

Applause

Volume 6 Number 7

Charleston County School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC

April 2005



Got
sports?



A look at SOA's spring athletes



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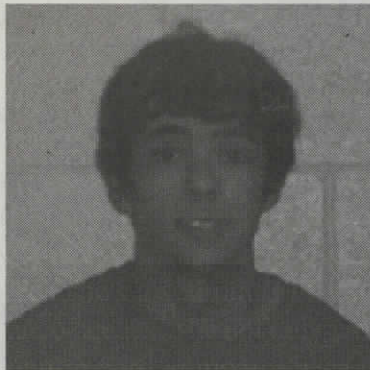
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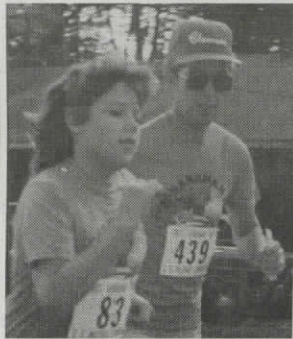
A Word from the Editor

Spring is here, and with the warm weather and sunny skies comes the anticipation of the end of the school year. Especially for us seniors, this time of year is a time to enjoy our last few months at home before heading off to college. Here at *Applause* headquarters, we are working to produce two more issues, one to be published in early May and the final 44-page graduation issue that will be distributed at commencement. In the current issue we are taking a look at some of SOA's multi-talented athletes and getting an inside look at the preparations for the upcoming senior theses. Keep on truckin', cause we're almost done.



Ben Forney

Spring Athletes



At left: Assistant Principal Mr. Davis and his daughter Teresa compete in a road race in 1983. On the cover: Clockwise from top left, Daniel Vincent, Amber Caparas, Austin Dukes, and Jason Basile.

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The School Improvement Council: A message of hope to all

by Omi Naderi

Unbeknownst to many, an elite society known as the School Improvement Council thrives for a sole purpose: (re-read the first two words of its name).

Meeting five times a year to discuss issues affecting the school, the Council serves to effectively bring together the administration, faculty, parents, and student representatives so that the needs of all can be communicated.



"The communication piece is so important--for us to sit around the table and share ideas--because that's where improvement begins: with an idea," says Mrs. Caldwell, assistant principal.

Mrs. Awkerman, who formerly served two years on the Council, recalls her memories of servitude: "When students bring up an issue or add to it, it's very powerful. People really, really care what the students say, whether or not it's a problem...it is very important that students are honest and raise issues that need to be addressed."

You, the SOA student body, have duly elected the student representatives for each of your grade levels (freshman, sixth, and seventh graders not included). These good, dedicated individuals who care about your welfare are as follows: Lamar Hunter, eighth; Lenna Walker, sophomore; the writer of this article, junior; and Tricia Ahearn, senior. If you have any concerns, particularly involving problems with your facilities at SOA, please contact your respected class rep who shall see that your needs are met. In fact, they are eager to hear your discontentment, for it is the driving force that implements change.

Currently, these reps are focusing on improving SOA's restrooms, which, though not pitiful, are not exactly pristine. Complaints from students in regards to their condition have alerted the Council members to take action--cries of anguish such as that of Constance Belton, who sought refuge one day, her hands glistening with water droplets from a recent visit to a latrine: "The dryer is gone. The dryer was bad to begin with, but now my hands are wet. You go out in the cold, and your hands are still wet. Your hands are going get to pneumonia."

Lenna Walker, the distinguished sophomore voice of the Council, recalls when she walked into the female restroom: "I was horrified. I was distressed and distraught. A soggy ball of toilet paper fell on my head. And that's when it hit me: it was time for the School Improvement Council [to intervene]."

"I don't like how in the white building there aren't any doors in the stalls. I don't like how when I need to relieve myself, I have to walk all the way to another building. I'm too tired to do that," exclaimed Shawn Jordan, Senior class vice-president, in a fit of righteous indignation.

Complaints such as the above will make a direct impact on the quality of the restroom facilities for everyone. In the same way, many more school improvements can be made with your help. Unite and contact your class representatives for a better, brighter future of the Charleston County School of the Arts! Hooray for the School Improvement Council! Cheers for change!

Features

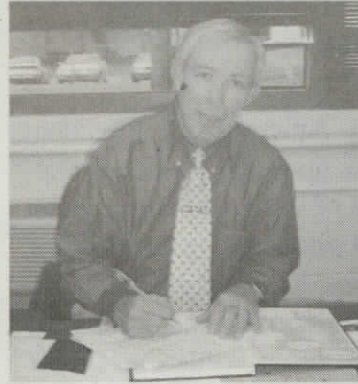
Jazz-ness

by Jonathan Squires

Superior, superior, superior plus: those were the ratings of the judges for the School of the Arts Jazz Band from the latest South Carolina Jazz Festival at Newberry College. Because the SOA Jazz Band is so feared, many other bands did not want to perform directly after SOA. The same day the Jazz Festival was taking place, the All State Concert Band was also performing, containing seven of our finest Wind Ensemble players. Not only were the Jazz and All State players there, four SOA alumni were guest performers at the Newberry Festival. **Sara Houser** was the outstanding soloist chosen from the Jazz Band. Jazz Band director, **Mr. Kerr**, was pleased with the performance and proud to have so many students participating in state events. Judges, students, and Mr. Kerr himself, all agree that the SOA Jazz Band has excelled beyond mere state competitions and should start working at national events such as Ellington in New York City, where jazz bands play only Duke Ellington music, and maybe even National Jazz in Washington D.C. This dream would not take place by next year, but for the future SOA Jazz Bands in years to come.

The 3D's

by Kathleen Smith and Rachel Maguire



Mr. Davis

SOA is a symphony of cultures and ethnic backgrounds. Our school has many diverse groups of students. We have always wondered about Mr. Davis' background, so we asked him, "What is your ethnic background, and what do you do to honor it?"

My father's side of the family is Welsh. I even have my family coat of arms from Wales. My mother is a mix between English, Cherokee Indian and German. During the St. Patrick's Day weekend my family usually celebrates by pinning shamrocks on our clothes and giving green hats to my grandchildren so they won't get pinched.

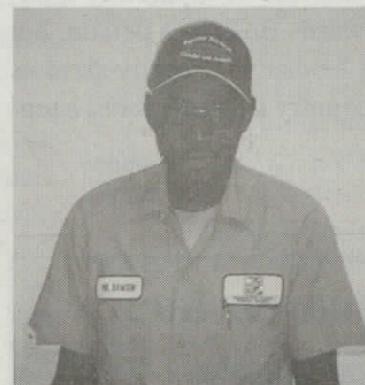
"There are so many different foreign dishes to prepare and try, such as cow brains from the coast of Greece or rabbit feet from the mountains in Ireland, but considering we have never tried those tempting dishes, we thought maybe Ms. Darlene had, so we asked, "What is your favorite dish to prepare and eat and why?"

I have several favorites, but I would say any type of Asian food. I love the combination of all the flavors and textures that goes into preparing the food. Asian noodles are my favorite to prepare because of the combination of sesame seeds, soy and ginger. Great combination!



Ms. Darlene

Is the School of the Arts implementing a sports program? Progress began with a batting cage being built around the facade of Ms. Hurtado's warehouse, but don't bring your baseball bats to school too soon, kids. Rachel and Kathleen are on top of things so we asked Mr. Dawson, "Why are there cages being built around the snack machines?"



Mr. Dawson

We had two break-ins in the past few months and the parts that were damaged are the most expensive, running about \$2000 a part. The fence is being built, so when our old machines are replaced with bright and shiny new ones, we will not have to spend more money replacing them or their parts. The fence is incomplete, but when finished it will encompass the entire area above and around the machines, making it basically impossible to penetrate. The gates will be locked in the afternoon after school is out and re-opened the following morning so that students can indulge.

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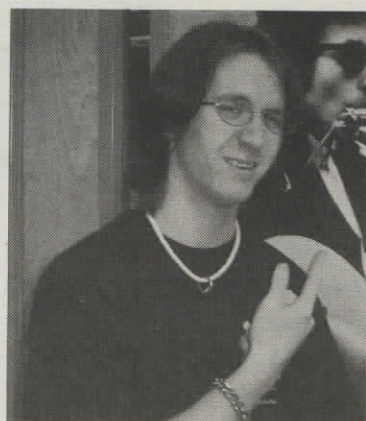
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Features

Bush's Golden Touch?**Yeah, we hope so!**

by Stephen Carlock



Recently America saw President Bush placed back upon the powerful platform of president of our great nation. After a heated period of campaigning and debates, among Bush, Kerry, and other potential candidates for the presidency - and among the citizens of the nation as well-what do we see? The presidential inauguration, that's what.

President George W. Bush raised over 40 million dollars in a period of six weeks for the ceremonies. That's a pretty penny to any American. To boot, over two thirds of the contributors were major com-

panies that are known or, more appropriately, 'rumored' to use their money to influence congress and the administration regularly. To me, this says "corruption"; I can smell it, just like many of the other millions of wary American citizens who are paying attention to how the president handles himself.

We are in a war, *a war*. The country is suffering from record deficits (nearly 3 trillion dollars), and we are stretching ourselves thin internationally, offering aid wherever aid is needed. The war in Iraq is draining our coffers - we've spent more time there than necessary, run into so many snags, and wasted men and women, and money as well. No, I'm not insensitive to what happened, to what is still happening, but if we continue to give into the rest of the world as we have been, during this time, then we will dig ourselves into a hole from which we cannot surface. If this country isn't careful it'll wind up busted and broke with nowhere to turn to. In case Bush hasn't noticed, we're not exactly in the best standing with many countries in the world; if we fall, who will turn to help us?

How I long now for the day when someone so apparently ignorant of his country is booted; I've no ill will towards Bush as a person, but as a president, he's already proving to me that he can very easily steer us into many an unnecessary pothole. Running a country isn't just about keeping up appearances, Mr. President.

Media bias strikes close to home

by Ben Forney

The past several issues of *Applause* have contained editorials expressing discontent with the current presidential administration and state appointed leaders like Jim DeMint. Because the *Applause* is not a mouthpiece for unchallenged media bias, I have decided it is long overdue to counter some of the arguments made by my peers in previous issues and perhaps to set a precedent for future politically oriented articles: that they may not continue to be the negative slandering of an opposing view, but a positive reflection on the pros and cons of government policy.



I am not as politically aware as some of my peers and do not profess to be an expert, or even a dedicated supporter -- on any of these subjects. I am merely trying to ensure that the paper does not become filled with left-wing rants against the government.

The main problem with most of the liberal bias in the media is the constant barrage of negativity that pervades throughout their reporting. Even if I agree with what they have to say, the manner in which they say it is often so accusatory and whiny that they come off sounding more like children than journalists. They can offer no legitimate solution to any of the problems, so they feel their job is to blow any discrepancy out of proportion to make the president look bad. And if there is nothing wrong, they just make something up, like Dan Rather.

They could have an entire series on CNN called "Millions of Iraqi civilians give their thanks for freedom from decades under a tyrannical dictator." But I haven't seen that one yet. Instead, the only shots we are shown are the ones where the small minority of Iraqi wackos are burning American flags and hanging George Bush in effigy.

Few presidents in the history of our country have been faced with as much adversity as the Bush administration. Within the span of a few minutes on September 11th, 2001, the entire scope of his term was transformed, as was the nation. While Bush, like any man, has his faults, I believe he is working to the best of his ability to do what is most beneficial for the country. He has surrounded himself with some of the most intelligent advisors and generals in the world, and is acting to the best of his ability to see the country through this time of anxiety and questioning of the fundamental values of American society.

The true consequences of his actions cannot be weighed at the moment. Only time will tell whether the decisions of his presidency will have a beneficial or negative impact on the country. So cut the guy a break. If you were in his shoes, with the entire fate of the world resting on your back, who's to say how you would act? I am a pretty open minded person, and I am not ashamed to admit that I may be wrong on some of these issues, but that's okay. Freedom of ideas and their expression is one of the most valued values of our society, and I don't mind if others disagree with me. So let's forget all the bitterness and accusations of politics and just accept our differences and work together to reach a compromise.

After all, we did have to live eight years under that slimy, lying weasel named Bill Clinton.

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Reviews

Cool Hand Luke author delivers another classic

by Jonathan Squires

The Bulge... winter of '44, allied expeditionary forces were cut off and surrounded at Bastogne. A few days before the encirclement, a small armada of deuce and a halves rumbled to the front lines dropping desperately needed reinforcements, one of these soldiers being infantryman Tobias Parker. Little did Parker know of the utter chaos and life-changing events which would ensue. Not even 35 pages into the book is when the first battle breaks out, from then on there is constant, head-grabbing, wet your pants, shudder in disbelief events that do not cease until the final pages of the book. The battle scenes in the book are historically accurate in the vehicles, equipment, and other miscellaneous items, even the scenes of gore and methods of hygiene and nursing.

The author, Donn Pearce, whose novels include *Cool Hand Luke*, uses stream of consciousness to an extreme in his latest book, meaning that certain parts of the book require rereading to comprehend what is taking place. Pearce's novels have at least one thing in common, a lot of references to his own life. After reading an interview that **Dr. Cusatis** conducted with Mr. Pearce, I found that some parts of Parker's flashbacks are word for word autobiographical.

War stories have always been a personal favorite, and if this is not the best war story I have read, then it is definitely one of the top. Parker's portrayal of a reluctant hero is rarely seen in literature, and in my eyes a proper war hero. This is what will make this novel a best seller.

Serene Renegade: A Sound Apart

by LaToya Smith

Already four months old to the public, Rene Marie's fourth album deserves great recognition. Marie is known to most as a jazz singer, but even Marie says that this album is "not really jazz, it's music." Her smooth, yet strong vocals, prophetic, yet personal lyrics, and innovative music makes this album a cut above the norm. The album begins with "Red Shoes," a brilliant story. The song ends with Charleston native, Quinten Baxter, on drums, using his style of skillful rim clicks to imitate the sound and attitude of red shoes. The beautiful music of Baxter,

pianist Takana Miyamoto, bassist Herman Burney, trumpeter Jeremy Pelt, and percussionist Roland Guerrero all mesh to support Marie's sultry vocals. Although nine of the eleven tracks are all original, Marie also includes her rendition of the standard "Lover Man" and John Lennon and Paul McCartney's "Hard Day's Night." While the music is unique, Marie's ingenious lyrics are poetic. Having to put her music career on hold to raise a family and facing many personal obstacles, she calls her music "the truth." And that is indeed the truth. As a writer she believes that whatever you write about is somebody's truth. In the fourth track, "Wishes," Marie sings, "if wishes were lovers, I'd have 10,000 at my side....If wishes were horses, beggars would ride." The entire song was inspired by the latter phrase which her mother would often say to her. Her smile is just as ecstatic as it was on the cover of *Vertigo*, *How Can I keep from Singing*, and *Live At Jazz Standard*; however, this time it is all about beginning again. Her tenth track, "Rufast Daliarg," is evidence of this sort of rebirth of an artist, as it is her acronym which stands for Run, Fall, Stand, Dance, Live, Ache, Rise, and Grow. As the mass of pop and heavy beats fill the music stores, take a two thumbs up suggestion and find *Serene Renegade* on the jazz rack. I promise you an edifying listening experience, filled with intricate and smooth originality.

**The Mustard Seed, a James Island haven**

by Hilari Ross and Brandi Dirkes

As our feet entered the Mustard Seed, it was like we walked into a new world. Leaving the noisy car squeaks and fast paced movement behind, we embraced an artsy haven, with lavish prints hanging on the walls and simple yet sophisticated fabric draped from the ceiling. Though the tiny restaurant was plumb full, in minutes we were seated with our menus in hand. In addition to our menus, there was also a small white board full of daily specials placed in front of us on a cute little bar chair. The menu included a variety of soups and salads, deli sandwiches, chicken and fish, and a drink menu from water to wine, and everything in between.

Suddenly our waiter appeared in all black, looking very professional yet young and eager to take our drink order. **Hilari** chose the classic Coca-Cola, while **Brandi**, on the other hand chose water, because she was feeling healthy that day. Instantly our drinks appeared along with freshly baked bread and olive oil. Our waiter gave us a few minutes to make our final decisions on our lunch order. Brandi decided on the chicken deli sandwich while it was Hilari's turn to go healthy by ordering the Mustard Seed cobb. After placing our orders, our eyes wandered around the restaurant. Brandi pointed out that you could see where our meals were being prepared. The restaurant was filled to the brim with a variety of human creatures, one was even sporting green pants with pink roosters on them. After a few more minutes, our lunch arrived. Everything looked so scrumptious that we had to eat it up immediately: the cobb included fresh green lettuce, hard boiled eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms, guacamole, grilled chicken and blue cheese. It was all smothered in Italian dressing. The deli sandwich consisted of grilled chicken, extra thick, crispy bacon, peppered mayonnaise, and tomatoes. Our attention was strictly on the food. After our plates were mostly empty, our bellies were filled happily. Though we were quite full, we asked to hear the dessert options. There were too many choices to choose from, items including hummingbird pie to double chocolate brownie cake. All the deserts sounded quite delicious, but our bellies just couldn't handle another bite. We realized that our experience was coming to an end when we received the bill of only \$16.50. We pulled out our wallets and split the cost evenly and included a \$6 tip.

Our artsy and peaceful experience came to an end as we stepped out of the Mustard Seed and back into reality.

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Features

SOA athletes shine

by Kathleen Smith and Rachel Maguire

The Daniel Vincent Express

On your mark, get set, go! And Dashing **Daniel** is off, running swiftly along Wando High School's track, training for his next big race.



Daniel Vincent

If you don't know Daniel Vincent, he is sixteen and an SOA band major. But behind this band geek exterior hides a phenomenal runner. For three years, Daniel has been one of the top long distance runners in South Carolina, dominating the 800, 1600, and 3200 meter events in Charleston County. Always on the move, Daniel requires two early outs to accommodate attending Wando practices. Daniel has been running since the fourth grade, when he tried out for his elementary school's track team and didn't make it. This did not deter Daniel's dream though, and he kept training for the rest of the year. He made the team a year later. To this day, he trains consistently year round since joining the Wando track team.

Currently, Daniel is concentrating on the track and field season. When Daniel is running these many miles, he has to have something on his feet, and his favorite training shoes are Adidas Supernova Cushion. These sneaks are pretty heavy but the extra weight can be beneficial when

training. "I like them because they provide a lot of support, which plays a crucial factor when running 50-60 miles a week, which I often do during the summer," Daniel says. Although as far as racing shoes are concerned, Daniel just buys whatever happens to be in stock at the store. Daniel's daily workout plays an important role in his running. Daniel has two types of workouts: on long days he runs anywhere from four to ten miles, depending on the time of year, and on other days, he runs shorter intervals on the track, anywhere from 200 meters (1/8 mile) to 1600 meters (one mile). Regardless of the type of workout, he chooses to run one or two warm-up miles and then stretch for ten minutes each time. However, through it all, Daniel states, "I've learned a lot of consistency and perseverance through running." His greatest accomplishment was winning a cross-country invitational his sophomore year. Daniel had to out sprint a very decorated runner to claim that victory. He also finished first in Charleston's Race for the Cure in 2003. Certain that Daniel gets thirsty when he is training, I asked him whether he preferred sport drinks or water, and without hesitation he fired back, "It really depends on the situation, Gatorade is good to drink immediately after you finish a workout because it gives back the electrolytes that the body uses while running, but I usually stick with water the rest of the day because it keeps the body better hydrated." Daniel hopes to continue running for a while, so I'll end this feature with a mental picture: Daniel in the final seconds of his next race breaking through the finish ribbon, heart pounding, feet aching, sides heaving, sweat burning his eyes, obscuring his vision as he enjoys the sweet taste of another victory.

Amazing Amber

2005 seems to be the year for **Amber Capares**; she began her first year at SOA and started her running career, completely unaware at the amazing talent hidden inside her. Although she is only a freshman, and this being her first year running track for a school, Amber broke West Ashley High School's record for the 400-meter hurdles in 1 minute and 14 seconds and 1/43 second. Amber's inspiration and motivation to run and attend all the grueling practices comes from watching the Olympics. "One day I hope I will be able to compete in the Olympics, and win the gold medal," Amber said. But even a big time track star can have an embarrassing moment. "One day I was running and my trail leg got caught in the hurdles, I tripped and busted my lip and tore up my chin pretty badly, and everyone was laughing at me," Amber recalled. Amber is sure she'll continue running for a long time and is focused on getting a college scholarship for track. When I asked Amber why she chose to attend SOA instead of West



Amber Capares

Ashley, given she runs track for the school, she stated with pride, "SOA is the best I would never want to go anywhere else."

Jason Basile among best in the USA

The way to win **Jason Basile's** heart is to know how to handle a tennis ball and racket. This senior theatre major has a not-so-hidden talent; he is an excellent tennis player.

Jason started playing tennis thirteen years ago when he became sick of only watching his brother play. He picked up the sport very quickly and has been very successful. Between then and now he has practically committed his life to tennis. As a freshman he played for West Ashley High School, but has not played on a high school team since. He was ranked twenty-fourth in the nation and sixth in the south as of last year. He was sponsored by Reebok as well, quite an honor to be sponsored by such a major corporation. A typical week for Ja-



Jason Basile

son consists of weight training on Tuesdays and Thursdays and working Monday through Saturday as a coach at the Charleston Tennis Academy in Mt. Pleasant with his coach Fritz Nau. "Tennis has its pros and cons," said Jason. He is away most weekends playing tournaments and his weeks are consumed by preparation techniques, but he's not ready to give up yet. Jason will be attending Furman University next year on a seventy five percent scholarship for both tennis and academics. His intentions were to go to either Colgate, Davidson, or Richmond, but after he visited Furman's campus and stayed with the tennis team, he realized that it was perfect for him. We wish you good luck, Jason!

Ace them, Mr. Davis!

Hey SOA! You might not know it but our assistant principal **Mr. Davis** dons his New Balance tennis shoes and sweat pants and hits the track, whether it's to train for a race



Mr. Davis chases a troublemaker.

or just to keep in shape. Mr. Davis has run the Cooper River Bridge Run for the past 23 years and just finished the latest one. "This year the Bridge Run was very crowded, over 41,000 people ran and walked. It was very wet and windy, which affected my time but I still made it just under 58 minutes," said Mr. Davis. His strategy when running the Bridge is to focus on the beautiful view and reach the finish line. Mr. Davis's favorite place to run is the beach, either on Isle of Palms or Sullivan's Island. His favorite race is the 5k run on Sullivan's Island: "It starts at 9:00, you run three miles under the pier and back. I have run that several times and placed first and third." Mr. Davis is very committed to his running and al-

Ultimate Frisbee

Discs are flying among some of the students here at SOA. Recently, an Ultimate Frisbee team was implemented by the City of Charleston Recreational Department. Ultimate Frisbee is a seven person, no-contact, no-referee, team sport that uses discs. The team consists of several SOA students: **Ryan Crawford, Austin Dukes, Josh Fernandes, Jonathan Hershenson, Sam McMasters, and Diego Villena**, along with a few students from other local schools. Their games are held on Sundays at West Ashley Park and practices are held when needed. If you are interested in joining the team contact Ryan Crawford, bring \$15.00, a pen to fill out the registration form, and your running shoes!



Ryan Crawford

Student Art

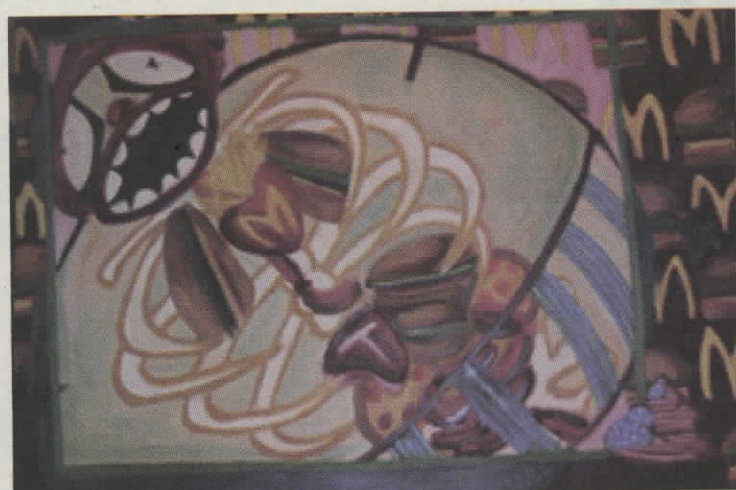
Student Artwork



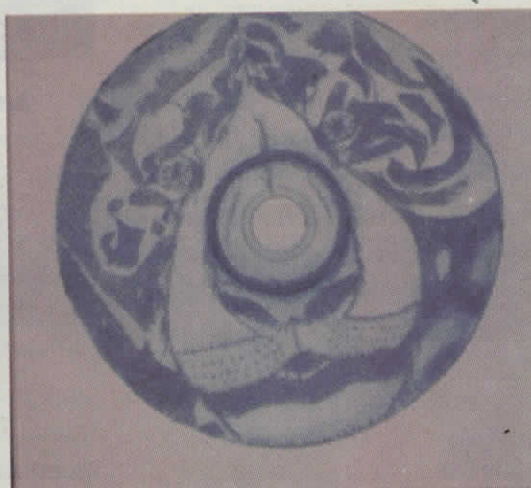
Trey Williams
12th grade



Leslie Thompson
11th grade



Lainey Harrison
11th grade



Kayla Watts
7th grade



Ben Aton
11th grade



Sam McMasters
12th grade



Oneka Buck
12th grade

Features

Crunch time for senior theses

by Noelle Williams

The year is ending, which means seniors will begin to perform their senior theses. Below are some of the details, including whose performing and the dates of each major's senior theses.

Visual Arts

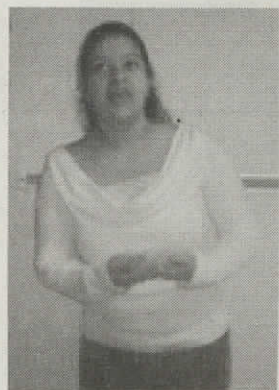
The seniors will hold a show with the other high school visual artists. There will be five pieces—out of a twelve piece concentration—on display for each senior. The works on display are a part of a twenty-four piece collection, which the seniors are expected to complete since they are taking an AP course. The entire collection will be judged by College Board for credit. The visual artists invite all students to come see their work Friday, April 8th, at the Visitor's Center at 8:00 PM.



Thomas Tanner

Theatre

Theatre majors will be performing during the week of April 11-15 in the Black Box. There will be 13 performances, one for each senior, which will be up to 20 minutes long. The shows will last from 7:00PM to 9:00PM. The seniors will hang posters with information in the halls. It is advised that the posters be read carefully because they will contain information about the seniors performing, the dates, descriptions of the pieces, and ratings (anywhere from PG to R).



Evelyn Palomo

Strings

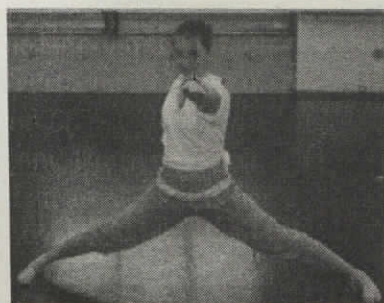
The strings senior thesis will be in two parts. The first part will be held April 28th with band majors. They will be performing at the Hanahan High School auditorium. The second part will be held May 10th. It will be a chamber concert performed by strings majors. Two of the seniors performing are **Diego Villena**, who will do a cello concerto, and **Kaleigh Fort**, who will do a violin concerto. Various chamber ensembles will also be performing along with the seniors. The strings majors are still deciding where the concert will be held.



Kaleigh Fort

Dance

The 13 senior dance majors will be performing April 20th in the Black Box. The pieces will be either ballet or modern based and will be between 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 minutes long. The pieces will have been choreographed by our very own dance majors. The seniors performing will include **Michael Star**, **Lane Elsey**, **Angela Wade**, and **Kala Ward**.



Lane Elsey

Vocal

The final details of the vocal senior theses are still being decided. The vocal senior theses may take place as late as May, but the vocal majors are not sure. If there are any vocal majors who will do a senior theses, however, they will either have to compose a song and have other vocal majors sing it or they will have to sing a piece and write a paper about the song writer.



Tricia Ahearn

Piano

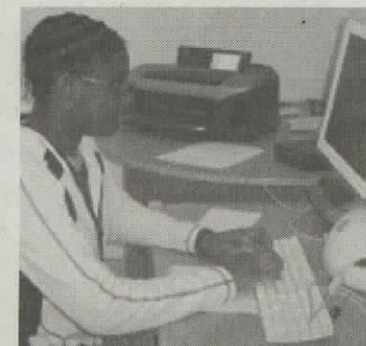
Ashley Coon, **Sara Houser**, **Ronald White**, and **Jenna McSwain** will be performing April 25-26 in the Black Box. Jenna and Ashley will be performing on the 25th, and Ronald and Sara will perform the following night. The piano majors will choose to perform either classical pieces or a mixture of genres.



Jenna McSwain

Creative Writing

Creative Writers will be performing on April 27th in the Black Box. They will each read for 10 to 15 minutes. The entire performance will be an hour, and there will be a reception afterwards. Copies of their theses will be available for sale during the reception as well.



Noelle Williams

Band

The band majors are also doing their senior thesis in two parts. They will perform April 28th at the Hanahan High School auditorium with the strings majors. On May 9th, they will do the second part of their thesis, which is a concert very similar to that of the strings majors.



Stacey Lambert

Congratulations to the Class of 2005!

Commencement will be held

Thursday, May 26, 2005, 7:00

**North Charleston Performing
Arts Center**

Interview

Mr. Smyth: Knower of mathematical truth

by Omi Naderi

Brace yourself for a near-mythical journey past the land of pi, theta, and TI-83s into the world of the man behind the math himself: **MISTER SMYTH: KNOWER OF MATHEMATICAL TRUTH.**

Once upon a time, a child was born, who would rise up to become **MISTER SMYTH: KNOWER OF MATHEMATICAL TRUTH.**

In high school he made 'A's in math. He enjoyed it and it came with ease, although it was not his favorite subject. He did not know the numerical destiny that awaited him.

This was a young man who decided against taking calculus to instead drive a school bus during the last period of the day. But the currents of fate would one day seize control and sweep him before a class where he would indeed be teaching that very subject, lion among math courses, O Advanced Placement Calculus. To this day at SOA, hungry students eagerly imbibe his teachings (and witty humor) in this class, along with AP Statistics and Honors Pre-Calculus, so they may experience the Truth—his knowledge—and claim it for themselves. And he majored in biology in college.

Divine intervention, perhaps, may have been responsible for not only his ascendancy to statistical greatness as a math teacher, but for his life. It has been many years since it happened: Americans were dying in the Vietnam War, and a young Peter Smyth, not yet the Knower of Mathematical Truth, had recently graduated from Sewanee: The University of the South. Rather than be drafted, he chose to serve his country by entering the Air Force. Mister Smyth, almost going into pilot training, had some health issues that led to the loss of one kidney and thus the alteration of his future—for he was unable to fight in Vietnam. Could it be that if this blessing in disguise did not occur, his life would have ended in combat high in the sky above Southeast Asia? We will never know.

However, let it be known that as a result, he looked for work in education, a decision influenced by the fact his mother was a teacher. Behold his words as he describes the dawn of his vocation: "I was helping coach basketball, actually, at St. Andrew's High School and started subbing. Math was the field they needed someone to teach in at the time, so I ended up in math. The rest is history."

"I taught the first year Middleton high school opened. I was there for three years, then went to graduate school, moved to Virginia, lived there for a while, came back from Virginia in 1980 and taught in Middleton for a while, then I worked at the State Department of Education in Columbia. I was a math coordinator in Beaufort, Horry, and went back to teaching in 1993 at Myrtle Beach High School. And I came here in 1999. So I've been around a few places."

The Faithful who gather in his classes may quietly wonder which course the Knower enjoys teaching the most. For the sake of the *Applause's* loyal readers, he reveals all: "I don't want to offend anybody—gosh that's tough—I would really say Statistics is my favorite. It's just more applied to the real world; you can't pick up a newspaper without reading statistics in it. The other courses are useful, but you'll use them later on when you get to college. You really can't tell a student that they'll go home and use pre-calculus that very day—but they might use it in their physics class!"

On a more serious note, his opinions on Michael Jackson: "He is definitely off the normal curve."

The most fulfilling aspect of teaching, as he says, is "seeing students learn something and learning they can teach themselves." When in the process of instructing his students, he effectively gives them the sizzle but not the steak: "It's sort of a paradox, but I think if a teacher is doing a good job, the students will learn how to learn without the teacher. They'll have some kind of intellectual independence. Essentially, learning something you do on your own. You're the one that does the learning; the teacher doesn't do the learning for you." Alas, as Mister Smyth pointed out, there is no pill! But in his class, laughter makes learning lively.

"I think one of the most hilarious experiences I ever had was when I was teaching middle school. I had a student who was somewhat challenged by the discipline standpoint; he couldn't stay in his seat. And I looked over at that student one day and noticed he had caught his spiral bound notebook in his braces! I thought that was one of the most hilarious things that I'd ever seen." Was this kid embarrassed? Oh yes. "It actually probably had an impact—he realized he could laugh at himself, and I could laugh at him. From then on, we just really had a great relationship. He straightened himself out and turned out okay."

Being a staunch supporter of **Miss Darlene's** cooking, he often seeks to uplift his students in times of weariness by commenting on the wonders of what "Miss Darlene is cookin' up" in the cafeteria kitchen. Whether or not it incites hunger or hope isn't certain, but his zeal is entertaining all the same. When asked to describe his passion for Miss Darlene's cooking, he issued the following statement: "I really feel that if we really wanted to make a bundle of money, we could sell her recipe book...what she's given comes from the school district, and she does pretty good with what she's got."

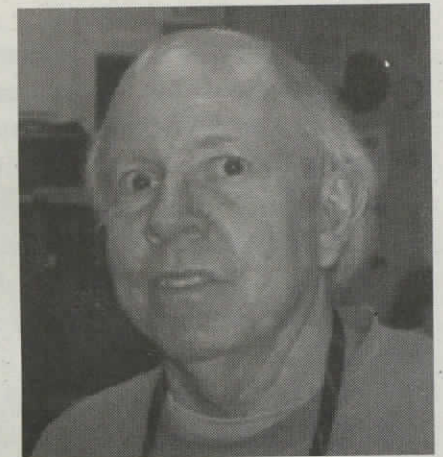
Mister Smyth, as one can see, is a man of many passions. When not exploring the boundless regions of math and all its glory, he is quite the adventurous man, engaging in such activities as running, playing tennis, and sailing—in fact, if he weren't teaching, his fantasy would be to sail around the world. But when not frolicking in the great outdoors, he reads avidly and watches movies often. Interestingly, Mister Smyth has informed the *Applause* that by the end of his life, he plans to write a book to leave something behind, to make a statement about the way he views the world preserved on paper—not a math textbook, ahem—but he pointed out he might use math in it indirectly since it has been an integral part of his life.

And now, explore the goodness of his heart:

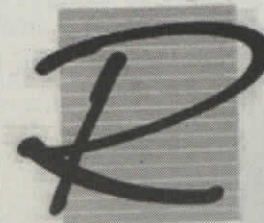
"I feel good about people, particularly in SOA. I think that people are basically good, and some people in the world don't appreciate that. Left alone, I feel people will do good things, for the most part, a that's been my sort of approach to life: things will turn out all right if you let them happen. I'm basically an optimist; I trust that things will work out in the long run. And if they don't, you know what my famous statement is: 'Oh well!'"

For those unfamiliar with this teaching, this two-syllable maxim, the Knower frequently tells to his students when they find themselves in times of trouble, yet its obscure profoundness remains undetected. Says he, "It doesn't mean give up! I think when you say, 'Oh well,' it really means, well, things happen to you, but you've got to move on beyond them and take charge yourself."

Oh well. Thus ends the adventure through the mystical realm of **MISTER SMYTH: KNOWER OF MATHEMATICAL TRUTH.**



Dr. Michael L. Runey III, D.M.D., M.S.



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Features

The new SAT: first hand

by LaToya Smith



My time had come. I had a date with destiny, March 12th, 2005, and I was going out on a 7:45AM date with the Scholastic Aptitude Test, infamously known as the SAT - the NEW SAT, that is. This new exam is only a few months old and unlike its preceding sibling, the highest score one can earn is a 2400. There is now a student-written essay, no analogies or quantitative comparisons, shorter reading passages and new content from third year college-prep

math. They say the College Board wants schools to produce better writers. Yeah, yeah - I had heard about all these changes well before this month. All I could say (that I can actually put in this article), is "Why me, Buddha? Why the class of 2006?"

But because I cannot share his response, I have to share my first hand experience of taking the exam. Here goes nothing. Most people get stressed during SAT time. However, since I'm way too cool for school, I decided to forget about the test until the day before. You can say that I tried a little reverse psychology on myself. On Friday, March 11th, I began preparing for this article. I read about the history and progress of that SAT, whose first version was originated during WWI. Now I had names to draw from. I could get amok with Robert Yerkes who was a leading member of the big IQ testing movement during the WWI era. He called the SAT prototype "Army Alpha" because the test was then being used as a method to test the intelligence of new recruits. Then I was able to display the highest degree of disdain for Carl Brigham, a psychologist and professor at Princeton University, who assisted Yerkes during the developmental stage, modifying the exam so that it could be used as a college admissions test. It was first administered in 1926, and Henry Chauncey (another dude I have beef with) the dean of Harvard, worked with Brigham to evaluate scholarship applicants. Moreover, when the war ended, the regular College Board admission tests were "abolished," and the SAT became the standard for all college applicants. But in 1944 it got worse. The exam was mandated. With all this knowledge about the SAT, I was now able to master the exam. I woke up on Saturday, March 12, 2005 to what seemed like a bleak and chilled morning. I put on my favorite color, black, kissed my mother goodbye, saddled up my blue baby and checked for supplies. Three number two pencils - check, driver's license - check, TI-84 calculator- check, admission ticket - check; I was finally ready to pull out. I cracked my windows, reclined my seat, and put on my favorite songs. I was in another world and not even the cops would stop me as I was speeding along I-26 (do not try this). After arriving near Charleston Southern University, I stopped off at the nearest gas station to pick up my favorite non-coffee caffeine drink, a SoBe Power, and also two Nutri-grain bars. I could see the swarm of nervous high school kids outside Norris Hall, so I followed the putrid stench of anxiety. The entire mass of students was extremely quiet. Many kids came with their parents holding their hands, but not me. Finally after a 15- minute wait, we went inside random classrooms. I sat far from the door in the front of the class. I wanted to be directly in front of the clock. The test administrator told us to take out our admission ticket and our ID. We all had our ID except one girl. Her father had just pulled off with her ID. They allowed the girl to call her father, but dismissed her after we waited for five minutes.

(Continued to pg.11)

A look inside Jonathan Kester

by Ben Forney

Many of you may not know Jonathan "John Boy" Kester, this shy, low-profile high school student here at SOA. However, after talking with him for only a short while, the secret life of this timid boy comes out, and his accomplishments can now finally be recognized by the student body.

Jonathan came to SOA in the eighth grade when he moved with his family from Seattle, Washington.

"I remember my first day here," he says. "Compared to my old school, I was surprised at the friendliness and caring of my fellow classmates and the teachers."

During the time he's not consumed with his studies, Jonathan loves to be outside. He is a "fool for nature." Last summer he hiked the entire Appalachian Trail with his father. They had many close encounters with death along the way. One day, Jonathan and his dad were hiking, and a cottonmouth sprang up from the trail and bit his dad on the leg. Jonathan used the skills he acquired from the Boy Scouts to make a tourniquet. Then he slit his dad's skin between the fang marks and sucked his leg until all the poisonous venom was extracted. They were soon back on their feet and continued their journey, but not before Jonathan sliced the head off of the snake. He says the skin is still proudly displayed in his bedroom.

Jonathan also spends time outdoors practicing his archery skills. He placed third in the South Carolina Junior Archery Championship last year. His fondest memory of archery is when he accidentally shot a man in the arm who was out in the field retrieving an arrow.

He loves to listen to the alternative rock band R.E.M., and has actually gone on the road with them twice because his uncle is the drummer for the group. This is where he acquired the nickname John Boy. While on tour in the summer of 1999, the guys from R.E.M. met up with Les Claypool, the infamous bass player for the band Primus. Legend has it that Jonathan was sitting on a John Deere tractor during a country-themed photo shoot for the band, and Claypool saw him and called him John Deere Boy. Later he shortened it to just John Boy, and the name stuck.

John Boy has been fortunate enough to travel across the globe, including a trip to Africa in the seventh grade. He says his favorite place in the world is Kuala Lumpur, where he spent seven weeks living with native tribes, learning how to fish with bamboo poles.

If you're not impressed with Jonathan Kester yet, one more achievement has to be recognized. John Boy was recently accepted into Phillips Exeter, the most prestigious college-prep boarding school in the country. However, after careful deliberation, he rejected their offer and is choosing to stay here at SOA.

"I just felt that Exeter didn't have as strong arts based programs as SOA, and that's what I'm most interested in pursuing as a career," he says.

Indeed, Jonathan is one of SOA's brightest young minds, and I encourage all of you to talk to this quiet, humble young man, and you may be surprised at what lies behind his shy, unassuming face. You'll usually find him traversing the hallways and outdoor fields of SOA during first lunch on A days, and second lunch on B days.



Features

(SAT, continued from pg. 10)

Being the human that I am, I was glad I drove and that incident didn't happen to me (\$49.50 non-refundable - oh no!). That was the highlight of the day. So I advise all that are preparing to take the new SAT to apply online and make sure you have all the required supplies. We began the test after 8AM, so after eight sections plus an essay, two five-minute breaks and a few one minute breaks, everyone hurriedly exited the room. It was a beautiful day outside. The sky was a velvety blue, the air was cool and I had given the world back to Atlas for him to place back upon his shoulders. I was relieved, but even more so at the degree of difficulty. If you are preparing to take the SAT in the near or far future, I encourage you to relax and take it in stride, because change is not always difficult, (wink ;).

Ani Difranco releases another great CD in time for her Charleston concert

by Lane Elsey

Ani Difranco has come out with yet another new CD, *Knuckle Down*.



If you've never heard of this speak-her-mind artist, Ani is well known as "a compelling if sometimes confusing composite of punk rebel, coffeehouse poet, and feminist crusader armed with an acoustic guitar, confrontational attitude, and sensitive spirit," as described by *TV Guide* in 1997. I would also add folk singer to that, since folk is the basis of her music. But don't let this well known magazine give you

the idea she's a sell out. Most students at SOA would probably look up to Difranco because she not only writes and produces her own music, she formed her own record company because she refused to conform to any indie or major music label. And she has an amazing voice and can play the guitar.

Her new CD lives up to the high reputation her many others have set. Unlike her last CD, there is a lot less of her usual folk sound. This CD is also more mellow than most of her others, which gives you something to relax to. Ani's strong opinions regarding politics and society still show through in this CD, but not as much as you would expect. "Knuckle Down," the first song, and "Manhole," the third, both deliver an upbeat style, which is in contrast to the rest of the album, but still two of my favorites. While listening to the CD you can find one of Ani's infamous songs that are almost like speeches; there's usually at least one on all of her CDs. On *Knuckle Down*, it's "Parameters," where she speaks her mind, not caring who is wrongly affected by the lyrics. Overall, *Knuckle Down* has surpassed my expectations, and I know Ani fans will be pleased. I recommend anyone going to the nearest Barnes and Noble and checking it out. If you enjoy it, Ani Difranco will be in concert April 22, at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center.

Horoscopes

by the SOA Astrologer

Aries (March 21 - April 19): The ability to make our own decisions is the only right any of us really has-make sure you follow your own mind, and not another's.
Taurus (April 20 - May 20): The sign of the bull is within you; this month you will find your true strength.

Gemini (May 21 - June 21): "I hope you don't believe them, when you hear them say, that everything you're looking or lies so many worlds away." (Dead Soul Tribe)

Cancer (June 22 - July 22): To be unique, take the road less traveled by. But remember, it's that way for a reason; tread carefully.

Leo (July 23 - Aug. 22): Words are the wonder of mankind, but logorrhea is the sprained ankle of society.

Virgo (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22): Doing what is right can often be tough. In times of doubt remember others who have done what is right before you.

Libra (Sept. 23 - Oct. 23): Don't live your life by someone else's quote; this month, try making your own.

Scorpio (Oct. 24 - Nov. 21): A story isn't a story unless it's told. Try sitting down with an elder family member and learning of the past.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21): The heroic story is the crutch of a poor writer; spice up your life, and realize that conceding the leading role to another isn't always the worst thing.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19): Think of stress as just another fad-it won't always linger, so make the best of your situation.

Aquarius (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18): Wishes are wishes, and nothing more-right now a million other people are wishing their lives away. Stop wishing; get out and do something for yourself.

Pisces (Feb. 19 - March 20): There's a fine line between true love and true lust. Step back this month, and check out your situation.



Convocation March 24, 2005

(Above) Vocal Majors sing their rendition of "The Battle of Jericho," a spiritual arranged by Moses Hogan. (Below) Sophomore **Calvin Dugan** prepares to perform the Telleman Concerto for viola.



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Question of the Month



"Worked at Belks."
Taylor Gaston, 12th grade



"I went to Dallas, Texas to edit a video program about dinosaur bones and then I treated myself to a trip to someplace exotic."
Ms. Mary Ann Henry,
Creative Writing Teacher



"Chilled,"
Dominick Palmer, 11th grade



"I birdwatched, stayed home, and studied for college with occasional bathroom breaks and my mom sliding two meals a day under my door."
Paige Schaberg, 12th grade

What did you do during Spring Break?



"I went to a prom and on a cruise with my boyfriend, John."
Kayla Dollarhide, 10th grade



"I got our house ready to put on the market to sell and took Mrs. Kerr and Jonathan camping."
Mr. Basil Kerr, band teacher



"I went to Sara's beach house."
Trevor Murray, 11th grade



"I drove my new car!"
Scott Davis, 9th grade