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The Purple Press

Official Publication of the St. Paul Open School

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Drop in Math Scores Causes Concern

Maura Shramko

Staff Writer

Every year when the Basic Standards test scores come out, teachers cringe and students wait in agony. Accusatory articles fill the newspapers, questioning the state of education in MN, St. Paul, our district, and especially, our school. This year is no differ-



Connie LaCombe, math teacher, doing what she does best: Teaching math.

ent; despite a statewide improvement in the Basic Standards test scores, Open School's math scores prompt students, staff and parents to ask one simple thing.

"What's wrong with our math program?" said Miranda Byrne, 10th grader.

Compared to the 70% passing percentage for the reading portion of the Basic Standard test, 31% passing percentage in math is worth considering-- and people have been.

In a letter written to the Site Council, junior Lauren Beitler stated, "Our students are not succeeding in mathematics." Lauren cites the recently implemented Integrated Math Curriculum, also known as Core+, as a major factor in students' lack of basic math skills.

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It's Big, It's Highly Rated, It's College!

Miranda Byrne

Staff Writer

The way our society is, success is always on the brain. It is drilled into our heads to the point where it is no longer a choice, but more of an obligation to succeed. Between teachers, principals, school districts, superintendents and all the other people responsible for our future, are we being prepared for this highly academic life we are expected to lead? How does Open compare with other high schools in preparing us for college? Does it do a good enough job?

Open is the kind of school where kids smoke pot in the halls and can do whatever they want without getting in trouble, right? Well, you and I both know this is wrong, but some people believe the myths that surround the essence of Open School. After all, Open is different from other high schools. We don't receive letter grades and have a lot more freedom and power over our own education. People tend to assume that Open isn't as academically challenging as other high schools and doesn't prepare you for post-high school education as well as they do.

"All in all, high school in general does a good job preparing us for college but a bad job of getting us to think," said Open School graduate Andrew Netteberg. "Open does a good job of getting us to think but a bad job of getting us to do school work."

"I value my Open School experience more than most of my friends at college value their high school experience," said Kate Dyson, another Open School graduate who now attends Carleton College. "I think that implies that Open taught me things that other high schools wouldn't have. In terms of academic rigor, however, some other students were more ready."

All in all, Kate felt very ready, and prepared for college. "I certainly feel that the opportunities that Open gave me prepared me for college," she said. "If you use it well, Open can turn you into a whole person, something very valuable in college, and something most other high schools don't do." One thing that helped Kate be so well prepared for college was her experience at Open School. COLLEGE Continued on 10

Violence Hits Home

Mina Blyly-Strauss

Staff Columnist

Violence, gun violence, teen violence, shootings . . . You hear about it all the time on the television, you see it everywhere in the newspapers, the magazines, the bestsellers list. Drug activity, child abuse, gangs, robbery are usually somewhere in the lead paragraph.



Budding Photographer

Tony Basta

But what if you're a young artist who just minds your own business, and goes on nightly bike rides by the river? How likely do you think it is that you'll be the center of one of these violence stories?

And what if you find out someone you know has been fatally shot from the front-page headline of the Star Tribune newspaper? Are you supposed to just say 'thank you mass media for keeping me aware of what's going on in my city'?

You may have guessed what this article is BASTA Continued on 11

"Under Minnesota law, Sister Marge and the as yet unidentified telephone pole are not allowed to engage in a 'civil union'..." . . . Mark, page 7

"Take, ouch, 10 damage" . . . Makenzie, page 4

"However, this particular evening was to create a tsunami in Open School's social pond..." . . . Anna, page 3



The Most Talked About Prom Scandal Ever! Read all about it on page 3.

The Purple Press

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Adult to Blame

Leo Bickelhaupt

Budget boo boos

Terry Schanno

Staff Writer

Open School is due to be cut one and a half teacher positions next year, due to state-wide budget cuts.

According to sources, Open is to receive a budget cut like none that we've seen in recent years. The cause of the cuts is reported to be the lowering enrollment that has plagued school districts around the state the past few years. While the actual damage caused by these cuts will not be seen until next year, it appears now there will be no severe cuts for the SLC.

According to Greg Adams, Open School's wood shop teacher and SLC team leader, the cuts will affect the ELC the most. Cuts are set to cancel the SEMS program, reducing first year teacher Stephanie Drow to half time. Vicky Larson, who has been at Open for six years, will be reduced to half time librarian while she will take the place of Lennie Major for afternoon kindergarten. Also, the ELC Spanish program will be replaced by a vocal music teacher and Amy Underhill will reportedly teach ELC science prep next year. The final cut, and perhaps the most controversial, will be the elimination of the EA position responsible for supervising the in school suspension program, currently filled by Jennifer Schultz. In order to keep ISS around, it appears that teachers or aids may be asked to cover ISS during their prep or during other assignments, according to principal Ruth Pechmann. ♦

Shakespeare Is In The Air

"As You Like It," the spring play, was performed June 1st, 2nd and 3rd by the drama class. The audience, obviously varied from night to night, perhaps the best crowd showing up Friday night. "It was wonderful," said Lenni Augustine, "It's amazing that they learned all those lines." ♦



A Few Tired Actors: Heather Raiter, Maura Shramko and Miranda Byrne try to catch a few winks the day after opening night.

Open School Senior Class 1999-2000

Sarah Bozeman
Andrew Busch
Matt Cloutier
Michelle Cook
Nicholas Dieterich
John Grotenhuis
Notah Gyorgak
Tonya Jaworski
Jonathan Lubke
Davyd Mackey
Brigette McKern
Cheryl Mishler
Lee Moua
Victoria Rosas
Holly Ryan
Sara Schultz
Elizabeth Skramstad
David Treumann
Thomas White
Rebecca Wilcox
Barry Wolf

Thematic Journeys Mural

Students in the Thematic Journeys classes are in the process of completing a mural on the second floor. A professional artist came in to consult with the students, who each drew individual scenes having to do with the history of St. Paul.



Students painting the mural

ELC/SLC Party And Yearbook Signing

Thursday June 1st, no classes were held 5th and 6th hour; instead the ELC/SLC party took place. 5th hour was when the games began. Activities like hula-hooping, four-square and tug-of-war were there for everyone's enjoyment. 6th hour calmed everything down. People were asking their friends to sign their yearbooks, being nice to one another and telling how much they would miss each other. It was one of Open School's ways of celebrating the end of the school year and saying an early goodbye, until next year. ♦

Prom 2000: Groooovy Baby!!

Emily Schultz
Staff Writer

On May 5, 2000, Open School held its first prom of the new Millennium! Everyone was there: Staff, students, old friends. . . you name it! The music was great, the food was delicious and everyone seemed to be having a blast!

This year's theme, "What Dreams May Come," had a bit of a twist as far as colors go. Our colors haven't changed much throughout the years. Open's themes have always been about wishes, dreams. . . that sort of thing. But this year, Como Pavilion's third floor ballroom was filled with beautiful pastel oranges, pinks, blues and lavenders (instead of the usual silvers, blues, blacks, whites and deep purples.)

As for the music, there was a larger variety this year. The DJ played anything from old 90's favorites (such as "Baby Got Back") to popular 70's disco songs ("I Will Survive"). It didn't matter what type of music you liked, people couldn't help but get up and shake their little groove-thangs on the dance floor.

"When it comes to dancing, I know there's a lot of people who don't like R&B, but if

you think about it, it's really the only music you can dance to," said Kathryn Alexander.

A variety of dress codes were represented. People showed up in ball gowns, tuxedos, regular casual clothes. Some people even

accessorized: Feather boas, old hats. . . no matter what they wore, everyone looked fantastic!

There seemed to have been a lot more couples at prom this year. About half of them were just going

as friends anyway, but the dance floor became quite full when a slow song came on. Some of the time, big groups of people just jumbled in big circles, rocking back and forth and shouting the lyrics to the songs. "I thought it was weird," remarked Anna Aslani. "It was strange that people felt obligated to go with someone. I didn't think it was a bad thing, but people felt they needed to go with someone just because their friends did."

All in all, Open School's Y2K prom was a big hit. Despite the small groups that Open usually has at their dances, (and in this case, prom) by the end of the night most everyone had a smile on their face. ♦



People dancing at Prom

What Not To Do At Prom: Be Like Leo

Anna Aslani
Staff Writer

Friday, May 5th began like any other. The aura of spring had found cause to inspire everything into chaos. However, this particular evening was to create a tsunami in Open School's social pond.

Stephanie Drow, Open's social studies and SEM teacher, was awaiting the arrival of her prom date, Leo Bickelhaupt, the adult to blame. Like any young woman, who has been spoon-fed Cinderella and various other "Disneyized" fairy tales, she had a few expectations of her so-called "date." Unfortunately for Bickelhaupt, being punctual was one of them.

"I was coming home from Wendy's at 7:45," claims Bickelhaupt "Besides we had never actually specified a time. I thought we could be fashionably late."

Drow didn't see things that way: "Leo stood me up!" She exclaimed upon her arrival at Como Pavilion. "I called him at quarter to eight, but he wasn't home."

When Bickelhaupt walked up to the Pavilion at around 9:30, things were anything but pleasant. Students had already taken sides. Some dismissed it as a "common misunderstanding." Others found it to be unexcusably lame. While still others, mostly high school boys, greeted Leo with high fives and "way to go's!"

In the end, Bickelhaupt seemed surprised to see that he'd created such a controversial expose, with students clinging to their opinions like life rafts. But perhaps that's just part of the melodrama that's so contagious in the spring. ♦

Senior Profile

Jon Lubke



How long have you been at Open School?

4 years

If you could be an animal, what kind of animal would you be?

Preferably a live one. Dead animals can't dance. Dead animals tell no tales.

What are your plans for after graduation?

I plan on eating lots of Dinty Moore beef stew, and maybe stopping by Hamline University once in a while.

What will you miss most about Open School?

Overflowing recycling bins.

From One
Kidney To
Another, The
Purple Press
Hopes You
Have A Long
Life, Free
From Kidney
Failure

Lunchtime Gamers Slay Dragons: *Film at eleven*

Makenzie Byrne

Staff Writer

"Pass me a D-20," the Dungeon Master (DM for short) asks one of the players sitting around one of the slate tables in the science room. The DM takes the die (D-20 stands for 20 sided die) from the player and rolls it. "Well it hit you, critical."

"S--t"!

"Take, ouch, 10 damage".

"Darn, I'm down to 2 HP."

This is a typical scene from lunch time RPG-ing. This group was playing AD&D, short for Advanced Dungeons and Dragons. What is an RPG anyway, you ask? RPG stands for Role Playing Game. An RPG is any kind of game where you take on the role of someone else. This is hard to explain, but there is a Game Master (GM, in AD&D the DM is the GM. Other games have special names for the GM, but GM is the general term.) The GM runs the game, tells the players what's happening in the game world, and then the players make decisions for their characters. In an RPG the GM has ultimate power and, if you are a player, he/she is thy lord and master. Before you play you make



People playing role-playing games.

a character. Each character starts with certain ability characteristics that you roll with dice. In AD&D, characters abilities are strength, dexterity, constitution, intelligence and wisdom. This information is written on a sheet of paper called a character sheet. Once you have a character, you can play with a group of other characters and be included in a campaign. "Me no understand, me smash," said Rusty, Shmuel's AD&D character.

What is up with AD&D? It is one of the many RPGs out there. AD&D is an advanced

version of Dungeons & Dragons, which is the very first RPG ever. AD&D and D&D are both fantasy RPGs with magic monsters and, of course, dragons. But RPGs don't stop there, Oooh no, there are RPGs of all kinds of things. Let me list a few types: Sci Fi, fantasy, spy games, wild west, vampires, super heroes, and a lot more. AD&D allows people to assume the roles of elves and dwarves and other mythical races.

"It gives you the opportunity to do things you can't do in real life," said 10th grader Duncan what'shisname.

Why are people playing these games at school? I think all people in the world are lazy at heart. We all want to do less work, and it is much less work to get together with your friends at school, because you are all already there. Having an RPG game at someone's house is much harder.

Playing RPGs during lunch isn't much different than what other people do during lunch. It is just some people's way of hanging out. Only you get to slay dragons. ♦

My Email Loves Me, My Email Loves Me . . . Not

Terry Schanno

Staff Writer

It starts with a seemingly harmless love letter, probably from someone you know, or a co-worker. But give it a few days and VBS.Lovebug (Commonly known as The I Love You Virus') will tear your computer apart, then infect all of your friends. It's actually simple to protect yourself, and I'm going to try to outline how the Virus works, as well as how you can protect yourself from VBS.Lovebug and it's variants.

Open School has been particularly lucky when it comes to this type of virus. Because we use mostly Macintosh hardware we have a much lower number of virii to worry about.

This kind of virus, called a worm, is not a new thing. We saw the same type of delivery for such popular viruses as Chernobyl, Melissa, CIH and Babylonia. These particular viruses target a vulnerability in Microsoft Outlook and Outlook Express - Outlook and Express automatically save attachments from emails. This is probably the most dangerous thing to do, as you can never know who is sending you what. However, the thing that makes the VBS.Lovebug virus different from Chernobyl, Melissa or any other

worms is that VBS.Lovebug can be transmitted by other means, such as Internet Relay Chat, sharing files with an infected system and reading newsgroups with auto download enabled for Visual Basic Files.

The destructive phase of the virus deletes, modifies or renames a large number of file types, including digital music files, picture files, programing scripts and some word processing documents. Lovebug also downloads and runs a program designed to suck all your stored passwords and email them to an address in the Philippines. In the final stage of the Virus, it tries to send itself to everyone in your Outlook or Outlook Express addressbook.

Now, you ask - just how can I prevent this from happening to me? The best prevention is not to open the email, but there is another way. It's pretty simple, but there are a few steps. First thing you have to do is disable the Windows Script program that allows VBS scripts to be run without a special program. For details on how to disable the Windows Script Host please read the website at this address - <http://www.sophos.com/sup->

[port/faqs/wsh.html](http://www.sophos.com/sup-port/faqs/wsh.html), which gives more detailed directions than I've got space to write about. The next step is to disable auto accept functions in your email and/or IRC clients. Consult your manual or the programs help files for specific solutions for the program you use to get program specific instructions. And finally, make sure to keep your anti-virus program(s) up to date (If you don't already have an AV program I recommend Norton Antivirus.)

So you say, "What do I do if I've already got the virus?" The first step is to make sure you don't connect to the internet, or to a Local Network. Next, go to another computer and download the necessary AV program updates which can be found on your AV vendors website. Install the update and run the AV program. This will take care of the virus itself - however, some of your files would have been modified by the virus. To restore some of the files to their original state, download the free program SWAT, from <http://www.antivirus.com/SWAT.EXE>. ♦

Outward Bound: Mountains, and The Beauty of Bonding

Miranda Byrne
Staff Writer

Every year the Outward Bound students embark on a trip. To where? Who knows. Every year it is a different place, a different adventure. This year it was Leadville, Colorado, a small mountain town nestled in between some of the highest peaks in Colorado. Julie Doble and 18 students whisked themselves away to this place of wonder, losing themselves for a week, returning tired, refreshed and full of stories.

During the day they worked hard, mending tarps, checking repair kits, fixing stoves, setting up the Outward Bound store, and doing whatever else that needed to be done. In return for their hard work and labor they were rewarded with adventures. One day

they did a high ropes course, another day they went rock climbing. Both activities challenging them and testing their limits.

"I loved every minute of it!" said Julie Doble. "I liked working really hard and feeling like we really made a difference."

"My favorite part was when we got together and did dumb bonding games," said Mee Xiong. "I also liked it when we helped each other with projects. You get to know people you didn't know before and that is cool."

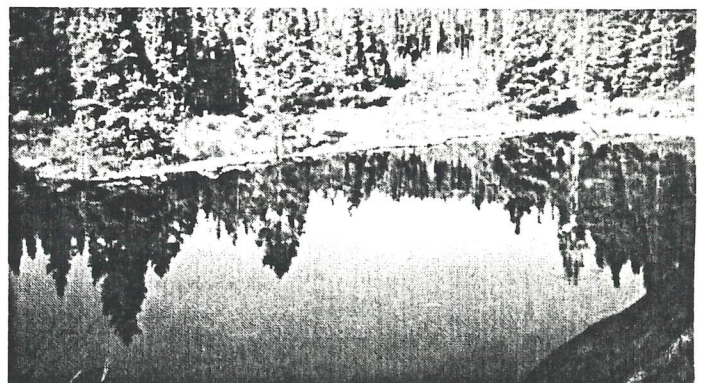
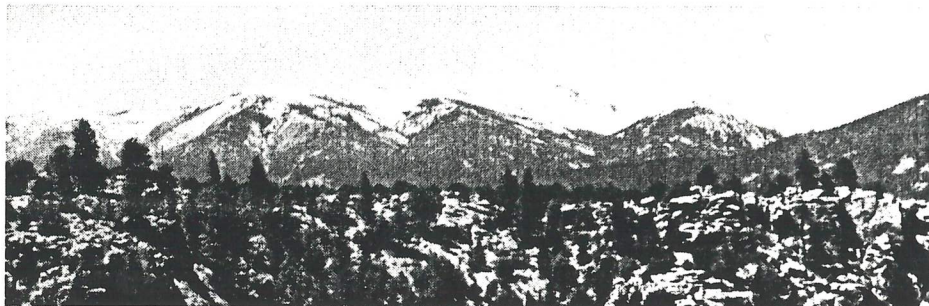
"The best part of the trip for me," said Heater Raiter, "was when Miranda woke Maura up by singing the sweet melody of Cat Stevens to her. You should have seen the

look on her face. It was priceless."

Sierra pretty much summed up everybody's feelings when she said, "Mountains." Because yes, there were mountains there.

Although everybody had fun and enjoyed themselves, some people felt they gained a lot more than just good times and memories.

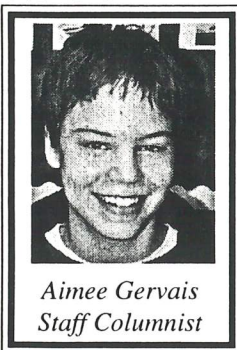
"I came away from the trip knowing the wonderful feeling of bonding," said Mark Dyson. "The trip taught me to appreciate life for what it is, a gift. And by Jove I will cherish this gift for as long as I live." ♦





See these!

The summer movie season is usually marked by lots of "guy movies." There're lots of explosions, simplistic plots, and plenty scantily-clad women. This year, for some reason, the summer blockbust-



Aimee Gervais
Staff Columnist

ers are keeping with their guy movie formulas, only substituting hunky male stars in for the scantily clad women. At any rate, add an astronomical budget to this summer movie formula, and you've got yourself a winner. Just ask the producers of this summer's first blockbusters, *Gladiator* and *Mission: Impossible 2*.

I think I actually would have been happier if *Gladiator* had been more of a guy movie. It yanks the short attention spanned viewer in immediately with something like a bazillion frames a second of brutal fighting in the most dizzying battle sequence ever. This little roller-coaster ride is followed up by a ten minute ride on a really slow ferris wheel. Immediately after the battle, the characters start talking, and talking, and talking. It may have been only about five minutes in reality, but after the adrenaline rush of the first few minutes, I was ready to start yelling at the screen, "C'mon, more bloodshed!"

Never fear, though, the ass kicking resumed after a bit. Boy, did it ever. *Gladiator* makes those WWF guys look like a bunch of pansies. It goes without saying then, that *Gladiator* is not for the faint of heart. Just about every death you can imagine is fit somewhere into this movie. People are shot, stabbed, impaled, decapitated, and even cleaved entirely in half. But, hey, it's all in context, right? Sure, because those gladiator battles of ancient Rome weren't exactly the same as a trip to the circus with the kids. If you don't want to see lots of violence, then it's just common sense that you don't go to a movie called *Gladiator*.

It's not all violence though, as I mentioned earlier, there's also quite a bit of talking. At nearly three hours, there'd better be a plot

MOVIES Continued on 9

10th Grade? Um, No.

I have to tell you, I'm developing a fear of graduating. Even as a sophomore with two more years to go, the fear that this may be the last time I experience this thing or that in high school (or ever) is

with me, particularly when I look back on things.

I hope that by the the time I graduate, it won't be as mind-numbingly terrifying or as sad as it is to me now-- that when the time comes I'll be ready to move on and make a major change in my life.

On the other hand, I fear what that would mean. To me, that means letting go of part of the love I have had for my high school experience. Something I have enjoyed living so much that it's frightening to think of life without it.

Despite my reluctance to let go, I know, deep down inside, that I need to be challenged more than I am now. I am at a point where I feel the need to decide my course:



Maura Shramko
Staff Columnist

Should I take the Super-Student, out-of-the-building-all-the-time, always-working-on-school-work road? Or should I just try to enjoy and appreciate my life the way it is now, fun but not especially challenging?

There are many times when I want to devote myself entirely to schoolwork. My mantra would be as follows: Become one with the text book. Feel the follow-up questions to the chapters. I would get to the point that I could no longer distinguish between myself and the text book. My arms and legs would transform into the glossy, mindless pages of the text book. My life would be consumed by making it from one test to another, just that last-minute blurb of studying where I sit, I read, I memorize. Short-term memory is a wonderful thing.

While this would quasi-satisfy me, it would also turn me into an antisocial, solitary creature. I am afraid, in a way, of commitment. I'm afraid to commit myself to endless hours of homework, and possibly, evening classes. I'm afraid that when my friends are all like, 'let's go see a movie,' I'll have to retire with the age-old homework excuse. Yes, it's important to challenge

MAURA Continued on 11

Senior Battles Spring Fever

Before I begin, I would like to say that I am fully aware that by the time this story runs, I will have graduated and everything will be said and done. Leo says it's still relevant... you be the judge.

There I was... sitting in newspaper class, pondering my next attempt at a story I would probably end up hating, when I thought to myself, "I don't wanna write another story. I'd be content just sitting here, reading the newspaper."

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls and everyone else, I'm suffering from an all-too-common ailment... Senior Fever. Or, rather, I'm not suffering, but causing my teachers



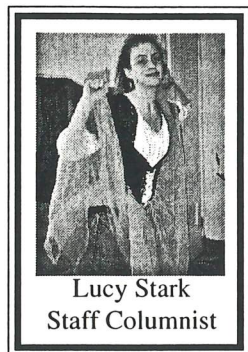
Sara Schultz
Staff Columnist

grief by not turning my work in on time, and thus making them suffer in some small way. You see, I have recently finished all I need to graduate; I have all my validations, put a graduation packet together, and even had my final senior meeting. Now, I'm just waiting for June 5th to roll around... and that's the problem. I don't feel like doing anything else, because I know that technically I could not do any work from now until the end of the school year and I would still graduate. The only problem with this is that if I did slack-off, I may not pass the classes I'm taking, and then there would be this big ugly... scar, so to speak, on my year-end summary, which would be sent with my packet to colleges and such anyway.

So, if I don't meet minimum requirements for my classes, not only will I feel guilty because I know I could work harder, but my

SENIOR Continued on 7

Old Man Monthly: David Bowie, Warding Off Old Age And The Monkees



Lucy Stark
Staff Columnist

In my life there has been one old man that is truly inspiring to me. For years I have watched him, loved him and prayed for his survival (because he's old). His name is David Bowie. Yes, the self ascribed "chameleon of pop" has won my heart with his sassy songs, wonderfully delightful movies (*Labyrinth* is a superb example) and snazzy outfits. I love David Bowie.

My love bug was born David Robert Jones on January 8th in the Brixton area of London. He is 53. That's kind of old. I origi-

nally thought he was 80 or so . . . I guess I was wrong. But 53 is old enough. You don't have to be really old and shriveled (like Regis) to be in Old Man Monthly. You just have to have the aura of oldness. Which my David does.

Anyways - Mr. Bowie started loving music at a young age. He was 12 when he got a saxophone and by the time he graduated high school he had been in numerous bands. After high school he went of to some technical school and got a degree in art. Around that time he was in his first serious band, Davie Jones and the King Bees. Super. Then in 1965 he changed his name to David Bowie so he wouldn't be confused with Davy Jones of the Monkees. Damn those Monkees. DAMN THEM!

Now, I could go on about little David's

hits and albums, but no one would care. So I'll tell you something cool. When he was a teenager he got in a street fight (street fights rock!) and his left eye got permanently dilated. I bet the street fight was with the Monkees! I bet they ambushed poor David Bowie and started to beat him up. They do monkey around. Cheer up sleepy Jean. Oh what can it mean to a day dream believer and a homecoming queen? That's my question for you. Cheer up sleepy Gene Rodenberry. Cheer up.

In 1992 David Bowie married super model Iman. Now she's pregnant. Or maybe she had the baby. But the point is, I love David Bowie. And I hate the Monkees. ♦

Keep Your Kidneys Safe This Summer

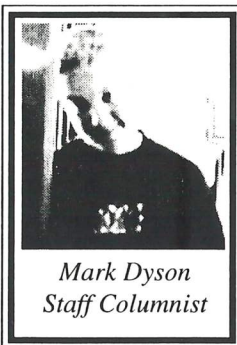
SENIOR From 6
teachers would lose some of what respect they may have for me, and I would probably never hear the end of it from my parents. Not to mention the fact that if college admissions people and future employers actually take the time to read over my year-end summary, they would come across many comments of disappointment and anger, and would deem me unreliable and irresponsible. Not the best way to impress people. Yet I still lack the motivations to complete assignments. And so I am stuck, walking the thin line between passing/not passing the last high school classes I'll ever take.

Many of my fellow seniors are facing the same dilemma. "Homework is something of my past," said Holly Ryan, a graduating senior. John Grotenhuis agrees, "Unfortunately, senior fever hit me first trimester of my junior year."

Although seniors in general seem to lack motivation, and spout such memorable phrases as Mousie (Michelle Cook)'s "I can be immature if I want to because I'm mature enough to make my own decisions," I can assure you we're still concerned. A few of us may have given up on homework completely, but I get the distinct feeling we'll pull everything we can together at the last minute. We the seniors at the very tail end of Generation X, are funny that way. ♦

Area Nun Loves Telie Pole

At a news conference on May 25, sources close to Minneapolis resident and St. John's Church Sister Marge Carter announced that she has broken with the leaders of her church in announcing her love for a local telephone pole.



Mark Dyson
Staff Columnist

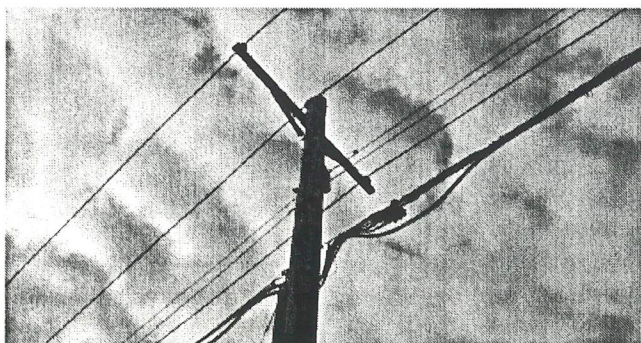
The clergy of her church have taken the news with surprise. "We have expected this for a long time, and it was only a matter of time before she fell from her divine sisterhood and into the hell and damnation associated with being polosexual, but I imagine that the church fellowship is still shocked with her decision to abandon us for this life of sin and malice."

Carter, 57, is not concerned with the opinions of her church. When asked if she was aware of the "hell and damnation" of her choice of life partner, she shrugged. "It's not the church's place to tell me who I can or can not love," she pointed out. "God will support me in my sexual

orientation, I am sure of it, even if the members of my congregation do not."

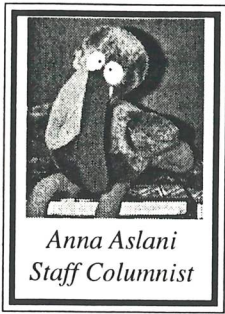
Under Minnesota law, Sister Marge and the as yet unidentified telephone pole are not allowed to engage in a "civil union," as relationships like this have been called in other states, but there is hope for their relationship to become official. According to Congressman Tom Pugh, next legislative session there will be a bill introduced that proposes allowing, in his words, "marriage-like rights for any two taxpayers, regardless of gender." Pugh is not sure that the telephone pole in the Carter case would qualify, but he believes that with a few modifications the bill could not only cover telephone poles, but Twinkies, pencil sharpeners, and shoehorns as well. "With a little luck, and some cooperation from the Republicans, we might be

NUN Continued on 10



A telephone pole, an object that is familiar to many

Death Penalty Sucks



Anna Aslani
Staff Columnist

On May 18th, New Hampshire's legislature decided to repeal the death penalty, despite veto threats from their governor. A repeal of the law is to "recall" or bring back a policy for reconsideration.

Ironically there is no one on death row in New Hampshire. In fact, in 1998, New Hampshire had the lowest murder rate in the country. Even so, state officials developed a plan for capitol punishment that would include a small list of crimes including: murder of a law enforcement officer, murder during rape or attempted rape, and murder for hire.

The Senate voted 14-10, reconfirming a House vote taken in March. This vote fell short of the 16 needed to override a veto, and in March the 400 member House approved the repeal 191-163, which is well short of the two thirds necessary for an override.

No other state has opted to repeal the death penalty since it resumed in 1976, when the Supreme Court made it legal. Only Nebraska's legislature has voted for repeal since then, which was vetoed.

Support for the death penalty in Minnesota is also decreasing. In a statewide poll of 1,021 adults taken from 2/23/00 to 2/27/00, it was found that 54% favored the death penalty as opposed to 73% in 1996. The margin of error for this poll is plus or minus 3%.

Minnesota abolished the death penalty in 1911, and repeated efforts of the legislature to restore it have failed. There are eleven other states and the District of Columbia who do not enforce capitol punishment.

Minnesota's declining support of the death penalty is reflective of the national attitude. A recent gallop poll showed that 66% of Americans support capitol punishment as opposed to 80% in 1994. The Star Tribune concluded that its own poll had shown support for the death penalty had declined across all demographics. Their poll was taken three weeks after Governor George Ryan of Illinois suspended all executions pending a task force study.

In Illinois, 13 death row inmates were released after being wrongfully or unfairly convicted. Governor Ryan concluded that

Save Elian From America's Media Obsession

"Let him go," scream a dozen protesters. "Keep him here," scream a dozen more. You can obviously picture the events happening in Maimi right now. We all know the situation and we all know the people involved. We've all heard of Elian Gonzales. What you probably don't know is why this is sparking debate and such a huge political controversy?

Well, let's begin by explaining the two groups that are involved. First there's the Miami family who currently are fighting for possession of Elian again. Then there is Juan Miguel, his father, who currently has the legal right to take him back by international law. Now these two groups are fighting for the child in legal fisticuffs in an American court.

We think our country is so great, but we need to get off of our high horse and just be big enough to let the boy leave with his family. His father is considered well off in Cuba, and the boy is Cuban. This little dispute is a



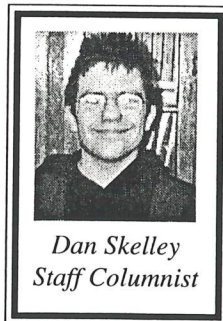
Joe Ring
Staff Columnist

waste of time. It's none of our business and yet the entire country gets involved.

You have seen the protesters in Miami, many of whom are from the Cuban American community. Don't they have lives or a job. I guess the economy's good; people need to screw it up. So I wonder why the press is doing this, I mean they're not stupid, they know when not to follow a story. So I'll point out the obvious to everyone and say he's a distraction. He's a symbol of this country's obsession with television and media. I wonder why though? Why the hype? Why the frenzy? Why the endless amount of court room arguments?

Well, I don't know the answers to those questions, but I wish I did. Maybe he should stay here. Maybe our country is the greatest place on the planet, but he didn't grow up here. Our schools don't test all that well internationally, and there is a lot of violence here. All I'm saying is that this is a horrible place to raise a child. But maybe he should grow up here and become just like one of the protesters that are in Maimi right now. ◇

How Do You Spell Youth Violence?



Dan Skelley
Staff Columnist

When youth violence happens it all comes down to blaming two things: video games and TV.

Every time I hear about a school shooting the perpetrators involved are said to have played violent

video games. If a teen does something as violent as shooting someone, chances are they like violent video games. I have heard people say that the kids lose sight of right and wrong because of video games and TV. In fairness to video games, however, most violent video games have to do with saving the world, not just killing things. In Doom, for example, you are fighting demons and zombies. There are actually very few violent video games where you're a villain.

In newspapers or on the news, people will say there is too much violence on TV, but when an act of youth violence happens, such as a school shooting, they keep talking about it and talking about and talking about it. After

a while, the killers become celebrities. Maybe some of them want to be famous so badly, they snap. For example serial killers have been known to copy other serial killers. As I once read off a bumper sticker: "Children often fail to listen to their elders but they never fail to imitate us." I think that violence in video games and on TV would be less if there was not so much of it in the world.

After Columbine the NRA suggested banning trench coats instead of making it harder to get guns. But Dylan Kleibold and Eric Harris walked into the school shooting. Not allowing trench coats in school would have done no good. Besides, someone could hide a gun in another kind of jacket. The best way to stop school shootings is to get rid of the guns, particularly military weapons.

You don't need a Military weapon to go hunting, and using one to defend your home is stupid, too. Imagine if a burglar stole the weapon. Don't tell me you can hide it; two year olds have managed to find guns their parents hide. The right to bear arms is out

VIOLENCE Continued on 10

MOVIES From

in there somewhere, and thankfully, there is. Which is not to say it's a very original one, it's mostly just a *Braveheart* rip-off, but it's a pretty good *Braveheart* rip-off. Russell Crowe is cooler than Mel Gibson these days, and he has apparently won the "hottest guy in a skirt" contest. Also, Joaquin Phoenix is hilariously easy to hate as Commodus, the sniveling new emperor with a "Daddy never loved me" complex. He's whiny, spoiled, and evil, but I guess that's what you have to expect from a guy who was named after a toilet. Or maybe the toilet was named after him.

Much truer to its early summer opening date, *Mission: Impossible 2* is much lighter on plot. Don't let the title fool you though, M:I-2 is in no way a sequel to *Mission: Impossible* from 1996. That one was a plot-heavy spy drama with only occasional action sequences, while M:I-2 is a straight action movie, with occasional plot.

TESTS From 1

"Students who learn from this curriculum are not going to develop the number sense and abstract math skills they will need in higher math," wrote Lauren. "As a tutor of two students in Integrated Math, let me say that if I'd had to do this stuff all year, I would've been turned off to math faster than you can say 'graphing calculator.'"

Connie LaCombe, Open School math teacher, disagrees. "The integrated mathematics course does not prepare students for the basic standards because it is not designed to do so," she said. Despite the low scores, Connie says that in the past, the Core+ program has "taken more students farther than was the case with the old algebra 1, algebra 2 and geometry courses."

"It is true that students coming into this program have some difficulty transitioning to a situation where they are expected to think, discuss, experiment, debate, try and discover," said Connie. "The onus in this program is on the student to make sense out of the new ideas."

In addition to the integrated math program, there are also statistics to be considered. According to the Pioneer Press, while Open School had only a 31% passing percentage, we have about a 50% "poverty level," which is determined by the number of free lunches that we qualify for and take advantage of. When comparing both the math and reading percentages with the poverty level, the scores do not look quite so bad. ♦

M:I-2 is also way over the top, in all the best ways. Our hero doesn't just hike to the top of a mountain to receive his assignment, he scales a giant cliff, without ropes. Tom Cruise can't just square off with the villain for the final show-down, they have to fly at each other from speeding motorcycles. Tons of explosions, and some really neat gravity-defying stunts that I swear I saw on Xena last week.

I was a little worried in the beginning, where the script had some rather painful moments, but I got used to it in no time when I remembered I was watching a John Woo movie. Woo directs action like nobody else, but he generally doesn't pick the most interesting scripts. That's fine with me though, because gosh, this movie was fun. Leaving the theater, I had a strange urge to buy a motorcycle and move to Australia, where it was filmed.

M:I-2 is a bit like an American James Bond movie, only a bit hipper, and without the nifty

tuxedos. An American Bond means lots more guns and less booze. One moment I found hilarious was the scene in a Bond movie where M would have been offering 007 a scotch, but instead, Anthony Hopkins was asking Tom Cruise if he'd care for a cappuccino or espresso. Ahh, America.

So, the summer movie season has started out as usual - stupid but fun. It's looking pretty good from here, with lots of stuff to look forward to. There's *Chicken Run*, from the creators of Wallace & Gromit, a new *Shaft* movie with Samuel L. Jackson (of course!), a director's cut re-release of the Coen brothers' *Blood Simple*, another try at *Godzilla*, a new *Highlander* movie featuring all the coolest characters from the TV show, and the long-awaited, live action X-Men feature. Maybe I'll have to look into getting a job at a movie theater this summer... ♦

Kidneys Are Fun For Everyone! Yay!



DID YOU KNOW?

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley was banned because it was believed to be "...depressing, fatalistic, and negative, and that it encourages students to adopt a lifestyle of drugs, sex and conformity..."*

*from 100 Banned Books, Karolides et al., Checkmark Books, \$18.95

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COLLEGE From 1

pared was her dedication to education. She took Post-Secondary classes at St. Kate's, Hamline, St. Thomas and Macalester, that challenged her and made her think.

Dorothy Henke-Haney, a '99 Open graduate who now attends St. Kate's, also said she felt prepared. "The whole validation system I found worked out a whole lot for me," said Hanke-Haney. "I took Calculus AP/IB at Central. The only thing at Central that would prepare you for college would be the homework. Open prepares you for the whole 'college feel.' I don't need a hall pass to go to the bathroom in college."

Although Kate and Dorothy felt pretty

well prepared for college, some students found it a bit harder to adjust.

"I was not prepared for a grade-based setting like college," said Andrew Netteberg. "More homework would have been better, plus the requirement of having to turn in my homework on time would have helped."

The way many people see it, how well Open prepares you for college is up to you. If you take classes that challenge you and do all your work, you will do fine in college; if you don't then college might be a bit harder. The decisions you make now affect your future. Lenni Augustine, sums it all up by saying, "STOP PROCRASTINATING!"

She also suggests taking lots of writing classes and perfecting your note-taking skills. Whatever high school you go to, you are going to run into problems when you go to college, because it is so different and for the first time in your life you are not being treated like a kid anymore but like an adult. How well high school prepares you for college is really up to you. As Jesse Buetow, TA and former Student at Open School says, "There is a fine balancing act to perform: too much work and you cease to learn anything (as was sometimes my case), too little work and there really isn't anything to learn." ♦

NUN From 7

able to squeeze toasters into the bill, too," he adds jubilantly.

Other people are not so happy about encouraging the two would-be lovebirds to have a successful relationship. There have been daily protests outside of Sister Marge's home on 26th Street since the announcement was made, with cardboard signs saying such things as "Go Back To Church, Heathen!" and shouted slogans like "Keep the pole in its hole!" One protester, who traveled from Atlanta, Georgia, to protest this "attack on her Christianity," rails against all forms of "sinful, anti-Christian, and heathen sexual practices and the laws that condone them."

The protester, who asked that her name not be revealed, was incensed as she asked rhetorically, "What is she telling our children? Is polosexuality okay? That a nun can abandon her faith and live in sin for the rest of her life with a t-shaped piece of wood is acceptable in this modern society? Heathens like her and Bill Clinton are corrupting our society."

When asked how she felt about the protesters at her house, Sister Marge apparently placed her faith in God that her property would not be harmed. "God will protect my home," she replied when asked if she worries about property damage. "As for the tele-

phone pole, if they try to harm my love . . . Let's just say I'll bust out a can of whup-ass on their sorry sinful souls."

There are no plans as of yet for any ceremonies to celebrate their relationship, but Sister Marge gave a tentative date for an "informal civil union" celebration as "sometime this summer." Throughout the research being done for this article, the telephone pole has not been able to be reached for comment, although the law firm representing all local telephone poles has issued a statement on behalf of it to authorities. At time of press this statement was not available to the media. ♦

Just as Elrak went to stab the troll king in his heart, a sharp pang erupted in his side. "Ahhh, my elven kidneys!" screamed Elrak.

VIOLENCE From 8

of date. It was made during the time of the revolution when weapons were needed to fight off the English.

You should need a license for any gun, and if you do something illegal with it say good bye to that license forever. If you're asked by a police officer or game warden to see your License and you can't show it, you should be taken down to the police station. There they could check your record to make sure. If you don't have a license, you should get at least five years in prison, a \$5000 fine, and you can never get a license. If your license is taken away the police could get a warrant to search your home for weapons.

At any given time, some kind of war or Military conflict is going on. Be it guerrilla tactics or full scale war, it is always going on. Violence is not just on TV, it's all around us. On TV the good guy always come over the bad guys at the end of the show then peace comes. In the real world, however, when one war ends another is about to start.

In conclusion, people want something to blame when school shootings or other youth violent acts occur. Maybe we should stop blaming TV and video games and reconsider how and why we license guns. ♦

DEATH From 8

the system is "fraught with error."

So how does a Houston jury handle Angel Maturino Resendiz, a convicted murderer and rapist, who requested that he have lethal injection as opposed to life in prison without parole?

"I've decided that injection is better than spending life in jail," he commented. "Can I tell you my reason? I'm 41, plus 40 years (in jail) is 81, and I might not make it all the way."

The Houston jury will not decide whether to comply with his request until a hearing on August 13th. ♦

BASTA From 1

about by now – the fatal shooting of seventeen-year-old Tony Basta, a photography student at the Arts High School.

Does this sound at all familiar to you? If not, how did you miss all of the newspaper articles and nightly news coverage that was everywhere for at least two weeks after the April 26th homicide???

Yes, I knew Tony, and yes, I found out that he had been shot from the front page of a Star Tribune newspaper, on April 28, in morning advisory. My first reaction was how, when, this can't be, there must have been another guy named Tony Basta living in Saint Paul, it couldn't be Tony. I was in total shock, and partial denial. After all, I don't know that many people, how could it have been the Tony I knew who had been killed.

I was thinking, there's got to have been a mistake. It will turn out to be someone else, someone I didn't know. But it hurt. Somehow I knew it hadn't been someone else, it had been Tony. What hurt more was that I

knew that one of his teachers didn't know. She had just gotten back to town late the night before, and most likely wasn't awake yet. I wanted to call her, but somehow couldn't. Actually, I wanted to just leave school, go curl up in a corner somewhere and cry, but I couldn't. How could I just leave? I'd spent so much time being Mina the unwavering, how could I just break down and leave? To say nothing about 'how the heck could I convince Mary Kay to let me leave without any kind of note?' I suppose I could have just left through one of the doors away from the office, but I wasn't thinking about that.

But finally, I did end up leaving. I was saved from making the difficult decision by my good friend Erin, with the simple words "we're leaving! We need to go over to Kris'." My answer: yes! So, we left. Erin took care of getting notes from Mary Kay, and we left.

It was a Friday, the Friday of the Saint Paul Art Crawl. After we left, Erin decided that we should do something constructive to remember Tony, so we did. We designed

a flyer which we handed out at the Art Crawl. A flyer talking about Tony's art, in mostly Tony's words.

People stopping at the Crawl kept asking, when they saw the flyer, wasn't he the guy who just got killed the other day? Was he irresponsible? What did he do? My answers were always something like "He made art, until someone drove by and shot him!" "He was quiet." "He was nice." "He spent most of his time in school or at work." What did they really expect me to say?

So, time has passed. The media has basically forgotten, forgotten what the found so interesting a little over a month ago. There have been a few newspaper stories recently about the shooting. They caught the guys who killed Tony. It turns out that it really was random, they wanted to kill someone, and Tony was the first person that they saw.

One bullet is all it took...And sometimes I still can't believe it--believe that my friend is dead, and that some people just feel like they should kill someone, and really do. ♦

10th GRADE From 6

myself, to learn new things, but I feel that most of what I've been learning does not have *useful* real-world applications. That's not to say I don't enjoy learning some things, but I often feel like it's pointless to learn. I think it's quite clear that if you don't think what you're learning is important, that it's worth learning, you're not going to be learning it very well.

At Open School, I don't have very many classes that challenge me anymore. This last trimester, I spent the entire day in the building, taking classes that for the most part, were something of a breeze, or were not very "academic." Yes, I'm enjoying myself this trimester, but I feel almost like I don't need to be here sometimes, like being here is a waste of time.

I know my high school experience has been and will continue to be unique. My social situation is odd: I have known many people for a long time, which gives me the chance to make a lot of friends, among both teachers and students. My academic situation is relaxed: It's your own responsibility to learn what you can, and stupid things such as tests just aren't as important. As a whole,

it's made a clear difference to me in the person I have become.

In a way, I feel like I've lost my hold on things a bit. The craziness centers on how unchallenged I feel and the massively premature graduation dread that is building up inside me. And to top it all off, next year I also have to deal with taking Post-Secondary classes for the first time. It's really quite scary. I totally understand all the Open School graduates who come back immediately after they graduate and work at Open. I'd be totally afraid to leave, too.

There's also the ugly perfectionist in me rearing it's beastly head. I know with a deadly certainty, that I can't possibly ignore, that over the next two years any time there's an event (like prom or snow days or something) I'm going to build up these expectations, like this has just got to be the BEST PAJAMA DAY EVER!!!!!! because it's my second-to-last one. I'll build my little house of expectations up oh so high and a-down will it crumble.

On the other hand (or maybe it's one of my feet; I'm running short on alternate hands) as I sit here in utter boredom (maybe not *utter* . . .), I find myself yearning for

something more. The other day when I got PSEO information from Macalester in the mail, including a list of courses, I found an unexplainable excitement coursing through my veins. I was genuinely elated by the list of classes: Elementary Greek made me want to forget my Spanish aspirations and learn Greek and some English course or other about British novels made me want to go dust off my collection. I felt the part of me that I remembered vaguely from before, before the rebellion of work, that part of me that is truly satisfied and challenged and happy to be learning things, to absorb information and excel at things. That part of me was excited as heck that I could take college classes next year.

I know I'm afraid, afraid to move on, but I'm also unbelievably excited about it. There's this aspect of being challenged and doing well that I enjoy so much, I can't really explain it. As long as I don't lose touch with what's really important to me, my life and experiences at Open School, life will go on and I will be happy. And maybe when I graduate, I won't be that sad. Just a little. Maybe I'll be ready to go. ♦

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