

THE DART

ST. TERESA'S ACADEMY

KANSAS CITY
POWER & LIGHT

lights OUT

Power and Light District allows open alcohol, takes necessary precautions to prevent underage drinking

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District 'ostracizes huge demographic'

New hotspot allows public drinking, prohibits people under 21 after 8 p.m.

by SYDNEY DEATHERAGE
Staff Writer

In the heart of downtown Kansas City, the new Power and Light District, developed by The Cordish Company has quickly become a weekend hotspot and thriving entertainment center since its debut late last year. However, with an above-21 policy in the core entertainment section of the nine-block public district, this new destination in Kansas City is often off-limits to teens.

The Power and Light District includes restaurants, retail, entertainment, nightclubs and residences. The central point of the district, off-limit to teens on weekends and at major events, is KC Live!, a courtyard-esque area which numerous nightclubs and restaurants surround and share. KC Live! is one of a few areas in the United States in which customers are allowed to bar-hop and mingle on public property with open alcoholic beverages.

With this policy, and multitudes of bars and nightclubs, how will the new Power and Light District cater to under-21 crowds? The lack of under-21 venues and nightlife in the district not only affects parents' decisions on whether they allow their teens to frequent the district alone, but also makes the district less of a hotspot for those under the legal drinking age.

"By not catering to teenagers, [The Cordish Company is] ostracizing a huge demographic whom it could be just as beneficial to service," said Ms. Cathy Barnett, mother to sophomore Julia Barnett. "They need to think more about [the policy] because you guys are their future patrons...but perhaps they aren't worried about [targeting teen crowds]. It's hot right now because it's brand new."

According to The Cordish Company representative Rachel Felix, however, the district is open and welcome to consumers of all ages.

"We have a lot of restaurants and a lot of establishments that appeal to all ages," Felix said. "There are opportunities to have fun for everyone. Everyone is open to walk around the district pretty much at all times, except for [KC Live!]... and mainly the hours that KC Live! is unavailable to people under 21 are hours that under-21's aren't going to be out anyway."

With KC Live! being an open outdoors area, some have questioned the safety of the district and the district's ability to regulate underage drinking.

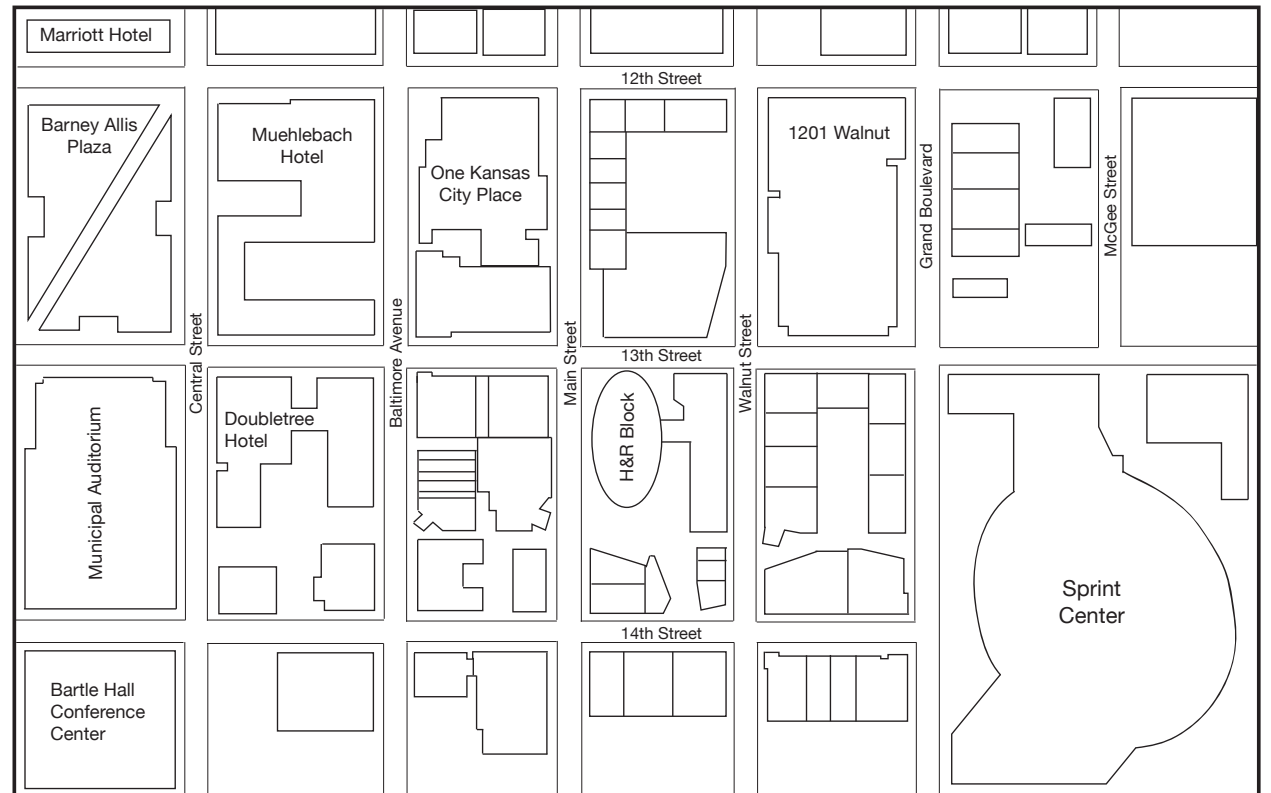
"If [a teenager] chooses to go down to an area where, after 8, it's very clear that it's an over-21 place - particularly if people are allowed to be outdoors and have open drinks - [a teenager] is going to run into problems," Barnett said. "It would be very, very hard for places to look after underage drinking if you're letting people take open containers out into the street."

"You can only hope that your child has decent judgement about this stuff."

Cathy Barnett, mother

Power City

The Power and Light District is currently working on a project intended to update Kansas City's downtown. New attractions include Lucky Strike Lanes and KC Live! and other bars, nightclubs and stores, but teens will be restricted from the area after 8 p.m.



Source: <http://www.downtownkc.net/kansas-city-power-and-light-district/> GRAPHIC BY ALY BROWNLEE

Though Barnett is not opposed to allowing her daughter to visit the District, she holds some reservations to the idea.

"I have such mixed feelings because you can only hope that your child has decent judgment about this stuff," Barnett said. "But if they're having public concerts and events, obviously they aren't keeping kids under 21 out of the area. Public venues aren't carding everyone that walks in off the street that looks under 21."

According to senior Claire McFarland, the open-beverage ordinance isn't one that will be an issue for her or for other teens in the District.

"I think they probably have pretty strict security, so I don't think I'd have to worry about the temptation [of drinking]," McFarland said. "They would have to have strict security if they're able to get away with open drinking."

According to the Kansas City Missouri Police Department, policing underage drinking hasn't been an issue in the Power and Light District.

"When [The Cordish Company] had this project in mind, they had it all planned out," a Kansas City Missouri Police Department representative said. "They pretty much took care of everything themselves and planned how they would manage underage drinking...and so far there haven't been any problems down there. We're not saying it doesn't happen; it happens at every bar, but we haven't had any



Checking IDs ★ Bouncers at the new Power and Light District in Kansas City use scanners to verify the legality of IDs last Saturday. Every Saturday night, the middle of the Power and Light District closes to anyone under 21 years old. PHOTO BY CLAIRE MCINERNEY

complaints."

Cordish Company hires off-duty officers from the police department, private security services sanctioned by the company, and public safety officers to monitor the district. On Friday and Saturday nights and at 21-and-over concerts and events, the company closes off KC Live! at each of its three sidewalk entrances with security checkpoints, carding those who wish to enter with an electronic scanning system and giving special bracelets to those who plan to drink. According to Felix, these procedures act as methods of controlling crowds and monitoring underage drinking. However, with the main entertainment section of the district closed off to teens, and other teen venues such as the Lucky Strike bowling alley closed off after 8 p.m., teen patronage of the district is limited,

senior Claire McFarland said.

"I don't think there's going to be people under 21 there because if you can only go bowling...that's not very attractive," McFarland said. "Unless there's a concert at the Sprint Center going on, there really isn't anything else to do. I think it will be successful but after 9 it's not a place where kids should be."

Though some feel the unavailability of KC Live! is unfair, Felix stressed that The Cordish Company feels the Power and Light District is a place for all.

"The district is open to everyone and available to everyone," Felix said. "All of the establishments that are open here welcome everyone of all ages. Nightclubs are 21 and over, but everywhere else is open to families all the time and open to teenagers all the time." ★

North Central visits STA

Students, faculty share commitment to education with visiting evaluators

by ALY BROWNLEE
Graphics Editor

Five-years of preparation for the North Central Association's visit came to a close last Thursday, as a team of teachers, students and staff finished STA's re-accreditation cycle. North Central calls itself "a commission on accreditation and school improvement" and accredits schools from around the world.

Every five years STA renews its college-prep status through North Central. A handful of teachers from across the academic departments make up a steering committee at STA, which sets two goals for student achievement for each five-year cycle.

"The [visiting] team looked to determine how well we met our two goals: reading comprehension and writing," science teacher Renee Blake said. "They also looked at the teaching strategies the teachers used in class and our standardized test results."

Blake was a part of the steering committee, which helped to develop "interventions," or activities like "6+1 traits of writing" essays and timed in-class writings geared toward the two goals.

"The teachers could create their own reading and writing activities using set standards," said social studies teacher Pat Sirridge, another member of the steering committee. "They had a lot of freedom to develop their own interventions."

During its time on campus, the visiting team of local principals interviewed parents, students, faculty, staff and community members about STA.

"I think that's the best way to get to know a school, through the student interviews," English teacher Megan Filipowicz said. "They knew our plan was solid and that we could really illustrate it with our interviews."

Besides evaluating the school's improvement in reading and writing skills, North Central also investigated STA's academic rigor, the performance of the curriculum and how well the school adhered to its mission statement.

"[The visiting team] felt a real sense of community,"



Talking shop ★ Ms. Laura O'Brien discusses the school nurse with two of the evaluators of North Central during their visit in the Math and Science Resource Center April 17. North Central visits the campus every five years to observe the school's progress. **PHOTO BY CLAIRE MCINERNEY**

Sirridge said. "We don't have a huge infrastructure, so it's nice to have some approval that we are doing a good job from an outside source."

According to Blake, the North Central team commended STA's advisory system and the single-sex education, but also noted room for improvement.

"The availability of technology to the students was something that we need to work on," Blake said.

Though the official North Central report will not

be available for 20 days, STA plans to offer more Advanced Placement courses. Additionally, the visiting team advised that STA use data from schools with similar profiles to judge student performance and needs for future cycles.

"It helps us to understand our strengths to have an outside committee like North Central say that everyone wants the school to do well," Filipowicz said. "It's always in an effort to improve." ★

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St. Teresa's Academy

College counselor announces departure

Ms. Steph Hart steps down from position at STA, will launch college consulting company this summer

by HALEY VONDEMKAMP
Staff Writer

Ms. Steph Hart, college counselor, National Honors Society advisor, testing coordinator and department chairwoman, is making this academic year her last at STA.

After six years of employment, Hart is leaving to start her own independent college consulting company, which is currently in the marketing stages.

"I was ready for a change professionally and personally," Hart said. "It's been something I've been thinking about but was too chicken to do."

Hart plans to launch her company, officially named Essential Elements: Comprehensive College Planning, June 1 and says she will be ready to work with students immediately after that date. She is offering four different packages, depending on the student's age and point of involvement in the college application process, as well as her assistance at an hourly rate. Among the many services she's offering are aid in editing college applications, resumes and essays, helping to plan campus visits, doing scholarship research and offering prep for the ACT.

Hart recognizes the risk involved in starting a business from scratch, but feels confident in her new endeavor.

"An opportunity for life change present-

ed itself and I accepted," Hart said. "This is a huge leap of faith, and for probably the first time in my life I am willing to take the risk and to trust that what is meant to be will be."

According to Hart, the duties outside her primary job in the college counseling department have taken away from the time she gets to spend doing what she loves most: working one-on-one with students. She believes that in starting her own private college consulting company, she will be able to re-direct her focus toward the part of her job she most enjoys.

Hart's departure leaves the future of the college counseling department in question for parents and students. According to STA president Nan Bone, there will be no significant alterations in the department besides the personnel change. A contract has already been offered to Ms. Debi Hudson. Hudson is currently a college counselor at St. James Academy.

"[Hudson] was a college counselor at St. Teresa's a few years back, so we were pleased she was interesting in applying for the position," Bone said.

This faculty change will have the most immediate effects on STA's current junior class, who has begun working with Hart. Kaitlin Zidar is one junior who has voiced her concerns.

"It makes me nervous just based on the fact I have no idea who I'm going to ask all



Closing the door ★ College counselor Steph Hart works inside her office Tuesday. Hart plans to leave STA after the year ends and hopes to start her own company titled Essential Elements: Comprehensive College Planning. **PHOTO BY ALLISON POINTER**

my questions," Zidar said. "It just depends on the type of counselor the new person is before I can decide if [Hart leaving] is a disadvantage."

Hart is quick to reject the idea that the class of 2009 will be at all handicapped due to her decision to leave STA.

"Personnel turnover happens at high schools across the country," Hart said. "Change just cannot be avoided... As long as students follow through on their responsibilities, they should be okay in the fall.

Everyone will just need to make the effort to get to know the new counselor when [she] arrives in August."

Along with the familiarity Hart has with current students, her work ethic and dedication will also be missed following her final days at STA, according to Bone.

"[Hart] was a hard worker," Bone said. "She wanted the best for the girls at STA... I think everyone is sad to see [her] leave, but she is excited about her new career opportunity." ★

Zoo adjusts to reduced budget

Kansas City Council approves cuts to subsidies of tourist attractions

by SARAH COOPER
Managing Editor

The Kansas City Council approved a new budget for the city, which included a reduction to the Kansas City Zoo's subsidy from \$4.6 million to \$4 million. Zoo director Randy Wistoff said the cut to the subsidy, which makes up 5 percent of the zoo's daily operating budget, presents unique obstacles for the zoo.

"To cut money from an operating budget is always a challenge," he said. "So much of that money is spent on the animals. I can't just put the animals on diets. I can't take the animals' quarters and turn the heat up or down... I just can't do that sort of thing with gorillas and chimpanzees. Some of the changes a normal business would make we are prohibited from doing because of the needs of the animals."

Wistoff wants to avoid removing any animals from the zoo and aims to maintain funds other ways, such as increasing entrance fees and memberships to the zoo. He does not plan to lay off any of the zoo's 130 full-time employees.

"As of now, the positions that we have open, we are just not going to fill," he said. "We're going to save money until the end of the year and then depending on next year's budget, we may fill those again."

Junior Jenny Gottsch has worked as gift shop cashier at the zoo since March 2006. She said there has been talk at the zoo about various changes that could be made to adjust to the zoo's smaller budget.

"[The managers] are trying to make the best of the situation and adjust everything they buy from vendors," Gottsch said.

The Kansas City Council members voted on the new annual budget March 27. The funds, which are garnered from taxes, were redistributed. The Council's vote cut several city venues' subsidies.

The cuts were passed to increase the city's reserve fund, which Council members hope will increase Kansas City's credit. This change will allow the city to borrow money for large projects, infrastructure repairs and public safety.

Mayor Mark Funkhouser initially proposed gradually eliminating the zoo's subsidy entirely. This proposition was



On the prowl ★ A Bengal tiger paces its cage March 22 at the Kansas City Zoo. Photo by CARLIE CAMPBELL

met with concern from citizens and Kansas City tourism representatives. Funkhouser held several town hall meetings to hear Kansas Citizens' concerns.

"People are talking reality now," Funkhouser told the *Kansas City Star*. "They're taking finance seriously."

Gottsch expressed disappointment with the decision to reduce the zoo's subsidy, and worried that it threatened the zoo's financial standing.

"I thought it was unfair because the zoo is a main attraction of the city," Gottsch said. "I think Kansas City needs a zoo."

Wistoff was also disappointed with the new budget.

"I wish that we didn't have to make the cut," he said.

"My disappointment lasted a little but it's just the reality; you have to work with what you have." ★

The Kansas City Zoo's board created a new budget April 23. The plan created admissions and membership price increases, which go into effect today.

Price changes

★
adults: \$10.50
seniors: \$9.50
children 3-11: \$7
children under 3: free
membership: \$75

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Escalera opens opportunities to youth

National Council of La Raza starts Latino-based leadership program

by SARAH SMITH
Section Editor



Success through education ★ During an activity period, junior Mika Casey studies with her friends in Spanish teacher Lucila Bernal's classroom April 28. Casey's intelligence is just one quality that made her stand out to be chosen to participate in the leadership program "Escalera." PHOTO BY TAYLOR BROWN

The National Council of La Raza, the largest Latino civil rights organization in the country, selected STA junior Mika Casey as one of 20 Kansas City students to participate in "Escalera: Taking Steps to Success." This leadership program aims to promote economic mobility for Latinos by increasing their level of education.

"Latinos constitute the highest percentage of the labor force however we have the lowest wages of any group," said Mr. Raul Murguia, Escalera program coordinator at the Guadalupe Center. "This program is about beginning a career path and preparing young Latinos to seek higher management level positions."

According to the NCLR web site, Escalera has six sites nationwide and has served over 120 students. So far, 96 percent of them have graduated high school and 94 percent have gone on to college. This is compared to a 58 percent Latino graduation rate in Kansas City.

"I wish [the graduation rate] could be higher," Casey said. "Everyone should have the opportunity to succeed as much as [Escalera students] do."

One tactic that the Guadalupe Center used was selecting students from all socioeconomic levels for Escalera.

"The dynamic at Guadalupe is very interesting," said Mr. Daniel Silva, national Escalera program coordinator. "An inner city school experience is much different than a private school. They will not only learn a lot from the program but they will learn a lot from each other."

Casey also hopes for this chance at reciprocal learning.

"I feel like they are going to teach me a lot," she said. "Hopefully I can teach them something too."

The application process for the program was competitive and students had to be willing to make a significant time commitment. They are expected to participate for 15 months for eight hours each week. Escalera also sets the students up with an internship in an area they might be interested in pursuing.

"What we are doing is developing a success culture," Silva said. "Once you can make being successful cool that really inspires young people."

The students are given access to other Latino's in professional positions as role models.

"Some students may have [otherwise] been channeled to do manual jobs," Murguia said. "College might not have been presented to them as an option."

Murguia sees some of the Escalera students at a disadvantage because college representatives do not typically recruit people from schools with "bad" stereotypes.

"Regardless of how troubled the school may be there are always intelligent individuals," he said. "All Escalera students are intelligent but their levels of knowledge are different so we want to make sure we fill in those gaps and level the playing field."

During the selection process, Casey's intelligence was just one quality that made her stand out.

"She has a strong concern for others and a good sense of community," Murguia said.

Casey is eager to put her leadership skills to work.

"I think this program is about encouragement," Casey said. "Senior year I will become a mentor to an incoming junior, so hopefully I will get to encourage [someone else] too."

Murguia hopes that the program will affect Latino graduation rates on a national level.

"I am a strong believer that education is the key to solving everyone's problems," he said. "Material things come and go but no one can take away [an education]. Education is about freedom." ★

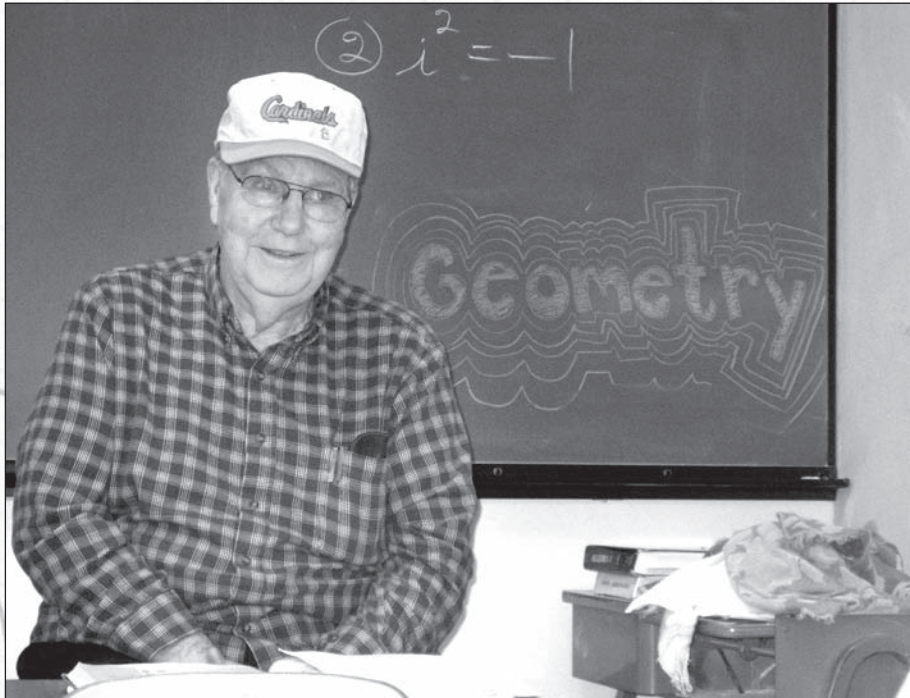
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ST. TERESA'S ACADEMY

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Each year, *The Dart* prints a special issue of the paper featuring stories and photos from the journalism students. For the 2008 issue, the students chose the theme of "transitions." From marriage to retirement, the STA community is constantly changing.

Math teacher to leave STA after 25 years



Chalk talk ★ Dr. Joe Grantham laughs with his students in his accelerated geometry class Monday, April 14. He said he would miss his students more than anything. **PHOTO BY CAROLINE THOMPSON**

In a bittersweet farewell, Dr. Joe Grantham plans to start a new chapter in his

by CAROLINE THOMPSON
Journalism Student

On the first floor of Donnelly Hall, in the corner of his classroom, he is surrounded by the usual group of sophomores just coming in for Activity. His bulletin board beside his desk is overflowing with photos and notes saying, "We love you!" or "Don't retire!" The Activity period "regulars" plead with him to stay, but their attempts are futile.

He has been joking about leaving for some time, but after 25 years of teaching at STA, Dr. Joe Grantham has decided to retire.

"I'm old and decrepit," Grantham said, jokingly giving a reason for his retirement.

Grantham claims his "body is betraying him." With age, he experiences memory lapses and body pains after numerous surgeries. In addition, Grantham admits he is less patient with his students.

"There are days when there's nowhere I'd rather be than standing there and teaching you," Grantham said. "It's pure pleasure. I love being in the classroom. But, sometimes I get tired and lose my temper."

One reason for his impatience is the fact that his doctor discourages him from running. In earlier years, Grantham would store his running clothes in his car and go out to run after school. He no longer has that outlet to run off his frustrations.

"Running is really important to him," said senior Elizabeth Keaveny, who regularly talks with Grantham. "When describing the Dipsea [race], he would talk about running up a mountain as the best thing in the world. Most people would hate it."

Although he has several reasons for leaving, by no means will this transition be easy. He will miss the STA faculty and staff, but leaving the students will be hardest for him. Through teaching his four classes of accelerated geometry, early morning accelerated algebra I, ninth

grade accelerated algebra I and selected algebra II topics, he has developed bonds with his students.

"I'll miss the students in class more than anything in the world," Grantham said. "I just look at you and I'm having fun. It's not like you're working. You keep me young mentally-not physically."

In return, the STA community will miss Grantham. Sophomore Becca Sommerhauser enjoys taking Grantham's accelerated geometry class.

"I really like his class," Sommerhauser said. "I don't dread it like other math classes. I feel comfortable asking questions, he's available outside of class, and he actually wants you to come in [for extra help.]"

Outside of the classroom, Sommerhauser finds herself in Grantham's room every chance she can get. She is not sure how she and her friends will cope without Grantham being available for frees and Activities. Grantham's witty personality has made his room a comfortable place for Sommerhauser and several other girls to spend their free time.

"I remember freshman year, during Activity, Dr. Joe was stamping accountabilities," Sommerhauser said. "He came to my accountability and asked, 'Who is this?,' and [after he saw me] asked what my name was. I said Becca, and he said, 'Well, it says Rebecca here.' Then I asked, 'Well isn't Joe short for Joseph?' Next, he asked what my middle name was, and [before I answered], I asked, 'What is your middle name?' We're still at a standstill."

Grantham has affected the faculty and students who know him. It's difficult to say which will struggle more with the transition; Grantham or the STA community.

"I know when the time comes [for me to leave], it'll hurt," Grantham said. "I can't imagine what I'll do once August comes. It's all I've done for 50 years."

Grantham doesn't have definite plans for his retirement. Along with "visiting the old cowboys in Death Valley," Grantham hopes to travel with his wife, Charlyne. However, no matter how far he goes, he will be remembered at STA. ★

New district lights up downtown

Company launches \$850 million project to transform Kansas City

by ELLE RAUCH
Journalism Student

Ms. Tracie Dittmore finds herself walking along broad, brick-paved sidewalks, vibrant landscaping and an outdoor arena complete with numerous fountains and a modern stage. She compares the scene to the San Antonio river walk or perhaps Los Angeles, and is shocked to find herself this excited over Kansas City's new downtown area.

"Walking [through the Power and Light District], I felt like I wasn't in Kansas City anymore," said Dittmore, a volunteer for the Big 12 Tournament in the new district. "It was so urban feeling and such a neat area. It is weird that it is downtown KC and that it felt like that."

The Cordish Company, an organization dedicated to real estate development and the operating of entertainment districts, is developing the Power and Light District.

"The Kansas City Power and Light District has already remade the physical environment of downtown with an eight-city block project," said Mr. Jon Stephens, the Director of Marketing and Public Relations for the Cordish Company. "We are now seeing the change of perceptions of downtown and the energy and excitement level build."

The new district features restaurants, bars, shops and live entertainment. Lucky Strike Lanes is the district's new bowling alley.

"They have a lounge area that makes you feel like you are in LA," Dittmore said. "It is a place that [high school students] need to go down to."

Even with the glamour of Lucky Strike Lanes, Dittmore's favorite addition to the downtown area is Kansas City Live!, an outdoor stage and courtyard that houses live music and festivals.

"I think it will be a real gathering place in the summer when they have all those concerts," Dittmore said. "During the Big 12 tournament it was so crowded you could hardly walk through it. I couldn't believe all the people that were there. [KC Live!] is what I am most



Lighting up the lanes ★ Ms. Carmina Temorio and son David, four years old, bowl at Lucky Strike Lanes in Kansas City's Power and Light District. The bowling alley is one of several new venues in the district. **PHOTO BY ELLE RAUCH**

excited about."

Stephens also thinks that KC Live! will bring a lot of excitement to the district, which will offer over 150 live events a year, including concerts of all genres, family activities, art festivals and charity functions.

"The KC Live! stage and the covered courtyard has truly become Kansas City's living room," Stephens said. "It is one of the most exciting places, not just in Kansas City, but anywhere. It offers a relaxing place to gather, a place to watch events on a giant video screen and one of the best concert venues in the city."

The concert area and other forms of entertainment are expected to draw in Kansas City locals hoping to live near the district.

"[My family and I] almost moved down there a couple years ago and I now wish that we had," Dittmore said. "It is going to become one of those areas that you just will want to hang out at."

With more people moving to the downtown area, a grocery store is a necessity, according to Ms. Casey Broker, the Marketing Director of Cosentino's Market. Cosentino's Gourmet Market will soon become Kansas City's first downtown grocery store.

"With so many people moving into the lofts [downtown], there has become a need for a grocery store and we are very excited to be the ones that get to provide that," Broker said.

The market will include daily meals prepared by chefs, a gelato and coffee bar and, according to Broker, "the largest soup and salad bar you can possibly see in a grocery store."

The market is one of 29 new tenants that have recently decided to join the new district, and Stephens expects many more to come.

"Great districts like the Power and Light District will continue to grow and evolve," Stephens said. ★

Media, celebrities influence teens to turn to surgery

Teen girls turn to cosmetic surgery to alleviate self-esteem issues

by MEGAN SCHAFF
Journalism Student

Dieting, tanning, tons of makeup and extreme plastic surgery have become the new face of teenage self-esteem remedies. More teenage girls than ever are using plastic surgery, from laser hair removal to rhinoplasty, to help them feel good about themselves.

"Girls are self-conscious," Dr. Aundria Speropoulos said. "They don't think they fit the typical looks that they think they should."

According to the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, 205,119 people under the age of 19 received cosmetic surgery in 2007 as opposed to about 60,000 who received surgery in 1997.

Although some doctors may not support beauty-enhancing surgery at a young age, its popularity among teenagers is growing quickly. Surgeries range from microdermabrasion for acne scars to major nose jobs and breast augmentations, but the message is the same: teens want to fit in and look perfect.

Speropoulos, a pediatrician who works primarily with teenage girls, thinks plastic surgery has increased because of its growing popularity and pressure from parents, peers and the media.

Freshman Hayden Fudenberg agrees that celebrities have a major effect on self image.

"Teens, especially girls, see people like Ashley Tisdale or Ashlee Simpson get nose jobs, then they relate it to their fame and popularity," Fudenberg said.

Whatever the motivations, most doctors suggest waiting for cosmetic surgery. Dr. Hannah Vargas, a facial plastic surgeon, says teens should wait until their bones are

completely grown before even thinking about receiving plastic surgery.

Aside from the medical risks, Vargas says the person wanting to receive surgery has to be mature enough to understand the seriousness of any operation. Although doctors say plastic surgery is relatively safe, complications can occur. On March 22, a Florida teenager died from a fatal reaction to anesthesia during a breast augmentation surgery. Doctors like Vargas say complications like this are rare but if teens want to receive plastic surgery, they have to recognize the possibility of complications.

"It's important to know that surgery is surgery and there is always risk involved," Vargas said.

The debate on the ethics of teenage plastic surgery has been a long one. Opinions on the subject are diverse and vary from person to person. Fudenberg is a supporter of teens receiving cosmetic surgery.

"In an ideal world, we would all have our ideal bodies, whatever that may be," she said. "I think that if you're unhappy with your body and it's because your features are too big or too small, if changing them will make you happier, then do that. Do what makes you happy."

Vargas considers each situation and person differently. She thinks surgery in young teens can be negative but can also give people a great advantage in self-esteem.

"It's a great feeling to take someone who has always had one particular area they don't like and not have that be their problem area anymore," Vargas said.

While other teenagers are receiving plastic surgery, Fudenberg feels confident with herself. STA's website states that the single sex environment creates a better sense of self confidence and self acceptance than co-educational schools. Fudenberg believes St. Teresa's increases her confidence as well as that of everyone around her.

"I think STA creates an environment where girls can feel really comfortable with themselves," Fudenberg said. ★



Checking in ★ Dr. Aundria Speropoulos signs a patient form in an examination room Friday. Speropoulos does not advocate plastic surgery for teenagers. **PHOTO BY MEGAN SCHAFF**

Shrock 'bails' out of prison job

From teaching inmates to teens, Shrock finds new happiness at STA

by EMILY BAKER
Journalism Student

Two years ago, Mr. Richard Shrock was teaching political science in an environment where many of his classes required the supervision of a security guard. Now, he frequents a class room surrounded by teenage girls, teaching the basics of world geography and history to freshmen and sophomores at STA, rather than teaching inmates in a prison.

When Ms. Nancy Hand first met Shrock, he was applying for his current teaching job in the social studies department at STA.

"[In him] we saw kindness, knowledge of discipline to teach, desire to make a difference in students' lives and his hope to develop critical thinking skills in students," Hand said.

Shrock landed the job he applied for, and Hand said that her knowledge of his previous job did not impact her decision to hire him.

"There were no second thoughts after hiring him," Hand said.

According to Hand, Shrock was highly recommended; he had great references and a Master's degree from Rockhurst University, proving his qualification for the job. Shrock knew he wanted to teach at a local high school when he moved to Kansas City, whether it was private or public, co-ed or single sex. It did not matter where he could fill the position; he just wanted to be teaching social studies in a high school.

"I would not want to be teaching anything else," he said.

Shrock taught in five different prisons in North Carolina over two years ranging from low security to medium security prisons. Shrock taught men whose crimes ranged from minor offenses to those of a more serious magnitude.

"I was nervous my first day, but there was no danger [in teaching at the prisons]," Shrock said.

He said what he liked most about the job was conversing with and hearing the views of people he would otherwise never encounter.

"The inmates were able to bring to class their lifetime experiences because they had so much time [in prison] to think about things," he said.

The difference between the life experiences of those he taught in prison and at STA set apart Shrock's two jobs. He discovered that teenagers have a harder time connecting with history because they lack the world views possessed by the inmates.

Shrock believes his transition to STA has been very easy because of the supportive faculty members who mentor him and who accept his mistakes. Ms. Mary Montag, Mr. Matthew Bertalott, Ms. Megan Filipowicz, and Ms. Denise Rueschhoff are just some of the teachers who have helped him adjust smoothly to the school.

"I don't know the drill yet and the teachers here are very understanding of that," Shrock said.

Shrock took this job for another reason, which is the commute. He lives only two blocks away from the school and can walk most days. The new teacher said this has helped him with the transition, as well.

"I feel like I am a part of this community," Shrock said.

Freshman Emily Strickland was a student of Shrock's world geography class first semester. She said he is an easy going teacher who shows enthusiasm about the subject he teaches.

"I cannot imagine him teaching at a prison with the inmates but I enjoyed having a teacher with such an interesting and diverse teaching background," Strickland said.

According to Shrock, the STA community has been very welcoming towards him, and the students and staff are very supportive.

"I love it here and I wouldn't leave," Shrock said. ★



Shaping young minds ★ Mr. Richard Shrock lectures his world history class April 14. The sophomores contributed to the discussion and learned new information about different cultures in his class. PHOTO BY EMILY BAKER

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Freshman leaves friends to start fresh

Student who started high school alone feels like she got the better experience

by EMILY WILSON
Journalism Student

As she walked up to Ms. Mary Jo Coughlin's third floor classroom, she took a deep breath before opening the door. She stepped inside and felt every set of eyes in the room looking at her. She scanned the room for a familiar face before she looked towards Mrs. Coughlin who smiled and said, "Sam, we were wondering when you were gonna get here."

This was freshman Samantha Scheuler's first day and she had gone to the wrong class.

"I was really embarrassed," Scheuler said. "I had sat in the wrong class for about ten minutes before I realized they hadn't called my name during roll. I just kept apologizing to the teacher over and over again and asking her where my next class was."

Scheuler is the only girl in this year's freshman class from St. Gabriel Catholic School but she did not always want to be at STA.

"I didn't decide [to go here] at all," Scheuler said. "My parents decided for me. I wanted to go to St. Pius. I cried when they told me."

During eighth grade, Scheuler was not looking forward to the adjustment that she would have to make. She was leaving her friends and going to a school

where she knew few people. She even expected to be at St. Pius High School by the end of first semester. But that all changed after a few weeks at STA.

"I was not excited," Scheuler said. "I had it in my mind that I was going to hate it. I didn't want to like it; it just happened. I wouldn't go to Pius for anything now."

Many girls in the class of 2012 are preparing to make the same adjustment that Scheuler made. Clancie Beisser and Katelyn Ehrnman are currently eighth graders at Holy Cross Grade School in Overland Park. They are the only two girls in their grade who will be attending STA next year. Kids from Holy Cross tend to go to St. Thomas Aquinas, St. James Academy, Bishop Miege and sometimes a few girls at Notre Dame de Sion. They believe coming to STA will be a stretch for them.

"I knew I wanted to go to an all girls school and St. Teresa's felt more like a high school," Ehrnman said. "Everyone was really nice and I really liked the campus."

Beisser looked at both STA and Bishop Miege while Ehrnman looked at Bishop Miege, Sion, STA and St. James. Both said that coming in a small group was part of the reason they chose STA. They felt like it would allow them meet new people but still have a friend to go through the whole adjustment with. But the large campus and the class size are some of their fears.

"I'm nervous about getting lost or that girls are going to be mean," Beisser said.



Lunch time ★ Kathleen Hough, left, Victoria Godfrey, Paige Vondenkamp and Samatha Scheuler eat in the cafeteria April 14. Scheuler felt like these girls, who she met through volleyball, helped make her transition to high school easier. PHOTO BY EMILY WILSON

Ms. Bernice Colby, a counselor at STA, thinks girls who come in larger groups tend to have an advantage when it comes to adjusting, but she also believes it had some disadvantages too.

"Disadvantages are that girls [who come in a group] tend to stay in their own group," Colby said. "Whereas girls who come alone have to branch out and meet new people."

Despite the difficulty of her first day,

Scheuler felt she had a relatively easy adjustment due to her involvement in the STA volleyball program. Coming alone was an adventure for her and she feels like she made the best of it.

"I came in knowing two girls when so many girls came in big groups," Scheuler said. "Looking back on it now, I almost feel like I got the better experience. I got to branch out and start fresh." ★

Twins to separate for college

STA seniors Leslie, Julie Sear will part ways this fall to attend different colleges and live on their own

by SARAH SCHULTE
Journalism Student

Seniors Leslie and Julie Sear have never spent more than two weeks apart. Next fall, when the identical twins attend separate colleges, that is all going to change. Leslie has registered at University of Kansas and Julie will be attending Benedictine College. While these schools are close to home, they are far enough apart that the girls will not see each other every day, as they do now.

"[Being separated] will make us grow closer," Julie said. "We won't be in each other's faces 24/7."

Both sisters think it will be easier for them to branch out at their college without someone attached to their hip, which is one of the main reasons why they chose not to go to the same school. Leslie and Julie both applied to Kansas State University and University of Kansas, but only Julie applied to Benedictine. When the girls visited the Kansas State University campus, neither one cared for it very much, so Leslie's only choice left was University of Kansas. Julie had already decided she wanted to go to a different college than Leslie, so she selected Benedictine.

"Our parents didn't really have any say in where we went for college," said Leslie. "It was always our decision. They just wanted us to stay close to home."

The twins managed to stay near their family while also choosing colleges that are less than two hours away from each other. Benedictine is located in Atchison, Kan. and University of Kansas in Lawrence. However, this will be nothing like living at home with a twin for most of their lives, according to Leslie.

"Sometimes, she'll just be blasting [country music] from her room, which is right next to mine, and it's really annoying," Leslie said.

The twins were more alike when they were younger, but as they have grown up, Leslie and Julie's interests and groups of friends have changed. They never dressed in matching outfits or put their hair up the same way because most of the time, they did not like the same things. According to the twins' father Mr. Tim Sear, the girls are very different, but



Board game bonding ★ Senior Julie Sear, left, answers a trivia question asked by her twin sister Leslie during a game of Scene It? Harry Potter April 14. The girls will attend different colleges next year. PHOTO BY SARAH SCHULTE

they will still miss each other while away at college.

"The interest of going off on their own [made them choose separate schools,]" said Tim. "People naturally want to move away from their parents and siblings."

Julie and Leslie agree that at first it will be strange to each be on her own, since they have been together since birth, but they know that eventually each will make new friends and do things she couldn't have accomplished with her twin.

"At first it will be sad, because [Leslie] sometimes wakes me up in the morning and without that I wouldn't get to school on time," said Julie. "But it'll gradually get easier to be on my own without her."

Even though Leslie and Julie are moving away from each other, they want to stay in contact. The twins will do

this by calling and texting, but not every day. They both know that college includes busy schedules, but that will not keep them from communicating.

When the twins were only a few months old, it was hard to prevent them from "keeping in touch," according to Tim. As babies, if Leslie and Julie were put in the same area, they would scoot over until they were physically contacting each other, like in the womb. Although they won't be physically close at college, they will still have each other as a support system and someone to talk to.

Both girls agree the separation will be hard, but as they spend more time apart during their college years, they will get used to being away from each other and learn to be independent.

"She'll survive," Leslie said. ★

Best friends to leave high school, each other

After years of friendship, seniors Sarah Coleman and Maria Koppen plan to attend different colleges

by COLLEEN CORCORAN
Journalism Student

Best friends and seniors Sarah Coleman and Maria Koppen, look forward to college, with one exception: being apart.

Sophomore year, the two became close friends, and ever since they have been inseparable.

"We're attached at the hip," Coleman said.

They both agree that going to different colleges will be a difficult transition for them, but they are also excited for the new experience. Coleman says she's looking forward to branching out.

"I'm excited to meet new people, but I'll still miss seeing Maria every day," Coleman said.

Koppen said it will be different, even though they'll keep in touch.

"We will always know what's going on with each other, but it still will not be the same," Koppen said.

Koppen is attending the University of Kansas, while Coleman is attending Texas Christian University. Koppen is unsure about what she is studying, but is considering physical therapy as an option. Coleman plans to study fashion merchandise with a minor in business.

"Of course I will have doubts about any place, but I hope [Texas Christian University] works out for the best," Coleman said.

Coleman said she is really excited just to think about moving on from high school.

Sophomore Mimi Koppen, Maria's sister, was able to tell they were best friends ever since Mimi met Coleman at

a birthday party.

"They have ringers for each other... like Tech N9ne or something, and it goes off like seven times a night," Mimi said. "Either that, or they're together."

Mimi said they are both independent girls and believes they will handle college without each other well.

She also said either way, whether they would have decided to go to the same college, or to follow through as they are doing now, it will be a good experience for both of them.

"I think it's good because I know they'll never grow apart, but they will still meet so many new people," Mimi said.

Maria and Coleman have not really discussed any plans for visiting each other, but agree it will be Coleman usually going to the University of Kansas, primarily because it's closer to Coleman's home. Maria says they will visit each other around the holidays.

Coleman will be part of a sorority at Texas Christian University, and will be leaving first.

"The hardest part of my transition will be not being close to the people I know care about me," Coleman said.

Maria says the most difficult aspect of her change will be getting used to new people. As for the two's friendship, the girls know they will keep in touch and stay friends, but will still miss seeing each other every day.

"I'm sure we'll stay in touch," Coleman said. "She gives good hugs; she won some award for best hugs... I know I will miss that."

They say it's hard to imagine their goodbye.

"[Our goodbye] will be sad, we'll probably be crying," Maria said. "We'll still talk, but we can't see each other."

They are both sure they will be best friends throughout college, despite being almost 500 miles apart.

"We are going to be best friends forever, so I am not worried," Coleman said. ★



Creating memories ★ After their lacrosse game April 12, seniors Maria Koppen, left, and Sarah Coleman talk on the STA soccer field. The two celebrated their victory over Columbia, lacrosse being one of the many activities the two do together. PHOTO BY COLLEEN CORCORAN

Students choose function over fashion

Girls decide on private school,
find comfort in new environment

by SUSIE ANCONA
Journalism Student

It is Aug. 21, 2006 and a new student walks into Ms. Mary Montag's physical science class at STA. It is freshman Laura Yeradi's first day at a private school. Yeradi is one of few students at STA who came from a public school. The new experience has helped girls like Yeradi develop more comfort and independence inside the classroom and STA community.

"The first year I was really shy and wanted to make a good impression and adjust to private school," Yeradi said. "The second year [I've been] really focusing on building friends and my character. I am more relaxed and comfortable with being myself."

Yeradi came from Antioch Middle School in Overland Park. She decided to attend STA instead of Shawnee Mission North High School.

"[I came to STA so I would] put more effort into my homework and not be as laid back," Yeradi said. "I wanted to get into a good college and get a high GPA."

Freshman Alexa Fowlkes came from Delta Woods Middle School, a public school in Lee's Summit. Fowlkes says she "feels welcomed" at STA.

"I talk a lot more and I express my opinion more," Fowlkes said. "I am doing better academically [at STA]."

Unlike Yeradi, Fowlkes decided to attend the academy for family reasons. Her parents are content with the fact that Fowlkes is at STA.

"Both of my older sisters went here," Fowlkes said. "I wanted to experience what they had."

According to Yeradi, public school teachers didn't put their hearts into teaching. She believes STA teachers see students as people.

"I think the teachers [at STA] are a lot more understanding," Yeradi said. "It's not just a professional relationship...they want to get to know the students."

Single sex education is a new experience for both of the girls. According to Yeradi, girls in public school seemed to care more about fashion than learning.

"I love it," Yeradi said. "I don't have to get up as early and make myself up. [I think girls in pub-



A private affair ★ Ms. Katie Dolan, center, lectures her American Literature class about "The House of Mirth" April 14. Dolan, who used to teach at a co-ed public school, associated the female protagonist of the book with her students, trying to bring out the "female empowerment in all aspects of life." PHOTO BY SUSIE ANCONA

lic school felt the need to dress up] because clothes were such a big deal. Also, [they tried] to impress the guys."

Teachers also experience the transition from public school to private. Ms. Katie Dolan was taught in private school for the majority of her education. However, her first job as an educator came teaching literature at Ferris High School, a public school in Dallas. Once Dolan began teaching at STA, she felt like she was "back into her comfort zone."

"I am much more independent," Dolan said. "I feel more academically focused and I don't feel guilty, like I'm doing my students a disservice."

Dolan sees a definite difference between single sex schools versus public schools. She supports single sex education, and feels it is more beneficial.

"[In a single sex environment], much more is encouraged for the girls and expected," Dolan said. "In

class the girls are more likely to participate and succeed."

According to Dolan, public school administration is more focused on district requirements rather than the school itself. Dolan had limited opportunities in a public school environment.

"[At STA, I have] independence in the classroom, take part in curriculum development, and help foster my own and others' faith growth," Dolan said.

According to GreatSchools Staff, private schools are selective, and are not obligated to accept every child. Yeradi and Fowlkes say they appreciate the fact that STA chose them to attend.

"[It's] an empowering educational environment for intelligent women," Dolan said. "[It is] because I think not only does it fulfill its mission and philosophy with strength, but I think we work to make strong and independent thinkers." ★

Valedictorian struggles at K-State

Small town girl Lindsey Pacey works to obtain a 4.0
grade point average while adjusting to big university

by ANNE BACHOFER
Journalism Student

Freshman Lindsey Pacey, a student at Kansas State, is adjusting from her small high school, St. John's Catholic High School in Beloit, Kansas, to Kansas State University, with over 23,000 students. Coming from a graduating class of 21, Lindsey said the transition was overwhelming.

"[In Beloit], I wasn't just a number," Pacey said, "It was like a big family."

Pacey came to Kansas State last August with high hopes. What she found inundated her. She said she was home sick like crazy, and was having a difficult time adjusting.

"First semester, that was a lot different," Pacey said. "There are so many constant distractions. There are constantly people everywhere."

Pacey said everything just changed at once living with someone she didn't know. She said there are probably a few more distractions in Manhattan, with about 50,000 people, than in Beloit, with a population of approximately 4,000. Her favorite part of her high school was knowing everybody. She had relationships between every student and especially with the teachers.

Pacey managed to maintain a 4.0 grade point average all throughout high school and

currently in college. She graduated as valedictorian of her class. Pacey said she studies hours each night, and if she needs fewer distractions, she goes to the library. To find time for herself, she visits her aunt who lives nearby in Manhattan, or her brother, Mr. Kendall Pacey, who keeps her strong and steady throughout her adjustment at Kansas State.

When times were tough, Pacey said her brother kept her going. He kept her encouraged and introduced her to people. He showed her around and helped her find a church for Sunday Mass, friends, hope, and strength.

Also, another change was living in dormitories. Pacey said this was one of her favorite parts of college. Everyone on the floor becomes close and they are always doing things together, rather it is beach volleyball, intramurals, or just socializing.

"We do everything together - eat, [activities,] parties, everything," Pacey said.

"It was nice to have family here," Pacey said. "I was very lucky. [Second] semester was a lot better, getting used to everything."

Another woman with Pacey's same experience was Mrs. Janet Bachofer. She went from a high school class of 42, to Minnesota State University, of approximately 18,000.



Wildcat territory ★ The streets of Manhattan await college students for Saturday night partying April 5. Freshman Lindsey Pacey had many adjustments to make to the lifestyle at the big university after coming from Beloit, Kansas. PHOTO BY ANNE BACHOFER

The change was so difficult for her that she transferred to a smaller university.

"The classes were huge, and the teachers weren't personable, and I got lost in the academics," Bachofer said. "I was just a number and I didn't like that."

Others, like Mr. James Ahern, had an easier transition from a small high school to a larger college. He enjoyed his dorm room, and the roommates and friends he made there.

"What helps you adjust, really, is if you live in a dorm," Ahern said. "It becomes your home 'cause you have a small group of people you can be with."

Ahern studied history and said his favorite part of his new college experience was

the learning opportunity.

"High school is so one dimensional because your courses are so white-washed, the people are from the same area," Ahern said. "So, when you go to college you meet people from all over, and your learning experience is all more in-depth. Like, in my history classes in college, you learn all the stuff they left out. You realize America's heroes weren't perfect."

College is an adjustment whether it be a difficult transition or a simple change. As students attending a college preparatory school, the girls at STA are preparing themselves for this transition best they can. ★

Graduates adjust to college life

STA alumnae find themselves prepared for college academics; lifestyle change is still an adjustment

by HAYDEN FUDEMBERG
Journalism Student

The transition from high school to college can be a big one. Adjusting to roommates, food, a co-ed environment and bigger classes are just some of the challenges awaiting freshmen.

STA is one of Kansas City's best prep schools, and is known for academic excellence. According to the STA web site, each year, a majority of the graduates receive merit-based scholarships to many of the country's most prestigious institutions of higher learning.

"STA has prepared me for college in so many ways," senior Claire Hickey said. "It's very appropriate to call it a college prep school. Not only do I feel so prepared academically, but as a person I feel so ready for college."

Hickey will be beginning UMKC's six-year medical program next year.

STA graduates confirm Hickey's speculations.

"As far as education goes, STA was impeccable," Nebraska University freshman Mary Kate Bird, said. "I'm way ahead of 90 percent of the student body. I'm learning things in college that I learned in high school. My freshmen year has been like a review."

Freshman Kathleen Pointer is experiencing her first year in college the same way.

"My junior and senior years have really prepared me," she said. "In my humanities classes, I read the same books I studied in high school."

According to STA's web site, the individualized modular scheduling, modeled after colleges and universities, prepares

99 percent of Academy graduates who go on to college.

"I think that with the mod scheduling, that really helped," Bird said. "In STA, I had a lot of frees and that helped me balance my time."

Pointer has not quite found her niche in the large university environment.

"I was socially used to STA - the environment and the closeness," she said. "I haven't really found that at MU."

Bird also was shocked by the size of her school.

"I think maybe it was a disadvantage knowing everyone at my school," she said. "I got [to Nebraska University] and I freaked out. At STA I felt like I knew everyone."

Both Pointer and Bird noticed the change of a small school to a large university.

"Being from a small school and going to a big university where you don't know everyone - it's different having 40,000 people around you from 400," Bird said.

However, the co-ed difference wasn't noticeable.

"I live in a co-ed dorm and it doesn't bother me," Pointer said. "I don't really notice it that much."

Bird agrees.

"There's really not a lot of difference. I ask the same questions I would in an all girls' environment. I have a whole floor of guys living above me, and I can hear them all night."

Pointer especially struggled living with a roommate.

"When we're in the same room, we don't really acknowledge each other any more," she said. "It's kind of a hostile



Countdown to college ★ Senior Claire Hickey studies for a math test in Mr. Mark Fudenberg's room during her activity period. Hickey will be attending UMKC's medical program next year, but feels confident she will be prepared. **PHOTO BY HAYDEN FUDEMBERG**

environment and it's hard to live in a small space. It's someone else's room, just as much as yours."

Hickey believes STA has prepared her beyond the academics.

"STA has helped me to be confident in who I am as a person and as a student. STA has helped me to realize the person that I want to be and what I want to do with my life," Hickey said. ★

A parent's hardest task: letting go

Natalie and Stephanie Zuluaga leave for college, parents struggle to get used to living alone again

by MARIA MALUENDA
Journalism Student

It was a hot summer morning in August of last year when the two Zuluaga girls moved out of their home. The atmosphere was gloomy and a bit awkward when parents Nestor and Maria Zuluaga found it difficult to say goodbye. When daughters Stephanie and Natalie Zuluaga moved out for college, their parent's marriage, home and way of life was changed completely.

"I felt like nobody needed me," said Maria. "It was very hard when they both left."

The college experience might be the time of their lives for the students, but for the parents, it is a difficult challenge to overcome. Maria remembers the struggle the family endured when her daughters Natalie and Stephanie left for college. According to Maria, they lived in a big four bedroom home that quickly felt empty and bare so it was no surprise when the parents decided to move to a small apartment. There was no noise, no mess and the parents felt depressed. Maria said her daughter's move "triggered a big change in our lifestyle."

Although her parents struggled during this period, Stephanie thought that this was a turning point in her life when she grew into adulthood. She no longer had to ask for permission each time she had to go out, but she understood that with this new independence came a new level of responsibility.

"My mom has a sense of trust in my actions," Stephanie said, "[Moving out] is all about being independent and taking responsibility for yourself. It's very liberating."

Stephanie is a sophomore at UMKC studying voice performance. She likes her classes but they are stressful and she describes them as challenging and exhausting. Since on normal day classes and rehearsals might go from 8 a.m. to midnight, Stephanie says time management is key in the college life.

"I think that by moving, my relationship with my parents became stronger," said Stephanie. "[My mom] doesn't even check my grades. My grades are e-mailed to me and just I tell them my GPA and they just trust me."

However with her sister Natalie, a Kansas State psychology graduate, the change wasn't as simple.

"I was lonely!" she said. "There was nobody around and I felt alone."

Being the oldest and first daughter to leave home and it was not an easy role.

"I know that [my parents] had a hard time with it," said Natalie.

She recalls the first few weeks when her parents called her at least once a day and urged her to come home every weekend. Her sister Stephanie remembers that her parents insisted she come home every weekend and they worried about her older sister, but eventually they learned to let go.

"Now they got used to the idea that I am an adult," says Natalie.

When the lease on their apartment ended, both daughters moved back in with their parents and the apartment that they had moved to is now too small. With Stephanie's new miniature schnauzer and Natalie's Siamese kitten, the Zuluagas found themselves

cramped in their city apartment and the family is moving once again, but this time to a bigger house.

Although she is happy to find her daughters are home, Maria is ready for when they leave home again. She feels that this challenge made her stronger and it has also improved the relationship with her husband.

When Maria was asked what she learned from this change she said, "I learned that they need us in a different way." ★



All in the family ★ The Zuluaga family, from left, Maria, Stephanie, Natalie and Nestor spend time together in their apartment. They are soon moving to a bigger home to accommodate the family because both daughters will be living at home again. **PHOTO BY MARIA MALUENDA**

Starting all over in soccer

Athletes experience reality check when transitioning to collegiate level soccer

by **KERRY CUMMINGS**
Journalism Student

At the edge of a soccer field is a large group of college soccer girls, leaning on each other, dripping in sweat and near total exhaustion. According to STA alumnae, Rachel Benben, Katie Kelly, and Ashley Devine, high school soccer was never this difficult.

"I would have to say the biggest change would be my preseason for college," Devine said. "In high school, preseason never even came close to what we do in college. In college it lasts about three to four weeks of two-a-days for the majority of the preseason, and three-a-days for the first week or so."

Kelly said the transition from high school to collegiate soccer demands extreme commitment from the athletes. The change is more than just the play; it is in the attitude as well.

"It's not just a bunch of girls coming together to win some games and have a good season," Kelly said. "College soccer is about building your program where girls from all over the country come together to achieve the goal of getting to the NCAA tournament."

According to Devine, unless a girl's heart and soul is put into playing college soccer, no longer will she enjoy her favorite childhood sport.

"You have to be completely into soccer, 100 percent, because your life becomes soccer and school," Devine said. "If you don't enjoy playing, you will not be as happy as you want to be."



Soccer stars ★ Coach Rachel Benben, center, reminds her JV soccer team to have fun during their game against Platte County High School April 14. She uses her experience from college soccer to encourage the team. **PHOTO BY KERRY CUMMINGS**

Devine said the change is remarkable and is much more than she expects. Going in as a freshman is a definite reality check to all of the incoming athletes.

Benben said the freshmen are so used to being the top dog in high school and now they come in being the bottom of the pack.

"The first couple of weeks are tough, because everyone is trying to earn a starting spot on the field and no one wants a freshman to come in and take their role on the team," Benben said.

As the season goes on, the intimidation of the upperclassmen begins to die down according to Kelly. The incoming freshmen

start to bond and form friendships with the older girls. The upperclassmen commence to give the freshmen more pointers and advice, helping them to become better players.

"They helped me grow into the player I am now, whether that be through telling me to pick up the balls and cones, or getting in my face when I wasn't playing with class or trying to pump me up for big games," Kelly said. "In high school, I was all about the team first. As a freshman, you are more about yourself. That sounds bad, but you're constantly criticizing yourself trying to get better and fix your weaknesses."

According to Benben, going from high school to college soccer is a big jump. Not only does the transition make you grow and learn how to become a better athlete, but it also creates an unexplainable love for the game. For Benben, the love was so strong that it forced her to come back to her former high school to coach, reliving and remembering her glory days through her team.

"When they offered me the job I just could not say no," Benben said. "The memories of my days playing at St. Teresa's came flowing back and I didn't want anything more than to be a part of it all over again." ★

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State champion joins beginner team

Experienced lacrosse player moves from New York to Kansas City, adjusts to differences on new team

by **CLAIRE VANASDALE**
Journalism Student

As Freshman Emily Reeves of Blue Springs Freshmen Center walked onto the field, she had no idea what to expect. It was the first day of lacrosse practice with a team that was just starting. The majority of the girls had never played before, something uncommon on the East Coast.

"I was afraid they would think I was cocky because I played before," she said.

Reeves moved to Kansas City from Saratoga, New York, last August. In New York, she played on her school's varsity lacrosse team, where she was goalie and defense. They went on to win the state championship.

In March, she joined the STA Stars team and is the goalie on the underclassmen team.

Throughout the East Coast, lacrosse is taken very seriously, according to Reeves.

"In New York, it's what kids do," Reeves said. "They don't try out for track and soccer like kids do here. They try out for lacrosse."

Her school in New York had a girls' lacrosse team before it even had a girls' soccer team. The majority of girls played, Reeves said, and they continue to play it more than any other sport. Reeves originally joined in New York because all her friends were and it was so popular.

"Guys respect you for playing lacrosse more than

they do any other sport," Reeves said. "All guys play, and they know what it's like."

Her team in New York had its own travel agent. Even though most of the schools in New York have their own team, Reeves still traveled frequently. They also practiced everyday and on the weekends, plus weight training.

"It sucked," she said.

It could be challenging at times, but she was glad she played.

When Reeves left New York and came to the Midwest, she noticed a change.

"The lifestyle is slower paced here," Reeves said.

She also noticed a change in her favorite sport, lacrosse. Unlike on the East Coast where it is intense, lacrosse is just starting to grow in Kansas City.

"Lacrosse is very different here," said Reeves. "Few people in Kansas and Missouri know about it and not as many people play."

Even though it's a bit different, Reeves still loves lacrosse and still loves playing the game.

She also says lacrosse is definitely not as hard-core in Kansas City. Another major difference is that on the East Coast many kids start playing as young as the second grade. The majority of girls on the STA team just started playing this year.

STA coach Jesse Hanna says lacrosse is the fastest growing team sport in America.

"People who know the game are starting to move here," Hanna said. "People are becoming exposed to the game."

Freshman Molly Meagher, is one of those people.

"I had heard about the sport before, but I never really thought I would be playing lacrosse on a team," Meagher said. "But I am glad I am."



Heads up ★ Sophomore Samantha Roach, left, and freshman Molly Meagher battle for the ball during lacrosse practice April 14. Both girls have no prior experience at playing lacrosse. **PHOTO BY CLAIRE VANASDALE**

She has enjoyed the game and the team so far. She enjoys it so much, that she is now looking for a summer club to play on.

"Once you start playing, you're kind of hooked," she said.

Meagher wants lacrosse to expand, so more people can play.

"Hopefully lacrosse becomes as big deal in the Midwest as it is on the East Coast," Meagher said.

Both Meagher and Reeves plan to play lacrosse next year and look forward to the expansion of lacrosse in Kansas City. ★

Family enrolls in foster program

Frankes open home to underprivileged children, share blessings, give back

by MEGAN WILKERSON
Journalism Student

*Editors' Note: * indicates name changed for confidentiality of foster children.*

Both college kids have returned home to the Franke household for summer break. It is time for dinner, and the seven Frankes gather at the table. Yet, something is different this time. They have set another spot at the table and replaced a chair with a high-chair for a new temporary addition to the household.

"We are a very blessed family and we wanted to share those blessings with other people," father John Franke said, "especially kids who are in need of a loving, caring environment."

The Franke family first enrolled in the State of Missouri Children's Division foster organization two years ago. Parents Ms. Martha and Mr. John Franke received instructions to take parent training classes, study a set of written materials, have a criminal background check, a house inspection and interview by the state.

After successfully completing every requirement and gaining a foster license, the family set their limitations. As a foster family, they were able to select the age, sex and race of a child they wanted. The Frankes were open to any sex or race, but they requested a child between the ages of a newborn to one-year-old.

"Martha and the girls have always loved babies," John said. "And with an eight-year-old in the house, we didn't feel it would be a wise decision to have any more teenagers."

The Frankes first received Jamal*, a nine-month-old African-American foster-son, after waiting four months since they had received their license. According to Martha, not only did this baby bring happiness to the Franke family, but he brought a drastic lifestyle change. This new infant, in the house for 3 weeks, meant a lot more work from each parent and child. Junior Anna and freshman Mary would come home to a babysitting job rather than doing their homework alongside their eight-year-old brother. According to Martha, everyone had to be more cautious about leaving objects around the house that could harm the infant. Though the house was more hectic with an addition to the family, everyone had to remember to remain calm and quiet around the baby.

"[Our parents] wanted to make sure we understood it would take a ton of extra time, work and effort on our part," Anna said. "And of course, we were accepting and excited about this idea of a new younger sibling."

Running on empty: the life of new parents

First-time parents experience changes in jobs, relationships

by TAYLOR IRWIN
Journalism Student

A helpless cry pierced the still night, immediately alerting everyone in the small house to the baby's distress. Jerked awake by the noise, Ms. Terra Hess rolled out of bed and quickly walked to her son for whatever he needed, despite the hour.

"I feel like I'm always running on empty," Hess said. "But whenever he cries, no matter how tired I am or what I'm doing, I rush to his side because it's my duty as a mom - and I wouldn't have it any other way."

Hess and boyfriend Mr. Brian Garden made changes when their son, Wyatt Matthew Garden, was born March 31. While neither of the two changed employment, they have both had to make cutbacks to manage a more limited budget.

"It's been difficult," Hess said. "But I was a nanny for three years in college, so I felt prepared - I knew about all the little stuff."

Mr. Joe James is a new parent as well. His daughter, Peyton Elizabeth James, was born Feb. 2.

"From the moment she was born I've been overwhelmed with how much I love her and how important she is to me," James said.

Since then, James has been adjusting his everyday life to accommodate his daughter. James went from a grocery store supervisor to supervise a restoration company in order to make more money to support the baby. While James' income is significantly larger, the profession causes him to travel all over the country frequently.

Since becoming parents, something that has changed for both families are the relationships with people around them.

Peyton's mother and James have become closer in the past few weeks. They were broken up during the pregnancy, but decided to stay friends for Peyton's benefit. Since then, they have spent almost every day together in order to care for her.

Hess and Garden have also become closer. Hess had to adjust to the changing relationships with some of her friends. Ever since having Wyatt, Hess hasn't been able to socialize.

Some of her friends eventually stopped calling.

"It hurt at first," Hess said. "But everyone has to outgrow that party phase, some just sooner than others."

Garden agrees the change was hard at first, but easier to deal with in time.

"It was weird in the beginning, not going out," Garden said. "But I like staying at home with Terra and Wyatt; there isn't really anything else I feel like I need to do right now."

Both James and Hess believe that having a child was the greatest thing that happened to them. The best part of becoming a mother for Hess was the overpowering love she felt when Wyatt was born.

"At this point I would have to say how much your heart grows for one individual is the greatest thing about being a mother," Hess said. "It makes you realize how important everyone in your life is."

According to James, it was hard to think like a father at first, but once Peyton was born, everything came naturally.

"My favorite thing in the world is to hold her," James said. "Again, that sense of love I've never felt before." ★



Brotherly bonding ★ Junior Anna Franke, left, and previous foster-brother Sam play with trucks together on the Franke's driveway April 6. Sam visits the Franke family periodically to keep in touch. PHOTO BY MEGAN WILKERSON

According to Martha, after two years of foster care, the Frankes realized that this new lifestyle, though hectic and stressful at times, was meant for them. They think of it as their Catholic calling to help others who are not as blessed as them. Martha said they hope to be able to participate for many years indefinitely.

"Or I guess until we are too old to chase a baby around," John jokingly said as he chased their visiting second foster child, Sam*.

"Which may be now."

The longest the Frankes hosted a foster child was 13 months.

His name was Travis*. According to John, he became integrated into their family. The hardest part for the Frankes was receiving a one-month-old child into their home, nurturing him for more than a year, then giving him to a new family. According to Anna, the longer the foster child stayed, the more attached she got, and by the time he left she thought of him as family.

"It is exciting when they come and when they leave to know that they have a safe home to go back to now and a family that will love them," Anna said. "But at the same time it's hard to know that I won't be able to see them every day." ★



Bundle of joy ★ Ms. Terra Hess smiles down at her son, Wyatt, as he naps in her lap. Hess sat there for 15 minutes while he slept. PHOTO BY TAYLOR IRWIN

Children now care for caregiver

Family members take on new roles as their mother recently develops Alzheimer's disease

by MADALYNE BIRD
Journalism Student

A mother of eight children was recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Now the same children that Ms. Mary Jane Sanders Meyer, 88, once cared for have taken on the role of caregiver for her.

"[Taking care of her] is my way of repaying her," Meyer's daughter Janet Miller said. "She did everything she could to give us a wonderful childhood. My mother was always taking care of others. She is and was a fine example of how you treat people. Now it's our turn to take care of her."

According to the National Alzheimer's Association's website, Alzheimer's is a progressive brain disease. It destroys brain cells, causing problems with memory, thinking and behavior. It is severe enough to affect work, lifelong hobbies or social life. Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, which is a general term for loss of memory and other intellectual abilities. The disease is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States. There is no current cure.

The eight children developed a monthly calendar to break up the work involved with caring for her. A different child is scheduled every night to go over to have dinner with her and provide stimulation for her. The same child is also responsible for spending the night

and getting her ready for bed, which includes giving her her nightly medicine and inhaler, taking her blood pressure, staying until 8:30 a.m., giving her the morning medicine and starting coffee.

"It is a huge responsibility to take care of my mother," Meyer's daughter Deborah Bird said. "You don't want to mess up because I know that she trusts us so completely to do what is best for her."

Along with the monthly calendar, the eight children have also developed a "person of the week" system. The "person of the week" is responsible for general maintenance, like going to the grocery store, ordering and picking up her medicine for that week. They are also responsible for taking her to church if she is up for it.

"I now experience a different relationship with my mother," Meyer's daughter Suzanne Meyer said. "It's close and intimate, as she continues to reveal more about herself and her needs to myself."

Another system the children have set up is "the notebook." Every day, the kid who spent the night with her writes down the date, what is happening on that day and who will be there to spend the night with her. The notebook is set up in hopes to decrease Meyer's confusion in the morning.

"I find a great sadness in this," Miller said. "This isn't the woman that I grew up with, and I miss that woman, I miss my mother, but that doesn't change the love that I have for her, that love will never change. But the change in [her] mental gears, to realize that some things are beyond her now is difficult."



Careful caretaker ★ Ms. Brigid Oberkrom, left, takes Ms. Mary Jane Sanders Meyer's blood pressure at Meyer's home April 13. Taking Meyer's blood pressure is one of the tasks for the family member spending the night with her. PHOTO BY MADALYNE BIRD

Even through that sadness, the children realize how important this time is with their mother.

"It hasn't been easy, but I'm happy to take care of her," Bird said. "Even though it's hard to lose the person who I always asked

for advice, I'm just so glad I still have this time with her. With my dad there were no opportunities to say goodbye, to take in what he had done for us, until it was too late. It's nice to at least still have time to do that before it's too late." ★

Student adapts to separate homes after divorce

Sophomore confronts, accepts changes as a child after her parents' separation

by LINDSAY BOWERS
Journalism Student

Blue Springs High School sophomore Rebecca Petit will always remember the day her parents told her that they were getting a divorce. From that day on, she knew her life would never be the same.

Petit faced many changes when her parents divorced. With her parents divorced and living in separate homes, Petit no longer has the opportunity to enjoy both of her parents at the same time.

Petit remembers how difficult it was for her to cope with her parents' decision to separate and divorce.

"I was really little when my parents got divorced," Petit said. "The hardest part of my parents' divorce was seeing my dad leave. My sisters and I watched him drive off, and I remember crying a ton."

Situations in which children are raised in homes without two parents are much more common than they were a generation ago. According to the US Center for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics, the current probability of a first marriage ending in separation or divorce within ten years is 33 percent compared to 18 percent between 1960 and 1964.

According to Kansas City area domestic attorney Mr. Dan Bowers, divorces can be very bitter and former husbands and wives can hold grudges and continue to fight many months and years after their separation.

However, Rebecca had a different experience. Her parents, Ms. Cindy Hennessey and Mr. John Petit, both say they recognized the dangerous effects divorce can have on children. They

agreed early on to remain close friends and keep a good working relationship for the sake of their daughters, even though they were no longer married.

"I think our divorce is a unique situation," John said. "From what I see, divorced couples argue and use their kids to get what they want. We have always been an exception to the norm."

Hennessey, who is now re-married, echoes John's comments.

"We always get along and co-parent well together," Hennessey said. "We both love our kids so much and neither one of us wants them to get hurt."

To help with the transition from one household to two, both Hennessey and John put aside time each day to spend with their daughters.

"I spend as much time with them as I can," John said. "Every free minute I have from work and sleep, I spend time with the girls."

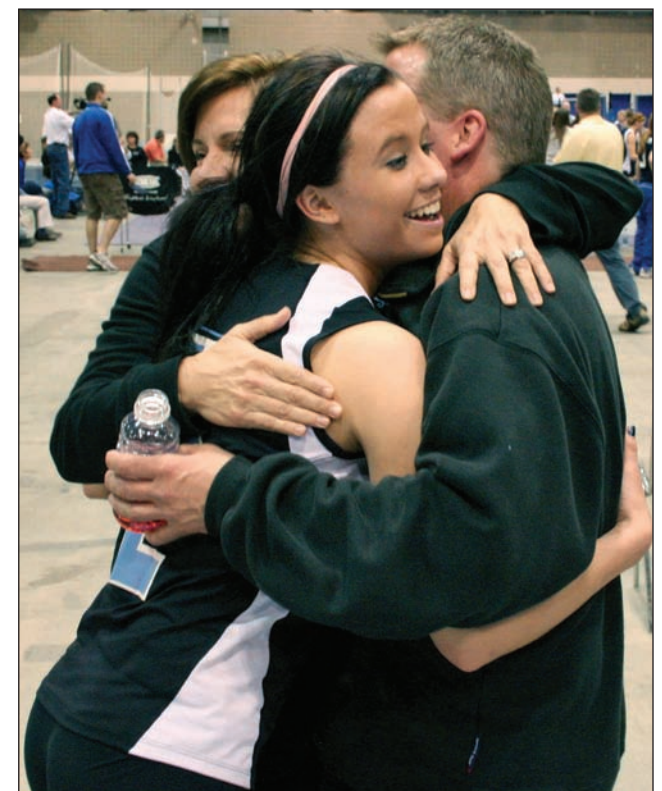
Now, nearly ten years after their divorce, Hennessey has remarried and John has begun dating. Rebecca has mixed feelings about her parents' new relationships.

"At first it was difficult and now it is better and more normal," Rebecca said. "I'll always wish that they were together, but they're in love with other people. That's life."

Tongue in cheek, Rebecca describes how she has become at ease with her parents' divorce as a teenager.

"I like living with my mom for a week or two, then living with my dad for a while," Rebecca said. "It's nice to have it like this because I get a break from them every once in a while so I'm not too irritated."

Although she is content with her parents moving on, Rebecca has made it clear she would trade anything to have both parents in the same home with her like they were before the day, nearly ten years ago, when she watched her father back out of the driveway and leave for a separate home. ★



Group hug ★ Blue Springs High school sophomore Rebecca Petit, front, gives her mother, Ms. Cindy Hennessey, and father, Mr. John Petit a hug after her volleyball team won April 6. Rebecca says her family has worked to stay close, even through the divorce. PHOTO BY LINDSAY BOWERS

Senior athlete strays from goal

Britney Scott, varsity soccer player, deals with changes caused by injury

by MOLLIE POINTER
Journalism Student

Watching an STA soccer game this spring is different than it has been for the past three seasons. This is because senior varsity player and captain Britney Scott has been sidelined due to a knee injury that occurred in January.

"It's really hard not being able to play," Scott said. "I'm used to playing everyday."

Scott, who plays center mid-field, tore her right anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) at the Olympic Development Program's national camp in California. On the first day of the camp's training session, Scott attempted to make a play on the field, but instead ended up with a life-changing injury.

"I didn't feel it but I could hear it pop when I twisted my knee," Scott said. "It all happened so fast."

According to Scott, the injury made her decide to head home and begin her slow and painful recovery. Her surgery consisted of placing her left patellar tendon in her right knee to help strengthen the injured area. Scott explained this method of ACL surgery is supposed to get the athlete back into the sport faster.

"I was anxious," Scott said. "I just wanted to get going with it all and be able to play again."

According to assistant varsity coach Jeremy McElduff, Scott was a huge asset to the state winning teams her freshman and sophomore years.

"[Britney is] tenacious, hardworking and technical," McElduff said. "[Her loss] has forced others to step up and take a more active role."

Scott continues to participate in team events, including attending games and practices. Teammates admire Scott for her persistent attitude toward getting back to the sport.

"[Britney] is really dedicated," said senior teammate Ellen Jantsch. "She does everything we do minus the actual kicking of the soccer ball. Britney is a leader for the team."

Scott has received support from her coaches and teammates through the experience.

"We just try to be there for her to talk to us," McElduff said.

According to the team, Scott works just as hard now as she ever did.

"Britney is an incredible player," Jantsch said. "It really



Scott sits ★ Senior Britney Scott, left, sits with junior Paige Kuhlmann and sophomore Megan Wilkerson during a home game against Kapaun Mt. Carmel April 4. Scott has attended each game to watch and support her team. PHOTO BY MOLLIE POINTER

sucks she can't play with us this year, but she's recovering hard for college."

Scott received a scholarship to play college soccer at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. She verbally agreed with Purdue junior year after being recruited as a sophomore and then signed with them in February.

Scott explained Purdue's head coach Rob Klatté has been very supportive. Klatté set up the surgery and rehab for her with Purdue's team doctor. This summer, she plans to work out and train with the team.

Though Scott is recovering well physically and plans to return to practice in May, she has had to deal with the emotional pain as well. According to STA varsity head soccer coach Scott Siegal, the center midfielder has a hard time sitting on the bench.

"This is really hard for her," said Siegal. "When we're down she knows that she could help us."

According to Jantsch, Scott has a good attitude and believes this will only make her come back stronger.

"Sitting out on something you love, the more motivated you become," Jantsch said.

The experience has allowed Scott to see the role soccer plays in her daily life and the importance it holds for her.

"It's really opened my eyes to how much it's a part of my life," Scott said. "It's opened my eyes to how much I really love it."

And while watching from the sidelines may not be easy she knows she'll be out there playing again.

"I'll just have to come back twice as determined," Scott said. "Now I have twice as much to prove." ★

New year, new position, new tactics

Soccer coach Nathan Reed moves down to C-team soccer, still coaches strong

by MORGAN SAID
Journalism Student

Mr. Nathan Reed, STA's former junior varsity soccer coach, has been asked to coach the Star's freshman team for the 2008 soccer season.

"It's a pretty big transition," Reed said. I have to be calmer; coach skills more. But coaching is coaching, it doesn't matter where or when."

Despite teaching P.E., health and computer at Alta Vista Charter School, starting a soccer program there just two years ago and working as the athletic director, Reed is currently coaching in his fourth year at STA, and his first year as the C-team head coach.

Even with the coaching change, which has allowed Ms. Rachel Benben to take over the JV team, he was still a successful coach, according to sophomore Kristina Strader.

"He was funny, I liked him," Strader said. "We won a lot. I'm not sure if it was a winning record, but we were a good team."

After leaving the JV squad and being reassigned to the freshman team, Reed still loves his job.

"These girls are great," Reed said. "They

come out every day ready to work...we joke around a lot. It's very positive."

Although the level of competition on the C-team is less than that of the JV team, Reed has increased his intensity of coaching, according to Strader.

"He wasn't very intense as our coach... but sometimes I look over at the freshman team practicing, and they'll be sprinting, doing more work...Reed's a good person," Strader said. "He'll do well with the freshman team."

Freshman team defender, Ellie Edelman, agrees that Reed's coaching style is beneficial.

"We run a lot, but in a fun way," Edelman said. "The other day we played a game like home run derby, to help with conditioning and aimed long passes...we focus on skills a lot."

According to Reed, the hardest part about coaching the freshman team is getting them to focus.

"Sometimes I just watch the girls' eyes trace off into the distance," Reed said. "I try to crack down on them...Focus is my word. I have a word every season, and focus is my word."

Edelman agrees that the team has a tendency to allow their minds to wander.

"He always says, 'You see other coaches? I never yell like that,'" Edelman said. "He doesn't think that yelling does anything



Girls' guide ★ Coach Nathan Reed, right, scrutinizes STA's varsity soccer team during their home game April 14. "These are my girls," Reed said. "I mean, the C-team girls are my girls, but they were my team first." PHOTO BY MORGAN SAID

for him, and he tries to emphasize focus."

Besides the lower competition level on the freshman team, Reed has encountered other issues as well.

"It's more difficult for me as a coach now, not having the luxury of the girls driving," said Reed. "On the days when STA doesn't have school, it's hard for them to get up to the school in middle of the day...we've lost a few practices because of that."

Still, Coach Reed seems to be okay with

his position change.

"I don't think it's hurt him," said Edelman. "If so, he hasn't shown it. He seems really into the team, and makes us feel like we have potential."

No matter what team or level of play he's coaching, Reed enjoys coaching at STA.

"I love coaching at STA because the girls are all very respectful, very fun," said Reed. "I really enjoy being around them...even the stinkers." ★

Teens manage school, jobs

Students balance school, work, social life, improve time management skills

by CAITLIN SWEENEY
Journalism Student

A first job for teenagers who are used to household cleaning and washing dishes can be a shock. This experience for high school students is one that can be stressful and time consuming, but is worth it for some.

"I have learned a lot about time management and money and I have learned a lot about how to deal with people," sophomore Kelsey Wendland said.

Wendland started working her first job at Culver's in the beginning of June 2007.

"When I started [working] it was in the summer so it wasn't a huge transition for me because I wasn't working a lot," Wendland said. "Starting a job in the summer is easier, because you don't have so many complications."

According to Wendland, working during the school year wasn't so easy and her managers didn't make it much easier.

"My managers aren't the best," Wendland said. "Some are really uptight and strict and it gets really frustrating sometimes."

Wendland told her managers in the beginning that homework came first, and felt any teenager looking for a job should tell their potential employer so.

Ms. Betty Bremser, the owner and manager of Foo's Fabulous Frozen Custard, agrees with Wendland's theory.

"Advice I would give to a person who has their first time job is talk to your employer if you feel like you're getting buried down in school work or job scheduling," Bremser said. "School work should come first."

Bremser feels an employee's work ethic reflects her school ethic.

"I look for a person that is a good student, and has a high GPA," Bremser said. "I gotta hire somebody who's smart. Somebody who knows what they're doing...I like someone who's quick on their feet."

Bremser doesn't feel that most teen employees have a hard time transitioning to balance work and school. Most of the adjustment comes from dealing with customers and scheduling.

"The things that are most challenging for a new employee is dealing with the public and someone who can be, let's say, challenging," Bremser explained. "The second thing is, just understanding that they're not going to make it to that party Friday night."

Wendland says working weekends affects her social life.

"I often work on weekend nights, because I don't work that much during the weeks," Wendland said. "So sometimes I miss out on fun stuff during the weekend. It's worth it, though, because I need to be earning money and saving it."

Sophomore Molly Fox, an employee at The New Dime Store, agreed with Wendland, but also said she felt "cool" when she first got a job.

"There was something to do [after school]," Fox said. "Usually I would just do whatever, but now there's something on the schedule. Having a job is liberating, because you have your money and you're free to do whatever you please with it."

Though at times jobs can be difficult, Wendland and Bremser both said that a person should make a first job worth while.

"I think your first job is a job you're always going to remember," Bremser said. "So have fun with it and make it something memorable." ★



Job joys ★ Rockhurst sophomore Tom Campbell restrings a tennis racket in his basement for Woodside Tennis and Health Club April 13. "Having a job is great because I don't have to rely on my parents for everything," Campbell said. PHOTO BY CAITLIN SWEENEY

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State restricts license for teenagers

States raise standards, requirements for maintaining a driver's license

by HOPE AUSTIN
Journalism Student

One of the biggest changes in a teenager's life occurs when they get their driver's license.

Many teenagers feel that being behind the wheel is one of the first steps to adulthood.

Statistics show that nearly half of 16-year-olds in the country received a driver's license in 2006, according to the Federal Highway Administration. Although that number is slightly down from previous years, it still means that the roads are full of teenage drivers.

The process actually begins when teens turn 15, the age when most states, including Missouri, allow you to get a learner's permit. In Kansas, you can get a learner's permit at age 14.

Freshman Sue Seemani is studying for her permit because she wants to be able to drive herself to school and other activities because "it's cool."

Freshman Dominique Brawner is also learning how to drive.

"My parents have encouraged me to drive."

But not all parents are encouraging. One reason may be because of the sobering statistics about teenagers and driving.

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, teenage drivers have very high rates of both fatal and nonfatal crashes compared with adult drivers. Teenagers drive less than all but the oldest people, but their numbers of crashes and crash deaths are higher. The crash rate is nearly twice as high for 16-year-olds

as it is for 18 to 19-year olds.

Many teenagers also die as passengers in motor vehicle crashes. More than 60 percent of teenage passenger deaths from the most recent statistics available occurred in vehicles driven by a teenager. Among deaths of passengers of all ages, 20 percent occurred when a teenager was driving, according to the institute.

These are some of the reasons the state of Missouri passed new laws for teenagers driving in Missouri. A teen driver between 16 and 18 may apply for an intermediate license if they have had an instruction permit for at least six months. In order to receive an intermediate license, they must pass a driving exam that tests their vehicle control skills.

An intermediate license offers more privileges than an instruction permit. But teens with an intermediate license may not drive alone between the hours of 1 and 5 a.m. unless they are attending a school, work or emergency activity. And every passenger in the car must wear a seat belt when the driver holds an intermediate license or they run the risk of losing their license.

Another restriction is that for the first six months, a 16-year-old driver can't drive with more than three passengers under the age of 19 and who are not members of their family.

Junior Kate Bohnert says the restrictions are a little annoying.

"The thing that bugs me the most is the carpool law," Bohnert said. "If I want to pick up one of my friends, I can't."

Despite all the new laws and restrictions, most teenagers feel that having a driver's license is well worth the effort.

Sophomore Katie Schmidt tried a couple of times to get her learner's permit when she was 15.



Driving desperation ★ More and more teenagers await to join the ranks of drivers. PHOTO BY HOPE AUSTIN

"I took the test again the same day," she said. "I was determined to pass." ★

Mother recovers from stroke

After months of recovery, Cindy Fischer struggles to regain her strength, health

by KATIE SHARP
Journalism Student

Imagine waking up in the morning and struggling to change into your shirt or even put your hair up in a ponytail. Ever since her stroke last November, Ms. Cindy Fischer has struggled daily with these routines and more.

"I feel like somebody amputated my left arm and [left] leg," Fischer said. "It's hard to get back to where I was; it's a struggle."

Fischer was in the hospital for six days and was released the day before Thanksgiving. Her left arm and left leg have not fully regained their strength. According to Fischer, having physical problems is tough, but having her communication is like a godsend to her.

Nov. 16, 2007 was the biggest transition in Fischer's life. After her son, Rockhurst High School sophomore Peter Fischer left for his dad's house for the week, Cindy took her trash out like she did once a week. All alone, Cindy dropped the trash off on the curb and headed back inside. When she went to reach for the door, she couldn't open it with her left hand and immediately knew she was having a stroke.

"I was shocked and very scared," Cindy said. "Up to this point, I had always been active and healthy."

The stroke has had a large effect on the family, according to Peter. He believes that through his mother's stroke they have had more time to bond because he has to help her out more. Mr. Jake Fischer, a freshman at the University of Missouri, has not been greatly affected.

"I don't think [Jake] realizes it as much because he's away at college and isn't here to see it," Peter said.

Reflecting, Cindy recalls having high blood pressure and being overstressed.

She wasn't on any medications for her blood pressure and wasn't doing anything to help relieve her stress. Her blood pressure and stress were what caused her hemorrhagic stroke, which means it was caused by a hemorrhage. Cindy's stroke was at the base of her skull in her brainstem.

In order for Cindy to recover, she had to travel to Reno, Nevada to stay with her brother and attend a rehabilitation center called Spine, Nev. She stayed in Reno for two months so she missed Peter's 16th birthday, Christmas and New Year's. According to Cindy, it was the hardest time of her life physically and emotionally. Through her tears, Cindy explained how thankful she was for her physical therapist.

"She was my mentor," Cindy said. "I had to learn to put my trust in her. I relied on her for so much physical and mental help."

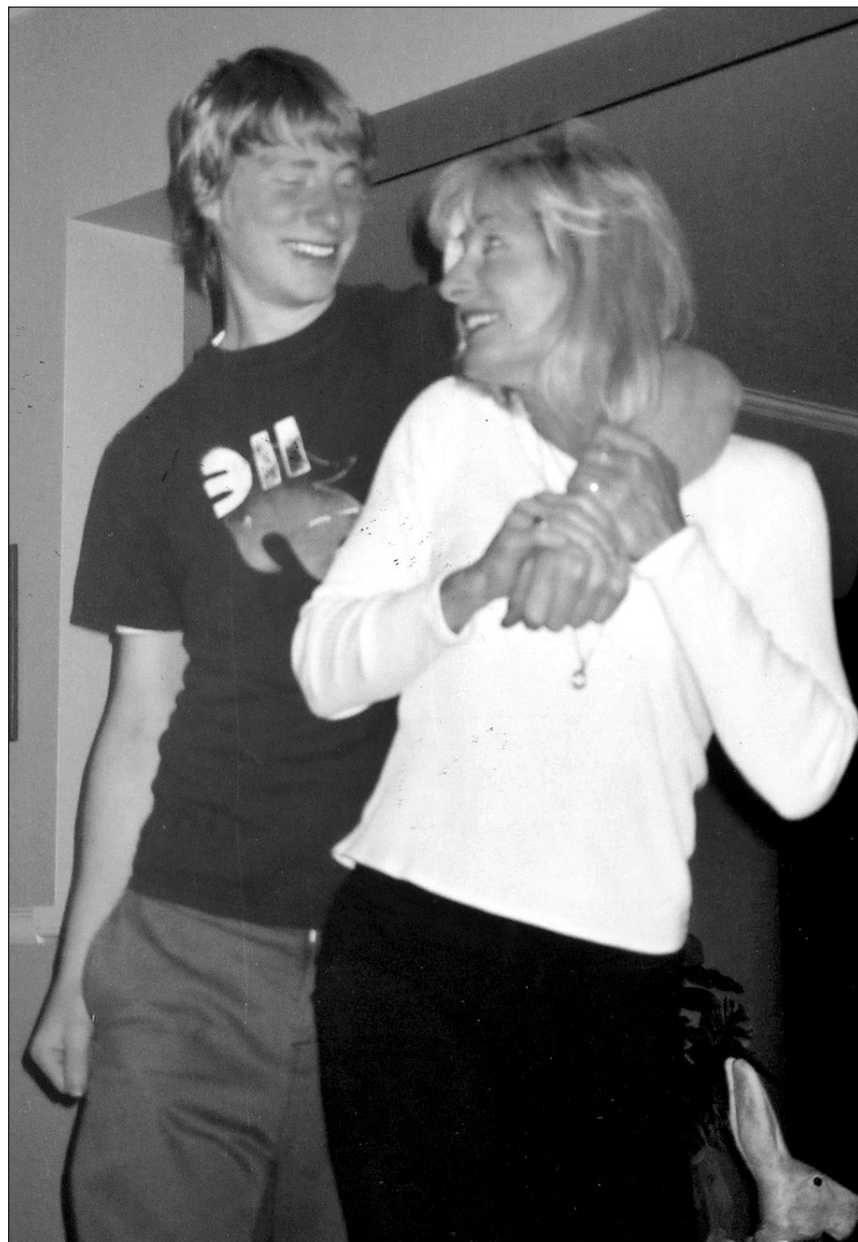
Besides her therapist, her good friend, Mr. Bill Blanck, helped her so much through her recovery. Cindy met Blanck at St. Peter's mass about five years ago and they have been friends since. When Blanck received the call from Cindy, he was in bed and answered the phone around midnight. When Cindy explained she was in the hospital due to a stroke he was shocked.

"You never know what's going to happen," Blanck said.

Blanck kept an eye on her house for the two months she was in Reno plus the six days in the hospital. He fed her three cats and offered his support and reassurance.

After four months, Cindy is still getting used to her new life. She attends therapy to gain the strength back in her arm and leg. This transition has changed her outlook on life. According to Cindy, she has a more positive outlook and is much more grateful for her health and her blessings.

"Most definitely enjoy everyday to the fullest and count all of your blessings," Cindy said. ★



Gaining strength ★ Rockhurst High School sophomore Peter Fischer hooks his arm around mother Ms. Cindy Fischer. Cindy suffered from a stroke last November and continues to regain her strength in her left arm through therapy. PHOTO BY KATIE SHARP

1 may 2008

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Crohns challenges families, individuals

Inflammatory bowel disease can affect all ages, remains incurable

by LEAH MILLER
Journalism Student

Crohns affects one out of every 13 people. Mr. Steve Miller, a sufferer since he was 17-years-old, is a part of this statistic.

"I have been told that my Crohns will get worse and that there is no cure," Miller said. "I am not happy with this, of course, but I continue to go on and live life."

Crohns is a chronic, inflammatory bowel disease that causes swelling and discomfort in the intestines. It commonly affects the lower part of the small intestine, leading it to empty more than normal, resulting in diarrhea.

According to Dr. Chris Nichols, a gastroenterologist, Crohns is difficult to diagnose. This disease has the same symptoms as other intestinal disorders, and some people are too embarrassed to seek medical attention. Crohns can affect people at any age, but is commonly seen between the ages of 15 and 40. People of Jewish heritage are at greater risk, while African-Americans run the least risk.

Mr. Rodney, father of freshman Dagny, was diagnosed with Chrons a few months ago.

"I have bad knees, joint pain, and I get cold feet," Rodney said. "I take medication to help with the cold

feet and bad knees. The doctors say my Crohns will improve with the medication."

Rodney takes anti-inflammatory medicines twice a day as well as Humira, a drug injected into the stomach, twice a month. Humira was originally used to treat arthritis, but researchers have found it can also help with Crohns symptoms.

Living with Crohns not only affects the person diagnosed, but often an entire family.

"This disease really hasn't changed my life," Dagny said. "My dad usually just goes off and does his own thing."

Rodney has made changes in his diet and self-awareness. Although he gets tired doing day-to-day activities, he does not have the normal intestinal symptoms of Crohns. Rodney will be on medication for the rest of his life.

Miller was diagnosed with Crohns disease in 1986. "It's frustrating living with Crohns," Miller said. "There are certain things like coffee, lettuce and spicy foods which make me worse. I don't embarrass myself with this disease because I usually keep it concealed from the public."

Miller and his wife, Kathy, have been married for 23 years. She said she has seen him at his lows and finds it difficult.

"I don't like seeing [Steve] depressed about his disease," Kathy said. "He gets irritable with our family and I get annoyed. I feel bad later because I know he can't help it."



Managing medicine ★ Mr. Steve Miller searches through and marks off what pills he has taken at his kitchen table April 12. Miller takes pills daily to help manage his Crohns disease and joint pain. PHOTO BY LEAH MILLER

Steve's disease affects his family when traveling. The Millers have to stop at restaurants or on the side of the road when they go on vacations.

"When he has to go, he has to go," Kathy said. "There is nothing we can do about it."

Recently, Steve spent time in the hospital; he couldn't walk after being taken off his joint medications. Crohns is associated with joint problems, so doctors believe the disease inhibited his walking.

Both Steve and Rodney will continue their life on medication. They will have to adapt to their disease as it progresses until a cure is found. ★

Single mother prepares for parenthood

20-year-old Sara Gurski raises four-year-old boy, plans for second child

by LAUREN PASZKIEWICZ
Journalism Student

Life is full of changes. For Ms. Sara Gurski change comes in the form of changing Pampers, bottles and sleeping habits.

At age 20, Gurski is a single mother expecting her second child. She is scheduled to deliver her baby girl Avaela in June.

"I'm excited to have a new little baby to give all my love to, but I'm also a little nervous because I am going to be raising her by myself," Gurski said.

Avaela's father has decided to be present in her life, but is unable to provide for his new daughter. As a result, Gurski explains that marriage is not an option.

"I am most excited to give my son Christian a sister," Gurski said. "One of the strongest relationships that God has blessed us with is a sibling."

Already Gurski is noticing that between taking care of Christian and preparing for a new baby, she finds little time for herself. Her social life has changed from parties with friends to play-dates with other single mothers.

"I think it's sad that Sara has lost out on the 'traditional' family structure," said Ms. Georgia Baxter, Gurski's step-grandmother. "She has lost some of the best years of her life. It would have been easier for her to wait until after college to start having a family."

As a junior in high school, Gurski had already gone through the experience of parenthood by raising her younger sister Rachael, who is currently a sophomore at Lee's Summit West. Watching her sister gave Gurski knowledge that prepared her for motherhood.

"I think Sara is going to be a great



Tickling tummies ★ Christian Gurski, left, plays with his mother, Sara before bedtime. Making sure that Christian gets extra attention before his sister's birth is very important to Sara. **PHOTO BY LAUREN PASZKIEWICZ**

mom to this new baby," Rachael said. "She's great with Christian and he adores her."

Being an expectant mother has not affected Sara's career ambitions. After finishing college, Sara plans to support her children by becoming a personal trainer.

"My advice to young, single mothers would be; if you have a career goal in life you should keep going with it," Gurski said. "It's always achievable, no matter what other people tell you."

Gurski realizes openly accepting changes will pave the way to new experi-

ences in her life. She is happy with the decisions she has made and grateful for the blessings God has given her.

"After every storm you have to be sure to look for the rainbows," Gurski said. ★

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Cameroonian moves to Kansas City

Mr. Celestin Wabo discovers both pleasures, hardships in move away from family, customs in Baham

by MICAH WILKINS
Journalism Student

Flying above the Missouri farmlands, Mr. Celestin Wabo was struck by the beauty, tidiness and space. In just a few hours, he would arrive at the Kansas City International Airport after flying for almost 24 hours from Douala, Cameroon. Wabo's first trip out of his country led to anxiety but also eagerness.

"I was so excited I didn't sleep the night before," said Wabo.

Born in the small town of Baham in the West Province of Cameroon, Wabo had to fight to receive an education. He and his family moved 20 miles so he could attend high school, which to his family would "bring a happy life." However, Wabo had greater aspirations that would be found outside the village of 20,000.

"My only motivation was to leave the village," Wabo said. He traveled to Douala, Cameroon's biggest city of over three million. With the desire to be successful, Wabo applied for a job where his boss was less educated than him.

"Seeing as how he had more money than me, I worked for him," Wabo said. "When you have money, you can manipulate people."

As Wabo saw his country being impoverished by its president of almost three decades, he signed up with an agency, which gave him a sponsor. This provided

Wabo with the necessary documents to obtain a visa to come to the United States. Wabo perceived the country to be a "paradise."

"When I learned I could earn more, I did not hesitate," Wabo said.

So in 2005, Wabo moved to the US, leaving his home, family and friends, and took a teaching position in the math department at Academie Lafayette, the French language immersion school in Kansas City.

"The image of the US that is given is not what I see," Wabo said. "The movies only show the good parts."

Though he found it welcoming, the US was drastically different from Cameroon.

"People are too busy here," Wabo said. "In Cameroon, we do not walk that fast, we take our time."

Wabo also observed that money is a large part of the US, compared to Cameroon.

Mr. Kamran Jahanshahi, who was born in Tehran, Iran, moved to the US at the age of 16, also found the US to be a very money-driven country.

"It seemed both rich and poor had access to a lot of resources that people in Iran only dreamed about," Jahanshahi said.

Mr. Patrick Sprehe, who lived and taught in Kazakhstan, Korea and Japan, also says that the people of the US take for granted the resources they have.

"We waste a lot of money, we waste food that others could eat, we use too many plastic and disposable items and we drive huge cars that eat up too much gas," Sprehe said.

Through Jahanshahi's and Wabo's experiences of moving from a different country to the US, they felt welcomed, but also discriminated against.



Traveling teacher ★ Mr. Celestin Wabo sits at his desk at Academie Lafayette grading math assignments Monday. Wabo left his home in Cameroon to teach in the French Language school in 2005. **PHOTO BY MICAH WILKINS**

"People are always afraid of someone who is different," Wabo said.

As Wabo neared landing, he glimpsed out the window once more at the outskirts of Kansas City. He saw the squares of farmland divided by many well-kept roads. In just a few moments, he would step onto the platform of the airport and begin a new life. As he sat in the cushioned chair, he pondered what the US would be like, what transitions he would have to endure, and how he has "never seen the world from this perspective." ★

Families join in matrimony

Father shot and killed; mother, children plan for future with remarriage to be held this summer

by ALLY FRANKEN
Journalism Student

Sept. 8, 2005, Morgan Said was sitting at her house, watching TV. Suddenly, her mom told her that her dad had been shot and killed. Said sat wide-eyed, staring off into space, not wanting to believe her dad was now dead. After weeks of mourning with her three sisters, brother and mom, Said realized what happened was reality.

"I have gotten used to not having a dad at home," Said said. "It made my mom and I closer."

One evening in the summer of 2007, Ms. Elizabeth Said told her daughter, Morgan, that she had met a man, and he was taking her out to dinner. That was the first time Morgan heard about Mr. Cody Holt.

Holt and Elizabeth began to hang out more and soon fell in love. During Holt's lunch break one day, he invited her over and proposed to her.

"We hadn't been dating for very long when I asked her, but I knew I wanted to spend my life with her," Holt said.

This didn't come as a surprise to Elizabeth because they had already been considering it. She happily accepted his proposal and now had to focus on telling her five children she was getting married.

"Normally we just eat dinner whenever we want to," 12-year-old Sammy Said said. "But one night my mom made our favorite dinner and we all ate as a family. Then she announced that [she and Holt] were getting married."

The Said children were shocked to find out their mom was getting remarried, but at the same time, they were happy for her and excited to be a family. The marriage will take place this summer. After the marriage, Holt and his 11-year-old son, Phoenix Holt, will move into the Saims' house.

"The worst part about the marriage is having to give up my room to Phoenix when [he and Cody] move in," Sammy said. "But that's also the best part because we are building a really nice room up in the attic which gets to be mine."

Cody and Phoenix have become an important part of the Said family. Still, according to Elizabeth, everyone in the



Family affair ★ Cody Holt, from left, Elizabeth, Maci, Halli and Sammy Said look at a picture that Maci drew at school while watching TV in their living room April 13. The soon-to-be family already spends evenings together just like this one, hanging out and watching TV. PHOTO BY ALLY FRANKEN

family will have to make some changes.

"It will be weird because now I won't be able to just walk into my mom's room whenever I want," Morgan said. "I'll have to knock first which will be different."

Sammy is glad to finally have a brother to play with since he currently has four sisters. Phoenix and Sammy wrestle with each other and get into mischief.

"It's evident that Cody is more comfortable disciplining Phoenix than he is with the rest of the kids," Morgan said.

Elizabeth has to experience many changes in her life with the new marriage.

"The main thing now is that I have to correspond with

another adult in decision making," Elizabeth said. "I'm used to it being just me."

The Saims are a close family. Elizabeth said they are physical with each other and love to play and laugh.

"I feel like we're a tight family and just happy, easy going," Elizabeth said. "We do everything together, from attending sports events to watching TV. It's a very happy home."

The Saims have overcome the grief of losing a beloved family member. Elizabeth feels fortunate to have found love again and the entire family is looking forward to new relationships and a happy future. ★

Couple copes with son's death

Mike, Susan Becker's son died 12 years ago; they continue to mourn

by SARAH WALLER
Journalism Student

An office window looks down on the sales floor of The I. Donnelly Co. Inc. Owners Mike and Susan Becker sit there every day, working more now than they did in the past because of devotion and love for the job, but also because of the death of their son, Patrick.

"We pray a lot and work a lot," Mike said. "We work more to keep our minds occupied."

In October of 1975, the Beckers had their fourth child. Two years later that child, Patrick James, known as PJ, was diagnosed with epilepsy.

According to www.epilepsy.org, epilepsy is a neurological condition that causes seizures, which are sudden surges of electrical activity in the brain. Though often short, seizures prevent those affected from feeling or acting as they normally would. Symptoms can include but are not limited to symptoms such as blurred vision, black outs, the inability to talk or move, convulsions and falling down.

When PJ was 20, he was in a motorcycle accident and took medication to manage the pain. However, the epilepsy medication he was on prevented him from realizing he was taking too many pills. May 27, 1996, PJ was admitted to the hospital, but fell into a coma that night. The doctors declared him brain dead after a week, and Mike and Susan took him off of life support. Although he died 12 years ago, Mike and Susan are still trying to cope with his death.

According to Mike and Susan, PJ had seizures more frequently as a child but they lessened as he grew older.

Having no close friends his age throughout his life, PJ tended to talk more with adults who were more willing to accept him.

"Adults were kind to him," Mike said. "But children didn't care, they picked on him. They weren't understanding. He was better off with adults than with his own age group."

Even with the unpleasant memories that surround his death, Susan still has happy memories.

"He would wander off in the grocery store and I'd think 'Oh God, where did he go?'" Susan said. "He'd come back holding a rose. He'd bought me a flower."

Mike said he remembers good memories as well, but there are also situations and memories he regrets.

"Any unkind word I had with him, any time I overreacted, even though it wasn't much," Mike said. "It may have only been 10 times, but I wish I had those 10 times back."

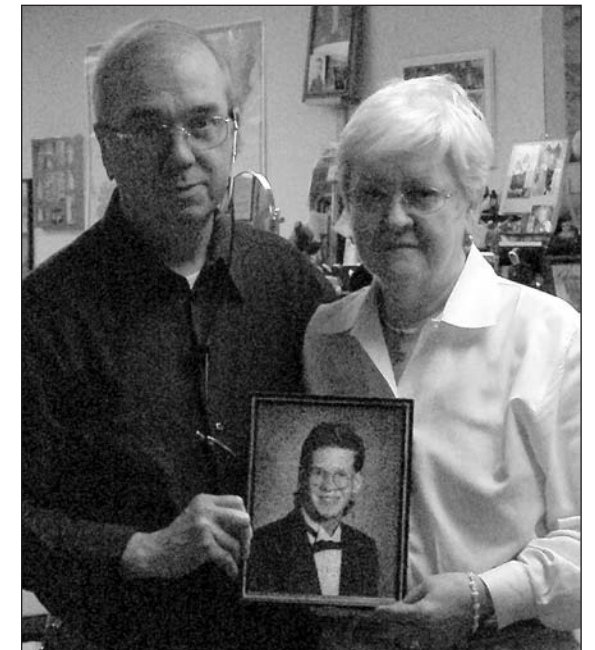
Mr. John Becker, a son of Mike and Susan, chose to accept PJ's death soon after it took place, knowing the different ways to deal with it.

"There are a few ways you can go about it," John said. "You can deny it, you can argue it, but probably the healthiest and the easiest thing to do is to just accept it. We can all try to blame ourselves and other people, but PJ did what he wanted."

Susan says PJ had "such a big heart," and she misses his happy, friendly personality.

"There always seems to be something missing," Susan said. "He was always the type that could make you feel better and make you laugh. While we were gone at the catalog meeting, he had planted a rose bush, and he was excited about it blooming. The first day it bloomed was the day of his funeral."

Mike and Susan say they now have a stronger prayer life



Holding on to the past ★ Mr. Mike Becker, left, and Ms. Susan Becker hold a photo of their son Patrick James (PJ) at the I. Donnelly Co. Inc. The Beckers work constantly in order to keep their minds off PJ's death, which happened 12 years ago. PHOTO BY SARAH WALLER

and sense of faith because of PJ's death.

"It helped, because of knowing and believing in an after life," Susan said. "God is good and he will take care of him and we'll see him again." ★

Son influences family's view



Remembering the glory ★ Brothers Michael, left, Charlie, and Will Nulton relive moments of the Memphis vs. Kansas NCAA championship game. The Nulton family showed off their spirit earlier that day in Lawrence at the Jayhawk parade. **PHOTO BY KATELYN DEVINE**

12-year-old outshines developmental disorder, inspires family, friends

by **KATELYN DEVINE**
Journalism Student

June 23, 1996, Charlie Nulton was born with Down syndrome to Dr. Carney and Ms. Maura Nulton. Charlie was born into a family of four kids at the time, and he is now one of eight kids in the Nulton household.

"I look at Charlie and I don't see him any differently than my other kids," said Maura. "I see him progressing just like the rest of them are."

Down syndrome is a condition where an extra chromosome causes developmental delays in children. Nearly one in every 800 babies are born with Down syndrome. The symptoms are not always the same for each individual. Down syndrome has symptoms such as different facial appearance, poor muscle tone, greater risk for heart disease, digestive problems and creates a higher chance of leukemia, cataracts and deterioration of the heart.

In the Nulton family, Charlie's slower developmental delays do not affect the way he interacts with his family.

Charlie has affected each of his siblings in unique ways. The Nulton family consists of Mary, 19, Sally, 17, Will, 16, Meg, 14, Charlie, 12, Annie, 10, Sam, 9, and Michael, 6.

According to the entire family, Charlie is treated just like all the other

siblings. He is not considered anything other than a brother, a son and a best friend.

"Charlie's my best friend," Will said. "He is one of the most affectionate people I know and he has had a huge effect on the way I see other people and how I treat them."

Charlie has had the greatest effect on his mother. One of the organizations Maura has become involved in is Foundation for Inclusive Religious Education. This foundation gives children with disabilities the opportunity to receive a Catholic education in their parish schools. After Charlie's birth, Maura became a community volunteer for the foundation.

"[Working for FIRE] became like a full time job for my mom when Charlie was born," Will said.

FIRE allows Charlie to receive a Catholic education at St. Peter's School. The Nulton family is one of many families in the St. Peter's Parish who have children with disabilities. Through FIRE and with the help of Maura, Charlie can experience the same education and relationships his brothers and sisters have.

"Charlie has the ability to do the same things as all other kids," Carney said. "He just will not be able to do those things at the same rate, but that one little extra chromosome can make a big difference."

In the Nulton family this slight difference does not affect the strong bond that all 10 of them have with each other. ★

Breast cancer troubles STA family

Senior Sarah Coleman faces increased worries as she prepares for college

by **JENNY PLATTEN**
Journalism Student

"Mom, just tell me what the doctor said," senior Sarah Coleman begged her mother, Christine Coleman, ear tightly pressed against her cell phone. What began as a simple phone call inquiring about dinner quickly turned into a conversation Sarah had been avoiding for weeks. Quiet moments passed on Sarah's end of the line while tears streamed down her face as she struggled to gain composure and steady her voice. It was the day before Sarah's 18th birthday that will be forever remembered as the day her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

"I was shocked," Sarah said. "I knew she was being tested. I always knew it was a possibility; I just never considered it. I felt helpless. It was something I couldn't fix."

Immediately after the diagnosis, the Coleman family went into support mode. Sarah's brother, Jason, came home from college the night of the announcement. The family came together to discuss the position they were facing without warning, yet after the realization settled in they tried to treat it like "any other problem that just needed to be handled," according to Christine.

Doctors quickly reassured Sarah of her mother's future when they said the cancer was caught early enough it would not be a fatal threat.

Christine mentioned that her greatest

fear from the start was always that the unfortunate illness would be passed down to Sarah. Christine's mother died a few years ago from breast cancer and she had a sister who was diagnosed and survived.

"My older sister has been through it twice and it was really aggressive both times," said Christine.

The disease is hereditary in the Coleman family so it was not much of a surprise for Christine when she was diagnosed.

Cancer survivors need a great inner strength to overcome their sickness.

"For me, [my strength] probably came from the same place the cancer did: my mom," Christine said. "I think people are born with that strength, and it increases through years of trials, experiences and life."

Christine didn't feel the need to increase her attendance at church but did have a desire to maintain it.

"I said we need to keep going to church so I can really suck up to God right now," Christine said.

She explained she did, however, find comfort in friends and family. Mr. Jay Coleman, the head coach of Rockhurst's lacrosse team, received support from his players and their families. Likewise, Sarah credited her long time friend senior Maria Koppen for staying by Sarah's side from the start.

"I've always been there for Sarah, but now I'm just more aware of what she's feeling," Koppen explained. "We've always had that support."

Koppen has seen Sarah and her family change, trying to adapt to the new situation.

"[Sarah] sees her own problems as



Taking it easy ★ Senior Sarah Coleman, front, sits with mom Christine Coleman to relax after a long day. "I just want to spend more time with her now," Sarah said. "Seeing her like this scares me." **PHOTO BY JENNY PLATTEN**

insignificant now that she has something so huge to worry about," Koppen said. "I know it's hard on their family, but there's hope."

With this hope, the family is trying to focus more on the present and future. With Sarah heading to college in the upcoming fall, she is hesitant about leaving her family behind.

"I'm definitely less focused, but I don't know if that's my mom or senioritis," Sarah said. "I even wait to go out later so I can spend more time with her and my family."

Though the Colemans realize it is a difficult situation, they try their best to act as if nothing happened. They don't dwell on their misfortunes; instead, they focus on the bright future they feel is sure to come. ★

Teens experiment with hair

Girls take more risks with changes in hairstyles, gain confidence, personality

by SHAUGHNESSY MILLER
Journalism Student

Fuchsia? Been there. Blue? Way over that. Red? So last week. Sophomore Anna Blanck stares up at the rows of hair dye kits and contemplates her next big change. Boring chestnut brown? Perfect.

"If you go back to brown, it lulls people into a false sense of security and then it's like 'bam!' It's blue," Blanck said.

Blanck said boredom drove her to dye her hair 12 times in the past three years.

"My worst pet peeve is when someone assumes that all dye is bad for hair because it's not," Blanck said.

Fashionising.com reports that a big trend of 2008 is the crop cut, one made popular by celebrities such as Natalie Portman and Elisha Cuthbert. Many students are displaying their agreement around STA's campus by chopping off their lengthy locks.

"I felt restless about my long hair," sophomore Sydney Deatherage said. "I had it for my whole life and wanted a change. I was a young rebellious freshman girl."

Salons are noticing and embracing the recent shift towards cropped hair as well.

"My favorite trends are textured crop cuts and angled bobs because it is a little more drastic when [teen girls] are going from long to short," Debbie Rolando, hairdresser at Salon Crestwood, said.

Deatherage recalls the troubles of her long hair.

"When I had long hair, sometimes I thought it looked good, sometimes I thought

it looked OK, sometimes I thought it looked bad," Deatherage said. "But with short hair, I think it always looks good."

Although teenage girls may be hesitant to change their hair, Rolando believes a haircut may bring benefits on a deeper level.

"When girls get a little older and they go from long and straight hair to a new look, their confidence goes up," Rolando said.

Deatherage said her hair cut has helped her become more comfortable in her own skin.

"I feel really unique," Deatherage stated. "I'm more confident because I was nervous about changing physical things about me, like my hair, but now I'm not as nervous because I know it'll turn out OK."

Change impacts not only the teen, but those around her.

"At first my family was nervous, but all of my friends were like 'yeah do it!'" Deatherage said. "My brother hated it and thought I looked like a hippie, but I think he likes it now."

Although Deatherage drastically changed her hair, she said her family eventually became accustomed to it.

"Initially I was sad because her hair was long and thick and pretty so I was surprised that she wanted to cut it off," Sydney's mother Billie Deatherage said. "[But now] I like it because it's short and sassy and has more personality."

Women such as Blanck and Sydney use their hair to make a statement. If someone is stuck in a hair rut, Sydney says they should not be afraid to cut their hair and try something different.

"I think hair says a lot about a person," Sydney said. "I don't want to stereotype people based on their hair, but it shows what kind of person they are, like their personality and confidence level." ★



Drying her new do ★ Sophomore Kayla Hogan, left, has her hair dried by hairdresser Christine Burke at the Hair Experience salon April 14. Burke also crop cut sophomore Sydney Deatherage's long locks. **PHOTO BY SHAUGHNESSY MILLER**

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The Dart

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St. Teresa's Academy

Stacy Hymer: from tomboy to teen girl

Never one to play with dolls, STA sophomore forms new attitude, style

by AVERY ADAMS
Journalism Student

Imagine being the only girl playing football on the playground with every boy in the grade. Imagine being the girl that has many guy friends but no boyfriends. Imagine being mistaken for a boy in the girls' bathroom. Then imagine buying new clothes, growing out your hair and going through puberty. For sophomore Stacy Hymer, this meant growing up.

"I would not really call that time a 'stage' in my life because I still feel like a tomboy," Hymer said. "I have changed, but it's been more of a physical change. My mind-set is still the same."

For the first 13 years of her life, Hymer said she fit right under the definition of a "tomboy," defined by Merriam-Webster as a girl who behaves in a manner usually considered boyish. Not only was Hymer active in many sports, but she also played the part of boy through her physical appearance.

"I had really short hair and hadn't gone through puberty yet," Hymer said of her tomboy years. "I wore a lot of boys' clothes and was very athletic and competitive."

Stacy's mother Erin Hymer agrees that Stacy's physical appearance set her apart from the other girls, and her competitive na-

ture pushed her more into sports than dolls.

"[Stacy] was never one to sit on the sidelines," Erin said. "She always wanted to be out there playing, but was never interested in cheering or other girly things."

Around seventh grade, this all changed. As a girl grows older and her body begins to naturally develop, there are natural indications that she is a girl. For Stacy, this natural development brought not only a new image, but also a new attitude and fashion sense.

"I went through puberty, and as soon as I got boobs and grew my hair out, I was not mistaken for a boy, at least, not as often," Stacy said. "Eventually I had to start buying girls clothes as well."

Stacy's sister, senior Amy Hymer, and mother Erin agree that not only did Stacy's physical appearance change drastically, but her attitude as well.

"Her attitude towards things became more silly and outgoing," Amy said.

Although her change was anticipated by many, the reactions Stacy received varied from shock to amazement. Stacy's best friend for more than nine years, sophomore Becky Seese, witnessed Stacy's change firsthand and was able to observe the feedback given to Stacy from her peers.

"A lot of [the reactions] were good," Becky said. "The boys started to see the more girly side and the girls saw her as a girlfriend to go shopping with."

While reactions from her peers were accepting and astonished ones, her family's



Comical romance ★ Rockhurst High School sophomore Elisha Donnelly-Strait, sophomore Stacy Hymer's boyfriend, and Hymer joke around while watching a movie at her house April 12. The pair met four years ago at a Knights of Columbus dance, but they didn't start dating until a month ago. **PHOTO BY AVERY ADAMS**

reactions aimed more towards teasing.

"I teased her a lot about all the makeup and clothes she was now wearing," Amy said. "After a while, it just became who she was and wasn't out of the ordinary."

According to Stacy, she has developed strong friendships with many new girls, discovered many new interests, gotten a new boyfriend and overall a new outlook on life, without changing her internal personal-

ity. To some, Stacy has blossomed from the tomboy down the street to a beautiful young woman, but Stacy and close friends and relatives believe Stacy is still the same old Stacy.

"She's still a lot the same, she's still really into sports but she's grown out of her tomboy attitude," Becky said. "She never really has changed though; it's the way people have looked at her that's changed." ★

Feminist message hurts students

AN OPINION BY



KATE RAINEY

Feminism permeates STA like the hum of cicadas in the summer; it is so consistent and pervasive that you stop noticing it. But, this background noise influences all students, and should be noticed.

STA's expressed mission is to create competent, intelligent women. This goal seems natural and harmless for an all-girls school with mostly female faculty and staff. But this focus on our gender worries me.

STA wants to send powerful females into colleges and the workforce. I hear from many of my teachers about people in the world who say women can't do certain things. These teachers believe there aren't enough female professionals because society still believes it is strange for women to fill powerful jobs. STA wants to counter this hateful message.

But I don't know any people saying these things. I've never been told I can't do something. I went to a grade school where boys and girls were given the same encouragement and expectations.

Look around. There are many female scientists, politicians, lawyers. Well over half of all college students today are female. And look at the faculty at STA. The entire science department is female and there is only one male in the math department. This cannot simply be because STA is more forward thinking than any other institution. These women went to college and became scientists and mathematicians; clearly it is possible.

But our teachers don't see these opportunities. They still believe women must fight to gain rights. They send a confusing and contradictory message. In the same breath, they tell us men and women are the same, then tell us we must achieve because we are women, to prove women can do it. They

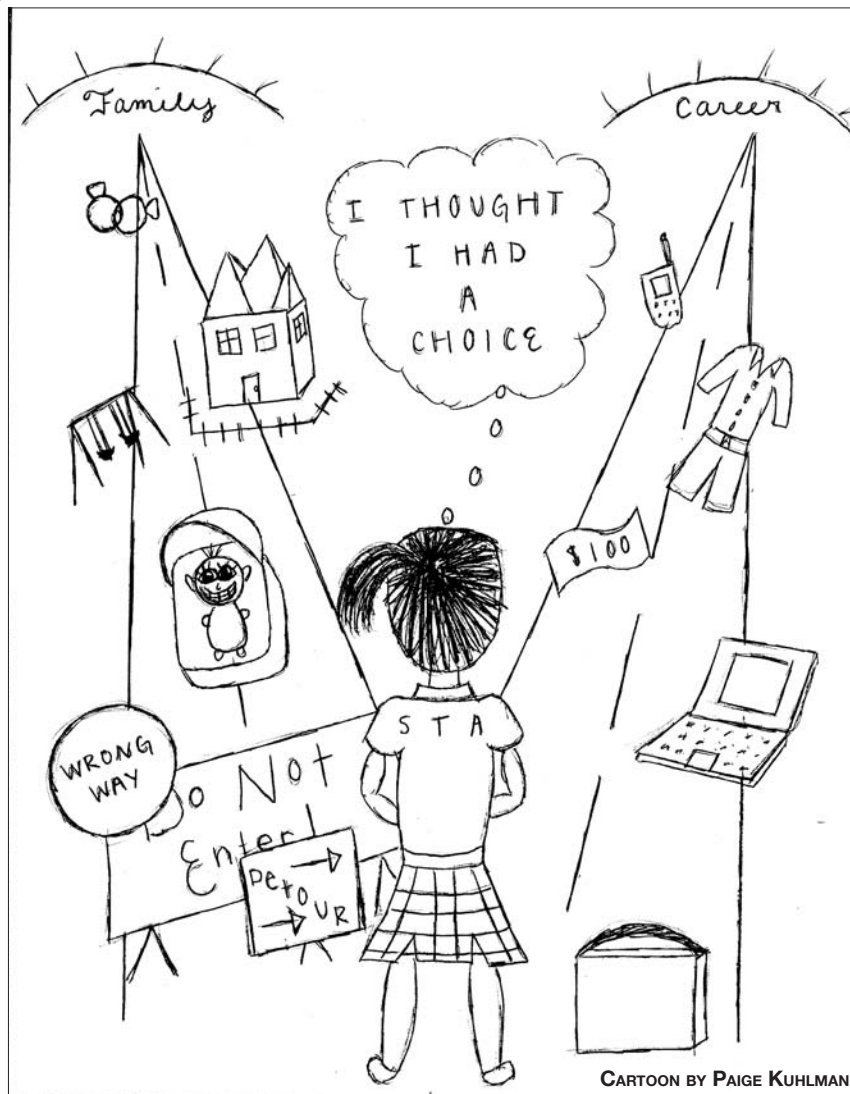
want to pretend there are no differences between the sexes, but then place significance on gender. Focusing on gender helps to perpetuate the differences between men and women, which our teachers say they want to eliminate.

This message is especially worrisome at a Catholic high school. The Bible tells us God created human beings, both male and female, in His image and likeness. In a speech, Pope Benedict XVI said there are differences between the sexes, but they are good differences because they allow men and women to "correspond to and complete each other."

Pope Benedict said: "In the face of cultural and political currents that attempt to eliminate, or at least to obfuscate and confuse, the sexual differences written into human nature, considering them to be cultural constructions, it is necessary to recall the design of God that created the human being male and female, with a unity and at the same time an original and complementary difference." As he says, men and women are equal, but they are not the same. This message of sameness, which asserts no differences exist between the sexes, magnifies the differences between them and causes serious societal problems.

It also worries me that STA pressures its students to follow one path: go to college, get a high-paying job and put off starting a family. One of my teachers told her class, in a half-joking way, that if we said we wanted to attend college to find a husband, we weren't allowed back in her classroom. It is ironic that a school which wants to provide students with opportunities pigeonholes us into one option: a professional track. Instead of pressuring women to stay in the domestic sphere and out of the professional one, STA pressures us to pursue careers and wait until late in life to have children.

Don't misunderstand me; I want to go to college and have a career. But having a family is more important to me than being a professional. I have a small window of time during which I can safely have children; God willing, my mind will be sharper much longer than my ovaries. I also don't expect all students to desire what I want. I simply ask for a choice: the ability to have a family



CARTOON BY PAIGE KUHLMANN

or a career. But I feel like many at STA don't want me to choose.

When I told one of my teachers I wanted to stay home to raise a family, she said it would not be a waste because I would continue to write. In her mind, if I wasn't doing something productive, like writing, staying home with my children would be squandering my life.

I don't think these teachers realize how their comments affect students. I want to believe they aren't consciously pressuring us

into pursuing one path. But, as teachers, and therefore authority figures, they must be aware of the message they send to their students.

Teachers, encourage us students to examine who we are and what we want to become. Don't abuse your authority by promoting your own agenda.

And students, listen to the hum of feminism and consider what it is telling you. Don't let it trick you into thinking you have only one option in life. ★

KC voters get what they bargained for

AN OPINION BY



CAROLINE QUINN

With exactly one year in office under his belt, Kansas City Mayor Mark Funkhouser has already racked up his fair share of controversies.

And these mishaps aren't just damaging KC citizens' image of Funkhouser, they're causing media spokespeople and politicians nationally to raise their eyebrows. Most important, Funkhouser's negligence has caused organizations like La Raza, the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy group, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), to question the hospitality of the Kansas City community. But could we see some of this coming?

It all began with his acceptance of a free Honda Civic Hybrid from a local dealership

last June. Though city council members approved Funkhouser's decision, mainly because it was no cost to the city, many of his co-workers and citizens thought his actions were mere advertisements for foreign auto companies. While this was not the crime of the century, it can provide significant insight into his character. If Funkhouser has no qualms about accepting a \$25,000 car, some are concerned about where the gift-giving ends. It's the 21st century, and we say we don't want political bosses or mobsters running our cities.

About six months ago, Funkhouser found himself in another bind when it was discovered that his co-commissioner for the Parks and Recreation Board, Frances Semler was a member of the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps, a group that adamantly tries to stop illegal border crossings. Many people and organizations called for Semler's resignation from the Board, and the National Council of La Raza voted to remove its 2009 national convention from Kansas City in protest of Funkhouser's refusal to demand Semler's resignation. This is a huge blow to the city. La Raza is a well-respected organization, and Kansas City now needs to work to prove its diversity and open mindedness. While

his response in no way negates his actions, it can be said that he is working to improve diversity on the Board. He appointed Ajamu Webster, the founder of the local National Black United Front (NBUF), an organization that, among many other projects, is working for reparations and separatist education for black Americans.

The latest debacle surrounds Funkhouser's plan to lay off city workers and cut the Kansas City Zoo budget by \$600,000 in order to fund public safety and basic infrastructure repairs. If the zoo budget cuts continue, the national Association of Zoos and Aquariums might cancel its 2013 annual convention. The decreased zoo budget will inhibit a brief local economic burst, but will this have a long-term effect on the city?

There clearly seems to be a trend - cancelled conventions, detracting tourists and a cumulating negative image of Kansas City. And Mayor Mark Funkhouser appears to be at the center of the mounting problems. But should we really put the blame on him? Over a year ago, what did Kansas City want? Change. The city was itching for a populist sort of mayor, someone who was actually going to have an influence, a powerful position in the community. Many feel

Kansas City hasn't had a truly strong mayor since Tom Pendergast during Prohibition. Granted, Pendergast was corrupt, but still, he brought Kansas City back to normalcy with his unwavering ways. Funkhouser was many people's modern prodigy of reform, the modern, honest version of Pendergast. So why the freak-out over his zoo budget cut that was created to bring the city out of financial crisis? While his acceptance of the car showed a flaw in character, should the city be so absorbed with a matter that doesn't really have much of an effect on the workings of the community?

Funkhouser has made some key decisions that have led to his declining image. He has failed to live up to his potential and lacks the political mechanisms, like charisma and finesse, that make someone a good leader. He is unsure of what his formal role in the city really is and cannot find equilibrium. But, he is trying to make change. We can knock his immoral decisions all we want, but we can't complain about his core plans that so many voters wanted. As the journalist H.L. Mencken put it, "Democracy is the theory that holds that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it good and hard." ★

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St. Teresa's Academy

Absence makes the heart grow fonder

Sophomore Claire Magers attends school over 100 miles from parents

by **BIANCA DANG**
Staff Writer

Running through the rain on STA's campus, attempting to reach her car before getting completely soaked, freshman Claire Magers threw her backpack into her car and jumped in. Her mom, Ms. Rose Magers, greeted her.

"Hi Clare," Rose said. "How was your day sweetheart? I missed you!"

Though many parents miss their children when they are at school, the Magers are a unique case. Clare lives over 100 miles away from her parents in order to attend STA.

Originally from North Kansas City, the Magers family moved seven years ago in order for Clare's father to take a physician's job in Mount Ayr, Iowa. Since last June, Clare has lived with her older brother in Gladstone during the week to attend STA. On weekends, she lives in Iowa.

"I don't like Sundays because I have to take her to school on Sundays but I love Fridays because I get to pick her up and bring her home," Rose said.

This has changed the family's lives drastically. Clare has taken on responsibilities expected in college.

"It kind of feels like it took a big chunk out of my youth because I had to grow up so fast because before my mom took care of me," Clare said. "She did a lot of stuff for me, my parents helped me with my homework... I have to do everything on my own. I have to do my homework and get good grades. I don't really think it's a barrier, but it's a huge difference."

Clare's increased responsibility has not gone unnoticed.

Her changes in personality and demeanor have been noticed by family and friends alike both in Iowa and Kansas City.

"I've already seen a change in her," Rose said. "She's more mature. She's working with her problem solving skills. She's a little more serious, but I see her really happy. Even my friends here when they see Clare they say she looks really happy."

Clare's brother, Mr. George Magers, 27, believes that though it is different living without parents, it is not hard.

"Clare seems to be taking it really well," George said. "In some weird way, it kind of feels like [our parents] are running an errand and will be back eventually."

This does not mean that living in a house without parents has been easy. Many students can get emotional support through physical interaction with parents. Clare must get this support over the phone.

"When she has a really bad day, she'll call me and she'll cry and I can't hug her," Rose said. "I can only tell her she is going to be okay and that the day is over but I can't physically console her."

The fact that they are not around each other constantly creates a need to keep closer contact when they are.

"I think we're probably closer because we've always had a really good relationship, very close and very open," Rose said. "...It's probably better because all of our conversations mean more to us now more so than before because I really can't see her."

Living without parents has altered Clare's view of her relationship of her parents as well.

"At first it was really nice," Claire said. "Everyone thinks it's the greatest thing. I didn't have to listen to my parents; I didn't have to listen to them bug me. I was just on my own, but then I started realizing I needed them more than I thought." ★



Mager move ★ STA freshman Claire Magers, right, reads her physical science book while watching the news with her brother George Magers last Friday after school. In order to attend STA, Clare lives George in their grandma's old house in Gladstone, while her parents live in Iowa. PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE

Girls provide alcohol education

Six sophomores speak at STA Town Hall Meeting, hope to affect students

by **RACHEL SCHWARTZ**
Section Editor

Around 150 girls piled into the M&A auditorium during Activity Tuesday for the Alcohol Town Meeting. Seven sophomores gathered at the front of the auditorium ready to begin the meeting. As everyone settled in, sophomore Ali Morgan stepped up to the microphone.

"We know that girls drink and the purpose of this meeting is not to stop that," Morgan said. "We all feel differently about drinking and come from different backgrounds. We are here to tell you different concerns and issues about drinking, not to tell you not to drink."

Morgan and fellow sophomores Taylor Brown, Caitlin Campbell, Tess Distefano, Kayla Loosen, Sadie McCue and Sam Roach led the meeting. At the sophomore retreat Feb. 25, Sinco encouraged sophomores to attend the Kansas City Alcohol Town Hall Meeting that would occur that evening.

"...we decided to go for service hours," McCue said. "And she asked us to do it with the school but we wanted to tweak it... I thought it would be good to go."

According to Sinco, the girls did the work on their own. They met with her once or twice a week to show the work they had completed. Sinco said she is very proud of their accomplishments.

At the meeting, the group presented different aspects of drinking: binge drinking, state laws, drinking and driving, teen drinking regarding sexual activity and the effects alcohol has on the body.

"We believe that everyone is [drinking], but in actuality about 169 out of the 405 surveyed are not," McCue said during the



Alcohol education ★ Sophomores Sadie McCue, from left, Caitlin Campbell, Sam Roach and Taylor Brown discuss underage drinking at the Town Hall Meeting Tuesday. The group hoped to influence safer habits among students. PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NELSON

meeting. "Something that seems so vital in having a good weekend may not be worth it after all."

The girls used statistics to emphasize their points.

Distefano said 66 people die daily from alcohol-related accidents. Brown went on to talk about how drinking affects sexual activity, stating that 88 percent of people ages 15 to 24 consume alcohol before having sex.

With these statistics, Brown said, "It only takes one mistake to cause regret."

"The facts they gave us really got a reaction out of people," senior Maranda Le said. "I liked all the statistics they shared. I knew the risks before, but this just made it real."

After the presentations, the girls posed questions to their peers in hopes of sparking discussion.

Senior Leah Hogan believes that not all

people took the discussion seriously.

"Some people were making fun of it," Hogan said. "Until people get in trouble with the law or get caught drinking, they won't and don't realize how serious it is and just poke fun at it."

Sophomore Grace Krause liked the way the girls presented it.

"It just kind of seemed like all the stuff we've been told the past years of our lives, but it was cool having people our age talking to us about it rather than someone older that we didn't know lecturing us about it," Krause said.

Morgan hopes this meeting influenced her peers to make smarter decisions.

"I want to educate my peers about [the bad effects of alcohol] so maybe that will change their opinions," Morgan said. "I do want people to be safer." ★

Alcohol Awareness



405 STA students were surveyed about drinking. Here are the results:

40% of the students are non-drinkers

18% of the students are moderate drinkers, reporting to have drunk two times or more but less than once a month

7% have driven after consuming alcohol

10% have passed out from alcohol

21% said alcohol has affected decisions about sexual activity

42% of students are drinkers, reporting to drink once a month or more

27% have driven after consuming alcohol

50% have passed out from alcohol

58% said that alcohol affects decisions regarding sexual activity

27% of the students surveyed said that adults were present at the house where they were drinking

Source: Alcohol Town Meeting survey conducted through advisories

COMPILED BY RACHEL SCHWARTZ

Shopgirls get down to business

Two local designers open boutique in Brookside

by ROSIE HODES
Staff Writer

A shopper closes a changing room curtain to try on a shirt that might go with her new favorite necklace she just selected from the counter. On the wall behind her, in the dressing room reads: "May you always recognize beauty." On the other side of the curtain is the dream of two local women.

A boutique named Shopgirls opened Oct. 25 at 6245 Brookside Plaza. Co-owners Ms. Aimee Green and Ms. Katy Hamilton quit their jobs, secured the space last July and created a boutique in months.

Both Green and Hamilton have years of experience in retail work and management in the Kansas City area and they had known each other through business before collaborating. They always referred to each other as "shop girls" so the name was fitting. They took out a small loan, completed their own renovations and construction, and went to market. Although in the beginning they maxed out their credit cards, they sold one third of their inventory in a pre-opening party.

"It was a good problem to have," Green said.

According to Green, it was coincidental and karmic that their ideal space opened up at the same time the business partners quit their jobs to sell their jewelry and clothes designs independently.

"[Opening Shopgirls in Brookside] was definitely my first choice," Green said. "Brookside is tucked in a neighborhood that is a frequented area with no chains."

Green and Hamilton feel they fit in with the atmosphere of Brookside. They have made friends and even started a bowling team with employees of neighboring stores. Green describes Shopgirls as something that was missing from the area. The co-owners do not sell their designs at their store, but Green sells her jewelry at a store named Stuff up the street.

"There's not any kind of competition,"



Shopping haven ★ Shopgirls co-owner Aimee Green sorts through paperwork at the store's counter last Wednesday. With the help of friend Katy Hamilton, the two owners opened the store in Brookside last October. PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE

Hamilton said. "It's important to support local business."

Shopgirls also tries not to overlap merchandise with neighboring stores. They purchase a variety of designers and sizes. According to Green, they try to be flexible and have an eclectic mix. Hamilton said some describe the store as the local Anthropologie, a retail chain store. Sophomore Claire O'Neill compared the price and style of the store to Addie Rose, another Brookside boutique.

"[Shopgirls] has more modern and natural looking pieces," O'Neill said.

The price of the clothes might be expensive for a teenager's budget. The dresses range from \$80-150. They also sell handmade jewelry, which varies in price. The earrings are around \$10-15.

Along with being self-employed and having the freedom to choose what to sell, Hamilton's favorite part of her job is interacting with customers.

"The employees didn't stalk me or

explain everything," O'Neill said. "They were nice and welcoming."

Green and Hamilton consider their presence at the store important. They have a few part-time employees, but aren't looking for more. They utilize every open space in the boutique, but aren't looking to expand yet.

"We've accomplished a lot in six months," Hamilton said. "I don't want to lose the feeling. Right now it's manageable and quaint." ★

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St. Teresa's Academy

STA musicians make showing at State

Sixteen STA students play, sing their way to music festival April 25

by EMILY BECKER
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Last Friday, 16 music students from STA competed alongside 4,531 other performances at the State Music Festival at the University of Missouri. Of the nine entries at the State competition, seven received a II rating or above while sophomore Mackenzie Miller received the more prestigious I rating.

"I'm very happy with the results," said music teacher Shauna Moore.

In order to compete in the State music competition, a student must first prepare a vocal or instrumental solo at the District contest. At Districts, the student must receive a I rating by the judge in order to be eligible for the State competition.

"[My favorite part was] seeing the students' reactions after seeing they got a I at Districts of their rating at State," Moore said.

The number of participants eligible for State was a significant increase from the past few years. In 2007, only two students qualified for State and in 2006, about four students qualified.

"It's very exciting and the best part is that we had sev-

eral freshmen who got to go this year," Moore said.

Among the participants from STA was an ensemble of junior Mackenzie Beisser and sophomores Shayla Sigler, Ellen Gude, Kristina Strader and Shay Bell. They were the first ensemble from STA to qualify for State in the past three years.

"Just finally being able to get to State with an ensemble was really rewarding," Beisser said.

Although this was the first trip to State for many of the members of the ensemble, the fact they had been practicing together since the beginning of the second semester gave the girls confidence during their performance.

"Right before I was about to sing, I felt some butterflies, but when we started singing, it went away because we knew the music really well," Sigler said. "It was really just like singing in front of my class for me."

Some took confidence from the fact they were performing as an ensemble instead of solo.

"I was more comfortable than if I had done a solo because I was with a group," Beisser said. "I felt that they could help me."

The girls performed "Whispering Pines" and "Come at Midnight" by Eugene Butler.

"My favorite part was working on the music because it's really rewarding to know your music and then perform it at such a high level on competition," Sigler said. "It shows that all your hard work paid off in the end." ★

STA musicians

Vocal Solos

Senior Claire McFarland-II
Junior Kirsten Hyde-II
Junior Laura Nendick-II
Sophomore Mackenzie Miller-I
Sophomore Kristina Strader-II

Piano Solo

Senior Ashtin Bryde-II

Violin Solos

Sophomore Mackenzie Miller-II
Sophomore Kelly Clay-II

Ensemble-II

Junior Mackenzie Beisser
Sophomore Shayla Sigler
Sophomore Kristina Strader
Sophomore Shay Bell
Sophomore Ellen Gude

Sextet-III

Sophomore Kristina Strader
Freshman Meredith Koch
Sophomore Alexis Banks
Freshman Sam Cusumano
Freshman Katie Pautler
Freshman Riley Uecker

Co-ed team builds friendships

Students form soccer team in Brookside this season, strengthen relationships

by MICHELLE REICHMEIER
Staff Writer

Rockhurst High School sophomore Nicholas Schilling dribbled the length of the soccer field, skillfully maneuvering past multiple defenders. Sophomore Megan Caffrey called for the ball, but instead watched as it flew through the air toward the goal. The goalie leapt for the ball, dropped it and Caffrey instinctively tapped it in.

This was the scene as Caffrey became the first girl to score this season for team Beast, a co-ed soccer team in Brookside.

Fourteen STA and six Rockhurst sophomores formed the team as part of the Brookside soccer club this spring. Sporting red and navy jerseys, they're all about having fun.

"The team has really helped strengthen the relationships with my group of friends," Caffrey said. "I've gotten to know the boys better than I would just by talking to them."

Sophomore Ellie Hart agreed.

"Playing recreational soccer is a fun way to make great memories and build lasting friendships while also preventing obesity," Hart said with a laugh.

According to sophomore Molly Fox, the team started out as something fun for her group of friends to do.

"Goals aren't our goals," Fox said. "Even when we lose there is music blaring in the parking lot and we have dance parties. Overall, we just like to have fun."

After each game, fans, mostly comprised of the team's friends, choose a Most Valuable Beast (MVB) in honor of their skill, effort and contributions. Schilling receives this award often. He enjoys being on the team, but said the lack of familiarity with the sport becomes a challenge.

"[Playing on a co-ed team] can be frustrating, not just because the majority of the team is girls but because the



Low five ★ Rockhurst High School sophomore Andrew Watts, left, tags STA sophomore Jessica Schmerge's hand to enter the soccer game at Swope Park April 20. In the end, the team lost the game 2-1. PHOTO BY ELIZABETH WILSON

majority of the team, boys included, hasn't played soccer in a long time," Schilling said.

Caffrey thinks the boys get too much credit, while players like sophomore Riley Cowing are yelled at constantly.

"Boys pass to boys," Caffrey said. "They only trust the boys to carry the ball. When I do get the ball, all I think is 'I can't mess this up.'"

The team established equal playing time until the level of competitiveness and thirst for victory increased.

The boys are especially competitive and sometimes bring in premier players because the opposing teams consist of mostly boys. The team's "secret weapon" is Rockhurst sophomore Bret Raybould, who plays on his school's JV soccer team.

"Sometimes it's intimidating play-

ing with guys," Hart said. "I mean, one time the goalie had a beard. That's just scary."

The intimidation and competitiveness can lead to injuries. Sophomore Haley Mize tore her ACL because she was pushed over by an opposing male player during a game.

"If you get knocked down, the boys help you up and say sorry," Hart said. "Then, they keep saying sorry about a million times."

The team's pre-game ritual is doing the hokey pokey.

"On a scale of one to 10...well it's just fun," sophomore Anne Schwartz said.

As the season ends, team Beast looks forward to competing next year. A second team may form because more friends are interested in participating.



Sideline ★ Rockhurst High School sophomore Nicholas Schilling, left, and STA sophomore Ellie Hart wait on the sidelines at their recreational league soccer game April 12. The entire team is made up of STA and Rockhurst students. PHOTO BY JULIA STAPINSKI

"I can't wait for next spring so I can play soccer again," sophomore Anne Marie Whitehead said. "I think next year we we'll take it more seriously and probably be a better team since we'll have even more chemistry and we can focus more on the technicalities." ★

Senior breaks 10-year discus record

Student improves greatly through high school career to accomplish track goals

by NICOLE GRAVINO
Staff Writer

Senior Katie Drummond sits with her knees pulled to her chest and her arms through the sleeves of her STA windbreaker. The day has gotten progressively colder and the temperature hovers in the fifties as a strong wind whips across the soccer field at the Blue Valley District Activity Center last Friday afternoon. She waits for the girls in the second flight (group of girls based on personal records) to finish before the third flight, her flight, begins. Each girl takes a practice throw before a scorekeeper records the next three throws to compete against the other girls in the flight. She stands up to take off her sweatpants as the girls hover around

the scorekeeper for the results.

"She is a brave one," her mother, Kris Drummond, said. She stands off to the side trying to keep warm with her hands shoved deep into the pocket of her hoodie.

Drummond completes the discus throw before walking over to the adjacent area to compete in shot put. She takes fourth place with a throw of 104 feet and two and one half inches, breaking her personal record of 96 feet and the school record, that has stood for ten years, by two feet.

She extends her right arm straight up into the air suspending the shot put above her right shoulder, takes a moment to compose herself and then goes into the backward glide she learned freshmen year, catapulting the shot-put 34 feet seven inches. She takes fourth place in this event, too.



Drummond

Drummond has thrown discus and shot put on the STA track team since her freshmen year. She says track and field coach Ann Bode-Rodriguez convinced her to join the team.

"She would talk to me during gym class," Drummond said. "She's one of those coaches who wants everyone involved if she can do it."

Drummond had no previous experience as a thrower until joining the team at STA. Four years later, she has worked to become the school's best. She says she has enjoyed the friendship she has found on the team. The throwers practice separately from the rest of the track team every day because they stay on STA campus while the runners go to the YMCA or the University of Missouri Kansas City to run on the track. She says this is probably the reason why they have gotten to know each other so well.

"I like getting close to the throwers," Drummond said. "After a while we can

watch each other and tell each other how it looks. We can give each other advice on technique because we spend so much time in practice together."

Sophomore Kelsie Fiss agrees the girls she throws with are a central reason why she enjoys being on the team.

"Some of them are friends I hang out with on weekends," Fiss said. "A few are from advisory and some of them I am meeting for the first time. It is all coming together, meeting new people. It's really fun to do that."

Depending on the size of the meet, the girls can spend a lot of time waiting for their flight. Although the field events finish before the running events and the girls throwing discus and shot-put can leave as soon as they finish, they usually stick around until everyone is done. They stay to support each other and talk.

"We can always laugh at anything," Fiss said. "It's really entertaining. We have a lot of fun." ★