

Coordinator Saga Continues

Mina Blyly-Strauss
Staff Reporter

When will Jennifer Johnson be back at school? When will Ev be able to finally retire? Who and what is this article about? If you are interested in finding out the answers to any of these questions, read on.

To address the first question concerning when Jennifer will be back, well . . . Nobody knows for sure. She may be coming back the 16th of December, or maybe January 1st, or possibly January 4th, no one seems quite sure. The only things that can be confirmed are is that she is coming back, and whenever she comes back she will be working full time.

The answer to the second question, of course, is dependent on that of the first. Since no one seems quite sure when Jennifer is going to be back, it's still unclear when Ev will get his long-earned break. Ev is, however, planning on re-retiring before winter break. He has a lot of stuff planned, so let's all hope that Jennifer will be back.

Once he re-retires, Ev plans to work on a large number of wood-working projects, go to Las Vegas and Mexico, and go to Washington D.C. to visit his son.

Many people seem to think that the transition between Ev and Jennifer will go smoothly, and that once situated, Jennifer will be a good program coordinator. Ruth thinks that the transition will be fairly easy because of the fact that Jennifer had taught at Open several years prior to taking the position. Ev's position is very similar to Ruth's. "She's been here four of five years so she knows how things work and how they are different from other schools," Ruth said.

How does Jennifer feel about coming back? She says that there are pros and cons. On one hand she is looking forward to seeing the students. On the other, she's not looking forward to having to put Jacori (her daughter) into day

COORDINATOR Continued on 2



Jennifer Johnson with Jacori

Rash of Thefts Leaves Open Baffled

Brian Blakely
Staff Reporter

Since the beginning of October, strange things have been disappearing from the family room. Strange because they aren't the type of things you would expect to be stolen.

The list includes: a complete set of ceramic paints, three spools of beading thread, and some stars that were hand beaded by Jennifer Diederich for one of her classes. Jennifer says it is not so much the expense of the objects stolen, although it is setting her back, but the knowledge that her students are stealing from her. "I feel really bad," said Diederich. "I don't want to think that our kids are stealing things." She also stated that since the thefts began, she has started locking everything in her room. "I don't leave anything out, and I don't like that feeling."

Not only have things been stolen, they have also been vandalized. An expensive amplifier was broken, and Diederich says she has "Not a clue" who is stealing and destroying the things. In the two days she was interviewed, someone even

THEFTS Continued on 4

Class Choices Cause Cataclysm

Maura Shramko
Staff Reporter

Recently, there have been some fishy class scheduling problems. Students are left with having either too few class options or too many conflicts.

3rd/4th hour is a regular trouble spot. First trimester there was little class variety. Since only a limited number of students were able to get into biology, there were a lot of people with too much SDL on their hands.

Since then, the 3rd/4th hour situation has improved. "It seemed to be a bigger problem before there was Physics [3rd/4th hour]," says Julie Doble, science teacher, "And then there was another option that was a really good option."

Julie attributes the lack of classes being offered MWF and TTH to the 3rd/4th hour block itself. Most teachers would rather teach only one class all week long, rather than one or two every-other day

CLASSES Continued on 4

**FIND THESE
LINES, FOR A
CHANCE TO
WIN YOUR
(IN)SANITY**

**"What kind of crazy
person would do that?"**

**"Another item that I
found was the ever
illustrious Bible."**

"I feel really bad . . ."

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COORDINATOR *From 1*

care. She does, however, feel that once in school, things will go well. "I think it will work well because we (Ev and I) worked together last year, and I worked during the summer setting advisories and some class schedules."

Teacher Turn-About Continues

Krysteenah Garcia and Aimee Gervais
Staff Reporters

Meet Sharon Haldeman, Open School's newest math teacher. She was born somewhere between the Triassic and the Jurassic era. She grew up in a small bacteria colony frozen in the ice on Pluto, and went to college at The University of Minnesota-Duluth. She got her degree in science, and shortly thereafter became a science teacher at a junior high school in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. When she got sick of that, she taught science at a middle school in Gurnee, Illinois, a small suburb north of Chicago. This is her first time teaching math.

She heard of our school from two friends who are also teachers. They were really excited for her because she would be teaching in one of the best schools in the Twin Cities. Unfortunately, she couldn't come at the beginning of the school year due to a "special" project she was working on at Abbot Laboratory.

So far, Sharon feels that Open School students are free and willing to express themselves, and the way to reach them is by constantly communicating with them to find out their needs. She feels that Open students are more mature than other students, and that the school allows them to deal with the "real world."

If you enjoy outdoor activities, get to know Sharon. She enjoys rock climbing, kayaking, basketball, and other sports. She keeps herself well rounded by traveling to foreign countries and small towns, playing the piano, and talking with others. She also enjoys listening to world, jazz, blues, and classical music, but is not close-minded to any specific style of music.

On weekends, she explores the Twin Cities with her boyfriend, Michael, and his "pooch," while drinking raspberry-flavored Snapple Iced Tea.

Her favorite colors are blue and purple, which makes her a very calm person, unlike most teachers.

Sharon is a really exciting gal. If you don't have her as a teacher this trimester, make sure to stop in and say hi. ♦

"Madwoman" Tries 30 Open School Students

Jessica Haug
Staff Writer

"The Madwoman of Chaillot" is this year's Open School production. It will be directed by Open's new drama teacher, Bridget Martin. Auditions for the play were Monday, November 16th to Wednesday, the 18th, both fifth and sixth hour. On Friday the 20th, the cast list was posted on Bridget's door and a mass of people crowded around to see if they got a part.

Kathryn Alexander, the Dorothy understudy of last year's "The Wizard of Oz," was cast as the main part, Countess Aurelia, the Madwoman. Jessica Haug is this year's assistant director, and Krysteenah Garcia is the stage director. The play, as of now, is going to be put on sometime this spring. Emily Schultz was cast as Constance, Anna Karl as Gabrielle, and Holly Ryan as Josephine. All are friends of the countess and are madwomen themselves.

There are 33 parts total.

Bridget said she thought it would be better if she did a play she already knew instead of jumping into a new play at a new school, even though she said she likes the acting she has already seen.

Bridget said that she had wanted

to do "The Madwoman of Chaillot" here in St. Paul at some point because of a previous experience she had several years back. While on the West Side Citizens Organization, the subject came up of building shops underground in a cliff where there was a lot of sandstone between two layers of limestone. The meeting was comprised of two completely different groups, the people who wanted to build these shops were all dressed up in their dark business suits with briefcases in their hands, waiting patiently and quietly while the West Side committee was in their rather usual clothes shouting and arguing that they didn't want anyone to build below their houses because they claimed that they owned their houses "all the way down to Australia." It was a scene straight out of Madwoman, says Bridget. She's been dying to do it ever since.

The other cast members in the play are:

Desmond Hicks as the Waiter; Justin Gilliland as the Little Man; Eric Taylor as Baron; Lizzie Shramko as Therese; Sierra Blakely as the Street Singer; Keenosh

MADWOMAN Continued on 4

SENIOR PROFILE



**Gwendolyn
Richards-Pierce**



Wellstone Talks With Schools

Mark Dyson
Staff Reporter

Last Friday, Minnesota's United States Senator Paul Wellstone hosted a press conference and a town meeting open to high school students at the Humphrey Center. He discussed many topics, from his possible Presidential campaign, to community service within the schools and the new graduation standards that Minnesota has adopted.

The press conference was held at noon on Friday, with the town meeting starting at 12:40. Students from all over Minnesota, but mostly from the Metro region, were in attendance.

The Senator's speeches, and many of the questions he was asked, dealt with issues such as education funding, lack of supplies in schools all around Minnesota, and lack of teachers. Wellstone said that he is trying to get more funding for schools to deal with all of these issues, and that for all of this to happen, he needs support from the students.

When the Senator was talking about community service, he said that he wanted students to reach out and touch their communities. "Community service is seen as a good thing," he joked, "while being involved in politics is seen as disreputable." He also added that "the future of this nation depends not on people who stand on the sidelines, or who are cynical, but on the people

WELLSTONE Continued on 4

How many years have you been at Open School?

Four years.

If you were an animal, what would you be?

Either a manatee or a cat. A cat because they have an easy life, and a manatee because they live in the water.

What do you plan on doing after high school?

I'm hoping to go to college at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

I'll probably get a job too and put the world domination plans on hold.

Where do you picture yourself in 30 years?

I dunno, someplace warm.

What will you miss most about school?

I'm just gonna miss the whole school; my friends here, the little kids and the familiarity of coming to school everyday. I won't miss school lunch though.

OMers Start Strong in Beginning But Lack Follow-Through

Emily Cusick
Staff Reporter

Odyssey of the Mind is off to its usual strong start. There are nine teams, six coaches, and around 58 kids participating overall. Greg Adams, who has been involved in OM for many years, expects Open School's teams to do well. "We've always done well, and I don't see that changing," Greg said.

The program, however, has run into some minor problems. Some teams are turning people away while other teams don't have enough people. The Division 3 teams don't have enough members, like the Environmental Challenge Division 3. Another Division 3 team, O My Faire Shakespeare, had to scrounge around to find people that weren't on NEDC (National Engineering Design Challenge).

For most Division 1 teams, on the other hand, there are too many people. Coaches have actually had to turn people away because there was an overflow. People wouldn't be turned away if there had been more teams, but we can only have six coaches, and most of them are not going to want to coach more than two teams.

In fact, the Pokemon Club was okayed not only because it was a good idea but because of the overflow from OM. It was a good solution for kids who wanted an after school activity, but were turned away from OM.

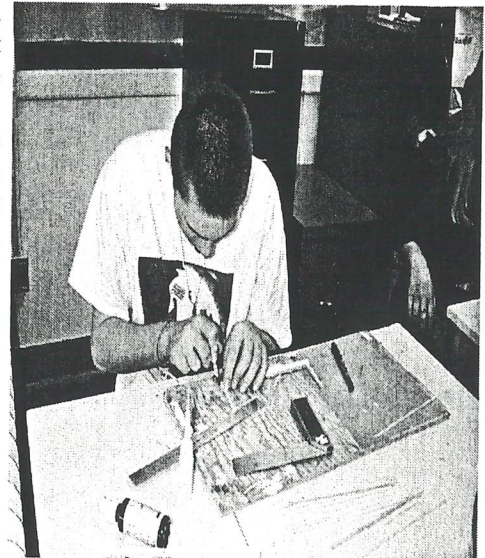
The coaches and teams this year are:

Coaches: Greg Adams, Kiara Buchanan, Susanne Hollingsworth, Sharon Haldeman, Fawn Nguyen, Don Von, Kathy Wilken

The teams are:

Division 1- Ratio Structure (Greg Adams), O My Faire Shakespeare (Don Von)
Division 2- Ratio Structure (Greg Adams), Environmental Challenge (Susanne Hollingsworth and Sharon Haldeman), O My Faire Shakespeare (Kiara Buchanan), Customer Service (Fawn Nguyen)

Division 3- Ratio Structure (Greg), Environmental Challenge (Greg), O My Faire Shakespeare (Kiara) ♦



classes.

"I don't think most teachers would want to teach two different things because it adds another preparation to an already schizophrenic week," Julie commented.

Another regular scheduling problem is the extra curricular classes like OM, Orchestra and theater block. Drama teacher Bridget Martin has had to deal with a lot of students juggling theater and various required courses. Obviously, most students are required to take a math class and probably a language of some sort, and this has a lot to do with schedule problems. There are also a few classes that students really want to take, like Orchestra, OM or literature, but can't because they can't keep up with the class and/or homework. Some students have decided to drop a class in order to put all their focus on the play.

Bridget says this is a result of having the play during the day, rather than after-school, which is the way she has always done it in the past. It's pretty much guaranteed that any time there's a two period block, there are going to be some problems with schedules. Bridget commented that people do not exactly regard theater as one of the most important classes compared to math, science, literature, etc. "If you look on it as part of the English curriculum and as an English class. If you want to be really academic about it, you're learning a lot, you know, in the way of performing arts and language ability and presentation and a whole bunch of things," Bridget says.

One cause of all these problems is the fact that Open is a small school, possessing a small staff, which limits the number of classes that can be offered. It is difficult for teachers to offer classes more than once a day like they might at a larger high school.

Maybe the real question isn't, why are there schedule problems, but is there a realistic solution? ♦

who have passion."

Wellstone talked about the new graduation standards for a long time during the town meeting. When asked about his opinion on the Portfolio of Learning, he replied that he was skeptical. "There's a distinction between testing of accountability and standardized tests." He said that he was not a fan of standardized testing.

He gave three reasons for his opinion on standardized tests. The first was that it was very hard to ensure that every student got an equal chance on these tests, because they came from such different backgrounds, families, native languages, and schools that it would be impossible to develop a test that would give them

each a fair chance.

The second reason that Wellstone was skeptical about standardized tests, was that he was "worried about standardized testing becoming standardized teaching, which would be educationally deadening."

For his third reason, the Senator pointed out that some very bright children with learning disabilities, like himself, would not have any realistic chance at passing these tests.

Wellstone asked the students in attendance at the town meeting whether or not any of them liked the new graduation standards. When no hands were raised, he asked how it was that students from all over Minnesota don't like the new

Portfolio, while the decision-makers who are supposed to represent the students put them into effect in the first place. A wide range of responses were given to him, such as "they will get paid even if we fail the tests," "the ones who do well on the tests make the laws," and a lone voice who said that the new standards weren't all that bad, that people did need to pass a certain level.

The town meeting ended with Goldy the Gopher handing out door prizes and cookies and lemonade being offered to the attendants. The Senator finished the meeting by saying that he would love to come to schools for roundtable discussions and school assemblies. ♦

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MADWOMAN From 2

Burrell as the Flower Girl; Ben Peterson as the Ragpicker; Tiffany Fearing as Paulette; Heather Cook as the Deaf-Mute; Caitlin Rude as Irma; Nick Ipsen as the Shoelace Peddler; Geoff Freeman as the Broker; Alix Fennel-Nivhols as the Street Juggler; Jeremy Bensussen as Dr. Gaspard Jadin; Geoff Wessendorf as the Doorman; Matt Cloutier as the Policeman; Pepsi Benjamin as the Sewer Man; Aaron Isakson as Pierre; Matt Cloutier and Justin Gilliland as Presidents 2 and 3; Nick Ipsen and Geoff Wessendorf as Prospectors 2 and 3; Eric Taylor, Geoff Freeman and Erin Boyd as Press Agents 1, 2 and 3; Lizzie Shramko and Tiffany Fearing as Ladies 1 and 2; Desmond Hicks and Jeremy Bensussen as Adolphe Bertaut 1 and 2. ♦

THEFTS From 1

went as far as to steal some screws for a chair from her desk drawer.

Thefts in the family room might be linked to the thefts in the art room. "I definitely think there could be a connection because look which kind of classes they're taking things from."

These thefts have cost her \$20.00. She feels that the trust she placed in students has been broken, and she doesn't want to

believe that the students she cares so much for could be stealing things from her.

"I think the kids at Open School are great, and I don't understand why they would be stealing from me."

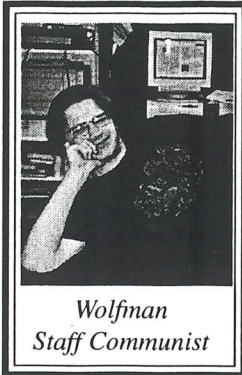
If you have any of the materials missing from either the art room or the family room, you can anonymously leave them in a bag in the lunch room, and they will be picked up. ♦

Opinions 'n' Stuff

My Dad's Roommate

This is how I refer to Mike, my dad's partner. Yep, you read it right, partner. My dad's gay. More importantly, I'm perfectly okay with that. I have absolutely nothing against my dad being gay, and that's the way I like it. I only use the term "roommate" because it removes the annoying line of questioning that tends to follow the term "partner."

You see, being brought up in a liberal Baptist background, (oxymoron or not, it's the truth) I grew up around GLBT people. (For those who don't know, that stands for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender.) In fact, my church is one of the handful of Open and Affirming churches in the Twin Cities.



Wolfman
Staff Communist

Not knowing the vast majority of my neighbors, and considering the small size of the church, this place that I attended since birth has served as a community for me. Therefore, those social skills picked up from community originated there.

With this kind of background, it's no wonder the kind of reaction I had when at the age of 10, my parents told me my father was gay. They set me down and made painfully sure I was okay with it, but I took the news just like learning where he went to high school. I listened politely, and then went back to whatever it was back in those days, probably watching M*A*S*H* or playing with LEGOs.

A few years after his coming out, my parents divorced. It wasn't an angry, "I Don't Want Any Contact With My Ex-Spouse" divorce, they just figured it would be too weird to be married to an openly gay man. So, they still remain good friends, and use the extra house for the oven in preparation.

ROOMMATE Continued on 6

So I Was Cleaning My Room . . .

This is a true story. Nothing is fake. No special writing effects. All characters and items described in this column are real. No amazing actors to cloud the fact that I can't write. Nothing. Just me and some letters on a paper.

So I was sitting around, doing nothing, minding my own business, when all of a sudden, my room got on my nerves. The grime and dirt and dead rotting animals hadn't bothered me before. Why now? Why, on a quiet day that I was going



Hollo
Staff Columnist

to waste away, did I have to get a hankering to clean?

I decided that the closet was the perfect place to start my clean up work. I hadn't been in that closet since I moved into the basement about three or four years ago. What fabulous wonders awaited me behind this cheap folding closet door?

When I opened the closet door, and all these "things," that could only be called "things," started falling on my feet. I began by picking some of these "things" up and dropping them in a box that was positioned by my feet in a quite perfect position. I then attempted to pick up a box that had a moderate amount of items in it. The bottom of the box proceeded to fall off. Now, if you've ever seen the bottom of something fall off, you know it's a very frustrating ordeal. So after about 10 minutes of struggling with the bottom releasing box I began sorting the many things that existed in that dark and dusty closet.

CLEANING Continued on 7

You've Had Too Much Give Me the Tree

It's the night before Christmas, and every time I move, the Egg Nog shifts from one side of my stomach to the other. I can't believe it's almost Christmas already. I've been dreading this moment since last December. For once I'd love to go somewhere warm for the holidays. Even better, somewhere warm where they don't celebrate Christmas, or the killing of pigs. But what kind of place could this be?

My mother is in the other room trying to create works of art with wrapping paper on the outsides of our Christmas presents. I can hear the handle of her scissors digging into her soft fleshy skin. She's trying so hard this year to make everything perfect. I'm thinking only selfish thoughts about relatives, Egg Nog, and annoying jingles. I have been lying here since ten o'clock. I can't sleep. Don't get all excited, Santa, it's not suspense. I feel the pain and discomfort of both the Egg Nog and selfishness. So I walk slowly to the hallway and knock on my mother's bedroom door. "Don't come in! I'm not through yet," I hear from behind the creaky, paint-chipped wooden door.

I then decide it would be best to take a walk. So I throw on my boots and scarf, snap the leash on my dog and trek through the snow. It is wonderful outside. The snow is scattering in front of my moon boots. I have been restless all night and I wonder what it could be. I look at the northern sky and wonder where Santa Claus is at this time of night. I'm guessing Asia, because I see no sign of him. Then I realize I am talking out loud and I don't even believe in Santa, I never have.

I walk down the street and see the stores aren't open. I also see few cars on the highway. Again I wonder why I keep talking out loud. Maybe the reason for my

JINGLE Continued on 6



Marlene Otterness
Staff Columnist

JINGLE From 5

extensive talking is that I will have to hold my comments all through Christmas Day. You see, tomorrow I will visit my father's side of the family. I close my eyes and picture my long, exhausting, ex-tenuating ride to Brainerd in the northern part of Minnesota. Christmas la-ti-da's all the way through the corn fields. This is not the jolliest thing to do on Christmas considering we as a family are legally dysfunctional and we no longer communicate. Instead we thrust our fists against our chests and threaten never to speak again. The worst part is we never admit defeat. We believe that we are too strong for it, but I say not strong enough. Why is it that everyone in my family is so different.

I hate to get involved, so I sit in the corner and smoke a cigarette; holding each breath in longer and longer, hoping maybe I can hold the smoke in my mouth for so long I could black out. Why does it have to be Christmas? I don't even like presents. God, why can't it just be the fourth of July! Santa, sure you've done good for many other boys and girls but what have you done for me lately? ◇

ROOMMATE From 5

tion for family gatherings.

So, although I don't regularly flaunt the fact that I have a homosexual father, I'm far from ashamed of it. It's not like I'm afraid of being gay myself. I'm as straight as Kirk Douglas. (Okay, I could've come up with something better, but this is one of those late-night columns. Give me a break.)

And, as for my relationship with Mike, (which also happens to be my younger brother's name, something that adds confusion to the household, but is utterly off-topic.) it's as casual as that with my dad. Granted, they're different in the aspect that they're different people, but I have no problem with the man sharing a bed with my father. He's a great guy who happens to live in the same house, and that's all that concerns me. Occasionally, it irks me that I don't get the last portion of dinner because that's Mike's share, but I'd rather take my little brother's portion, anyway.

In any case, what I'm trying to tell people with this column is simple. Tolerance is the art of apathy. I grew up around GLBT people, so I don't care who they sleep with. I understand

"Tolerance is the art of apathy."

them as people from first-hand observations and experience, which is the only true way to accept people. I am open to other "minority" groups. I have no problem with people of other races or the disabled, but I don't have the "so-what?" attitude that I do around GLBT folks. This is because I haven't been exposed to them the way I have the GLBT population. If the congregation had been more mixed in those respects, aside from looking like a government integration scheme, I would've gained the same attitudes towards those groups as well.

Now I'm not saying chase these people around with kid in tow just so that they'll be able to get the experience, that would be sick. I'm saying give them the open, apathetic environment early on in a natural way, so we'll raise a generation of kids who won't have the faintest clue why we had all this trouble in the first place. Introducing it naturally is very important; the kids'll know something's up when you try to cram acceptance down their throats.

Before I sound too much like a damn psychiatrist, let me end it while I'm ahead. Environment is the key to tolerance. All you need is love. Can't we all just get along? Don't worry, be happy. ◇

Living in a Pokémon Hell

You know what I think is pretty scary? This Pokémon obsession. When I first heard about this television show, I decided to watch it to see what it was like. The show was actually pretty cute, but I rarely watched it be-



Emily Schultz
Staff Columnist

cause I had other things to do.

About a week ago I found out that some of our students had started a Pokémon Club. From what I've heard it's a club where people sit around, watch Pokémon, and talk about the characters, and their favorite episodes. That's when I started to freak. At first, the craze didn't scare me so much. I noticed a lot of people bringing their Gameboys to school to play the Pokémon game. That didn't really bother me. But then, people started printing pictures of Pokémon off the internet, and

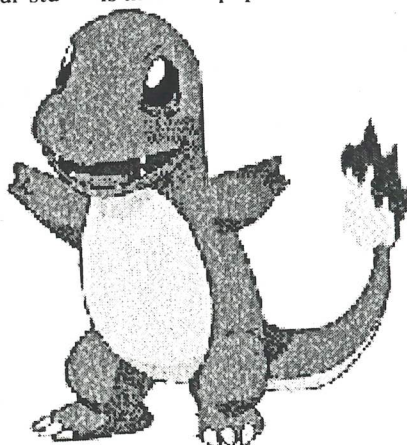
writing stories about it, and then THE CLUB!

I have nothing against Pokémon. In fact, I find the characters very cute, but really . . . It's only a television show.

And what about these new Giga Pet type Pikachu's? Y'know, those little Gameboy looking things with Pikachu bouncin' around on the screen. Do you have any idea how WELL those will sell? I remember how popular Giga Pets were last year. You couldn't find them anywhere, and now they're back with this Pikachu pet? That is just too frightening. Where do these people come up with these

things?

And another thing: I don't understand why Pikachu is the most popular Pokémon of them all. Is it because he's the main Pokémon? Or do you just think he's the cutest?



What about the other Pokémon? Like Haunter, or . . . geez. I don't even know the character's names. They're just as cute, but all people care about is Pikachu. What about the others, huh? They have feelings too. I haven't met one Pokémon fan that wasn't obsessed with Pikachu. If you're out

there, just tell me who you are. I am destined to find a fan of another Pokémon besides Pikachu.

Pokémon is gonna take over the world, I tell you! Pretty soon you'll be able to buy Pokémon wallpaper. Unless you can already . . . By then, I'll be in an asylum. ◇

Greeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeen Giant

I was shocked when I read a recent newspaper article that appeared first in the Los Angeles Times and then in Minneapolis' November 8th Star Tribune. This article was entitled "Shocking inside story of the mascots revealed." It seems that Tony the Tiger, the Energizer bunny, the Jolly Green Giant, and many other company mascots are battling social issues ranging from children born out of wedlock to an unhealthy self-image.



Mina Blyly-Strauss
Staff Columnist

The first part of the article addressed the Jolly Green Giant. Now it seems that the very muscular looking Green Giant is very different looking from when he first appeared in 1925. When he was first showcased, he was not at all tall, muscular or green. Instead, he was short, had a caveman-type appearance and carried a single pea pod. However, this image did not last long. By the 1930's someone in marketing decided that this stout barbarian wasn't selling frozen peas well enough, so he was forced to have his skin surgically turned green and to put on a leafy toga. Strange, isn't it? I don't know about you, but I'd probably be just as likely to buy peas from a stout caveman as I would from a green football player in a toga. And what about Jolly's little tag-along sprout? It seems that he is in no way related to the Jolly Green Giant.

What about the well-known, "They'rre grrreat" Frosted Flakes tiger? Well, it seems that 46 year old Tony and Tony Jr. are doing fine. Wait a minute, is there a Mrs. Tony? Where is she? When asked these questions, a Kellogg's publicist that the writer quoted said "Uh, no," "We can't have Tony fathering children out of wedlock. Let me look into this." About a week later, Kellogg's called back to report that Tony Jr.'s mother, who had no name, once appeared in a TV commercial on an unspecified date. It was also discovered that in 1974 (the Chinese year of the tiger), Tony briefly had a daughter named Antoinette. I don't know about you, but this whole story seems like something that social services should look into.

The Pillsbury Doughboy also seems to be experiencing some sort of emotional turmoil. It seems that the 33-year-old doughboy once kept company with a doughgirl and doughdog (who have since disappeared). Could it be that the Pillsbury Doughboy is in denial? If so, should he even be considered stable enough to be working?

There is also a large number of socially iso-

lated mascots. The Ty-D-Bol man, Charlie the Tuna, even the Energizer Bunny are single. The excuses vary greatly. One example may be found in the Energizer Bunny's biography, which states that he is "interested in a long-term relationship but too busy at the moment."

The oldest mascots cited were Aunt Jemima and the Michelin Tire Man, who are 109 and 100 years old respectively. Here questions also arise. Shouldn't these two be retired? Are they workaholics and mentally unable to stop working?

There is at least some comfort in knowing that not all mascots are too self conscious, busy, or unethical. Yes, it's true, even in this day and age of social cripples, there remain a group of mascots that manage to lead relatively "normal" lives. These down to earth mascots seem to hang out at General Mills. The Trix Rabbit, the Lucky Charms leprechaun, Betty Crocker, Frankenberry, Count Chocula and Sonny the CoCo for Cocoa Puffs Bird lead relatively quiet lives. When asked about the marital status of the before mentioned company mascots, spokeswoman Pam Becker said, "I don't know. We don't delve into their personal lives." ♦

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CLEANING From 6

First, I found some old books. Then some miscellaneous little games. And then I found (picture now, a sharp organ chord), a rubix cube. How great. I played with it for about 10 minutes. I then preceded to add it to the box of stuff and get back to work.

Another item that I found was the ever illustrious Bible. In perfect condition. How odd, it was like it was never used. Almost like it had never seen the outside world. This odd occurrence is probably due to the fact that I locked it in that closet a long time ago. I put it in the box and continued upon my journey.

I found my crayons. I was quite happy.

By this time I was beginning to think I was never going to find something so outworldly cool that it would make my socks pop off my feet and curl at the ends. All I had found so far were some half full boxes, filled (half way) with useless junk. Aside from the Rubix Cube and the Crayons of course.

And then came the most glorious item. An item I thought I had lost a long time ago. (organ chord) This "thing". I don't really know the real name of this "thing", but I know it's cool. It's a bunch of triangular prisms all linked on the ends. You then play with it by flipping the parts and making really cool designs. It's one of the most fabulous things in nature. Ok, in a toy factory somewhere in New Mexico.

The most illustrious item had been found. What else could I possibly hope to find in the closet of wonder? Absolutely nothing was left in the closet, save a few dust balls that were making me sneeze a lot, and a large bookshelf. The adventure was over. ♦

I've Been Hypnotized by 16 Bits

Andrew Netteburg
Staff Critic

Well, it's getting to be that time again. Brightly colored, garish decorations have arrived and advertisements are attracting the gullible masses to buy gifts that will be returned the day after Christmas. I will try to help by shedding light on an already dim topic: Computer Games, which ones should you buy?

***1/2 (out of five) Rebellion This is the long awaited Master of Orion with a Star Wars theme. This stunning piece of eye and ear candy has a beautiful sound system for music and decent sound effects. The graphics are gorgeous, just seeing a richly rendered Death Star obliterate the pathetic rag-tag rebel fleets is quite joyous.

Unfortunately this game is not perfect. One fault is the real time space battles. The battles are difficult to control, making even the simplest battles pain staking. Also, computer opponents never attack your fleets until they are sure to win. This is a great tactic, but decidedly annoying when all you have to do is blast that one darn fleet and the game is over. This game takes place in real time, as opposed to being turn based, so you need to manage a lot of actions at once. If you're a Star Wars buff, then this is the game for you. Besides, nothing is cooler than putting the Emperor on trial.

*** (out of five) Might and Magic V This fantastic fantasy game is set in the magical world of Enroth, the world of Heroes of Might and Magic 1 & 2. It is a great game with an awesome story line. Beautiful graphics and a non-linear story line mean that the quests can be performed in almost any order. Unfortunately, a few problems present themselves. One is that unless you have the strategy guide that lets you locate the teachers, it is difficult to improve beyond a certain point. Also some of the spells are considered better than they really are. This is only a minor problem, but the skill training problem is a major one that is hard to solve without the \$20 strategy guide. The strategy guide does help you on a number of quests though and is well worth the extra \$20.

In my mind this is a great game and a good buy. If you do play it, here is a word of warning. When in doubt, Run. Trust me.

(No Stars) 7 Kingdoms This wretched excuse for a game cost me \$20. I now use it as a coaster.

* (out of five) Age Of Empires In this Warcraft clone you play one of several different nations in an attempt to rule the Ancient world. Basically, you chose your nationality and begin in the stone age. By collecting resources you move through the various ages to eventually reach the Iron age. In the process you can build various units to wreak havoc upon the poor helpless nations. Aside

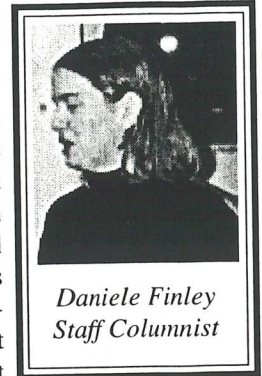
from the excellent graphics and the great musical scores, there is little to tell this apart from Warcraft-like games.

***** (out of Five) Starcraft. Where do I start? This game is better than Warcraft 2, the granddaddy of all the games in the genre. Stunning graphics, dazzling special effects, an excellent plot line complete with plot twists, a diverse number of units and three nations to choose from. The only way this game could be any better is to connect all of my friends computers and mine on a LAN and play a huge, 8-player game. This game is worth whatever you pay for it. ♦



I! Need; My? Punc,tuation.

You know what really irks me? Run on sentences I just don't see why people do them. You would think that by the time people are in high school they would learn how to use punctuation but it just isn't so people still really can't handle things as easy as this. Run on sentences make it very difficult to edit things and as if that weren't enough it makes things a whole lot more boring to read.



Daniele Finley
Staff Columnist

The St. Paul Public Schools System has tried to give us better skills than to have have people just going on and on, we should all learn how to use things like periods comas quotation marks exclamation marks question marks apostrophes and things like that. It's ridiculous, we have teachers for these things, I went to a school where they taught us how to write when I was a youngster. They taught us how to write almost perfectly.

If people do not learn how to write then what will our future generations be like I mean think about all the books we are going to be writing in oh say thirty years. It's a good thing thatThe Purple Press staff is above things like this or you would all be read-

“If this problem does not fix itself then it’s going to be like another great depression . . .”

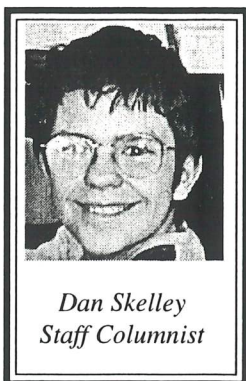
ing trash already luckily most of us are better educated than our fellow youths of today.

If this problem does not fix itself then it's going to be like another great depression and more people will be jumping out of windows from really tall buildings onto even more buildings or quite possibly highways and the like. There are also too many highways in the world anymore seriously though you look out your window and you can practically see them and the orange lights reflected in the sky at night is also a sign that our future generations are going to suffer.

In conclusion if people could just learn to write like my colleagues and I then we would all just not jump out of windows through orange skies and into highways. ♦

Rampant Primates Raid Shopping Malls

Did you ever notice that holiday decorations get put up earlier and earlier every year? Someday soon, they will be put up immediately after being taken down. Some people never take them



Dan Skelley
Staff Columnist

down. They also get more and more elaborate every year. When will the decoration madness end? I mean why do you need decorations for Christmas up in August? People should at least wait 'til after thanksgiving.

Don't forget that there is a new toy craze every year. Remember Tickle Me Elmo? Ads in the classifieds offered Tickle Me Elmo for \$3000. Did you ever hear about the man who was trampled by the people trying to get Tickle Me Elmo when he opened the store? What kind of crazy person would do that?

This year the new expected craze is small furry creature that looks like Gizmo from the 80's movie "Gremlins" called Furby. This toy needs to be fed by pressing its tongue. It also needs to be played with. Even though Furby gets sick, he never dies. Their are five or more kinds with their own colors and names. This year, 300 people waited outside Toys 'R' Us in Bloomington before the store opened at 6:00 am. What kind of crazy people would wait outside a toy store that early just to get Furby? At some Wal-Mart a kid was bitten in a dispute over a Furby! I have to say Furby has a good chance of being just as big as Tickle Me Elmo.

Now here is part of a song that sums up my feelings about the holiday madness:

Decorate the halls in August, fa la la la la la la la, Tis the season of the dollar, fa la la la la la la la, man is trapped for a Furby, fa la la la la la la la. and that is all I have for now so stop the holiday madness.

P.S Furby for sale, best offer. ◇

"Star Trek" Hits Home With Everyone

Mark Dyson
Staff Critic

Imagine this: you walk into a theater, because you are going to see a movie on opening day. Almost all the seats are filled, and as you take a look at the people in those seats, they're all filled by people talking about "Star Trek," "Star Wars," "Babylon 5," and some lesser-known science fiction flicks. Also, some are talking about computer-related stuff, like baud rates and newsgroups. Do you have any guesses yet as to what this movie is?

Yup, it's that new Star Trek movie, "Insurrection," and all of the geeks, nerds, and science-fiction freaks are committed to seeing it on opening day. It was a bit scary to have all those Trekkies surrounding me. Not as scary as it would be to a non-geek, because I am a Trekkie myself, so if you do go to see the movie, you might want to bring some ear-plugs to drown out the noises of so many nerds trying to engage you in a conversation about quantum phase disruptors and other such nonsense. There was even a nasty rumor going around the Internet in the weeks preceding the release of the movie which said that the entire Net would be shut down on opening day of "Insurrection" so that all of the network administrators (geeks) could go see "Star Trek" without guilt.

The movie itself, if you take out the rest of the theater's population, is wonderful, even if you're not a "Star Trek" fiend. Even if you only watched three episodes of "Next Generation," it will make sense to you. And it's a whole lot funnier than any of the previous "Star Trek" movies: Data (Brent Spiner) learns how to have fun at Riker's (Jonathan Frakes) expense, Worf (Michael Dorn) goes through the Klingon version of puberty, and the good captain finally gets a girlfriend that doesn't die during the movie. "Insurrection" also has a lot of excitement, with plenty of firefights and a plot that's moderately deep.

Over all, I'd say that this was better than most of the other "Star Trek" movies in all areas. "First Contact" still is the best of the "Next Generation" movies, but this comes in a very close second. ◇

IN A NUTSHELL

What: "Star Trek: Insurrection"

MPAA Rated: PG, for some yucky surgery scenes

Starring: Patrick Stewart

Directed by: Jonathan Frakes

Rating: **** 1/2 out of 5

One Good "Trek" Deserves Another

Wolfman
Staff Critic

Star Trek: The Motion Picture - The original big-screen flick which, to anyone born after 1980, looks like "Flash Gordon" with a different soundtrack. The only one that managed to snag a G rating, it's worth seeing for kicks and giggles, mostly for the ending. *

Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan - Long considered the king of all "Trek" films, it's remembered for Spock's death scene and Kirk's most touching moment in history, besting even his own death scene. The film did a fabulous job of tying-in an episode from Season 2 in a way that both those who have and have not seen it would understand and enjoy. ****

Star Trek III: The Search for Spock - One of the more memorable movies for its use of the "modern" Klingon make-up and language, and the chance to see William Shatner duke it out with Christopher Lloyd. This film was a segway in the series, re-unit-

ing the crew for "Star Trek IV." It was the anti-climax of the films, particularly due to the destruction of the Enterprise. ***

Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home - A break from the Enterprise's gallivanting around the universe, this film ties much more directly into the human side of "Star Trek." You can see the actors enjoying having characters with trouble adjusting to 1980's San Francisco. *** 1/2

Star Trek V: The Final Frontier - Shatner's failed attempt at directing bred the most infamous of the series. A far-fetched idea about Spock's brother hijacking the Enterprise and searching for God. No Stars

Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country - Redemption for its predecessor, "VI" gives Sulu a chance at a bigger role and finally brings the age-old Klingon conflict to an end. A classic adventure-type in the style of "II," based on the Chernobyl incident which led to peace with Russia. ****



The Conspiracy Pages

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



They Love Us, They Love Us Not

Ben Peterson

Staff Schizo

Once again, our beloved school district is trying to squelch the very life-essence of *The Purple Press*. While going through the process of laying out Volume 2 for production, the computer which houses The Purple Press' files crashed. After rebooting and working a while longer, it crashed again. This happened six more times before a member of our technical staff became concerned.

He decided to scan for viruses, and lo and behold, he found one. He set to work to rid us of the dreaded thing, spending the next 45 minutes fixing it. This, of course, set the production of the paper back, and put us invariably behind schedule.

After we were back in production, he ran some scans and discovered that the virus was contracted when some files were downloaded off of the Internet. You may think the school stupid for not checking these files beforehand, but here's the kicker: These files came from the Independent School District #625. That's right, the St. Paul School District.

This is clearly a brutal attempt at espionage. A direct act of sabotage has been committed. The district is trying to silence The Purple Press and its team of hard-hitting investigative reporters. I wouldn't be surprised if their next target is me, or one of the other writers . . . or even Leo himself!

What has the world come to, when supposedly honest establishments feel the need to resort to subterfuge and espionage? I think the school district doesn't want you to know the what's really happening. All the things these pages have reported on in the past must have hit a sour note with them.

I wouldn't be surprised if our spreading the word about such issues as the janitors' nanoprobe, or the pseudopeeps, or FBI cameras in the halls, or mind controlling lasers in the computers, or maybe even Kraft's tobacco-laced macaroni, has led them to the decision to destroy us. We will keep fighting and spreading the news. We have proven it before, and we can prove it again: The district is no match for Open School! ♦

A Tale of Two Big Red Guys

Matt Pajunen

Staff Writer

It's nearing that time again. The holiday season. The season of giving, receiving, taking back, and most of all, spending. The icon of all those things is in the process of letting kids sit on his lap and is making sounds that can only be described as "ho-ho-ho-ing." Of course, I'm talking about Santa Claus.

Dressed up in a bright red suit, mirthful, jolly, and most of all, kind, you wouldn't suspect that there is a darker secret behind this old man. One so surprising, you will literally flip your lids!

Let's examine what this man "Santa" is like, shall we? Santa is a kind, old, overweight fellow who gives out presents. Now let's examine him closer. He loves the color red, has a beard, red cheeks, and is only seen one day of the year.

Now we'll transpose some letters in Santa, to examine another being, the dark lord Satan. Satan is a demonic being who loves the color red, has a beard, red cheeks, and is never seen on Christmas.

These two seemingly unsimilar people are actually very similar. However, we must also examine how they are different. Santa is kind, gentle and nice, while Satan is dark, evil and consid-

BIG RED Continued on 11

A Letter From the Editor

Ben Peterson

Headline Hedgehog

HELP! My writers have been kidnapped under the guise of La Niña. I was, also, but I was able to escape thanks to my covert operations training through the NEDC team's on-site trainer, MacGyver. The Conspiracy writers are being held by the powers that be against their will. You may still see them walking around in the halls, but I assure you: They are not themselves. I'm not quite sure, but these are either the same people without their investigative talents, or they have been replaced by the dreaded pseudopeeps. I'm writing this on-the-fly at 7:50 in the evening. This is the only time I'm allowed to write freely at school without prying eyes. I blame them all. The district, Kraft, the FBI, well, just see my article. All those listed are responsible. I am hereby sponsoring a contest. Anyone who has any hard-hitting investigative material that will help further my cause, please submit it to Leo (the only staff you should trust), and he'll make sure I get it. If it is of a high enough quality to publish on this page, you will win (drum roll) an original, unmodified pilot edition of *The Purple Press*. That's right, Volume 1, Issue 1. The original. You will be able, for yourself, to see the paper while under the influence of "Them." See how the paper has changed dramatically between then and now. That's all I can write now, I think I hear Mike coming. ♦

Question of the Month

Do Santa's reindeer get paid by the hour, or by the mile?

This space intentionally left blank to save printing costs.

Question of the Month, Too

Why do girls always have to pee in squadrons?

I Told Her I Had No RENT; Out the Door I Went

Mark Dyson

Staff Critic

"Rent," a Broadway musical by Jonathan Larson, recently came to the Ordway Theater in downtown St. Paul. This musical, based on the old play "La Boheme," is about eight young artists living and dying in New York City, most of them living with AIDS, and all of them struggling in one way or another.

This play, first performed on Broadway in 1996 at the Nederlander Theater, is on its second national tour right now. It has come to the Ordway twice since it started, and it has been sold out both times. The reason "Rent" has become so wildly popular with older teens and younger adults is probably because it captures the struggles of young people living on the edge and being daring. It may also be the fact that the music and the acting are rockin'.

The plot is as follows: Mark and Roger, long-time friends and roommates are living in a building owned by Benny, a rich yuppie and former roommate who wants them to pay rent, which they can't afford. Roger is a songwriter, and Mark is a freelance

filmmaker trying to make a documentary about life. The play goes from the first song, "Rent," where the entire ensemble is singing about surviving in this world, all the way to "I'll Cover You," where the main characters' friend Collins laments over the death of his loved one, Angel.

The acting, music, dancing, and plot in this musical are absolutely captivating, sexy, and open. The music, consisting mainly of rock n' roll and pop, is almost always fast and upbeat, and gets you jumping in your seat. The lyrics and dancing really make the spirit of the young artists stand out.

You should go see this the next time it comes around to the Cities if you like fast-paced musicals and shows that will have you crying, laughing, cheering, and moo-ing (you'll know what I mean if you see it) all in the same sitting. While a bit on the pricey side if you buy your tickets in advance (\$50 for third row balcony, and \$65 for third row main floor), you can get tickets for \$20 that will sit you in the very front row if you get in the student rush ticket line. And it's worth it; this is not an old-fashioned musical like "Les Miserables" or "Oklahoma," but a new trend in pop culture. ◇

Top Ten Things to do With Guppies

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 - Eat them | concert tickets |
| 2 - Fishbone quills | 8 - Send them to third-world |
| 3 - Squish them to make music
(ala "Muppets Tonight") | countries where they will be |
| 4 - Elvis | used in deathmatches against |
| 5 - Mug them as they leave
RENT | chickens to raise money towards |
| 6 - Feed them | the end of child-labor camps. |
| 7 - Swallow them whole to win | 9 - Stick them in Leo's desk when
he isn't looking. |
| | 10 - Give them cameo spots in
Budweiser commercials. |

I Am Also Living in a Pokémon Hell

"So?
What Pokémon do
you want to be
Jimmy!"

"I want to
be Dude!"

Yes,
There is a new
Pokemon. It's my
creation, it's called
Dude. It's not like
the other Pokémon,

oh no no no. This Pokémon has the normal
appearance of a human being. Specifically
that of a Californian white boy surfer who
has partaken just a little too much of the local
herbs. His special attack includes pulling
out a bag of chips and throwing
Cheetos™ at you. So what if it sucks?

What's with your people's obsession
with this TV-show/video-game? I don't
understand it. Everywhere I turn in this
school there is some kid talking about



Hollo
Staff Columnist

Pokémon. And if they aren't talking about
it they are playing the video-game. It's al-
most like an addiction. And now, they have
a club at school. Treatment anyone?

Just so everyone knows, Pokémon
is a Japanese Anime TV show for kids. It
features a group of three Pokémon trainers
wandering through some planet (the name
escapes me right now), catching the inno-
cent looking Pokémon that could kick the
crap out of any one of you. Then they pit
fight them at some tournament. What mean
people.

I'll admit, the show is kind of cool.
It has its interesting points. It has its mys-
tique. It also has its band of devoted fol-
lowers. You may know who they are, they
eat, sleep and breathe Pokémon. It's almost
sickening. Liking something is all fine and
dandy, but when you finally work your way
up the ladder to the obsession rung, you've
gone too far.

Stop being obsessed. ◇

BIG RED From 10

ered the enemy of good. To top that off they
live in places which are near opposites
(North Pole, Hell). The perfect cover up!
That means that Santa and Satan are one in
the same! I would get a DNA test done on
those two just to prove that they are one be-
ing, but they would probably hire OJ
Simpson's dream team in their defense.
(Hey, Santa has to have some cash if he doles
out presents to everyone). Even if they
didn't hire the dream team, they would still
probably get off. They are supernatural be-
ings, you know.

The question does arise, though: if
they are one person, who is that one per-
son? Well, let's see. Both are very old, but
the winner is Satan. He seems to have been
around forever. Also, if Satan is playing the
role of Santa, what does he have to gain by
doing so? Simple. Respect, love, compas-
sion; he is going for the admiration of the
people! Sometime in the future he will re-
veal himself as being Santa and people will
love him and respect him, and turn away
from their deities in order to worship Satan!
We'll all be Satanists! Now that the truth
has been revealed, my life is now forfeit. I
have given my life so you can read the truth!
Please don't waste my life. Make good use
of this knowledge. Call your senator, your
congressman, your favorite new personal-
ity, for the truth must get out into the public,
or we'll all be saying "oi" in the nearby fu-
ture. ◇

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