

THE PURPLE PRESS

Volume 10,
Issue 8
May 22
2006

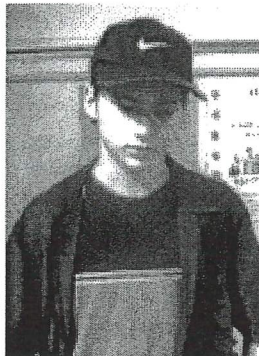
Thou shalt not sell soda

Liam Shramko
Staff Capitalist

On Tuesday May 2nd, 2006 Open School took yet another step towards communism when our principal, Ruth Pechman, announced that there would be no selling or purchasing of any kind in school. The news hit Open School like a ton of bricks. I can tell one thing for sure, John F. Kennedy is rolling in his grave. No more soda for the reasonable pricing of 50 cents. Instead we're forced to spend twice as much on some murky product that isn't half as flavorful. Some democracy, eh?

But there is no final say as of today. There are a select few who continue to fight for the good of us all. Erik Peterson, our new English teacher, is protesting the decision. He had just given out

an assignment to track soda sales. "I am speechless," stated a shocked Erik, who didn't necessarily say that, but he looked speechless. Erik's students have made a proposal to Ruth and are trying to make contact with the district. They hope for a reply soon.



Former pop vendor
Jefferey Bies

"I am saddened by the new rule, it's rulings like these that make me wonder if America really works," said senior Duane Buck. Students are rallying and the storm is rising. There is heck to pay. "It just doesn't add up, man. Why? Why would the school deprive its children of food and drink?" commented a saddened Julia Travers, a senior. "I am flab-

THE PRICEContinued on 2

New mosaic complete

Khaliya Dorry
Staff Writer

Angela Carlson, Open School's temporary mosaic artist, worked on a mosaic in the front entrance of our school to show parents, students, and newcomers at Open exactly what our school is about.

The mosaic took about two weeks to complete, but Carlson wasn't working alone. Some of Open School's students agreed to help her finish the job. Angela said, "The student helpers were great and a lot of fun!"

7th grader Ruby Uribe, who helped on the mosaic, said, "I wanted to help because it looked like a lot of fun and I wanted to help make our school look a little better." Symone



Part of Open's new
Mosaic in the entryway

Colquitt, another SLC 7th grade helper, said, "I wanted to help because I wanted to let Open School be noticed not only academically, but by it's creativity too."

ELL teacher Tim Leone-Getten told Carlson what the school is like and she worked from there. She included encouraging words such as, 'imagination' and 'explore', to inspire Open School's students to reach for their goals. Angela said, "The theme is about the community, and it's telling the story of the school."

Angela, with her helpers, first broke the

MOSIACContinued on 2

Nerdy advice

Alex Plonski
Staff Writer

You know what's really fun? Shooting people with rubber bands. There are two good ways to do it:

1) Pull the rubber band back as far as possible.

Advantages: Really fast, hard to dodge, and painful. Relatively accurate for short distances, and lots of (somewhat inaccurate) range.

2) Pull the rubber band back a medium amount, but much more on one side than on the other. When you release it, it will spin like a frisbee.

Advantages: Great accuracy throughout its entire range, and completely silent. Stays straight and sometimes curves upward instead of falling.

I like to play a game where each person has two rubber bands, and the first person to get hit loses. It actually isn't that fun, but it's the closest I will get in the near future to a FPS. Apparently anything that involves guns will make me go on a rampage, killing

NERDContinued on 6

The Ear

-Norah voices her opinion
on TV commercials: page 3

-Katie checks out the new
movie Stick It: page 4

-Rhys explores the new
Swedish sensation IKEA:
page 5

The Purple Press Staff

The Man Upstairs

Cameron Beitler

Bullpen Coach

Nathan Jesson

Scoop Master

Liam Shramko

Salt of the Earth

Leo Bickelhaupt

MOSIAC From 1

tiles into smaller pieces. Then they had to apply the pieces on the wall and ceiling with a little glue. After that they filled in the extra spaces with a dark gray filling called grout. Last, but not least everyone helped clean off the dirty tiles.

Angela has done seven other public art pieces in Saint Paul and Minneapolis, but Open is only her second school. Hopefully our new mosaic will help greet new people into our Open school community.◊

DI Finds Success

"For the first time in my life, I feel complete," said 11th grader Liam Shramko after Destination Imagination came to a close on April 22. Open School sent a total of five teams to the Regional Competition and two to the State Competition. All in all, Open School experienced all kinds of success in the field of creative problem solving.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with Destination Imagination, (or DI as it is referred to by nerds), it a competition that encourages creativity, team work and having lots of fun. There are multiple challenges and there are levels for Elementary, Middle School and High School.

"I had the time of my freaking life!!" stated 11th grader Andrew Hoaglund.

Interim 06 ready to go

Norma Romero & Sonia Romero
Staff Writers

Tomorrow Open School will begin interim. There are a lot of activities going on during interim, such as fishing, role playing games, Outward Bound, and much more. The Interim activities will be supervised and taught by Open School staff.

Interim has been in Open School for 20 years. Interim used to be three weeks long, now it is only three days. Outward Bound wasn't the only way to get out of town, a lot of students used to go to different places with their teachers. Because it was three weeks long, they had plenty of time to discover cities all over the country.

Julie Doble, SLC science teacher, led many different activities other than Outward Bound. She once had a dance class. The students danced jazz, ballet and then they performed. Another year she did a health club class. Julie got a massage therapist to come in and they did some aerobics. Now she

does Outward Bound, which she has been doing for the last 15 years.

Tom Totushek, one of SLC's math teachers, is trying to make interim a better experience. IEP teacher Kim Totushek, social studies teacher Luke Leba, and Tom make up the interim committee. This committee has been going for two years, and, according to Tom, each year it has been getting better. Tom's job in the committee is administrative. He collects surveys and analyzes the data.

Luke is in charge of the non athletic triathlon interim. He enjoys interim because he likes working with students on something outside of class.

Jeff is going to be the one in charge of the fishing interim. He does fishing every year and it is the most popular interim -- regularly drawing up to 60 students. He's had *INTERIM Continued on 6*

THE PRICE From 1

bergasted," stated Miles Alteri, "Cha right man. I say we boycott the vending machines! Viva La Revolution!"

Ruth claims that the selling of products can cause arguments and disputes and can distract students from school. "I'm up for the entrepreneurial spirit, but our school and this district have a stance to try and have healthy and nutritious food. The district has moved away from pop... School has to be an educational environment where we're not trying to have students sell to other students," said Ruth. Ruth seemed flabbergasted when I implied that selling soda was always legal. She thinks that the rule has been in place for ages... Sounds kinda crazy to me.

Before this "dark age," pop sellers flourished. Whether it be Antonio Rosario, Jon Sherman, or Mike Griffin, they ruled the school. They were able to maintain a high level of professionalism and run an extremely efficient business. All that and it never interfered with school work. They all had bags in which they would efficiently carry their product. Mike Griffin was stabilized, he had a permanent spot where he would sell, outside of Bridget's room. Antonio and Jon were mobile, moving throughout the school like a Green Beret.

Not only do I question the necessity of this rule, but I outright ask that students to

disobey the new rule. In the heroic words of Public Enemy front man Chuck D: Fight The Power that be! "I will be very upset if I have to spend \$1 on some piece of crap Powerade that tastes like moldy water with sugar," Said Senior Molly Stark, "And while we are on the subject, someone should start selling candy. \$1 for a snickers bar, that's highway robbery." I couldn't agree anymore with that statement even if I had forged it myself.

Some students have already been shut down. Jeffery Bies is one of the few who have closed down. The future is bleak.

"It's important that we work towards a brighter future instead of a bleaker tomorrow," said senior Chelsea Jane. This is just the newest installment of what I like to call Operation: MANUAL LABOR. First, they took off the bathroom doors. They banned the student lounge after giving us false hopes. Then they tried to keep us off the third floor. Now this. I'm going to puke in Eisenhower's grave. Next they're gonna have us make sneakers for England.

Some students are still in business. They are like runaway slaves on the underground railroad. That is all. Woot! Woot! This is a small step for man, a giant step for mankind.... What will become of the pop seller, that is unknown, but I have a chilling view for you: Children lined up by the soda machine!



Meredith Springstead

How long have you been at Open School? Two years.

Extra Curricular Activities: Spelling Klub (Secretary).

Senior Profile



What are your plans for next year?

Going to Art School.

What are you going to miss most about Open?

The Characters in this place.

What was your favorite class at Open?

Art with Elizabeth.

What is your favorite book, movie, or TV show?

The movie *Run Runny Run*.

What is one super power you wish you had?

Invisibility.

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

Rock star.

Who is one person you would like to meet?

The guy from the Menards commercial.

Commercials: worth the nuisance?

Norah Harper-Godderz
Staff Writer

Are you annoyed with commercials? Well, if you are, then I'm positive that you're not the only person. Commercials are a nuisance. They interrupt your show, they make each show at least five minutes shorter, and they are everywhere. There are bad commercials, there are good commercials, there are those that are helpful, and there are those that make no sense at all. All of which interrupt your show.

There are some commercials that are inappropriate for young eyes, and they are during children's shows! Like a lot of movie commercials, they have swearing and violence, or sometimes even a very scandalously dressed women selling underwear. Some of the commercials that are on TV are just horrible, like the Subway/ Arby's commercials. They aren't interesting in the least and they play them like 15 times during the commercial break. You want to say to them

"Yes you can get 5 of them for \$5.95, get that in your puny brain!!!!!"

Sometimes when there is a great part in a show and there is so much suspense, then suddenly there are commercials, and all the suspense is gone because the commercials brainwash you and make you forget everything you just saw. I suppose this is good, because it keeps you wanting to watch the show, and maybe you'll go do something productive like get a drink or go to the bathroom or something. Or instead of wanting to watch the show you'll forget what you were watching and switch the channel...

When there is a tornado thinking about placing itself on our beautiful city, there are tornado warnings on TV interrupting our show, which is fine. I mean, it's for our own city's safety, but when it is time for commercials, they take away the warnings and put on the commercials instead of warning

us. So if there were a tornado blasting through your neighborhood you would have no idea where it was and then you would die because the commercials took over the television.

Most people assume that there are 10 minutes of commercials during a 30 minute show, and they are mostly right. I did a little research to find out how long commercials actually were. The average time for commercials is 9 minutes and 31 seconds per half hour show. There are commercials at the beginning of the show, twice during the show, and once at the end. So there is a total of 4 times that commercials played during a 30 minute show! Outrageous!

Commercials aren't all bad. They have a few microscopic good things about them. They give you a break to go to the bathroom or actually do something besides turning
COMMERCIALS Continued on 6

Open at the Movies

Finally, a movie for geeks

Chole Taipale
Staff Writer

I have long felt that there has been something missing from movie theaters. Was it supple leather seating? No. Hardwood flooring? No. Ham sandwiches? Well, yes, but here's another missing piece: something to cater to the spelling nerds' tastes. In today's society, movie night is for the frat boys, the sensitive rockers, maybe even the belligerent pessimists. But not for the geeks. Not until now.

Akeelah and the Bee is about English-oriented Akeelah (Keke Palmer)'s fight against whiteys, her mama, school bullies, and everyone else who doubts her. She keeps a secret journal of big words to which she adds every time she hears another 5-point vocab word. She comes from the hood, and her school is fading fast. Test scores fall every year, and unless they run into a miracle, no more funding. I mean, what do they expect? The last thing an inner city school needs is

new books.

Akeelah hides her smarts so she won't be made fun of. She doesn't do a very good job, because she forgot to disguise her glasses and ponytail. The students who are wise to her ways taunt her and try to milk some A+ homework out of the little dweeb.

The principal of the school knows about Akeelah's brains, so he tries to coax her into competing in the school's spelling bee. If she gets to the national competition, it will mean some serious cheddar for her school.

She's mighty hesitant, because competing will mean exposing her exquisite gift for everyone to see.

Of course she decides to do it; otherwise the movie would be really boring. Her mother isn't one bit happy, because she feels that the bees will distract her from her regular *KEELAH Continued on 7*



Keke Palmer stars in *Akeelah and the Bee*

Beasts, Kami, and Oni

Tristan Allen
Staff Writer

Princess Mononoke is probably one of the awesomest anime movies ever. It was created by none other than the great Hayao Miyazaki, maker of *Castle in the Sky*, *Spirited Away*, *My Neighbor Totoro*, and many other anime productions. What is this movie you might ask? If it was real it would be somewhere in the medieval Japan. It's a time giant beasts, of Kami (Gods), and Oni (Demons). It is a time of battle; a battle between the humans, and the forest.

Ashitaka is the last Prince of an ancient tribe hidden after supposedly being wiped out 500 years before. The remnants of the

tribe sought shelter in one of the remaining great forests, and that is where the story begins. In a battle against a great big boar demon, covered in strange blackish purple worm like things, Ashitaka's arm is hit by one of the purple appendages, and slays the beast, there is an odd purplish mark on his arm where the boar touched him.

His fate is that the mark is going to grow across his whole body,

then kill him. His only hope is to travel far to the west, to an ancient forest where the spirit of the forests dwells, and plead for a healing. The problem? A monk by the name *MONONOKE Continued on 7*



Some of the action that can be found in the classic *Princess Mononoke*

Stick It: not so bad

Katie Hurley
Staff Writer

When I was in line waiting to buy tickets to *Stick It*, I thought, this is going to suck. A movie about gymnastics. I don't really consider gymnastics a real sport. Hockey is a sport, and so is basketball, but gymnastics isn't a real sport. Some people may disagree with me but I don't care. Wow. I was surprised by how okay it really was.

I didn't know who most of the actors were and I suppose this was a first movie for most of them. The main character was Haley Graham (Missy Peregrym). She gets into trouble with the law. Whoa! So, she could go to JDC but she gets sent to a gymnastics program. Of course she hates it. The other girls on her team worked hard to get to where they are and they really want to win. Something all the other girls struggled to get to do, she's all pissed because she has to do. She was in a



gymnastics program years before, but a "tragedy" made her give up. I mean, it's sad when people's parents break up but she took it way too hard. Now she turns to a life of petty crime and biking. Not just

any biking though, BMX.

She also wrecks a house by biking through a window. At first she doesn't really do anything that the gymnastics program. If she doesn't she has to go to someplace else that's worse so you would think that she would actually try but no. She also spends way too much time lying on a mat trying to get the guts up to do something even though no one was watching her. BLAH!

The plot could have been more creative. "Rebel girl turns nice" is really getting old. Also, the bully in the gymnastics class turns nice. She stops making fun of Haley. There needed to be more fights and drama. Not that "OMG, I broke a nail" drama but "I *STICK IT Continued on 6*

IKEA: Swedish wonderland Do it yourself coaster

Rhys Hunding
Staff Writer

Where can you find both meatballs and fold out beds that do not hurt when you sleep on them? IKEA of course. This home-furnishing behemoth has been my source for many an hour of sweet entertainment. After I get bored at the mall, I venture across the vast parking lot to my big blue and yellow friend.

IKEA was founded in 1943 by an anxious Swede named Ingvar Kamprad when he was only 17 years old with money earned from a gift given to him by his father for excelling in school. IKEA now operates in some 44 countries.

When you enter this fortress of comfort, one of the first things you see is the excellently organized chillin' care center. So organized, in fact, that they give you a pager when you leave your child with them, I personally would love to spend a day there. They have BALL BINS! I love those things. I jumped in one of the littler

ones when the workers were not looking and popped like eight of the balls. The employees were coming and then I ran away because those people scare me with their blue shirts. Monsters!

They also have a restaurant, in a furniture store! Who would of thought? Clearly, the Swedes! Those meatballs are all shades of delicious, I tell you what (Hank Hill voice), Especially with that lingonberry sauce. And that bread is a whole new world of tasty. Did you know that they have breakfast for just 99 cents. That is intense, intensely cool.

Anyways, having personally experienced this delicacy among men, I thought it was delicious. (Okay maybe it was not a delicacy among men and women alike, but the ladies at the counter accidentally did not charge me for an extra swedish pancake and the drink, so that made

IKEA, the big blue store with everything

IKEA Continued on 8



Damien Bullis, and Griffin Larson
Staff Writers

Have you ever wanted to be a theme park mogul, deciding how the park is set up, what rides go where, can you make the BESTEST PARK in the world?

Developed by Chris Sawyer in 1999, Roller Coaster Tycoon was the first very successful tycoon game, and it started the tycoon craze that was soon to come. Only a year after being released Roller Coaster Tycoon had already become a classic. The game starts you off with 5 basic scenarios, all with different landscapes and goals. Once you complete a scenario, another one becomes available to you in the scenario chooser (not to mention all yours guests stop whatever they are doing to clap for you). With a total of 21 different scenarios, this game won't get boring too fast.

Since its initial release, it has added two new games, and a total of 6 expansion packs (2 per game). The second game (RollerCoaster Tycoon 2) seemed a whole lot like the first. The only thing that changed was the number of rides and scenarios, so



Just one of the many coasters that await you

basically the second one was just a larger version of the first one. The third one, however, changed the entire game. The graphics changed, the menus changed, the park guest AI changed, and they added a whole lot of unnescasary features. Atari ended up owning the third game, which is most likely the reason for all the changes.

There is a whole lot to this game that can't be covered in one article, so I will break down the parts I find most enjoyable and the parts I find annoying/unenjoyable. We'll start with the good stuff: 1.) Lot's of different rides to choose from roller coasters/gentle rides/thrill rides/transport rides and food and drinks 2.) The simplicity of custom ride design, it is very easy to make your own tracks for rides (like roller coasters, go karts, log flumes) 3.) Guests have different

stars two of comedy's greatest, John Belushi and Dan Ackroyd of Saturday Night Live, and several Rhythm and Blues greats, including James Brown, Aretha Franklin, James Lee Hooker, Ray Charles and the unforgettable Cab Calloway.

The plot is a fairly standard redemption story: two brothers, Jake and Elwood Blues, are trying to raise \$5,000 for paying the property tax on the orphanage they grew up in. The problem is these two brothers are known criminals. Jake is a con artist, while Elwood is a known traffic menace. They find out, when Jake has "seen the light," that the only way to raise the money cleanly is to get their old R&B band back together.

In their quest for redemption and fame (and the \$5,000) they are hunted down by the police, a country band, the bar and truck stop they stole \$300 worth of beer from, the

BLUES Continued on 8

Blues Brothers: a classic

Peter Allen
Staff Writer

"Mrs. Toronto?"

"Tarantino."

"Ma'am, do you have a Thomas Malone or Louis Marini living here?"

"Not any more, they moved out a long time ago. I don't take in boarders, not for a long time."

"May we come in, ma'am?"

"Please."

"Did they leave a number or an address where they could be reached?"

"No."

"Did they live quietly? What were their personal habits?"

"They were good boys, but they made an awful lot of racket at night. Are you the police?"

"No, ma'am, we're musicians."

This is one of many funny scenes from one of the greatest movies of all time: *The Blues Brothers*. Filmed in 1980, this movie

NERD From 1

millions. Plus it will make me rude, and it will sprain my left hand. I don't know how that works, but one thing I've learned over the past few years is to just agree with everything my parents say about the computer when I'm in front of them.

Another fun thing to do is play Spring. There's a new version out, 0.71. Get it at <http://taspring.clan-sy.com>. The best mod so far is XTA, but I'm working on a better mod that features fast paced gameplay, and even more strategy than XTA. And the best AI is NTAI, which is programmed by this british guy, but I make the XTA buildtree, which pwns the other AIs at XTA. And the mythical new GUI, the solution to all of Spring's problems, might exist sometime. I will never give up hope! For the GUI! The GUI! So, yeah, you should play Spring.

Total Annihilation, which Spring is a remake of, had 1337z0r music. And it was cool, because the music changed when battles started and ended and stuff. But Spring doesn't have that. They're thinking about having it so that you can specify your own tracks for when different stuff is happening. You'd have folders named Battle, Building, Winning, Losing, Suspenseful, ect. The music that I would put in:

1) Every single track from the *Lord of the Rings* soundtracks. Yeah. That's right. I'm just that nerdy. Actually, the LOTR music is pretty good. It's like classical music but it's actually catchy and stuff. "It's a modern take on an old favorite!"

2) The music from Jazz Jackrabbit 1, Jazz Jackrabbit 2, and Jazz Jackrabbit Holiday Hare. It's like a cross between techno and rock, with no lyrics.

3) The Total Annihilation music. Huge, orchestral, drums, cymbals, melodies, countermelodies, harmonies. Jeremy Soule, the composer, is a genius. You can listen to

it at school by going to <http://www.fileuniverse.com/?p=listing&ID=54>. Listen to the intro, and track 6.

4) Beethoven's 9th symphony. The Ode to Joy part is crap, but the beginning is good, lots of interconnected extremely short melodies.

5) the Four Seasons. Doesn't seem to be particularly complex; mostly it is just excellent melodies repeated over and over again. But it's still fun to listen to.

6) Oh Fortuna. It makes going to the bathroom epic. So imagine what it would do to a battle with hundreds of units, five of them exploding every second, their smoking wreckage littering the battlefield...

Sometimes, in the rare occasion that I get tired of Spring, I play the Open Source strategy fantasy battle game Battle for Wesnoth with Kevin. It has a combination of turned based strategy, fantasy warfare, and an epic soundtrack. These factors combine to make me both bored enough and inspired enough to flood the chat screen with my epic novels.

"They were coming, burning, and soon they would be upon us, overwhelming us with strength in numbers. Then they were among us, forcing us to retreat the ford and allow them passage to our homeland. But Ferlion, a common warrior, rallied our host, and led a charge, sweeping them away..."

When my parents kick me off the computer so that they can download music or play chess, I play board games. The best are Stratego, Chess, Abalone, and Othello. All of the other ones have lots of random chance, and so they are less fun. But I could beat YOU easily in Stratego. Everybody else thinks I'm talking to them, but really I am talking to YOU. And I could definitely beat YOU in Stratego.

NERD Continued on 8

COMMERCIALS From 3

your mind to mush. And if you are watching TV and your mom shouts at you from upstairs to wash off the table, or to wash the dishes then you can shout to her "on the next commercial!" Then she will forget. Commercials are good in another sense, too: they pay for the TV shows. There are good and bad things about commercials but the bad definitely outweighs the good.

Jingles! Jingles for commercials are soooooo annoying. They get stuck in your head, and then you sing them for the rest of the day. They are so stupid, like the National American University jingle and the

Empire Today jingle. Jingles=annoying, I think everyone can agree on that. But there is one jingle that is for couches that I find myself humming while I am chopping up carrots. It is the bomb, it's the klick klack commercial... klick klack.

Commercials are very annoying and a lot of people wish that they would go away, disappear, or just not play as much as they do. Commercials in my opinion are worth while, and they should stick around. Even if it means humming stupid jingles all day long.◇

STICK IT From 4

watched my baby brother's head explode" drama!

Oh, and what's with dumbing girls down in movies? All the other girls in the gymnastics program were all really dumb. In this one part they were pretending their hands were phones and some actually thought no one but the person they were talking to could hear them. They wouldn't know a fire when they saw one. If their house caught on fire they would all die because they would call the flame pretty and talk about how it reminds them of their boyfriend. Haley was the only smart one and she "got her GED when she was 15." Well, she dropped out of school first. Good job on that!

This movie had funny points in it but it was mainly when someone got hurt, like coach Vickerman (Jeff Bridges) because he's old and they make him try to do all sorts of flips and what not. I mean, it could have been



Jeff Bridges stars in Stick It as coach Vickerman

worse. It was a very typical plot though. Rebel girl needs to change her bad ways and by the end of the movie she's wearing flare pants. It was still entertaining though. The end was probably the best part. Partially because it was ending but also because it wasn't THAT expected. Still could have used more of a twist though. This movie was 1 part water, 2 parts whiney teen drama queens, and a shocking 2 parts good. All in all, I give *Stick It* 3.5 out of 5 stars. I liked the posters in Haley's room (Sex Pistols). It was also still entertaining in an odd way. If I was flipping through channels at 3 a.m. and this was on ABC Family, I would stop and watch it.◇

INTERIM From 2

some experience fishing because when he was younger he used to fish with his dad. He has been doing interim for five years, and says he rarely has any problems.

Interim's purpose is to give students a chance to explore their interests outside of of the classroom.◇

AKEELAH From 4

lar schoolwork. See, Akeelah is so bored at school that she decides just not to go, now she's staring summer school in the face. Let that be a lesson to you, kids.

Anyway, she dominates at the school bee, which catches the attention of Dr. Larabee (Lawrence Fishburne), a college professor on sabbatical that's looking for the next big thing in the spelling circuit. He tests her with words like "pterodactyl," and "prestidigit-

ation." Why, she gets them all! How splendid! He begins to teach her the ways of the spelling nerd and she continues to excel in competition. She keeps this all a secret from her mother, and signs the parental consent forms as her dead father. I must admit, she is crafty. She meets an adorable

Latino boy who gives the judges a little sass, and an unhappy Asian who's domineering father sucks all the fun (of which there is plenty, I assure you) out of the bees. Nobody really likes him, but really, it's all his father's fault. Akeelah spends all of her free time with the Latino's spelling club, where they spell with basketballs and play Scrabble at birthday parties. They have the new Scrabble, with the little notches in the board and lazy Susan platform. I'm impressed.

Akeelah's mother finds out about her secret spelling parties and is in a tizzy. She just about pulls Akeelah out of the bee, but she realizes how much her daughter wants to win, and the fact that her coaching sessions count as summer school doesn't hurt either. Everything is coming up roses for awhile, until Dr. Larabee cuts off his coaching all of a sudden. He says it's because he's taught her all he can, but anyone with eyes can see it's something else. Aww.

Before sending her off, he gives her boxes of flashcards and tells her that once she's memorized those, the national competition will be a snap. Akeelah is lost without him! It seems that she's lost the will to spell, until the whole ding dang community begins to help her out. She has grocers, slim thugs,

her hoodlum brother, and everyone in between testing her. It gave me a pleasant fuzzy feeling.

Now that Akeelah is ready to compete, she has to face her arch rival, that snooty Asian. Will she be able to overcome her fear of being in the spotlight and win her school all that moolah, or will that grouchy Asian conquer all. Just how much is the trophy worth to her? Is the Asian really that grouchy at all? I guess you'll have to see it to find out.

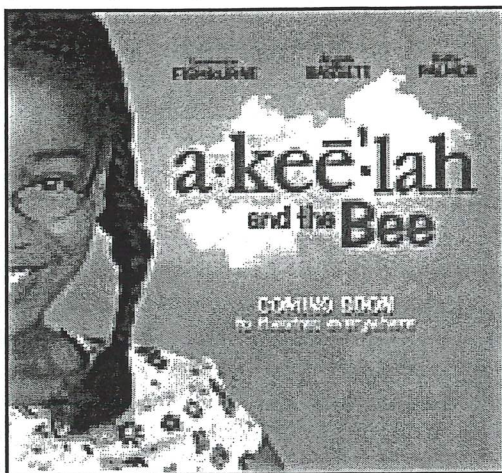
I genuinely enjoyed this movie. It's one of the "feel good" films, so if you're into the melancholy types, then skip it. I liked it because I too love spelling. I found myself spelling along with the kids in the movie, and it got an-

noying. I just couldn't stop.

I spent half of the movie trying to figure out where I'd seen one of Akeelah's brothers (Lee Thompson Young) before. Whenever he was in a scene, that nagging question just took me right out of the movie. Was he from a 90's pop group? A Nickelodeon show? I didn't figure it out until the end of the movie, and both guesses were wrong. He was from a Disney show. He played a secret agent or a pop star or something. I Googled Lee Thompson Young, and discovered that he starred in the series *The Famous Jett Jackson*, where he played a teen who played a secret agent and struggled to be a real kid. It was a part of the ZoogDisney lineup. Good times.

The movie is a classic story of triumph, like *Seabiscuit*, *Karate Kid*, and *Beauty and the Beast*. I actually liked the character of Akeelah, which made it a lot easier to root for her. Thanks to her brains and determination, Akeelah makes me believe that I, too, can escape the hood.

So if you like Scrabble, triumph, *The Famous Jett Jackson*, Lawrence Fishburne, birthday parties, courage, and jumping rope, then you'll like *Akeelah and the Bee*. I give it three stars, for being so dang happy.◊



PRINCESS From 4

of Jigo, is looking for the Forest Spirit too, but he wants to kill it. On the border of the forest is a small fortress, Iron Town, which produces the most powerful weapons ever; guns, capable of killing large forest creatures, and able to pierce the toughest samu-



rai armor in one shot.

The Lady Eboshi, the leader of Iron Town, is also interested in killing the

Forest Spirit. She wants the great forest monsters to stop attacking her town, and the wolf girl Mononoke, who was raised by the wolf god Moro, to become human again. Or is that her reason? As Jigo and Eboshi side together to slay the Forest Spirit, an army of samurai assault Iron Town, and a group of boars decides it's time to destroy the humans, Ashitaka is caught in the middle of it all. What happens? Watch the movie to find out, it is not my duty to spoil the ending.

This movie has excellent graphics, it's well voiced, and I consider it the best of Miyazaki's movies. It has an interesting plot, better than any other movies Miyazaki has made, and apart from the obvious, it's very realistic. I'd give this movie a nine-and-a-half out of ten, whether you like it as much as I do, that your decision, but all the same, watch it, it's better than I make it sound.◊

TYCOON From 5

personalities and like different types of rides.

Now let's talk a little about what could have been better in the game 1.) There are only 4 different viewing angles so at times it gets hard to see things that you are working on 2.) Although it is nice that the guests have different tastes in rides (to make the game more challenging) it can get very frustrating because sometimes you will build a seemingly "beautiful" roller coaster only to have guests telling you it's too intense for them 3.) The game lacks a "free build" scenario so you always have to be playing a scenario with set goals and money.

Overall this game is one of the best simulation games I have ever played. If you ever have the opportunity to buy this game at a garage sale or used game sale, go for it! ◊

IKEA From 5

me pretty happy.)

In my opinion the best thing to do while visiting IKEA is just to walk around, lay in the beds, and treat all the rooms as if they were my own. Although I do not believe the employees appreciate me disrupting their usual clientele much.

Some of the merchandise baffles me because of its low cost and high quality, like their kiddie toys. They are all so soft. For instance these crazy plush snakes. Upon jumping into the bin I experienced a tiny sample of what I imagine heaven to be. Although I did not get the Swedish name of the toy in question, I think it was something like snakeenugen. They have packs of felttippenangarjin (felt tip pens) for a mere 50 cents! I do not know how they price things in good old Sweden, but in America we like our merchandise over priced. Take a clue, Sweden, you could go higher. (I was just kidding IKEA, I did not mean it. Please do not discontinue your pricing habits, I will always love you.)

So my final conclusion is that if you like low prices and high quality than go to IKEA and if you do not, I do not believe you are someone I want to know.◊

NERDY From 6

Unfortunately, Board games take forever, and the school computers don't have Spring or BFW on them. So during lunch, I am confined to Magic the Gathering. My deck is pretty good, and its current record against Kevin's deck is 9 wins, 5 losses. But if I actually bought cards for my deck, it would be unstoppable. Alas, I am too young to legally get most jobs, and even if I had a job, its money would go towards buying a computer of my own. "Yeah! Try to kick me off now! Oh yeah, you can't! Even if you need to download that song you heard on the radio! Coz it's mine!"

So yup, that's pretty much everything that I think is fun. Except rereading LOTR, Orson Scott Card's Ender series and Bean series, and the Redwall books. But now I have covered those too. I need to make this three sentences for it to be a paragraph. But I'm out of stuff to say. Oh well.◊

BLUES From 5

American Nazi Party, Jake's mystery girlfriend, the National Guard, the Fire Department, and Illinois' SWAT teams. The action is ridiculously over-the-top, with Jake's mystery girlfriend trying to kill him with a rocket launcher, demolition equipment, a flame thrower, and finally, a good, old-fashioned M-16 assault rifle, literally hundreds of police cars chasing the brothers and crashing and piling up in incredible numbers, and the unforgettable police adjutant's line, "Use of unnecessary violence in the apprehension of the Blues Brothers has been approved."

After having seen the movie, I've realized that the most frightening thing in the world is seeing Ray Charles with a handgun. After having seen it multiple times, I've realized that if you listen closely enough, in every car crash involving more than one police car, someone always says something along the lines of, "he broke my watch!"

The R&B greats are all in disguise; Cab Calloway is a mentor to the Brothers at the Orphanage, while James Brown plays a hilarious priest. Aretha Franklin has a small but funny role as the owner of a soul food restaurant, and Ray Charles plays the owner of Ray's Music Exchange,

an instrument shop. I also like the seamless (and sometimes random) changes from plot to music, involving such songs as, "Twistin'," "Sweet Home Chicago," "I Need You," the theme from "Rawhide," and "The Ride of The Valkyries."

Problems: It's rated R for excessive language. That means swearing. There is one scene where the dialogue is almost nothing but profanity (that's what makes it funny). Of course, it came out in 1980, and they were a little more strict about rating films back then.

This film stars Belushi as Jake Blues, Ackroyd as Elwood Blues, Ray Charles as himself, Cab Calloway as Curtis, James Brown as Reverend Cleophus, Aretha Franklin as herself, John Candy as the chief of police, James Lee Hooker as himself, Carrie Fisher as Jake's mystery girlfriend, John Gibson as the Nazi leader, Frank Oz as the Corrections Officer for the Joliet state prison, and all of the Blues Brothers band

(except Jake and Elwood) as themselves.

The Blues Brothers has many hilarious scenes, and I'm not going to name them all, but my personal favorite is the concert scene at the Palace Hotel Ballroom, when the Blues Brothers put on a show while being hunted by the western band and several squads of Illinois state troopers ("We're so glad to have all you lovely people here tonight. We especially would like to thank the representatives of the Illinois law enforcement community, which have chosen to be here with us at this time. Remember people, no matter who you are or what you do to live, thrive and survive, there are still some things that make us all the same. You, me, them, everybody. Everybody."). Another great scene is when Jake tries to fast-talk his girlfriend out of killing them. ("OH,

PLEASE, don't kill us! Please, please don't kill us! You know I love you, baby! It wasn't my fault!" "You miserable slug! You think you can talk your way out of this!? You betrayed me!" "No I didn't! Honest! I ran out of gas! I had a flat tire! I didn't have enough money for cab fare! My tux didn't come back from the cleaners! An old friend came in from out of



The classic tough guys of Blues Brothers

town! Someone stole my car! There was an earthquake! A terrible flood! LOCUSTS! IT WASN'T MY FAULT, I SWEAR TO GOD!")

"It was an awesome movie," said teacher Leo Bickelhaupt. I would agree with you on that, Leo. Out of 10, I would rate *Blues Brothers* a 10. It's a ludicrous film, with wonderful jokes orchestrated by Ackroyd and Belushi, who have to be among the 20th century masters of comedy. It was deliberately done in a musical style, because not only does Dan Ackroyd like R&B, but it was a tribute to this wonderful form of music. Although the plot is fairly simple, the sheer hilarity of it all makes it much more entertaining. If you like comedy, R&B, ridiculous car chases, musicals, or movies that make fun of Nazis, *Blues Brothers* is definitely for you. If you're one of those poor, underprivileged folks who haven't seen it yet (you've had 25 years to do it), check it out. You'll be glad you did.◊