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“One of our many strengths [as a team] was the great amount of talent we had.”

—Chris Burke, a junior on the basketball team

Team takes a roller coaster ride, Page **4**

# the falcon

Pottsgrove High School  
1345 Kauffman Road  
Pottstown, Pennsylvania 19464  
Phone: (610) 326-5105

Volume 37, Issue 4

February 27, 1998

## newsbriefs

### Book removal sparks claims of censorship

KENNA, W. Va. --Nobody can check *The Color Purple* out of school libraries in Jackson County anymore.

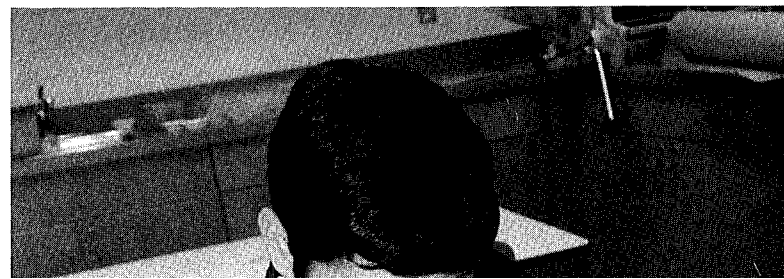
Citing profanity, sexually explicit language, and descriptions of rape, sexual molestation, and homosexual behavior, the Jackson County School Board pulled the book--and 16 others--from school libraries in November.

Besides *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, other banned books include *The Hunt For Red October* by Tom Clancy; *The Pelican Brief* by John Grisham; and *100 Questions and Answers about AIDS* by Michael T. Ford.

The removal of the books followed a complaint by Jean Rectenwald, a parent who objected to her two daughters reading *The Color Purple*, a novel about a Southern black family during the first half of the century.

The girls, who attended Ripley High School, had read a passage from the beginning of the book at an earlier board meeting. The book, which was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1983,

Sometimes we can't do  
**Sickness and treatments**  
**slow down**  
**one junior**  
everything we want to do



by Devin L. Mercer

While most students worry about sports, after-school jobs or other school-related things like who is dating whom, David Gresko has to worry whether or not he will have to undergo more treatments for his illness.

racism and family brutality.

About 40 students, primarily from Ripley High School and Revenswood High School, attended a Nov. 20 school board meeting.

Anna Sale, a junior at George Washington High School, was able to address the board members. "I think the whole concept of trying to protect students by censoring what is actually present in society is not in anyway conducive to learning," she said.

"It's important for students to be exposed to the rural black experience, even if it contains explicit and harsh language," she said.

In the end, a slim majority on the board voted 3 to 2 to keep the books out of libraries until they are reviewed by a committee.

### Survey reveals teens still dealing with acne

SCHAUMBURG, IL. --One in three teenagers would give up a chance to date supermodel Cindy Crawford or actor Brad Pitt for an acne-free complexion, a new study reveals.

Acne can be so devastating for nearly 20 million teenagers afflicted with the disease that it can cause emotional and physical scars, says the American Academy of Dermatology.

In a survey of more than 500 teens, the AAD says one out of 10 believes acne is one of the worst things about being a teen-ager. The skin disease makes teens like themselves less. In addition, one in eight say they avoid looking at themselves in the mirror because of their acne.

"The teen-age years are extraordinarily challenging--socially, psychologically and physically," says John Koo, director of the Psychodermatology Clinic at the University of California at San Francisco Medical Center.

"When a teen-ager has a disfiguring skin condition like acne on top of all the normal traumas of adolescence, it can affect grades in school, limit social activity, cause low self-esteem, and result in long-term psychological consequences such as depression and social anxiety," Koo said.

Experts say parents and teens often consider acne an inevitable part of growing up, and many believe it will just go away. But acne is a treatable medical condition that, if left untreated, can last well beyond the teen-age years.

"Different kinds of acne respond differently to treatment, so getting professional medical help is essential," says James Leyden, professor of dermatology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.



**Illness slows down junior:** After being diagnosed as having leukemia, David Gresko found he has had to make a few changes. "I can't do all the things that I wanted to do," he said. However, he is trying to stay in touch with his friends and school work.

Two years ago, Gresko, a junior was diagnosed with cancer of the blood and bone marrow.

Though his type of cancer, leukemia, is not uncommon, it has slowed him down some. He is no longer able to attend school or play the sports that he enjoyed before the illness was diagnosed, and things are also different with his family. However, Gresko has had the opportunity to make new friends and find new hobbies.

"I can't do all the things that I wanted to do," Gresko said, talking about how his life has changed since he was diagnosed with cancer.

Gresko's treatment began with almost a year of chemotherapy. Having to deal with different drugs, different doses and different time schedules was difficult because he had to travel to several hospitals for his treatments. Gresko is now taking

(cont. on p. 3, col. 2)

## Director and cast rehearse 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

by Devin L. Mercer

A Shakespearean play at PHS? Yep, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will be presented by director Todd Kelly and members of the student body at 8:00 p.m. on March 20 and 21.

"I like the fact that it is a challenge--the dialect and the language--to get the character across to the audience," senior Caitlyn Hallman, who plays Helena, said.

The play is a comedy set in the classical days of Athens when fairies, sprites and the gods roamed the land. Some scenes in

the play include young people falling in love, a group of comical characters preparing a play and an argument between Oberon and Titania, the king and queen of the fairies.

"It's a good challenge for the students this year," said Mr. Kelly, talking about why he chose this play. He also said it is designed for a wide range of people.


Debbi Frazier, a sophomore, plays Hermia in the play. Hermia is in love with Lysander, but her father does not want her to marry him. Her father wants her to marry Demetrius--someone else just happens to be in love with

him. Frazier said she thinks that people will enjoy the play a lot and that it is a type of play where the audience will be able to relate to the characters.

Both Mr. Kelly and Frazier said that there are a lot of good people working on sets, on costumes and as performers.


"[It should be] a really good show," Frazier said, talking about the play after a few weeks of rehearsals, "and all the people involved are working very hard."

"I think the audience will like the story," Hallman said. "It's romantic and really funny at times."



the falcon

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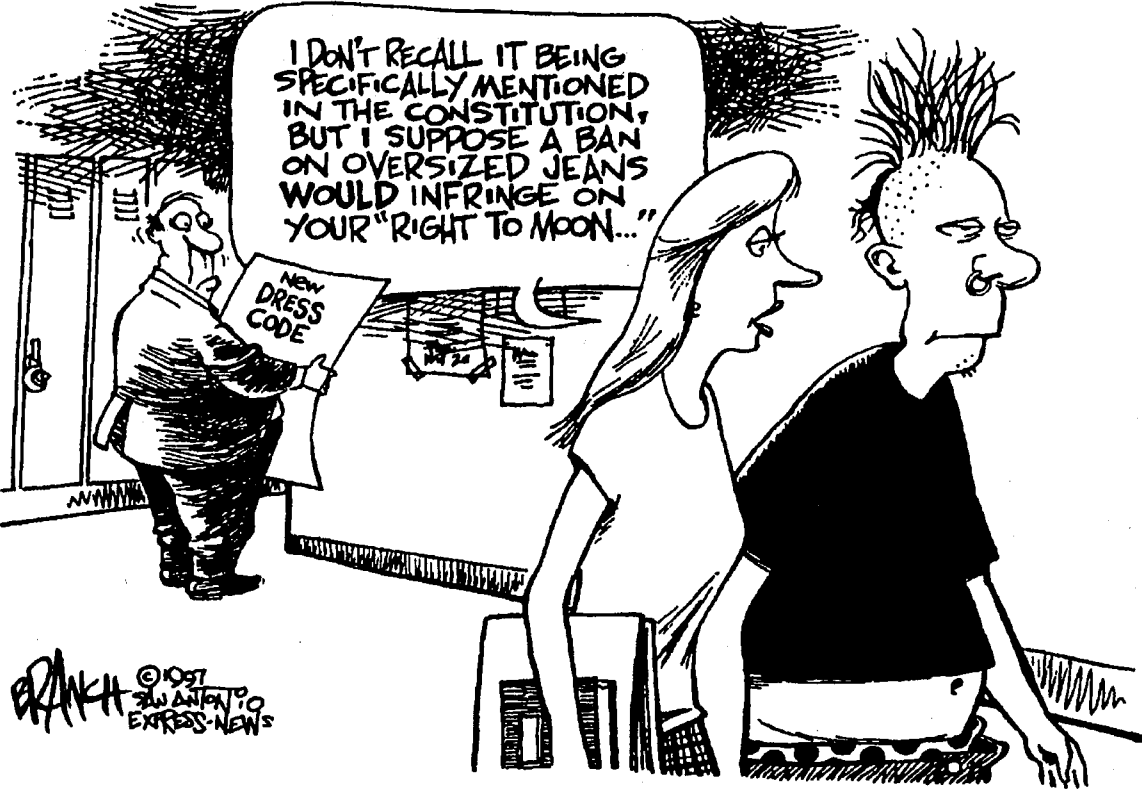
# Teens make a difference

Kids today... This statement is usually followed by a derogatory comment about America's youth. Teenagers are often portrayed as slackers who do nothing but watch MTV. Students at Pottsgrove, however, are proof that this stereotype is not necessarily true.

Many students at Pottsgrove donate their time and talents to make a difference in their community. For instance, seniors Carina Weigner and Lisa Brown, sophomore Tricia Weigner and sophomore Gretchyn Vogt all participate in Girl Scouting. They spend several hours a month visiting nursing homes and do other community service. Carina Weigner personally spends an hour and a half a week tutoring two little girls.

Pottsgrove students also help out at places of worship. Lisa Brown teaches a Sunday School class at her church. She spends about two hours a week making up a lesson. Adina Leitner donates her time at her synagogue to teach children to speak Hebrew. She also helps children prepare for their bar mitzvahs and bas mitzvahs.

The Pottstown Memorial Medical Center offers the opportunity



# Court says schools can search lockers

## Students raise objections to the need to search

by Mai Hoang

For most students here at Pottsgrove High School, lockers are simply places to put school books and supplies they don't need. For others, lockers are a

Supreme Court has ruled that school districts throughout the state have the right to search students' lockers.

Forty students here (15 sophomores and 25 freshmen) were asked whether or not Pottsgrove School District needs to search lockers.

Out of the freshmen questioned, 16 percent think there should be locker searches, 52 percent think there shouldn't and

or no privacy when it comes to lockers and other school items.

"Well, if they have an extremely good reason," Megan Zeigler, a sophomore, said about having locker searches. "Otherwise, I would say no because it's a total invasion of privacy. They don't go routing through teachers' desks, do they?"

Jeff Beattie, a sophomore, also agrees.

Jessica Clifford, a freshman, spends three hours a week delivering medication for patients. Rupert Venzke, a junior, did the same thing this past summer, spending eight hours a week at the hospital.

Next time adults say teenagers don't do anything useful, they should come to Pottsgrove. Here they can see real teenagers trying to make a difference in the community.

## High school institutes new scheduling procedure

by Devin L. Mercer

A recently instituted scheduling procedure at PHS for the fall of 1998 means that students will have to make any changes to their schedule for the 1998-1999 school year by the end of summer vacation.

The new scheduling procedure was brought about by principal Joyce Wishart. This change in the way the scheduling is handled replaces the 1994 method where schedules were sent out through the mail in the summer followed by a two-week, drop-or-add period at the beginning of the school year.

Michael Ondo, a guidance counselor at PHS, said that students should talk to other students or teachers to find out what a class is like before they make their final decisions. The new procedure is supposed to help students plan to avoid failure, avoid disruptions in class and create more of a balance in the number of students in each class.

"I think it's worth looking into," Mr. Ondo said, talking about how he feels about this new procedure. "Students should take course selections more seriously."

Ms. Wishart made the

change to make the jobs of the teachers and guidance counselors a little bit easier. During the two-week drop-or-add period, teachers had to deal with students who were coming in and out of classes, making it difficult for teachers to keep their schedules on track.

For the guidance counselors, their job will become a little less stressful since there will be fewer students changing classes.

The guidance counselors are trying to see students as the school year progresses to help

place to stick pictures of friends. However, for some people lockers are a place to hide stuff they aren't allowed to have (i.e. drugs, weapons, alcohol). And because what is true here is true in other schools, the state

them make decisions concerning their schedules for next year.

"They may move," Ms. Wishart said, talking about possible scheduling changes, "if they are in an inappropriate class." Ms. Wishart also said that the teachers, parents and guidance counselors must agree on the change.

The success on the new scheduling procedure will be based on whether or not the school can get schedules out on time and whether or not the new time line actually works.

### On the big screen:

## Just hope the Spice Girls' careers don't rest on their acting abilities

by Devin L. Mercer

The Spice Girls added yet another chapter to their roller-coaster ride of fame: *Spice World*, the movie released on Jan. 23. Gerri, Emma, Victoria, Mel B. and Mel C. have added the title actress to their list of credits, which already includes musicians, models and merchandising moguls.

Sadly, *Spice World* is not a movie to be proud of. The film has absolutely no plot at all, plus

the Girls' acting really leaves a lot to be desired. *Spice World* showcases the Girls' goofing-off abilities, but not much else.

Since the Girls won't have much of a future in the movie business, they can think more about their next album. The Spice Girls actually do have some vocal talent, as heard on their debut album *Spice*. "Wannabe" (number one in 21 different countries), "Say You'll Be There" and the ballad "2 Become 1" (a radio-favorite on adult-contemporary charts) are

52 percent don't think it's important. Out of the 15 sophomores surveyed, 13 percent thought there should be locker searches, 47 percent thought there should not be locker searches and 40 percent didn't think it's important.

Again, the sophomores who didn't want locker searches were asked why. Out of the 47 percent who think locker searches shouldn't be allowed, 83 percent said that they wanted privacy, 6 percent thought it wasn't necessary to have locker searches and 6 percent gave other reasons.

According to this survey, members of the student body think that when administrators search lockers it is an invasion of privacy. However, according to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, students "have a limited expectation of privacy in a school environment." According to the court's recent ruling, students are expected to have little

I think [locker searches are] just an invasion of privacy," Beattie said.

However, even if most think locker searches are an invasion of privacy, some students, like junior Donna Steck, think locker searches are necessary.

"Yes [there should be locker searches]. Too many guilty people are getting away with too many illegal and/or immoral acts and I'm sick of it," Steck said.

Locker searches for some school districts also serve as a protection from such things as drugs and weapons. Some, such as Steck, agreed with this idea.

"It's a protection for those who have nothing to hide [in their lockers]," Steck said.

Other people, such as Beattie, don't agree with this idea of locker searches being a protection for the student body.

"I feel it wouldn't do anything about protection," Beattie said, "I'm a strong believer in self-protection."

featured in the album.

One song that has not been released as a single is the ballad "Mama," which is a well-written, heart-warming dedication to all of their mothers. Along with beautiful vocalizing, the group is accompanied by a well-played acoustic guitar and an orchestra.

The follow-up to *Spice* is their sophomore effort *Spice World*, which is also the name of their movie, but this album is not to be thought of as a soundtrack. The first song off of this album is "Spice Up Your Life," which has

not received as much air-play as previous hits, but it has made its way into many dance clubs.

The newest release is the ballad "Too Much," which makes you wonder whether or not the Girls' time is up. However, it is slowly picking up air-time on VH1, which is known for playing more ballads than dance songs. This release is one of the many reasons why the Spice Girls have sold more than 13 million copies of their debut album and over 7 million of their latest effort.



# Sophomore's scores earn her a seat

■ Violinist hopes to one day play on state orchestra

by Caitlyn Hallman

Sophomore Janet Marquardt, like the Dalai Lama, has done something that most people only dream of doing: she achieved perfection.

Marquardt was named to the District Orchestra violin section in December. To be a member of the District Orchestra, music students are required to go through a grueling audition process. Every student who auditioned for the violin section was required to perform the same piece of music. The selected piece was Mozart's "Fourth Concerto."

"I have been working on Mozart's 'Fourth Concerto' since the seventh grade," Marquardt said. "I have spent a lot of time on the piece over the years."

In addition to playing that piece, everyone who auditioned had to sightread and know all her scales. The students were then judged on each of the three criteria.

Marquardt had excellent scores in all three areas, but she achieved her highest scores on her scales, when she received a score of 80 out of 80 points.

"Janet is a consummate musician," Pottsgrove orchestra director Teresa Zeoli said. "She is an excellent student and a marvelous violinist."

Marquardt has been taking violin lessons for six years. She also enjoys playing the French horn in the band. Some day Marquardt would like to have a career in music.

"Music has always been a part of my life and I cannot imagine not having it in my life," Marquardt said.

After her success with the District Orchestra auditions, Marquardt hopes to one day be a part of the State Orchestra. At the District Orchestra Festival, which was held Jan. 15 through Jan. 17, all members of the orchestra had to audition again for the Regional Orchestra. Marquardt was one of the lucky musicians to make it into the Regional Orchestra.

Then all the Regional Orchestra members had to audition once again. This time the audition was for Regional Orchestra seating. Only those

who are in the top eight seats in the Regional Orchestra will go to the State Orchestra.

Marquardt, unfortunately, moved back in seating during that audition. As a result, she won't make it into the State Orchestra this year, but Marquardt is still able to play in the first violin section in the Regional Orchestra. (Actually, Marquardt is the 13th seat. This means if five of the selected people before her get sick or for other reasons cannot make it, then she could be among the eight in the orchestra.)

Marquardt is auditioning for a national orchestra and is now auditioning with symphony orchestras to start her solo career.

"We look forward to having Janet bring awards to Pottsgrove," Ms. Zeoli said.

However, Marquardt is still only in the tenth grade, and this means she still has two more chances to become a member of the State Orchestra.

## Junior battles illness, treatments

(cont. from p. 1, col. 5)

pills which have lower dosages than the actual chemo. If this routine is not maintained, he might have to return to regular

Gresko also has to find time for school in his already-busy schedule. He does a minimal amount of work because his teachers know the limitations

## 'Falcon' asks...

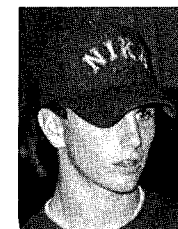
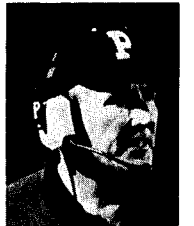
Do you agree with the recent court ruling that schools can search students' lockers?

Peggy Mycek, senior: "Yeah, it's a public school--they have every right."



Andrew Reed, freshman: "Yeah, I agree with it."

Rich Pennypacker, gym teacher: "Yes, depending on probable cause."



Rusty Rhoads, junior: "It depends on what they are looking for."

Kelly Lange, sophomore: "Yes, because students could have illegal substances or weapons in their lockers."



Jason Kelly, senior: "Yeah, if you don't"

perfect score.



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Physical therapy has also become a part of Gresko's schedule. He has a light workout designed to help him maintain his strength. Lack of movement when in the hospital weakens him.

"Almost all of my friends have kept in touch," Gresko said, talking about whether or not he has had much contact with his friends. "I've also met new friends through the hospital."

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chemotherapy treatments.

"You really have to rely on yourself to know the material," Gresko said, talking about one of the changes from in school to at home instruction.



have anything to hide, then you shouldn't care."

## School offers course to help students take the SAT

by Devin L. Mercer

One of the major hurdles in the road to getting into college is the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), which is designed to find a student's verbal and math comprehension abilities. Most colleges require that a student take the test before applying.

The scores for each of the 126 Pottsgrove students that

took the SAT test, 65 percent of the Class of 1997, were averaged out and compared to Pennsylvania's average and the nation's average. Pottsgrove's average for the '96-'97 year was 522 on the math section and 525 on the verbal section.

Pennsylvania's average score was 498 on the math section and 495 on the verbal section. The national average score was 511 and 505 respectfully.

"I did really well on the verbal part," Michelle Swanson, a senior, said, talking about how she did on the SAT test, "but I wasn't as ready for the math part as I wanted to be."

Diane Holoka, a PHS guidance counselor, said that students' tests scores have improved in the math section by five points and in the verbal section by 25 points over the last four years. She attributes the higher scores in large part to a revision of the test in 1995.

"Everybody's scores are looking a bit higher," Mrs. Holoka said, talking about how scores have changed.

Ralph Werley, a math teacher at PHS, and Charles Parrish, an English teacher at PHS, offer a SAT preparation class to students who want to learn about and practice the test. Mr. Werley said that the class discusses the test's directions, how to work out a strategy to take the test, how the test is graded and a detailed description of the test.

Students also take four full three-hour tests to help lessen the anxiety of the actual one. The practice tests provide students with an opportunity to find out how well they should do on an actual test.

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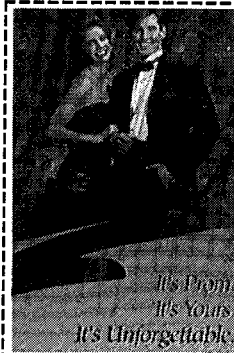
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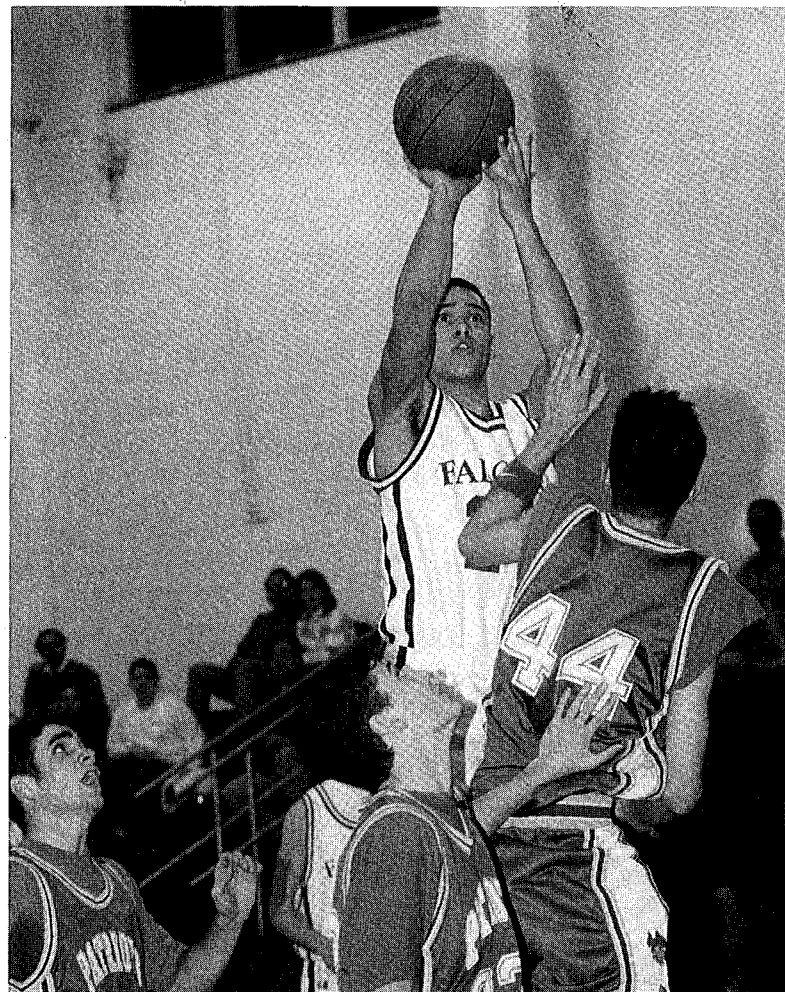


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**Falcons see district action:** Helped by players like forward/guard Phillip Washington (with ball), a junior, the Falcons make it to district playoff action, which ended in a loss to Kennett High School (68-62).

## Wrestlers improve record, build program under new coach

by Caitlyn Hallman

the challenge."

Other wrestlers had different

## Lady Falcons keep coming back

■ Girls' team ups the play action by beating Pottstown

by Mark Holloway

You can't keep a good woman down, especially if she is on the Pottsgrove girls' varsity basketball team. Twice the girls came back from a deficit to beat St. Pius, and when it counted, they stunned the league by beating Pottstown, 46-38, and advanced to the championship round.

The girls struggled on offense during the entire season, according to Jan Fritz, the girls'

basketball coach. This didn't stop them from ending their PAC-10 season with a 13-5 record. Turnovers were a problem for the girls, occurring more often than they would have liked.

The girls' strengths, however, far outweighed their shortcomings. Coach Fritz felt he was dealing with a very mature team. He said the team was "focused" for every game and noted that they had respect for each opponent they faced. Coach Fritz also said the Lady Falcons' play was very consistent and they were "unselfish."

The search for examples of the girls' skills needs to go no further than the two St. Pius games.

In both games Pottsgrove trailed St. Pius by double digits at some point in the game, and yet came back to win. Trailing by 15 points, in the second game, after the first half, the girls turned the game around and won by 15.

Despite their loss of the final game, the girls managed to beat Pottstown in the Final Fours after losing to them a few days before. The win placed them in a game with Lansdale Catholic, a game they lost (50-28), and boosted their confidence for district play-offs.

Against tough opponents in a tough league the girls hung in and came out on top.

## Boys' basketball team takes a roller coaster ride

by Devin L. Mercer

"Our season was like a roller coaster," senior Justin Bostick said. "We had our ups and downs."

The energy was high on Feb. 3 when the Falcons faced Pottstown in the last regularly scheduled game of the season, and the players were tense--playing Pottstown always makes for

a tense game. It was an important game too, because if the Falcons won then they could advance to Districts.

"One of our many strengths [as a team]," said junior Chris Burke, "was the great amount of talent we had."

"I think we played our hearts out with what we had," senior and team high scorer Jermaine Thaxton said, talking about the season.

The Falcons were leading until the second quarter. The members of the boys' basketball team were loaded with anticipation like riders on a coaster zooming up track. Then their

selves behind Pottstown by two points. However, junior Phillip Washington pivoted, faked one way and went another, turned in a loop, jumped and dunked. For a few seconds, the teams were tied.

Later, Thaxton, the high scorer that night, scored on a lay-up. The Falcons were in the lead again.

"It was pretty tough with the expectations that we had for the team," Thaxton later said, "but we had a lot of fun."

When the final buzzer rang, the score was 70-58. Thanks to a team effort, the Falcons had dealt a defeat to their cross town

As the wrestling season ended on Feb. 4 in a win against St. Pius, the team took time to reflect over their triumphs and disappointments of the past year.

This season was one of big changes for the team. It was one in which the team started to build a program that will hopefully continue to improve to a championship level in future seasons.

It was also the team's first season with their new coach, Gary Rodenbaugh.

"We all pushed ourselves to the limit," 160-lb. junior John Irwin, who also wrestled at 171 lbs. and 189 lbs. during the season, said about the team's performance during the season. "When we needed to step the [performance] level up, we met

season he had both weak and strong performances. He thinks that wrestling in a class that was 20 lbs. heavier than his natural weight (which is 169 lbs.) kept him at a disadvantage for much of the season.

Talking about the season, junior Tim Roeder, who wrestled at 135 lbs., said that it started off slow. "But we worked hard," he said, "and in the end it paid off."

The team finished its regular season with a 4-15 record.

Irwin thinks that the best thing about the past wrestling season was how much everyone on the team supported one another. He felt that the wrestling team had "a good union with each other."

"I improved a lot since last year," said Mike Brilla, a junior who wrestled at 125 lbs., "but I am still not where I want to be."

Another thing that made this season unique was that the team had so many away matches--12 during the regular season. All the traveling and wrestling in opponents' gyms added a lot of stress to the Falcons' season.

Altogether the wrestling team had a season to be proud of. They were able to overcome any difficulties they had in the beginning of the season and unite as a team.

"The most important things the team learned this season were the need for hard work and the desire to win more matches," Irwin said.

worst fears happened. They suddenly found them-

rivals and had lengthened their season.

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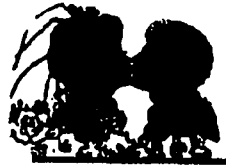
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