

Applause

Vol. 9 No. 2

School of the Arts

October 2007

Art

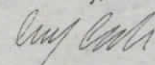
Smart '07

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to *Applause's* annual Art Smart issue and to our visiting 5th graders from Charleston County elementary schools, who will attend the Art Smart presentations by the 8th grade class. We asked students from each art major to write essays about their experiences at SOA. I hope this will provide interesting insight to 5th graders who are considering an education at this school. This issue also includes updates and important information about the plans for the new school building in an article on page four by **Victoria Doose** and

Liz Gildea, Blake Engel and **Chelsea Adent** profiled new teachers and staff members on page 13 in a continuation of an article last month. Check out page 18 for featured work by Visual Artists and Creative Writers! This issue of *Applause* is an exciting opportunity to highlight the myriad accomplishments of SOA students.

Sincerely,



Congratulations to the October Patron of the Month, Linda Wozniak!

Dr. Veronica Price, September's Patron of the Month, receives her \$20 gift card to Barnes and Noble from staff member Victoria Doose.



PTSA Meeting

November 28

in the SOA cafeteria

Topics to be addressed:

- New campus
- Use of unallocated funds

Cover art by **Alex Corsaro**, senior.



Applause

the official student newspaper of

Charleston County School of the Arts



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LIVE MUSIC, DANCING AT JUMP JIVE AND WAIL

Visitors Center packed, many leave with prizes

By Chelsea Adent

Did you Jump, Jive and Wail? More than 900 tickets were sold for the event, which took place October 20. The profits from ticket sales support the high school band.

"The jazz band was the best I've heard in the three years I've been attending Jump, Jive and Wail. They played a variety of music that appealed to everyone," says Ms. Melody Morris, a SOA band parent. "You could look around and see that everyone was having a great time."

High school Band director Mr. Basil Kerr says, "That was the most fun I've had working in a long time."

There were many contests that went on over the course of the night. Best Dressed was awarded to Maddie Cooper and Logan Wells. The dance contest winners were Taylor Raffield and Laura Tonks. Second place winners were Reilly Lovingood and Sytske Hillenius, and third place went to Logan Wells and Hannah Chilcote. Also, three American Express gift cards were given out to Band majors that had sold the most tickets. The third highest seller was Adam Bailey, the runner up was Carley Congdon, and the winner was Kierra Wilson. Congratulations to all!



Penelope Murray and Serena Doose



Grace Lee and Michael Ancrum



Mandy Holcomb, Jesse Hildreth, Emma Ostapech, Zach Thames



Cordell Mosteller



SOA high school jazz band

Photos by Sytske Hillenius and Jessie McGinty

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NHS starts year with tutoring, breakfast sale

By Victoria Doose



The National Honor Society's officers this year are President **Morgan Lewis**, Vice President in charge of Community Service

Sytske Hillenius, Vice President in charge of Tutoring **Min Bu**, Treasurer **Frank Shary**, Secretary **Victoria Doose**, and Historian **Lauren Turner**. Also helping oversee the Society this year is **Ms. Susanne Drennan**, who now serves as an adviser alongside **Mr. Ed Murray**.

Before the school year even began, NHS had a beach sweep at Folly with both the current members and several School of the Arts NHS alumni. We also participated as a group in the September 15 National Beach Sweep, cleaning the beach of Kiawah Island. Another Folly Beach sweep took place on October 6.

The peer tutoring program began

September 17. This year, tutoring sessions take place after school every Monday and Thursday in Ms. Drennan's room (B3). Students in grades six through nine must have a referral form from their teacher(s) in order to be tutored.

Breakfast sales also started in September. The sales table is located by the high school band room in the Fine Arts building, where bottles of Starbucks coffee are sold for \$2.00, muffins for \$1.00, and juice for \$0.50.

Members of NHS participated in the Race for the Cure, a fundraiser for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. We formed a team, and the race will take place October 20 on Daniel Island.

National Honor Society members also volunteered in the Friends of the Library book sale on October 12-14 at the Gaillard Auditorium.

Changes to SOA/Magnet Building Plan

By Victoria Doose and Liz Gildea

The plan to combine the new campuses of Academic Magnet High School and the School of the Arts has undergone revisions since it was originally proposed in 2005. Changes include consolidation of certain areas due to budget constraints and the creation of a two-story building in the middle of the campus, which will house the administrative offices and media center for both schools. AMHS and SOA will also share a cafeteria.

In addition to its academic portion, which has separate middle and high school wings, SOA's campus will have sixteen fine arts studios, a black box theater, a larger, state-of-the-art performance theater, a darkroom, a recording studio, and a costume shop.

People have voiced fears that the actual administration of each school will be combined, essentially merging SOA and AMHS into one school. SOA interim principal, **Ms. Myrna Caldwell**, said that the latest plans show a clear separation between the two schools. Also, in a September 12 letter to parents at both schools, CCSD superintendent, Dr. Nancy McGinley, herself gave assurance that "AMHS and SOA will remain two separate schools when they are relocated to a shared campus. Each school will retain its own unique integrity and mission which have brought such great success to our students."



Updates regarding the building plans are available online at www.heeryschools-charleston.com/School.aspx?id=17.

Retaining each school's integrity is a main goal of the "Center for Arts and Academics Transition Team," a group of parent and faculty representatives from both AMHS and SOA who are tasked with making the switch to the new campus as smooth as possible for both schools. The transition team was created last spring in order to identify issues that can be addressed by the schools themselves (they are not involved with district decisions), such as the possibility of SOA students taking courses only available at AMHS (and vice versa), or whether the schools will have a combined prom.

Once the transition team has identified the issues, they will delegate the handling of each to individual committees. "The transition team is general," said Ms. Caldwell. "The committees will look at specifics."

The new campus and buildings will be located on the former site of Bonds-Wilson High School on Rivers Avenue in North Charleston. As of August, construction on the buildings – to be collectively referred to as the Center for Arts and Academics – is set to start in February 2008. School of the Arts is scheduled to open in August of 2009, and Academic Magnet will open in August of the following year.

Novelist's niece visits as part of Big Read

By Tanya Lewandowki

In September Ms. Lucy Anne Hurston, niece of novelist Zora Neale Hurston, visited SOA as part of the Big Read. Started by the National Endowment of the Arts, the Big Read is a national effort to "promote literacy, celebrate diversity, and recognize the significance of community connections by bringing people together to read and discuss a single book," as stated by the Charleston County Public Library's website. Schools, colleges, businesses and civic groups have organized lectures, seminars, movie showings, and much more to celebrate the late Zora Neale Hurston's novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, the book selected for Lowcountry readers. Our community is one of 117 that the NEA

selected to participate.

English teacher **Ms. Jane Marshall** arranged Ms. Hurston's presentation which occurred in the Black



Ms. Lucy Anne Hurston spoke in the Black Box about her aunt, Zora Neale Hurston.

Kimberly Jenkins

Box. Hurston discussed her book *Speak, So You Can Speak Again: The Life of Zora Neale Hurston*, a biography that includes a collection of Zora's short stories, poems, photographs, maps, and letters. Many of the students commented on how much fun Ms. Hurston's visit was and found

her take on life interesting. "She is an extraordinary woman," said Ms. Marshall. "I feel that the students got a lot out of Ms. Hurston's lecture, and there was a very direct connection."

SAT scores put SOA in SC's top five

By Chelsea Adent

SOA's average SAT score places us among the top five public schools in the state. While the national average score decreased last year, SOA increased 6 points from last year's composite score, giving us the score of 1,623. Our score was 112 points higher than the national average

and 164 points above the state average. Schools that scored above us include the Governor's School for Science and Math (1,959), Academic Magnet (1,800) and the Governor's School for Arts and Humanities (1,667).

Who will be chosen as Mr. and Miss SOA?
...and Junior Mr. and Miss SOA?
Find out at the

SOA Talent Show
Friday, November 2
7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the cafeteria

Presented by Student Council
For more info, contact Student Council advisor Lisa Colquitt at
lisa_colquitt@charleston.k12.sc.us

Mr. Lindgren promotes "greener" SOA

By Tanya Lewandowski

Mr. Kirk Lindgren, 9th grade physical science teacher, will be joining **Dr. Marty Ball** as the newest sponsor of SOA's Ecology Club. He has circulated an e-mail to teachers listing energy-saving tips for around school, but he wants to involve students, as well. "I feel that the 9 Steps to a Greener School will impact SOA because I'm trying to make a big impact, on a small scale. SOA is just big enough to where we can all communicate and hopefully be on the same page." Mr. Lindgren is very enthusiastic about helping and improving SOA's Ecology Club, and making a lasting impact.

Mr. Lindgren's

"9 Steps to a Greener School"



- Set your computers to Power-save! On school computers: Under the start menu go to control panel, go to performance and maintenance, select power options on the bottom right, and select max battery at the top.

- Change the margins on your computer! Even changing the margins to .5 instead of the default for Microsoft saves paper.

- Turn off your power strip!

- Use compact fluorescent lightbulbs when possible! They conserve 60 to 80 percent more energy than regular light bulbs, and they run longer too!

- Turn off the lights when you're not in your classroom!

- Recycle! We're doing a good job on paper, but now we need to focus on plastic bottles! E-mail me if you need another bin: Kirk_lindgren@charleston.k12.sc.us.

- Use both sides of the paper!

- Lighten the toner. Lowering even a couple of steps helps save toner and money.

- Encourage your students to follow in your footsteps!

Seussical canceled

By K. Chaney Long and Liz Gildea

Despite last year's plan, SOA will not be producing *Seussical: The Musical* this year. Interim principal **Ms. Myrna Caldwell** and theatre teacher **Ms. Megan Link** discussed why the project was dropped, referring to complications of Ms. Rose Maree Myers' abrupt reassignment last spring.

Ms. Link was initially set to co-direct the musical with **Mr. Michael Locklair**, former fine arts director and Musical Theatre teacher. Mr. Locklair did not return to SOA this year, and – because she hadn't anticipated being the sole director – Ms. Link had already committed to another project that would conflict with *Seussical*.

"For the quality of shows we like at School of the Arts," Ms. Link explained, "we [the teachers involved in the project] didn't feel that we could produce that this year. We are coming to a place where the school is growing, and we did not have the manpower."

Ms. Caldwell said the fine arts teachers voted to drop *Seussical* because "we didn't have adequate preparation to do it this year because nothing was done over the summer."

Lack of manpower wasn't the only problem in producing the play. At some point it was discovered that West Ashley High School also had the rights to *Seussical* for this school year. "We didn't want to have competing shows," Ms. Link said.

Ms. Caldwell and Ms. Link both mentioned plans to put on a show next year. Ms. Link said she does not know what next year's production will be, but "it's definitely an agenda item at all of our meetings."

This is good news for current eighth through eleventh graders, but the class of 2008 will not have another opportunity to perform in a major SOA production. Talk has risen among the seniors about doing an alternative show. Visual Arts major **Hannah McClesky** said, "That would be cool, but who'd be in charge of that?"

Daniel DeCola, a Band major, said, "It's a good idea, but without the correct leadership and organization it would fall through." Seniors have made no concrete plans or proposals for a production to replace *Seussical*.

Each of the two Musical Theatre classes, which would have been devoted to *Seussical*, will be putting on its own, smaller play this year.

Ms. Reilly plans junior and senior Italy Trip

By Liz Gildea

U.S. History teacher **Ms. Laura Reilly** (formerly Ms. Tisdale) is organizing a trip to Italy for seniors and juniors. The trip, which is not sponsored by SOA or the school district, is to take place in June of next year.

Ms. Reilly is planning the trip in conjunction with EF Educational Tours, a company geared toward students. The eleven-night trip, designed by Ms. Reilly herself, is tentatively scheduled for June 9 to June 20 of next year. Overnight stops include Sorrento, Rome, Florence, the Cinque Terre Region, Venice and the Como Region. Students will also visit Capri, Pompeii, Vatican City and Assisi, and will pass through Milan.

The group will have a private bus as well as a bilingual tour guide who will accompany them for the entire trip. EF Tour Directors are equipped with computer phones and GPS tracking systems, which allow them to send pictures and updates to a website visible to parents and friends.

Ms. Reilly said she used to vacation in Italy with her family when they lived in Germany. She stressed the beauty of Italy as well as the experiential value of international travel. "You get to see the things you've heard about and read about your entire life," she said. "And universities and the corporate world are really pushing this globalization thing."

The trip was originally intended to be for seniors only but is now open to juniors in order to meet a minimum requirement. "This is not your 'seniors gone wild' trip," said Ms. Reilly. She said that last year students had asked her to sponsor a senior trip, and that she had refused at first. "Then they told me, 'No, you don't understand – we want a non-traditional senior trip, a non-alcoholic senior trip, a *real* senior trip.'"

Because the trip is not affiliated with the Charleston County School District, the school PA system may not be used to make announcements regarding the trip, nor can the campus be used for meetings or fundraising. Meetings will take place at Friendship Baptist Church on Lackawanna Boulevard, just outside the SOA campus (the first one took place in September).

The trip costs approximately \$3000 per student. Included in the cost are flights, hotel accommodations, breakfasts and dinners, transportation, and the sightseeing program. "We're going to reach out to the community for funding," Ms. Reilly said. The final price will depend on how many students sign up and how much money comes from fundraising.

For more information, call Ms. Reilly at 810-6435 (cell) or e-mail her at ltisdaleccsoa@yahoo.com.

Yearbook aims to increase student interest

By Liz Gildea

This year, the SOA yearbook staff is working to change the process by which the yearbook is made in order to increase participation by non-staff members.

"We've always had to rely on a small yearbook staff for photography," said English teacher **Ms. Anna Bronk**, the new yearbook advisor. But now, "Everybody in the school can be a contributing photographer. That way we can capture moments outside of the SOA walls that are important to student identity."

Photos can be submitted online – a first for SOA yearbook – through the Jostens website (see Ms. Bronk in room B-7 for login information). Also, senior Piano major **Lauren Turner**, who is yearbook editor, created a group on Facebook through which students can submit photos. Clubs can ensure that their pictures will be included by submitting a form that lists their major activities and events.

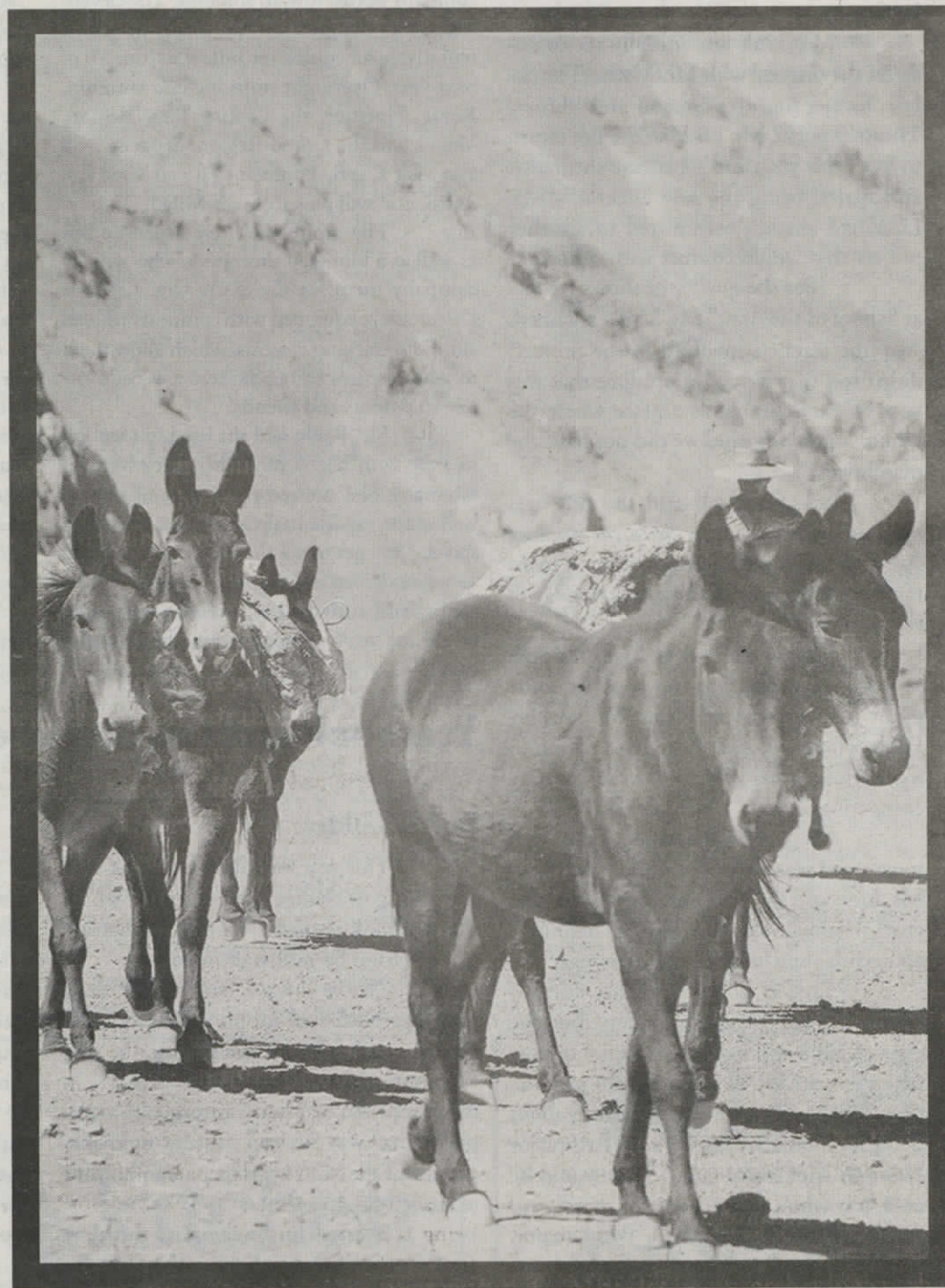
In the past, congratulatory ads have only been available to parents of seniors. Ms. Bronk said that middle school parents have voiced concerns that eighth graders don't get enough recognition for their graduation, especially considering that many transfer to other high schools. Thus, congratulatory ads will now be available for graduating eighth graders as well as seniors.

The theme of the 2007-2008 yearbook is "Express Yourself: We create to express, not to impress."

Ms. Bronk said that the yearbook staff's goal is to sell at least 525 yearbooks (the school population is over 1000), at which point they would break even on their budget. "In the recent past, yearbooks haven't sold well," she said. "We're trying to turn that around."

JILL HUNTER

HORSE PHOTOGRAPHER



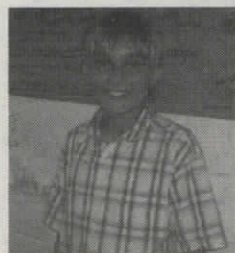
WWW.JILLHUNTER.NET

A day in the life of a 6th grader

Applause asked two 6th graders to describe a typical day at SOA.

Compiled by K. Chaney Long and Shanequa West

Carson Smith



The daily schedule for a 6th grader would be the following: get off the bus, go to the cafeteria, go through your classes, and get home. Seems simple, right? Wrong! There are so many choices and things that a 6th grader has to do to finish one day of school at SOA.

In the mornings, when I come into the building from the buses, the first choice to make is how to get into the cafeteria: through the high school hallway in the building or through the wet, soggy, muddy grass outside (play frogger through high school kids or walk across a swamp). If I choose to go through the hallways, I might as well be a squashed ant. The chances of getting out of there alive are one in a million on account of the super tall high school kids

roaming through the hallways. They could squish anyone. And for the second choice, you can trudge through the murky swamp. Now that is just the beginning!

Once I have somehow made it into the cafeteria, next on the list is to get to my classes, which, is the easiest part. All I have to do is try not to get shoved off the two-foot sidewalk by a hundred and fifty 6th graders. Then, I get to my first class. I spend an hour staring at the clock waiting for classes to switch. Finally, the bell rings and I carry my ten-pound binder across the field or across the sidewalk to my next class, and then for an hour or so, I stare mindlessly at the clock.

Then it is time for lunch and recess, the best time of the day. And then, before I know it, it's time for majors and the last period class. After I am finished with those classes, the day is over and I have accomplished my day of 6th grade. Phew!

Isabelle Jur



In 6th grade a lot of stuff happens. For example, all of the classes. There is so much to do sometimes that sometimes you forget what you have to do.

My first class on A days is math, and I have **Ms. Wojciehowski**. She is really nice and fun, and you play a lot of games in her class. Next, for my A2 class, I have **Ms. Moschella** for science. She does not like to give out homework, but if she does, it is usually for a grade. She gives you agendas that you can turn in before interims and when report cards come out, it makes your grade higher.

Then, my major, Theatre, comes next. **Ms. Link** is awesome. We play games, write a lot of monologues, and then for attendance we say whatever we want to

and do it in any voice. Finally, I have my last class, A4. I have **Ms. Mitchum** for a literature teacher. She is very nice. She has a lot of tests on stems, which are prefixes. You have to study for them, and it is not easy. She does not give out a lot of tests, but you do have to read a lot.

Then come B days. First I have **Ms. Wojciehowski** again. Then I have Ms. Blake for social studies. She is nice and strict. She gives a lot of tests like the D.O.G. test and chapter tests, which are hard. You need to study everything that she gives you to study and read the chapter, and she gives you homework every night.

Then comes my Theatre class again. All of the people in there are awesome, and nice. After that, I have **Ms. Newell**. She is strict, and you want to follow all of her rules or you will get in a lot of trouble, but she does not give out tests. We also have laptops in her class.

A brief history of SOA: Introduction for a visitor

By K. Chaney Long

Charleston County School of the Arts was founded in 1995 by former principal, and founder of Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary, Rose Maree Myers. After creating an elementary school with an arts infused curriculum Ms. Myers wanted to extend that learning into middle school. School of the Arts remains drastically different from any other school, specifically in art. At SOA art is a major and not an elective. Because School of the Arts is a public magnet school the students must audition for their major. In most other high schools people are in an arts elective because it is a hobby. SOA students are in their major because they have auditioned, they have a true talent, and are serious about their art.

The idea of having a school that focuses on an art major was a new and

different idea for Charleston County parents and students. In 1995 SOA was just beginning. That first year a little less than two hundred students entered the doors for the first day of school. In the first year of School of the Arts there were only 6th grade and 7th grade. As new 6th graders entered SOA, the school expanded into both a middle and high school, complete with grades 6th through 12th. Now, twelve years later, School of the Arts has approximately 1,025 students in attendance.

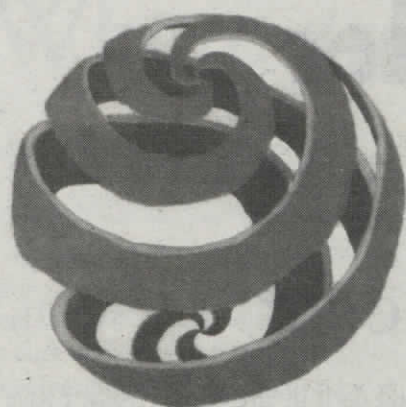
The 1,025 students are a part of one of SOA's eight majors. These majors include Theatre, Vocal Arts, Visual Arts, Band, Piano, Dance, Strings, and Creative Writing. Each day students spend one hundred minutes in their majors. Throughout these one hundred minutes they explore their craft through practice and lessons,

but students' arts education doesn't just end in the classroom. Most majors give their students the opportunity to experience their art outside of school. This can be through either after school performances or publishing student writing.

SOA students currently inhabit a hodgepodge of buildings and trailers used as classrooms. The main building was actually an elementary school before being converted into School of the Arts. In 2009, School of the Arts will be leaving the converted buildings and moving down the street into the new School of the Arts building. In 2010, Academic Magnet High school will be joining the campus with School of the Arts. Though both schools shall share *The Campus of Excellence*, School of the Arts will remain its own individual school that focuses on arts education.

Besides striving in Arts Education, due to high SAT scores and exam grades, SOA is one of the top five academic schools in the State. A great deal of SOA students graduate with high grades and go on to be accepted by many colleges. The first School of the Arts class graduated in 2002. Most of these students have gone on to college and are pursuing their dream jobs. Several School of the Arts alumni have even landed roles on Broadway shows such as Josh Strickland who is currently playing the role of Tarzan and former student, Richard "Bubba" Bryant who currently has a role on the television show "Army Wives."

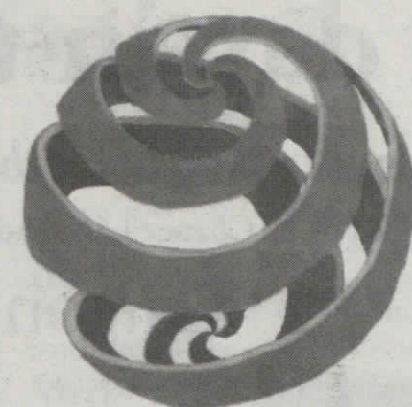
Many other SOA alumni are pursuing their dreams and aspirations with the knowledge, tools, and abilities cultivated at School of the Arts.



Graphic by Sammy Derrick

WHAT IS ART SMART?

BY VICTORIA DOOSE



Art Smart is a program designed to attract upcoming sixth graders to School of the Arts and show off the unique talent and ability of our students. Fifth graders from elementary schools across the county, as well as home-schooled children, are invited to take a guided tour around the school and watch a performance that incorporates all eight art majors offered at SOA. Though the themes and actors have changed over the years, the idea of Art Smart itself has remained largely the same.

But this year, Art Smart is experiencing some modifications.

Since SOA's inception, when Art Smart was only part of a drug awareness program and seventh grade

was the highest grade level offered, the seventh graders have taken the lead roles in this showcase performance. It was their duty to present the school in the best light and demonstrate the uniqueness of the school's art program. This year, the eighth graders are taking on this responsibility.

Director of Art Smart **Ms. Susan Johnson**, who teaches middle school Strings, made this decision along with the administration and the other art teachers.

"This is a big change," she says. "We decided to change it to the eighth graders because it's a kind of conclusion to their middle school years. The eighth graders would be more experienced and have more expertise in their art area to put on a really good show. That's the big change for this year."

While the change in grade level is certainly a significant departure from the tradition of Art Smart, it is not the only change that has been made.

Art Smart has customarily been centered around a theme, and one performance was put on in which all the art majors participated. This year, not only is there no theme for the program, but the single performance has been split into several performances.

The eight majors have been divided in half and assigned two different locations. Creative Writing,

Visual Arts, Theater, and Dance are to display their artistic creations in the Black Box, the school's performance center. Piano, Vocal, Band, and Strings are to perform in the high school band room, dubbed the "White Box."

Art Smart will run on a rotational schedule: upon arrival, the visiting fifth graders will be separated into three groups, and each group will start with a different part of the Art Smart experience. The shows in the Black Box and White Box will each be approximately twenty minutes in length. In addition to a twenty minute tour, the elementary school visitors will spend an hour to an hour and a half at SOA.

This decision was made in the interest of the eighth graders putting on Art Smart.

"It makes the shows a little bit shorter for the performers," Ms. Johnson explains. "For young [students] to sit through an hour is a lot. This way, they get a little bit of a break every 20 minutes."

The four music majors have agreed to consolidate their presentations into one purely musical rendition of the Disney movie *Beauty and the Beast*. Jazz piano, a division of the general Piano major, is also performing pieces independent of the *Beauty and the Beast* production.

Creative Writing this year, rather than writing the script for Theater as they have in the past, is putting on its own performance. It is a comedic representation of a day in the life of a Creative Writer; the students start the skit as "writing zombies" and end in a

song and dance number, including the "Happy Llama Song," "We Will Rock You," and "Lean Wit It, Write Wit It."

The Visual Artists designed this year's Art Smart T-shirt and will have artwork displayed for the visiting fifth graders to view. Dance is putting on a five minute piece, playful in nature, to represent the mix of personalities in the Dance program. Theater will be doing a production in the style of the avant-garde movement.

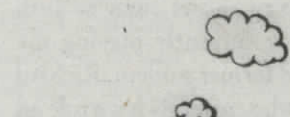
Art Smart will go on for three days, starting October 30 and ending November 1. All the shows will take place during the school day, in the morning, with the exception of a performance on Thursday evening so the parents of the fifth graders – as well as the parents of the eighth grade performers – can take part in the event.

Ms. Johnson expects seven hundred to one thousand fifth graders to attend Art Smart this year.

"We have record numbers of participants this year. Usually we fill up maybe two days worth of shows. This year we've got three days worth of shows, plus the parent performance, plus we're doing a show for the 6th and 7th graders to watch."

All total, this schedule will result in twelve shows.

Art Smart will likely follow this same format in the years to come, with tweaks and alterations being made as necessity and circumstance dictate.



Drawing by Weston DeWolff.

Creative Writing

A day in the life of a Creative Writer

By guest writer **Larissa Schiavo**



6:00 a.m.: I am jarred awake from some pretty restful REMs. The incense stick I lit the night before is out, leaving behind a pile of ash. I fall out of bed and get dressed in the dark – literally. I brush my teeth, wash my face, and try to get downstairs before my mom's Mustang leaves our driveway with my brother the trumpeter. If life were a movie, "Manic Monday" by Cyndi Lauper would be playing in the background. But, if life were a movie, I wouldn't be wearing an uncoordinated outfit and cheap drugstore mascara.

8:10 a.m.: So, it's first period in Creative Writing. This is the time of day where, if life were in fact a movie, "Kung Fu Fighting" would be playing out of sheer randomness. Jessie is hungry; Jacob is happy; Savannah did something useful over the weekend; Sam had a near-brush with avian zombies; Hadley is late; Brett is playing Halo 2; Xan is surpassing Flava Flav at raptastic-ness; Epstein is being melodramatic; Katie B is singing Happy Birthday; Katie R is being philosophical. I, personally, am throwing threats such as "I'll fix your wagon!" at my computer when it takes 5 minutes to turn on. All this changes pretty quickly when, before I know it, Microsoft Word is up on the screen. The minute I start writing I'm in my "zone," and I'm not disturbed until I have to pack up.

9:50 a.m.: Ah, science, with its good old theory names and plate tectonics. Thomas, the person sitting next to me, is mouthing the lyrics to a song that I haven't even heard. Cue that song by Journey that you can't even understand the

words to.

Lunch: Ah, a sandwich. The perfect metaphor for life. It can be boring on the outside unless it's rye, but it can be more fun if you decide to delve deeper and explore the anatomy of almond butter. Around me, everyone is eating small pizzas from those ominous red boxes. Cue "Chicken Stew" by System of a Down.

Recess: To put it short, we stand in a little circle and talk. Brittany tries to swipe my Red Hots (which are wagon-fixing-tastic) while singing love songs to a tree, and Sarah tries to pass as Kenny from South Park by sticking her lunchbox on her head. The only possible way things could get any more random is if a llama fell from the sky. To only make things even more random, "Bicycle Race" by Queen would be playing.

11:40 a.m.: I've got social studies, which has nothing to do with sociology as the name may have suggested, and much more to do with geography and history. It's pouring rain outside, and we're studying the wet and boggy conditions of (and diseases associated with) a rice field. If we don't watch out, we may see rice plants and malaria blossom up around SOA "Sweet Home Alabama" is playing, even though we're not in Alabama.

1:45 p.m.: Yippee! Français! Un de mes sujets prefers. One of my favorite subjects, which I seem to be getting fairly well. Cue that really old song from the Coke commercial about Genghis Khan and Marie Antoinette falling in love with Coke.

After school: "Crazy Nights" by Kiss would be playing in the background as I study, eat dinner, study, and go to bed.

Band

The middle school Band experience

By guest writer **Stephanie Thompson**



Band starts right when you're seated. Brian Guiles, our student director, takes us through scales and a warm-up called "5 Minutes a Day," which includes a choral and scale technique. Then our conductor, Ms. Reed, steps onto the podium, and the band works on songs for upcoming performances.

Right now we're practicing our

The high school Band experience

By guest writer **Amanda Eglan**



Being a senior in Band isn't much different from any other year. We're hard at work on band music, auditions, etc. like everyone else, but we're also starting to think about our senior theses. If you decide to do a senior thesis, there are two choices in Band: a music education thesis and a music performance thesis. The music education thesis is a year-long project. It requires teaching children at a neighboring elementary or middle school and documenting the experience in a journal. Near the end of the year, the mentored child or children put on a recital. The music performance thesis is the performance of a well-known piece of music for your instrument, as well as a written

music for Art Smart. Some of us work with the strings and vocal majors while the rest work in small ensembles. The music majors are working together to perform songs from *Beauty and the Beast*.

If we're not working as a whole band, we're broken up into sectionals. We practice solo pieces for the All-State competition or practice music that we're having a hard time with. Overall, the eighth grade band has a great time together during class.

paper about the piece and composer.

Obviously, preparation for this is no easy task, so Mr. Kerr has broken it up. Juries (evaluations) are held throughout the year, and all the band majors participating in senior thesis have to play their chosen piece for the entire music faculty. The first jury is primarily to make sure we have a rough idea of what we're playing. The second jury evaluates our improvement. At the end of the year, the students doing a performance thesis have a concert, and they get to graduate with a senior thesis honor!

Right now, the seniors have just begun to think about which thesis they will do and what piece they will play if they do a performance thesis. This year's senior class is amazing, and it's going to be an awesome year.

Violinist Daniel Davis, '07, playing major venues

By Shanequa West

Applause managed to get a quick interview with Daniel, who will be performing at Jesse Jackson's birthday party in L.A. in early November. Check next month's issue for a follow-up story.

Shanequa West: How has SOA helped you as a performer?

Daniel Davis: By giving me motivation and channeling my art in the right direction.

SW: What events prior to this have you participated in?

DD: I played at this thing for the NAACP with Hilary Clinton, Spoleto, Moja Arts, and Reggae Night. I played at the College of Charleston; they had a jazz event down there. I travel around with this gospel artist by the name of T Bone.

SW: Did you ever think that you would accomplish all the you have already?

DD: No. I did not. I'm just thanking God

everyday that more and more opportunities keep coming my way.

SW: Who are your musical influences?

DD: Probably this hip hop violinist by the name of Miri Venari, Joshua Bell, and Dr. Cusatis.

SW: What styles of violin music do you play?

DD: From classical to hip hop to jazz to gospel and Christian; everything basically; contemporary.

SW: What advice do you have for middle-schoolers who are just beginning to play the violin?

DD: Don't stop. Don't quit. No matter what anybody says.

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The middle school Dance program focuses on performance, self-reflection

By guest writer **Taylor DuPree**



As an eighth grade Dance major, my year so far has been great! The new teacher, Ms. Lucas, has done an excellent job of challenging her students and helping us become better "risk takers."

This year, Ms. Lucas's class and Ms. Cline's eighth grade class will be going through a series of assessments to see if we are meeting the criteria of an eighth grade Dance major. It also helps us see what specific things we need to work on to help us improve. During these assessments we are filmed and graded according to a rubric.

Along with the assessments, the eighth grade Dance majors are going to learn more about the audition process, performance qualities, and choreography. For each performance we have this year, we will do a miniature audition to help the teachers figure out who will be in certain sections of each piece. In order for us to learn more about performance quality and choreographing, we will be doing the annual eighth grade solo performance. This is a performance where each dancer choreographs a solo and performs it for a grade towards the end of the year.

One new thing we have done differently this year in Dance that each student keeps a journal. What I mean

by this is that each dancer has their own three-ring binder that they use to write comments in about themselves and their class. We usually write in this journal before each class, but sometimes we do it after. This helps us focus on ourselves and what we want to work on. Also in this journal we write vocabulary and assignments we have been given in the past. As Ms. Lucas says, "a good dancer is a smart dancer."

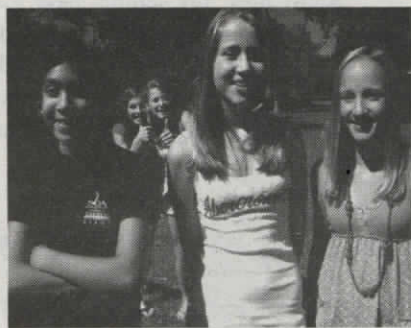
I am very excited that, starting this year, the eighth graders get to do Art Smart instead of seventh graders. We will be running the show a lot differently. Instead of all the majors combining to put on one production, the majors will have their own sections

in the show. For Dance, we decided to contribute a dance that not only shows our technique, but how dance class is run and how we act in class. The choreographer, Ms. Lucas, really wants this piece to show off our personalities. She wants the dance to be somewhat serious but fun at the same time so all members of the audience will enjoy it. It's a work in progress right now, and it's sure to be a great number.

Well I am totally excited about what's in store for us eighth grade Dance majors this year. I hope everyone can come to see Art Smart, because the dancers sure have worked hard.

Middle school Pianists cover jazz and classical techniques

By guest writer **Anja Evenson, Bhavishya Ramamoorthy and Emily Ulbricht**



Piano at SOA is a very rewarding and unique experience. It has two subdivisions, jazz and classical, which require different skills.

In Jazz, Mr. Clarke teaches the fundamentals. First he will teach the basic jazz chords and then he will go on to teach different rhythms. Once you understand the basics, he will teach specific pieces based on the level of the class. The entire class works on the same piece together so that each person's understanding of the song comes into

play. After everyone learns the song, we record the piece individually, using a computer program called Band In A Box. We play along with the sounds created by the computer, which include the necessary elements of a band (drums, bass, etc.). Mr. Clarke plays the recordings of the songs, and students are graded by their peers anonymously.

Next, the class moves on to improvisation, in which the player makes up a melody that is compatible with the chords. Each improvisation is different. Then the class learns how to *vamp*, or play an opening for a song. In some classes, students watch movies on the history of jazz to gain an appreciation for jazz music.

When the class is finished with a set number of songs, a recital called Jazz Café takes place around December at Park Circle. The students each

play their songs with drums and bass in the background, and each gets a performance grade.

The Classical class runs a little differently. Each student is assigned particular pieces based on his or her level of accomplishment. Ms. Benson helps the students where they need it in their lessons, but the students do individual work on the songs. Students are required to keep a record of how much they practice each week. To help teach the students technical work, theory and "pass-offs" are included in lessons. Theory includes chord inversions, major and minor intervals, etc. For pass-offs, students are assigned different major and minor scales, cadences, and arpeggios to play for a grade throughout the year.

In winter and spring, students

have a recital. High school and middle school have separate recitals. In Art Smart, students have the option of going to Landers University, where they play for a judge and then get reviews. There is a chance at the Honors Recital. This is a two-day, one-night field trip. Sometimes we go to Converse College. Each student plays in front of a group of people and is critiqued.

Piano majors have a number of roles in Art Smart this year. Jazz pianists will play the *Beauty and the Beast* synthesizer, accompanied by a band. The rest will play out in the hall. Students have a choice of playing classical or jazz pieces. Different majors will add to a performance group that a number of different actions are happening at one time.

A high school Visual Artist's experience

By guest writer **Marshall Drake**



I first came to SOA my freshmen year. As a result, I was behind most of the other students in Visual Arts (V.A.). I lacked understanding of

the different types of media, concepts, principles, and art history that so many of the other students had already been taught. It was pretty intense going from making turkeys out of hands with paper plates to doing weak eye and hand blind contours. By the end of the 9th grade, my skill level had improved drastically.

The 10th grade was probably the most different out of my years in V.A. It was probably because of the change in teachers. For 9th, 11th, and 12th grade I had Ms. Jaycie, whose main focus was on still life, oil, and acrylic painting. Where as Mr. Moore, my 10th grade

V.A. teacher, focused more on drawing and sculpting. What I liked least out of 10th grade would have to be the stupid wood sculpture project Mr. Moore made us do. We had to spend the class outside laboring on these pieces of wood for about a fourth of the quarter, and at the end, they didn't even look good. It looked sort of like a beaver got a hold of a tree limb.

Now that I am a senior, I like V.A. more than the other years. Why? Because of the freedom. Also, the critiques that I am receiving this year have been more helpful to me, and have really benefited my work. Sometimes our work is even critiqued by local artists. What I don't like about V.A. right now is that now that I am working on my Senior Thesis, I don't have the time to explore other types of media and styles that my thesis is not focused on.

All about middle school Visual Art

By guest writer **Weston DeWolff**



In Visual Arts we use a combination of media and styles. This course is designed to develop our individual

drawing and basic art skills. We have worked with watercolor, clay, mosaics, pastel, charcoal, colored pencils, paint, printing, ink, cut paper and many more. We have studied different styles including architecture, landscapes and the style of other famous artists such as Van Gogh, Picasso, and Monet. We are also experimenting with various techniques.

Field trips are also a very important part of Visual Arts learning. One field trip was to the old Navy Base where we took pictures of architecture for our pen and ink project. Our kayaking trip to the ACE Basin was to observe the various eco

systems where wild ducks live. Later in the year, we will be going to BrookGreen Gardens to observe figurative sculptures. Some of our projects were entered into contests such as the Duck Stamp and



It's not all work and no play for Visual Artists; for these middle schoolers, it's both.

the Coastal Carolina Fair. During Art Smart, our artwork is displayed around the school. Some visual artists will even create caricatures of band students during Art Smart.

Typical Theatre year diverse, exciting

By guest writer **Alex Berlinsky**



A typical year in Theatre is extremely exciting and eventful. There is almost nothing involving theatrical arts

that we do not perform.

One thing that you get to do in Theatre is write your own monologue. These can be about anything and can get very creative and crazy. There are only two rules that you follow while writing these monologues. First, they obviously have to be appropriate for school. Second, and not so obviously, they have to fit into a time limit.

Also, we have to study a little bit of William Shakespeare. As hard as it sounds, once you really get the hang of it, it sort of starts to come naturally. You pick from any of six different sonnets and perform them in both a representational and presentational style. The representational style is subtle and true to reality, but the presentational style is more obviously dramatic.

Another interesting thing that is done in Theatre class is stage combat. This is just a fancy name for fake fighting. Another thing that we will do in a lot of classes is play improvisational games. For a lot of people, this is the best part of class. There are many games we get to play, and all of them are fun in their own

different ways.

We also work throughout the year on cold readings. This is when we get a script and, five minutes later, get up and perform it. One more thing that we work on in theater is terms. There are fifty theater terms that we must memorize by the end of the year for a huge test known as adjudications. For adjudications, we go around the Theatre room working on three of the subjects I mentioned earlier. These three subjects are monologues, cold readings, and the terms. The monologues are not the ones we've written ourselves; instead, they are ones we are assigned about one or two months before the adjudications. The graders for adjudications are high school

theater majors, who always remember when they were in middle school and had to take the adjudications themselves. This makes for a very fair grading system.

Another thing we Theatre majors look forward to is the end-of-the-year picnic. This is when we just take a day off towards and do whatever we want. We can play football, eat hotdogs and hamburgers, or just run around and talk with our friends.

There are the occasional tests thrown in here and there, as well as other extra stuff, but this is what being a Theatre major all comes down to. That's pretty much your average year in middle school theater.

Strings

What it's like to be a Strings major

By guest writers **Catherine Gilmore, Zach McNellis and Joseph Pate**



What do instruments, fun and competition have in common? The School of the Arts String Orchestra. Playing an instrument may sound like it's easy, but Strings majors have to practice at least 30 minutes every day in addition to the time we play in class. Every day, we go through the process of tuning, practicing scales, and playing beautiful music.

At the beginning of every year, we begin practicing a piece for auditions for the Lowcountry Region Orchestra. If you make it to Regions, you get to try out for All-State. Many of us make it into the Region and All-State orchestras each year.

All of our practice pays off, since we have a lot of concerts, auditions and competitions. Some concerts that we will be playing this year include a fall festival, a winter concert with the Vocal majors, and a spring concert.

One event that is coming up is Art Smart. The orchestra will be performing a medley of songs from *Beauty and the Beast*

with some of the Band, Vocal and Piano majors.

Another important part of SOA Strings is the competitions we participate in, ranging from the regional to national levels. We go to a national orchestra competition every year in different states. This is a competition against other orchestras in the country. For the past three years, we have received a score of Superior and won first place! Oh yeah, and there's Ms. Johnson, our conductor, who is also an awesome teacher and a great violinist who plays with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra.

Even though being a Strings major requires lots of practicing and performing, it's not all work. Sometimes we are able to have a few minutes at the end of class to talk or play cards, and of course, there is the awesome time we have on our trips! Every year, we also have fundraisers to support our orchestra like a car wash and a spaghetti dinner. And at the end of the year, we have a pool party!

So, if you haven't already figured it out, Strings is an awesome major!

Vocal

A year in middle school Vocal

By guest writer **Samantha Hord**



A big bonjour to you from the 8th grade vocalists! We have already kick-started a successful year with thirty-one pages of sheet music from the Disney movie *Beauty and the Beast*. This will be the focus of a mini-concert for the touring 5th graders this year, presented by the four SOA music majors. This project stretches Vocalists to our limits and helps us become better musicians. Plus, it gives us experience to get into character while singing.

But even before Art Smart, we had our first concert of the year on October 16. All middle school Vocalists sold tickets to a fantastic spaghetti dinner, courtesy of Fazoli's Italian restaurant, which was followed by a performance by the Vocalists themselves.

The rest of the school year can be summed up as one long string of events. First, we'll have a holiday concert presented by both Strings and Vocal majors at Citadel Square Baptist Church. Then, winter break will bring 2007 to a close. Just two months later those lucky people that are accepted into the All-County Chorus will travel to West Ashley High School to partici-

pate in a clinic and concert with other Charleston County students. But let's hope nobody forgets about our second fundraiser right after that... more tickets, anyone? The middle school Vocal Dinner Theater will take place at the very end of February.

But that's not all! Our fundraiser money will help pay for our annual Vocal competition trip to another state. We'll take a tour bus to our destination, check into a hotel, sing for the music festival judges, and bring back yet another bunch of pretty trophies and awards to show off in our classroom. Although Mr. Rogers and Ms. Slenk have not yet revealed where we will travel this year, I'm sure we will find some tourist-like things to do along the way.

After the trip, we hope to finish our year with a bang! The middle school Vocalists are fortunate enough to have Ms. Sally Albrecht, a professional conductor and composer, hold a choral clinic in May. And alas, our final 'hurrah' for the school year follows: our spring concert held once again at Grace United Methodist Church. Nothingness will then take the place of business, leaving room for a more academic focus: goody, oh joy, the PACT test I foresee!



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Introducing SOA's newest teachers, part two

Mr. Justin Baker

By Blake Engel



After teaching for three years at North Charleston High School, Mr. Justin Baker has joined the fine arts department at SOA. He teaches two Musical Theatre classes and Arts Management.

"I've always loved the stage," he said. "Educating the minds of our young people by being a 'lead learner' is my passion.

"Coming from a completely different environment, I was a bit in 'culture shock' during my first week," he said. "The students here seem to have an innate desire to learn, and to work toward that goal self-sufficiently.

Mr. Baker's class to put on shows

By Carolyn Brown

The two musical theatre classes have begun a major project: the creation of a musical. Each class will write, direct, choreograph, and create costumes for its musical. The plays will contain songs from such shows as *Rent*, *A Chorus Line*, *Aida*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Tarzan*, *Newsies*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Wicked*.

Musical Theatre teacher **Mr. Justin Baker** said that "the idea behind getting the students to write their

This is an amazing place to be a part of."

Outside of education, Mr. Baker worked for five years as production assistant and executive producer at a local television station. He received a B.A. from Charleston Southern University and received credits in film production at Trident Tech.

Currently he is involved with the musical program at the Church of the Holy Cross on Sullivan's Island. He also enjoys camping, rock-climbing and other outdoor activities. He has journeyed abroad to Bulgaria, Scotland and England, where he hopes to return this summer.

"Great things are happening here," Mr. Baker said of SOA. "Lives are being changed forever."

own musical is to teach them what all goes in to the performances, and the sheer amount of work that goes into producing a musical. But the ultimate goal," he said, "is to teach them to work as a team."

Introduced last year, the musical theatre class teaches students about not only performance but also auditioning, musical theatre history, the business of musical theatre, sets and costumes, and lighting and sound.

Ms. Brenda Brooks

By Chelsea Adent



Ms. Brenda Brooks is SOA's new guidance secretary. She described her time so far at SOA as "enjoyable. Everyone has been friendly and helpful."

She said that, "even working for CCSD, I was unaware of what SOA really was. I thought it was a school for artistically gifted students. I was unaware that they are also academically gifted."

Ms. Brooks spent seventeen

years as a secretary at her alma mater, Stall High School. She also spent several years working outside of education so that she could spend time with her children.

Since her dad was in the Navy, Ms. Brooks was always moving as a child. However, she has lived in Charleston since she was in the tenth grade. Ms. Brooks studied accounting at the College of Charleston for two years and received a degree in Business Management from Trident Technical College.

Outside of work, Ms. Brooks likes to read, garden and help her husband with home repair projects.

Ms. Sallie Hutchinson

By Chelsea Adent



As the new Resource teacher at SOA, Ms. Sallie Hutchinson helps students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) to reach their goals.

Ms. Hutchinson said, "I love my job! The students and teachers are so much fun to be around! I find that students are motivated and under-

stand that I am here to help them in any way possible."

Before coming to SOA, Ms. Hutchinson taught a self-contained class at another high school for students with learning disabilities. She has also been a nanny and worked in a shoe store.

Ms. Hutchinson, a Charleston native, spends a lot of time training the puppy she adopted six months ago. She also enjoys doing yoga and anything outdoors.

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“Where are they now?”: Michael Badger

By Liz Gildea

Liz Gildea: *What was your major at SOA? What were you involved in at SOA besides classes?*

Michael Badger: I was a Creative Writing major, back in the day. (Hi, Ms. Miles!) To my knowledge, there weren't really a lot of “extra-curricular” things available at the time, but the school was still pretty young at that point. Poetry and literature readings with the Writing folks were one of the best “non-class” events in which I participated. There was also a certain video made by a classmate for Video Production, which shall remain nameless.

LG: *What's this about a “certain” video?*

MB: The “certain video” was a short, half-hour movie called *Assailant* by Craig Baurley. Basically, it consisted of taking the bizarre noises made by our friend, Frank Wright, and making a “horror” (yeah right) movie around them. Who knew Frank could impersonate a gibbering little alien so well?

I was victim number one – the dude in the red shirt who dies in the first five minutes (a little homage to *Star Trek*).

You'd actually be surprised by the level of special effects Craig managed to cram into this movie. Story, not so much... acting, puh-leez... but there was some decent eye candy in there, especially the opening sequence with the ship crash landing in – where else? – the back yard of SOA.

LG: *What was it like being in our first graduating class? Did you enter as a sixth grader, the year the school began? I imagine there must have been some kind of pride in leading SOA through its formative years.*

MB: Yeah, I was definitely proud of myself for having been part of the school's first graduating class ever. My classmates and I were hopefully part of what helped the school establish the fine reputation it's built over the last few years, though I dare say some of us, um, tried a little too hard to “leave a legacy” (read: “scare the kids in earlier grades”).

Unfortunately, I was not there “from the beginning.” When I finished middle school, I auditioned almost immediately for the Writing department (after talking my parents into finally admitting

that “magnet schools” were not a bad thing) and was admitted for the ninth grade.

LG: *What were the highlights of your time at SOA? What do you miss about it, etc.?*

MB: Highlights: The people. What I miss: The people. Definitely. I had some experiences at SOA that I will never forget, simply because of the other people who were there. I also miss the opportunities to practice and develop my skills as a writer.

LG: *Do you have any funny or otherwise memorable anecdotes from Creative Writing or SOA in general?*

MB: Anything Hamadi Brown ever wrote – anything Hamadi ever said or did – was absolutely hysterical.

I seem to remember a particular “incident” where someone dug up an older piece of Ms. Hart's writing. It was from back when she

was just getting started as a professional author, if I recall, and it was, um, a little on the “dirty” side in some places. (By “dirty” I mean “naughty,” as in, “I can't believe somebody actually wrote that!”) When her face lit up like a Christmas tree and she was too embarrassed to keep reading between awkward laughs, I think it was either Hamadi Brown or Shannon O' Shea who grabbed the manuscript from her and kept reading out loud. That was... definitely a memorable experience, let me tell ya. Very rarely have I ever laughed that hard.

Also, the fact that people in my own class still talk to me about the first lengthy comedy story I wrote, or the way I read it (in characters' voices), always

puts a smile on my face (though a slightly embarrassed one – a lot of it was “kid humor,” fart jokes and whatnot, but honestly, can you say you've ever read a story about someone getting their pants lit on fire by a stage prop?).

LG: *When did you enter the College of Charleston? How was the whole college experience? What did you study?*

MB: Actually, I started college in Furman and managed to survive – barely – my first two years there. Private school was not all it was cracked up to be (long story), so I transferred to the C of C for the 2003-2004 academic year. I graduated with honors, with a B.S. in Psychology and a Minor in Philosophy, in May 2005.

As for the “college experience,” it was amazing. The Furman years really

helped me to open up socially, and the C of C years helped me to continue that while really figuring out just what it was I wanted to pursue as a career – not to mention helping me develop as a person, by figuring out my own beliefs, my principles, etc.

LG: *I see on your Facebook that you've been working for the Post & Courier. Describe your positions there. Are there any job-related moments in your memory that stand out?*

MB: I began at The Post and Courier as a Newsroom Clerk, basically taking care of “odd jobs” for the editors and staff. Mostly, it consisted of errand running, phone duties, etc. I also put together a few of the weekly calendars and concert listings, as well as

editing some short work for local and regional news. Earlier this year, however, I moved laterally within the company into the Retail Advertising department. Right now I'm working as a Sales Assistant, helping my team coordinate business with a variety of clients, from AT&T to Wal-Mart. I'm hoping I can rack up enough experience some day soon to start work in actual sales.

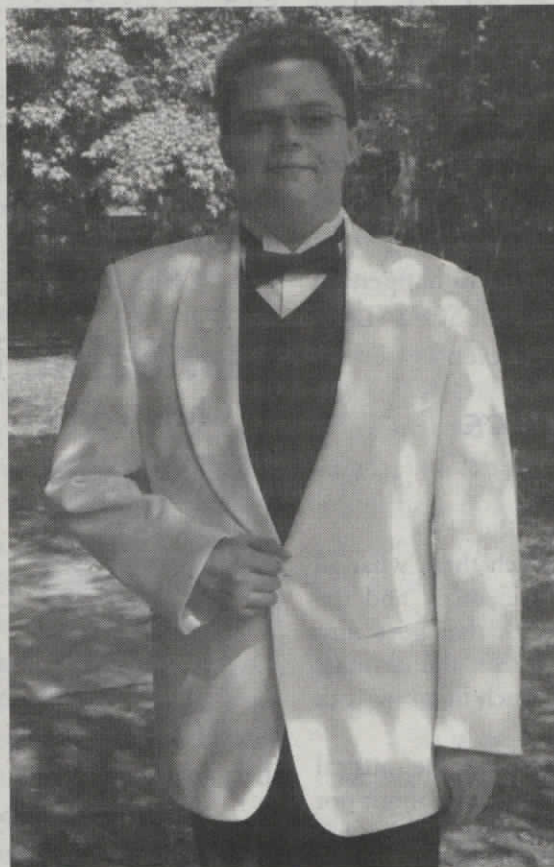
In the way of “job-related moments,” I could point to the handful of short articles I put together for the Preview and Faith & Values sections of the paper, when I was still working as a Clerk. The article of which I am most proud is one I wrote about a Holocaust photo exhibition in Myrtle Beach. I forget the exact title, but the exhibition was amazing... It was a display of lost photographs that were recovered by historians after Auschwitz was finally opened to the public as a museum and memorial.

LG: *What do you do outside of work, in your free time?*

MB: I'm still writing. Now that I don't have to dedicate hours at a time to “academic” writing (lab reports and what-not), I have time to get my own ideas down on paper and flesh them out. It's hard to get started, sometimes, after at least five years of lacking either the willpower or the time to just sit down and write, but it's coming back to me. Also, I read constantly – and of course I'm still a geek (always have been – anyone who was at SOA with me will attest to that), so movies and PC games are top-notch time-wasters. I also love catching up with my old friends, in person, on the phone, or whatever.

LG: *What are your plans for the future?*

MB: Well, right now, I plan to just continue working for at least another year. (That, and work on paying off my student loans... ugh.) In the near future, however, I plan to return to school and complete the one or two requirements needed to turn my Philosophy Minor into a B.A., then pursue a Master's in Psychology. I'm also focusing on getting my skills as a writer back up to snuff; like I said, I've written nothing but reports and term papers for years, so I'm forcing myself to get back into it and practice.



Michael graduated with honors from C of C in May 2005.

“Where Were They Then?": Dr. Marty Ball

By Blake Engel

Blake Engel: *What was your childhood like?*

Dr. Marty Ball: I grew up in the semi-rural environment of suburban Lynchburg, Virginia. I was the oldest of three kids; I have a younger brother and sister. Our neighborhood had a lot of children our age and we played in the woods, yards and peoples houses without a lot of regard for property boundaries or class distinctions.

BE: *In what kind of environment were you raised?*

MB: We had a strong nuclear family. My Italian great grandmother lived with us for my first ten years and brought a lot of old world influence to the family. My parents are college educated and avid readers so literature was always a part of the environment. They were also transplanted Yankees which caused us to be cultural oddities in the neighborhood.

My father is a nuclear engineer and was in charge of a nuclear laboratory. I used to go in to work with him on weekends and wander among the test reactors. There is even a reactor that was named for me, since it was being built when I was born.

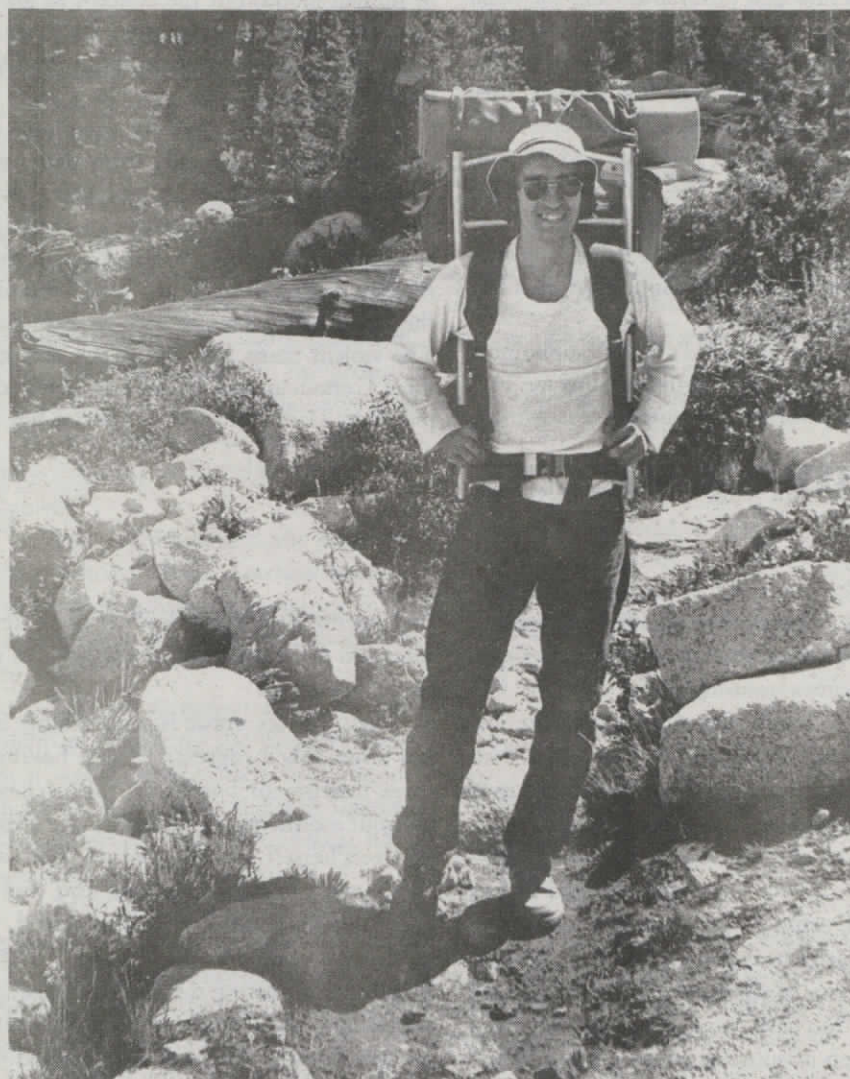
Both of my parents were professional photographers at points during their careers so I pursued photography at an early age. My mother and sister still do and in my opinion are quite good. A lot of my time in the summer and after school was spent at the local community theater. One of my friends from this time recently closed down the Broadway run of *Beauty and the Beast* with the part of Lumiere.

BE: *Please describe some events from your early and adult life that had the most impact on you.*

MB: When I was in the first grade my

family moved to Italy for six months. It was my first experience of being an immigrant and a foreigner. I also got to snorkel in the reefs of the Florida Keys which convinced me that I

MB: In elementary and middle school I was considered one of the slow kids, partially because I would spend my time in class reading and not doing the assigned work. After a



In his teens, Dr. Ball loved to go on solo camping trips. Here, he hikes the Sierra Nevada in California at age 17.

wanted to be a marine biologist.

BE: *What aspirations did you possess as a child?*

MB: To be an archeologist, then a marine biologist, then a documentary filmmaker.

BE: *What were your experiences in school and how did they influence you?*

while a guidance counselor put me in the fast track so I did that. It was more fun. In graduate school I hooked up with a hot lab studying evolutionary genetics. It was a great time, the other graduate students in the lab were wild and we had a reputation for finding trouble but new ideas and thoughts were everywhere.

BE: *Other than teaching, did you have*

any other professional aspirations, and if so, why did you abandon them?

MB: I wanted to be a marine biologist and worked at NOAA [the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration]; I became disillusioned by the paperwork and infighting.

BE: *What influenced you to pursue teaching?*

MB: I started coaching youth soccer and found I enjoyed the company of kids. I also despaired that my college and graduate students were academically unprepared. Rather than complain I decided to move into the trenches.

BE: *Which college(s) did you attend and what were your undergraduate and postgraduate experiences?*

MB: Carleton College, University of Washington and University of Georgia. As an undergrad I was unprepared and wasted a lot of opportunity. Graduate school was different and I had a great time.

BE: *Besides SOA, where else have you worked, as a teacher or otherwise?*

MB: Before SOA I taught at Cross High School in Berkeley County. Before that, I worked at University of Chicago in Biochemistry, Dalhousie University in Halifax Nova Scotia, and NOAA. I have also worked as a waiter, photographer and referee.

BE: *Looking back on your life, do you have any regrets?*

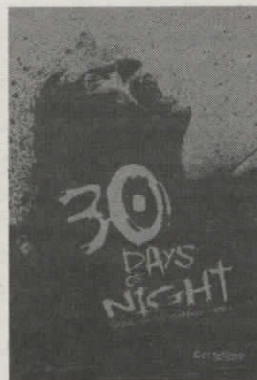
MB: I wish I had been more relaxed and confident in myself.

BE: *What was the proudest moment of your life?*

MB: I won't know until I die, but certainly watching my children, both biological and academic, succeed and excel ranks up there.

30 Days satisfies a horror craving

By Blake Engel



Whenever an author approaches a new work, in either film or literature, he concentrates first and foremost on the plot. Will it be a dramatic character study? Or perhaps an exercise in the medium's ability to convey

inner conflict through action? Or how about vampires? For *30 Days of Night* screenwriter Stuart Beattie, whose past credits include 2004's *Collateral* and the first installment of *The Pirates of the Caribbean*, and Brian Nelson, who worked on the 2005 independent film *Hard Candy*, it was the latter of the three.

Adapted from a graphic novel of the

same name, *30 Days* centers on the town of Barrow, Alaska, where a month of darkness will soon envelope the industrious people of America's Ice Capitol. Josh Hartnett plays Eben Oleson, the local sheriff who investigates a few curious occurrences around town, such as the methodical elimination of all connection to the outside world. Apparently, this is a sure sign of vampires and the band of survivors would probably agree, including the sheriff's estranged wife Stella, portrayed by Melissa George. For one month, they hide from their bloodthirsty assailants, who speak in a subtitled language and whoosh around in the night like Batman. Infection or death eventually strikes the group, and one by one they fall until we are left mostly with the actors whose names appear on the film's promotional posters.

This is David's Slade's sophomore outing as a feature length film director. He's previously worked on a number of music vid-

eos with artists such as AFI, Muse, and Stone Temple Pilots. *Hard Candy* was his debut into the ninety-minute-plus territory, where story can and probably should dominate the visuals, as many music video directors tend to forget on their first time out. And certainly Slade's ability behind the camera shows, as the film's blue tinge acts as a perfect accent to the rivers of human blood, but the concept of giving vampires a perfect playground for mayhem – a world without light – is about the film's limit of originality.

The film's stars – the vampires – are not altered monumentally from their early cinema and literature counterparts. While less eloquent than Bram Stoker's incarnation, and more frightening than Bela Legosi's, these Alaskan plasma-drinkers are "feral," meaning they *could* have rabies, so keep your distance. The violent fangs and dead-black eyes give them a certain undead appeal, and their leader, played by Danny Huston, is a poster-boy for

quality dental care. This leaves the innocent people of Barrow with quite a world of nightmares, and, should they survive, a possible future in the oral- and skin-care business.

30 Days of Night is certainly far from unwatchable; in fact, in an era of contemporary cinema where a new installment in a horror franchise premieres every other weekend, this is worth the time for casual filmgoers and fans of horror films. While I might suggest visiting a local F.W. Murnau (creator of 1922's *Nosferatu*) retrospective or downtown festival celebrating the work of the German expressionists (the precursors of film noir and modern horror), chances are you have more interest in hostels and buzz saws and all you want is a good old fashioned pool of well-lit human blood and some vicious, endurance-running neck suckers, in which case this movie will more than suffice your weekly paycheck.

Jill Scott's third volume a success

By Bryan Rouse



Jill Scott is a phenomenal R&B, soul and jazz singer-songwriter who has captured fans since her debut album, "Who is Jill Scott?": *Words and*

Sounds Vol. I, hit stores in 2000.

Ms. Scott began her career as a spoken word artist, appearing at live poetry readings to showcase her work. Amir Thompson of rap group The Roots discovered her and invited her to collaborate on the song "You

Got Me," which they performed together. She broadened her experience by touring in the Broadway musical *Rent*.

Ms. Scott's new album, *Jill Scott, The Real Thing: Words and Sounds Vol. III* hit stores late September and has sold over 148,500 copies. The album gives listeners an idea of what she was going through during her divorce from her husband of five years. Deeply personal lyrics continue to characterize her songs, providing the melody on top of relatively subtle background beats: "You have managed to turn me/ from a woman of substance into a brick-flying/ calling-too-damn much/ crying-and-cry-

ing/ spying way down low chick/ I never intended to be this chick," she sings in the song "Insomnia."

Ms. Scott's music is outstanding. She has smoothly progressed from having a three-instrument band to a full orchestra without sacrificing the intimacy she creates between herself and the listener. The song "My Love" uses synthesizers and violins and has a more polished studio sound, yet retains a trademark characteristic of Ms. Scott's: an answering machine message spoken during the introduction. In this song, she says breathlessly to an ex, "I heard you got married. You got *married*. It don't really

make any sense."

Vol. III incorporates different genres of music, as well: "The Real Thing" features a catchy electric guitar riff, while "Hate on Me" creates a retro feel through the use of a brass band that evokes Aretha Franklin.

Ms. Scott successfully expands her musical range in her third album; however, she has not lost the unique sound that attracted fans to her earlier work. The result is a recording that is likely to keep her old fans loyal and draw in new ones as she matures as an artist.

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Surviving 6th grade: Keeping your binder organized

By K. Chaney Long



Congratulations, 6th grade! You have officially survived your first two months at SOA. Now take a moment to breathe. This is the best time to look back and reflect on the progress you've made.

I'm sure you have noticed that it's quite common to have lower grades in 6th grade than you ever received in elementary school. Before you hyperventilate, pull out your binder. In 6th grade all of your subjects are kept in one binder. This is both a blessing and a curse. On one hand you have less binders to keep track of. On the other, 6th grade binders tend to become toxic waste dumps of loose paper and trash.

Having an organized and tidy binder is vital for 6th grade success. The only way to look over your notes or do your homework sufficiently is to organize your binder and notes. Start with simply opening the binder. Do you see any trash,

such as candy wrappers or balled-up paper? These are the first to hit the garbage. After you throw them out, pull out old flyers or information that are no longer relevant.

Just by cleaning the front of the binder you are probably breathing more easily, but the front of the binder isn't even half the work. Go through each subject of the binder and remove any unneeded documents. If there is something in your binder that you don't need currently but think you could use in the future, take it out and put it in a separate folder.

After all excess papers have been removed, put the remaining notes, worksheets, and handouts in chronological order. Having everything in the order in which it was taught will help you to know what needs to be studied on tests or quizzes.

Having your binder compulsively organized will be most helpful for Ms. Blake's binder test. Usually, at the end of every grading period, Ms. Blake writes out a table of contents that covers every item

you should have in your social studies section. It is vital to copy down this table of contents. Without this table you will be in the dark about what to have prepared. Once you copy the table of contents, look through your now-organized binder. If there is a single item missing you have three options. You can find it, redo it, or ask a friend to help you find the information. Simply shrugging and hoping there won't be a question on your missing document is not an option.

One last note: organize your binder once a week. When you are changing classes things tend to get hectic and you might jam papers loosely into the binder. Over the course of five days this adds up. The best way to avoid total binder meltdown is to reorganize every Friday afternoon.

Remember, even though your 6th grade binder might currently look like a dumping station, you can regain control and be the master of the binder.

Healthy on the go

By Carolyn E. Brown



According to the American Medical Association, 4 out of 10 teens eat fast food more than once a week.

Though it is easy to understand that most teens don't have much time on their hands, burgers and French fries aren't the only options. Fast food restaurants have some healthy options to keep your waistline in check.

- McDonald's: Compare the average meal of a double cheese-burger (740 calories 2.5 grams of trans-fats) and a medium order of fries (380 calories, 5 grams of trans-fats) with the southwestern salad with grilled chicken (320 calories and 0 grams of trans fats). Plus, the salad contains 30 grams of protein and 7 grams of dietary fiber.
- Arby's: Instead of getting Arby's roast beef sandwich (552 calories) get a market fresh turkey and swiss sandwich with mayo, and eat half of it (trust me, these sandwiches are huge) and that's only 260 calories.
- Burger king: Try the new BK veggie burger, and hold the mayo. It has 320 calories and taste pretty good too.
- Moe's Southwest Grill. Instead of eating a 938 calorie home wrecker, switch to a Full Monty Taco - chicken, black beans, shredded cheese, lettuce and salsa. Side of chips with salsa, water, and you're only eating about 347 calories. Out of all the normal fast-food restaurants, Moe's is the one with the healthiest options.

Fast food is really never very healthy, but when you're on the go, choices are limited. Want to know more about healthy fast food options? Check out the nutrition facts that are posted on each restaurant's website. More tips to come, so stay healthy.

"Sass Attack" on "Standardized Terrorizing"

By David Sass



It's getting to be that time of year again; the leaves are beginning to change, the weather's starting to get cooler, little kids are buying their costumes, and their unlucky older siblings are soon to be bashing their heads against their desks. Why, you ask? Because of the evil that is Standardized Testing, or, as I fondly think of it, 'Standardized Terrorizing.' Soon, the test administrators (a.k.a. the Imperial Storm Troopers of high school) will be flitting about the halls like sharks in a feeding frenzy. In fact, I've always entertained the notion that they *are* sharks in human disguises and that they're feeding off the students' anxiety, stress and hatred for those accursed tests. Really, really malevolent sharks.

But I digress. One of the things that makes Standardized Terrorizing so horrifying and evil for us students is how frustratingly vague and nigh impossible the results are to read. After a student takes the

test, the scores are tallied up and sucked away, probably to Area 51, almost certainly never to be seen by the student again. It leaves the students feeling tired, since they put all that effort into getting it right (well, some of them did), stressed out, and really angry. And on those rare occasions where a student gets the test results back, it's like trying to have an average, English-speaking American read Japanese: it doesn't work. I highly doubt that anyone, with the exception of the people who created it, actually understands a single word or number of it; that's why we have the machines there to do it for us.

The other big point of student frustration is the pointlessness of the tests as a whole. According to the test administrators, the purpose of the tests is to compare the knowledge of students across the country. This alone renders the tests useless and idiotic because of the fact that no two humans are alike. Everyone learns best at different speeds and in different ways, and this applies twofold for children due to the fact that their minds are constantly chang-

ing and growing. And, around the time of adolescence, a teenager's body is swamped with raging hormones, causing an even greater fluctuation in his or her learning abilities. Also, the students' abilities are all a moot point if their teacher doesn't know the material well enough to effectively teach the class. So, the teachers should have to take the same tests as their students to determine how strong their grasp of the material is in comparison to the students. And besides, the time wasted on these tests is time that could be spent actually teaching the students the knowledge that they are supposed to know, like the stuff on those tests.

All in all, Standardized tests are worthless ordeals that waste time and turn students into burnt out bundles of raw nerves. But the point of all this is really that life itself is like a really humongous test and this is just the first section. Sadly, there's no matching, multiple choice, or fill in the blank sections. Anyway, I think I've done enough damage to Standardized Terrorizing and the education system for one day.

October Creative Writing samples

Excerpt from a short story
Aubrey Isaacson
 11th grade

"Maggie?" Jack was lookin' at me, but my eyes went straight to the tags in his hand. The wheat around us swayed with the wind. Their green heads tickled my arms.

"I been wonderin'. Y'think..." At first, he didn't say nothin' after that. Instead, he picked the seeds from the top of a wheat stalk, the way that made Daddy slap the back of my hand for doin' when I was little. He popped a seed into his mouth and chewed on it while he thought. I learned a while back that you had to be patient with Jack. With him, the more important things took some time. He squinted at me, and cocked his head to the side, like the day I met him, the way our old coon hound did. His Oklahoma drawl didn't even shake with the words, "Y'think you'd wanna marry me?"

"What is Time?"
Connor Gatton
 6th grade

What is time?

Is it like a colossal cat waiting to ambush?

Or like a caterpillar waiting to evolve into a butterfly?

Is it a sound,
 like the chime of a bell?

Does it stop,
 like the silence in a thought?

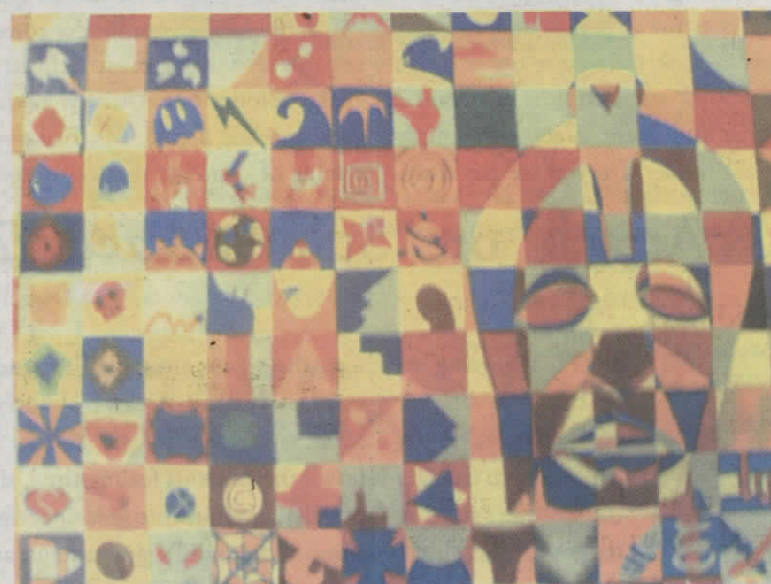
Is in an object you can touch,
 like the cold street signs during the winter?

Or an invisible object,
 like air that surrounds us all.
 Or maybe it's counting down,
 like a time bomb waiting to detonate and explode?

October Visual Arts samples



Alatheia Holenko, 8th grade



Devin Dukes, 8th grade



Weston DeWolff, 8th grade



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Horoscopes ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 By the SOA Astrologer ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

♎ Libra (Sept. 23- Oct. 22) Being alone might not be the best thing for you. Going to family and friends for comfort will be an enormous help.

♏ Scorpio (Oct. 23- Nov. 21) Titanic ideas are beginning to have great effects on your life. Don't be scared of them!

♐ Sagittarius (Nov. 22- Dec. 21) Share your good vibes with your friends and family; there is plenty to go around.

♑ Capricorn (Dec. 22- Jan. 19) This is a perfect time for structure and discipline in your life. You're on a slippery slope. Cut the slacking and get to the core of things.

♒ Aquarius (Jan. 20- Feb. 18) Your social energy is low-key but strong. Being around people can change that.

♓ Pisces (Feb. 19- Mar.20) Luck is all over your being right now. Ride it for all it is worth.

♈ Aries (Mar. 21- Apr. 19) Honesty should be at the top of your list. It will be very beneficial for you in the long run.

♉ Taurus (Apr.20- May. 20) You need to tread carefully around your peers. Don't push yourself on them. Just take it easy.

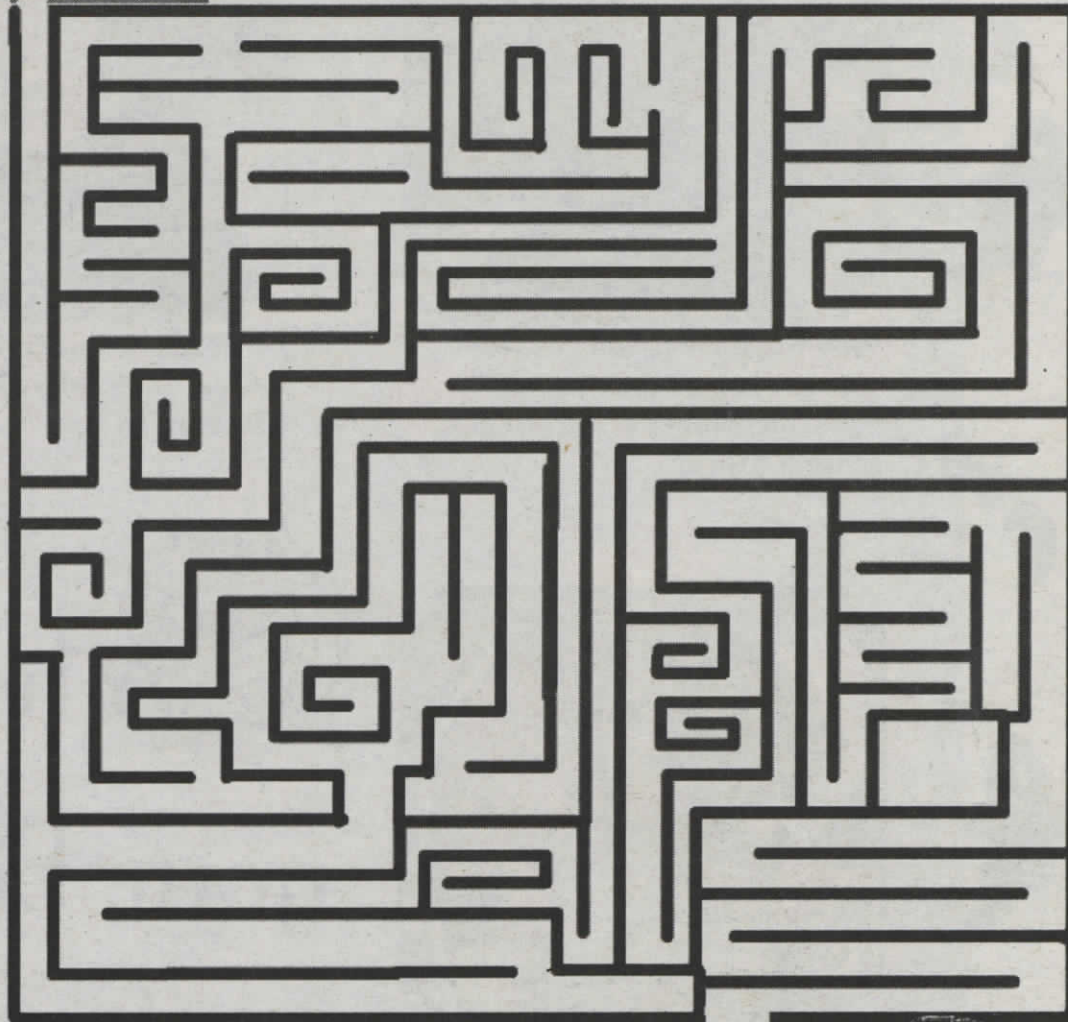
♊ Gemini (May 21- June 21) A friend will take the lead. Don't worry, things are not going to change.

♋ Cancer (June 22- July 22) The surface of your life is great but it's those inner issues you are hiding that are a mess. Talking to someone close to you will really help.

♌ Leo (July 23- Aug. 22) Life has had you chained down for too long. Break free and live for yourself.

♍ Virgo (Aug. 23- Sep. 22) Stop being so hard on yourself. It's only a distraction from all the positive things that are rolling into your life.

**Help
 Dr.
 Ball
 find
 his
 scuba
 gear!**



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"My biggest fear is of fireworks. I hate fireworks!"
- Justice Murray, 6th grade Dance major



"I'm scared of heights."
- Alex Berlinsky, 7th grade Theatre major



"Dying...suddenly!"
- Jonathan Pizzaro, 8th grade Strings major



"I'm afraid of snakes and spiders."
- Charlie Martindale, freshman Vocal major

What's your biggest fear?



"A slow and painful death."
- Hans Turner, sophomore Visual Arts major



"Failing high school."
- Francisco Figueroa, junior Creative Writing major



"Getting eaten by a shark."
- Martin Miller, senior Band major



"I hate cockroaches!"
- Ms. Susan Johnsen, Strings teacher

