

The Round Table



VOLUME XLV, NUMBER 3

STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL, 55 STRAWBERRY HILL AVENUE, STAMFORD, CT 06902

DECEMBER, 2002

The Holidays Are Here!



Special Holiday Issue

-Holiday Crossword Puzzles!
 -Holiday Messages to SHS Members!
 -Fun Holiday Articles!



Low on Dough? Try Making Your Holiday Gifts This Season

Randy Miller
 Features Editor

The holiday season is a time for giving, but not necessarily store bought gifts. Telling someone how much you care doesn't require a big budget, and often most necessary supplies can be found around the house. This year

send your love with custom presents made with love, care, and personalization.

One of the easiest, and least expensive, gifts to give is a coupon book. You remember those, hand drawn, or computer designed mini booklets filled with custom made certificates. You may recall these from your younger days when allowance was non existent and

teachers offered arts and crafts time to assemble these gifts. Well now that your grown up this present is still a viable option, with many practical and desirable ideas. For a gift to your mom why not offer breakfast in bed, or to do a chore you normally wouldn't; you could make a coupon to spend quality time together, a day at the movies, or a nice lunch. Of course the gift differs based on the recipient, you friend may rather a "I'll drive tonight" or a "let me blow dry your hair" coupon. Whatever you chose to write on your coupons it is sure to be a pleasant surprise, who wouldn't want a homemade gift like this one?

Another, more tasty, option is concocted in the kitchen. If you know your way around this room of the house and have a good recipe available you too can have an irresistible present. Making a batch of your world famous brownies or a plate of grandma's chocolate chip cookies is enough to please even the pickiest of friends. Few people can resist a homemade treat, and if you know what your doing your entire holiday gift list can be satisfied with baked goods. "When I was younger my friend and I made peanut brittle and it was a horrible disaster, it

burnt and stuck to the bottom of my mother's pot. So maybe this year I will brave the brittle once more and make her a batch, I'm sure we'll both get a good laugh out of it, and hopefully it will be yummy too." Senior Sarita Dan decided. And if you know a friend of yours melts over your lemon squares than why not cook them up for her and include a copy of the recipe so she can duplicate them at home (of course they'll never taste as good as yours). And why stop there, you could make an entire meal, breakfast in bed, a

delicious lunch, a romantic dinner. The possibilities are endless and the costs are minimal.

A third option is the gift of memories, a scrap book is enjoyable to unwrap and collecting photos is a fun task. The ornateness of the book differs depending on your level of creativity. Some may chose to purchase a pre assembled book, the pages have designated spaces for pictures with drawn on frames and introspective questions

PLEASE SEE "GIFTS" P. 2

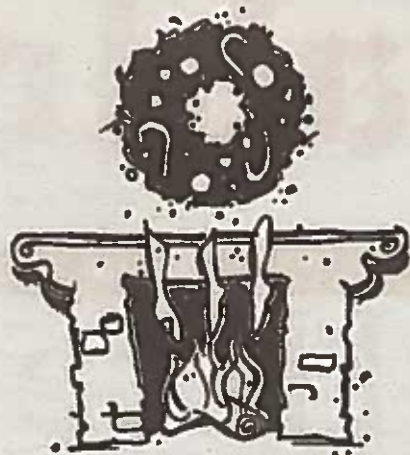
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We hope for all of our readers, advertisers, and friends that this Joyous Holiday Season brings Peace, Contentment and Happiness and that it refreshes and renews you for the Happiest of New Years.





A Holiday Smorgisbord



The Christmas-Chanukah Chronicle

Rachel Fletcher
Arts and Entertainment Editor

It happens to me every year, the Christmas-Chanukah chronicle. In the Fletcher household it is not uncommon to light the Christmas tree and the menorah on the same night, to play dreidel with Santa cookies instead of gelt, or to see a wreath and a mezuzah on the front door together in synchrony.

Let me make it a little clearer for you: in my house, we celebrate Christmas and Chanukah, and this is my Christmas-Chanukah story. In elementary school, I always felt like the lucky kid who got quadruple the presents— one set from the parents, one set from each pair of grandparents, and one set from the aunts and uncles, kids envied me more than they envied McCauley Culkin in *Richie Rich*. "I wanted to be Jewish," lamented Junior Kelsey Emmett "but my parents just wouldn't let me". I never felt segregated because of my accepted religion, Judaism, and my accepted practices, because my dad is Christian. I was raised in a Jewish Sunday School and brought up with kids of similar faiths but I was always the lone Jew when I went back to my public school world, I was never giped, but rather exulted as the cool kid who got tons of presents when December came around. Junior Randall Lewis expressed to me her shared feelings—"I never felt weird celebrating Christmas and Chanukah in my house, I always felt special."

There are the downsides of this wonderful, hand I am dealt; I have to buy

quadruple the presents. It is a little tough on my wallet, but for 16 years, my family has been supportive of my parents' decision to give my little brother and me the best of both worlds. Another downside to this marvelous holiday season is the fact that some kids can't really identify themselves with either religion and are torn in the long run. I know that personally, a lot of people try to label me as half-Jewish or half-Christian, in reality, that title doesn't exist. Junior Justin Cymbol tells me of having a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother, "I've never really seen myself as either religion." Yet there are still those who don't really mind, like Junior David Fogel who celebrates both Chanukah and Christmas, "I get more presents." Now that I can look at this with an introspective viewpoint, I realize that a lot more kids than I thought celebrate Christmas and Chanukah and live in dual faith households.

For some of us, the holidays will always be about spending time with family, drinking hot cocoa and what not, and playing outside in the snow. If you ask me, us Christmas-Chanukah kids just get double the fun.

**Happy
Holidays
to All!**
from The Round
Table Staff

My Jewish Christmas

Jessica Troy
Co-Editor-in-Chief

This is the diary of a Jewish Christmas. You think you know what Jews do, but you have no idea how they celebrate this merry holiday.

December 25th 11:00 AM: most Jews in Stamford wake-up around this time. We do not wake up before the crack of dawn to open presents; we stay in our nice, warm, and cozy beds until the smell of breakfast pours into the bedroom. We eat our Christmas morning breakfast of French toast or pancakes, and relax for about two hours. Then we get our game faces on and begin the Jewish Christmas tradition: movies.

On Christmas Eve when everyone else waits for Santa to arrive on his sleigh, we Jews map out the location of each new movie, the times that they are playing, and what time our dinner will take place on Christmas Day. Most of the movies start around 2 in the afternoon, and the last show time is around 10 in the evening. This allows us to watch two movies, and enjoy our delicious dinner of Chinese food since it is the only restau-

rant open. December 25th 1:45 PM: we arrive at the movie theater in New Canaan to see our first movie. There are only four other people in the theater because everyone else in New Canaan is celebrating Christmas.

December 25th 5:00 PM: we arrive at the Chinese Restaurant with a partially full stomach of Raisonettes and popcorn. We sit down with the other Jewish members of the community surrounding us, and we enjoy our meal of chicken in garlic sauce and wanton soup.

December 25th 8:00 PM: we arrive just in time to see the 15 minute long previews and commercials for the second movie. More people are in the theater, but the majority of people are still Jewish.

December 25th 10:00 PM: we arrive home after the hectic day and unwind to an old movie on VHS. While everyone else is cleaning up the house, recuperating from the relatives, and fighting over the best toy; we are in our quiet houses with the menorah shining bright watching the end of the movie.

The Jewish Christmas has come to a bittersweet end, but only because it will repeat itself in 365 days.

Gifts, continued from pg. 1

to answer regarding you and your loved one. But if you have a lot of time and artistic tendencies then you can work with a blank canvas. Whether you photocopy pictures, convert them to black and white, or use the originals each photo marks an important point in the relationship. You can organize the pages by decades, events, themes, or any other technique your creative mind concocts. Topics like "remember when" are sure to spark nostalgia and remind both of you of the fun times you've spent together and the many more to come. "One of my all time favorite gifts was a photo collage my friends made for me, I still have it in my room and it always reminds me of all

the good times. Whenever I glance over at it I have to laugh, what was I thinking with some of those hair styles?" reminisced Senior Krystina Fisher. The possibilities are endless, there is no limit to what type of creative homemade gifts you can concoct. "I am always thinking of new clothing that I could make for myself, but with the holidays approaching I can practice my designing on friends, giving clothing made personally by me." determined Senior Felicia Kovacs. A picture frame, a bracelet, a video, a pillow, only you can decide what the perfect gift is, but the beauty of making your own gifts is that you control the decision.

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Happy Holiday Wishes From

*Happy Holidays.
Study!
FROM: J. Cox*

*Happy Birthday,
Sam Blank!*

*To Whom It May Concern, The
disbander is coming to get you!
What, you're disbanded!!! Visit
[www. Stamfordhigh.org](http://www.Stamfordhigh.org)
FROM: Students X, Y, Z*

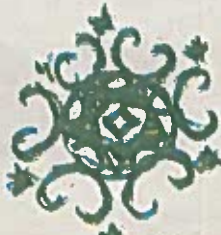


*To: Steph
Our time together is
the present I cherish
most this holiday sea-
son.
FROM: Scott*

*Feliz Navidad!
Joyeux Noel!
Natale!*

*Nicole and Nikki -
My partners in
crime. Have a very
Merry Christmas!
FROM: Sammie*

*Big M.
I don't appreciate you photo-
copying my picture. I'm turning
in my grave! Happy Holidays!
FROM: Jimmy N.L.
Oglethorpe*



*Happy Holidays SHS
Buy a really cool travel
mug! \$10
FROM: Mr. Limone
(Drama)*

*Merry
Xmas James.
Luv, Jodee*

*Big Mense! You're the
best. Don't eat too much
food.
FROM: Love, Amanda*

*Dear Students use floss,
don't abuse it. Love
and warm feelings,
Ljubonitr.*

*No boyfriend must be
Santa cuz when he
saw you he felt red
Ho! Ho!
FROM: Unknown*

*Merry Christmas
Sammie and Nicole
FROM: RJ*

*Happy
Holidays to all my
girls - never forget
that girl power is
highly underrated!
FROM: Alex F.*

*Happy Holidays Teddy
and Cat.
From, Laura*



Our House To Your House

To SFS:

Happy Holidays Stamford High and remember tennis season is only four months away.

FROM: Frank

Merry Christmas to my BFF

Kara and to my baby 'Negrito.' I love you.

FROM: Jully Rain

Merry Christmas James.

Love Jodee

Happy Birthday and Chanukah, Sammie! Happy Holidays to all my friends. Love, Colleen

Happy Kwanza Andrew! Love, Your African Princess Kelsey

To: Rachel, Mike, and Laura.

Rachel, Mike, and Laura: Happy Holidays FROM: Rob Rosado

Happy Holidays and Birthday to Sam Blank

I want to wish you a very Merry Christmas. I love you so much. FROM: Chris

Merry Christmas to Mr. Arcano and Kara from Raquel Welch and Matt FROM: Matt

Happy Holidays from Ms Bourrett's Period 3 Spanish Class

To Christine Hamilton. You're really hard to hang out with...Call me sometime!!

Merry Christmas FROM: James Cheeseboro

Have a Happy Holiday you pain in the butt! Matt, Promise I love you.

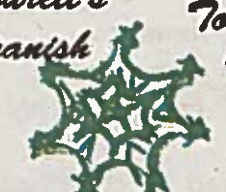
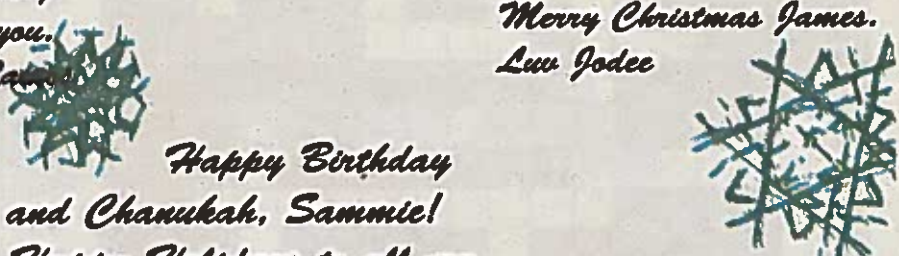
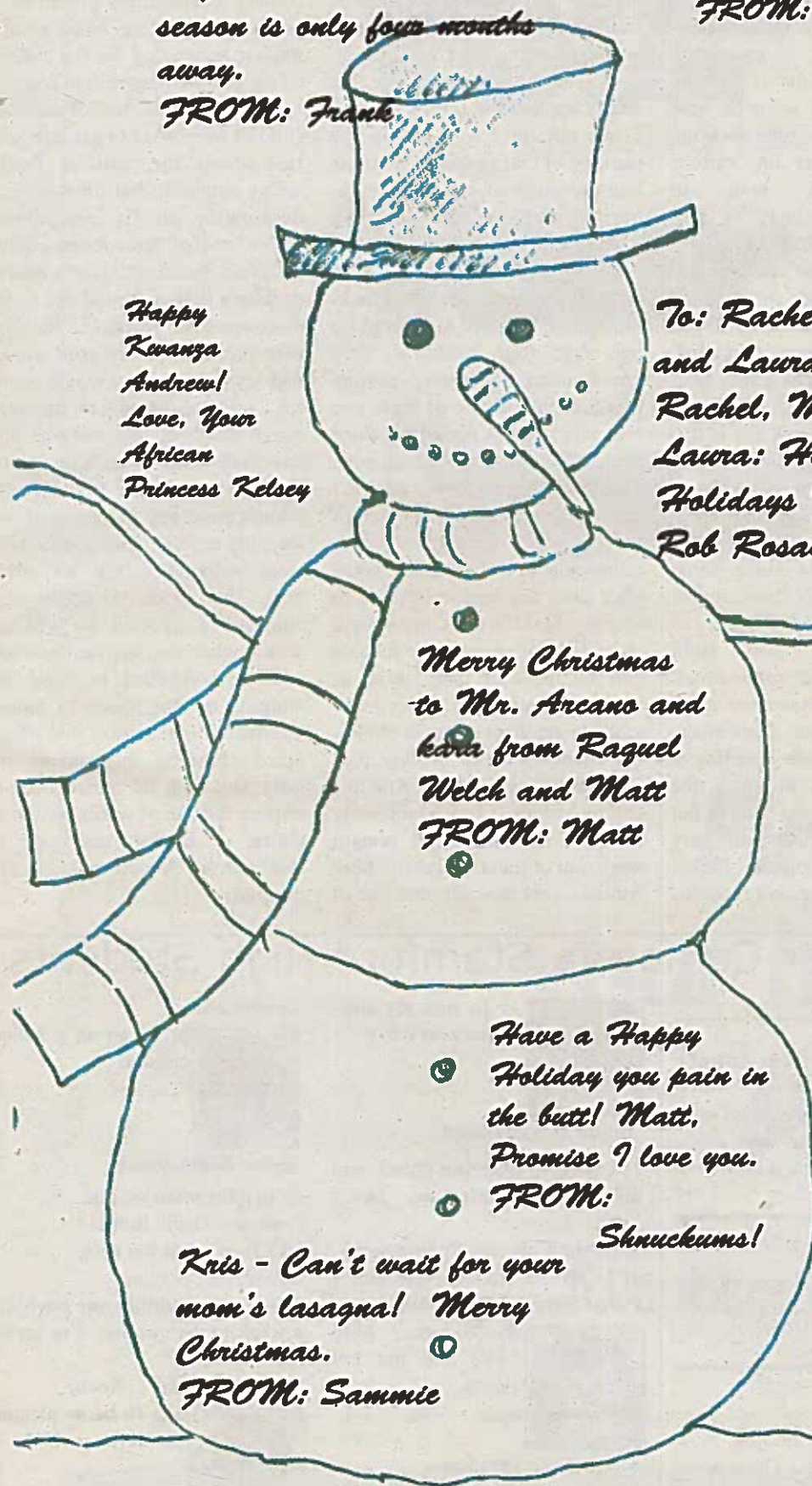
FROM: Shnuckums!

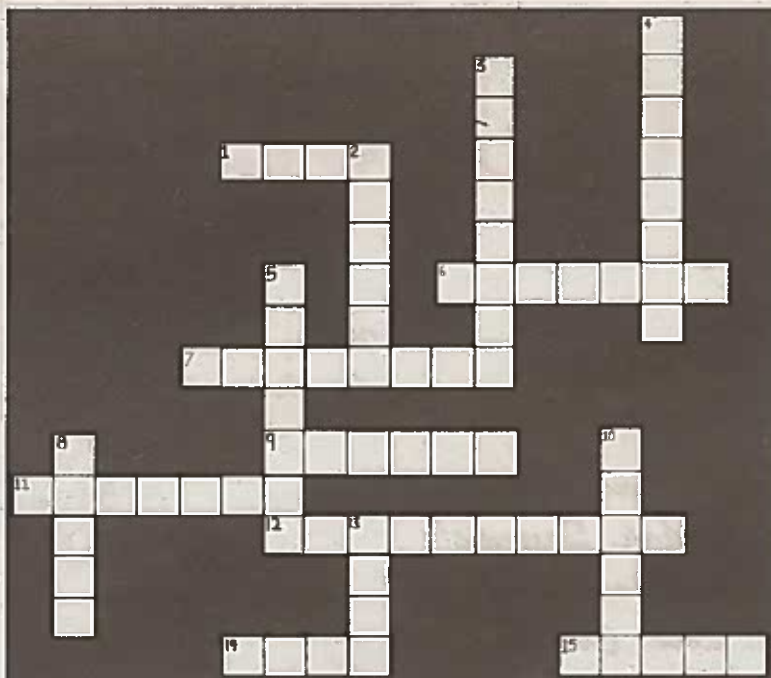
Happy Birthday, Jesus. Love Rachel

To Jeff: Merry Christmas! I love you! FROM: Ashley

Kris - Can't wait for your mom's lasagna! Merry Christmas. FROM: Sammie

To: Lyndsey & Lindsay Happy Holidays to my girls Love you bunches. FROM: Sammy B





Try Our Holiday Crossword!

ACROSS

1. You can sled in it
6. If you behave this way, Santa won't bring you presents
7. Describes people that enjoy giving
9. Houses are often decorated with these.
11. It is better to give than to _____
12. Another name for Santa
14. What you should do instead of 11 Across
15. The way one often feels this time of year.

DOWN

2. This season
3. Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa...
5. Nine of these go in a menorah
8. "_____ Christmas!" is a commonly heard comment.
10. Holiday not celebrated by Christian or Jewish people.
13. If you are _____ and not 6 ACROSS, Santa will bring you presents.

**Happy
Holidays To
All Of Our
Readers!**



Holidays With the Family Get Interesting

Nick Gooding
Associate News Editor

Something has perplexed me about visiting my relatives for the holidays, and it is not the unfathomable amount of traffic on the road, nor the peculiarity of the relatives themselves (although, for the record, they are all veritable bewilderments in my eyes). What has struck me is that no matter how lightly we pack, how few worldly possessions we bring on our quest over the various interstates that lead to Gumberland, Virginia, we still somehow do not have nearly enough room in the car for what we come home with.

My grandmother, if you tend to be a positive individual, could be described as a very generous individual. If you're a cynic, you might think she is trying to save herself a trip to the dump by unloading all her junk on her innocent, unsuspecting grandchildren. Or perhaps she just wants to pass along some very sentimentally meaningful objects of hers to her progeny.

But then, I've always been more cynical than sentimental. Last time, for instance, we spent upwards of an hour dismembering a bookcase then inserting it into our minivan in much the same manner as one would put together a very frustrating, very over-sized jigsaw puzzle. If that weren't enough, we also received

a very... interesting piece of artwork involving the meticulous sewing of a stuffed horse to add a bit of the third dimension to an otherwise attractive painting, along with an assorted selection of tacky frames (quantity over quality, that's what I always say).

I took a tour of my house to discover just how many pieces of furniture we've come upon this way. Following are my findings: We have acquired a wardrobe that nearly touches the ceiling (gladly, I was not there to assist in the packing of that gargantuan article into our minivan, but I can imagine it involved the purchasing of a new roof rack just for the purpose, lots of rope, and at least three rolls of duct tape), two rocking chairs, a coffee table, and no less than four bookcases (my grandmother apparently has an inexhaustible source of those and a certain affinity for giving them away). And that was without even entering the basement, where I know there to be the graveyard of various pieces of living room furniture unable to be reconstructed after their ten hour migration to scenic Stamford, Connecticut (actually, this seems to be the fate met by most of these gifts, as we're often not particularly motivated to get them set up in the living room as we're quickly running out of living room). And to a certain extent, I am boundlessly thankful that they can remain there; out of mind except on those fruitless searches for that set of

metric Allen wrenches you know you have but can't find because, naturally, those are the ones you need. (Conversely, if you needed the Imperial Standard wrenches, you would only be able to find the metric ones. Naturally.)

But this Thanksgiving we got off easy, relatively speaking of course. Although my grandmother flung a rocking chair at my mother as we fled for the shelter of our car, we managed to receive only a five pound bag of walnuts (I don't even want to get into stories about the various foods we've acquired, but often in our desperation to fit everything, we've stuffed these once edible gifts into nooks in the car's interior where they're bound not to be discovered for years) and the sincere promise, as we sped away, that my grandparents would come for Christmas bearing an antique, queen-sized bed and, not one, but two mattresses to go along with it. I don't joke here. Not only do we not have any urgent need for sleeping accommodations for two more individuals, but we don't have the room. I really am stumped as to what we will do with it when they arrive. Soon we will be compelled to build an addition on our abode to house this random, generous, and often quite stunning assortment of gifts. But that, of course, would require the use of wrenches, be it metric or English standard, so that's pretty much out of the question.

New Year Comes To Stamford High Students

Rachel Fletcher
Arts & Entertainment Editor

2003 is on the way, and with the dawn of a new year come those little things we'd all like to

*Let us contemplate this,
who actually keeps their
resolutions?*

accomplish in 12 months, New Year's Resolutions. There are a few things the student body has in mind now that January first is creeping up on us.



1) To wax my sideburns every day.

Junior Danny Quach

2) Learn to play the guitar and marry James Valentine. Junior Kelsey Emmett

3) Abstain. Senior Robbie Smith

4) To have a wicked New Year's Party. Senior Tim Nusbaum

5) To wear high heels and not fall down.



Junior Irina Vanchagos

6) To not get punched in the face. Junior Scott Glucksman

7) To buy many Tee-Skirts.

Anonymous



Senior Ralph Desirz

9) To gain some weight.

Freshman David Ratner

10.) To climb a big rock.

Junior Nick Gooding

11.) To keep adding one push up a week to my routine. I'm up to 51!

Senior Samantha LaRoche



Senior Shauna Bryson

12) To be as nice as possible.

Putting On Pounds This Holiday Season

Randy Miller
Features Editor

The fruit cakes, the pecan pies, the potato pancakes, the stuffing, the pounds! While most eaters cast away their diet habits during the holiday season, around New Years the resolutions build up. Regret over too many pieces of cake, or second helpings of sweet potatoes and marshmallows, leave Americans guilt rid-

den. At the average Thanksgiving dinner each person eats an approximated 3,000 calories; that's double the recommended daily consumption in one sitting. Warnings that over eating leaves most 5 pounds heavier by January 1st sends people into a bloated panic. But now an optimistic update in a string of disturbing news: according to James Hill, an obesity expert at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver, "That's one of those

myths- that you gain 5 to 10 pounds during the holiday." Recent studies have found that on an average a better estimate would be 1 to 2 pounds. According to an article by Nanci Hellmich, printed in USA Today, "Researchers at the National Institutes of health tracked 200 men and women from late September through early March... On average people gained .8 pounds during the holidays... By March, they'd gained 1.05 pounds." While that readjustment should ease some nerves it is not meant to give people a license to eat excessively during the holiday season, because as Hill notes, "...if you gain a pound a year for a decade, that's 10 pounds." Because most people never shed those extra holiday pounds they can really add up. In addition, it is important to remember that the 1 to 2 pound average is just that, an average. Hellmich adds that, "18 people in the study gained 5 pounds." That's 9% of those in the study, which means that the looming threat of major weight

gain still exists. So while your Aunt Bessie may only gain 2 pounds during the holiday season you could gain 6.

But good intentions, an optimistic study, and a solid New Year's resolution aren't enough to keep anyone in shape from November to January. Exercise is crucial. In the same study as men-

"On average people gained .8 pounds during the holidays..."

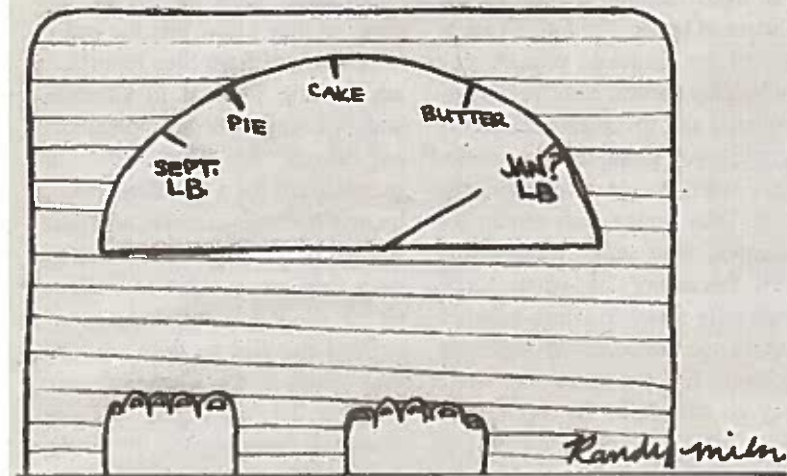
Nanci Hellmich

tioned before, those who exercised, on average, lost 1.5 pounds. What are some other strategies to lose or maintain weight at the holiday table? There seems to be as many "stay thin" strategies as there are varieties of pie. Wayne L. Westcott Ph.D, in a piece written for Health World Online, recommends drinking plenty of water. We've all heard this tip

before, but perhaps never understood the full necessity of proper hydration. Westcott writes that, "Drinking cold water serves as a mild appetite suppressant and burns calories to warm up the body temperature." Since water is plentiful no matter where you celebrate and everyone loves the crisp taste, this is an easy suggestion to follow. In addition, Westcott recommends munching on low calorie snacks like the fruits and vegies, eating a light lunch before sitting down to the big meals, and making wise decisions. The smorgasbord of food may be overwhelming and incredibly tempting but you should only choose those that are your favorites. Why take a heaping spoonful of cranberry sauce when you'd much prefer a slice of chocolate cake (which you're gonna have anyway).

The overwhelming favorite holiday tip of all is to plan ahead and make a strategy before going into the meal. Know what your goals are and don't diverge far from

PLEASE SEE POUNDS, PG 8



Those holiday treats may add up when you step on the scale.

Out Of Time? Last Minute Gift Suggestions

Andrew Sanzo
Managing Editor

So it's almost Christmas and you haven't purchased any gifts. Fear not. Procrastination and the holidays go hand in hand, but that doesn't mean your friends and family have to suffer. Last minute options abound, be it a Christmas Eve mall run or an online shopping spree. Some people even have their own last minute traditions. "I go to Genovese, buy random stuff, and put it into a bag," says junior Jenny Magyari, "I do that for a lot of people."

Although that may be a bit left of center for some people, there are other viable options. Junior Jeff Michelson prefers to let the gift recipient choose what they want for themselves. "I usually give a gift certificate or something to that effect." He adds, "that way whoever I give it to can't complain." The mighty gift certificate is a tried and true tool of the last minute shopper. In fact American Express has come out with its own

super gift certificate, the American Express Gift Card. The Gift Card is essentially a prepaid credit card that can be used any-

We live in a golden age for last minute shopping. Stores have big sales... leading up to Christmas and most online sites have overnight shipping options if you don't mind paying a bit extra.

where that accepts American Express. To learn more go to www.americanexpress.com/gift-card.

For those looking for a more personal touch, junior Dan Blank has some good advice: "For girls



American Express
Gift Cheques and Gift Cards

photo courtesy of AmericanExpress.com

American Express gift cheques and cards are a viable solution this holiday season. They work just like money so they're sure to be a pleaser.

go into that bath store in the mall, [they] like that stuff. For guys go to one of those stands or Kay-Bee toys in the mall, anything is cool."

Of course the mall this time of year can be quite trying. The long lines and large crowds can multiply the stress that accompanies shopping at the last minute. For these people and for the more fiscally conservative among us, hand made gifts may be the best bet. "I never have any money so I usually make stuff for people," says freshman Laura Sanzo. But she warns, "They don't usually like what I make."

Another option for those averse to the mall is online shopping. Prices are usually lower than mall retail and all your purchases can be made in the comfort

of your own home. Some sites even include free shipping and handling. "It's a fast, convenient way to get what you want," according to junior Justin Cymbol.

It's good news all around for the procrastinators of the world. We live in a golden age for last minute shopping. Stores have big sales during the days leading up to Christmas and most online sites have overnight shipping options if you don't mind paying a bit extra. More and more businesses are starting to cater to those who believe that the gift-buying season starts at 9:00 pm on Christmas Eve. So next time you think about getting your shopping done early, remember: why do now what you can do later?

Top 10 Guy Gifts

Andrew Dolian
Associate Sports Editor

According to a recently conducted poll of male students at SHS, the most commonly requested holiday gifts are:

- 10) Clothing
- 9) Gift certificate to the mall
- 8) A year's membership to a sports club
- 7) X Box
- 6) DVD Player
- 5) Satellite TV
- 4) Nintendo Game cube
- 3) Money
- 2) Car
- 1) Playstation 2

These Holiday Recipes are Sure to Liven up any Holiday Dinner

Dimitra Tzirikidis
Staff Writer

Many people like to eat good during the holidays, but not everyone likes to eat the same thing each and every year. So instead of eating apple pie and ice cream for dessert, try something totally different. Put a little spice into the holiday season and test out something new and exciting. Here are some great ideas for an altered eating experience, including dainty desserts that even we, SHS students, can prepare. Don't worry, you don't have to be a skilled baker to create these sweet pleasures. All the recipes below can be found on the website of Better Homes and Gardens at www.bhg.com.

-One recipe that is quite easy to prepare for Hanukkah are cookies. The ingredients for this recipe include: 1/2 cup all vegetable shortening, 1/2 cup margarine, 1 1/2 cups sifted powdered sugar, 1 egg, 1/2 teaspoon vanilla, 2 1/2 cups all purpose flour, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, 1/2 teaspoon baking soda, 1/2 teaspoon ground mace, and the ingredients for the icing, which are included in the directions. As for the preparation, the first step is to "combine the shortening and the margarine, and beat for 30 seconds. Add the sugar; beat until light

and fluffy. Beat in the egg and the vanilla. Combine the flour, cinnamon, baking soda, cream of tartar, mace, nutmeg, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Add to the margarine mixture; beat well. Wrap and chill dough for 3 hours or until it is easy to handle." The second step is, "on lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/8 - inch thickness; cut with cookie cutters. Place on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake at 350 degrees F about eight minutes or until edges are firm. Transfer cookies to wire rack and let cool. Spoon white on icing cookies. While white icing is still moist, drizzle with blue icing." This recipe makes about 60 cookies, so make sure to cut down the amount of ingredients used if you don't want that large quantity. The icing can be made by scratch, but if you prefer to easily buy it in your local grocery store, which is fine too. The directions to making the icing can be viewed at the web site mentioned above.

-For a delicious Christmas dessert, cherry peach cobbler is an excellent choice. According to bhg.com, the preparation time is 15 minutes and baking time is only 20 minutes. Run to the store and get these ingredients; 1 cup all purpose flour, 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder, 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg, 2 tablespoons butter or margarine (which

ever you prefer), 1/2 cup sugar, 4 teaspoons cornstarch, 3 cups fresh or frozen unsweetened sliced, peeled peaches, 2 cups fresh or frozen unsweetened pitted tart red cherries, 1 cup plain fat-free yogurt, 1/4 cup refrigerated or frozen egg product (thawed), ground nutmeg (optional). Better Home and Garden web site stated the directions, "for the topping in a mixing bowl, stir together the flour, the 2 tablespoons sugar, the baking powder, and the 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg. Using a pastry blender, but in the butter or margarine until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Set aside." The second step is, "for filling, in a large saucepan stir together the 1/2 cup sugar and the cornstarch. Stir in 1/3 cup water. Add the peaches and cherries. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly. Keep the filling hot while finishing topping. To finish topping, stir together the yogurt and egg product. Add yogurt mixture to flour mixture, stirring just to moisten." As for the last step, "transfer filling to a 2 quart square baking dish, using a spoon."

Many other delectable dessert recipes for the holidays can be found at the Better Home and Garden web site (bhg.com). There are also many fascinating ideas for dinner, and side dishes. Have fun with the baking segment, but also with the eating!



Winter Break: The Ultimate Vacation

Dan Maimon
Staff Writer

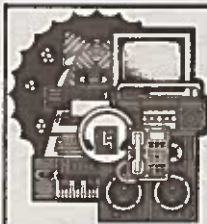
As we move full force into the final month of the year 2002, we find the air filled with all sorts of holiday spirit. Christmas songs play on the airwaves of many radio stations, people decorate their houses, Chanukah candles are lit for eight nights (even though it came particularly early this year), but best of all, the most well liked vacation is upon us, the Christmas break. The longest vacation of the academic year. A time for holiday parties, New Year's resolutions, and jovial morale. Many people enjoy going away to someplace warm to get away from the cold. Take junior Josh Green for example, who said, "I can't wait until December 20, when I can finally fly away to warm beaches and escape the cold." Most people probably feel the same way when they go outside in the morning to their cars, or wait for the school bus, and have to face the deadly morning cold. It seems like a warm bed is the most missed place in the entire world.

While many go away for the holidays, some like to stick around here in Stamford and await the arrival of family members. Senior Adam Schuckman said, "I'm excited because my older brother and sister will come home from the west coast to visit." Other kids who also await the arrival of an older sibling share the same feeling. Some visit family, and some have family come visit them. Wherever people go, it always

makes the holidays a better time when it is spent with family. Lots of students like to stay around here in Stamford because they have the ability to sit around and do nothing for an entire week. These types of activities are not very easy to enjoy during the school year, and when the opportunity comes up, it has to be jumped upon.

For various seniors, Christmas break will mark the culmination of their college application process. Early acceptance applications must be out by this time, so they know that the end is near. Senior Efram Slen reports, "I am looking forward to vacation, and finishing college applications and essays." There's no greater thrill for a kid than waking up on Christmas morning and finding all the gifts he wanted waiting right there under the tree for him. Or for the kid that feels so disappointed because he didn't get his Playstation 2 for Chanukah, and then on the last night, when he thinks all hope is gone, he finally gets it. It's things like this that make you realize, spring break has nothing on winter. Indeed it is a very exciting time for all ages.

Whether you're sitting on Santa's lap at the mall, building a snowman, going sledding, taking a family ski vacation, sunbathing on a warm resort, or maybe you're just sleeping in, you have to agree with the song, "It's the most wonderful time of the year." It always gives a little cushion for people, so they can end their year stress-free, and start the brand new calendar with clear thoughts, and a contented mind.



'Tis' the Season for A Listen to Holiday Compilation CD's

Jeff Morganteen
Associate Sports Editor

If you haven't noticed the amount of holiday music on the radio waves recently, well then, you obviously don't listen to the radio. This annual phenomenon may bother some, but others just can't get enough of this holiday cheer. Here's a holiday compilation to satisfy the most diehard of holiday music fans, if there are any that is.

- *Now That's What I Call Christmas!* - From the makers of the popular compilation

series *Now That's What I Call Music*, this two-disc set has everything a Christmas music fan would want. From Tony Bennett to Britney Spears to the Beach Boys, this compilation ranges from old-school Christmas tunes like "Jingle Bell Rock" to "Love on Layaway," by Gloria Estefan. These two CD's make for a perfect gift for anyone addicted to holiday cheer and Christmas songs.

- *A Christmas with the Rat Pack* - For all of you Sopranos fans, here is the Christmas album for you. Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., and Frank

Sinatra sing all the familiar Christmas tunes with their trademark lounge lizard stylings, and with all three's combined wit and charm. This will certainly put a welcome twist on holiday favorites.

- *Holiday Band-Aid* - This one may be hard to find but is still worth purchasing. An Atlanta based record label got all their bands together for a good cause to produce this quality compilation. One track, Another Man Down's "The Dreidel Song" is one that stands out above the rest. Adam Sandler finally has some competition with this Hanukkah anthem.

Pounds

Continued from pg. 7

them. If you find putting your objectives down in writing helps you, do it. You may decide ahead of time that you want to eat a moderate portion of Christmas ham with a little gravy, keep that in mind as you spoon out the portions. In an online article "Natural Born Enemies: The Holiday Season vs. Your Waistline" the number one objective was to "Plan ahead... You will need a course of action: What to do when your offered foods you shouldn't eat; what to eat instead; and ways to enjoy the season that aren't food related." This season is

about food, but more importantly it's about family and togetherness, "I can't wait for Hanukkah because it is the one time of the year that I get to see my older sister in New Jersey."

The holiday season is a time to remember what is truly important to us, health for one thing. So while the food is abundant and the fragrances are tempting, be aware of what you spoon into your mouth. If you spare the extra calories at supper time you may be able to save your new years resolution for bigger and better things.

New Drivers' Tips May Ease Initial Anxiety

Eric Gu
Staff Writer

Almost everyone will receive their license during their four years at Stamford High. Driving is a stepping-stone toward independence and opens doors by breaking down former obstacles. For some, receiving their license is quite emotional. It's an experience to cherish because in our society, it is the closest thing to getting wings. Here are some tips to make this experience the most it can be.

1. Show Respect.

2. Take things slowly- whether it's the vision test or the driving, by taking it slowly not only are you able to absorb one of the best days of your life so that you can cherish it for a long time to come, you also exhibit a careful attitude

which will make the driving part much easier.

3. Try and do the best you can on the knowledge test. A perfect score will definitely ease the driving portion of the exam. Doing well on the knowledge test creates a subconscious message to your tester that you actually prepared.

4. Try and book a test date on a weekday morning when most of your peers are busy in school studying. AKA never go on a Saturday. It's worth missing a school day. Less people means a shorter line, which equals less anxiety and time for you to have a nervous breakdown.

5. While taking the practical part of the driving test, go at a speed of 20-25 miles per hour. Try to stay at exactly 25 mph. This will help because you won't have to keep focusing on the speed limit signs. Chances are, your driving skills will look much better if you stay at a constant speed as opposed to speeding up and slowing down all the time. 20 -

25 mph is the ideal speed because it's okay to go over the speed limit by ten units; the tester might ask you to slow down, but he won't fail you unless you go any higher. On the other hand, you shouldn't go any slower than 10 mph below the speed limit either. It's highly unlikely that you will be required to drive in a fast lane.

Mid Term Exams

It is hard to imagine at this time of the year, but in less than three weeks after students return to school in 2004, they will be faced with mid term exams. Exams are scheduled to begin on January 20, the Tuesday following the Martin Luther King holiday.

Tuesday, Jan 20

Per 1 exam 7:45 - 9:35
Per 2 exam 9:45 - 11:35

Wednesday, Jan 21

Per 3 exam 7:45 - 9:35
Per 4 exam 9:45 - 11:35

Thursday, Jan 22

Per 5 exam 7:45 - 9:35
Per 6 exam 9:45 - 11:35

Friday, Jan 23

Per 7 exam 7:45 - 9:35
Makeups 9:45 - 11:35

Makeup exams may only be taken with required excuse notes.

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The Round Table



VOLUME XLV, NUMBER 3

STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL, 55 STRAWBERRY HILL AVENUE, STAMFORD, CT 06902

DECEMBER, 2003

HOMINGCOMING DANCE MARRED BY LAST MINUTE VIOLENCE

Andrew Sanzo
Managing Editor

One of the more successful homecoming dances in recent memory was cut short by an outburst of violence. After a night of fun and dancing participants were witness to a chain reaction of fights that led to nine arrests and the premature conclusion of the dance.

The evening began calmly, and despite some students who were upset that they couldn't purchase tickets at the door, for the most part things ran smoothly. According to senior class president Nitesh Banta, "There was no indication that anything was going to go wrong. The entire night was going pretty well."

Students were eager to dance, and it seemed the only thought on their minds was which song was going to be played next. The enthusiasm in the gymnasium was palpable. Said Brian Thurm of Fl6

Entertainment, the night's DJs, "I thought there was a lot of excitement. Everyone was in the mood to have a good time, and you could feel the energy. I've never worked an event with that much intensity, where everyone was having so much fun."

Attendees also seemed excited that members of the Stamford high student body were chosen to provide the



Photo by Dolcine

Mr. Porter, an SHS security officer was one of those who responded to the violence that concluded the Homecoming.

entertainment for the evening. Fl6 Entertainment, whose four members are all seniors here at Stamford high, made their second appearance at a school function after a successful gig at last year's Junior Prom. "I was really happy when I heard Fl6 was going to be playing Homecoming this year," said senior Daryl Batan, "They were great at

Prom last year, and they seem to put a lot of effort into what they do."

The evening progressed well until shortly after the homecoming court was announced at about 10:45 pm when a large crowd started to gather in a circle. Some didn't think anything of it. Said Dave Jones a member of Fl6 Entertainment, "We [members of Fl6] saw all these people in a circle in the corner of the gym and we just thought some kid was break-dancing."

Others were more nervous about the throng of people. Said junior class president Erica Virvo, "When I saw the huge crowd gather I got really scared."

It soon became apparent that there was something more than break-dancing going on. Police officers wielding nightsticks rushed to the scene to break up the fight. Said sophomore Michael

Poliboy describing the events, "No one really knew what was going on. There was blood all over the place. It was just chaos." Students were ordered to vacate the building, as police attempted to regain control of the situation.

Some alleged fight participants were forcibly, and some say violently, apprehended for resisting arrest and assaulting police officers.

In the aftermath of the fighting many rumors spread around SHS regarding the severity of the fight. "It was completely blown out of proportion," said junior Mike Seiler, "rumors flew, and by the next day people were saying there was a stabbing or shooting, but none of that happened."

Allegations of police brutality also made their way around the school. Some students felt that the officers at the scene used unnecessary force in detaining suspects. "I

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No Child Left Behind: What is There to Know?

Andrew Pramberger
Features Editor

Known by some as "a bad law with good intent," the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) contains more than 750 pages of law and 1500 pages of regulations that are changing the fabric of the American educational system. Signed into law in January 2002 by President Bush, NCLB is aimed at raising achievement in public schools nationwide.

As we go forward, NCLB will be an ever more present force in education. To answer some questions about NCLB The Round Table

sat down with Stamford High principal Mrs.



Photo By: Dana Forrest

Koroshetz to find out the essentials of this very complicated law.

What does NCLB call for?

One of the most important components of



NCLB calls for 100 percent of students in the United States to be proficient in math and reading by the year 2014. On last year's CAPT test,

Stamford High had 59 percent of students who were proficient in math while 62 percent were proficient in reading as defined by state goals. Each year up to 2014, a school's percentage of students who reach proficiency must increase. While it is realistically

impossible for 100 percent of students to be proficient, Mrs. Koroshetz explained that aiming for less than 100 percent achievement would be

allowing someone to fail, and that is unacceptable. NCLB also calls for all subject teachers to be highly qualified in the subjects they teach. Luckily for Connecticut, state certification standards are already high and many of our teachers meet these standards. Mrs. Koroshetz also attributed this to the district's ability to hire and retain great teachers.

How is a school's performance measured?

Under NCLB, each state has to create a test to evaluate students in reading and math, and set a definition of proficiency. In Connecticut, the CMT

SEE NCLB PAGE 3

The Round Table

Founded in 1957

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The Round Table is published approximately 6 times a year by the Communication and Journalism classes at Stamford High School.

Unsigned Editorials represent the views of The Round Table Editorial Board. Signed pieces, letters to the Editor, and illustrations represent the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the student body at Stamford High School.

The Round Table welcomes letters from its readers. Letters must be original and signed. Anonymous letters will not be printed.

The Round Table Pledge

We pledge to make every student in our school aware that they are welcome to join our staff.

We pledge to publish a newspaper that mirrors the concerns, interests, experiences, and opinions of the spectrum of our student body.

We pledge to publish a newspaper whose content and coverage reflect ours School's ethnic, racial, and religious make-up.

We pledge to work to create a newspaper that brings about a greater understanding and sense of mutual belonging to our school community.

We believe adherence to these pledges will make The Round Table a strong publication and an accurate representation of the Stamford High School community.

Our View

I have a dream. I have a dream that one day, me, and about a million other people will do exactly what they set out to do at the beginning of every year. Either this, or we won't feel bad about ourselves for not doing it when it comes to judgment day. What is this hurdle that I and so many others fail to jump each year? Well, it's the enigma of the common New Year's resolution. I know, New Year's resolutions aren't that hard to understand. They're usually something simple like lose five pounds, don't bite your fingernails, try to not yell at your little brother as often- nothing complicated like solving the international crisis of nuclear weapons or anything. What is enigmatic about the New Year's resolution is this; why is it that we set ourselves up for failure every year? Do we honestly believe that January first will start an entirely new chapters of our lives in which we will become completely different people, devoid of any flaws or idiosyncrasies that make us undesirable?

I personally have come to believe that the New Year's resolution is a myth. No one actually accomplishes them, right? I'm sure that there is no secret checkpoint system or support groups along the road to achieving this feat that I don't know about. Therefore there is no other explanation for this phenomenon. Unless...

Maybe it's a government conspiracy. Perhaps the government, in attempts to better each and every one of its citizens, created this policy for personal improvement and made it look as though it was something we should all do. Maybe in seeing the hysteria people put themselves through to single out one imperfection in their appearance or behavior and alleviate it because "everyone else was doing it" was the affect the government wished to have. It's kind of like that whole Aryan theory of cleansing the population. For all we know, there could be a secret alliance between some high ranking officials and Jenny Craig and Lucille Roberts "If you endorse this whole 'New Year's Resolution' thing, we'll guarantee a horde of women lining up outside your doors each and every January first, and you can tell them all to bring a friend!"

Quite honestly, I don't know. It would be nice of me to say that I believe in the human spirit and our ability to overcome the difficulties we face in our lives. However, when it comes to New Year's resolutions I just can't say this is the case. Take solace in this, you are not alone. No one, I mean NO ONE will play five hours of Tony Hawk instead of six, or call their grandmothers more often, or read the newspaper every day if they make it their New Year's resolution. It's a jinx, an automatic, no hope, give up before you get yourself excited, guarantee. Personal resolutions can take place anytime, not just New Year's. If you do make the mistake of setting one, you are not a bad person when it turns out you don't do it. You are not a bad person.

Be Smart Don't Start Smoking!

Second Annual Great American Smoke-Out Comes to SHS

Kettia Dolcine
News Editor

If you happened to notice a walking cigarette on your way into school a few weeks ago, you shouldn't have been alarmed; the school has not developed a new mascot. The giant cigarette was actually school social worker Emily Segal, hoping to attract the attention of a few more students.



Photo By K. Dolcine

Nurse Practitioner Terry Harrison and Human Cigarette Emily Segal stand ready to educate the passersby of the dangers of cigarettes and nicotine.

On November 21st, the second annual Great American Smoke-Out came to SHS. The program, geared towards ending teen smoking caught the eyes of students and staff as they reentered the building after the second fire drill that day.

The Great American Smoke-Out is usually held on the third Thursday in November but because of SHS nurse practitioner Terry Harrison's busy schedule, it was held on the following Friday instead.

The goal of this project is to help students quit smoking by

emphasizing the harmful effects of smoking and second hand smoke. To help teens quit, the Smoke-Out offers a free eight-week course. The program also attempts to prevent kids from starting the habit. "It is offered to the student body (I think that's over 2500 kids) during all three lunch waves.

It is effective and students were very excited to see the costume this year [the cigarette]," comments

Harrison.

If students are caught smoking in school or on school grounds, the E.N.D. Program (End Nicotine Dependency) is mandatory, free of charge and has been shown as an effective way to quit smoking.

NCLB Con't fr pg 1

is used as the measure in grades 3-8 and the CAPT test is used as the measure for high school students. When the CAPT results come in, results are reported for both whole school and subgroups of the student population. At Stamford High, the subgroups are: English language learners, African American, students with disabilities, Hispanic, Caucasian, and economically disadvantaged. Should any one of these subgroups not have enough students performing at proficiency, a school can be labeled as "in danger of failing."

What happens to schools in danger of failing?

Once a school has been put on the list of schools in danger of failing, the school must submit a school improvement plan which explains how it plans to change and make progress. Should the school continue to fail to make adequate progress, the school faces a gradation of consequences. These consequences include having to hire an educational expert to come in and evaluate the school, mandated curriculum reform, government takeover of the school, and should a school still fail to make

progress, parents have the right to transfer their child to a different district at the failing school's expense.

Why does this law cause such an uproar?

Mrs. Koroshetz explained the situation like this: through the course of the year, your grade in a class was determined solely by your performance on one test—nothing else you might have done would matter. Mrs. Koroshetz pointed out that Stamford High is successful in so many different areas that NCLB will never even see, academics being one of those areas. All that NCLB will ever see is CAPT results, which may not show what Stamford High is really about. Another problem with this law is that it has no exceptions. For instance, a school can fail simply on that basis that less than 95 percent of their students took the test. The law also makes no allowances for students that have just arrived in the US. Under NCLB, a student who arrived the day of the test from a foreign country who knew no English would have to take the test and his/her scores would count towards the school's performance.

Is Stamford High "in dan-

ger of failing"?

At this point, J.M. Wright Tech is the only school in the area to make the list of schools that are "in danger of failing" because they did not have adequate progress on the CAPT. However, once the state releases its final list of schools who failed to make adequate progress, it is expected both Stamford High and Westhill will be on the list. If this happens, it is not a time of panic, as a school can fail for any of the previously mentioned reasons. Mrs. Koroshetz hopes people realize that NCLB is but one piece, though a very important piece, of Stamford High. Mrs. Koroshetz remarked the CAPT is a test of things kids should be able to do by high school, but the fact that it is potentially the sole judge of our school and the penalties that are imposed can be devastating are the problem.

Where does the funding come from for compliance with NCLB?

Right now, there is no federal government funding to pay for the costs schools incur in order to comply with NCLB. Any expenses our school district might incur while complying with NCLB will have to be paid for by the city government.

SHS Chef for A Day

Hey SHS!! This is your chance to change the food in the cafeteria!!

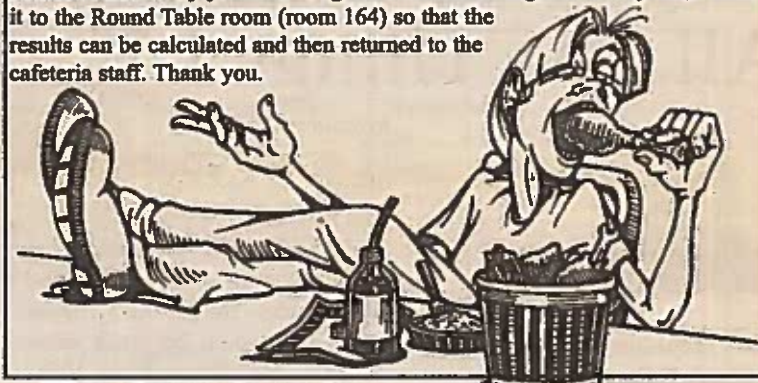
If you had the power to change what is sold in the cafeteria, what food(s) would you eliminate?

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

*Which foods would you add?

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

*Remember to be reasonable, don't suggest foods like lobster and steak because most likely you will not get them. After filling this survey out, return it to the Round Table room (room 164) so that the results can be calculated and then returned to the cafeteria staff. Thank you.



What changes in curriculum are being made because of NCLB?

Mrs. Koroshetz pointed out that NCLB is forcing meaningful conversation to happen throughout the district. People are looking at areas students traditionally fair poorly on and changing how these subjects are being taught. This will not mean students will only learn how to take a test, but more emphasis will be placed on tested skills. Additionally, the CAPT testing dates have been moved from late April to the first week of April to get the tests corrected by the time school districts need to report for NCLB.

NCLB is by no means a simple law, yet these are the basics. While some may still complain, the fact is NCLB is here to stay. As this year's sophomores take the CAPT, they will be determining the future of Stamford High as seen through the eyes of No Child Left Behind Act as it presently stands.

DANCE, Con't from pg1

think the cops were a little too harsh because they were actually hitting people," said senior Pam Conte.

Others felt that the talk of police misconduct was totally baseless. Said Stamford High Principal Mrs. Koroshetz, "From the perspective of the adults and the police officers present there was no police brutality, [and] everything that police did was in reaction to what students did."

Unfortunately for students, the ultimate result of the evening's violent ending is the shadow it will cast over future dances at Stamford High. Summing up a sentiment shared by many at Stamford High, senior class president Nitesh Banta said, "I was really happy with the turnout; the dance was going really well. It was a lot better than in years past. I'm upset about the fight because it really hurts the prospect of future dances."

In Life there are Winners and Internet Losers

Natalia Senatore
Staff Writer

Recently, the internet has become common in many homes due to its many applications such as self-help, research, and free porn (haha just kidding!). It's also a great way to talk to friends and keep in contact with people you don't see very often.

Even with all this in mind, it has become apparent to me that the internet was made for dorks. Let me explain myself.

A predominant use of the internet is communication. While it's great for people with speech impediments (or bronchitis), people who have problems talking face to face and people who have issues with using the telephone, it does lack that human quality.

Although, this type of commu-

nication is not just conveniently impersonal, it's also incredibly addicting. Being online, especially talking to people on AIM (AOL

"if you send this email to five people your crush will call you... three hundred and twenty-two thousand and you'll get married and live happily ever after, have six children, win a brand new, red Porsche and a million dollars."

Instant Messenger) or other messenger services, makes the hours quickly fly by. There are even people who spend every waking

moment outside of school in front of the computer. Hasn't this gone too far?

From addictions to instant messenger things only get worse. A fine example would be those pathetic chain letters that end with "if you send this email to five people your crush will call you, ten and your crush will ask you on a date, three hundred and twenty-two thousand and you'll get married and live happily ever after, have six children, win a brand new, red Porsche and a million dollars."

Yeah, well those never worked for me, and I tried! They always made me wonder about the people who do have a significant other? What grand prizes are they awarded from such emails?

There are social people in this world who have too many other things to do than spend hours sit-

ting online wasting away time. It's others who spend hours and hours instant messaging people they don't really like, searching endlessly online for things they don't really need, and know every web site for getting anything anybody could ever want that truly are internet losers.

I will be the first to admit that the internet is a great and necessary part of modern technology,

for its research and communication capabilities, but there should be moderation in how much it is used. There are so many fun and exciting things that can be done beyond a computer screen. Join a club, meet people, and try new things— Go bungee jumping, water skiing, mountain climbing or ballroom dancing. What ever you do, don't waste away your life in front of your computer.

All The Things I Wish I'd Said



Jenny Hopkinson
Opinions Editor

I have an issue with full serve gas stations. My parents have a Jeep, and every once in a while when it's late on Sunday night, and work calls early the next morning, they send me down High Ridge with forty dollars and the beast on empty and tell me to fill it up. For some reason, at these times, I always seem to just end up at a full serve station, not by design of course. I hate it; Sitting in the car flicking through radio channels, all conveniently on commercials, while the attendant starts to pump the gas, then wanders away and forgets about me. I feel so useless, and it really bothers me.

This isn't to suggest that that I don't see the purpose of full serve. We are a very lazy society. How else can one explain online checking, paper shredders that also cut through staples, and mechanical pencils? Why shouldn't gas be just as convenient? There is nothing essentially wrong with these

inventions and services that make life easier, except that "convenience" is becoming the lazy man's excuse.

I'm not trying to berate things like calculators, alarm clocks, and can openers— things that without which life would be much more difficult. No, I'm talking about those items like the new, cordless, remote control vacuum that can clean while you're asleep and software with which you can simply talk and your speech will be translated in to text on your computer. It's items like these that show convenience has gone too far.

There is a wonderful episode of *The Simpsons* where Homer, in an attempt to be more like his idol, Benjamin Franklin, invents a recliner with a hole cut into the seat, so that one need never get out of this chair. Undoubtedly this has been done somewhere outside of the clever animation of Matt Groening, and perhaps one day they will even be standard in living rooms, marketed as the Laz-i-John. What worries me is that it won't stop there.

At the rate society and technology are advancing the day will come when we will be able to sit in front of a computer screen and never need to move again. Mankind will lose the need for arms and legs and we will all become pods with heads that pee

into a sack. Imagine the can openers then.

While I am making light of this situation, the reality has to be faced that it will eventually happen. Humans develop in relationship to their surroundings; many predict that one day soon people will be born without pinky fingers because with the loss of high tea at four, they will wither and droop off from lack of use. Why then will arms and legs be necessary when everything is robotic?

I personally think that hands would look odd with out pinkies. While Mickey Mouse can perhaps pull it off, we haven't quiet reached his level yet. Furthermore, I would hate to be the mother of a pod child. Beyond the fact that I couldn't yell at it to take out the garbage, it would just in general be kind of wierd.

Obviously none of this will happen in my time and and its a comforting thought to know that when I die people will still have limbs and ten fingers. But even now, all across America the side walks lay empty as the wind blows pieces of paper along, perhaps even this one, while countless people hide behind their computer screens making instant noodles while the remote control vacume slowly purrs around their feet.

And to think, this all started will full serve gas stations.

Don't be Lazy: Go Exercise Your Rights

Jenny Magyari
Staff Writer

It has always been a mystery to me as to why nearly half of the citizens in this country choose to surrender their right to vote. After pondering the possible logic behind giving up one of the most important advantages granted to American citizens, I've reached several potential explanations.

The first justification I see is people often don't think that their vote can make a difference. I find it hard to believe that any person can assume this due to the many historical precedents that prove otherwise.

In 1776 one vote gave America the English language instead of German, and in 1960 John F. Kennedy won the presidential election over Nixon by a margin of less than one vote per precinct.

The other problem that arises with this way of thought is the large number of people, such as teenagers, who could have a strong impact on the election together but choose not to vote; thinking their individual vote insignificant.

The second reason for the low voter turnout seems to be ignorance about the issues being discussed. I have found that an

appalling large percent of people have been entirely uninformed about the candidates and issues involved in both local and national elections. These people who do not know who to vote for simply decide not to vote.

This leads me to my third and most prominent explanation— people are lazy.

Among my peers I find that an astonishing preponderance is not registered to vote. This is the result of coupling ignorance with laziness— being ignorant about how to

register and too lazy to find out.

Aside from not registering, the situation appears that people are either too busy to educate themselves on the candidates and issues involved in the election, or just too lazy to drive to the voting booth and actually cast a vote.

The form of government that America practices is one in which the people have a voice. Perhaps the greatest thing about our democracy is citizens are granted the right to govern themselves through elected representatives. What the large number of Americans might not understand is that by not voting they are losing their voice in the government.

If you are a member of this group, stop and think the next time you complain about the way in which our country is run, with your vote you can change it.

The form of government that America practices is one in which the people have a voice... through elected representatives...[and]...by not voting they are losing their voice ...

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Band Plays on to Third Place Finish at Championships

Jenny Hopkinson
Opinions Editor

Much like that of fall sports,



Photo by Jenny Hopkinson

Percussion section performing

the beginning of November means one thing for the Stamford High School Black Knight Marching Band-Championships.

At the 2003 Musical Arts

Conference Championships held at Kennedy Stadium at Central High School in Bridgeport, the Knights were awarded third place for their show *The Harmony of Rhythm and Melody*, which is comprised of three movements: "A Short Ride in a Fast Machine," "Adagio in C Minor," and a reprise of "A Short Ride in a fast Machine".

While the band was not thrilled with their third place finish, a tie with Newtown High School, most band members felt confident that it had been the best performance of the year. "We were really confident coming off the field. It was an amazing performance and a nice way to end the season." Said Drum Major senior Carolina Lescano.

The past season has been hard on the SHS Marching Band. Extended weeknight practices, minimal stadium use due to sporting events like Greenwich Football Games, and last place finishes were discouraging to the

110 member group. With the guidance of band director Steve Fasoli, and Drum Majors, seniors Nicki Puza and Carolina Lescano, the band overcame its obstacles and went from regular last place scores to third. "The whole band really stepped it up," commented Lescano, "we had a rough season, but it really came together in the end."

Two weeks before championships, the Knights competed in the Bands of America Regional Championships- also held at Kennedy Stadium in Bridgeport. At this nationally ranking competition, the band received twelfth place, the highest it has ever gotten in the BOA circuit. At the competition, they also beat rival Brian MacMahon, whose musical selection this year is *The Rise and Fall of Rome*, the same show that the Knights won the Citrus Bowl with four years ago. "They may have beaten us [in championships], but we knew we could

play their show, but they can't play ours." Said senior field captain Stephanie Kim.

The following week, the band participated in Norwalk High School's Competition where despite having a good show, a timing error in the beginning of the second movement gave the band another disappointing fifth place finish.

The week before championships, the band rehearsed every night. "The whole band was really positive and together," commented Kim, "and that really helped for championships." Despite the rain, and with the help of a new instructor- which the band brought in from Arizona- the Knights completely changed the second movement to a visually appealing and dramatic free form representation of the music.

With all their hard work, band members'

disappointment over a third place finish at championships is understandable. "It was disappointing," commented sophomore Emily Scovill, "but at least we did better than last year." To finish third coming from a regular position of last is quite an accomplishment.

Now that the Holiday Parade Spectacular is over, all the band has left is the Memorial Day Parade in May, Christmas tree sales, and a slew of pancake breakfasts, pasta dinners and other fundraising events in preparation for next year's season.



Photo by Jenny Hopkinson

Band performs their field show

Yearbook 2004: Sneak Peek at Memories in the Making

Colleen Thomas
Business Editor

Stamford High's award-winning yearbook always causes a sensation when it is released every June. Upon receiving their coveted books, students search for their faces amongst the pages and for their names and quotes in captions and copies, but few people actually know about all the work that goes into making the book throughout the year. The staff, divided into two periods as well as several independent studies, closely guards the secrets that will be revealed at the end of the year and spends hours during and after school getting information, writing copy, and selecting pictures. Last year's book received numerous awards, including a gold medal from Columbia University with two All-Columbian Honors for photography and coverage, First Place from the national Scholastic Press Association with two Marks of Distinction for photography and design. The book was also selected for Josten's national sample book program. The yearbook gets bigger and bet-

ter every year; this year will be no exception.

All the editors began work on the 2004 yearbook last spring. Over the summer, eight juniors and seniors went to "Yearbook Camp" at Bryant College in Rhode Island, a two-day workshop where co-advisor and art teacher Ms. Assunto was Resident Advisor. Her job was to help the other schools in attendance with themes and ideas for their upcoming yearbooks. At the workshop the SHS yearbook staff went to lectures and classes to learn the new version of the program used for laying out yearbook pages (Adobe Pagemaker). They also got new ideas and perspectives for upcoming yearbooks, as well as a jumpstart by coming up with this year's theme and a cover idea, putting them months ahead of schedule.

So far this fall the new yearbook staff has been off to a rocky start. "The 2004 yearbook will certainly be a challenge to com-

plete" said Ms. Assunto, "Although we have an awesome theme and cover design in place, problems with the new computers have put us behind schedule." With the move from the sixth floor to the newly renovated third floor



Photo by Dana Forest

Kristina Rich (l) and Amanda Beckford are two of the members of the yearbook class who work all year long to put together the massive book.

came several problems. For example, the staff had to get used to a smaller room with more people; the class has grown more popular with seniors as well as underclassmen. While enrollment for last year's yearbook course was under 40 students, 49 people are in

the class this year. New computers were also installed, an upgrade from last year's Macintosh's that constantly crashed and caused endless problems and frustration. Unfortunately, the new computers did not function properly for the first two months of the year, causing more problems and a delay in the production of the yearbook. The problem was eventually solved and the staff got back on track.

While new staff writers began work on ideas and copy for their sports, academics, clubs, and student life pages, editors oversaw their progress and worked on their own sections. With only one functioning computer and one Mr. DeFeo to do the final check on all the pages, the editing process was long and hard.

Some changes to the yearbook include new sections, editors, and a new price. To better include the different clubs and organizations in the school, a new section was created to highlight our active student clubs. New editors (staff members with at least one year's previous experience

writing for the yearbook, as well as three new writers for the academic and clubs sections) brought fresh ideas to their sections. Also, the starting price for the book went up to \$70 dollars from last year's price of \$60. The reason for the increase in price has to do with budget cuts, inflation, and more pages (including more color) that all make creation of the yearbook more expensive. Staff members also fundraise for the book by selling a mandatory two ads a quarter to be featured in the book, and selling Stamford High School flip flops for \$15 each. Support the 2004 Stamford High Yearbook by buying personal ads and a copy of the book on sale now for \$70.

Don't forget these important upcoming yearbook dates:

2/13/04

Last chance to order yearbooks for \$75, price goes up to \$80

3/12/04

Last day to order yearbooks!!

Help! Community Service Clubs Are Looking for You

Alex Tanev
Staff Writer

Doing community service is one of the most beneficial and fulfilling activities we as students can participate in over the course of our high school careers. Reading to little kids, packing food for the less fortunate, or helping clean a public park are just a few examples of how you can become a better and more involved member of our community. Besides making you a better citizen, community service also enhances your resume and college applications. Showing that you have contributed a considerable amount of time as a member of a community service club is one of the best ways to prove to colleges your involvement in the community and your responsibility. There is no reason not to do community service, yet only a small percent-

age of students join service clubs. Part of the excuse may be a lack of time, while some people might just be too lazy. However, it is never too late to start, as Stamford High is full of opportunities for its students.

"I'm pleased with the commitment to community service so far this year and I hope it continues in the future," commented Mr. Swenson, the advisor of Interact in our school. Interact provides community service opportunities through its affiliation with the Rotary Club International, which provides humanitarian service worldwide. Interact sponsors the Big Brother/Big Sister Program where volunteers work with little kids to expand each other's horizons by sharing everyday activities such as playing sports, seeing movies, cooking, going over schoolwork, visiting museums, washing parents' cars, taking walks, volunteering in their com-

munities, or just hanging out together. Other activities the club participates in are Harvest Day, Apple Cider Sunday, the

"I'm pleased with the commitment to community service so far this year and I hope it continues in the future."

Gary Swenson, Advisor

Halloween UNICEF Drive, various painting projects, semi-annual holiday food drives, Kid's Day, Environmental Day and Special Olympics. Time commitment varies greatly according to each student's degree of involvement. The Interact Club is open to all grade levels and meets in the small auditorium the first Wednesday of every month right after school.

Stamford High School also has a Building With Books club. BWB is a Stamford-based national non-profit organization that works in conjunction with over 40 school-based clubs across the country. Building With Books' mission is to enhance education for American youth while providing children of developing countries the opportunity to become self-reliant through education. Club members gain a greater sense of global awareness and participate regularly in service projects to better our community and foster an environment of social awareness. Some services include the Meals on Wheels program, where students help prepare food for delivery to the needy, and also the Soup Kitchen, where food is served directly to those who need it. Through carwashes, bake sales, candy sales and various other fundraisers, the club also collects money to build schools in

third-world countries all over the world where they are greatly needed. For example, BWB, as a national organization, has recently undertaken projects in Nicaragua, Mali, and Nepal. On September 14th, 2003, it completed its 89th school in Palo Verde, Nicaragua. To join this club, you can attend its regular meetings in rooms 101 or 202 every Tuesday after school.

Building With Books and Interact are just two of Stamford High's multitude of clubs that offer community service to their members. For more information about these or other clubs, you can check the Round Table's club listings, the SHS handbook, or go on the SHS website. The point is, community service not only looks good on your college application, it also gives you a sense of accomplishment and triumph which few other activities can deliver. So get involved, there is no excuse not to!

Giving Great Gifts this Year

Colleen Thomas
Business Editor

The holiday season is generally a hectic time for everyone. For high school students, schoolwork, sports, and jobs take up so much time that getting holiday gifts for friends and family is often left to the last minute. It is obvious when a present is rushed and whether or not thought was put into it. This year, why not get ahead of schedule and make sure you have the perfect present for everyone on your list?

Family members are sometimes hard to shop for. How are we supposed to know what parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles are interested in? "I always tell my kids to get me Walden Books gifts certificates because I like to listen to books on tape," says graphic communications teacher Mr. Mecca, "That way, I can chose what I want." Gift certificates are perfect for a high schooler's budget, and they are often the best gift to give because they allows the freedom of choice while still knowing where that person likes to shop. Shopping for younger family members is usually easier because kids

will tell you what they want if you listen. "Usually my sister will tell me what she wants when we're watching TV when she sees a commercial and says, 'You're gonna get that for me, right?' over and over," says junior Amanda Abbate. "Also, she likes anything



Strawberry Shortcake."

Friends your own age are usually interested in the same things you are, so if you have been pining for a pair of Ugg Boots or eyeing the newest Juicy tees, chances are they have been doing the same. Once again, simple listening skills will tell you what your friends want. Unfortunately, most of us don't have the kind of money to buy the world for our friends as we probably want to do, so in that case a homemade gift might be best.

Presents made by hand are often cherished the most because of the time and care put into making them. "I like to make my own gifts because they are more personal," says junior Erica Virvo. "Also, that way people remember me as the creative one." Things like photo scrapbooks and picture frames are also fun to create because they preserve memories for years to come. Another inexpensive approach to holiday gift giving is baking. Whether you chose to go through cookbooks and select something fancy and complicated like crème brûlée or use a mix is up to you, the delicious end product will be appreciated either way.

This season save yourself the stress and worry over gifts left to the last minute. The more effort and love you put into a choosing a gift, the happier you will make those you are shopping for. Heartfelt, homemade cards will always get a better reaction than corny store-bought ones with just your signature in them. Remember, you don't have to spend a fortune, keep it simple and keep in mind what your loved ones have interests in. If you care about these people, let them see it.

Holiday CD Treats

Anna Nyakana
Staff Writer

Don't know what to get for your friends and family this Holiday season?

Just take a look at the top ten best selling albums from Billboard's "The Billboard 200." There's an album for every person on this list, why not give someone music they can play throughout winter vacation? It's not like the videos on TV aren't re-runs. And besides...Santa never gives CD's.

1. Jay-Z- The Black Album
2. No Doubt- The Singles 1992-2003
3. Britney Spears- In The Zone
4. Hilary Duff- Metamorphosis
5. Various Artists- Now 14
6. Toby Keith- Shock'n Y'all
7. Josh Groban- Closer
8. G-Unit- Beg Fore Mercy
9. KoRn- Take A Look In the Mirror
10. OutKast- Speakerboxx/The Love Below



Happy Holidays to You and Yours

Tali,
This is for all of your pens I
have chewed.
Anonymous



Speech Class,
Happy Holidays and Happy
New Year.

Ms. Reed
All English Students,
Happy Holidays, rest up!
The English Department

Meaghan Machcinski,
Happy Holidays! When are
you going to come over?
Adam Japha

Lunch Group,
Happy Holidays!
Marina Miloslavsky

Shaira Mitchell,
Hope you have Happy
Holidays and a great New
Years 2004! Your girl 4 ever!
Karolina Z

The Powers,
Merry Christmas!
WWTOTW!
Joseph Barber

The Round Table,
Keep it up!
Anonymous

Brian,
Merry Christmas! I love you.
Thanks for a great two
months!
Your Secret Admirer

All My Friends,
Hey guys! I just hope all of
you have a happy and
healthy holiday and a great
new year! I love you
all!
Natalia

SHS Staff and
Students,
Have a safe and
enjoyable holiday!
Class of 2004

Have a great vaca-
tion.
Mr. A. Mecca

Dante Calabrese,
I'll miss you. Have a great
vacation! Happy Holidays!
Allie Morganteen

Jesus,
Happy Birthday!
Bobby Tournas

Colleen, Maggie and
Angie,
Have a great holiday and
a happy new year!
Matt Slen

Shizam,
Happy 17th birthday!
You're the best.
Beeny

Erica, Kate, Steph and
Kara,
Merry Christmas! I love
you girls, hope you get
everything you want for
Christmas.
Colleen

All Faculty and Student
Body,
The new security guard
would like to wish everyone
a safe and joyous holiday.
McCord

Stephanie,

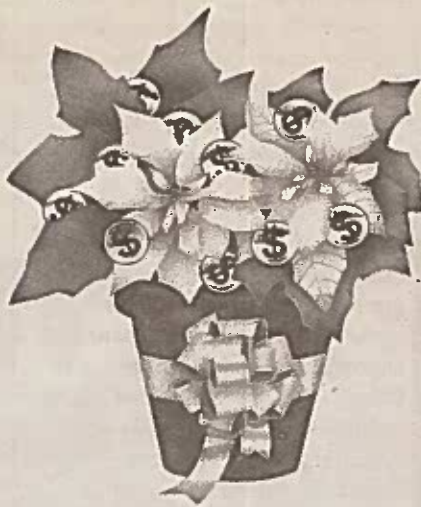
Have a great Christmas
Stephie, you're the best!
Merry Christmas hun!!
Anthony

My best buddies Anna and
Stephers,
You guys are the coolest! All
our shenanigans, gossiping
and singing on the top of our
lungs is always fun. Have a
great, great vacation and
Merry Christmas! I love you
both!

Meg

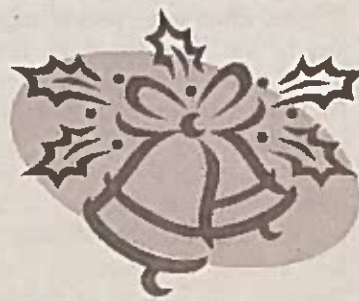
Rachael,
Merry Christmas! I want you
to know that I really enjoy
being your lab partner!
Matt

Andrew,
Happy Hanukah!
Helen



Helene,
Merry Christmas! You're the
best!
Love,
Andrew

Ekaterina,
Join Slavic Heritage Club!
Your Secret Admirer



Brandon C.
Merry Christmas baby and
Happy New Year. I can't
wait to spend the New Year
with you. Love you.
Erica T.

Alex Griff,
Merry Christmas! Have a
happy new year!
Jesse Wills

Third Period,
Merry Christmas and Happy
New Year! Enjoy your break!
Mr. Ferri

Everyone,
I hope everyone has a great
break and a Happy New
Year!
Eric Larobina

Nayson,
Merry Christmas! Enjoy
your break!!
Griff

Rachel Rosado,
Merry Christmas sexy legs!
Keep looking good. Hope
you get everything you want.
P.S. "It was hard!!"
Josh Castillo

Tali,
Have a Happy Hanukah.
Love always,
Brian
Josh Castillo,
Merry Christmas bro!
Thanks for everything,
you're the best! BFF
JC

Rachie Rosado,
Merry Christmas Poot
Have a holly jolly Christmas
Love you my little fallback
JC

Sam Blank,
Happy Christmas. There, tv
holidays covered. And Sco
too. I'm sorry my brother's
strumpet.
Laura Sanzo

Merry X-mass to Gu's fu
Happy Holidays to the ma
ried couple Andrew and
Helene. Shout out to Din
Donk. Hey Kev, "She IM'
me first." Merry Holidays.
Anonymous

Happy Holidays everyon
Make the most of winter!
Scofe

The SHS Girl's Track
Team,
Happy Holidays! Don't fo
get to run during Christm
vacation!

Gwen
Stephanie and Stephanie:
Merry Christmas, have fun.
Kevin

Steph Mac
JA Mentors- Jason, Su
and Raffi,
Thank you for mentorin
DECA students with th
Junior Achievement Succes
Skills program. Wishing a
of you a happy holiday se
son.

Howard Levy



Messages For The Holiday Season

Rachel,
Happy Christmakah!!
Samantha

Jack,
Happy Chanukah Boobie.
Your gift is coming...
Love,
Rachel

**My Wonderful 5th Period
AP European History Carolina,**



Happy Holidays, you ho ho ho!
Amanda

The United States of America, including its provinces,
Happy Holidays, many wishes, Happy New Year.
Azi

I can't wait to spend time with you. Merry Christmas! I love you.
Matt

Buchy,
I'm looking forward to taking the voyage of the **Mimi!** Happy Hanukkah!
Cortney

Jennie,
Jennie is the best newspaper person ever.
Melissa

Sam,
I love you man. Lisa- you'd better watch out.
Dane

Lilia,
Life isn't about getting what you want, it's about wanting what you have. So even though you don't have a boyfriend, I want you to know that I love you.
Darline

I'd like to wish all my friends and teachers Happy Holidays.
Vaso

I'd like to wish Jenny, Ruth, Ali and everyone else Happy Holidays.
Stacey
Happy Holidays to Stacey,

Jessica, Yassmarie and to all that I forgot, sorry... but you know I love you guys.
Jenny

My sister and friend,
Happy Holidays to you all, have a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year. I hope you all live to see many more to come.
Love always,
Tony

Happy Holidays to all my teachers and all my people.
Cody

Period 3 Marine Biology,
Happy Holidays to my favorite class. You all are the reasons I come to work everyday.
Mr. Buchbinder

Exim,
Thanks for being a wonderful DECA president. I admire your leadership qualities, have a great holiday.
Howard Levy

Ema,
You're a great store manager and I appreciate all the work you do for the DECA club. Much of our store success is due to your hard work. Have a great holiday.



Howard Levy

Typa and Ashka,

Thanks for all of your work and management of the store during period 3 and for "piper" being a good treasurer.
Howard Levy

All DECA Store workers,
Thanks for all your efforts, hard work, and integrity. We are looking forward to doing community service through your efforts.
Howard Levy

Erica,
I love you sooo much. Have a great Christmas! BFFAE (Best friends at Erica's, LOL)
Steph M

Colleen,
Have a great Christmas! I'll always remember when we stayed up to 6, and wrote "the list" LOL. One week and 1 minute apart.
Steph M

Steph,
Hope you have a great Christmas! Your feet are very sexy. I like to eat chicken LOL. Many more inside jokes.
Steph D

Caitlin,
Merry Christmas- Drive-thru and the jokes. Michael J and "Beat It!" LOL Luv ya!
Steph

Mylinh,
Merry Christmas! I love Alias! I call Michael Vartan, Ewan McGregor and Orlando Bloom. LOL Good luck with your track season.
Steph and Steph

Jess,
Merry Christmas!

Steph
Amy,
My favorite person and writer on The Round Table staff. She always finds time to give DECA and other clubs a venue for expressing opinions and insights for SHS. Wishing Amy and Matt a happy holiday.
Howard Levy



All SHS students and staff,
Wishing you and yours an enjoyable and happy holiday, se ya next year!
Mr. Mecca and Pat

Steph Mac,
Hey Steph, wishing you a merry Christmas. Have fun with Tim!
Kevin

Stephanie D,
Have a merry Christmas!
Jan

Steph Mac,
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I love you so much, BFF. Cheers! LOL
Steph D.

Tim F,
Merry Christmas! MWA X9
Steph Mac

Class,
Best Wishes for the holiday season.
Mr. Terlizzo

My Diligent 4th Period AP European History Class,
Best Wishes for the holiday season.
Mr. Terlizzo

My Amazing 1st period AP European History Class,
Best Wishes for the holiday season.
Mr. Terlizzo

Rachel,
Thanks for the apple juice! For holiday fun visit www.bleachedreality.com.
Tom

Meaghan,
Can you believe the year is half over? I sure can!! Have a merry Christmas and a happy new year. Say hi to Limone for me!
Jack

Rachel,

New Drivers' Tips May Ease Initial Anxiety

Eric Gu
Staff Writer

Almost everyone will receive their license during their four years at Stamford High. Driving is a stepping-stone toward independence and opens doors by breaking down former obstacles. For some, receiving their license is quite emotional. It's an experience to cherish because in our society, it is the closest thing to getting wings. Here are some tips to make this experience the most it can be.

1. Show Respect.
2. Take things slowly- whether it's the vision test or the driving, by taking it slowly not only are you able to absorb one of the best days of your life so that you can cherish it for a long time to come, you also exhibit a careful attitude

Mid Term Exams

It is hard to imagine at this time of the year, but in less than three weeks after students return to school in 2004, they will be faced with mid term exams. Exams are scheduled to begin on January 20, the Tuesday following the Martin Luther King holiday.

Tuesday, Jan 20

Per 1 exam 7:45 - 9:35
Per 2 exam 9:45 - 11:35

Wednesday, Jan 21

Per 3 exam 7:45 - 9:35
Per 4 exam 9:45 - 11:35

Thursday, Jan 22

Per 5 exam 7:45 - 9:35
Per 6 exam 9:45 - 11:35

Friday, Jan 23

Per 7 exam 7:45 - 9:35
Makeups 9:45 - 11:35

Makeup exams may only be taken with required excuse notes.

which will make the driving part much easier.

3. Try and do the best you can on the knowledge test. A perfect score will definitely ease the driving portion of the exam. Doing well on the knowledge test creates a subconscious message to your tester that you actually prepared.

4. Try and book a test date on a weekday morning when most of your peers are busy in school studying. AKA never go on a Saturday. It's worth missing a school day. Less people means a shorter line, which equals less anxiety and time for you to have a nervous breakdown.

5. While taking the practical part of the driving test, go at a speed of 20-25 miles per hour. Try to stay at exactly 25 mph. This will help because you won't have to keep focusing on the speed limit signs. Chances are, your driving skills will look much better if you stay at a constant speed as opposed to speeding up and slowing down all the time. 20 -

25 mph is the ideal speed because it's okay to go over the speed limit by ten units; the tester might ask you to slow down, but he won't fail you unless you go any higher. On the other hand, you shouldn't go any slower than 10 mph below the speed limit either. It's highly unlikely that you will be required to drive in a fast lane.

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Junior Achievement Proves Challenging, Worthwhile

Harrison Abramowitz
Staff Writer

For many high school students, college is an important issue. Everyone knows that grades are important, but many wonder if they are involved enough in after school activities. Colleges, as many know, are more prone to accept well-rounded and assertive applicants who are involved in their communities. As college looms right around the corner, I have had worries that I was not involved enough in extracurricular activities. So I decided to take the initiative and get involved. I have found that not all things that look good on your application or tran-

script have to be a hassle in your life. On the contrary, you can enjoy these activities and in the process, hopefully learn meaningful life lessons.

My journey to get involved began at the start of this school year. A woman came to speak in my Social Studies class, asking whether anyone would like to take part in an activity called Junior Achievement (JA). She explained that the program separated high school students into companies who would be responsible for coming up with a business plan and running their own company. The idea sounded interesting and I figured that if I wanted to get involved in an activity, at least I should have a fun time doing it, and this sound-

ed good!

So I went to the meetings on

"...if you want to play a major role in the company and want to invest a lot of time in it, you can... If you would rather just sit back and be more of an observer, you are allowed to do so"

Wednesdays at Pitney Bowes and started to get really involved. At

the first meeting, I decided to run for company president and ended up winning. This instantly put me in a position of importance and responsibility, which also gave me the opportunity to get the most out of the program. My company, JAMMED, decided to sell items with personalized lettering or pictures on them, such as shirts, mouse pads, calendars, etc. These gifts were geared for the holiday season and made great presents for loved ones. When we started with the company, the first couple meetings were so great that I truly looked forward to the next one. Everyone was having fun and things seemed to be running smoothly. But as usual, activities like this become tedious and bothersome. One reason for this was the fact that as president, I had to worry about many more things than most of the other participants in the program—things like production and teamwork.

And yet, that's another good thing about the program, if you want to play a major role in the company and want to invest a lot of time in it, you can. However, if you would rather just sit back and be more of an observer, you are allowed to do so.

Although JA is almost over for this year, I would like to encourage anyone who really wants to get involved in something that has the promise of being eventful and enjoyable to sign up for JA next year because this could be what you are looking for. Overall, this program has brought me a bit of energy and enthusiasm this semester. I do encourage anyone out there who is looking for something different to try the Junior Achievement experience. Although it is a challenge in the short term, the lessons learned from it can go a long way down the road. At least give it a try—I did.

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*The Staff of
The Round Table
wishes everyone
a happy
and joyous holiday
season,
and best wishes
for a healthy and
fruitful New Year*

Marilyn Manson's Metamorphosis Complete in "mOBSCENE"

Justin Cymbal
Arts and Entertainment Editor

Marilyn Manson is both a band and a man. Born Brian Warner in Canton, Ohio, Manson combined the names of Marilyn Monroe, a voluptuous pin-up starlet and pop-culture icon, and Charles Manson, the infamous serial killer and cult leader, into his notorious stage name. The name is symbolic; a contrast of beauty and ugliness...a relationship personified by the band's new album, titled *The Golden Age of Grotesque*.

The band first reared their ugly head in Tampa Bay, Florida, where they delivered a crude mix of gothic rock, metal, and industrial tape loops and sampling. Manson's lyrics tackled the most controversial social issues at the heart of American society, "exploring the limits of censorship", as Manson himself put it, along the way. The band's first album, *Portrait of an American Family*, was a mockery of American pop-culture. The rampant consumerism, tabloid frenzies, and political controversy of everyday life were twisted into a sonic monstrosity of industrial and gothic rock. They released the remix EP *Smells Like Children* in 1995, which included a cover of the Eurythmic's "Sweet Dreams".

1996's *Antichrist Superstar* was the pinnacle of the band's success. A nihilistic account of Warner's transformation into the fictional *Antichrist Superstar* (a kind of Nietzschean "uberman"), the album reached the zenith of industrial metal, drawing heavily from earlier acts such as *Ministry* and *Big Black*. Deliberately controversial, Manson set to work burning bibles and sexually assaulting security guards, as well as becoming a Reverend of the Satanic Church; all in the name of infamy. Furious right wing and Christian groups only aggravated the "problem", increasing Manson's notoriety through their protests. Critics accused Manson of being an "Alice Cooper for the 90's"; a deliberately shocking stage act, as well as a limited artist, unable to step out from the shadow of his

mentor, Trent Reznor, whose tight production was responsible for much of Manson's sound.

In response, Marilyn Manson underwent a bizarre transformation for their fourth album. In true David Bowie fashion, the singer adopted an androgynous, drugged out image, and drew inspiration from science fiction. *Mechanical Animals* tells the story of an alien being that came down to earth, and the rock 'n' roll "dopestars", Omega and the *Mechanical Animals*. A strange breed of glam and classic rock song writing, the album was a quality record despite its risky deviation of style. Apparently sensing that he had gone too far, Manson returned to his trademark spook-show industrial rock



Manson.com

Marilyn Manson in one of his more unique appearances.

for the incredible Hollywood, a close contender to *Antichrist Superstar*, which focused on obscure religious themes that were drawn mostly from Manson's strict Christian upbringing.

Now, Marilyn Manson returns to our ears with a strange new album. *The Golden Age of Grotesque* draws heavily from *Burlesque*, an artistic and theatrical movement that fostered in pre-World War II Germany. Characterized by massive indulgence and recklessness, *Burlesque* was the German predecessor to Manson's own crusade against conservative America. The intro, "Thaetre" sucks you in with its clanking factory sounds and disturbing atmosphere, reminiscent of the earliest and most primitive indus-

trial acts, such as *Throbbing Gristle*. "This is the New Sh*t" and "The Bright Young Things" follow a bizarre attempt at uniting a heavy rock chorus with hip-hop synths and bass lines that sounds unlike anything Manson has yet done. A successful hip-hop/industrial marriage was achieved by the now-defunct British act *Godflesh* long ago in its dub sessions, but continues to be ruined by nu-metal bands that aren't content until they mutilate both styles. "mOBSCENE" is a classic metal anthem about the underground *Burlesque* culture, and one of the best on the album, with a chorus similar to that of *Faith No More*'s "Be Aggressive". "Doll-Dagga Buzz-Buzz Ziggety-Zag" and "Ka-Boom Ka-Boom" reveal Manson's newfound interest in onomatopoeia and simple, obviously catchy lyrics, which is surprising considering his articulate response to allegations considering the Columbine murders. "Sl*tgarden" is hardly original, but contains the ingenious line: "I memorize the words to the porno

movies, this is a new religion to me." "Obsequy (The Death of Art)" employs a sad piano melody that is inspired by *Burlesque* performance, with a shifting soundscape background that serves as an intriguing end to the album.

The *Golden Age of Grotesque*, much like *Mechanical Animals*, is a serious creative risk on Manson's part. Where *Mechanical Animals* fused a bizarre combination of funk, glam, and classic rock with Manson's typical style, *The Golden Age of Grotesque* tried to do the same with hip-hop and nu-metal. The result is somewhat cliché, as Manson almost becomes a parody of a host of young acts that possess a fraction of the band's skill. The lyrics are not as controversial and socially active as Manson's usual style, and seem almost beneath his

intellect at times. Ultimately, it seems that Marilyn Manson is trying to reinvent himself by absorbing the mainstream radio sound into his act. Unfortunately, that sound is stale and overdone,

and most Manson fans are left waiting for the return of the true *Antichrist Superstar*.

Best Tracks: "mOBSCENE", "Spade", "Obsequy (The Death of Art)" Overall Rating: ***

The Diary of Alicia Keys: An Easy Listening Life

Anna Nyakana
Staff Writer

Alicia Keys is the fusion of R&B, hip-hop, classical, jazz and blues whose debut album, "Songs in A Minor" was a breath of fresh air for R&B in 2001. She went on to win 5 Grammy's, 2 American Music Awards, 2 Soul Train Awards, 4 nominations in the prestigious MOBO awards, 8 nominations in the Billboard Awards; the list goes on. And now she's back with her long anticipated sophomore album titled "The Diary of Alicia Keys." "I knew I wanted it to be in a diary form, because that's the way I write my music. It's the way I explain to myself honestly what I feel, because I'm good at putting on a smile. Sometimes I fool myself! I turn around and I'm like, 'Wait, what do I feel?' Through these songs, I look at myself in the mirror. I say, 'What is it? Tell me, right now,'" said Alicia to VH1.

This album brings us back to the 70's and to the present in a way that no matter who you are, you're gonna hold this album close to you as if it truly is your diary or thoughts. This album also brings together Rakim and Nas, two MC's who have NEVER been on the same record before. When asked about the process of her second album, by VH1, Alicia stated, "People are dying to hear me say that there was a crazy amount of pressure and I was suffering under the weight on my shoulders, but I didn't feel like that. For me to put that on myself before I'd even gotten out what I had inside of me? I'm defeating myself! And I'm not defeating myself, see? I know I'm getting better with time. I'm like wine, you know? I just get sweeter!"



KEYS.COM

Keys' single "You Don't Know My Name" has skyrocketed to number 2 on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks, to 15 on Billboard's Hot 100, IN A SINGLE WEEK! But the one thing everyone wants to know about this single, besides if she and MosDef really did share a kiss (which she denies), is if her new single is a true story. AND IT IS! "I was observing this one gentleman from across the room, as you do in parties. He came up to me and said, 'I would love it if you called me.' But he wasn't able to tell me his name and I wasn't able to tell him [my] name, because something was happening and we were leaving. I really liked that guy and his flow, so I decided to give him a call. I opened up the number the next morning and I couldn't read what he wrote! I felt really upset about that. That's the official version of "You Don't Know My Name!" And "The Diary of Alicia Keys" is nothing less. Instead of treading over the exact same grounds of "Songs in A minor" she digs even deeper, backwards even, bringing us this retro vibe that is a welcome relief from the overproduced pop and R&B that's out right now.

The O.C.: Proving Rich People Have Problems Too

Meg Machcinski
Arts and Entertainment Editor

Stephanie Dinella
Staff Writer

What are you doing Wednesday night at 9 pm? Well we of course, are in complete 'O.C.-mode,' as we like to call it. We put everything aside, heat up some popcorn, grab the soda, and, oh, most importantly, set the VCR! Like true O.C. fans, we squeal when Ryan woos Marissa, laugh at Seth's witty humor, and bitch and moan about Julie Cooper's manipulative actions that just make you want to yell at the TV.

So for those who have been living under a rock, let's recap. Ryan, played by newcomer Benjamin Mackenzie, steals a Camaro, influenced by his older brother, and gets himself in trouble with the law. A public defender, Sandy Cohen (David Gallagher), grabs his case because he whole-heartedly sympathizes with the boy who has a similar past as he does. He takes him into his home and observes Ryan's bad boy reputation. Sandy's son, Seth Cohen, quickly takes a liking to Ryan because they both do not fit in with the popular, rich and snooty, lifestyle of the O.C. Ryan develops a major crush on Marissa Cooper (Mishca Barton), the girl next door. Meanwhile, Seth falls hard

for Summer, Marissa's best friend. Together they pursue the girls, though facing conflicts of interest: Marissa has a boyfriend, and Summer fears losing her high profile image by dating Seth.

Things start to heat up when Marissa and Ryan develop some chemistry for each other. Ryan then gets into several fights with her boyfriend Luke. Seth, on the other hand, continues to obsess over Summer, but she doesn't give him the time of day. Nevertheless, they all become friends and run into each other everywhere they go. Ironically, they decide to take a vacation to Tijuana together at the end of the summer, as the season finale. The final summer episode is a total cliffhanger to keep us on board, as if we'd ever give up watching.

The new season opens with Marissa in the hospital. She had overdosed on painkillers and shots of alcohol during the trip because she found her boyfriend at a dance club cheating on her. Furthermore, she discovered that her parents were planning a divorce. She realizes that Ryan is really the guy for her, and decides to be with him, regardless of her mother's resistance. Her mother tries to send her away to an institution after the incident in Tijuana, lying that both she and her husband had made the decision to send her. When Marissa

finds out that her mom had never even confirmed anything with her father she becomes fed up with her mom's deceit. She escapes the hospital with the help of Ryan and Seth. In resolution, she moves in with her dad, where she knows she will be happy. Now, Summer slowly admits she does like Seth. This becomes more apparent when competition is

to help win Summer over, but in the process begins to like Seth herself. Summer, spurred by the rivalry, gives into her feelings for Seth and tries to steal him away. At first Seth being an utter air-head doesn't even acknowledge Ana's strong feelings, being too wrapped up with Summer. Gradually, he realizes both girls are into him. He decides to have

his "fun" with both girls, but regrets to acknowledge their feelings and is forced to choose. At the big Christmas party the final decision went down. Seth was given a homemade comic book from Ana, and a 'Wonder Woman' seductive getup from Summer as presents to win him over. Both girls soon realize what they are doing, and feel ridiculous. Seth needs to make a decision. Seth

ends up, to our surprise, choosing neither in order to spare hurting one of them. He values their friendships more.

We say O.C. is the new '90210,' "but really, it's ten times

better!" Watch it once and you'll become hooked. Thursday morning this is all we (and everyone we know) talks about. First off, Benjamin Mackenzie is so hot! His beautiful blue eyes, gorgeous sandy blonde hair, and buff physique, keep us enthralled throughout the show-no joke. He makes it worth watching. He is a rising star with incredible potential. And, as we said before, he is HOT! So what else do we like about the show? Well, we really like Ben Mackenzie. But on a more serious note, the show uses issues teenagers deal with: friendship, crushes, divorce, sex, drugs, alcohol, and peer pressure. The show has become a smash hit, a phenomenon that does have staying power. It's one of the most captivating shows on television right now, undoubtedly.



Cast members of the OC have managed to put together the latest FOX hit, Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

theoc.com

Before the episode on Wednesday, December 4, 2003, we polled 53 people about Seth's conflict with Anna and Summer

Who do you think Seth will chose as his girl?
57% Summer
39% Anna
6% Neither of them

Although the minority was right, it was interesting to see what people thought about this conflict!

Members of Stamford High School's student newspaper, *The Round Table*, wish all of our readers, advertisers, subscribers and friends the very best of this holiday season. May your holidays be times of warmth and good friends, renewal and reflection, comfortable conversations and quiet insights.

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Wrestling Sets Out for an Improved Season

Bobby Tournas
Staff Writer

Last season the Black Knights wrestling team was one of the most overlooked programs in our school. It was a program that held six players who were All-FCIAC Honorable Mention or better, including one all-state wrestler. This team pulled together a 17-8 record to close out the season and surprised many.

Many have ignored the sport in the past due to the lack of knowledge when it comes to the rules. Wrestlers are paired based on weight classes. There are 14 weight classes ranging from 103 pounds all the way to 275 pounds. In a match there are three 2 minute periods where each wrestler attempts to pin each other or outscore the other in points. There are points given out for a variety of moves, including takedowns (2 points), and escapes (1 point). If a wrestler pins the other one he/she earns his team 6 points towards his/her team for the final score. If a wrestler defeats his opponent by 15 points (also known as a Technical Fall) it is worth 5 points for the team's final score. Once every weight class has wrestled the final score is totaled and a winner is announced.

This year however may be more of a rebuilding year. The Black Knights, coached by Tim Donnelly Sr., will be led this year by senior co-captains Jeff Levene (All-FCIAC second team) and Alex

Flaig. The two will try to bring experience to a young roster. The roster is young due to several seniors who have since departed including starters Tim Donnelly, Jon Gale, Matt Ortegon, Jed Sosnowitz, Alex Sanguinetti, and Sam Pomerantz. And with junior starter Dan Mark out with injury the Black Knights have several open slots to fill. Key returning players who could be factors this season are seniors Alex Roberts, Mario Marroquin, and juniors Christian Rodriguez and Bobby Fanti. Also returning for her second year is senior, Darline Auguste one of the only females on the team. When asked about her role on the team this year she stated, "It is only my second year but I'm used to being one of the only girls. I am looking forward to the competition."

This group of wrestlers is looking to avenge a few defeats as well as maintain their role as City Champions. Although it may be hard to avenge defeats like the one against State powerhouse Danbury, the Knights believe they could definitely defeat teams that narrowly beat them, such as Trumbull (who won 39-38). In terms of maintaining a solid record Jeff Levene believes, "We lost a lot of key wrestlers last year, but even with a young team if we practice hard we will win our share of matches."

The Black Knight Wrestling team may be in for their share of hardships this season, but with the help of a few experienced wrestlers they could be on their way to another silent winning season.



Harrison Abramowitz
Staff Writer

Last year, the Black Knights Hockey Team had one of their better seasons in a very long time. With a 20-4 record, they were able to gain a lot of respect in many people's eyes throughout the FCIAC. Some of the success can be placed on standout goalie Tommy Domanick, who played exceptionally well in his first year as a starter. He was rewarded for his prowess in net with a spot on the All-State 2nd team. The Round Table's Harrison Abramowitz recently sat down with Tommy to discuss the team's hopes for the season and his increased role as captain.

Round Table: What made your first year as a starter such a successful one?

Tommy Domanick: Well, most of the credit has to go to

Hockey Team Finds a New Leader in Goalie Domanick

seniors, Doug and Brett, who made things for me a lot easier and made me feel comfortable right from the start. It is so important to have that comfort level when playing goalie, the nerves go away and the trust of your teammates goes up, therefore your skills as an individual increase dramatically.

RT: Because the team had such a good season last year, do you feel that this team has a shot of building on last season and getting to the next level? In addition, do you think that you, as an individual, can improve upon last year's season?

TD: We definitely have a shot at being an improved team. We have many returning players, which is a big plus because everyone has played with each other before and is on the same page when on the ice. As for me, losing last year's seniors Doug and Brett is a blow to the team but I am sure

there are many players on this year's team that can step in and fill their void. However, I can't be overly optimistic, which is why I am ready to see whatever comes at me on the ice. If it is more shots on goal than last year, so be it. I don't mind working a bit harder, as long as it helps the team grind out the "W".

RT: Now that you are a captain, do you feel your role on the team has changed at all?

TD: Because I am a captain on this team, I feel that there is a certain responsibility of setting a good example for the younger players on this team, who look up to me. When you're a captain, you have to lead by example and if you work hard during practice, others follow your lead. A good work ethic is a very important thing to me, because if you work hard during practice, it spills over into the game and that is how games are won.

Girls Grapple With New Opportunity

Chris Jimenez
Staff Writer

In many schools across the country a few sports have become co-ed. Here at Stamford High, wrestling is no longer just a guy sport. Last year, Junior Darline Auguste wrestled a full season with the boys' wrestling team. When a couple of the wrestlers were asked about the female presence, they said it was cool, they also stated that Darlene was just like one of the guys.

There are certain sports girls can play, and other that they need to stay away from. One sport that girls could play without injuring themselves is wrestling. Wrestling is not physical enough for a girl to get hurt, although there is a significant amount of touching and grasping that does go on. The one sport that girls must stay away from is football. There is not enough room on the football field for girls; girls would just take a brutal beating

every time they step onto the field.

If I were to play football for Stamford high and I saw a girl on the opposing team, I wouldn't know what to do. I wouldn't be sure of whether to let her run by me or if I should hit her. I'm sure the majority of football players would also be undecided and wouldn't know what to do.

It's easier for a guy in wrestling because you can most likely overpower a girl and pin her down with ease. All you really have to do is just watch where you put your hands and make sure you don't hurt her. The last thing you want to be known for doing is hurting a girl playing on a boys' team. Also, one other thing you have to make sure of is that you win the match; losing to a girl is just unacceptable.

When a junior who is both a wrestler and a member of the football team at Stamford High School was recently asked for his thought, he stated that girls should have the same opportunity that guys have. If they feel they can and want to play a boys sport, then let them. Also,

when asked what he would do if he wrestled or opposed a girl in a football game, he said that he would treat her no differently than he would a guy. He would wrestle the girl just as if she were a guy, and hit her just as if she were a guy.

From a girl's point of view, one sophomore explained that if a girl wants to play then they should be able to. If they can take the pain of being in a physical sport with guys, then more power to them. But if they feel that they are getting too badly hurt then they can stop whenever they want.

When an informal poll of high school students was taken, 73% of the students said that girls should not be able to play boys' sports because of the risk that they can get hurt. Only 17% of the students said that girls should be able to play boys' sports because it's their choice. They should have the same chances that guys have. One student even commented that guys are allowed to cheerlead with the girls, so girls should be allowed to play boys' sports.

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Audience Concern Expressed Over Continuation of ESPN's *Playmakers*

Chris Jimenez
Staff Writer

If the names Leon Taylor, Demetrius Harris, and Eric Olcyk don't ring a bell, then I feel very sorry for you. If you don't know who those three people are then you missed out on the fall's best weekly show called *Playmakers*. *Playmakers* was ESPN's new dramatic series that was aired on Tuesday nights at 9 o'clock. In the opinion of ESPN.com, "*Playmakers* was ESPN Original Entertainment's first-ever dramatic series, a gritty ensemble chronicling the behind-the-scenes and off-the-field lives of the players, families, coaches and owner of a fictional professional football team. This lightning-paced series took the viewer beyond Sunday's glory, "good guy" endorsements, and super-jock celebrity."

Although the show was excellent, not everyone seems to have been very pleased with the way things were portrayed on TV. Tampa Bay Buccaneers Defensive Tackle Warren Sapp vows not to give interviews to ESPN because he, along with the rest of the NFL is angered by the actions that were

shown on the TV show. The NFL is trying to stop ESPN from airing a second season of the hit show next year.

The show was supposed to be like a real NFL football team, but was made fictional by creating a team called the Cougars. Leon Taylor was the name of one of the main characters; Leon was a 30-year-old Running Back who had to prove he still had what it takes to start in place of the rookie phenomenon Demetrius Harris. While struggling to see playing time, Leon got caught up in a few domestic disputes with his wife and the show portrayed the obstacles he had to face trying to get past this situation without the involvement of the owner who is trying to force him into retirement.

Another main character, Demetrius Harris (DH), was also the star of the show. Omar Gooding played the Harris role. DH had many things to overcome as well, especially a drug abuse problem. DH was the rookie who the owner always made sure was taken care of. He never let it be known that DH was in trouble, so when it came to DH's turn to be drug tested by the "piss man," Harris was ready and had a minor

surgery to flush the crack-cocaine out of his system. DH's substance abuse problem went as far as his needing to get high at half time during one of his games.

It is understandable why the NFL would have a problem with this show, because the sorts of problems that they depicted on *Playmakers* are the sorts of problems that really occur today in our National Football League.

Another group of people angry at *Playmakers* are the avid ESPN viewers. Some say it is turning into MTV and they fear ESPN is going to stop showing actual sports and run all created TV shows.

From another point of view, many are angered by the rumors that season 1 of *Playmakers* is going to be all they're going to get. The NFL is pressuring ESPN to stop the production of a second season. Junior Bobby Tournas explained how he felt on this issue, "I think that the NFL should not take a TV series so seriously unless they think they have something to hide."

Tournas says what many believe to be absolutely correct, the NFL shouldn't want the show to end if the things they were showing weren't true. *Playmakers* went as far as creating a character named Letrell Hawkins, a quick, very agile black quarterback who can run for a 90 yard touchdown. Any football fan knows that Letrell Hawkins is supposed to be none other than the Atlanta Falcon's quarterback Michael Vick. One thing that many do give to the NFL is that ESPN made the characters a little too easy to guess which real NFL player they were really talking about, but they feel that is the only justifiable reason for them to be mad.

If a second season of *Playmakers* is not aired many viewers are going to be very angry and all the fingers will likely be pointed towards the NFL. In the fans' eyes the NFL would be the only thing in the way of knowing whether the Cougars make another playoff run next year. The NFL's upset that ESPN's highly successful dramatic series let the struggles of the players and coaches be known publicly, and to the NFL, the show was a slap in the face.

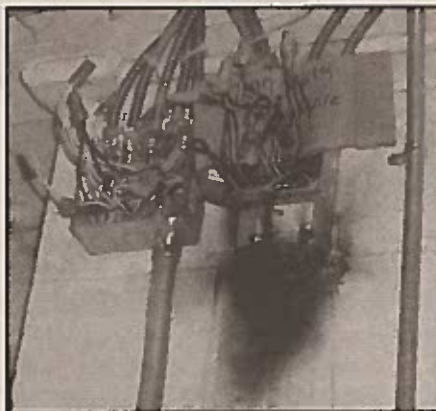


Photo Of The Issue....
When your mother told you electricity and water don't mix, she meant it: Someone doing Code Compliance rewiring at Stamford High School didn't listen as this high voltage circuit was placed...OOPS!... in the midst of a long existing roof leak. But the blueprint said...

Track Team Seeks to Run Circles Around Competition

Stephanie Dinella
Staff Writer

Just imagine yourself racing around the track as fast you can with time passing quickly but everything is in slow motion. Your teammates are on the sideline cheering but it's all a blur. All you can think about is getting to end, crossing the finish line where you will be able to breath. This is what track is like and that is why it is not a sport for everyone. Most people do not understand what track is all about. It is a lot more than running around a track a couple of times and getting tired. It is about training hard and pushing yourself.

Junior, Mylinh Hoang states, "A lot of people underestimate how hard track is and think it's so easy. But in all honesty, it's probably one of the hardest sports because it's an individual sport-you have to be dedicated, hard working, and be self-motivated... no one can help you. It's all up to you and how well you perform". The Girl's Indoor Track Coaches, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. Maovero leave it up to the girls to train. It will show in the meets who is working hard and who is not.

Coach Brown says, "This is the largest and youngest team we've ever had. The team is mostly all freshman and sophomores, with a few juniors". There are about 48 members on the team, many of which have great potential. The team is broken down into three groups, the sprinters, the middle distance runners, and the distance runners. We have many runners in each area, but we are strongest in the middle distance section.

The meets are what really count. The meets are co-ed but the boys and the girls alternate races, they do not race each other. They are usually very long, three to four

hours, and are held at either Wilton or Staples. The good news is that the runners get time to relax before and after their event, and have plenty of time in between, especially if they race more than once. Most members of the team only race in one individual event but some race in the relays, which are held at the end of the meet.

There are only four regular season meets: December 20, January 10, January 17, and January 24. All of the meets are on a Saturday, which is one of the advantages to indoor track. It will not conflict with after school activities and although it may seem like a short season, some people may qualify for the division Championship that is being held on Saturday January 3, 2004 in Wilton.

Indoor track can help you train for other sports as well. Sophomore and distance runner, Danielle Angotta agrees that, "Indoor track (and outdoor track) are great ways to stay in shape during the winter, and spring months for any sport you might play.

Field Hockey requires a lot of running and endurance and personally I find track to be a huge help while training for the field hockey season. While track requires a lot of hard work and dedication it is also a great way to have fun with your friends while making new ones. The meets are long, but there is always something interesting to do while cheering on your teammates. The coaches are great, they can sometimes be strict, but it is only for the best. I enjoy track a lot and hope others do just as much as me. We need a lot of motivation to get through the season. It is different from all the other sports because you do not need a special skill to do it, just determination. The girls who practice are those who perform well in the meets.

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