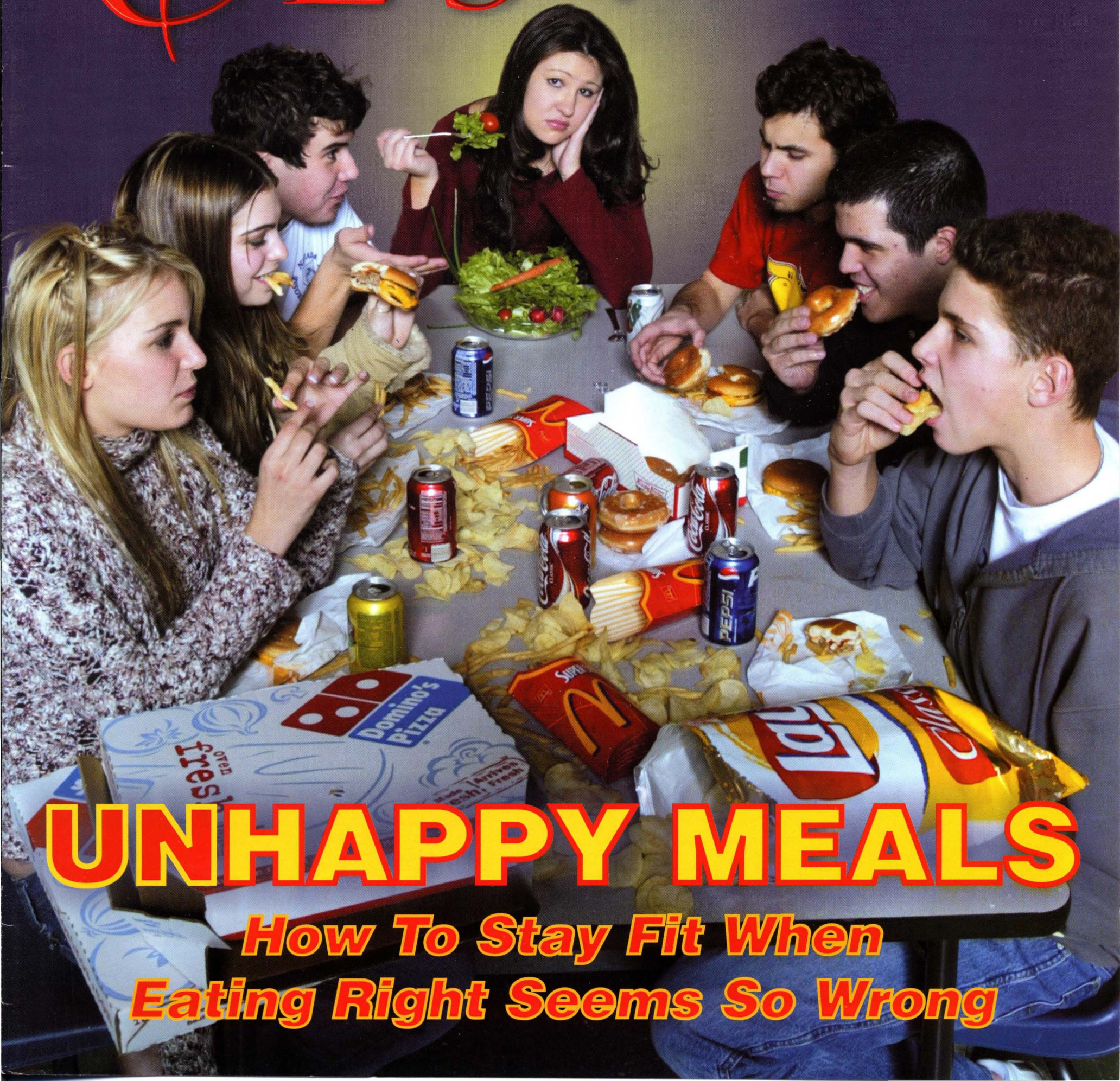


JANUARY 2004

CLASS!

**By, for and about Clark County
high school students**



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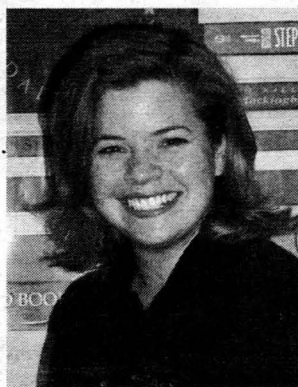
Sometimes, I'm questioned about my job when I tell people that I work for a publication that is written by, for and about Clark County high school students. There are members of our community who only hear about the kids who are making headlines by misbehaving. They've heard the statistics like those mentioned in Kaycee Lewis' story on page 14, "Nevada students not the sharpest crayons in the box, report says." When they hear that the 2002-2003 Smartest State results have listed Nevada as number 46, these people ask me how can these delinquent teens write anything worth reading?

That's when I hand them our most recent issue. I show them stories like those from the Sun Youth Forum on pages 4-9. Dan Reynolds from Bonanza High School states, "I sometimes worry that my generation will not live up to the prior one, but after the Sun Youth Forum, my fears and worries are gone." Ryan Hamilton from Chaparral High School says, "Anyone with doubts about the future of this country should sit in on a typical Sun Youth Forum discussion. Listening to the diverse ideas ... makes it clear that we are prepared to meet with gusto the challenges which await us outside of the schoolyard."

There are arguments waged that some people believe that teens don't have it any harder today than in years past. I can tell you for a fact that today's teens are up against a great deal more than my schoolmates and I when we graduated from Valley High School in 1989.

Yes, there are a few dozen students who will rattle chains and upset the community during this school year, but that's out of a population of more than 60,000 other students. That means there are tens of thousands of you and your peers out there going to class, doing your homework, acing your finals, and really caring about who you are and where you're going. In my eyes, these teens are the representatives of Clark County teens, not the extreme minority making headlines for the wrong reasons.

So when the adults in your world ask what's wrong with kids today, I encourage you to hand them this issue and tell them nothing's wrong; you're just teenagers working through your world the best you can.



Allie Smith

Allie Smith
Editor/Executive Director
www.classmag.com

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Coronado High School students "chew the fat" over lunch ... literally! From left, Darralee Hacker, sophomore; Barbara Kaminsky, junior; Jacob Green, junior; Riley Marriage, junior; Johnny Driggs, senior; Andrew Reyes, junior; and Mike Lukowski, sophomore.

CLASS!

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Sun Youth Forum students tackle Nevada's toughest issues

At left, Alex Bayless, a student at Eldorado High School, speaks during a session of the Sun Youth Forum at the Las Vegas Convention Center. Below, Sebastian Balint of Las Vegas Academy speaks out on the issue of gay marriage while Marcos Ibarra of Western listens.

From proficiency exams to city growth, debates were focused

By Ryan Hamilton, Chaparral HS

Arriving in the early morning, shuttled by a big orange school bus with the bitterly cold wind as company, students destined for the Sun Youth Forum to discuss issues affecting Nevada, brought with them broad-based views. These views, containing vast disparities and different motivations would come together and form cogent, clear and concrete conclusions regarding some of the vital and not-so-vital topics affecting the population of this great state.

Assembly Speaker Richard Perkins proved a fine moderator, leading the discussions and introducing viewpoints contrasting with the prevailing beliefs of the room. Out of necessity resulting from the students' shyness, Perkins selected the first issue: should casinos share more of the tax burden? The discussion ultimately morphed into an issue about education: is the proficiency exam useful, and do businesses value education in our community?

The clear focus of the debate was on the proficiency exam. Those supporting proficiency testing suggested that the test was elementary, and that a failure to pass it was a sign that

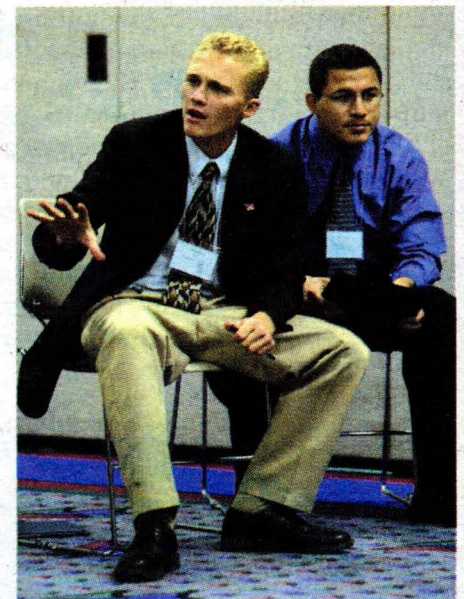


education was probably not the student's forte. Opposition leaders voiced discontent, founded in the exam's

strict construction of education. They claimed that not all students were bound for college, and those students who wished to pursue a different form of education, free from complex arithmetic and literary analysis, should be free to do so.

The argument went a little something like this: If those students who were good at drawing forced a drawing proficiency on those students who excelled in math, students would fail on almost the same level as they do now. Education should offer a wide range of alternatives for students not wishing to go to college. Others added that it stigmatized seniors who couldn't pass it. One astute member brought up the test's inconsistency. If it shows that a student is proficient, then after passing it, why should a student be forced to continue their education? The vote was taken, and most students favored eliminating the proficiency test, while at the same time providing viable choices to those of us who plan to immediately enter the workforce with a vocation.

A topic linked with education involved the amazing rate at which Las Vegas is growing. The question was about



All Sun Youth Forum photos are courtesy of the Las Vegas Sun.

whether the local government should begin to take actions to deter further growth. Proponents of that measure listed finite resources, chief among them water. They went on to cite the transportation services that are quickly deteriorating, unable to provide effective and quick commutes.

Those in favor of growth advocated letting the water experts and scientists make the decisions on how much growth the valley can sustain. Perkins explained some of the governmental issues affecting water consumption, especially the Law of the River, a constitutional document dividing Colorado River usage among the states and Mexico. After a vote of students was taken on the issue, the majority found it favorable to continue growth.

What we're doing with what

we already have sparked some of the most fiery dialogue of the session, particularly on these two issues: the Las Vegas "What goes on here stays here" ad campaign, and smoking in public places.

Everyone was able to agree that Las Vegas was not the most moral place in the world, and that the title "Sin City" existed for a reason. However, to some that was simply a label they were no longer willing to accept. Arguing that the ad promoted immoral behavior, and in turn portrayed Las Vegas in a negative light, they questioned the need for an ad at all. Given that most people already know the reputation of Las Vegas, why promote the issue on national television? Moreover, we should take active steps to reduce the unfounded perceptions of Las Vegas, like the belief that everyone lives in hotels. At this point, Perkins shared an interesting anecdote about how a Virginia Protestant ragged on him for an entire conference about the "immoral nature" of the city.

Most students, however, didn't think the ad was bad. This author finds no shame in sharing that television commercials shouldn't be able to affect what ought to be deeply conceived and seriously held morality. Allies joined me in not opposing, and even supporting the ad by voicing that the ad is necessary to increase the younger tourist base, and that ultimately we'll reap the benefits from sharing our "dirty secret" with the rest of the nation. After the vote, it was apparent that most people didn't have any serious problem with the ad.

Banning smoking in public was a fairly divided issue, and there were some objections as to whether it posed a serious health concern. The most-used example for those supporting a ban was a grocery store, where no one wants to buy smoke-saturated watermelons, or anything else for that matter. It was generally agreed upon that smoking wasn't something to be promoted, but ultimately we came to the consensus that individual property owners and proprietors should be given the authority when it comes to smoking in their establishments, and that government intervention would abridge property rights and force some busi-

nesses to cut a policy that they would have preferably kept.

As the day marched onward, we came to the conclusions that the death penalty was justified and should be kept in our penal system, and that wild animals should not only be kept in shows, but oftentimes, they end up benefiting from domestication.

Anyone with doubts about the future of this country should sit in on a typical Sun Youth Forum discussion. It becomes readily apparent that our generation is not only prepared to tackle the tasks set before us, but also to set a positive, forward looking vision so that some day, future generations will no longer be beset by the problems in education, government, society, and the problems of life with which we currently deal. Listening to the diverse ideas not only being expressed, but jiving together to form some amalgam of logical policy makes it clear that we are prepared to meet with gusto the challenges which await us outside of the schoolyard.

Religious beliefs clash with legal rulings in forum's law discussion

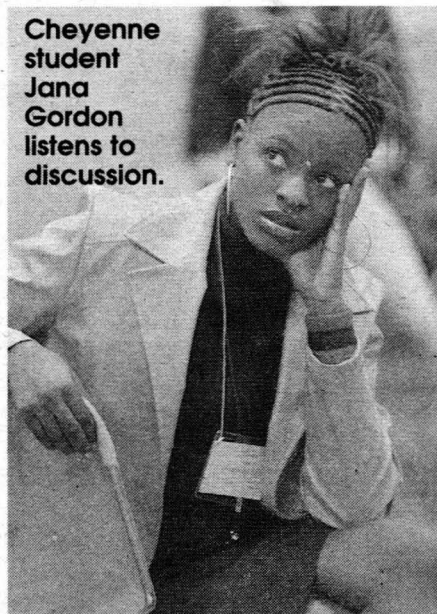
By Blaire Schembari, Centennial HS

Several intelligent young adults gathered together at the 2003 Sun Youth Forum in order to share their diverse values and beliefs. Being involved with the Law and Crime discussion group allowed its members to dive into the depths of some very controversial issues.

We began the session with the question of whether or not the Bill of Rights extends to homosexuals. Opinions clashed immensely during the discussion of this particular topic, and the question of how we as a nation can justify freedom and whether or not homosexuals should be legally allowed to marry and adopt children only heated the conversation.

Many valid points were made during this debate such as the question of what the true

Cheyenne student Jana Gordon listens to discussion.



concept of marriage is, and before you can understand the other point of view, you must be able to see that there are two different definitions of marriage, connotation and denotation. From that compelling statement, religion seemed to make its way into the conversation, and many quoted from the Bible. Although many Christians filled the room, there were also a few atheists who brought an entirely different outlook upon our discussion.

We then proceeded to discuss gun control and how we can adopt more effective gun control laws. Once again the discussion went from one extreme to another, between many pro-gun control views to many anti-gun control views.

Our next topic of discussion was capital punishment and if it is a just penalty, and once more, religion played a major role in this debate. Many argued that even with DNA tests, guilt is not always perfectly clear, and with the death penalty, the completely innocent may be put to death. Another point brought up was that, ironically, the taxpayer's money goes toward supporting a murderer's medical needs even if the law-abiding taxpayer can't afford medical support for himself or herself.

Physician assisted suicide was our next subject and whether or not it should be made legal. The majority of the room agreed that it is a person's choice to end his or her life but only if they have a serious terminal illness that causes them great pain and suffering.

One topic that seemed to arouse something in everyone was the question "Are the '311' Boys being treated differently

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Amanda Schiers, left, and Claribel Ayala, both of Desert Pines High School, confer with Elaine Collins of Bonanza High School during the Sun Youth Forum at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

from other 'gangs'?" A few said "no" while an overwhelming amount replied "absolutely!" The fact that no one would expect such behavior from white, rich kids who go to a nice school was the defense for many, while others blamed America and its constant hunger to publicize sex, violence and bad things altogether.

Another question that stimulated a fervent debate was abortion and whether or not it is the mother's choice, an additional topic that gained a religious outlook. Arguments took place between how one would justify when an abortion is right and when an abortion is murder. Between rape and birth defects and just careless, casual sex, where is the line drawn? However, one of the most passionate statements that was made during the entire debate was that everyone should get a chance to live, and many found it difficult to argue with that.

Although the list of questions goes on and on, I found that these were the most interesting and intense issues. I thoroughly enjoyed being involved in such an open and professional environment in which I could express my opinions and soak in those of my peers. Perhaps some opinions have changed and perhaps some have become stronger, but being able to respect both sides gives all of us a greater understanding of each other and, more importantly, ourselves.

Teens take on variety of topics at Sun Youth Forum

By Nicholas Smith,
Cimarron-Memorial HS



The 2003 Sun Youth Forum was an intellectual gathering of students from all across the Clark County School District. Out of the many groups debating across a broad range of topics, some of the most controversial topics were addressed in the "Potpourri" debates.

I had the honor of participating in one such group made up of diverse individuals of many nationalities, from different walks of life, and each with their own unique views and opinions.

We began the morning with the question of why there has not been a female president. Most in the group agreed on the fact that America is still a traditionally male-dominated society and that the opportunity has not even been available. Even with the freedoms granted by the women's rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s, there simply have not been that many qualified candidates. The presidency has always been a traditionally male

office, and change will not come easy, as many stereotypes still exist that women must fight to overcome. Our group agreed that one day there might very well be a female president, but only in the very distant future.

Following the issue of a female president, the topic flowed to the issue of why women are paid less than men. The problem is that some women in certain corporate jobs get paid less even though they may have the same number of hours in schooling and work experience. The topic quickly became one of gender equality. The group consensus was that, as much as women talk about equality, they really don't seem to fully want it. Equality is really being granted the opportunity to compete, not special treatments. An example of this is how women are exempt from the draft and excluded from combat in the armed forces. Discrimination against women is wrong, but sadly it still persists in the male fraternity of executive corporate management. Though great progress is being made, the old stereotypes will take time to break down. The group agreed that women tend to talk more than take action, and to point the blame rather than take an active stand.

Next our group debated on whether the words "under God" should be taken out of the Pledge of Allegiance. We all understood that it was added during the Cold War as a philosophical gesture of solidarity, uniting the nation as Christian against the atheist Soviets. We felt that the rights of both the minority and majority should be respected. The pledge should be left alone, and the choice to say "under God," or even the Pledge at all should be a personal choice. After all, there are much more important things to worry about than a mere two words anyway.

The controversial topic of gay marriage was a heated issue. Most were in favor of keeping marriage between a man and a woman. Though many were very adamant in their beliefs, a middle ground, if it could be called that at all, was reached. After numerous statements were made, including the infamous Adam and Steve argument and the lesbian double standard, we concluded that it is hypocritical to deny gays the right to marry or have some

form of civil union. It just goes against our Constitution and what our country stands for.

The Patriot Act was unanimously agreed to be unconstitutional. The debate shifted to the war on terror and that brought a lot of Iraq, Afghanistan and Bush criticism. The added airport security, though it is annoying, is a necessary evil. The Patriot Act seems to be a bill that Congress decided to pass first and worry about later. Like many things, it was passed with good intentions but it just gives the government too much power that can easily be misused, like in the case of the Las Vegas county commissioners.

Lastly, our potpourri group debated the issue of legalizing marijuana. We agreed unanimously on the medicinal uses of marijuana. As for recreational purposes, we felt that people are going to get high no matter what and that by decriminalizing and taxing it, the government could make revenues like it does on cigarettes and alcohol. The only real difficulty with legalization is that it would most likely not make it through the Food and Drug Administration. In spite of the expected social consequences, many agreed that it does seem hypocritical that our government bans marijuana yet reaps billions in revenue from the alcohol and tobacco industries.

Media influence on teens highlights 'Teen Topics' debate

By Dan Reynolds,
Bonanza HS

The room in which the Sun Youth Forum discussion group on "Teen Topics" was held was never silent. Teenagers waved their hands in the air, hoping to be able to voice an opinion. Everyone's mind was racing as the topics were introduced. The Sun Youth Forum not only informed me of my peers' thoughts, but it also brought me to a new perspective on life. As a teen, I sometimes worry that my generation will not live up to the prior one, but after



the Sun Youth Forum, my fears and worries are gone.

We began the meeting right on time, with no time wasted. Our mediator introduced himself and then jumped right into our first topic: Have family values changed? Many argued that teens spend much less time with the family than they did in the past. They are either playing sports, or at friends' houses. Most felt teens need to make more of an effort to spend more time with the family, and less with their friends.

We slowly worked our way into the next topic: How big of an effect does the media play on us?

We all agreed that television now shows much more than it did only four years ago. More curse words are allowed; drugs, sex and violence are shown to extremes on channels that any kid can see. For this reason, youth begin to feel like it is normal to curse and have sex at a young age.

Kids are growing up so much faster than they should be. Children at the age of 10 know more swear words and more about sex than many of us recall knowing at 15. The group felt that the media are slowly making kids think that all these things are normal. America is becoming accustomed to the things that used to be bleeped-out and blurred. Kids are growing up too fast and missing out on a lot of the necessary easygoing years of childhood. We all felt that the media should stop expanding its boundaries on what it shows, before kids start learning their morals from the television instead of their parents.

On the topic of showing affection at school, many got into heated discussions over situations they had experienced in the past. One girl stood and told of a time when she had been "RPC'd" (Required Parent Conference), just because she had hugged a boy at school.

"Hugging is not showing affection. It is merely a greeting to someone you care about," she said.

Teens believe that in some cases, school is turning into a prison. The rules are becoming so strict that we have no room to enjoy our education.

"School is a time to prepare for the future, and isn't learning social skills a part of preparing for our future?" one girl

argued.

The next subject that was discussed was the possibility of selling condoms at school. Some students believed that it was good because it would persuade teens to practice safe sex.

"If some kid has decided to have sex, at least make it easy for them to have safe sex," one young man said.

On the opposite end, many believed that it would influence students to have sex and make it seem more normal and accepted. The consensus among the group was that condoms are sold at stores, and if you need them, go buy them. School is not the place to sell condoms. School doesn't sell nicotine patches, does it?

Random drug testing at school was a major issue. Many said that it would be a great thing because it would get rid of the dangerous drug addicts who are found in many high schools. It would make schools safer and get rid of those who endanger others.

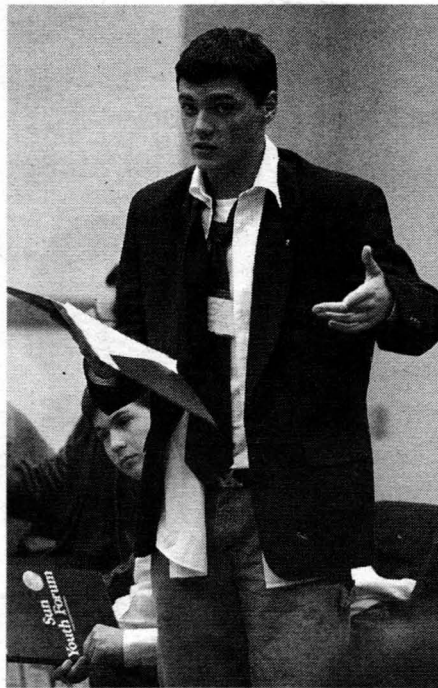
On the other hand, some thought that it was an invasion of privacy. Random drug testing will hurt more than it helps because even if the kid is kicked out of school, he could still continue doing drugs at home. The dropout rate is already high, and with drug testing, it will just become even higher. This could ruin a teen's future. Is it really worth making many kids get kicked out of schools just because we want to feel that much safer?

Drug legalization was another topic discussed.

"If they were legalized, less people would get jailed, and fewer futures would be



Tiffany Yanke, a student at Shadow Ridge HS, gives her opinion on high school proficiency exams.



Ariel Xaubet, a student at Chaparral High School, speaks during a session of the Sun Youth Forum.

crushed," one boy said. "We already get them, so why don't you just make it easier?"

The alternative opinion was expressed stronger, however: Why make it easier to get something that is killing so many teenagers? More teens would have access to drugs. Teens already have easy access to alcohol. Do you really think that if they legalize drugs, we won't gain access to these as easily? Drugs, legalized or not, ruin teens' futures. The easier it is to access drugs, the more teens' futures will pay the price.

One of the longest and most discussed topics was on how the media portrays teens. For the most part, we are portrayed as drug addicts, violence-lovers, sex addicts, and just plain troublemakers. Most argued that we still, for the majority, are people who wish to make the future the best place possible, even if we do choose wrong some of the time.

We still have morals, and we stick to them as closely as we can. Like all humans, we mess up sometimes. You will find kids who choose wrong, just like teens did in the past, but for the most part we are sticking to the standards that our parents have instilled in us. We are learning the same lessons our Dads and Moms learned. One reason that many felt we are portrayed the way we are is because rules are becoming stricter. As rules become stricter, it is possible to break more laws. The tighter

the boundary is, the less room we have for mistakes.

We know that our generation has its problems. Just like in the past, we are learning, and with learning come mistakes. The group felt that we have a lot of potential. Perhaps adults will pardon some of the mistakes we have made, and see the things we do right.

We understand that we need the discipline. We realize how much our parents do for us and that they only wish the best for us, whether we admit it or not. We are the new generation, and are ready to take on the huge burden of keeping America the wonderful place it is. After the Sun Youth Forum, I feel confident that we are another choice generation.

As it becomes harder for us to stick to our morals and standards, we only grow stronger. The world has many trials and obstacles that try to hold us back, but we will not be held back.

Youth group handles heated, intelligent debate on America

By Sebastian Balint, LV Academy



Welfare, "under God," illegal aliens, gay marriage, homeland security, rebuilding the World Trade Center, stem cell research, a national language: these are all pretty heavy topics for a kid who likes to play basketball on Sundays and who tries to catch up on sleep in government class.

However, all these topics and more were discussed at the 2003 Sun Youth Forum. It was an awesome experience that I will never forget.

In my forum room, which had the topic of America, we talked about all of our subjects and a few others. To my surprise, it was really fun, and the conversations were really interesting. I enjoyed listening and sharing other points of view.

Our group first debated a topic, and then decided on various solutions. The first topic we discussed was welfare. The dis-

cussion was heated, but respectful, and we had many different points of view and opinions. We discussed the pros and cons of socialism, humanitarianism in America, the benefits of welfare, and how our national budget is currently spent.

As a group, we came up with five solutions. There needs to be better budgeting of our money, a return to the welfare programs of the 1990s, more money in education, incentives to encourage humanitarianism, and education of adults on the welfare program.

We also had a passionate debate on illegal aliens and whether or not they should be removed from our nation. This was a heated argument, which was very interesting. Our solutions included making all the illegal immigrants legal citizens and allowing them to stay, as our nation is based on immigration. Another solution was sending illegal aliens back because they are here illegally as a result of our loose immigration laws.

We also discussed gay marriages, and whether our nation should legalize them. Our solutions included not allowing gay marriages, allowing civil unions and abolishing marriage and making civil unions for everyone.

We discussed many other topics including the Patriot Act, Ground Zero at the World Trade Center, stem cell research and English as a first language.

Standardized tests, budget cuts lead 'School Daze' debates

By Cory Elder, Boulder City HS



What's wrong with the school system? Proficiency tests are being dumbed-down because too few students are passing them; the budget doesn't hold water; and in some schools, popular clothing brands are banned because of possible gang affiliations. And cheating! Don't get me started on cheating. Since we can't just flush the system and start over, let's work with what we have.

Does society value grades over learning? Most of you still reading this just laughed to yourself and thought, "Grades — DUH."

That's sad. It is a great injustice that the world of academia to which blossoming minds are introduced is one where GPAs mean more than cognitive capacity. Sure, tests like the SAT level the playing field for those of us who don't feel like doing all the busy work a 4.7 GPA entails, but the person with the highest test scores isn't given that most honored title of "valedictorian." This is a battle between intellectual slackers and those with little

more than a solid work ethic. Very few crossbreeds exist. Can intelligence be used to sidestep the necessity of said work ethic? We can't eliminate grades in favor of a more collegiate schooling style, and we can't judge students by busy work alone. The verdict? Leave things the way they are. The system isn't perfect, but it's the best we have.

On the matter of dress code, there are some ridiculous policies in place. Some schools have banned certain brands based on the principle of "gang affiliation." Preventing distractions within the classroom, or even worse, violence, the bans are tolerable. Consistency is key, though. If a brand is prohibited at Centennial, it should be banned at Boulder City or Green Valley High Schools as well.

Should the district reformat to a four-day week? Would students benefit from four longer days at school rather than five normal days? After long deliberation, there are still no easy answers to these questions. The biggest draw of the four-day plan is money. The schools will save huge amounts on transportation and utilities. The downside is change. Teenagers are creatures of habit, and a change in their schedules would throw them off balance.

School budget cuts are threatening my way of life. As captain of my school's cross-country team, I always listen with rapt attention when budget cuts are mentioned because sports will likely be the first to suffer. Programs like music and foreign language are already being diminished. What many do not understand is that an education is not forged from books alone. The experiences gained through the social interactions involved in sports and the artistic expressions afforded students in many electives are just as necessary to students as algebra or iambic pentameter. Sports nurture the body with activity; the arts nurture the soul with beauty and camaraderie. Take away our sports and arts, and you take away who we are.

Perhaps if we taxed the casino industry more, it would help. It is the largest industry in Clark County. It does report huge profits annually. But someone with greater wisdom than I has decreed that south-



Siuming Lee, a student at Green Valley HS, voices her opinion.

ern Nevada's greatest source of income shouldn't pay any more than it already does.

Can our programs be saved? It is an uphill battle for both sides, and people don't want to face the harsh truth of the matter. To improve schools, higher taxes will have to be paid. No one wants to pay taxes, but "tastes great, less filling" is a bar commercial, not a model for how life works.

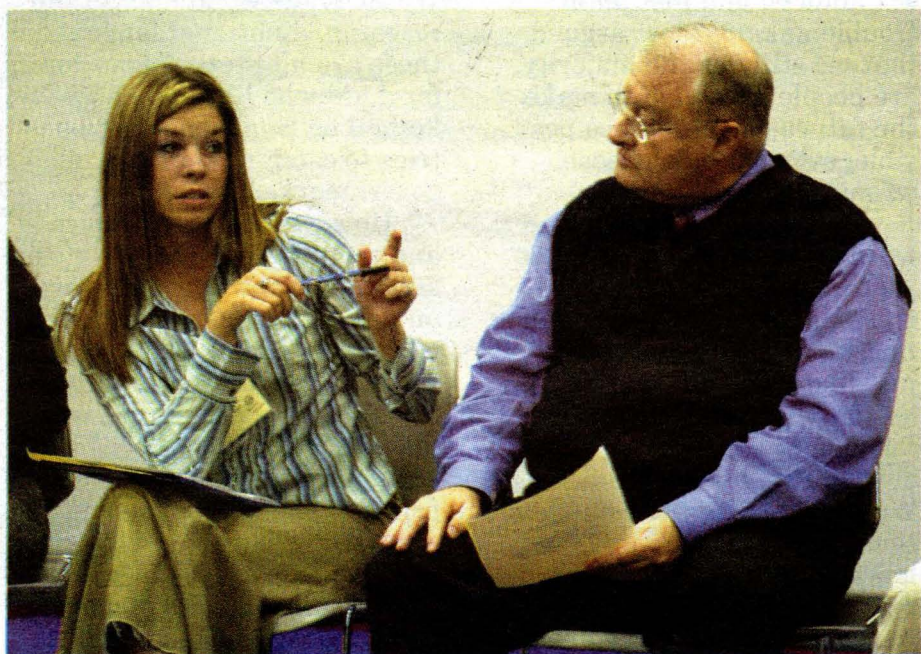
Anything worth having requires sacrifice. I say, if budget cuts are truly that necessary, they can start at my throat, because without the nurturing of the body and soul of the student, what good is the mind?

Intellectual debates at Youth Forum show hope for the future

By Nicholas Grainger, Chaparral HS

Sometimes I worry about this country. Where are we going? Who's driving us there? Do I really want to live in a country in which the decisions are made by young people whose favorite reality show is "Survivor?"

But then at the Sun Youth Forum, I discovered that there are some young people whose favorite reality show is the



Erica Dresel of Centennial High School speaks during a session as moderator Bob Fisher, president and CEO of the Nevada Broadcasters Association, listens.

original, longest running reality show: the nightly news.

It occurred to me that there's just enough people watching just enough of the news to have varied and intelligent responses to some of the tough challenges facing the world today. For example, in the Forum group that I was privileged to be in, we tackled issues from "Around The World," such as peace in the Middle East, a possible war with North Korea and the question "Is America overstepping its boundaries in international affairs?" Those weren't the only issues, but you get the gist of it.

Of course, we all didn't agree, which is expected and should be cherished. I mean if we all agreed, how boring would that be? We would have been done with our discussions in 30 minutes instead of the six hours it took us.

For example, one of the most controversial topics was whether or not America is overstepping its boundaries in international affairs. Personal feelings aside, a majority felt that it was not only our right, but our responsibility to step in as the only true "superpower." Besides, this is politics, not ethics, that we're supposed to be dealing with. So what if our cultural imperialism and holier-than-thought attitude causes people to sneer at the mere mention of McDonaldland? I mean as long as we're making money, it's good, right? Protecting our interests, no matter what. The other side of the coin is such altruistic and lofty matters as respect for your neighbor, and not taking advantage of a disadvantaged country. Sovereignty is a great thing; how can we invade one country and expect others to do as we say, not as we do? I could spend hours going back and forth arguing this with no one but myself and still not reach any conclusions. It's a tough one all right.

As one might expect, there was a whole slew of questions about the war in Iraq. Should we have gone? Was it necessary? Is democracy possible? Should we withdraw? How could the United Nations have been more help? Was the main goal to make "them" more like

There's nothing quite like matching wits, arguing, I mean discussing, one another's ideas in a forum of mutual respect and acceptance.

"us"? Should we seek more international assistance? Should we ask Iraq to repay us with oil?

We answered for the most part that we probably should not have gone to Iraq; that, yes, it was necessary for us to go, but only because we need a scapegoat; that we hope democracy in Iraq is possible; that we should only withdraw from Iraq if the Iraqis can deal with it;

that the United Nations should help by giving food, money, medicine and education to the people; that we should probably seek more international assistance; and that we should absolutely not

ask Iraq to repay us with oil.

If I said only one of the questions made me think, I would be lying because they all did. Oh sure, I already knew what my opinions were before walking in, but the challenge was in figuring out why I'm so sure my opinions are right.

One of the questions made me think out in a direction I don't think many could have pointed toward: "What should be done about the AIDS epidemic, especially in Africa?" What I wondered then and still do is if there were any gathered in that room whose life had been touched by AIDS. Several solutions were proposed — one advocating that education will be our salvation, and one which at first glance seems ridiculous: let it be.

It was argued with some degree of success that AIDS will only live as long as its last host-victim lives. Without a host, AIDS dies out very quickly. If we were to go into an "ultimate containment mode," sure, it would be unpleasant, but the AIDS virus would cease to spread and would ultimately kill itself off. It's an interesting notion. One ethno-centrist proposed going over with Christian missionaries and teaching the 'heathens' good Christian values and the morals of abstaining from premarital sex.

Personally, I enjoyed myself. There's nothing quite like matching wits, arguing, I mean discussing, one another's ideas in a forum of mutual respect and acceptance. Maybe there is hope for our country's future after all.

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Valley water crisis affects school playing fields

By Rickey Lofton,
Sierra Vista HS

Many students, especially student athletes, have become vulnerable to various injuries as a result of inadequate high school sports playing fields, due to new water allocations set by the Las Vegas Valley Water District and the Southern Nevada Water Authority.

The watering of grass on school sports fields has been cut down to once per week. As a result, students must play on grass that is dry and brittle, increasing the incidents of burns, scratches and bruises. The schools have no control over the watering cycle and must comply until the restrictions are lifted.

Football and soccer players are especially susceptible to more serious injuries due to their constant use of the fields. Many football injuries aren't caused by the contact of the sport, but as a direct result of the inadequate fields.

"I understand that the water mandate is above the school district, but the field is Bermuda grass, and without the proper watering, the field will cause more injuries," says Nathan Selby, Sierra Vista High School baseball coach.

"As the quality of the field

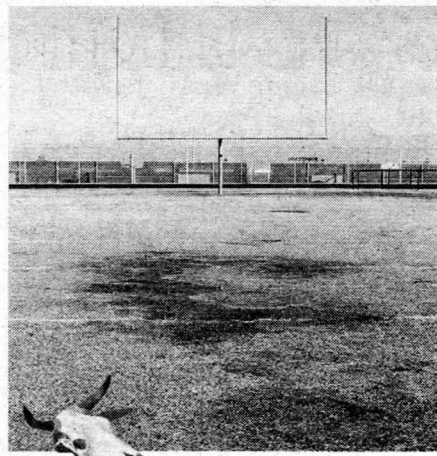
goes down, the chances of more serious injuries will go up," he says. "Bermuda grass gets extremely rough and dried out without the proper watering, so altering the water cycles seems like an appropriate solution."

"The fields have never really been in great shape, but recently they've been really bad," says Andrew Bravo, Sierra Vista varsity football player. "The field is more like dirt, rocks and weeds disguised as grass patches. I'm not surprised at all of the injuries that take place during practice and at games. I myself have had skin ripped off and countless bruises because of the field."

"I've addressed the issue of the grass with the authorities here at school, and no changes were made," says Head Football Coach Ben Johnson.

Nevada's drought ordinance laws regulate landscape watering, fountains and water features, golf courses, and even vehicle washing. They also direct when and how to water certain locations, based on water grouping assigned by the area and time of year. However, the only consequences of violating these limitations are small fines.

"The schools now have absolutely no control over the watering of the fields," says Zane Gray, Sierra Vista's assistant principal in charge of athletics. "The



Desert landscaping? Dirt, rocks and weeds plague district playing fields under new watering restrictions.

LVVWD has developed a base timer for all Clark County schools that relays signals through school phone lines, which is directly linked into the field's watering systems. Other facilities, such as Desert Breeze Park, water their fields at least three times a day, as opposed to Sierra Vista, which can only water once per week."

Schools in the past have abused the previous watering system that allowed schools to oversee their own fields. While some schools may have chosen to exploit this system, the revised plan now affects all schools regardless of their involvements in past misuse.

There are certain watering guidelines that are exempt from drought restrictions such as hand watering, non-spray irrigation, supervised testing or new plants. New plants or vegetation, which have been planted within the previous 30 days, are exempt de-

pending on the type of watering system. Some schools have taken full advantage of the LVVWD exemption policy and planted new fields accordingly.

While school fields remain inadequate and a prevalent danger to students, some local businesses and various homeowners have opted not to comply with new drought restrictions. This of course will only prolong the lifting of drought restrictions. Previous drought restrictions were lifted by community involvement, compliance and improved water saving. In this particular case, the water restrictions will last until the Lake Mead water level increases. Consequently, there is no set time as to how long the restrictions will last.

"There is a set water budget for each Clark County school," says a spokesperson for the SNWA. "Schools have exceeded these budgets on numerous occasions and have now been put under an appropriate subsidized budget account, which will send relief to the drought situation. When the drought restrictions become revoked, changes should be made to the new watering systems for schools."

The Colorado River system is facing one of the worst droughts on record. Lake Mead has dropped nearly 70 feet over the past two years and is expected to drop even further. The drought currently taking place is affecting schools, homes and local businesses. This issue will continue to disturb school safety until an appropriate resolution is found.

CLASS! design workshop makes news

High school journalism students got a crash course in graphic design and newspaper page layout at the recent

CLASS! PageMaker 7.0 Intermediate Design Workshop, held on Dec. 4 at the West Charleston campus of the Community



Hoping to gain extra proficiency in layout and design are, from left, Natalie Minev, CCHS; Chiarra Velloffa, Valley HS; Lauren Pastor, Liberty HS; and Calen McCallister, Chaparral HS.

College of Southern Nevada.

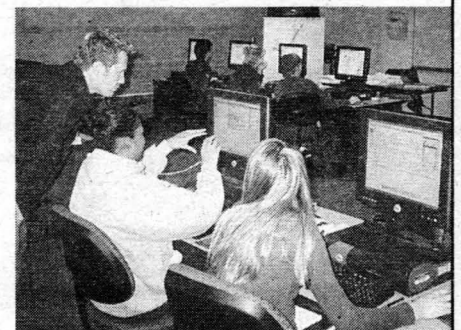
Twenty-one students from 14 high schools in Clark County participated in the small, intensive workshop that featured hands-on training in design concepts and computer skills needed to produce high school newspapers.

"We're offering more small workshops this year to make sure that the students receive as much individual attention as possible," says CLASS! Executive Director Allie Smith.

Graphic designer Todd Wirth from Graphics 2000 used the multimedia technology capabilities of the CCSN computer lab to create an interactive and individualized learning experience for students, guiding them, step-by-step, through the design and layout process.

"Now I can go back to school and show other people how to do things!" says Samantha Jameson, a senior at the Peterson Center.

CLASS! is currently planning a writing workshop in early spring. Watch for more information coming to your classroom soon.



Instructor Todd Wirth, left, shared design insight with students.

Astronaut's father sheds light on shuttle disaster, one year later

Despite losing his son, Barry McCool still supports space program

By Eric Noggle,
Palo Verde HS

Barry McCool sat outside his house on Feb. 1, 2003, snapping photo after photo while he watched his son fly overhead. A few minutes later, he was inside watching CNN, and his son's aircraft disintegrating over Texas in one of the most tragic events in the history of the United States.

McCool is the father of William McCool, the pilot on board the Columbia Space Shuttle when it broke up on re-entry. As the anniversary of the launch approaches, I had the opportunity to interview McCool in November and get answers to some of the questions that still surround the tragedy. McCool was able to bring forth some interesting information that NASA has not widely released.

"It was fate"

Columbia's 28th mission had been delayed three times over a course of two years. The first time was due to problems with the Hubble Space Telescope, which had to be repaired. Then, a crew on the International Space Station had to be relieved, and the last delay was due to a cracked engine bell housing on the Columbia that had to be repaired.

Finally, on Jan. 16, 2003, the Columbia took flight. During take off, the yoke that holds the main rockets and fuel canisters to the space shuttle broke off like it normally does. However, a piece of foam insulation that also normally breaks off during take-off struck the left wing in a way that one of the panels was nudged loose, exposing the space shuttle to the extreme heats that are inherent to takeoff and reentry.

"It was fate, an act of God," says McCool, "that this piece came off and struck the leading edge of the wing at the exact critical point, at the right angle, to put a hole ... into the leading edge of the wing."

NASA did not pay much attention to the foam hitting the

wing since, until that point, it had seemed like a standard part of liftoff.

"It was a whole lot of ifs"

On the third day of the 16-day mission, NASA, while reviewing a tape of the launch, finally noticed the strike and that there could be major issues because of it. A few ideas of what could be done were explored. These included launching a rescue mission or taking all the spare parts, along with bags of frozen water, and jamming them into the wing where the strike occurred. Unfortunately, there were problems with each of these options.

The Columbia had 80 experiments on board; therefore, the cargo bay was full. Since it was full, no Extravehicular Activity Flight Packs were onboard the shuttle; these flight packs are used for activities outside the shuttle.

Without the flight packs, repairing the hole became more of a problem. To get out to the damaged wing, one of the astronauts would have had to put on one of the white spacesuits, which were onboard, tie themselves down to the ship and climb out to the wing. This would have been extremely dangerous.

"It was a whole lot of ifs," says McCool. "There are no patching kits on board. There will be in the future, but they've never gone up.

"The other thing is," he adds, "in a weightless environment, how do you spread glue on a tile and then get it into place?"

Docking with the International Space Station was not an option either. The shuttle did not have enough fuel to reach it, and if it reached the station, the shuttle door was not configured to dock with the space station.

The last idea that was toyed with was that of sending up another space shuttle on a rescue mission. This would have been very difficult, and the decision to launch a rescue mission would have to have been made on the fifth day of the 16-day mission.

If this were to be an option, the astronauts on board the Columbia would have had to go into what is called "maximum sleep mode," which is when there are five astronauts asleep at all times in order to conserve oxygen, and the astronauts would

not have been able to brush their teeth or shave in order to conserve water.

But according to McCool, "There were a few executive decisions where [NASA] dropped the ball."

"But it's not a big deal"

Ultimately, there was no attempt to save the astronauts or repair the wing due to NASA's indecision and physical inability to do so. However, the astronauts on board the Columbia were informed of the strike on the wing but not the severity of it.

"They were told of the strike on the wing on about day seven, but the message that they got was in the form of an e-mail," says McCool. "So the astronaut that sent them the message ... was speaking like you would in a letter. 'And oh, by the way, there was a tape that indicated that [there was a strike on the wing,]

"There are no guarantees in life and every one of the astronauts accepts the risks that are involved."

but it's not a big deal.' And that was how, basically, it was phrased. I'm not using the exact words."

NASA never officially released any information concerning whether the astronauts knew about the problem or not, and McCool did not cite the source of his information.

Sixteen minutes from touchdown at Kennedy Space Center on Feb. 1, 2003, the Columbia Space Shuttle broke apart over Texas, taking with it the lives of its crew: Commander Rick Husband; Pilot Willie McCool; Payload Commander Michael Anderson; Mission Specialists Dave Brown, Laurel Clark and Kalpana Chawla; and Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon of Israel.

Trying to recover

The recovery of the wreckage began immediately after the crash with the help of authorities and many civilians. After recovery was complete, McCool, his family and the families of the other astronauts were permitted to view the remains of the shuttle at the Kennedy Space Center.

One of the things they were

able to view was the black box, which was the first black box ever aboard a shuttle. The box was exposed to 3,000-degree temperatures during reentry, and it survived the fall from 100,000 feet above the earth. Miraculously, everything in it functioned, providing a treasure trove of information.

"They have a timeline ... that shows every second from the time the Columbia started reentry halfway between San Francisco and Hawaii until it reached ... the Texas/Louisiana border," says McCool. "The timeline shows that either Willie, as the pilot, or Rick, as the commander, one of the two, for a ten-second period disengaged Columbia from the computer and was flying by hand, trying to recover."

They also found a camera that had survived reentry. They took the photo and the rest of the debris back to Houston. NASA took the burned film from the camera and developed it. There were only four frames that survived reentry. One of these photos is what McCool and his wife refer to as the "Miracle Photo."

"One of those frames was this crew picture of these seven wonderful people with great smiles on their faces, floating in space as a crew, and that's what we call the Miracle Photo," says McCool. "The photo has a tremendous amount of meaning to us."

Pride

"The space program is very, very important," says McCool. "Our future lies, our destiny lies in the stars, and manned flight is a dangerous business, but so is flying an airline, and so is strapping on a military jet."

"There are no guarantees in life," he says, "and every one of the astronauts accepts the risks that are involved."

McCool maintains that the astronauts did not suffer and that their deaths were instantaneous.

McCool saw his son for the last time on a videotape that survived reentry. He also has a tape, given to him by NASA, which shows the preparation for the launch and the astronauts walking up to the shuttle.

When asked what he felt every time he sees that tape, McCool answers with one word: "Pride."

Casinos: Don't blame the obvious target

Dear Editor:

In response to an article titled "Casinos need to do their part" (By Joseph Fogarty from Sierra Vista HS, CLASS!, December 2003), I've decided to clarify some issues for the sadly mistaken writer.

The article claims in its opening sentence, "Casinos have corrupted our city beyond redemption." It says that these giants are at fault for the recent influx of homeless in the valley because they don't do enough to help and have contributed to the rise in business taxes.

Number One: Las Vegas gained success as a city because of these "corrupted" casinos, and they employ a large number of valley residents, allowing your peers and their families to have a good quality of life. We have such a large and diverse population because of these casinos, and we should all be grateful for that.

Number Two: The homeless aren't homeless because the casinos aren't donating money. In fact, look around town! Most (if not all) of the casinos on the Strip have donated some money to non-profit organizations throughout the county.

Number Three: Don't blame the casinos; blame the mayor of Las Vegas if you want to start

pointing fingers. He's the one having the police enforce strict laws on the homeless, pushing them out of public places.

Number Four: Many owners of hotels on the Strip have schools named after them, so they're obviously giving money to the school district. They even support CLASS!, so you can't regard their new hotel projects as being heartless. They also are among the strongest supporters of public television and give money regularly.

Number Five: Next to middle-class Las Vegans, the casinos pay the second highest rates in taxes. Small businesses and banks pay a minimal amount compared to the two, and nobody ever complains about them.

Before doing the obvious and blaming the casinos for the woes of our city, take a good look around. How many people do you know who spend their weekends feeding the homeless or giving money to organizations to help them? The casinos aren't to blame for the apathetic nature of the citizenry — we are. If we want to help the homeless, people of all ages need to get involved to help reopen shelters and feed the homeless. We can't blame one aspect of our county and say, "You need to do your part." This is a community issue, and the community, as a whole, needs to solve this problem.

Claudia Melton, Green Valley HS

Band thefts hit CCSD high schools; \$14,000 in instruments lost

By Rachael Sanman, Centennial HS



Centennial High School has become the latest victim in a series of band instrument thefts that have occurred in recent years in the Clark County School District. Centennial's marching band lost \$14,000 worth of instruments when two male suspects broke into the locked band room and stole the instruments on Oct. 7 between 6:15 p.m. and 7 p.m., just before the band's evening rehearsal. Four sousaphones, valued at \$2,000-\$4,000 each, and two students' purses were taken, though several other purses and instruments remained in the room.

"Our insurance will cover the \$14,000, but it will be several weeks before we will see new sousaphones," says Centennial Band Director Jeff Eichman.

However, Centennial has not been the only school that this has happened to. In the past two years, three other schools, Cimarron-Memorial, Rancho and Sierra Vista High Schools, also have had band instruments stolen.

Michael Foster, the band director at Rancho, says the theft at his school occurred during

the summer break.

"I went to pick up some materials at school on July 29, 2003, and when I returned on Aug. 13, a lot of brand new instruments were missing," Foster says.

Not only was a brand new, \$2,300 sousaphone stolen, but six trumpets, six clarinets, three flutes, a cello and some violas and violins also were gone, all still in the plastic, amounting to between \$13,000-\$14,000.

In America, sousaphones are worth between \$2,000 and \$4,000. However, both Eichman and Foster believe that these instruments were not going to be re-sold in America.

"The only other uses for sousaphones, besides in a marching band, would be in German polka bands and Mariachi bands," says Eichman.

Besides the lack of necessity for them in America, all band instruments have their own serial numbers and have their schools' names etched into the metal. It is not possible for them to be pawned or even sold on eBay, since the serial numbers are always on file. Many have come to the conclusion that the suspects are headed over the border into Mexico for illegal re-sale.

No one is quite sure what the prices of the sousaphones are in Mexico, but it is estimated to be around \$1,000.

"It must have been worth their time to go out of the country," says Eichman.

The suspects have been seen on camera and have been described as two middle-aged men; however, there could be more. Also appearing with the men on the videotape were the two cars they were driving, a red Mustang and a white Caprice.

In an e-mail sent out by Marcia Neel, school district coordinator for Fine Arts, two specific precautions were mentioned to prevent another incident: secure all band room doors using additional security measures, and install security cameras at all band room exits.

Although the thefts from the high schools have been reported, no one has been taken into custody.

Something Special About You

By Amanda Woolworth, Cheyenne HS

When I first laid eyes on you, I saw something in your eyes That I didn't understand, So I just shook it off, But lately there's something New about you. When you smile at me, I feel chills up my spine, And it ain't because of the weather. You have something in those eyes of yours That makes me keep looking, Plus your body doesn't hurt either. I thought with the way you looked You would be a jerk, But you are so sweet. You are the first guy

Who writes to me the way you do. I am not going to push, But I think we would be good together And so does everybody else. You make me smile And trust me, I could bring a smile to your face Just by being me, And I know you know what that means. I want to thank you now For giving me the chance to get to know you Like I have. YOU ARE AMAZING, And I think I'm sort of falling in love With this strong, amazing, loving guy That you are.

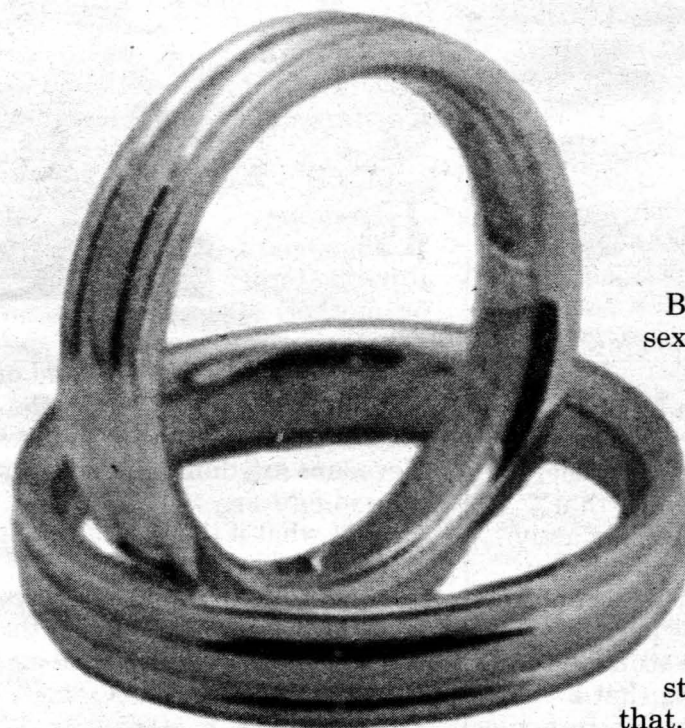
Love should determine who marries, not law

By Stephanie Esbin,
Palo Verde HS

What is it that prevents people from accepting same-sex marriage? After all, marriage in America has become more of a sentimental, romantic pursuit rather than a life goal or requirement — so what's the fuss?

Marriage is reforming, and with that reform should come the legalization of same-sex marriage. There are tax and insurance benefits to marrying, and denying a person those benefits just because they love in a "nontraditional" way is appalling.

The people of this country used to live under a law that banned the marriage between a black person and a white person. That was discrimination, and America is doing it again, only this time, it's a ban on the



Besides, homosexuality is not contagious. It is not a learned trait, and it is not a choice. It is biologically determined, and scientists have made huge strides in proving that. Think of it this way: Why, if someone

marriage between two women or between two men. What will it take to open people's eyes to this unequal treatment of our fellow citizens?

Unfortunately, many people seem to be afraid of homosexuals and that fear is baseless. They're afraid a gay person might be interested in them — so what? If someone hits on you and you're not interested, you say no, right? Still others are grossed out, and to that, I say, "Don't look."

knew of the incredible bias and discrimination against homosexuals, would someone choose to be homosexual? You don't choose to be heterosexual, do you? You feel it in your heart and mind that it's right for you and that is what you practice.

I'm sure it's the same for homosexuals. If you love someone enough and wish to marry him or her, you should not be prevented from doing so, even if he or she is the same sex as you. If not, you are basically

telling that person that he or she cannot love whomever he or she chooses.

Some people argue against same-sex marriage from a religious viewpoint. I must say that my religion does not condone same-sex marriage, yet I keep an open mind and maintain a logical opinion. Homosexuality has been around since the dawn of civilization. God may have created Adam and Eve, but if everyone on earth came from them, how do you explain homosexuals? They had to have come from Adam and Eve, too. Therefore, God did create them. Plus, if God does not accept homosexuality, then why are there more than four million homosexuals in America who have not been struck down by lightning?

For those of you who believe in hell, I'm sure people who loved those of their same sex are not burning down there. Do you know how I know that? Because gay people are people, and homosexuals can be good or bad, just like heterosexuals — hence, you would go to hell based on your level of sin. Love is not a sin, and love, according to Webster's Dictionary, is not just between a man and a woman.

Race-based clubs should encourage diversity, not division



By April Corbin,
Las Vegas HS

America has come a long way as a country in the fight for tolerance, acceptance and equality for all. From the civil rights movement marches to Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I

Have a Dream" speech to the suffragettes, minorities have fought hard for their rights.

Yet, a person would be naïve to say that everything is equal in our world today. Race relations are still a very important topic. While in the past, repressed minority groups have fought to make things more equal, it seems that the trend has come full circle. Majority groups, such as whites and males, are claiming that minorities are getting special rights.

Earlier this year in Oakley, Calif., 15-year-old Lisa McClelland tried to start a Caucasian Club. Her reasoning was that schools should be allowed to have a White Student Union because they already allowed such clubs as the

Black Student Union, the Student Organization of Latinos, and the Asian Student Union. Not surprisingly, the vision of this club was met with anger. McClelland has since left her high school and transferred to another school. Yet, the debate lingers on about whether it is right or wrong to create such a club in high schools.

Whites have many privileges not granted to minorities. It seems that people have forgotten that history classes predominantly teach history that deals with whites; after all, every president and vice president, and the majority of government officials, have been white. An ASU, BSU or SOL makes sense because there are still issues to discuss and hurdles to overcome.

Although not specifically named as a celebration of whites, almost everything within our society, if you really think about it, is just that. The Caucasian race is still the most catered to group of people within the country. There is no need for a Caucasian Club, just as there would be no need for a "Straight Club" simply because some schools have

clubs for gays and lesbians.

If McClelland, or anyone for that matter, wants to join a club about diversity and talk about race relations, they could easily just join another race-based club, since there is no need for a white-race-based club, and current race clubs do not discriminate. Anybody, regardless of race, is allowed to join a Latino-based race club or a black student union.

McClelland's school, Freedom High School, has a club called the Power of Unity Club, which oversees all race-based clubs; yet McClelland chose not to join this club, but opted instead to try to create a Caucasian Club.

More importantly, if the already existing race-based clubs are creating racial problems within the school by making anybody feel alienated, then they are not doing what they were designed to do originally. These clubs were not created in high schools with the intention of further segregating students. If this is the case, then the racial club problems run deeper than previously thought.

The Blame Game: Who's really responsible?

By Chris Dudash, Durango HS

It was a frigid, January night, the type of night that numbs lips and enables one to paint the sky with his breath. I had sneaked out of my home at the serene hour of 2 a.m., and met with neighborhood friends who had done the same. Our shadows enlarged as we walked under the streetlights and made our way to a deserted house, or at least what appeared to be one.



There tends to be a fascination boys have with breaking windows with rocks, and I was no different. The rock left my hand with piercing force, in perfect formation with the other rocks that were thrown. But mine was the lucky stone that shattered the window and sounded the alarm. When my activities had been discovered and my actions inquired upon by my parents, I simply stalled. I put the blame on my friends, on the weather, on the actual stone. If not for my father's powerful blow against my upper lip, I probably would have stumbled on another dozen causes for my actions. The one thing that I didn't blame in that interrogation, though, was myself. In my attempts to squirm out of taking any responsibility for my actions, I had exhibited a lack of accountability, something that has now become standard practice within society today.

Juvenile offenders have no need to put the blame squarely on themselves. We've provided them a multitude of options to blame for their crimes. They can blame their parents, the influence of their friends, their video games and their music. Not only have we come to accept this, but we have actually grown accustomed to providing sympathy for these cowards. Records remain sealed, sentences routinely reduced, and courts are reluctant to provide harsher penalties for fear of public outcry.

Now, we have developed into a society that needs to be told not to operate heavy machinery after taking medication, or that certain domestic chemicals should not be ingested. Under normal circumstances, such obvious knowledge would not need to be printed on the labels of manufactured products. Unfortunately, consumers tend to blame accidents they have with these products on the lack of distinct warnings rather than on their own incompetence or illiteracy.

We also do not hold ourselves accountable for our own eating habits as evidenced by the many frivolous lawsuits put against fast food corporations. For some in this society to claim they are unable to regulate the amount of food they consume and then blame a company for fattening them up is truly disturbing.

Even the organizations and bureaucracies that compose our government are reluctant to place responsibility solely on themselves. They choose instead to point the proverbial finger at other causes. The entire makeup of our intelligence and defense networks is in complete disarray, mainly because of a lack of communication between America's two chief defense bureaucracies: the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency. Domestic security within the United States has become a major burden for travelers within the country, and yet these stringent security measures have failed several times to recognize potential threats in routine security checks. Neither organization has accepted full responsibility for the many loopholes in our defense, and each is quick to blame the other agency when challenged about it. Surely if our own government cannot establish themselves as strong, honest figures, how can we expect society as a whole to do so?

In the practice of placing blame on others, we have found a way to avoid punishment and any further security, but perhaps we have also lost something that is even worse than the greatest discipline imaginable: our dignity.

Nevada students not the sharpest crayons in the box, report shows

By Kaycee Lewis, Centennial HS



Everyone has heard it in one form or another.

Whether it was meant as a teasing remark from a friend or a pathetic attempt to hurt feelings, the disrespectful slur that Nevadans are dumb has been around forever.

But what if they're right? What if we really are dumb?

According to recent statistics, it may not be far from the truth. Nevada was actually ranked as one of the lowest states when it comes to smarts.

The 2002-2003 Smartest State results show Nevada as number 46, barely beating out Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana and New Mexico. Topping out the chart at number one was Connecticut.

Rankings for the Smartest State competitions are mainly determined by each state's dropout rate and proficiency test scores.

Nevada has the second highest dropout rate in the nation, according to the Kids Count survey. Although this is a horrifically bad statistic, the dropout rate has actually decreased in recent years.

Nevada is now only at a 16-percent dropout rate, instead of the 17.6 percent rate it had been in the past. Arizona now has the highest dropout rate with 17 percent.

District data shows that dropouts from Nevada leave for a variety of reasons. Some students just decide not to show up to school anymore, and many are sent to alternative schools due to disciplinary problems. Then there are the few who are taken out of school by their parents.

Parents who claim to have purposely taken their child away from an education say that is so

the student can dedicate their time to a full-time job or dedicate their lives to being a full-time parent.

UNLV psychology professor Christopher Kearney believes numerous causes affect a child's decision to quit school.

"In Nevada, the economic lures are very powerful and this is what schools like to talk about," Kearney says.

Kearney also believes that the lack of parent-student interaction leads the child to abuse privileges that students who spend more time with their parents would not.

"Parents [in Nevada] do not supervise as closely," says

Because Nevada's problems are not solved by learning, but by lowering standards, students from Nevada may be left behind.

Kearney. "Both parents may leave for work at six or seven in the morning and do not monitor their child's attendance. Or they work swing shifts or graveyard and are not awake to see their child leave for school

in the morning."

Proficiency tests are also a factor in Nevada's education. Few who take them pass with ease. For some, it may take three or more tries. The most failed portion of the proficiency test is math.

In order to increase the number of students who graduate from high school, Nevada Assemblywoman Chris Giunchigliani proposed that the requirement for students to pass the proficiency exam in order to graduate should be suspended for two years. Giunchigliani claims that this will give the district adequate time to review the test and see why so many students are struggling with the "bare minimal math."

So what does this mean for Nevada students seeking an out-of-state education after graduation?

Because Nevada's problems are not solved by learning, but by eliminating, students from Nevada may be left behind. So in reality, dumb may not be far from the truth.

double talk

The Dating Game: Who's got it tougher?

the guy's view

We just want *something* to go right

By Jeremy Stoker,
Foothill HS

When it comes to dating, I would like the females to put themselves in the guys' shoes, see what we go through just for one night of gossip, crying and a big bill.

It all begins when you get a call from the girl's best friend, telling you how much her best friend loves your hair and your broad shoulders. She tells you that her friend is having a rough time and that you should take her out on a date.

With nothing planned, you call the girl to ask her on the date. Once you get through to the girl, you are put on hold so that she can call her best friend to tell her the good news. After about three hours of consulting with her best friend and thirty minutes of telling you her "last date" story, she decides she has nothing better to do than to waste your evening on a date.

So you get ready, which takes around thirty minutes, give or take if you have to spot clean your favorite shirt — your favorite shirt being whichever is the cleanest at the time. Then you drive to the girl's house and walk to the door, not to be greeted by your date, but rather confronted by a six-foot-five, overbearing, shotgun-carrying father and his playful behemoth of an animal that he lovingly calls "Killer."

After a session of 21 questions and the beast making love to your leg, your date is finally ready. As you walk out the door, her father shakes your hand, almost breaking many of the bones, then whispers in your ear, "I've been to jail once, and I don't mind going back again."

As you drive to dinner, you and your date engage in some light conversation, which escalates into crying and complaining about the girl's ex-boyfriend and how big of a jerk he is. After one or two phone calls to Dr. Laura in the steakhouse parking lot, your date has finally calmed down and has reapplied her mascara and the other 30

pounds of makeup to her face.

Once inside, you sit in a well-lighted booth, so that you can see your date's newly restructured face. Being the custom, you let your date order first. Not to your surprise, she orders a Caesar salad and a water to keep her "feminine physique." Not to outdo her, you order a simple six-ounce steak and a lemonade.

After both meals are finished, the waitress comes and asks if you would like some dessert. Your date pipes right up without any wait at all and orders a large, hot fudge brownie sundae, with extra ice cream. To save face, you order the same, just as you notice some steak sauce on your pants, and you excuse yourself to go to the little boys' room.

Apparently, the sundaes got there while you were in the restroom and, to your amazement, your date has devoured her entire sundae in the short five minutes that you were gone. It seems she threw the whole "diet thing" out the window because, as you sit down, she conjures up the gumption to ask, "You want to share yours?" Of course you agree, and as you take a quick glance at the bill, she eats the entire thing. It amazes you how a sweet little girl could turn into a ferocious eating machine in a matter of seconds.

After paying the bill that would put Bill Gates in debt, you head to the movie theater. Upon arrival, you let the girl pick out the movie. Apparently, the action-packed movie that you would like to see isn't on her list. She'd rather see the remake of "Sleepless in Seattle," the movie that not only put you to sleep, but made you want to kill yourself the first time you watched it.

Finally, the movie is over and you have only a short drive to take your date home. As you approach her house, you end the third conversation about the "ex." Then as you walk her to the front door, she smiles and waves to her dad, who is

now in full camouflage, hiding in the bushes with night goggles and an AK-47. Although you can hear her dad cocking the gun, she leans in for a hug. You return the offer and say good night. As she shuts the door, her dad lets good old Killer out. You make a break for it, barely making it to

the car, just as the beast smashes his face into the side of the door.

As we can all see, dating is no less a torture than cattle prodding. To girls, dating is a wonderful evening, with the only downfall being that it has to end. For us guys, it is a night that is comparable to a proctology exam.

the girl's view

We want *everything* to be just right

By Linda Robinson,
Foothill HS

Brush your teeth, slap some gel in your otherwise untamed hair, and you're out the door, ready for your hot date. That would be the usual male routine for getting ready to impress the opposite sex. It's a little different for girls.

Long hours spent trying to find that oh-so-perfect outfit, what seems like years spent in the bathroom trying to get your hair just right, and finally the time comes when your date is ready to come pick you up. The eagerness and anticipation are over, and now your nerves start to act up; sweaty palms, shaky knees, and that feeling like you're falling and you're never going to hit the ground.

He finally shows up at your door, and you can't get over how good he looks. In the back of your mind, you're hoping you don't say something stupid or trip on your way out the door. But, he's not worried about all of that; he's just happy he remembered how to get to your house.

As you carefully walk down the sidewalk to his run-down Toyota pickup, you're wondering if he is going to be a total gentleman and open the door for you, or if he is going to hop in his side and watch you try not to rip your skirt as you climb on in. You get to the truck and you have to let yourself in, and that's when things go bad. All night you're wondering, "Why didn't he open the door for me? Does he not like me or something?" Which means you can barely enjoy the

cold spaghetti you order at the Olive Garden.

As you watch him chomp away at his food, you're wondering, "Will this date ever end?" When the end of the date finally rolls around and he walks you to the door, the whole way there, you're curious if you will get a goodnight kiss. So you get to the door and he lays a big wet one on you, and that's when you know you don't want to see him again.

Then Saturday rolls around and you've got another hottie lined up. Even though you have done this a thousand times and just did the night before, you're still just as nervous as the first time you ever went on a date.

Most girls see dates as a big deal, especially the first date, and the more guys they go through in a month, the more nervous they get.

Typically, when a girl goes on a date, she is hoping that she and the guy will eventually become an item. Even when date number 14 rolls around, she is still hoping he will be her future main squeeze. When it turns out that he is a huge loser or that he isn't interested in her, she starts to doubt herself. A million thoughts start running through her mind and she starts questioning; "What's wrong with me?" "Am I not pretty enough?" and "Did I say something stupid, or do something wrong?" That's when her nerves set in and start to take a toll on a girl's self-confidence.

When a girl is on date 25 and still takes just as long worrying about her hair and her perfect outfit, don't worry, guys, she does it because she cares.

Conference teaches students to believe in themselves

By Stephanie Turnbull,
Silverado HS

The "Soaring to Close the Gap" pre-conference was held at the Tuscany Hotel & Casino on Nov. 20, 2003. The conference not only consisted of a main seminar, but also offered many different breakout sessions, one of them covering student career demonstrations. Students from different schools in the valley set up booths, showing spectators the different processes of photography, culinary arts and architecture, to name a few.

By presenting these sessions, they have helped other students get an idea of different careers they might want to pursue in the future.

The photography students demonstrated how to develop film and make actual prints of photos, leading up to the coloring of the picture.

Culinary students worked patiently, carving figures of swans out of melons, along with other shapes from different fruits and vegetables. They also made hors d'oeuvres for the amused onlookers.

Architects showed how they lay out blueprints. They set up

computers that allowed the visitors to experience drawing firsthand. They also set up mini-models of houses, which they built after drafting the house plan.

This wasn't all; there were many other vocations on display.

Some of the students in attendance have been told not to set their expectations too high. It was here at the youth presentation that they were told differently.

Justin Boudreau, the main speaker, travels around the world, sharing his heart and encouraging students. Boudreau told the audience of students from all schools about his childhood experiences. He was very shy, had low self-esteem, little confidence, hardly any friends and poor grades. Although this eventually changed, it wasn't easy.

Boudreau had dreams of being a motivational speaker. When he told others about his dreams of traveling and speaking words of encouragement to others, he was put down and basically told he had nothing exceptional to tell people and that he needed to focus on something more attainable.

Obviously, they were wrong. As Boudreau was growing up, he decided he would succeed and conquer his dreams.

"Opportunities are given, not taken," says Boudreau, explaining that anyone can do whatever they choose to accomplish if they have the determination.

"No college is too good for you if you want it bad enough," says Boudreau. Applying for any college is as simple as filling out the paperwork and sending it in. Just do it.

Boudreau shared the story of a friend of his by the name of Doug who turned his life into a success story. Along with his mother and three brothers, Doug went from homeless to being on his own at the age of 16. Although he had a hard life at the beginning, he decided for himself that he was going to make something out of it. He

finished high school with outstanding grades, which got him accepted to Harvard.

"It's your decision; you build your own foundation for your future," says Boudreau.

Boudreau relates his dreams to a favorite song.

"Find a song that you love, listen to it, put it on repeat and stay connected. Don't let others discourage you from being who you want to be — it's your dream, not theirs," says Boudreau.

"You don't have to be embarrassed about anything you want to be. That is what makes a person unique."

Plug in and stay connected to your dream. Believe in yourself — that's all it takes to succeed.

The conference was successful because not only did students get a chance to showcase their work, but they also realized how much potential for success they have.

Study says volunteering proves beneficial to health, happiness

By Marlo Starr, Community College HS

Often, people see volunteerism as something that will detract from their time and money, when in fact, it increases health and happiness. Volunteering gives people a sense of purpose, which increases their self-esteem and reduces their stress level.

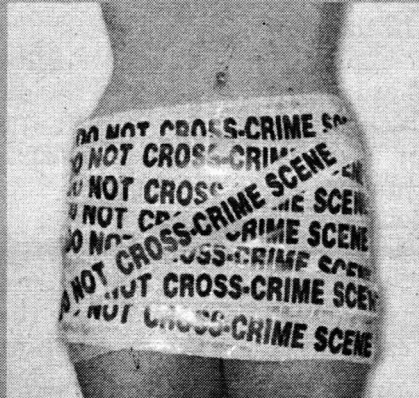
According to the "Journal of Health and Social Behavior," voluntary association decreases stress, anxiety and depression. The sociological study suggests that the decreased stress can lengthen one's life up to 30 years.

An article in "Social Psychology Quarterly" states that individuals who volunteer gain increased confidence and a feeling of control over their lives. They become more enabled to pursue their own goals.

However, with school, work and families, it is difficult for some to visualize fitting community service into their lives. Yet, by making volunteerism an extension of what you are already involved in, this becomes possible.

When you are at the grocery store, pick up a couple of extra cans of food to donate to a food pantry, or on your way home, stop by a Safe Nest, Shade Tree or another organization and drop off clothes.

If you can find even an hour of free time in your schedule, use it to volunteer. Every minute you do counts, and if you can commit only an hour or two to community service each week, the effort you make will begin to add up over time.

If you don't stop at "no" that makes you a rapist.

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SICK OF SALAD?

By Sarah Burgman, LV Academy

New diet products offer tasty recipe for health

In the aftermath of turkey, eggnog and candy canes, many teens are left wondering how to quickly get rid of that extra 10 pounds before having to face the scrutinizing eye of classmates at school again. This leads many to break out their notebooks to jot down annual New Year's diet resolutions and renew scarcely used memberships to the gym.

New Year's Diet Resolution Week was Jan. 1-7. The New Year serves as an alarm clock to those of us who let our diets slide as time passes throughout the year. It is a fresh start, a chance to erase the cholesterol and blood pressure-raising damage done in the past.

According to a national survey by the American Dietetic Association, 40 percent of Americans select some form of diet as a New Year's resolution. The difficulty comes in trying to keep the resolutions throughout the year, but not all hope is lost. If there ever was an easy time to stay on a diet, the time is now.

Allison Boone, a Las Vegas Academy junior, agrees. "If they're planned, and the goals set are attainable, then diet resolutions can be a good thing."

Others tend to look at resolutions in a different light. Steven Retchless, also a junior, is skeptical. "Diet resolutions never work because no one is ever going to hold out on eating fatty food. No way, it's just too good."

Marjorie Sawicki, assistant professor of nutrition and dietetics at the Saint Louis University School of Allied Health Professions says on www.about.com, "Every person on a diet should develop a personal plan that is evaluated every week. Dieters should set a realistic long-term goal and then choose weekly mini-goals for behavior change. I suggest keeping a daily diary of foods and beverages consumed and compare the list to the Food Guide Pyramid."

Also, with the amount of low-fat and low-carbohydrate specialty snacks and food choices available today, eating healthy doesn't have to mean eating bland. No, not rice cakes, but things that actually taste good like low-carbohydrate muffins and candy bars. These cellulite-friendly treats can even be found at the local 7-Eleven.

Lastly, for every week of eating healthy and keeping on track with the goals set in the resolution, you should reward yourself with a treat not related to food. Any change is hard, but in the end, the benefits of slimming down or merely eating healthier will outweigh the ice cream sundaes missed.

If you're tired of eating salads and lightweight foods every day to stay healthy and trim, check out these new, hip ways to keep the pounds in check. Leave lettuce to the rabbits!



Few teens measure up to media's 'perfect' body image

By Brittney Porter,
Coronado HS

"The average American woman is 5 feet 4 inches tall and weighs 140 pounds. The average American model is 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighs 117 pounds."

— National Eating Disorders Association

Teenagers' views of body images today are substantially influenced by the media. As young girls grow up idolizing models and actresses they see on television or view in magazines, they are persuaded about what is attractive and what is thought of as the ideal body image. Unfortunately, this representation may be very unhealthy.

Eating disorders are not only caused by psychological factors but cultural aspects as well. Today's society stresses thin and toned bodies like those

of Britney Spears or Heidi Klum. What teens do not realize is that these icons exercise hours each day and are restricted to a grueling diet program. What normal teen today really has the time, energy and discipline to actually follow this schedule? Still, teenagers who may admire such stars will go to the extremes to look like them, even if it may call for drastic measures.

The most common eating disorder among teens today is anorexia nervosa. This is a deadly disorder from which more than one percent of Americans suffer. More deaths are caused by anorexia nervosa than any other mental disorder. Although at first it may seem harmless with sufficient results, the long-term outcome is disaster and may result in extreme illness or even death. Almost 25 percent of women who suffer from anorexia nervosa eventually die. With the extreme pressures created by the media today, this number will



Believe it or not! In today's world, Marilyn Monroe is considered a "plus-size."

almost certainly increase as the years go on.

"When teens see how much attention attractive, skinny girls are receiving, they can't help but try to be that way too. It's just dumb," says Coronado High School junior Mary Bacon.

The main reason young girls attempt to perfect their bodies like those they see on television and in magazines is to impress their peers and critics. However, a person's worst critic is him or herself and many indi-

viduals loathe at least one part of their bodies, which creates an even higher expectation for their desired appearance.

Even second and third graders dislike their figures, and, according to the National Eating Disorders Association, more than 42 percent of girls from first to third grade want to be thinner. This extreme number is shocking, and it is frightening to think that this amount continues to grow.

Since the 1960s, popular body image has transformed drastically. Marilyn Monroe, the ideal icon during the '50s, would be considered a plus-size model today. Monroe's 5-foot 5-inch, voluptuous body was admired by women and desired by men. Today, this figure would be unacceptable for a typical model to have. Models and actresses are forced to possess a tall, gaunt figure, which can be extremely unhealthy and even deadly. As society creates icons out of these individuals, teens follow their steps in order to be just like them.

Now there is just one simple question to ask: Is achieving a minimal body weight and "perfect" figure really worth the risk of serious illness or even death?

With today's lifestyle, it is almost a necessity to eat at fast food restaurants frequently because of American's hectic schedules. People do not have time to sit down to a home-cooked meal. They substitute dinner with McDonald's, Burger King and Pizza Hut. The thing is, fast food is not healthy.

In July 2002, Caesar Barber filed a lawsuit against McDonald's, Burger King, KFC and Wendy's, blaming these fast food chains for making him and others overweight and raising his risk of illness related to being overweight.

For the past few years, lawsuits very similar to this one have been popping up all over the United States. As a result, fast food restaurants have become more cautious of their customers' health. They are striving to create low-calorie food. Good effort, but is it enough?

Pizza Hut has created the Fit 'N Delicious Pizza, which has 150 calories per slice as opposed to the 450 calories in a slice of Pizza Hut's stuffed crust pizza. The new pizzas have half the cheese than a regular Thin 'N Crispy and more tomato sauce. Vegetables or lean meats replace the fatty toppings such as pepperoni and sausage.



Healthy pizza may cause confusion between good food and junk food

By Regina Froman, LV Academy

"I would eat it. It's more healthy and with the extra sauce there will be more flavor," says Valerie White, LVA English teacher.

Pizza Hut is the first franchise to put out a "healthy pizza" nationally. Their new pizza targets women between the ages 29-

54. These women are more focused on "watching their calories," so food marketers want to cater to that.

"I think that it will make it easier for people to order their food without feeling guilty about it," says White.

Some analysts fear that because of this new pizza, people will begin to think it is good for them, and they will eat more of it. This is not the case. For people who want to lose weight, they should look into healthier foods such as fruits and vegetables. Staying away from fast foods will help people's diets become healthier.

Americans' poor eating habits have led to the current report that one of every five Americans is considered obese. It starts off at a young age. The calorie intake for a child between the ages of 1-2 years require 950 calories a day, but studies show that the median intake is 1,220 calories every day.

Studies also show that a third of children do not consume fruits or vegetables. At this rate, it is no wonder why people of this generation are becoming increasingly overweight.

However, for some who rely on fast foods, this is a huge improvement for the pizza chain. Perhaps other marketers will follow.

Obesity caused by choices we make, not McDonald's fries or double cheeseburgers

By Harmoni La Huillier,
Sierra Vista HS

We've all seen it; we go into a McDonald's or a Burger King for lunch. In front of us in the line is a humongous man, breathing heavily as he makes his way up the line, sweating from the effort.

He orders an Ultimate Chili Cheese Burger with extra everything, super-sized fries, and then for good measure, a super-sized Diet Coke. Over the years, this sight has become increasingly more common. An estimated fifty-five percent, or 97 million Americans are overweight or chronically obese.

According to the Surgeon General's report, 300,000 deaths in the U.S. have occurred because of health problems related to obesity. Health issues caused by obesity can occur in a kaleidoscope of problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and even Type II diabetes. Americans seem to ignore these facts as they save a minute by "grabbing a bite to eat" nearly every day. These "bites" tend to be from fast food restaurants that serve greasy burgers, fries soaked in oil, and other foods high in carbohydrates and low in real nutrition.

Foods with tons of saturated fats and starch turn to fat almost instantly in your body. All the restaurants seem to be making their meals bigger and bigger when we don't need to eat that much food in one helping. Does this mean they are solely responsible for America's weight problem? The answer is



NO!
The people who sue fast food restaurants because they claim the restau-

rants made them fat are ridiculous! They act like McDonald's forced a fudge sundae down their throats every day. It takes more than a few fries and a hamburger to make you fat. Fast food joints are not the culprits; the American lifestyle is.

The 1990s gave birth to the era of "faster, quicker and easier," and in the year 2003, it holds more sway than ever. Think about it. In America, we drive wherever we go. Heaven forbid we WALK through the building, or climb UP the stairs! We have moving sidewalks and escalators to do that for us. We have so many laborsaving devices we would find it hard to live without them anymore. America is one of the only countries where more than half the population is chronically obese or overweight. This is a distressing fact when so many countries in the world do not have enough food to live on.

Our days are hectic, and most adults and even teenagers find it hard to take time off to eat a good, balanced meal. I know that some days, I find it easier just to grab a bag of chips than to take time to find something healthy.

Fast food restaurants

make it even easier with drive-thrus and value meals. This only means that we are lazy. We have somehow gotten the idea into our heads that we don't have time to take a walk, we don't have time to eat something other than the ingredients of "blue dye number two, corn starch and sugar," and we certainly don't have time to make sure we do some real exercise.

Our bodies are designed to take in food, burn the energy we get out of it, and then store fat for "harder times," but in this modern age we hardly need to store fat for winter. So why haven't we stopped eating foods with fat we don't need? While adults sit in tiny cubicles all day and teenagers sit in school, we are not burning fat; we're storing it! If you're not going to get the exercise you need, why combine a lazy lifestyle with fattening food? This is just asking for disaster.

There is a solution to the nationwide epidemic of obesity. Use your head! Think about it. Greasy hamburgers with a gallon of mayonnaise and limp fries don't look like energy food.

There is nothing wrong with eating it once in a while, but you've got to use your common sense and don't eat like that every day for every meal.

There are alternatives to pizza, chips and burgers. Bring something to eat with you. Breakfast bars, for example, are affordable, healthy and easy to carry.

There are many other healthy foods made especially for those on a tight schedule. If you do decide to go to a fast food restaurant, use your head when you order. Many fast food places have made salads, yogurts and other healthier items available on their menus. Or if you aren't the type of person that is satiated by a dinky little salad or yogurt, go get a delicious sandwich at Subway or Port-of-Subs.

Eating habits are a big part of weight issues, but so is lack of exercise. Every now and then, try taking the stairs. Take your dog for a walk. Wash your car by hand instead of going through the automatic washer. Don't worry, it's painless, and it will help you in the long run.

Training tips to get you back in the game

By Angel Campbell, Western HS

Need some advice on how to get in shape? Here's a little something to help you out!

Getting in shape involves many parts of the body. It involves the heart, lungs, muscles and personal mentality. Being in shape is the ability of the heart and lungs to be able to withstand any amount of strenuous pressure put on them.

It's also developing muscle mass and decreasing the body's ratio of fat in comparison to muscle. In order to acquire and maintain such capabilities, one must be able to stay focused and persevere through the good times and the bad, which is where mentality comes in.

Western athletics coach Keith Foster says, "A lot of running and stretching is what you really need to do to get in shape."

James Sullivan, also a coach at Western, adds, "Having a good nutritious diet and avoiding junk food are important as well."

Eusebio "Chivo" Alvarez, captain of Western's boys' soccer team, says that to stay in shape, he runs and does equal amounts of aerobic and anaerobic exercise such as jogging and sprints, which are aerobic, or oxygen-burning exercises; and squats, leg presses, and leg extension exercises, which are anaerobic, using no oxygen. Both types of exercise benefit the body in different ways.

Kristen Bishop, captain of Western's girls' soccer team, recommends staying in shape all year long, regardless of the sports season. Bishop stays fit by going to the gym three or four times a week.

Overall, running, strength training and eating right are all essential for achieving good physical fitness. While conditioning, staying hydrated without over-hydrating is important. Also, it is important to do a lot of stretching and get plenty of rest.

All of this is vitally important for getting into shape and for being an asset to your team and to yourself.

I Have a Dream

By Ms. Brown's Fourth Period
English IV Students, Rancho HS

I have a dream
Like Martin Luther King,
An African-American leader
Who fought for freedom and rights.
A man's never dead until he's truly forgotten.
This man left a legacy that will live on forever.

Healthy eating habits start with curbing the cravings

By Whitney Hartley,
LV Academy

After a grueling day at school, the first thing most normal teenagers do is head straight for the food. A handful of chips, a few cookies here and there, and then back out the door to make it to an after-school rehearsal or a part-time job. Although it may not seem like much, all these calories add up.

With the American lifestyle today, one of the main problems is the amount and kind of food we consume on a day-to-day basis. Open any magazine, and it is highly likely that you will find an article on unhealthy teenagers, overweight children, or obese adults followed by a guide telling people how to "eat smarter."

Although it is not uncommon to be sitting in class and overhear someone talking about going to the gym, or to be standing in line in the cafeteria and see a handful of students eating a salad, how many people actually take the initiative to take care of themselves?

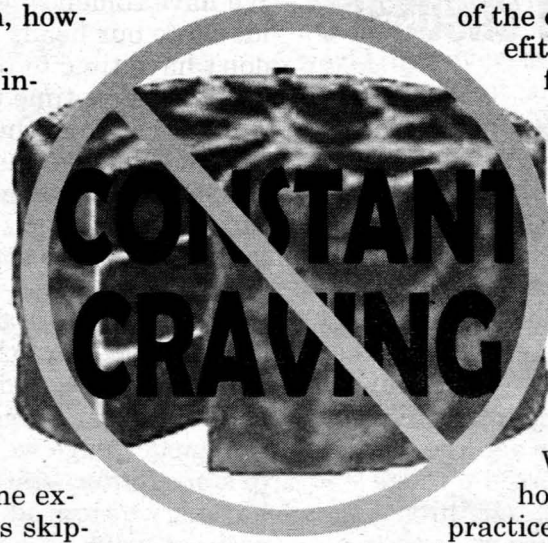
According to TIME Magazine, nutritionists, having become alarmed by the worsening health condition, have released a plethora of information advising teenagers to eat healthier.

The problem, however, is that most of this information is contradictory.

While one expert says eating beef is healthy, another says that red meat is bad for you. And while one expert suggests skipping potatoes, another recommends eating the skin. With all these stories, studies and research offering contradictory solutions to our nutrition problems, how can we expect people to even want to try to eat better?

"In American society, we grow up with the convenience of fast food and an abundance of junk food. This becomes a routine diet," says Las Vegas Academy senior Ambaer Reynolds. "Teens especially do not realize the importance of eating healthy in the long run. Rather, they eat the fattening food they crave at a moment."

She adds, "Health food is highly underestimated, and teenagers should become aware



of the essential benefits of such food."

When it comes down to it, the decision and power to take care of our bodies rests in our own hands.

When driving home from a practice, rehearsal or job, and the feelings of hunger strike, it is much easier to buy take-out or cruise by the drive-thru.

These days, fast food restaurants offer a wide array of seemingly healthy foods. But it is our

responsibility to choose to eat a baked potato or salad instead of a double cheeseburger and french fries. Although it is hard to keep track of the things we eat while trying to combat a busy schedule, it can be done.

"Once you get into a steady routine of going to the gym, it's easier to keep doing it," says LVA senior Tabby Zona. "It gives you more energy, a faster metabolism, and it makes it easier to wake up."

If teenagers don't get on the right track health-wise, researchers report that obesity could reach an all-time high. All the information helping us take care of our bodies can only take us so far; taking the next step is up to us.

So, what do you want to eat for dinner?

Crowded cafeterias, short lunch times strain student health, create attitudes

By Mandie Berry, Mojave HS

With 2,830 students attending Mojave this year — the largest enrollment to date — deciding how school lunches would be set up this year to please everyone was a hard task.

With everyone in such a big hurry to get his or her food, and with not a whole lot of social time, lunch can be quite an unpleasant experience with a lot of negative attitudes.

"It gets really busy during second lunch," says Mojave High School student and cafeteria worker Brittney Ray. "People get a lot of attitude when they are hungry."

With all of the hungry people and not enough time to feed them all, bad attitudes grow really quickly.

"People are always getting mad because they do not have enough cheese or ice; it gets annoying," Ray says.

The general consensus this year is that we should just have one lunch.

"There aren't really enough seats for everyone, but I would rather just have one lunch, so I could see all of my friends and girlfriends," Apollo Wade says jokingly. "I never have time to get in line and wait for food. I just bring a Pop Tart to eat. Ah ... nutritious lunch."

Those who have had the small taste of freedom of off-campus lunch wish that it would return. This privilege was taken away when "too many lives were lost on account of irresponsible drivers and the ditching rate increasing rapidly," says Larry Russel, dean of students at Mojave.

Parents all over the district complained about this, worrying that their children would be next.

"Off-campus lunch being taken away was a district policy," Russel says. "There isn't really much time [to go off campus], so you do need to rush. If you add the speeding and the bad drivers, it's too easy for it to end badly. It's for your safety."

With all of the conveniences that off-campus lunch offers, it is hard for some students to see the negatives of the situation. Off-campus lunch offers a variety of fast food restaurants to choose from, or the comfort of your own home.

Mojave student Jeremy Garrett says, "Why pay for bad lunch at school when you can go and get a Jumbo Jack for 99 cents?"

Build a better body with weightlifting

By Charles Trujillo, Green Valley HS

Lifting weights can be a great way to lose weight, build muscle and become better physically fit.

One thing that everyone wants to do is lose weight. Lifting weights helps you gain more muscle mass, which increases the rate of your metabolism. The more muscle a person has, the faster their metabolism is.

Another great thing about lifting weights is that you see results after lifting for a while, compared to some phony infomercial that promises fast results. There is no easy way. It takes hard work and dedication to become a well-conditioned athlete.

After lifting for a while, your energy will increase just by doing a couple of basic weightlifting exercises. You will feel better about yourself, especially when someone says, "Hey, have you been working out?" but they don't mean it sarcastically.

Weightlifting is not just to build strong muscles, but also strong bones. Bones become stronger and denser just like muscles do after lifting weights. And if you have weak joints or a limited range in your joints, strength training promotes strength in your joints.

It can change your life and make stuff easier. Carrying heavy objects seems not as hard, and you can get more done.

There are a couple of things to remember. See a trainer or talk to someone who lifts to get to know the basics. Another is not to try something crazy like an amount of weight you cannot lift. Just remember the most important thing is safety.



Díganos

El frío es sinónimo de enfermedades

Por Lina Hernández,
Editora de Díganos

El 22 de diciembre empezó la época del invierno, el verdadero frío. Esto significa que debemos estar más alerta a todos los virus y enfermedades que siempre andan rondando por ahí. Hace poco llegó a mis manos un folleto acerca de las vacunas, el proceso al cual le llamamos la inmunización.

La inmunización es la manera más segura y efectiva de ayudar al cuerpo en la prevención y rechazo de ciertas enfermedades. La vacuna causa que el cuerpo produzca "anticuerpos," que son sustancias que pelean



o años. La inmunización es importante porque puede protegerte contra enfermedades que pueden causarte daño, incapacitarte o hasta causarte la muerte.

Es por eso que debes informarte acerca de las enfermedades que pueden llegar a tí sin que te des cuenta. Una enfermedad de la cual tenemos que estar pendientes es de la Hepatitis B.

Esta enfermedad es muy contagiosa y es causada por

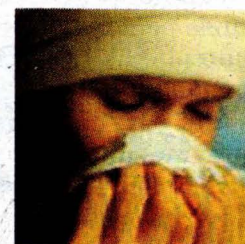
contra la enfermedad y se mantienen en guardia contra la infección por meses

un virus que se encuentra en la sangre y otros fluidos de las personas infectadas. Se difunde por el contacto directo con la sangre y los fluidos corporales como por ejemplo, teniendo relaciones sexuales o compartiendo agujas hipodérmicas con una persona infectada. Algunas personas no muestran síntomas, pero su período de incubación puede ser de seis semanas a seis meses. Los síntomas más comunes pueden ser gripe (fiebre, dolores musculares, ganas de vomitar, etc.) Algunas personas también padecen de ictericia (amarillez de la piel y las conjuntivas), orina oscura

y excrementos pálidos.

En casos graves puede causar una enfermedad hepática o hasta la muerte debido a un fallo hepático. Puede afectar a personas de cualquier edad. Una persona puede portar el virus dentro del organismo y pasar la infección a los demás (incluso una madre a su bebé aún no nacido), sin tan siquiera saberlo. La hepatitis B ocurre durante todo el año.

Si no sabes si estás vacunado contra esta u otras enfermedades, asegúrate para que no te lamentes en un futuro. Aquí te dejo con el nombre, la dirección y el teléfono de



uno de los lugares donde puedes recurrir para vacunarte.

También, infórmate con el diagrama que muestra otras de las enfermedades que pueden llegar a tí. Recuerda que no solo los niños pequeños pueden ser afectados, tú también puedes ser víctima de ellas. Y también recuerda que éstas no son las únicas enfermedades que andan rondando por ahí ... son innumerables. Infórmate, abrigate bien y cuida tu salud.

Clark County Health District
625 Shadow Lane
Las Vegas, Nevada 89106
(702) 383-1351

| Enfermedad | Causado por: | Se difunde por: | Periodo de incubación: | Periodo contagioso: | Síntomas: | En casos muy graves: | Es más probable que afecte: | Ocurre frecuentemente: |
|------------|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| SARAMPION | Un virus que entra por la nariz o por la boca. | Contacto con la persona infectada. | Entre exposición al virus y primeros síntomas es de 7-14 días. | Especialmente entre 3-4 días antes de la erupción. (Muy contagioso.) | Cansancio general, fiebre intermitente, tos, ojos lacrimosos y sensibles a la luz. La erupción empieza en la cara y se extiende por el resto del cuerpo. | Puede causar problemas del oído, daño al cerebro y hasta la muerte. | A niños que tienen más de 6 meses. También ha llegado a ser más común en adolescentes y adultos. | Desde fines de invierno hasta principios de la primavera. |
| RUBEOLA | Un virus encontrado en la nariz y boca de la persona infectada. | Contacto con persona infectada o con artículos usados por ésta. | Entre la exposición y los primeros síntomas, entre 2-3 semanas. | Desde 10 días antes hasta 5 días después de la erupción. (Muy contagioso.) | Leve incomodidad, fiebre no muy alta y usualmente un salpullido de manchitas que empieza en la cara y el cuello y que dura de 1-2 días. | Cuando las mujeres están en embarazo, su bebé puede desarrollar defectos al nacer. | A niños y a adolescentes no vacunados. | En el invierno y en la primavera. |
| TETANO | El bacilo del tétano, un organismo de la enfermedad, difundido y resistente. | Contacto con el organismo en la tierra o en el polvo de la calle, alrededor de los caballos, especialmente por heridas sucias y profundas. | De 2 días a 2 semanas o más. | No es contagioso de una persona a otra. | Dolor de cabeza, sudor, cambios de disposición, contracciones musculares, especialmente en la quijada o en el abdomen. | Ocurren frecuentemente y son serias, incluso problemas de respiración y problemas cardíacos. | A la gente de cualquier edad que tenga una herida contaminada. El tétano puede ocurrir más de una vez; un ataque <u>no</u> produce la inmunidad. | Entre abril y septiembre. |
| PAPERAS | Un virus presente en la saliva de personas infectadas. | Contacto con la persona infectada. | Entre exposición y primeros síntomas puede ser de 14-25 días. | Dura desde 1-2 días antes y 7 días después de los síntomas, sobretodo cuando el enfermo se hincha. | Fiebre, dolor en frente de la orejas, que aumenta cuando se mastica, glándulas hinchadas en las mejillas y algunas veces debajo de la quijada. | Los testículos, ovarios y el páncreas pueden ponerse hinchados y dolorosos. Dolores de cabeza y complicaciones en el sistema nervioso son comunes. Daño al oído puede ocurrir. | A los niños de 5 a 9 años, pero puede ocurrir a cualquier edad y es mucho más probable que sea más grave y doloroso entre adolescentes y adultos. | Durante el invierno y la primavera. |

Salva una vida: la gente, no la medicina, puede prevenir el suicidio

Por Natasha Lahera,
Eldorado HS

Cuando se piensa en el alto nivel de suicidios en los adolescentes de Nevada, la pregunta que siempre se asoma es, ¿Por qué? ¿Por qué más jóvenes (y adultos) se van a los extremos para resolver "supuestamente" sus problemas?

El stress y la ansiedad vienen hacia nosotros en cualquier dirección. Hay algunas personas que nunca se han sentido amadas. Algunos no pueden soportar ver lo que está pasando en el mundo. Otros sienten que nadie les entiende y que nadie se preocupa por ellos. La mayoría de personas que tienen pensamientos suicidas no muestran sus verdaderos sentimientos y sus amigos están demasiado ocupados tratando de corregir sus propias vidas para darse cuenta que estas señales pueden llegar a ser un gran problema.

La mayoría del tiempo, la gente que piensa en el suicidio se

siente ignorada y sin valor. La vida para una persona de 17 o de 30 años de edad en el 2004 no es lo mismo que pudo haber sido en 1970. Las personas no han cambiado mucho, pero las situaciones sí.

El país tiene muchos problemas, pero ninguno tan grande como alguien que quiere acabar con su vida. Todos tenemos potencial. Pero aquellos que solo piensan en la muerte, no se dan cuenta de ello.

"Haz que (la persona afectada) inicie conversaciones, haz que participen en actividades, inspira sueños y metas," aconseja Terry Conder, profesora de Eldorado HS. "Hay muchas maneras para hacer que alguien vuelva a querer la vida."

Hacer algo tan cruel como tratar de acabar con tu vida no va a hacer que la gente te escuche porque si tienes éxito con ese plan, entonces no habrá nadie que te escuche después que ya no estés. Problema no resuelto.

Las personas se preocupan; lo que pasa es que no siempre es

obvio. El mundo está hecho "patas-arriba," pero ¿Cuándo fue la última vez que alguien hizo sentirte mejor o te dijo que todo iba a estar bien? Todos sabemos lo que es sentirse solo. Todo el mundo ha pensado que ya no vale la pena seguir intentándolo. Entonces, ¿Por qué no se ayuda a esas personas a desechar esos sentimientos?

Si las escuelas, los profesores, los padres y amigos se enfocaran en ser más comprensivos, podrían existir menos suicidios. Si lo analizas, nadie está completamente solo y nada es completamente inaguantable.

"Pienso que el suicidio está solo en la cabeza de la persona y es completamente preventivo," dice Patty Eliason, estudiante de Eldorado. "No creo que la vida de nadie sea tan mala como para acabarla. Ser dulce y buena con la gente es una buena manera de prevenir el suicidio."

Realmente, no hay ninguna manera de salvar a nadie en el mundo, pero es increíble la diferencia que una sola persona puede hacer. Una persona puede darle razones para vivir a otra que las necesita. Todos tenemos efectos en la vida de alguien sin ni siquiera darnos cuenta. Es difícil abrirle nuestro corazón a la gente, pero esa es la respuesta para un mundo mejor.

La vida es una aventura con

mucho que ofrecer. Lamentablemente, este punto no es lo suficientemente enfatizado. Es muy triste saber que alguien se siente solo y duda en tener una sola razón para seguir viviendo.

"Creo que hay mucha más gente que ha tenido pensamientos suicidas en algún momento de su vida aunque no lo quieran admitir," dice Conder. "Pero esos pensamientos se pueden acabar. Desdichadamente, la gente que se encuentra 'en la bajada hacia la barranca' usualmente no tiene a nadie alrededor para ayudarlos a salir de esa situación."

Gente - esa es la respuesta. No la medicina. El amor y la preocupación pueden marcar la diferencia. Las personas pueden solucionar casi todos sus problemas con la ayuda de seres comprensivos y una actitud positiva puede derrumbar aquellos obstáculos que parecían indestructibles. Cada uno de nosotros necesita ser ese "comercial ambulante" demostrándole a los demás que sí hay razones para vivir. Necesitamos ayudar a aquellos que no le ven la salida a los problemas y que piensan que no vale la pena intentarlo.

"Pienso que cualquiera puede prevenir un suicidio," dice Andy Ngo, estudiante de Eldorado HS. "El primer paso es mostrar que te importa."

Reseña musical

Por Elisa Mondragón, Valley HS

Grupo: Genitallica

Album: "Sin Vaselina"

Ultimo disco: "Después"

Suena como: alguien que jamás hayas escuchado antes

Después de haber ganado disco de platino con su álbum novato "¿Picas o Platicas?", Genitallica se ha superado con su tan esperado lanzamiento de "Sin Vaselina."

"Sin Vaselina" es un álbum con mezclas de rock, reggae, hip-hop, ska y también con un poco del sonido de Las Vegas. Sus canciones son picantes y tocan diferentes temas, desde ir a fiestas hasta cómo cambia la vida cuando se toma licor.

"Después" es la canción número uno del CD que abarca la historia de un tipo en una fiesta y como él piensa que después de nueve copas de licor, una chica puede que no se vea tan mal; y después de otras nueve, puede que se llegue a enamorar. Estos son pensamientos que generalmente pasan por las mentes de los hombres. Tiene un ritmo pegajoso que te hace bailar y reír al mismo tiempo.

"No tengo amigos" una de sus otras canciones, tiene un sonido más acorde a Las Vegas, con trompetas, saxofones y otros instrumentos de percusión. Es acerca de un tipo que piensa que es perfecto, que no necesita nadie en el mundo - que si la gente fuera como él, el mundo sería perfecto. Es por eso que no tiene amigos.

"El perro de mi primo" es la historia irreal del primo psicópata del cantante quien está obsesionado con la novia (irreal) que lo dejó. Esta canción tiene un sonido más fuerte que el resto de las canciones del álbum.

En este CD encontraremos un sonido único que estos muchachos de Monterrey, México han alcanzado en esta última producción.

Tareas vs. trabajos del hogar

Por Adriana Gutiérrez,
Western HS

Algunas latinas entre las edades de 15 a 17 años, tienen que tomar la decisión de qué hacer primero: las tareas o la limpieza del hogar. ¿Cuál es la prioridad?

Conversando con algunas de ellas, dijeron sin excepción alguna, que hacer la limpieza del hogar es más importante que hacer las tareas o algún otro trabajo que tenga que ver con la escuela. Al parecer, en ciertos hogares latinos no es tan importante que la mujer tenga una profesión fuera del hogar. En algunos casos, la familia no muestra interés por el desarrollo profesional de sus

hijos, por lo cual, hacer las tareas o participar en eventos escolares no es necesariamente una prioridad ni para ellas (hijas) ni para sus padres.

Afortunadamente, esto no es el caso en todos los hogares latinos. Algunos padres valoran la educación de ambos, hombres y mujeres. Estos padres se preocupan por el desarrollo escolar, por las tareas y por las actividades extracurriculares; en estos hogares la escuela viene primero que ninguna otra cosa.

No importa cuál sea tu caso sino la importancia e interés que le pongas a tu educación. Piensa que todo lo que te propongas, lo puedes lograr. ¡Echale ganas!

Me llamo es ...

Por Sydney Alford,
Foothill HS

Era mediados de junio y algunos estudiantes organizaban sus mochilas, terminaban de hacer la tarea y hablaban con sus compañeros de clase hasta que la profesora entró al salón saludando, "¡Hola, clase!" No, ésta no es la típica clase de español en una escuela de Estados Unidos, en cambio, es la primera hora de inglés de Christine Greve, estudiante de Foothill High School.

Durante cinco meses y medio, Greve abandonó todo lo americano, incluyendo su idioma, para convertirse en una estudiante de intercambio en Monteros, Tucumán en Argentina.

"No estaba tan nerviosa al principio," dice Greve, "pero sí tenía miedo de dejar a mi familia y amigos porque la verdad nunca he estado lejos de mi casa. Pero decidí tomarlo como una aventura."

Mientras que ella estuvo en ese país, no solo estaba expuesta a aprender de la vida diaria en Argentina, sino también de la vida escolar. Así como los estudiantes de intercambio vienen a los Estados Unidos y viven una vida normal, ella también participó en diferentes eventos de su escuela y tomó clases regulares.

"Los estudiantes se quedan en un solo salón, y son los profesores los que tienen que cambiar de clase. Solo teníamos que ir a la escuela por cuatro horas al día," dice ella. "Además, si el profesor no iba al salón, como no había substitutos, entonces nadie iba a clase. Ah!, y las primeras dos semanas, el profesorado estaba en huelga y no nos toco ir a estudiar."

Pero no todo era trabajo sin diversión. Después de las clases, especialmente durante los



fines de semana, la actividad más popular era irse a

bailar. Como no hay ley para menores, todos "bailan hasta el amanecer," algunas veces sin llegar a la casa hasta las ocho de la mañana.

"También íbamos a La Plaza (un lugar en la mitad de la ciudad) muchas veces. Todas las personas son muy sociables y nadie hace nada solo. Si quieres ir al supermercado, ¡siempre te llevas un amigo contigo!" dice Greve.

Aunque extrañaba mucho a sus amigos y sobretodo a su familia, también extrañaba la comida americana: como la mantequilla de maní y macaroni con queso. Sin embargo, la deliciosa carne de Argentina y el dulce de leche (caramelo) fueron los substitutos para sus antojos.

Ahora que Christine se encuentra de nuevo en casa, se da cuenta de lo diferente que es Estados Unidos. Ella piensa que Nevada es mucho más limpia y moderna y que aquí la gente está obsesionada con la apariencia física. De igual manera, ya empieza a extrañar su "casa" en Argentina, especialmente a sus amigas.

"Aunque extrañé muchos a los amigos que tengo aquí, es más deprimente regresar a casa porque sé que nunca volveré a ver a mis amigos en Argentina," dice Greve con un poco de desilusión.

Según ella, vivió una experiencia fantástica y le recomendaría este programa a cualquiera que sea lo suficientemente valiente para sumergirse en una cultura diferente.

"Argentina fue definitivamente una experiencia espectacular," dice Greve, "pero Estados Unidos es mi casa."

LEYENDAS DEL MES

Famosos en Estados Unidos

Cada día que pasa, los latinos estamos triunfando más en los Estados Unidos; con la música, en lo deportivo y en muchas otras actividades. He aquí, tres de los más famosos. Nos vemos en la próxima edición.



Oscar de la Renta

Oscar de la Renta, modisto de alta costura, nació en República Dominicana en 1932 pero dejó su nativa tierra a los 18 años para estudiar arte en la Academia de San Fernando en Madrid. Mientras vivía ahí, se interesó por el mundo del diseño y empezó a dibujar para casas de moda en ese país. Después se reunió con el famoso diseñador español Antonio Castillo en París. En 1965 sacó su marca de ropa la cual produjo gran cantidad de accesorios. Tiempo después crea 'Oscar Jeans' para hombres y mujeres.

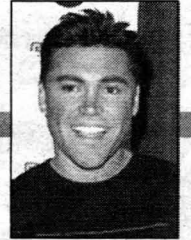
Dos de sus más grandes pasiones aparte de su carrera es la jardinería y el servicio comunitario. De la Renta posee un jardín en su casa, el cual cuida como si fuera oro. De su bolsillo salen los fondos para lo que fue la construcción de una escuela para 1,200 niños en República Dominicana. En el año 2000, ganó el mejor diseñador de ropa para mujer y la medalla de oro de las Bellas Artes del rey de España; éstos, son solo dos de los innumerables premios que ha recibido a lo largo de su carrera.



Gloria Estefan

Gloria Maria Fajardo, nació en 1957 en La Habana, Cuba. Cuando tenía solo un año de edad, su familia tuvo que abandonar la isla por razones políticas, recalando en Miami. Gloria participó desde niña con grupos americanos que cantaban en inglés versiones de Los Beatles y Los Rolling Stones. En una clase de música a la que asistía, conoció al que hoy es su marido, Emilio Estefan. Ella se hizo famosa por su gran talento con los "Miami Sound Machine," en donde Emilio era también parte del grupo. Gloria y Emilio se casaron en 1978 y después de muchos años de arduo trabajo, Gloria consiguió un Grammy por su disco "Mi Tierra," en 1993; y en 1995 repitió Grammy por el disco "Abriendo Puertas."

A lo largo de su carrera ha ganado ya varios Grammy's y ha hecho más de 25 álbumes (en español y en inglés), así como su conocido disco "Alma Caribeña." Hoy en día tiene dos hijos con su esposo y también es considerada por muchos, una de las divas de la música Latina.



Oscar De la Hoya

Oscar De la Hoya, el niño del boxeo estadounidense, nació en California, el 4 de febrero de 1973. Su relación con el deporte se inició a los cinco años. Sus primeros pasos en el ring los dio en el 'Eastside Boxing Club'; fue allí donde descubrió el ingrediente devastador: su potente izquierda. A lo largo de su carrera, De la Hoya ha sido coronado en siete campeonatos mundiales de box, en cuatro categorías diferentes. En 1994 ganó su primer título mundial y obtuvo su segunda corona, esta vez en la categoría de peso ligero.

En mayo de 1995, obtuvo un título mundial y al final del año, combatió en el 'Madison Square Garden' de Nueva York, donde venció por "knock-out." Estas hazañas lo han hecho el gran héroe de América; y por su estilo y carisma sus seguidores lo apodaron "The Golden Boy" (el niño de oro.) Así fue como se convirtió en el único boxeador en conseguir la medalla dorada y en un hombre que supo hacer de su demoledora izquierda, el deleite de los amantes del buen box.

De la cabeza a los pies, el programa 'Covering Kids & Families' tiene a los jóvenes bajo su cuidado



Por Rachel Hommel,
Green Valley HS

Para muchos jóvenes, el seguro es lo que se tiene que pagar por su carro cada mes sin falta. Pero, ¿cuántos de nosotros hemos pensado en los gastos del cuidado dental, de las citas al médico y de las costosas visitas al hospital? Muchos dicen que eso es responsabilidad de los padres, ¿pero qué tal si tus padres no pueden responder por esto?

Muchos padres de familia tienen que tomar la penosa decisión de escoger entre las necesidades y la salud. Cuando ya todas las cuentas están pagadas, sobra poco o nada de dinero para las medicinas con receta médica o para cualquier cita al médico. Los niños que no tienen seguro médico están más propensos a faltar a la escuela por problemas que se pueden prevenir, tales como asma, infección de oído y problemas de la visión.

Para muchas familias, el programa "Covering Kids & Families" (Asegurando a Niños y Familias) viene al rescate. Este programa de \$55 millones, patrocinado por la Fundación de Robert Wood Johnson, tiene una meta en mente - "incrementar el número de niños y adultos que reúnan los requisitos necesarios para beneficiarse de los programas de salud estatales y federales." En los últimos tres años, el número de niños sin seguro médico ha bajado en 1.8 millón.

"Covering Kids & Families" se asegura de proteger a las familias de bajos recursos en Estados Unidos. De acuerdo con el programa, el nivel de vida de una persona no tiene nada que ver con la calidad del cuidado de salud que tenga. Muchas veces, el seguro puede ser



necesitan.

Dependiendo del trabajo de cada persona, las compañías usualmente aseguran a sus empleados bajo su mismo plan. Las visitas al dentista o al hospital muchas veces son pagadas en co-pagos por la aseguradora de la compañía. De esta manera, el seguro pagará cerca del 80 por ciento de la cuenta. Por ejemplo, imagínese que una visita al doctor le costó \$100 dólares. El seguro le pagará \$80 y usted como paciente pagará la módica suma de \$20 dólares.

Sin embargo, las compañías pequeñas o privadas no pueden ofrecer los mismos beneficios que las compañías grandes. Además la mayoría de los empleados de tiempo completo reciben estos beneficios después de haber trabajado cierta cantidad de horas. Los empleados de medio tiempo quizás nunca reciban estos beneficios.

"Covering Kids & Families" está continuamente ocupada construyendo coaliciones locales y alrededor del estado para darle el mensaje a los residentes de Nevada que el seguro médico está abierto a las familias que lo necesitan. Localizada en el Distrito Escolar del Condado de Clark, esta organización envía notas y panfletos al valle de Las Vegas para informar a la comunidad. Hasta en la escuela, este programa se hace notar. Durante este verano, más de 250,000 tarjetas fueron

demasiado costoso para ciertas personas y sus trabajos simplemente no pueden ofrecerles los beneficios de salud que ellos

publicadas. Estas tarjetas le dan a los jóvenes acceso a servicios como números importantes de teléfono, asistencia médica de emergencia y hasta programas de tratamientos para el abuso de sustancias tóxicas. Estas tarjetas están a disposición de consejeros en las escuelas medias y preparatorias, en bibliotecas, en organizaciones de servicio comunitario y hasta en estaciones de policía.

"Nevada Check Up," una subdivisión de esta fundación, es el sitio de acceso para las familias que necesitan ayuda. Desde que el programa empezó, éste ha incluido y asegurado cerca de 25,000 niños. Este programa de seguros fue diseñado especialmente para niños y jóvenes hasta los 18 años, quienes no estaban cubiertos por Medicaid o una compañía privada de seguros. El único pago que la familia debe hacer es pagar una baja cantidad de dinero anual, dependiendo de sus ingresos.

Con toda esta promoción, no hay ninguna razón que le impida a las familias en la comunidad de Las Vegas vivir con seguro médico. "Covering Kids & Families" está ahora esparcida por los 50 estados y, con más de 8.5 millones de niños sin seguro médico en los Estados Unidos, es definitivamente una causa que vale la pena.

La información en esta página fue recibida gracias al Departamento de Educación de Nevada.

Obtenga seguro médico

Si quiere saber si califica para el cubrimiento médico, puede ir a la página en Internet www.nevadacheckup.state.nv.us o llame al 1-800-360-6044. Las aplicaciones están disponibles en inglés y en español en varias localidades incluyendo centros para familias, escuelas, oficinas del welfare o simplemente llamando a la línea de información.

Involúcrate

Si estas interesado(a) en ser voluntario para este programa, contacta la coalición del sur de Nevada "Covering Kids & Families" al teléfono 759-0704, o vaya a su página en Internet www.communitylink.koz.com/lvrj/coverkids y envíeles un correo electrónico. Para saber más de esta organización, visite la página principal en Internet www.coveringkidsandfamilies.org

Los beneficios

Más que simples vacunas y medicamentos, esta fundación ofrece seguro para los siguientes servicios médicos:

- Ambulancia
- Quiroprácticos
- Servicio dental
- Ayuda audiovisual
- Vacunas
- Hospitales
- Servicios de laboratorio
- Salud mental
- Medicamentos con receta médica
- Rayos X

Smoking during school is easy to get away with

By David Peterson, Eldorado HS



Smoking on school campuses isn't allowed, but people still do it.

"I smoke cigarettes every day and get away with it," says an Eldorado High School student named Thomas.* "I only got caught once when I was smoking weed off campus with a pipe. The cops caught me because they saw me through the school cameras. They zoomed the camera all the way across the street and got me with a pipe."

Other students agree with Thomas that it's pretty safe to smoke cigarettes between classes.

"Smoking at school isn't allowed, but it depends on where you go to smoke," says Mike,*

also a student at Eldorado. "If you go in front of the school and do it though, you'll probably get caught."

Some students don't think there's anything wrong with smoking at school.

"Smoking should be allowed on campus because it's legal to smoke everywhere else [if you're not underage]," says Eldorado student James Green. "You can smoke at restaurants, so why not at school? They should make a certain area just where you can smoke, so that people who don't want to be around it don't have to."

Eldorado student Daniel Murrilo says that regardless of the rules, it's not that difficult to find a place to smoke on campus.

"I think the reason why the cops and the deans don't do anything is because they have better things to do," Murrilo says. "They are more interested in busting people with drugs or the people who sell cigarettes. If they were to send everybody to the office they caught smok-

"You can smoke at restaurants, so why not at school? They should make a certain area just where you can smoke, so that people who don't want to be around it don't have to."



ing, they would have to RPC at least 50 people a day because that is how many people are out there."

John Mapes agrees with Murrilo's assessment of smoking on campus. "I think that the reason that schools don't do anything about the smoking on campus is because the teachers do it, too. I don't think that the teachers are supposed to smoke, but I see them every once in a while doing it. If the students aren't supposed to smoke, then the teachers shouldn't either."

So should smoking be al-

lowed at school?

"I don't think that it should be allowed because I don't like the smell," says Eldorado student Martha Rameriez. "And it causes too many problems. People who stop to smoke are usually tardy to class. They are here to learn, not to smoke. I think that you should be disciplined if you get caught."

What does Rameriez suggest?

"Either be kicked out of school or suspended," Rameriez says. "I don't think it's fair that I am forced to be around smoke if I don't want to."

Coping with stress important to maintaining health

By Malina Montgomery, Foothill HS



Throwing, punching and screaming into pillows, teenagers across the United States are continuously getting stressed out, and it's happening right here in Clark County.

Waking up late, running to the shower only to discover that all of the hot water is gone, dressing frantically not knowing that the shirt you just put on is inside out, stuffing your face as you run out the door five minutes after first period has already started, and forgetting your homework on the kitchen counter. Mornings like these are what make high school students so stressed. Stressful mornings often turn

into stressful days and continue into the week.

Since the very first day of school, students have been feeling the stress.

"I get so stressed, I start to punch walls and scream really loudly," says Foothill High School student Mary Tompson. "Work, school, family, practice and my boyfriend are big factors when I get stressed."

Not only can being stressed get annoying, it is also extremely unhealthy. Doctors say that teenagers who get stressed out more than twice a week are likely to start an unhealthy habit and may also become aggressive toward their peers or teachers. Students and some doctors agree that the large load of homework students receive is a factor in their stress and growing aggression.

There are many ways to relieve stress, and each person's relief will vary based on the amount of stress that he or she has and

"I get so stressed, I start to punch walls and scream really loudly."

the type of personality he or she possesses. Until you find the relief that's right for you, deep breaths and calming music are suggested as ways everyone can calm stressful feelings.

Other ways include screaming, practicing a hobby that is calming and enjoyable, sleeping it off, talking calmly to a person you like about the stress you're experiencing, and creating a peaceful setting where you can go when you get stressed. The easiest way to relieve stress is to think positively and continue to smile.

For teenagers across the nation and here in Las Vegas, stress is a normal part of everyday life. As we continue to learn what it is that makes us explode, we will also need to learn how to control the urge to punch walls and yell at friends.

Discriminating against lefties is just not right

By Anna Scarpa, Coronado HS

Do you ever notice how many everyday products are built for right-handed people?

Discrimination against lefties is supposed to be a thing of the past, but products such as scissors, the mouse on a computer and gum wrappers are all made for right-handers. Turning a gum package upside down to open it, learning how to work around the scissor problem and finding a mouse with a long cord for position change may not seem like big deals to some people, but the situation gets more severe.

On jet planes, the pilot's position compared to the position of the gears is made specifically for right-handed individuals. This creates awkward situations for left-handed pilots as well as copilots, which can be a hazard to the passengers aboard the plane. Also, the gears of a car are on the right side, which takes a lot of adjusting to for lefties.

Left-handed Coronado student Matt Lincoln says, "Driving was hard in the beginning because of the car gearshift. I did not like using my right hand so much, but I got used to it."

Left-handed discrimination is something of which many people are aware, especially left-handers, but the origin of this concept and why it exists is pretty much a mystery to many.

It actually began with the building of the Roman Empire. Their word for right-handed translated into 'dexter,' and their word for left-handed translated into 'sinister.' Because of this language problem, they believed left-handedness to be the work of the devil and started the discrimination, which has carried into modern day society. In the early school systems, left-handed children were continually smacked on their left hands so they could learn to write

with their right.

Finally, the law was passed that teachers could no longer hit the students, and with that, the physical discrimination of left-handed students ended. The abuse was not terminated all over the world, however, and verbal discrimination still exists even within the United States.

"I was born left-handed in China," says UNLV freshman Jack Wang. "The problem is, they do not accept left-handed people. I learned to use my right hand until I moved here, now I can use both."

According to James T. de Kay, author of "The Left-Handers Handbook," the frustration that lefties deal with from not being accepted or accommodated can cause physiological problems. De Kay believes that this might be the reason that left-handers Jack the Ripper and the Boston Strangler became serial killers, and also the reason why left-handers are three times more apt to become alcoholics.

In early school systems, left-handed children were smacked on their left hands so they could learn to write with their right.

Some parents today who grew up during the time when schools wanted to correct the left-handers, tend to place pressure upon their left-handed children because they had that pressure put on them. One particular

left-handed individual admitted that his parents scold him for using his left hand.

The discrimination of left-handed people has definitely come a long way since the time of the Romans. Various left-handed support groups have arisen to help fellow lefties cope with the situation. The existence of these groups has helped the problem fade but has not succeeded in fully demolishing it. Left-handed people still undergo a great deal of discrimination, whether through their parents, peers, or the everyday products they use.

On the Job Interview Questions

Is "What do you do in your spare time?" legal?



IT'S AGAINST THE LAW, BUT IT HAPPENS. Employers ask illegal questions in job interviews. Some employers know the questions are illegal and ask them anyway, but some employers don't know. The important thing is that you recognize which questions are legal and which aren't.

Why is this important? It's important because employers are only supposed to ask you questions about other jobs, your education or experiences that would help them decide whether you could do the job. You can volunteer anything you want to, but questions about anything else are illegal. Here are some examples:

Name: If an employer asks, "Is that an Irish/German/Spanish name?" the employer may be interested in your ethnic background. That's against the law. Names are not discussible.

Health: If an employer mentions that the job requires good attendance and the ability to lift 70-pound bags of corn meal, that's fine. The employer can then ask if you will have any problems with attendance or lifting the bags. If an employer asks whether you have any health problems, that's illegal.

Hobbies: If an employer asks what you do in your spare time, that's illegal. What you do for recreation has nothing to do with your ability to do the job. Your personal life is not discussible.

Assignment: List at least five other illegal questions that employers often ask.

© Job Jargon

This month's featured jobs:

Admissions Attendant

If you have great customer service skills and are interested in selling tickets and cash handling, this may be the job for you. This job requires prolonged standing and walking. Applicants must be 16 years old and have a work permit. Workdays and hours are flexible, with a wage of \$6.50 per hour. Job Number 7850

Clerk

Assistant needed to perform clerical work. Applicants must be 16 years old and have a work permit. Workdays are Monday-Friday from 1 p.m.-5 p.m., totaling 20 hours per week. The wage is \$8.00 per hour. Job Number: 7854

Ride Attendant

If you are interested in operating rides and safely loading and unloading guests, this may be the job for you. This job requires long periods of standing and walking. Must be at least 17 years old, and have a work permit. Workdays and hours are flexible, with the wage at \$7.50 per hour. Job Number: 7848

File Clerk

Assistant needed to answer phones, file, copy and type. Must be at least 17 years old and have a work permit. Workdays and hours are flexible, totaling 15 hours per week. The wage is \$6.00 per hour. Job Number: 7846

Sales Associate

Outgoing, positive customer service representative wanted to greet customers and cashier. Experience in fast food is wanted and ability to lift 20-30 pounds may be necessary. Many positions are available. Must be at least 16 years old and have a work permit and health card. Workdays and hours are flexible, totaling 40 hours per week. The wage is \$7.00 per hour. Job Number: 7845

Graphic Arts Assistant

Assistant needed to help with production artwork, including research on the Internet, photo shoots and ads. Must be familiar with Illustrator and Photoshop and be 15 years old with a work permit. Reliable transportation is a must. Workdays are Monday-Friday from 2:30 p.m.-5 p.m., totaling 12 and half hours per week. The wage is \$8.00 per hour. Job Number: 7843

For more information about these jobs, or to view the entire list of available job opportunities, contact the work experience coordinator at your school, or call the CCSD Job Bank at 799-8461.

Gang-related

Get out before it's too late

By Leah Boelter,
Desert Pines HS

Everyone makes right decisions, but everyone also makes wrong decisions. Either way it goes, teens come across violence, alcohol and drug use, all things that have to deal with gangs.

Gangs are what some people join to prove themselves to others. They do things like wear certain colors and jump people to show their loyalty to the set that they claim. They feel that the people they kick it with will be the ones that have their

back if something happens, but when something really goes down, the people they call their friends could be the first ones to leave their side.

I see a lot of people here at Desert Pines getting into trouble or hurt because they chose to be in gangs. Gangs are not worth it. Why waste time dealing with it?

Other opinions similar to mine came from Desert Pines' school police officers, Officer Brown and Officer Clark. I asked them if there are a lot of gang-related problems at Desert Pines.



"Not so much on school property," they say. "But there is lots of gang activity in this area."

When asked about the dangers of joining gangs, they say, "In [that] atmosphere, you're more than likely to get hurt or killed, but mostly caught up in crimes."

Having other sets chasing after you, wanting to kill you,

puts you and your family in danger. You are risking the lives of your family and loved ones.

I know there are people out there who do not want to be around or associated with gangs anymore. Some people get out of gangs because they have to accept the fact that something they did or contributed to caused a tragedy.

Sometimes, they get out because a family member or someone close to them made them feel guilty. Others have witnessed things like friends being shot and paralyzed for the rest of their lives that made them decide to get out of that gang.

If you are in a gang and you want to get out, do what you can before it's too late.

10 ways to lose a girl

By Jennifer Arthurholtz, Rancho HS

This article is for all you guys out there. This is to give you a little insight into how girls' complex minds work. These are ten popular reasons why girls dump their guys.

10. Being messy. Guys, you have to clean up after yourselves. Girls do not want to walk into your house or room and see clothes on the floor and dishes all over. When we see that, we think that bugs must live there and that does not put us in a romantic mood.

9. Looking at other girls. Now, we understand that boys will be boys, and they are going to notice when a pretty lil' thing walks by. All we ask is that if we are in the middle of a sentence and someone pretty walks by, don't go all goo-goo-ga-ga over her and stop listening to us because you are too busy watching her.

8. Not helping. This one is a classic. Come on now, girls, you know what I mean. When they say, "Oh, but you do it so much better," or "I don't know how. Can you just please do it for me and teach me later?" Be a man and help out, whether it is a project for school or something like housework.

7. Not caring/paying attention/noticing. Everyone knows that after being together for a while, the magic goes away a little bit. But every girl wants to be a princess, and every girl deserves to be treated like one. So give us a compliment and tell us that we look nice. Don't forget that girls still like flowers and cards and other sweet

little things like that to show us you are thinking of us.

6. Being jealous. I'm not saying that we don't want you to protect us, but there is a fine line. Girls are different from guys in the way that we can be just friends with a guy and nothing more. Just because we are hanging out with a guy doesn't mean that we have feelings for him, and we have more than likely made that perfectly clear to the other guy. So trust us unless you have a real reason not to. Then it's probably time to talk.

5. Being conceited. Okay, now you should not take longer than us to get ready to go out. No girl wants to go out with a guy who is prettier than she is. We may love you now but don't take for granted that you are so great that we will love you forever. Just because a girl talks to you doesn't mean she likes you, and looks aren't everything. So spend some of that time you were taking in the shower and work on ways to show us you care.

4. Being a jerk. I don't know if you noticed it by now, but I am trying to grind it into your minds that girls want a sweet guy who will take care of them while showing that they truly want to be with them and only them. This doesn't mean that you can't hang out with friends or have a boys' night out. But it does mean that if you are with your girl and the guys at the same time, don't treat her differently. You still need to be a gentleman to her while having fun with the guys.

3. Being a user. It may be awkward

for you, but you need to let a girl know what you want. Don't lead her into thinking that you are interested in a relationship when all you are doing is using her to get a little. And don't date a girl just because that is the only way she will give it up to you. You should date her because you care about the person she is, not because she will "mess around" with you.

2. Cheating. This is a big one and one of the easiest. DON'T CHEAT. Plain and simple. If it is worth cheating on her, than you might as well break up with her over it because if she ever finds out she will dump you. Isn't it easier just to make a phone call, say it's over, and go about your merry way, than to cause all the drama about it? You have to stop her from finding out by lying, and if she does find out, you caused a lot of pain. So never cheat; break up with her first or just don't do it. If something does happen, you should tell her because she would rather hear it from you than from anybody else, and you will stand a better chance of being forgiven.

1. Being abusive. This is number one for a reason. I don't just mean physical abuse. I'm talking mental (verbal) and sexual abuse too. Don't ever hit us. You might not realize your own strength, so always make sure to be ultra-gentle with us. Don't put us down either. No matter how ditzy we can be at times, don't call us stupid. And for the last one, when we say no, we mean it. Don't EVER make us feel like we have to fight you off. They're our bodies so respect that!

Safe schools start with students

By Psyrus Torres, Peterson Center

Have you ever experienced being the butt of everyone's jokes? Have you witnessed someone being singled out? Or have you singled someone out because of his or her physical appearance? Have you ever been belittled in front of a crowd? How did that make you feel? Personally, I believe that demeaning people because of their appearance is wrong and immoral.

Millions of people throughout the world are criticized because of their appearance, ethnic background, financial class or gender. Many people single out others because they have no self-esteem of their own, so they belittle other people by focusing on their physical attributes to make them feel better about themselves. You can call it an unhealthy method of therapy.

In the United States, many teens commit or try to commit suicide due to the constant ridicule they are forced to endure every day. Often, people don't realize how much of an impact words can have on an individual. They do not take the time to think about what that person feels or if that person leaves crying or mentally distraught.

People often disregard the idea of repercussions, much like the students who ridiculed the "trench coat mafia." The town of Littleton, Colo. learned their lesson the hard way. Will you? The violence and obscene gestures and language in our schools are constantly increasing each day; this is due to the mocking of fellow students.

There is only one way out of this cycle of madness. It's not the teachers; it's not the staff; it's simply the students. We all have to play our parts in ending our schools' violence and obscenities. One person may not make a difference, but when each person does his or her part, our schools can be safe.

SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT: CHAPARRAL HIGH SCHOOL

If there was one thing you could change about yourself this year, what would it be?



By Jennifer Carlton, Chaparral HS



Laura Dunn, freshman:
I would stop being lazy and start doing my chores.



James Clough, sophomore:
I want to be more tan.



Jolene Seery, sophomore:
I would get my driver's license. And a Hummer!



Andrew Wetmore, senior:
I would do more homework, and polish my boots more often.

Thomas Burge, senior:
I want to be taller.



Adam Thompson, sophomore:
I want to be a woman.



Donavan Burke, senior:
My GPA!

gallery



"Rocket Ship to Heaven," by Danny Gobaud, Las Vegas Academy sophomore. Colored pencil.

Remember to have fun while you're growing up

By Ariel Gove,
Las Vegas HS

For most of us, growing up is not all that it is cracked up to be.

High school is that transitional period between being a kid and growing into an adult. We begin high school around the age of 14. We are still immature, even though we don't think we are. We leave high school as 17-18-year-olds, but is this too young an age to be thrust out into the supposed 'real world'?

When graduation comes around, most teens are ready to be out of school. Many have been ready for months, while some may think that they are not ready to leave high school and wish they could stay awhile longer. No matter what your feelings, when it is time to leave you have no choice.

Senior Kyle Martin of Las Vegas High School says, "When I came here as a freshman, I admit I was a little immature. I did things that I would not normally do today. But it is through the years I have been here that I have grown up. I have learned so much through different experiences that have taken place here at school and with my friends that I met here."

When you begin high school, your teachers are usually pretty easy on you and try to help you to the best of their abilities. It may not seem as if they care when you are just beginning, but as you move up and become an upperclassman, you will see how much they actually did for you.

When you are a freshman, you have many more freedoms and should not be worrying about as many things as you will



as a senior. You shouldn't be worrying about how you are going to make enough money to pay your car payment, or how you are going to save up enough to take that one special boy or girl to prom.

"When I was a freshman, I only cared about getting up in the morning and having a great day at school," says Las Vegas High School senior Marcus Sherrod. "I would dress up and try to look nice for all the ladies and then try my hardest to pay attention in class. After school I would go hang out with my friends until one of my parents could come and pick me up to go home."

"Now, I am working part time at Olive Garden, trying to save up enough money to graduate," he says. "It is a little known fact to underclassmen that it is very expensive to graduate. There are so many things that you have to pay for."

He adds, "I do have so much more freedom now that I can drive and get myself around, but I don't know if it is worth it compared to how everything used to be. I miss my lazy days when I was able to go home and take a nap if I wanted to."

When you first begin high school, you need to focus on keeping your grades up and deciding whom you really want to be. If you have not already decided your own rules and guidelines for yourself, then now is the time to do it. Place rules upon yourself about what you want to accomplish throughout high school and what you want to achieve. Set standards of whom you will date and how serious you will let things get with those you choose.

Throughout your sophomore and junior years, you should be concentrating on your grades so you don't have problems with your GPA when you are a senior. You should be making friends with your teach-

ers and opening up a little more around people. You will have friends that you meet in your freshman year that you will be closer to later, and you should find the time to hang out with them.

You shouldn't let your high school years pass you by without going out and having fun every once in a while.

Successful families come in all shapes, sizes

By Matt Cullen,
Faith Lutheran HS



Living in a nuclear or "traditional" family, one mom, one dad and two kids, is not needed to raise a child right.

U.S. Census reports show that in 1960, the nuclear family made up 45 percent of American families. Now the nuclear family has dropped below 25 percent of the families in America. The nuclear style of families seems to be falling out.

During the past three decades the rates of divorces, single-parenting and cohabitation have grown rapidly. People are now waiting longer to get married and have kids. The average female gets married around the age of 25, and the average male gets married around the age of 27. Now 26 percent of American men and women live alone, and they outnumber the number of nuclear families.

Since this is the case, I don't believe that just living in a nuclear family affects how a child grows up. I believe that what does matter is how the single parent or the divorced family raises the child.

"A traditional family is most desired," says Faith Lutheran High School counselor Elayne Washington. "But sometimes it does not work out that way."

If the guardian teaches the child how the world works and how to survive and treat other people, then no matter what the home setup, the child should still grow up without any problems. The child can still grow up and own a business, study sciences or even run a country.

In some sense the "traditional" family helps a child, but in another sense, we do not even know exactly what the ideal family is. Most people have an idea that is really just a cliché from old TV shows such as "Leave It To Beaver" or "Ozzie and Harriet." So it may be that we will never have the "ideal" family.

The real question behind it all is what we think, individually, an ideal family should look like and what environment the parents or guardians want their children to grow up in and learn from.

the Nod (and) Shake experience

with special guests:

ABSENT MINDED
and...

LOCAL
IF IT SEEN

Friday, February 6th Brian Lewis Gallery
(art + music starts at 5:00) (9th street + clark ave)

Too much testing may get in way of real learning

By Stephanie Hernandez, Las Vegas HS

Iowa testing, Terra Nova tests, proficiency exams, PSATs, SATs, ACTs, AP exams, the ASVAB, quarter tests, and semester finals are all tests students complete in school year after year. With this inundation of exams, people are starting to question if too many tests are being administered at the expense of a student's learning experience.

Las Vegas High School sophomore Amanda Valdez says, "I don't see why we have to take so many of them."

Las Vegas sophomore Hilary Ferdig adds, "We should only have the proficiency exams. Tests just really stress you out, and all of the tests you have to take are ridiculous."

Testing in education is widely used to measure a student's learning ability. Many tests come in the form of standardized tests, which are tests in which the level of results (in the form of percentiles) are preset and a student's ability on all subject areas is tested.

For example, the Terra Nova tests a student's ability in reading, math, spelling, word analysis and language arts. An aptitude test is like the SAT or ACT in which the test is used to foresee how well a student will do in a certain educational surrounding. The other type of standardized test is an achievement test in which the test is meant to assess how well a school or teacher is teaching students. The results of standardized tests are also used for comparison with other students in the same school, district or even in the nation.

This leads us to the other side, the complaints. Some people think that it isn't necessary to compare students with their peers. However, due to the recent No Child Left Behind Act, the government is pressuring states to raise the amount of testing done every year in order to get federal Title I grant

money. This allows for the government to use the results obtained from standardized tests to compare with other states and see which states need to catch up or obtain better results. The pressure from the government is a prime example of just why so many tests are administered every year.

Just this fact has many in an uproar.

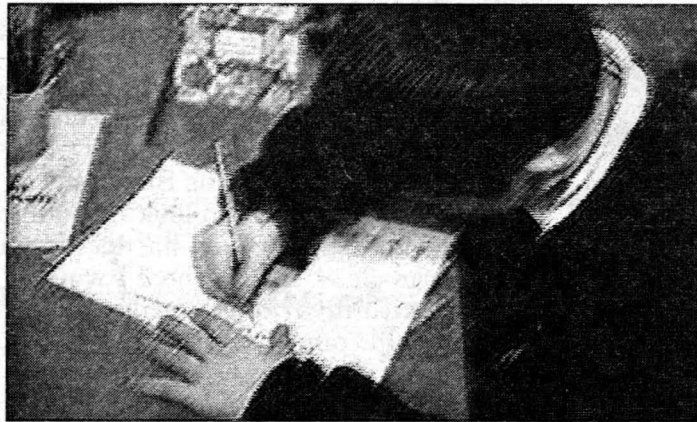
"It is a waste of time, money and energy," says Las Vegas High School English teacher Jeff Arvizu. "Politicians and school administrators are the only two entities that benefit from these tests, and the students are 'pawns' for them. It is all about money and scores. Students do not gain intelligence from standardized testing."

According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, "Students are tested to an extent that is unprecedented in American history and unparalleled anywhere in the world." They also stated, "The effort to [increase testing] comes at the expense of more meaningful forms of learning."

When asked if testing takes away from a teacher's curriculum, LVHS physics and math teacher Margery Babcock says, "Yes, we worry about not teaching to the test. There isn't much room for exploration."

Teachers are so preoccupied with worrying about teaching something that isn't on the test that they end up going fast and not getting into details on a subject that might interest their students for fear that those details in the end won't help them get a high score on an upcoming standardized test.

Yet, why so many tests? According to a2zpsychology.com, it is important to test in education in order to gain knowledge and perspective on how certain students learn, what they have learned, and where a student



needs improvement.

Las Vegas High School Counselor Coordinator Jennifer Williamson says, "Iowa testing is not a pass or fail test. It's just a score on where you stand with a national score in relationship to others who take the test. It gives us an idea as to which class to put you in, so [the class] is not too hard or too easy."

"I think as a state or district, we should take out all other tests, and choose only one test that gives us the proper information on a student," she adds. "I think [testing] has a purpose and it gives us information, but we do it too much."

For example, every year sophomores are required to be tested using Iowa testing. However, Williamson says that freshmen are also tested even though it's not required.

She says, "I don't think we have to test every kid."

Teachers most often provide students with their own tests that cover what was on their curriculum. However, this isn't administered on a wide range of subjects like standardized achievement tests do. With these tests, individual teachers choose the questions based on the curriculum in the particular classroom.

Las Vegas sophomore Joseph Latta says that one thing that is positive about these tests is that "they let the teachers know if you know the right things and if they are teaching right."

Despite the tremendous amount of tests that students take every year, many teachers believe that there are other ways to assess a student's progress.

Arvizu adds, "I would rather my students be assessed by novel portfolios, reading logs or essays. I want them to show me that they learned."

Survey says:

Homework rarely done at home

By Anthony Boike, Western HS

What do students do when they get home from school: play games and watch TV, or do their homework?

I gave an admittedly non-scientific survey to Western High School honor students and non-honor students and asked them that question.

The non-honor students gave the typical answer of watching TV, but some students I asked said they do their homework. Some even said they do neither — all they do is go places until they have to go home.

That really didn't come as a shock. The honor students' reaction did.

Half of the honor students play games and watch TV instead of doing their homework. Most honor and non-honor students do their homework while they're in class so they'll have the rest of the day to relax.

For all those students who don't do their homework, take this advice: When you get home from school, just do your homework. It only takes a half-hour to an hour depending how smart and focused you are. Plus, the ones who don't do their homework try to do it the next day in school, even though it's due at the beginning of class.

Don't be like that.

Do your homework. For those still passing even though no homework is done, I pity you.

One day it's going to backfire.

'Mix It Up Day' gives students different perspectives

By Krysten Hughes,
Sierra Vista HS

Things appeared to be slightly different in the Sierra Vista High School cafeteria on Nov. 19, 2003. Some of the students were not sitting at their usual tables because they were taking part in Sierra Vista's "Mix It Up Day."

"It was a good experience," says Sierra Vista junior Billy Hartman, who participated in the event. "I got to hang out with a bunch of different people."

Many students participated in "Mix it up Day" by sitting with a different group of people at lunch, people they normally would not associate with. In fa-

vor of promoting diversity, this definitely helped bring students together.

"I met some new friends and they were really accepting. I was uneasy at first because I thought that they were not going to like me," says freshman Alex Stiles.

Acceptance is one thing that students have to deal with, which is uncomfortable for some, especially those who find themselves in a new environment.

"Being an exchange student, it's a little more difficult to meet people because you don't know anyone, so everyday is a 'Mix It Up Day' for me, and I like it because of the diversity," says senior Monique Chinen.



Sierra Vista students Eugene Payne, Billy Hartman and Fariest Brown sit with people they normally don't sit with at lunch during "Mix It Up Day."

It is hoped that the event broke down many barriers and walls that people built, and helped students to be more accepting and less ignorant.

Meeting new people was one advantage, and now taking it a step further is the key to eliminate discrimination and stereotyping.

College is not for everyone

By Crystal Hughes, Western HS

Many high school students do not know what they wish to pursue after high school. It is that big decision between going to college and not going to college. Many people do not even finish high school, let alone going to school after graduation. Some people may have a fear of failure or may think that they cannot get into a decent college. Some people do not have enough money for college, and some people think that it may be too hard.

Going to college may help some people reach their goals and help people have careers in areas such as medicine that help others. But college is not needed for everything. Notice how much a plumber makes. Some plumbers make about \$36 an hour, and they do not even need to go to college. Ask your parents and neighbors; many of them have probably not gone to college.

Many teenagers want to live on their own after high school. Being independent is very important to a lot of teenagers. Then there are those who want to leave town completely, but they are leaving town to get away, not to go to college.

Some people do not even have plans to go to college right away. Western High School junior Eileen Rojas is one person who plans on waiting awhile before going to college.

"I don't plan on going to college right after high school, but I will go someday," she says. "I do not want to be flipping hamburgers in my future."

There are many things that can be done after high school other than going to college. Some students decide to go backpacking around Europe. Those who have money might like to travel around from place to place. But some people might just want to move out and work without school. Some people are happy with their smaller jobs.

It should not be such a big deal if everybody does not go to college. Some people may just need a year or two to experience life without school for a while. Do not feel bad if you do not want to go to college. Remember that school is not for everybody. College is not going anywhere; people can always come back to school later if they feel that they should.



Whoppers and Big Macs — those were the days

By Kevin Perkins,
Basic HS

A thick, juicy Whopper; a crunchy, beef-filled taco; or a mouth watering, breathtaking, Six-Dollar Burger — do you remember the days when we had the opportunity to leave campus and go to any restaurant we desired? Well, as everyone knows we no longer have that opportunity.

We have come to the realization that a privilege can be given and taken away in a heartbeat, as we have all seen with our own youthful eyes. For years, high school students had the opportunity to leave campus during their lunch period. This was a privilege that was revoked in recent years due to problems in the community. For example, Wendy's on Boulder Highway banned all Basic High School students a few semesters ago because of students who were misbehaving during the lunch hour. Should the entire student body be punished for mistakes made by a few irresponsible students?

Basic Assistant Principal Jennifer Mohammad says, "We [the BHS administration] are still responsible for students

during school hours."

The only way the administration can be protected is to make sure they know where every student is during the school day.

Some students at BHS feel it is wrong for the school district to take away a privilege that has been in our lives for so long. Some don't.

Freshman Sean Mulvihill says, "It doesn't really matter to me because I don't have a car to leave the school with."

Basic senior Daniel Brisendine says, "Seniors should be able to leave campus because the maturity level of seniors is well above the maturity of the underclassmen."

One positive outcome of closed campuses is the improvement in the attendance rate. Since the closed-campus rule has been in effect, Basic High School attendance rates have gone up from 89.9 to 90.1 percent. It may not seem like a big jump, but this two-tenths of a percent took Basic out of the "needs improvement" category.

It makes one wonder what the school district is planning to take away from the students next.

Take tests seriously or your school may be 'left behind'

By Chiara Velotta,
Valley HS

So, you are sitting in class taking the Iowa standardized test, and you are bored out of your mind. You are having such a hard time concentrating that you just begin making pictures with the bubbles on the Scantron.

You should know that Iowa test that you just made designs on was extremely important, and it could be the reason that your school may be on the No Child Left Behind "watch list."

Most students have heard about it. It has been on the news, teachers have mentioned it, and it has been in the newspapers. But do you really know what it means or what it has to do with you and your education?

"No Child Left Behind is a

federal plan to be sure that all students achieve on a level that they are supposed to be achieving," says Dr. Annette Conners-Harris, assistant principal at Valley High School. "All students have to be achieving at the same range each year.

"If we all don't progress, then that's how we get put on the watch list or deemed 'inadequate,'" says Conners-Harris. "After we've been on the list for two years, the state will start coming in and telling us how [teaching] is done."

Scores on the standardized tests are collected from all tests.

"It's so extremely important for each one of our kids to do the best job that they can on the standardized testing," Conners-Harris adds.

Test time is not a sleep hour. It has been stressed that

students need to focus and think about the answers they are bubbling in.

"The number one thing to help a student do better in any class on any test is to come to school," says Conners-Harris. "Every time you miss a day, a piece of the puzzle is gone. The things that you learn in classes are part of the material on the tests. That's why the state tests you."

"The other thing is to pay attention while you are [at school]. Take notes!" she says.

The Iowa test currently consists of a math test and an English test. The graduating class of 2007 will have to take a science test, in addition to the math and English tests. A way to prepare for the new science test is to have a diversified science curriculum. What that means is do not just take biology classes. Take chemistry classes, too. Take algebra-based classes and geometry-based classes. Take multiple levels of English.

"Take classes that will prepare you for the proficiency. Work with your counselors to get the best possible schedules,"

says Conners-Harris.

You also need to physically prepare. Conners-Harris suggests getting a good night of sleep the night before and eating a good breakfast the morning of the test.

While you are taking the test, stay focused. Use test-taking strategies that you have learned from other classes. Those strategies apply to any test that you take.

The state tests that you take your freshman and sophomore years have proven to be incredibly important, and it is equally important that you are prepared. There are ways to improve your test scores to help make your school look better and to get off or stay off the state "watch list." Your counselors are there to help you, and your teachers are there to give you the best education possible.

The next time you take the Iowa test, resist the urge to make your answers in the shape of a smiley face and attempt to really focus. Your test scores affect everyone at your school.

Working hard or hardly working in school affects your future

By Mary Bacon, Coronado HS

"Good grades are their own reward," one student mockingly jokes when asked if he receives benefits from his parents when he receives "good grades." His parents accept nothing short of straight A's.

"I know they're right, but it's discouraging when I see kids in the parking lot that I know are failing half their classes, driving away in a new Mercedes or BMW," the student says. "If I want a car, I have to work for it, which means less time to focus on my studies."

Making your classes the focal point of your life probably isn't the "cool thing" to do now, but it is almost guaranteed to pay off later in life.

If it helps, think about it this way: You may not be able to drive now, but at your high school reunions, you will be the one showing up in a new, flashy sports car. The people who did not take high school seriously either will not show up, or will show up in the old, beat up car they can afford to pay insurance on with their minimum wage salaries.

You, on the other hand, will be able to enjoy life and have the ability to take a day or two off if you want, while they are worried about next month's bills. This may

sound harsh on students that do not take high school seriously, but in all honesty, the truth hurts and it's time that students start hearing it.

Many of the students who stress themselves out over honors and AP classes, who receive an A or a B in the class, do not do so for their parents or for the slim benefits they may acquire or just because they know it is possible. They work hard nine months of the year for their futures and for the benefits they know they will reap from

You still have time; make high school a time of no regrets.

their hard work.

"These are probably the four most critical years of our lives," says Coronado High School student Brittney Porter.

"How we do in our high school years affects the rest of our lives," says Lindsay Jaworski, also a Coronado student. "Now is not the time to be slacking."

These years are so vital because how we do in high school has a ripple effect. Our grades determine which colleges or universities will accept us, which in turn affects

future job opportunities, which determines little details of life that most of us do not think about now such as where we will be able to vacation, Lake Mead or the French Riviera.

AP classes have almost become a must, as Coronado student Andrew O'Conner explains. "AP classes have basically replaced honors classes in the past few years because honors classes have lost their merit," he says. "AP classes are the new norm, and you are almost expected to take them by colleges, teachers, parents and even friends."

AP classes are time consuming, and seniors, juniors and sophomores receive the same credit as in honors classes, so why take them? Many students choose more rigorous courses because they want to be challenged and because they know that they can be successful in their AP classes.

Most parents want what is best for their children, and they know that means pushing them to do their best, even if it means being temporarily disliked by their children.

Regarding parents' expectations, Coronado junior Riley Marriage says, "My parents want me to push myself, but not past what I am capable of."

The majority of high school students have heard the "If I could do high school over again, I would ..." stories from their parents and have realized that their parents are only trying to give them everything that they did not have when they were their age. You still have time; make high school a time of no regrets.

Cheyenne ends football season under fire

By Sara Nesci,
Cheyenne HS

A fight between Bishop



Gorman and Cheyenne High Schools' football teams on the night of Nov. 7, 2003 began a dreadful epic for the Cheyenne Desert Shields' players that would carry on for the remainder of the season.

Cheyenne High School's varsity football team, the Desert Shields, was playing against Bishop Gorman's football team on Gorman's field. After the Shields' 32-27 victory, a fight broke out between the players of both teams on the field. It is said that at least 17 players were involved in the fight.

The Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association ruled that Cheyenne was to forfeit the Sunset Regional game coming up on Nov. 14. The game would have been played against Centennial High School. Bishop Gorman, which would not be playing in the playoffs due to the loss of the Nov. 7 game, will forfeit its first Southwest Division game next season. The NIAA made its decision after viewing a tape of the Gorman-Cheyenne game.

Cheyenne football coach Dave Snyder and Principal Dr. Ronan Matthew both said that they thought the students should have been punished by suspension, not by having the whole team forfeit a major game.

In a Nov. 14 Las Vegas Review-Journal newspaper article, Jerry Hughes, executive director of the NIAA, stated that suspending the team was necessary because so many players were involved.

"If we would have had two or three isolated kids doing this, this wouldn't occur," Hughes said in an interview for the Review-Journal. "We felt it was a brawl, an outright brawl, and serious injuries could have occurred."

Seventeen players identified on the videotape faced suspensions of one to three games, and if the players are seniors, the

Violence on the playing field leads to court battle to finish season

suspensions will be served if the athlete participates in a winter or spring sport.

Coach Snyder and the Cheyenne players were disgruntled by the NIAA's ruling. Most of the teammates considered it unfair.

"I thought I was dreaming," Cheyenne senior David Peeples said during an interview with the Review-Journal. "I still don't get it. It's just unfair."

Bishop Gorman's coach David White said that he felt awful for Cheyenne if they weren't able to finish their playoff run.

Matthew said he feels that Cheyenne players were coming to the aid of another teammate when the fight broke out.

Days after the ruling, Peeples and his mother, Deborah Johnson, went to court over the NIAA's ruling, arguing to get Cheyenne back into the playoffs. Johnson was asking for a temporary restraining order against the NIAA's enforcement action.

Attorneys for Peeples and Johnson argued that Peeples wasn't given notice about the forfeiture order and wasn't given a chance to appeal it. He also said that the forfeiture order ruled unfairly because it punished the entire team, not just the teammates involved.

District Judge Jackie Glass issued a 15-day restraining order against the NIAA's enforcement. The semifinal playoff game between Centennial and Cheyenne was then rescheduled.

Peeples' attorney argued that if Peeples had not been allowed to participate in the playoff game, he might have lost out on an opportunity to demonstrate his game skills for college scouts who would likely attend the game.

NIAA attorney Paul Anderson said the NIAA was specifically given the power to enforce the rules of high school athletics under state law. He said the courts have always upheld the

right of agencies such as the NIAA to discipline athletes or teams involved in inappropriate behavior.

In spite of all the arguing and disagreement, the case came to a close with the court ruling that allowed Cheyenne to attend the Sunset Regional football semifinal game on Nov. 17. The final score of the game was Cheyenne 28, Centennial 6.

Cheyenne should have continued on to play Palo Verde High School for the Sunset Regional title, but the NIAA announced it was going back to court to overturn the restraining order. The continuing legal battle meant that Cheyenne's football season was again put in jeopardy.

Luckily for Cheyenne, Glass threatened to hold the NIAA in contempt of court if it delayed

the game. Following the warning, officials with the NIAA and the CCSD dropped their plans to delay the competition.

Cheyenne showed up at Palo Verde with high hopes of winning, but that wasn't enough for the Desert Shields. Cheyenne's football team was defeated by Palo Verde, 31-0.

Coach Snyder said that he was glad his players got to compete in the game.

In similar news, college football teams Florida State University and the University of Florida played a tight game, and at the end of the game, a brawl broke out on the field, with up to 100 men involved. Police with pepper spray were needed to get the players under control.

The NIAA wanted to ban Cheyenne from the playoffs for their 17-man brawl, and Cheyenne had to go to court to finish their season. FSU and Florida State apologized for the outbreak after their game, and no players were suspended.

Controversy, tragedy mar CCSD football season

By Riley Marriage,
Coronado HS

After starting off smoothly, the 2003 Clark County School District football season ended in a very different state. Among all the victories and defeats associated with a normal season, the post-season playoffs brought more travesties than anyone ever expected.

The controversy between Cheyenne High School and the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association, stemming from an on-field fight between Bishop Gorman and Cheyenne football players on Nov. 7, occupied the prep sports headlines for several days. However, no one expected the even deeper blow that would be suffered by the high school football community.

The death of Las Vegas

High School player Edward Gomez shocked the valley. On Nov. 21, Gomez suffered a neck injury in the Sunrise Regional championship game against Desert Pines High School. He was injured midway through the fourth quarter after colliding with a Desert Pines receiver and later collapsed on the sideline. An ambulance rushed him to UMC's emergency trauma center, where he later died. An autopsy ruled the cause of death to be blunt head trauma.

In honor of Gomez, his teammates remembered him by wearing patches on their uniforms, and the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association donated all gate admission money from the Nov. 29 victory against Palo Verde High School to the Gomez family to help with funeral costs.

New Web site lets sports fans' dreams come true

By Eric Ruiz,
Virgin Valley
HS

Anyone who really knows me knows that I am a diehard sports fan.

While I generally prefer football and basketball, I am a fan of almost any team or individual sport.

However, I and many other sports fans like me have had plaguing questions that were completely hypothetical. How would the Old School Packers of Bart Starr and Max McGee do against Brett Favre and Ahman Green's Pack? How would Michael Jordan's University of North Carolina program do against today's powerhouse that Duke brings to the college hardwood?

Now, a Web site has been developed to answer those very questions:

Whatifsports.com.

"Simleagues" is a great method that this site uses. It allows fans to be in control of a fantasy sports franchise and throw together a dream team of all-stars throughout history. How about the combination of Walter Payton and Barry Sanders in the backfield? Can you imagine what would take place if you were to put Dan Marino on the field with Randy Moss and Art Monk as his targets?

With "Simleagues," people are in complete control of their teams. They choose who starts, who blitzes, who sits when they get fatigued — the whole nine yards.

"SimMatchups" is another great program. It allows a person to take two teams throughout history and play them against one another. This one really caught my attention, as I let my imagination run wild: Magic's Lakers against Kobe's Lakers; Pistol Pete's Jazz against the Mailman's Jazz; Montana's 49ers against Garcia's 49ers.

All in all, this site is superior. I have been waiting a long time for a site like this, and I encourage all sports fans to check it out for themselves.



the look



If your T-shirt makes a statement, just say NO

By Sydney Jensen, Las Vegas HS

It's like seeing the one person you absolutely despise every single day. It's like being in a room full of a thousand crying babies, or maybe it's just like hearing an annoyingly bad joke every five minutes. Oh, the horror! What exactly is "it?" The dreaded, horrible, yet normal, everyday cotton T-shirt, with the most annoying phrase possible plastered right on the front.

You can hear yourself now in your head agreeing, can't you? Quite possibly, many of you are slowly raising this newspaper over your chests, hiding the ridiculous phrase on your own T-shirt. You, my friend, are guilty of the S.S.S. — Stupid Shirt Syndrome. Please read on, and for our sake, cure yourself of this horrible disease our local stores are spreading.

You just got your hot little hands on your paycheck, and you're ready to start spending. You're at the mall and you walk into Anchor Blue. This place is the hot spot for stupid shirts. The fact that you stepped foot in this store is a very, very bad sign.

The first shirts you need to stay away from are the "how to" shirts. "How to get a date" — do you really need a shirt to tell you how to do this? We pity you. Next up, "How to dump your girlfriend." This shirt not only reeks of ridiculous, but also,

let's put it bluntly, is quite possibly the worst shirt out there.

Hot Topic is a definite no-go. With shirts like "It's okay, I'm with the band," and "Pretend I'm not here," it's a real wonder why you would pay \$22.00 for such an annoyance. It only gets worse as you walk further into this store and come face to face with the shirt that says, "It was so funny I forgot to laugh." Turn around and run! Get out of that store as quickly as you can! Put back any shirt you decided was worthy of your money, and just get out!

Saving the best for last, we come to the armor printed shirt that has "Ha ha, you can't see me now" printed in black ink. We can see not only you, but also the worst shirt that has ever been made, which leaves us to wonder what exactly you were thinking this morning when you woke up, looked in the mirror and saw yourself quite clearly. The biggest craze, "Princess" shirts, has shrunk down to a very minimum, thankfully. Shirts like "Babe" and "Hottie" are still lingering in the hallways and haunting our streets.

Maybe someday the people of our generation will realize that these shirts are utterly preposterous and should be thrown into a flaming garbage can and never replaced.

Chasing Down Riley takes the prize at Battle of the Bands

Crowds turn out despite cold to hear live music competition

By Kaila Hart, Centennial HS

Decked out in hoodies and scarves, Centennial High School students turned out in droves for the Second Annual Battle of the Bands on Nov. 19. Members of Ninth Island, Batteries Not Included, Fighting Hellfish, Brown Eyed Deception, the Dirty Cosbies, In the Deep End, and the winner of the competition Chasing Down Riley gave the fans what they came for and delivered their performances despite the cold weather.

The turnout for the show was a huge success this year with more than 350 students in attendance. Bringing in two canned food items lowered admission price from \$7 to \$5. The freshman student council collected more than 500 cans and helped Key Club exceed their goal of raising food for the Salvation Army.

"Last year, the Battle of the Bands was great, so I came back again this year to check out the competition. I don't remember it being this cold, though," says Centennial High School graduate Jay Camilari.

Judge Tony Abbatangelo was the emcee for the night and got the crowd ready for the concert. Channel 3's John Fredericks and his dog also made a special appearance that night.

The winning band received five hours of studio recording time at Digital Insights Recording Studios, a \$50 gift certificate to Pat's Desert Music, and a \$100 cash prize as well. An electric guitar, along with an amp, was raffled off that night to interested fans.

Having the difficult job of judging the bands were the Centennial band director Mr. Eichman, City Councilman Chip Maxfield, KLUC disk jockey Rayne, and Pat, the owner of Pat's Desert Music. Lyrics and instrumentals, origi-

nality, appearance, crowd response and overall performance played a major role in judging the bands.

Kicking off the night's entertainment was Ninth Island. It was the first time Jake Jacobson, Ryan Gustafson and Kevin Winne performed together as a band, and for Winne, it was his first time performing in front of a crowd.

"It was cool being able to start off the night and not having to be compared to any of the bands before us. It took off a lot of the pressure," says Winne.

Next on stage was Batteries Not Included. Worried about the cold weather, Cameron Phillips, and Nick and Jovan Johnson soon warmed up when their adrenalin got going while they were playing "Nick of Time."

Chasing Down Riley was third up and took home the glory of being the winners of this year's Battle of the Bands. Opening up their act was Jonathan Ochpa with his version of the "Star-Spangled Banner," on his electric guitar. Lead singer Ryan Kelly wowed the judges and the crowd with his vocal talents, while Kyle Stucki played both the electric and acoustic guitar. With Christian Stutz on bass, Adam Grey on the drums, and Trust Titus with the electric guitar, these guys put on a great show. The balanced sound of vocals and instruments, along with the overall performance, won the judges over.

"All I could think about when we were playing was how cold my fingers were," says Stucki.

"I thought that Chasing Down Riley was awesome!" says Centennial senior Ashley McClure. "They really surprised me because they played so well together."

Fighting Hellfish caught the attention of many and reeled them in with their mind-blowing drumming by Jonny Hydock. With Jeff Shiller playing the bass, Zac Moiser kept the audience hooked with his singing.

"Being able to hear our competition before us let us know

that we had to step it up and give it our all," says Brown Eyed Deception bass player Jacob Kirkegard.

Brown Eyed Deception was no doubt the crowd's favorite. With Kyle Lobec singing, Kirkegard on bass, John McClain playing the guitar, and Cheyne Smith banging on the drums, these guys got the crowd riled up.

On a different note, the Dirty Cosbies changed the tune when it was their turn to perform. At first glance, you might bet these guys played your normal rock music, but as soon as

Ryan Taylor played a few notes on the trumpet, all bets were off. With Paul Rosenberg's vocals, Devin Taylor, Mike Nichols, and Chris Bex's instrumentals, the band had a major impact on the crowd.

Last but not least to perform on the chilly night was In the Deep End. Josh Coughlan and Steve Moats ended the night performing "Song."

Though some came to cheer on their friends and others to check out the competition, it was no doubt that this year's Battle of the Bands was a hit, despite the cold weather.

REVIEWS

'All I Really Need To Know, I Learned in Kindergarten'

By Felicia Taylor, Centennial HS

Green Valley High School's theater department put on a fabulous performance of "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten" on Nov. 14, 2003. Displaying an honest mix of actors, technicians and settings, the show made me laugh, cry and think about life. I feel it was a great show for all who saw it.

"All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten" is an astonishing show. It was originally an essay titled "That Thing Called Kindergarten." It has traveled to many places and has been interpreted in many ways. The concept was what I liked most about the show. It had me asking, "Did I really learn all I need to know in kindergarten?"

The truth and beauty of the messages were really inspiring. Now, when I'm upset, I will think "problem or inconvenience," or when someone is overwhelmed, I will say "Merry Christmas." Each skit had a

deep inner meaning. Out of the 22 skits, five stood out the most. One of the five was titled "Problem or Inconvenience."

It starred Christy Coffey, Angelina Dixson and Chelsie Kesjeral. The story revolves around a young woman, her conscience and her co-worker. The acting was superb. They took on the emotional dialogue terrifically. The next skit titled "Beethoven" had me looking at Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony" in a new light. It was wonderful.

Though this show had an ensemble cast, a couple of people stood out immeasurably. Coffey had amazing energy throughout the show. She made it fun and exciting for everyone to watch. Jordan Rakita has breathtaking talent and did an amazing job. People couldn't take their eyes off this kid if they wanted to. His acting was phenomenal, and his singing was the icing on the cake. He will make it big in this business one day!

The blocking in this produc-

Continued on page 36

Kindergarten

Continued from page 35

tion was excellent, considering the ensemble cast of 25 could be seen clearly and were perfectly placed. The settings and costumes for this show were brilliant. The set was simple yet intricate. The way it was all put together was fantastic. The costumes were very simple, but they worked with each scene. I liked them very much.

However, I had a hard time seeing some of the girls' faces. It would have worked better if they put their hair up in some way so the audience could see all of their facial expressions. When it comes to the sound, they had a few problems. In some parts, the sound drowned out the actors. I thought the lighting was right on cue. The technicians were very well put together.

All in all I enjoyed the show. It was a fun experience, and I can't wait to go to another production put on by Green Valley. I walked out of this show with a big smile, which is saying a lot. In most high school shows people don't get that feeling, so congratulations to GVHS. Way to go!

Audiences love

Liberty's 'As You Like It'

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts..."

— William Shakespeare, *"As You Like It"*

By Katy Edwards,
Foothill HS

These famous lines were brought to life on stage Nov. 20-22 by the Liberty High School Patriot Players as they performed "As You Like It" by William Shakespeare.

With a green show prior to

the play that included the producing director Sharon Fenwald Chadwick, the play was grand. This production was done very much in tune with how it would have been done when Shakespeare wrote it. It had a very classical set and elaborate costumes.

The set in this production was a traditional sloped stage with very few additional pieces like a table and chairs and stumps for the forest scenes. The actors used the sloped stage like second nature. In each new scene, the audience could tell that the actors knew what they were doing and knew where they were even though there was no set to help aid in the visualization of this play. The actors also used the theater itself to their advantage as many of their entrances came from the sides and the audience itself.

As there was not a lot of set equipment, it was up to the audience to imagine the scenery, but the technical crew at Liberty High did a phenomenal job with the lighting of this production. At one time during the show, the actors were in the forest and on the backdrop was an orange and yellow shadow made by the lights to give the impression of a burning sun. The audience was awed by the talented ways the lights were used on stage. The use of different colors for different locations and scenes was a brilliant masterpiece and brought the whole show onto a professional level.

Most of the actors onstage were equally talented but a few stood out above the rest. Anthony Nannini, who played the fool Touchstone, was captivating with his childish gestures and emotions and his understanding and delivery of Shakespeare's beautiful language. He was a lively and effervescent character who brought all eyes on him whenever he was on stage. Also, Sterling Buckley, who portrayed the part of a lord named Jaques, was stunning. He executed the language superbly. With not one word lost or misunderstood, his character brought the whole play to a level of insight for the audience.

Richard Panganiban, who played both Duke Fredrick and Duke Senior, did a great job of helping the audience distinguish between characters by using completely contrasting emo-

tions. Everyone could tell it was two different characters being played by the same performer. So as just a few actors stood out, they all did a wonderful job in this classic production.

With only a few odd choices in this play including the music that was played during scene changes and having faint music in the background during some scenes, which might have caused a distraction for some, this play was delightful. The many hours put into this production by the cast and crew was well worth it and showed throughout this performance.

And if, in the famous words of Shakespeare, we are all merely players on stage, the students at Liberty High must have seen the play of life a couple of times to be this spectacular.

Lighting effects set stage for Centennial's 'Dark' comedy

By Alex Bayless,
Eldorado HS

A tainted glass has left an infamous author dead. The suspicions floating around are of murder. On top of that, there may be an escaped madman loose somewhere in the house. Now, two distant relatives as well as those who personally knew the late author Sebastian Sly must endure the night at the deceased author's humble abode, partially unaware of the potential dangers that may lurk from every corner.

"Don't Be Afraid of the Dark" weaves a dark and hysterical story that keeps guesses coming until the very end. Centennial High School produced this wicked comedy by Tim Kelley. Directed by Tania Webb, this comedy was a stamper of great technical work, an awesome set, and terrific acting ability by the actors.

No one could ever say that setting the scene for a mystery production is easy, yet Centennial's technicians did a remarkable job at putting the audience in the shoes of the characters on stage with their

use of various lighting techniques and distinctive sound effects. The talented workers in charge of lighting were able to manipulate light in ways that gave the actors fuel to show sheer terror that is faced when confronted with creaking walls and flickering lights. From the lighting techniques that displayed the headlights of a car at the beginning of the play, to the final blackout at the end, the lighting was an essential element in the production of this play.

Accompanying the distinguished lighting, the set was a display of total radiance. Beautifully constructed and tastefully decorated, the set was without a doubt essential for setting the mood of the play. It provided total mobility for its actors as well as gave a radiating eeriness that influenced the audience as much as it influenced the characters in the show. This set even featured a revolving bookcase. Many watched in awe as characters filed into and out of the revolving set piece, including an escaped lunatic known as "The Creeper." The set as a whole added to the fear factor of the production and made the mystery more enthralling.

If there is a recipe for a great comedy, one ingredient that is undoubtedly needed is personality, and many of the Centennial actors and actresses have enough personality to become renowned comedians. Among the characters called to Sebastian Sly's home is the clever, but snide Sylvia Frye (Megan Ryan). Ryan's commitment to playing a rude and egotistical prude was remarkable to the end of the show. The audience was also treated to the hilarious styling of the has-been actress, Velma Cringe (Felicia Taylor), who made each scene she appeared in hysterical with her ability to maintain her comedic persona. The comedic timing of many of the actors was tremendous and the witty momentum of the show was always constant.

"Don't Be Afraid of the Dark" is a madcap comedy that will keep you guessing until the very end. It is good, clean, family fun that can be enjoyed by all various age groups. If you wanted to know how it ended, and you didn't see it ... the ending will just have to remain a mystery!

Get ready for the Nod & Shake Experience

By Michael Gobaud, LV Academy



What is Nod & Shake? Technically, it's the combined artistic and musical talents of Las Vegas Academy art majors Wadih "Odie" Sader (Nod) and Michael Gobaud (Shake). Others consider them to be an absurdity. After sitting down for a glass of milk and cookies with these two rabble-rousers, all I can say is that they are not necessarily artists, and not exactly musicians. They have managed to successfully combine several experimental and creative procedures to create an experience like no other. The following interview took place with Nod, Shake and me in December 2003.

Michael Gobaud: *So boys, tell me a little about yourselves.*

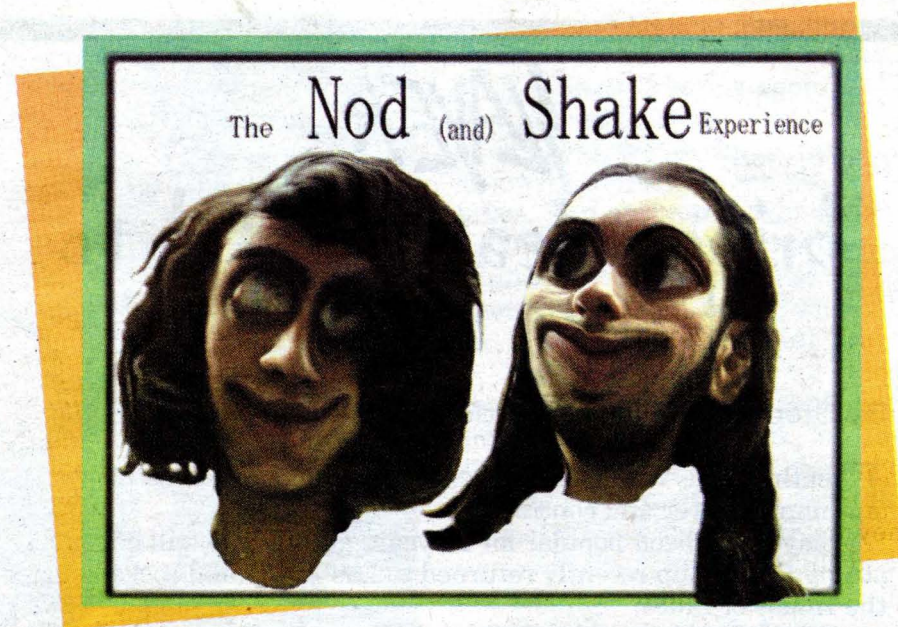
Nod: Well, my name isn't really Odie or Nod. The name that was given to me at birth is Wadih Maroun Sader. I just go by other names because that one has too many syllables in it.

Shake: (takes a sip of milk) I really like cookies.

MG: *Okay ... Well, how did Nod & Shake begin?*

Shake: It all started one magical day when I was hiking in the wilderness, and I sat down to take a nap. When I awoke, Nod was standing before my eyes. He said to me, "Hey buddy, you wanna throw rocks in that stream?" I replied, "Okay." And the rest is history.

Nod: (chuckles) That never happened. We met in our Visual Design class freshman year. I remember I was having trouble getting a stain out of my pants.



MG: *What kind of stain was it?*

Nod: Oh, it was just a little bit of blue oil paint.

MG: *Did you two quickly become friends?*

Shake: Well, after spending nearly an hour in the bathroom rubbing someone's pants with Orange Clean, you sort of form a bond.

MG: *When did you realize that you had chemistry with each other?*

Nod: It all started one night at

Mikey's house. As I leaned against the wall, strumming chords on my trusty guitar, we began discussing past flames. We spoke of one person in particular that Mikey had an acquaintance with, whom I did not get "those" vibes from.

Shake: I began to sing simple lyrics to Nod's guitar, "I don't get no vibes, don't get no vibes, don't get no vibes from you..." And the rest is history.

MG: *Where have you performed?*

Continued on page 38

NEVADA POWER COMPANY

Students of the Month



ShaRyan Brown, Senior Centennial HS

"ShaRyan is a bright student who possesses a congenial, cooperative attitude and has the determination to succeed," says Centennial High School Principal Gary Velasquez.

ShaRyan Brown is currently the student body president of Centennial High School. She is also an anchor for the "Good Morning Centennial" news show, as well as a photo editor and writer. As a freshman, she played on the women's and men's lacrosse teams, and at the time was the only girl playing on the men's team. During that year, she also played tuba for the band. Brown also found time to be a Sunday school teacher at Victory Missionary Baptist Church.

Brown maintains a 3.6-weighted GPA. She plans on attending Arizona State University for college and pursuing a career in mass media.

Ben Keller, Senior Coronado HS



"Ben is an incredible athlete, student and leader, who is respected by students and teachers alike," says Coronado High School Principal Monte Bay.

Ben Keller has been varsity football captain, and has been on the basketball and volleyball teams for three years. He has received the All Sunrise Selection Award, the Henderson MVP for football, and he is a finalist for the Wendy's High School Heisman Award. Keller is also the secretary and treasurer of the Pre-Veterinarian Club at Coronado, and even finds time to be involved in a program called "Christmas in April" in which the participants restore houses in older neighborhoods.

Keller is in the top six percent of his class and maintains a 4.2-weighted GPA. He is endeavoring to earn a football scholarship to the University of San Diego, Utah State University, or the University of California, Los Angeles, and major in pre-med dermatology.

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SLAYER

brings death metal to House of Blues

By Stephanie Michael, Eldorado HS

Death Metal. With these words, two other words come to mind: Slayer and controversy.

Slayer has been popular for 20 years and they're still going strong. The group recently returned to Las Vegas and rocked out at the House of Blues.

"We definitely made our own road," says Kerry King, guitarist for Slayer on the band's official Web site, www.slayer.net. "And there's not too many people driving down our road. Nobody's doing it."

That's definitely an accurate description of the band's unique style. Slayer came to life in the Los Angeles suburb of Huntington Beach. They soon won a reputation as "the Huntington Hooligans."

King started Slayer after a stint in a band with future Slayer bassist Tom Araya. King met Jeff Hanneman, another guitarist, who was into the punk movement that was going on at the time. Later the two teamed up with a very skilled drummer, Dave Lombardo.

Slayer became a reality when singer and bassist Tom Araya joined the band. At the time, Araya was working in a nearby hospital as a respiratory therapist.

Slayer first performed in 1982, playing hits by other bands. They were a "cover band" that played Judas Priest and Iron Maiden songs. At first Slayer played at small clubs; later, they played at larger weekend shows. In 1983, Slayer recorded its first studio album, "Show No Mercy." The album included lots of screams, thundering drumming and lengthy solos. Slayer received its first major exposure after the record came out. In no time the band was showing up on metal magazine covers, and the group became the talk of the underground metal scene.

Slayer's first big tour was very successful, and the band slowly began gaining legions of fans around North America. Following the tour, Slayer recorded three songs for an EP called "Haunting the Chapel" that included "Chemical Warfare," "Captor of Sin" and "Haunting the Chapel."

Skin Lab opened the House of Blues show. Next came Arch Enemy and then Hatebreed.

"[Hatebreed's] entire set sounded like one drawn out song," says concertgoer Rob Cybul.

"But they were good," adds Mike Cybul.

Slayer, adorned with upside down crosses and iron eagles, finally came out on stage at 9:15. They began their set with "Darkness of Christ" followed by "Disciple." They then proceeded to play for nearly two hours. The set included music from 10 of the band's 12 albums, including "Haunting the Chapel" and "Hell Awaits." "Reign in Blood" was the final song.

The crowd loved the show. "Slayer is still one of the best bands I've ever seen live, and they get better every time I see them," says Mike Cybul.



A Slayer fan's ultimate experience, Soundtrack To The Apocalypse, a four-CD box set, includes tracks spanning every Slayer album since 1986, soundtrack cuts, Japan-only tracks, more than a dozen rarities, and a DVD of live performances spanning 20 years, all digitally remastered.

Yellowcard's 'Ocean Avenue' a perfect reflection of life

By Jessica Roadhouse, Indian Springs HS

Usually, I'm not the kind of person who just throws out compliments, but when I got the new Yellowcard CD, that's exactly what I found myself doing.

"Ocean Avenue" is the perfect blend of happiness, depression and teen angst. It starts off with "Way Away," a song that, from what I gather, is about breaking away from the people and things that hold you back.

The CD has all the ingredients to be a hit, even a song about dear old dad. But unlike most dad songs out there now, "Life Of A Salesman" comes straight from the heart, filled with love.

This album is full of sheer emotion and catchy beats. It feels like Ryan Key, the lead vocalist, is speaking right to you. This CD is a must for anyone in need of an escape, and I highly recommend it. Check out Yellowcard at their official Web site at www.yellowcardrock.com.



Nod & Shake

Continued from page 37

Nod: We try to play wherever we can — restrooms, hallways, street corners, etc. But "the man" keeps putting us down. You know how it is ...

Shake: Yeah, some people just aren't ready for us. However, we have managed to organize a public "art" show called "The Nod & Shake Experience." It will be held in LVA's Bryan Lewis Gallery on Ninth and Clark Streets on Feb. 6 at 5 p.m. This will be the city's first official look at the phenomenon that is Nod & Shake.

MG: *What can be expected at this show?*

Shake: Bring your dancing shoes because resident bands Absent Minded and Local 15 will be opening for us.

Nod: There will be plenty of exotic food prepared by Mikey and me. In addition to our artwork and music, we will be featuring original short films and a dramatic performance. There is something for everyone.

MG: *What does your music sound like?*

Nod: Well, let's say the band Radiohead was to get into a horrendous accident on a highway and only the bus driver and maybe the band's drummer were to survive. And, say the drummer was completely paralyzed from the neck down. In

addition, the bus driver has absolutely no musical talent whatsoever; in fact he's deaf and blind and creates music purely by sense of smell. That's kinda what we sound like on a good day.

Shake: He's not kidding.

MG: *And what about your artwork?*

Shake: Well, let's say you take a monkey, you tie his hands behind his back, put a paintbrush in his mouth — never mind.

MG: *But what are you trying to express through your art?*

Nod & Shake: Pure, unadulterated love.

MG: *I see. Where do you picture yourselves in a year?*

Nod: Hopefully, our show "The Nod & Shake Experience" will be successful, and we will move to larger venues.

Shake: Yeah, like the bathrooms in Circus Circus. I hear they have motion-activated sinks.

Nod: Yeah, that or the Huntridge.

Shake: Or that ...

M.G.: *Well, thanks for chatting with me. I hope to see you at your premiere show.*

Shake: I have a feeling you will.

Taking down the tobacco industry

By Mytae Carrasco,
Bishop Gorman HS



Turntables were spinning, the DJs were hyped, the crowd was dancing, and it all happened at the Kick Ash Party, Nov. 24, 2003. More than 2,500 of the valley's teens showed up at UNLV's Cox Pavilion for the event, joining guests Yes Duffy from "Road Rules" along with DJ Icon from the "Wade Robson Project" along with other well known DJs.

"We wanted to 'XPOZ' kids who would never go to an educational type of setting on a Saturday night," says Maria Azzarelli, director of the XPOZ Coalition, a group that encourages teens to help other teens resist the influence of the tobacco industry. XPOZ sponsors the Kick Ash event every year in Las Vegas.

"We wanted to expose all those kids to the XPOZ message, even if that meant confiscating their cigarettes for the first time in their lives," says Azzarelli. "Some of them were a little shocked, and it made them think a little bit. There were kids running around saying you're not allowed to smoke here. This is an anti-tobacco event."

There was also a booth set up at the party for teens who wanted to learn more about the XPOZ Coalition.

"Last year, there were 1,200 kids at the Kick Ash Party, but we more than doubled that this year," Azzarelli says.

XPOZ throws the Kick Ash Party every year to gather teens around Las Vegas to join the coalition if they feel it's something they want to be involved in. XPOZ is a Las Vegas-based coalition against the influence of the tobacco industry on teens. It is made up of local teens from around the valley who participate in XPOZ events and counter-market to their friends and community, hoping to reverse the dangerous messages teens receive from tobacco industry marketing schemes.

In 1999 before XPOZ began, the youth smoking rate in Nevada was 33 percent. Now, it is at 19 percent.

"That is a huge drop," says Azzarelli. "XPOZ was started in the year 2000 with 30 official members, and now there are over 5,000. Not everyone is involved at the same level, but they all made the conscious choice to sign up and entered their information in our system."

People join XPOZ for many reasons. Yes Duffy from "Road Rules" is a real friend of XPOZ. He joined the coalition because his best friend died in a fire caused by smoking in a dorm room during her first year at college. DJ Icon from the "Wade Robson Project" joined XPOZ because her dad died at the age of 40 from lung cancer, so this cause is very dear to her heart.

"They come to all of our events so kids can meet them and relate to them," Azzarelli

says, describing the commitment XPOZ has received from celebrities.

This year, XPOZ also won the Youth Advocates of the Year Award from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, giving the local coalition national recognition.

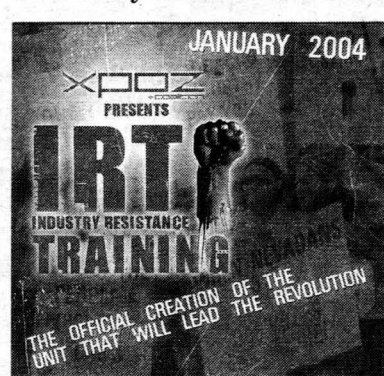
"Kids can make a difference, and we are really lucky because XPOZ is comprised of a lot of youth," says Azzarelli.

She adds, "Politicians aren't used to seeing young people getting attention. For example, in our protest that we did, it was kind of shocking to some people because in Nevada, you don't see kids tackling a political issue."

According to Azzarelli, regulating the tobacco industry is a hot political issue. "No one has been called on the carpet for the decisions they have been making and that's what we want to do," she says.

XPOZ plans to enlist the help of local youth members to launch a campaign called "Industry Resistance Training" to bring attention to legislators who vote for and against tobacco industry regulation.

"This Industry Resistance Training will name names, saying this is how this person voted, and that they voted not to protect us against secondhand smoke," Azzarelli says. "We really want to tackle that local issue so that everyone is on the same page."



Sign up now to go for the IRT Training. See how, below.

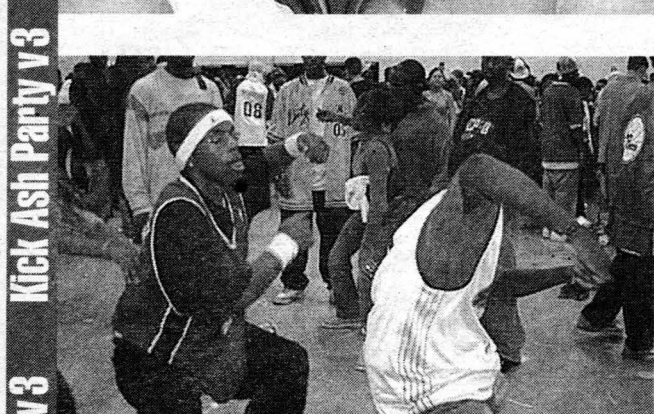
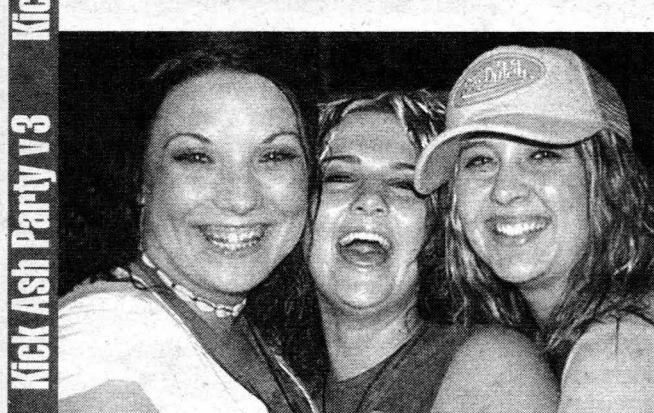
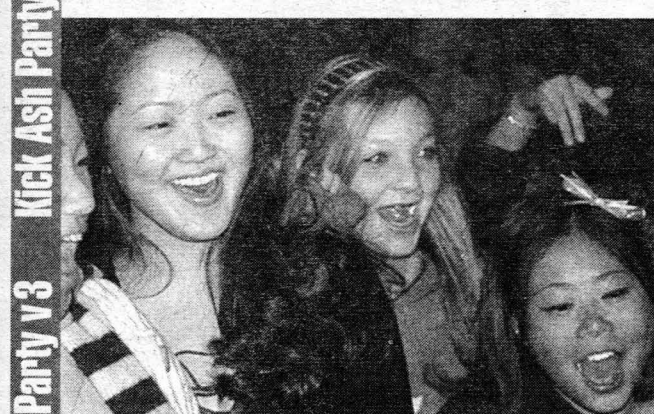
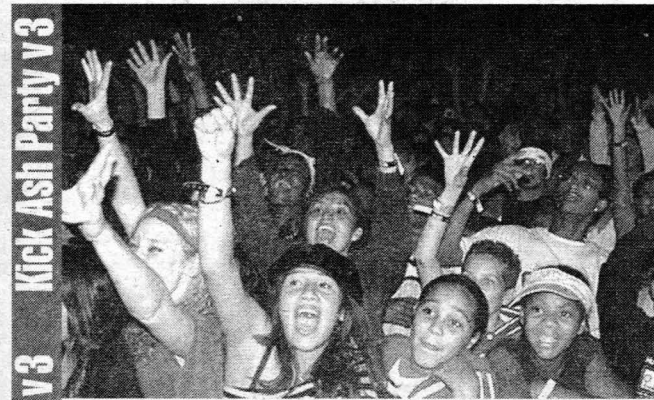
on Jan. 16, 2004 at UNLV in the International Gaming Building. The daylong event will again feature special guest Yes Duffy, along with other trainers.

"It's going to be very much focused on advocacy and how we can make a difference on our local tobacco control issues here," says Azzarelli. "It's really easy to say that this big industry is doing all this bad stuff, but we can't touch them because they are too big for us. Actually, there are things at the local level that we can affect and that is what we want to talk about at the Industry Training."

If you would like to go to the Industry Resistance Training, the only way to sign up is by calling Maria Azzarelli at 385-1591 or by logging onto www.xpozcoalition.org and filling out an application.

Azzarelli says, "We want people who are truly dedicated, who want to make a difference in their community, and who want to be at the Industry Resistance Training."

Every year, XPOZ conducts a training event for local youth members. This year, the Industry Resistance Training event, also known as the IRU, will host 150 youth participants



For more photos of the students who attended the event, go to www.xpozcoalition.org. XPOZ sponsors the Kick Ash event every year in Las Vegas. XPOZ Coalition encourages teens to help other teens resist the influence of the tobacco industry.

Kick Ash Party v3
Kick Ash Party v3
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Kick Ash Party v3

announcements



Stationed in Germany, 1st Lt. Krista Bonino flies the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter for the U.S. Army.

Flying high

"Women and Flight," a Smithsonian traveling exhibition, will open at the Clark County Museum on Boulder Highway in Henderson and will be on view through Feb. 1. The museum will also show a companion case of aviation related artifacts from the Cannon Aviation Heritage Museum at McCarran International Airport during the exhibit. Museum hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily, and admission is \$1.50 for adults and \$1.00 for children and seniors. For more information, visit the Smithsonian's Web site at www.sites.si.edu.

What's your A.Q.?

Art Quotient is now accepting submissions for the 2004 issue of the art annual for high school artists. All submissions are guaranteed to be published and prizes will be awarded for best entries. Check out their Web site for updates. The entry fee is \$30 and entries must be submitted by Jan. 30. Please download submission forms at www.artquotient.com.

Now for something completely different

Enjoy "The Nod and Shake Experience" presented by Las Vegas Academy art majors Wadih "Odie" Sader (Nod) and Michael Gobaud (Shake). Come enjoy art, music, original film, food, prizes and more, with special guests Absent Minded and Local 15. The event takes place on Feb. 6 at 5 p.m. at the Las Vegas Academy's Brian Lewis Gallery, 9th Street and Clark Ave. All ages. Free admission. For more information, call the Las Vegas Academy at 799-7800 or email otacon45@hotmail.com.

Do something

The youth leadership group Do Something is seeking applicants for its annual Brick Awards, which honors under-18s for their work in the areas of community building, health and the environment. Each 2004 Do Something Brick Award winner will receive a \$5,000 higher education grant, a \$5,000 award to continue their community work and other support. Six winners will be selected. The deadline for application is April 8, 2004. For an application or more information, see the Do Something Web site at www.dosomething.org.



Is it summer yet?

Clark County Parks and Community Services is currently recruiting staff to work as camp counselors at three six-day summer youth resident camps in July on Mount Charleston. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age by the time the camp starts. Experience working with children is preferred. Call 455-7560 to request an application or for more information.

calendar

JANUARY

Jan. 13

Get art smart at the library. Explore art in different media including chalk, paint, markers and pencils. Spring Valley Library, 4280 S. Jones Blvd. Also showing on Jan. 20 and 27. Free. 3 p.m. 507-3823.

High school homework skills class: learn how to do research in the library and on the Web. Green Valley Library, 2797 N. Green Valley Pkwy. Free, pre-registration is required. 7 p.m. 507-3791.

Jan. 14

Ideas Beyond the Page. Think like a

CLASS! publishes only calendar items of possible interest to teenagers.

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Fax: (702) 895-1505

writer and explore the deeper meanings of life by reading short passages and poems of great writers around the globe. Whitney Library, 5175 E. Tropicana Ave. Also showing on Jan. 21 and 28. Free. 6 p.m. 507-4010.

Anime Afternoons. Bring and share your Japanese animation-related artwork. Watch episodes of Magic Knight Rayearth and other animated shows. West Las Vegas Library, 951 W. Lake Mead Blvd. Free. 4 p.m. 507-3983.

Jan. 15

The Toasters will kick off their Ska Brawl Tour '04 in Las Vegas. Jillian's at Neonopolis, 450 Fremont Street. Tickets \$10. 7 p.m. 477-0470.

Young Adult Book Club Discussion on "Can You Sue Your Parents For Malpractice?" by Paula Danzinger. Rainbow Library, 3150 N. Buffalo Dr. Free. 3 p.m. 507-3712.

Jan. 16

Downtown Cultural Series: McAvoy Layne as Mark Twain. Lloyd G. George U.S. Courthouse, 333 S. Las Vegas Blvd. 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. Free admission. 229-1087.

Poet's Corner. Hosted by Keith Brantley and Pendelita Toney, the series features established poets and open mic participants. West Las Vegas Arts Center, 947 W. Lake Mead Blvd. Free. 7 p.m. 229-4800.

Continued on page 42

HOROSCOPE

January Forecast



Aries (March 21-April 19): The New Year certainly can bring in a new set of ideas, and your mind is buzzing with an innovative project. Take the time to plan a strategy to get the wheels rolling on your plan.



Libra (September 23-October 23): An odd feeling may come over you, perhaps caused by the realities of certain negative situations that you or your friends are involved in. Make the decision that comes the most natural to you.



Taurus (April 20-May 20): The holiday season was very rewarding for you, but the beginning of this year will have you focused on a new friend in particular. It could become something more than friendship.



Scorpio (October 24-November 21): The stress-free zone you were in last month is officially over now. Take in lots of rest during the first few weeks of the year because schoolwork may become long and tedious afterward.



Gemini (May 21-June 21): Everything in your life should be flowing a lot nicer now. You have a fresh start in all outlets in your life, including family, friends and your personal life.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21): Second-guessing yourself is not a good way to start out the year. Maintain confidence in your abilities, and let go of the fear to learn more about yourself and promising friends.



Cancer (June 22-July 22): The unexpected clash of two friends within your clique has you stuck in the middle of a heated argument. The best advice for this scenario is to let their dispute play itself out without getting involved.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19): Now that everything is back in order in your personal life, you may be able to expect a promotion within your job. A smooth ride is to come for you.



Leo (July 23-August 22): A difficult decision regarding your finances may present itself. Save up because money may become pretty tight soon.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18): When it seemed like all was going perfectly, a flaw in your plan comes around. Hurry and revise your current methods, otherwise, things may take longer than expected.



Virgo (August 23-September 22): Your pickiness on a new reward given to you is surprising and is ruining a potentially great opportunity. Think of other possibilities besides instant gratification.



Pisces (February 19-March 20): An easy-going attitude will flow through you this month, contributing to your more charitable side. Many people will benefit from this side of you.

Scholarships

National Association of Hispanic Journalists'

Ruben Salazar Scholarship

Contact: www.nahj.org/student.html

Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: Jan. 30

Requirements: Applicants must be seniors in high school and major in print or broadcast journalism. Application also requires samples of the applicant's work, two letters of recommendation and a 500-word autobiography in the third person in the form of a news story.

The Chapman Foundation College Scholarships for Cross Country Runners

Contact: www.LasVegasRunningTeam.com/Chapman and at
www.NVTrackStats.Com

Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: Jan. 31

Requirements: Applicants may be high school seniors who competed in cross country in Clark County and are planning to attend a two- or four-year college. Applicant must demonstrate excellence in cross-country competition during all four years of high school and show high academic achievement.

American Chemical Society Scholarship

Contact: www.acs.org/minorityaffairs/scholars.html

Amount: \$3,000

Deadline: Feb. 15

Requirements: An African American, Hispanic/Latino or American Indian high school senior who is planning to pursue an undergraduate college degree in the chemical sciences may apply for this award. Applicants must have a 3.0 GPA, and supply transcripts, documentation of financial need, two letters of recommendation and SAT/ACT test scores.

Commitment to Agriculture Scholarship Program

Contact: www.Monsanto.com or www.NAFB.com

Amount: \$1,500

Deadline: Feb. 15

Requirements: Seniors interested in agricultural study are encouraged to apply. Applicants must describe work experience and leadership activities with the application. They must also provide statements about why they should receive this scholarship, essays, GPA, SAT/ACT scores and references.

Scholarships for Military Children Program

Contact: www.militaryscholar.org

Amount: To be determined

Deadline: Feb. 18

Requirements: Unmarried children (under the age of 23) of active duty, Reserve/Guard and retired military personnel may apply. Provide transcript, essay and letter of recommendation.

U.S. Bank Internet Scholarship

Contact: www.usbank.com

Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: Feb. 29

Requirements: High school seniors planning to enroll full time in an accredited, eligible two- or four-year college or university by Sept. 2004 may apply for this award. The college or university must participate in the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP).

The Davidson Fellows Award

Contact: www.davidson-institute.org

Amount: \$10,000

Deadline: March 15

Requirements: This award recognizes high school students' achievements in the areas of science, technology, mathematics and the humanities through pieces of work submitted for judging.

Chevrolet Michelle Kwan R.E.W.A.R.D.S. Scholarship

Contact: www.chevy.com/rewards

Amount: \$5,000

Deadline: March 31

Requirements: Female seniors with a 3.2 un-weighted GPA who can demonstrate both academic and athletic excellence, as well as leadership and community involvement/volunteerism are eligible to apply. They must also be planning to enroll in an accredited two- or four-year college or university as a full-time student for the fall term of 2004.

Project 21 Nevada Scholarship

Contact: www.nevadacouncil.org

Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: March 31

Requirements: The applicant must be a high school senior and create an original work that educates peers and discourages participation in gambling activities by persons under the age of 21. Entries may be submitted in one of the following categories: published articles, posters, audio or video public service announcements (limit one entry per student).

National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)

Free Enterprise Scholars Award

Contact: www.nfib.com/education

Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: March 31

Requirements: Applicants for this award must be high school seniors who can demonstrate entrepreneurial spirit and initiative, such as starting his or her own business, participation in organizations such as DECA, Junior Achievement and the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship. The applicant must be planning to attend an accredited, non-profit two-or four-year university, college or vocational/technical institute.

calendar

Continued from page 40

Jan. 18

Chief Fafore Kimya Akinlana, facilitator, leads a monthly two-hour workshop on African history, science, philosophy and health. West Las Vegas Arts Center, 947 W. Lake Mead Blvd. Free. 3 p.m. 229-4800.

Jan. 23

Dirty Cosbies in concert with Over the Line, In Like 20 and Frolicaholic. Doggystyle, 4440 S. Maryland Pkwy. Tickets \$3. 9 p.m. All ages. 732-2011.

Jan. 26

Minus One in concert with The Story So Far and Madhouse. Doggystyle, 4440 S. Maryland Pkwy. Tickets \$3. 9 p.m. All ages. 732-2011.

Jan. 29

Learn to make your photos into great scrapbook pages. Materials provided, just bring a few photos. Green Valley Library, 2797 N. Green Valley Pkwy. Free. 7 p.m. 507-3791.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 1

Come out and listen to the classical performance of the Las Vegas Wind Quintet. Reed Whipple Cultural Center Studio Theatre, 821 N. Las Vegas Blvd. 3 p.m. Free admission, tickets re-

quired and available for pick up or by mail. 229-6211.

Feb. 6

Sacagawea: The Bird Woman's Return. Original songs and traditional Plains Indian music help tell the story of the young Native American woman. Reed Whipple Cultural Center, 821 N. Las Vegas Blvd. Feb. 6, 7, 12-14 at 7 p.m. Feb. 8, 14, 15 at 2 p.m. Tickets \$7 adults, \$5 teens and seniors, \$3 children 12 and under. 229-6211.

Feb. 7

Community Roots featuring the Snowden Family sharing stories of their years in Las Vegas, dating from the era of discrimination against African Americans. West Las Vegas Arts Center, 947 W. Lake Mead Blvd. 3 p.m. Free admission. 229-4800.

James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket. Come and watch the documentary that examines the life of one of the 20th century's major authors and civil rights activists. West Las Vegas Arts Center, 947 W. Lake Mead Blvd. 3 p.m. Must be 17 or older. Free admission. 229-4800.

Feb. 14

Learn the history of tattooing and use body markers to create your own temporary tattoos. Green Valley Library, 2797 N. Green Valley Pkwy. Free. 4 p.m. 507-3791.



From head to toe, Covering Kids & Families has teens covered

By Rachel Hommel, Green Valley HS

To many teens, insurance is that annoying thing you have to pay every month for your car. But how many kids have thought about the costs of dental care, checkups, and even costly hospital visits? Many say leave it to the adults, but what if your parents can't save you on this one?

Too many parents in this world have to make the unfortunate choice between necessities and health care. When everything else is paid for, it leaves little to no money for prescriptions or even checkups. Children in these situations who don't have health coverage are more likely to miss school due to preventable problems such as asthma, ear infections and vision problems.

For many families, the Covering Kids & Families program comes to the rescue. This \$55-million grant project, sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has one goal in mind — "to increase the number of eligible children and adults who benefit from federal and state health care coverage programs." In the past three years, the number of uninsured children has decreased by 1.8 million, and the credit all goes back to Covering Kids.

Covering Kids & Families ensures that the low-income families in America get insured correctly and properly. According to the program, a person's standard of living should have nothing to do with the quality of health care he or she receives. Many times, insurance may be too costly for some people to pay for, or their jobs simply do not provide them with the health care benefits they need.

Depending on one's job, a company usually insures its employees under the company's insurance plan. Many times, hospital and dental visits are paid for in co-payments under the company insurance. Therefore, insurance will usually pay around 80 percent of the total bill for any health care needs. For example, say a

checkup at the doctor's office is \$100. The insurance company would pay \$80 and the worker would pay a mere \$20.

However, many smaller companies, such as privately owned businesses, may not offer the same benefits as these bigger corporations and franchises. In addition, most employees receive these benefits after a certain number of hours worked full time. Part-time employees may never receive these benefits. Covering Kids & Families fills in where an employee's company insurance may be lacking.

Covering Kids & Families is busy building local and statewide coalitions to get the message out to Nevadans that free and low-cost health insurance is available to families in need. Located at the Clark Country Health District, the organization puts out newsletters and brochures all over the Vegas valley to inform the community. They have also worked closely with the Clark County School District to distribute information directly to parents at Back-to-School fairs in the malls.

Even at school, Covering Kids makes sure it gets noticed. This summer, more than 250,000 youth and teen resource wallet cards were published. The cards give teens access to services such as hotline numbers; law enforcement; medical, dental and emergency assistance; and even substance abuse treatment programs. These cards are available from any middle or high school counselor as well as libraries, Boys & Girls Clubs, SAFE houses and even police stations.

Nevada Check Up, a division of Nevada Covering Kids, is the main organization families in need can turn to for help. Since the program began, it has enrolled and insured close to 25,000 children. This insurance program was specifically designed for kids up to 18 who are not covered by private insurance or Medicaid. The only fee the family must pay is a low, annual premium depending upon the family's income.

With all this promotion and press, there is no reason why families in the Las Vegas community should continue without health insurance. Covering Kids & Families is now in all 50 states and, with more than 8.5 million uninsured children in the United States, it's definitely a worthwhile cause.

GET INSURED

To see if you qualify for medical coverage, you can log onto www.nevadacheckup.state.nv.us or call 1-800-360-6044. Applications are available in both English and Spanish at various locations including family resource centers, schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, welfare offices and other locations or by calling the main information line.

GET INVOLVED

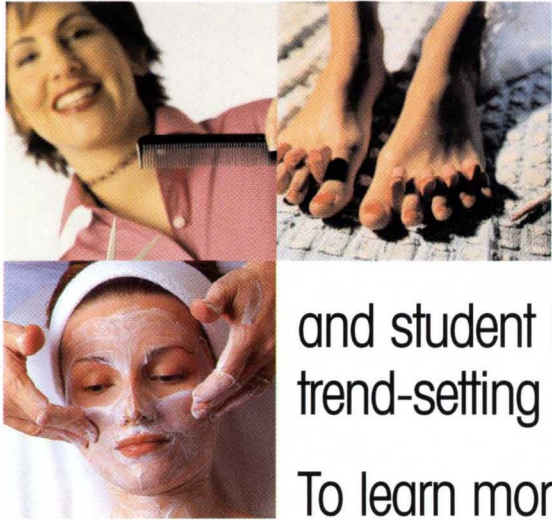
If you would like to volunteer to help this program, contact the Covering Kids & Families Coalition of Southern Nevada at 759-0704, or log onto their Web site at www.community-link.koz.com/lvrj/coveringkids and drop them an e-mail. To learn more about the organization, log on to the main Web site at www.coveringkidsandfamilies.org.

A-Z HEALTH COVERAGE

More than just shots and pills, Covering Kids offers insurance coverage for the following medical services:

- Ambulance
- Chiropractic
- Dental
- Hearing aids
- Home health
- Immunizations
- Inpatient hospital
- Laboratory services
- Mental health
- Outpatient hospital
- Physician services
- Prescription drugs
- Vision
- Well baby/well child
- X-ray

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