

The Purple Press

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Official Publication of the St. Paul Open School

“Madwoman” Features Strong Acting

Maura Shramko
Staff Critic

Open School has just gotten through its most recent theatrical production, “The Madwoman of Chaillot.” The play ran four performances, with one matinee. Considering that this play experienced its share of pre-production snags, including several cast members being removed, all four performances went by very smoothly.

Set in Paris in the twenties, “Madwoman” is about an eccentric countess who comes to the stunning realization that the world has become corrupt and greedy. Consequently, she decides to take action and exterminate all the wicked people, which she does after a brief trial.

The highlight of this play was the acting. Jon Lubke looked natural, delivered his lines skillfully, and fit the part very well as the Prospector. All four of the countesses

were also cast well. The mixture of people worked well together onstage. Kathryn Alexander starred as the sensible and intelligent (for a madwoman) countess Aurelia, Emily Schultz as the flirty, grouchy and



The Madwomen, Plotting the Death of Evil

domineering countess Constance, Anna Karl as the utterly innocent and wide-eyed countess Gabrielle, and Holly Ryan as the just and reasonable countess Josephine.

Another stand out was Ben Peterson as the rag picker. Ben has the ability to improvise and did so from performance to performance. On the last performance, he threw the shredded remnants of the cabbage (used for the Cabbage Pimp speech) to the audience, much to the audience's delight.

Despite the wonderful acting, at some points, the plot ended up unfolding slowly and seemed to go off on tangents. The basic plot of the play was sidetracked frequently, often when it made some kind of new development. For example, when Aurelia, the Madwoman of Chaillot, is try-
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Rollerskating: A Quiet Controversy

Mina Blyly-Strauss
Staff Reporter

Once upon a time, in a roller skating rink not quite close enough, yet a little too near, there was a broad gathering of people; about 220 to be more precise. These people, primarily adolescents, came on three buses, from St. Paul Open School. It was around 12:30 on Friday, March 12th and many SLC students and staff of Open were out having fun and experiencing excitement. Others, however, were moaning, complaining, and having an all together awful time.

Rollerskating is an annual activity that brings together most of the SLC staff and students of Open School. The activity is supported and planned by Julie Doble, Open's resident science goddess. According to Julie, planning and preparing for the yearly activity is no big deal. She changes the date on a letter from a previous year, makes copies of permission slips, collects money from

students and staff and calls the skating rink to set up a date as far in advance as possible. She says that she does it, "because I think it is really important for staff and students to get together outside of an academic setting and have fun together and relate to each other in a recreational atmosphere."

For many SLC students rollerskating not only works but is fun and exciting. For many others, however, see it as a rather boring waste of time. According to Cheryl Mishler, a senior, rollerskating is good because there "is nothing else that everyone wants to participate in." Cheryl went on the trip but said that she didn't skate because she was afraid of breaking her neck. Neil Henke-Haney also thought that rollerskating was a good activity. He went skating with the rest of the SLC because there wasn't any-
SKATING Continued on 7

“This school has been stricken with a procrastination bug more contagious than the Ebola virus.”

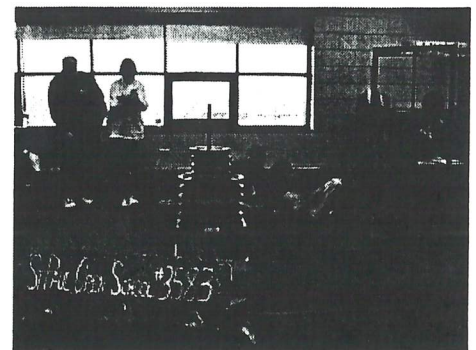
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“The Easter Bunny is a Commie.”

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MATH

It Isn't Just For Geeks and Freaks Anymore

On Wednesday March 24, Open School had a math fair during 5th and 6th hour. Students had been preparing for a week or two beforehand, making math oriented activities and projects which would be interesting and informative to both ELC and SLC students. The math fair took place in the cafeteria. ◇



Forward March!

Mackenzie Byrne
Staff Reporter

This year's Open School Outward Bound trip will take students north to Ely, Minnesota from May 17 through May 21.

Outward Bound is an annual service project; students will be doing things like clearing brush, building and maintaining trails, painting and repairing camping gear. It sounds like a lot of work, but the 17 SLC students going are willing to do it because afterward they get to have fun on either the high ropes course or go rock-climbing.

Science teacher Julie Doble, the organizer of Outward Bound trips past and present, said they have raised most of the money through the taste test and T-shirt sales, but they still need more. To raise the rest of the money, they're having a spring plant sale on May 7 and 8 (order forms will be in the next newsletter).

Julie has recruited Liz Galvin, former Open ESL teacher, to help her supervise the participating students.

"I'm excited about it and I'm glad there's interim, so I don't take five days out of school," said Julie. ◇

The Prom Primer

Ryan McKern
Staff Reporter

Expensive clothes, limos and dancing are on the minds of many Open School 9th - 12th graders. Another prom must be around the corner.

This year's prom is going to take place on April 23 at the Como Pavillion, from 8 PM to 11 PM. The D.J. is from The Scene and the theme is "Catch a Falling Star." Tickets are available at school for \$15. No tickets will be sold at the door. This year's official colors are sapphire blue, black and gold.

Group facilitator Lenni Augustine likes the lakeside location. "Lakeside is the best because of the parking and because it's beautiful by the lake. It works well for the number of students that come," she said.

Prom has evolved with Open School's history, according to Lenni. "It's been on the Jonathan Paddleford Boat, to being a k-12 experience in the early 80's. Since then we have had prom at school, Union Hall, the Student Union at the U of M and the Lakeside Pavilion," said Lenni. ◇



Ally Riley builds a structure for her division one RatiOMetric OM team, which will be one of five Open School teams competing at the State Competition on April 10.

Senior Profile

Tara Wilken



How many years have you been at Open School?

Since 4th grade, so nine years.

If you were an animal, what would you be?

There's nothing I could say that would ever top Pat's . . . I think a panther.

What do you plan on doing after high school?

Going to River Falls, where I will be going into either architecture or engineering.

Where do you see yourself in 30 years?

With a family. Either a senior partner of a firm or my own company.

What will you miss most about Open School?

I would say the students and the staff.

Open Bags Competition at Regional Tournament

Emily Cusick
Staff Reporter

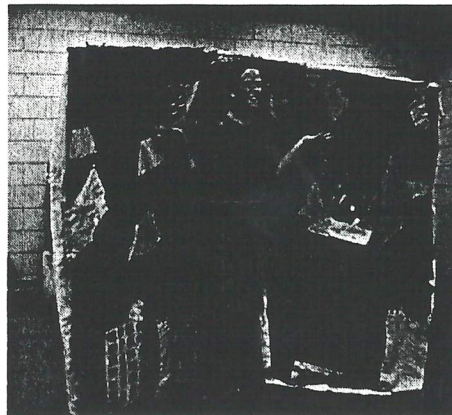
Five Open School teams took first place, and two teams placed at the OM regional competition on Saturday, March 6th at Harding High School.

All three RatioMetric teams, divisions one, two and three, placed first. EnvirOMental Challenge teams in divisions two and three also took the blue ribbon home. O My Faire Shakespeare division three took second and the Customer service division two team took third.

"It couldn't have gone better," said Greg Adams about the competition. Greg coached all three RatioMetric teams as well as the EnvirOMental Challenge division three team. Other coaches and teams at the competition included: Susanne Hollingsworth, EnvirOMental Challenge division two; Don Von, CustOMer Service, Division one; Fawn Nguyen, CustOMer Service, division two; Kiara Buchanan, O My Faire Shakespeare, divisions two and three.

The RatioMetric division two and three

teams won by impressive margins. In the structure portion of the competition, teams are scored according to ratio of the weight held by the structure divided by the weight of the structure itself. The division two team earned a ratio of 46 and division three a ra-



Emily Schultz as the narrator in her division two RatiOMetric team's skit.

tio of 50. With ratios like these at regionals the teams were almost sure to go to state. The division two team actually placed first in all three categories: spontaneous, long term and style.

"I think we did pretty well," said Lucy Stark, a member of the division two team. "I messed up a little on some of my lines (during the skit), but no one noticed and the audience still reacted really nicely."

Even the teams that didn't place seemed to have a positive experience at the competition.

"It went really well, even though my team didn't work really well together. I wasn't surprised we didn't place," said Sierra Blakely from the team O My Faire Shakespeare division two.

So even though not everyone took home a blue ribbon, the over all OM experience was very good.

"Open went on stage so many times!" exclaimed Lucy. "Everyone did so well. Next year will probably be even better." ♦

PLAY From I

ing to tell the other madwomen, Constance and Gabrielle, about her proposed extermination of the wicked people of the world, they are sidetracked many a-time. While the play is at times clever and humorous, during the slow spots it comes off as more idealistic and overly tedious.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that the play is supposed to be a satire. It was not supposed to represent reality; it was more like a metaphor. Another thing that may have taken away from this play is that it was written in French, and may have lost some of the finer points of wit in the translation.

Overall, I think the cast and director did an excellent job, and while the play itself may not have sailed all the way through, it gives a new director and relatively young cast something to build on. ♦

Opinions 'n' Stuff

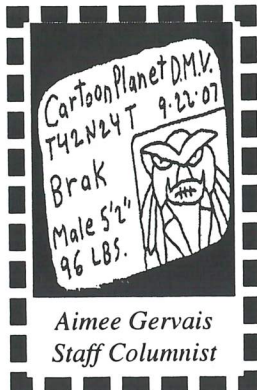
No Story, No Prob.

There was a comic in the paper today that said, "The unspoken law: If it is very late at night, a huge project looms the following day, and there is no one awake to help... Then it is time to rearrange the bedroom." I

think it should have said something like, "If it is very late at night, a newspaper story is due the next day, and you still haven't got an interesting topic, then it is time to play with your new Star Wars CD-ROM." Well, I'm supposed to be writing about movies. Star Wars is a movie. Or maybe I could just go to a bunch of movies and call it "research." Or dig through the recycling for that thing the Pioneer Press movie critic wrote about movie theaters. Of course, the one time that guy actually says something worthwhile, I lose it.

As far as interesting topics go, procrastination isn't exactly the most original, but I've run out of time and options. If I don't get something in tomorrow, I'm going to be in trouble with just about everyone, and I will not be a very happy camper. I knew that. I've known that since... oh, I don't even know how long I've had this deadline. So why didn't I just write something? It's not like I've been stranded on some far-off desert island with no paper or pen. I haven't been threatened by the mob, and I haven't had my brain sucked out through my ears by creepy, sadistic aliens. At least, not as far as I know. I think it's because I'm just stupid. At least I'm not the only one. Ever heard of that Open Schooler who had all their validations done by their junior year, without any threats of grounding or TV deprivation? Probably not, because we all know that this school has been stricken with a procrastination bug more contagious than the Ebola virus.

I got in all sorts of trouble for not writing.
PROCRASTINATION Continued on 7



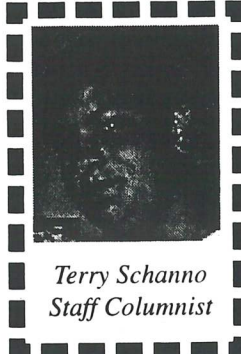
Aimee Gervais
Staff Columnist

Jesse's Got a Gun

Imagine walking through the state capitol and coming across a tall, bald white man roaming the hall with a jet black .38 in his hand. Now that Jesse Ventura was a concealed weapons permit, this scenario could be very real some time in the future

Shortly after his election this November, our new Governor Jesse Ventura was issued a concealed weapons permit by the Minnesota Association of Police. Concealed weapons permits in Minnesota are rare. Jesse is one of only about thirty people in the state who have been issued concealed weapons permits.

Many gun control lobbyists have questioned the need for this permit- after all, Ventura has three state police officers for bodyguards, and Jesse isn't the kind of per-



Terry Schanno
Staff Columnist

son most people would like to come across alone in a dark alley. Ventura was trained as one of the elite Navy SEALs and should more than be able to defend himself without a gun. Others question the morals of having someone with a concealed weapon in the state capitol.

Many who have lobbied for Ventura's right to carry a weapon state that because of his SEAL training, Jesse is very qualified to carry a weapon. The SEALs are trained to use all available resources before resorting to their weapons. Pro-gun lobbyists say that he can use his training to know when to use the weapon that he should have the right to carry. I am part of this group.

The governor has shown us on a few occasions that he doesn't actually carry any weapons around with him - save for his fists. So really, what's the big deal? Many feel insecure thinking that Jesse can.

Of all people who could possibly be carrying a concealed weapon, I would feel much more comfortable with Jesse, the former Navy SEAL, who is trained in how
JESSE Continued on 7

Rock 'n Drugs?



Becca Stephens
Staff Columnist

To echo the words of the rock band Hole, "The boys on the radio, they crash and burn. Too young. Too sad. Too bad." It's common knowledge here at Open School that I love the band Nirvana and grieve the loss of its lead singer, Kurt Cobain. I've thought a lot about the reasons for his death and for the deaths of so many talented young musicians. I can only conclude that drugs and the lifestyle they lead to play a major role in these tragedies.

Rock stars are powerful role models for

teenagers. Ever since the beginning of rock and roll, drug-use has been glamorized by many musicians. "It is all about money, girls and drugs," said Marilyn Manson's Twiggy Ramirez. "That is what it comes down to. Money, girls, drugs and music last. If you have money, then you have the freedom to do the drugs and get away with it and not be a loser. And also, if you have money and you're a rock star, no one looks down on you if you're on drugs. You're allowed to. That's one of the status symbols of being a rock star."

While most rock musicians are not as blunt as Twiggy Ramirez, they send us the same message in other ways. They lead us to believe that drug use makes them more creative and insightful. They do this through their song lyrics and their lifestyles. They
DRUGS Continued on 5

Are You A Native? Find Out Now



Mina Blyly-Strauss
Staff Columnist

While sitting around at home with a Compaq computer watching over me, I received what may have been one of the stupidest ideas I've had yet. This idea, actually more like a question, was about my fair home state of Minnesota. I started thinking about all of the useless trivia that had been pounded into my head during all my years in school. I thought about Asia, Germany, New York, Alaska, Israel, Washington D.C., California, Australia, Mexico, the Ukraine, Russia, Florida, Utah, North Dakota . . . all the events, history, people, places, flags, plays, songs, monuments, natural resources (I think you get the point), all this stuff with one thing in common . . . none of it is in, or about my home state. Then I started wondering . . . why doesn't "Minnesota stuff" seem to be talked about? I started asking around. Other people were also unsure about this topic, the mysterious state in which we inhabit.

The computer was still sitting there, on the desk with a little AOL icon on its screen. I thought tetris, research, tetris, research, homework, solitaire, research . . . I had to decide. My hand was on the mouse, AOL

here I come! Before long I was cruising along on the net, looking for information about Minnesota. Guess what? I found stuff about this seemingly mysterious state. Some of the information was extremely boring, other things I already knew, some of the stuff that popped onto my screen was even interesting (gasp!). This article is about Minnesota, the people, history, hobbies, food and other stuff that makes our state unique.

Minnesota's state bird is the Common Loon, *gavia immer*. The species dates back 60 million years, making it one of the oldest living bird species. Its name comes from a Norwegian word that means "wild, sad cry." Loons are large black-and-white birds with long black bills. They are clumsy on land, but graceful in water and air. There are approximately 12,000 Loons living in Minnesota.

The state tree is the Norway Pine, *pinus resinosa*. The pine has reddish brown bark, earning it the nickname "red pine." Most red pines stand 60 to 100 feet tall, with a trunk 3 to 5 feet wide. The tallest red pine in Minnesota is over 300 years old, stands 120 feet high and is in Itasca State Park.

Minnesota's state flower is the Pink and White Lady Slipper, *cyripidium reginae*. This flower is one of the state's rarest wild flowers. The Pink and White Lady Slipper can be found in swamps, bogs, and damp

woods. They grow very slowly, taking 4 to 16 years to produce their first flower. They can live 50 years and can grow to four feet in height. The Lady Slipper blooms in late June or early July. If you see Minnesota's state flower in bloom you should seriously think about staying away, it is illegal to pick the Lady Slipper.

The official state seal shows a barefoot farmer plowing a field near St. Anthony Falls on the Mississippi River. The farmer's axe, gun, and powderhorn rest on a near by stump, as he looks at a Native American riding a horse. The seal is a feature part of Minnesota's royal blue state flag. The seal is surrounded by a wreath of lady slippers. The wreath has a ring of 19 stars around it, the largest of which represents Minnesota, the 19th state to join the union after the original 13. The state flag also features the state motto, *L'Etoile du nord*, the star of the north.

Minnesota's state song "Hail! Minnesota" was written by two students at the U of M named Truman E. Richard and Arthur E. Upson. "Hail! Minnesota" was written in 1904-05 and was the official song of the University until 1945, after which it became the state song.

The state grain of Minnesota is wild rice, *zizania aquatica*. Wild rice grows naturally in the shallow waters of lakes in central and northern Minnesota. For many years, the entire world supply of wild rice was grown in Minnesota. The rice is harvested from lakes in the traditional Anishinabe Indian way, from canoes. Wild rice is now also planted as a farm crop.

Minnesota's state drink is milk. Cows in the state produce 9.7 billion pounds of milk a year, earning us fifth highest among the 50 states. A glass of the state drink goes very nicely with the state muffin, blueberry. That's right, Minnesota's state muffin is blueberry, this is because wild blueberries are native to northeastern Minnesota. Wild blueberries grow in bogs, on hillsides, and in cut over forested areas.

The state's name is based on the Dakota Sioux word for "sky-tinted water," referring to the many rivers and lakes in the state. There are 4 major rivers in the state, the Mississippi River, the Minnesota River, the Red River and the St. Croix River. There are over 11,842 lakes in Minnesota. There are 6,564 rivers and streams in Minnesota, totaling 92,000 miles of moving water.

MINNESOTA Continued on 7

DRUGS From 4

have us thinking that everyone does drugs, that drug-use is cool.

These people are our heroes. Over and over we see them arrested for drug possession, drunk driving and many other drug-related crimes. We follow their vists to rehab centers and jails. We mourn them and pay homage when they kill themselves through drug overdoses. We accept and even model their behavior.

Think for a moment about the messages that are being sent through songs such as the Beatles' "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds," Hendrix's "Purple Haze" and Marilyn Manson's "I Don't Like The Drugs, But The Drugs Like Me". While most of these lyrics would have us believe that the use of drugs will add something to our lives, it's important that we take a good hard look at what, or rather whom, drugs have taken away from us. We can only imagine the

musical contributions that this group of talented souls would have made if they had lived.

Janis Joplin -- Dead at 27 (Overdose)

Jimi Hendrix -- Dead at 27 (Suffocated in his own vomit while in a drunken stupor)

Jim Morrison -- Dead at 27 (Heart failure resulting from drug use)

Keith Moon -- Dead at 32 (Overdose)

Sid Vicious -- Dead at 22 (Overdose)

John Bonham -- Dead at 32 (Alcohol intoxication)

Freddie Mercury -- Dead at 45 (AIDS, drug-related)

Andrew Wood -- Dead at 21 (Overdose)

Kristen Phaff -- Dead at 27 (Overdose)

Kurt Cobain -- Dead at 27 (Suicide)

Shannon Hoon -- Dead at 17 (Overdose)

Brad Nowell -- Dead at 28 (Overdose)

Hillel Slovak -- Dead at 25 (Overdose)

May they rest in tormented peace. ♡



The Conspiracy Pages

The views expressed on these pages do not necessarily represent the views of The Purple Press or its staff.



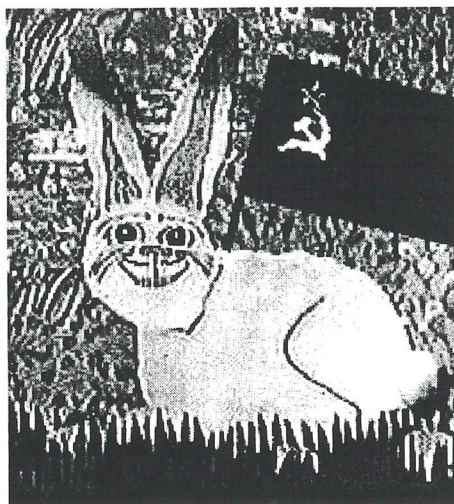
Easter Bunny is a Marxist

Brian Blakley
Staff Reporter

For thousands of young people, waking up Easter morning gives them the sense of sharing, of kindness, and of being included in some larger whole. But the sad truth, the truth that many just don't have the guts to face, is that the Easter Bunny is a Commie.

Think about it. Once a year, the Easter Bunny goes around the world and distributes all of his government's (Mother Russia's?) wealth equally among all the people of the world. Namely, the Easter Eggs, which (although these sources have not been verified), are believed to contain LSD, the use of which would turn the world into Easter Egg addicts.

Even if all the above could not be verified, there would still be enough evidence to prove a link between Mother Russia and the Easter Bunny: Once a year, Easter rolls around, and only about three companies make Easter supplies. My theory is that these three companies are tied in to the comrades in Russia. And you might



money than God. Not even Easter is safe. ♦

now ask, "If this is true, then why is Russia's economy so incredibly fried?"

The answer is that they have pulled all their precious stones, gold and other solid wealth out of the banks to fund their secret war in the United States. Without these funds, they wouldn't have been able to purchase, yes, you guessed it, Hallmark. Now they control the largest selection of holiday propaganda in the world, and there's nothing you can do about it; after all, where else are you going to get a birthday card when the party's in five minutes? So the moral of this rant is that everything you see has been engineered for larger corporations. Take nothing for granted, it's all going to benefit someone with more

SubHumans in Vents

Dan Skelly
Staff Reporter

Strange things have been happening around Open School. Have you ever heard the weird banging coming from the school air vents and wondered what it was? Or who is it that keeps trashing the bathrooms? There is only one reasonable explanation; there are subhuman creatures infesting the air vents.

These creatures grow to be no more than three feet. They have yellow eyes, gray, bumpy skin, long slender fingers and no hair. No, their heads are not oversized and they don't have little cups at the ends of their fingers.

Someone has actually seen them. He looked into the vents with a flashlight and there it was. After that I decided to look for myself, taking a pocket knife, a flashlight, and a laser pointer (they don't like bright lights). I crawled into the vents spotting them many times. When one started moving towards me, I used my laser pointer and he ran a way.

Where do these things stay all day? Most of the time they are in the big brick tower. You know the one by Leo's room. Some move around during the day and mess things up when no one is looking. By night they are busy. They vandalize the bathroom because they know it will be locked which will make it a safe haven during the day.

They vandalized the art room too, for some unknown reason. They stole strange things from the family room because they like to collect artifacts. They also stole VCRs from the school this year. They like to break things, too, like Julie's rotators.

One time they even took the caps off some of the bottles in Julie's room. I believe that they need calcium to survive. Now this is just a theory, but I think they eat chalk too. I have poisoned the chalk and these creatures will soon meet a chalky death. ♦

Pinkles is Leo?

Emily Schultz
Staff Reporter

Every year, some wacko in Newspaper class comes up with a mascot for The Purple Press. Last year, I noticed a monkey flying around quite a lot. But this year, someone spectacular has come around to help out the newspaper. His name. . . Pinkles the Purple Press bunny rabbit.

Ah yes, Pinkles The Purple Press bunny rabbit. Who could resist the small, pink, fluffy rabbit we all know and love? Very few have actually seen Pinkles in person, but the whole Purple Press staff knows he lives in our hearts.

No animal could be as sweet and kind as Pinkles, but there's another side to him that no man or woman has witnessed before . . . until now! You see, Pinkles and I go way back. He and I have been great friends for a long time. We share each other's secrets, and stories. But one day, Pinkles confessed his true identity to me, and now I'm revealing it to the world!

Pinkles is a schizophrenic. He's a kind, *PINKLES Continued on 7*

PROCRASTINATION From 4

ing anything for the last issue of the paper. The really ironic part is that I was supposed to be writing about procrastination and work avoidance techniques when I got ultra-apathetic about the whole thing and used all my ideas of what to write about to avoid writing it. It would be funny if it weren't so darned annoying.

I guess my biggest problem is that I'm easily distracted. I somehow got addicted to multi-tasking, and unfortunately, that's impossible if one of those tasks is writing. Either you'll be distracted from your writing by everything else, or writing will take over your entire brain. Usually it overrides something you'd rather be doing, like sleeping. I think the best thing I've ever written was a little character sketch that rudely woke me up from a much-needed nap at Minicon last year, when I hadn't slept in 24 hours, at least. Of course, the best ideas surface when you're half-asleep, so then you have to make

yourself completely awake in order to write them down. Then you try to go back to sleep, but no, now you've come up with something to continue that first idea. So you wake up, write it down, and try to go back to sleep. Later, rinse, repeat, until 3 a.m.

But naturally, that never happens when you have something due for school. Then everything works just the opposite of the way it should, just to spite you. That's where you have to try all kinds of odd little strategies to fix the problem. Most of them are really just distractions disguised as progress. There's "brainstorming" in which you sit in your chair staring at your notebook with a frustrated expression on your face. Really you're just daydreaming. There's my personal favorite, Internet "research" where you type something relevant into a search engine and then, when the teacher leaves, you start surfing around to your favorite sites or checking your e-mail. There's also the myth

that watching TV helps you concentrate. Maybe it works for some people, but I have never met these mysterious individuals. I think they might be evil government clones. For you normal humans out there, just a tip: Never try to do homework while watching Hercules or Xena. It's hopeless. I'm sorry, but watching Falafel serve coffee to Salmoneus's inner child is a lot more interesting than writing a column.

In the end, I usually manage to write something the night before it's due. Of course, I never finish up until I've gotten very sleepy and completely taken leave of my senses, which, understandably, has a bit of a negative effect on my writing. It's now 10:30, which is actually a lot earlier than most of my stories are finished, but I think it's time I left this alone and went to sleep, before I really start babbling. "Smoke me a kipper, I'll be back for breakfast." ◇

MINNESOTA From 5

Minnesota's state fish is the Walleye, *stizostedion v. vitreum*. More than 1.6 million fishing licenses were sold in Minnesota in 1990, more per capita than any other state. Maybe next time you are out fishing and someone asks what you're trying to catch, you'll say "Nothing much, I'm just hoping for a *stizostedion v. vitreum*!" In theory you will have plenty of chances to do this because more than 2.3 million people fish in Minnesota annually.

Here is some other, possibly more interesting, information. Minnesota's state mushroom is the Morel, *morchella esculenta*. The state occupies 86,943 square miles, has 87 counties, 66 state parks, 4854 square miles of inland water, and has a population of 4,685,549. Waterskiing was invented in Minnesota in 1922. More people own recreational boats in Minnesota than anywhere else in the world. There is one recreational boat for every six people. There are more than 4000 kilometers of cross-country ski trails. The first commercial snowmobiles were manufactured in northern Minnesota in 1953. One in 20 Minnesotans now own a snowmobile.

If you have read this far, you may have learned something new. You may be wondering "why?" You may even be thinking about your loyalty to the state in which you live. Or not. ◇

PINKLES From 6

loving bunny one minute, a killing machine the next. Sadly, I am the only staff member who has witnessed Pinkles' raging emotions. I have come to believe that Pinkles is actually. . . . Leo Bicklehaupt! Those brief moments when you see Leo sing and dance, that's the real Pinkles showing. How else do you think Leo could be so strange? Pinkles is trying to escape!

One day after school, I noticed Leo snoooping around in his room. When I saw

him excuse himself to the bathroom, I snuck in to see what was going on. Inside his desk, I noticed many threat notes, and a picture of Pinkles with a dart stuck in the photo. The door began to open, so I quickly rushed behind a chair to disguise myself.

Now I had proof that Leo was trying to take over the world. And what's worse, he's trying to rid us of Pinkles' existence! The evil Leo-Pinkles is trying to overtake the sweet Pinkles the bunny rabbit. Pinkles needs your help! We shall overcome! ◇

SKATING From 1

thing else to do.

8th grader Robin Steimetz, however, believes that skating is not something all students appreciate "cause we don't like it." Shmuel Blyly-Strauss, 7th grade, agrees that skating isn't a good group activity: "not everybody likes to roller skate!" He says that he didn't skate, but was at the rink because his advisor made him go.

Although many students seem unhappy about being required to participate in the activity, the complaints don't seem to be reaching staff members, and no one is quick to offer alternative activity ideas. Julie Doble, activity facilitator, has heard that students have a great time. She sees students teaching each other how to skate, she sees it as a non-cliche activity with a great atmosphere. Jennifer Johnson, program coordinator, says that in past years she liked the skating and so did the students. She has heard many students say how fun skating was, how they liked being able to talk, eat and skate. She thinks that the activity is a good way for everyone to interact, and sees it continuing for as long as student interest remains strong.

Some ideas to improve the activity are having a theme, going to a new skating rink, or having the students who won't skate only pay for the bus, not the rink. Ideas for alternative activities include, a movie at school, community service activities, invading the Mall of America, having a party, having a talent show, working with ELC students or having individual advisory activities. Some Open schoolers like all SLC skating the way it is, or think that it can be made better with a few small improvements. Others, however, think that skating is an unimprovable, awful activity that should never happen again. Wherever your standpoint on this issue is, you're not alone. ◇

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