

THE SOUTHERNER

An upbeat paper
for a downtown school

CAIRNS PROJECT

*Grady students
build statues to
decorate campus*
p. 7

SENIOR SECTION

*A tribute to the
student standouts
of the class of 2007*
pp. 8-11

HENRY W. GRADY HIGH SCHOOL, ATLANTA

VOLUME LX, NUMBER 08, May 16, 2007

FINAL FOUR BERTH CAPS HISTORIC RUN

BY GRANT COYLE

For the first time in Grady history, the girls soccer team won a match in the state playoffs last year. Although they were knocked out by highly ranked Providence, it was clear that Grady would be a force to be reckoned with for years to come. This year, the Grady girls made Grady soccer history again by making it to the Final Four of the state playoffs.

The girls went 10-5-1 during the regular season, with a 5-2 record in region 5B-AAA. After a region tournament match against Druid Hills, Grady entered the state playoffs as a number three seed.

In the first round of the playoffs, the Grady girls, ranked fifth in state, were matched up with ninth-ranked Stephens County. Although Stephens County was a higher-seeded team, the girls had no problem defeating them, winning the game 5-1.

"This team came at you from start to finish, ladies," head coach Rodney

Thomas told his girls after the game. "This is what you are going to face for the rest of these playoffs."

Coach Thomas was right. Grady's second-round match against 10th-ranked Carrollton was a dogfight. Grady scored midway through the first half, but surrendered two goals before halftime. Grady started the second half strongly and kept Carrollton under pressure for the majority of the half. They had several opportunities to score, but were unable to until the 68th minute of the match, when junior midfielder and captain Hannah Rosenbaum chipped the ball over the Columbus keeper on a free kick to tie the game 2-2.

see SOCCER page 15



EYES ON THE PRIZE: Junior defender Ella Miller attempts to steal the ball from a Westminster forward in Grady's 1-0 state semifinal loss on May 8.

Film analyzes SGA races, showcases Grady sophomores

BY SARAH BETH MCKAY

I'd say 50 percent is popularity, the other 25 percent is funniness," a student at Hall Middle School in Marin County, Ca. said of student council elections.

"I have this reputation in American studies class as the 'Oh, don't even get him started about Florida' kid," confessed a candidate running for president of his student council in Austin, Texas.

"If they made this a popularity contest, I'm pretty confident I would win," bragged Grady's own Teekia Cain. Cain ran against two other Grady sophomores, Noelle Jones and Kayla Bacon, for president of Inman Middle School when they were in 8th grade.

These are the political sentiments of America's future voters: middle school students captured in Big Year Productions' documentary *The Third Monday in October*, which followed student council elections from start to finish at four schools around the nation.

"I wanted to look...for what shapes kids' political identity, how they voice their views and how much the adult version of democracy impacts kids when they cast their first vote—often in middle school student council elections," said Victoria Roth, the film's director and co-producer.

The Third Monday in October, which was shown at Midtown Art Cinema on April 21 and 25 as a part of the Atlanta Film Festival, followed 11 student candidates as they built their political platforms, ran their campaigns and heard their election results.

see FILM page 5

CONTENTS

comment 5

Leah Bishop uses lessons she learned at Grady to describe herself while searching for the ideal college roommate.

teachers 12

Five staff members leave Grady for new frontiers ranging from theology to child-rearing.

news 13

In response to the Virginia Tech tragedy, Grady and local colleges explain how another shooting may be prevented.

sports 16

The first-ever ultimate season proves to be a big success for the Grady Gauntlet.

AJC restructuring to enhance quality of online paper

BY CHRIS COLLIER

In an effort to accommodate shifts in readership, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* has started to retool its structure, leading to major changes for everyone on the staff.

Stell Simonton, *AJC* web publisher and parent of a Grady graduate, said

the changes will cater to the increase in readers of the paper's online branch.

"The goal is to throw more resources behind the newspaper website and kind of tailor the print paper to the people who are the most loyal readers," Simonton said. "The second part of [the goal] is to restructure the

newsroom in a totally different fashion than newspapers have been traditionally structured."

The current staff divisions, such as sports, metro and living, will be replaced by four simple categories: news and information, enterprise, print and digital. The first two sections will

provide the content for both the print and the online sectors, while the latter two will deal with the production of each publication. The news and information section will supply general news; enterprise will cover in-depth local stories.

see NEWSPAPER page 7



AND THE WINNER IS: Mr. Martinez receives a rose bouquet and applause after the fourth annual Urban Couture Fashion Show on Friday, May 11.

Teachers honor Martinez

BY EMMA DIN

His co-workers found his couture to be haute enough to elect him Teacher of the Year. School officials announced at a May 1 faculty meeting that Mr. Vincent Martinez has been voted Grady's 2007-2008 Teacher of the Year for his work with the school's fashion program and his impact on the Grady community.

"He has a strong commitment to Grady High School; he's doing great things with students from all facets of our school pop-

ulation, and he has a true sense of spirit for collaboration," said Ms. Mary Carter Van Atta, Martinez's predecessor as Teacher of the Year. "I'm thrilled that he's been chosen."

From Sunday school teacher to fashion guru, Grady's new Teacher of the Year has striven to make a difference, and his unrivaled fashion program has succeeded beyond anybody's expectations.

see TEACHER page 5

**For the winner of the
Marian P. Kelly Award,
see page 5**



EDITORIAL BOARD
CURRY ANDREWS
EMMA DIN
LILY FEINBERG
REBECCA GITTELSON
JANNA KAPLAN
SARAH BETH MCKAY
MICHELLE WILCO

A few parting words

Juniors,
This is it. Once these words are printed, you will have successfully and indisputably proven that you can not only run a newspaper but work as a cohesive staff under the pressure of a tight deadline. As we have watched you throughout this process (yes, we have been watching) your passion has been astounding. You have the unique audacity and insight to work together toward your common goal.

Before we leave, we want to impart to you the power you now hold. As journalists, every staff member can and will influence the thoughts and opinions of students, teachers, administrators and the larger community. Your words, photographs and design must continue the *Southerner* traditions of fairness, objectivity and high quality. You have a reputation to live up to.

Throughout the year, we have lectured, we have criticized and we have guilt-tripped to the best of our ingrained Jewish (and honorary Jewish) abilities. Looking back, however, we are proud to have worked with you and we are excited about the future of the paper under your leadership. You have what it takes. You have the skills, the vision and the courage to take *The Southerner* to new heights. We would expect nothing else.

Just as it has this past year, *The Southerner* is set to experience some change. Change is good. Embrace it. Learn from it. Don't be distracted by it. This year, we've have been fortunate enough to have been given the opportunity to blend new ideas with old traditions. Along with many other members of the staff, we've both grown tremendously as leaders, journalists and people, and although our tenure as staff members is over, we will always be "Southernerds." Now, it's your turn.

Sarah Beth and Rebecca

Senior tradition nixed

Grady administrators recently announced that they are canceling the tradition of "senior wills" this year. At Grady, the wills have been an end-of-the-semester perk for years: seniors had the opportunity to write "wills" leaving fictional things to teachers and underclassmen.

In a sense, the administration's decision reflects a trend of the school's disassociation itself from senior wills. Until 2002, *The Southerner* published the wills in their final issue, but the adviser at that time determined that the wills were not "journalistically sound" because it was impossible for the staff to verify the accuracy of each will or, for that matter, the content itself. Since that time, Grady seniors have taken in upon themselves to organize, publish and distribute the wills on campus. These seniors used publication lab computers, but the wills haven't been an official school publication.

The administration feels that last year the senior wills included offensive material, and the decision to end the tradition came as an attempt to eliminate hurtful statements and the appearance that the school sponsored them. Although we agree that the senior wills should not reflect unfavorably on any school publication, we feel that the wills, while not journalistic, are ultimately harmless and should be continued as an informal, non-school sponsored tradition.

The senior wills are something that every graduating class looks forward to. Saying students can't use school resources to publish the wills is understandable, but saying that the wills can't be published at all is a bit extreme. □

CORRECTIONS

In our April 20 article, "Highly decorated track teams eye state, region competitions," the picture's caption mistook junior Marquelle Newton for his twin brother, Marquez Newton. Also, in our restaurant review for the Highland Tap, we gave the wrong address. The correct address is 1026 N. Highland Ave. NE. In our April 20 "Corrections," we incorrectly stated that Colby College is an NCAA Division II school. It is a Division III school. Finally, in the same "Corrections," we stated that Georgia Southern is a member of Division I. We should have specified that Georgia Southern competes in NCAA's Division I-AA in football. In "Voters extend APS devoted tax," the person referred to as Sherman is John Sherman, the president of the Fulton County Taxpayer's Association.

Staff

Managing editors: Rebecca Gittelton, Sarah Beth McKay
Design editors: Lily Feinberg, Carson Hale
Copy editors: Curry Andrews, Emma Din, Lily Feinberg
News editors: Curry Andrews, Emma Din
Comment editors: Sean Harrington, Sally Zintak
Feature editors: Lena Brodsky, Hanna Griffiths
Sports editors: Asa Beal, Travis Jones
Photo editors: Erik Belgum, Sally Zintak
Staff: Leah Bishop, Scottie Bookman, Andrew Bracken,

Scott Chambliss, Charlotte Christopher, Christopher Collier, Sophie Cox, Grant Coyle, Stephen Crouse, Arielle D'Avanzo, George DeMeglio, Caroline Denton, Jourdan DeVies, Barbara Dougherty, Kelly Douglas, Ramika Gourline, Michael Harper, Stone Irvin, Kenny Jones, Janna Kaplan, Jamison Kinnane, Julia Oliver, Carson Phillips-Spotts, Alexander Ritz, Hannah Rosenbaum, Kayci Schoon, Hamp Watson, Madeleine Webb, Michelle Wilco, Keely Youngblood

Letters to the editor

NCLB article gives inaccurate portrayal

Dear editors,
In response to the editorial regarding the No Child Left Behind Act from the previous issue, I believe *The Southerner* does not fully understand what is happening and is consequently spreading an inaccurate view of the situation to the reader.

Reasonable people can disagree about the flaws of the American education system, but the NCLB Act actually recognizes those problems across the country. What better way to measure how a school is performing than standardized tests? If there is a more accurate, efficient and realistic way to measure how well the millions of students across the nation are doing, then I have yet to hear it. Emphasizing student individuality is unrealistic and would simply not work in practice. While teaching in "mind-enhancing" and "innovative" ways is indeed fun and a good way to learn, the real world cares surprisingly little about how you learned something.

Congress is strongly considering revisions to the act this year, and both Democrats and Republicans alike are working to make the act more flexible for schools across the country. I appreciate the author's concern for Grady's education and looking out for the students who

attend here, but I feel as though the paper portrays an inaccurate and simply incorrect view of the act.

Anonymous

Comment shouldn't prompt Imus's firing

Dear editors,
In response to the article, "Harmful words end crude career," regarding the comments of Don Imus, I disagree with the author. Free speech is something that is very important to this country, and when someone says something deemed to be inappropriate, they should not be fired. The purpose of his job was to say things that shocked people, and that is exactly what he did. Imus has been making crude remarks for years, and hopefully people will be able to move on and ignore the comments of one man. Just because someone says something you deem offensive doesn't mean they don't have a right to say it.

John Holland,
sophomore

Amendment needed to promote equality

Dear editors,
While perusing the latest issue of *The Southerner*, I discovered an article, "Amendment to aid women's

justice outdated, gratuitous," that seemed to be in support of equal rights for women. While reading it, however, I was puzzled by the statement: "Truth be told, I think feminism is a bit lame."

"A bit lame"? Is feminism crippled? I found the tone of this statement entirely too juvenile for a publication as highly acclaimed as *The Southerner*. To make matters worse, its warrant consisted merely of a description of stereotypical feminine behavior. Immediately, I was forced to reevaluate the writer's position.

According to this journalist, "gender disputes ultimately lie within individual mindsets and cannot be legislated," but at the same time she believes that "it doesn't make sense to disregard the fact that men and women are indeed different biologically and psychologically." If men and women are intrinsically different then why are the disputes unique to the individual? To say that the Women's Equality Amendment would not make a difference because some people might still see women as inferior is like saying the Fourteenth Amendment was doomed to failure because some people still considered blacks inferior afterward. The entire purpose of a constitutional amendment is to override the influence of "individual mindsets."

Kieran Maynard,
junior

QUESTION of the month:

How do you feel about the cancellation of the senior wills?

Jillian Woodliff,
sophomore

"I don't think [the Class of] 2007 should be punished for what [the Class of] 2006 wrote."

Harry Buck,
senior

"I don't really care because [seniors] aren't leaving anything besides words and [the wills] cost money."

"It's ridiculous. [The wills] go through the system anyway, so somebody could censor them in advance."

Caitlin Wert,
junior

"People need the senior wills so they can express their opinions, even if they're harsh. People need their own voices."

Kim Carr,
nurse

"I'm glad they were canceled. Previous wills have caused such hurt when people were trying to be downright ugly."

An upbeat paper for a downtown school

Photo adviser: Dawn Wadsworth
Adviser: Debra Hartsfield
Print staff: Alvin Hambrick, Harlon Heard, Michael Jackson, Adlai McClure, Charlotte Napper, Benjamin Shaw
The *Southerner*, a member of GSPA, SIPA, CSPA and NSPA, is a monthly student publication of: Henry W. Grady High School
929 Charles Allen Drive NE
Atlanta, GA 30309

The *Southerner* welcomes submissions, which may be edited for grammar, inappropriate language and length. Please place submissions in Ms. Hartsfield's box in the main office. Subscriptions are also available. For more information, please contact Ms. Hartsfield or a member of the staff.
We can be reached at dhartsfield@atlanta.k12.ga.us

Grady years contribute to character



LEAH BISHOP

Several weeks ago I gave out my name, social security number and phone number to a complete stranger. I told this person that I am a non-smoker and a social person. I revealed that I am interested in sports, I am somewhat clean and I like to party. Believe it or not I wasn't looking for the man of my dreams on eharmony.com. I was looking for the ideal girl to spend most of my time with at UGA next year: a roommate.

To narrow down the search among the thousands of first-years, the University Housing Department launched a program called 'Dawg House' which allows future students to create personal profiles and find individuals with profiles

similar to their own.

Filling out my profile, I blew through the first 16 questions with ease—What time do you usually wake up? How social are you? How many hours a week do you think you will study? All of these were simple questions that required almost no thought. The final item, however, left me perplexed. "In 4,000 characters," it read, "provide additional insight about your personality and details that most correctly describe you." It sounds easy enough, but how often are you asked to really sit down and sum yourself up. I couldn't help thinking of the influences that have shaped my personality—family, friends, teachers, coaches, but most importantly, our very own Henry W. Grady High School.

The hallways are too congested, the toilets and sinks don't always work and the graffiti on the bathroom walls reads like the *National Enquirer*, but I wouldn't have it any other way. The lessons I have learned through classes have been helpful, but my attitudes and outlooks on life as they have been shaped by the students and teachers at Grady have provided me with a different breed of education.

Grady has taught me patience, encouraged me to appreciate and embrace diversity and helped me to be more positive and always look at the glass, or in Grady's case, the Hot Cheetos bag, as half-full.

I owe my concert crowd maneuvering abilities to the practice I've gotten dodging students on my way to 4th period. All the broken sinks at Grady have taught me to

be prepared with hand sanitizer wherever I go. As for the graffiti, students have found a local and literal way to write a wall post—without Facebook.

Learning to adjust to things that I cannot change at Grady has shaped my individual identity. Thinking about these last four years here helped me fill in that lonely blank box.

"I'm well-rounded, easy-going, have a goofy sense of humor, and can get along with almost anyone. My studies and grades are important to me, but at the same time, I love to have a good time and make sure everyone around me is having fun too. I love meeting new people, everything related to sports, respecting myself and others, and not taking life too seriously."

I summed up all the things that make me who I am without writing an autobiography and filling up all 4,000 characters. Sarah, my soon-to-be roommate from South Carolina, will find out for better or for worse if my description of myself is true to my personality. Through this awkward process, I found more than my roommate. As cheesy as it sounds, I found out just how much Grady means to me, so I offer this advice to those who still have more time to spend in Grady's midst: meet new people, laugh at the "yo' momma" insults written on the walls, represent your class at the pep rallies and buy gummy bears and Cheetos in the hallway while you can, because there sure won't be kids selling food out of their gym bags in college. □

In a radio microphone test: "Macho Americans, I am pleased to tell you I just signed legislation which outlaws Russia forever. The bombing will begin in five minutes."

-Ronald Reagan



SEAN HAIRYNGTON

Bush, Putin imperil peace with missile shield threats

Heavy-handed threats, stubborn national leaders and the looming threat of nuclear war dominated the Cold War-era of U.S. foreign policy. Although the threat from Soviet Russia ended 16 years ago, the recent animosity radiating from Russian President and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in response to America's proposed missile defense shield has brought those frosty memories back with a startling lack of hesitation.

President Bush's newest stroke of genius, a missile defense system based in Poland and the Czech Republic, has greatly upset Putin. The shield is intended to serve as a counter to any attacks from unstable Middle-eastern countries, namely Iran. The question is: how necessary is this new security measure? The answer: not at all. This is just a not-so-clever ruse by Bush and his policy-makers to try to get the public's mind off of Iraq.

Bush's motives are suspect enough, but the attitudes taken by our European allies in this venture have done little to confirm his goodwill. The Czech Republic has no problem with the missiles as long as they get compensation and, on a quieter note, they wouldn't turn down a little more weaponry to strengthen their armament against a possible Russian attack. Poland has made it very clear that they welcome the missile shield as a way to deter their eastern neighbors from attacking them. Their history of constant invasion and subjugation makes this a fair request, but does little to aid friendly relations between the U.S. and Russia.

Putin, the man in the driver's seat of the largest country in the world, also falls short of being Mr. Good Intentions. Although he has proclaimed himself an advocate of democracy, he has taken several covert steps over the years to promote his own power. A background in the KGB (Russian Committee for State Security), avoidance of many corruption charges and a high death rate for freelancing journalists in Russia hardly polish his marred image. Putin faces the same problem faced by former Russian President Boris Yeltsin: struggling to make Russia a democratic nation without resorting to the Cold War-esque methods of totalitarianism.

Despite his democratic overtures, Putin has taken a very Soviet stance towards the proposed missile defense system. His reckless stubbornness will endanger the whole world as he prepares to plunge us into yet another arms race. Or at least, that's what the conniving Bush administration would like us to believe. In reality, this poor ruse to make Russia look like the bad guy is yet another childish attempt by Bush to pull himself out of the muck.

Does anyone seriously believe that Iran will attack Europe with a storm of missiles? Currently, the United States is the only nation with any real presence in the Middle East, and we continue to garner criticism as a result. If Iran pulls a Pearl Harbor on the European Union, it may as well go ahead and dig its own grave. With a continent in outrage, even the decision-handicapped U.N. will waste no time in drawing up battle plans. Ayatollah Khomeini's regime will be wiped off the face of the earth. An Iraq-like situation may emerge in the aftermath, but there will be nothing left of those who initiated the conflict.

Putin has responded somewhat rashly, the most alarming of his actions being a suspension of participation in a treaty governing the number of troops near Russia's borders. The blame, however, does not rest in Moscow. Putin is simply making it known that he will not tolerate any measures taken by Bush that may endanger the lives of his people. Bush needs to clean up his existing problems before making new ones. □



No more 'D's gives students HOPE



JULIA OLIVER

The newly-implemented Atlanta Public Schools grading system takes the D out of the grade scale, enabling my fellow students

and me to pass our classes with Cs as low as 70. While some may be skeptical of the new system, I believe the change will not only benefit students when report cards are mailed home, but it will also allow formerly-ineligible students to attend college.

The adjustment to the grading scale may seem out of the blue, but it is a result of the recent change made to the HOPE Scholarship requirements.

To qualify for the HOPE under the old requirements, students were required to have a minimum 3.0 grade point average; the eligibility requirement has now been raised to a 3.2 GPA. In calculating GPA on a 4.0 scale, an A counts for four points, a B counts for three points, a C counts for two points, a D counts for one

point and an F counts for no points. GPAs will rise under the new grading system because 70s will now count as Cs rather than Ds.

Eliminating the D will also help students deal with another change to the HOPE Scholarship requirements. Formerly, only the four highest grades in English and Math, the three highest grades in Science and Social Studies and the two highest grades in Foreign Language classes were used to calculate HOPE eligibility. Now, all attempted core credits, even failing grades, will count toward the calculation.

According to APS administrators, the grading scale has been adjusted so that APS's grading scale will match up with the grading scale utilized by the majority of the state.

While the entire state has not conformed to a single grading scale, counties like Cobb, Seminole, Hall and Fannin all operate under a grade scale with no D range. For once, I believe that conforming will be beneficial.

With the changes made, and the D dropped, grades will improve and APS students will be have a fair shot at HOPE. By making the HOPE more attainable, students who never thought they would be able to afford college have a much better chance of getting past their financial restrictions.

Better grades, higher GPAs and an increase in the number of kids continuing their education will all be the direct result of this monumental change in the grading system. □

Statistics a mere trifle when stacked against my rifle



STONE IRVIN

Once again, the government is causing more wanton death with its criminal hesitancy. The culprit: gun control laws.

I am not alone in my yearning for looser gun control laws. For those of us who use logic, it is a no-brainer that adding more gun restrictions will only increase the number of madmen able to bring slaughter into our schools and homes. How can we protect ourselves from this nightmare unless we too carry the burden and responsibility of a personal firearm? How many more human lives will Americans allow to end before they come to their senses and unite under the banner of the NRA?

Some may point to 29,569 U.S. gun-related deaths in 2004 and claim that these deaths were the result of lax gun laws.

Others may point to countries like Japan, where occupants

cannot legally own a gun and mention the coincidental fact that Japan has few gun-related deaths. Still more others may point to Australia and its recent tightening of gun-control laws and, once again, the coincidental decrease of gun-related deaths. But what these people ignore is that guns protect people. How unsafe the people of Japan must feel without a trusty handgun at their side! Are we to sacrifice security for statistics?

What would our forefathers think of us? That congregation of old men who gave us the right to bear arms would be outraged by the trap we threaten to walk into by tightening the oppressive grip of gun control. Conversely, they would be overjoyed by the mass-production that now allows every American to own a rifle or handgun.

Only through the grace of

firearms can the United States be saved. Not until I am able to wield an AK-47 in order to fend off the plethora of madmen intent on taking my meek and humble life, will I feel safe. It is my sincerest hope that other men and women of weighted reason are with me in this endeavor. Surely, this is but a minor thing—a trifle—to be asked, for what is more important than our safety?

Let there be no laws to keep the trigger-happy in line; let there be no place for the conscientious objector to hide; let there be no peace other than the peace wrought by the hammer of the pistol and the anvil of the hollow point.

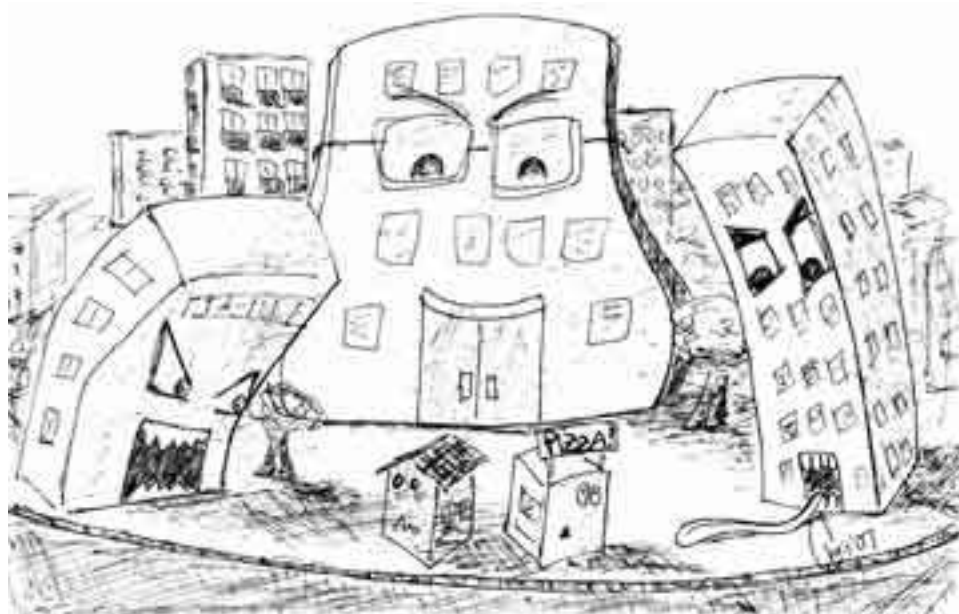
In the amended words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.:

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let gunshots ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let gunshots ring from the mighty mountains of

“That congregation of old men who gave us the right to bear arms would be outraged.”

New York. Let gunshots ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let gunshots ring from the

snow capped Rockies of Colorado. Let gunshots ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that; let gunshots ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let gunshots ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let gunshots ring from every hill and school hall of the United States. From every mountainside, let gunshots ring. □



‘Supersize’ may cause problems

Lately, you may have noticed signs around town that bear the phrase: “Revitalize, don’t supersize.” These little cardboard signs have been stuck into lawns around Atlanta and are especially popular in the Emory area. They refer to a proposed reconstruction of Emory Village’s main intersection and its surrounding area that is set to begin in August.

Currently, the plan is to first replace the traffic light at the main intersection with a roundabout, and then to change the intersection, from five-way to four-way. Additionally, North Decatur Road will be converted into a two-way street and many of the surrounding buildings will be augmented so that they can hold shops, office space, and condominiums. Excluding some of those at Emory University, this will put the new buildings at four stories high, which is significantly taller than any of the other buildings in that area.

I’m not exactly sure what the goal of it all is, but there are a couple of possibilities. The two that immediately come to mind are to make lots of money and to reduce the amount of traffic in the area, primarily at the intersection. I think it’s probably a combination of the two with the money thing outweighing the traffic issue a bit.

As the signs should tell you, many of the residents of Emory Village do not support an expansion of the buildings in their area.

Rather, they would like to see a modest revitalization that will match the rest of the neighborhood more closely as far as scale and construction are concerned. They do not, however, seem to be as outspoken about the reconstruction of the road, which I feel is the bigger problem.



ANDREW BRACKEN

One revision should be chosen. If all goes according to plan, more people will come to visit Emory Village, but the smaller roads will not be able to accommodate them and the area will subsequently be bogged down with heavy traffic. Furthermore, it’s probably unwise to build a roundabout at a major intersection such as this one. People often don’t seem to know how to handle themselves at roundabouts, and even the small ones tend to breed road rage and dangerous situations.

When someone dies in an ambulance that is stuck in Emory traffic someday, I hope he or she thoroughly enjoyed the ride through the super-sized additions. □

Grateful for Grady safety; fearful of college liberty

It’s almost over. After 13 years of having to get up when I really don’t feel like it, sit through classes I know I’ll never use and complete endless pages of dull homework, I’m almost done.

I should be excited. I should be jumping for joy because I’m almost done with school. I’m almost free. But do you want to know the truth? I have a lot more school to experience, and quite frankly, I’m scared senseless.

In the wake of the Virginia Tech shootings, the idea of leaving what I know to go off to college is quite frightening. I know that my next four years won’t be at a place even remotely similar to Virginia Tech, but that makes no difference.

In the fall, I’ll be a freshman at Oglethorpe University. It’s a small school, with only about 900 students, fewer than Grady. Virginia Tech has more than 25,000 students. Oglethorpe is in Buckhead; Virginia Tech is 328 miles away in Blacksburg, Virginia. Despite the differences, however, there are still plenty of people who feel they are outcasts. There are still plenty of people who have overlooked and untreated depressions. There are still people who could do the unexpected. Infinite dangers still await me.

Along with more than 200 other members of the senior class, I will soon be venturing beyond the comforting walls of Grady High School into the outside world. Whether we are going to college, or into the military, or into the work force, we will no longer have the safeguards of this school.

A bell will no longer tell us to go from one place to another. We will no longer need permission to go to the bathroom. We will no longer have metal detectors to give us a false sense of security.

Even though those things may not have actually kept us more secure, they have helped our little world stay organized; they have helped it make sense. There have always been tragedies, and this particular class has dealt with more than its fair share. We’ve gone to school through terrorist attacks, lockdowns, and hurricanes; we’ve endured the deaths of students and faculty



RAMIKA GOURDINE

alike. In the midst of all that sadness, however, we have had each other. We have had the Grady community as a support system.

Now, as we venture outside of this little world, things make a lot less sense. I’m excited about graduation, but when I think about Virginia Tech, I’m not half as excited as I could be. Instead of making friends, I’m going to be worrying about the kid who isn’t. Anyone who has read any of my columns over the past two years knows that I am very capable of offending people, but instead of speaking my mind, I’m going to be filtering myself, hoping not to offend anyone.

Usually, this is the part of my column where I attempt to solve the problem at hand—where I attempt to offer a word of advice—but I won’t this time. Why? Because I don’t know what to do. I don’t know what’s going to happen, and that frightens me. I know that it’s okay to be somewhat in the dark, but that doesn’t stop me from wishing I had a night light. So, as I trade this little world for a much bigger one, I’ll have to do what everyone else does; I’ll have to wait for what comes next. □

For information on how to prevent a Virginia Tech-type shooting from happening at Grady or local colleges, see page 13

Journalism accolade awarded to Gittelson

Senior Rebecca Gittelson won the Georgia Champion Journalist Award, given annually to the top high school journalist in the state, on April 27 at the Georgia Scholastic Press Association Awards Ceremony. Gittelson plans to attend Emory University in the fall on the prestigious Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship.

Virginia-Highland welcomes Figo Pasta

As a follow up to *The Southerner's* November issue, Atlanta-based food chain Figo Pasta recently opened a new location in the Virginia-Highland area. Entrees, which are selected by combining a choice of any of Figo's pastas with any of its sauces, will run from about \$7 to \$12. The pasta chain's first location opened in 2002 on Collier Road.

Orchestra members star in APS concert

Seven Grady students performed in the 2007 APS District-Wide Honor Groups' Spring Concert on April 30. The concert's music ranged from classic songs like "Georgia On My Mind" and "Moon River" to more modern selections such as a medley of James Bond songs.

King, Class of '72, passes away at 51

Yolanda King, Grady graduate and daughter of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. passed away in Santa Monica, Calif., on the night of Tuesday, May 16. According to CNN, family members say she may have died due to a heart problem.

Music department to perform in Europe

The Grady music department has confirmed its plans to travel abroad next spring. The band, orchestra and chorus will have a number of performances over the 10-day trip. The itinerary calls for students to visit London and Paris.

Exemplary teachers go above and beyond



SAY "YEAH PHIL": Mr. Kurt Phillips helps senior Rachel Deel study for the AP psychology exam. Mr. Phillips' commitment to his students helped him win the Marian Kelly Award.

Seniors appoint Mr. Kurt Phillips favorite teacher for his unique humor, enthusiasm

By REBECCA GITTELSON

Economics and Advanced Placement Psychology teacher Mr. Kurt Phillips described his interview for a Grady teaching position as "very unique." Social studies teacher Mr. Lou Sartor, who conducted the interview in 1999, agreed the meeting was anything but dull.

"When he first interviewed to teach at Grady, I was struck by what a high-energy teacher he was," Mr. Sartor said. "He was overflowing with enthusiasm about teaching and what he could do at Grady. I thought, 'How could anyone sustain that energy level?' But he has—I've never seen anything like that before."

After eight years at Grady and a 26-year teaching career, Mr. Phillips was chosen by the senior class to win the second annual Marian P. Kelly Award. He received a commemorative plaque at Visions of the Future on May 19. The award is meant not only to honor English department chair Ms. Kelly but also to recognize other teachers who mirror her high level of commitment.

Both students and teachers support Mr. Phillips' selection as the Kelly Award winner.

"It's no surprise he won because he connects with students more than any other teacher I've seen," English teacher Mr. Larry McCurdy said.

Mr. Philips said he tries to bond with students by adhering to The Golden Rule.

"I haven't raised my voice at a teenager in a long time," he said. "I rarely get angry with students."

He is open about having repeated the 10th grade, and he encourages students to work their hardest and come to him if they have academic problems. Mr. Phillips holds an undergraduate degree in history from Oglethorpe University and a master's degree in social studies from Georgia State University.

Students appreciate Mr. Phillips' unique teaching style and often repeat his catchphrases, such as "Say yeah, Phil."

"I like how his classes have a more laid-back structure; I like that he cracks jokes and goes off onto entertaining tangents in class," said senior Lauren Mitchell, who is currently enrolled in Mr. Phillips' economics and AP Psychology classes. "He gets things done, but he doesn't do them in a stressful way."

Mr. Phillips not only focuses on his students but also on other staff members. Mr. Sartor said Mr. Phillips often stocks his own classroom and the teacher staff room with supplies he buys with his own money. Mr. Phillips also tries to boost teacher morale and has even gone camping with some of his friends on staff. The students, however, are Mr. Phillips' top priority.

"I look forward to coming to school every day," Mr. Phillips said. "The students are spectacular, kind, considerate, intelligent—I'm lucky to be here." □

TEACHER of the Year Vincent Martinez helps students realize capability, potential

from page 1

Collaborating with different groups within the school, Mr. Martinez has elevated not only his fashion program but also other school departments.

"He really incorporates a lot of different groups within the school and ties them into what he's doing," assistant principal Ms. Naomi Grishman said. "Everybody buys into it; instead of it being just an outgrowth of the fashion class, it's an outgrowth of the entire school."

Ever since he was a student himself, Mr. Martinez has been involved in some form of education or youth work. He began as a Sunday school teacher in the seventh grade and continued as an active youth group member until he graduated from high school. In college he ran his campus art club, and in graduate school he "managed the university's art gallery and taught classes in gallery management to underclassmen." He also worked part-time for two years with preschool children.

"I learned that I not only had the gift of patience, but [also that I] really enjoyed what I was doing," Mr. Martinez said. "There is an appealing quality to the innocence children possess, including high-school [students]. That for me is a warm and welcome reminder that there is plenty of good in the world. The influencing factors to becoming an educator have always been present, even if I was unaware of them at the time."

Four years ago, Mr. Martinez started teaching fashion design classes at Grady as an expansion of the art curriculum. According to Ms. Grishman, hiring him was one of the best decisions the school ever made. During his first year teaching fashion design classes, Martinez laid the foundation for what would become a successful, career-

building program, UrbanCouture.

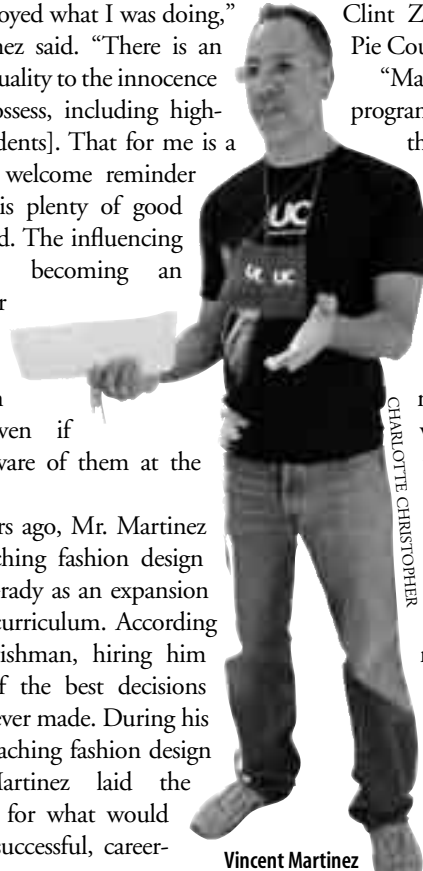
Mr. Martinez said UC has gone from an upstart program to "a strong, thriving program, acknowledged and respected by students, faculty, parents and the professional community." He has taught many students everything they know about fashion design.

To senior designers like Kellisha Stewart, Mr. Martinez is more than just a teacher.

"Ever since I got here, he [has] always tried to help me, and all the stuff that I go through; I always go to him for anything—advice or just someone to be there for me," Stewart said.

Since January 2007, professional publications have published five favorable stories about UC. Mr. Martinez and his students hosted a fundraising event in March to bring attention to eating disorders among teens. They designed T-shirts that are sold at school events, are carried at three local boutiques and will be available by summer at major retailers nationwide. This past February, UC partnered with fashion designer Clint Zeagler for the Pecan Pie Couture show.

"Martinez has created a program in fashion design that has no parallel [that] I have found anywhere in the country," said Mr. John Brandhorst, chair of Grady's Fine Arts Academy. "He has made connections with the students that are indelible and far-reaching in their professional and educational futures, and has managed to bring regional and national attention to the work of his students," Brandhorst said. "He is one in a million, and we call him our own." □



Vincent Martinez

FILM highlights thrills and spills of Inman election

from page 1

Roth was amazed by how closely the elections she documented reflected national political trends.

"[It's] troubling that things don't change an awful lot between the politics of middle-school elections and the road to becoming President of the United States," Roth said. "In both we see how our votes are strongly influenced by popularity, image and a good marketing campaign—how substance and message is not enough and how strongly special-interest groups can sway results."

Despite this observation, Roth was inspired by the candidates' enthusiastic participation.

"What was reconfirmed to me is that young people want to be involved," Roth said. "They want to express themselves, they want to be heard, they want to make a difference in their world and they want to

believe in things."

Jones agreed with Roth's description, she added that the camera's presence made Inman's election even more intense.

"I ran because I really did want to change things about the school, but when they started filming us everything got a lot more serious," Jones said. "All of us wanted to win a lot more than before."

Bacon, the only candidate who plans to pursue a career in politics and who would "love to be the first female president someday," won the election by 12 votes. During her term, she

organized a fundraiser for tsunami victims in Asia and worked against what she saw as self-segregation at Inman.

"I was 13 at the time, and I knew a lot about the political world," Bacon said. "But I've learned a lot [about politics] since."

Jones felt that the film didn't accurately reflect the character of each candidate.

"I thought [the film] was really good, but the way they edited it gave each one of us a certain label," she said. "It made us seem more extreme."

Nonetheless, Roth believes that the individual personality of each candidate and

their willingness to be filmed is what makes *The Third Monday in October* meaningful.

"I love the young people in this film," Roth said. "They take a chance to stand out among their peers at a time in life when most of us would rather muddle through without such attention to our growing pains."

Roth hopes that the film inspires other young people to get involved in politics.

"I think that *The Third Monday in October* has a unique opportunity at a special time in this country's history to become a catalyst in a national movement to actively engage young people in democracy early on," Roth said. "[I hope it inspires] family and school discussions about...the strengths and weaknesses of political systems on both the middle school level and in our national system...as these young people become the next generation of voters." □

[Students] want to express themselves, they want to be heard, they want to make a difference in the world and they want to believe in things.

film director Victoria Roth

Grady Says Goodbye

After many years and joyful memories, five faculty and staff members will bid farewell to the halls of Grady

By HANNAH ROSENBAUM AND KAYCI SCHOON



Ms. Marva GREENE

Ms. Marva Greene first came to Grady 10 years ago. She has been teaching English for a long time, but now she's interested in being taught a thing or two.

"I know [that] if I'm ever going to have the time and energy to pursue another interest—that happens to be

theology—then I better do it [now]," Ms. Greene said.

While she's busy pondering the intricacies of religious thought, Ms. Greene hopes to spend more time with her grandson.

"My grandson is 2 years of age, and he is the most incredible child I've ever met," Ms. Greene said. "I'm sure a lot of grandparents say the same thing but in his case it's really true, so I want to spend more time with him."

Flying to Boston to see a grandchild can be difficult on a teacher's schedule, but Ms. Greene looks forward to spontaneous visits in the future.

Ms. Greene said she will also enjoy having a

looser sleep schedule.

"I like to write, and it seems that my brain just comes alive at 1 o'clock in the morning," Ms. Greene said. "I can't [stay up late] and come to work [at Grady], but I think I can if I'm in [another] field for which I have a passion."

Even though leaving her teaching career may be very difficult, Ms. Greene said she knows it's time to move on.

"I have loved every minute of my time here at Grady—I love my co-workers, I respect [and] trust them," Ms. Greene said. "I have made life-long relationships with many of the teachers here, and hopefully I have made some lifelong relationships with some of the students." □



Mr. Derek HON

Journalism and ninth-grade literature teacher Mr. Derek Hon is finishing his last few weeks at Grady after two years. Mr. Hon and his wife plan to move to Athens—a calmer environment for their expected first child. There Mr. Hon plans to teach at Winder Barrow High School in Barrow County.

Although he taught at Grady for only two years, his students appreciated his originality and dedication.

"He makes journalism as good as it could be," freshman Lauren Edwards said. "His projects are intense and he has a hard grading system, but when you pass you really feel as though you've accomplished something."

Mr. Hon will miss Grady's unique atmosphere just as much as his students will miss him.

"The students are diverse, bright [and] capable and the faculty was accepting and helpful to me as a young teacher," Mr. Hon said. □

Due to inclement future plans, Grady will not be dining alfresco with assistant principal Ms. Naomi Grishman next school year. After 36 years in the educational system, Ms. Grishman is retiring.

"I've always wanted to go out at the top of my game," Ms. Grishman said. From English teacher to magnet coordinator to administrator, Ms. Grishman feels she has worked her way up the education ladder.

Although Ms. Grishman is excited about the freedom from school, she will still miss Grady. In between all of the announcements and dress code violations she deals with daily, Ms. Grishman finds joy in Grady's creativity and success.

"My favorite thing [at Grady] is the mix of students," Ms. Grishman said. "It brings so many talents and interests [together] to make Grady

what it is."

With three and a half decades of experience, Ms. Grishman has a great deal of wisdom and advice to share. She has worked with people from 5 to 50 years old, students and administration alike.

"[I think] it's important to have passion about what you do," Ms. Grishman said. "Every teacher should feel passion about working with kids about



Ms. Naomi GRISHMAN

their subject matter [and] about their jobs. Being an educator, you are contributing in ways you don't even realize.

You find out later something you thought was a totally insignificant thing to you was totally major to someone else."

It may be hard to imagine what Grady will do without Ms. Grishman, but she is just as unsure

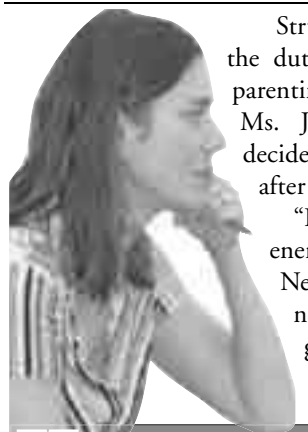
what she will do without Grady.

Filling a day that doesn't consist of bell schedules and the Do-Not-Admit List will be a challenge, but Ms. Grishman has a general plan for the future.

"I'm just going to enjoy things; [I want to] travel and take classes," Ms. Grishman said. "It's time to pursue some of my creative abilities. I've always wanted to learn Spanish."

Just because Grady's favorite weather woman is departing doesn't mean she will be gone forever. Between all of the arts performances and activities Grady has to offer it will be hard for Ms. Grishman to stay away.

"I love coming to the art events and seeing the students perform," Ms. Grishman said. "When I'm out taking my long morning walk I might drop in and say hello." □



Ms. Jocelyn NETTLES

Struggling to balance the duties of teaching and parenting, English teacher Ms. Jocelyn Nettles has decided to leave Grady after eight years.

"It requires too much energy to do both," Ms. Nettles said. "[There's not enough time] to give the attention to students and my son that I would like to."

Ms. Nettles is considering taking on a part-time job

or going back to school after she leaves—only this time as a student.

"I was going to stay home for a while and then [see if] something would work out part-time," Ms. Nettles said. "I'm just going to wait a year until I figure out if I can go back to the classroom. I need my energy at home more than I did before."

Ms. Nettles will remember Grady as her first teaching experience, and hopes to stay involved even after she leaves.

"I will miss the fun days and the funny things that students say and how clever and creative they are," Ms. Nettles said. □

After seven years at Grady, much-loved English and drama teacher Ms. Janet Milton is retiring, ending her 34-year career. Ms. Milton decided that although she loves her job as a drama and American literature teacher, she is ready to move on to something new.

"I want to act on MainStage in Atlanta," Ms. Milton said. "Or maybe I'll direct films—I have connections in the filming industry."

Ms. Milton is the director of the school's annual Black History play.



Ms. Janet MILTON

"The singing, dancing and acting involved in the [Black History program] has been one of the highlights of my career," Ms. Milton said. "I've met so many magnet students in the [Black History play]. It gave me an opportunity to bridge the gap between magnet and non-magnet students."

Ms. Milton had been involved in the Black History plays because of her love and admiration for her students. She was especially good at connecting with those around her.

"I love interacting with kids; I'll miss that most of all," Ms. Milton said. "I've developed close ties with students, and the faculty has been wonderful." □

Teachers say managing work, family a balancing act

By MICHELLE WILCO

It's a question that many working parents eventually ask themselves: continue working or stay at home to raise a family? For English teacher Ms. Deedee Abbott, the choice was indisputable.

"We were moving around, and I was in graduate school, so I took a four-year break [before teaching] after I had kids," Ms. Abbott said.

For English teacher Ms. Jocelyn Nettles, however, leaving was a much harder decision.

"I think I'd always planned to come back [after my son was born] because I really wanted to keep working once I had a baby,"

Ms. Nettles said. "My initial plan was to come back to work, and it just sort of changed."

Women aren't the only ones who have to choose between working and raising families.

"I think [men leaving their jobs to raise families] is more acceptable today than when my parents were raising me," said former Grady teacher Mr. Chris Hess, who decided to continue teaching after his daughter, Wren, was born and he moved to Pennsylvania. "[My wife and I] both like to work, and Wren loves the school she attends. I'd be fine staying home with my children if that was what worked best for our family. Still, I think children ideally need lots of time with their mother."

Both Ms. Abbott and Ms. Nettles said that their husbands never considered leaving their jobs to raise their kids.

"It's not about sexism as much as finances," Ms. Nettles said. "Teachers aren't usually the breadwinners."

While some parents opt to work and to raise a family, Ms. Nettles said doing both ended up being more difficult than she thought it would be.

"The reason why I just feel I can't teach and be a mom is that I'm just so exhausted at the end of the day," she explained. "Especially [being] an English teacher, I have so much grading and reading essays. I feel like I can't get everything done and get to daycare on

time to spend a couple of hours with my son before he goes to bed at 7:30."

In the end, all three teachers believe that the decision to leave or stay at work should be mutual between spouses.

"I believe couples need to talk about it and make a choice," Mr. Hess said. "People say, 'Time is money.' I've found that time is better than money."

Mr. Hess explained why he kept teaching after he left Grady and moved to Pennsylvania.

"I loved my experience at Grady, especially the close relationships with my students," Mr. Hess said. "I couldn't imagine doing anything else [other than teaching] right now." □

Gap year allows room for exploration, travel

By SOPHIE COX

The transition from high school to college presents students with a number of obstacles. Between acing the SAT and surviving high school classes comes the pressure of not only getting into college but actually attending that college in the fall. While most of Grady's seniors will join the class of 2011 in universities around the country, some have other plans.

By the start of her senior year, Lee Allen knew she wanted to take some time off after graduation. Allen plans to move to Austin, Texas, this summer and get a waitressing job before she applies to the University of Texas.

"I [plan to] work for a year, making money and establishing Texas residency at the same time," Allen said. "The following school year I'll go to UT and major in psychology."

Although Allen's family set up a trust fund to help pay for UT's expensive out-of-state tuition, they have also encouraged her to seek residency so that she can apply in-state.

"I don't really have enough money to pay for it all," Allen said. "I figured [that] waiting a year so I could get cheaper tuition made sense."

For senior Ben Williams, deciding how to pay for college also influenced his decision to take a year off. Williams is currently working at Rice Box, a local Chinese restaurant, to save money for college. He will continue to work in the fall.

"Money, it is all about money," Williams said.

Williams will spend part of his year off building his photography portfolio, which he hopes to submit to the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Aside from financial motivations, there are many incentives that lead seniors to take a year off. Some students want the chance to experience life without school for a while.

"Taking a year off is a break from school and a chance to experience the 'real world,'" Allen said.

According to the Princeton Review website, time off can give students "added focus and enthusiasm" when they decide to return to school. It also leaves high school graduates with time to explore various areas of interest and "pursue experiences that

might be impractical" upon entering the working world.

Senior Archie Lister decided to defer his enrollment at the University of Colorado at Boulder until the fall of 2008 so that he could explore some of his own interests.

"I didn't want to go to college yet," Lister said. "I wasn't entirely sure about what I wanted to study or what I wanted to be."

Lister currently works at Rice Box with Williams but wants to get an internship working in an Atlanta music studio. In addition, Lister plans to take classes over the summer at Georgia State University.

"Hopefully taking classes [at GSU] and getting a feel for that lifestyle will help me figure out what I enjoy," Lister said. "I'm leaning towards studying film but I'm definitely not decided on anything."

The Princeton Review website also says that while many students benefit from taking a year off, there are some disadvantages. Many students make the mistake of taking a year off and then unsuccessfully reapplying to schools they did not get into during their senior year. Attending another school and transferring after a year is usually more effective than trying to re-apply with no college experience. Many students who take time off have trouble going back to school when the year is up.

"I think taking a [year off] is risky for some people but can be a great experience for others," Allen said.

Allen believes she will be at an advantage because she will have time to "mature and get new perspectives" on real-world ideas. With her family's support, Allen has always had the option of taking a year off.

"I think teenagers are pressured into going straight to college, even if they don't know what they want to do," Allen said.

Lister agrees with Allen, suggesting that college life is not for everyone.

"Not going to college is not a bad thing," Lister said. "If you enjoy your life without that experience, then that's fine—just because it's unusual doesn't make it a bad decision."

For Williams, taking a year off will give him time to evaluate his future plans.

"I'm in no hurry [to go to college]," Williams said. "It's not a race to see who finishes first. It's all about me. I'm going to take my time—after 12 years in school; I'm in no rush to go back." □



1



2



3



4



5



6

GRADY ROCKS

Grady students have been working to create two cairn (mounds of stones assembled as a monument) structures that will be installed on Grady's campus. 1) Art teacher Mr. John Brandhorst teaches students how to dig the holes that will act as molds for the cement that will form the cairns. 2) Senior Max Meinhardt breaks the ground to start digging a hole. 3) Students mix water with dirt to make mud to smooth out the holes. 4) Sophomore Mason McNay spreads a thin layer of mud to erase the imperfections in the walls of the hole. 5) Mr. Brandhorst works with students to transfer cement from the truck into the hole. 6) Sophomore Kevin Giblin evens out the freshly poured cement. The cairns, which will be sandblasted with the names of Grady organizations, are scheduled to be finished by the end of the school year.

AJC revamps structure to shift with changing times

from page 1

Simonton said the enterprise section would contain "watchdog and investigative" journalism. The enterprise section will assume a large role at the paper, with an unprecedented number of reporters.

"To have 50 reporters devoted to that kind of coverage—that's a lot for a major newspaper," Simonton said. "The focus will be very, very much on metro news—on Atlanta news."

Prof. John Greenman, who holds the Carter Professorship for Excellence in Journalism at the University of Georgia, believes the *AJC* is headed in the right direction.

"There should be more, and better, journalism online," Greenman said. "There will be less journalism in the newspaper, but it should be more focused on what the newspaper does best: enterprise reporting."

The new four-section plan will clear up the complex system of the paper's staffing for the benefit of reporters and editors alike.

"One of the goals of [the reorganization] is also to reduce the levels of hierarchy," Simonton said. "The idea is to flatten the structure so that it is more responsive."

Along with the restructuring of sections will come the redistribution of jobs. Half of all staff members were asked to reapply for their jobs, and although management has assured them that none of them will be left jobless, many are worried that they won't get the same position.

"Since the job descriptions have changed,

some jobs have been eliminated, but other jobs have been created," Simonton said.

Roughly 80 people over the age of 50 and with 10 or more years at the *AJC* were offered early retirement.

"About half of them took the buyout," Simonton said. "That group does include some of the very skilled and experienced people."

Greenman said that despite the many changes the *AJC* is undergoing, it will retain its reputation.

"The restructuring, in and of itself, is neutral with respect to journalistic quality," Greenman said.

The motivation for the restructuring stems from a desire to please the *AJC*'s target audience. Although the paper has attempted

to cater to younger readers in the past, the "Internet generation" continues to receive news primarily from online sources.

"It's been a struggle to keep that readership up," Simonton said. "The people who are continuing to read the print newspaper are slightly older."

Greenman is hopeful about the *AJC*'s future.

"Clearly, the plan is thoughtful and consistent with newsroom trends across the United States," he said. "Newsrooms resist change, but the *AJC* has worked harder than most on managing change."

Change at the *AJC* is far from over, and the paper will continue to adjust to its readers' preferences.

"It's meant to be ongoing," Simonton said. "One of the things we've been told is that this is not a one-time change—this is a process." □

“The focus will be very, very much on metro news—on Atlanta news.”

Stell Simonton,
AJC web publisher

The Grady High School Senior Class of 2007

Salutatorian Din wins elite UNC scholarship

By SCOTT CHAMBLISS

"Oh, I can't look, I can't look," she said, pushing the computer screen away from her.

Emma Din, the salutatorian for the Class of 2007, was loading an e-mail from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill that would inform her of whether or not she had been named a Morehead-Cain Scholar. The scholarship, which was offered to 59 students (25 of which were from out of state), is one of the most prestigious merit-based scholarships in the country.

According to the scholarship's website, potential scholars are selected based on their leadership, scholarship, moral force of character and physical vigor; they are "prodders, organizers, seekers, catalysts. They act. They work. They achieve."

All of these attributes certainly describe Din, who was in fact named a Morehead-Cain Scholar, prompting her to enroll at UNC Chapel Hill. Although

she had already been awarded the Carolina Scholarship by the university, which was a full ride, the Morehead-Cain Scholarship covers all expenses, including summers, a year abroad and a laptop computer.

"They really stress leadership," Din said. "Just to get to the interview weekend you have to be academically accomplished. My first thought when Mr. Arnold told me about it was 'Wow, this is pretty intense.'"

Despite the fact that she was accepted to all nine universities to which she applied, including Stanford, Harvard, Brown and Yale, the attraction of the study-abroad opportunities UNC offers greatly influenced her decision.

"I definitely want to go abroad because it is a culmination of all of my interests," Din said.

"I'm afraid that I will end up being an everyday doctor. ... My passions lie more in humanitarian work than in medicine."

senior Emma Din

degrees at UNC, and her father, an architect, got his master's there as well. When Din was in sixth grade, her father got a job at Georgia Tech, so the family moved to Atlanta, where Din started attending Inman Middle School.

Though Din has spent most of her life in the United States, the majority of her extended family lives in either France or Cameroon. Din views herself as "a citizen of the world," and doesn't limit herself to one country.

"Early on, I struggled with trying to fit in," Din said. "When

you come into a new culture, it is hard to know where you fit. It turns out I didn't have to pick."

Although she has no definite plans after college, her multicultural experiences have already opened up a whole new world of opportunity to her.

"Since my mother and grandfather are doctors, medicine runs in the family," Din said. "I thought that my pediatrician was the coolest person, so I always wanted to go to the doctor. I've always been interested in medicine, even though I've never had to go to the hospital. I've always taken it for granted that I might go into medicine. ... When I hit ninth grade, I also started thinking that I wanted to get involved with humanitarian work."

Volunteering with organizations such as the Atlanta-based Refugee Family Services and traveling on a mission trip to Honduras with her youth group have exposed Din to many of the humanitarian issues facing the world today. Some possibilities that she is considering in her long-term plans are working with organizations such as Doctors Without Borders or the Peace Corps.

"Working with [these services] has helped me learn what [refugees] have to go through," Din said. "I can't imagine what it would be like to have to lose part of your identity to stay safe. I've realized that this is what I'm truly interested in."

Din's personal understanding of the obstacles involved in immigration has



COURTESY OF MAREY MAXWELL

OVER THE TOP: Senior captain and salutatorian Emma Din is known on the court for strong serves and spikes. "I made it my goal to be versatile; I didn't want to limit myself to one position," Din said.

fueled her passion to work with refugees in any facet.

"I can't even imagine what it's like to be forced to leave one's home or haven," Din said. "I'm afraid that I will end up being an everyday doctor in an American hospital, though. It's not that those people aren't amazing; it's just that my passions lie more in humanitarian

work now than in medicine."

Din realizes that devoting her life to humanitarian efforts means forgoing some of the normalcy of a typical life.

"Everyone keeps telling me 'You're going to be poor, Emma, you're going to be poor, poor, poor,'" she said. "But I would rather be poor and happy than rich and stuck at a desk." □

Hard work keys Girardot's past success, future plans

By JOURDAN DEVIÉS

On his second attempt at the SAT Preston Girardot scored a 2340, the highest score out of Grady's 248 seniors, earning him the Student Teacher Achievement Recognition student nomination. Girardot attended a luncheon held by the Atlanta Kiwanis Club that honored all Atlanta metro area schools' STAR students and teachers and an APS breakfast that honored this year's valedictorians, salutatorians and STAR students.

The STAR Program recognizes the students with the highest SAT scores at their schools, who then nominate a STAR teacher. Girardot chose Mr. Matthew Mihordea, a former Grady chemistry teacher, as this year's STAR teacher because of his personality and teaching methods.

"I was impressed when we hardly ever used the textbooks and progressed through the curriculum out of order but in a way that actually seemed more logical to everyone," Girardot said. "[Mr. Mihordea] had a way of communicating his obvious aptitude of problem solving that made chemistry accessible to anyone willing to apply himself."

Mr. Mihordea was partially responsible for Girardot's high score on the SAT because of the free SAT class he offered during Girardot's 10th grade year. The course created a base for his SAT knowledge.

"I believe that if I work hard enough, I can get into any graduate school after going to Georgia."

senior Preston Girardot

On top of Mr. Mihordea's SAT class, Girardot tried various SAT prep courses before settling on a program called Studyworks, which was designed for students aiming to improve their 500-or-above scores on each section of the SAT. He spent a few hours studying every Sunday before he took the SAT for the second time. He did everything possible to get the most out of the course, and his dedication was reflected in his 2340 score.

Girardot has decided to attend the University of Georgia where he has been accepted into the Honors Program.

"It's the best value for someone like me who doesn't know what he wants to do or major in," Girardot said. "I believe that if I work

hard enough, I can get into any graduate school after going to Georgia."

Girardot will miss the small size of Grady and the unique people he met throughout the

school.

"The people here never get old to me, and I know that every day someone—maybe someone totally unexpected, will make me laugh or smile," Girardot said. "That's what the diversity that everyone likes to talk about means to me, and I know I will miss that." □

Forrest Aguar, *University of Georgia* • Aria Alexander, *Southwestern Christian College* • Anna Alexander, *Georgia Institute of Technology* • Taniesha Alexander, *Georgia Perimeter College* • Lee Allen, *gap year / University of Texas* • Matthew Altland, *Auburn University* • Meredith Altman, *Georgia Perimeter College* • Curry Andrews, *University of Georgia* • Chelsea Armstrong-Mitchell, *Georgia Southern University* • Jessica Baer, *Georgia State University* • Samuel Barksdale, *Georgia State University* • Dexter Barnett, *University of Alabama at Birmingham* • Noah Barrett-Conroy, *Kennesaw State University* • Jessa Barron, *Georgia Southern University* • Douglas Baumann, *Auburn University* • Asa Beal, *Johns Hopkins University* • Alexandra Becker, *Savannah College of Art and Design* • Max Beeching, *Georgia Perimeter* • Erik Belgum, *University of Georgia* • Mark Bell, *Le Cordon Bleu College* • Termorris Benn, *Georgia State University* • Tierra Benn, *undecided* • Ryan Betty, *United States Naval Academy Preparatory School* • Christian Bevil, *Austin Community College* • Leah Bishop, *University of Georgia* • Alexandra Black, *University of California, Berkeley* • Serria Boston, *undecided* • Andrew Bracken, *Guilford College* • Caitlin Bradley, *Georgia State University* • Dana Brittain, *AIU Buckhead* • Lena Brodsky, *University of Michigan* • Chanel Brown, *Georgia State University* • Audriana Bryant, *Georgia State University* • Harry Buck, *DeVry University* • Manzy Byrd, *North Carolina Central University* • Adrienne Calk, *College of Charleston* • Jonathan Carcamo, *AIU* • Elijah Carmichael, *Westwood College* • Phylicia Caruthers, *undecided* • Joy Carter, *Howard University* • Sulpicia Casiano, *studying in California* • Marvin Castillo, *undecided* • Samantha Chatman, *Atlanta Area Tech* • Chantrell Chambliss, *undecided* • Oanh Chau, *Georgia State University* • Sefa Cobblah, *Alabama State University* • Tai Cohen, *University of North Carolina at Wilmington* • Michael Coker, *undecided* • Charles Collins Jr., *Gwinnett Tech* • Griffin Collins, *University of Georgia* • Tedra Colzie, *Georgia Southern University* • Marko Corbik, *returning to Macedonia* • Devongalo Crawford, *Benedict College* • Britain Cunningham, *Georgia Southern University* • Nicholas Curry, *Coastal Carolina University* • Marina Danilchenko, *undecided* • Brittanie Darrisaw, *Bauder College* • Jade Davis, *Georgia Southern University* • Rachel Deel, *University of Georgia* • George DeMeglio, *Georgia Institute of Technology* • Marquavious Dennis, *Samverly College Barber-Hairstyling* • Emma Din, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill* • Quinton Eberhardt, *Atlanta Technical College* • Kevin Eccles, *University of Florida* • Jordan Echols, *Georgia State University* • David Edgar, *Emory University* • Leland Edmond, *Georgia Southern University* • Ian Evans, *Kennesaw State University* • Wayneice Evans, *AIU (online)* • Gabriel Fedota, *Auburn University* • Lily Feinberg, *University of Georgia* • Randolph Flemister, *Florida A&M University* • Jabari Fletcher, *Appalachian State University* • Benjamin Flynn, *undecided* • Derek Franklin, *Western Kentucky University* • Jermar Franklin, *Georgia Perimeter College* • Summer Frost, *Amherst College* • Camille Ganey, *University of Southern Florida* • Nicholas Gibson, *Syracuse University* • Travis Gill, *Clayton State University* • Preston Girardot, *University of Georgia* • Rebecca Gittelson, *Emory University* • Anjali Gokarn, *University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa* • Christopher Goodine, *Howard University* • Ramika Gourdine, *Oglethorpe University* • Lakeisha Green, *undecided* • Icee Grier, *Hampton University* • Nina Griffin, *Georgia Southern University* • Hanna Griffiths, *University of Georgia* • Desmond Guest, *undecided* • Yemane Haile, *undecided* • Carson Hale, *University of Georgia* • Jeffrey Hall, *undecided* • Carrie Handell, *Georgia Institute of Technology* • E'Nocisha Hardeman, *Albany State University* • Lydia Hardy, *Georgia State University* • Sean Harrington, *Georgia Southern University* • Lashawn Harris, *Fort Valley State University* • Kolen Hatchett, *Howard University* • Rebecca Healy, *gap year* • Courtney Heflin, *Georgia State University* • John Helsel, *Furman University* • Aviance Hendricks, *University of Mississippi* • Adina Herman, *College of Charleston* • Marcus Hill Jr., *University of California, Los Angeles* • Maria Hilliard, *Georgia State University* • Teannah Holland, *undecided* • Tiffany Holloway, *University of Georgia* • Kayla Horton, *undecided* • Cordell Howard, *Georgia State University* • Jossy Ana Huaman, *Schools of Radiation and Imaging Technologies* • Melanie Huaman, *undecided* • Lindsey Hutchins, *Georgia Southern University* • Stone Irvin, *University of Georgia* • Said Ismail, *undecided* • Asha Jackson, *undecided* • Kamesha Jackson, *undecided* • Anthony Johnson II, *Villanova University* • continued on next pages

Congratulations, seniors!

Valedictorian Helsel excels in debate, *The Unmasking*

By KELLY DOUGLAS

Senior John Helsel enters the room, ardently discussing a confusing poem on a particularly difficult AP Literature test with a fellow classmate.

"If John Helsel doesn't understand something, then you know it doesn't make sense," his classmate exclaims.

Helsel is the valedictorian for Grady's graduating Class of 2007. Though Helsel's zone school was North Atlanta High School, he made the decision to attend Grady.

"I'm really thankful for the Communication Magnet," Helsel said. "Especially through debate, I have acquired new ideas I would not otherwise have been exposed to."

Helsel has thrived at Grady; he is an active member of Grady's successful debate team and co-editor of Grady's literary magazine, *The Unmasking*. As an editor, Helsel said, he has to "read through all the submissions, help decide what went in the magazine, help place the stories and help design the format of the pages."

Helsel remained committed to his duties throughout the production of the lit mag, even though his enrollment in AP Latin prevented him from having a class devoted to the literary magazine.

"While producing *[The Unmasking]*, I didn't have a lunch period," Helsel said. "I had to come to work

on it during my lunch."

Members of the literary magazine staff appreciate his efforts to remain involved throughout the process of publishing the lit mag.

"He has done a lot considering his scheduling conflicts," said senior Kevin Eccles, co-editor of *The Unmasking*. "He's strict and he doesn't let things slip under the wire."

Though he sacrificed his lunches for the sake of the lit mag, Helsel devotes most of his time to the debate squad. Helsel has competed in Lincoln-Douglas debate for four years and has placed in numerous tournaments. Helsel's success in debate has given him the opportunity to attend tournaments throughout the country, including competitions in Florida, Alabama, Texas, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Massachusetts and North Carolina. Helsel values the friendships he has made while on the squad, especially with debate coach Mr. Mario Herrera.

"[Helsel] is a remarkable individual," Mr. Herrera said. "I've seen him grow tremendously over the past two years, both academically and philosophically."

Along with debate and the lit mag, Helsel spends his time reading and practicing the viola, which he has played since third grade. Some of his favorite books include *Why Social Justice Matters* by Brian Barry and *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert A. Heinlein. His wide range of interests is evident in the subjects he excels in at Grady.

"I like dabbling in all [subjects]," Helsel said. "I enjoy mathematic reasoning, so I like physics and math. I also really like philosophy, especially post-modernist philosophers, like Foucault. The ideas they critique are extremely thought-provoking."

Helsel's enthusiasm for such a variety of subjects led him to search for a liberal arts college with an emphasis on science and interdisciplinary study. He considered such colleges as Carleton, Davidson, Grinnell, Kenyon, St. Olaf and The College of Wooster,



COURTESY OF MS. LISA WILLOUGHBY

KEEP YOUR ENEMIES CLOSER: Seniors John Helsel and his "rival" Lincoln-Douglas debater Meg Harrison of Starrs Mill High School, pose with their trophies after the University of New Mexico Lobo Howl Tournament. Helsel won second place while Harrison got third. "Most of my friends are debaters," Helsel said.

but ultimately he decided to attend Furman University, where he received Furman's most prestigious academic scholarship, the Herman W. Lay Scholarship.

Helsel's classmates admire his achievements and his aptitude at school.

"[Helsel] definitely deserves to be valedictorian," Eccles said. "He works hard in class and has an impressive vocabulary. He

probably got a 2600 [out of a possible 2400] on the SAT."

Though Helsel has received a lot of praise during his time at Grady, he remains modest about his success. He is excited to be valedictorian, but he says it wasn't a goal toward which he specifically worked.

"I just did the best I could [in school]," Helsel said. "It just worked out." □

Brooke Johnson, *Bethune Cookman College* • Jaz Min Johnson, *Clayton State University* • Jessica Johnson, *Georgia State University* • Samuel Johnson, *Georgia State University* • Amber Jones, *undecided* • Latoya Jones, *Tennessee State University* • Travis Jones, *University of Georgia* • Wesley Jones, *Tulane University* • Channelle Joseph, *Georgia Southern University* • Wesley Journey, *Albany State University* • LaSasha Kelly, *Texas Southern University* • Simeon Kelley, Jr., *Ball State University* • Graem Kinsella, *School of the Art Institute Chicago* • Wyatt Kirven, *Georgia State University* • Gabriel Klein Kuhn, *Berklee College of Music* • Melanie Klein, *University of Michigan* • Zachary Koen, *Albany*

K



KELLY DOUGLAS

PLAYMAKER: Senior Harry Buck creates a new cartoon character for his drawing class. Next year, he plans to study game and simulation programming at DeVry University.

Game creation leads Buck to DeVry

By ARIELLE D'AVANZO

Exciting opportunities await senior Harry Buck in the coming year. Buck will attend DeVry University, a technology-based college established in 1931. Buck plans to major in Game and Simulation Programming.

"I had the option to begin school in either the summer or the fall," Buck said. "Of course I chose to start in the summer on July 7, so that I can begin programming games as soon as possible."

Buck became interested in DeVry when he saw a commercial about the university. Buck set up a meeting with the dean of admissions, who told him that 90 percent of DeVry graduates immediately receive a job after graduation. This statistic convinced Buck that DeVry was the school he wanted to attend.

While studying game and simulation programming, Buck's

main focus will be on the scripting and coding of video games.

"What I really want to do in life is create games," Buck said. "The core of creating them is programming them."

Buck recently quit his job at Gamestop because he could not work as many hours as he wanted to. Buck will work at Planet Smoothie until he can find a job that incorporates his passion for gaming.

"I am going to try and keep my job at Planet Smoothie during the first semester of school," Buck said. "During second semester though, I am going to intern at the school."

Buck plans to live at home until he can earn enough money to rent an apartment located on the DeVry campus.

"Ever since I was young, I loved everything about video games," Buck said. "I think that attending DeVry is the perfect thing for me right now." □

Betty plans career at sea with Navy

By CAROLINE DENTON

Can you imagine taking physical tests of strength and agility to get into college?

While some might categorize law or medical school as strenuous or intense, senior Ryan Betty's plan following graduation gives intensity a whole new meaning.

On Aug. 6, while most 18-year-olds will be entering dorm rooms at their new university, Betty will officially be admitted into the United States Navy. Betty will attend the Naval Academy Preparation School in Newport, R.I.

Betty's route differs from a student attending college for a degree. From the application process to his everyday schedule, it is clear that not only is this his education—this is Betty's job.

For Betty, an average day at the academy will begin at 5:30 a.m. followed by almost two hours of exercise. Then classes start at 8:15.

"The preparatory school helps me brush up my skills in mathematics," Betty said. "Its emphasis is math and English; it gets people ready for the [Naval] Academy that wouldn't be able to go in directly."

Direct application to the United States Naval Academy is rigorous; one needs to have a congressional nomination from a congressman, the president or the vice president.

After preparatory school, Betty will enter the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. for four years.



HAMP WATSON

TRUE NAVY BLUE: Senior Ryan Betty attends Saber Day with other cadets.

"Both schools are dedicated to making officers, and officers are the leaders in the military," Betty said. "You have to take physical tests just to get into the school; I mean, they are training you to lead people into combat. They are going to teach us how to be gentlemen. They are going to make sure that we are the cream of the crop."

Once in the Navy, Betty hopes to become either an amphibious-warfare officer or a fighter jet pilot. As a member of the JROTC program throughout his four years at Grady, this is not a new ambition.

"I've thought about joining the military ever since I was a little kid, but in these past two years it has become a reality," Betty said. "It's going to be very hard, but I'm looking forward to it." □

Senior drama students utilize thespian expertise in night of one-acts

By SCOTTIE BOOKMAN
AND BARBARA DOUGHERTY

Every year, the seniors in Grady's advanced drama class have the opportunity to direct self-chosen plays, which constitute Grady's Evening of One-Act Plays. This year, Joy Carter and Cecily MacMillan were two of the seniors who had that chance.

"It was unlike anything I'd ever experienced," said Carter, who directed *Beauty*. "I've never had so much responsibility before."

Carter has been involved in Grady's drama department since her freshman year. The one-acts provided her with a chance to work behind the scenes yet be involved with the production.

"It's completely draining," MacMillan said, who directed *For Whom The Southern Belle Tolls*. "It takes an incredible amount of dedication, creativity and determination to direct, but it's certainly worth it. It's an empowering experience to have complete control of an alternate reality—it's like playing God."

MacMillan began learning theater technicalities in the middle of high school.

"After 10th I started working for Seven Stages Theatre," MacMillan said. "I got a broad background of theatrical knowledge—technical, artistic and just how to put it all together."

Both directors had previous theater



CARSON HALE

ACTION: Juniors Donté Harvey and Julianna Strack act under senior Cecily Macmillan's direction in a one-act.

experience. MacMillan had directing experience in two previous plays, while Carter had already taken advanced drama twice and participated in six previous Grady performances.

Despite these seniors' passion for drama, they each have hopes for the future that don't include

theater.

"I'm going to Howard University in D.C. next year," Carter said. "I don't want theater as a career; it's something I do mostly for fun. I want to become a veterinarian or a news anchor."

MacMillan wants to improve education.

"After college I want to go to Emory Law School then help work with educational policy in Georgia," MacMillan said. "I hope to alter the way schools run and work, and maybe if it works in Georgia, other states will be able to mimic the policies in order to better their education systems."

Carter believes that directing a one-act can be a gratifying experience.

"If you can handle it and you want to do something that you want to be proud of, then I recommend directing a one-act," Carter said.

MacMillan had some different opinions on the experience.

"I would not recommend directing a one-act unless you have some experience in technical theater and performance and have at least directed a monologue or a two-person scene," MacMillan said. "I don't think you can really handle it until you've experienced almost every aspect of theater. It has bettered me exponentially as a performer and as an artist, but it will drive you insane." □

Matthew Powell, *Georgia State University* • Quentin Pridgen, *Georgia State University* • Laneshia Rachell, *Georgia Perimeter College* • Khaili Raheem, *University of West Georgia* • Briana Rawlings, *University of West Georgia* • Shakeria Reid, *undecided* • Jannice Revere, *undecided* • Andrea Ritter, *Bennett College* • Britnee Roberson, *undecided* • Aisha Robinson, *Reinhardt College* • Noah Robinson, *Johnson and Wales University* • Rico Robinson, *Alabama State University* • Julia Rooks, *University of*

P

Olunuyomi, *Atlanta Technical College* • Alex Orlansky, *Tulane University* • Brittney Owens, *Bowie State University* • Xavius Pace, *Miles College* • Anyt Paez, *Georgia State University* • Luke Pattison, *University of Georgia* • Johnathan Peralta, *undecided* • Karina Perez, *undecided* • Helen Peterson, *University of Minnesota* • Katherine Peterson, *University of Mississippi* • Carson Phillips-Spotts, *Colby College* • Tiffany Platt, *undecided* • Chelsea Polk, *Hawaii Pacific University* • Skyla Pope, *Temple University*

©

State University • Tereza Kucecova, *Anglo-American College in Prague* • Jessica Lambert, *Emory University* • Adrienne Langford, *University of West Georgia* • Venika Leach, *AmeriCorps City Year, New Hampshire* • Leah Leonard, *Mercer University* • Robinson Levin, *Worcester Polytechnic* • David Levison, *The Art Institute of Atlanta* • Quran Lewis, *The Art Institute of Atlanta* • Edward Lister, *gap year / University of Colorado at Boulder* • Keith London, *undecided* • Joe Loving, *undecided* • Tiffany Lowery,

K

L

Hampton University • Martha Lucas, *Evergreen State College* • Stephen Lyons, *Albany State University* • Kelliese Mackey, *undecided* • John Manfredi, *San Francisco State University* • Lardicia Manns, *University of Georgia* • Matthew Marshall, *Howard University* • Mareks Martin, *undecided* • Miroslav Martinus, *returning to the Czech Republic* • Candace Massey, *undecided* • Rhys May, *Brenau University* • Quivintae McCants, *undecided* • Timothy McCullum, *undecided* • Cecily McMillan, *undecided* • Sarah

L

M

Beth McKay, *University of Pennsylvania* • Max Meinhardt, *Georgia State University* • Kelly Minor, *University of South Florida* • Brittany Mitchell, *University of West Georgia* • Lauren Mitchell, *Clemson University* • Benjamin Moore, *Georgia Perimeter College* • Candace Moorman, *High-Tech Institute* • Lillian Morgan, *Georgia Southern University* • Sarah Muntzing, *George Washington University* • Ashley Neasman, *New World School of the Arts* • Jaclyn Nix, *University of Maryland* • Robert Nonemaker, *Ball State University* • Tyrone Norman, Jr., *Albany State University* • Samuel Oden, *Alabama State University* • Julia Oliver, *Georgia College and State University* • Pedro Olivera, *returning to Brazil* • Adetutu

M

©

R

North Carolina, Asheville • Misha Rumph, *George C. Wallace Community College* • Agape Shacor, *undecided* • Ihsan Sharif, *Hampton University* • Xavier Shorthouse, *Benedict College* • Andreria Simpson, *undecided* • Ashley Slaughter, *Albany State University* • Christopher C. Smith, *Coastal Carolina University* • Christopher M. Smith, *undecided* • Brian Starnes, *Tulane University* • Yachi Stewart, *Georgia State University* • Quentin Stillwell, *undecided* • Natalie Streiter, *Guilford College* • Candrea Strickland, *Georgia State University* • Marty Styles, *Morehouse College* • Brandon Taylor, *undecided* • John Taylor, *Georgia State University* • Krystopher Taylor, *Georgia State University* • Richard Thomas, *Georgia Perimeter*

T

Community work provides sense of purpose for Leach

By CARSON HALE

During a self-proclaimed existential crisis, how many people would sign up for an 11-month volunteer program 1,000 miles away?

That is exactly what senior Vernika Leach did. When the college application process came around, Leach didn't feel ready to be grounded at a college. Instead, this September, she will join Americorps' City Year program, where she will stay with a team of 17 people in Seaport, N.H. Their mission is to "reinforce the idea that people make their own communities" by working in public schools and leading community – based volunteer initiatives.

Leach views herself and others as "citizens of the world and the U.S." She has no interest in simply taking a year off to relax; she wants to make a difference.

"She's very passionate," Interact Club leader Ms. Mary Carter Van Atta said. "She uses her passion to help other people."

For those who have witnessed Leach's fortitude and perseverance as a leader firsthand, her decision comes as no surprise. Leach single-handedly founded Grady's Amnesty International Club this year and is co-editor of the yearbook.

Ms. Erin Davis, the teacher sponsor for Amnesty International Club, believes that the



CHRIS COLLIER

FOR SALE—A YEAR OF MEMORIES: Seniors Melanie Klein and Vernika Leach sell yearbooks to seniors. Klein and Leach served as co-editors for the yearbook. This summer, Leach will travel to New Hampshire with Americorps' City Year program for community service.

commitment Leach has showed in planning Student Action Week and a Darfur awareness campaign will help her get through any overwhelming obstacles of City Year.

"She has the follow-through," Davis said. "She plans something, and then follows it through to completion."

Fellow co-editor of the yearbook senior Melanie Klein expects that Leach's success will stem from her personable, energetic and cheerful attitude.

"She's very extroverted," Klein said. "She commands people's attention because she's so bubbly. She was a good inspiration for the juniors [in yearbook] because she showed that you can be friends with them while helping them."

Leach feels that Grady has

prepared her for her excursion through the hard work she has become accustomed to as a magnet student. She faces her year as a volunteer with her usual enthusiasm.

"I learned not to try to expect everything that's going to happen," Leach said. "Take everything as it comes, and don't try to plan too much or try to anticipate it."

Leach lives by her own advice: she is spontaneous. Klein remembers a night when they were at school late working on yearbook. When they went to set the alarm in the office, Leach started dancing around Ms. Ross's desk.

"We were all thinking, 'oh my God, I hope someone's watching this on the camera,'" Klein said. □

Klein-Kuhn's musical passion proves to be driving force

By LENA BRODSKY

For many seniors choosing a college is extremely difficult. For senior Gabe Klein-Kuhn, his interest in music made his decision a little easier.

"I have been playing drums since the third grade," Klein-Kuhn said. "During freshman year I started playing guitar. It was just a hobby then but when I went to Outdoor Academy in sophomore year I started focusing on music more."

Klein-Kuhn chose to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston because of its reputation and its emphasis on teaching modern music and musical production.

"Berklee's one of the top music schools in the country," Klein-Kuhn said. "They teach rock and roll and jazz instead of just classical, and it's one of two schools in the country that offer music production as a major."

Klein-Kuhn plans on studying percussion and majoring in musical production and engineering. Grady and the local community have helped develop



GRANT COYLE

MIX IT UP: Seniors Gabe Klein-Kuhn and John Taylor edit and prepare music recorded by students in Grady's new, state-of-the-art recording studio.

his interests in music.

"Last semester I had an internship in Grady's recording studio," Klein-Kuhn said. "I have also been an intern at WRSR Radio station in Little Five Points where I did promotional and other work."

While music remains Klein-Kuhn's focus, he also enjoys camping, hiking and hanging out with friends. He also played for Grady's soccer

team for two years, but decided not to continue his junior year to focus solely on music.

"I played varsity soccer as a freshman and sophomore at Grady," Klein-Kuhn said. "It was a situation where you put in an incredible amount of work, but the reward was well worth the effort put into it."

Klein-Kuhn's semester at Outdoor Academy solidified his love for music.

"My band, Dead Respect, started at Outdoor Academy," Klein-Kuhn said. "My band mate, who goes to North Springs High School, and I call our genre 'gangsta folk' because we combine hip hop beats and acoustic guitar. We have a lot of fun and play at coffee houses and in Virginia Highland." □

Designers' imagination prevalent in senior lines

By CHARLOTTE CHRISTOPHER

Grady's senior line designers have found inspiration in everything from princesses to ancient weaponry.

"Everyone takes inspiration from different things," said Mr. Vincent Martinez, Grady's fashion teacher. "It could be just walking down the street and being inspired by nature."

This year's lines are as unique as their designers. "[The lines] have certain similarities but really very few," Mr. Martinez said. "It was very evident from the beginning that my seniors had a clear vision."

Each senior designer creates a unique collection, which gives them the flexibility to showcase their original ideas.

"As a senior designer you have full creative power and get the opportunity to show what you would do as a designer in the fashion industry," senior designer Rachel Deel said.

The senior lines make Grady's fashion program unlike any other.

"[The lines] are important to the fashion program as a whole because [they are] part of the program that really sets UrbanCouture apart from other high school fashion programs," Deel said. "[They] prepare the students interested in fashion for what lies beyond high school."

Although many students at Grady may think that the designers only have to produce clothing, their work goes far beyond sketching and sewing.

"It's not just designing and constructing the clothes, it's finding people to do hair and makeup, getting jewelry and accessories, getting shoes, choreography and so much more," senior designer Jordan Echols said. "Being a senior designer may look really simple, but honestly, you have to be on your game really early and love what you're doing."

While working on their lines, this year's seniors have learned about more than just clothes.

"The most valuable thing that I learned from the program is time management," senior designer Natalie Strieter said. "Before, I procrastinated a lot, but now I've figured out how to get things done on time—that's going to be really valuable in college."

In the three years since its inception, Grady's fashion program has grown tremendously, improving every year due in large part to the dedication of the program's senior designers.

"Working with the seniors on their lines was absolutely amazing," Martinez said. "I couldn't believe it could be better than last year, and it was. The seniors are raising their own bar and standard and the tone." □



MICHELLE WILCO

BY DESIGN: Senior designer Jermar Franklin poses with juniors Brittany Cabil (right) and Ryan Kelly, who modeled in his line.

College • Selertan Thomas-Walthall, *Georgia Perimeter College* • Travis Todd, *Georgia Southern University* • Whittion Ukan, *Benedict College* • Quawana Vaughn, *Albany State University* • Rafael Velez, *Middlebury College* • Lan Yo, *undecided* • Ngan Vu, *Southern Polytechnic State University* • Virginia Wagner, *Auburn University* • Takeira Wais, *undecided* • Joshua Washington, *North Carolina A&T* • Kai Washington, *Atlanta Area Tech* • Madeleine Webb, *University of Missouri* • Donald White, *Morehouse*

W

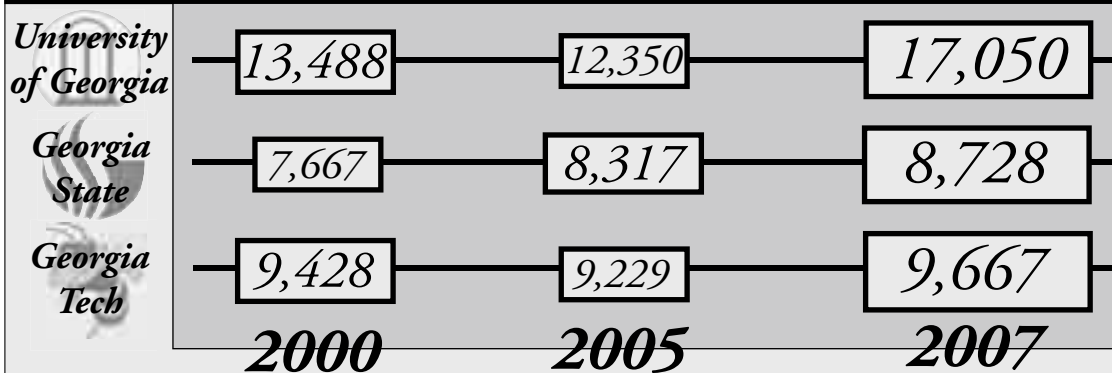
College • Stanley Wilburn, Jr., *undecided* • Britney Wilkins, *undecided* • Benjamin Williams, *gap year* / *Georgia State University* • Joshua Williams, *undecided* • Lillian Williams, *Atlanta Metropolitan College* • Shara Williams, *Georgia Southern University* • Marcia Williamson-Pace, *Georgia Southern University* • Jonathan Willis, *Valdosta State* • Ysatis Wood, *State University of West Georgia* • Asako Wyatt, *Georgia Southern University* • Travis Wynn, *University of West Georgia* • Ahsan Zahid, *Georgia State University* • Sally Zinlak, *Loyola University New Orleans*

W

Z

College application hike crowds field for acceptances

HOW MANY APPLICATIONS DO COLLEGES RECEIVE?



Data reflects the number of students who applied to each school as prospective freshmen.

SOURCE: RESPECTIVE UNIVERSITIES' ADMISSIONS OFFICES AND WEBSITES

Record-high number of college applications escalates competition

By JANNA KAPLAN

"We're sorry, but we won't be able to offer you a place in our first-year class."

This year, more seniors across the country read that sentence—or one just like it—than ever before. The number of students who applied to college reached an all-time high—and so did the number of rejection letters.

According to data from the National Association for College Admissions Counseling, 73 percent of U.S. colleges received more applications in 2006 than in 2005.

"[2007] was a record year for [the University of Georgia]," said Patrick Winter, senior associate director of undergraduate admissions at UGA. "We had a little over 17,000 students apply for a spot in the freshman class. That's up from 16,000 students last year and 12,500 three years ago."

Winter believes that the HOPE Scholarship played a part in increasing the number of applicants to UGA.

"[The HOPE Scholarship] is keeping the best students from Georgia in Georgia," he said. "Many students who could get into Ivy League schools are choosing to stay in Georgia because they get to go to school tuition free."

Winter also said that there are simply more students applying to more colleges than there were even three years ago.

"If you go back 10 or 15 years, most students were only applying to three or four colleges," he said. "Now students are applying to seven, eight or more. This is inflating the number of applications [UGA] is receiving."

Because the number of applicants has increased while the size of the freshman class has not, UGA has rejected or wait-listed more students in 2007 than in past years. Many students who had considered UGA a safety school found that getting accepted was more difficult than they had anticipated.

"I applied to UGA early action and I was expecting to have that as a safety school," senior Britain Baker said. "When I didn't get in, I freaked out and applied to lots of schools I knew I could get into for regular decision."

Grady teacher Mr. Scott Stephens doesn't understand why seniors are applying to so many different schools.

"Applying to schools is a headache and it's expensive," Mr. Stephens said. "People should apply to three

schools—one that you know you can get into, another one that is kind of a stretch and one more that is a long shot."

Mr. Stephens said that when he applied to college, "people weren't as particular" as they are now.

"I'm not sure that schools are all that different," he said. "What's important isn't the school. It's the teachers you have and the students you're surrounded by. The buildings and the football team don't make the college."

Though several Grady students were disappointed when they didn't get into UGA, Mr. Stephens believes the increased selectivity is a positive thing for the school in the long run.

"Clearly, UGA has gotten more competitive," he said. "There are disappointed families and students, but the fact that the university has higher standards reflects well on the school and on the state of Georgia."

Winter said that he doesn't expect a decline in the number of students applying to UGA and other colleges in the near future.

"We are at a peak right now in terms of 18 year olds," he said. "All the population trends show us that [the increase of applicants] is going to continue for the next 10 years or so. Anything could change, but we don't have a reason to believe it's going down any time soon."

Carol Dunlap, media relations manager for Admissions Consultants Inc., believes that in spite of these high numbers, rising seniors should not feel like they face an impossible task.

"Yes, this has been a tough year for high school seniors, with record-high applications resulting in record-high rejection letters going out this spring, but a person should not feel defeated by this," she said.

Dunlap said that students should consider applying to schools that are "in their range for academic performance and that will meet their educational goals." She suggests that students research each school carefully before applying, rather than using the Common Application to apply to as many schools as possible.

Baker said that the hardest part about applying to college is the competition, and that students should never assume that they are going to get into a certain school.

"Don't stress out about it too much, but don't blow it off," she said. "It's important to find a balance." □

Students on colleges' waiting lists forced to remain uncertain of post-graduation plans



LILY FEINBERG

I congratulate myself. I have not been rejected from some of the most selective colleges and universities in the country. I have not, however, been accepted to them either. At more than half of the schools to which I applied last fall, my name currently resides in the limbo-land of college admissions: the waiting list.

What exactly does it mean to be wait-listed? Many students will turn down offers of admission from multiple schools; the almost-as-qualified individuals on the waiting list at those schools will fill the spots left vacant.

This annual process presents a series of problems. Before students on the waiting list can find out whether a school has room for them, all the students who were accepted to

it must decide whether they will actually attend that school. After May 1, the date by which accepted students must reply to colleges, the admissions officers can begin to review the waiting list. Because they don't review wait-listed applicants until the spring, students on the waiting list cannot be officially accepted or rejected by these schools until mid-summer.

When I found out I'd been wait-listed at the first school I heard back from, I gave it little thought. I had applied to several schools and was not yet discouraged, but as the letters began to come in, more

colleges began to tell me that after "carefully reviewing" my application, they had placed me on the waiting list. I began to worry. Suddenly, my plans for next year seemed frightfully uncertain. Knowing that I would not be able to make a decision until mid-summer furthered my anxiety. I almost felt as though I would rather have been rejected so this whole college application ordeal could finally have some closure.

I know I should be glad that I wasn't rejected from these schools. Friends and family tell me to be proud, that my waiting-list status is an achievement. Considering the tens of thousands of bright, talented, interesting and accomplished students who applied to these schools, it's an accomplishment just to avoid a rejection letter. Admissions officers have told me that all of the applicants were highly qualified and that those placed on the waiting list had no faults in their applications; the school just didn't have enough room for them.

Fortunately, there are colleges to which I have been accepted. I can choose a school, send in a non-refundable deposit, find a roommate and finalize everything so that when I hear from the other colleges this

My name currently resides in the limbo-land of college admissions: the waiting list.

summer, I have a backup in case their final answer is a "no." Still, that's one heck of a backup plan. I can't help but wonder—what

makes these colleges think that I would go to all that trouble just to drop everything and go to their school if they do, in fact, accept me? For some reason, however, I'm tempted to play along with their little game.

Come graduation, when most other seniors have solidified their plans for the next school year, I'll still be tangled up in uncertainty. In the meantime, though, I'm getting comfortable here in waiting list limbo-land. I'll kick back, find a nice book to read, and cross my fingers that my frustration has not been in vain. □

ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS STAGE JOINT CONCERT

1) Sophomore Alexandria Cantrell performs a solo during the orchestra's rendition of *After a Dream*. 2) Chorus teacher Mr. Kevin Hill directs a combined ensemble in Gabriel Fauré's *Cantique de Jean Racine*. 3) Freshman Eva Dines scans the music for Mozart's *Lacrimosa*, or *Requiem*, before joining in as the orchestra's second-chair cellist.



1



2



3

ALL PHOTOS BY CHARLOTTE CHRISTOPHER

Could it happen at

GRADY?

From counseling to special education to security, how another Virginia Tech could be prevented

By HAMP WATSON

Seung-Hui Cho, the Virginia Tech student responsible for the worst school shooting in American history, had shown signs of disturbing behavior prior to his violent outburst on April 16. According to *The Washington Post*, a Virginia judge had ordered Cho in 2005 to receive “involuntary outpatient treatment,” which does not require that the patient remain at a mental hospital, after he threatened to commit suicide. He stopped receiving treatment two days after the court order was issued.

Although Cho never threatened anyone overtly, he wrote violent poetry in a creative writing course that prompted his professor to send him to the school counseling center to be evaluated. Virginia law, though, requires that there be an “imminent” danger to oneself or others before one can be confined to a hospital, so Cho was never forced to receive mental care.

A Choice for Counselors

Dr. Mark McLeod, director of the Emory University Counseling Center, said tragedies like the shooting at Virginia Tech are difficult to prevent.

“From what I know of Virginia Tech, I think [the administration and counselors] did everything that I think we would have done,” McLeod said. “I don’t know of any other college or university that can prevent these kinds of things from happening in every case.”

Georgia law states that a mentally ill person can be forced to go to a hospital if he or she “presents a substantial risk of imminent harm to himself or herself or others,” or if he or she is so unable to care for himself or herself that his or her life is in “imminent” danger.

“In Georgia we basically say it’s OK to be mentally ill and crazy and do some odd and strange things, as long as you’re not putting yourself or anyone else at risk,” said Mercedes Murrell, a Fulton County

hearing officer and Atlanta attorney. “It’s really a balancing act between protecting all of us as a society

and violating any rights that [mentally ill people] may have as individuals. At that point where they cross the line, where they clearly become violent, then [the courts] have to step in...and keep them away from everybody else.”

The goal, Murrell added, is for people to seek care on their own.

“The law in Georgia is written so that any time you can get somebody to voluntarily agree to stay in a hospital for treatment, [judges would] rather take it

out of the courts and let them stay there until the doctor thinks [the patient] is ready to go,” she said.

Dr. Catherine Brack, associate director of the Georgia State University Counseling Center, said the Virginia Tech case shows how hard it is to ensure that a student-patient receives care.

“[The Virginia Tech shootings were] fairly unpreventable,” Brack said. “The person has to be honest with you in order for you to do an assessment, and that’s why [ordering hospital care] doesn’t always work. If you force somebody to go talk with you, you can’t get very good information out of them.”

McLeod said that determining who poses a danger is a judgment call.

“In my profession there is no black and white,” he said. “It’s very difficult to predict based on research and empirical information when somebody is going to be violent to someone else or even to [himself or herself]. We’re being asked to make these kinds of assessments based on limited knowledge.”

Despite the gray area surrounding determining who is dangerous, Brack said that laws governing involuntary care are reasonable.

“I would not want someone hospitalized just because they’re thinking about [committing suicide],” Brack said. “A lot of people think about killing themselves but never do anything about it.”

A Place to Go

At Grady, the Program for Exceptional Children helps teach students who have mild mental illnesses, learning disabilities or behavioral disorders. The school lacks the capacity to teach students with extreme cases of depression or other mental illnesses.

“In the PEC [department], if we have students with [Severe] Emotional Behavior Disorders, then they would go to a psychoeducation center,” said Ms. Betty Foster, chair of Grady’s PEC. “[Psychoeducational centers] deal with counseling, education and psychiatric treatment—the whole package of care that these students might need.”

Students who attend psychoeducational schools might have any of a large number of maladies, from Severe Emotional Behavior Disorders to schizophrenia.

“Just having a disability or depression doesn’t get you into the program,” said Terry Fletcher, director of the North Metro Psychoeducational Program, which serves the area of Atlanta encompassing Grady. “It has to affect

you so adversely that you can’t be successful at any model in the school system.”

Ms. Foster explained what would happen to a student from the general population who was suspected of developing a mental illness such as depression or schizophrenia.

“It would be the teacher who would probably first notice that the child is withdrawn—that they aren’t participating in class,” Ms. Foster said. “They could be lethargic or perhaps unable to stay on task. At that point

normal

ly the teacher would make a referral to the counselor or contact the parent. The parent can shed some light on whether in fact that child is suffering from depression or schizophrenia.

Then a meeting would be called and if in fact that child is truly schizophrenic, then the teacher would meet with the school nurse, a case worker and a parent and they would give the teacher some type of strategy in an attempt to work with that child.”

Fletcher said that while the counseling sessions North Metro offers are confidential, parents have the final say on most matters.

“Unfortunately, under the law, [minors] don’t have rights until they [are 18],” Fletcher said. “Until the students reach the age of maturity, the parents sign for everything. Just [as with] any child, as long as the parent has rights, the parent can sign to accept [the student’s enrollment at North Metro] or not.”

One legal expert confirmed minors’ lack of rights.

“Parents are responsible for their minors,” said Ann Jackson, a hearing officer for the Fulton County Probate Court. “Usually what you’ll see is if you have some type of illness and you think your child is ill then you’ll take them to get care. Most kids don’t argue with their parents about what kind of care [they receive]. I haven’t read or heard of any cases where a kid would go out and get an attorney and say ‘I don’t want this.’”

‘Best in the State’

People entrusted with Grady’s security described how they seek to prevent shootings and what they would do if a shooting took place.

“If a situation like the one at Virginia Tech occurred, we would have a lockdown, but it would be difficult [to prevent harm to students] if the [shooter] were already in the

classroom,” Assistant Principal Mr. Roosevelt Foreman said. “We do have a button inside the rooms which teachers can push to signal for help. If something happens, our police officers would be the first on the scene. They would then contact zone officers in our area within five to 10 seconds [for immediate backup].”

Grady also has a plan for apprehending students suspected of bringing a weapon to school.

“We would immediately isolate [such a] student,” said Lt. Gary Gullatt, a

retired police officer who is a member of Grady’s police force.

“We might ask the student to come to the discipline office without saying for what. We have a resource officer who could find the student’s schedule. We have radios to talk to each other.

We would let people know about the student, we would give a description, we would locate and find his class and he would be searched and disarmed.”

Gullatt said security at Grady is centered around prevention.

“We encourage students, teachers and staff to identify any suspicious activity,” Gullatt said. “We want our teachers and staff to be proactive. If we want to try to prevent [violence], the main way is to get teachers and staff involved.”

Mr. Foreman said Grady security is effective because students, staff and security forces communicate well.

“I get a lot of information from students,” Mr. Foreman said. “There have been many times where I saw infractions because I had information ahead of time that students gave me because they trust me.”

Mr. Foreman said he regrets that Grady does not have a fenced-in campus to help protect students from people walking in off the street. Still, he had high praise for Grady’s security.

“I would say our security system is probably the best in the state because we have so many qualified personnel who can respond quickly if any problems were to occur,” he said.

During his 11 years at Grady, Mr. Foreman said he had never heard of an instance in which someone brought a gun to school.

“We’ve had maybe a knife at the most,” he said. “I don’t think [any students] at Grady would be capable of or would attempt [gun violence].”

Still, Mr. Foreman said he won’t take any chances.

“You can never know what’s going on inside someone’s head,” he said. “You have to be on the alert.” □

“If we want to try to prevent violence, the main way is to get teachers and staff involved.”

police officer Lt. Gary Gullatt

“A lot of people think about killing themselves but never do anything about it.”

Dr. Catherine Brack

Track teams face tough region opponents

By STEPHEN CROUSE

The boys and girls track team went into the region 5-AAA meet with high hopes and the state's top-ranked runners in several events. They left with mostly disappointment sprinkled with a few individual successes.

Despite the fact that the Grady boys were ranked second in AAA and 19th overall in the state going into the region meet, the team only advanced to the state meet in two of the 12 scoring events it competed in—the triple jump and the 4 x 100 meter relay race.

“We went [into the region meet] thinking that we had a good shot of winning,” boys coach Delbert Ellerton said. “We were at the top of AAA all year, and it looked like we had a great chance at state, but it didn't work out that way.”

One of Grady's star runners, junior Demarcus Watts, gained eligibility to compete in the Nike Outdoor Nationals with his performance in several events including the 100-meter race, an event in which he set and then broke the school record three times.

Grady's lack of throwers, as well as its lack of depth in the long-distance

events, hurt the team at the region meet, which Blessed Trinity won, partly because they did well in the events where Grady struggled.

Despite this season's results, Coach Ellerton has high expectations for next season. Next year's team will be stocked with seniors with a lot of experience. There will also be one additional runner, Joshua Tolbert, who transferred to Grady this year and whose mother was a member of the 1988 Grady girls state championship track team.

Coach Ellerton hopes to improve on the team's overall discipline for next year. He stresses the importance of hard work and commitment to the team in order to be successful.

“[The runners] have to be serious and work hard,” Coach Ellerton said. “If they are, they will be ready for any competition. It shows at crunch time if you aren't prepared.”

The girls track team had similar troubles in its region meet. Not only are the girls in a very competitive region, but some of the girls also had other commitments scheduled the same day. Disregarding the absence of their teammates, most of the girls competed; however, the level of competition was not representative



LIFT OFF: Senior Dexter Barnett competes in the triple jump at the region meet held at Westminster on April 28. He jumped 45 feet, 1 inch and set a new school record.

of Grady's true talent.

“The girls competed very well,” girls coach Randy Reed said. “It was just too bad that there were so many conflicts that the girls had that day.”

The girls finished ninth overall, with many finishes in the middle of the pack. A few runners had to run multiple events. Junior Quanisha Bridges finished fourth in the high jump, sixth in the 100-meter hurdles and eighth in the 800-meter race. Others who ran in multiple events were freshmen Tayla Luckett, junior Nina Micklebury and

sophomore Iesha Simpson. Senior Teannah Holland was Grady's only state qualifier for the girls. She qualified in both the shot put and the discus. Coach Reed is optimistic for all events next season because the majority of the runners this year are juniors who have run all four years.

“I can see us going [to state] in a few more events next year,” Coach Reed said. “There are going to be a lot of fourth-year seniors next year and also a lot of returning sophomores.” □

AJC honors Holland for success at region

On April 24, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution* named senior Teannah Holland a Player of the Week for her accomplishments in the Region 5-AAA track meet. At the meet she won the discus and the shot put and then went on to finish third in both events at the state meet.

Watts breaks records at region track meet

At the Region 5-AAA track meet, junior Demarcus Watts broke Grady records in the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes, with times of 10.68 seconds and 21.52 seconds, respectively. Both times qualified him for the Nike Outdoor Nationals. His performance in the 200 lifted his national ranking to 34th.

APS taps senior Din as top Scholar Athlete

Senior Emma Din was awarded Grady's Scholar Athlete of the Year by Atlanta Public Schools. Din played volleyball for three years and tennis for four years here at Grady. She was co-captain of both teams in her senior year.

Holland sets field records during high school career

By JAMISON KINNANE

Teannah Holland came to Grady as a junior in 2005 having previously won state championships in both discus and shot put. Now, in her senior year, she finished third after winning discus again and finishing a close second in shot put last year. Holland's remarkable performance in these two field events over the past four years has gained her recognition by colleges including Alabama State and Charleston Southern University.

“Both schools are offering me scholarships in track,” Holland said. “I haven't decided which one I want to go to. It will probably be Alabama State.”

She hasn't visited either school yet; she is waiting for some paperwork from the NCAA to come through so she can visit the two schools and make her final decision.

Holland transferred to Grady when she

moved here from Athens where she went to middle school and part of high school. In middle school she participated in every sport except track. High school, however, wasn't the first time she had done shot put or discus.

“My mom has been working with me since I was little; about 4,” Holland said. “When I got to high school I went on and did the events and she pushed me on. My mom, my aunts and my uncles all pushed me to do my best.”

At Cedar Shoals High School in Athens, Holland worked with a coach whose specialties were shot put and discus. His expertise continued to help her at Grady. Throughout her time at Grady she relied on stretches and exercises she learned from her old coach as well as help from Coach Randy Reed. In preparation for the season she stretches and lifts weights, and will continue these exercises during the summer to train for college.

“I will probably work with Coach [Ronnie] Millen here at Grady over the summer,” Holland said. “Any training specifically for shot put and discus I will get from whatever college I go to.”

Over the past four years Holland has accomplished many things both in Athens and at Grady. She has won state championships in both discus and shot put in the past two seasons. This year she won both events at the Region 5-AAA championship with distances of 117 feet, 3 inches in discus and 39 feet, 3 inches in shot put, but those are only her track accomplishments. Holland has also played on Grady's basketball team since she arrived, and she played the drums in Grady's marching band. She is considering playing in the band wherever she goes to college.

Thinking back on her years of high school track, Holland says that her best memory was

winning her first state titles as a sophomore; she finished runner-up in both events her freshman year and was favored to win her sophomore year. After the competition, though, she was worried she hadn't won.

“I thought I lost. I threw a 35 [foot], which isn't very good for AAAA,” Holland said. “So I was just standing there and crying because I was supposed to have won. Then my coach asked me why I was crying and told me I had won in both events. I just jumped up and down and then I was crying for no reason.”

Holland is grateful she came to Grady and wishes she didn't have to leave.

“I'll miss everything,” Holland said. “I'll miss the band, the school, my friends, my parents, my teachers, everybody and everything because Grady has helped me mentally and physically. I am thankful for coming here and for everybody here helping me with everything.” □

Late bloomer Fletcher stars on varsity football team during senior season

By MAX BEECHING

Senior Jabari Fletcher will be attending Appalachian State next year on a football scholarship to play defensive end. Despite all of his achievements, Fletcher will be the first to admit it has not been an easy ride.

When Fletcher was in the eighth grade, he was cut from his middle-school football team.

“In eighth grade I was fat, slow and I couldn't even run [up] a hill,” Fletcher said.

When high school came, Fletcher was reluctant to try out for the Grady football team.

“I was a couch potato who didn't want to play football,” Fletcher said.

In the summer of 10th grade, Fletcher found his inspiration when former teammate Simeon Hendricks convinced him to try out for the football team.

“He helped me raise my confidence level a lot,” Fletcher said. “If it were not for him I wouldn't be half the player I am today.”

Fletcher ended up playing left defensive end for Grady's JV team where he honed his skills.

“Tenth grade was a tough year,” Fletcher said. “At the beginning I was slow and chubby, but I stuck with it and, boy, am I glad with that decision.”

During the summer at training camp, Fletcher found guidance from teammates Tony Bryant and Brandon Thurmond. Together, they took him under

their wings and slowly helped turn Fletcher from a chubby couch potato into a dynamic player with tremendous heart.

“They really just showed me the ropes and were able to help motivate me to play my best,” Fletcher said.

Some of Fletcher's success can be attributed to the growth spurt he had during the summer between his sophomore and junior years. Not only did Fletcher grow three inches, raising his height to 6 feet 3 inches, but he also slimmed down and became especially quick. In 11th grade, Fletcher made varsity but saw little playing time because of Bryant and Thurmond's

dominance.

“I benefited a lot from playing with both [Bryant] and [Thurmond] because I was able to take their best aspects of the game and make them mine,” Fletcher said.

Fletcher understood the situation, but at the same time he was eager to play.

“I was happy that my teammates were playing well, but I also wanted to show people what I could do,” Fletcher said.

Fletcher would finally get his time to shine in his senior year. The 6-foot-3-inch workhorse racked up 45 tackles and 11 sacks to help the Knights reach the quarterfinals of the state playoffs. A memorable moment came for Fletcher this year when the Knights played region rival Dunwoody during the regular season. When the Knights came out of the locker room, Fletcher saw that

one of his middle-school coaches was on the Dunwoody coaching staff.

“When I saw him he looked at me and said, ‘If they let Jabari play, anybody can play,’” Fletcher said.

Instead of letting it get to him, Fletcher silenced his former coach with nine tackles and three sacks as the Knights demolished the Wildcats 30-13.

“What he said only made me more determined,” Fletcher said.

Fletcher has learned the ability to overcome adversity and his determination to persevere, no matter how bad it gets.

“Jabari is a very good player with a tremendous amount of heart, and I was glad to see his time come,” head coach Ronnie Millen said.

Once Fletcher graduates from Appalachian State, he plans to attend medical school to become an oral surgeon. □



SOCCEr team reaches final four of state tournament

from page 1

"I knew I had to score if we were going to stay in the game," Rosenbaum said.

Regular time ended with the score 2-2, forcing the game into two, five-minute overtime periods. The score remained deadlocked after the first two overtimes and the game went into kicks from the mark to decide the winner. Grady prevailed 5-4.

"[The win] was the most amazing thing I have ever experienced," sophomore goalkeeper Lena James said. "It was better than all of the tournaments I have ever won."

In the third round, Grady traveled to Columbus to face the seventh-ranked Blue Devils. For the first five minutes of the game, the girls were under immense pressure and Columbus had some early chances.

"We came out flat and it killed us," Coach Thomas said.

In the eighth minute of the match, junior midfielder and captain Jamison Kinnane hit a shot on goal from a free kick 35 yards out. The keeper dropped the ball and it rolled into the goal.

"The [referee] told me it was an indirect kick, but I had heard that the keeper dropped the ball a lot, so I decided to go for the shot," Kinnane said.

After the goal, Grady was able to keep

possession for a fair amount of time. In the 34th minute, Columbus scored off a ball that was played through Grady's defense.

"We need to be the first to every ball; we're ball watching," Coach Thomas told his girls at halftime. "There's no tomorrow; you have to dig deep."

Twenty minutes into the second half, Columbus had excellent goal-scoring opportunities, hitting the ball off the post

twice. Then in the 64th minute, sophomore midfielder Kala Marks chipped the keeper on a one-touch shot from 25 yards out.

"We had just practiced taking long shots the day before, so I was ready," Marks said.

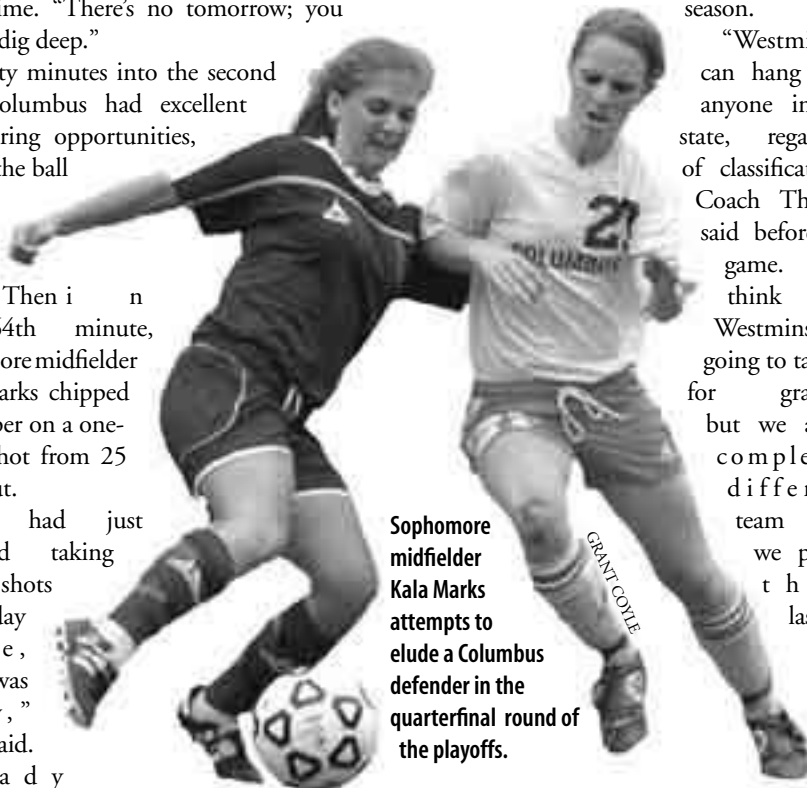
Grady

dominated the final fifteen minutes of the game and cruised to a 2-1 victory.

In the state semifinals, Grady was matched up against second-ranked Westminster, to whom they had lost twice during the regular season.

"Westminster can hang with anyone in the state, regardless of classification," Coach Thomas said before the game. "I think that Westminster is going to take us for granted, but we are a completely different team [since we played them last]."

Sophomore midfielder Kala Marks attempts to elude a Columbus defender in the quarterfinal round of the playoffs.



Baseball struggles in tough division

By KEELY YOUNGBLOOD

The Grady baseball team kicked off their season earlier this spring with a win against North Atlanta. They ended the season with an 8-7 loss to McNair High School and the opportunity to look back on a season that many of the players considered disappointing.

"We could have done a lot better in the McNair game," sophomore pitcher and third baseman Emery Ozell said. "I don't think we played to our full potential. We all knew our season was over, but we definitely could have come out with a win."

The team played through a genuinely difficult schedule, one that included Westminster, Blessed Trinity and nationally-ranked Dunwoody. The team's most recent games were against Southside, which they won 14-3 and Chamblee, to whom they lost 17-0.

"Overall we're in one of the toughest regions in AAA baseball," Coach Patrick Thomas said. "We have to play some of the toughest teams in the state. We finished with a record that was somewhat in the middle, but we could have done better. A few mistakes were made, but towards the end of the year we started playing well."



STRIKEOUT: Junior Jeremy Turner throws a pitch while junior first baseman Darryl Farley prepares himself defensively for a ground ball. The team lost the game to Towers.

The team attributes some of the problems to a lack of necessary equipment and no home practice field.

"We need to get committed, [then] we will be more successful. I have no doubt that we'll have a winning record next year."

Coach Patrick Thomas

the grey wall of the gym," Coach Thomas said. "The kids want to practice. They want to work hard. They do work hard, but the lack of a playing field hurts us."

Next year, however, the team should have full access to the Crim High School baseball field for practice.

"Next year we'll be able to work on a real baseball field and that should help us out a lot in the season," Coach Thomas said. "We're even in the process of getting a batting cage built on the Crim field."

The team also struggled with what they feel is a general lack of interest in the Grady baseball

program.

"We could use so much more support," Ozell said. "I doubt half of Grady knows we have a baseball team."

The team has room for improvement, and they also have time to make it. Many of the team members play in summer leagues. There is also a fall baseball season before the spring season.

"We basically use the fall league for practice," Ozell said. "It's just a warm up for spring and we lose a lot of our starting players to football, but I think we can definitely get a lot better."

Coach Thomas agrees that they can improve if they put forth the effort to get better.

"We need to get committed, [then] we will be more successful," Coach Thomas said. "I have no doubt we'll have a winning record next year."

Most of the team shares the same optimism about next year's season.

"We'll have to work a little harder," junior pitcher Jeremy Turner said. "We'll need more effort, but the team next year will be made up of almost all seniors and we're all really excited." □

Unwavering love, support of Braves to remain for eternity



ASA BEAL

"Oh say does that star-spangled banner yet wave, o'er the Land of the Free and the Home of the Braves."

For as long as I can remember, the words of Francis Scott Key were not good enough for me. Every time I have belted forth the words of my country's national anthem, I have foregone patriotism in order to show my love for the greatest team on earth—the Atlanta Braves.

I am as avid a fan of the Braves as you are likely to encounter. My love for the team goes back as far as I can remember. I've been going to games ever since I was strong enough to open a peanut shell and even before that.

Some would say that the reason I have been such a devoted fan is because I was born into a culture of winning in Atlanta. The fact that the Braves have not had a losing season since before I could put together a sentence fragment has no doubt ignited my passion, and my love for Los Bravos has been unconditional.

My undying commitment withstood its biggest test last year when the Braves failed to reach the playoffs for the first time since 1991. Though I'm sure I bad-mouthed the front office at times for

not improving the bullpen, I stuck with Chief Noc-A-Homa's troops through thick and thin.

To my utmost joy, 2007 has emerged as a season of rebirth for the Braves. Though the pitching-dominant teams of the 1990s are long gone, with John Smoltz as the one remnant, a number of young players have emerged to carry my team into the 21st century.

A bumper crop of youthful talent has surfaced over the last two years including a number of franchise cornerstones— Kyle Davies, Jeff Francoeur, Chuck James, Kelly Johnson, Brian McCann and Scott Thorman have had varying levels of success, but all appear ready to lead the next generation of Braves.

As I prepare to head up to college in Baltimore, I look back on my years supporting the Braves with lots of love and some nostalgia for being right in the middle of such an amazing run.

Although I will miss going down to Turner Field on a whim to catch my favorite team play, I will remain as much a Braves fan as I ever was despite my remoteness.

So to all you current or future Braves fans out there: stay strong and put your support behind Atlanta's team, one of the best in recent memory. With the young talent and amazing legacy to build on, more brilliance is yet to come. For those of you who would lose faith in the franchise that has never let you down, just read my Board Ed from issue two.

Since I needed a reliable source to corroborate my feelings of devotion, I turned to the ever-eloquent DJ Unk. As Unk would say to anyone who opposes my viewpoint, "You ain't Bobby Cox, you ain't Braves, get out of line and I'll tomahawk chop your face." □

Gauntlet successful in inaugural season

BY MICHAEL HARPER

In the final game of Grady's inaugural Ultimate season, the Gauntlet faced off with the Heritage Patriots on May 3 in Rockdale County. Grady appeared sluggish in the beginning of the game, allowing Heritage to run up the score to 7-1. One point before halftime, head coach Susie Mercer called a timeout.

"You guys are playing like you're asleep out there," Coach Mercer said during the timeout. "You're getting beat on defense way too much."

The team responded by scoring two points in a row and went into halftime down 8-3. During halftime Coach Mercer and assistant coach Joe Waterbury told the team that for every three times a defender blew his or her assignment, the team would run a sprint after the game.

"There was no effort in them," Coach Mercer said. "Everyone was [just] watching the disc."

The second half started off with Heritage scoring two unanswered points as a result of careless throws by the Gauntlet. With the score 10-3, Heritage turned over the disc

close to their end zone. Senior Luke Pattison quickly picked up the disc and passed it to junior George Sanders in the corner of the end zone for Grady's fourth point.

The Gauntlet scored two more unanswered points, making the score 10-6. Heritage also gained offensive momentum and the game ended with the Gauntlet losing 15-7.

"We started to play our own game in the second half," Coach Mercer said. "We showed glimpses of the team we have been this season and the team we will be in the future."

Pattison, like many other Gauntlet members, played Ultimate for the first time this year and credits much of the team's success to the positive leadership that was present throughout the season.

"We had really strong leadership and great coaching from the people who had played before," Pattison said. "It's easy to learn from people you enjoy being around."

Before the season started, Coach Mercer's expectations were for this to be a year that built people's interest in the sport, not one where they could compete with schools that



MAN MARK: Junior captain Max Leonard attempts to pass the disc around a Heritage defender in Grady's 15-7 loss on May 3. The Gauntlet finished their first season with a 4-10 record despite having only two players with experience before the season started.

have had programs for years.

"I honestly didn't expect us to win more than one game," junior Max Leonard said.

Of the 17 players on the team, only two had competitive experience before the first game, yet the Gauntlet finished the season with a 4-10 record.

"We absolutely did better than I expected," Coach Mercer said. "People developed a passion for the game right away and that helped get them through the learning curve."

Even though the season just ended, the team is already preparing

for next year. During the last week of the school year, the team is going to Inman Middle School to encourage eighth graders to play next year. The team will also continue to have weekly practices open to anyone throughout the summer.

Several members of the Gauntlet plan on continuing to play outside of Grady after school has ended.

"Five of us are going to play in the Atlanta Summer League to get some higher level competition under our belts," Leonard said.

The three seniors on the team this year, Jordan Echols, Pattison, and

Rafael Velez brought determination and emotion to the team.

"All three of them would take their heart out of their chest and hand it to you if it would make you play harder," Coach Mercer said.

Coach Mercer and assistant coach Waterbury hope that the second Grady Ultimate season will be as satisfying as the first.

"I couldn't have asked for a better group of kids," said Mercer. "I know we can carry on the traditions left by our seniors this year. They embody what it means to be an Ultimate player." □

Golf team's mental errors prevent a state appearance

BY TRAVIS JONES

On the beautiful afternoon of April 24, Region 5-AAA golfers converged at the Atlanta Player's Club to decide which high schools would move on to the state competition. Grady's golf game, however, wasn't as pretty as the weather.

Grady needed four golfers to make the cut for placement at regionals. The Knights had five golfers in the male competition and a lone female, Tyler Lawrence, competing in the girls division. The golfers needed to shoot a 45 in order to make the cut after the first nine holes.

Senior captain Erik Belgium played in the first group of the day, which meant that he played against the best players in the tournament.

Belgium had a bit of trouble with his short game on the first hole, but putted for birdie on the second. Entering the third hole, generally considered one of the easier holes on the

course, Belgium was shooting even and was still in good shape.

On the next hole, however, Belgium's shot took off to the left and plunged into the woods, forcing him to play from behind

for the rest of the hole. On his next shot, Belgium tried to shoot through the foliage, but the ball rocketed off of a tree, landing on a storm drain 20 yards behind him. A few shots later, he was on the green but his short game fell, well, short. He three-putted once on the green and triple bogeyed the hole.

"He really should have chipped it back onto the fairway and taken his medicine," Coach Scott Brown said. "That may

have been a mental lapse."

Belgium hung with the pack for the rest of the tournament, and ended up shooting an 84. His early troubles cost him, though, and he was never able to catch up to the extremely talented group that he was placed in.

Senior David Edgar, meanwhile, had the opposite problem. The players were matched up based on their average score for the season, but when Edgar approached the tee box, he discovered that while he normally shoots in the mid-80s, his opponents shot in triple digits.

"David usually plays to the level of competition," Coach Brown said when he saw the pairings. "So we'll have to see what he's made of mentally."

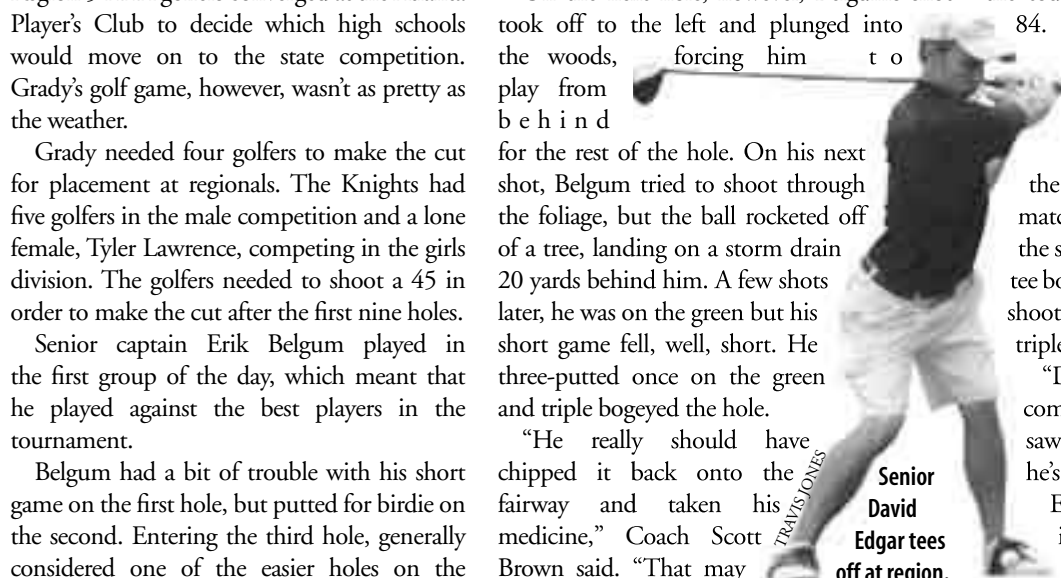
Edgar started the day with four players in his group and ended the day with two. While Edgar shot a solid 88,

all but one of his other group mates shot above a 45 over the first nine holes and were eliminated. Though the top two golfers for Grady proved to be a solid core, the other three male members did not fare as well.

Sophomore Dean Jackson shot out-of-bounds on the first hole, but seemed to keep his composure when he sank an uphill putt from no less than 30 feet. Unfortunately, Grady's theme of mental errors ran rampant throughout the team and the shot turned into a two-stroke penalty because he did not remove the pin, even though all of the players were on the green.

Early lapses typified Grady Golf on that Tuesday, as no male player besides Edgar and Belgium made it to the second round.

There was a very bright spot, however, as Lawrence recovered from a shaky first hole to shoot at a very solid clip despite being placed with lesser players in the girls group. □



Senior David Edgar tees off at region.

TOP 10 MOMENTS of '06-'07

10 Senior Donald White sinks a game-winning shot at the buzzer giving the basketball team a 57-55 victory over region rival North Atlanta.

The girls volleyball team qualifies for the state playoffs for the first time in school history.

8 Teannah Holland sets state and school records in the shot put and discus with throws of 39 feet, 10 inches and 124 feet, 9 inches, respectively.

7 Boys track team advances to state competition in the 4 x 100 meter relay and the triple jump. School records were set in the 100, 200, 4 x 100 relay and the triple jump at the region meet. Team members gain eligibility for Nike Outdoor Nationals.

With 55 seconds left, junior fullback Darryl Farley pushed through the defense to score a two-point conversion that sent the football team ahead 24-23 in a crucial region game against Chamblee.

In the football team's second round playoff game against Flowery Branch, senior wide receiver Rico Robinson received a lateral and threw a 40-yard pass down field to senior Xavier Shorthouse who ran to the one-yard line before he was tackled. This set up the touchdown that sent Grady into the quarterfinal of the playoffs.

4 The girls soccer team beats Carrollton 5-4 in sudden death PKs in the second round of the state playoffs to continue their historic playoff run.

5

3 Boys soccer team beats No. 1 ranked Westminster in PKs 6-5, keeping their playoff hopes alive.

After dominating region 5-AA, the football team surprises competition by winning region 5B-AAA in their first season as a AAA school.

2

1 The Grady girls soccer team advances to the semifinal round of the state playoffs, losing to second ranked Westminster 1-0. This was the farthest any Grady soccer team has ever gone in the playoffs, and only the second time the girls have made it past the first round.



MAX BEECHING



GRANT COYTE