

the

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UNDER pressure

Each year, the *Dart* prints a special issue of the paper featuring stories and photos produced by the journalism students. This year, the class chose “pressure” as the theme and students explored the positive and negative effects of pressure. From handshakes to headaches, deadlines to dating, pressure can be found everywhere.



The Journalism Issue 2010

Confidence in the...

PALM OF YOUR HAND

Shaking hands assertively yields positive results in job situations, interviews

by ELIZABETH IMPERIALE
Journalism Student

Heart pounding, hands sweating, senior Chloe Watters prepares herself for another job interview. Even though she has done this many times before, she still gets nervous before these meetings.

As she enters Old Navy, she looks around for an employee who can direct her to the right place. After a few minutes, a man comes out and introduces himself as the manager. Watters smiles, states her name and immediately goes in for the handshake. Little does she know, she has just gained her first brownie points.

"[A handshake] is the first impression that you begin with and the last impression you leave with," Watters said. "You wouldn't want to offend someone by giving a 'dead fish' handshake."

Spanish teacher Julia Gargallo agrees that in a professional situation, a strong handshake definitely has an impact.

"I always prefer a strong handshake," Gargallo said. "If the handshake is weak, it seems as if the other person doesn't care about meeting you."

Swedish scientist Karl Astroem conducted a study in 1994 rating handshakes on four dimensions: temperature, dryness, strength and consistency of grip. Results showed the strength of the handshake gave the strongest correlations to emotion overall.

Psychologist Monique Gregg explained this by stating that a strong handshake suggests aggressiveness whereas a weaker handshake suggests



First Impressions ★ Dr. Monique Gregg, left, demonstrates an effective handshake with senior Chloe Watters at Bella Napoli on Saturday. "The handshake has to be just right," Gregg said. "It shouldn't be too loose or too firm." PHOTO BY ELIZABETH IMPERIALE

lack of power, submissiveness and an antisocial attitude.

"I have experienced some astoundingly weak handshakes," Gregg said. "They mostly came from antisocial and highly neurotic patients, which tends to make me very nervous and hyper vigilant."

According to speech and debate teacher Ann Heid, a strong handshake shows a person's confidence and the positive aspects of his or her personality.

"When you first meet someone, there is no familiarity, so the handshake really counts," Heid said. "It provides a bonding connection between people and can make a nerve-racking situation much more comfortable."

Gregg agrees that remaking first impressions requires a lot of work, so one might as well begin on a good note with a worthy handshake.

"If your limp handshake is a part of this first impression, it is a battle to change the many judg-

ments the person you've just met has made about you," Gregg said.

Gargallo explained that for years, many societies did not expect women to shake hands with others, especially men. Because of this, more women are apprehensive about extending their hand to shake first.

"Today it is pretty equal for men and women," Heid said. "A handshake is expected out of both genders especially in professional instances."

Gregg said that handshakes can be a useful way for women to project assertiveness, confidence to others.

"Women have long been at a disadvantage relative to men in competing for high wage jobs," Gregg said. "One way to overcome this is to be perceived as more competent and qualified initially. It can be very difficult for women to act assertive and confident without being lambasted. Using a handshake levels the playing field more quickly and more subtly."

A week and a half after Watters' interview, she received a phone call from Old Navy.

"Congratulations Ms. Watters, you got the job!" her manager said. "I especially liked that handshake of yours..." ★

"When you first meet someone there is no familiarity, so the handshake really counts."

Ann Heid, teacher

Landing the Job

Here are some tips for a successful first impression at a job interview

- Put a smile on
- Dress for success
- Come prepared with a resume
- Be on time
- Always follow up on your interview
- Ask questions
- Research the organization where you are applying
- Write a thank you note
- Be a good listener
- Don't talk too much
- Research the person interviewing you

Source: www.employmentguide.com

Compiled by MADALYNE BIRD

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Sophomore feels stress from alum sisters

Sophomore Kathleen Vogel strives to reach the same success as her sisters at STA

by MADDIE DANG
Journalism Student

She watched one sister contribute to STA's 2006 volleyball State championship and both sisters graduate near the top of their classes. She walked on STA's campus her freshman year pressured to achieve the same success in athletics and academics as her sisters.

Sophomore Kathleen Vogel feels pressure to compete with the achievements of her sisters, Ms. Erin Vogel and Ms. Jen Vogel, everyday.

"I think my parents see how hard I work to try and accomplish things," Kathleen said. "I don't think they realize that the reason I pressure myself so much is because I want to be as good, if not better, than my sisters."

Both Erin and Jen had at least a 4.0 GPA every semester at STA and went on to attend the University of Notre Dame after graduating. Kathleen's friend, sophomore Anna Meyers, notices the stress Kathleen is under from witnessing her sisters' accomplishments.

"Her sisters are really successful and she feels the need to live up to that," Meyers said. "The pressure isn't 'you have to do this,' but [the pressure] is secretly weighing on her."

With two older sisters and a brother, Mr. Eric Vogel Jr., Kathleen is the youngest of the four children of Ms. Anna Marie Vogel and Mr. Eric Vogel Sr.

"I think being the youngest and being home by herself puts [Kathleen] under more pressure than I was," Erin said in an email interview.

According to Kathleen, when she meets teachers at STA, they ask about her sisters and expect her to meet the standards set by her siblings.

"I think Jen and I were both very involved at St. Teresa's, so a lot of the teachers and faculty know us," Erin said. "Teachers automatically have a positive opinion about [Kathleen] because they know our family."

According to her father, Kathleen accepted the challenge of competing with her sisters' achievements. Her parents allowed her to attend any high school, and she chose STA although she knew she would follow in Jen and Erin's footsteps.

"It is clear that Kathleen is aware of her sisters' success and she wants to uphold the high



Time to talk ★ Sophomores Rachel Caffrey, left, and Kathleen Vogel recite lines for a Spanish video project at Loose Park April 14. Vogel feels pressure to measure up to her sisters Ms. Jen and Ms. Erin Vogel, but that her energy sets her apart from them. **PHOTO BY MADDIE DANG**

standards that her sisters set," Eric Sr. said in an email interview. "However, I truly believe it is a positive motivator and her sisters support her at every step. She often talks to her sisters to learn from their experiences, enabling her to avoid their mistakes."

Her father said that along with the pressure in academics, Kathleen also deals with stress from athletics as a varsity and club volleyball player. Erin was on STA's 2006 State championship vol-

leyball team and set the record for the largest number of kills by an STA student in the same year.

"There is no question that Kathleen is motivated to match or surpass Erin's records on the volleyball court," Eric Sr. said. "When they talk at home, it is a friendly competition, but a clear motivator. That being said, Erin is Kathleen's biggest fan and advocate on the court."

Along with supporting Kathleen in volleyball,

Erin is sure Kathleen will succeed academically.

"I'm confident that Kathleen will excel at STA too because she is a completely different person with different interests and talents," Erin said.

Kathleen knows that her family supports her, but she still feels the difficulty of trying to be equal with her sisters in academics and sports.

"I push myself to live up to [my siblings'] standards, but at the same time, sometimes I put too much pressure on myself," Kathleen said. ★

A hug a day keeps the doctor away

Author Steve Ryals reports hugs, touch relax muscles and decrease heart rate

by GABI LUKENS
Journalism Student

Imagine walking into a funeral for someone you love. You are overwhelmed with grief and sadness, and you need to feel that someone is there for you. Receiving a hug is one way to relieve the stress of grieving. Yet, you only want a hug from the person who is no longer alive.

"Her hugs made me feel totally loved and protected," said Mr. Charles Lukens, father of freshmen Ali and Gabi, of his grandmother who passed away when he was only 21.

According to Lukens, losing someone is hard, but sometimes it is good to remember the positive aspects that they brought to your life. He remembers exactly how his grandmother's hugs made him feel, and said that nothing can replace their presence in his life.

"I would describe the absence of her hugs as an empty space that has never and will never be filled," Lukens said.

STA freshman Madi Schieber can also relate to the pain of losing a family member. She lost her grandmother when she was 13 and can remember exactly how her grandmother's hugs made her feel.

"[My grandmother's hugs] made me feel good," Schieber said. "They made me feel very warm and comforted with her arms around me."

Although Lukens said he could not fill the absence of the hugs, Schieber disagreed.

"I am filling the absence of [my grandmother's] hugs with the hugs from friends and other family members, yet it doesn't completely fill the gap," Schieber said.

Schieber has also lost a best friend who moved away in first grade.

"My best friend, Angelina, moved to Oklahoma a few years ago," Schieber said. "I miss her hugs because they always made me feel better if I was having a bad day."

The loss of someone can take a toll on people that may lead to depression. However, researchers have found that a hug can minimize depression and relieve stress.

"Our bodies respond immediately to loving touch," said Mr. Steve Ryals, an author from EzineArticles.com. "Our heart rate goes down,

along with our blood pressure. Our breathing slows, our muscles relax, and our immune system picks up."

STA freshman Keara Miller gets the same feelings that Ryals described when she is hugged. Although Miller feels relieved and relaxed when she is hugged as Ryals described, she also feels loved.

"[A hug] makes me feel warm, fuzzy and good," Miller said. "It also makes me feel like that person really loves me."

According to Schieber, a lot of these same feelings come to her when she gets a hug from a friend.

"[Hugs from my friends] make me feel loved and they give me that warm, tingly feeling," Schieber said.

Ultimately, according to studies, hugs are the best all-natural therapy.

According to Lukens, the feelings he gets from hugging his wife and daughters are both unique and individual feelings.

"When I hug my wife, I become overwhelmed with satisfaction, assurance and confidence," Lukens said. "When I hug my daughters, I get the feeling of love, pride and a true sense of accomplishment for myself and my daughters." ★



Feel the love ★ Freshmen Paige Kemna, left, and Jodie Foster share an embrace at the annual Mother-Daughter Luncheon March 7. Hugs create a positive, relaxing pressure that can calm bodies and boost immune systems. **PHOTO BY GABI LUKENS**

Girls desire bronze skin all year long



Bed time ★ STA sophomore Katie Patterson prepares to begin her 11-minute tanning session at Hot Spot tanning salon. Patterson has tanned at Hot Spot for several months. "I like Hot Spot because it's close to my house and not as expensive as some of the other places," Patterson said. PHOTO BY MARGOT LIVERS

Girls turn to tanning for a darker look, better body image

by MARGOT LIVERS
Journalism Student

According to Time Magazine, 2.3 million teens use tanning beds every year. Tanning salons across the country provide many with the chance to be tan all year, contributing to the growing industry.

According to ezinearticles.com, the tanning bed industry began in the 1970s, introduced by the German inventor Friedrich Wolff. Wolff put two kinds of bulbs in the bed; one produces UVA rays, the other UVB rays. The rays from both of these kinds of bulbs work together to make people's skin darker, faster. Over 40 years, the tanning bed industry has come to make \$5 billion dollars every year.

Some STA students have decided to join the tanning trend. STA sophomore Katie Patterson began using a tanning bed last August. She said it was not the people around her who pressured her to tan; it was more pressure from herself.

"I like the way I look tan," Patterson said. "I feel prettier and more confident, and I'm able to wear more colors."

Ms. Renee Blake, STA science teacher, observed the increase in tan skin at STA over the past few years.

"I think tanning makes [STA students] feel healthy," Blake said. "Some do it to fit in, or because of

peer pressure. Some groups, however, don't believe in it."

STA sophomore Patricia Smith is one student who chooses not to tan. Smith said the risks, like skin cancer, are what keep her from tanning beds.

"I don't look down on people who do tan, I just personally don't want to do it," Smith said. "I don't want to pay for myself to get skin cancer."

According to Time Magazine, skin cancer is the biggest risk for girls between the ages 15-29 and has more than doubled since the invention of the tanning bed. So why do girls still tan even with the risk of developing cancer? Patterson said the risks of tanning are not the first things she thinks of when getting into a bed.

"I don't think of [skin cancer] as a priority," Patterson said. "I guess it's just always in the back of my mind. If my skin ever starts changing in an unhealthy way I will definitely stop tanning though."

Patterson tans at Hot Spot Tanning and said they charge around \$30 for a month of tanning. Every additional visit is approximately 7 or 8 dollars. The cost of tanning has left people like Smith turned off.

"That's too much money," Smith said. "I don't want to spend all that money on something temporary, I could get a pretty good meal with that."

The question that still remains, why do girls really want to be tan? Many teens like Patterson tan simply because they think they look better, while others are pressured by friends and peers. Pressure can come from society as well.

"In the media, everyone's always tan," Patterson said. "Exotic people who are really tan are always considered pretty."

Pressure could also come with upcoming dances like prom, homecoming and Teresian. Hot Spot Tanning employee, Ms. Lauren Groom, has worked in the tanning business for 5 years.

"We see a lot of girls come in during homecoming season and closer to summer," Groom said. "I think the girls feel pressured to look tan in their dresses and swim suits."

Whether it's because of peers, society or dances, some girls, like Patterson, enjoy looking tan all year long.

"Being tan adds a natural glow to your skin," Patterson said. "It gives you a pretty, summery look." ★

Tanning Troubles

Teenagers may feel pressure to look tan year-round, but getting too many UV rays can have a deadly effect

Women who use tanning beds more than once a month are 55% more likely to develop malignant melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer

Source: www.cancer.gov

Compiled by MEGAN SCHAFF

Does this skirt make my butt look big?

STA students find the school and its students accepting of different body types, images

by LENA WHITE
Journalism Student

The bell rings, and as their classmates hurry to the locker room to change for P.E., three or four girls head to the bathroom stalls. From this, one could conclude that even in an all-girls environment, body image insecurities still exist. But where do they come from? Our friends? Our parents? The media? Or is all of our pressure self-inflicted?

According to the Nutrition and Wellness Food Archive, more than one half of teen girls are (or think they should be) on a diet. In a society facing problems with obesity and struggling with healthy, almost five percent of women suffer from anorexia or bulimia.

Ninth grader Kathleen Keaveny doesn't feel pressure from St. Teresa's environment or from its students, and cites the atmosphere of the school for this.

"I don't think that it is the school or other students that apply the pressure," Keaveny said. "It is more from the individual pressuring themselves to look a certain way. I feel like the atmosphere at STA allows the students to be more like themselves."

On the other hand, freshman Emma Rebein feels that there are people at school who judge others based on appearances.

"I think that there are some people at STA who judge people by the way they look or

act without getting to know and understand them," Rebein said. "I think the people who do this are the people who think themselves higher than others."

Freshman Grace McCarthy thinks that what you are pressured to look like depends on the company one keeps. According to McCarthy, there are pressures at St. Teresa's to fit one of a number of image "ideals", but that the individual is not looked down upon for refusing to fit into one of them.

"I don't really let what other people might think affect me, so the pressure is usually self-inflicted," McCarthy said.

Junior Elise Ferron doesn't think that there are "ideal" body image pressures from the school or its students; she said that if a girl was feeling this kind of pressure, the school and student body would be there to help her.

Other students disagreed with this rosier view of St. Teresa's Academy. Eleventh grader Alysa Turner felt that body image pressure has "always been [at STA], always sucked."

"I've just stopped caring [what other people think of my body]," Turner said.

"I'm not going to pretend to be something I'm not," friend and fellow junior Maggie Holt chimed in.

A classmate of Holt and Turner felt that over the years she has stopped doing things (for her body) because other people want her to, but because she wants to.

"I don't work out to look good for other people, I do it because it makes me feel good," she said.

Many girls believe

"I don't think that it is the school or other students that apply the pressure...I feel like the atmosphere at STA allows the students to be more like themselves"

Kathleen Keaveny, freshman

that an all-girls environment contributes to the more accepting atmosphere of STA. Without the influence of male classmates, some students feel that they don't have to face repercussions for not looking a certain way.

Keaveny believes that STA would be much different if it were co-ed.

"I think that mostly everyone, maybe including myself, would be very different," Keaveny said.

"There would be makeup, less eating, and probably a lot more drama."

McCarthy went to St. Ann Catholic School for elementary and middle school, and thinks that there was more pressure at a co-ed school.

"I do feel like there was [some body image pressure]," McCarthy said. "Even though some of the girls [from my class] go to St. Teresa's now, I feel like they had different opinions [in elementary and middle school],



Frosh fest ★ Freshmen Carrie Hudson, left, Nikki Rodriguez and Emma Stanfield converse, snack and study on the front steps of the Music and Arts Building. PHOTO BY LENA WHITE

and that they were always trying to impress people." ★

Media influences teenage relationships

STA finds media's portrayal of relationships can put pressure on sexual activity

by MAGGIE KENNEY
Journalism Student

After an earlier fight, Nate Archibald pulls his girlfriend, Serena van der Woodsen into the coat check room at a formal event. Although he explains to her that he wants to take their relationship slowly, they begin to kiss. Still kissing, they move to the back of the closet, taking off their coats and shoes. As the couple falls onto the couch together, the scene changes, leaving viewers of the popular television show "Gossip Girl" to assume that one thing led to another.

Some teenagers feel that many television shows today misrepresent the sexual aspect of relationships, therefore sending the wrong impression to teenagers with a boyfriend or girlfriend.

"I think producers want the viewers to see the physical aspect of the relationship, but they go too far in expressing it," said junior Anna McTygue, who's currently dating Rockhurst High School junior Matthew DeRuyter.

According to McTygue the idea of a richer, more glamorous world draws teenagers into watching the show. McTygue thinks the New York background of "Gossip Girl" and clothes the characters wear are "cool."

"If 'Gossip Girl' or '90210' was based in a small town, no one would watch it," McTygue said. "We want a parallel to a better life."

Though many people like "Gossip Girl" and "90210", the show may not always be portraying the right image, according to STA junior Rachel Edmonds. Edmonds thinks the sexual relationships of the couples in the show move quicker than they normally would, and because of this, they often leave out the social aspect of the relationships.

"I don't think the sexual relationships expressed on shows are realistic," DeRuyter said. "The shows don't display any consequences to the couples actions, and in real life there are many consequences to what you do."

According to DeRuyter, some people think sex is interesting, so producers show sexual scenes to keep viewers watching and entertained. DeRuyter also thinks that the producers fail to show the consequences to some of the couples' actions, where in the real world, couples have to think about them before they act.

Both DeRuyter and Edmonds believe the shows view sex as casual activity and can bring people out of their comfort zone when watching it. Consequently, DeRuyter thinks "Gossip Girl" and "90210" can make teenagers feel self-conscious about themselves and their relationships.

"Some people might compare their relationships to those on television shows," Edmonds said. "It depends on the person and how secure they are with the relationship they're in."

According to McTygue and Edmonds, media puts more pressure on girls than boys. The ideas boys have for perfection are much smaller than they are for girls. According to McTygue, there is so much more girls must do to be "perfect". Edmonds agrees that media



90210 ★ Freshmen Jane Evans, left, and Mickey Redlingshafer talk while watching "90210" April 17. Redlingshafer was a weekly viewer of "90210" but didn't take the message the show portrayed seriously. PHOTO BY MAGGIE KENNEY

puts pressure on girls to have the perfect hair, clothes and body.

The media puts pressure on teenage couples to appear like the couples in the shows, according to DeRuyter, but everyone can interpret the message differently.

"Personally, I don't feel pressure from the media, because I know it's fictional," DeRuyter said. "Girls might feel they have to act like the characters in the shows to get boys

to like them."

Although many popular television shows may be dramatic and the relationships may be unrealistic, Edmonds believes teenagers can avoid the pressure the shows put on relationships by viewing the content with maturity.

"I think [the content of the shows] is okay, as long as [teenagers] don't look too far into the physical aspect of the show," Edmonds said. ★

Teenagers cope with pressures of curfew

Students respond to stress of meeting parents' set curfew

by KATIE MCCOMBS
Journalism Student

As the clock strikes 10:30 p.m. STA sophomore Meg Nulton gathers her carpool and delivers them to their homes throughout the Brookside area. She pulls into her driveway at 11 p.m., and the weight of possibly breaking curfew is lifted from her shoulders, as she has made it home on time.

This is a typical weekend night, according to Meg, and just one scenario of how high school teenagers cope with the pressures of managing a curfew.

Driving on weekends brings an additional level of pressure to meeting curfew, Meg explains. Because she received her license earlier than most of her friends, she provides a ride home for many of them. She is responsible for getting herself and her friends home on time.

"I not only have to make my curfew, but the curfew of others as well," Nulton said.

Classmates and parents can blame her for broken curfews, Meg said. Therefore, she is "always watching the clock" on weekend nights. She determines who she is taking home

in advance so she can plan accordingly.

Senior Emily Quatman also believes that drivers have more pressure than non-drivers regarding curfews.

"My friends and I alternate driving, so the responsibility is shared," Quatman said. "We do this so that not one person feels pressure all of the time."

Freshman Maggie Rellihan believes she experiences less pressure concerning curfews, because she does not have her license yet. Therefore, parents have the responsibility of driving her home on weekend nights.

"Next year, I won't have an excuse for being late, since I will be driving," Rellihan said. "I will be the one in control of my curfew and how I get home."

The order in which one falls in a family may also affect the pressures of curfews. According to Nulton, her parents were stricter about curfews with her three older siblings. As each of her older siblings has progressed through high school, Nulton believes the pressure on curfew in her family has decreased.

"We've tweaked various rules over the years, but the curfew times from our oldest child seem to still work well," said Meg's mother, Ms. Maura Nulton. "However, we are now more understanding of our

teens arriving a bit late for curfew."

According to Quatman, her curfew has also been influenced by her older siblings. With each child, curfews have become more lenient.

"My older sister was a guinea pig for curfews," Quatman said. "My parents experimented with stricter curfews on her."

Rellihan, as the oldest in her family, believes that there will be more pressure on her than her younger siblings. She will have to "set the bar" for her elementary school aged brother and sister.

Nulton, Quatman and Rellihan say that with the passing of each year, curfew times can increase and the stress that accompanies them can decrease.

Maura said that if Meg maintains consistent trustworthy behavior with her parents, her curfew will increase 30 minutes each year after sophomore year.

"Curfew times seem to work well using the following: freshman - 10:30, sophomore - 11:00, junior - 11:30, and senior - midnight," Maura said. "Curfew should be consistent so that [Meg, her dad and I] are clear on what is expected."

According to Quatman, she has gained the trust of her parents and does not feel any pressure with her senior year curfew of 1 a.m.

"Nothing goes on any later than [1 a.m.] anyway," Quatman said. ★



Right on Time ★ STA sophomore Meg Nulton sets down her car keys while glancing at the clock Saturday night, assuring herself she made her 11 p.m. curfew. Nulton drove that evening and was responsible for meeting curfew and staying safe. PHOTO BY KATIE MCCOMBS

Kansas City Curfew

Although parents may set curfew restrictions on their children, each city has its own rules as well.

Children under 18 may not be out between the hours of 12 p.m. and 6 a.m. Friday and Saturday and 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. the rest of the week

Anyone in violation must have a parent or guardian pick them up and will be issued a ticket

Source: www.kansascity.com

Compiled by MORGAN SAID

Sophomore, parents debate conversion

Hannah Wolf and family ponder conversion while trying to maintain tradition

by ALLISON FITTS
Journalism Student

Sophomore Hannah Wolf puts on her new dress and prepares to attend Easter services with her family. She arrives at church and greets her grandparents with a smile. Hannah sits through the Presbyterian service, but she cannot help but think about how this day would be different if she were to convert to Catholicism.

"I feel like I have to be [my family's] religion to celebrate with them," Hannah said.

Hannah has been raised in the Presbyterian faith by her parents, George Wolf and Deena Wolf, but she has decided that she would like to become Catholic. According to Hannah, some differences between Catholicism and Presbyterianism are that Presbyterians do not have all seven sacraments that Catholics have and Presbyterians view the Eucharist as a symbol, not as a Transfiguration like Catholics. Hannah's parents understand her desire to convert, but they do not want her to while living under their roof.

"We've told her we want her to be confirmed Presbyterian while living at home," Deena said.

Hannah's Presbyterian Confirmation during her freshman year at STA caused debate at the Wolf home. Because Confirmation is the time to fully commit to a faith, Hannah said she was reluctant.

"There was conflict before Confirmation just because I was so reluctant to be confirmed when [my parents] were eager for me to," Hannah said.

Hannah said much of the hesitation she was feeling towards Confirmation was from her realization that she knew more about Catholicism than Presbyterianism. This was partly due to her attending St. Elizabeth's School.

"I've been raised half by my Catholic education, and half by my Presbyterian religion," Hannah said. "I really re-evaluated myself before Confirmation."

Because of her Catholic education and Catho-



All in the family ★ Sophomore Hannah Wolf, center, poses with her parents Deena, left, and George. "[My dad] just felt as a Presbyterian, it was his responsibility to raise me Presbyterian," Hannah said. PHOTO BY ALLISON FITTS

lic friends, Hannah had insight into the faith. She said that much of her desire to convert stemmed from her perception of how involved the Catholics she knew were in their churches.

"Most Catholics I know go [to church] every week," Hannah said. "I feel that if I was Catholic I would be more consistent about it."

Deena said that she and her husband made the decision for Hannah to be confirmed in the Presbyterian faith because she was too young to make the decision to convert.

"We want her to choose what's best for her in adult life," Deena said. "And if [Catholicism is] best for her that's fine."

Hannah and her mother cite family tradition as the primary reason for her to remain Presbyterian while living at home. Deena said that the family attends church together, and Hannah knows that becoming Catholic would change that tradition.

"I don't want to upset anyone in my family or be seen as an outcast," Hannah said.

Hannah's story is not unique to the STA community. Students may be experiencing religious uncertainty in their lives, but according to campus minister Joe LaScala, there are means of helping students cope with these doubts.

"I'm always open to talk to kids," said LaScala.

Along with talking to students, LaScala said that theology classes are an outlet to express religious uncertainties. However, he also said that the school is not in a position to intervene in the religious life of a student and their family.

Hannah has accepted her parents' decision to require her wait to convert to Catholicism and she said she may convert in the future. Deena said her and her husband will support Hannah if she decides to become Catholic later. To Deena, it is all about belonging to a religion and having a faith life.

"Having religion is more important than which religion," Deena said. ★

Respect shown regardless of religion

Even from different religions, students feel acceptance at STA, in theology classes

by ELLIE NACHBOR
Journalism Student

She sits awkwardly during prayer services and does not participate much in theology class. She does not know how to pray the Rosary or say the Hail Mary, but freshman Libby Stoops believes she fits in well at STA despite her difference in religion.

Stoops is one of many girls at STA who does not associate herself with the Catholic Church.

"I don't think the other students mind me not being Catholic," Stoops said.

STA holds a standard for "loving thy dear neighbor" and upholds Christian values including accepting everyone, according to the STA Mission Statement. However, each student responds differently to the Catholic environment of the school.

Because not all girls at STA are Catholic,

theology teacher Mary Jo Coughlin believes she has to teach with an understanding that many students differ in opinion.

"I explain [to the students] that this is a Catholic school, but I do recognize that not everyone here is Catholic," Coughlin said. "I invite and encourage all students to participate in discussions to help us understand how the concept of their own faith works."

She asks her non-Catholic students to use the concepts that the class is discussing to reflect on their own beliefs. Coughlin also teaches her students to think about their faith, Catholic or not, ask questions and gather information so they can make moral life decisions.

"I'm not trying to make them believe, just to teach them and provoke thoughts," Coughlin said.

Coughlin wants non-Catholic students to feel accepted, included and welcomed.

Stoops is one of those students. She defines herself as having Christian morals, but she is not religiously affiliated. According to Stoops, there is an obligation to be Catholic at STA, but it has helped her become a better person.

"I have always agreed with having good morals, but it feels like since I've come here people push [morals] more," Stoops said. "They are just expected."

Freshman Grace Doran also agrees that the Catholic way of mind has influenced her as a Methodist at STA, but she does not feel pressured to practice Catholicism. Doran feels that she does not stand out at STA because she believes in many of the same teachings as the Catholic Church.

"I don't feel pressured into being Catholic because there are a lot of different religions, different views and different opinions at St. Teresa's," Doran said.

Freshman Lena White believes that the many different religions and characteristics of the girls at STA help them not put pressure on her, as an atheist, to be Catholic.

"I don't think that anyone here tries to force their beliefs on others," White said. "They may pass judgment, but they don't do it vocally. I think that is a sign of maturity."

White feels that STA is very open to diversity. She thinks that even though STA is a Catholic school, there is mutual respect, especially in religion.



Test Time ★ Sophomores Hanna Katz, left, and Sarah Burchett laugh while preparing for a morality test given by Mrs. Mary Jo Coughlin. Even though Katz is Jewish, she enjoys participating in class. PHOTO BY ELLIE NACHBOR

Sometimes sophomore Hanna Katz feels like she stands out being Jewish; at other times she does not. Katz believes that at some points she has felt pressured into being Catholic and at others, she feels no pressure at all.

However, all of these girls can agree on one thing: it is easier here to be who they are and say what they feel.

"We all believe in being good and moral people and respecting others," Katz said. "We all think for ourselves and that is why it is so easy to have different beliefs at STA." ★

Stars fade under pressure to shine



Competition for top spot lives on for sophomores, juniors

by **ABBY UCHE**
Journalism Student

It is the last final exam of first semester and a room full of nail-biting, head-scratching freshmen fills out Scantrons to the soundtrack of scribbling pencils and blowing eraser dust. Each one has seven more semesters' worth of finals to look forward to. However, these freshmen only have six more semesters of class work and finals left to earn the title "valedictorian."

Senior Celeste Bremen has gone through this scenario seven times already. In January, STA principal of academic affairs Barbara McCormick notified Bremen that she had earned the highest cumulative GPA of her class, making her the class of 2010's valedictorian. Bremen was recognized for her hard work in STA's parent newsletter and at the academic awards ceremony April 22. In addition, Bremen will speak at the graduation ceremony this Sunday.

Throughout her years at STA, Bremen has made an effort to avoid feeling the pressures of competing for academic honors.

"I try not to put a lot of pressure on myself," Bremen said. "I just try to do whatever I think I can

do."

This attitude has made Bremen's academic goals more about self satisfaction than competition. According to Bremen, in order to uphold a positive mind-set, she avoids viewing GPAs as a contest. Though Bremen strives to remain positive, this does not eliminate all the pressures of academics.

"Occasionally, I have put pressure on myself, [but] if I'm doing the best I can then that's what I'm happy with," Bremen said.

Some students, however, have not managed to avoid the pressure of competition for academic honors. Freshman Maya Burtin feels that there are high expectations for STA students and that this pressure will only increase as a student gets older. After a student's freshman year a variety of challenging courses are available, including seven accelerated courses, four honors courses and six AP courses. According to Burtin, as the classes get harder, expectations for STA students increase.

According to college and academic adviser Debi Hudson, weighted courses are vital in the competition for valedictorian.

"Weighted courses obviously do play a major part [in earning valedictorian] when the only criteria is GPA," Hudson said.

This year's valedictorian has taken 14 weighted courses in addition to four accelerated courses during her time at STA, according to

Hudson. For some students, accelerated and honors courses increase the pressure put on them. Sophomore Alex Mediavilla has felt this pressure from accelerated courses.

"The students in these classes normally try to outdo each other in order to impress their peers," Mediavilla said. "There is always a pressure to do better than our classmates and be the best at a subject [that] we can be."

Administration at STA makes an effort to alleviate some of these pressures by allowing students to add or drop classes prior to the start of the school year through what McCormick calls an "open door policy."

"I...believe that promoting an open door policy to students allows them the opportunity to share their academic concerns," McCormick said. "It provides the student an avenue for collaborating with administration and teachers."

McCormick believes STA students manage the pressures and expectations at STA very well and also notices students working toward a balance in their lives by participating in extracurricular activities outside of academics.

Even with the efforts of STA's administration, Mediavilla feels that students at STA will always feel the pressures of competing.

"[Competition] is a simple aspect of being human; we all want to be better than everyone else," Mediavilla said. ★

Bummed out ★ Sophomore Alex Mediavilla rests her head during Ms. Denise Rueschhoff's 13/14 accelerated world history class April 15. Mediavilla, along with many students at STA, has felt academic pressure from competition between students, especially in her accelerated courses. **PHOTO BY ABBY UCHE**

Students struggle to choose classes

Parents, teachers, friends, other factors impact students' decisions to take AP classes

by **MADDI HUGHES-ZAHNER**
Journalism Student

STA will see its greatest amount of students in Advanced Placement (AP) classes this coming school year, according to AP US history (APUSH) teacher Craig Whitney, even if it is just a slight increase. Under STA's new administration, more students have the opportunity to take accelerated and honors courses.

"[I've been pressuring] students more this year to take the AP option," Whitney said.

"This year we have been more free to invite students who may not have hit the mark in the past."

Many students have to decide whether or not to take the AP or honors option each year. Taking AP courses as a junior normally requires a cumulative GPA of 3.5, and for some students, this is difficult to attain. This year, though, teachers can evaluate each student and make exceptions based on her interests.

Whitney, who teaches both APUSH and regular US history, is happy to see more students in AP classes and taking the APUSH exam in early May. Teach-

ers, like Whitney, can push students to take certain courses. Whitney encourages students who are interested and excel in history to take his accelerated class.

"[Students] should invite the challenge [of harder classes]," Whitney said.

However, teachers are rarely the only ones who apply pressure to students to take AP or honors courses, according to junior Sarah Wirtz. She feels parents and classmates, too, can advocate for a student's decision. She, however, believes she also pressures herself to take on an advanced class load.

"[I have] high expectations for myself," Wirtz said. "I would like to look back at how hard I worked and see my grades reflect that."

This year, Wirtz is taking honors physics, honors pre-calculus, AP American literature and APUSH. She hopes to see the positive effects of a background in higher-level courses when she attends college. STA's college and academic adviser Debi Hudson agrees that a student's enrollment in AP or honors classes can improve her college acceptance.

"For schools that are more selective in their admissions process, the rigor of courses is crucial," Hudson said. "Students should [take advanced classes] if possible. The goal is to challenge, but not bury yourself."

AP and honors courses can also allow students to focus on the subjects they enjoy most. Wirtz, for example, plans to pursue a career in math or science. Therefore, for her senior year, she will take AP calculus and AP biology, but will drop down to regular literature and social studies courses.

"[Higher-level] classes have [helped me focus on] what I like, what I want to go into,"



Table talk ★ Juniors Jenny Schorgl, from left, Sarah Wirtz and Elle Rauch discuss the 1920s in their Advanced Placement US history class April 14. The three chose the weighted AP course in hopes of earning college credit at the end of this school year. **PHOTO BY MADDI HUGHES-ZAHNER**

Wirtz said. "I feel more prepared."

However, AP and honors classes do not suit all students, according to junior Dominique Brawner. Grades, interests, lack of pressure and many other factors affect a student's decision to take regular or advanced courses. For Brawner, regular classes were the right choice.

"[Regular courses] have a reasonable pace and a reasonable amount of homework," Brawner said. "It makes it easier for me to juggle all of my classes."

Brawner did not feel pressure to take AP or

honors courses and has few regrets. She had no trouble choosing to take all regular classes.

"I didn't think I could manage all the homework [of AP and honors classes]," Brawner said. "[The only downside] is possibly not having a big enough work load for getting into college."

However, in the end, the decision is ultimately up to the student.

"[Students] have to decide if they want to challenge themselves," Wirtz said. "[They have to] find what helps them get the most out of high school." ★

Whatever It Takes

Advanced Placement (AP) courses at STA may require a student to have:

- a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher
- specific scores on PSAT and PLAN tests
- a signature from the course instructor on their registration form

Source: STA's Program of Studies

College aid lowers cost, raises stress

Seniors Claire O'Neill, Sarah Kindscher explain pressure due to college scholarships

by HANNAH WOLF
Journalism Student

As college acceptance letters fly through the mail this month, seniors fly through different emotions. However, the pressure does not end there; availability of scholarships and financial aid still burdens seniors, and in many cases, dictates which school they will attend.

"I hear a lot of people talking about how they are waiting to hear about financial aid to make their decision," senior Claire O'Neill said. "I do see many people settling for their second or third choices because a \$40,000 tuition check is just out of the question. Scholarships do help sometimes, but for many people the couple thousand dollars here and there doesn't add up to be enough."

According to STA college counselor Debi Hudson, 70 percent of STA's class of 2009 received scholarships worth \$6,500 on average. Students can receive scholarships primarily for academics, but also for athletics, visual and performing arts, leadership and service. However, seniors are starting to see that this scholarship money may not be enough.

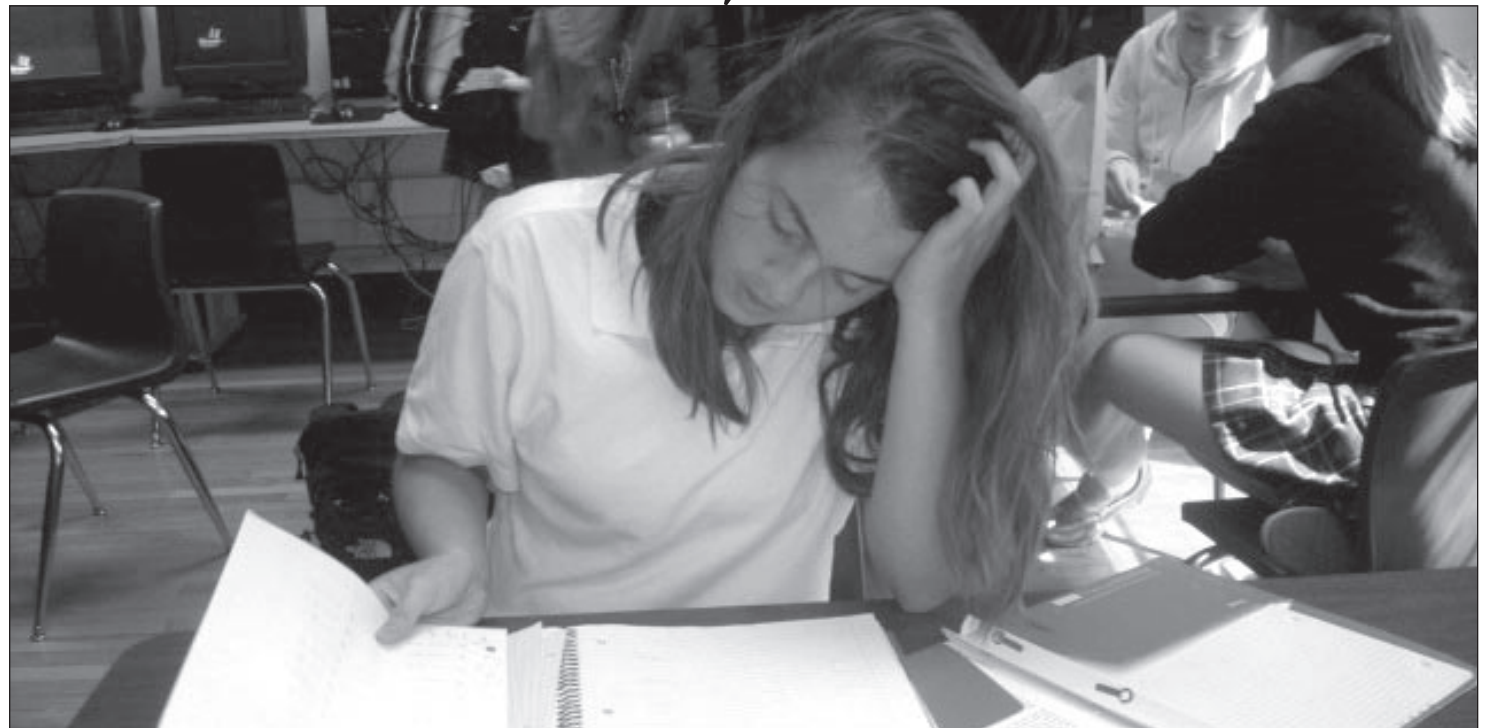
"It's happening more now than in past years because of the high cost of tuition and room and board," Hudson said.

Because more students need scholarship money, competition has increased, creating more pressure for applicants.

"I believe [scholarship] pressure has increased because the cost of education has increased and the success of some of our investments has decreased over the years," Ms. Nancy O'Neill, Claire's mother, said.

Claire understood just how helpful this scholarship money could be when she enrolled at the University of Missouri.

"The biggest factor is just being able to lighten the load on my parents," Claire said. "The thing that worries me the most is putting this weight on



Stressed out ★ Senior Claire O'Neill stresses to finish homework in the M&A resource center April 15. "Pressure is normal during this time of senior year," O'Neill said. PHOTO BY HANNAH WOLF

my parents' shoulders. I am the oldest in my family so I worry about the spending because I want to make sure my brother and sister can have the same opportunities as me."

Nancy recognizes how much pressure Claire was under throughout her application process, always keeping in mind how expensive her options were and how much money each school would hand out.

"Claire has always understood the importance of financial aid," Nancy said. "Discussions of scholarships were always a part of her college application and decision processes."

However, Claire believes her parents are not fully responsible for this pressure.

"My parents appreciate the work I did in high

school and know that I wanted to get scholarships to help them out," Claire said. "They really didn't harp on me too much. I think most of my pressure was self-imposed."

Senior Sarah Kindscher, enrolled at Texas Christian University, also knew how important scholarship money could be when she chose a college. She agrees that the pressure to get a scholarship came primarily from herself.

"I put more pressure on myself than my parents did," Kindscher said. "They knew that I was stressed and worried on my own."

Kindscher thinks scholarship money is not merely financial aid, but a reward for her hard work.

"I wanted to get rewarded for all of the work

I've put into high school," Kindscher said. "I also wanted to prove to myself that I can do it."

According to Claire, financial aid and scholarships are just part of the stress that the college decision process inflicts on seniors this time of year.

"After [scholarships], you have housing, enrollment fees, roommate plans and more," Claire said. "So the stress still lingers."

Both seniors recognize a high level of stress that comes from adding scholarship pressure to their workload.

"The stress level is off the charts," Kindscher said. "We have this mind-set that we have to get that scholarship in order to get a good start in college." ★

Required courses lower stress levels

Semester courses remain integrated in schedule and relieve student stress

by CHRISTINA BARTON
Journalism Student

At St. Teresa's Academy, every student will take a foreign language, theology, physical education, world geography, speech and a computer class. For teachers like world geography teacher Denise Rueschhoff and speech teacher Ann Heid, this can mean teaching over 70 students each semester. With large class sizes, teachers like Rueschhoff and Heid must teach students with a wide variety of intelligence and interest.

According to academic principal Barbara McCormick, world geography and speech are required classes in Missouri for high school graduation. To avoid scheduling problems, the STA administration grouped the students into one class.

Rueschhoff has taught at STA for 10 years, but she does not have a problem with teaching students all over the grade spectrum.

"There is too much pressure on the freshmen already," Rueschhoff said. "The students are new to the STA system and are already going through a big enough adjustment from grade school to high school. Freshman year is a time to get to know each other, not to be split up."

Although many classes, such as math and English, are divided for freshmen, Rueschhoff said a single class is not a problem because the students come from different geography backgrounds.

Freshman Jane Evans agrees that combining students in world geography relieves stress on students.

"It is easy to see if people have not taken [world geography], but there is no pressure for students to be better than others," Evans said.

Freshman Sarah Frey also believes it is obvious who has taken world geography before.

"You can tell who pays attention because they answer more questions," Frey said.

McCormick said that although world geography is not divided by grades, expectations for students remain the same.

"Regular courses have high to low students, so teachers must teach everyone and differentiate," McCormick said.

Similar to world geography, speech is a required course for all sophomores. Heid said she likes having one class for all sophomores because it is great groundwork in speech, and students help each other.

"People think they know more than they really do," Heid said. "With [split classes], an entry level would be missing."

According to Heid, one class allows experienced students to critique the inexperienced students' speeches and act as role models for new speakers.

While some students enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of a joined class, sophomore Emily Holt believes there should be an option for an accelerated speech class.

"It can be obnoxious to be stuck in a class with slower people or doing stuff you already know," Holt said.

Until this year, all freshmen took the same computer class. However last May, students had



Pack it in ★ Freshmen listen to teacher Denise Rueschhoff in world geography class Thursday as she introduces a new topic. Rueschhoff said one general class works because "nobody comes in knowing a lot about geography." PHOTO BY CHRISTINA BARTON

the opportunity to test into computer II, a more advanced class. According to computer teacher Kathy McCarthy, the regular computer class does intermediate activities with Microsoft Office, while the computer II class does activities requiring more computer skills.

When the administration decided to provide a computer II class, McCarthy said she did not want a divided class, but it ended up being a good thing because the classes reinforce what the students already know and teach them new things.

McCormick said the computer class was divided for the benefit of the students who come

from all different computer backgrounds. Emma Dillon, a freshman in computer I, said she does not think there is a big difference between the computer classes and that most students could be in either class.

Although world geography and speech will remain one class next year, McCormick said the administration will continue to find the best way to help students. Even if the classes remain united, the pressure on students will always remain.

"No matter what the class is, the expectation [for students to succeed] is always there," McCormick said. ★

Dart staff: hot off the stress?

Benefits and consequences of stress on the newspaper are evident to the students

by NIKKI RODRIGUEZ
Journalism Student

If you drive past STA late at night on just the right day, it may look like a crazy dance party in the parking lot. For a Winstead's employee, it may look like a starving group of girls celebrating a victory. To teachers, it may look like empty seats in the classroom as girls fall sick. To the STA community, it may look like tightly cropped pictures or a missing interview in the *Dart*.

The *Dart* staff has a responsibility to the entire STA community, and that knowledge can lead to stress and anxiety among staff members, according to the publications' advisor, Eric Thomas.

"Our work is published," Thomas said. "If [we] forget to do something for the publication, three to four thousand readers will know."

The *Dart* staff attempts to inform, educate and entertain STA students, teachers, faculty and families. But at what cost? Research shows that 85 percent of teenagers feel stressed or pressured at times.

"It makes me really stressed out sometimes," staff writer, junior Molly Meagher said. "Being on staff is a different kind of pressure. When you're on deadline and you don't get something in on time, it brings down the whole staff."

Stress in teenagers can lead to panic attacks, anxiety, depression, headaches, trouble sleeping or stomach problems.

"If I was stressed about something on the *Dart*, I would be tossing and turning until three in the morning," staff photographer, sophomore Hanna Katz said. "I [am] always tired."

Trouble sleeping and anxiety most commonly occur as signs of stress, but the *Dart* staff finds its own ways to combat the pressure.

"Girls definitely tend to get sick around deadline time," said Thomas. "Some girls tend to be really silly and goofy. Mostly, they have trouble dealing with each other. They don't know how to handle each other when under stress."

As well as taking a toll on the staffers' health, pressure can negatively affect the work.

"When I am under pressure, I have to crop my photos a lot," Katz said. "My work becomes more rushed and tends to be sloppier."

The stress to meet deadline and keep up with the work increases when coupled with the competitive nature on the staff.

"The amount of work surprised me at first," staff writer, sophomore Paige Wendland said. "There was pressure to keep up with the girls who had been on staff for one or two years."

However, opinions differ on the benefits of stress in the staff routine. According to Thomas, pressure is not entirely negative for the *Dart*.

"That stress [the staffers] feel really motivates them," Thomas said. "The stress of the deadline is pretty amazing. Without [it], I don't think we would accomplish what needs to be done."

Meagher agrees there are benefits to the pressure of being on staff.

"It's become a good kind of stress," Meagher said. "It makes me get my work done early because I know I have to give some time to each step. The pressure over all will help me to prepare for college. I'm not doing everything last minute,



Right on target ★ Seniors Sydney Deatherage, front, and Kayla Loosen work during the *Dart*'s publication night April 15. Publication nights allow *Dart* staffers to design pages for the next issue. PHOTO BY NIKKI RODRIGUEZ

like I used to."

The *Dart* requires more work out of the classroom than most courses, but the work ethic learned on the publication can affect students'

view of other classes.

"I see [the work ethic] rubbing off in other classes and I am able to do good work in a much shorter period of time," Wendland said. ★

Pressure for technology impacts STA

STA receives high tech advances in order to compete with other schools

by MADDISON BALACHOWSKI
Journalism Student

As this year at STA comes to a close, the coming new school year brings a change that can set STA apart from other schools. This change is laptops for each student to use throughout the year. This change is just the crest of the technology wave that is hitting schools around the nation.

"The key to change and growth is leadership," principal of academic affairs Barbara McCormick said. "[Leadership] is evident at STA."

This technology advancement is a result of a survey taken by faculty, staff, alumnae, students and parents in the spring of 2009. Though technology was not the main focus of the survey, it showed the problems that STA faced with technology. On a scale of one to five, the participants were asked if students had access to the appropriate technology. The result for students was 3.6 whereas faculty and staff had 3.1 and alumnae and parents gave it a 3.8. This survey helped STA administration decide what needed to be changed.

"Laptops will help set St. Teresa's apart from other schools in our area," math teacher Jeanella Clark said. "I also think it will more adequately prepare our students for uses of technology other than just simply entertain-

ment."

With each new generation, schools try to find new ways to help the students learn with methods that students are more familiar with. Technology has become the new way of learning and has started a domino affect in schools. This domino effect is the outcome of schools competing to be on top of the higher education for students. However, this effect will also help to improve the SAT and ACT scores for many students according to Northwest Michigan College study on technology.

"My classroom and style of teaching is more like that in which you would find in a university so I help my students be more prepared than other classes might," science teacher Renee Blake said. "[My] students become better prepared for real world application and problem solving."

Students have had tests, quizzes, or projects which they want to know how they did as soon as they turn it in. With advances like Moodle, Turnitin.com and Powerschool STA is quickly become a technology advanced school. Moodle gives each student access to their homework on any computer, while

Turnitin.com allows teachers to grade students paper on the computer, and Powerschool will show the students their grade in that class.

"I give my students online quizzes and exams that they do during class," Blake said. "These help them to get immediate feedback about how they did."

More universities and colleges are beginning to use technology in class and are getting



Tech savvy ★ Juniors Kirby Buckley, from left, Hayden Fudenberg and Montaya Jones take a practice quiz in botany using the Smartboard. The girls worked with each other on a project using the laptops in the science room April 14. PHOTO BY MADDISON BALACHOWSKI

rid of the "old" way of teaching by adding wifi to the campuses and wireless remotes that allow them to take multiple choice tests without paper. Some classes have gone completely online while others are still using chalk boards

every day. According to publicagenda.org, in order for high school students to be prepared for college, high schools needs to teach similar to the way of colleges. ★

STA students neglect illness to avoid absence

Principal encourages students to stay home while sick to reduce school outbreak

by ALEX RADTKE
Journalism Student

"Hello Julia. This is Gabrielle Schweitzer calling for my daughter Molly Kaniger. She has the stomach flu and will not be coming to school today..."

As administrative assistant Julia Berardi hangs up the phone, she marks the twelfth student sick for the day. Berardi is glad these students decided to stay home today rather than coming to school sick.

"If a student is feeling sick, then... she needs to stay home," Berardi said. "Also, if a student is sick enough to miss the first half of the day, then I think it is better for them to stay home to get rest."

Berardi thinks that there is pressure for students to come to school sick because they are nervous about falling behind in classes. According to Berardi, the STA attendance policy allows a student to miss five days of a class before her grade is dropped a letter.

"I think [the attendance policy] is why many girls come to school sick," Berardi said. "They feel like they cannot afford to reach that fifth day because of their grades."

Some students, such as sophomore Libby Randolph, have other reasons for coming to school sick.

"I am afraid if I miss school I would have even more work to do," Randolph said. "I'm terrified of getting behind in class. If I have something to turn in, I go to school anyways because it... complicates everything with teachers, tests and homework."

Principal for academic affairs, Barbara McCormick, believes that students need to follow the STA policy when deciding if they are too ill to come to school. The policy states that a student must be fever free (temperature below 100 degrees) for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

"I know I am not pressuring students to come to school if they are sick," McCormick said. "Students must ask themselves what is pressuring them [to come to school]. Who? What? I think the student's interpretation of the policy is the thing that dictates the amount of pressure a student is feeling. No one is hounding the students to come to school when they are sick."

In a poll of 126 STA students, 94 percent admitted to coming to school sick, when according to the STA policy they should have stayed home. McCormick presumes that the STA policy on illness is often broken, but she wishes students would follow the policy out of concern for themselves and the students that surround them.

"I do believe students should follow the policy," McCormick said. "...also, if a student is contagious, she should know better than to come to school."

According to the poll, homework loads, tests, and a fear of falling behind in classes most commonly pressure students who come to school sick. Freshman Emmi Shearman is one of the 94 percent who comes to school when she is sick.



Check it out ★ Freshman Phyleia Battle, left, checks out with Ms. Julia Berardi April 16 in the M&A Building. "I try not to miss very much school, so I come in even when I'm not feeling my best," Battle said. "Then I'll leave [before lunch] if I'm not feeling [well]." PHOTO BY ALEX RADTKE

"I hate missing so much school," Shearman said. "It seems like I can get behind so easily. Plus I hate missing tests, and I feel like I learn [material] better when I am actually in class, not just getting notes from someone else."

Despite the consequences of missing school, Berardi and McCormick agree that students should

stay home when they are ill, reducing chances of an outbreak at STA.

"I just wish students would stay home and rest," Berardi said. "Then they can come to school when they have fully recovered. I wish they would not come to school sick because it spreads throughout the school and everyone ends up getting sick." ★

Freshman class to increase 10 percent

STA administration manages increase in class sizes, shows little space concern

by KATE ROHR
Journalism Student

At STA, the incoming freshman class of 2014 will be 10 percent larger than the current freshman class. Although three or four students usually drop out before the school year begins, there are currently 153 girls enrolled in the incoming freshman class, according to director of admissions Roseann Hudnall.

"We are in such a good space right now," Hudnall said. "It is natural that people want to be part of a strong community."

Hudnall accounts for the increased size because of the example current STA students set.

"The girls sell the school," Hudnall said. "When [parents] hear about students who have excelled, it makes people understand that we're strong academically."

According to Hudnall, academics is not the only reason many girls are interested in STA. She believes traditions such as STA's spirituality also attract potential students.

"People are looking for a value-based education," Hudnall said. "It makes girls so much stronger in their faith, whatever it is."

Although STA administration expected this increase, statistics warned them otherwise.

"Demographics told us we would experience a decline about four years ago," Hudnall said. "We didn't experience any of the decline. It speaks for the reputation of the girls."

Despite the increased size, Hudnall isn't worried about overcrowding.

"We feel really comfortable with that number," Hudnall said. "We took as many as would make a nice student body. Mrs. McCormick



Full house ★ Latin teacher Sue Marquis helps Latin I students with homework April 14. Next year's freshman class will be 10 percent larger, but Marquis and other faculty members are not concerned. PHOTO BY KATE ROHR

knows what it means to have a good classroom size."

Principal of academic affairs Barbara McCormick is also content with the size of the incoming freshman class. However, both Hudnall and McCormick agree that there may be some shifting of classes to accommodate the larger group.

"Until we have allowed the incoming freshman to take qualifying exams we will not be certain of their placement in some classes," McCormick said. "But there could be a few more students in some of the sections that require all freshmen, such as world geography and theology."

McCormick and Hudnall are confident in STA

teachers' ability to attend to students' individual needs.

"[STA's] community embraces the philosophy of accepting students as unique individuals," McCormick said. "Therefore, the institution employs resources to best serve the needs of its students."

World geography teacher Denise Rueschhoff believes that for the most part there will be almost no impact at all.

"The school in the past has never had a problem with that size," Rueschhoff said.

Latin teacher Sue Marquis has taught in a classroom half the size of other teachers' rooms

for the past four years. She is now moving to a larger room and is confident that the larger class will not be an issue.

"STA is very good about keeping class size manageable," Marquis said.

According to Hudnall, one reason for the lack of anxiety about a larger freshman class is because the administration expected and prepared for it.

"We saw it coming," Hudnall said. "We talked before we ever accepted it. [Teachers] aren't going to feel those extra kids in the class. We have a fabulous faculty, and they are going to love every one of them." ★

Sophomore puts mind over mono



Keeping busy ★ Sophomore Megan Schilling takes a test in Spanish teacher Melissa Axton's classroom. Absent for most of the first semester due to illness, Schilling was still susceptible to sicknesses that prevented her from fully returning to school until the second semester. PHOTO BY CELIA O'FLAHERTY

Student misses over 60 days of school, makes up work

by CELIA O'FLAHERTY
Journalism Student

October 17, the day of the Teresian dance, sophomore Megan Schilling woke up feeling better than usual. After missing school in spurts due to strep throat, she visited the doctor and received a clear to attend Teresian and host an after party. That night, Schilling danced with her date, entertained friends, finished a late night clean-up and fell asleep, exhausted.

"A big part of who I am is being social," Schilling said. "I would hate to look back at sophomore year and see that I did nothing."

Only a few days later, Schilling was diagnosed with severe mononucleosis, not fully returning to school until the second semester. According to webmd.com, mononucleosis, or mono, is a viral illness leaving the infected weak for months and is often misdiagnosed as strep throat.

"I bet I have slept more than I have been awake the whole year," Schilling said. "It wasn't weird for me to sleep all day."

Schilling missed three consecutive school weeks and struggled with the pressure of staying on track academically. However, when her mother, Susan Schilling,

informed principal for academic affairs Barbara McCormick of the seriousness of Megan's condition, McCormick met with Megan's teachers to handle the situation. McCormick said they made it a priority to meet Megan's academic needs.

"I could see [Megan's] concern about getting everything done," McCormick said. "[But] I had full confidence in the teachers to know what skills [she] needed to be prepared for her courses."

During her absences, Megan missed all of her semester exams. According to Susan, STA was tremendously helpful in Megan's recuperation.

"The school really understood [Megan] needed time to get well," Susan said. "They put her recovery [first]."

Megan said her teachers reached beyond her expectations.

"My teachers were really patient with me," Megan said. "They never pressured me and respected that I needed time."

Literature teacher Stephen Himes introduced Skype, a video chat and software application, during his class so Megan could listen to discussion.

"It is more difficult in [literature] classes where the basis of what I teach revolves around class discussion, so I was worried she wouldn't understand everything without being involved [in class]," Himes said. "By letting Megan hear the discussion [through Skype], she [had] a much better idea of what she was missing."

Along with her teachers' assistance, Megan said she would not have recovered without her classmates' support.

"Without my friends, I would have become depressed," Megan said. "My doctors were even surprised about my school experience. Most teens exposed to mono suffer from depression because of a lack of connection with their school. It was awesome to see everyone cared."

After recovering over Christmas break, Megan planned to fully return to school second semester. However, because she was susceptible to common sicknesses, she found catching up difficult.

"I pick [illnesses] up easily, so I have already missed a fair amount of school during the second semester," Megan said. "The hard part about this semester is my schedule. I only have two frees [weekly] and activity periods—all of which [I spend] making up tests."

According to Megan, weekends are time for recovery, not friends, due to her tight schedule.

"I am usually sick by the end of the week because I am mentally and physically exhausted," Megan said. "Balancing sleep and homework is more important than my social life."

Despite her ongoing illness, Megan does not want it to define her sophomore year.

"There's always the option to give up, but I don't want to take it," Megan said. "To me, turning in work is like a big thank you to my teachers for their flexibility." ★

Eighth graders feel pressure to attend STA

Family tradition, friendship groups impact class of 2014

by MADDIE MILLER
Journalism Student

Sunlight streams through the window of the Roasterie Cafe in Brookside as St. Paul's Episcopal School eighth grader Maddie Horton sits at a table enjoying a strawberry smoothie. She grins as she recalls her shadow experience at STA. Horton continues to list reasons why STA was her number one choice. What pressured her to come here? Why did she choose STA?

Horton shadowed several places before she chose STA. Along with STA, she visited Bishop Miege High School, Pembroke Hill High School, Shawnee Mission East High School and Notre Dame de Sion High School. Horton said her parents would be happy if she attended any of those schools.

"My friends helped me decide which high school I was going to go to, we talked about it a lot," Horton said. "Hearing all the posi-

tive things they had to say about STA really encouraged me to go there."

Horton is excited that some of her friends are going to STA. She said that it will be fun having people she knows there.

St. Elizabeth School's eighth grader Kelly Fletcher is a legacy at St. Teresa's. Her mom, grandmother, aunts and cousins went to STA, and her sister, Caitlin Fletcher, is currently a freshman at STA.

"So many of my family members went to [STA]," Kelly said. "I knew I would have to go there so I didn't shadow anywhere else."

Caitlin said she helped convince Kelly that she shouldn't consider any other high school.

"I really want my sister to come to [STA] because I think that it would be the best place for her," Caitlin said. "I love it so much. I

think Kelly will too."

Kelly loved her shadow experience. She enjoyed the classes and the campus and is looking forward to being in an advisory and meeting new people.

"It's a good thing that Kelly likes [STA] so much because she had no other choice in high schools," Mrs. Shanna Fletcher, Kelly's mother said.

Visitation School's eighth grader Kathleen Connor will also attend STA next year. Her biggest influence in her high school decision was her sister, sophomore Caroline Connor.

"I do feel a little pressured to go to [STA] because my sister goes there," Kathleen said. "Overall, I think if Caroline didn't go there, I would still pick [STA] because of all of the fun girls who go there and the stories I have heard. I saw my sister having a lot of fun at [STA], so I wanted to go there too."

Kathleen said that her shadow



All laughs ★ Freshman Caitlin Fletcher, left, and St. Elizabeth's eighth grader Kelly Fletcher joke around at their house April 3. Kelly will be following her sister's footsteps at STA next year. PHOTO BY MADDIE MILLER

experience was a blast. Kathleen's favorite thing about STA is that there are many of sports and events going on. She also likes that there are advisories so freshmen can meet upperclassmen.

"My friends didn't influence me in my decision to come to STA," Kathleen said. "I don't think it would be that bad to go to a high school without my friends because you meet so many new people and step out of your comfort zone."

Kathleen said she decided to come to STA a long time ago when her cousin and sister came here.

"Ever since I was little I have always imagined myself going to STA," Kathleen said. "That had a big role in my decision." ★

Theater stresses some, eases others

Some students feel nervous about performing, others relax with experience

by KATE SANDERS
Journalism Student

Standing beneath the lights, waiting for her cue, staring into the sea of faces watching her, she takes a deep breath. The show has started and it is time to perform.

"Things will happen," sophomore Mackenzie Jones, a performer at Christian Youth Theater said. "It's life. You just have to be prepared."

For students like Jones, theater is a way to relieve stress. It takes their mind off of pressures with school, work or friends.

For other students, performing in front of an audience adds pressure.

"[I get stage fright] anytime I'm talking in front of a bunch of people," drama student Annie Palmer said. "I like acting. It's just [that] I get freaked out."

According to Mindtools.com, stress affects performing, for better or for worse. Pressure motivates people to work for something; it acts as an incentive. However, too much pressure causes distraction and overloads the brain. Theater affects everyone differently.

"[Theater] relieves stress and adds a whole new level at the same time," Christian Youth

Theater participant Michael Reiser said.

Auditions

Auditions cause one level of stress. Palmer believes auditions are worse than the play. Jones agrees.

"Auditions are the worst part [of theater]," Jones said. "The nerves go away a bit after the beginning though."

Jones also finds that auditioning for strangers is easier than auditioning for directors she knows. Actress Laurie Lowrance agrees. She is not as tense when she auditions for strangers.

"You need to be able to put the best 'you' out there you can," Lowrance said. "If you let your nerves get the better of you, you can't."

STA junior Ryan Tucker thinks differently. She thinks it does not make a difference if you know the directors or not because they will make the decision based on what is best for the show.

Rehearsals

A developing show is a part of theater that makes Jones and Tucker anxious. Tucker

feels nervous when it is flawed but has discovered that it always comes together.

Jones agrees, knowing that she will get the choreography or lines, but others that do not practice make her nervous. She worries about how the show will turn out if they do not work at it.

Lowrance knows that she cannot control how others act, but she can control how she acts. If she does not get something she will work on it, but if they do not get something she can only control how she acts toward them.

"Theater relieves stress and adds a whole new level at the same time."

Michael Reiser, Christian Youth Theater participant



Just dance ★ Christian Youth Theater participants Amy Vance, left, and Michael Reiser goof off while learning the ball scene. They were rehearsing the dance for "Cinderella," their upcoming show. PHOTO BY KATE SANDERS

Show Time

Eventually show week arrives. Jones has found that during show week everything comes together, and nobody sleeps. Then it is time for the show.

Jones observes that before the show she gets nervous, but when she is on-stage she does not think about that.

"You get into character and go with it," Jones said.

Tucker agrees. Tucker finds it nerve-racking before the show.

"But as soon as I get on-stage, under the hot light, everything just flows," Tucker stated.

Palmer doesn't feel the same way that Jones and Tucker do. She experiences nerves before the show and stage fright during it.

"I forget how freaked out I get until I already got myself into it," Palmer said. "It happens whenever I [perform] in front of people."

Theater gives Lowrance stress and great memories. Standing beneath the spotlight, wondering if she will have to cover for someone, the sea of faces watching her every move, she speaks.

"For that time I could touch them, entertain them, and take them on a journey to another world," Lowrance said. ★

Students press out unique artwork



Shape up ★ Sophomore Meka Kelly molds her teapot in teacher Lisa Dibble's classroom. She has spent a couple of months working on this piece in ceramics class. PHOTO BY ANDIE DRUMMOND

St. Teresa's students enjoy and learn a new craft with Ceramics I and II courses

by ANDIE DRUMMOND
Journalism Student

Mounds of clay sit in Ms. Lisa Dibble's room waiting for STA Ceramics I and II students to press into it and form their own creations. Whether it is spinning on the wheel, or sitting on the table, STA girls have the chance to make works of art out of nothing but clay. The students make teapots, vases, sculptures and many other works. Some of these pieces have received awards such as the Scholastic Gold Key Award and Silver Key Award. The students enrolled in the classes have spent time and energy into creating pieces with their own two hands.

Sophomore Shannen Freeman took Ceramics I last semester. When she was creating her sculptures, she was very indecisive about how she wanted her pieces to look. When she was forming her teapot, she changed her mind twice.

"It was interesting," Freeman said about changing her mind about her pieces. "I mean I would start making [my teapot] and I would change my mind and try to form something else."

When Freeman started working on her teapot she did not expect it to take two months to create. It took that amount of time because she wanted everything to be right. She wanted the texture to be smooth, the formation to be unique, and the overall outlook to reflect on how much time she put into the piece. Freeman feels clay is not just something you can play with like play dough from preschool, but

art medium that can transform into something original.

"We can do many things with the clay [other] than just playing with it," Freeman said about her experiences in ceramics class. "Sometimes things might not turn out the way you had planned and you might have to re-think how you are going to make your piece come out the way you want."

Sophomore Meka Kelly feels that ceramics has opened a door for her in art that she did not know about before taking the class. Now she creates art with her own two hands. With the opportunities given to her from Dibble, Kelly has learned ways to create pieces that she is proud of.

"I chose ceramics because I thought it would be fun and interesting to learn about something new," said Kelly about her journey through ceramics class. "I am not an art person at all but I decided to try it anyway. I did not know anything about ceramics before I did the class. Everything I have learned is really new."

Senior Maegan Kelly has been taking ceramics class since her sophomore year. As her knowledge has grown over the years, she has come to earn awards such as the Gold Tea Award this year for one of her teapots. Even though she has been an award-winning artist, Maegan feels that one of her downfalls in the class is not cleaning up after herself. Meka also agrees with Maegan on this being their least favorite part of the class.

"I usually make a big mess and never want to clean [the clay] up," Maegan said.

The class has taught these three girls that ceramics is more than just messing around with play dough. According to Dibble, the class is important because of the time it takes to create works of art with your own hands. This idea about using your own hands to make something is the foundation for ceramics class. ★

Women use pressure points to disable attackers



Hiya! ★ Mr. Jeremy Martin, left, and Mr. Peter Klavin practice offensive and defensive moves during a self-defense class April 5. Both are participants in a six month self-defense program at the United Studios of Self Defense. **PHOTO BY MADELINE BARTH**

Assault victims use multiple methods to protect themselves

by **MADLINE BARTH**
Journalism Student

A woman is raped every six minutes in the US. A woman is attacked every 15 seconds in the US. And according to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 248,280 women were attacked or sexually assaulted in the US in 2007. But 17-year-old Tracee Barton, Kempo instructor at the United Studios of Self Defense, believes that everyone should be able to protect him or herself in every assault situation.

"One of the most effective methods of self-defense is aiming for the pressure points of your attacker," Barton said.

Barton specializes in teaching Kempo; a specific type of karate based off of practical self-defense moves. Working as an instructor for the past three years, Barton has seen first hand the effect self-defense classes have on a person's ability to protect him or herself.

"Self-defense is about muscle memory and being able to react in the moment," Barton said.

Using techniques such as pressure points can be an effective way of defending against attacks or sexual assaults. Pressure points are nerve bundles found throughout the body that can cause both pain and pleasure. If approached

in the right manner, hitting a pressure point, such as the Achilles tendon, hand, knee, arm and foot, can disable the aggressor significantly, Barton said.

"Don't think about what the attacker is going to do next," Barton said. "Let your body react."

Self-defense is a skill that is acquired over time. When self-defense movements are repeated, a long-term muscle memory is created for that task. This eventually allows these movements to be performed without a conscious effort.

Ms. Melissa McKnight is involved in a 6-month-long program at the United Studios of Self Defense. McKnight and her daughter, Lizzy, were shopping at Walmart when a USSD instructor approached them and encouraged them to take classes.

"I didn't know any self-defense before this and wouldn't have stood a chance when trying to protect myself," McKnight said.

After 4 months of the program that began at the end of November, McKnight now believes she has improved substantially but still has much to learn.

"You must practice self-defense continuously to be able to protect yourself efficiently," McKnight said.

Women can also practice self-defense through foundations such as TAKE (The Ali Kemp Education) Foundation, Kelsey's Army, and the United Studios of Self Defense which provide workshops that focus on teaching women the

most effective methods of self-defense, plus how to identify potentially dangerous situations.

Fourteen-year-old Shayna Stevens, an eighth grader and second-degree black belt at Moreland Ridge Middle School, has been doing Taekwondo for the past seven years.

"My brother actually used to do [Taekwondo] and I thought it looked interesting," Stevens said. "But breaking boards and kicking people is really what got me hooked."

Stevens is very confident that she could protect herself if anyone attacked her. She said to always be loud and get people's attention, but most importantly to scratch to get some sort of DNA. Stevens believes that knees, heels, elbows and even heads are the best weapons an unarmed victim has. But she also said to be alert and conscious, because all people are unpredictable.

"The most important aspect of self-defense is awareness [and] being able to know your surroundings and what's going on around you," Barton said.

According to Barton, the central point of self-defense is to surprise, disable, or immobilize an attacker in order for the victim to get away without being seriously injured.

"There are many efficient techniques for self-defense I have learned though this program," McKnight said. "But most importantly, always assume the attacker knows as much as you do." ★

Under Armour clothing offers little physical benefits

Under Armour provides only mental advantages but advertises physical benefits

by **EMILY BRESSETTE**
Journalism Student

Many athletes purchase Under Armour and other compression clothes for the sole purpose of having a physical advantage over their competitors. MC Sports manager Kevin Anderson, however, believes that the only physical advantages of Under Armour include keeping athletes warm and wiping away sweat. The only other advantage is psychological.

"Physically, it is not going to help an athlete in a competition," Anderson said. "It could mentally help them, but not physically."

The main point of compression clothes is to prevent muscle strain, wipe away sweat from the body and prevent rashes from breaking out. However, Under Armour has been promoting that their compression clothes give athletes a physical advantage over their competitor, mainly by calling all of their garments "performance clothes." A study conducted at the Ball State University Human Performance Laboratory tested compression clothes on 20 track athletes, 10 men and 10 women. Their results showed that the compression clothes did help the athletes physically, due to increased warmth, which made muscles looser. The athletes jumped higher while wearing the compression shorts, giving them a physical advantage over their competitor.

Some people are not convinced that compression clothes can help a person physically. STA track athlete Mari Kerwin agrees with Anderson's statements that Under Armour only helps an athlete mentally, besides the basic use of wip-

ing away sweat from an athlete's body.

"It emotionally makes you feel better," Kerwin said. "So you know you're prepared for any kind of weather. I feel like I can accomplish more [while wearing Under Armour]."

Despite the emotional security Under Armour provides, Kerwin feels running without it would not affect her chance of success.

"I probably could compete the same without Under Armour," Kerwin said. "But it makes me feel stronger and more at ease."

Kerwin, an 800 and 1600 meter distance runner for STA, only wears Under Armour when the weather is cold or rainy. She says that most girls on the track team wear Under Armour when the weather is bad to keep warm, and sometimes even for comfort. But now that the weather is warmer, most girls do not wear them.

"[Under Armour] keeps you warmer," Kerwin said. "Being comfortable makes a big difference when you're running."

Mr. Chris Maguire, a physical therapist from St. Luke's Hospital, believes that an athlete may feel more at ease while wearing Under Armour, which could attribute to the athlete's enhanced performance. He said athletes could feel more confident and as a result, would perform better than they normally do.

"Some athletes may feel more comfortable while wearing [compression clothes]," Maguire said. "So they perform better. But physically, it does nothing for an athlete."

Anderson said that while Under Armour carries its weight, the only thing it really does for any athlete physically is wipe away sweat from athlete's bodies and keep them warm. Anderson says that an inanimate object is not going to cause an athlete to suddenly perform better than a competitor, yet people still buy the clothes. He believes some customers may be attracted to the name and logo of the company. When they see the name Under Armour, they are more tempted



Under the Armour ★ STA track and field athlete Mari Kerwin runs outside her south Kansas City home on April 16. Kerwin feels Under Armour only helps an athlete mentally. **PHOTO BY EMILY BRESSETTE**

to buy it just because they believe it will give them a physical advantage over their competitors.

In the end, most people disagree that Under Armour physically helps an athlete. Even though Kerwin believes Under Armour makes an athlete

more comfortable, she still does not think compression clothing will help an athlete physically in a competition.

"Maybe there is a physical advantage," Kerwin said. "But I only see the mental [advantages]." ★

Sit back, relax and unwind through meditation

Three Kansas City locals give their tricks of the trade on the new way to relax

by EMMA WHEATLEY
Journalism Student

Relaxation comes in multiple forms. For many people, the need to reduce feelings of pressure is huge. Sophomore Katie Hyde chooses to relieve the stress by way of meditation. Hyde's mother first introduced this method to her a few months ago.

"[Meditation] really relaxes and prepares me for any stressful events in the future," Hyde said. "It puts me in a right frame of mind and reminds me of what's important."

Just as relaxation comes in different forms, so does meditation. One way to practice meditation, the way Hyde chooses to do so, is a simple and personal way.

"I meditate around three times a week, depending on my homework load, for about half an hour," Hyde said. "I lie down and close my eyes envisioning myself lying on a raft in the middle of the ocean."

Her less formal way does the trick for her; no fancy methods required. Lama Chuck Stanford, spiritual director at the Rime Buddhist Center in downtown Kansas City, teaches a more formal way in his meditation sessions.

"Although meditation can be practiced in any way that relaxes the human mind, the formal way to do so is to sit upright and cross-legged with the eyes closed," Stanford said.

Unlike Hyde, who sometimes listens to soft music while she meditates, Stanford prefers the peace and quiet.

"I don't like meditating outside because of all the sounds that distract me," Stanford said. "Music also comes as a distraction."

Stanford's viewpoint on meditation is that it

is more effective if it's done in an isolated area. Mrs. Susan Johnson of Prairie Village has different thoughts about where and when meditation can be performed.

"I meditate in two ways," Johnson said. "A longer, more purposeful meditation in the morning and night while I'm in my bed, and a situational meditation when I find myself in anxiety-provoking circumstances."

Since these "situational meditations" are usually in public, they require a different form of execution.

"I've learned that [meditation] is something you can do wherever you are," Johnson said. "In situational meditation, no matter where I am, I will close my eyes for one or two minutes. It's like a long pause."

Hyde, like Stanford, chooses to meditate in isolated places. Her area of choice is her bedroom on the floor.

"I lie on my floor and close my eyes," Hyde said. "Occasionally it gets to be a problem, because I will end up falling asleep."

One thing that Hyde, Stanford, and Johnson all agree on is that meditation is beneficial to one's health and stress level.

"Meditation has many benefits, but they are not experienced during the actual session," Stanford said. "They are experienced in one's everyday life. It's like exercising. If you only exercise once a month, you won't see the benefits. But if you do so every day, you will notice how much easier it is to do everyday tasks. Meditation is the same way."

Johnson sees the benefits of meditation to be more spiritual.

"I would encourage people to use meditation as a form of prayer; it doesn't matter what religion you are," Johnson said. "It's something that can benefit everyone...you should choose to meditate as a health and spiritual benefit."

Hyde sees it as purely beneficial to stress relief, which is why she started the practice in the first place.



Meditation as medication ★ Lama Chuck Stanford prepares for a meditation session at the Rime Buddhist Center in Downtown Kansas City. Stanford teaches and practices a formal way of meditation to relax and center himself. PHOTO BY EMMA WHEATLEY

"By the middle of this school year, I found myself feeling intensely stressed out," Hyde said. "Once I started meditating, those feelings decreased."

All three of these people have first hand experience with the helpfulness of meditation. With stress becoming more prominent in people's lives as a result of homework, school, friends,

the economy and natural disasters, among other things, meditation is a way to greatly reduce that stress and it is a way to make life more manageable.

"Meditation gives me a sense of peace that is unexplainable," Johnson said. "Because of it I have become more aware of the good things in my life." ★

A pose a day keeps the pressure away



Namaste! ★ Mr. Steve Miller, father of STA freshman Maddie Miller, practices yoga at a local studio April 17. "Yoga requires you to focus on what you're doing...that focus helps you clear your mind and relieve pressure," Miller said. PHOTO BY EMILY MCCANN

STA community relies on yoga to relieve pressure

by EMILY MCCANN
Journalism Student

At 6 a.m. Mrs. Kirsten McGannon rolls out of bed, careful not to wake her sleeping husband. She slips on workout pants and a shirt

and heads to the yoga studio. After an hour and a half of Bikram, also known as hot yoga, McGannon returns home in time to send her four children off to school.

This is how McGannon has started her day, three days a week, for the last 11 years since the birth of her second daughter, Helen.

Yoga is a way for McGannon, mother of STA freshman Emma Wheatley, to relieve some of the pressure of her daily life.

"Yoga is like a time out for my body and my life," McGannon said.

According to local yoga instructor Drew Corrigan, a local yoga instructor, many people have imbalanced bodies because today, humans strongly stimulate the nervous system with caffeine and busy tasks of everyday life. Yoga helps ensure a strong connection of mind and body to fix this imbalance. The meditative state of yoga helps create emotional balance and a positive outlook that

helps people relax and keep the pressure off.

"Yoga helps restore people to a place of balance physiologically and mentally," Corrigan said.

Many yoga students attribute improved concentration and the ability to focus to yoga.

"I do [hot yoga] at 6 a.m. and I find that when I finish I am very mentally alert," says Steve Miller, father of freshman Maddie Miller and an avid yogi. "I feel on top of my game. I am wide awake and ready to go."

According to Corrigan, yoga also creates chemical responses in the body. For instance, there is a decrease in catecholamines, the hormones produced in response to stress. Research also suggests that yoga boosts the hormone oxytocin, also known as the trust and bonding hormone, that is associated with feeling relaxed.

STA freshman Sophia Seigfreid does yoga on a regular basis and finds it really helps her stress level.

"Yoga helps relieve pressure because it's putting your focus into something that is completely calm-

ing," Seigfreid said. "It puts you in a tranquil piece of mind."

Junior Catherine Arensberg has done some yoga as a member of the STA dive team and in her sophomore intro to dance class. She wishes that she took yoga more often.

"I think yoga is just really calming," Arensberg said. "I wish I had the time to go to yoga classes more often because I think it is a big stress reliever."

Yoga has many more benefits than just relieving stress. According to Corrigan, yoga improves flexibility, coordination, balance, posture, muscle tone, and metabolism.

Why should an STA girl do yoga? The answer is simple. Yoga helps to quiet the mind and focus energy towards things like homework and sports and also improves general well being.

McGannon believes yoga benefits the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional aspects of her life. "Yoga helps with everything," McGannon said. "Yoga is just like a magic pill that helps you sleep better, weigh less and worry less." ★

"Yoga helps relieve pressure because it is putting your focus into something that is completely calming."

Sophia Seigfreid, freshman

STA athletes find themselves knee deep in pain

Knee injuries differ in type, various treatments bring relief

by LANE MAGUIRE
Journalism Student

She feels a sharp pain near the top of her kneecap. The pain increases when she runs and walks up and down stairs. Advil and ice ease the pain, but do little to cure this STA student's knee injury.

"I was worried because I thought that if I kept running with my knee hurting, I would damage it even more," freshman Courtney Coppinger, who suffers from IT (iliotibial band) syndrome, said.

Many STA athletes suffer from knee pain, including Osgood-Schlatter's disease, IT band syndrome, and Patellar tendonitis. Continuous pressure on the knee from physical activities can interfere with athletics and lead to possible long-term damage.

"[Anterior knee injuries] are very common, more so in girls than in boys, but are probably the most common causes of knee pain that I see in high school athletes," Dr. John Vani, an orthopedic surgeon specializing in sports medicine, said.

Knee pain, according to Dr. John Fulkerson in his book "Disorders of the Patellofemoral Joint", is most commonly the result of overuse, weak or unconditioned muscles or change in the intensity of workout routines.

Freshman Hannah McCausland, who suffers from patellar tendonitis, believes that changes in her running schedule caused her knee pain.

According to Dr. Jonathan Cluett in his article "Patellar Tendonitis" on the about.com web site, Patellar tendonitis or "jumper's knee" occurs when the patellar tendon and the tissues around it become inflamed.

"The pain is under my kneecap," McCausland said. "It hurts when I bend my knee and press on it."

Knee pain usually increases when walking up and down stairs or when the knee is bent for a long period of time, according to Fulkerson.

Sophomore Taylor Twellman describes her knee pain as an "aching right below the knee all the time but mostly when running or going up and down stairs."

Twellman suffers from Osgood-Schlatters disease, a knee injury that affects mainly athletes in their early teenage years that are experiencing growth spurts.

"I went from about 5'0" to 5'7" the summer going into eighth grade," Twellman said.

"Let pain be your guide to activities. So if it hurts, don't do it."

Dr. John Vani,
orthopedic surgeon

Both Twellman and McCausland now wear knee braces when participating in physical activities.

"Sometimes [a knee band or brace] will change the forces on the patella slightly and take away the excess force that is causing the pain," Vani said.

Although the knee braces help Twellman and McCausland, the pain still persists.

"If you've tried some stretching, icing, and [the pain] lasts for more than about a week, I would consider seeing a doctor," Vani said.

Most doctors and trainers will recommend stretching to their knee injury patients as one of the primary steps of treatment and prevention.

Coppinger believes that her knee pain is a result of "not stretching enough."

The pain associated with IT band syndrome occurs when the iliotibial band, which runs from the hip to the knee, becomes tight and rubs against the outside of the knee.

"I feel a sharp pain at the top of my kneecap, and my hip flexor hurts a lot because it is really tight and [the knee and the hip flexor] bind together," Coppinger said.

Coppinger now incorporates several stretches and exercises into her daily routine.

Instead of stopping exercise altogether, Dr. William R. Post in his 2005 article in the Journal of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons entitled "Anterior Knee Pain: Diagnosis and Treatment" encourages those with knee pain to modify physical activity so that the pain is reduced and then to slowly increase activity as pain allows so that conditioning, flexibility, and muscle strength are not lost.

"Let pain be your guide to activities," Vani said. "So if it hurts, don't do it." ★



Pain in the knee ★ Freshmen Sarah Vickery, from left, Courtney Coppinger, Hannah McCausland, and sophomore Lane Schulte run at Loose Park during track practice April 15. Coppinger and McCausland, like many STA athletes, have suffered knee pain which can interfere with physical activities and lead to long term knee problems. PHOTO BY LANE MAGUIRE

We've got spirit, yes we do...or do we?

Athletic department open to suggestions for instituting STA cheerleading squad

by LUCIA MASCHLER
Journalism Student

The zombie-filled crowd roars as STA scores another basket in the basketball game against Notre Dame de Sion High School. Various members of Spirit Club lead victory cheers at the bottom of the bleachers. Members of dance team stretch on the sidelines in preparation for their half-time performance.

And STA cheerleaders wave their pom-poms and jump up and down in excitement.

These cheerleaders might be a part of the future; athletic director Mark Hough has gotten interest from several students about forming a cheerleading squad. Though nothing is being planned yet, he thinks cheerleading would be a welcome addition to STA's athletic program.

"I really like what [cheerleaders] bring to home games," Hough said. "They bring a good atmosphere and work to pump people up. They would add organization and stability to what we already have at home games. It would be great to have [them], but things like this take a lot of time, effort and planning."

Some students, like sophomore Claire McKeon, are already interested in joining

the potential cheerleading team. She thinks a squad would be a great compliment to STA's Spirit Club and dance team at home games.

"Spirit Club focuses on themes and skits, which is unique and fun to our school," McKeon said. "Dance team is kind of like an art to be appreciated...but they don't interact with the crowd the way cheerleaders would. Cheerleaders really get the crowd going and they could really bring the energy level up."

However, other students have expressed concern for the dance team and Spirit Club if a cheerleading team is added. They like how STA is one of few schools in Kansas City who do not have a cheerleading squad.

"I just don't think cheerleading is for our school," sophomore Jasmine Colhour said. "The Spirit Club does a great job with themes and the dance team does a great half-time routine. We are unique and we don't need a cheerleading team just to be like other schools."

Hough addressed this issue, saying that while the structure of the cheerleading team would be very similar to dance team--it would run two seasons and they would cheer at every home game for varsity volleyball and basketball--the roles of the teams would be very different.

"I really like what the dance team does now," Hough said. "We wouldn't want to take away from what they do, but cheerleaders are different from dance team. The cheerleaders



Bend and snap ★ Sophomore Claire McKeon practices her backbend in the quad April 15 in hopes of joining the potential STA cheerleading squad. Though nothing is planned yet, she feels cheerleading could add to the spirit of home games by pumping up the atmosphere and interacting with the crowd. PHOTO BY LUCIA MASCHLER

would actually interact with the crowd. I think we would be able to work it out."

However, this decision is not solely up to Hough; there must be many students interested for a team to be planned. He says the team would have to have at least twenty girls with a dance or gymnastics background to make a

decent squad.

"Anyone can come by and suggest something to me, which I have already have [had] happen a few times," Hough said. "I think a cheerleading team could turn into something we all really enjoy, but we will never know until we try." ★

Uncovered: knuckle popping myths



Snap, Crackle, Pop ★ Freshman Mickey Redlingshafer presses knuckles against a table to pop them while working on an assignment. Like other STA students, Redlingshafer finds that she cracks her hands on a regular basis without knowing the harm she is causing. **PHOTO BY MURPHY MARX**

Myths on knuckle popping lead to potential damage, experts reveal consequences

by **MURPHY MARX**
Journalism Student

Sitting in Latin class, listening to teacher Sue Marquis, freshman Scout Distefano suddenly feels the urge to snap and bend something. Almost without thinking, Distefano reaches for her hands, twisting and stretching each finger until she hears the pop of the knuckles.

Dr. Mark Rasmussen, an orthopedic surgeon, revealed some misconceptions of the habit of popping knuckles.

The first misconception about popping knuckles is that the habit will cause arthritis in the hands, according. Instead, other damage to the hands such as stretched ligaments may appear after years of popping knuckles, according to Rasmussen.

"I tell [patients] not to do it," Rasmussen said. "It isn't necessary to do."

When people pop their knuckles, the synovial fluid, a fluid much like raw egg which covers the ligaments, loses pressure, according to Dr. Dimitrios Pappas of The Johns Hopkins Arthritis Center. Then bubbles form in the fluid, and when the joint is bent far enough, the bubbles burst, causing the cracking noise.

STA students and staff hold different views and opinions on the habit of popping knuckles. Distefano said that she wishes she could stop popping her knuckles because she knows of the possible damage it may cause to her hands.

Distefano said the sound of the knuckles popping annoys her, even if she is the one making the noise.

Sophomore Caroline Connor says that she chooses to not pop her knuckles and does not believe she ever will.

"I've never popped them before," Connor said. "I just don't find the need to."

Speech and debate teacher Ann Heid finds that the habit annoys her; thus, she has not popped her knuckles in a long time.

"[We] all used to do it until our mothers told us it caused arthritis," Heid said. "That is when I stopped."

Another myth about popping knuckles is that the habit is very damaging to hand tissue. According to Rasmussen, the habit is neither good nor bad.

"[Popping knuckles] creates negative pressure in joints," Rasmussen said. "Some do feel better after popping them."

After the knuckles are popped, most feel more mobility and looseness in the hands.

According to SixWise.com, the sound the knuckles make when they are popped is most intriguing and is the reason why some continually pop.

The loud noise can sometimes disrupt the teacher from what he or she is doing and also then disrupting the class, according to Heid.

Connor finds that the sound the knuckles produce is what pushes her away from popping her knuckles.

"I usually cringe up inside," Connor said. "Sometimes I feel like running out of the room when I hear it."

For many, this habit starts most likely in grade school and continues through high school. In some cases, siblings and friends can influence them, then instilling the habit in them.

"My sister [popped her knuckles]," Distefano said. "And I wanted to do everything she did."

As the child grows older, the habit becomes almost involuntary as most do not realize what they are doing with their hands. Distefano finds that she is popping her knuckles regularly without thinking of

"I usually cringe up inside. Sometimes I feel like running out of the room when I hear [knuckles popping]."

Caroline Connor,
sophomore

what she is doing.

For habitual knuckle poppers, some damage will be present over a period of time. According to Pappas, the tissue in the hands, especially around the joints, becomes soft. When tissue becomes soft, the grip of the hand is weakened and loosened. Possible dislocation of the tendons is also a side effect of popping the knuckles.

Distefano said that by knowing the facts, she may be more encouraged to stop popping her knuckles and break the habit. ★

Headaches lead students to try new treatment

Sophomore Paige Wendland uses acupuncture to her cure her chronic headaches

by **JACQUELINE MCGEE**
Journalism Student

During her freshman year of high school, sophomore Paige Wendland would sit in class with chronic headaches, not being able to pay attention. Every few minutes, Wendland said she would suffer from throbbing headaches near the front of her head. Wendland tried to use painkillers but they never seemed to completely eliminate the symptoms.

"Luckily, the headaches didn't cause my grades to fall much at all," Wendland said. "But I was much more stressed out because it was really hard to keep them off my mind." "They weren't really painful but just noticeable enough that I couldn't ignore them."

The discomfort got to the point that her mother decided to take her to local acupuncturist Dr. Fredrick Loeb.

"I was skeptical at first, but it actually really worked," Wendland said.

Starting in January of 2009, Wendland saw Loeb twice a week for an hour session. During the visit, she would lie on a table and Loeb would insert thin needles at specific points on her body. Loeb has a map of where each needle should be placed on Wendland's body based upon the body's pressure points.

"I could feel when he missed the spot because it would tingle when he hit it," Wendland said.

After Loeb had inserted all of the needles, she would rest and almost always fall asleep.

"It was very relaxing," Wendland said. "I went right before basketball practice so I would go to practice totally relaxed and almost dazed."

Acupuncture was discovered in China thousands of years ago and according to Acupuncture.com, has become a popular trend in the United States, Canada and Europe. Scientists still don't know how acupuncture works but it has proven to have many therapeutic benefits.



Pricking the pain away ★ Chronic headaches have forced some STA students to seek alternative methods of treatment, including acupuncture. **PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JACQUELINE MCGEE**

Though acupuncture will never replace modern medicine according to medicalacupuncture.org, the trade has gained respect over the past decades. Acupuncture can be used to cure anything from headaches to depression and is often used to relieve allergy symptoms.

After a couple of weeks of acupuncture, Wendland started to feel the headaches slowly subside. Today, she no longer suffers from chronic headaches. Although she hasn't set up any appointments, Wendland has thought about using acupuncture to cure some of her allergies.

Though in Wendland's case it was used as a pain reliever, many yoga studios offer acupuncture as a calming stress-relief treatment.

Today, it is popular for people to use acupuncture to achieve internal balance.

Freshman Emily McCann's mother and STA alumna Julie Miller McCann uses acupuncture to relieve stress. Julie starting using acupuncture after the birth of her last child to help with stress and other health issues she experienced after her pregnancy.

"My sister-in-law recommended it to me,"

"I was skeptical at first, but [acupuncture] actually really worked."

Paige Wendland,
sophomore

Julie said. "She used it while she was undergoing treatment for breast cancer to help with nausea. I recommend acupuncture all the time. It helps with so many common health issues."

Although Julie recommends acupuncture, she does not replace it with modern medicine.

"Acupuncture will never replace modern medicine," Julie said. "It will coincide and work with it to cure most any health issue."

Though there is no scientifically proven reason why acupuncture is effective, it is known to have many benefits. Acupuncture has been used as a therapy for many common health issues for thousands of years. Although many people have been skeptical of acupuncture, it has gained respect over the past few decades. Acupuncture has not replaced Western medicine but its positive results have caused it to become a more accepted compliment to traditional treatments in today's world. ★

Lifeguards dive into looming duties

Pool season approaches at Fairway Pool as lifeguards question rescuing abilities

by ROWAN O'BRIEN-WILLIAMS
Journalism Student

First-year Fairway Pool lifeguard Katie Patterson rushes to the dummy's lifeless body, kneeling down to begin breaths and chest compressions. As she practices CPR in the lifeguard training class she took last March at Shawnee Mission East High School through the Red Cross, she imagines using this skill in real life.

Although Patterson practiced these skills in class, she has yet to use them at work. When Fairway Pool opens in less than a month, Patterson may encounter the opportunity to use CPR on actual people.

"I'd be scared to [use CPR], but if it were really necessary, I'd do it," Patterson said.

Stressful feelings like these spill over into other areas of lifeguarding, including memorizing CPR.

"As of now, I don't feel that confident that I'll remember CPR in the summer because I took the class about a year ago and there are a lot of steps to remember," Patterson said.

According to Patterson, the multiple steps of CPR make the skill even more scary and intense.

"There's a lot you can mess up on," Patterson said. "If you mess up on [CPR] it has a way bigger effect than if you treat a cut wrong or something like that."

Fairway Parks and Recreation director Nathan Nogelmeier offered advice regarding these lifeguarding pressures.

"I hope I put enough pressure on staff so they understand the significance of their role as a lifeguard, yet at the same time, I hope they understand that over-stressing about CPR is not helpful either," Nogelmeier said.

These tips could help returning Fairway Pool lifeguard Meghan Harper to overcome the pressures she feels about lifeguarding.

"When the season starts I will have been out of practice for about eight months," Harper said. "That's scary."

Harper said she will feel more confident about her CPR skills once she has practiced them.

"Refreshing my memory about CPR allows it to become an instinct I will have," Harper said.

Fairway Pool operates weekly in-services, summer meetings where lifeguards practice their lifeguarding skills, which strengthen these instincts.

"What's nice about [in-services] is you don't know who's going to be tested, which keeps you

on your toes," Harper said.

Nogelmeier agreed with Harper about the benefits of these weekly meetings.

"By making [CPR] a part of their everyday lives and memory, lifeguards can better overcome the fears and anxiety about performing CPR," Nogelmeier said.

Fairway swimmers notice these efforts lifeguards make to perfect their skills.

Ms. Shana Puckett, Fairway Pool swimmer and mother of three Fairway Pool swimmers, values these lifeguarding and CPR skills in lifeguards.

"I've seen lifeguards use their skills out of the water, like checking on a kid that fell, which makes me feel good," Puckett said. "I feel like they really take their job seriously, especially when I see them go chase after a kid."

However, she does think that lifeguards could improve certain skills.

"Especially when you have young kids who can't swim, you watch lifeguards a lot, at least I do," Puckett said. "When [lifeguards] look bored, I can tell and it affects me as a parent."

In general, Puckett said she trusts Fairway lifeguards because she's seen them in action.

"If [lifeguards] choose to do [this job], then they have to do it," Puckett said. "People count on you." ★



Saving lives ★ Year-round lifeguard Maggie Bradford patrols the length of the Cleaver YMCA indoor pool Tuesday, April 13 before returning home to finish her homework. "I feel pressure all the time from homework," Bradford said. "Sometimes, I've had to turn down shifts because I have too much homework, and I feel bad when I get behind in school." PHOTO BY ROWAN O'BRIEN-WILLIAMS

Arch-supportive shoes help students' feet

Athletic shoes relieve pressure off arches; unsupportive shoes may cause foot issues

by EMMA ROBERTSON
Journalism Student

Walking up three to four flights of stairs between three different buildings is done every day on campus at STA. Certain shoes, such as Converse, Ugg Boots and flats, worn each day by students do not always provide the correct arch support for most people since they have no arch support, according to Ms. Karen Moran-Redlich, an employee at Garry Gribble's shoe store that specializes in running shoes.

Athletic shoes offer correct support for the average person and would be most supportive for the amount of walking done on the STA campus, according to Ms. Gretchen Brewer, a podiatrist at Foot Solutions in Deer Creek Marketplace in Overland Park that specializes in footwear made to help foot-related problems.

"By wearing [shoes with no arches], there is no support and the muscles are working in ways that they're not supposed to be by trying to provide the support that isn't there," Dr. Mark Green, a podiatrist at St. Joseph Medical Center, said.

According to Brewer, women have the hardest time finding shoes that correctly fit the arch and sometimes even the rest of the foot because of the different styles that are currently out on the market; this can cause a number of problems including plantar fasciitis.

"Shoes like flats or non-insoled converse are uncomfortable because without the arch support my arch completely collapses," STA freshman Hannah McCausland who has plantar fasciitis said. "As far as I know [the doctors] aren't quite sure why I got it because it is so unusual for someone my age to get it."

"By wearing such shoes, there is no support, and the muscles are working in ways that they're not supposed to be by trying to provide the support that isn't there."

Dr. Mark Green, podiatrist

The most common foot problem due to unsupportive shoes among women is plantar fasciitis, according to Brewer. This occurs when the tendon that runs from the heel to the ball of the foot collapses, causing pain in the heel or the arch.

The best way to fix the issue, if caught early on, is to find a supportive shoe or insert orthotic foot pads to support the arch, according to Brewer.

"Women tend to come in earlier than men do for this sort of problem, which starts to occur at around age 30," Brewer said.

Preventative measures can be taken, according to Green, such as wearing athletic shoes instead of the non-arch supportive shoes worn by so many women today. The American



Step by step ★ Two STA sophomores walk to find an open classroom during activity period April 14. Both students are wearing non-arch supportive shoes, which could affect their feet later on, especially with the amount of walking done on the STA campus, according to Ms. Gretchen Brewer, a podiatrist at Foot Solutions. PHOTO BY EMMA ROBERTSON

Podiatric Medical Association recommends when buying athletic shoes to make sure that the shoe bends at the ball of the foot and not in the arch. By providing a stiffer arch area, the foot is at less of a risk in creating tension to the Achilles and plantar fascia tendons, which helps to prevent the plantar fasciitis.

"It's under control now, but before that I couldn't walk without it feeling as though my [heel] bone was hitting the ground directly," McCausland said. "I got specially fitted orthotics to ease the pain, but athletic shoes with

more arch support are more comfortable."

McCausland recommends Mizuno athletic shoes and says that they are one of the most comfortable shoes she owns, which can be bought at any of the Gary Gribble's shoe store locations. McCausland also recommends finding a comfortable athletic shoe because it helps to ease the pain of the plantar fasciitis.

"Every brand [of athletic shoes] will fit differently and every shoe within the brand fits differently," Green said. "It needs to fit right and fit comfortably." ★

Scuba divers plunge to new depths

Professional divers explain passion behind their pressure oriented careers

by RACHEL TOVAR
Journalism Student

Dressed in a black wet suit from neck to ankle with a large, highlighter pink oxygen tank attached to a black vest, I descend slowly into the 24-foot pool. Cautiously, step by step I go deeper under the water. My ears ache as the water squeezes my head. The deeper I go, the harder my temples throb. I try to cover my ears, but my mask is in the way and my oxygen piece is knocked loose and water fills my mouth.

While every individual's first time underwater is different, water pressure is the same for everyone.

Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus shortens to what most know as SCUBA. For every 33 feet underwater, the pressure doubles. At sea level, 13 pounds per square inch surrounds the human head. The safe diving depth is 130 feet, which rounds up to 56 pounds of pressure per square inch on the human skull.

The Professional Association of Diving In-

struction, or PADI, takes responsibility of certifying professional scuba divers like Mr. Manuel Tovar. Not only is scuba his passion, but it used to be his job in the military.

"I've always wanted to do it, so I did," Tovar said. "In the end, it helped me out in the military. I worked Special [Operations] underwater."

According to Tovar, these teams of scuba divers would swim to the bottom of the ocean off the shore of Guam and look for long, metal poles. These poles were long enough to be touched by submarines and were attached to mines. It was Tovar's job to defuse them and to come home alive.

According to Ms. Beth Pike of The Dive Shop in Merriam, her profession is much less stressful and much more satisfying. Pike's PADI license states that not only is she allowed to scuba dive, but is able to teach others how to dive as well.

"As professional divers, you already love to dive," Pike said. "And to be able to watch other people fall in love with it too, it's just so gratifying. Scuba diving felt so natural to me. I loved it from the first time I took a breath [underwater]."

I love being able to help people get to that point too."

Pike has dived inside of sunken ships, off islands, deep sea diving, at night, in the day, with schools of sharks and even down a current with no way of stopping.

"It's the closest thing I think I can imagine to flying ever," Pike said. "It's pure weightlessness."

"It's something you can't experience anywhere else. Even if you just do it once, it's something that will stay with you for the rest of your life."

Ms. Beth Pike, dive instructor



Down by the seashore ★ Mr. Manuel Tovar displays the seashells he recovered from the bottom of the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Guam in 1983. "It's a completely different world underwater," Tovar said. "Like Finding Nemo in real life." PHOTO BY RACHEL TOVAR

And even in the pool at [The Dive Shop], scuba is never something you can just get used to."

Through a one day seminar called Discover Scuba, The Dive Shop offers clients a miniature lesson on the essentials of scuba diving and two to three hours in the water.

Pike shares Tovar's love of scuba diving and

recommends anyone to try it.

"If you like the water, being in the water, or any water sport at all, I highly recommend [scuba diving]," Pike said. "It's something you can't experience anywhere else. Even if you just do it once, it's something that will stay with you for the rest of your life." ★

Atmospheric pressure: a fair weather friend

Difference in air pressure changes forecast, peoples' day to day plans, events

by SIBEL ALPAKIN
Journalism Student

Tornado season has begun anew, starting in March and lasting through June, bringing severe weather along for the ride. The 2010 season has not been active yet, but that can quickly change, according to the National Weather Service.

Kansas City's winter felt unusually severe with not one, but two blizzards as well as one of the longest stretches of snow cover in recent history. This severe weather, affecting lives, is the product of atmospheric pressure.

"The changes in [atmospheric] pressure are hard to escape," Kansas City Kansas Community College science professor Ernie May, said. "There are good things and there are bad things. Humans are very much affected."

Atmospheric pressure has a part in all forms of weather, which affects anything and everything people do in their lives.

According to May, the atmospheric pressure affects the weather based off of what type, low pressure or high pressure, is in an area at any particular time. If the pressure is low, the weather typically has dark clouds with cold air resulting in rain and snow show-

ers. If the pressure is high, the weather is generally warm and cloudy.

Atmospheric pressure affects everything in people's lives, not just weather. According to May, atmospheric pressure is the weight of air on anything on the surface of the earth. Climbing Mount Everest would result in less pressure from the atmosphere and thinner air. Descending into Death Valley would result in more pressure and thicker air.

"Basically the atmospheric pressure is a measure primarily of the weight of the air over a given point," University of Missouri-Kansas City geology professor Raymond Coveney said. "So the easiest way to describe [atmospheric pressure], I think, is by giving some values like the pressure of air at sea level, on

average would be about one atmosphere. But the pressure can change depending upon the movement of the air; so it can be a little bit higher or a little bit lower than that and it does change regularly as a result of what it does and moving air masses."

Blizzards and tornados are created from fights in the sky between atmospheric pressures low versus high result-

ing in severe weather.

In the course of normal weather patterns, the pressure systems are bound to run into each other. When a strong high and low pressure are close to each other, the conflicting air flow creates severe storms. The air heads toward the low pressure, but the earth's turning does not allow this and pushes the air to the right.

The wind as a result ends up flowing around the low pressure area instead of going



It's a beautiful day ★ A group of teenagers walk through Loose Park to play a recreational game of soccer Saturday, April 17. This high pressure in the atmosphere enabled many groups, like this one, to spend the day outside in the 50-degree weather. PHOTO BY SIBEL ALPAKIN

straight to it. This causes severe wind, which typically then forms into blizzards and tornados, according to weatherstreet.com.

"The difference of how machines and people operate depends on where they stand on earth," STA science teacher Mary Montag said.

The weather affects everything. Severe weather can damage and kill. Stormy, cold

weather prevents people from venturing outside. Cloudy or sunny, warm weather attracts people outside. Planes cannot fly in very windy and stormy weather. Flowers and trees blossom in warm and sunny weather. All of this is a result directly or indirectly of atmospheric pressure.

If 2010's tornado season becomes severe, the atmospheric pressure is to blame. ★

Tattoos leave lasting impressions



Picasso with needles ★ Mr. Justin McIntyre, left, waits as his friend and boss, Irezumi tattoo artist Blake Shamburger, puts the finishing touches on his "sleeve" tattoo. Both McIntyre and Shamburger work at the tattoo parlor on Wornall Road. PHOTO BY MARY O'LEARY

Tattoo popularity increases, but some still hold stereotypes

by MARY O'LEARY
Journalism Student

Tattoo artist Justin McIntyre, covered in a colorful array of tattoos, walked into a local grocery store and asked the store clerk for a job application. The clerk took 10 seconds to scan McIntyre from head to toe, shook his head and told McIntyre that the store was no longer hiring. As McIntyre left the supermarket, he passed a sign saying "Assistant Manager Needed." He quickly realized he had been denied the job because of his clearly visible "sleeve" tattoo decorated with baby Buddhas and various birds.

"Tattoos can be amazing works of art and it's too bad some people will judge you for having them," McIntyre said. "[Before I became an artist], even I thought tattoos were trashy, but when I started seeing my friends work as tattoo artists I was shocked at the true art of them."

McIntyre has been working at Irezumi tattoo parlor for the past three years. Like McIntyre, STA students sporting tattoos feel themselves being prejudged just because ink covers parts of their bodies.

"I feel like a lot of people who don't really know me or who aren't my close friends judge me for having [tattoos]," junior Emily Cox said.

According to Harris Interactive, tattoos have always been associated with sex, drugs and "rock 'n' roll"; as they were in-

troduced to mainstream society by influential rock stars like the Rolling Stones in the 1970's and 1980's. Today, people still see tattoos on celebrities of all kinds, whether it is professional sports figures or movie stars.

"When people see tattoos on celebrities they think that tattoos in general are less trashy and more attractive," sophomore Brianna Casey said.

According to Inked Magazine, today's society is becoming more open to these not so foreign markings on the skin. In 1936, a Pew Research Center survey

Although the American culture is warming up to the idea of tattoos, some STA students still have their opinions and judgments towards tattoos.

"It depends on what the tattoo is of," junior Sophia Garozzo said. "A lot of the time I think they are pretty cool when simple and small, but when it gets to arms and/or legs being covered, it's a bit frightening at first glance."

With nearly 15,000 tattoo shops across the nation and a \$2.3 billion industry, tattoos are quickly leaving their mark on society.

"Art is changing and it's not as intimidating to walk into [a tattoo shop]," McIntyre said. "It's not like an old, biker man [will yell] 'What do you want?'"

According to McIntyre, tattoos have definitely broken their 'ex-convict' image, and have created a new image themselves in today's culture. STA theology teacher Betsy Hansbrough agrees.

"Society is much more accepting of people who have tattoos than they were when I was a teenager," Hansbrough said. "Even getting your ears pierced was pretty 'on the edge' when I was a senior in high school."

According to Dr. Roy G. Geronemus, less people are hiding tattoos on their body, and tattoos are seen in more visible places. This trend has come along way in society and will continue to knock down stereotypes and judgments.

"People have always gotten tattoos 'under the shirt' but now they're everywhere," McIntyre said. "You can still find places that will hire you; it used to be hard to even find places that would rent to you." ★

"Tattoos can be amazing works of art, and it's too bad some people will judge you for having them,"

Justin McIntyre, tattoo artist

showed that approximately 6 percent of the American population had at least one tattoo. By 2006, that number jumped to approximately 36 percent of people age 18 to 25, and 40 percent of those age 26 to 40.

"Tattoos are more common; people see them all the time," Irezumi employee Beth Burns said. "It's not just a sailor with an anchor [tattoo] on his arm anymore and people think 'Oh, he's hard core.'" ★

Restaurant workers feel added stress

Some workers feel pressured to please when they have many customers at once

by SARA MEURER
Journalism Student

It is a Thursday afternoon, and STA freshman Elaine Schmidt is busy taking orders at TCBY Frozen Yogurt in Prairie Village. It is the busiest time of day - right after school - when numerous grade school and high school kids in the area gather for their afternoon snack. The line circles the perimeter of the shop and nearly reaches the back door. Schmidt is trying to remain calm while remembering everyone's order and keeping her customers content.

"Sometimes I feel pressured when I have many customers at once, and I get overwhelmed when the line is really long," Schmidt said.

She said she feels this pressure every time she works during busy times, but she rarely has angry customers. Schmidt has been working at TCBY since last March.

"[My customers] don't get angry, but sometimes I'll get orders wrong," Schmidt said. "I'm fine with remaking it though because I want to please my customers to my best ability."

Schmidt is not the only worker feeling stressed. STA sophomore Theresa Murphy, who works as a hostess at Johnny's Tavern in

Prairie Village, also feels pressured by having many customers at once.

"I feel very stressed out and pressured to do it all when I have a lot to do," Murphy said.

Murphy also said that the hardest part of her job is "keeping everyone happy and doing everything at once." When these workers are under pressure and have many customers at a given time, some customers get angry.

"[Customers get upset] sometimes if I make a mistake and they blame me," Murphy said. "They may threaten to leave."

According to Murphy, angry customers come in about twice a month, and they are usually around 40 to 50 years old. In response to an angry complaint, Murphy handles the situation by usually apologizing and suggesting that they stay.

Due to this occasional pressure, both Murphy and Schmidt can become overwhelmed.

"The most stressful part of my job is when there are a lot of people and you have to make a lot of orders at once," Schmidt said. When Schmidt deals with this stress, she remains calm and focuses on keeping her customers happy.

"When I get stressed out, I usually just try to calm down, focus on the job, and be extremely nice to my customers," Schmidt said.

Owner of Kokopelli's Mexican Cantina in Prairie Village Kevin Lyman also witnesses this kind of stress. Lyman says that he receives complaints on the service about once each month.

"The most stressful part of my job is service because I can't follow each employee around,"



Order Up ★ Employees at Kokopelli's Mexican Cantina in Prairie Village rush to fill orders on Friday night. Friday nights around 7:30 are usually the restaurant's busiest times, according to owner Kevin Lyman. PHOTO BY SARA MEURER

Lyman said. "It makes me wonder if my servers are good or not."

Lyman has owned Kokopelli's since the opening in August 2004. When he isn't managing his 40 employees, he is paying bills, working on the menu design, marketing and advertising.

In general, teen restaurant workers will occasionally be overwhelmed or feel stressed out

at some point. This can be caused by a number of things such as an angry customer or a large crowd. Workers like Murphy and Schmidt handle the situation by being pleasant and doing whatever they can to please the customer.

"Having a lot of customers at once can really stress me out at times," Schmidt said. "But most of my customers are really understanding if I make a mistake." ★

Backpacks pose possible injuries

Students feel the combined weight of backpacks, stairs

by CARRIE HUDSON
Journalism Student

What's your number? 25, 30, 31, 35, 37? No, not your Sleep Number; the weight of your backpack. According to Simmons College Graduate Program in Physical Therapy, 55 percent of students carry backpacks that weigh too much for their bodies.

An average of 25 pounds of textbooks, folders and binders rests on a student's back each day while walking across STA's quad and up and down three flights of stairs.

Although little research has been conducted on backpack-related injuries, orthopedic specialists from Children's Mercy Hospital claim that students should only carry 10 to 15 percent of their bodyweight on their backs. The heavier the backpack, the more strain that is caused and the greater the chance one has of injuring his or her spine.

The pressure of the weight of backpacks on students' backs is not the only unhealthy aspect.

"It is important to note that it is not the weight alone that affects a person," orthopedic nurse at Children's Mercy Hospital Andrea White said. "It is the long periods of time backpacks are carried and the heavy load that make the perfect environment for overuse injuries, similar to what a skilled athlete may experience."

A loaded backpack, along with the way a student lifts his or her backpack, can adjust the natural alignment of the neck and spine.

"If you don't use proper form [when lifting], you could definitely injure yourself," White said.

The strain put on backs from the weight of bags is not the most common backpack-related injury.

"Our most common injury [with backpacks], actually, is people tripping over their big, heavy backpacks," White said.

Some STA students do not go to their locker during midday advisory. They choose to let their lockers sit empty and bear the weight of their books on their backs, shoulders and arms.

"It's too much of a hassle to go to my locker," freshman Kelly Stokes said.

Even though some backs are aching across campus from the amount of pressure on them, girls have learned to deal with this because it is a part of STA.

"I guess I've gotten used to it," Stokes said. "It could be a lot easier, but I mean we just have to do it, so I just have to live with it."

"Carrying my backpack across the quad for five days definitely



isn't fun," sophomore Shannen Freeman said. "My shoulders hurt and my back aches after the day is over. It's not one of my favorite things to do, but it's one of the things where you just need to tough it up. It's part of STA life."

Years of STA girls have dealt with pressure on their backs from their heavy bags.

Ms. Kelly Shuss, 2004 STA graduate, believes that four years of lugging around her backpack prepared her for college; she was better at carrying her books and projects around the Kansas State University campus.

"By the time I was a senior I was used to carrying books and

hiking up the stairs," Shuss said.

The type of backpack and the way it is carried can lessen the amount of pressure put on a student's back.

"Use both straps because it balances out the weight," White said. "You want the wide, padded straps, not the little skinny straps."

White said to utilize the backpack's compartments and pockets, and to organize the contents. Arrange it

so that the largest items are located the closest to the back, and the smallest up front.

The STA administration realizes that backpack problems could be resolved with the use of technology. The use of electronic textbooks on student laptops next year is one possible solution. ★

"It is important to note that it is not the weight alone that affects a person."

Andrea White,
Children's Mercy Hospital orthopedic nurse



Stairmaster (above) ★ STA students haul their backpacks down the M&A Building stairs at the end of a day to go check out of advisories. Backpacks are supposed to weigh 10 to 15 percent of one's bodyweight. **PHOTO BY CARRIE HUDSON**

Shove it in (left) ★ Freshman Ellie Nachbor forces one of many books into her backpack by her locker before the first bell rings. Nachbor carried everything she needed for the day, adding more weight on her back. **PHOTO BY CARRIE HUDSON**