

The Round Table

Volume XVIII, Number 1

Stamford High School Stamford, Connecticut 06902

October 13, 1989

New 'ninth grade program' designed to help students adjust to high school

By Len Wolfson
Assistant Editorials Editor
& Rachel Loonin
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Many up-perclassmen are unaware of it, but there is a tremendous change occurring in Stamford High School. The change is within the structure of the freshman class, the class of 1993. This year, those students who would have normally been placed in a 9-2 or a 9-3 group are being placed in a new program. This unique and innovative "Freshman Program" is designed to make their transition from middle school to high school easier.

All students will agree that this change (from middle to high school) is one of the hardest and most frightening ones which they go through during the course of their school lives. Mr. Ferrara, the administrator in charge of this program, is highly optimistic about this concept. He said, "The purpose of the program



OPINION

New ninth grade program should benefit students

This year a new program is being introduced at Stamford High School. It is a system of grouping the freshmen students in the two and three groups, not unlike the junior high cog system. Students in each group share a set of teachers for their core academic classes, elective classes will still be taken with the rest of the school, so the program doesn't run the risk of being too insular.

We at *The Round Table* support this program for several reasons. The transition from middle school to high school can be difficult and overwhelming. Many students find it hard to adjust to the freedom and lack of personal attention in high school. This can lead to students skipping classes, dropping out, and neglecting schoolwork. The new cog system hopes to catch these "at risk" pupils before this can happen.

Because teachers will share all the same students, they can discuss their progress and monitor their attendance. This added structure provides disciplined support system for students. It is hoped that after getting over the transition ninth grade year, these students will be set on the right track until graduation.

Freshman year is a pivotal one for everyone, not just those in the two and three groups. Perhaps in the future the freshman program could be extended to include the rest of the ninth grade.

Students must become environmentally aware

One problem that all Americans must face is how to preserve and help maintain our environment. With the recent discoveries concerning the depletion of the ozone layer, people should be concerned, because it not only affects us, but generations to come. In order to help counter this potentially devastating situation, we must all pitch in. But how can we successfully solve this problem when even Stamford High contributes to it?

The main culprit contributing to this problem is the styrofoam products that our cafeteria employs. The chemical compound chlorofluorocarbon is found in styrofoam. It is released when the used styrofoam is incinerated with the rest of our garbage. This chemical has been directly linked to the depletion of the ozone layer. Before the ozone completely disappears and allows dangerous radiation to enter our atmosphere, our government must do something about it.

The Round Table believes that Stamford should take the first step and demand that all cafeteria products be either biodegradable or free of the chlorofluorocarbons.

Do we need the national anthem here?

By Barbara Antonelli
Staff Reporter

Twelve hundred SHS students sat in their first period classes as if it were any other day, waiting for *SHS on the Air*. What made September 13 different? Suddenly, something highly unusual happened. At first, the students weren't sure what it was, but as the music coming from the intercom was recognized, most students looked around their rooms to find our nation's flag.

Some raised their hands to their hearts, others stood quietly, but nearly everyone was astonished by the music. The sudden, unexpected, playing of the National Anthem stirred feelings, both positive and negative, among the listeners.

"I felt like I was in third grade again," said senior Nancy Kaye, "but I am glad it came back. I hope they continue to play it."

Mr. Nast agreed. "Of course we will continue the playing of the National Anthem. I really don't know why it was taken off the program in the first place."

Apparently, the National Anthem was omitted from the morning program in the sixties when the youth of the nation were in a state of rebellion. The students began to refuse to salute the flag and the administration, being very patriotic, tried to force the issue. Things became chaotic so the easiest thing to do was get rid of the practice altogether.

Although today there are students who don't believe in pledging the flag, due to culture or

religion, there are others who become, in the view of most people, downright disrespectful. "I was trying hard to pay attention but there were kids in my class who were laughing and mocking the song, making it difficult for me," commented senior Sandra Cataldo, "I think if you don't agree with something, you shouldn't be rude and infringe on the rights of others."

Senior Emily Brown also agreed with the return of the National Anthem. "I feel very proud. I guess we all missed it, but just didn't realize it."

Others felt that it was a waste of time and that most students will become bored and disrespectful as the year progresses. Senior Justin Hough stated, "I think it's okay to play it in the morning, but only every other day."

As crazy as that may seem, the idea is being taken under consideration. With the new-found popularity of the Alma Mater, caused by the Class of 1989 there has been talk of rotating the Anthem with the Alma Mater.

The idea of bringing back the National Anthem was a decision made by last year's Student Council. The Student Council made this choice because they felt it was important to have an opportunity to pay respect to a nation that allows its citizens the freedom to make their own choices. If it were not for the freedom and liberty the National Anthem represents, then people would not have the chance to make these decisions for themselves.

It is out of respect for the United States that students take a mere minute and a half in the morning to say "Thank you."

The move to legalize drugs is on

By Mark Sherman
Assistant Features Editor

Imagine walking into your drug store and right between the Tylenol and Flintstones vitamins are marijuana and cocaine. This is no joke. This could happen if "recreational" drugs were legalized. Legalizing drugs is an old idea that is becoming more popular among politicians, professors, and citizens.

Right now America is involved in a worldwide drug crisis. Something must be done about drug law enforcement or we must give up altogether. This is a difficult situation and one in which there are few alternatives.

Why not legalize drugs like cocaine, marijuana, and heroin? Legalizing drugs would reduce violence and the economic crises in America. It would also lift a huge burden from police forces across the country.

Illegal drugs cause serious problems

Drug dealing, using, smuggling, and drug busting are causing many problems in America. Innocent people are being murdered by drug gangs. Violence is a big problem in our cities today. The drug laws and drug enforcement by our police lead to gang fights over drug turf, drug smuggling overseas (thus creating problems with other countries), drug related deaths of law enforcement officers, stealing, and drive-by shootings.

According to a *New York Times* article published July 27, 1989, "In New York City, Los Angeles, and Boston, the number of innocent bystander shootings soared from 41 in 1986 to 135 last year. It is probably due to the rise of crack and gang fights over turf." The article went on to say that "... modern drug gangsters are likely to react with aimless gunfire into crowds."

"History repeats itself" is true with the case of alcohol and drugs. In 1919, Prohibition was declared by the passing of the 18th Amendment. All forms of alcohol were illegal. As a result of this, gangsters and bootleggers smuggled in alcohol and sold it for large amounts of money. Kingpins like Al Capone ran rampant as the crime rate skyrocketed across America. This situation resembles today's. Our crime and violence rates are at their peaks. Back in the 1920's, "Save the Children" posters were advocated across the country. Again, this resembles today's "Just Say No" motto.

Finally, the government gave up Prohibition by passing the 21st Amendment. Alcoholism continues to be a problem, but it is being

fought with education and rehabilitation programs. Why not do the same with drugs? Turn drug addiction into a medical problem instead of a violent and deadly disaster.

Legalizing drugs would solve many problems. If drugs were legalized, the number of users would probably decrease. Milton Friedman, a highly respected free-market economist and a Nobel Prize winner said, "The harm that is done by drugs is caused by the fact that they are illegal. You would not have had a crack epidemic if it was legal."

Legalizing drugs could also help reduce the national deficit. According to a May 30, 1987 article in *Time* magazine, "Some of the \$8 billion spent on [drug] interdiction and local enforcement could be used for education and treatment which now receive less than \$500 million."

Drug enforcing takes up time of police. According to Joseph McNamara, Chief of Police in San Jose, California, "[My] department spends 80% of its time enforcing the drug law." This time could be used for solving murder cases or finding missing children.

In Stamford, Lieutenant Cronin of the police department estimates that "... about 75% of the crime in Stamford is in some way related to drugs."

Legalizing drugs could also help cancer victims fight their tragic disease. Arnold Trebach, a professor in the Department of Justice, Law, and Society at American University explained, "Heroin is an excellent sedative and pain killer. Also, marijuana is a big help in chemotherapy."

Cancer victims are being deprived of treatment that would make their painful, and often times fatal diseases easier to live with.

When drugs are legalized, the government could impose taxes on them as they do today with alcohol and tobacco. This money could go towards education about drugs, drug treatment programs, and rehabilitation programs.

Legalizing drugs would also impede organized crime. According to the *Time* article, "Cocaine and marijuana sales bring drug lords more than \$20 billion each year." Legalization could wipe out these gangs major source of income.

Legalizing drugs may seem like a radical idea now, but America has few alternatives. Drug addiction is a big problem, but it could be controlled. We have taken a problem and turned it into a national disaster. We must legalize drugs now. We must stop the violence because right now, for all the drug dealers and smugglers...crime does pay.

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The Round Table is published monthly (except July, August and September) by the Communications and Journalism classes. Press Room is located in Room 114, Stamford High School, 55 Strawberry Hill Ave.

OPINION

School grounds need better upkeep

By Sara Albrecht
Staff Reporter

Many articles have been written in the past about the condition of our school. The inside and the outside both have their bad traits; something may be done this time.

The first thing, we, as the students and visitors, see is the outside of our building, which right now is not in the best of shape. About the only thing that is kept up are the sports fields, and sometimes they aren't even attended to very well.

The school grounds have weeds growing everywhere, which takes away from SHS's potential beauty. Also, the bushes surrounding the school are never trimmed. And finally, the garbage which is seen outside is deplorable. We as students can help with litter control, but we have no place outside to put our waste. Garbage cans should be placed outside by the sports fields and by the bus area.

There are also things wrong with the interior of the school. Holes in the ceilings and walls are very common. In many classrooms there is at least one window that can't be opened because it is broken. The blinds on many windows are either broken or unusable and others are in very poor condition.

And, of course, there are always the

bathrooms. Granted, measures were taken last year to improve them, but they have mostly returned to their original state. Some may say it is because of the neglect by students, but there are things we can control.

Things such as flushing the toilets, and throwing the garbage in the proper place are tasks that we are all capable of doing properly, and we are certainly old enough to clean up after ourselves, so that the next person that comes along does not have to be disgusted.

Some things I believe are not our fault. Broken locks, toilet seats, and doors missing from the stalls are not students' responsibilities. Also a shortage of toilet paper is not our fault. The locks, toilet seats, and stall doors should be fixed and the toilet paper problem should not even exist.

Locker rooms need work

All of these problems are an embarrassment to student athletes and all of Stamford High when teams come here to compete. Junior Timna Sherman said, "It's hard to be proud of your school when it is in such bad condition. It is also embarrassing to have guests come into the school and see it like this especially since when we visit their schools, they seem presentable."

Ozone layer threatened by styrofoam

By Jen Fraulo
Assistant News Editor

Imagine summer. School is out. It's hot. You want to go to the beach. You don't understand this desire, for it requires immersing yourself with SPF-62 sunscreen and exhibiting ultra-violet-proof goggles and swimwear that date back to the '20's, in order to keep from being fried.

O.K., so this is an exaggeration, but this scenario is a potential reality, and it is not as distant as one might choose to believe.

The ozone layer protects us and other life forms from harmful ultra-violet rays. It is now in serious danger due to a host of destructive pollutants, namely the chemical compounds trapped inside styrofoam. The establishments which continually add to the chemical arsenal, do not help in this situation. Our school cafeteria uses styrofoam products.

The kitchen staff claims that styrofoam is actually environmentally cleaner than paper products because it can be chemically altered to form the common and natural component of our atmosphere. This, unfortunately, is irrelevant in our situation. What can be done isn't helpful if it isn't done. Connecticut, at this time, does not require, and therefore does not apply this chemical treatment to styrofoam and related materials. Rather, the wastes from our community, including our school, are mashed, dumped, buried, or incinerated. This con-

tributes 90% of the accumulating permanent non-biodegradable wastes and uncountable deadly ozone-eating chloroflourocarbon (CFC) molecules.

Because it takes about 15 years for these pollutants to reach the ozone layer, scientists are not yet able to predict the extent of damage that may be done. Most estimate that it will be disastrous; DuPont has begun exhaustive research on alternative products. However, the uncertainty factor prevents any government action, leading citizens to believe that they are not harmful. However, if we continue to dispose of them through burial or incineration, damage will be done.

Alternatives do exist. According to Mr. Krein, one of SHS's resident chemists, New Jersey residents are now required to separate and package classes of only recyclable trash for collection and recycling, with steep financial penalties facing those who fail to comply. This is the only way that the manufacture and use of disposable plastic and polystyrene products can be justified (Connecticut has a recycling law going into effect in 1991).

We must recognize that the potential long-term risks and their implications are far too serious to be disregarded on the sole basis of uncertainty. At home, we can avoid disposable goods, especially plastics and styrofoams. And at school, we can demand that our food is served responsibly, in environmentally safe containers.

Study hall policy should be changed

By Josh Weinstein
Staff Reporter

Throughout this year, one question will continuously be brought to mind, "Should students be allowed to leave school premises during their study halls?" There will never be a solution to the problem that will satisfy both the students and the administrators. Most students who have cars want to leave and get something to eat, or hang out in the parking lot. Most students feel that study hall is a waste of time because they don't do their homework in there anyway. Eric Lotstein said, "Study hall is plain and simple, a waste of time. We should be able to leave school."

The general consensus among the students is that they should be able to leave school during their study hall. But when Mr. Markosky was then asked about his views on the topic, his first words were "It is a Board of Education policy that all students remain in school from 7:50-2:00."

Mr. Markosky further elaborated. "The staff of Stamford High is responsible for the students from the beginning of first period to the end of last period. Although they cannot

schools in this area, but have failed due to the fact that they were unable to keep track of the students' whereabouts."

"At one point, Stamford High had a lounge with a ping pong table and a juke box. Unfortunately, students abused this privilege by skipping classes to be there instead."

Another attempt was a huge study hall with all the students in the cafeteria. This allowed them to be together with all their friends who also had study hall that period. Some students who were interested in doing their homework during their study hall complained that it was just too noisy.

Can the administrators and the students agree on this issue? Students will continue to leave school during study hall. If the administration is sincere in their efforts to help remedy this situation, they should take the initiative and settle the situation with a resolution that is both fair to the students and the administration's concerns. Or why not return to a huge study hall in the cafeteria, where people who want to study and need quiet can go into the cafeteria annex?

A solution to this problem is not easy. If the situation is not resolved, the students will more



Liven up SHS dances

By John Hamlin
Staff Reporter

The 1989-90 school year is underway and it promises to bring lots of the same old fun stuff with it. You know what I mean, the great sports, clubs, teachers, students, SHS on the Air, dances... dances? Those of you who were here last year may ask yourselves, "What's so great about the dances?" Well, last year not much, but this year can be different.

In past years many of the dances have been a disappointment. With the exception of a few special events during the year, the dances with no theme or special gimmick didn't attract the crowds they deserved. There are always plenty of refreshments, great music, and a friendly atmosphere. For some reason though, everybody always seems to find something else to do, even if it means just hanging out at Friendly's for the night.

While many dances have been flops in the past, some dances always seem to be packed. Homecoming, and the Halloween/Auction Dance always seem to make money and are usually crowded. The Auction Dance is one of the biggest money making events for the senior class and is clearly SHS's most popular event.

At this dance students are auctioned off for the evening. Any student can "purchase" another who must dance with his/her master all evening. Also, the buyer and buyee have their pictures taken together.

The best thing about this dance, however, isn't that it allows anyone to buy their dream guy/girl. On this one night there truly is school spirit at Stamford High.

Except for Halloween, and the old reliables, Homecoming and the Junior and Senior Proms, you usually can't say that for SHS dances.

Changes needed

This is the year to make a change. Maybe the class that sponsors a dance could work a little harder to come up with an innovative theme. More contests could be included in the evening to attract dancers from every class. But whatever is done, it's time for a change. Support SHS and the individual classes by attending dances, and by convincing your friends to go. The dances don't have to be a joke anymore.

Do animals have rights as people do in U.S.?

By Seth Nesin
Staff Reporter

In the past few years, numerous animal rights organizations have been forming around the country. These groups pose numerous questions to the American public about the killing of animals.

Although these groups want to see an increase in the rights of animals, different groups believe in different ways of getting this result. Certain new radical groups, such as "The Last Chance for Animals," advocate using violence to achieve their goals. These are groups that are tired of waiting for something to get done about animal rights.

Other groups, such as the National Anti-vivisection Society, are hoping for a more gradual change. They feel that the use of terrorist tactics will lose support for their cause instead of gaining support.

In addition to disagreement on how the problem should be solved, there is disagreement as to what the solution is. Some factions want to see an end to all animal killing, even if it is for the good of mankind, such as in research. These groups believe that an animal has the same unalienable rights that humans are

must be killed for the progress of mankind, but that these animals should be treated more kindly and should be killed painlessly.

In a much-publicized incident last winter, Fran Stephanie Trutt was arrested for attempting to kill the head of United States Surgical. U.S. Surgical teaches doctors how to perform a type of surgery by doing it on dogs. The dogs inevitably die. The company claims all the dogs are under anesthesia and that they get the dogs from pounds, where they would be destroyed anyway.

Another question involves the killing of animals for fur coats. Last month, an animal rights group rallied in front of a fur store to protest fur coats. A group also ran a relay in the Stamford Classic Marathon to protest the use of fur in coats. To them it seems this is senseless slaughter, because fur coats do not benefit mankind, rather only making people's lives more luxurious.

Each year, 14 million cats and dogs are killed in the United States. Countless other animals are also killed. Should animals be sacrificed for the sake of human life? Or do animals have the right to live?

These questions must be

NEWS

Mr. Robert Ferrara appointed new assistant principal

By Aimee Mak
Staff Reporter

Upon coming back to school this year, many students were faced with an unexpected development. Their guidance counselor, Mr. Robert Ferrara, is now roaming the halls as Stamford High's new assistant principal.

The position became available when Mr. Bruce Tucci was appointed principal at Westhill High School. Forty-five people applied for the vacated position and Mr. Ferrara was the chosen one.

He's not sure how easily he'll adjust to his new position, but with his experience, many have great faith in his abilities.

Experience varied

Mr. Ferrara has been teaching for many years. He first started in 1962 at Burdick Junior High teaching physical education. In 1968, he transferred to Rippowam High

School where he taught physical education and coached baseball and football.

In 1971, he became a guidance counselor at Rippowam. Ten years later, in 1981 and still a guidance counselor, he moved to Stamford High School. And now he is a new assistant principal of Stamford High.

New responsibilities

Mr. Ferrara has many new responsibilities. He is the senior class administrator, administrator for the new freshman program, and also is in charge on discipline for 1/3 of the freshman class.

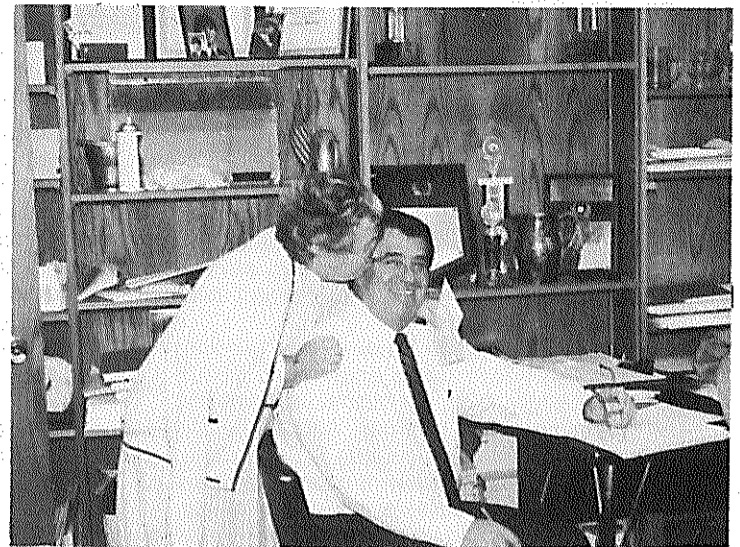
He knows that he'll miss the one-on-one contact with the students, but he's happy to be working in the same school. "I'm glad that I was appointed assistant principal of Stamford High, as opposed to one of the other high schools, because I am familiar with the faculty and students," said Mr.

Ferrara.

While enforcing school rules, Mr. Ferrara feels that his guidance background will help him in dealing with the students. Even though he is no longer a guidance counselor, he is always available for all of his previous counselees. Mr. Ferrara has not completely withdrawn from his students. He plans on helping his seniors choose their colleges.

Instead of heading for the first floor to find Mr. Ferrara, you can now find him on the fourth floor. Though our Guidance Department has suffered a great loss, the administration of Stamford High is certainly experiencing a gain.

"I will miss him as a guidance counselor, but I know he'll be just as supportive as he was in the past. I wish him the best," said senior Marc Graber.



Mr. Robert Ferrara, new assistant principal, congratulated by former guidance colleague Mrs. DeCamillo. (Photo by Lam)

One student's perception of Mr. Ferrara as counselor

By Jennifer Kay
Staff Reporter

"There was one instance which I, personally, will never forget. I wanted to be in a certain program offered at school, but I needed his help getting me into it."

"He said that when I had the free time, to come and see him and he would help me. Well, finally I found the time and stopped in his office. At that moment he had a parent sitting there for conference. He was just about to start his

meeting with her, when he saw me. He excused himself from the parent, apologizing and saying that he'd be back in one minute and that he had promised me this for a long time."

"He walked me all the way down to the fourth floor and introduced me to the head of the program. After he was sure things were O.K. he left to go back to his meeting."

"This incident really proved to me and should to everyone else, that Mr. Ferrara really cares about his students."

Ninth grade program (continued)

freshmen in the first floor display case. She said this will "... make kids feel welcome and give them a nice support system."

Said Mr. Neylan, "It is easier for ninth graders because it is a slower transition."

Mr. Ferrara added that the program will help students reach their potential and not be denied an equal learning experience. "The program will make them [the students] realize that they do have the ability to do well." He believes it will enable them to "... leave grade nine and go forward."

"The students are challenged more through the program," said Mr. Vaccaro.

Attendance goals

The secondary purpose of the program is to eliminate class cutting. Because each group of students sees the same set of teachers, it is far easier to see if they are cutting. Each group's teachers meet every day during third period with each other and the guidance counselor. They discuss any students who were absent from class and any student who seem to be having problems. This way, they can spot problems and solve them within days. All problems, from learning disabilities to inattentiveness, can be nipped in the bud.

Inter-disciplinary approach

The teachers are also trying to work on projects together. For example, both the science and math teachers are overlapping lessons on measurement; and both the English and social studies teachers are overlapping the reading of *A Tale of Two Cities* with the lesson on government. Mr. Vaccaro likes this benefit of the program, "Since the history department is collaborating with the English department in this program, I can help my team with their homework from their other classes."

The teachers are also able to plan trips and speakers. "Because we all have the same period to meet," added Mrs. Queenan, "We can get all of the kids together at the same time for a lecture."

"The purpose of the program is to help... a group of students who, in the past, have not worked to their potential... this program is structured to motivate them."

—Mr. Robert Ferrara

we will try to open all lines of communication," said Mr. Swenson.

That is another important aspect of the program. There is a direct link between the teacher, the parent, the administration and the guidance counselors.

The kids seem to like the program. "They still have three free periods to choose electives," said Mr. Swenson, "... and they are not isolated the way they were in middle school."

Mrs. Queenan added, "We want to help them get A's, and this way they have five people zeroing in on them. We want them to go to college."

Will the program work? Mrs.

Queenan is extremely enthusiastic, "Absolutely!" she exclaimed. Mr. Swenson added, "We will constantly be re-evaluating this program and will react to parts that need improvement."

Will the program be continued next year for incoming freshmen? Will it eventually include the 9-1 and 9-0 groups? Mr. Ferrara said, "First the program must be evaluated. Then a decision will be made whether to continue it or not."

Finally, Mrs. Sentementes offered an upbeat review of the program, "It is working! The kids feel great! There's no doubt about it!"

FRESHMAN PROGRAM SURVEY

During the week of September 25, 100 freshmen program members were randomly selected to participate in this survey. The results are printed here:

	YES	NO
1. Has the program enabled you to adjust to the enormity of SHS?	75%	25%
2. Do you find that you are getting to know your classmates better because you are all together for four classes?	93%	7%
3. Do you like the idea that your teachers have conferences about you so they can determine the best program for you personally?	71%	29%
4. Would you like to see this	85%	15%

Use of nuclear power needed with fossil fuel

By Banjot Chanana
Staff Reporter

Since the day of the first nuclear explosion in New Mexico on July 16, 1945, the United States has begun to realize the potential of nuclear power. It began with power in a military sense, but in 1956 it evolved into something more constructive.

The first nuclear power plant was opened in Shippingport, Pa. and since then nuclear power has become an inexpensive and productive means of creating energy for a world which is quickly depleting its natural resources and fossil fuels.

Nuclear power is not much different from coal in the fuel it generates except that only one kilogram of uranium is needed to create the same amount of fuel as 3,000,000 kilograms of coal.

In both cases the energy is used to create steam from water which turns a turbine to create electricity. The only distinction is how the energy is produced. One method uses fission (the splitting of an atom) and the other burns coal as heat.

Major concerns for nuclear power are the waste products that are produced by it and the concern of radioactivity around the plant. Presently, waste products are being dumped in the ocean or under ground, but environmentalists have slowly begun to stop nuclear waste dumping. Nuclear waste is created as by-products of the fission of uranium.

Radioactivity presents a problem to most communities in close vicinity of these plants since the chemicals may enter drinking water. Most of these

in which radioactive materials are released into the air. Communities such as these must have evacuation plans in place.

Recently some nuclear power plants have been shut down because they have not come up with a fail-safe method to evacuate those communities near the plant. All the commotion regarding safety was sparked by the meltdown in Chernobyl which released radioactive particles that still effect agricultural areas.

The effect of radiation can be deadly and the United States has tightened its grip on nuclear power plants and their evacuation methods. Many towns close to plants still complain about high radiation levels, but the government has yet to investigate.

Student feelings

Students have varied opinions on the matter of safety in the power plants. Junior Aaron Gregory stated, "There is no doubt in my mind that they should even have a second thought about building housing developments near a nuclear power plant."

While his classmate Jon Chapman argued, "They're so careful they shut the power plant down if a light bulb breaks!"

Either way a nuclear power plant is no small matter considering the fact that there are 106 plants in the United States. Safety has become a major issue surrounding the communities which revolve around and survive on the jobs and energy produced by the plant. A projected 20% of the nation's energy will come from nuclear power by the year 1990 and safety must be considered to prevent any of that

NEWS

Knight Light

Jennifer Chiappetta leads the class of 1990

By Lisa Dolan
Staff Reporter

Four years ago Jennifer Chiappetta entered Stamford High knowing only a few students, but with a desire to meet new people and to leave her mark on SHS. That attitude has led Jen to become a fully involved student/athlete.

As a freshman Jen had wanted to run for class office but decided to make herself better known and run in her sophomore year. She was elected vice-president of the Class of 1990 in her sophomore and junior years. "It felt great to be elected because it showed that people had faith in me," notes Jen. Last spring she got the ultimate vote of confidence from her peers, running unopposed for the position of senior class president. Jen loves leading and being active; she has never been one to just sit back and watch. She likes to be involved at school and help decide things rather than just be told what to do.

Jen has been a member of the Drama Club for three years and currently is co-president with Mike Limone. Last year Jen played the lead female role in *Pippin*.

The end of an era when siblings leave home

By Emily Moon
Staff Reporter

What school did he or she go to? Do you miss him/her? Are you happy he/she left?

These are all questions you are asked when your older sibling goes away to college. Some people say, "Yeah, I miss him/her a lot," or, "...not at all, we always fought." In my case it's the former. I miss my brother a lot.

In the beginning I thought there would be no real change except that I'd have to find another ride to school in the morning. Boy was I wrong!

There are many things that have changed since my brother Dave, went to college. First is the problem of finding a way to school. Last year, my freshman year, Dave drove me to and from school. Now it's either my mom, or the bus (I choose my mom).

Then there are things like who's going to tell me if my outfit or my hair looks O.K. in the morning?

There are other aspects of having my brother leave like cleaning the table after dinner, emptying the dishwasher, and

Mayoral race (continued)

ing and taxes. Vignola has promised that he would not increase taxes, saying that he is not afraid to cut money from any department.

Serrani has countered Vignola's accusations with statistics. He stated that the city has operated at a surplus during his six years in office, and has had tax increases at or below inflation. He believes his record is one of the best in the country for similar sized cities.

Even though few students at Stamford High are old enough to vote, the election affects them as well. Along with the Board of Education, Board of

"I have not finished leaving my mark on SHS. Just wait until the end of the year!"

—Jennifer Chiappetta

Athletic Involvement

Jen is an important member of the varsity volleyball squad and will be co-captain of the girls' basketball team this year, both of which she has played since freshman year. Prior to ninth grade, Jen had played in Stamford's Youth Soccer League, but when she came to SHS there was no girls' soccer team, so she took up volleyball instead. Jen also felt that joining a team was one of the best ways to meet people.

Academic achievements

Besides her extra-curricular activities, Jen is also a member of the National Honor Society. This year her course load includes A.P. English, A.P. European History, Senior Seminar and Photography 2. She hopes to attend the College of William and Mary or the University of Richmond and has aspirations of becoming a lawyer, in part because she loves to argue.

With such a tough academic load and a myriad of extra-

curricular activities to her credit, one would think Jen has no extra time. However, Jen does manage to enjoy her favorite hobbies, playing the violin, writing poetry, taking photographs, and skiing.

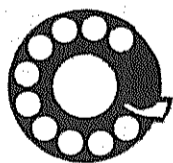
Also, Jen works on weekends at Hit or Miss in Greenwich and teaches a Sunday school class. She has also been an officer in the Junior Achievement program.

For some people, all of these successes would promote a swelled head, but Jen Chiappetta has another activity that helps her maintain a proper perspective on life. As part of a youth group, Mission at the Eastward, Jen has spent the past three summers in Starks, Maine helping the less fortunate. She helps in building and repairing their homes. Jen said, "It is a great feeling to help people and see how much your work is appreciated. It also helps me put my own life in perspective."

Looking back to the first day of her high school career when she saw so many unfamiliar faces, Jen can clearly see how far she has come. She has accomplished her goal of being involved and has definitely left her mark on Stamford High.

Senior Anna Griffin said of Jen, "She is one of the most dedicated people I've had the privilege of knowing. It's amazing how she does so many things and does them all well. 'Chip' is a great friend and a true school leader."

Jen thinks highly of SHS and hopes she will be remembered here. But she adds with a smile, "I have not finished leaving my mark on SHS. Just wait until the end of the year!"



'Hotline' helps students who need crisis intervention

By Lee Shufro
Editorial Editor

There is a little known, but extremely useful service of which all residents of Stamford should take advantage. That service is Hotline, a non-profit agency serving all ages in Fairfield and Westchester counties. It provides immediate, confidential counseling and information to people with personal problems or concerns.

Hotline is a 24 hour telephone crisis and counseling service founded in 1971 under the direction of the United Way. Trained volunteers handle over 15,000 calls a year from people dealing with all kinds of problems. If anyone has any kind of problem that they would like to talk about, Hotline has a toll-free number: 353-HELP and counselors can be reached 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 3 p.m. to



Class president Jennifer Chiappetta has big plans for the class of 1990 and they head into a new year. (Photo by Kaye)

SAT prep courses can be of help to some students

By Deidre Jafari
Staff Reporter

The time is approaching for the November 4, and December 2 SAT exam. For seniors, these are the last SAT exams they can take in order to send their scores on time to the colleges, one important factor in determining the acceptance to a college or university.

Although the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) is an aptitude test, there are ways to prepare for the exam. The majority of students choose a college board SAT class to achieve a high score and to learn testing skills.

Choosing the right class is not difficult if it is chosen to enhance academic and score expectations. These classes cost from about \$200 to \$700. Each course reviews mathematical functions, English vocabulary and reading comprehension questions.

These courses enable students to understand shortcuts in mathematical equations, and to understand specific parts of the exam

such as the analogy section.

The primary object of these courses is for students to become familiar with the questions that will appear on the SAT, and determine the correct answer quickly and efficiently.

SAT preparation classes usually last three hours a week for eight sessions prior to the exam. Three hours of homework per week is expected from both the Verbal and Math sections.

There are other ways for preparing for the exam with little or no cost. Some students purchase the College Board, 10 SAT's Book, to take sample tests and to see how well they might do on the actual exam. Other students have the option to review mathematical formulas and vocabulary words to prepare for the exam themselves.

Whether one takes a professional course or uses his or her own methods, the effort put into the preparation for this vital exam is often reflected on the scores.

Registration forms can be found in the career center of SHS.

SAT preparation classes usually last three hours a week for eight sessions prior to the exam.

than its counseling service though. It has a Telephone Reassurance program that is tailored to check on the homebound and elderly.

Also Hotline has a Phone-a-Friend program in which trained volunteers talk to kids about anything from homework to peer pressure. Hotline also runs a Tel-Med program at 869-8303 to hear any one of 250 tapes covering such topics as AIDS and drug abuse. A full listing of topics to Tel-Med can be found in the back of any phonebook.

But the most important aspect of Hotline is its accredited suicide and eating

disorder prevention service. Hotline handles over 100 suicide calls each year and it was recently recognized as a suitable source to handle any kind of eating disorder problems.

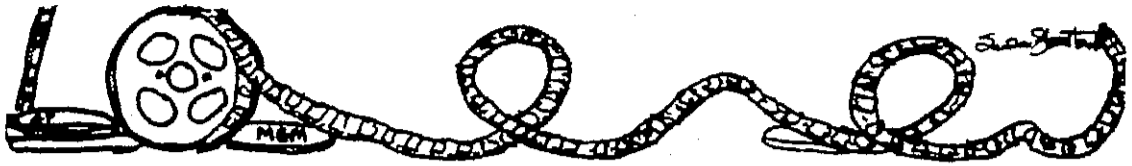
In an age in which drug abuse and AIDS run rampant, it is important that programs such as Hotline exist. If you ever have a problem or question that you feel would be best answered by someone who is trained to deal with it, call Hotline at 353-HELP. It is a worthwhile and valuable service because sometimes just talking to a friend is not enough.

Hotline has a toll-free number: 353-HELP and it can be reached 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday and 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

FEATURES

Blockbuster movie line-up anticipated in time for fall

To follow up [summer movies] Hollywood is prepared to give us a mighty fall season... here's a sneak preview



By Len Wolfson
Assistant Editorials Editor

(First of two parts)

Most people will agree that the summer of 1989 was one of the greatest movie seasons in history. Smashes like *Batman*, *When Harry Met Sally*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *Ghostbusters 2*, *Dead Poet's Society* and *Parenthood* emptied a lot of wallets this summer. To follow up, Hollywood is prepared to give us a mighty fall season, and here's a sneak preview.

★ **The Fabulous Baker Boys** This film stars brothers Jeff and Beau Bridges alongside Michelle Pfeiffer. The brothers are small-time piano players until they acquire a female singer, complete with romantic troubles.

★ **Breaking In** The latest film from Burt Reynolds, who plays a safecracker who is also a mentor to a young thief.

★ **Fat Man and Little Boy** A film with Paul Newman, who plays General Leslie R. Groves, the director of the infamous Manhattan Project. This story about the making of the atomic bomb is directed by Roland Joffe, who also made *The Killing Fields*. This picture also stars John Cusack.

★ **Blaze** Paul Newman is very busy these days. Besides the above film, Newman will star as Louisiana governor Earl Long. The movie is about Long's affair with stripper Blaze Starr and was written and directed by *Bull Durham* director Ron Shelton.

★ **The Lemon Sisters** Starring Academy Award winner Diane Keaton, as well as Carol Kane and Kathy Grody. The three are friends and singers in modern Atlantic City.

★ **The Old Gringo** Based on a novel by Carlos Fuentes, this film stars Jane Fonda and the legendary Gregory Peck, along with *L.A. Law*'s Jimmy Smits.

★ **Dad** First he did *Three Men and a Baby*, then he did *Cousins* and now Ted Danson will be appearing in *Dad*. It stars Jack Lemon as the title character, Olympia Dukakis, an Oscar winner for *Moonstruck*, as his wife, and Ted Danson as his son. It is based on a novel by William Wharton.

★ **Immediate Family** Academy Award nominee Glenn Close co-stars with James Woods as a middle-aged couple who adopt a child. The film is directed by Jonathan Kaplan, whose

credits also include the Academy Award winner *The Accused*.

★ **Back to the Future, Part II** The long-awaited sequel to the original smash hit starring Michael J. Fox as Marty McFly and Christopher Lloyd as the mad scientist who builds a time machine out of a DeLorean. The film, which will send Marty into the future, will be followed by the third installment, which has already been filmed and is slated for release next summer.

★ **Harlem Nights** Another much talked about movie starring the hilarious duo of

Richard Pryor and Eddie Murphy. This action-comedy is set in 1938 Harlem, with Pryor playing the owner of Club Sugar Ray's, and Murphy as his adopted son. This film marks the debut of Murphy as both producer and director.

★ **Henry V** Kenneth Branagh directs and stars in this Shakespeare classic. Expect comparisons to the legendary Sir Laurence Olivier's version.

★ **Steel Magnolias** This movie offers a superb cast which consists of Sally Field, Dolly Parton, Shirley MacLaine, Daryl Hannah, Julia Roberts,

and, in the only male role, Sam Shepard. This is the film version of the Off Broadway drama in which Southern women chat about life and death.

★ **Crimes and Misdemeanors** This new Woody Allen film, is a New York "dramedy." In other words, it's what Woody does best. The cast includes Allen himself, who has not been appearing in too many of his films lately, as well as Darryl Hannah, Sean Young, and Mia Farrow, of course.

Rock Pile

R.E.M. moves into mainstream

By Bonni Fierstein
Staff Reporter

Although R.E.M. don't like the mainstream much, it's obvious that the mainstream likes them. R.E.M. has had an eight year struggle to success, from playing bars and small clubs to recently selling out their largest tour ever. The Green Tour took them to Europe twice and now they are touring the states for a second time.

R.E.M., which consist of singer Michael Stipe, bassist Mike Mills, guitarist Peter Buck, and drummer Bill Berry began in 1981 in Athens, Georgia. The group lived in an abandoned church and played mostly at parties.

Their first single was *Radio Free Europe* off the *Murmur* album produced by IRS records, a small label. The company also released *Cronictown*, *Reckoning*, *Fables of the Reconstruction*,

Life's Rich Pagent, *Dead Letter Office*, and the most popular, *Document*, which went platinum.

But after a long, safe ride with IRS, R.E.M. took the risk of moving to a big company, Warner Brothers. They signed a five record, \$10,000,000 contract with them. The first by-product of that deal is *Green*, their latest album.

Has the change done any good? *Green* has sold millions of copies and produced five videos, plus the top-ten hits *Standand Orange Crush*. This album sounds very different from their previous recordings. It is more upbeat, and the lyrics are clearer, as opposed to Stipe's muffled, indistinctive singing on other albums. For the first time ever they even printed the lyrics to one of their songs.

While opinions differ from person to person, Stipe's lyrics are described from abstract to story-like. All of their lyrics have a meaning, about such

things as the ozone layer and the use of agent orange in Vietnam.

R.E.M.'s concerns aren't found only in their music, but in their lives as well. The band is very aware of current issues. Stipe said in a recent MTV interview, "Clearly the environment is a very large problem, but if we band together and make large groups we can do something."

They are certainly trying. They set up lobby space at their concerts for Greenpeace U.S.A. and the Nature Conservatory. Their tourbook supplied the addresses of the aforementioned, plus the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Environmental Defense Fund, and inserted an article about the ozone problem.

R.E.M. also donated the song *It's the End of the World as We Know It* for the *Greenpeace Rainbow Warriors* album.



But have they changed much since their new-found stardom? "We've grown with our popularity, but those days were so good. I've grown, the band has grown; those two are very symbiotic at this point. Hopefully the audience has grown as well, and I think they have," said Stipe in the April '89 issue of *Rolling Stone*.

R.E.M.'s audience has not only grown in maturity, but also in size. The group, which used to cater to college radio and serious alternative music fans, and is still considered "alternative," picked up new fans with such hits as *The One I Love*, and *Stand*.

The band members still feels uneasy about seeing themselves in magazines. They don't really feel comfortable as a mainstream band. However, they've been featured in *Spin*, *Smash Hits*, *Sassy*, *In Fashion* and *Revolution*. They've had two cover stories in *Rolling Stone* where they were dubbed the "best and hippest" band in America.

What's Happening?

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WED.	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
October 15 Grateful Dead at Meadowlands	16 Grateful Dead at Meadowlands Parsons 10:20 a.m.	17	18	19 College/Career Night Conn. College 8:30 a.m.	20	21 PSAT's
22	23	24	25	26 ½ day Rolling Stones at Shea Stadium	27 Halloween Dance Red Hot Chili Peppers at The Ritz Rolling Stones at Shea Stadium	28 Johnny Cash at The Ritz Rolling Stones at Shea Stadium
29 Turn back clock one hour Rolling Stones at Shea Stadium	30 David Byrne at Roseland	31 HALLOWEEN David Byrne at Roseland	Nov. 1	2 ½ day	3	4 SAT Achievement Tests
5	6 Round Table	7	8	9 End of first	10 Veterans'	11

Flashback • Flashback to The Round Table

By Brooke DeNisco
Co-Managing Editor

Flashback is a new feature in *The Round Table*. Each issue an article from an early edition will be re-printed. These articles show how much newspapers record the trends, ideas and language of the era in which they were written.

The Bare Facts

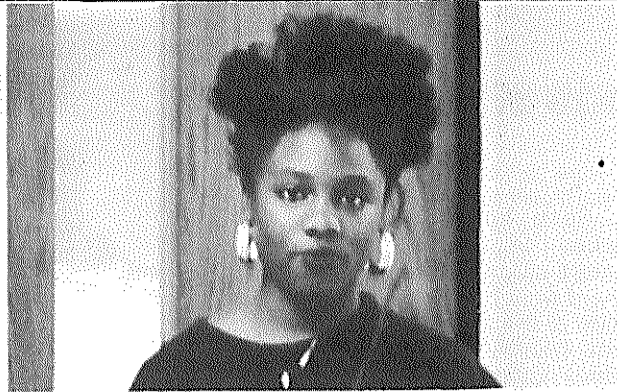
By Michele Caputo
Staff Reporter

The Stamford High dress code is an obsolete idea. Students should have the freedom to wear any style of clothing they feel comfortable in. Many students are taking full advantage of this freedom. In warmer summer months, it is not uncommon to see a pupil wearing just a pair of shorts, a T-shirt, and sneakers.

Some juniors and seniors may remember back a few years when girls were allowed to wear pants only on the coldest of winter days. Even when this was permitted, the pants had to be dress slacks; dungarees were a definite no-no. Today, the majority of female students are wearing pants, dungarees especially, and they are not limiting their freedom to just the

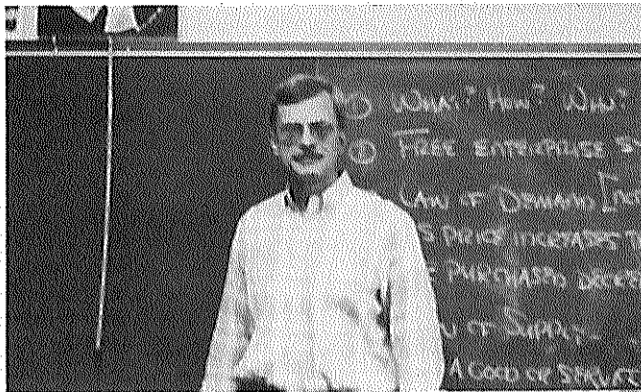
SPEAK OUT

How do you feel the freshman program is helping the transition to high school?



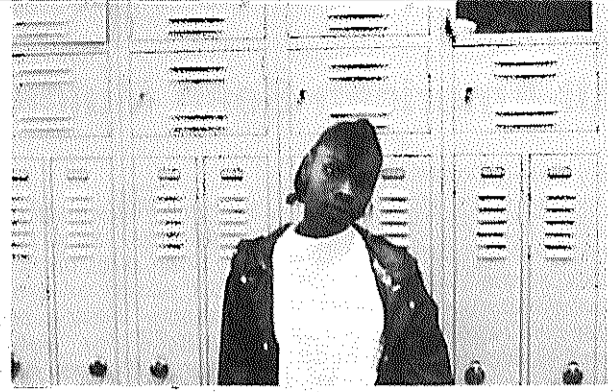
FELICIA TURNQUIST

"It's easier. I like most of my classes and teachers."



MR. GARY SWENSON

"...excellent for the transition from middle school to high school. I hope the kids appreciate all it offers. Students respond to the security of knowing someone is there to help."



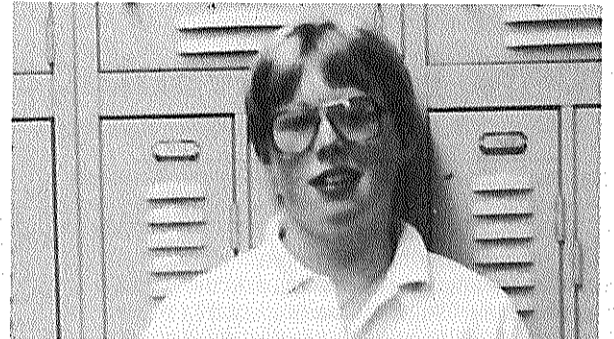
SHAKEIA OLIVER

"I made new friends. I thought it would be harder but it isn't."



GRAHAM GARDENER

"Teachers are basically nice. We read *The Advocate* and I like the science experiments."



GARY AMON

"I'm enjoying it very much. It makes high school easier."

Girls join junior varsity soccer team

By Andy Phillips
Staff Reporter

On September 15, unsuspecting fans were shocked to see that there were two females playing on this year's Stamford High School J.V. soccer team. There is currently no girls' soccer team at Stamford High. That is the reason the two girls have chosen to play with the boys. Several schools in the FCIAC field soccer teams for girls, but the idea hasn't caught on in Stamford yet.

Coach Mario Caminiti likes the idea of girls on the team. He says, "Legally, everyone has the right to be on a team. It's the ability and talent that gets you on the team, not whether or not you're a girl." He tries to "... treat everyone as an equal, even if they're girls. I don't let them slack off."

Mary Sentementes commented on the possibilities of a girls' soccer team taking players away from the field hockey team. She said, "[This year] we've had the most girls yet." She also explained that she wasn't worried because a lot of the girls have been on the team before and know what it's like. She said that, "Field hockey also is a much more technical sport than soccer because soccer doesn't take as much skill."

One of the girls that made this year's J.V. soccer team was Denise Mathews. She had previously played soccer for New Canaan Country School. She said, "I don't mind playing soccer with the guys, but I still think there should be a girls' soccer team." Denise also admitted, "The coach doesn't treat us differently. The only time is when we are on the "skins" team, he lets us keep our shirts on."

The second athlete that has made the J.V. soccer team is Susan Taliaferro. She too said, "It's not bad playing with the boys on the team. In the beginning all the boys thought that we would wimp out, but

bother us."

"The only time I notice the coach treating us differently is when he asks the guys and LADIES to have a seat."

Other schools around Stamford, like Stamford Catholic, King, and Westhill presently

don't have any girls on the boys' soccer teams. It will be interesting to see how big an impact these two girls will have on the regular season play. Maybe in the future, there will be a girls' soccer team here.

"It's not bad playing with the boys. They thought we would wimp out, but after they saw that we kept coming to practices, they knew we were serious."

—Susan Taliaferro

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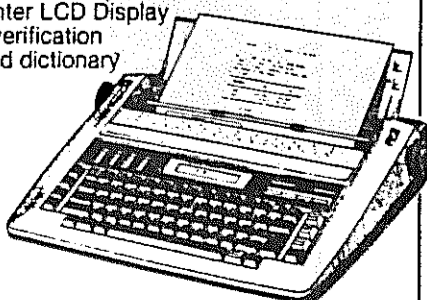


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SPORTS

Sport Light

All-American Sean Mulcahey leads Knights

By Jared Cohane
Assistant Sports Editor

As the decade comes to a close, so does one of the most successful athletic careers at Stamford High School. Senior Sean Mulcahey is truly one of the most outstanding athletes ever to walk the halls of Stamford High. Sean has been an All American gymnast for the last three seasons and will most likely achieve this honor again this season.

"Besides being an all-American gymnast, he sets a strong example and relates well with the team. "There is no doubt we can repeat as state champs," said senior co-captain Jon Casden.

Leading the gymnastics team to three straight state championships, Sean is fairly certain that the team will clinch the state title again this year. "We have a strong team full of all-state competitors; the other

teams in the state do not look that promising," he said.

Sean was number one in the state all-around last season, leaving most competitors far behind. His strongest event is the vault, where he is number one in Connecticut, and ranked number five in the United States. He gained this ranking over the past summer at the nationals in Albuquerque, New Mexico. "My performance at the Nationals over the summer is one of my most honorable and memorable yet."

His best event may be the vault, but Sean's favorite event is the high bar. "It is the most challenging event, requiring much precision and concentration."

Watching Sean perform his high bar routine is a sight to behold. Precision and concentration are understatement.

Sean began gymnastics when he was about eight years old, and through much hard work has developed into one of the finest gymnasts in the country. He has tremendous natural ability, but he still has to work to maintain and improve his skill. He practices four hours a day during the season, and in preparation for a meet he practices in the early morning before school at a gym in Yonkers, New York. Sean feels that this extra practice is essential. "I really dislike practice, but it is worth it when it comes to the competition."

Sean's future looks promising. He hopes to get a scholarship to UCLA, UCSB, or Arizona State. Sean's ultimate goals are the National team, or possibly the Olympics. With his natural ability and determination, these goals are quite realistic.



Sean Mulcahey practices several hours a day as he leads the Knights to another championship season. (Photo by Kaye)

Home field advantage should be used

By Chris Coffey
Photo Editor

Do you remember last year when our basketball team played Westhill and the game was sold out 40 minutes before tipoff? Or the Danbury game, or any other home basketball game? Hundreds of people went to those games, and by being loud and cheering, the fans spurred the team to victory.

Other sports need fans too. If more fans went to more games, the teams might do better. Suppose it's a weekday afternoon and there's a soccer game. What do people have to do that is more fun than hanging around school, supporting the team and being with friends?

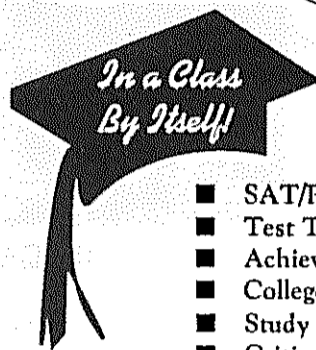
Besides the soccer team, the field hockey and volleyball teams also play games during

the week. Many times if a game is close or tied in the final minutes, an extra "Go Black Knights!" could get the team excited.

Everyone has heard of the term "home court advantage." Let's make it pay off. If team members of other sports would stop by games after their practices, which end around 4 or 4:30, they could cheer on SHS teams.

Some people may not want to go to a game because the team isn't doing well. But, maybe with more fan support these teams could do better.

Another possible way to attract fans would be to have the varsity and junior varsity squads cheer on their freshman teams and vice-versa. People are always hanging around after school anyway, so why not support the school by attending home games and cheering SHS to victory.



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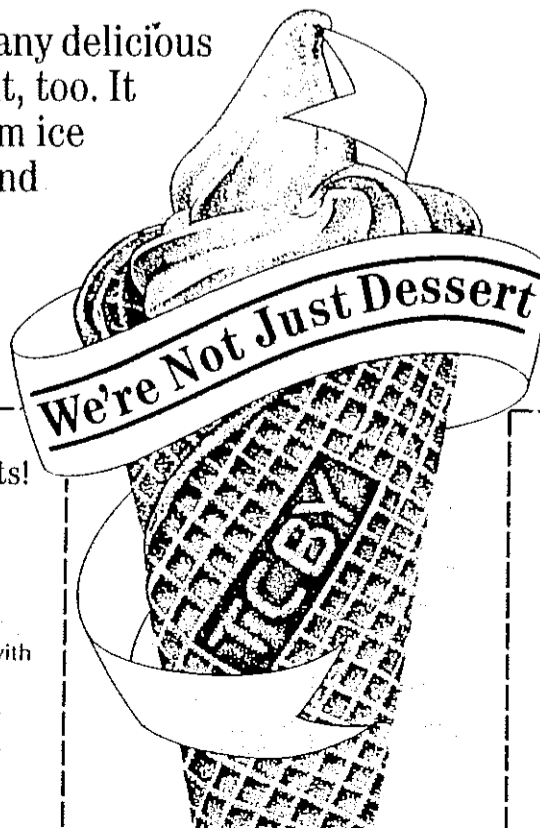


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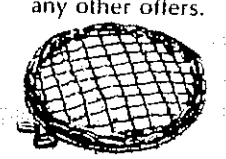
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SPORTS

From the Editor's Desk

Elimination of athletic director puts sports program in jeopardy

By Jon Casden
Sports Editor

After school ended in June, the Board of Education eliminated the positions of athletic director at Stamford High and Westhill. This decision, still unexplained by the people who made it, could pose problems for the athletic programs at the city's high schools.

Why do schools need athletic directors? For a number of reasons. First of all, A.D.'s have to make sure that buses pick up teams to take them to away games. If a bus is late, now that the A.D. is gone, whose job is it to get the teams to their games?

Also, if a team needs more equipment, the coach now has to go through red tape that could delay the time the team gets the equipment it needs. Instead of going directly to the A.D., coaches now have to go to Mr. Kuczo. This process could take a while. With an A.D. in house, a coach can put in the necessary equipment request directly.

Other problems could also arise. Who will assign the timekeepers, ticket sellers, police and firemen? Without the A.D. to assign these jobs at each school, administrators and Mr. Kuczo's office will have to do it.

The lack of an athletic director at SHS has already caused problems. Would head football coach Nick Pia have been hired earlier if Mr. Vrtiak were still on the job this summer? Coach Pia was hired in late August, giving him minimal time to prepare for the season.

Another problem occurred on September 16, the date of Stamford's first game against Fairfield. On that Saturday, more than 20 students drove to Fairfield High in the rain only to find no one there. Assuming the game was canceled, they went home.

However, this was not the case. The game was played at Roger Ludlowe field. If there had been an athletic director, he probably could have had an announcement made on Friday in school, or have someone at Fairfield High to direct lost students to Ludlowe. Consequently, these 20 students missed the first football game.

If problems like that are to be avoided, the position of A.D. is needed. Without

Night football returns after eleven years

By Gerard Meichlonne
Staff Reporter

In other towns around Connecticut, night football is played almost regularly. However, in Stamford, night football has been absent for eleven years. That will all change on October 14. Stamford High will be playing Ridgefield "under the lights" at Boyle Stadium. Temporary lights will be put up for only that game.

The night game was planned to generate more excitement about high school football in Stamford. The night game should draw a large crowd to Boyle Stadium.

The idea originally was proposed by Mr. Kuczo a few years ago. He presented the idea to the Booster Club and asked them to "get the project off the ground." Mrs. DeLeo, Booster Club president, was instrumental in its planning.

There will be a hospitality

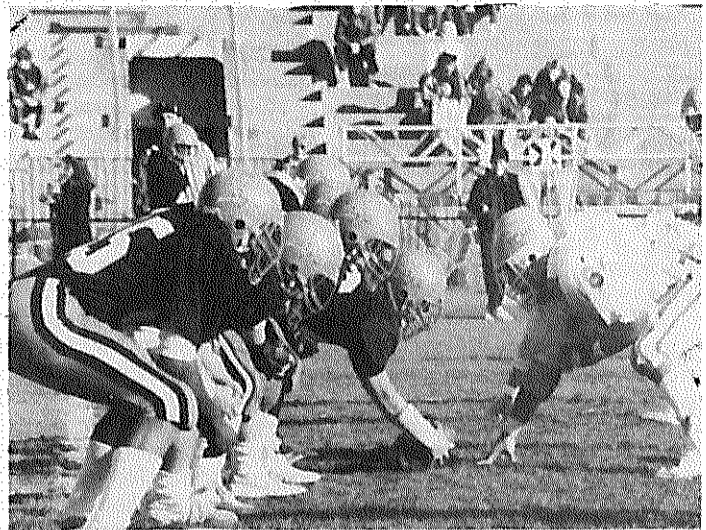
hour planned before the game for former SHS players in the gym. There will also be a section in the bleachers reserved for former players. Although there will be several festivities surrounding the game, Mrs. DeLeo said, "The main purpose of the night is to play football."

Players excited

The players are looking forward to the game. Since it is at night, Stamford High fans have to wonder if the lights will affect the team's play. Mike Iorfino, senior tri-captain, said, "There is really not much of an adjustment to make since most members of the team already played at night last year [away]."

Paul Welte, senior tri-captain said, "There will hopefully be a lot more people to cheer because it's more exciting to watch a night football game."

Everyone involved hopes there will be more spectators



After an eleven year absence, night football returns to SHS on October 14 at 7:30 p.m. (Round Table file photo)

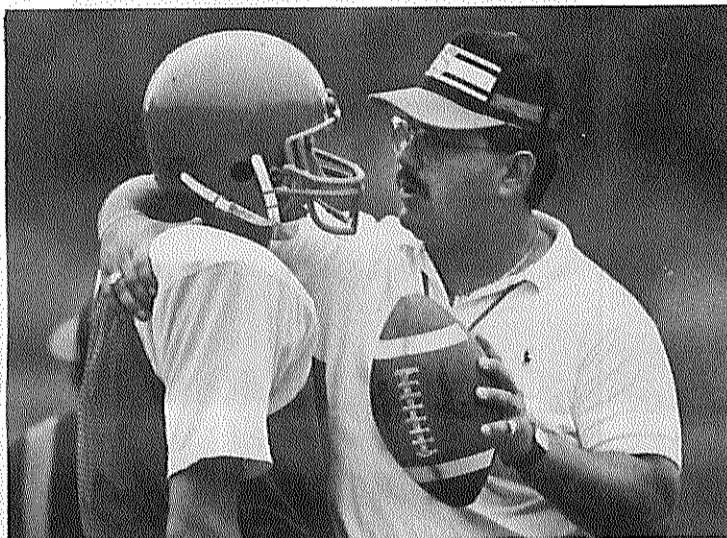
at the night game; maybe even people who are neighbors to Boyle Stadium.

The night game will be somewhat of an experiment. If all goes well with the lights and the crowd, there is a possibility of having permanent lights installed. If this happens, not

only will football games be played at night, but also some soccer and field hockey games could be played at night too.

Make every effort to attend the night game on October 14. Come out and cheer the Knights to a win.

Coach Nick Pia leads football team



Coach Nick Pia and quarterback Chris Twardy confer during Stamford's opening game. (Photo courtesy of The Advocate)

By Josh Fedell
Staff Reporter

Nick Pia hopes to instill pride and discipline in Stamford High School's football program, the crucial ingredients needed to produce a winner.

Pia, 27, was named Stamford High School football coach during the summer. The new coach played football for Stamford High School. He was All-State Defensive Tackle during his junior and senior years. For the past seven years he has been an assistant coach at SCHS.

"I learned pride and

discipline from [Stamford Catholic High School] coach Jack Slavinsky," Pia said. "I hope to apply these values to Stamford High School because that's how it was when I left the program."

Pia faces a tough task. Stamford High School's combined record for the 1987 and 1988 football seasons was 1-17. But Pia feels that entering a program that has been on the down side makes no difference. "You don't think about that. You take on the challenge and coach no differently. Don't expect too much, work hard, and whatever happens happens."

A kid who is willing to make a commitment to a program and work hard day in and day out is what Coach Pia looks for in a high school football player.

Pia admires John Madden's coaching style because, "He has no hard and fast rules. He lets the players go and lets them do what they have to do and that's the way I coach."

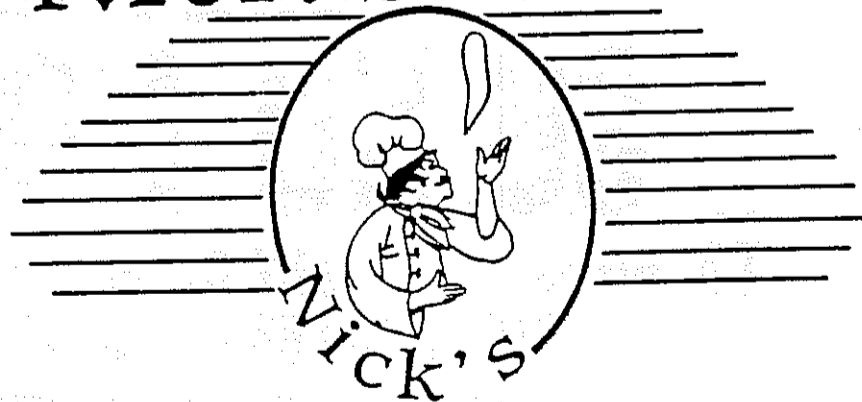
Rob Luther, the center for the Stamford High football team, said this about Pia, "He's a tough coach. He pushes us to work hard and do the best we can."

Pia, with good football coaching ability, is the young, inspirational, hardworking coach that Stamford High School has been looking for.

Experienced in coaching

According to biographical information from school spokesman Allen Grafton, Nick Pia graduated from Stamford High School in 1980. He attended the University of Central Florida and Housatonic Community College. He then went into coaching football. He decided to coach because he loved the game and enjoyed teaching it to others. He has been coaching football for six years at Stamford Catholic High School. He was assistant football coach from 1983 to 1989, defensive coordinator in 1988, and head coach of junior varsity football in 1984 and 1985. "It's a great thrill to return and coach for the school I played for and graduated from. By teaching young players well and the older players to believe in themselves, our

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Athletic Director position eliminated at SHS

Burden of responsibility returned to administration

By Anna Griffin
Editor-in-Chief

Last June the Stamford Board of Education voted 5-2 to eliminate the position of Athletic Director at Stamford and Westhill High Schools.

All the responsibilities of running the high school and middle school sports programs now fall solely on the shoulders of Mr. John Kuczo, District Department Head for Inter-Scholastic Sports in Stamford.

Position created in 1985

Nearly five years ago, the position of Athletic Director was created because Board of Education members felt there were too many communications breakdowns when the physical education department controlled the sports programs at the high schools. The new position seemed to be a great idea; the coaches would report directly to the A.D. who would then report to Mary Jane Hagan, District Department Head of Physical Education.

However, the A.D. position seemed to create as much red-tape and misunderstanding between parents, students, and administrators as the old system had. Board member Jill Beaudry commented, "In any kind of structure where you have communication on many levels there can be communication breakdowns."

According to both Mrs. Beaudry and fellow Board member Jerry Pia, the system became too cluttered. While the A.D.'s did do all the minor things needed to run a sports program, too many people were involved. Mr. Pia suggested the Board needed to "streamline the program" to make it function more effectively.

With the creation of the middle school sports program in Stamford, the Board felt there was a need for someone who could oversee both the high school and middle school programs. In June of 1988, the Board created the position of District Department Head for Inter-Scholastic Athletics. John Kuczo, a former assistant principal at Stamford High, was the choice for the job.

Originally, this position was created to work cooperatively with the Athletic Directors. But Mrs. Beaudry suggested that this was when talk of eliminating the A.D. position first began.

Duplication of services

To many in the district, it seemed that Mr. Kuczo's office could perform the same responsibilities as the Athletic Directors. Also, at this time there is a surplus of physical education teachers in the district. Mr. Phil Ragozzino (A.D. at Westhill) and Mr. Andrew Vrtak only taught three classes in their roles as A.D. It seemed obvious to the Board that Kuczo's office could be just as effective as the individual Athletic Directors.

A recent audit of the Stamford Public School System's operating procedures had shown that the sports program was not operating as efficiently and effectively as it should have been. At a Board

voted this motion down.

However, several weeks later Superintendent William Papallo told the Board that even though budget reallocations were complete they could still cut the position if they wanted to. In late June, the Board voted 5-2 to do so. According to both Ragozzino and Vrtak, they had received no official warning that their positions were in jeopardy. They had even signed contracts with the stipend for the job included. No one in the district had told them that both the job and the extra money paid to them as Athletic Directors might be lost.

Feelings were hurt, but according to both Mrs. Beaudry and Mr. Pia, it wasn't the Board's fault. "Somebody should have told them," Mr. Pia stated, "This became a big deal because a lot of things that happened... in the past."

Answering those who claimed that "politics" were involved, Mr. Pia emphatically stated, "The people who started it wouldn't have been politically motivated... We had to streamline the program."

The question now created for everyone involved in Stamford athletics is how this will affect the day-to-day activities of high school sports teams. Who will give out uniforms, get officials and school personnel to work at games, make sure junior varsity and freshman teams have practice and games sites, and just insure that things run smoothly on a day-to-day basis? It remains to be seen whether or not Paul Kuczo's office can handle the job.

Assisting Kuczo currently is Mr. Ron Parente, former assistant principal at Rippowam who has been assigned to Kuczo's office until his retire-

ment in January.

The fall athletic season opened without too many problems. But many wonder what will happen in January when Mr. Kuczo is left without an aide or assistant. "We'll just have to wait and see," said Mrs. Beaudry, "This is something we haven't tried before. You will have small problems when you change the system, but we have to wait and see what happens."

Mr. Kuczo did not want to comment on his new responsibilities. Originally his position, which will now include supervision of both the middle school and high school programs, was designed to "...direct and evaluate the Interscholastic Sports Program for the Stamford Public School System."

Now, instead of holding a more administrative role over the Stamford sports programs, Mr. Kuczo will be acting direct-

ly with coaches and athletes. It is questionable whether one man can handle all these responsibilities.

What will happen next to the sports programs in Stamford remains to be seen. It could take months, perhaps even several years before the full impact of this personnel move is known. No one knows how much more effective Mr. Kuczo's position will prove to be in comparison with the Athletic Director. The Board of Education's decisions on this matter will hopefully be made with the intent to make the athletic programs at both the middle schools and the high schools more effective. The student/athlete on either level should not have to worry about where he will play or if his team's bus will show up.



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