

Applause

Volume 5 Number 6

Charleston County School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC

March 2004



Tuning in with SOA's strings majors

Editor's Page



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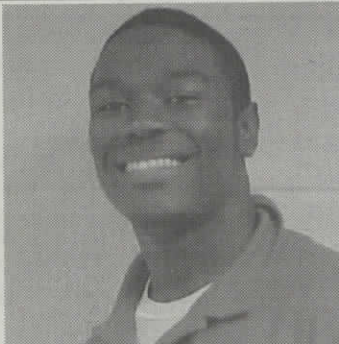
*Applause is a student produced publication of the School of the Arts.
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A Note from the Editor

I would like to welcome everyone to our March issue of the *Applause*. The featured art area this issue is strings. We also have included articles on March Madness, The Ecology Club's trip to Homosassas Springs, and Battle of the Bands.

I would like to give a special thanks to the strings teachers, students, and everyone who made time for our staff to interview them. Your cooperation makes it so much easier for us to put the paper together in the little amount of time that we have. If anyone has any information that they would like to appear in *Applause*, e-mail us at soa_applause@yahoo.com, bring it to Dr. Cusatis or me. I hope that everyone enjoys this issue.

Sincerely
Emory Frazier, *Applause* Editor



SOA Upcoming Events

- March 16 - 8th grade Field Trip to Dock Street Theater - 9 am
- March 17 - Report Cards
- March 18 - 8th grade theater to perform Alice in Wonderland at 7 pm
HS Orchestra Booster Meeting
HS Vocal All-State Chorus
French Club meeting - 3:40 - 4:15
- March 19 - HS Orchestra Second Annual Contra Dance Fundraiser
- March 23 - Early Release Day
HS Orchestra Mozart's Requiem mass rehearsal - 9 am
- March 24 - HS Orchestra Mozart's Requiem Performance at Gaillard Auditorium
OAKE National Concert Choir - HS Vocal
- March 26 - HS Orchestra Concert Festival
- March 29 - Senior Thesis begins - 7 pm
Visit from SACS Team
- March 30 - 1st Block High School Convocation
- April 5- April 12 - Spring Break
- April 19- April 30 - BSAP exit exam

"Some are destined to succeed, but most are determined to succeed."

-Unknown

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Music Page

A pop star's dying words are...

by Sara Houser

A year ago, the media went into a frenzy every time Britney Spears sneezed or Christina Aguilera picked a wedgie. Pop stars had the press wrapped around their fingers...or so it seemed, muahahahaha (evil laugh, lightning, thunder, etc.). Now-a-days the media goes crazy whenever, get this, news happens. Who would've thought that the success of a pop star's career could be so superficial? I mean it's almost as if their entire existence was based on their image; the very idea still blows my mind. I suppose reporters and such have bigger fish to fry these days what with the war on terror, upcoming elections, economic instability, and higher rates of unemployment. But now how am I supposed to know who got voted off of the American Idol episode I missed last night because of my SAT prep course? Who's going to let me know if Ben and Jen are still together? Despite the obvious inconvenience that comes with this turn to intellectual media, pop stars are finding ways to make headlines, if not with their record sales (or lack thereof).



The smart ones are getting involved in current affairs and helping a cause (i.e. Bono from U2). The others, though not as clever with their method of getting on the news, have discovered that sex sells, a relatively new concept to pop stars. It turns out, no matter what's going on in the world, the media can always make room at the top of the hour for scandal, especially if it involves pop stars who coincidentally are "not that innocent." While no one knew what was going on in Baghdad that crisp September morning, everyone was analyzing Britney and Madonna's moment of sheer passion. While the flu virus swept over the nation, claiming lives, people were aghast at hearing news that Britney was married. Yeah, people are dying everyday from AIDS, but did you see the footage of Justin and Janet's half-time surprise?! I mean, that is just crazy!

Anyway, it appears that the end of an era is drawing near. The latest news on the pop stars that at one time were unavoidable is proof of the anxiety that these tragic artists are facing. Someone really needs to tell them they look desperate before the public catches on.

Album Review: How it Feels to be Something On

by Sarah Haynes

How it Feels to be Something On marks the reunion of this native Seattle band. Sunny Day's sound dramatically improved in this album, leaving behind most of the agnsty-emo influences and catchy yet uncomplicated guitar riffs. The band deserted thier older sound, making a huge musical leap forward into better, more intellectual material and a new polished style.

No longer solely depending on one softly infectious guitar lick to guide their songs, Sunny Day completely branched into a newer and more honest approach to their songwriting. There are no remnants of their first attempt, *Diary*, found here. The album induces a feeling of longing and melancholy, beautifully presented in these lyrics. Opening up with the moody "Pillars," with the lines, "But you were always one to stay the same girl/I know you want to be the rain/And I know that we would fall in there/For a time and then unfall again/For awhile I take you burying old bones/Dawns grey the sign in the winter light/And I know that you can feel the pain/Your eyes speak one hundred million knives..." the album thunders on with an almost emo-influenced sound. Although their lyrics are depressing at times, one can still appreciate their poetic quality and craftsmanship. "100 Million," seems to be a complaint about the restrictions placed upon life and self. This is evident in the lines "Pay for the sign on the hill that says 'you're home'/Pay for the hole in the ground to place your bones/Pay for the words in your mouth to flow/Pay for the soles of your shoes to walk the streets of kings/Pay for the simplest things/Pay for the food on your plate to live/Pay for the mood in your mind to give a thought disguised/Pay for the simplest things.....one hundred million/Fences around us/Can we own everything/Including the moon and the sun and the stars?" The band suddenly becomes surprisingly innovative in this CD, with abrupt song endings and unconventional lyric construction.

Jeremy Enigk's voice serves as a perfect vessel to carry the unique sound and to contain Sunny Day's themes and melodies. It is as if when they made this album, they suddenly became more than the music. They appeared to be struggling just to keep up with a sudden awakening of emotional and spiritual clarity. "The Prophet," is perhaps the most poignant. The song begins with some strange vocals that fade away, leading up to an uplifting message at the climax of the song: "We cross the millions/We'll see where we stand/Far removed from the womb/Will you carry me across the sea?/Will you carry me?/We can drink from fountains/And the taste of truth/Far removed from the womb/Rhythm and mind/Don't waste no time/Want to let it all out/When the chains fall off/And the walls fall down/When we break the seal/And our hearts pour out/When the frozen ground/Comes alive around us/With a scream."

How it Feels to Be Something On is Sunny Day's self-assured revelation. The album is impassioned like none of their past work, with the exception of LP2. It presents almost angsty themes but in a hauntingly artful way, allowing the listener to forgive their complaining and appreciate the musical evolution they've obviously gone through. Unfortunately, Sunny Day Real Estate has since broken up. Several band members decided to leave and join the Foo Fighters and Dashboard Confessional, which could have been their worst mistake.

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Features

It's 11:07 and Your Mom is a Spicy Bandit!

by Lane Elsey

On Friday night, February 20th, SOA's black box was the place to be. Students from SOA as well as many other schools came to our school to see The Battle of the Bands. The guest judges for the night were Erin Moriarty from ABC News 4, Chris Carlisle and Camille from Coast 92.5, and Bam-Bam and Stupid Mike (a former SOA student) from 96 wave. The show began with a hard rock style from Tannix and ended with a bang from Just Post-Incorporated who sang "Hey ya" with their own spicy style and hot dance



Liz Eckbreth and Jamie Stockman were a part of the show during intermission

moves. Speaking of spicy, The Spicy Bandits, Chris Gingrich and our very own *Applause* staff member/maintenance man Ben Forney, won first place in the Battle of the Bands competition. Their unique style and perfected guitar skills won them an encore performance and studio time, or maybe it was just their good looks!

Our second place winners were 11:07, a Christian rock band including Tim Clemons, Chris James, Cody, and Scott. Then the third place winners were the band cleverly named Your Mom consisting of Sara Houser (yet another *Applause* staff member), Jenna McSwain, Trevor Murray, Michael Polk, and Mary Reed. Other bands gave their own versions of some already well known songs, giving the audience some fun to sing along with them. Dorian Grey and the Snagfags gave their own renditions of "True Love Waits" and "Like Spinning Plates," two Radiohead songs, while the TBA slot (which was not the band's name), played the Led Zepplin song, "Misty Mountain Hop." Some bands like Minus the Standard gave out some tee-shirts to the audience to



Yeager provides security and comfort to the crowd

win them over while others like The Majestic Dinosaur posted signs around the school and had their own dinosaur tee-shirts to show off. The bands themselves were amazing, but the student council helped make the performance a hit by having signs, food, drinks, weird costumes, and beautiful dancing girls (which always helps pep up the crowd) all over the black box. Also the extra performances in between the



bands were a great addition to the show, especially Jamie Stockman and Liz Eckbreth's rap song. To sum it all up the SOA Battle of the Bands was incredible and definitely showed off the talented students we have at this school.

On your Honor

by Casey O'Neill

As many of you may know the students of School of the Arts are in the process of creating an honor code for our school. Earlier this year the faculty chose a group of students to head the committee and write the honor code. On February 25, a student body meeting was held after school by the committee in order to include the entire high school in the creation of the honor code. During the meeting the members of the committee explained that by having everyone contribute, the honor code in turn will be more effective and easier to enforce. The members of the committee also feel that this code will create a school "culture" in which the students expect each other to be honorable. While students and teachers agree that the average School of the Arts student is a person of integrity, many feel that the creation of an honor code will elevate those whose integrity is questionable. The meeting provided a forum for ideas not only about the content of the honor code but the recognition it could possibly bring to our school. Many comments were made about the consequences for breaking the rules outlined by the honor code. Both Shawn Jordan and Jason Basile, two members of the honor committee, feel that this meeting was a success in both generating ideas as well as spreading the word to other students about creation of the honor code. There will be more student body meetings as the year goes on so be sure to attend and let the committee know what you think.



Mrs. Myers, the Honor Committee, and Mrs. Caldwell

Student Art



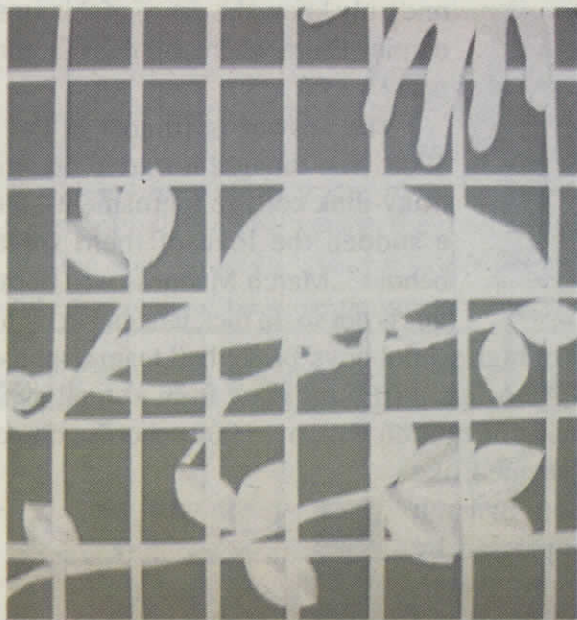
Shawn Silva
8th grade



Davis Hood
8th grade



Julia Maggairi
8th grade



Maddie Moore
6th grade

Works in Progress



Jacki Brown
6th grade



Jay Drayton
8th grade



Hanna Trussler
8th grade



Alice Gaynor
8th grade

Features

The Core of True Vision

Ashton Coons sat with Marcus Richardson in order to get the scoop on SOA's gospel choir True Vision.



What is True Vision?

True Vision was a vision given to the High School Vocal majors last year. They wanted a gospel choir but didn't have the means to form one. So when I came to them with the idea, they said that it was a "true vision."

How did you get it off the ground?

I talked to Mr. Davis, Mrs. Myers, and Ms. Lasley, and from there on, we performed.

What is the purpose of this choir?

To encourage young people to understand that it's cool to sing and not compromise one's salvation for popularity or to hang with the "in-crowd."

Do problems arise within the group?

Yes, we definitely get issues, but we know that in everything we must still give thanks, for it is the will of God through Christ Jesus concerning us.

Has the choir been given the chance to perform yet?

Well, there was one major concert in April, and we sang at West Ashley High School and at the pep rally in the cafeteria last year. We just sang at the FCA worship service last week as well. In fact, we have an upcoming concert in April.

What type of songs will the audiences hear in April?

Contemporary gospel from the early 90's. We wanted to take it back to the songs that we grew up on.

Have you recorded anything?

Not yet, we're wanting to, but just waiting on instructions from God on what His will is for us on that subject.

Is it hard to manage your schedule with the choir?

My schedule is so hard to manage. The closer that we get to the concert, it will become more intense.

So, are you considered to be the leader of the group?

I'm basically just the director, and I try to be a role model as well.

What will happen when you graduate from SOA?

I hope and pray that someone will take the responsibility of keeping the vision alive. I will mostly pray for a person who will not just qualify, but has spiritual maturity as well as the capability to handle what needs to be done.

Do you have any goals for the group?

For the choir to grow spiritually, in number, and to ultimately become more loving towards everybody. This choir isn't just about the music. It is ultimately about praising God. I mean, if you sing from the heart, it doesn't matter how you sound as long as you praise the Lord.

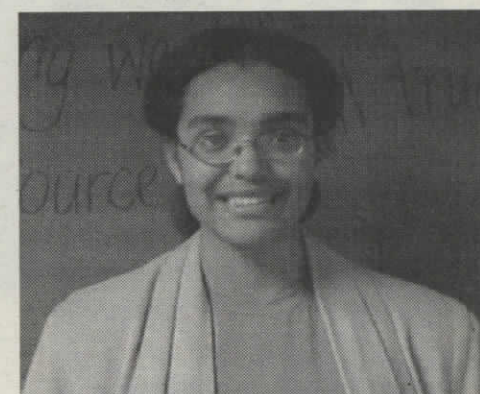
What is happening this month?

This month will be preparation, extra rehearsals, corporate prayer, and asking God to have His way in our concerts.

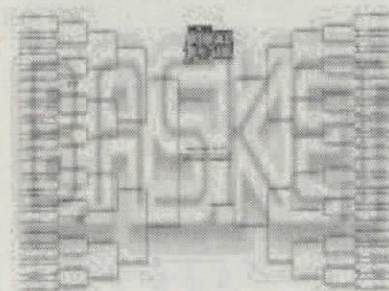
Give me that ole time basketball

by Ashton Coons

Well, it's that time again, March Madness. 'Tis a madness that brings college basketball into the spotlight instead of the NBA, a madness that drives young students to become legends and local heroes, and a madness that claims the majority of American citizens each year. There are thousands, if not millions of fans cheering in the stands and at home, endless songs and revelry commemorating each game, and the sweet

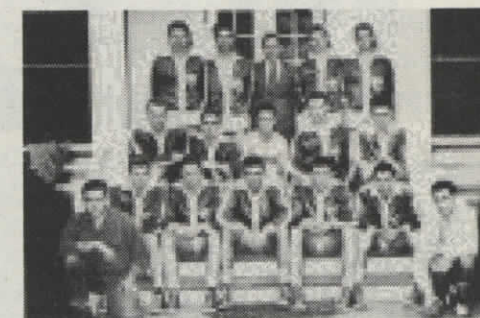


sound of the basketball bouncing in rhythm. The sign of the basketball fever is among us, the symptoms are claiming the lives of many. Amidst all of this, does anyone truly know the cause of this annual epidemic? From where did this disorder originate?



The answer is Illinois in the year of 1908. You thought it started out with little rinky-dink college tournaments, and all of a sudden the love of them spread, and behold...March Madness was born. Sadly, this is not so. In fact, it began in high school.

"The annual tournament of high school boys' basketball teams, sponsored by the Illinois High School Association (IHSA), grew from a small invitational affair in 1908 to a statewide institution with over 900 schools competing by the late 1930's." (1) It seemed like an overnight phenomenon; each game was sold out. "Impressed by this phenomenon, Henry V. Porter, the assistant executive secretary of the IHSA, wrote an essay to commemorate it entitled "March Madness." (1)



From then on, "the spirit of March madness [caught on like wild



fire and spread] from coast to coast, as other companies and organizations, including state high school associations and manufacturers, have been licensed by the IHSA to use these trademarks." (1) It has become one of those classic American pastimes, and has maintained its status throughout history. 'Tis a rare find these days to enjoy past traditions, and still keep up with modern times. I think that I can safely say that most Americans would say, "Thank Goodness that March Madness is still goin' strong." While March Madness is seen as a College thing, the IHSA still claims that, "March Mad-

ness is an IHSA thing, always has been, always will be!" (1)

References:

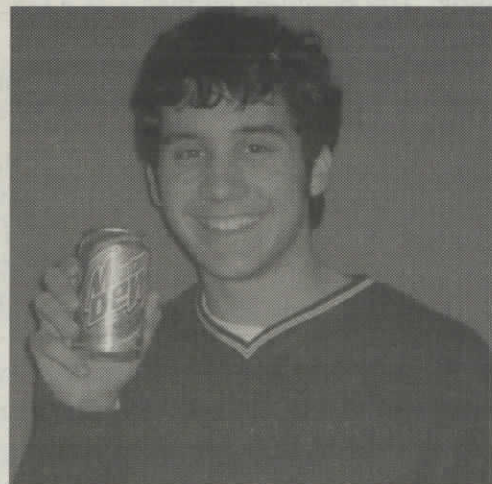
1. <http://www.marchmadness.org/>.

News

The Perfect Score

Jeanne Albinger spoke with Shawn Jordan about his stellar performance on the SAT.

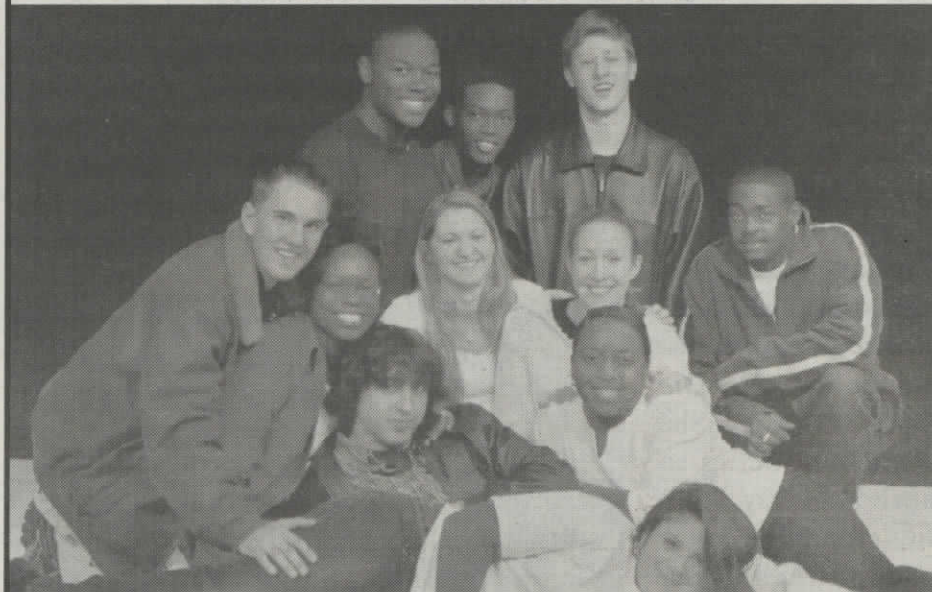
Shawn Jordan, a junior vocal major, achieved something formerly unattained here at School of the Arts. Shawn is the first student at SOA to make a perfect score, (800) on the math section of the SAT. With a composite score of 1440, Shawn has proven that he has the potential to go far beyond his aspirations of attending the College of Charleston. To prepare for the SAT, which he took on January 24th, Shawn took Jantzi Test Prep, Incorporated's SAT prep class from Atom Taler, the morning show DJ at COAST 92.5, sitting through all six classes twice.



He didn't, however, do much studying in the days immediately leading up to the test. In fact, when his mother told him to study the night before, he decided he would go to bed early instead. Shawn chugged a Mountain Dew right before he went in the room, to which he attributes his success. "Going into the room," Shawn says, "I felt really tired. I was exhausted and I was really mad at my parents because they wouldn't let me go

to Atlanta with a friend instead of taking the SAT." Well, it looks like Shawn's parents made a good decision- though it may not have seemed like it at the time. Huge congratulations to Shawn on his accomplishment and I know that when I take the SAT in March, a Mountain Dew will go with me.

Senior Thesis 2004



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Featured Art Area

Empress of the Strings

by Ben Forney

If you're looking for a tall, blonde female who enjoys sleeping and playing the viola, your search is over. Here at SOA we have someone who fits all these categories and is at this moment undoubtedly involved in a grand scheme to improve the lives of everyone in the High School Strings Department. I'm talking about none other than Ms. Fitzgerald, empress of the strings majors. Many of you may know her only as that perpetual ray of cheerfulness that brightens the corridors of SOA on even the dreariest of days. After a few minutes of conversation, however, it becomes apparent that there is much more to her character than the mere facade of carefree joy she incessantly exudes.

When Ms. Fitz was six years old, she and her father went out on the town one night, first to IHOP for a quick bite to eat and then on to the movies to see *The Sound of Music*. She remembers being so captivated by that movie that she knew she wanted to be a musician from that moment on. Becoming a teacher was not something she originally intended to do, but she did want to learn all the



different instruments, so she eventually came to see herself as an instructor of music. Her methods of teaching have changed over the years, as has her attitude toward the students. As a young lassie just emerging into the profession, she felt that kids were out to get her and was very anxious towards them. Now she has come to realize that kids are generally without a strong urge to destroy the sanity and reputation of their tutors, and therefore she has relaxed her attitude on teaching. She remains young at heart and still insists that she's a child. "I still don't know what I want to do when I grow up," says Fitz.

In her second year as High School Strings teacher, Ms. Fitz is continuing her quest at making the SOA orchestra the best it can be. In the future, she hopes to get electronic instruments that can be used to record the orchestra's rich sound on tape. She also hopes to see the SOA symphony orchestra become a class, uniting



members of the band with the strings majors. In April the symphony will join with the vocal majors in a performance of Mozart's Requiem at the

Gailliard Auditorium. She enjoys teaching at School of the Arts because of her nice office and new Dell computer. She also loves being around students who have such great opportunities to play music on a day to day basis. Her proudest moments as a teacher come when kids play beautiful music and really "get it."

Her own musical tastes range from Mozart and Brahms to the Beatles, James Taylor, and the Indigo Girls. She is a member of the Long Bay Symphony in Myrtle Beach, the A-string Quartet, and even a rock and roll band where she plays guitar. She owns a cat which seems to possess the magical abilities to reset her alarm clock while she's sleeping. With all of her activities it's a wonder how she remains so positive and energetic about learning. Our hats are off to this one of a kind diamond in the rough, Ms. Fitzgerald.

A lifetime of music

Sara Houser talked with eleventh grade strings student Diego Villena about strings.

Q: What was your first experience with music?

A: My mom played hippie music to put me to sleep when I was a baby, so I suppose that would be my first encounter with music. But she played classical music a lot too.

Q: How long have you been playing cello?

A: Since the 5th grade, so 6 years.

Q: What drew you to the cello?

A: My mom says that when I was younger I always liked the sound of it and would point it out when listening to music. I think I chose it because it was the biggest instrument my mom would let me play. She wouldn't let me play bass because it was too big so cello was the compromise.

Q: How did you find out about SOA?

A: Ms. Fitzgerald (then Ms. Clark) was my 5th grade teacher at Oakland elementary and she encouraged me to take up the cello. Then, since I was getting ready to change schools, she introduced the idea of auditioning for SOA.

Q: Do you think you could go to a "normal school" after being a student in an arts school for so long?

A: No, they'd eat me alive. I went to West Ashley High School the other day and this guy came up to me and told me to "brush off [my] shoulders before I come here." I didn't even know what he was talking about.

Q: What are some musical activities you do outside of school?

A: I am in the Charleston Youth Symphony but I also play a lot of gigs for weddings, church services and such. Most recently I have been asked to play in some praise bands as well.

Q: What do you plan to do with your cello skills after high school?

A: I don't know, it really depends. You're not going to make a lot of money in city symphonies. So, unless I am discovered like Yo-Yo Ma was, I'll probably just keep it as a pastime.

Q: Will your decisions about what college you attend be affected by their music programs?

A: Yeah, if the school has a good music program, there will be incentive to



Featured Art Area

go there as opposed to somewhere else.

Q: Do you play any instruments in addition to cello?

A: Right now I am pretending to learn how to play guitar.

Q: What are some things that set the cello apart from other strings instruments?

A: Well, it has the biggest range, a warm tone, and it is the most popular.

Q: What has been the most influential experience you've encountered because you play cello?

A: Music camp, learning the Bach suites, and meeting Yo-Yo Ma were all definitely influential experiences.

Q: Who are your favorite musicians?

A: Yo-Yo Ma and Sara Houser top the list.

Q: What has been your biggest challenge so far?

A: Learning and my memorizing my concerto was pretty challenging. But taking lessons from my private teacher has also been hard because he is a perfectionist and impossible to please.

Q: Oh yeah, do chicks dig the cello?

A: I hope so.

Great Expectations

Jeanne Albinger talked with seventh grader, Matt Kwon about the joys of being a strings major in Middle School.

Matt Kwon, who is currently in his second year as a strings major at SOA, has been playing the cello since fifth grade. He was given the opportunity to begin playing the cello when he found out about the strings program at his elementary school. He decided to try out for SOA because, he says, "it was a lot better than the school I would be going to otherwise," and now he is very happy with his decision.



Matt feels that SOA is a really great place to be, especially as being in the orchestra is concerned. He says that at other schools, students don't get chances to be in outstanding arts programs, and School of the Arts presents a challenging yet fun learning environment. The students in strings at SOA are pushed far beyond what is expected of students at "normal" high schools. For example, the middle school students were given a set of music on Thursday, and were expected to know it on Friday for performance, which, I might add, they did with all the dedication and success of professionals.

On a typical day in strings, the students warm up and then play steadily through the period, with perhaps a break in the middle. On A days, the violas, cellos, and basses go to Ms. Fitzgerald's room and work with her so that the violins, who often have a harder part, can work alone with Ms. Johnson. On Wednesdays, Matt takes lessons after school from his private teacher, Iris Lee.

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Never say "never"

by Noelle Williams

Mrs. Johnson, the School of the Arts Middle School strings teacher, has been playing and teaching strings professionally for fifteen years. Although she grew up in Athens, Georgia, Mrs. Johnson was born in Miami, Florida the youngest of three children. Her father was a musician; her mother-even though she was not professionally involved with music, played the piano and sang in a church choir, and she had two older brothers who also played musical instruments. Mrs. Johnson



was raised in a very traditional household, and her parents expected a lot from her and her brothers. One of these expectations was that everyone in the family had to play a musical instrument. Mrs. Johnson's interest in music did not start with an instrument, however. She began getting involved with music by singing in a church children's choir, her father instructing her as the director. Later, she decided to play an instrument as well, a choice she made because she was inspired by her father and her brothers. "I was about six years old when I started playing the violin. I pretty much wanted to be able to do what my brothers did," she says.



It would not be until her high school years that she would begin to think about pursuing music as a serious career. Mrs. Johnson started taking private lessons with a college professor from the University of Georgia and later went to Florida State on with a full scholarship in music. There she majored in violin performance then went to the University of Wisconsin and got her master's degree. After college Mrs. Johnson faced what many would consider the biggest challenge of choosing a career in music, establishing herself as a musician. "If you're really good at what you're doing, it's a lot easier [to establish yourself]," says Mrs. Johnson. She moved to Spartanburg South Carolina in 1988 where she taught strings lessons privately. In 1989, she won an audition which allowed her to have an opportunity to play with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra as a full time member for ten years. "There were parts of it that were enjoyable. I got to travel and play really good music and I had a lot of friends in the orchestra," she says. Mrs. Johnson never imagined that she would teach in a school, in fact, she had not even planned for it just in case she ever needed the money. "When I was an undergraduate, my father told me I needed to go to get my educational degree and I told him no, I would never teach in schools and his exact words were 'never say never'." She changed her mind

(continued on page 10)

Featured Art Area

(continued from page 9)

years later, however, after filling in at the School of the Arts for the last middle school orchestra teacher who left in the middle of the year. She loved teaching at the school and decided that she wanted to stay. In January 2001, Mrs. Johnson officially became the School of the Arts Middle School strings teacher. Immediately after joining the school she began to make improvements to the orchestra program. "I feel I've organized the classroom instruction with a routine and developed the expectations of classroom procedure. I feel that I have brought up the level of my students' playing, and given them the confidence that they can play and be considered a great middle school orchestra," she says. She also tries to teach lots of different styles of music ranging from folk to classical to contemporary. "Right now we're working on Bach, a Baroque composer and Bartok who is considered contemporary." Mrs. Johnson also tries to teach her students good qualities that she believes makes a good musician such as being dedicated to playing very accurately, not being afraid to show emotion, and not being too boastful by letting their playing speak for themselves, though she realizes that not everyone will progress quickly when taught these three important principles. "As far as the students' who come here, we accept students who are very advanced to students who are on basic levels and it is up to the individual student to progress to their potential." Mrs. Johnson hopes to make more improvements to the strings program. Two of her goals so far are to have all of her students playing on quality instruments and giving them a chance to take private lessons. Mrs. Johnson also strives to be a better musician by rating herself on the same qualities.



She continues to teach private lessons and perform at weddings with a chamber group alongside teaching at the School of the Arts. As of today, she has been married for eleven years and has two children, a ten year old daughter, Laura, and a five year old son, Michael. "They both have started playing piano. My daughter Laura is a competitive gymnast, and my son Michael will begin playing soccer soon." "They are both going to be attending Ashley River Creative Arts School."

Mrs. Johnson feels proud of her students and what they have become. "I feel, for the most part, the students are wonderful," she says. She also feels proud of the school's orchestra program. "I feel [the strings program at the school] is special because students are playing instruments that have a history of over 400 years," says Mrs. Johnson. "It takes large amounts of individual practice to be successful, but the reward of being able to perform great music is why we love to do it." Mrs. Johnson hopes to leave the impression that hard work and dedication does pay off in the end, and more importantly, that playing strings instruments can be something you can do your whole life at some level, whether it is community orchestra professional orchestra.

Technological takeover: SOA websites enhance teaching

by Ben Forney

How do you make a bass sound in tune? Chop it up and make it into a xylophone. This stupid joke wouldn't make a four year old laugh, but if that's the kind of jokes you like, check out soastrings.com, where Ms. Fitzgerald has posted a large collection of these awful puns. The Internet has many uses, and looking at bad joke collections is just one of the thousands of positive ways to spend your time. School related websites have grown by leaps and bounds in the past several years from simple home-work sites to multi-paged labyrinths of technology.

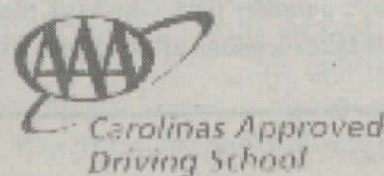
At School of the Arts, the undisputed king of the Internet is Dr. Cusatis. His website, drcusatis.com, dominates the competition and is one of the World Wide Web's finest attractions along with Amazon.com, Yahoo, and eBay. Although I'm joking, it is still a great website where anyone can come together to discuss virtually any issue. His forums range from music and film to current events and summer reading. He has weekly surveys where students can voice their opinions on all kinds of topics. It is a very organized site, which took him most of the summer to get up and running. He has had 143,362 people visit the site between June and March, with more hits coming every day. Students in his English classes use the Internet to post weekly journal entries and comment on their classmates work as part of Dr. Cusatis' requirements.

Another technological titan is Mr. Smyth, whose website lionspaw2002.org, contains valuable information to those in his math classes. Another well organized site, it features homework assignments, tips and problems to help understand the concepts, and puzzles and activities to expand one's mind. Ms. Fitzgerald's soastrings.com is also a great site featuring up and coming attractions, news, pictures from past events and the humor page, which is full of terrible jokes. What will come from this use of technology as a means to expand the classroom setting into our living room desktop? Perhaps one day there will be no need to go to school, as all of the learning will be done digitally from the computers in our houses. Maybe computers will take over the world and destroy the human race, or maybe we will destroy them and live like the Amish. Whatever path we are destined for, it is important to realize that as of 2004, our system of education, commerce, and many other facets of daily life are becoming increasingly controlled by computer technology. The effects of this reliance will only become apparent to us through time.

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Features

Where are they now: A look into the college life of a former SOA student

Lane Elsey interviews Yannick Bennett about his life as a college freshman

What college are you attending?

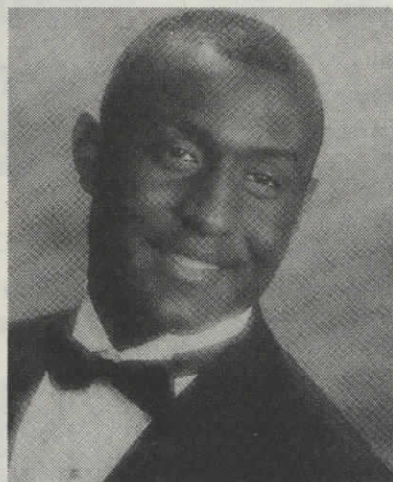
I'm attending Coker College in Hartsville South Carolina.

Most people from SOA usually go to College of Charleston, why did you decide that you wanted to go to Coker?

I wanted to get away from Charleston for a while. But I didn't want to be too far from home so I decided to come here.

Has the switch from high school to college been a big change?

Yes it has. Coker has so many people here. They say it's a small school but it isn't to me seeing that freshman are the majority of the school.



Has your major at SOA helped you in college and are you taking in classes involving your major?

Yes it has and I am taking dance classes at the college which gave me a small advantage over most of the other students.

When going to a small high school was it hard for you to meet new people in a place where you hardly knew anyone?

Oh yeah. There were so many people, I was not sure if I were to make any friends unlike back at SOA where you can see all your friends all the time.

What is your major and what have been your hardest classes so far?

My major is dance and the hardest classes I have taken so far are math and English.

Have you been to any major social events and what were they like if you have?

Well there was a jazz concert in Hartsville around Homecoming. The concert was a lot like the jazz concerts back home. A lot of people showed up, but it wasn't as good as the jazz concerts I've been to back home.

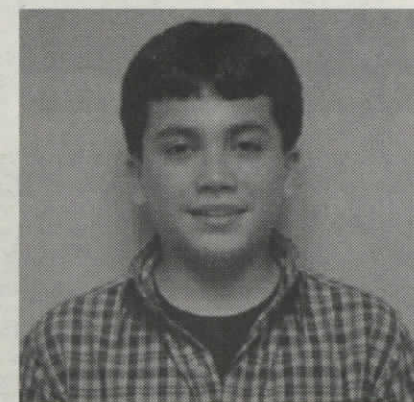
Which teachers at SOA have prepared you the most for college?

Mr. Anderson because he shoved the terms and technical names of the dance movements down my throat, Mrs. Kay for telling me not to give up, and Mrs. Olson for believing in me in English.

Do you have any advice for the students at SOA for college?

Yes, I do....SAVE YOUR MONEY!!!! Because in college you will go broke really quickly. If y'all don't believe me ask Nulani,(my sister) she will tell y'all what I have had to go through to get money!

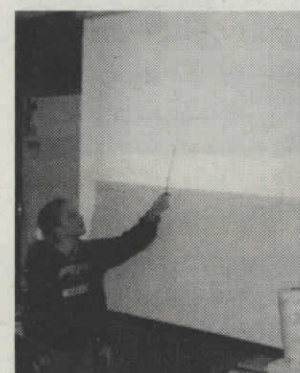
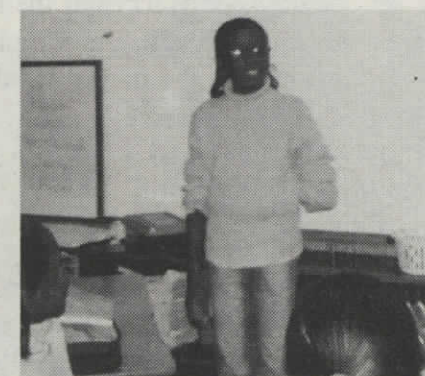
Diego grew up in Colombia, South America, where his love for soccer began. As a child, he never wanted to play with the kids his own age, so he learned the game of soccer by playing with the older boys. Now he plays for the Summerville Soccer Club, which he has led to victory in many games throughout his time there. Though he suffered from a bad knee injury, Diego persevered and never lost his devotion to the sport.



Diego hopes one day to become a professional soccer player, perhaps with Spain, who he says is soon going to be the best national team around. Everyone will be cheering for you, Diego, and best of luck this July. Congratulations from SOA and the Applause staff!

The beginning of a bright future

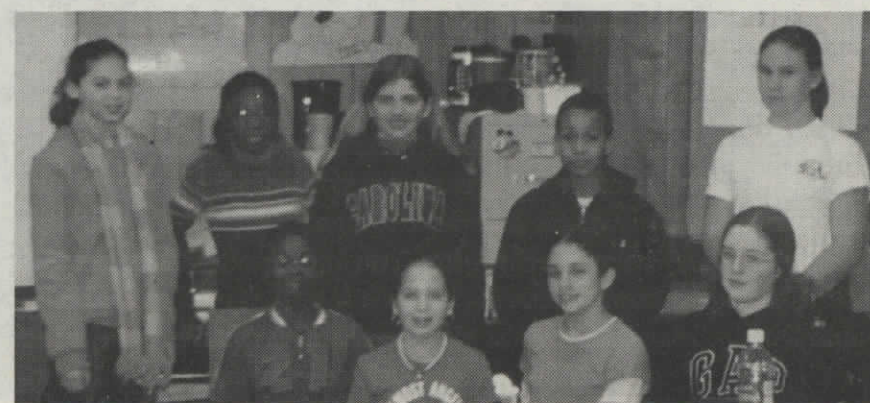
Mrs. Dirkes-Horton has put together an excellent media team made up of selected students from her 6th grade class. Every morning the students come together and share the information with their fellow classmates. The media team covers the topics of political news, special news, whether, current news, tragic news, sports, happy news, shares, and lunch.



The students have worked very hard to make their media team a success and very informative. The news team has been a group effort as much as an individual one since everyone has their portion of the news to cover. The students who deliver the news are: Annie Patterson, Jess Jarnes, Julia Wilson, Justin Deas, Lynx Mitchell, Lowanda Green, Kiante Chapman, and Jamie Solinger.

These students by being apart of this media team are receiving an experience of a lifetime.

Thank you Mrs. Dirkes-Horton for allowing your students to be so creative and for giving them this experience.



Seventh grader recruited by U.S. soccer team

by Jeanne Albinger

Diego Lizarazo, seventh grade strings major, has been playing soccer since he could walk, and it has really paid off. Early in February, Diego received a letter inviting him to be on the United States youth soccer team, which will be traveling all over the world throughout the month of July. Diego will be playing against teams in such wonderful places as Australia and France in internationally televised matches.

Feature

Becoming a Manatee

by Sam Danna and Casey O'Neill

From February 13 to the 15 the Ecology Club was in Homosassas Springs swimming with manatees. Our chaperones were Dr. Ball, "Dr. Dad" and Dr. Price, "DP." The Ecology Club consists of Sam Danna "Super Sam," Casey O'Neill "Casenator," Ben Forney "Fornicator," Quenby Keisler "Little Idiot," Jamie Stockman "J-Man," Hope Sims "Hoprah," Josh Fernandes "The Boy Scout," Kirsten Palmer "K-Cheese," Olivia Williams "Oli," and Alexa Ball "the coolest 6th grader ever." We embarked on a three day journey with Charleston Scuba as our guide through the wet



lands of Florida.

At high noon on Friday the 13th we congregated at Charleston Scuba on Savannah Highway. As we piled into the van we had no idea what would await us in the murky waters of Crystal River, Florida. Our estimated seven hour drive actually took nine and a half hours including dinner and two bathroom breaks. When we finally arrived in Florida and settled into our glamorous hotel rooms, we were amazed to find that we were expected to be up and at 'em at 6:15 on the dot.



As we ate breakfast the next morning our vampire-like waitress threatened to beat up and suck the Fornicator's blood. After consuming over five pounds of good home cooking we were then expected to squeeze our bulging bodies into our unimaginably tight wetsuits. We split off into two teams; kayakers and boaters. The kayakers flew down the river like fat people going to McDonalds. In the middle of Crystal River there is a small island where about eight or nine monkeys live. Although the mon-



keys were cute we all knew what they were really thinking and we kept our eyes peeled. When we reached our final destination in the river we hopped into the frigid water with snorkels on our heads and flippers on our feet.

After not seeing any manatees for about ten minutes, we were feeling discouraged when all of a sudden two enormous manatees zoomed un-



derneath us. We reached our hands out to pet the gentle giants and the most amazing thing happened, the manatees rolled over like dogs so we could rub their tummies! After experiencing the manatees first hand, all of our anguish we had felt left us like kids leaving school on the last day. Although we were not allowed to ride, poke, or lasso the manatees we felt we had made a connection with them.

After a few hours of "manatee defending" we piled back into the motor boat dubbed "Manatee Queen." We then ate lunch at a sports bar which was colder than the arctic waters of our homeland. We then journeyed to the Manatee Museum that made us appreciate the scarcity of the manatee. When we were all seated in the Manatee Mobile our guides Sally and Tom took us to the Mecca of Manatee gold. The Little Idiot was so in awe of the magnificent manatee she spent over \$40 on everything from a manatee pillow to a manatee butter knife when she only had \$50 felt to spend and we still had four more meals to buy. Then we went back to the hotel and got ready for Manatee Bowling Lanes. When we arrived we



felt like we were stuck in the twilight zone because there was no music playing and no one was bowling. We went over to our lanes when all of the sudden the music began to bop and people began to bowl. Everyone was surprised to discover that the J-Man and DP were master bowlers. As the night came to a close, we loaded up in the van and went back to the hotel for the last time. We were ready to go by 6:15 the next morning.

We decided to go to Denny's for breakfast before our departure. The Little Idiot ordered a tub of greasy gravy to go on her two biscuits. When it came to the table you could see the grease hovering above the gravy waiting to attack like vultures hovering over a dead antelope. But don't worry she licked the tub clean. After that scrumptious breakfast we headed over the Rainbow River, a pollution free zone. We wrestled into our wet suits once again and loaded on to the "Manatee Queen." Then we flopped into the water and began our snorkeling session. While snorkeling through the clear water we saw many fish and birds doing what they do best; living in the habitat they love. Although there were no manatees in the Rainbow River we did get a chance to scuba dive. It was neat! After we explored the depths of the Florida water ways we slowly made it back to land. We changed out of our wet suits and into dry clothes and jumped into the van for the ride home.

Before we left Florida we stopped at a charming Mexican Palace that had the best flautas in the world. The only problem was that our waitress didn't speak English or Spanish and wouldn't let the Little Idiot order her meal but it didn't matter because she didn't have any money left. After that filling meal we headed for an



orange grove and bought some authentic Sunshine State fruit. As we headed home everyone but Hoprah, Super Sam, the Little Idiot drifted off into a peaceful slumber. We arrived at Charleston Scuba at 11:50 and headed off our separate ways to dream about all of the wonderful things we had done in the manatee capital of the world, Homasassa Springs.

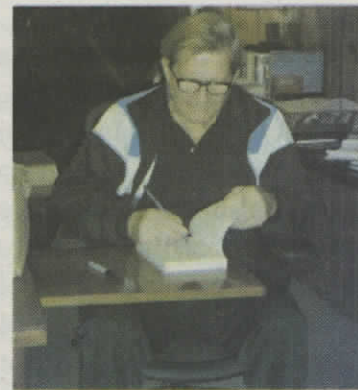
Family and friends of 2004 graduates, be sure to reserve a space in the forthcoming May Applause for your graduation greeting! Contact Applause at soa_applause@yahoo.com

Bringing the author a little closer to the classroom

by Ben Forney

Thanks to Mrs. Miles, SOA has hosted many fine authors from novelist Josephine Humphries to *Sports Illustrated* columnist Gary Smith, not to mention our own South Carolina poet laureate, Mrs. Marjory Wentworth, who have all shared their experience as professional writers with our students. Last year, while teaching the classic American film *Cool Hand Luke* to his A.P. English students, Dr. Cusatis decided to contact the author, Donn Pearce, hoping he could address several questions his students had raised regarding the film. Dr. Cusatis was showing the film as part of a unit on existentialism and felt that the protagonist, "with his adamant aversion to crippling authority figures" was the perfect existential hero. "Students wanted to know whether the author intended a philosophical reading of the film, which is also filled with Christian symbolism, so I wrote to him with our questions."

In a four page letter, Mr. Pearce, explained that "when the director of the film told me I had written the first great American existentialist novel, I went right to a dictionary and looked that word up." Was it a theological story? "Yes," Mr. Pearce responded, "but I had Prometheus in mind more than Jesus. Luke was the fire-bringer." Pearce, who co-wrote the screen play said that Hollywood greatly modified his novel, in most cases to his disappointment.



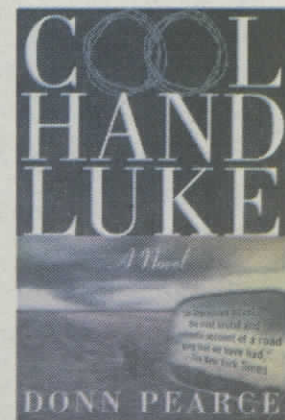
Over the next year, Dr. Cusatis continued to correspond with the author. This year, he decided to teach the novel in conjunction with the film to invite a comparison between the two, and a look at how a book is translated into a screen play. When he was unable to obtain 17 copies of the novel from Barnes & Noble, and ultimately, the publisher, he phoned Mr. Pearce, who told him he had a box of copies the publisher had sent him. This seemed like a good time to finally meet in person, and since the 75-year-old author had no plans to visit Charleston anytime soon, he invited Dr. Cusatis and his wife to visit him at his home in Fort Lauderdale during a weekend in late January.

Over the weekend, Mr. Pearce, who is generally reclusive, sat for a taped interview, which Dr. Cusatis has used during his classroom discussion of the book. The author also personally inscribed 17 copies of *Cool Hand Luke* for the students in the AP class. "He and his wife were very hospitable and we had a great visit." Dr. Cusatis said. "He walked us through the whole filming of the movie with old photos from the shooting, and he and I talked a lot about the inspiration for certain scenes from the book." When it was nearly midnight and Mr. Pearce still had not finished signing the books, he invited Dr. Cusatis and his wife back for a second day. "It was a great opportunity to learn from someone who has experienced so many aspects of the writing profession and to bring that knowledge back to the classroom."

Pearce, like his novel's hero Luke (played by Paul Newman in the film), served time on a Florida chain gang when he was twenty. It was in prison that he began seriously writing, realizing he needed to find a way out of a life that was proving to be "a hard road." Writing he claims, in his interview, was his salvation, as well as the only thing he felt he could do for a living. His next novel, *Nobody Comes Home*, a WWII story, will be released in 2005.

"He hasn't published a novel in thirty years," Dr. Cusatis said, "and when he heard that a group of young people in SC were currently discussing his work, he told me it was 'like a shot of adrenaline ... the most powerful drug in the world.'"

Incidentally, Mr. Pearce denied writing the film's most quoted line. "That inane line," Pearce told Dr. Cusatis, "about 'failure to communicate' was not mine ... even though I am quoted in *Bartlett's Quotes* as having penned it."



Reviews

Movie Review: *Big Fish*

by Ben Forney

Watching director Tim Burton's latest film, *Big Fish*, is like trying to complete a jigsaw puzzle in which every piece is from a separate set. Yet somehow, all the pieces come together in a patchwork of incomparable originality to create a movie unlike any other. The story chronicles the adventures of Edward Bloom, a man known for telling tall tales about his past. To his son, now married and expecting a child of his own, these tales represent the secret life of a father he never knew. He goes to his father, now dying of cancer, to try and understand the facts behind the legends he had spouted all his life. What he discovered instead, was that the life of Edward Bloom was indeed every bit as unbelievable as he claimed, from a certain point of view.

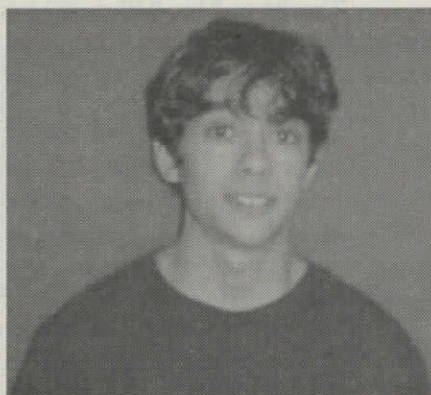
The movie switches between the present and the memories of the dying father. The real magic in the film is the balance between complete, unbelievable fantasy and the logical occurrences of daily life. Just when the plot becomes too farfetched to make sense, Burton brings us back to reality, blending the worlds of legends and life into a surreal state where anything can happen, yet nothing is expected too. In the film there is a witch that lives in a swamp with a glass eye that can foresee the death of anyone who gazes at it. Yet later, she is seen standing in the middle of town watching a parade pass down the street. There is also a giant, a pair of Japanese Siamese twins, a circus conductor that turns into a werewolf, and a catfish the size of a man in the movie. All of these images are a part of a complex symbolic relationship that Burton has weaved to impress

upon the viewer the message he is trying to send. After watching the film only once, it is impossible to fully understand the intricacies of the movie that lie on many different levels of comprehension. In one of his adventures, Bloom travels down a dark, haunted path through the woods only to discover deep in the Alabama swamps a tiny, Utopian village where everyone knows his name, the grass is always green, and the inhabitants live without worry. The town was not an illusion, despite being named Spector, and later in his life, the innocent aura of the town was gone, as the real world infringed upon their way of life.



Perhaps the point Tim Burton made with this film was that life can be as spectacular or as boring as we make it to be. To be a storyteller is to be immortal, and the only way to achieve such a status is to make the stories you tell so memorable that they echo in the minds of those who hear them for the rest of their lives. Tim Burton is a storyteller, and with *Big Fish*, he has succeeded in creating a work of art so unique, that it will surely be implanted in your mind for years to come.

I give it eleven out of eleven stars.

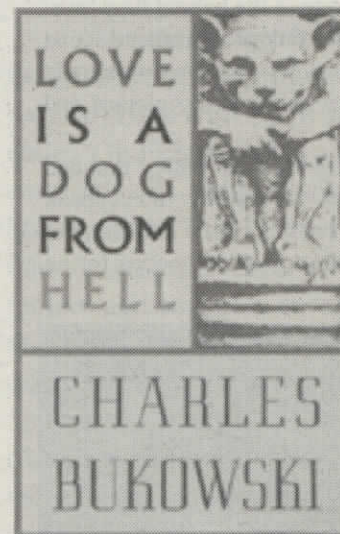


Book Review: *Love is a Dog from Hell*

by Sarah Haynes

There are many aspects of love, just as there are many aspects of life that one would rather not have to deal with or endure. It isn't always flowers or heart shaped candy because it comes along with many unpleasantnesses. Charles Bukowski presents the reader in his book of love poems with subtle humor and morose observations. He was a drunkard, much like his Beat peer Jack Kerouac. He lived as a Skid Row poet, writing raw and soiled poems that reflected his surroundings. He even became homeless for a year just so that he could attain new images and ideas for his writing. This book of poems documents the most uncomfortable parts of love, while combining sublime wit into often crude images of it.

Do not let the title unneve you. This book is not a diatribe condemning love, rather it laughs at it. Bukowski simply choses to discuss the despondent side, the cheep and corrupt side of love that is sometimes soul-de-



stroying. For all the painfulness engrained in love, why do people continue to seek it out again and again? Perhaps Bukowski has the answer. His poems contain a sad quality, such is the case with "Trapped:" "Don't undress my love, you might find a mannequin; don't undress the mannequin, you might find, my love. She's long ago, forgotten me. She's trying on a new, hat, and looks more the, coquette, than ever. She is a, child, and a mannequin, and, death. I can't hate, that. She didn't do, anything, unusual. I only wanted her to." However, not all of his poems are tough, there is also a very poignant side to his work. Such is the case with "One For Old Snaggletooth," a

poem about his ex-wife: "She has hurt fewer people/than anyone I know/ and if you look at it like that/well/she has created a better world/she has won." Though his writing lacks the elegance of a Shakespearean sonnet, his emotions and honesty may make up for it. Not for the easially offended, but certainly for the neurotic, Bukowski's work will induce laughter and will hopefully put some emotions into words for the reader.



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Miscellany

No avenue has finer, try the Boulevard Diner

by Sam Danna and Casey O'Neill

If you are looking for good Southern hospitality to tickle your fancy, come on over to Boulevard Diner where the food is as good as the price. Boulevard Diner is located at 409 W. Coleman Blvd. in Mt. Pleasant where the sun always shines and there's not a cloud in the sky. With a surf board on the ceiling it reminded us of the far-out shin-digs we used to attend back in our days on the professional surfing circuit.



As we sat down our waiter, Kyle whose face shone like a flashlight in the dark pit of our souls, immediately took our drink orders, diet coke and sweet tea. Those drinks quinched our thirst and soothed our parched throats. Our appetizer, fried green tomatoes with shrimp remoulade (\$5), with its crisp pickle-like taste and tangy sauce tamed our wild hunger. Then magically our meals arrived on our lickably clean table.

As Sam bit into her southern fried grouper sandwich with shrimp remoulade and a side of french fries (\$7) she levitated due to the feeling of nirvana. Casey's meal, reuben on toasted pumpernickel with a side of french fries (\$7), made her drool as she mused over it, and when she put it into

her mouth she felt the God's had smiled on her. As we finished up our meals we contemplated the idea of dessert. We finally decided on the chocolate strawberry cake (\$4) which turned out to be a huge piece

of chocolate cake with a chocolate covered strawberry on top. The serving size was even more surprising than the lack of strawberries. The serving size was so big that we wondered if our waiter had forgotten that we had already eaten an entire meal and an appetizer, because our one piece of cake was about one fourth of the entire cake. But don't worry folks, we finished the whole thing. As we ended our meal and reflected on the wonderful time we had, we smiled the smile of a nostalgic grandmother. As we left the restaurant the satisfactions we felt stayed with us until our next meal. So next time you are looking for a good home cooked meal, stop on the sunny side of the road also known as Boulevard Diner.



Horoscopes

Aquarius (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18) - Cars have horns for a reason, keep your comments to yourself.

Pisces (Feb. 19 - March 20) - It's raining, it's pouring, your sense of humor is boring.

Aries (March 21 - April 19) - Taking advice from a fortune cookie is about as useful as taking swimming lessons from a cat.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20) - Sunglasses add 15 cool points to every outfit.

Gemini (May 21 - June 21) - If your imaginary friends outnumber your real friends, you might want to start worrying.

Cancer (June 22 - July 22) - Freeze your Valentine's Day candy and save it for next year.

Leo (July 23 - Aug. 22) - Taking a trip to Guinea would do you a lot of good.

Virgo (Aug. 23 - Sept. 23) - Wish a Happy Birthday to all Pisceans, cough...Ms. Mitchell.

Libra (Sept. 23 - Oct. 23) - Your milkshake may bring all the boys to the yard, but it also brings hundreds of nasty sugar ants.

Scorpio (Oct. 24 - Nov. 21) - Don't hire Janet Jackson as your costume designer.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21) - Dedicate a trailer to your school.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19) - Grow a mullet.

The math all-stars of SOA

by Emory Frazier

On February 20th Mrs. Fairchild and eight SOA students traveled to the Citadel to compete in the math counts competition. These students, consisting of two seventh graders and six eighth graders, scored the highest out of a middle school examination and were selected to compete. The students during the competition had to answer forty-eight questions by themselves, ten together as a group, and go through a pop up round in which they won prizes.

Congratulations to all the children and Mrs.

Fairchild for your participation and for representing our school so well.



(From left to right) Paul Runyon, Mrs. Fairchild, Bradley Kennedy, Sally Lui, Araba Appiaghei-Dankuh, Frank Shary, Zan Isgett, Zach Walle, and Johnathan Ladson.

Next PTSA Meeting:

April 29, 2004 at 6:00PM

Contra Dance

When: March 19

Time: 8:00-11:00

Where: Stern Center, College of Charleston

This event supports the
Charleston County School of the Arts
H.S. Orchestra

Adults - \$8

Students - \$5



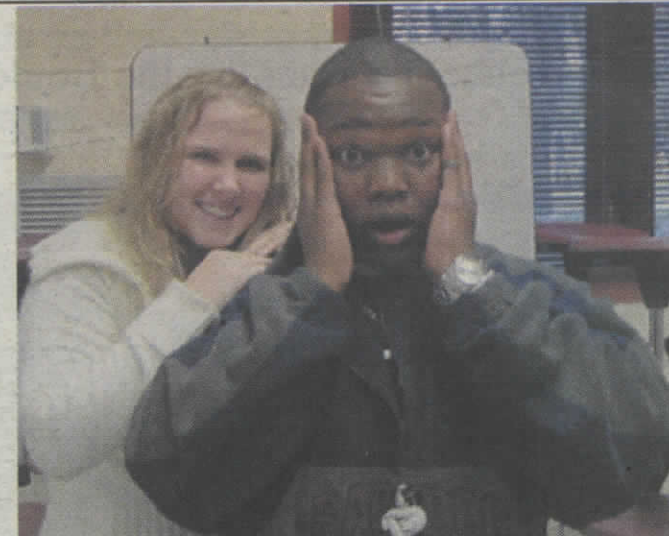
Question of the Month



"I would wish for a million dollars."
Mariana Salazar, 7th grade



"I would wish for ten more leprechauns in a cage."
Ryan Graudin, 11th grade



"I would wish for Nigel to be mine once again."
Jamie Stockman, 11th grade



"I would wish for a Dodge Viper."
Akeam Rivers, 7th grade

If you caught a leprechaun, what would you wish for?



"I would wish for a genie holding a talking fish."
Jake Henessey, 11th grade



"I would wish that I knew everything and then I wouldn't have to go to school."
Maneesah Fraiser, 10th grade



"I would wish that Kathleen would take a bath."
Jenna McSwain, 11th grade



"I would wish for my own country."
Ronald White, 11th grade