

Mardi 2009

School of the Arts

Vol. 10 Issue 7

Feelin'

Lucky



APPLAUSE

Editor's Note



Greetings everyone!

It's a big news month for *Applause*, and we've been hard at work. I would like to point out the *Applause* is no longer using the word *amazing*. For an explanation, and a very informative article, turn to page 8!

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

K. Chaney Long

Cover art by

Chrissy Thorne

Congratulations to our
March

Patron of the Month
Ms. Ruth Forman

Applause

the official student publication

Charleston County School of the Arts

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Eighth graders performs *A Midsummer Night's Dream* By K. Chaney Long

On February 26 and 27, the theatre majors preformed their annual 8th grade play. This year they tackled Shakespeare with their production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mr. Younts constructed a fantastical dream world set, complete with hanging stars. The eight graders completed the difficult task of performing Shakespeare superbly, and as a whole the show was excellent.



8th graders JC Chapman and Eli Dent

Mr. George Younts
Cullen Baldwin as Bottom, with Derrick Kinloch, Christian Jabolonski, Alex Berlinsky, Dante Brown, and Joel Chapman as The Mechanicals

Middle school theatre majors perform Tunnel of Love



(From left to right) 8th grade theatre students Sophie Greene, Joseph Kilgallen, Austin Blevins, Eli Dent, Price Long, Breland Feaster, and JC Chapman during Tunnel of Love

On February 6, Middle school theatre majors created amorously themed scenes for the annual Tunnel of Love dance. The students performed their scenes for friends and family while **Mr. Younts** DJ'd the dance in the Black Box.

Ms. Passarello's classes explore Emerson and Thoreau By DeAnna Kerley

Ms. Passarello is known for her lessons that involve more than just reading out of a textbook. So it was no surprise that she would take the same approach while teaching the writing of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.

"This writing changes lives," she said. Within the next week, her English classes had read *Walden and Nature*, discussing what it meant to be an individual and measuring the value of nature in today's society. Questions like "Could you live in the wilderness by yourself?" and



Juniors Alek Mihalok and Kayla Watts in class

"Would you value a home more if you had built it with your own hands?" floated through the air. As Junior **Caroline Rogers** said: "It really made me question myself. It made me think, and it was very interesting." Mrs. Passarello quickly moved the classes outside, encouraging each student to write and attempt to take in the outside world. Personal beliefs were questioned, views were altered, and lives were definitely changed.

Artists shine at convocation By Kimberly Jenkins

On Friday February 20, the SOA High School held its third convocation of the 2008-09 school year. Strings, theatre, visual arts, and vocal displayed their talent for their classmates and teachers to see. The symphony orchestra, conducted by Maestro **Jonathan Heyward**, performed the "Hebrides Overture" by Felix Mendelssohn. Senior theatre majors performed excerpts from the group portion of their senior thesis. The senior visual artists provided us with samples from their AP Studio Arts portfolios. Vocal majors participating in the All-State Choir performed two selections, "Omnia Sol" and "All the Things You Are," a song in twelve part harmony. Convocation was wonderful and is a great time to showcase other majors that we rarely get to experience.



Theatre majors Raymond Caulder, Chris Richardson, and Leah Wilson perform at convocation.

Science Night a huge success By Tanya Lewandowski

SOA's first ever Science Night was a huge success. The turnout of teachers, students, and faculty was remarkable. The halls were filled with activity and excitement. Fold-out tables were around every corner, each one set up with a student-led trial. Each test wowed the crowds of students and teachers alike, all eager to learn. Experiments included an acids and bases test, which used a red cabbage solution to determine if different solutions, such as lemon



Juniors **Jamie Rardin, Lauren DiNicola, Amber Wells, and David Nicholson** were an acid or a base. Crowd favorites included the hover craft, which was made out of cardboard and lifted by a vacuum. Another favorite was the

super bubble. Participants stood on two bricks inside of a kiddly pool filled with bubble solution. A hula hoop was then dipped into the bubble

solution, and lifted around the participant. This made a vertical bubble tunnel, which enveloped the partaker. Head organizer of the event, **Ms. Colquitt**, did a remarkable job, and Physical Science teacher, **Mr. Lindgren**, gives her "major kudos for organizing everything, and being the behind the scenes leader."

Dr. Price and **Mr. P** are also to thank for putting on such an interesting, and exciting event. Hopefully the Science Nights to come will have as good a success as this year.

Arts Management creates alumni web site By Chelsea Adent

Last year, Mr. Baker's Arts Management class created a magazine for SOA alumni, Art: Form, and this month they launched a web site for alumni, teachers, and parents to see what's going on at SOA. The web site features updates from majors that include videos and pictures, along with a "Where Are They Now" section that shows recent accomplishments of alumni. **Aubrey Crawford**, a junior band major in Arts Management, says, "It is just beginning to come together and I'm looking forward to seeing the finished product and also what people think about it." Go check it out! The web address is www.soaalumni.org.

Second Nine Weeks Honor Roll

Congratulations to the following students for earning a spot on the second nine weeks honor roll. Students were recognized in a Principal's Honor Roll Breakfast on Thursday, February 12th.

9th Grade

Claire Bailey
Katie Erin Clancy
Renee Cooper
Cayli Crawford
James Decker
Chris Haycook
Samantha Hord
Allie Larkin
Matt Lehman
Hayley Malone
Savannah Miller
Caitlin Newton
Jonathan Pizarro
Lucy Rummier
Eileen Szwest

Yasmin Alvarez

10th Grade

Megan Broadwater
Leah Hildreth
Megan Lewis
Rachel Riddle
Josh Rodriguez
Christina Crossley

11th Grade

Catherine Bowler
Carley Congdon
Heather Corson
Blake Crawford
Lauren DiNicola
Tyler DuBose
Jacob Fanning
David Nicholson
Melissa Rauton
Joanna Schlitt
Chris Sim
Wesley Snell

12th Grade

Daniel Anthony
Raymond Caulder
Gary Cooper
Serena Doose
Tara Grantham
Paige Griffith
Monique Collins
Steven Moskos
Andi Musselwhite
Amanda Nelson
Tradd Pstrak
Hannah Riddle
Anastasis Timina

Ms. Bronk named Teacher of the Year By Wes Snell

This year's Teacher of the Year award went to tenth grade English teacher **Anna Bronk**. Ms. Bronk keeps herself occupied at SOA, both inside and outside of the classroom. She teaches a (how shall I put it?) challenging English class, both honors and college prep, but also manages Yearbook and Quest academic teams. She helps countless students (in all grades) with writing contests, college applications, public speaking competitions, tutorials, and other academic activities. "Just about everyday I'm here until seven or eight," she says. This is a busy woman.

Before teaching, Ms. Bronk spent ten years as a broadcast journalist, anchor, investigative reporter, photographer, producer, you name it, for every major news network but CBS: Fox, CNN, ABC, NBC, and their affiliates. She has interviewed Hillary Clinton, Democrat Elliott Spitzer (before he got in trouble), NBA basketball player David Robinson, country singers Charlie Daniels and Garth Brooks, and she covered George Bush's visit to West Ashley. Ms. Bronk also worked with 20/20 to break a case of domestic abuse in an Amish community.

"When I reported, I tried to look at the human side of the story instead of the bare, super-

official aspect that you see sometimes," she said, "You have to be able to peel back the layers of the story and think critically, which is something I bring to the classroom. It doesn't do any good for a student to have an A or a B without being able to think critically. So I translate this into the classroom by promoting activities that think differently or by assigning literature that gives students ideas they might not have thought of before." Ms. Bronk also taught special-needs classes and worked with visually and hearing impaired, and mentally disabled children. This helped her to consider various teaching styles.

Other teachers agree with the decision. When asked why Ms. Bronk deserved the recognition, **Ms. Marshall** said, "She's one of the most dedicated teachers at this school. She's here before anyone else in the morning and leaves after everyone else is gone." **Ms. Miles**, creative writing instructor, had this to say, "Ms. Bronk approaches teaching like one of those bullet trains in Japan. Anything she takes on in her teaching is approached with all her energy and with expectations of excellence for her students. She knows the ultimate educational destination for her students and directs them there with passion and ferocity."



As the weather heats up, **Ms. Darlene** is on fire and ready to tell us just what type of food she'd prefer: hot or cold. Would it be a cold antipasta or a hot meatball sub? I ventured into SOA's cafeteria to see what this suave chef would like on her dinner table.

"Most definitely a cold antipasta. I need something to keep me cool in the hot Charleston weather."

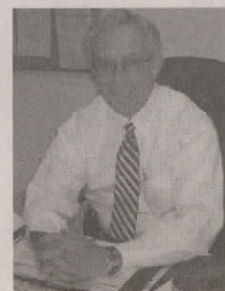
As SOA prepares to move to the new campus, everything will become more compact, which will help our #1 handyman a great deal. I decided to ask, **Mr. Dawson**, are you looking forward to moving to the new campus?"

"Yes, I am. I am truly looking forward to it. After starting here in 96' and still here in 2009, it's a great privilege to be moving into a new school. It will surely relieve me. I won't have to walk as much and it will save me the headache of having to open all of the trailers every morning."



March 17 is St. Patrick's Day and the luck of the Irish will be upon us. I wanted to know, **Mr. Davis**, do you believe in luck?"

"Yes I do. I believe that you make your own luck by the decisions you make, by doing the right thing, by your friendships. The main thing is what you choose, how you choose, it's your decisions."



March Arts Calendar

Mondays- Monday Night Blues at East Bay Meeting House
First and Third Sundays of the month- James Island Farmers and Crafters Market
March 1st- Masterworks Concert, including W.A. Mozart's Piano Quartet in g minor K. 478; R. Haken's "Suite for Viola Pomposa"; C. Franck's Piano Quintet in f minor 4pm at the City Gallery at Waterfront Park, \$35
March 1-14th- *A Flea in Her Ear* at the Village Playhouse
March 2nd- Pulse Trio at Mellow Mushroom
March 6- French Quarter Art Walk, downtown Charleston
March 9th- George Kenny Quartet at Mellow Mushroom
March 12- Badfish at the Music Farm
March 16th- Quentin Baxter Trio at Mellow Mushroom
March 17- St. Patrick's Day
March 20- Rehab at the Music Farm
March 24-28- Charleston Fashion Week
March 28- Jeff Dunham at the North Charleston Convention Center

AP Exams approach

By David Sass

Students in Advanced Placement classes are cracking down in preparation for the upcoming AP exams. Pictured to the right are a few selections from the second semester AP Literature syllabus. The exam schedule is as follows: Tuesday, May 5 – 12pm – Statistics; Wednesday, May 6 – 8am – Calculus AB; Thursday, May 7 – 8am – English Literature; Friday, May 8 – 8am – US History; Friday, May 8 – 12pm – Studio Art; Monday, May 11 – 8am – Music Theory; Thursday, May 14 – 8am – World His-



Artists take to the field

By David Sass

When most people think of the School of the Arts, they don't think of the hulking jocks on the school football team and the glamorous cheerleaders that are always the popular kids in a regular high school. They think of artsy kids who paint and sculpt, who play the piano, the violin, the saxophone, who sing in great big choirs, who dance and twirl, who act out tragedies and comedies onstage, who write their little hearts out. They think of these artsy kids as completely out of place on a sports field. And in a way, they are right; we don't have a football team, or the cheerleaders to go with them.

But they are far more wrong than they are right: just because SOA doesn't have all the normal sports teams that all the regular high schools have doesn't mean that no one here plays any sports. In fact, a fair number of students at SOA play sports; they just go and play at those regular schools. And with spring just around the corner, more are coming out of the woodwork to get ready for the season.

"Going to play for a different school "is a lot of work," says **Cat Bowler**, a junior piano major who plays on the varsity soccer team for West Ashley. "The SOA girls have to rush straight from school to soccer, and there's little time for snacking." Cat plays on the team alongside **Aubrey Crawford**, a junior band major, **Kimberly Johnson**, a sophomore vocal major, and **Hilary Ferguson**, a sophomore band major.

Lauren DiNicola, a junior creative writer who runs track for Wando, agrees, but says that it's worth it because she, "loves running."

When asked how they balance their sport with their art major, the resulting answers were wide and varied, but nearly everyone agreed that it can be very hard to find equilibrium. "It's funny because theatre and soccer are like polar opposites," commented junior theatre major **Leila Gorstein**, who is on Wando's varsity soccer team. "If the two intertwine, as they frequently do, I just have to choose one over the other." Though, for Lauren DiNicola, "running gives me a break and helps me clear my mind."

Of course, some students don't have to go anywhere else to get their fill of sports; with our very own Ultimate Frisbee team right

here at school, there's no need to look elsewhere.

Started last year by **Marshall Drake**, an '08 visual arts graduate, and **Kurt Sauer**, a senior theatre major and current captain of the Ultimate team, it evolved during the year from being a simple club into the flourishing team it is now.

"What Marshall and I wanted was a bonding team experience for all the members," remarked Sauer, "and I think that since we don't have any of the regular ones here at school, a lot of people here don't understand that that is what a sports team is all about."

SOA Sailing Team shoves off season

By Wes Snell

Every Sunday, approximately twenty people gather at the Charleston Harbor representing SOA. Why? To sail, of course. Most people here don't even know SOA has its own sailing team. Many don't even know what a sailing team is. A sailing team is a group of

says skipper **Maddie Moore**, junior, "We all get along very well, which isn't what I've seen at other schools. Everyone leaves their aggression on the water, and that's how it should be." The county teams are sponsored by Charleston Community Sailing, which provides them with



(From left to right) students **Kyle Heck** and **Drew Corriveau**

students representing their high school that practice the art of sailing and compete in regattas (races), similar to the structure of any high school sport and equally legitimate. Many local high schools, including Porter-Gaud, Wando, James Island, Academic Magnet, Ashley Hall, and West Ashley, have a sailing team. This year, SOA joins that roster.

Until this year SOA did not have its own team, and students wishing to sail had to join their district school's team to compete. Last year, the South-Atlantic Scholastic Sailing Association ruled that students could not sail for any school but their own, which left SOA stranded. Things looked grim until sophomore visual artists **Drew Corriveau** and **Joey Dixon** spearheaded the effort to form an SOA sailing team. These days the team is alive and eager, and improving all the time. "Our team is unique,"

free boats, equipment, and facilities. Each boat holds two people, a skipper and a crew. The skipper guides the main sail and handles the tiller while crew keeps the boat level and makes sure everything is synchronized, including the front sail, or jib.

The SOA team sails on collegiate 420's, a small type of dinghy, throughout the Charleston Harbor and Cooper River, on Sundays from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., weather permitting. They compete in regattas throughout the South-Atlantic Conference. Anyone grades 6-12 can jump on at any time, but the team is looking especially for more experienced sailors who could captain a boat. As Moore described the experience, "The technical part of sailing only goes so far and then it becomes something organic, a feeling, a part of you. I love it."



Junior **Lauren DiNicola** runs track for Wando.

Because

Ultimate is such a new sport, at least competitively, only a few schools in Charleston County have teams, such as Academic Magnet and Wando. "We play against more colleges than high schools, like the Citadel, Clemson, Duke, and the College of Charleston, for instance. In fact, the C of C team is like our big brother team," said team captain **Kurt Sauer**.

Kurt tries to push his team to their limit, doing his best to squeeze three practices in a week, including one on Saturday. "It's difficult, because I have to keep all the equipment and all the cones and such in the back of my car. And balancing all that with my schoolwork and senior thesis is even harder, but it's definitely worth it," Kurt commented. And considering that the team won all but two games last year, and their first game this year, it certainly looks like it.

The weekend of March 7-8, Charleston is hosting the Sixth Annual Chucktown Throwdown, where thirty Ultimate teams, including SOA's very own team, from all over will compete to win.

From soccer to track and Ultimate Frisbee to sailing, the kids at SOA can hold their own on the court as well as on the stage. All this goes to show is that artsy kids can be sporty as well.

Bowl team soars

By Sam Whitley

In its inaugural year, School of the Arts' Academic Bowl Team has already had a lot of success, proving that our motley crew is a force to be reckoned with. Basically, the Academic Bowl is a trivia contest, in which teams from high schools across the county compete to test their academic mettle. Taking place every Thursday night, each match lasts about thirty minutes. Two teams, each with five members apiece, try to answer questions that are produced by the district. According to **Steven Moskos**, a 12th grade member of the team, these questions cover a wide variety of academic subjects. "There can be weird stuff too," he said. "One time they had to guess the names of the presidents based on the nicknames of their wives." So far, SOA has a 5-1 win record, beating such schools as West Ashley, North Charleston, and Wando.

Global studies teacher **Mr. Clark** is in charge of the team, and is the one to see for anyone interested in joining. Other than being a high school student, there are no requirements for joining. "We mostly have juniors and freshmen," Mr. Clark said. "Next year when we get rolling we will have a weekly meeting where we also do programs for the school that encourage participation in the trivia game."

Though the team is already going strong, its future looks even brighter. "Hopefully we'll do well and be in the top three when the season ends mid-March," And for the members of the team, there couldn't be anything better. "I love academics, and I love arguing about stuff," Steven declared, "so it seems like the perfect place to be." With any luck, our team's arguing talents will lead us to become one of the top teams in the district.

Art Show in media center a success

By Rebecca Forman

On February 6th, under the direction of Ms. Cimballa, the freshmen visual artists presented an art exhibit entitled "Brain in a Box" in the library. Angelica Halvarsson, one of the participants, describes the show as a "concept piece," a mixed media self portrait using two sides of a basic canvas. One side represents the artist's exterior, how the artist wishes to present himself. The other side depicts what is going on inside, how the artist is feeling, and his general temperament. The technique is an exercise of self exploration, based on curiosity boxes," a Renaissance practice of little cabinets depicting scenes.

I walked into the library not really knowing what to expect. I was met by a jazz version of The Beatles "Yesterday," performed by freshmen piano majors, accompanied by Mr. Klarke. When walking through the impromptu gallery in the back, I was met with music lyrics on the backs of CD's glued onto a colorful canvas, the frenzy of Ms Pac Man eating away at the back of it. Lindsay Knox glued brightly colored sunglasses on to the front of hers, along with painted bubbles and rubber ducks.

Some of them were even interactive. Weston DeWolff's piece titled "Self Portrait" was

SOA dominates regional Scholastic Awards

By Alek Mihok

In their 86-year history, The Scholastic Art and Writing Gold Key awards have recognized some of America's most prominent young artists and writers, such as Truman Capote, Robert Redford and Andy Warhol. This year, thirty-three School of the Arts students were awarded with a Regional Scholastic Gold Key Award for their poetry, short stories, dramatic scripts, personal essays, journalism work or memoirs.

Ms. Miles said, "School of the Arts always has a large number of regional winners, but this is the largest number of regional portfolio winners that we have ever had. Because we had two sections of senior thesis, I've been able to give much more individual attention to students and I think this helped them in putting together their portfolios. And I think that anybody in that class could have won a regional portfolio award. I'm delighted but not surprised. There were winners in every grade level, and I can't wait to see who goes on to National."

The four Regional Portfolio winners included seniors **Catherine Donnelly**, **Aubrey Isaacson**, **Forrest Putnam**, and **Shanequa West**. A full Portfolio set doesn't necessarily have to include every genre of writing, after all, last year's Portfolio winner, alumni **Virginia Pfahler**, won using entirely poetry. Even a theatre major, **Christopher Richardson**, entered his dramatic-script that he wrote for senior thesis and was selected as a regional winner.

When Nationals come around in early June, a small group of lucky and talented SOA writers will join 1,000 other students from across the U.S. in New York City for the National Celebration Events at Carnegie Hall. The portfolio winners will compete to receive a Portfolio Gold Metal and to have their work published by Alliance.

a colorful pictures of explosive drums, but on the other side he simply painted a mustache on a mirror. I watched intrigued students bend down to match their faces with his piece. Angelica directed me through the process, explaining how her own piece reflected her personality. "The inside is more psychedelic, where as the front is dark. The inside is happier."

Will Horry explained his piece in his artists statement. "I use art to show my individuality. That's what I look at when I first see artwork." Devin Hartley used branches to show the multiple facets of her personality. Morgan Nuss explained that the front is her personality: a "controlled crazy," where as she used the back as a canvas for her favorite things in life. Lucy Runnar just wanted people going away from her art feeling happier. The pieces really showed me how different each artist is. I have yet to meet these students, but the show is just another reminder of the talent and thought that goes into our art. We often forget that we are not only among peers, but among people who are the best of the best at what they love.

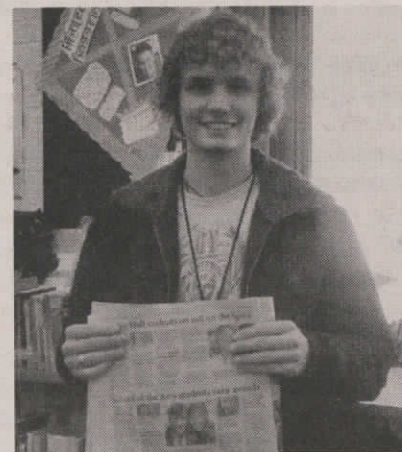
The Portfolio winners are **Catherine Donnelly**, **Aubrey Isaacson**, **Forrest Putnam**, and **Shanequa Sanders-West**. The regional winners were **Allison Hilton**, **Wes Snell**, **Aleksandar Mihok**, **Caroline Rogers**, **Katie Drennan**, **Kianté Chapman**, **Lauren DiNicola**, **Louisa Hopkins**, **Emily Thomas**, **Sydney Cowart**, **Cayli Crawford**, **Savannah Miller**,

Becca Forman, **Hadley Preganz**, **Danair Neihrah**, **Sam Rames**, **Sierra Debrow**, **Katie Ridgeway**, **Shalless Robinson**, **Christopher Richardson**, **Dorothy Behre**, **Shannon McNellis**, **Haley Dixon**, **Louisa Hopkins**, **Shelby Studebaker**, **Courtland Sutton**, **Maya Novak-Cogdell**, **Sylvester Rodd**, and **Rebecca Witcher**

Applause writer joins Post and Courier

By Tanya Lewandowski

Wesley Snell, a junior creative writing major, has been chosen by the Post and Courier to write a monthly article showcasing School of the Art's achievements and events, as part of their new Student Writing Project. The articles, written by high school journalism students from Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester counties appear each Thursday in the Local section. Wesley's debut article, "SOA Students Win Awards," was featured in the February 19th issue. Unlike students from non-magnet schools who have been asked to participate in this program, Wesley's article was the only one to



circulate throughout the entire low country, reaching the hands of a quarter of a million readers. When asked of his first reaction to seeing his article published in the Post and Courier, he answered modestly, "I didn't even know that it had come out. I found out later that night when I went to work because my co-workers had cut out the article and put it up for display. It was really very sweet of them." Wesley hopes this will further his journalism career, and ultimately lead to an internship at the Post and Courier. If you have any news or achievements that you want to see featured in Wesley's future articles, please e-mail him at: snelly1091@yahoo.com.

Save our strings

By Kimberly Jenkins

In late January, the strings department at SOA came abuzz with worry and disbelief when they learned that the school board would possibly cut funding, of the district's strings programs. When high school orchestra director **Sarah Fitzgerald** heard about the possible cuts, she was outraged. "It seems that in uncertain economic times, the arts are always the first thing on the chopping block." When Ms. Fitzgerald explained in detail what could happen to the strings department at SOA as a result, I saw a sparkle in her eye and I knew she wouldn't let this go down without a fight. Later on that week, the Save Our Strings campaign had officially begun. Ms. Fitzgerald informed the strings majors that she was on an all out blitzkrieg and would do everything in her power to keep the program going. On January 26, SOA strings students and parents gathered outside the school board meeting on 75 Calhoun Street and held up signs. Channels four and five were in attendance at the board meeting and they mentioned the efforts of the students later that evening on the six o'clock news.

The Save Our Strings campaign has thus far been a great success. Many people have lent their support to the cause including parents, community members, and teachers across

the state. Dr. Robert Jesselson, the music professor at the University of South Carolina, recently wrote an opinion editorial that appeared in The Post and Courier stating the positive effects of strings programs in public schools. He noted the increased number of students in the All-State Orchestra from Charleston County and how studies have shown that there is a direct relationship between SAT scores and arts study. In recent research by Mr. James Braunreuther, CCSD Fine Arts Coordinator, he shows a direct correlation of PACT scores of arts and non-arts students. Students involved in arts programs, especially those in strings, had increased PACT scores and the highest level of students earning Proficient and Advanced scores.

The Save Our Strings campaign is continuing on strong and support has been steadily growing. Two members of the school board, Mr. Greg Meyers and Ms. Ann Oplinger, have promised to keep arts in the schools.

If you would like to be informed about future events, become a member of the Facebook group by searching "Save Our Strings." I also encourage you to visit the website, www.saveourstrings.net, and sign up to receive regular email updates.

Mary Jane isn't so sweet

Lauren DiNicola



Cigarettes damage lungs: true. Alcohol impairs brains: true. Marijuana is harmless: false.

The most widely used drug by teens today,

marijuana has a reputation of causing nothing more than lethargy and laughing fits. So what is the big deal? Why not make weed legal?

For one thing, marijuana is not as risk-free as people may think. It contains delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in varying amounts that determines the strength of the drug's mind-altering effects. THC content has increased from less than one percent in 1974 to six percent today, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The NIDA also reports that marijuana can lead to addiction in some people, and a heavy pot smoker (someone who smokes five joints a day) may be consuming as many carcinogenic chemicals as a heavy cigarette smoker (someone who smokes a full pack of cigarettes each day). Although it is hard to pin marijuana as the sole cause of Cancer, many people who smoke weed also use tobacco products that are proven to be detrimental to one's health. Marijuana smokers often develop the same breathing problems as cigarette smokers, and studies have shown that marijuana prevents lungs' T-cells from fighting infection. Long term abuse of marijuana can cause changes in the brain similar to those caused by cocaine, heroin, and alcohol, by weakening memory, attention spans, and learning abilities. Plus, short term effects of the drug include short-term memory loss, distorted perception, and loss of coordination.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration conducted a study to investigate the effects of marijuana while driving. The study found that the drug significantly impairs the ability to drive due to factors such as sleepiness, lack of coordination, and bad estimation of time and distance. Many people who support marijuana's legalization believe that everyone has a natural right to make decisions, even wrong ones, and should be allowed to smoke pot if they please.

However, when a person's decision to use a drug puts the lives of others at risk, the government has the right to enforce restrictive and protective laws. But who would be stupid enough to drive while high? According to the United States Department of Justice, one in six teens admitted to driving under the influence of marijuana, and, in a study from a shock trauma unit, 19% of teen crash victims tested positive for marijuana. Research conducted on motorists pulled over for reckless driving reported that 45% of those not under the influence of alcohol tested positive for marijuana. Geico even reports that, in 2001, 38,000 high school seniors in the U.S. crashed while under the influence of marijuana.

Well, what about the drug's medicinal value? According to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Marinol, an FDA-approved alternative to smoked marijuana, has synthetic THC (which can relieve nausea from chemotherapy) and is easier to administer safely than unregulated doses of smoked marijuana (which contain carcinogens themselves). The American Medical Association (AMA) has rejected the endorsement of marijuana as medicine until further research is conducted.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, in a long-term study of high school students reports showed that young people who use other illegal drugs almost always use marijuana first. Teens that are exposed to users and sellers of marijuana are often urged to try other, more dangerous substances. Additionally, the Rand Corporations Drug Policy recently performed surveys to compare the education and income of marijuana users vs. non-users, starting when the 5,833 participants were 13 years-old and conducting a final follow up at age 29. Their research concluded that non-users had higher education levels, better health, and less use of hard drugs. The people who had used marijuana as teens had considerably lower incomes and levels of health. Marijuana, according to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, can even worsen cases of depression in teens that use the drug for "self-medication."

As anyone can see, marijuana is dangerous and detrimental to the minds and health of our youth and every citizen in America. The drug should not be legalized in the United States.

Why shouldn't it be legal?

By Wes Snell



Let's talk about the over reactive, federally self-righteous, hypocritical, unnecessary and harmful aspects of the fact that marijuana is illegal. Let's talk about the amount of money we stand to make through its legalization and regulation, the amount we lose through its illegality, or the benefits of marijuana for medicinal, social, and economic purposes. As Greek playwright Aeschylus said, "In war, truth is the first casualty." The War on Drugs is no exception.

Is marijuana really that bad? 435,000 people died in 2000 from tobacco use, and 400,000 died from a poor diet and physical inactivity. 17,000 died from illicit drug use, and 7,600 from prescription drugs. How many deaths were directly caused by marijuana? Zero. There has not been a single recorded case of a person dying from a marijuana overdose. Alcohol accounts for many of the violent crimes in America, but marijuana for almost none. Alcohol-impaired driving constituted thirty-two percent of driving fatalities in 2006. The impairment of driving under the influence of marijuana is inconclusive - reports by Rand, a non-profit think tank, indicate that stoned drivers do not show a significantly higher percentage of car accidents than sober people. So which is worse? Paradoxically, which is legal?

The people who first and foremost do not want marijuana to be legalized are drug dealers. It would bankrupt them. In 2007 marijuana was reported by 23% of teens to be easier to buy than cigarettes or beer. Were marijuana legalized, it would solve a lot of the problems with which it is associated. It would take the drug off the streets and regulate it, reducing its exposure to teenagers. After all, unlike alcohol from a liquor store, one is not likely to be carded by a dealer for weed. It would also go a long way towards stripping it of its status as a "gateway drug," a label that is inconclusive and speculative at best. If we took marijuana off the streets, people buying it would not be as inclined

to exposure to cocaine and amphetamines because those selling it would not be suggesting such alternatives.

People say that marijuana use would increase if it were decriminalized. The truth is that it never decreased. Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in America. Over 20 million people in this country are current or past-month users. Almost half of the population has tried it at least once. According to the FBI, police arrested an estimated 872,720 persons for cannabis violations in 2007, the highest annual total ever recorded in the United States. And despite over thirty years of wasted tax dollars, marijuana is America's leading cash crop. John Gettman, a public-policy analyst, reported that in 2006 marijuana cultivation and sales made over \$35.8 billion annually, more than corn (\$23.3 billion) and wheat (\$7.5 billion) combined. Citing 2005 State Department data, he reported that marijuana production today is ten times that of 1981. The federal government is clearly fighting a war they can't win, and, instead of harnessing these profits and channeling them into schools or infrastructure, our law system guarantees that every cent of that \$35.8 billion profits unregulated criminals and costs us, the taxpayers, in wasted court time, prison sentences, and drug prevention tactics. In 2003 state and federal governments spent over 40 billion dollars on the War on Drugs. To put things in perspective, the national education budget that year was 53 billion dollars. Already this year (as I write this it's February, by the way) the state and federal governments have spent over seven billion dollars. We need to start asking: what is this money spent on? Is it working? Is it necessary? Couldn't this money be better spent somewhere else, like our failing economy or education reform?

Marijuana isn't habit-forming, but a safer alternative to alcohol and cigarettes. It helps cancer patients fight nausea, relieves chronic pain, and encourages eating for anorexics. We are not gaining anything by its illegality. I think the question is not "why should marijuana be legal?" but instead "why should it not be legal?"

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Village Playhouse leaves no *Doubt*

By Chelsea Adent

Saturday night, January 31, The Village Playhouse concluded their eight performances of *Doubt: A Parable* directed by Keely Enright and starring *Applause* editor, **K. Chaney Long**. There was not an empty seat to be found as the lights of the final performance were dimmed.

Doubt focuses on a priest named Father Flynn (Paul Whitty) who faces accusations of sexually abusing boys throughout the St. Nicholas Church and School. Sister Aloysius (Libby Campbell) is convinced that Father Flynn is no-doubt guilty of these accusations and soon



SOA junior **K. Chaney Long** and Libby Campbell in *Doubt*

convinces Sister James (K. Chaney Long) of the same. The audience finds themselves changing their opinions of Father Flynn constantly and whether or not he was guilty.

The Village Playhouse provided a very serious and dramatic atmosphere, which was much needed throughout the entire play. Not

only were the actors convincing and inspiring, but the set, which included a church courtyard and a principal's office were spectacularly constructed. The costumes were also intricately detailed, especially the robes worn by Father Flynn during the sermons. Chaney says, "*Doubt* was a lot of fun. I really enjoyed the whole process, and I'm

very sad that it's over."

If you have never been to The Village Playhouse, the theatre provides a wonderful atmosphere to see a play with friends or family and also offers drinks. You definitely will not be disappointed when you see a production at The Village Playhouse.

The last amazing article

By Chelsea Adent

Applause has been forced to add a new rule to our style manual: writers cannot use the word *amazing*. After the word turned up five times in an early draft of a recent article about President Obama's inauguration, Dr. Cusatis put an end to its usage: "The word has lost its impact. Everything has become 'the most *amazing* thing ever.'" We decided to compile a list of words that can take the place of this *amazing* word. This is for all the students and teachers who find that they tend to use *amazing* to the point of redundancy in speech or writing.



Inspiring
Spectacular
Marvelous
Dope
Sick
Ballin'
Super-duper
Wonderful
Phenomenal
Great
Awesome
Rockin'
Sweet
Incredible
Stupendous
Delicious
Lovely
Beastin'
Off-the-chain
Awesome

Radical
Astonishing
Breath-taking
Mind-boggling
Astounding
Stunning
Sensational
Fabulous
Extraordinary
Indescribable
Remarkable
Unbelievable
Fantabulous
Superb
Fantastical
Exceptional
Unique
Singular
Gnarly
Excellent

Way-cool
Dynamic
First-rate
Bomb-diggity
Neato
Magnificent
Magical
Wondrous
Exquisite
Coolio
Bangin'
Smashing
Bloody good
Terrific
Eloquent
Charming
Glamorous
Phat
Fresh

SOA juniors star in "grabbing" production of *A Flea in Her Ear*

By Rebecca Forman

I spent my Friday night not at a movie, a party, or a BFF sleep over, but rather, like the art student I am, seeing *A Flea in Her Ear*, at the Village Playhouse. It featured our very own **K. Chaney Long** and **Addison Dent**, both junior SOA theatre majors, with outstanding stage presence. After getting over the initial shock of seeing my editor in a French maid costume, screaming and grabbing Addison's butt, the play grabbed me. The Village Playhouse pulled *A Flea in Her Ear* off with detail and sophistication, without any neglect in the set department, something I have often seen in live theatre. The production was personal, without underestimating the audience's desire to be entertained.

Because the play is described as "a French farce," I had no clue what to expect

as I walked into the auditorium. I certainly didn't expect cozy tables, candles, and an assembly of adorable old couples. The play was set in Paris at the turn of the 20th century, and explores infidelity among the elite of that time.

The conflict is presented when a package from the "Frisky Puss" hotel is sent to the naïve newlywed Madame Chandebise, containing her husband's suspenders. However



Actor Tom Michal with SOA juniors **K. Chaney Long** and **Addison Dent**

raunchy this may sound, the characters somehow pull off a charming innocence as this one misunderstanding leads to several thousand more. By the time the

third act rolled around, the plethora of twists reminded me of those frustrating camp sing-a-longs, "the leaf on the twig on a branch, a branch on the tree, a tree in the hole, a hole in the bog, etc., etc., etc..." Perhaps the only downside was the audience's strong desire to slap the main characters (not Chaney, of course!), scold them for their ignorance, and tell them to talk it out like rational adults. But then again, without irrationality, we would have had no play, and without train wrecks we would have no grossly entertaining play. The Village Playhouse has proved it can hold its own among The Dockstreet and Charleston Stage, and has taken its place in Charleston's live theatre complexes.

Winter Formal 2009

By Alek Mihok

On Saturday, February 14th, aka Valentine's night, the annual School of the Arts Winter Formal took place at the South Carolina Aquarium. It was our school's first time hosting the dance there, and from the moment SOA's snazzed-up high school students entered the building, they were surrounded by crunk music and an array of mesmerizing sea creatures.

Three guest performances also debuted at the dance: Trouble in Transit, a jazz-rock band made up of SOA students, Sexy Dark Chocolate, a four-membered vocal group, and Ebony and Friends, a vocal trio that performed their rendition of "Killing Me Softly".

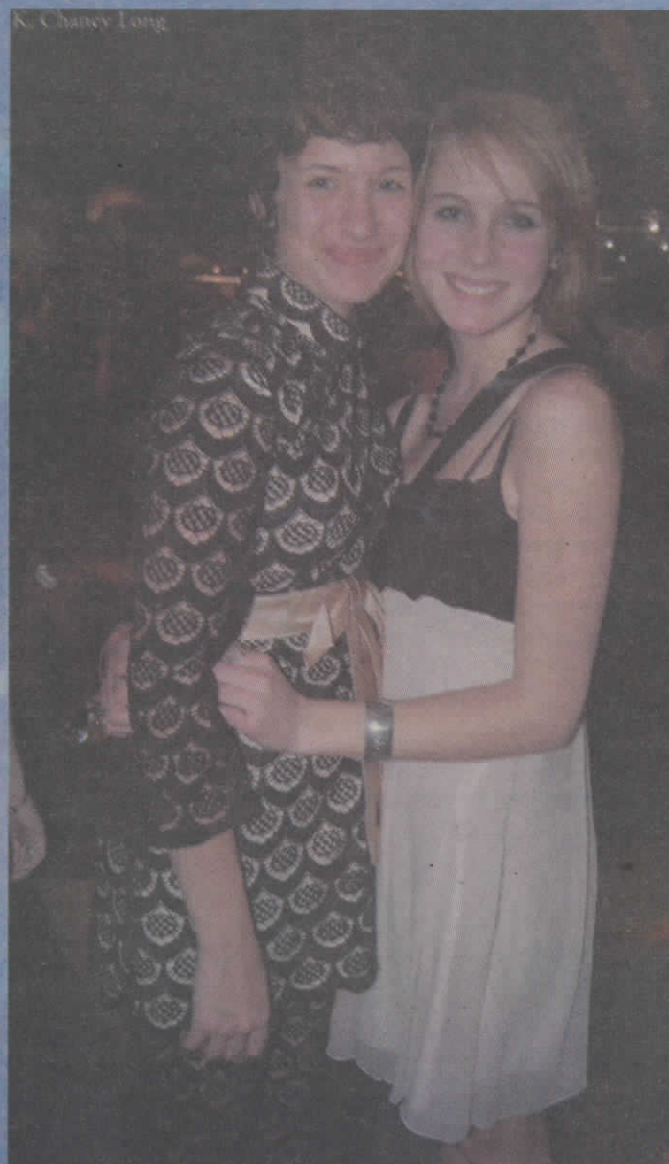
The SOA community anticipated this year's Winter Formal months before it took place, and from eight o'clock pm to the late hours of the night, (well, eleven o'clock), high school students 'jumped on it', 'pop lock and dropped it', and 'got low'. Any past school dance cannot even compete with the fabulousity of this year's Winter Formal.



Ebony Clemons performed at Winter Formal



Applause staff member David Sass



Sophomores Free Kopsak and Stephanie Hardy



Sophomore Pete Page and junior Megan Murphy



Juniors Johanna Schlitt and Leila Gorstein strike a pose.

Taken is a thrill ride

Classic DVD review

By Rebecca Forman

When my dad finally gave me permission to go to make one of my annual pilgrimages to Disney World, this time with my best friend and her mom, instead of him, I jokingly remarked, "and I promise not to get kidnapped by sex traffickers!" Hardy-har-har, right?

Well, you'd get the joke if you've recently seen *Taken*, a movie I'd expected little out of, and frankly got just that. However, like mediocre Bond movies, Jackie Chan, or High School Musical, it was still entertaining, and I had the unique experience of seeing it with my dad. Why unique? Well, the entire premise is about just how far ex-CIA father will go to save his bratty, teenaged daughter from Albanian kidnapers. As director Pierre Morel's first successful film, it will make quite an impact on the post-Oscar's plethora of B-rated comedies and



action-thrillers, because, it might be one of the better things in theatres right now. One of the more artful scenes is when the father and daughter must stay on the phone while she is kidnapped from her Persian apartment. It made me grab for my own father, and pull my legs into fetal position. This is also about the time I realized I was watching a good movie.

For someone looking for a break from movies like *The Reader* and *-kill me now- Frost/Nixon*, *Taken* just might be the movie for you. Try to ignore the numerous holes in the plot. Instead exclaim, "Wow, that's cool!" as a fifty year old man kills an entire mafia in thirty seconds. Great for a night out with the family, if they're in to that kind of thing, for as my father and I drove away from the theatre, he actually apologized for not knowing karate.

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By Lizzie Caulder

On March 28, 1964 *The Incredible Mr. Limpet* was released as a family friendly movie. Directed by Arthur Lubin and screenplay written by Jameson Brewer and John C. Rose, this movie is a lighthearted comedy that is perfect for any family get-together.

Don Knotts plays Henry Limpet, a scrawny little man, obsessed with fish, who cannot get into the navy during World War II. He accidentally falls into the ocean one day



and by some magic power, he turns into a fish. He is finally able to be the secret weapon of the United States and assists with the destroying of Nazi submarines.

Advanced for the 1960's, this movie is a combination of animation and reality. The real life drama appeals to adults, and the silly animation is wonderful for kids. The actors work marvelously in making the animated parts more real. Even though it is rated G, children, teenagers and adults can enjoy it.

The Bird and the Bee

Classic Album Review

By DeAnna Kerley

Rarely does a band gain any sort of success without losing its individuality. However, The Bird and the Bee manage to retain their unique sound. Consisting of Greg Kurstin and Inara George, the band first formed in Los Angeles. Quickly following the formation of the band, Kurstin and George's first album, *Again and Again and Again and Again*, debuted in 2007. After two years of success, with songs appearing on the television show *Grey's Anatomy* and movie *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*, The Bird and the Bee finally released their newest CD, *Ray Guns Are Not Just the Future*, in January 2009.

The CD carries the legacy of the band's sound: a mellow, psychedelic beat. The CD is filled with "stuck in your head all day"



choruses, George's voice a haunting melody that compliments the electro pop, jazzy background.

The only criticism one could hold against the album would be that some of the songs, such as "What's in the Middle", are simply a dead weight to the rest of the CD. The good definitely outweighs the bad, however, and *The Bird and The Bee* are sure to continue to widespread popularity in the future.

Classic Album Review

By DeAnna Kerley

When the Violent Femmes (members Gordon Gano, Brian Ritchie, and Guy Hoffman) first released their self-titled album in July of 1982, it was unlikely that the little-known CD would gain any sort of recognition. Against all odds, the album would reach platinum status within a decade and reach almost every home in America. At the success of this album, the Violent Femmes were instantly



put on the radar, credited for beginning a new genre of music known as "folk punk."

With popular hits like "Blister in the Sun, Gone Daddy Gone, Kiss Off, and Add it Up," it is no surprise their CD gained widespread recognition. Its hits have drifted from decade to decade, featured in an array of television commercials and movies from the last twenty years. *Violent Femmes* is a truly artistic album, one that was meant to be blasted in cars with the windows down, to be sung loudly in the shower, to stay stuck in your mind from sunrise to sunset. Catchy tunes and idiosyncrasies have come to represent their unique sound: whiny vocals, the addictive beat of the snare drum, and the strong acoustic bass lines. It is no doubt that this CD is the definition of our generation.

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Where were they then? Ms. Rogers

By Dorothy Behre

Ms. Rogers teaches three math courses –CP Pre-Calculus, AP Statistics and AP Calculus – at the School of the Arts. She has been teaching for twenty four years, and also teaches math at the College of Charleston and Strayer University.

Dorothy Behre: *Where were you born, where did you grow up, and what was your childhood like?*

Ms. Rogers: I was born and have grown up here in Charleston. I've always lived in the same neighborhood. My mother and father both lived in that neighborhood too, even before they met each other. Both of my parents went to St. Andrews High School, which is where I went also. I still have all the same neighbors, and know them really well.

DB: *Was your middle/high school experience similar or different from SOA?*

R: It was much different. Segregation had just ended, and the place was full of hippies. In seventh grade, I was the first female in the Charleston County schools to wear pants to

school. There was an unspoken dress code that girls wore dresses to school, but I wore white Levi jeans and black converse high tops.

DB: *Do you have any connection with the arts?*

R: I used to play the piano. If I had to choose a major at SOA, it would probably be vocal. I sang in my high school glee club.

DB: *What inspired you to start teaching high school and college math?*

R: It was definitely my math teachers during high school and college that got me interested in teaching mathematics. I've always liked it. I went to the College of Charleston to study math, but I wasn't planning to be a teacher. I wanted to be a

stay at home mom. Other than teaching, I was a bartender for 10 years after college.

DB: *Is it challenging to teach CP and AP math classes?*

R: Any level is hard to teach if the students aren't interested; I would much rather have a motivated, less able student than an able unmotivated student.

DB: *What is your most embarrassing teaching-related moment?*

R: I was in a restaurant, and someone was on the phone, so the waiter asked, "Is a Matt Preacher in the house?" But I thought that the waiter asked, "Is there a math teacher in the house?" Like how they ask

thought there might be a math emergency that I could help with, and so I spoke up and said, "I'm a math teacher!" It was so embarrassing.

DB: *What do you enjoy doing most outside of school?*

R: I love to camp, although I don't get the chance to very often, and I love to read. Recently I've also been enjoying yard work and gardening, which I used to hate.

DB: *If you could make any personal change to SOA, what would it be?*

R: I wouldn't change a thing, although I do miss football games and pep-rallies that other high schools have. Part of me is worried that the new school is going to change the uniqueness of SOA. I would rather be in my trailer here than in a high-tech classroom anywhere else because of my students; if I hadn't gotten a job at SOA, I wouldn't have continued teaching at public schools.



Ms. Rogers at age nineteen.

Where are they now? Rebecca Fanning

By David Sass

Rebecca Fanning, a vocal alumna from the class of 2007, currently attends Bard College and is a Russian Studies major.

David Sass: *How has your SOA education affected you?*

Rebecca Fanning: I've learned from my time at SOA how important small communities are for me. What I enjoyed so much about my experience in classes at school was that I felt comfortable with my teachers and classmates, in the sense that I found education to be a process involving those with whom I connected on a level not confined to the classrooms. Moreover, thanks to my vocal department education, I received a stunning repulsion toward musical theatre as well as a voracious desire to delve deeper into musical theory, which I was only really introduced to through the context of learning how to sight read, a skill I cherish very much.

DS: *What influenced you to pursue Russian Studies as a major?*

RF: I knew I wanted to learn Russian in college, but I didn't realize until later that the circumstances of the Russian state would captivate my interests so entirely. It is not only the Russian language, but also the history, literature, and current events of Slavic lands that I'm studying. I'm particularly interested in Soviet literature and am currently reading stories by Daniil Kharms, if that's not just my bag.

DS: *What are your career plans and aspirations?*

RF: I aspire to be a decent enough person. My short-term plan is to try to diversify my course selection, since I'll be at a liberal arts school only once, after all. I want to be open to other interests of mine and not let any one of them die a death of malnutrition. After college I

my intuition is decent enough to steer me the right way. All I need is my integrity; I've got my best interests at heart.

DS: *How do you like living and studying in New York City?*

RF: Contrary to popular belief, Bard College, which is where I go to school, is located a



Rebecca Fanning graduated from SOA in 2007

plan on participating in a program in Russia, teaching English there. After I feel that my level of language has reached an acceptable degree of proficiency, I suppose I'll look into grad school, or else be aware of opportunities in general along the way. Basically, my plan, I suppose, is to improvise, and I just hope that

hundred miles north of New York City, also on the Hudson. Close to where I live is the famous landscape painter of the Hudson Valley River School's estate, "Olana." Frederick Church actually had the mountainside on the opposite river bank sculpted in order to make the view from his property more idealistic. Besides long "Sleepy Hollow" roads, there is not much to the area surrounding Bard College except farmland interspersed with quaint towns. Summers and autumns suit it best, but I must say there

is something absolutely luxurious to having snow in the winter. Getting to the city is a matter of an afternoon spent relying upon public transport, but includes an hour and a half long panoramic showcase of the Hudson river as it flows into the city and of course all of the glory of the big city.

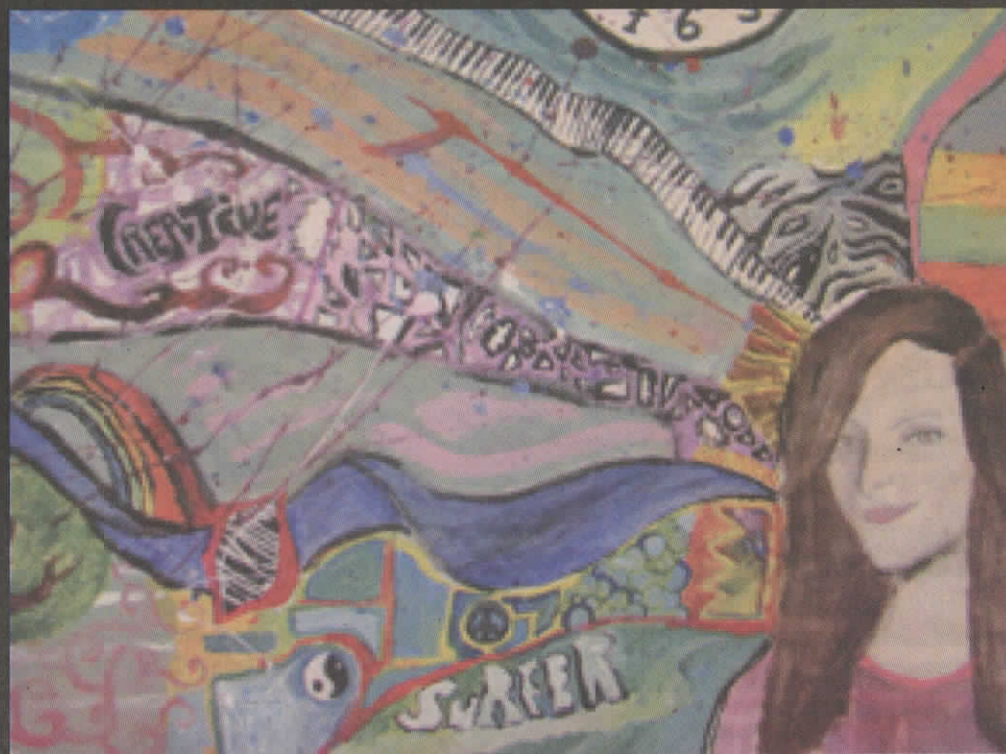
DS: *Do you have any advice for future graduates?*

RF: Well, I don't feel so much wiser now that I was just two years ago, but I suppose I would recommend long hours of actively reading books you wouldn't normally think to read, writing letters you never got around to writing, sorting, cooking, walking, visiting. I want to take advantage of these years that I have for it to be endearing that I'm clumsy but hopeful, moving with the inertia of youth. What I like about SOA is that it presupposes that everyone there is invested in something requiring impetus. It is fortunate to have something to be passionate about, and even more fortunate when it is cultivated from such a young age. To take up an instrument, to perform your own dance, to write and publish a novel all before reaching that age when all good little boys and girls matriculate into college, is a feat achieved by a very small margin of the population. My advice is to not drop these things as soon as graduation has gone by. The value of an education in the arts is not something to be squandered.

Student Artwork



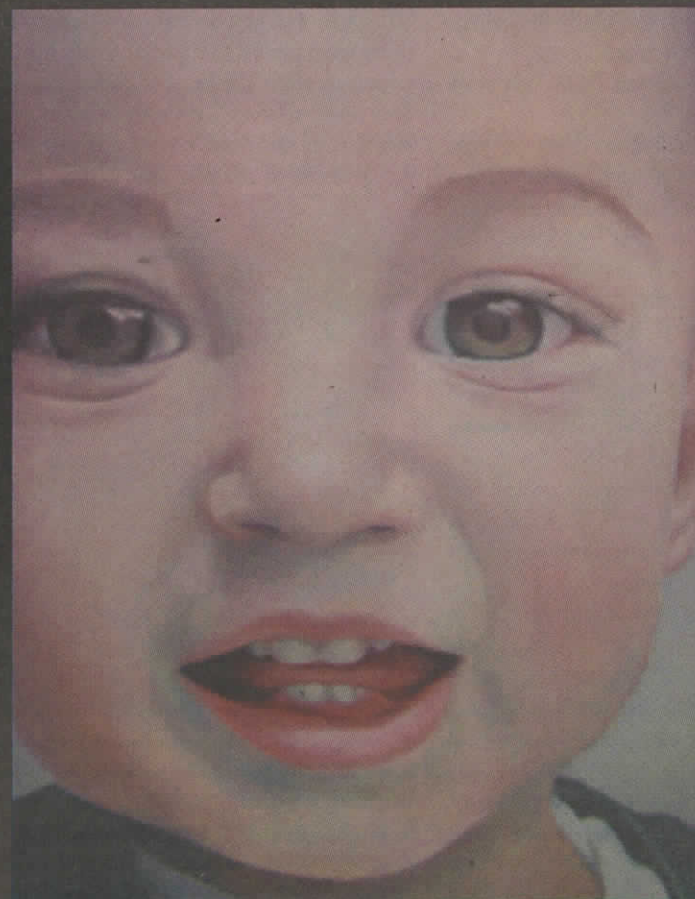
By **Althea Holenko**, 9th Grade



By **Dylan Scheer**, 9th Grade



By **Ryan Bing**, 8th Grade



By **Maddie Moore**, 11th Grade

Sass-Attack: Sporting a new rage

By David Sass



HOLY MUFFINS! You've got the ball! Go for the goal/end zone/basket! Wait, why is that bipedal zebra blowing a whistle at you? How does a zebra even hold a whistle to blow it at you? Does it even matter how? Probably not.

Sports. Really, sports. Nearly every culture has had them, and man, what a

waste of time. Actually, I take that back; sports used to be a whole lot cooler. But in recent years, say the last couple of centuries, sports have completely degraded to a total pansy fest of steroids, scandals and more pads than a fat suit.

The stakes in sports used to be a lot higher, as well. The Romans had the Coliseum, where one man's failure was another lion's supper. The ancient Aztecs and Mayans had Ulama (the much more wickedly sweet precursor to basketball), where the team that lost was the team that would appease the appetites of the gods (I must be hungry with all these food allusions!). Back then, there was actually a good reason to play your best! Nowadays, sports have just degraded to the point where it is all about who walks off the field with the biggest paycheck. Where once there was honor and integrity in sports, there now is only greed and foul play. 'Tis a shame, I tell you, a royal shame.

Another problem I have with modern sports is the fact that people get all sympathetic and empathetic, and just generally pathetic, and stop the game when a professional athlete gets injured while on the field. Honestly, people, give me a break; do not make me have to get up and find my bat. These ath-

letes get paid **MILLIONS A YEAR** to do this. They make more in one year than the average American will make in his or her entire life. And for what, playing a game like a bunch of barely disciplined schoolboys at recess? It truly depresses me to see how screwed up my species' priorities are. I think that if you are getting paid such a ridiculous amount for doing something that has very little to no positive impact on society, then you better get injured and entertain me if you want my money in your oversized pockets.

Also, there are way too many rules. Take football, for instance. And I'm not talking about the **REAL** futbol; I'm talking about the pansy American football. All that it really is is just a bunch of big, overpaid and overfed gym rats going at it and jumping and rubbing all up on each other for a stupid little ball. And the only decent part of the whole game, that is, the humongous dog-pile and struggle for the ball, only lasts for a few seconds before a two-legged zebra with a whistle breaks it up. At the very least, they should be able to kick and punch each other, considering that all the players are wearing padding as thick as tank armor. I would be far more entertained watching the resulting battle if I were to toss Heath Ledger's body between a horde of Joker fanatics and Brokeback-addicted teenage girls. It would be ten times more epic of a struggle, and it wouldn't cost me a dime to see. And honestly, everyone knows that the only reason we watch sports like football is for the violence, even if we try and tell ourselves that we as humans "have overcome our barbaric past and animalistic urges" (not me, I embrace mine!).

Without a doubt, while humanity may have "progressed" considerably over the last few millennia, our sports certainly have regressed!

Bad Fashion: The instant message

By K. Chaney Long



A person's clothes make a statement. They provide insight into someone's personality, and often reveal small truths about a wearer's personal beliefs or ideas. These statements can be made through one's style of clothing, or maybe through a message on a pin on T-shirt. Unfortunately, some of

these statements are made in a particularly personal way.

We've all seen them, the messages that draw our eyes right to where we have no desire to look. That's right, I'm talking about the interesting girls' fashion of wearing short shorts or sweatpants that have a message

printed across the butt. What makes the whole thing even more alarming is the fact that the shorts or pants in questions are usually much too revealing. It's bad enough that we're forced to read vapid messages like, Daddy's girl, or Angel, but do we really need to read the message while it's dangerously stretched across an over exposed behind?

I'm not saying people shouldn't express themselves, but really, ladies. If you need to label yourself as a dancer, a cheerleader, or describe you personality as sweet, cute, or devilish, do us all a favor and tell us some other way. Put it on a T-shirt or something, but please don't use your butt as your own personal billboard.

Beyond Strange

By Sam Whitley



We live in a world where "The Search for Spock" has a longer Wikipedia article than "Location of Osama Bin Laden," where deep-fried sodas are possible, and where spoiled millionaires like Jessica Simpson can become country music singers. But every once in while, something happens that makes so

little sense that we have to reevaluate our standards of what should and should not exist. For example, ocular parasites.

Not only does our world actually contain parasites that live in human eyes, but we've been blessed with more than one kind of these creatures. *Loa loa filarial* is one of them, a microscopic worm that lives in the rainforests of central Africa. These worms are spread by the bite of horseflies, leaving tunneling larvae in the newly opened wound. In addition to causing rashes and

swellings on the body, adult worms sometimes travel through the eyes, garnering the nickname, the "African eye worm." Don't image search this if you value your sanity.

Onchocerca volvulus is another eye parasite, a nematode that, while mostly living in Africa, also finds its home in parts of Mexico and South America. Like its cousin, the African eye worm, *O. volvulus* is spread through the bites of flies. Unlike the other parasite, however, this one can live in the body for up to fifteen years. After years of laying eggs and living in body tissue, the worms die, causing a variety of disastrous immune system responses. If the worms were living in the eyes, which is unfortunately likely, then the person will go blind. This illness is known worldwide as river blindness. It's the circle of life, or something.

When Nature sees fit to create eye tunneling worms, I'm not going to sit by and take it. Oh, no. I'm going to quit recycling and drive my exhaust spewing car. Take that, Nature. We'll see who has the last laugh.

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a christmas story
nov 28 - dec 20, 2008



doubt, a parable
jan 16 - 31, 2009



a flea in her ear
feb 27 - mar 15, 2009



a delicate balance
apr 3 - 18, 2009



ring of fire
may 1 - 16, 2009

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The history of St. Patrick's Day

By Dorothy Behre

When one thinks of St. Patrick's Day, the first things that come to mind are shamrocks and the incessant pinching of people who don't wear green. However, those typical things are just on the surface of the holiday. Many don't realize that in addition to tiny male faeries called leprechauns, the story of St. Patrick's Day also includes pirates and pagans.

Everyone knows that St. Patrick's Day is the feast day of St. Patrick, originally named Maewyn Succat, who drove snakes, aka Pagans, from Ireland. This event has been celebrated in Ireland for many years, although

St. Patrick was actually born British, and was kidnapped by pirates and sold into slavery in Ireland, where he started converting Pagans to Christianity. St. Patrick's Day began to be celebrated in America in the 1730's with the influx of Irish immigrants that led to the fact that today there are more Americans of Irish origin than there are Irish in Ireland.

For those of you who haven't learned by now to wear at least one square-inch of green on St. Patrick's Day, you can try to protect yourself from getting pinched by reminding celebrators that St. Patrick's actual color is blue, and was changed in

the 1800s, as green was the color associated with faeries, immortality and fertile crops. However, if I were you, I would still wear a little green, just to be safe and un-pinched.

Irish or not, I highly recommend celebrating St. Patrick's Day; it represents not only an ancient saint, but the discrimination that Irish-Americans have overcome. Although it was originally a religious celebration, and pubs in Ireland were ordered closed for the day until the 1970's, St. Patrick's Day is the opposite of dull.

Horoscopes

By Zordon

Pisces (February 19- March 20): You have read the horoscopes! You gain 42 nerd points, and have grown to Level 2 in Social Unacceptability!

Aries (March 21 - April 19): There is gold buried under the theater platform. Be careful, though: I hear it's guarded by the sword master's ghost.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20): Working hard and applying yourself is overrated. Do you know who else worked hard and applied himself? Hitler.

Gemini (May 21 - June 21): Be wary of strangers. While they could be your eternal soul mate, they could also be inhuman horrors that want to devour and assimilate the human race. Don't take any chances.

Cancer (June 22- July 22): Things aren't looking good, Cancer. Many people are trying to kill you with radiation, and I think Kurt Cobain said he wanted to eat you.

Leo (July 23 - August 22): Our fleshy manbodies are too weak! It's time for the next stage of evolution. From now on, spend all of your time at high altitudes. Don't you want your children to fly one day?

Virgo (August 23 - September 22): The younger generation is a lazy bunch of slackers. You need to bring back the good ol' days! Back when there was modesty, people worked a hard day's work, and most of your siblings wouldn't survive. Yesiree, that sure made you feel special.

Libra (September 23 - October 22): Always let your conscience be your guide. Just don't let it get too friendly or anything. That would be gross.

Scorpio (October 23 - November 21): Do strange things, like poor test grades and the disappointment of others always seem to happen to you? It could be because you're a wizard. Who needs responsibility when you can turn people's heads into bats?

Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21): If the world seems to be falling apart all around you, that's because it is. The universe is constantly expanding until there will be nothing left but particles and emptiness.

Capricorn (December 22 - January 19): It is too late for you. You are already infected. Do not fear the Contagion - become one with it. Join us. *Join us.* Can you hear it? ...It is beautiful.

Aquarius (January 20 - February 18): You may not become a world-renowned celebrity, but there's still hope! If you can fit more than 266 straws in your mouth, you'll get a new world record and fifteen minutes of fame. Are you a real go-getter?

Games and Puzzles

2					5		8
		4		6		1	
6			5		3		
8					7		2
	6						3
	1		4				5
			9		2		4
		8		7		3	
3		6					7

What would be the pot of gold at the end of *your* rainbow?

Compiled by Alek Mihok, Rebecca Forman, and DeAnna Kerley



"Whatever I wanted at the time."
Tony Pinckney, 6th grade Piano



"A Puppy!"
Mia Silvestri, 6th grade Dance



"Chicken Noodle Soup... complete with a spoon."
Mando Smoak, 7th grade Visual Arts



"Lots and lots of money."
Isabell Jur, 7th grade Theatre



"Wherever that rainbow takes me."
Eric Davidson, 8th grade Creative Writing



"John Lennon!"
Grace Collins, 8th grade Creative Writing



"A Laissez-Faire government."
Mr. Donnellon, US History



"Being featured in the 'Question of the Month' section of *The Applause*."
Angelica Halvarsson, 9th grade Visual Arts



"A new sailboat."
Haley Dixon, 10th grade Creative Writing



"My girlfriend, Charlotte."
Michael Byrd, 12th grade Band



"Dr. Cusatis."
Lydia Kemmerlin, 12th grade Band



"Time to work on my own writing and publish a collection of poetry."
Ms. Miles, Creative Writing