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Blogging craze catches fire

Ananda Wold
Guest Writer

"So today I went to Ikea. It was totally overwhelming..." This is the beginning to my December 30th weblog entry. The weblog craze has hit the Internet by storm, allowing people the entire world around to read what you write and know the ins and outs of personal problems, relationships, and your life in general. . . at least all the information that you are willing to post.

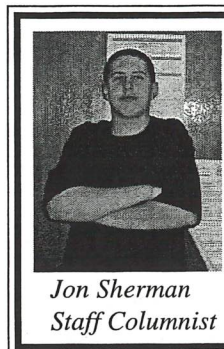
For those of you that are not familiar with the term weblog or blog, the shortened version, a blog is sort of an online journal. Jesse James Garret, editor of an on-line publication, started the weblog (so named by Jorn Barger) in the 90's. Early in 1999 there were 23 websites that today are considered the forefathers of the modern weblog.

Originally the weblog was only accessible to people that knew how to create and maintain websites, making blogs an exclusive-to-

computer-nerds phenomenon. The original weblog was a compilation of links, commentary, personal thoughts, and essays, logging the Internet, hence web-log. Many of today's blogs still log the world wide web to some extent, however, by late 1999, with the launch of the 1st "build your own weblog" website, the definition of weblog extended to include the already somewhat popular on-line journal.

With the large amount of general public creating weblogs, the term "blogger" was coined to recognize the people actually writing the blogs. The original form of the blog was short, sweet, and to the point, written by editors that would whittle a sentence down to the least amount of words, with the most impact. In the "post blogger explosion," the blog changed forms taking on *WEBLOGS Continued on 6*

America: The Book



Jon Sherman
Staff Columnist

As if commercialism needed any assistance plaguing the winter holiday season, I'm going to play advocate for the great new book from the writers of Comedy Central's *The Daily Show with John Stewart*, *America (The Book)*,

is "A Citizen's Guide to Democracy Inaction."

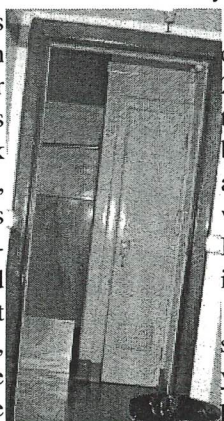
Packed like jam with amazing left-wing insight, America's keenest features include a "what type of government best suits you?" chart that covers options from Democracy to a possible future government of "constitutional robocracy," where a typical day consists of obeying the robots, consuming RAM for breakfast, listening to your favorite punk-rock band, Devo, and possibly being jailed for showing emotions.

At the end of each chapter are classroom activities and discussion questions, seeing as *AMERICA Continued on 8*

Doors: opening the past

Devlin Byrne
Staff Writer

The bathrooms in our school do not have doors. To the keen observer, this may seem obvious. If you have been going to this school for three or more years, you may think that this article is frivolous. You may think that the doors are old news. True, the doors were taken off three years ago this October, but if you mention to a seventh grader, or indeed anyone new to this school, that at one time the bathrooms had doors, you'll usually get some thing like this: "The bathrooms used to have doors? Whatever. (Pause) Wait, why were they taken off?" There is a general curiosity as to the events that led to the removal of the doors. I hope



The bathrooms
still lack doors

this story will satisfy that curiosity.

THE REMOVAL The bathroom doors were taken off in October 2001, over MEA weekend. Reactions included: surprise, confusion, bewilderment, apathy, outrage, and mild disconcertion. The doors were taken off for several reasons. I will now use a clever metaphor involving a gun to explain them.

The gun was loaded by the constant vandalism over the past few years: paper towels and toilet paper thrown on the ceiling, paper towels jammed in the sink, and the soap dispensers ripped off the wall almost every other week. Not to

BATHROOM DOORS? Continued on 7

The Ear

Doug reviews new movie *The Life Aquatic*: page 4

Paul reviews new game *Half Life 2*: page 5

Very special Fraquetball page: page 10

The Purple Press Staff

Editor in Chief
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Assistant Editor
Nathan Jesson

Adult to Blame
Leo Bickelhaupt

Central to Open? Open welcomes Central student

Geoff Freeman
Staff Writer

When an Open School student exhausts the resources Open has to offer, they are encouraged to leave the campus and pursue classes elsewhere. I did so myself, which is how I met my friend Jay Shoenberg, a senior at Central High School. Jay and I were hanging out this past summer, chatting over a couple tall ones. He was joking about taking a class at Open. I encouraged him to look into it, of course, mistaking his enthusiasm for wishful thinking. I guess I was wrong. Because Jay is taking a class at Open! He began Leo's sixth hour Pop Culture class this trimester. Leave it to Jay to break that longstanding, if not a bit novel, barrier.

I asked Jay how he liked Open so far. He paused a moment, a contemplative look on his face, then answered. "My first day at Open was off the hook/ 'till Leo greeted me with a nasty, fowl look/ and said 'You Central kids are wack, you prob'ly can't even rap'/ so I wore him out with some flows 'till he needed a nap/ But I'm a thug so I'm sure I'll be alright/ So far Open School seems tiggiddy tight." I told Jay I was impressed with his freestyle abilities, less so with Leo's. Leo scowled at me.

I also asked him to fill out a survey about a few of his likes and dislikes. I watched as he thoughtfully filled out the page. Under likes, he wrote: Break dancing, whaling, and keeping it real. I noticed he hadn't put anything down for dislikes. But before I could compliment his sunny disposition, I realized he was just busy rap-battling a passerby. Then he returned his attention to the survey. "This part could take while," he explained.

Anyhow, I encourage you to introduce yourself to Jay.

Fraquetball All Star Game

The Best of the Best Square off

Nathan Jesson
Staff Editor

For the first time on December 16, the annual Fraquetball All-Star game took place. Five people were on each team, and they rotated in and out. "It was more intense than climbing Mount Everest naked," said junior Tony Cavanaugh, a spectator. The All-Star game was a best out of three series. The Northern conference won the first game, but then dropped the next two. Jaime Avila was declared All-Star game M.V.P. The first game was a 7-4 victory, for the Northern conference. Liam Shramko of Fetal Attraction scored 4 of those goals and Nathan Jesson had 5 saves. However the Eastern Conference won the next game 8-6, although Antonio Rosario of Ultimate Sonning scored 5 goals in a losing effort. The third game was tied 6-6 when time ran out, and was continued the next day. The Eastern Con-

ference ended up victorious. In doing so, they won home team advantage for the Fraquetball Finals. The All-Star game was so popular in fact, that after the finals, there will be a Fraquetball Pro Bowl.

After Fraquetball continued following winter break, the competition remained heated, when Fetal Attraction (Liam Shramko and Andrew Hoaglund) faced off against The Losers (Jaime Avila and Tim Fiero.) The two teams were the leaders in their respective conferences. The Losers took a quick 5-2 lead, before Fetal Attraction made a tremendous comeback. They tied the game at six, and from then on the teams traded off points. "We won in spectacular fashion, as usual," said Liam. The loss caused The Losers to fall behind Gentle
FRAQUETBALL Continued on 7

Piper a Thursday delight

Rhys Hunding
Staff Writer

"The Pied Piper of Hamelin" is about the delicious town of Hamelin, which is made filthy by an infestation of rats. After many attempts at ridding themselves of the vermin, they import the help of a traveling gypsy bastard with a flute, named the Pied Piper. This fantastic voyage through the world of theater made my Thursday.

So those little kids came running in throughly scaring the bejesus out of me, and making me forever fear rats, by running around with brown stuff on their noses and acting like "rats," or people who are at a rave. Then it goes into a scene in the mayor's office where they're sitting on tables (which Natalie schools them about later) and Owen Platt, 9th grade, is writing furiously through their whole discussion being the sly dog he is, while Rob-

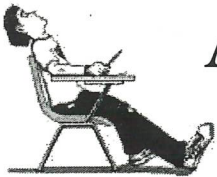


*The leads Nathan Jesson
and Peter Allen*

ert Jackson, 9th grade, is holding the ink bottle. That really bothered me so much. Seriously couldn't Owen's jaunty self have used a table? I'm pretty sure there is a better use of Robert's time (hmm, maybe not). No problem to Owen, except the ink bottle was too close to his face. Who wants to go all the way up there every time they need ink? I personally hate that ink bottle. It was craptacular!

All the while, the townswomen are complaining about the rats. Shaeng Yang, 8th grade, because they are ruining women's chats(if they had AIM that wouldn't be a problem), Courtney Sjquist, 10th grade, because she loves sausage and Anna Byly-Strauss, 10th grade, because they were making nests in the men's Sunday hats (if they wore hats all week that wouldn't be a problem). After that whole climactic ink bottle thing a crazy wizard guy (Peter Allen, 10th grade), with a shiny hat that caused mild vision loss, came all Sadddam Hussein-esque with a bomb for every individual rat but I don't remember what happened shortly after that due to temporary vision loss.

Shortly after I regained my vision, the
PIED PIPER Continued on 6



A Moment with Sean Keith

How long have you been at Open School? 11 years

Extra Curricular Activities: Student Government, Youth Leadership, Viceburgh, Team Zissou

Senior Profile



What are your plans for next year?

I'm going to college. I'm applying to Evergreen, Macalester, and Earlham.

What are you going to miss most about Open?

The comfort of knowing all the teachers and students.

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

My favorite movie is West Way to the World. (A documentary about The Clash)

What was your favorite class at Open?

Heroic Literature.

What is one super power you wish you had?

Stretch arms. (He sort of already has those)

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

Cab Driver or superhero

Who is one person you would like to meet?

Ghandi

Winter holidays: the ultimate debate

Chloe Taipale and Anna Blyly-Strauss

Staff Writers

G. Love and Special Sauce

It's the winter holiday season again. You know what that means; time to eat vast amounts of food and be merry. So, will you ravage a tree and haul it into your home, or light candles in hopes that your younger siblings' presents become enflamed? Are you one of them Jesus folk, or are you some minority we don't care about? It is time once again my friends, for *dun dun dun* the winter holiday dance off! We, your holiday experts, will waste paper arguing about Yuletide and Chanuka. Taking the side of Chanuka, we have G. Love, and defending Yuletide, our very own Special Sauce. Let the games begin!

Special Sauce: First of all, I would like to say that nothing quenches the soul like hacking at a glorious tree and nestling it into my splendid home.

G. Love: Yes, but you must understand the joy of lighting things aflame in the comfort of your own home. Not only do you get the satisfaction of shiny firey things, there is also a chance you'll be able to collect a

lovely check from your friendly neighborhood insurance company when the house is set alight.

Special Sauce: Well, if I play my Christmas tree cards right, I will also be able to enjoy a roaring piece of landscape in my abode as well.

G. Love: But let's be honest, Menorahs are VERY aesthetically pleasing. And let us not forget the colors. Which matches better, the scrumptious blue and white of my Jew days, or the nasty green and red of the Yuletide season?

Special Sauce: Maybe you're taking crazy pills, fool. Green and red are very tasty colors. Do YOU have an old man with a funny outfit watch you while you sleep, and then break into your house and leave you stuff? I don't think so.

G. Love: Maybe you folk wouldn't be so fond of red if Jesus didn't love you so much, like crazy. The green is obviously a reference to the way you enjoy eating green eggs

and HAM during the Yuletide season. We may not have crazy men in funny outfits, but we do celebrate the deaths of many a folk who we killed just to be able to put the right shiny little bits of happiness in our temple.

Special Sauce: At least we get to eat cheese filled bratwurst. Zing!

G. Love: Well, we have the tastiness of greasy Latkahs. Oh, burn! And we get eight days of presents, that's more than I can say about Christmas.

Special Sauce: Man, I'll eat your latchkeys any day of the week. YOU don't have shiny fly-y reindeer and a magical sack, DO you?

G. Love: Don't kid yourself, you know as well as I that the vastitude of Chanuka presents outweighs the happiness of any reindeer. With all those dirty little animals on your roof, you'll have a mighty hefty post-Yuletide shingle replacing bill.

HOLIDAY Continued on 8

The Life Aquatic

Douglas Anderson
Staff Writer

The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou is a film for the ages. During the opening scene, you see an old man on his deathbed. He is clutching an orb containing a winter scene in his hand. As he dies, he drops the snow globe and it shatters. He also whispers one final word: "rosebud." A journalist tries to uncover the secret of what that word meant. So we see, through a series of flashbacks, the dead man's rise to power. Then it turns out that rosebud was the sled he had as a boy! I'm just kidding, that was actually *Citizen Kane*.

For real though, *The Life Aquatic* was a little strange, pretty sad and very funny. It has a nice mix of humor, sad times and drama. Director Wes Anderson fails to disappoint, and Bill Murray turns in an excellent performance. Not to mention the screenplay, which by my standards is quite good. Bill Murray's string of casual one-liners are excellent, and all of the setups for regular jokes are good. In addition, a bunch of David Bowie songs were translated into Portuguese

and played throughout the movie. It was both funny and fun to try and figure out which song was which. I haven't had this much fun at the screen since I saw Lyndon Baines Johnson's campaign ads with the little girl and the daisies.

The Life Aquatic is about Steve Zissou (Murray), an internationally renowned oceanographer who has fallen on hard times. None of his recent documentaries live up to his old works, and his best friend and colleague of 27 years was eaten by a mysterious shark. He and his crew, Team Zissou, are going to set sail to find and kill this

enigma of a shark. (Does this story sound familiar? It should, because it's *Moby Dick*.)

Zissou also becomes aquatinted with Ned Plimpton (Owen Wilson), the man who may or may not be his son. Plimpton is a Kentucky Air pilot who joins Zissou and co. on the expedition. Also joining Team Zissou is Jane Winslett-Richardson (Cate Blanchett), a reporter assigned to do a profile of Steve. **STEVE ZISSOU** Continued on 6



Bill Murray and Owen Wilson star in *The Life Aquatic*.

National Treasure

Beau Fritz
Staff Writer

National Treasure is one of those movies that involves a lot of thinking. However, at the same time it is a very exciting and mysterious movie. It seemed as though the clues would never end.

Nicholas Cage and Sean Bean are some of the big name actors in the movie. The movie is about Ben Gates (Nicholas Cage), whose grandfather told him as a boy of a treasure that was hidden by America's founding fathers in the

early years of America. Gates is supposed to protect it from the hands of Ian Howe (Sean Bean). Howe, at the beginning of the movie, is supposed to be Gates's friend. As the movie progresses, it seems like Gates is looking more for the treasure instead of pro-

tecting it from Ian. Later on in the movie, he turns on him and decides that he will try to find the treasure on his own and kill Gates in the process.



On the hunt in *National Treasure* in theaters now.

The movie takes place in several different locations. One is Antarctica and another is Washington D.C. Also featured are several famous national monuments and some famous artifacts: the Liberty Bell and of course the Declaration of Independence.

After seeing the movie *National Treasure*, I am convinced that Nicholas Cage is probably the best adventure movie actor of our time. He has a unique knowledge of history and figures out riddles that bring him **NATIONAL TREASURE** Continued on 7

Finding Neverland

Katie Hurley
Staff Writer

What up dawgs? Yay for a movie review!!! If you like Johnny Depp and Kate Winslet and fairy tales, then this movie is for you! Yes, you!! I know that you tied your grandmother to the sidewalk then hit her with your tricycle when you were four. If you hate kids with fleshy ears, maybe you should stay away from this movie; the little boy, Peter, had badunkaeers!!!

Okay, so *Finding Neverland* takes place in old time Edwardian, England. It's about Sir James Matthew Barrie (Johnny Depp) and his inspiration for Peter Pan. His plays aren't doing too good, his wife is overcontrolling and always wants him home and she seems to also want him so stop writing so much. Okay, he's a play writer. It's like telling a dog to stop licking themselves while you're trying to watch TV. She won't even really talk to him and when he offers her to spend time with her she always is too busy. He goes to take the dog to the park and asks

if she wants to go with and she says no. But that's okay because if she did go he would



Johnny Depp stars in *Finding Neverland*

have never met his inspiration, Sylvia Llewelyn Davies (Kate Winslet) and her four sons. He spends time with them and his wife gets over controlling some more. I hate people like that. He's just friends with her!

That's how relationships fail. (Over a person getting too attached.) If he is missing for a week maybe you should worry, but really now! A writer needs time out of the house especially if his wife is stupid! If he gets, like seven phone calls all from different women maybe you should kick him out of the house, but Sylvia never called him. It's a good movie though.

It had a lot of good parts, like when the kid broke wrist because of his stupid little brother that always whined and got in the way! Also, when James and his wife finally broke up. It's always nice seeing Johnny Depp and someone break up. There was also some sad parts, like the end of the movie. Quite a few people in the theater cried at the **NEVERLAND** Continued on 7

Opinions 'n' Stuff

Half Life: not half bad

Paul Wilkening
Staff Gamer

You hop out of a storm drain, a 9mm USP Match pistol training out in front of you, and your ears and eyes wide open for the masked soldiers of the Combine that controls City 17. A blue clad citizen runs by, 30 feet ahead of you, and then is shot, the automatic gunfire echoing off the canal walls and blood spraying across the whitewashed concrete. You maneuver through wreckage and trash, trying to keep some cover. Another burst of gunfire and a yell. You turn sharply, a covered storm drain, another citizen dead, and the inhuman mask of the Combine soldier, raising his gun to aim at you.

This is Half-Life 2, the long-awaited, sweated-over, and highly-expected sequel to the original Half-Life. Produced by Valve for PC and selling for around \$50 retail, Half-Life 2 is well worth the wait and price tag. It finally reached global stores on November 16th, 2004, after struggles with the theft of the source code, and a number of quickly pushed back release dates that ate up months even faster. Finally, it ended over a year after the initial release prediction of September 30th, 2003. The only downside

so far has been the rather high level of requisite computer performance for the graphics intensive game. It requires a 1.2 GHz processor, 256mb RAM, and a DirectX 7 capable video card. The recommended system is a 2.4 GHz processor, 512mb RAM, and DirectX 9 capable video card. This review tested the game on a 2 GHz Athlon64 processor, with 512 RAM and DirectX 9 capable video card. I had no problems at what seemed optimal video settings.

In Half-Life 2, you are the same Gordon Freeman who survived the Black Mesa incident over a decade before the current situation, used by the 'G-Man' of Half-Life to solve problems. Now in 'City 17', a landscape eerily similar to some eastern European capitals, Gordon joins a group of freedom fighters trying to escape the rule of former Black Mesa administrator Wallace Breen, and aliens known as 'The Combine'.

Enough setup though, you can find all that out in the beginning of the game and the end of Half-Life 1. What's all the hubbub about? Graphics. Half-Life 2 has been widely con-

HALF LIFE Continued on 9

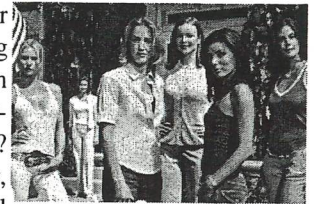
Desperate Housewives

Maybe ABC is getting desperate

Tony Cavanaugh
Staff Writer

Lets face it guys, we all saw the billboards around town and we all drooled a little bit at the idea they implied. There's just something about Desperate Housewives that excites us all. As it turns out, the show is really nothing like the ads made it out to be, and when I watched an episode, I was about as disappointed as when Bush got reelected.

The housewives are the somewhat attractive yet very sleazy residents of a place called Wisteria Lane, which resembles any modern upper class American suburb. The most desperate housewife, the main character, has killed herself and now all of the others live their lives guessing why. How can the main character be dead? I don't know, but she is, and somehow she narrates the



The Cast of Desperate Housewives

show from her elevated point of view. Back to the housewives. One is a mother of four, so stressed out that she has become addicted to her kid's ADD medication. Another is an ex-model, who is having an affair with the 17-year-old gardener. One has been married like three times. Another has large breasts. The last one decided that the best way to deal with her son's drunken hit-and-run accident was to dispose of his car in the inner city.

In the episode I watched, Lynette becomes steadily more dependent on her children's ADD medication; Susan (large breasts) is angered when her first official date with the man that all the housewives day dream about is canceled. Gabrielle (ex-model) is very obviously jealous of another woman in her man John's life, but then again, she's gettin' down with their 17- year old gardener on the side. Finally, the aforementioned "last one," her kids basically flip out and rebel when they learn that their dad has moved out, and Mr. Shaw (guest star Richard Roundtree) progresses in the investigation

HOUSEWIVES Continued on 8

Super Bowl Preview

Jaime gives us his insight on the big game

Jaime Avila
Staff Writer

The Super Bowl is the greatest prize in pro football. It's what teams work for all season. I believe that these four teams: the New England Patriots, the Pittsburgh Steelers, the Philadelphia Eagles, and the Indianapolis Colts have the best chances to win the Super Bowl.

The Patriots are probably going to repeat as champions because they just win no matter what. They have a good offense, ranked fourth in the league at 27.3 points per game, and have a good defense, ranked second in the league and allowing 16.2 points per game. The one game they lost was when they didn't have running back Corey Dillion, who currently is fifth in rushing even though he missed one game. That just shows how im-

portant he is to them. They have a good defense that comes up with big plays in almost every game. They know how to stop the run, and even with injuries in the secondary they stop a lot of big plays through the air. They will get far in the playoffs, but will need Corey Dillion to be healthy so that they can control clock and wear out opposing defenses.

I think the Steelers are the only team in the league that can beat the Patriots, but they probably won't because the Pats will have Corey Dillion back. They have a good offense, ranked 11th in the league at 23.2 points per game. They have a great defense which is fast and linebackers that can hit

SUPER BOWL Continued on 9

Holiday Season Cheer

Nicole Downey
Staff Writer

The holiday season is a very special time of the year. I believe that the holidays bring everybody a little closer, whether you're spending your winter break with family and friends or smooching underneath the mistletoe with that special someone, everyone is sure to have some kind of fun during the holidays.

Christmas always doesn't come with happiness and joy though. It also comes with expenses and very overwhelmed people. I asked some students at Open School about what stresses them out the most around the holidays. Most of them had answers similar to trying to get everybody gifts. It's hard to buy presents in the big mad rush of Christmas shopping, but many people make the most of it anyway. "I love Christmas shopping and eating all the fancy food... I love making cookies and giving people presents and, of course, getting presents," said junior Maggie Karl. While, on the other hand, Christmas shopping just stresses some people out. "I ain't got no money to buy nobody stuff!" said junior Molly Stark.

There's usually at least one thing that stresses many people out about the holiday season. However, I think the people that suffer the most would have to be the par-

ents. Some students at Open School seem to agree. "Overwhelmed," is what junior Delia Levine-Horrigan said about how she thinks her parents feel around the holidays. Most people replied with the same answer, saying that they think Christmas stresses their parents out, but in the end they seem to appreciate it. Around the holidays parents and teenagers share some of the same problems, money problems that is. "Everybody is so materialistic nowadays," said senior Vanessa Parsons. I asked some students about how much money they spend on Christmas gifts and related things and their answer was in the range of \$150 to \$300 or more. "God, I don't know. Way too much [money]!" Said Maggie.

While the holidays always seem to stir up some trouble, everybody must not forget the happiness and fun it brings on that special day. From shopping for gifts to decorating the house, everybody is rushing for their lives. Even teenagers are involved in the hectic times of the holidays; we have to work and buy gifts and on top of that we have to go to school. At the end of all of this, the one thing everybody is looking forward to is spending time with family and just having fun. ♦

PIED PIPER From 2

grand duchess (Natalie Iwaszek, 9th grade) arrived looking much like Eleanor Roosevelt, except, you know, not old or bisexual, and with a hoop skirt. Apart from me personally hating the word duchess, I thought it was an excellent performance, especially when she yelled at Zack

Gilliland, 9th grade, that was awesome. But then after that ordeal the Pied Piper, Peter Allen, arrived with promises of ridding the town of the rats. The mayor (Nathan Jesson, 11th grade) being overjoyed with the concept, offered him way more money than he deserved. But that's all right be-

cause after that the piper creep gets swindled (ha, swindled) out of all his money because the mayor was like "I saw the rats drown now, I don't have to pay you." Shortly after that the Pied Piper steals all their children,

except the crippled one (John Knapp, 7th grade). Earlier in the play he was complaining about how the rats chewed the bottom of his crutch off, so he couldn't run errands, but the truth is he can't run at all. Then at the end of the play he tripped and fell (ha!).



Nathan with Zach and the ELC cast.

When asked about it later, he said he did it on purpose. Anna is also who we can credit all the fantacolous (ya, that's right I made up a word) costumes, which include Doug Anderson, 11th grade, and Zack's fluffy chest things, the square hats, and my personal favorite, Nathan's fluffy shoulders.

Basically, at the end of the play the townspeople are sad because all their children are gone, so the moral I took from this was if you steal from people they will kill your children, or will they? Yes. ♦

STEVE ZISSOU From 4

Run- ins with pirates, Zissou's rival Alistair Hennesy (Jeff Goldblum), and Steve's estranged wife (Anjelica Huston) make for some craaaaaazy hijinks. Plus there's Pele, the Portuguese guitar-playing man.

So what about this movie doesn't work? The stylized aquatic wildlife in my opinion both add and subtract to the movie in my mind. They are kind of cool, but rather unnecessary. It almost seemed to me that Wes Anderson included them as a sort of smug, try and stop me joke. That was the biggest issue I had with the movie. Also, Ned isn't the greatest character on Earth. But I think that may be because if you like Ned, you are almost definitely going to hate Steve, because Steve isn't extremely nice to Ned, for reasons you will see if you view this film.

The plot comes full circle in a good fashion, and this movie weighs in at less than 2 hours, so it doesn't drag on. They search for the shark, bad things happen, and they may or may not find the shark. And when they do, they may or may not kill the shark. Just watch the movie and see.

Just how good was *The Life Aquatic*? "I haven't seen it yet, but it looks splendid," said Nathan Jesson, a junior at Open School. He then made a rather indecent proposal. Like I said, it's funny, it's sad, it's concise and it is well-played. I would give this movie an 8.5 to 9 out of 10 stars. ♦

WEBLOGS From 1

a role more like a free form short hand journal.

Today when you do a Google search for "free weblogs" you come up with over 4 million websites ranging from *Xanga.com* to *Livejournal.com* to *Blogger.com*. According to *Wired Magazine*, the estimated number of weblogs reaches well beyond 500,000. The large amount of weblogs has caught the interest of several large news organizations. Weblogs have been featured on National Public Radio, and in *Time Magazine*.

Why are blogs so popular? I mean if you think about it, it is almost a stalker's paradise. I began my personal weblog on *Xanga.com* in late December. I did it hoping on the bandwagon, along with some friends. I really thought that I'd get bored with it, and end up forgetting about it; amazingly though it's become almost an addiction. Everyday I post on my blog 1-3 times. I generally have a "link of the day" to some zany website I've found. I add an odd thought or two, a movie or music review,

WEBLOGS Continued on 7

BATHROOM DOORS? From 1

mention the massive amounts of urine covering the floor. According to custodian Dave Horvath, the events that pulled the trigger were one-fold. 1. A smoker was drifting between the first and second floor bathrooms. With the build up over the years and the recent problems, Ruth decided to take decisive action and remove the doors. The rest is history.

THE CONTROVERSY. When students returned after a four day weekend, they slowly came to realize that the doors on the bathrooms were gone. This realization was followed by mass hysteria and the biggest government cover up in U.S. history.* There was an all SLC meeting in Bridget's room run by student government that provided a sounding board for students to sound their feelings against a board of students. I attended this meeting as a puny eighth grader. The general sentiment from the students seemed to be two-fold: 1. It was a little embarrassing that we didn't have doors on our bathrooms. 2. They were upset that the students hadn't been consulted on the matter. They felt that if Ruth had come to them and voiced her opinions, they could have come up with an alternate solution to end the vandalism.

Many students were upset, and so was at least one staff member, Julie Doble. "It still bothers me," said Julie. Although Julie is still bothered by it, she feels that as long as the students are fine with it, the doors should

stay off. What Julie wonders is why the students aren't up in arms about it, saying, "What is interesting to me is that students don't seem to mind. That no one talks about it anymore." Well maybe no one was talking about it before this article Julie, but I'd bet my most fertile sow that they will be after.

The student body has mixed feelings about the lack of bathroom doors. Douglas Anderson, 11th grade, "I think about it every time I go to the bathroom, it upsets me. It's awkward when I'm walking down the hall and I glance over and a girls walking out and she's looking right at me." Jaime Avila feels very strongly on the issue, saying, "I want those damn doors back!" Not all students feel so strongly about it.

One such student, Sean Keith, Senior, was against having doors on the bathrooms from the get go. He was quoted in the January 2002 Purple Press as saying, "The doors were annoying," and, "I'm really against putting the doors back on." I interviewed Sean to see if his feelings had changed on the matter. He was very hostile, saying, "I refuse to answer your questions. This is a stupid article." Clearly there was something that happened three years ago that Sean doesn't want me to find out. I would have dug deeper, but I feared for my life, and did not think it would be fair to my children to leave them fatherless, so I let it drop.

THEIR FINAL RESTING PLACE. The

man who Principal Pechmann called upon to actually take the doors off was our very own custodian and all around helpful guy, Dave Horvath. Dave removed the doors using a screwdriver. Whether it was a phillips or a flat head eludes him at the moment. Dave broke down the procedure for me. Step one: take a single door off. Step two: carry it to storage. I asked Dave why he didn't remove both doors on the same floor then take them to storage together. Dave said this was impractical. "Each door weighed about 200 pounds," said Dave. That's right, our man Dave here carried each 200-pound door all by himself. If you didn't respect Dave before, you should now.

Now for the really juicy part all of you are dying to know. Where are the doors now? Dave was the only man who could clue me in as to where they are, and he did. The doors are still in the building. That's right. If you really wanted to, you could see them for your self. The doors are in three separate locations. The doors from the first floor are in the cafeteria. The doors from the second floor are located in the storage room between the second and third floor in the main stair well. The doors off the third floor are kept in the penthouse between the third floor and the roof.

I for one think that these relics should be put in an Open School museum, right next to the long extinct principles, values, beliefs, and general spirit of early Open School.◊

FRAQUETBALL From 2

Giants in the standings. "Fetal Attraction got a much needed self esteem boost today, after their loss to Jesson 5," said Commissioner Nathan Jesson.

And what does the next month hold for Fraquetball? The playoffs begin on February 4th, and many are wondering who will get in. Los Geezers and Alpha Numericals Revisited are in a close race for the final spot in the Eastern conference. In the Northern conference three teams are vying for one spot. Muffins, Ultimate Sonning, and Hat Trick are all trying to get ahead. However, Hat Trick is as ice cold as Halloween 1991. Jesson 5 and Fetal Attraction are fighting for the top spot in the north, while a seemingly unending battle is taking place for the top spot in the east, between Gentle Giants and The Losers.◊

NEVERLAND From 4

end but I laughed at the kid's stupid hair when he and James Barrie were talking. I couldn't help but laugh. People look at you funny if you laugh at sad parts though.

So, over all I give this movie 3.5 out of four stars, because I don't like the youngest kid. He made me angry. Mainly because he whined too much. So I think you peoples should go see this movie, but don't laugh at "sad" moments or people will start to stare. The acting was pretty good as well. Johnny's accent was really good. So were the kids', but I don't think the kids had to try too hard to have an accent because they were really British. YEEEEAAAAH!!!!!!!!!!!!◊

NATIONAL TREASURE From 4

one step closer to finding this nation's biggest treasure. An example of one really good action scene is where Gates and his friends are captured by Ian Howe and his crew. After being captured, they are just trying to stay alive. They start looking underground for the treasure which becomes a difficult task, because the winding stairs that they are descending on begins to fall apart beneath their feet.

I would have to give this movie 3 out of 4 stars, because of all the action scenes. The only drawback was that the movie involves too much thinking outside of school. Other than that, it is a pretty good movie.◊

WEBLOGS From 6

and a summary of my day, and ta da! I guess there is something oddly appealing about putting my life, and thoughts on the Internet for friends and complete strangers to read and comment on, or completely ignore.

I asked fellow bloggers, both known and unknown, why they blogged and I got a variety of responses. Blogger "Raver" commented on the fact that it is a place to share
WEBLOGS Continued on 8

AMERICA From 1

how the book is designed as a text book and even has a "This Book Is The Property Of" stamp inside the front cover that you are familiar seeing in our own school textbooks. In one of the activities, you can make your own flag, using either a star, a crescent, stripes, a Bhutanese winged dragon, a pot leaf, or an Alfred Hitchcock silhouette. In another activity, students are challenged to write a campaign speech incorporating as many words on the given list as possible. The list consists of such words as liberty, freedom, good people, regular folks, this great nation, churches, synagogues, and mosques, heroes, and small businesses. Among the extra credit words are wetlands a n d Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis.

A page entitled, "The Vice President: A Heartbeat Away from Relevance" contains a copy of the Vice-Presidential Welcome Letter, left in the Vice President's desk for newcomers. It opens by saying, "If you are reading this letter you've just been elected Vice President. That means your most vital job is already done, namely, 'balancing the ticket.' Congratulations on being a region geographically disparate from that of the President."

The book also features regular correspondents from *The Daily Show*, like Samantha Bee, who generously steps in every other chapter to tell the reader "how we do it in

Canada."

An illustrated diagram, "The Cabinet: Yes-Men of Freedom," reveals who comprises a cabinet and their roles. For example, the Director of Homeland Security "came up with the color-coded terror chart in 2002 and hasn't done a thing since." The Secretary of State "shakes hands with important people, then attempts to get those people to shake hands with each other . . . They must supply their own American flag lapel pin and must also learn the phrase, 'Please, Your Excellency, the president didn't mean that,' in 125 different languages." Only in the cabinet meeting room does the last remaining Tab Soda machine exist in the Western Hemisphere.

Then there's the C-SPAN Drinking Game, Dress The Supreme Court, a cross-section animation of a campaign bus, or News Calculus: a cheat sheet for reporters in determining newsworthiness where we learn the body count conversion rate of "2,000 massacred Congolese=500 drowned Bangladeshis=45 fire-bombed Iraqis=12 car-bombed Europeans=1 snipered American."

The book recommends in its "writing your congressman" section that using a "Stardate" is NOT appropriate. There are also several imaginative comparisons presented in side notes: "Like the menstrual cycle, the democratic cycle is a highly regular occurrence

that, while reassuring, is a bit of a nuisance."

America (The Book) is in the most literal of phrases, laugh out loud funny. Skimming through its 240 plus pages gave me the chance to act out to others as if I knew what I was talking about. Even for the non-reader, the full color diagrams are fulfilling. The hilarious interpretations of "how things work" can almost be compared to the genius of Mister Roger's "Picture, Picture." Consider this book to be the best \$25.00 spent while trying to get some knowledge through down-to-earth political views. Of course, this book is by and large, liberal tongue and cheek. I strongly recommend this to Open School students and teachers, being as this is a fairly liberal school. Melissa Bank, author of The Girls' Guide to Hunting and Fishing agrees, "A Bridget Jones's Diary for the comedic nonfiction government textbook set."◊

HOUSEWIVES From 5

of Mary's suicide.

Before researching or watching the show I assumed that *Housewives* would appeal to teenage boys like me, who hope to see some attractive older women get with some younger guys. I didn't think it would be all that popular. But as it turns out, the show premiered second, behind only *CSI*. Since then, the ratings have decreased a little bit. I think that can be attributed to the kids like me who watched the show once and realized that it wasn't as trashy as we wanted it to be. But as it turns out, about half of the viewers are men, which is one of few things that makes *Housewives* different than *Sex and The City*. It is also set in the suburbs, and none of these women could ever compare to the beauty of Kim Cattrall.

So, basically this show sucks. It would be better if it were just as the ads had promised. A bunch of hot women standing around like they want to get into something. But then again, something that looks so good in this day and age can't be for real. And you can't show porn on television. I guess I expected more from the creator of *Sex and The City*. But I think I've figured out the problem with this show. When the director went about looking for a cast for *Sex and The City*, he waited outside the good plastic surgeon's office for a blonde, a redhead, and a few others that don't really matter. With *Housewives*, he must have sat outside the trailer park.◊

WEBLOGS From 7

things with a certain group of people. "I belong to a blogging that shares stories we have written. I get feed back on my writing from all over the world." Other bloggers just use their blogs to be random and make fun of their friends. "I love to randomly post things like crazy quiz results, and I like to tell my pals to jump off bridges and stuff like that," said blogger "Crazy_Munky." Another use for blogs is to stay in touch. "My friends and I keep each other informed about things going on in our lives. It's nice since we all go to different colleges in different states," said "Ducky_411."

Whatever the reason, bloggers have become a subculture of their own, separated from other computer-based subcultures like PC gamers, Mac-o-files and Hackers, bloggers are being recognized by the media as individual group. The weblog is changing things. Bloggers everywhere are challenging conventional journalists, providing amusing anecdotes and facts faster than a newspaper or magazine can be written and printed.

HOLIDAY From 3

Special Sauce: Any Yuletide celebrator would know that Santa's reindeer never touch the shingles.

G.Love: I may never understand your strange Christian-y ways, and I still won't love Jesus, but I guess all that matters is we both walk away from the holiday season with tangible goodness.

Special Sauce: I guess we're not so different after all. *hug*

And then there was joy throughout the land. Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. Happy Christmahannakhwanzakah to all.◊

"Amid it all, this much is clear: The phenomenon is real. Blogging is changing the media world..." stated an article in *Wired Magazine*.

HALF LIFE 2 From 5

sidered a graphics and environment extreme, with a wholly connected, continuous seeming world that you move, shoot, and live through. It really seems like everything flows into one landscape, a recent trend in first person shooters that is just beginning to be fully realized. The world is absolutely breathtaking. The first time I stepped outside into City 17, I just stood there, looking around, and beginning to aimlessly wander to see more of it. There have been comments from a reviewer living in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, that it's even more eerie to be

walking the streets that parts of City 17 seem to be based on--the comment was accompanied by the unconfirmed information that the set designer was from Bulgaria. The graphics stay glorious throughout the entire game, but begin to be rivaled by gameplay. By far,

the most entrancing scene was just standing out in a city square, gazing at a setting that seemed horrifically realistic.

What are graphics though without gameplay? Nothing. The gameplay of Half-Life 2 is engaging and challenging, requiring problem solving and good perception to advance. It makes full use of its physics engine create problems, such as a half sunk ramp you need to raise, as well as solutions like the plastic barrels of air that you stick into the basket concealed beneath the water to raise the ramp. This kind of problem is common throughout the game, were you have to pick up and properly position things to create a solution that makes sense.

On the combat end of the gameplay, life is even more interesting. The AI is advanced and does seem to think for itself. Combine soldiers will set ambushes if pushed back by gunfire, take cover, and coordinate with one another. All this adds up to very real feeling enemies, and a new angle of first person shooter gameplay. The weapons are revamps of the ones used in the original Half-Life. The ever popular crowbar, 9mm pistol, high caliber revolver, dual or single-fire shotgun, sub-machine gun with grenade launcher, crossbow, rocket launcher, and fragmentation grenades have all made reappearances, with somewhat modified statistics, and heavily redone models; except the crowbar. New to the game in particular

is the fabled gravity gun, which allows you to pick up objects and shoot them at opponents. This includes even such things as toilets, radiators, and crates.

To round things off, there's that often overlooked aspect of first person shooters that's now beginning to grow in importance: the audio. Half-Life 2's audio more than lives up to the rest of the game, with great music that cuts in at just the right moments, and clean weapons fire being just two of the features. Another more subtle feature is the voice acting. Frankly, I think it was won-



Some of the intense in-game action from Half Life 2.

derfully done. The people sound real, with emotions to match expression and the situation's mood. Brought together with the environment, it creates an amazingly real experience in gaming that begins to make you forget the real world around you.

There is one annoyance to this otherwise great game. The loading times are mildly frequent, and a little on the long side. These don't cut in during combat or action-packed sequences though, and provide a totally smooth, lagless game.

Personally, I think this game is well worth the price. It has an intricate plot that I've left for you to discover, a gorgeous environment, and challenging gameplay. I quite enthusiastically recommend that anyone with the



Check out Half Life 2, in stores now

gift for whatever winter holiday you happen to celebrate. Anyone that enjoyed Half-Life 1, or many other adventure/shooter games, should like Half-Life 2.◊

SUPERBOWL From 5

hard, and are ranked first in the league at 15.7 points per game. They will make it to the conference championship, but I don't think that they will be able to beat the Patriots. Even with that great running game, the Steelers still have rookie Ben Roethlisberger at quarterback. He's a good QB that has started his career 13 wins and 0 losses, and has a completion percentage of 66.4, the record was 58.45 set by Dan Marino in 1983. I believe that the Patriots will win it all because they have a better team. They just don't lose no matter what, they just keep finding ways to win by scoring points, and getting big turnovers.

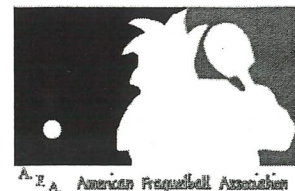
The Eagles are finally going to make it to the Super Bowl because they are the best team in the NFC, and won't have a problem getting there. They now have a receiver that can go deep in Terrell Owens. Owens is the big threat that everybody is afraid of, and he gives other players the chance to go unnoticed. They have a good offense, they are ranked eighth in the league at 24.1 points per game, and a good defense ranked 3rd at 16.2 points a game. They do have a great team, but I don't think that they can beat Patriots, who will probably meet them in the Super Bowl.

The Colts are the other team that can win the Super Bowl. They have a great offense that will probably have the league MVP, and one of the top five running backs. The Colts have the best offense, and score a league leading 32.6 points per game, which is why they keep winning in spite of the fact that they have one of the worst defenses. They can win games, but I don't think that they will get past New England or Pittsburgh with that bad defense.

I believe that the New England Patriots and the Philadelphia Eagles will meet in Super Bowl XXXIX. I think that they can match last year's Super Bowl with both of them having a good offense. The Patriots defense will probably stop the Eagles offense, but I don't think that the Eagles defense can stop the Patriots offense, which can control the clock with Corey Dillion. I think that the Patriots will beat the Eagles 35 to 27.

I think that the Vikings will make to the playoffs, but will only get to the divisional playoffs. They are a good team, but the offense isn't scoring enough to keep up with the opponents. With that defense, teams will be able to score points against them. In the wide open NFC anything can happen.◊

The Purple Press Presents



The Fraquetball Page

The Top Five Teams

1. Gentle Giants

The Giants have the fewest losses at this point (two), and continue to wreak havoc on opponents with their power game. They have a well-balanced attack -- both have over 30 goals -- and have improved their defense. They seem comfortable in their traditional role as favorites.

2. Tie: Fetal Attraction and The Losers

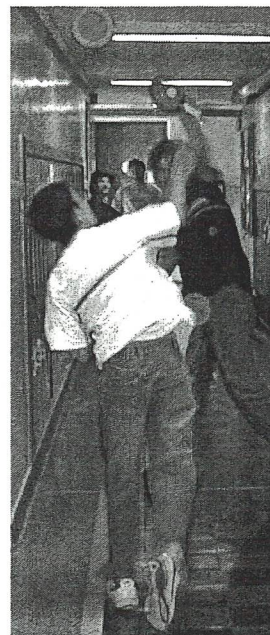
Fetal Attraction won the most recent battle between these two skilled teams, but The Losers have rolled up some impressive numbers thus far; they are one of two teams to beat the Giants. Both of these teams are well on the way to a playoff birth.

4. The Jesson Five

The Five has recovered from their humiliating loss to the spunky Hat Trick team by going on a torrid streak. Doug leads the league in goals and Nathan is in the top three for saves.

5. The Alpha Numericals Revisited

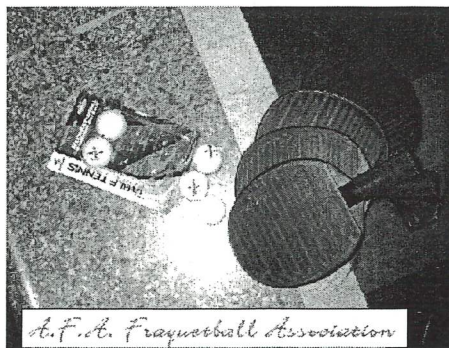
Think big. This team uses size to its advantage, and their skill has progressed considerably since the beginning of the season. They edged Los Geezers in a 15-13 slug fest, and look to have a slight edge over the Geezers in the battle for a final playoff spot.



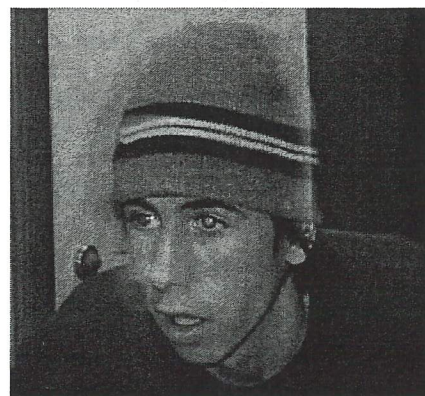
Jaime goes head to head with Doug



Cameron Beitler of the Gentle Giants takes a swing



Ping Pong Ball shortages have plagued the AFA this season



Liam Shramko focuses to stop a shot