

INSIDE

Jim Carrey offers depth as well as comedy in "Fun with Dick and Jane"
See Review page 8A.

WEDNESDAY
January 25, 2006

the Central High School REGISTER

A HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER
PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL
JOURNALISM

FIVE TIME NSPA/JEA BEST-OF-SHOW WINNER

FIVE TIME NHSPA CLASS A1 SWEEPSTAKES CHAMPION

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER

West O voices anger at Mackiel

Meeting raises concerns from all sides of issue

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

The eight panel members went to the Holiday Inn Central ballroom on Jan. 12 ready to work out the future of the city's children.

But when they sat down at the front of the room, they realized the packed audience was already working things out in its own way.

Many of the panelists had forseen an Omaha divided between blacks and whites, and rich and poor—completely unable to work together in the community—and now they had the chance of their visions.

State Sen. Ron Raikes, chairman of the education committee, sat next to Omaha Public Schools (OPS) Superintendent Dr. John Mackiel at the center of a long table, overlooking a room that just wouldn't take no for an

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Revolver found on freshman

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Name changed to protect identity

Within minutes of receiving the tip, a freshman's gun was confiscated and the student was arrested.

On Fri. Jan. 20, an unloaded .38 caliber pistol was found in the possession of a student.

"I wouldn't be surprised if it was found within five minutes," Principal Jerry Bexten said.

In a situation like this Bexten said it wasn't important to inform him right away.

What was important was getting the police involved, and getting the gun out of the school, which they did.

"Our administration acts immediately," he said.

THE EVENT

The student had indicated to assistant principal Dr. Keith Bigsby that he had not intended to harm anyone with the weapon, Bexten said. It was probably

Continued to **Gun** on Page 3

"When she told everyone she was leaving, we all cried. She inspired me to never give up. Having to go to her class every day made me want to come to school."

Samone Starks | sophomore, child development class



PHOTOS BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Family and consumer science teacher Kelli Priebe explains what it is like to go through radiation and chemotherapy. She said both made her tired and sick and she was not sure if she wanted to pursue them as options again. When she received radiation for lymphnodic cancer, it resulted in sores and burns on her neck. (BELOW) Priebe has to take medication to help boost her immune system every night. She does this along with draining the fluid that has collected in her lungs.

LIVING IN THE MOMENT

BY MOLLY MULLEN

She said it has gotten so bad she has to drain fluid from her lungs every day. She can't even walk around her house very long without losing breath.

"I look for little pockets of time when I can do some work," she said.

Family and consumer science teacher Kelli Priebe took her last day at school Fri. Dec. 9. After over 30 years of teaching in and out of Omaha Public Schools, she decided to take some time for herself.

She has been battling cancer for four years and said she needed this time to look at her options.

She continues to battle cancer after leaving Central



She learned from her doctor in late November the cancer that started out as melanoma had spread to her right lung.

"He pretty much told me the next two or three months I couldn't work," she said.

She was hoping to last the semester, but her lung was filling with fluid and she had to get it drained.

Priebe asked Principal Jerry Bexten to make a small announcement about it during teacher meetings.

She said she has tried to be pretty open with her students and staff.

"I don't believe in hiding," she said. "Even if you're

Continued to **Priebe** on Page 3

Collection taken up after death of staff member

Staff comes together to help family with loss, funeral costs

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

The cafeteria personnel stood in a circle in the kitchen on Jan. 9, silently listening to a counselor talk to them about how to handle their loss. Cafeteria worker Thelma Haywood, a beloved member of the staff, had passed away earlier in the

morning.

Cafeteria manager Jodi Smith had known Haywood for nearly 12 years as both a close friend and as a coworker.

She was absent when the news arrived, but when she returned to school on Tuesday, she could tell how the staff was handling it.

"It was quiet," she said. "It was a surprise, you know. It just happened...too sudden."

Sandy Bornhoft, the backup manager that day, received information that Haywood had a heart attack early Monday morning in the arms of her fiancée, who was unable to contact Bornhoft until

around 10 a.m.

She found out that Haywood was barely awake hours earlier when her fiancée noticed that everything wasn't all right.

"She was like, stroking the back of his head," Bornhoft said, "and then he heard a gurgling sound and then he lifted up, leaned over to see she was gasping for air."

Haywood's fiancée, who was unavailable for comment, told Bornhoft he called an ambulance as soon as it happened.

Then he attempted to resuscitate Haywood before the emergency medics arrived.

"The nurse told him at the hospital that she didn't suffer, that there was no pain and she just went really quick," Bornhoft said.

She called Smith as soon as she heard what happened, then informed Principal Jerry Bexten that a staff member had passed away.

Bexten, along with Guidance Department Head Lynda Molyneux, decided to wait until they felt it was the proper time to inform students.

Bexten did, however, write a confidential note to the staff with the information shortly after he

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INSIDE

Andrew Wahl

Student guitarist prepares for life as professional musician.

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First home game

Eagle teams win doubleheader at unveiling of new lobby.

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Teens learn to appreciate differences

BY CLAIRE ANDERSON

It's a place for everyone. Unitown, sponsored by The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ), will take place during the weekend of March 10-14.

Unitown is a program that promotes leadership skills and diversity awareness in teens, social guidance counselor Ron Moore said.

"It's a place to go to be accepted, be equal and to find a way to come back into the world," he said.

The aim of Unitown is to bring back the golden rule, to treat others as you would like them to treat you.

"The primary concept of social justice is equality, understanding and acceptance," Moore said.

Students will participate in exercises, discussions and activities. These activities will teach students about racism, sexism, heterosexism and classism.

The hope is that upon their return to school the following week, students will be more informed and able to pass this information onto their peers to create a more respectful and inclusive environment, he said.

There are 15 spots allotted to Central, 10 of which have already been filled, which is a good thing, Moore said.

Eight specific schools are selected to be part of the four-day, three-night program. The program consists of 60 high school students and faculty members who are specifically chosen.

Past participants have brought back a positive attitude and influenced their peers to be more open-minded about "isms" upon returning from Unitown, Moore said.

"I know they have because I have kept in contact with a lot of the kids from previous Unitowns, and I see a change in their attitude and thought process," Moore said.

He said more students will be able to participate in Anytown, a week-long camp during the summer with the same concept as Unitown. Anytown is open to everyone.

Eagle Doe one focus of Arts Week

BY PASCALE ROUSSEL

Art department head Larry Andrews is doing a new project for for not only his art students, but the entire school called Eagle Doe.

The project is for the new Fine Arts Week that originated this year.

"The idea is to get around 25 ceramic eagles and have Central clubs, organizations and even students and teachers to decorate them however they want," Andrews said.

Whatever they put on the eagle will have something to do with the club or organization they are in.

"Let's say if rock climbing does one, they would have something on there having to do with rock climbing," Andrews said.

They are going to be centerpieces for the scholarship auction for seniors and will be available for sale.

"The clubs that are doing it will have four to six weeks to complete the eagles," Andrews said.

Andrews said this was the idea of Mr. Erickson, a parent of a former Central student. He said they brainstormed about it, and thought that doing eagles would be a good idea.

"Hopefully, all 25 Eagles will be used," Andrews said.

Augusta Ceramics will be providing the actual eagles statues, but Andrews said the art department will not be providing many supplies for the people doing the art.

"We can probably supply some paintbrushes or glue, but they will have to do most of the work themselves," Andrews said.

Andrews also said the Art doing another project in April.

CALENDAR



PHOTO BY EMMA PHILLIPS/REGISTER

Junior Kevin Kennedy teaches children at Dundee Elementary school to play chess. He said teaching chess would help pay for the trip to a national competition in the spring. The children said they enjoyed high school students coming to show them how to play.

Club members become teachers

BY EMMA PHILLIPS

It was easy to pick out sophomore Alek Erickson and junior Kevin Kennedy in the Dundee Elementary library. They stood at the front of the room and addressed the crowd of 29 elementary school students.

"Welcome to Chess Club," Erickson said. "We're going to teach you to play chess."

One student thought Erickson's comment was redundant and he responded that the point of Chess Club was to play and most of the students already knew how. After a hand count was taken, it turned out the vast majority of the students did already know how to play.

Three members of Central's chess team were present to help teach, or in most cases, refine students' chess skills. Erickson and Kennedy arrived early and set up the chessboards while senior George Blazek arrived a little later.

Bill Kerrey is a parent aide to Dundee Elementary's Chess Club. He said he had two sons in attendance at Dundee, one in the 3rd grade and the other in the 6th. Kerrey said his sons were very enthusiastic about the game.

"They both love to play chess," he said.

Kerrey said his sons have been playing the game for three years, and they both have excelled in it. He also said he thought having experience in the game would benefit them later in their lives.

"It's a very logical game and it teaches them to sit quietly and think, and it teaches them to compete in a courteous fashion," he said.

He also said he thought being familiar with the logic involved in chess would help his sons later, in terms of their academic performance.

After introducing themselves and getting the meeting started, Kennedy, Erickson and Blazek milled around the room and spent time at tables advising players on their next move.

Kennedy said he got involved with teaching the students because Chess Club sponsor and technology teacher Drew Thyden asked him to participate.

He said helping teach the students would also help pay for the Chess Team's trip to the National Chess Championships this year, which will be held in Wisconsin. Kennedy said he had been slightly apprehensive about teaching other to play chess, and when he was learning to play the game himself he never thought about instructing others.

"I was kind of nervous," he said.

He said his favorite part of teaching the students

was when he was teaching strategies and he could see when they began to grasp the concepts.

"It's fun to look at them learn and know what they're doing," he said.

Erickson spent the beginning of the meeting teaching 1st grade student Stephen Siy. Siy said he enjoyed the game, even though it was new to him.

"I'd never played it before," he said.

For students who were totally unfamiliar with the game, Erickson and Kennedy had a demonstration board attached to a chalk board where they explained slowly and patiently what each piece was called and what moves it was able to make.

Kennedy tutored 4th grade student Lilia Hutchinson, who also said she was enjoying herself despite her lack of experience with chess.

Kerrey said he has been playing chess for a long time and said he hoped his sons will do the same. He said he thought his sons would soon be able to play chess just as well, if not better than him. He also said playing chess often becomes a lifetime experience for talented players.

Kennedy also said he thought introducing chess to students at a young age was a good thing.

"It'll help expand their minds, get them thinking," he said.

Girls captain fulfills team expectation

BY LAUREN CRIST

Varsity basketball coach Townsend said senior Brianne Tapley is a strong player who is one of the best on the team.

"Brianne has played extremely well, especially for her first time on varsity," he said.

He said she has continued to improve throughout the year. He said she has been a leader to the team in a lot of different ways, but particularly in defensive play.

"She's a leader defensively as well as intensity in guarding the ball," he said. "We feed off her energy as a team."

She said her light personality also added a lot to the team atmosphere. He said she was always laughing or making other people laugh.

"She brings fun to the team," he said.

He said how she performed on the court was what really set her apart.

"Her speed is almost unmatched," he said.

He said it was difficult to see she had progressed in the last year because she was on junior varsity. He said there was no comparison between how she played last year and this year because of the difference between the two teams, but she had definitely improved.

"I've been really pleased with her progress," he said. "She's definitely stepped up."

He said she seemed to be involved in volleyball, but she was very talented at basketball.

"If she has a good senior year, she knows," he said. "You never know what will happen."

Science Club prepares for competition

BY KIM BUCKLEY

Science Club/Science Olympiad will help prepare those students who will attend the Science Olympiad competition this spring, sponsor Fredrickson said.

"Science Olympiad is a competition that happens every spring," he said. Fredrickson said there were a variety of events offered at the Science Olympiad.

He said the competitions ranged from robots and bottle rockets to fossil classification and astronomy.

Fredrickson said he usually takes about 15 students to the Science Olympiad competition in Lincoln every year.

"We have a club and kids who want to do Science Olympiad join. The club does more stuff than Science Olympiad," he said.

Fredrickson said Science Club meetings every other Wednesday. "We kind of practice for the events that the kids see what the events are," Fredrickson said.

He said there were about 20 students could participate in the Science Olympiad.

Fredrickson said he wished there was more time to prepare for Science Olympiad, but the club helps.

"It's typically kids who enjoy science anyways," he said. "With the club, they can do more science."

Fredrickson said the things that the students learn in their science classes

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Upcoming Events

January

27-28 Speech, Debate team Hosts Contest

The Speech and Debate Team will host a competition on Friday and Saturday. There will be 30 schools and between 400-500 students competing in multiple categories, such as Congress, Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum and Policy Debate. Central's team will not be competing, it will be the host. Many rooms in the building will be filled with students from different schools. State competitions will begin at the end of March.

28 SAT

Juniors and seniors need to bring a calculator, number two pencils and other materials to the exam. Students will want to have a good night's sleep before the exam. A pen for the essay is optional, and students may bring food and a drink if desired.

31 All-City Instrumental Rehearsal

The students who participate in the instrumental part of the All-City Music Festival will be attending their first rehearsal. The rehearsal will last from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Teacher Administrative Center Board of Education Rooms and Auditorium/Stage. There will be other rehearsals in February. Students are responsible for providing transportation to the rehearsal.

February

3-4 School-Wide Talent Show

The annual Road Show performances is Friday the 3rd at 7 p.m. and Saturday the 4th at 2 p.m. and 7 pm in the auditorium. The theme this year, "Under the C," was chosen by the advanced drama class. "We thought it was cute and clever, and it represented Central well," drama teacher John Gibson said.

4 ROTC Drill Meet

Junior varsity and varsity are competing Feb. 4, at Central. It is an OPS drill meet. They are competing in two categories: drill team regulation and color guard. The annual event is hosted by Central and is open to the public. The competition begins at 9 am.

9-11 All City Music Festival and Wesleyan Honor Choir

The All-City Music Festival is a district-wide event involving vocal students and instrumental students. The performance begins at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday at the Civic Center. Practices on Thursday and Friday will be held at Benson.



ANDREWS



KENNEDY



TAPLEY

Teacher looks at options after four-year battle



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

she reads the label on a bottle of the medication she has taken. The shots help boost immune system and have an 8 percent chance of curing any part of her cancer.

■ 'PRIEBE' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

fighting an illness you can still have a good outlook on life, doing what you want to do."

Sophomore Samone Starks said when teachers visited Priebe, she would give them letters to give to her about staying positive and never giving up.

She said Priebe is her favorite teacher.

"She inspired me to never give up," she said. "Having to come to her class everyday made me want to come to school."

She said her personality and laugh made the entire class love her.

When Priebe told the class everyone cried, she said.

"Just being herself, just being Miss Priebe was inspiring," she said.

Ideally she said she would want to return to school and continue teaching. She said she was only considered to be on medical leave because she couldn't bring herself to quit or retire fully.

"Every day here is different," she said. "The people you meet and the connections you make with other people..."

Priebe said the cancer started out as melanoma in her scalp.

It spread over the next four years, and although she has had successful treatments, she is not cancer free.

"Once you face a cancer diagnosis, they (doctors) tell me you don't become cancer free until seven years," she said.

She said she didn't want to quit working and she made an effort to keep coming to school every day.

She said even though she had great support from her family, working was something she loved to do.

"I think it's a little easier to get depressed if you don't have something to keep going," Priebe said.

Scrapbooking and photo albums will become one of her new concentrations while

she waits to make a decision about having more radiation treatments.

Her husband, a counselor at Burke, attends all of her appointments with her.

She has two children, a son attending University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a daughter in Seattle.

She said both of her children call daily and they keep touch through email.

As of right now there are several possibilities and decisions she could make about her cancer.

She said radiation and chemotherapy were both options she perused before. As of right now, she is taking shots to boost her immune system, but she said they only have a 10 percent success rate.

She will have completed three series of the shots by the end of February, at which time she will see if they had any impact.

She has also found support through her doctor and the Internet.

She posts and asks question of people who are currently going through what she is going through.

She asks what course of action they took and how effective it was.

"I try to stay informed," she said.

She said by now there were not a whole lot of options left.

"Once it reaches the lungs, there's not much hope," she said.

The cancer started as just a lump on her scalp that she didn't get checked out for a few weeks after she first noticed it.

"I didn't even notice it at first," she said. I thought it was just an infected hair follicle."

Then it grew. It got to be as large as the tip of her finger.

Apparently there was an even bigger mole beneath the skin that wasn't visible.

Then it spread to her lymph nodes in her neck and she went through interferon therapy.

That was supposed to keep the cancer from spreading, but it was unsuccessful.

She had her first surgery in 2001.

Then she underwent chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

"It made me more tired," she said. "It had different effects on different days."

Lately, she said, she has been a little resistant to getting more treatment.

"I know enough about cancer to know there is not a whole lot of success (in lung cancer)," she said. "Seven to 9 percent are not real good odds to me."

She said she just wanted to focus on getting the fluid drained and then start making decisions about the next step she will take, if any.

She said she drains the fluid every night and empties it into little bottles.

The fluid in her lung was caused by a tumor that caused an infection.

She was hospitalized again in early January after her first chest tube caused another infection.

"The chest x-ray showed it was filling up again," Priebe said.

Radiation and chemotherapy are both possibilities. She could try other type of shots or just stop fighting all together.

"Sometimes I think I've been through enough," Priebe said. "It doesn't make sense to me to go through chemo and be sick all the time. I want to enjoy the time I have left."

She said the department was planning on hiring a student teacher from South High School.

Principal Jerry Bexten said he read an e-mail she wrote to the staff.

"She has a lot of good friends on staff who are concerned about her," Bexten said.

He said he knew she had been battling long term and when she decided to take a leave, it was all based on the quality of her health.

He said she made the decisions day-by-day.

One day she might have been feeling better and planned on staying longer, the next day she might have to leave immediately.

Gang member says metal detectors would keep guns out of school

'GUN' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

for show. Bexten said the student cooperated fully with the administration.

It was important for everyone involved to be safe. Bexten brought up the occurrence of administrators getting shot in a school in the South a few months ago. The student in that had a loaded gun, and before anyone could search him, he shot two adults in the room.

He was first made aware of the situation at this school by a boy, who was not the student's administrator.

The student was arrested by resource officer Jesse Stokes and booked into the youth detention center.

Bexten said situations like this were extremely rare, citing experiences in high school and middle school. He said it was likely to have a report of a knife, but even that was rare.

Bexten related this occurrence with another that happened first year teaching at Central, three years ago.

He said in that case the administration was made aware of a weapon after a student showed it to someone else. He said he searched, but couldn't find anything.

"All of the sudden (former resource officer) Randall put it on my desk," he said.

The student in that instance showed it to someone and hid it in the bathroom. Another student went to blow his nose and the gun fell on the floor.

"That gun was out there for awhile," Bexten said.

Because of that and other factors Bexten felt it necessary to send a letter home to parents and students, and said he hasn't ruled out that possibility for this case either.

In his experience, Bexten said students get caught with weapons because they show it to their friends or classmates.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

He said if any student knows about a weapon at school, they should tell the first teacher they see.

"It is kind of a vote of confidence in the staff," Bexten said. "We're asking us to make the school safe, and we're here to do it. We take that respect very seriously."

He said there are nine security cameras on campus, five security guards patrolling the school and all assistant principals are administrators in the hallways during passing periods.

One security guard also drives around the campus during passing periods.

One administrator is watching the security cameras during periods.

"I have never felt unsafe coming to school," Bexten said.

In a Register poll of 251 students 70.5 percent of students had seen a gun, knife or both in the school building. Of those students 58 percent said they feel safe coming to school every day.

Bexten said he thinks the administration does good job securing the building and campus. He takes suggestions to make the building safer very seriously and it is continually a discussion at principal advisory and faculty meetings.

"When we are vigilant watching students it does two things," he said. "It reassures students that we are watching and looking out for them and it discourages inappropriate activities."

There are perceptions about inner-city schools, he said, but he has never heard anything specific to Central.

He said everyone talks about the time when a gun was found at school, but no one ever is excited about the fact that nothing has happened in the building for three years or that there has never been any shootings or wide-spread violence in the building.

Public relations director for Omaha Public Schools (OPS) Luanne Nelson said a security policy is different for each school.

"Most administrators want to be out and visible during the mornings," Nelson said. "Things like that are constant."

She said each school has a policy, but it is up each administration to deal with security.

Security guard Frank Zavorka said at the beginning of the year two shots were fired at the security van when he was driving it.

Two people were attempting to steal a car and he pulled up behind them. He said they fired at the van or in the air, but nothing was hit.

"I did prevent them from stealing the car," Zavorka said.

He said the police came, but they never found who the people were. This incident was before the security vans were properly identified.

He said since then all the vans now have OPS Security on the side and no car has been stolen. He said the recent issue with a student bringing the gun to school was a great example of students looking out for each other.

He said when a student found out someone was carrying a gun, he went and told an administrator.

"Everyone is keeping an eye out for each other," he said.

Zavorka said Central has the best security of any OPS school. Out of 2,600 students, there have only been two guns found in three years.

"Out of all these students, it's only a handful of students who cause the problems," he said.

There is gang activity in the school, he said, but the security force has it under control. He said it is because of the report the security has from students. He said he gets along with the students and they trust him. This way, he said, he has been able to stop fights before they happen.

"We get wind of brewing activity," Zavorka said. "They (students) don't want to see violence in our school either."

Faculty, students remember Haywood for her humor, soft-spoken voice

'HAYWOOD' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

and out. "Part of what we want to do before we announce it to the students is make sure we have a response team," he said.

This team, which consisted of two district counselors, an independent therapist as well as counselors from the guidance office, was prepared quickly, ready to help with Haywood's death just an hour after school officials were informed.

Vicki Orsi, a licensed therapist from Methodist Hospital, was in her office at Central when the news arrived.

Molyneux, who knew Orsi was present for the day, decided to call her up for some needed assistance.

The other two individuals, Ann Naylor of the Omaha Public Schools' (OPS) employee assistance program and Marie Kovar, a psychologist from OPS, were asked to assist more than just the students.

"The district recognizes that when there's a loss in a school, that it's not only the students that are affected, but the staff as well," Molyneux said.

Naylor, the counselor who spoke with the cafeteria personnel immediately following the news, works primarily with OPS employees to ensure that everyone involved is able to handle such situations.

Once the response team was in place and all the counselors in the school had been notified of

what happened, Bexten felt prepared to tell the students.

Junior Steve Nightingale already knew what happened after a staff member informed him earlier that day.

He didn't take the news very well, and found comfort with the cafeteria and nursing staff in dealing with the situation.

"I cried about it. I was very upset," he said. "It feels like she's on a long vacation, but the reality is that she's not coming back."

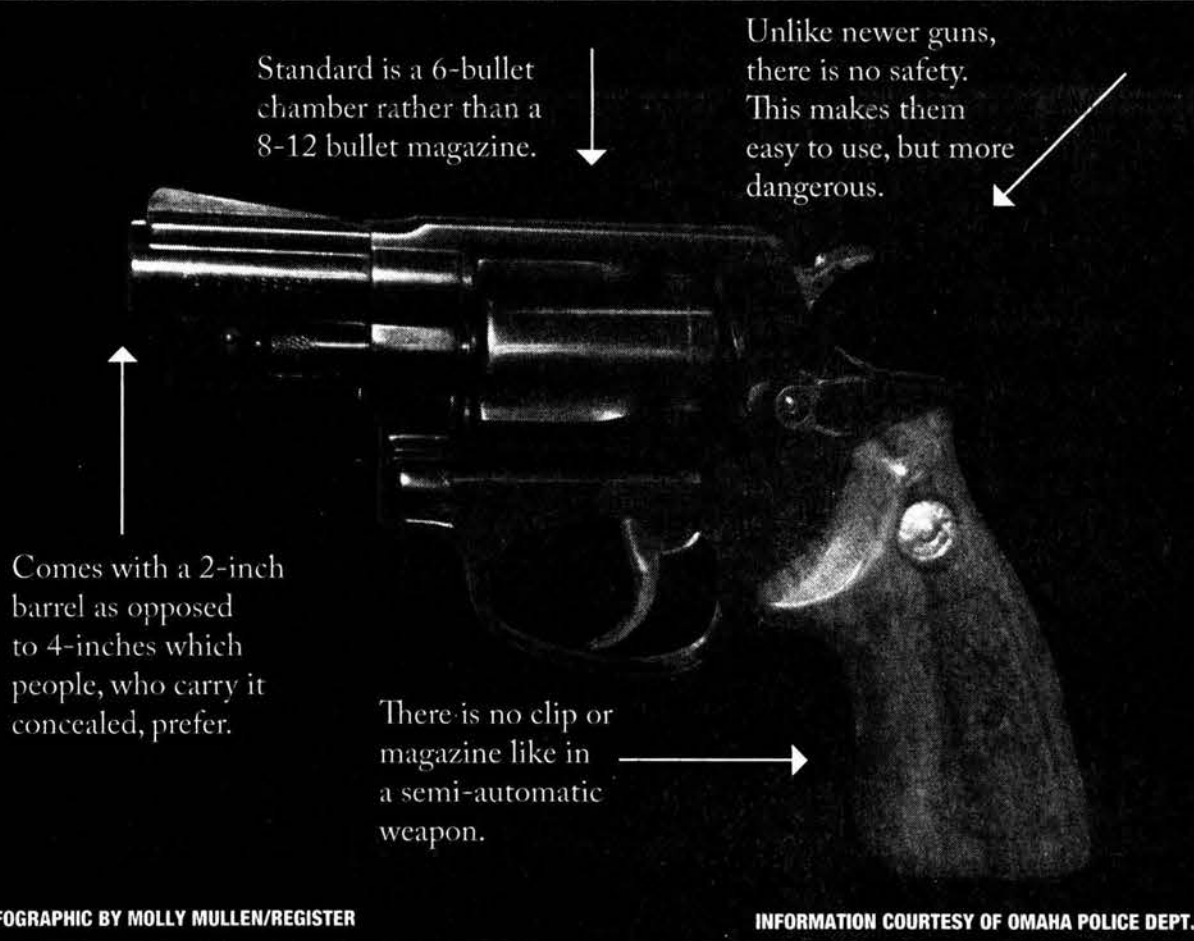
Nightingale was not happy about how he found out. He said school officials knew about it for too long before they notified students.



HAYWOOD

.38 Taurus Special

This is the type of gun found on a freshman Friday, Jan. 20.



INFOGRAPHIC BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

INFORMATION COURTESY OF OMAHA POLICE DEPT.

GUNS AT SCHOOL

Senior "John Doe said he carries a gun to school on a regular basis. He said he knows half a dozen people who bring them daily, and around 40 who have brought them ever.

He said he brought one of his seven guns to school for protection. Doe bought them off the street because he said gang members needed to carry them.

Doe is a member of the Murder Town Gangstas (MTG) 19th St.

"What Central needs is metal detectors," Doe said.

He said if there were metal detectors there would be no way he could bring a weapon, and he didn't think anyone else would bring one either.

He said even with the high security that already existed in the building, most people could avoid getting caught. He has been searched four times. He said when he thought it was a

possibility he could get searched, he would give the weapon to girl to hide in her locker, so he would appear to be clean.

However, that doesn't mean Doe has never been caught. He said he was caught with a 9 mm in summer school, but because it wasn't a regular school year he couldn't get expelled or anything. He was just kicked out of the program.

Doe never intended to commit violence in the building, he said. He said he just needed to make sure people knew he was protected.

A gun salesman at Midcity Jewelry and Loan said he sold a new revolver for around \$300. He said revolvers were popular with people who knew nothing about guns.

"They don't have a safety on them, and you don't need to worry about a clip or anything," he said.

The easy and dangerous thing about revolvers, he said, is anyone could load the bullets and start shooting.

She was always happy."

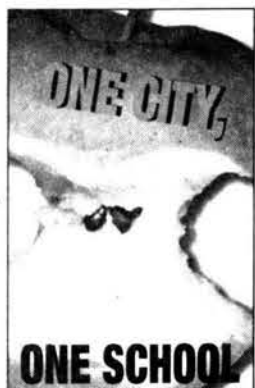
In addition to the students, teachers and staff at Central, Haywood left behind a son, 21, and a daughter, 20.

To help her family members with general expenses, the cafeteria staff opened up a collection available to students and teachers.

The donations, ranging in size from pocket change to large sums of money, were made in containers in the lunch lines or sent to the kitchen office.

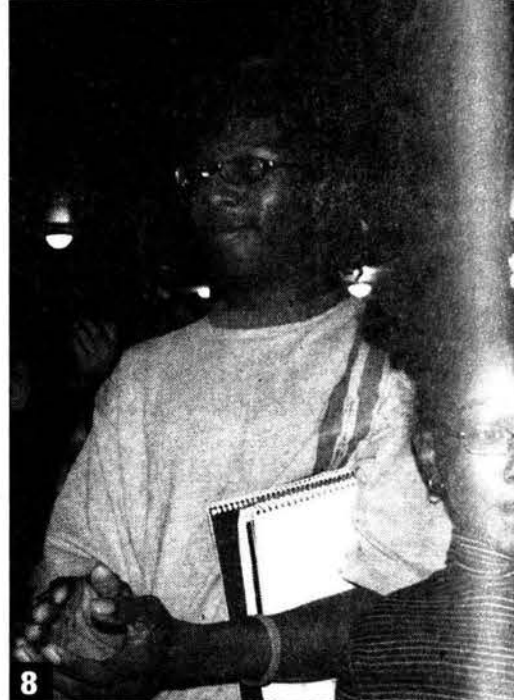
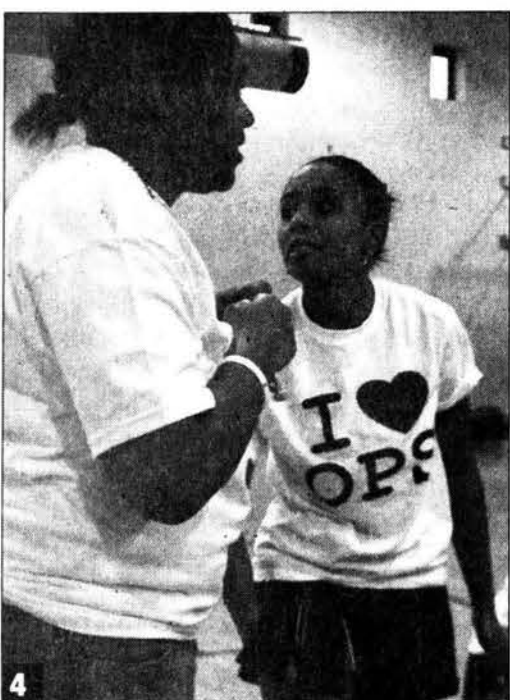
By the time cafeteria workers ended the collection and tallied up the money, \$553 had been raised.

Even after the containers were removed from the lines, \$30 was received from teacher donations.



PLANNING FORT

Officials from Millard and Ralston school districts have come up with alternatives to the 1891 law saying Omaha Public Schools should grow with the city. OPS superintendent Dr. John Mackiel said the law is outdated and doesn't reflect the current reality of the city's growth.



1. Rev. Larry Menyweather-Woods was one of the speakers at the OPS rally. He said the suburban schools were not in support of One City, One School District because they were afraid of the unknown. 2. Affinity Council helps prepare sandwiches for the meal served before the speeches and other events started. 3. A member of Northwest High School's color guard stands in front of children from Skinner Elementary. They said the "Pledge of Allegiance" in both English and Spanish. 4. Seniors Morgan Conley (left) and Keaira Goodwin talk before the basketball game against Millard South. The "I Love OPS" T-shirts were the subject of some controversy, when Millard Athletic Director said some fans were offended. 5. The head of the Coalition, a Millard parent, attends a town hall meeting about One City, One School. 6. A member of the Bellevue West Steppers performed for the OPS rally. 7. A singer from North High school sings for supporters of One City, One School District who came to the OPS rally. 8. Junior Lewis Culliver applauds at the end of the OPS rally. He said he wasn't planning on going to the rally at first, but when he got there he realized how big of an issue One City, One School was.

PHOTOS BY CLAY LOMNETH, ZACH PLUHACEK AND MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Alliance forms to put together first OPS rally

BY MOLLY MULLEN

"One City, One School is the most important civil rights issue of the 21st century," Affinity Council chairman Ben Gray said.

He was standing on the stage in Central's auditorium for the first Omaha Public Schools (OPS) rally Saturday, Jan. 14.

The audience was filled with middle and elementary schools students who would perform for teachers, school board members and members of the newly created Affinity Council.

The Affinity Council was formed from the African American Achievement Council, the Latino Achievement Council and the Native American Achievement Council.

"We're in this to win it," Gray said.

The theme of the event was "What is at stake?" The obvious focus was integration of West

Omaha and creating equal opportunities for all school children.

Although not present at the rally, Westside middle school parent Tom Blair said he took offense to the comments from OPS officials and parents, feeling that they were calling him a racist.

"I look in my 1st grader's class and see African American students," he said, "and it brings me great joy."

He said it was certainly not his feeling at all that his school system or the others in the coalition were racist.

He said race was not the reason he was opposing One City.

Junior Lewis Culliver attended the rally with his little sister who was singing in the Skinner Elementary School choir.

"It was more than I thought it would be,"

Culliver said.

He was not sure about how to feel about One City, One School.

He said he didn't know if OPS should force other schools to be in one district. He said, however, the schools in OPS did need improvements and more money. Among many common trends in the speeches given, one of the most common was support for superintendent Dr. John Mackiel, who was sitting in the front row.

"Dr. Mackiel knows if you take a position against the majority, you're treated like the minority," Gray said. "I want you to know that if we could withstand it, so can you."

He said the situation for OPS looked lonely until the rally. He said the coalition had meetings and rallies since the summer and this was the first time OPS supporters got together.

Gray also mentioned the importance of the

school board talking about the issue. School board president Sandra Kostos-Jensen said Mackiel and the school board took immediate action on the problem when they realized there had been a law on the books since 1891 giving OPS the right to annex schools within city limits.

"Thank you for showing compassion for our children, and when I say our children, I mean all children," Jensen said.

John Pan from the Omaha tribe said Omaha means "those who go upstream." He said it would be very difficult for someone to go against the current, and it was much easier to flow downstream. He said going against the current took strength and determination.

"Our people have done that," he said, "and we're still here."

He said all the children live in one city so it is natural for them to live in one school district.

"You can't learn diversity from a book," said.

There were also performances from students, starting with the Skinner Elementary School Skyhawks. The entire auditorium sang when they sang "We Shall Overcome."

Later, the North High men's chorus sang "Let us March Until Victory is Won."

Rebecca Valdez from the Chicano Awareness Center gave her entire speech in Spanish being translated to English for most of the audience.

"Only 10 percent of Latinos are college graduates," she said, "and OPS is doing a remarkable job to change that."

She said she supported One City because it provided opportunity for everyone.

"There are no borders, no lines, no fences, nothing to keep us from a good education," said.

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THE FUTURE

ans to integrate their school districts while trying to erase
er. John Mackiel said he still supports a One City, One School District.

Millard AD says game turned into OPS rally

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Comments made by alumna Susie Buffett (of 1971) during the halftime basketball game at Millard South offended some of those present. At the home game in the new stadium, she expressed her feelings and support for

One of those offended was Millard South's captain Jon Lopez. Lopez said he realized there was no personal attack, but there was a different message. He said he knew Principal Jerry Bexten and good friends with him.

"Personally, I understand the whole issue of OPS expansion plan," Lopez said. He said this was an issue of adults bringing politics into a political issue and that was what was upsets about.

"It's just a matter of let's let kids be kids," he

The issue of whether or not the One City,

One School District issue should be brought up at athletic events was discussed shortly afterward at a monthly metro athletic director meeting.

The Millard Public Schools Director of Activities said he thought the politics should be kept out. He said this would make it better for all of the students and participants.

He said no conclusion had been reached, yet. Junior Sarah Maxey said it wasn't fair that there was controversy over Buffett's comments. She said everyone has their own opinion on the issue and should be allowed to express it.

Maxey said the issue of One City, One School was something that belonged in the schools.

"Millard students, they get to wear 'Millard Forever' (T-shirts)," she said.

OPS superintendent John Mackiel said he has had no conversations with anybody from Millard who complained. He was present at the game and said all he saw was a benefactor of the school expressing her pride and showing support

of Central.

Mackiel said when looking at what happened at the game, one must also look at what the Coalition has done to get their views across.

Lopez said when there are meetings or rallies put on by the Coalition, students are not informed. He said they might have parents who know people who are going to them and that is how they can find out and get involved.

"Ultimately, the kids will just have to keep rolling with the process of learning," Lopez said.

Lopez said he and others from Millard wanted to put everything behind them.

Buffett said she did not see anyone was angry at the game but heard there was a problem the day after. She said she would have made her speech no matter who Central was playing. Originally, she was told Central was playing North for the first game and she would have made the same speech.

"What I said was not about Millard," Buffett said.

She said the excitement wasn't even really about who Central was playing, but that the team finally had a gym to play in and a new lobby.

Stories she had read and seen seemed to say the T-shirts were the big issue, so she wasn't sure what Millard representatives were really mad at. At the first school board meeting in June, Buffett said she saw groups of Millard students and parents wearing pro-Millard T-shirts.

"Is this new that now we're going to keep kids out of this?" she said.

Buffett said the One City, One School issue was something that would have a huge effect on all students and they should be allowed to talk about it.

"Why would your group not talk about it?" she said.

The communications director for Millard Public Schools Amy Friedman said lots of people from Millard who went to the game were offended.

Crowd behavior stifles discussion at open forum

'ONE CITY' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

Since June 6, the date when OPS passed its resolution to annex a number of schools in the Millard and Ralston districts, parents, students and educators from across the city had been in tense radiation.

Before the start of the rally, over a thousand concerned representatives from both sides could be seen flooding in to the day Inn Central ballroom. They wore T-shirts with the names of their schools, loudly debating over the murmur of a crowd filled with energy.

One parent, Patricia Crum, said she feared for future students because of the changes planned.

"When you destroy something excellent," she said, "there are no guarantees that something better could take its place."

Crum is the mother of two Millard alumni.

Millard Public Schools (MPS) is a member of the Coalition, an unofficial group containing districts that feel threatened by and oppose One City, One School. Also including Ralston Public Schools (RPS), Elkhorn and Westside (WPS), the Coalition represents the organized and staunch opposition to the OPS plan.

Their voices among others were heard at the meeting that night, murmurs slowly sweeping across the crowd and escalating into yells and applause. The Coalition appeared to agree on one thing, that is, they wanted OPS out.

"I moved to Ralston because the schools were small," one parent said prior to the meeting. "It has the small-town atmosphere."

Staci Dorgan, a mother of four Ralston students three of whom attend a school that lies within Omaha city limits, felt strongly that One City, One School would have a negative impact on her community. She said 75 percent of RPS's tax base was located within Omaha city limits. Should the annexation succeed, that tax base would be gone.

"I think it (OPS) needs to be audited to begin with," she said. "I think it's a misuse of funds. If you were in the private industry and you were to spend money like that, you wouldn't have a job."

Dick Lundquist, a retired counselor from WPS, observed the emotional conflict.

"There was a huge amount of tension in the room," he said. "People were very passionate about how they felt about this thing."

All the anger, confusion, isolation and energy that were so evident in the concerns from both sides were to be addressed by the panelists, potentially to reach some kind of consensus.

"We all (the Coalition schools) feel deeply that the scenario that Dr. Mackiel is throwing out there...is terrifying," Lundquist said.

He and other district officials still felt there were things they could work on—needed improvements on both sides that were brought to the forefront during the meeting.

While OPS officials describe One City, One School as an attempt to level the playing field between districts, Mackiel said Millard and Ralston schools would not be negatively impacted in any way by the plan.

"All young people may choose, should they so desire, the neighborhood schools," he said.

Lundquist felt the program went well, especially for the number of people in attendance. He said he expected much more animosity than what was apparent.

"There were some stupid things that were said, but nobody called anybody stupid," he said.

Elizabeth Eynon-Kokoda, the attorney for OPS, was upset by the numerous outbursts in the crowd, especially after audience members were asked to stop by those overseeing the discussion.

"I think it was a well-designed program," she said. "Sadly...some people weren't there to talk about the problems. I was concerned with the aggressive rhetoric rather than a discussion about solutions."

Expert talks to parents about plan

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

There were plenty of questions for John Linsey, the lobbyist for OPS at the Jan. 10, Parents, Educators and Pupils (PEP) meeting and he seemed to have all the answers.

For the past several years, Linsey has served as a conduit between OPS and the Legislature, which recently began a 60-day session. One of the key topics in the session was expected to be school district boundaries, primarily those regarding the One City, One School District plan.

In the plan, which was brought about last year by the OPS administration, the state's largest district claims its right to control schools in suburban districts that exist within the Omaha city limits. Started as an argument over money-per-student ratios within the district, the problem has since escalated into a battle over integration and diversity.

Linsey has been closely following One City, One School, and was asked by PEP officials to provide the organization with accurate information to clear up misunderstandings and to specify just what was happening with the plan.

The attendees of the meeting, held in the vocal music room, were especially interested in the particulars of what was being considered by the Legislature: who was taking what sides on the matter, who wasn't taking sides at all and, mostly, what interested individuals could do to have their input heard by politicians.

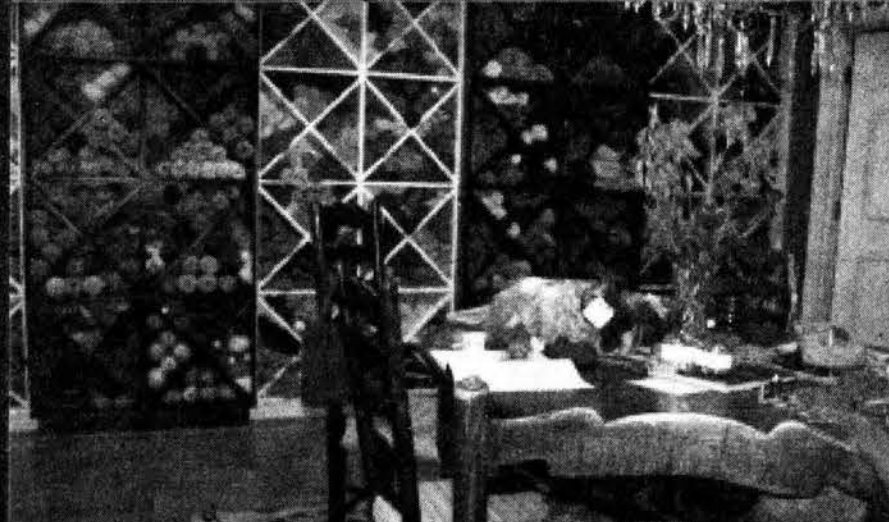
Linsey began by discussing the specific legislation he had seen under consideration. The proposals ranged from being straightforward ideas to complex plans that could take several years and hundreds of government officials to put in to action.

All of them, however, were set to change the current state law, which gives OPS the right to control public schools within the city. Should the law be changed, Linsey said, the Legislature would be providing "an exception to the general rule in this state."

The majority of state senators, he said, have yet to express opinions on the matter, leaving the decision over district boundaries mostly undetermined. It is, Linsey said, largely up to the parents, students and other people involved to determine what will happen.

He encouraged attendees to write letters to their representatives and tell others about the conflict, taking on a pro-OPS tone.

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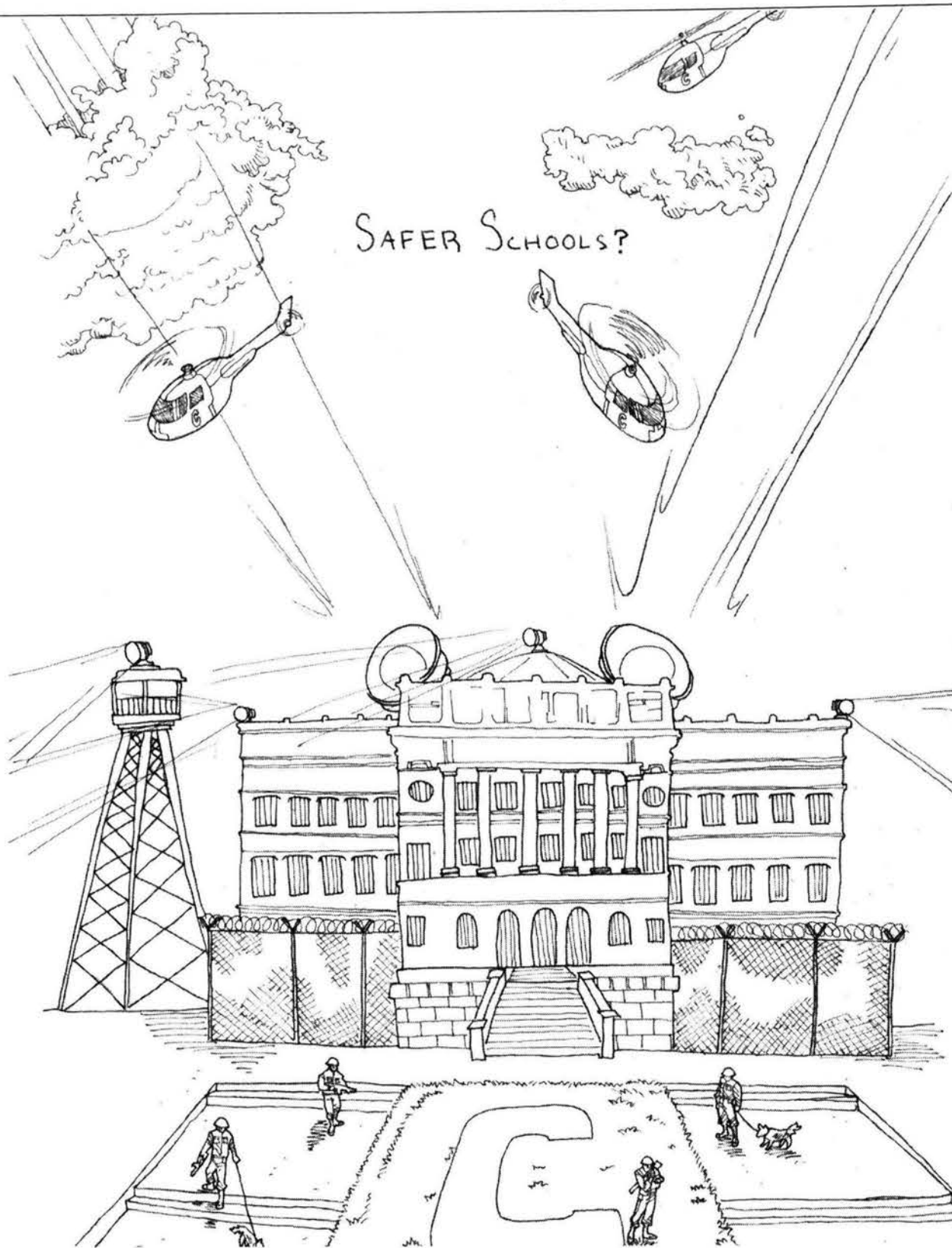
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EDITORIALS

Jerry Bexten
PRINCIPAL
Matt Deabler
ADVISER
Molly Mullen
EDITOR IN CHIEF



Schools should never turn into prisons

Central is a safe school, get over it. Simply check the numbers for proof. Do you want to go to a school that has a prison-like atmosphere, where metal detectors and lockdowns happen multiple times a day? Of course not. This approach is not needed at this school in any way, shape or form.

However, a few misguided students do sometimes bring weapons and other harmful things to school. Unfortunately, it's almost unavoidable. The number has been very small at this school over the years. Again, check the numbers.

Students at every school in this state bring weapons, from nail files, to knives, to 9 mm handguns.

These students are not being sufficiently punished, and that is out of high schools' hands. More has to be done in the courts and in the homes. Where are the parents and guardians? There are around 2,500 students who walk into this building every day, and the administration somehow keeps order.

At Central alone there are nine security cameras and five security guards, one of which patrols the campus in a van to make sure no one is entering the building or breaking into cars. We also have a school resource officer who is trained in dealing with firearms and making arrests.

What else do people need? There can't be security guards at every entrance. There can't be metal detectors. Students don't want to walk into Fort Knox every day.

This is a place to learn. The great thing about Central is the students know they are safe. The security guards know everyone's names. The students don't have to constantly be reminded about the security measures.

However, the freshman who was expelled for bringing a pistol will be able to return to another OPS school in one calendar year. That is scary. Maybe this part of the equation should be changed. The problem is where would you put this kid?

The fact of the matter is, there has never been a shooting at Central. A gun hasn't gone off in the building. There has never been a letter sent home to parents explaining a stabbing of a faculty member.

What more can be done? If anything more is done to try and prevent crime students would complain more about privacy being infringed.

The ID badges were a step in the right direction, if only students would take it seriously. If nearly half of students don't feel safe coming to school then why doesn't anyone comply with the new ID procedure? Would adding more security like metal detectors help anything? No!

Students and parents everywhere would go crazy. It would bleed out all of Central's nonexistent funds. It would make parents afraid to send their children to what is referred to as an academic powerhouse.

Then there would be no students and no money. Not to mention give an easy hit to the West Omaha parents who already think all downtown (anything past 72nd St.) students are thugs and gang members.

If people are scared of intruders then why don't they wear the tag that separates them from the outside world?

This administration is doing everything it can to keep the students, faculty and staff safe.

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff

05-06 REGISTER

The Omaha Central High School Register seeks to inform its readers accurately as to items of interest and importance.

The staff strives to uphold the principles of journalism in all its proceedings.

The Register is a member of the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA), the Nebraska High School Press Association (NHSPA), the Journalism Education Association (JEA), Quill and Scroll and the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA).

The Register is a ten-time Best-in-Show winner for large newspapers at the JEA/NSPA national conventions in San Francisco, Boston, Phoenix, Dallas, Washington D.C., Seattle and Chicago.

The Register staff is also responsible for the publication of the Edge feature magazine, which has won a first place Best-in-Show award for specialty publications.

The Register has won multiple NSPA Pacemakers.

The Pacemaker is considered the Pulitzer Prize of high school

journalism. It has also won many Cornhusker awards from NHSPA.

It has been awarded Gold and Silver Crowns from CSPA for its overall work.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the Register staff and do not necessarily represent the opinion of Central High School or its faculty. Signed editorials are the opinion of the author alone, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of Central High School or the Register staff.

Letters to the editor are encouraged.

They can be sent to the Register at 124 N. 20th St., Omaha, NE 68102 or via e-mail to Central.Journalism@ops.org.

Letters must include the author's full name and grade. The use of pen names is not permitted. Unsigned letters will not be printed. Letters will be edited for length, clarity, taste and accuracy.

Misrepresentation of fact will not be considered.

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Teen concerned with parents over 'One City'

I honestly don't know the real reason why OPS wants to annex Ralston, Elkhorn and Millard, and I had no idea what to expect at the Town Hall Meeting.

No one in the room knew what to expect.

There were people from both sides, OPS supporters, and people from the other three districts. It seemed as if most of the audience was against OPS.

The meeting was a waste of time. Nothing beneficial occurred for either side.

It was all just for show.

Politics ruled the floor.

All of the members gave

a politician's answer. They

didn't answer the question

at all, they were just trying

to save their butts and make

themselves look good.

It was apparent that

Omaha Public School

officials were slaughtered.

The former superintendent

of Elkhorn dominated the floor most

of the time. She was aggressive, unlike

OPS superintendent Dr. John Mackiel.

The crowd could not be controlled.

Even when told not to applaud they did,

and for the most part it was for Ralston,

Elkhorn, Westside and Millard.

Nothing could stop them from

showing their support or dislikes.

People waited for a long time just

to get into the ballroom where the meeting

was held. The workers at Holiday Inn had to open up

another room because so many people were filling

the space.

People were rude the entire time.

When individuals in the audience asked

questions about the One City, One School plan,

they were rudely interrupted by both the audience

and members of the committee, mostly OPS

opponents.

When 2005 alumna Jessica Womack stood

up and explained why the OPS annexation was a

good thing, many of her opponents turned away

raising their voice so they wouldn't hear her.

"Once segregation is stopped, education

excellence and everything else will follow," she

said.

Womack said everyone is avoiding the

problem of segregation.

It was strange to see that so many people

had different perspectives on the annexation.

Some blamed money, others said it was best for

the children and others said it was to end all

segregation.

One woman I met was from Ralston. She

said the annexation was completely wrong. She

wanted to have a choice, and she felt as if her

parental rights were being stripped away.

Choice was one of the main issues concerned many of the parents from the three districts.

But, if it's about choice, then OPS is going to them and all students, who attend an OPS Public School.

It seems that they only want what they is best for their children. But, what about children who attend an Omaha Public School?

When the annexation finally occurs, will have the choice of going to any school city. All teens will have the choice of where they go for school.

It seemed that people were afraid because all the tension in the room. I asked an elderly woman what she thought about the meeting.

She turned out to be a Ralston teacher. I asked her all the questions I needed to, and she was very end I asked her for her name.

She asked me why I needed money go name and I told her I needed it so I could have a concrete source for my story.

It was apparent that she was scared, but scared of what? Of being fired because she was wrong?

"You can put me as a M teacher," she said.

The exact same thing happened with a who didn't want his name to be in the paper.

Even though this annexation will affect students the most, it seemed as if only parents cared. I met a mother of one high school senior when I asked them what their opinion was on the annexation, they said they didn't know. Then the mother started to push them aside and she wouldn't let them talk to me and give me good answers.

I was shocked.

"The meeting is so everybody's opinion," I heard, not just adults," freshman Joseph Bush from Ralston said.

His little sister, Marilyn, said she was there to show school support. It seemed they didn't want to say anything wrong because it might upset their mother.

The entire meeting was pathetic. Parents need to see past their selfishness and the OPS Public Schools representatives need to stop being so passive about this issue. This is the only problem can start to be fixed.

Are the adults really thinking about what is best for the children? Or are they thinking about themselves and money?

I think the answer is obvious.



IT'S MY TURN

A Column by Astrika Wilhelm



Student finally faces fear of aliens after a 10-year phobia

On Sunday, Jan. 1, I made my New Year's Resolution. The resolution, you may ask. To overcome my last fear, that was the task of the new year. Few things scare me, but when it comes down to it, aliens do. My tough assignment was to eliminate my fear of aliens, which has lasted over 10 years.

It all began when I was at a young age of 5. I remember it like it was yesterday. My father rarely let me stay up after bedtime, so when he did, I took advantage. I stayed up and watched "Close Encounters of the Third Kind". A chill went down my skinny, curved spine. In my silly craziness, I watched the whole thing.

After the two hours of gut wrenching, freaky, aliens bombarding the simple people, I never wanted to see an alien again. But even without seeing the extraterrestrials, I was afraid. So now was the time to do away with my last fear.

On Jan. 2nd, I began the toughest task of the last millennium. I started out by forcing myself to watch all the "Star Trek" series.

Yes, I know, not about aliens, but Leonard Nemoy is really freaky. I was easing myself in. I had survived the first day, but I felt little progress on destroying my fear. Tomorrow would have to be more drastic, I thought.

The following day I began my advanced workout. I went to the library and checked out every piece of literature I could find about aliens.

It took me about one hour to find everything I needed. The longest, most excruciating hour of my life. These pieces of fine literature ranged from "Aliens Attack" to "Alien Probing". I had to return them three days later, so I went straight to reading the books. In these books, the "scientists" explained about aliens and why they were here.

If you do not already know, they are here to steal our planet, probe us and keep us like pets. That will be great.

In the afternoon, for a special touch, I bought the UFO Cheerios from Bag'N Save. That everyday I woke up from my peaceful slumber would remember to keep to my difficult task. A box of crappy cereal kept me motivated during whole objective. For if I strayed, all would be lost.

The dream that night was freakier than the last. The aliens abducted me and took me to their secret lair in downtown Detroit. I know it's weird, but I fought them off with lasers that came out of my eyes. I guess in my dream I have superpowers. And while running I awoke in a panic. I had to rid of my fear.

Wednesday I gave myself a little rest. The tough mission was over. Every night to come, I slid under my covers, shivering, wondering if "they" were going to attack or probe me. Either way, I lose.

Then Thursday I watched the Holy Grail alien movies, "Signs", "Mars Attacks", and "Alien vs. Predator (AVP)". For over six hours I sat in my small half-closed eyeballs watch these horror movies. By the end, a round shiny tear dropped slowly from the corner of my eye. I was crying but exhausted. I would have to return the library books tomorrow, I said to myself, as I slowly drifted away into the most peaceful sleep I had gotten since I was a baby.

I woke up and my whole perspective on life had changed. I wasn't afraid anymore.

A light from the heavens drifted slowly down to me as the angels sang "Hallelujah". I was free. No more did the aliens control me. I dropped the library and walked in with the swagger I had before. I looked around the deserted library and saw the only person there, the librarian, eyes glared with anger.

I could see the steam roll out of her ears. "Those books are late!" she screamed.

Now I have a new fear: librarians.

Is there a librarian cereal?



FAKING A SMILE

A Column by Patrick Breen

OPINION

"I think that it's great that we finally get to play a basketball game at Central High. I can hang out downtown and come back and watch the game."
LaVel Sterling (11)

7A



FEARED BY THE SHADOWS

A Column by Stephen Wilhelm

Senior sees vouchers as necessary reform

Public schools are like blood-sucking leeches with an appetite for dollars from working Americans.

They were created to educate Americans for free, but instead, public schools have become a breeding ground for bureaucrats.

Without any competition, public schools have become complacent, selfish and cold toward students.

Public schools receive on average about \$10,000 per student, which is about a quarter of a million a class of 25. Where is all of that money going? If public schools are receiving millions of dollars, they must be held accountable.

Our schools are filled with bureaucrats, who don't care about the love to spend our money after day while they do as they please. Schools must be forced to prove by implementing the idea of survival of the fittest."

A recent example is the car industry where companies which are connected from what the public desires, bureaucratic and inefficient, are replaced by others, which understand what the public wants and how to maximize their limited resources.

An atmosphere of competition between public schools would force them to change and produce the same rate of education, which every American deserves and needs to compete with foreign nations.

If a school remains stuck in its antiquated ways, then it would see students run off to rival schools and wither away like a plant without water and be replaced by another, better school, which can get the job done right, the first time.

The solution is a statewide voucher system, which could be used at any public school, and a voluntary busing system for students, who want to attend a school that is not in their neighborhood.

Thus, all students would have the opportunity to attend the school of their choice, no one would be forced into anything, public schools as a whole would not lose funding and competition would force schools to prove they are worthy to teach

students and receive their vouchers.

To do this, all money for public schools in a state would be pooled together and then divided equally among all high school and elementary students through vouchers.

With such competition, schools would no longer be able to count on being handed money, which they neither have earned nor deserve, or be able to ignore the public's demand for the best possible education.

I don't want to be left in the dust because some student in another nation received a better education than me. Would you?

I have lived in about a dozen states and Canada and have attended just as many schools.

I have seen the decay of the schools system in America and experienced its horrors first hand.

I learned that if you want a good education, then you must fight for it and use the rules to your advantage. When I moved to the suburbs of Chicago, I chose to attend what was said to be one of the best schools in the area, Downers Grove South High School (DGS).

By the time I learned the truth about DGS, it was too late.

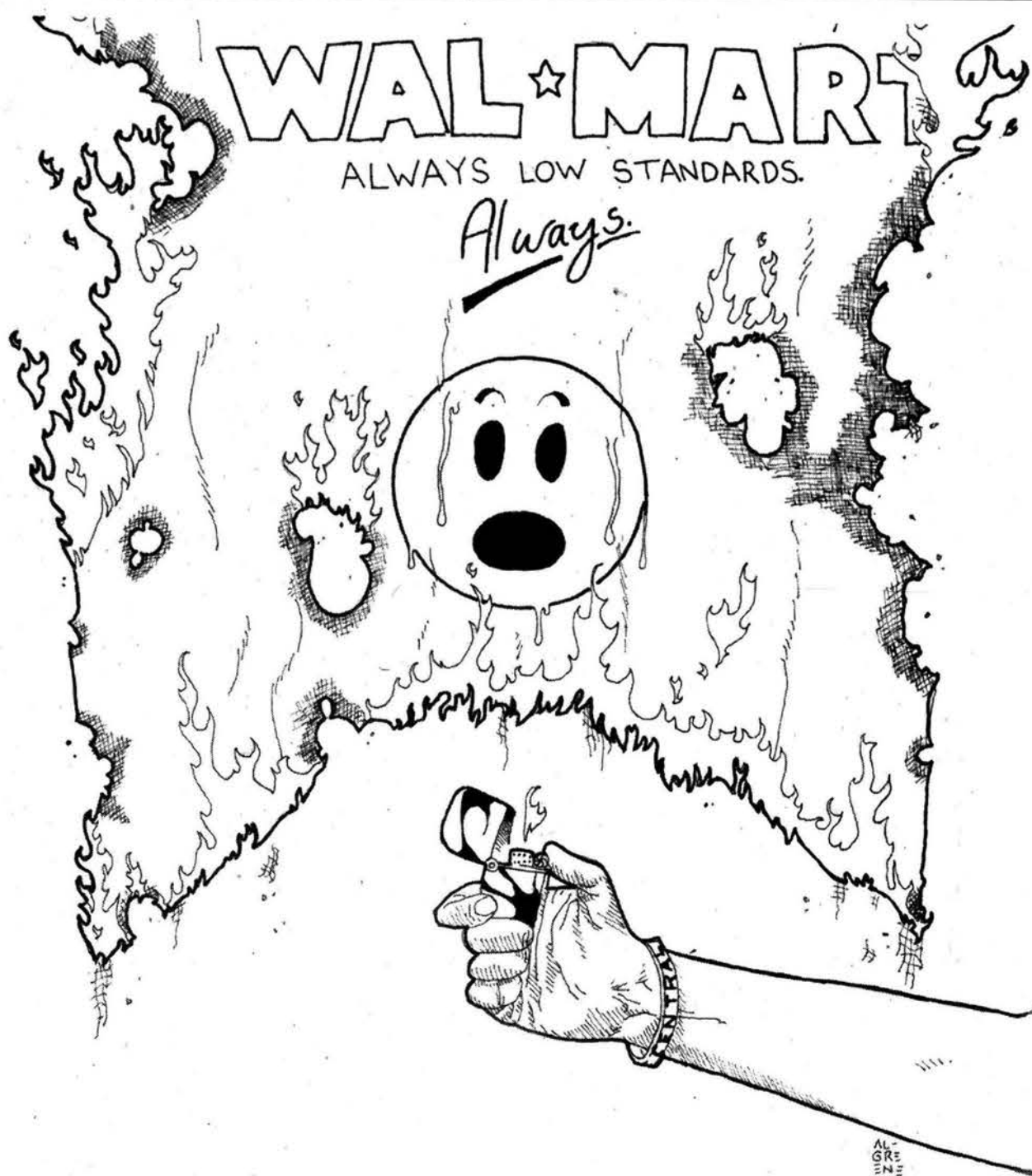
The school was having major problems for over a decade, but did nothing, as was the same for other public schools in the Chicago area.

Hundreds of parents and students complained year after year, but the school officials just sat on their rear and denied there was any problem like always.

Students often became angry because they were stuck in an education system where the school officials and teachers tuned out to be what students and parents said.

Incidents were never isolated, but widespread. Student tactics included anonymous, threatening letters, phone calls, slicing car tires of teachers and protesting in class.

The First Amendment gives all people the right to a redress of grievances, but schools act like they have the right to do as they please. In truth, they act like tyrants with students playing the role of the oppressed whose money is stolen.



Teens take down machine

On Buy Nothing Day, known as Black Friday to most consumers, a small group of concerned citizens decided to park their cars in Wal-Mart's parking lot and hand out fliers protesting the company's business ethics.

At least three students were involved in the demonstration, which was soon moved by law enforcement officials.

The protestors left Wal-Mart's parking lot, but continued to distribute their fliers and approach customers as they entered the store.

The protest was relatively small, at least on the local level, especially considering the amount of national effort that went in to planning it.

For any number of students to be involved in the community in this way, peacefully following laws or even using civil disobedience to make a change they think needs to be made, is a positive thing and should be encouraged in schools.

As times change, and adolescents regress to the 1940s sort of political acceptance and ignorance, the power to make change is slipping away as well. Things that were fought for fervently by protestors in the '60s and '70s are being pushed to the wayside by teens who "don't care about" or "don't know enough to have a say in" the government and their rights.

Many students go a step beyond apathy, and actually support more censorship.

In a recent study conducted by the University of Connecticut, more than one in three students thought the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it promises.

By giving up their rights or electing to not take advantage of them, young people are allowing the control of this country to slip from their fingers. The democracy students trust is no longer one that represents them. And it's not necessarily their fault.

These teens, many of whom do care about the way the government influences their lives, lack the organization and the drive to take control. They lack the foresight to realize how much the world has an impact on them and, as a result, how much of an effect they can have on it.

Many of these students fail to grasp the importance of involvement and never really experience the effects their protests can have.

To students, government is the name of a class, a class with tests, homework and a grade, like any other 45-minute chunk of learning. There is no extra drive for students to apply their lessons outside the school walls. Teachers and parents should be providing this drive for students who may not have it otherwise.

Congratulations to the few teenagers who can get involved and make change on their own. These individuals fit into the system well, but are by no means more exceptional people than any others.

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff

LETTERS, E-MAILS, FAXES, POLLS, CARTOONS

Home court brings advantages

Dear Editor,
I think it's great that we finally get to play a basketball game at Central High. I don't have to travel all the way to South Omaha to go to the game. I can hang out downtown and come back and watch the game. It is about time.
LaVel Sterling (11)

Teas instead of pop better for all

Dear Editor,
I just have a suggestion on another kind of pop or juice to put into the vending machines. I think that it would be great if we had some healthier juices. Tea would also be nice. Those diet and non-diet Lipton green teas and iced teas are really good, not to mention they are a lot better for us.
Mary McDermott (12)

Chair rule restricts friendships

Dear Editor,
I am fine with almost all of the rules in this school. But, there is one rule that I especially don't like. In my opinion and many other people's opinion, the eight people per table rule is worthless.
The people that I sit with at lunch are some of my best friends. I feel like this rule is limiting my friendship with other people. My table actually kicked people off because there were too many people.
The teachers won't even let people stand next to a table. I feel we should at least have 10 people per table. This way more people get to know each other.
Davis Sorvellon (10)

Finals before break help pupils

Dear Editor,
Finally, the dreadful finals are officially over and the new semester can begin. However, something has been bugging me

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor are gladly accepted in room 030, via Journalism@OPS.org or can be placed in Mr. Deabler's mailbox in the main office. Letters must be factual and contain the author's full name and grade. Incorrect or unsigned letters will not be printed. The use of pen names is not allowed.

about finals. I believe they should have been before Winter Break.

If the finals had been before the break, my friends and I would not have had to complain about forgetting everything that we have learned throughout the semester. Despite me getting pretty good grades on my finals, some of my friends didn't do so well because some teachers were still handing out homework the week before exams.

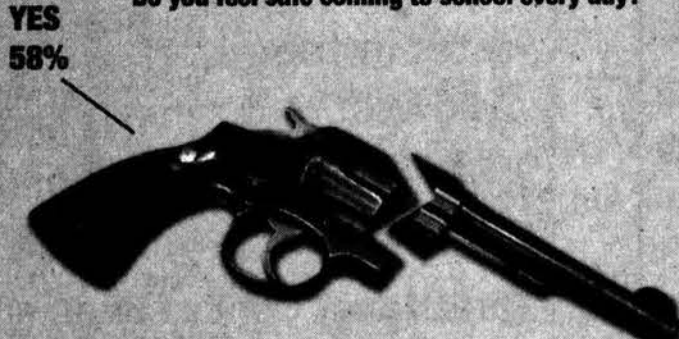
My cousin in Arizona had her finals before break and could start nice and fresh. Most people that I talk to agree with me and believe that we should write to the superintendent and ask why we don't have them before break. We should ask if we could have them before break, and then start fresh.

Is this a good idea or are we just too demanding?

Brittani Avery (10)

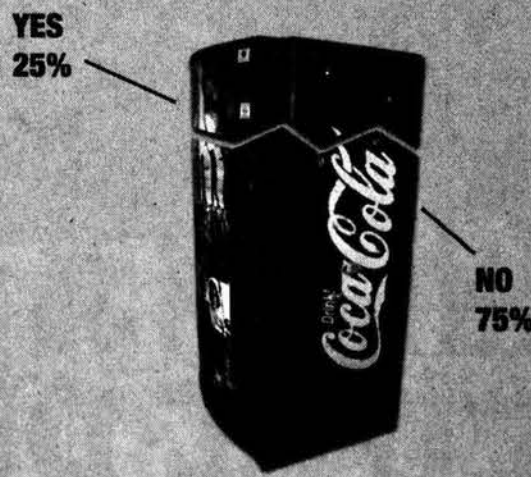
STUDENT POLL

Do you feel safe coming to school every day?



STUDENT POLL

Is the soda industry a reason why people are overweight?



Finals taken too seriously

Dear Editor,
Finals have been so overestimated. Everyone makes it seem as if you don't do extremely well, you just fail. Well, I see it differently.

If you try your best and actually study, you're bound to at least pass. I believe that finals are just a summary of what you've learned since day one until the end of the semester. Basically that is exactly what finals are all about, but most students don't see it that way. Most students want to ace every single final.

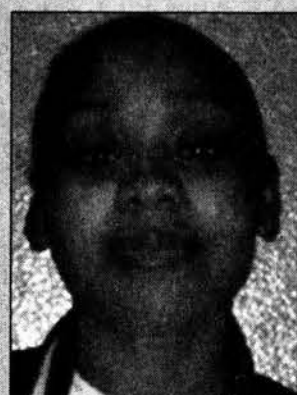
But when I took finals, they went pretty well. I think students should treat finals just like any regular test. Just saying the word "finals" puts so much pressure on us. If we see it as just a regular test we might do better, as if it was just a regular test.
Val Gipson (10)

REGISTER YOUR OPINION

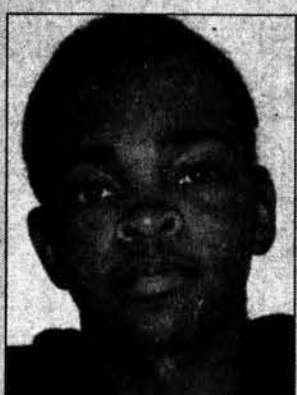
Should Wal-Mart be able to build in residential areas?



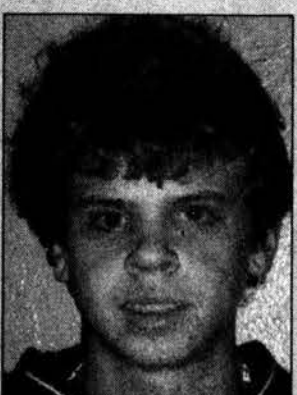
"Yeah, because when people don't have cars, they can walk."
Melisa Arias (11)



"Yeah, because it's closer and easier."
Laketa Plater (11)



"Yes, because they'll probably make money out there."
Deion Sherrod (10)



"I don't really care."
Aaron Noble (9)



"No, because it will get in the way of people's homes and their families."
Alex Meador (12)

Unexpected reality shines through typical Carrey

MOVIE REVIEW

'FUN WITH DICK AND JANE'
Starring: Jim Carrey

BY MOLLY MULLEN

"Fun with Dick and Jane" was unexpectedly good. It is almost embarrassing to admit, but it was more than just cheap laughs.

This movie could make anyone laugh. It had the obvious slapstick comedy where Jim Carrey would spray someone with a fire extinguisher, but there was also the darker side.

The whole movie was based off of an Enron-type occurrence.

Carrey got promoted to be the vice president of a major corporation called Globodyne and that same day the company went under.

It was something so real it was almost sad to laugh at. That's why Jim Carrey was the perfect man for the role. He could make someone cry and laugh in the same breath, and he did.

He perfectly portrayed the type of guy who was just not meant for a life of crime. When he tried to rob a convenience store he couldn't even retrieve his son's water gun from his pocket to do the job.

Within the 90 minutes of this film, Carrey managed to get fired, be deported, have his things repossessed and get even-



PHOTO COURTESY OF COLUMBIA PICTURES

Jim Carrey and Téa Leoni watch their friends get arrested after robbing a bank they planned on robbing themselves. They found themselves bankrupt after an Enron-esque swindle and turned to a life of crime. This was a surprisingly good movie, to see the always diverse Carrey do something slightly political was worth the price of admission.

with the corporation that built him up just to tear him down.

But he was just half of the duo. His other half, so to speak, was Téa Leoni. Both had a lot to live up to in this remake of the 1977 movie with the same title starring Jane Fonda and George Segal.

Leoni lived up to it, though. She seemed to have done something like this before. She's worked with comedians in serious roles before. Adam Sandler, Hollywood's "make 'em laugh" boy for nearly a decade worked with her in the comedy/drama "Spanglish."

If the two weren't taking their jokes from Fonda and Segal, they were definitely taking notes from Bonnie and Clyde. They were two seemingly good people stealing from people who were doing wrong.

For Carrey and Leoni, it was the big

corporation.

A great face was put to the corporation. Alec Baldwin played the CEO of Globodyne. He has that always recognizable voice, dark and scratchy, that paints him out to be a villain from the start.

Not in this pic, however. Through the problems of his corporation, he went down to his southern ranch hunting. This movie very possibly made up of pot shots at more people than just Ken Lay.

Student's obsession with literature makes Oscar Wilde a muse

One goal I have set for myself is to create a wardrobe of Oscar Wilde memorabilia.

I think it's entirely possible for me to iron a picture of his on a few T-shirts, perhaps write some quotes on a hoodie or purchase more pins to add to my collection.

I would love to be a walking shrine to my favorite writer because he deserves it.

To inspire myself to be a better writer I have pictures of him taped up on the wall behind my computer monitor and when I can't think of a good sentence, I'll stare at them and say to myself, "What would Oscar do?"

I believe with my entire being that no writer will ever

compare to Oscar Wilde and it would be a difficult task for anyone to even try and emulate him.

I was introduced to my favorite writer when I was reading a review for another book on the Internet and the reviewer compared an element of the story to Wilde's "The Picture of Dorian Gray."

I was familiar with the plot of the aforementioned novel and, almost on a whim, I went to the bookstore and bought a copy.

After I got home, I stretched out on the couch and cracked my fresh, new book to the opening page.

I didn't move for seven hours. After I finished reading it, I knew it was the best book I had ever read.

I could even go so far as to say it changed my life.

That may sound dramatic, but it's true.

Ever since that day I have read everything Wilde has ever written.

I have pins with his face on them and I wrote the inscription of his tomb on my backpack.

I like to discuss Wilde's works with others, but I have also noticed that I am strangely protective of it as well.

I don't like the idea of someone reading one of his books who I don't feel deserves to, or won't properly appreciate the genius of it.

My love of Wilde's work has produced several other pet

peeves. For one, I hate it when people have only read "The Picture of Dorian Gray," or went and saw "The Importance of Being Earnest," at the movie theater and think that this gives them the authority to proclaim whether or not the writer is brilliant.

This happened at the bookstore when I was buying a collection of his poems and the cashier said, "Oh, Oscar Wilde. I saw that movie about his book, I don't really like his work much," I asked if they had read anything of his and the cashier responded in the negative.

This may sound extreme, but when I die, I'd like to be buried with my complete collection of Wilde's works. I'm not cramped, but I'll be content.

It'll be tattered and yellow, but so will I, so it'll work.

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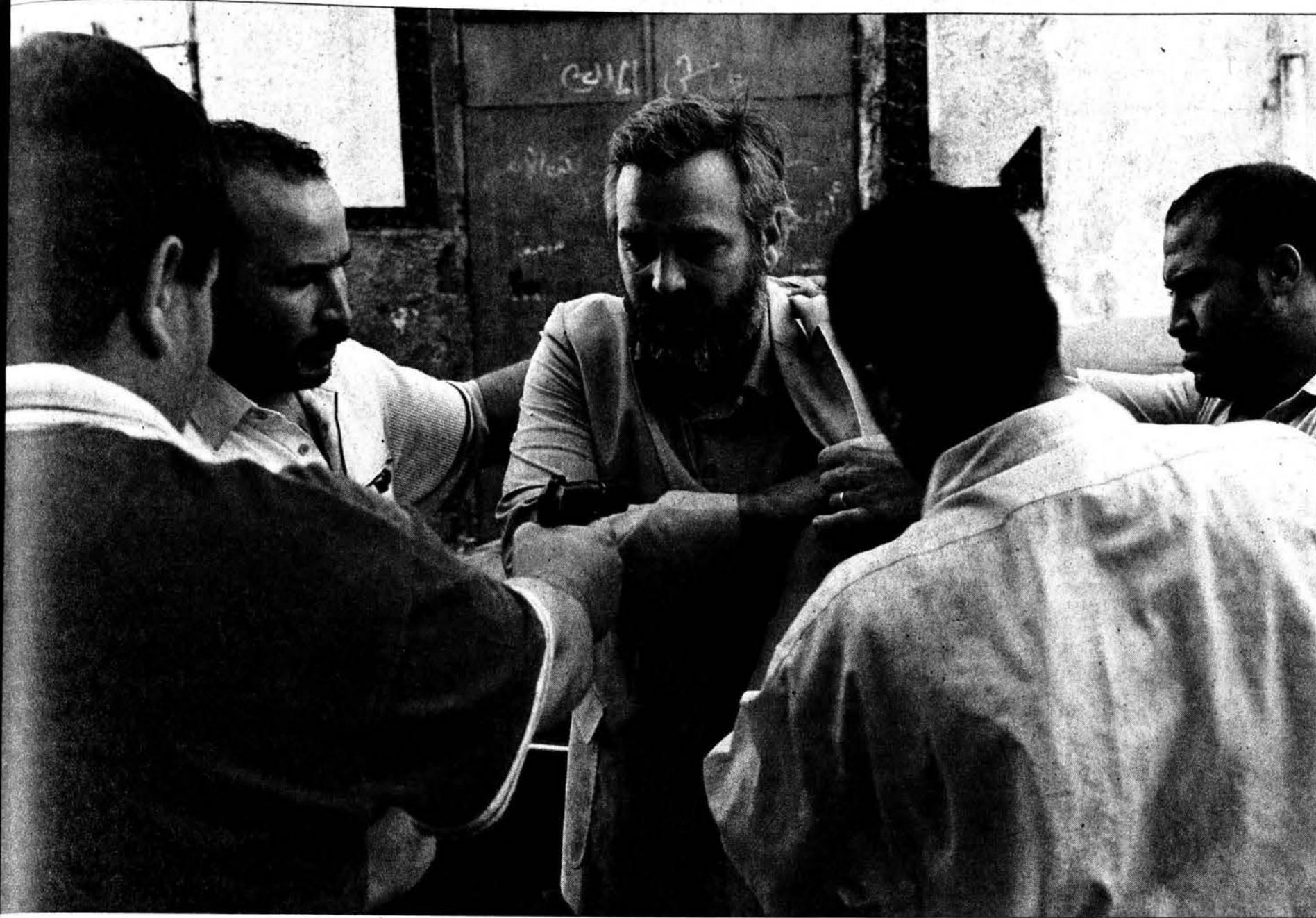


PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.

to recover CIA agent Bob Barnes (George Clooney) is confronted by members of the Islamic terrorist organization Hezbollah while trying to arrange a meeting with their leader. Clooney starred alongside Jeffery Wright and Matt Damon in a tense, interwoven political thriller that was very accusatory of the government and oil corporations.

Clooney gives insight to corruption

BY BOB AL-GREENE

been the greatest of political dramas, for activism-spurring and humanitarian messiness, could not achieve the solidity of

"Syriana" was based on "No Evil" by Robert Wright. Though the characters in the film were fictional, they represented the true mess in Baer's book, a chilling look inside the oil companies and the terror. The convoluted plot has been the complaint among reviewers, but a prepared and interested brain will have no trouble. The film opened as undercover CIA agent

Bob Barnes (George Clooney) returned from a mission in Tehran to find his superiors no longer valued him, and the system was shutting him out altogether in pursuit of their own interests, which mirrored those of the oil companies in the

region. Barnes' struggle for truth was at the same time disturbing and pitiful.

At the same time, the merger of two oil companies, Connex and Killen, required an investigation, headed by the true-hearted but naive

attorney Bennett Holiday (Jeffrey Wright). Holiday's involvement with the heads of the corporations exposed him to the darker sides of business and politics.

Meanwhile, Bryan Woodman (Matt Damon), an American energy analyst for a Swiss investment firm, attended the party of an Arabic king in an attempt to become the rising prince's financial adviser.

When tragedy struck his family at the party, circumstances gave him the job, and the opportunity to pursue his own obsession with money, distancing him from his family.

And finally, a world away, Wasim (Mazhar Munir), a young Arabic worker, looked for new work and a way to live in vain, and found himself drifting more and more towards terrorism through his religion.

The prince who began to employ Woodman, Nasir Al-Subaai, yearned for civil justice, reclaiming the pride of his people and his land that the United States had extorted for too

long.

Regrettably, America, be it the government, business, or intelligence community, was very much the villain of "Syriana."

Though the film scarcely mentioned real politics, it was difficult not to see the implications and references to the current presidency, and American politics as a whole back to the '50s. During that decade the CIA installed a Shah in Iran that 20 years later would lead to the coming of the Ayatollah, and in the '80s, America gave power and purpose to the likes of Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden.

"Syriana" punctured that veil, and will hopefully receive enough attention to awaken those in charge to the fact that we must change. For that reason it is more than a movie, and for that reason it should be seen.

MOVIE REVIEW



'SYRIANA'

Starring: George Clooney

Jackson creates impossible: a credible remake of 'King Kong'

BY BOB AL-GREENE

Remakes have been, as a rule, bad. Especially in recent years, when being churned out as quickly as they can be imagined, they have become a despicable cliché of Hollywood, so much that a good remake is as rare as it is unappreciated.

Luckily, there are directors like Peter Jackson, who still treasure the classics instead of trying to one-up

Jackson's spectacular new remake "King Kong" is the result of a filmmaker's love and appreciation of the source material, the tools at hand and his own capabilities.

The year was 1933. The Great Depression swept through America, putting countless people out of work, leading the vaudevillian Ann Darrow (Naomi Watts).

Luckily, she was just the Size 4 moviemaker Carl Denham, played by Jack Black, needed for his next picture.

As Denham set out for a mysterious destination in the South Seas with crew and scriptwriter Jack Driscoll (Adrien Brody) onboard, there was a pending sense of doom and tragedy.

There were stories of an undiscovered island covered in fog, with a red-foot wall so old no one knows who built it, and a creature neither more beast so monstrous it drives men to suicide.

When Denham and the crew came ashore, they were ambushed by natives and Ann was captured to be sacrificed to the great 25-foot ape.

The crew set out to save her, but they were soon to be exposed to horrors more terrifying than they could imagine, and it wasn't much better for Ann.

She had Kong to save her, however, and the two soon developed a relationship that left her devastated when the great ape was captured to be brought to Broadway. Once in New York he of course escaped again in search of her, but his doom was already sealed.

At over three hours, "King Kong" ran a little long, to be expected of Jackson after "The Lord of the Rings." It was, however, long in a way that it could be considered epic; the visuals and characterization that filled those hours enraptured the viewer.

MOVIE REVIEW



'KING KONG'

Starring: Naomi Watts

The digitized title character, played by Andy Serkis (who also appeared as the ship's cook) of Gollum fame, was an astounding achievement. His motions were appropriately gorilla-like, something severely lacking in the 1976 version.

The fight scenes and their fluidity also deserve acclaim; the stunning scene with Kong versus three tyrannosaurs (beating the original's one) was a high point and executed in the best possible way.

Kong rightfully stole the show, but the human actors did their best. Much of the talk has circled around Jack Black, comedy actor and rock star, half of the metal/folk duo Tenacious D. Yes, Black took a chance with this dramatic role, but he succeeded, and truly was perfect for the eccentric, egotistical Denham role.

Perhaps the only drawback was the viewer's constant awareness that it was certainly Black on the screen; when he fought giant insects at the bottom of a ravine, his wide eyes and frantic swinging and kicking comically reflected his past roles in movies such as "Saving Silverman" and "School of Rock."

Seeing Black that loose made the rest of his performance seem slightly restrained.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Jack Driscoll, played by Adrien Brody, faces off against the many horrors of Skull Island in pursuit of Kong. He also had to fight off man-eating bugs.

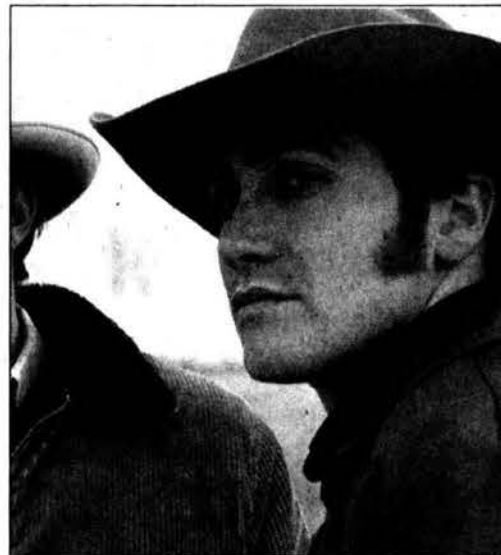


PHOTO COURTESY OF FOCUS FEATURES

Although actors like Jake Gyllenhaal were outstanding, the plot seemed incomplete.

MOVIE REVIEW



'BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN'

Starring: Jake Gyllenhaal

'Brokeback' only offers shock value

BY MOLLY MULLEN

This no-dialogue, no-ending look at homosexuality did not stand up to all the heat it got from Hollywood.

"Brokeback Mountain" had good moments, but still left the audience confused and depressed at the end.

This is not to say Ang Lee did not deserve his Golden Globe for the movie.

It was a good move to bring these serious issues to light, and he chose a story that was unique and controversial.

The movie was exactly like the trailer. There wasn't any more dialogue in the movie than there was in the preview.

An odd comparison would be to "Napoleon Dynamite." That movie started off as a short film until MTV turned it feature-length with about 45 minutes of wasted reels.

"Brokeback Mountain" started off as a short story. It seems like the writer took exactly what was written in the short story and added sweeping landscape shots and slow motion to make the movie hit that two-hour mark.

The script couldn't have been more than 50 pages. Heath Leger may have 20 lines in the entire movie.

There wasn't even a complete conversation between any of the characters. Some might say this added effect because no one ever came right out and said "gay" or "fag." They got desperately close and then cut to Jake Gyllenhaal misting up for a few seconds.

Even that 30-second sex scene everyone was talking about wasn't all that great. There was some shock effect. It was also a little surprising to see exactly how far they would take it.

But what the bigots, who refuse to see the movie, don't realize is that this scene is only one of three sex scenes in the film. The other two are between the main characters and their wives, and are more graphic and show more nudity.

What one has to wonder is why these stars chose these roles? Some might say the controversy would give them instant name recognition or a leg up in Hollywood.

These guys were already recognized.

Anyone who sees Jake Gyllenhaal automatically thinks "Donnie Darko." One can see his face on T-shirts in the hallway all the time. Anyone who says they haven't seen "10 Things I Hate About You" is lying.

This is a movie worth seeing just for the fact that it is a good conversation and debate starter.

It doesn't, however go down in the top 10 for classic dramas. It doesn't even make the top 10 for gay cowboy movies. That is filled up with every movie John Wayne ever made.

What do I know about me

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my best is
yet to come.

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PHOTO BY LAUREN CRIST/REG

Junior Andrew Wahl plays his guitar in tryouts for Band Aid. Wahl, who has played guitar for four years and is a member of the band VirginiaJoyce along with three other Central students, said music is to him what words are to a lot of other people. He said the hardest thing he's ever done is write lyrics, but junior Trevor Moore, also a member of VirginiaJoyce, said Wahl has become much more technical and better at writing songs.

Band Aid just one of many gigs for student guitarists

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

Every day junior Andrew Wahl grabs one of his five guitars and sits hunched over it for hours, picking away at the strings over and over into the night. He is always chasing a form of energy in his music, an energy that is all-important—almost an obsession.

"It's what it's supposed to do," he said. "Animalistic. You just feel so arrg, just going crazy. That's what I love about it."

Wahl has been working towards this feeling for the past three and a half years, since the time he first picked up a guitar.

Now considered one of the best guitarists in his age group, he has managed to surpass many musicians who have been playing for a much greater period of time than he has.

He understands, as someone with a musical mother, stepfather and father, the amount of hard

work and dedication it takes to be the best.

It all started at the end of 8th grade, when Wahl disappeared from his social life. He wasn't around to hang out with his friends like he had been in middle school, and no one really spoke to him, he said.

For that summer, he spent around eight hours a day in his house practicing tabs, reading music and running over the same basic tunes his teacher gave him.

"At first it was really hard. I hated going to lessons. I hated playing the guitar," he said.

His mom, a flute and piccolo player in the Omaha Symphony, told him to keep working at it; she knew his effort would pay off in the end.

When Wahl showed up for his first year of high school, he had changed almost completely. His hair was long and shaggy, he listened to completely different music and, most of all, he was good.

Junior Trevor Moore has known Wahl for four years, and was friends with him at around the time he started playing guitar.

"His style has changed a lot," Moore said. "He's gotten a lot more technical. He writes songs a lot better."

Moore and Wahl are both members of VirginiaJoyce, a hardcore band featuring four Central students and a vocalist from Benson.

Wahl also plays in an acoustic band, Hello Miss, with the bass player from VirginiaJoyce.

Even though he is also familiar with jazz and flamenco guitar, two more difficult styles of music, Wahl has chosen to devote his time to writing hardcore songs.

"I love everything about jazz," he said. "You have to be really talented to play it...but there's nothing like playing for a crowd of people. There's nothing like the energy you get. I'd really like to ride this thing out and see where it takes me."

Whether or not he keeps playing with the band after high school, Wahl said he was almost certain he would be involved in music as an adult.

He believes he has found his "niche" in the guitar, one of the seven instruments he has played, but he still wants to learn more, whether it's in college or not.

"I'm planning to take a year off (after high school)," he said. "If this band thing works out, I'm not planning to go to college."

He liked the freedom in writing his own music, especially given his experience in jazz and musical improvisation.

Wahl started out by working over improvised riffs and preparing them to show to his friends.

"What I try not to do is to go listen to music to try and get inspiration," he said. "I kinda just go down into my basement, that's where I have my little amp, and I just start messing around. It just kinda comes out."

Wahl said music, to him, is like words are to a lot of other people.

He was torn between sticking with writing for instruments, something he is comfortable with, and attempting to write meaningful lyrics to his music.

"War bad. Peace good. Ooo, me like pink."

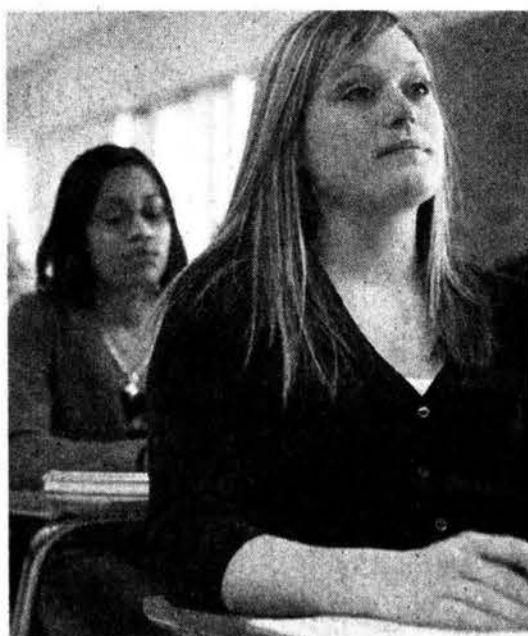
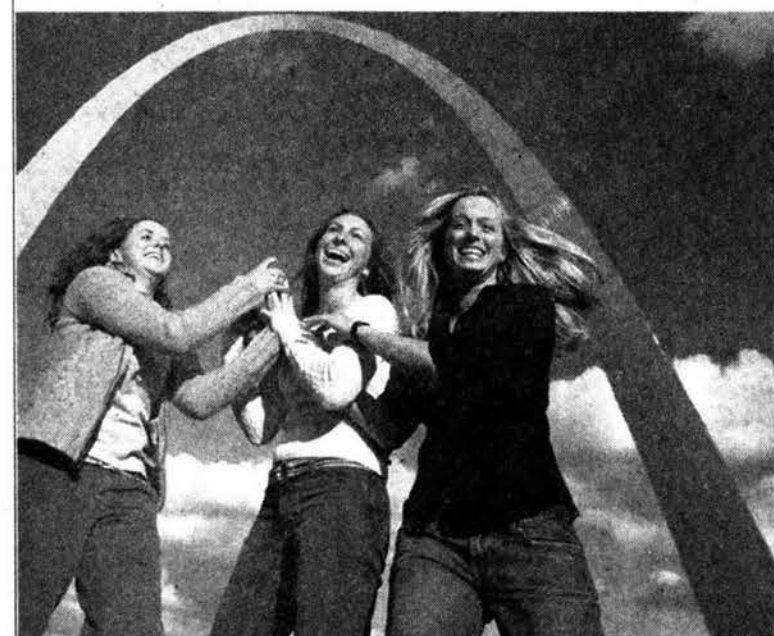
(Writing) lyrics...that's just not for me, he said. "I've been thinking about taking vocal lessons. I found the hardest thing I've ever done in music is write lyrics."

The music he writes is already enough to pack venues. Hello Miss and VirginiaJoyce both played for large audiences in Omaha throughout the area, including Ted and Wanda's Rock, Caffeine Dreams, The Foundry and other small venues, as well as at friends' and members' houses.

"He's on the professional level," Moore said. "I don't think he's gotten a break, yet."



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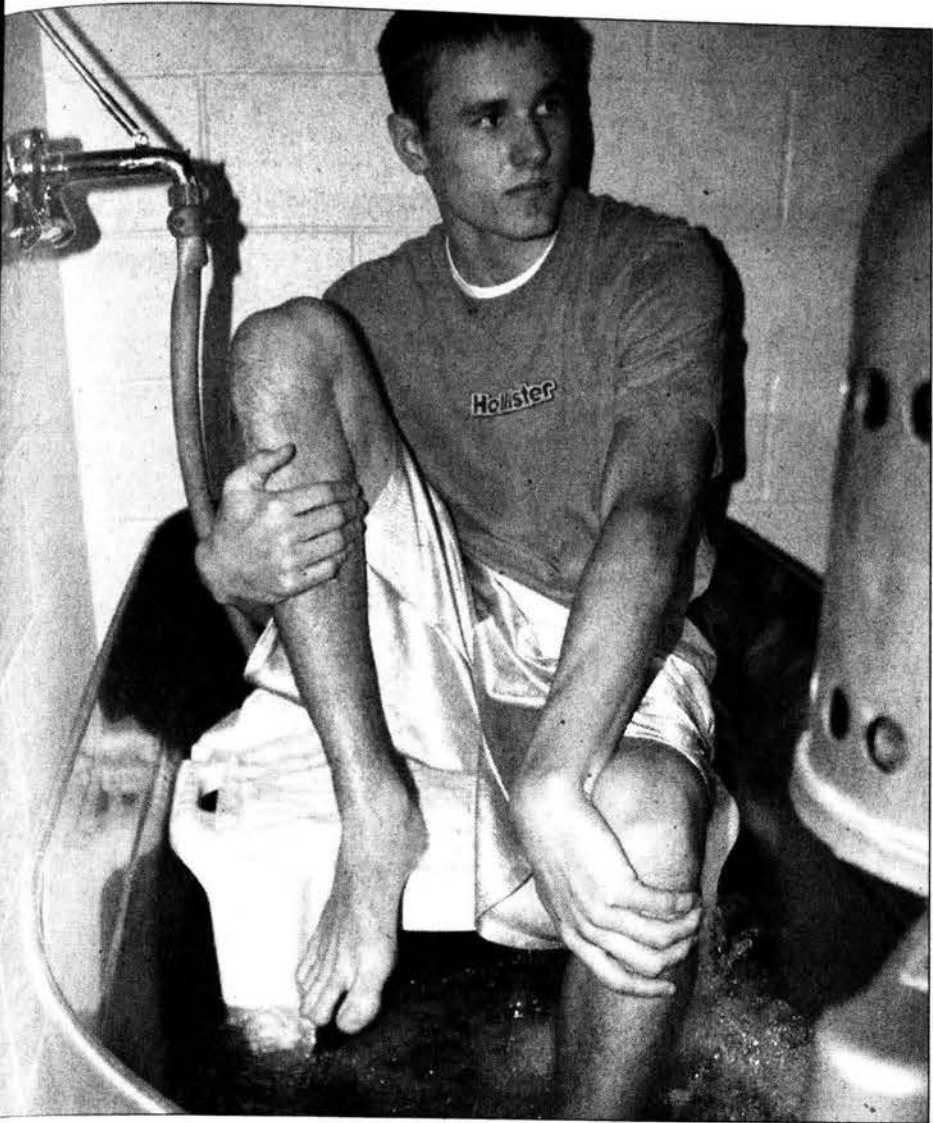


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Ben Kline soaks his injured ankle in an ice bath. He was injured during the Holiday Tournament and worked for weeks using first-aid and workouts.

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

The Eagles only all-tournament player for this year's Metro Holiday Tournament championship was also the only player to sit out of the first real home game in over 30 years.

Junior Ben Kline, who lead the boys team with 19 points in the semifinal victory against Bryan and made the Eagle's tie-breaking three points in the final minutes of the game, was unable to play against Millard South because of an injury.

In the championship of the Holiday Tournament, Kline badly sprained his ankle near the end of the game, playing against the then undefeated Bellevue West Thunderbirds who won 83-75.

"I got ready to jump and instead of jumping off the floor, I jumped off the guys foot and rolled it," he said.

When he landed, Kline collapsed on the floor under the basket, causing officials to stop the clock so he could be helped off the court.

The injury, a second-degree sprain, was still bad enough a week later that he was forced to sit out the season's first home game at Central Jan. 6.

The lobby to the new gym was finished which made the first home game in a long time possible. He also missed an away game against Prep the next day.

"I would rather play in it," he said, referring to the game against Millard South, "(but) a lot of the players said it wouldn't feel like a home game because we've been playing at Norris so long."

The injury came at an awkward time for Kline.

Coach Eric Behrens said he has been making vast improvements as an all-around offensive player and has become more of an aggressive presence on the court.

"He's always been a really good shooter and passer, but I think his ability to create his own shot and drive better has improved. He's also gotten (physically) stronger," Behrens said.

Kline said he was not concerned that being injured would hurt his recent growth as a player.

He knew what hard work and determination could do for his future playing time.

Once his ankle healed and he began to practice again, he said he would be back to his old self.

"You really can't be scared to play on it," he said.

For a few weeks following his spill, Kline worked with the school athletic trainers to fully rehabilitate his ankle.

They used a combination of first-aid techniques to keep it from getting worse and workouts to increase the strength and flexibility of the joint.

The new training room, located down the hall from the boys locker room on the lower level of the gym lobby, gives these trainers the space they need to treat Kline's injury, as well as help many other students in similar situations.

Head athletic trainer Suzanne Young said the new facility was a much-needed improvement over the old office, located next to the girls locker room.

That space, which was roughly the size of a large closet, could not meet the demands that were being placed on it, especially with the amount of storage.

"Football, we had guys lined up in the hall waiting to get taped," Young said. "Right now we have about six to eight people who come in for treatment or tape...and it fluctuates."

Paul Pennington, the former athletic director, was in charge of allotting the budget for the trainers.

He was largely responsible for the new facilities, as well as the updated equipment, including a new electro-stimulation and ultrasound machine.

A private donation earlier this year provided the training office with custom-fit braces and splints for students with injuries like Kline's.

After the completion of the room itself, Athletic Director Darin Williams sat down with Young and decided what additional equipment was still needed. Principal Jerry Bexten approved their proposal.

These other systems, including a bike and a treadmill, are slated to arrive later this year.

"We're just getting more equipment for here that we can use for physical therapy," Young said. "Between Mr. Pennington and I last year, we kind of had an idea of what we wanted. This is one of the nicest ones (training rooms), I would say, in the city."

In fact, the room compares to some college facilities.

"It's like a division III school training room," Williams said.

Behrens, who regularly sends 8 to 10 athletes for taping, wrapping and ice, said the space and equipment make healing athletes much more efficient.

"I'm sure Suzanne has a lot easier time," he said.

Score in final minutes not enough to save indoor game against Gretna

When it's too cold to play outside, the soccer team moves inside to stay in shape.

Indoor games are part of their training for the school's regular season.

Surrounded by protective glass, the Indoor Center turns into a place with an atmosphere of a hockey rink.

The audience at the indoor facility usually sees players on both sides slamming into each other into the protective glass wall.

It's really fun to watch.

These indoor games are good ways to see how players are going to be keys for the real game.

Girls from Central team got beat by Gretna 1-0.

The teams were lopsided in terms of shots on goal, and Central's girls spent much of the game on defense.

In the beginning however the teams seemed evenly matched. One team would take it into its offensive zone and then have to prepare to defend its own goal. This juggling back and forth did not produce a goal for a whole period.

Every once in a while there was a good push by a team and a shot on goal.

Gretna took more shots in the first period, but not by much. Central's goalie senior Allison Denton made quite a few impressive saves.

Central junior Elizabeth Garvin was a key player in the first quarter. She played rough enough to be a hockey player, checking girls into the glass for control of the ball.

Her passes were right on target and the Eagles moved down the field with ease. All of the girls seemed to know every corner of the walls and knew exactly where to kick the ball to reflect it to a teammate. Eventually though, that energy in the first quarter seemed to wind down.

The second period came around and there were extreme differences. Central's girls played defense a lot more than they played offense, and Gretna shot many more times.

Something clicked for Gretna in that period. The passes got them down onto the Eagles' defensive side before anyone could react.

At the same time, Central began to have problems passing. What was before clean, precise passes were intercepted from Gretna most of the time. The Eagles spent more time defending than trying to score.

At first, the teams still looked evenly matched.

Denton would prevent any scoring, send it down the field and wait for it to come back again. At the 9:35 mark, however, Denton let one by.

The goal didn't seem to have a demoralizing effect on the girls, and they at first kept playing like before. Garvin again showed skill while battling though defenders. Denton seemed back on track after making a nice save from a corner kick at 5:12.

Denton had a good eye and saved a lot of goals considering how many shots were taken.

It still came down to how much her teammates would help her out, which would improve as the game went on. Senior Katie Gorga was a key player in stopping the ball before it even got to the goalie box, but there were too many that still got by. The girls seemed to have trouble clearing the ball down the field. Staying on defense eventually resulted in another goal by

Gretna, at the 4:13 mark.

Central could be formidable when it was on offense, but that didn't happen often. As the period went on, the game got rougher. Most times when going for the ball, two or three girls ended up with their faces pressed against the clear glass.

The period wound down and with 30 seconds left, Gretna scored again.

Coming right into the third period, there were some great efforts by the Eagles to try and score. However, Central was just not reading Gretna's movements very well. Gretna could now execute perfect passes, whereas before the teams were evenly matched.

In the fourth period, Central players seemed to take a hint and decided to help their goalie. They stayed back by Denton and often interrupted the ball's path to a sure goal.

It was good effort that was a little too late.

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff

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SPORTS

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A HIGH SCHOOL PAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD

Eagles fall to Jays at Bird Cage

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

Something just wasn't quite right when the Creighton Prep Junior Jays beat the Eagles 50-49 in an away game on Jan. 7, especially considering the varsity boys basketball team outscored the Jays by 14 points offensively.

But then again, there was the 15-point spread in free throws.

The Eagles, who made only two of seven foul shots the entire game, failed to make up for Prep's success in drawing penalties, even after pulling ahead at the end of the first half.

Both teams started out the game with little success, remaining scoreless until several minutes into the first period.

Prep was then able to set the mood on the court with a short run that left the Eagles behind 9-2.

It took nine minutes for Central to respond with a countering seven-point lead.

With four minutes left in the half, sophomore Josh Jones followed up a three-point play by senior co-captain Tim Kanger with a breakaway layup.

Senior co-captain Rodney Grace then added three more points, making the score 27-20 after drawing the foul on a two-point basket and shooting his second and last successful free throw of the night.

The Eagles left the second period with a lead of three points after scoring a solid six over Prep to counter their three-point lead at the end of the first.

The beginning of the second half echoed the start of the game. Sophomore Ronnell Grixby scored all seven of the team's points in the third period, while Prep was able to put ten on the board to tie the score 34-34.

Fans from both sides held on tight as they entered the fourth period—and they wouldn't let go, as the teams tossed around leads in virtually every play.

While Grace and his compatriots upped their offensive gain to 15 points, the Jays were able to tip the scales with an overwhelming number of free-throw baskets, placing the game-winning points on the board with two successful foul shots in the final seconds of the game.

The Eagles' last chance was gone in the blink of an eye.

They had their lowest-scoring game of the season, held under 50 points for the first time and dropping to No. 6 in the rankings.

"One of our goals is always to win the battle at the free-throw line," coach Eric Behrens said. "It's very hard to win a game when you lose by 15 free throws."

Behrens said a poor offensive showing was also to blame, with bad shot selection and rushed attempts making a crippling free-throw battle a much bigger problem than it should have been.

Both teams failed to make successful use of offensive progress, constantly allowing their opponents to keep them in check with a nearly consistent point margin.

Not much could compare with the night before when the Eagles had a momentous blowout victory against Millard South in their first home game in decades.

The Prep game did yield at least one outstanding performance, however.

In the absence of Central's star outside shooter junior Ben Kline, who was out of both weekend games due to an injury, Grace scored a game-leading 18 points. Seven of his points composed the Eagles' entire scoring offense for the first period.

"He played really well," Behrens said. "He rebounded the ball really well, and he scored some important points down the stretch."

THE VARSITY STARTERS

BOYS

Tim Kanger
senior
6'2"Ronnell Grixby
sophomore
5'9"Ben Kline
junior
6'2"Rodney Grace
senior
6'6"Josh Jones
sophomore
6'1"

GIRLS

Rachael Dryver
junior
5'9"Jasmine Johnson
junior
5'6"Brianne Tapley
senior
5'7"Cherylle Leffall
senior
5'11"Alex Fuhs
junior
5'9"

WELCOME TO THE EAGLE'S NEST

With a gym fit for home games, a new lobby and nearly a State win last season, there is nothing standing in the way of victory this year

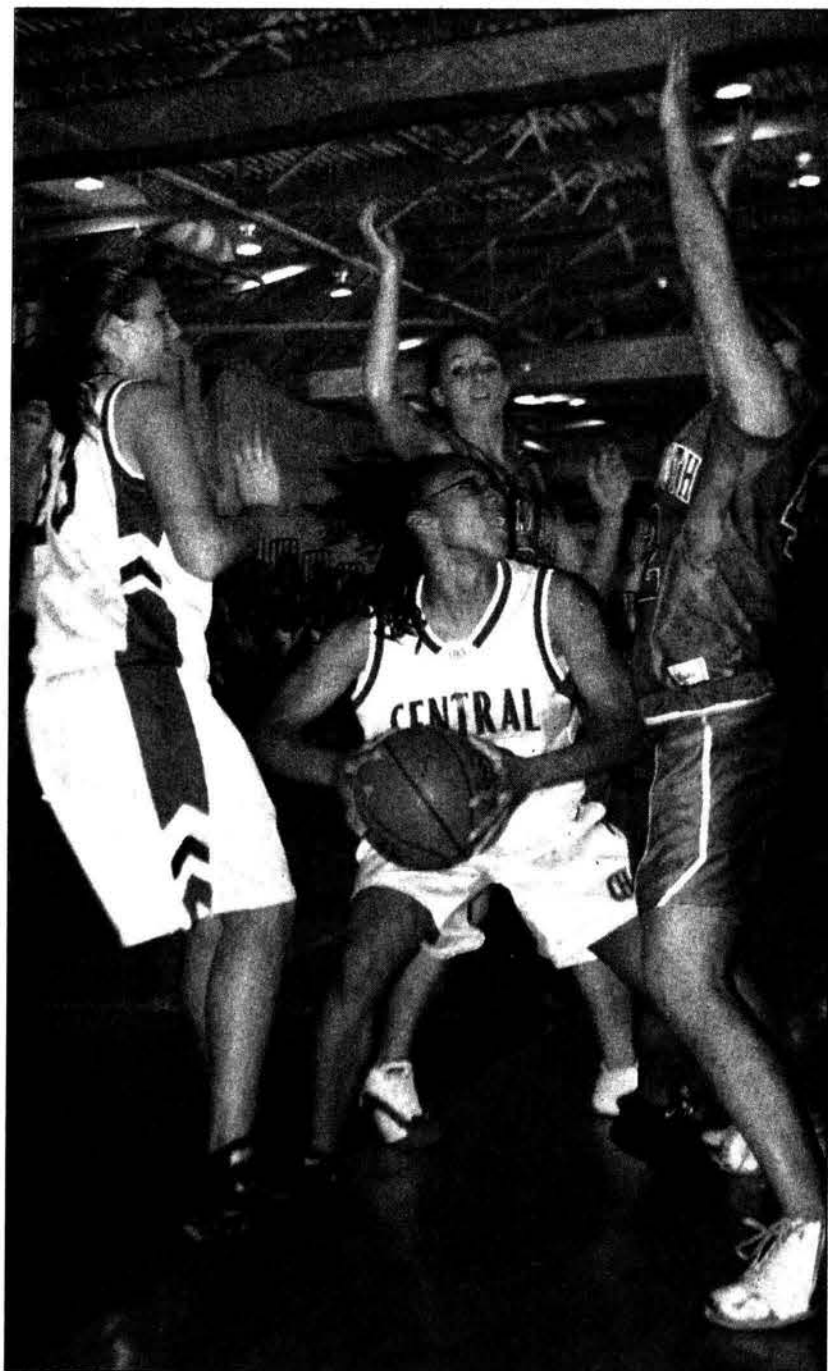


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Junior Jasmine Johnson attempts to shove past Millard South's senior Gina Paletta in an attempt to shoot during the first game in a school gym in 45 years. The girls beat Millard South 53-41, after starting the third period behind 25-21.

Girls steal win in second half

BY CLAY LOMNETH

The gym was packed Friday with an eager crowd murmuring about the new lobby and expectations for the game. Everyone from alumni to cheerleaders, who had their "I Love OPS" shirts on, were hoping for a good game, and they got one. The Lady Eagles beat Millard South 53-41, due in large part to a full-court Eagle press that caused the Patriots to panic.

Despite all the press, it was a close game, too close for Eagle fans.

The score started at the 7:01 mark with two free throws made by Millard South's junior Jessie Audas. Audas, along with her teammate sophomore Aitcel Cisneros, would be the Patriots' key players in the game.

The Eagles answered back not long after that, with a two-pointer from underneath the basket from senior Cherylle Leffall. Under the basket, there was constantly a battle for control of the ball. Rebounds were never given up without a struggle from both sides.

The Eagles turned on the heat with a full-court press early on. It was a consistent thing they have been doing all year. They like to put the pressure on when their opponents least expected it. In the first period, Central had some passing issues. Steals were common for Millard South and fouls became common for both teams.

A few shots went in for Central during this quarter, but mostly the ball bounced around the rim. The frustration could be seen on the girls' faces as most shots were rebounded. The quarter ended with few shots by either team, 10-8 with Millard South in the lead. Coming right into the second period, junior Jasmine Johnson started off the line of baskets.

Despite her size, never underestimate her drive to the middle. Almost every single time she attempted a layup, if she didn't make the shot, she got the foul. Fouls increased during this period.

Both teams got more aggressive, trying to steal the ball and ending up slapping the other player on the arm.

By the end of the second, however, Millard South was still in the lead, 25-21.

Eagle head coach Chad Townsend said there wasn't really a major difference between the first and second periods, except that a lot of the shots they should have had in the beginning didn't go in.

"We want to play full throttle for four quarters and see what happens," he said.

Right in the first few minutes of the third period, junior Rachael Dryver had a scare. Going for a layup, she was knocked down and mildly injured her ankle. Two minutes later, however, she was back in playing as strong as before.

Especially in this period, the Eagles were very strong at getting the rebounds. They put the ball up until they came away with the foul, and more often than not got two free points.

Boys use real home-court advantage to churn out expected win

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Scattered among the crowd were big, bold letters reading "I love OPS." There was a tension in the air that hadn't been equaled since the first football game in the new stadium.

As with the first football game, Central came away with a win on its home court, ahead of Millard South 57-38. Despite a mediocre first-half offensive performance, the Eagles took real control of the game in the second half.

Central won the tip to start the game, and sophomore Josh Jones began the scoring. His first two-pointer was almost foreshadowing. He would play an important part again in this game.

The entire first period was a battle.

Millard took the lead at 2:30, with senior Nate Hetmanek making a free throw to put the Patriots ahead 8-7. Hetmanek was a key player for Millard South throughout the game, and the main reason it held on to lead as long as it did.

Central's defense was strong.

What the Eagles did need to watch out for though, were the fouls were beginning to stack up. The shots the Patriots did get off were at first only from the outside.

When the clock ran out for the first quarter, Central grabbed back the lead, 15-11. This was mainly due to senior Rodney Grace, who had a near perfect game. Towering over the Millard players, he was a threat anywhere near the basket.

Right into the 2nd period, after two points were scored by Millard South, Central called a timeout at 6:14.

The boys came out with a strong push by senior Tim Kanger.

Grace was seen under the basket again and rebounded nearly every missed shot. Just under two minutes later, Central was ahead 20-13 this time.

The Eagles started to really take it from there. They seemed more energized and alert, but their opponents began to take notice.

The Patriots stepped it up again with a lot of attempted three-point shots.

Most of the time all it got them was an air ball or a turnover, and eventually Patriot senior Josh Nielsen made a push through the middle. He was a player the Eagles had to watch out for, and was often times underestimated and let by.

Fouls almost doubled in this quarter on both sides, almost to the point where someone was on the free-throw line every time the team had the ball.

Stupid fouls could cost the team the win, and this game was not short of them.

The third quarter was the time for sophomore Ronnell Grixby to shine. In addition to his shots near the block, he also had an eye for the three-pointers.

He, along with Grace again, took the game and got Central to a position it needed. By the end of the period, the score was 45-28, Eagles.

By this time some fans were already out the door. A win seemed clearly on the way for the Eagles.

Grace and Jones were major players for much of the fourth. Grace stood out with his rebounding performance. However, Millard South began to match the Eagles basket for basket in the fourth. The comeback attempt, though, was too little, too late. The clock wound down and the final score ended 57-38.

Coach Eric Behrens said the major difference between the first and second half was the offense. After halftime, he said his team came back and played better, and everybody started to get shots. Behrens said defense still needed work, but it was just a matter of toning and practicing.

"You're always trying to get better," he said.

The end of the game was almost boring. The cheers had long faded and the crowd had long realized who the victor would eventually be.

MOLDING THIS CLAY
A Column by Clay Lomneth

Teen glad to see OPS on T-shirt

Students finally began to show interest. After weeks of apathy, they began showing support for One City, One School (OPS) and One School. Then, they were shut up about it.

Students who wore pro-OPS shirts to the first game against Millard South were told to turn them out. I realize the administration was worried about offending someone, a threat of being sued, but this support for the district is really needed.

People need to see that students love the district. This "we're better than you are" statement was simply a point of view.

T-shirts worn at the game against Millard South, the "I Love OPS" T-shirts were school approved. They were allowed. They were an excellent idea, despite the controversy at Millard South.

But why aren't students taking initiative and showing support? The shirts weren't offered.

The One City, One School has been called the new biggest rights issue of the century. A student not only should be allowed to express opinions about this, but should almost be expected to.

Energy and support for a school alone a district, is hard to find. In a place of apathy, where barely over 50 percent of students 18 or over actually isn't this a shining example of student involvement? Most students are going to care enough to go to a One City, One School meeting, shouldn't the administration let us show support where they are going to show up?

The whole "keep it out of the classroom" attitude is the last thing the district needs. Hushing up students when they are following the rules is dangerous. What is that telling them? Be quiet, we might offend someone with our point of view and let our education. Even bigger than that, students finally showing interest in One City, One School is finally showing interest in the Amendment.

Students speaking their mind in a positive way is a good thing. How often does it happen? Look at all the unity and passion going to waste as students fight for what's right.



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Senior Rodney Grace makes a layup at the end of the third period in the game against Millard South. The boys won a tight first half, 57-38.