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Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words....

The "N" word



Trae Anderson &
Hayley Williams
Staff Writers

Black History Month is a time when African American history is highlighted. Does anyone remember Emmett Till, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., or even Rosa Parks? All those people were African Americans who stood up to the white community.

An important part of this history is the types of words used by white people to describe African Americans. One of the most offensive words throughout history is "nigger" or the "n" word. The word nigger was used as a put down for blacks from whites.

Most are familiar with how whites used the word to make blacks feel bad, because of their skin color is different, but where did this word come from? The word originated from the Dutch, German, Portuguese and

Spanish. It wasn't until the 18th century the correct spelling was proclaimed. The Dutch and German spelled it "neger," the Portuguese and Spanish spelt it "negro" and the English finished it with the modern spelling "nigger."

The word has remained offensive throughout time. The word is so offensive that the NAACP bought the rights to nigger.com to make sure that no one could use the word for marketing clothing. There is even a book called *Nigger*, subtitled "the strange career of a troublesome word," written by Randall Kennedy and available on Amazon.com.

What are people's opinions on another race calling an African American a nigger? "I think they shouldn't use it too loosely, because it can be offensive to blacks," says Shakeyla (Angel) Stephens. "I'd feel offended. They know it would make me mad, because of the history of the word and that kind of anger usually ends up with a fight," says an

NIGGA CONTINUED ON 6

Homophobic words



Peter Allen
Staff Writer

"Fag"
"Gay"
Do you ever hear yourself or those around you use these words? Do your friends or family use them, perhaps? Take a moment to ask

yourself why these people say these things. Are they used to replace such words as, "idiot," "stupid," or "wrong?" Are they used for some other reason entirely? Maybe these people don't realize this, but these words can be hurtful to other people.

These words are often used as slurs against homo/heterosexual individuals. Calling them or the things they may do "gay" is like calling a black person "nigger," or a Native American "redskin." If it's not okay to call an Asian a "chink," or "jap," why is it okay to call a boy who likes to wear makeup and eye shadow a "fag-got?"

This has a lot to do with the fact that people just aren't ready to accept that others are different. Xenophobia (an unreasonable fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers or of that which is

foreign or strange -OED definition) is deeply ingrained into our society and culture, and people everywhere find it difficult to relate to people from entirely different backgrounds. Don't you prefer to hang around with your friends, rather than go and meet the new kid on the block? Don't you like to stick to your favorite flavor of ice cream rather than try the new ones? We are so indoctrinated to believe that different is wrong that we even use such slurs in everyday life, without even noticing it.

GLBT's (Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender) are people too, with thoughts and feelings that have to be respected. I personally am appalled at the number of times I have heard this kind of language being spewed out of people's mouths without them even considering the consequences. Swearing I can understand, but calling something "gay" just because it seems unfair or stupid? That is wrong, and people should recognize this as the new Jim Crow.

I suppose the real problem is that descendants of wealthy or imperialist (or formerly imperi-

GAY CONTINUED ON 8

Theft; stealing Open's pride

Bekkah Olson
Staff Anarchist

What do a bunch of batteries, ELC Special Ed. teacher Jennifer Kalenborn's lunch, SLC Science teacher Megan Hall's coat, an LCD projector, SLC Theater Arts/Social Studies teacher Amy Kampf's laptop, and four school laptops all have in common? They've all been stolen from Open School this year.

Being a place where trust is a key element in shaping the environment, Open is actually an easy place to steal from because everyone is



Laptops are hot property

predisposed to thinking you'll play fairly. SLC English teacher Erik Peterson-Nafziger affirmed, "Everyone thinks, 'Oh, it's Open School, people are nice here!'" "It happens every year: expensive things start to go 'missing.' Maybe these are personal revenge crimes, but more likely, whoever is taking the items is either using them for

THEFT CONTINUED ON 8

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Adult to Blame

Leo Bickelhaupt

Alert List

Tong Kou Yang & Tong Lor
Staff Writers

The alert list began on January 8 this year. The alert list, created by SLC staff members and Todd the principle. The alert list is designed to keep students from having pass privileges during class and can't be on the 3rd floor after lunch for 2 weeks.



"I think that it is needed for students who abuse the pass privilege," said History Teacher Luke Leba. Students will stay on the alert list as long as they want and also get out of the alert list. "As long as it is necessary, until students get their act together," said Luke.

"I hate it and I think that it is good for bad kids that make trouble" said 7th grader Bee Xiong. "I think it's crap," said 11th grader Rhys Hunding. He admits that he is a "bad kid" that's why he's on the alert list. Bee is trying to get out of the alert list because he hates it and Rhys is trying to but failing.

Students can get off the alert list by having appropriate behaviors for two weeks. When the students get off of the alert list they will need to get a signature from their teacher.*

Service auction a resounding success!

Liam Shramko
Staff Elf

For those of you that have been living in mountainous caverns, I'm looking in your direction dwarves, Open School held it's annual service auction on January 23rd, 2007. All the proceeds went towards Open School's Outward Bound Service project. This year, North Carolina is the destination. YAY!

Overall, the auction was a success. At least it was according to Science teacher Megan Hall. "It was a success," said Megan, "due to the generosity of our bidders and donors and the hard works of all the kids." As it turns out, the auction made enough money to send every member of the group to North Carolina... by plane! We're moving on up! Moving on up! To the east side! To the east side! To a deluxe apartment in the sky!!!

Former math teacher Carl Olsen was the auctioneer. He was quite prolific too. Except for a couple touchy comments. The

crowd brought their attention and Carl brought out the laughter. "Carl was hilarious, he had us rolling in the aisles," said Megan. He also bought a bike for 200 dollars! I guess his new gig as a lawyer is paying off. I guess he's not really a lawyer now, but whatever. Some of the hottest items up for grabs, were two garden benches, a custom built bicycle, lessons in the art of making egg-rolls and hand-knitted scarves/hats. Some of most popular services were baby-sitting, landscaping and tutoring.

However, in the midst of all this celebration, there was a bit of controversy. Leo Bickelhaupt, who is commonly viewed as a poor man's Ted Danson, turns out to be a little wealthier than we all thought. "He bought landscaping for 150 dollars! Holy crap!" exclaimed Senior Ian Molloy-Busse. Does he have a second job? Is his family rich? Is he Ted Danson? These questions will never be answered. I'm now going to watch some *Cheers*.*

Barbara Washington

Nou Thao & Xeng Xiong
Staff Writers

Barbara Washington is the new fourth grade teacher. She replaced Bobbi Nguyen, who left the week before winter break. Bobby wanted to work with ELL students and she found a job that suits her abilities more in the St. Paul school district.

Barbara had a choice between Webster, where she would be teaching fifth grade or Open School where she's now teaching fourth grade. She likes multi-generation and likes K-12, so she chose Open School.

"The staff and students at Open School are very nice" said Barbara. The previous school where Barbara worked was Maxwell. There were lots of African American students there. She likes Open School because there is a mixture of races and religions. Barbara likes being called Ms. Washington instead of Barbara from the students.

Barbara went to school at Concordia College in St. Paul. She got her Elementary teaching license there. She now has a Master degree, Education Administration, and Ph.D. degree.

If she could meet one person, she would want to meet Glory Ladson-Billion. Meeting Ladson-Billion would make her understand what it would take to be a teacher.*

On board with baby

Candice Fuller
Staff Writer

On December 4th, 2006 at 11:52 p.m., Kathryn Rose Totushek was born. She weighed in at six pounds, 13 ounces, she was 19 inches long.

Although Kathryn Rose has brought much joy into the Totushek's lives, Tom Totushek has come to realize that being a teacher and a parent at the same time can get hard, "Time, time is a big part, I guess I didn't realize how time consuming a little baby could be," says SLC math teacher Tom Totushek. Tom's teaching life has changed from what it used to be. "There has to be a time limit on how much time I spend at school and on school work," says Tom. Time must be a big factor in Tom's everyday life from here on out.

Open's other SLC math teacher, Stephanie Davis-Larson, also has a toddler, "I have a lot less time, having a child horribly affected my teaching life, I have less time to do stuff, I am also finding I have less time to do stuff in the morning," says Stephanie. It could be that when you have a new born, it could affect your career life, that is if you have one.

Luckily there is a good side to being a parent, "The look on her face when she smiles at me has to be the best part; that's what you do it all for," says Tom. *

Alexia Johnson

What are you planning to do next year?

I don't know. Absolutely nothing.

What will you miss most about Open?

The sound of kids running into the trash cans.

What is your favorite book, movie, or T.V. Show?

The Real World Austin, I hated all of the characters.

What is your favorite class in high school?

Art class with Elizabeth.

What is the last concert you went to/album you bought?

Invisibility.

What is one job you would like to have as an adult?

Taco Bell Manager

If you could meet one person dead or alive, who would it be?

A hybrid mix between Johnny Depp and Al Pacino



Beckham to give America a try

Jose Garcia
Staff Writer

David Beckham, the world renowned soccer star, is moving to United States to play with the L.A Galaxy. Beckham signed a five year contract, worth 250 million dollars. He is the highest paid soccer player in the world.

Beckham began his pro career with Manchester United in 1992 at the age of 17. He left the club to become only the third Englishman to sign for Real Madrid in 2003. He is one of the best in the world at set pieces.

It has been a disappointing year for Beckham. He was dropped by England coach Steve McClaren from the England National team August 2006. Also he only has started 7 out of the 25 matches for the LFP Spain soccer league. He has also only scored 12 league goals in his entire time in Real Madrid.

Beckham's contract ends June 2007, and the MLS season starts in of April 2007. That is a big problem, because Beckham is going to miss one month of the league. Beckham and his people are trying to make it possible for him to play for the MLS full season, but Real Madrid coach Fabio Capello said that he has to stay until his contract is over. Fabio Capello also said that Beckham is not going to see any playing time for the rest of the season.

At a press conference, Beckham told reporters "I'm coming there not be a superstar. I'm coming there to be part of the team, to work hard and to hopefully win things. With me, it's about football. I'm coming there to make a difference. I'm coming there to play football...I'm not saying me coming over to the States is going to make soccer the biggest sport in America. That would be difficult to achieve. Baseball, basketball, American football, they've been around. But I wouldn't be doing this if I didn't think I could make a difference."



What a dreamboat!

Beckham also mentioned that he wanted to go to the United States while he was still young and could play. He

did not want to go to the United States when he got older, because then people would think that he was going to the United States for the money.

Mexico's new head coach, Hugo Sanchez, told reporters that the U.S soccer has improved so much that he was concerned.

"I believe that the progress of the United States has accelerated and that begins to concern me. Now that they've contracted Beckham, other good players like David, and it looks like they've called Ronaldo and that way each team isn't going to fall behind."

Leo Bickelhaupt, who has been a soccer player and fan for more than 15 years, thinks that by having Beckham coming to the U.S will not change soccer much. "I'm not sure how much impact it will have. After all, Pele played here in the 70's and that didn't turn into a soccer power."

I agree with Sanchez. By having Beckham and maybe Ronaldo, who is also a Real Madrid player, come to the U.S, the competition is going to increase more so that by the next World Cup. U.S might surpass Mexico's level of skill. And I think Beckham has it easier than Pele because when Pele came soccer was not as organized. All Beckham has to do is play well and try to inspire the younger athletes who play the game and reach the ones who don't.*

That's What She Said!

The great debate: who gets shotgun?

Quinn Miller
Staff Writer

Friday, January 12. With the school day over, I found my legs making their way to Liam's car with Andrew Hoaglund, Griffin Larson, and Damien Bullis. Once we stepped out the door, Damien was quick to pronounce himself the shotgun champion. It didn't bother me at first, for we were outside and in sight of the car. It's only fair. But after the short drive to Burger King, Damien immediately jumped out of the car and announced that he would once again accompany Liam in the front seat. I, a powerful figure in rules for shotty, exclaimed to Damien that his vote did not count, seeing that he had just stepped away from the vehicle, and had not even made it to the final destination.

I explained the rules as I knew them. The chance to take control of the front seat is available only once you're coming back to the car, not at your destination, and certainly forbidden on the way to the destination. Damien, being his usual hard headed self, told me that if I didn't like it,

I should "cry to my mom". Strangely enough, I did find myself discussing this topic with my mother, but that is off subject. So, doing what any passenger would, I went to the driver, Liam Shramko. I wanted justice, not just for me but for the fellow back seaters. The answer I got was unbearable.

"On Friday, I did deny Quin's request for a recalling, on the simple knowledge that Damien said he might give me a dollar. And I fully admit that on this particular day, I did play favorites," said Liam. This series of unfortunate events continued.

For centuries, people by the millions have puzzled themselves with the question which determines the future comfort of everyone in the car: who gets shotgun. I myself am perplexed when it comes to deciding who

SHOTGUN CONTINUED ON 10



Rock Paper Scissors is good way to settle disputes

Global warming and other... tales

Alex Plonski
Staff Nerd

It was Tuesday, January 9th, 2007. I was in newspaper class, trying to think of the perfect story idea. And then it happened: I realized how lame the winter had been. It was not the first time it had happened, but it was the first time it had happened during newspaper. So, in panic at the thought of not having anything for my article, I decided to undertake an epic quest through the internet, to find out exactly how and why this phenomenon had taken place. Little did I know the perils that awaited me.



Al Gore, global warming fearer

an easy target for theft, and cold air blew in over the keyboard from the right, freezing my hands even as I typed. But despite the abysmal conditions I remained focused on my objective, my quest for knowledge. I knew what I had to do. I needed an answer. An answer to a question. And Google was the perfect place to start.

My first few searches were in vain, so, desperate for answers, I searched "why is there so little snow Minnesota," and, just when I thought that this search would also prove fruitless... A lead, in an article about the lack of snow in the northeast. I now had a suspect. Two suspects, to be precise. Who was this "El Nino," and what was he doing with "long term climate trends?" And what did all of this have to do with a 2% warmer winter? Google could help me out. Alas, 2nd period was over, and the search would have to continue another day. I saved, clicked on the icon to safely remove my hardware, yanked out my 1 gigabyte usb

PLONSKI CONTINUED ON 7

Vox populi of Open School

Friendly advice



Liam Shramko
Staff Elf

When I was buying Doritosdic the snack machine yesterday I realized something, I've been here 13 years, which means that I am one of the few that was at the old building on Osceola, along with 3 students and 1 teacher.

And since I've been here longer, I am therefore better than all of you. Or at least wiser... To some extent... Anyway, I was eating my Doritos in Leo's class, staring off into space as he started talking about Nordic skiing or something, and I decided it was selfish of me to hold on to my infinite wisdom. Maybe instead of being a greedy bastard I should spread my knowledge. At that moment I left Leo's class on a quest for freedom! Then I got sidetracked and kicked a soccer ball around.

The point of that opening paragraph, if there was a point, is that this is an advice column, an advice column for you: the Open school student. If there's one thing I know, it's how to pass a class with minimum effort. Just ask Tom, I passed Integrated 3 with 70% in every category, the absolute bare minimum. In your face Tom. In your face. Anywho, without further ado, here is my advice.

Handle yourself in the classroom. You always want to make it seem as though you are working vigorously. Having a notebook and a writing utensil is a smart move. But don't worry, you can just work on your D & D character. Make sure to look when the teacher is talking and take occasional notes, so as to make it look like you are retaining information. Of course those notes can be pictures of your favorite Pokemon. One thing that is immeasurable as far as getting good evaluations, is developing strong relationships with teachers. The bottom line is that if a teacher likes you, you will pass, regardless of how much homework you do. Leo claims this is not true.

For class work, make sure to read just enough to know the basics so you can answer the easy questions upfront. Once you raise your hands and answer a couple questions you should be on easy street or 21 Jump Street. However, if an intellectual

ADVICE CONTINUED ON 7

Mischievous ninjas await

DJ Sass
Staff Writer

I am critiquing a manga and anime, called *Naruto*. This is a fun, fast-paced anime about a young mischievous ninja named Naruto Uzumaki. Besides the fact that I am fond of this show, I am also reviewing it because of its recent and rapid growth in popularity. To me it seems to be one of the only mangas to have gained so much popularity so quickly. A manga is a Japanese comic book read "backwards" compared to American books.

Naruto is manga created by Masashi Kishimoto, which is now the anime *Naruto*. The manga was first published by Shueisha in 1999 in the 43rd Japan's Shonen Jump magazine. VIZ Media publishes a translated version in the American Shonen Jump. They have translated roughly a third of the manga series. It is produced by Studio Peirrot and Aniplex. *Naruto* debuted in the US on Sept. 16 2005 on Cartoon Networks Toonami.

This show is about a loud, hyperactive young boy named Naruto Uzumaki who

is always looking for approval and to fulfill his dream of becoming Hokage, acknowledged leader and strongest ninja of the village. The only problem is he is shunned by many of the villagers because as a baby, a giant, evil, fox demon was imprisoned inside of him. On his way to fulfill his dream he must go through many ninja ranks including: Genin, Chunin Tokubetsu Jonin, and Jonin. Each rank represents a different level of skill, Genin being novice or beginner, and



Comical drawing

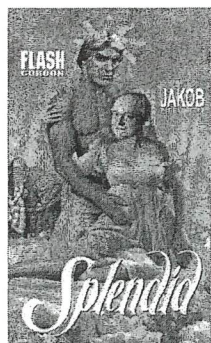
Jonin being very skilled. On his way to fulfill his dream, Naruto and his team must do missions to get ready for tests. On his team there are Sasuke, Sakura, and his teacher Kakashi Hatake. On some of these missions they run into problems. On one mission, they must transport a bridge

On his way to fulfill his dream, Naruto and his team must do missions

NARUTO CONTINUED ON 9

The romantic dwellings of Chloe

Chloe Taipale
Staff Temptress



A similarly themed book

You know, I am tired of the public's perception of me. Everyone thinks that Chloe Taipale is work, work, work. "She never relaxes," they say. "She's such a perfectionist," they say. Don't let my flawless school-work and impeccable attendance fool you. I can let loose,

let my hair down occasionally. My favorite way to unwind after a day at the office? I loosen my tie and recline in front of a roaring hearth, sipping a smooth Venezuelan roast and nursing a fine work of literature. I recently delved into Donna Valentine's amorous novel, *Prairie Knight*.

Juliette Walburn is our fair-but-could-be-brunette-I didn't-actually-read-it-or-care maiden. She has startling good looks

and everything, but what's a dame without some suppressed heartache? She has lost both her parents and her young husband. She has promised never to love again, though sometimes can find her imagination a-wandering. She often dreams of a hunky dude descending from the heavens to quell her weeping heart and raging loins, but, you know, it's not like that kinda stuff actually happens to anybody. It's ridiculous, really.

Juliette is accompanying local school-children on, quite literally, a field trip to see buffalo when the most peculiar of natural phenomena strikes. A "cloudburst," I'm assuming that means thunder with no rain, strikes the prairie, sending the children and the fauna into a frenzy. A child tells her the Injuns are behind it with their savage voodoo, but, in reality, a man lies in the prairie. Not just any man, a knight.

This man, this mystical man, is named Geoffrey d'Arbanville, who turns out to be of the aforementioned hunky dude variety. He and his steed, Arion, have made the impossible leap through the

PRARIE CONTINUED ON 9

Books love nerds

Ester Lewis
Staff Writer

"Wind howled through the night, carrying a scent that would change the world." What's about to change, is that a teenage farm boy is about to become the proud owner of a baby dragon. This is a key moment in the plot of *Eragon*, by Christopher Paolini.

Paolini was born November 17th, 1982, in Southern California. He was home schooled his entire life and graduated high school at fifteen, then began working on his now famous book.

Eragon is about a young boy named (surprise!) Eragon, who finds a mysterious "stone", which turns out to be a dragon egg. Galbatorix, the evil king of Alagaesia, where this book is set, has been the only one with dragon eggs, but elves managed to steal one and



Puff the magic dragon

transport it to the Spine, where Eragon was hunting. So when the "stone" hatches and a dragon emerges, Eragon gets marked by her, marked as a dragon rider.

A few days before the egg hatches, a group of merchants were passing through Carvahall, where Eragon, his uncle Garrow, and his cousin Roran live. Eragon takes the "stone" to a merchant to gauge it's worth, hoping to bring wealth to his poor family. The merchant will not buy it from them, but knows that it's incredibly valuable.

After the egg hatches, Eragon joins up with Brom, a storyteller who is knowledgeable of dragons and magic. Eragon, his young dragon Saphira, and Brom flee from Carvahall as Urgals, servants of Galbatorix, learning of the new dragon rider, pursue them. As they travel across Alagaesia, Brom teaches Eragon to read, sword fight, and magic.

The plot leads to a crescendo as Galbatorix's forces gradually catch up, after many attempts to defeat Eragon. Eragon and Brom get hurt in a fight and narrowly escape with the help of Murtaugh, who they join up with, rescue an elf, and helps Eragon get to his final destination, the Varden, a hidden group rebelling against the evil king.

ERAGON CONTINUED ON 9

NIGGA FROM 1

anonymous Open School student.

While the "n" word remains dangerous, a similar word "nigga" has become part of popular culture. Obviously it's two letters off from the "n" word and it has the same meaning, black. The NAACP condemns the use of the word, but Tupac says a "nigger" is a man with a slavery chain around his neck, and a "nigga" is a black man with



Tupac makes a distinction between "nigger" and "nigga".

a gold chain around his neck. The word is used a lot in the hip hop music culture. It's understandable that

other ethnic groups can like hip hop, but is it understandable when a white person uses the word, because they're so into the music?

Tenth grader Nikia Davis said it is "unacceptable" for white people to use any form of the "n" word. Shakeyla Stephens agreed that white people should not use this word. "They could get jumped," she said.

And on a more serious note, has anyone heard a big white rapper say nigga? Not likely.

Some people like to claim black people and say they're black, but when looking at them they're skin color doesn't have a fade of black to them. Many older people say that being black is a stereotype and say what is being black? That is a really good question. If you walk up to an anonymous white person and ask them what's black to you what would they say? What if you walked to an anonymous black person and asked them the same question?

"Stereotypically a black person is dumb, uneducated, poor, and etc, but all black people are not dumb or uneducated or poor," says Larry Calhoun.

What African Americans are probably trying to state is that whites or any other culture can't use the word, because they

feel like the person saying it is taking it back when blacks were whipped, beaten or even killed, because they were trying to read and write, or even that another stupid reason could it have been. Is there any other racist word that means as much as the "n" word? If we would all go a day out calling each other niggers, what would the outcome be? Yes everyone understands the word is a put-down, but blacks can't put each other down by calling each other niggers because they're both black skin color and ancestry. Can black also mean your ancestors have to be black? The statement of another race using the word nigger will probably never be solved. The word will always be used and talked about for a very long time.

Another thing is why would any other race, not blacks, feel angry because they can't use the word blacks' use. White people used to hate blacks and now they want to listen to their variety of music, wear their style of clothing, use their slang, etc.

"All of a sudden whites can change their mind and just say oh I like that word so I'm going to say it cause I can. Do what you want. Use the word, wear what blacks wear, talk

like them, but at the end can you say you went through chronicles of hurt blacks went through or can you say you know how a black feels when they say how their grandpa and grandma we're slaves? You already know the answer is no, so don't be something you're not," says an anonymous Open School student. "A white man can't say the word to another black, because the black person they're talking to won't see them as a friend, but as a slave-owner. The word can never be inclusive, because the two don't share that identity and this is why whites can't use the word nigger," says another Open School student.

What is the real reason a black person gets mad when a white person calls them the "n" word? That as an African American or other race is going to find out on their own, because there is no real reason.*

Money Hungry

Ajee Evans-Hall
Staff Writer

Money Hungry is a book about being homeless. The main character in this book is Raspberry. She is selling stuff, like notebooks, pencils, chocolate, and candy at school so that she and her mom can have a better living.

Raspberry's mom works two jobs but her pay isn't good enough for them to keep food at their house. Her friends all have troubles in their lives with boys, their parents and lots of other things.

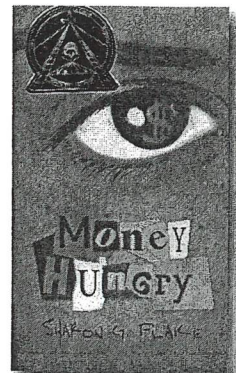
Raspberry's mom tells her to stop selling stuff at school, but that doesn't stop her. One day she gets caught by the principal. The principal tells her if she doesn't stop

she'll be expelled, but that still doesn't stop her. She keeps on selling it and it could get her into serious trouble.

There's also a little romance in this book between Raspberry and a boy in her class that she thought she would never like.

Money Hungry is written by Sharon G. Flake. It is the winner of the Coretta Scott King Award and the John Steptoe Award for New Talent, given to an outstanding black author and illustrator.

I would recommend you read this book, because it's basically what happens in life. This book was the best book I've ever read in my life. You should also go to the school library and check it out.*



*Money Hungry
by Sharon G. Flake*

PLONKSI FROM 4

drive, and frantically continued on to Teen Culture.

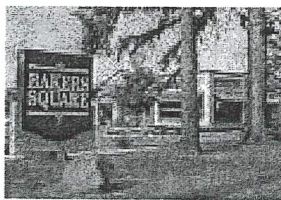
On Friday, January 12th, I again went down to the computer lab to work on my article. I sat down on a good computer on the end, stuck my 1 Gigabyte USB flash drive in the convenient slot in the front, and proceeded to rewrite the first few paragraphs, as well as continuing the narrative. I was refreshed by my break the previous days, and filled with optimism about my chances of success. I navigated to Google, and searched "El Nino 2006 2007." The first site I looked at didn't have much, but then I saw a

Wikipedia article. Of course!

Wikipedia would know everything about El Nino! Eagerly, I clicked the link.

Apparently, El Nino is a regularly occurring anomaly in the surface temperature of the Pacific. Yes. A regularly occurring anomaly. Every 2-7 years there is usually a period lasting a year or two where the surface temperature of water in the Pacific Ocean is either significantly warmer than usual (El Nino) or significantly colder than usual (La Nina.) El Nino is Spanish for "The Male Child," which apparently refers to Jesus, because El Nino historically was usually noticed around Christmas. And it causes floods and droughts and starvation and stuff. Jesus comes, and brings with him DEATH! But who knows what La Nina refers to. A female version of Jesus?

Before I could explain more, 2nd period was over yet again. So again I saved my work, safely



Car problems took place at a local Bakers Square

removed my hardware, yanked out my 1 gigabyte usb drive, put it in my pocket, and continued on to Teen Culture. Then came the 3 day weekend, during which I broke the internet while trying to upgrade the firmware so that the wireless would work, fixed the internet, went shopping unsuccessfully for a Serial ATA cable for use in installing a hard drive, and got stuck at Baker's Square due to car problems. Then my Dad went to Africa to help deliver books and meet with prime ministers and

stuff. There was also a big snowstorm, and it got much colder, partially destroying a reason for this article.

Then came Tuesday, and eventually 2nd period. I went down to the computer lab, confident that I would finish my article. But when I went to the good flatscreen computer on the side, I was confronted with a new foe: a login screen. And I did not know James' password. Desperate, I tried the obvious "Open," "Open School," "James," "semaj," "today," "duck7," and "smorking." But like the Ents at Orthanc, my efforts were in vain. I could barely

scratch the surface of this Númenorian rock face. In despair I observed that all of the unused computer lab computers had some sort of login screen open, so I

slowly walked back to the library. Much to my amazement and joy there was an open computer! But then I found out that it was actually being used by Candace, even though she was out of the room. But then, as I turned to leave, the person on the far left got off, allowing me to continue my research of El Nino.

One of the side effects of El Nino is that the northern United States gets warmer. So if you mix that with a 2 degree above average global temperature, a.k.a. Global Warming, you get a lame winter.

I stepped away from the computer, flush with the excitement of my victory. They call me Plonski. Alex Plonski. Wait, that didn't make sense. In this context I'm either a detective or a heroic figure, but definitely not a spy. Oh well. At last I had found what I was searching for. I knew now why the winter had been so lame. I clicked save, closed the window, dragged PAPDRIVE to the trash, yanked out 1 gigabyte USB flash drive, and went back up to Leo's room. For though it was due today, the formatting on the stupid mac program didn't work very well with what Microsoft Words spit out. So I closed it, and resolved to print it out at home, and give it to Leo the next day, January 17th. In the meantime though, I had another story idea...

But first I had to revise this one, to remove "unimportant" information, and then to add more "unimportant" information, and then to cut out a quarter of it. So I never got to my other story.*

ADVICE FROM 4

question is pointed in your direction, just take a really long time and pretend to be philosophical. It's always good to answer the question with another question. Example:

Teacher: What was the author trying to convey with this passage?

Jimmy: Convey? Ha, ha, ha. Well, You can't really pinpoint one particular message, every reading can be taking on several very different levels. You have to fully realize the text. What was the author really thinking?

It's always better to know what you're talking about, but if all else fails you can act like an intellectual curious teenager, teachers seem to appreciate that.

When assigned a group project it is always good to latch on to someone reliable.

Forget your stoner friends, they'll probably want to play hacky-sack instead of starting,



Copying answers from nerds is a time-honored tradition

much less finishing a school project. Take a cue from an earlier lesson: volunteer to do a lot of the easy stuff and then tell your classmate that you would gladly do the some of the harder portions but your cat just got hit by a car and you have yet to recover. Just finish it quickly and you'll have plenty of time to play hacky-sack with your friends. However, Open School is based on group work. So if you're going to survive the harsh realities of Open, then you'll have to step it up a notch.

Finally, tests, quizzes and exams! To be honest, it's hard to do well on these if you haven't done any work. But, if you're willing to build a time machine then everything will be all right. All you really need is a flux-capacitor. I all else fails tell the teacher that your grandmother died. The sympathy card is a desperate one, but it often works. Then afterwards you can play all Pac Man your heart desires.

In summary: The world don't move to the beat of just one drum, What might be right for you, may not be right for some. A man is born, he's a man of means. But they got, Different Strokes. It takes, Different Strokes. It takes, Different Strokes to move the world!*

THEFT FROM 1

their own benefit, or selling them for (quite a large) profit.

The school laptops that were stolen this year, 12-inch Apple iBooks G4s, currently range from \$177.50 to \$360.00 on eBay. It's unable to be determined from the pictures and minimal descriptions whether these are the same ones that once resided in our school or if they're simply the same model. "I can see the appeal of stealing laptops," Chloe Taipale, grade 11, thought aloud.

Pawn America, a pawn shop chain in the Twin Cities, claims not to have been sold any laptops of the sort that were stolen from Open, but reports that laptops are brought in all the time. It's not a good idea to try to pawn stolen goods, because if the item has been

reported to the police as missing, you're sure to be caught.

"We compile a list of all the items brought in and send it to the police at the end of

each day," explained a representative from Pawn America. "They compare it with their list of what's been reported as stolen, and if the items match up, you're in trouble. We make sure to get the information of everyone who brings something in."

Some of the items stolen, such as Amy's laptop, were most substantial on an emotional level. That laptop held not only years of work and personal files, but also the only sound recording she had of her deceased father's voice. "There's nothing like this to destroy your sense of security here," said Todd Bartholomay, Open School Principal. A \$100 reward was offered for anyone who contributed to the recovery of her laptop, and a \$1,000 reward for returning it with the files still intact; in addition, she promised not to press charges if the culprit came forward. Does someone just have it in for Amy, had they already done something with the laptop therefore could not return it, or could they just not be bothered to? Any profit that that laptop would bring on the black market is probably less than the reward offered by Amy and the school.

(Ed. note: Amy has recently found out her backup hard drive can be repaired, so she has recovered some of her files.)

According to the Sacramento Sheriff's Department, 24 percent of apprehended shoplifters are between the ages of 13 and

17, and they usually steal from places they go to regularly, so it makes sense that schools would be a prime target.

Last year, when three laptops from SLC Social Studies teacher Susanne Hollingsworth's room and smaller items such as a personal CD from SLC Social Studies teacher Luke Leba went missing, Open heightened security and emphasized not only keeping valuables out of sight but also keeping things like the laptop cart, desks, and classrooms under lock and key.

School property isn't the only target. Possibly occurring more frequently is petty theft of commodities from students.

Things like CD players and cell phones are often stolen from students. They're

small and inconspicuous (therefore easy to conceal), don't raise any suspicions, and are good for either profit or personal use. "Just don't be stupid and leave your stuff

around," chuckled Rhys Hunding, grade 11.

Open takes theft "very seriously," according to Mary Posey, school secretary. The district's student behavior handbook states that stealing from the school, staff, or students offers "possible suspension, possible notification of police, parent conference, and restitution [replacing what was taken]," as the minimum punishment. Todd commented, "I would notify the police if it was anything more than a pen." Unfortunately, he rarely gets that chance, because it's seldom thieves are caught. (However, the stealer of the three laptops that were taken last year was caught and suspended.)

The district is aware of the current problem of theft here, and has met with Todd to discuss it. "One problem we have that other schools don't is that we have evening events," Todd explains. Even though the office was remodeled this summer for the purpose of being able to watch the front door of the building, that doesn't work so well. It is relatively simple to dart in the door and up the stairs before anyone in the office notices. We have no security at the door, no security desk anywhere in the building, and no cameras. Todd has promised that from now on, though, there will always be someone at the door in the window of

GAY FROM 1

alist) countries and cultures tend to disregard cultural and social tendencies of others in favor of ones similar to their own.

Of course, a lot of people aren't even aware that these words are offensive to others, and use them without thinking. Ignorance is not an option. I believe that everyone, especially children, should know that these are hurtful words and only contribute to the atmosphere of hatred and misunderstanding that is so

These are hurtful words and only contribute to the atmosphere of hatred in our world today.

ubiquitous in our world today. Just like "nigger" universally referred to black people a century ago, "gay" is now the slur against GLBT's. However, it is difficult to determine who is "straight" and who is not; it is impossible to determine a "gay" by sight alone, especially if they are hiding the fact. It is because of this unseen factor that makes it so hard to tell who will be insulted and who won't that I believe that this should stop.

This is why organizations such as the Gay Men's Choir and the Gay/Straight Alliance exist: to tell the world that GLBT's are people who are little different than "straights" are. These differences are akin to variations in skin color between people, which are not allowed to be discriminated against under the Civil Rights Act. Why is it then that everyone but GLBT's are protected by this movement started a half-century ago?

After reading this, I hope that you'll understand where I'm coming from with this. Please... clean up your language, and encourage others to do the same. If you wouldn't like others to call you names, don't do it to others. I'm going to quote a proverb when I say, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." As for all the GLBT people out there in the world, I support you 157%, and I hope your social oppression ends soon.*

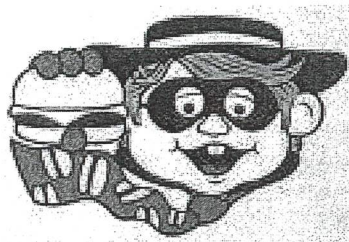
THEFT CONTINUED ON 9

THEFT FROM 8

time where people are allowed to come in for events.

Most staff members, including Todd, assume the culprit/culprits are students. "There's usually one or two good student thieves circulating around... they get the job done," confirmed Leo Bickelhaupt, SLC English teacher, who has had at least two sets of batteries stolen from him so far this year. One reason it is doubtful that the thieves are visitors, as opposed to students or even staff, is that "during the day, because we're such a small community, any intruder would be recognized immediately," Todd explained. "At night, they can go relatively unnoticed," but they can't get into the classrooms.

In general, unless they're kleptomaniacs ("a tiny minority of shoplifters who have a mental disorder that makes it difficult to overcome their urge to steal," says the National Crime Prevention Council), people steal because "they want



The hamburger is a thief well-known in the school community.

things. They want money," accounted Todd. According to Brad Manor, who has

spent many as principal and vice principal of many St. Paul public schools including Open, most of the theft in school is result of opportunity. It's just spontaneous. Todd added, "there are people who, when they get the opportunity, will violate trust... And we take trust really seriously."

This is a bit of a problem at most schools. One way or another, if you get a large group of people together, there will always be problems like this; there will always be people who don't always respect each other, people who don't play nicely.

Recently, all unused lockers at Open have been fastened shut to prevent students from hiding things in them. For example, we wouldn't want someone to bring something like drugs or weapons to school and hide them in an empty locker where they can't be blamed for them. "To the extent where we can make things public or private, there are fewer of those in-between places where people can hide things and not be accountable for them," Todd reasoned."

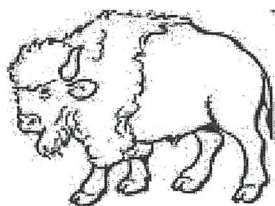
The extra security is a burden and a nuisance for all of us, but it's purely the result of the delinquency of the student body. So what can you do? Notify the office if you have any information regarding the thefts that you think would be helpful in either finding the culprit or the recovery of the items. "I'm really disappointed this keeps happening in my school," Andrew Hoagland, grade 12, concluded.*

PRARIE FROM 5

Eternal Chasm, away from the dark lord Drogo, to a strange and unfamiliar place, the rural Kansas lands of 1859. He doesn't know English (only the "dozens of tongues he'd learned over a lifetime of knighting for hire," insert saucy joke here), but Juliette is drawn to something within him... something magnetic and all-consuming. Maybe it's his flowing locks and rippling pectorals, maybe it's the steed, I don't know.

Though the dialect is different, there is one language they both can understand... the language of passion. The two are swept into a story of unbelievable romance, savage and powerful, yet gentle and tender. Much like myself. You will find yourself immersed in the masterfully intertwined story. Though Juliette's heart is yearning for Geoffrey, will she be able to toss her heartbreak aside? Will Geof-

frey put his happiness first for once in his life, or will the call of a knight's never-ending duty tear him from the one he



Buffalo are rarely featured in romance novels.

sion, or epic battles, or cascading locks, or even buffalo.

...Oh wait.*

loves?! Oh god! Sure, you could read *Tender Scoundrel*, *Season of Miracles*, or maybe even *Pirate of My Heart*, but it's not like they have cloud-

ERAGON FROM 5

When I first heard of this book, I became really intrigued, not because of the plot, but because of the authors' age. I was very impressed with *Eragon*. It was fast paced in all the right places, well written, and though it has many similarities with *Lord of the Rings*, it still has lots of individuality; the characters are only somewhat predictable, yet still fun and enjoyable. I would recommend it to anyone who likes fantasy books, enjoys *Lord of the Rings*, or just looking for a good read.*



*Can't get enough? *Eldest* is the sequel to *Eragon*.*

The third and final book is as of yet unwritten and unnamed.

NARUTO FROM 5

builder to another village, but the builder is being followed by two Jonin assassins named Zabuzza and Haku. Both being very skilled, they must protect the bridge builder without being killed themselves. Kakshi tries to defeat them quickly, but is imprisoned by one of Zabuzza's jutsu's or spells. The team must still protect the builder but get Kakshi back as well.

After using strategy to release Kakashi, Naruto and Sasuke are trapped in Haku's mirror jutsu. After Sasuke is badly injured, Naruto gains some of the imprisoned demons power and breaks through one of the mirrors badly injuring Haku. Then Haku sacrifices himself to save Zabza, who dies any way.

I truly like this show, but, there are some things wrong with it. They seem to drag out unimportant subjects to long, like when Sasuke was injured from Haku's mirror jutsu. Since the show airs faster than the manga they must add episode extensions. The script is pretty cheesy, like in any anime show. However, the story goes in chronological order, and has just enough action.*

SHOTGUN FROM 4

should sit in the front seat. Usually, I find people who have similar options such as calling it, where all you say is "shotgun." Bribing, used mostly by Liam, concerns how much people are willing to give up (money or possessions) to the driver. One which simply irritates me is seniority. I encounter it quite a bit these, due mostly to hanging out with Doug



Let's face it: the front seat is the place to be.

Anderson. He just takes it, and there is nothing to do to stop it. Apparently size does matter. Most of our population partakes in being a passenger at least once (with the exception of Liam, who drives more than he smiles), and to deciding on the "crown" of the car, we will eventually need a new variety of trails to announce the copilot.

After returning to school from BK, we decided to ask Leo about the all important shotgun question. "Paper, rock, scissors is the only fair way to do it," he said.

The history of shotgun is threaded through our lives. It is an everyday situation, and is important to most of our new generation. "The big problem that the Board of Shotty can sense is the fact that most youth today aren't learning proper rules to receiving copilot. If we don't start setting examples now, we are looking at total anarchy whenever we drive a car," said Junior Andrew Dames, the President of Free Shotgun for America (FSA). "We are currently working on a bill to legalize a new

rule for equal rights in all Jeeps and SUVs."

After a long discussion, we came up with a new and fair way for Front seat receiving for Liam's blue party wagon. If the car is full (5 people, including driver), the two people who had back windows would fight in a game of RPS. The victor would move on to face the person who sat in middle, again with one winner, who would go to finals against the previous shotgun holder. To add spice, every player is allowed one "Claw" draw, which automatically proclaims you the champ of that battle. This move can only be used once a week, resetting every Monday.

Unfortunately for the handful of people I hang out with, Liam has already grown bored with the rule and again is thinking greedy. Justice slowly became a form of organized crime, Liam the Godfather. Liam, who has been known to choose sides due to ignorance, explained to me that he wants more stuff, but still I break the ice off the truth. Over the weekend, the car was once again full with me, Liam, Andrew Hoaglund, and Griffin Larson. Andrew was given shotty because he said he would pay for Liam's food. At the end of the meal, Andrew paid for \$18 worth, when I was stuck paying mine and Griffin's (some of Liam's too but not much), then being nice and leaving the tip, making a total of \$20. Add the price of that with me paying for other activities, and you have a total of \$70. Who deserves shotgun now Liam? Who deserves it now?

With my final words I would just like to advise you to please keep the future in mind. It is up to this generation to keep shotgun alive for the next. Don't let shotgun hoarding scoundrels like Liam break down the walls of Justice, and take away your rights as well as everyone's else's to have shotgun and be fair with it. We have the power of opposable thumbs, so make the right choice. Shotgun is only three hand pounds away.*

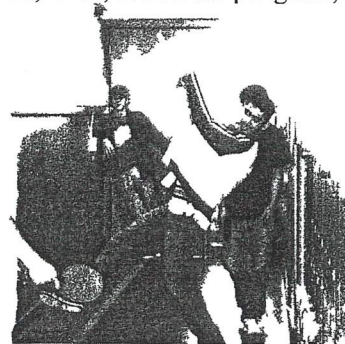
The Fraquetball Segment!

Top Ten Nine Teams:

9. *1 & a Half Mexicans*: 4-2
Jesse Valenzuela & Danny Maleuon
8. *Donkey Punch*: 5-2
Kwame Churcher & Miles Alteri
7. *Anger Management*: 4-2
Alex Johnson & Damien Bullis
6. *Los Geezers*: 5-1
Tim Leone-Getten & Leo Bickelhaupt
5. *Brooklyn Extreme*: 4-1
Chang Thao & Chee Nou Xiong
4. *Fetal Attraction*: 4-2
Liam Shramko & Andrew Hoaglund
3. *Grease Lightning*: 4-0
Doug Anderson & Quinlan Miller
2. *Hat Trick*: 6-1
John Knapp & Griffin Larson
1. *Chivas*: 8-1
Jose Garcia & Jaime Avila

Top 5 MVP Candidates:

- Doug Anderson:**
31 goals, 9 aces, 53%, 2.7 stops per game
- Chang Thao:**
21 goals, 44%, 4.2 stops per game
- John Knapp:**
26 goals, 52%, 2.57 blocks per game, 3 steals
- Tim Leone-Getten:**
32 goals, 53%, 6 aces, 3.16 blocks per game
- Liam Shramko:**
22 goals, 40%, 8 aces, 4.9 saves per gam
- Jaime Avila:**
32 goals, 49 %, 3.4 blocks per game, 5 steals



Jose Garcia scoring a goal

Around the League:

As Gerald Morriseau continues to improve as a top tier player (20 goals, 16 blocks) so does **White & Nerdy's**(3-5)chances of making a run towards the playoffs, albeit slim chances...**Griffin Larson** may have the best serve in the game (13 aces) but he needs to cut down on costly mistakes, 3 double faults and 3 own goals!... **Six-One-Tizzou** (Tom Totushek and **Luke Leba**) has been a huge disappointment thus far. At 2-4 their game against **1 & Half Mexicans** could make or break their season..
