

SoothSayre



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SoothSayre



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Exams Aren't So Bad

Rachel Trontz

Twenty percent of your semester grade seems like a lot of pressure put into a two-hour exam, but really these tests aren't as bad as people say. Cramming in fifteen hours of studying a day, sleeping half the time you normally do, and cutting off time with friends and family should not be the way to handle this seemingly stressful week. If you spend a reasonable and appropriate amount of time studying and build enough time in your schedule to get plenty of sleep and have some down time to relax, then your exam week will fly by and cause much less stress in your life.

Exams at Sayre aren't so bad because of the amount of freedom and responsibility given to the students during this week. This year, all of our exams are scheduled for a Monday thru Friday, which makes it go by even faster. In the past couple years, we have had the exam week start on Thursday and end on the following Wednesday. I definitely prefer this year's schedule as opposed to the Thursday thru Wednesday one, which seemed endless as it spanned a weekend and much of two school weeks.

A typical exam week consists of two exams on Monday, because of the weekend, and then one for each of the remaining days, unless a student has doubled up in a subject and has an extra exam to be taken during an afternoon conflict time.

Freshmen and sophomores are allowed to sign out and walk anywhere between the two exams on Monday, and being in the middle of a myriad of places to eat, hang out, and study makes it even better. Juniors and seniors are allowed to drive or walk anywhere between the two exams. and students who live close by could even go home and take a power nap, or have a few friends over for a last minute study session in those free hours on double exam day.

The fact that students are only required to be on campus for two hours a day on the days when there is just one exam gives students lots of opportunity to relax as well as get some serious studying time accomplished. As long as you're willing to put just a few more study hours into 2009, exam week will fly

by while you are either studying, sleeping, eating, or anxiously awaiting the first day of the holiday break. There are so many activities to choose from during this week, and you will stay so busy that Friday will arrive very quickly.

I have had pretty successful exam weeks in the past. They were successful because I was able to balance studying time with relaxing with friends. My sophomore year, we would go to my friend's dad's office that was only a few blocks away from school. It had a perfect conference room where we all had

plenty of room to spread out our books, flashcards, and review sheets on the giant mahogany table. It became the perfect place to study and still hang out with my friends.

Another successful exam week occurred one spring

when my friend's birthday fell on the same day as our English exam. We studied separately the night before the exam, but after we had completed our blue books, we celebrated her birthday with a very memorable water balloon fight and endless amounts of Graeters ice cream.

Exam week isn't so bad if you are willing to crank out a few more study hours, but also build in time to relax with friends, getting plenty of sleep, and preparing for the exams.

Cramming in fifteen hours of studying a day, sleeping half the time you normally do, and cutting off time with friends and family should not be the way to handle this seemingly stressful week.

Oh, College

Ben Tudor

This is application season. Though that may seem funny to some people, this is truly the time of year when high school seniors find themselves frantically assembling essays, recommendations, transcripts, and four page documents with personal information, and sending them away to various schools. The college search and application process will end (for most people) by the first day of February, one of the last days to submit any materials to schools. Many schools require their applications

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before that date, thus adding more stress to applicants. This entire process will culminate with the receipt of acceptance (or denial) letters, which should arrive by the first day of April. All in all, the college process is fun, stressful, and scary. I can say from personal experience that there have been a few moments when I have been able to reflect on how far I have come since first beginning my search last winter and the progress is astonishing.

Yes, applying to college can be fun, particularly selecting and visiting schools. The selection process begins with a list of schools that provide some interest to you, and at least one that interests your parents. I began last February with a visit to Mr. Mills' office, where I created a list of eleven schools. From that list, I chose eight that I thought would best fit my interests and personality. This required some pretty extensive research, since so many schools offer so many diverse and exciting things. It was my responsibility to determine which schools offered exactly what I wanted.

The fun began when I visited the schools. My first visit, which happened over the 2009 mid-winter break, was to Wake Forest University. This, like most standard visits, consisted of an information session followed by an extensive campus tour. I absolutely loved touring the campus, especially with an enthusiastic student guide, whose passion for the school was infectious. Since this first visit, I have seen: Centre College, Furman University, Elon University, the University of South Carolina, the University of Virginia, and Washington and Lee University. Each of these visits was important for me, since I had little or no previous experience with these schools, and making an informed decision requires learning lots of details. The campus visit is by far the most exhilarating part of the entire process.

Sadly, there is a considerable amount of stress that presents itself after the campus visits. Each school requires a complete and thorough application, which is always difficult and time consuming to put together, but the application process pales in comparison to what is needed to be accepted in to each college. Most colleges expect to first see a comprehensive high school transcript first. This means that grades are extremely important, and are usually the first impression that each

school receives on a potential applicant. Second, schools like to see strong test scores from either the SAT or ACT. Both of these tests are challenging, and usually require more than one sitting to achieve the "target score" set by Mr. Mills and the majority of schools.

Once schools have considered the test scores, they consider teacher recommendations and extracurricular activities/honors. These two parts are extremely important, and require a significant commitment to character and community. Unfortunately, those students who have chosen not to be a part of their communities have missed the boat, as it is too late to start the week that an application is due. This may be too much to handle, but it is the unfortunate reality of college admissions. Thus, this process has its stressful moments, especially when compiling the application, contemplating what you have truly done (or haven't done) over your high school career, and of course, taking the tests.

The campus visit is by far the most exhilarating part of the entire process.

There is also a significant amount of fear once the applications have been sent to the respective institutions. There is the "will I get into college?" concern that lingers in the minds of students from November until April. The ever-popular University of Kentucky offers rolling admissions, meaning applicants will receive a decision (acceptance or denial) within four weeks. I am, however, confident that I will be admitted somewhere. Having said that, every trip to the mailbox will contain a hint of nervous excitement until I get the letters that I hope for. Possibly the most difficult part of this process is contemplating what lies ahead, after the letters have come, and the deposits have been made. For me, it is a scary thought that I will soon be living on my own in a dorm room, where I am likely to know few people. Though I understand that this is part of life, it still causes a slight panic in me.

So, for all of you who will not be applying this year, get ready for an exciting ride in the near future! These few months are full of excitement, stress, and fear, and at the end, an awesome result. Though there will certainly be bumps along this road, rest assured that we all have to walk it, and there are always people to offer a helping hand along the way.

Helping the Homeless

D.R. Ball

Remember *The Pursuit of Happyness*? It was a great movie. Sad. But great. Will Smith played Chris Gardener, a very intelligent African-American man trying to make it as a stockbroker in San Francisco who finds himself homeless with an infant son. Well the other night, I was able to see Chris Gardener, the story's main character, speak. It was all part of the Ball Homes' "Night of Hope" where the tickets sold from Gardener's speech all went in donation to the Lexington Hope Center.

My family decided to go to the event as my dad's work had extra tickets, and my parents figured it would be both interesting and inspirational. I was not quite as convinced, as I've seen some of the best speakers in the United States, and I sometimes find them a bit boring. But, at least I thought it would be nice to spend some time with my family. As it turned out, every seat in the Opera House sold out, so I figured that this Gardener guy must have some interesting things to say, and I was right. I laughed; I cried-almost-not technically, but I was really thinking. Thinking not only about how lucky I am to have a home, food on the table, and clothes on my back, but about how I have a duty to give back. I need to do whatever I can to help the less fortunate in general.

On my recent trip to Louisiana, I was able to help feed the homeless. I decided to visit one of my good friends from D.C., Maddie, and wanted to see what she does in her regular life back home. What that entailed was feeding the homeless. I was apprehensive at first, because (this sounds awful) homeless people make me uncomfortable. I guess that's because I've never really spent much time with them, and in my mind they are vulgar, unmannered, offensive and different than the people I'm usually surrounded by. Still, I didn't want to be rude to my friend, so I cracked a smile and jumped on board. We set up tables of food, the menu consisting of hot dogs and chips, as well as tables for clothing. I was amazed at how many people showed up. Most of all, I was amazed at their gratitude. There were hundreds of thank yous and bless yous,

and this might sound selfish, but I felt good about myself and the whole situation. I definitely stepped out of my comfort zone, but I was rewarded.

While it's difficult to find the time and the energy to spend five hours feeding the homeless or spending time with the elderly in nursing homes, I know that I must make time. In this Christmas season, I am going to be vigilant in aiding the less fortunate. So if you see me ringing the Salvation Army bell, I urge you to step back, think about your situation, and give a dollar or two... and maybe an hour or two of your time.

Bubba Ho-tep Peter Simon

Periodically, you'll come across an idea so outrageous that you're absolutely hooked from the very beginning. Such is the plot behind *Bubba Ho-tep*, starring Bruce Campbell and Ossie Davis. Imagine for a moment, if you will, that the King of Rock and Roll never died, but in fact swapped places with an impersonator to get away from the limelight. Imagine if Elvis Presley were still alive today, rotting away in a shabby rest home with a man who claims to be JFK placed in a protective program to ensure his well-being. Still with me? Okay, then imagine if the elderly Elvis and JFK team up to take down an Egyptian mummy, who sucks the souls out of the residents of said rest home. There you have *Bubba Ho-tep* in a nutshell.

This is what most people would refer to as a B-movie, and such is evident through veteran B-movie star, Bruce Campbell. Originally, the term B-movie referred to the second film on a double bill, like one of those cheesy sci-fi movies from the 50's, but nowadays it pretty much encompasses any low budget film. Fittingly, *Bubba Ho-tep* received a beyond-miniscule budget, but like many other B-movie experiences, it quickly found itself a cult following. Unlike other B-movies, however, *Ho-tep* is not only highly regarded for its cheese factor, but also for the fact that the film is, for the most part, surprisingly well made and complex.

I have been a fan of Bruce Campbell for quite sometime, but I'll admit that I never really saw him as an A-list actor. Sure, he's perfectly

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capable of pulling off comedic roles, such as Ash in the *Evil Dead* trilogy, as well as horror roles, but nothing really allowed me to praise him for his acting ability. That was before I saw *Bubba Ho-tep*. Campbell's portrayal of Elvis Presley is probably one of the most convincing roles I think I've ever seen any actor play. The way he channels his self-pity and depression knowing that he's past his prime and missed his opportunity for redemption is nothing short of poetry. Then there's the late, great Ossie Davis, who does a brilliant job of leading viewers to question whether his character, Jack, is really JFK or just out of his mind. Without saying, the acting is top notch.

Besides the actors, the script is exceptionally well written—each and every line serves its own purpose, whether it's comedic relief or plot advancement. The King's deep emotional pain and regret for his past actions can be felt by the audience through lines such as: "Why the hell did I leave the fame in the first place and do I want it back, and could I have it back? And if I could, would it make any damned difference?" Despite the fact that *Ho-tep* is a comedy-horror genre piece, it also manages to be a surprisingly complex character study. I haven't even mentioned that Elvis is suffering from cancer in his, let's say, "private parts."

Bubba ho-tep delivers on nearly every aspect necessary to achieve an impressive comedy, drama, and horror flick. You have Elvis Presley, JFK, mummies, old people, and pretty much any other conceivable plot device that comes together to make an extremely entertaining piece of cinema. More importantly, it's a throwback to movies that were generally more simple, poorly funded, and cheesy. What's there not to like about *Bubba Ho-tep*? Nothing, that's what.

Too Much Too Soon

Havana Childers

Taylor Swift dominates. I mean seriously, she really does, but I am still unsure about how I feel about her winning Entertainer of the Year. Obviously, it is amazing, but did she deserve it? And some country music stars, like Wynonna Judd, have wondered that since she is so young, what does she have to look forward to now?

On November 11th, 2009, Taylor Swift

became the youngest country singer to ever win the Entertainer of the Year award, and she also won three other awards that night. Swift won every award she was nominated for including Music Video of the Year, Album of the Year, Female Artist of the Year, and Entertainer of the Year.

Although I think it is amazing for her to accomplish all of this, I believe that she is truly not the most deserving person. Swift is an amazing songwriter and a very good role model for young girls, but I don't believe she has the best voice, and that she won these awards for being popular, instead of winning them based on talent.

Wynonna Judd has been quoted saying "It's too much too soon. Time is God's way of keeping everything from happening at once. It's just too much of a good thing too soon." I believe that Wynonna has a point, because Swift does not have much to look forward anymore. Is this the climax of Swift's career?

Taylor Swift has become a teenager superstar; she sings, she is starring in a new movie with Taylor Lautner called *Valentine's Day*, and she is a great role model for people of all ages. Although I am a huge Taylor Swift supporter, I believe that at the 2009 Country Music Awards she was not the most deserving winner of her awards. But now that she has won, she has a lot of pressure to prove that she really is one of country music's best new stars.

When Vampires Were Vampires

Peter Simon

"The Twilight Saga," as it's called, seems to have popularized vampires in the wrong light. See, I remember when vampires used to be dark and scary, creatures of the night; I remember when they were horror icons. Granted, there has always been an element of romance associated with vampires, Dracula for example, but Edward Cullen is no Dracula. No, Cullen is kind of pathetic when compared to the vampires of the past. Consider: Dracula, Nosferatu, Lestat de Lioncourt, Edward Cullen. Who doesn't fit? Vampires don't sparkle in the sunlight; they catch on fire and burn to death. They don't spend all day standing around high schools, and they definitely don't cry and whine about "forbid-

den” romances. Now, I’m not trying to bash the Twilight series (even if it’s an overdramatic piece of bunkum), nor its fans; I’m simply pointing out the obvious. Before Twilight, vampires were vampires, not teenage prima donnas with relationships that even soap operas would find pathetic.

I remember when vampires were strong-willed, evil, self-worshipping, and otherwise sinister creatures. Admit it:

that’s what vampires are supposed to be. They drink people’s blood, for crying out loud, and for what reason?

Quite selfishly, to survive. Vampires are scary in part due to the fact that they’re able to put aside petty relationships, using their close friends, possibly romantic pursuits, as tools to ensure their continued survival. They are not creatures that victims willingly, or knowingly, fall in love with; vampires manipulate all those around them for their own, selfish intentions. Take Dracula, for example. In the moments leading up to the point in which he bites his victim’s neck, there’s almost some romance. He approaches the woman very slowly, takes her in his arms, but it always ends the same way; he always takes that bite. Never does he carry on any relationship longer than he needs, and all he needs is to drink blood. That’s how vampires work, which is exactly why Edward Cullen and his bunch are not vampires.

I also remember when vampires had frightening supernatural abilities that extended beyond the comprehension of their victims. I remember that Nosferatu, for instance, was able to make doors close by themselves. But that’s just the tip of the iceberg. There’s the always classic ability vampires have to turn into bats, which doesn’t make any sense to me, but that’s really the point. The idea of somebody suddenly transforming into something else is scary in its own right, even more so changing into some kind of bat, then disappearing into the darkness. Vampires have been shown to have heightened senses, speed, and strength. Some will rot away into pus-filled ooze with physical blows, and can miraculously reform themselves when they so choose. With direct eye contact, some are even capable of hypnosis, commanding unfortunate souls until their own demise. Yet, Edward Cullen can’t do much of anything classic vampires have proven to do. Maybe sparkle, he’s really quite good at doing

that. Oh, and whine, too, he’s really good at that.

Now, maybe I’m living in the past. Maybe I just don’t understand these new developments in the vampire horror genre. But, see, usually “development” implies an improvement over time. From what I’ve seen, vampires have not been improved. They’ve been stripped of their personality; they’ve been stripped of their powers; looking at Twilight, they’ve also been stripped of their clothing. Some people like that kind of thing, but I remember how vampires used to be. I remember when they were strong-willed and self-worshipping creatures of the night. I remember when they had frightening abilities that extended beyond the comprehension of their audience. Frankly, I remember when vampires didn’t suck. Think back to Dracula, Nosferatu, and Lestat de Lioncourt. What does Edward Cullen have on any of them? Nothing; they don’t have anything. Classic vampires win in every respect.

I remember when vampires were strong-willed, evil, self-worshipping, and otherwise sinister creatures.

Obsessing Over The Sims 3

D.R. Ball

While I’ve been an avid supporter of Maxis’ the Sims for the better part of my seventeen years, I was hesitant of the game’s update when it launched last June. *The Sims 3* seemed different than any of its predecessors. First, you could only have one game per neighborhood. For a simmer such as myself, that is craziness; however, I got used to it. Second, house building seemed much more difficult and the addition of making everyone interconnected in town seemed too complicated for my style of Sims play. However, over the last six months, I’ve grown to love—even obsess over *The Sims 3*.

When it comes to video games, I think they are a waste of time. They take over your life, and they are incredibly expensive. Saying that makes me a hypocrite, however, as I’ve clocked hundreds hours staring at the computer screen playing with my families. I try and promote the dad to level ten of the medical career, or I make the mother pregnant with her sixth child, or I attempt to earn straight A’s for my kids in school. It’s fascinating. You can literally choose the course of their life—but, will they be

successful? Or will you set them up for failure?

For an architecture geek such as myself, the house-building component is my favorite part of the game. I make Southern plantations, Victorian mansions, or simple townhouses; it's all fun. There are tons of interior furniture to choose among as well as landscaping and cars and everything in between to worry about. I've spent hours just building houses, and it's incredibly enjoyable. The Sims has a wide appeal and the architecture graphics are impressive.

Like any video games, cheats are essential to the game's enjoyment. The game would be horrible if you couldn't cheat to get money. How could you afford your convertibles or countertops for instance? I'd never buy an expansion pack, that's for sure. There are other more complicated cheats, and if you're interested, I'll let you know. The Sims has something for everyone to enjoy. It might be juvenile and silly, but as I've grown older, I've grown to respect the game even more. For those more cerebral video gamers out there, you might give this game a try.

Greatest Game Ever Created

Griffin Patterson

Call of Duty Modern Warfare 2 was released in stores the week before Thanksgiving. Most of my friends bought it on Tuesday when it was released, and they all came to school on Wednesday telling me how awesome it was. I had to get it. Finally, Friday came, and I made plans to get the game right after basketball practice. That practice seemed like the longest one ever, even though it was thirty minutes shorter than the usual ones. As soon as it ended, I flew home, got my money and drove out to EB Games on Richmond Road next to the Wal-Mart and bought the game. When I got home, I popped in the disc and started playing, what I quickly realized was, The Greatest Game Ever Created.

This Call of Duty has so many more attributes and different things you can do with the game than any one before it. And considering this is the sixth edition, that is saying something. There are totally new guns to play with and completely different maps to play on. I have played a little, but I still have a long way to go before I unlock all the guns, attachments for those guns, and other perks.

The perks are things that make your character better. For example, the most commonly used perk is "Stopping Power", which is where the strength of your bullets is increased. Attachments are things that you add on to your gun, like different sights to look through and silencers.

There are three different paths you can take when playing this game. There is multiplayer, which is the online experience where you can play with kids from all over the world. In multiplayer, there are different game types to search for like the classic Team Deathmatch, which is probably the most popular. Team Deathmatch is where teams are made of five players and you and your four team mates go against the other five in the game and play to 75 combined kills.

Another path is the campaign mode, which is basically the story mode, and it is supposed to be one of the best according to game reviewers. I have just played the first 3 levels and they are pretty intense so far. There is also a section called special ops. In special ops you have things like time trials, and hard sniping challenges that are both fun and difficult at the same time.

Modern Warfare 2 in my opinion is the greatest game ever created, at least for now. I'm sure with the growing expectations of gamers and technology advancements, there are greater games to come. But for now, if you are a video game lover, I recommend you run out and grab a copy of this one.

Guinness' Records

Rachel Trontz

What is the smallest waist on a living person? (38.1 centimeters or about the size of a regular jar of mayonnaise.) What is the longest ear hair length? (18.1 centimeters.) These questions can be answered in the *Guinness Book of World Records*, which holds a record itself as the best-selling copyrighted series of all time.

On May 4, 1951, Sir Hugh Beaver, the managing director of Guinness Brewery, attended a shooting party in Ireland where he argued about which was the fastest game bird in Europe. He realized that there was no reference book to settle the argument. Meanwhile, Norris and Ross McWhirter

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were running a fact-finding agency in London. Beaver commissioned them to compile what became the Guinness Book of World Records in 1954 when they made 1000 copies to give away. Then in 1955, the first edition went to the top of the British bestseller lists in three months. The next year it sold 70,000 copies in the United States. The book had become a household name by 1970.

Each edition contains a large selection of records from the Guinness database. The types of records include human body, amazing feats, natural world, science and technology, arts and media, modern society, travel and transport, and sports and games. The records range from the furthest eyeball popper (almost half an inch), the longest tongue (9.8 centimeters) to the heaviest weight dangled from a swallowed sword (about 55 pounds) and the largest dental caps (50 centimeters long fitted to an Asian elephant's tusks.)

I think the fascination for millions of people is read about the biggest, longest, loudest, greatest or most extreme record. It's really interesting to be able to see the most outrageous limit that a real person, animal, or machine can reach. I am most intrigued by seeing the proof of these records. Not only are there pictures in the book, but also there is a website with pictures for almost every record, so the visual proof can be seen from anywhere...with a computer. Unfortunately, the website does not have as much information as the book, so the website is better used for quick fact checks instead of an interesting read like the book.

The Guinness Book of World Records is one of the most popular books in the world, and will continue to be one of my favorites for years to come.

A Legend in the Making

Havana Childers

"At forward, a 6'9" junior from Huntington, WV, number 54, Patrick Patterson!"

That is one of my favorite introductions before a basketball game in Rupp Arena. Sadly, there are only fourteen more home games, when that intro-

duction will be given. Patrick Patterson is arguably one of the best basketball players to ever play for the Kentucky Wildcats, and once he goes to the NBA, his legend is sure to live on.

On May 16th, 2007, Patterson became the last recruit to sign to a college. He chose the University of Kentucky over Duke and the University of Florida, mainly because of how close UK was to his hometown of Huntington. Of course, Patterson made the right decision, and I guarantee anyone else in Big Blue Country would say the same. He and his parents have become a major part of the Kentucky Wildcat family and it is sad to think that in a short time they will no longer be part of it.

Patterson has proven that he is one of the greatest players to ever put on a Kentucky uniform. He has become the 10th quickest player to be inducted into the 1,000 point club. He has been a starter in sixty-six games, only missing a few games because of his ankle injury freshman year, and he has twenty-five double doubles on his career thus far. Most importantly, he has a strong work ethic and never gives up, and unlike some Kentucky Wildcats, he is a team player.

One interesting fact about Patterson is that he has never played in a NCAA Tournament, which is one of the main reasons he decided to return to Kentucky, instead of going to the NBA. During Patterson's freshman year, shortly before the SEC Tournament, he was sidelined with an ankle injury, which he would later have to get surgery on. Last year, the Cats stumbled quite a lot throughout the season, and they ended up not getting a bid to the NCAA; instead, they had to play in the NIT Tournament. This year it will be different, and Patterson really believes that.

"I have the chance to graduate in three years, which is important to me and my family," Patterson said in a statement released by UK. "I want to help Kentucky compete for a national title, and even more than that win its eighth national championship. I'm also really excited about playing for Coach Cal and developing my game in the dribble-drive offense." (Kentucky.com)

I believe that any goal he has is one he can reach, and now his goals are to graduate and be able to win the NCAA Tournament, both of which he can do.

I think the fascination for millions of people is read about the biggest, longest, loudest, greatest or most extreme record.

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Aside from Patterson's amazing ability on the court, he is also an amazing person outside of Rupp Arena. He is humble and nice. There was one story written about Patterson by Yahoo! Sports on October 16th, 2009. In this story Patterson is recognized for helping out a fourteen year old girl named Heather Durham, who had been hospitalized with cystic fibrosis and needed a double-lung transplant. Durham contacted Patterson through Facebook and before she knew it, he appeared in her hospital room to offer words of encouragement. Patterson puts others before himself.

On March 7th, 2010, the Rupp Arena faithful are not going to be ready for their huge loss, and I am not talking about losing to Florida (that will not happen.) I am talking about how that will most likely be Patrick Patterson's last home game in a white Kentucky jersey. I do not think any fan is ready for that day to come, but I do know that we are all grateful for everything Patrick Patterson has done for the Big Blue Nation.

The NFL's Most Pitiful Teams

Griffin Patterson

What do the Cleveland Browns, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the Detroit Lions, the Oakland Raiders, and the Kansas City Chiefs all have in common? They are the worst teams in the NFL this year, and can barely win a game. At this point in the season (week 13), they have collectively won 12 games, and things don't look to be getting any better. I should also throw the Washington Redskins and the St. Louis Rams in the mix. Although the Redskins have won four games, they have not played any good teams and they have given most of the teams listed above their only win. The Rams have not had a good season either, but they finally got a win against the Denver Broncos and are hoping to turn their season around.

The Redskins have not had a good go of it this season. They have had to face injuries throughout the team, such as Chris Samuels, who as a 6'5", 317 pound tackle, is arguably the Redskins' best defensive player. He was the third overall pick in the 2000 draft, but is now out for the season. H.B. Blades and Byron

Westbrook both just had knee surgeries and are questionable to return to action. These are just a few of the injuries the team has sustained so far this season.

The Redskins' offense has struggled miserably, mainly, because they do not have a good quarterback to throw the ball down the field and make plays. So they have to rely on the running of Clinton Portis who has battled injuries all year. He has had bone spurs in both ankles, a sprained right ankle, and has had knee problems.

They have done numerous different things to try and make their team better, but nothing seems to be working. They tried picking up some new guys from the free agents list, and they fired their offensive coordinator and hired Sherman Louis, who was calling Bingo at a retirement home and delivering "Meals on Wheels." Still, he has had a ton of experience in the NFL; he was the Packers offensive coordinator for six years or so.

A common theme among all of these teams is the fact that they have the worst defenses in the league. And if you don't have a decent defense, then you're not going to win games, because you can't stop the other team from racking up points. I believe these coaches are trying everything in their power to make their teams better, but they just don't have the resources to be able to execute plays. and until they can execute then they are never going to be successful.

If these teams don't do something quickly, then the reality of their teams not making the playoffs will be clear, and they will be fighting each other for this year's first lottery pick.

Running for Fun

Benjamin Tudor

Running is hard. Actually, running is extremely hard, especially for long distances. Two years ago, I would have laughed at anyone who told me that I would take-up running as a sport and actually compete. But I have. My first ever race was the Lexington Bluegrass 10,000, which spans 6.2 miles of downtown. While this race is not the best entry into the sport, the Fourth of July race gave me just the motivation I

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needed to become an athlete.

Before I joined the Sayre Cross-Country team in August of 2008 (my junior year), I was more of the academic-artist who far preferred homework over physical activity. I had been a faithful member of the tennis team for three years, but my love of tennis was dwindling, and I was looking for a new activity. That spring, I joined the track and field team, and much to my surprise, thoroughly enjoyed it. Even though many people, if asked about running, would have nothing positive to say, for me, running builds physical strength, friendship, and character,

While I continued to pursue my artistic, and of course, academic interests, I found running everyday extremely satisfying. Being a member of the cross country and track teams gave me an outlet with which I could relieve the stress created during the school day.

A typical cross country practice, which always lasted an hour in length, involved at least ten minutes of stretches and push-ups/sit-ups, a five to ten minute warm-up, a speed or distance workout (depending upon the day), and then another ten minutes of stretching. Track followed the same model, but with a slightly larger emphasis on the speed. Each of these workouts was always physically challenging, but not impossible. While each practice was guaranteed to leave each runner with some muscle soreness the next morning, the positive results were certainly evident during our races.

The cross-country course is exactly 3.1 miles for a high-school team member, and 1.6 miles for a junior-high runner. These races are usually held in large, open spaces, surrounded by forests and nature preserves. If you're looking to win a race, you would need to finish in about sixteen minutes for a male, and nineteen minutes for a female. Sayre has produced some wonderful runners, including the top two female runners in the state of Kentucky for their classification, Ann Marie Eason and Maddox Patterson, and several top high school male runners and junior-high runners. The intensity of the workouts not only makes us more competitive as a team, but

always provides us with a satisfying feeling once completed.

Being a member of a running team requires responsibility and commitment, as there are quite a few people depending upon you. The winners of meets are determined by the scores of the top five runners from each team, and the other runners are factored in when breaking a tie. Points are handed out for every finish, and the team with the fewest points wins. While running is an individual activity, being a member of the team means always being prepared to have your time count towards the overall team score. Older team members, such as me, bear a responsibility to watch out for the younger runners, especially at large meets, where finding the starting line can be extremely difficult. The younger runners also depend on us to protect them from unfair activities during the race, such as reporting a witnessed push or shove.

Bonding with teammates is easy when everyone is in the same situation. Our diverse team is

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composed of members from every age and social group, making practices and meets interesting and entertaining. I have had the opportunity to bond with

a great group of people, and have developed many friendships. This fall, the team seniors hosted a night of pizza and laser tag, followed by ice cream. Members from both the high school and middle school teams participated, and everyone had a great time. Developing these friendships makes the physical part of running much easier.

Despite popular opinion, running isn't horrible. Being a member of a running team can increase physical strength, develop strong friendships, and build character. Even those who have never run a mile before in their lives are invited to join the team and develop life-long skills that will be beneficial. So, give running a try--it's fun.

Driving Under Duress

Maggie Berry

As teenagers we wait our entire lives to get our permits. It's a right of passage, a piece of laminated paper that tells us we can legally get behind the wheel of a vehicle with an adult twenty-one or over. When we turn sixteen there is all this discussion about the process of getting a permit and of course trying to pass the road test. What no one ever seems to talk about is the in between portion-- the stress involved in actually trying to learn how to drive.

I found out just how stressful it can be last summer. For weeks my mother tried to teach me how to drive, but her impatience and the fact that I had no idea what I was doing made the experience a difficult and short lived one. She quickly decided that she had no other choice than to get me driving lessons. I was a bit apprehensive about lessons. I was driving so poorly with my mother, I didn't want to go and do something stupid in front of a complete stranger.

I started lessons with Tom, an instructor from Boone's Driving School. As soon as I got in the car, I could feel a completely different atmosphere than when I sat behind the wheel in my mother's car. I was suddenly calm. Tom spoke to me in a patient voice that instructed more than it criticized.

I soon learned that this was exactly the kind of instruction I needed. Driving is stressful enough without having to worry about what one's parent happens to think about your performance. Not only did I find that I was much calmer, I also found that my driving improved. With every lesson I was driving better and better.

At some point my mother and I decided I should try driving with her again, but both of us quickly realized this choice was a big mistake. As soon as I got in the car with her, I felt immediate tension. This tension, of course, brought my stress levels up tremendously.

Soon after I left the driveway the criticism began, "Did you look?" she asked with frustration.

"Yes." I replied nervously.

"I didn't see you look." Mom snapped.

"I looked."

As we traveled down the road it only got worse, "You're not going fast enough."

At this point I can no longer hold in my anger, "I'm going 23. The speed limit is 25."

To my mouthy reply my mother responded, "Are you going the speed limit?" She doesn't wait for me to answer, "No. You're not. This is my car and I am going to teach how I want to teach you."

All of this back and forth not only raised my stress levels, but it made me focus too long on other things rather than what was happening around me. Though I never crashed the car, my driving was seriously impaired.

After reporting all of this to Tom, he gave some suggestions and advice to both my mother and me on how to behave when we're in the car together. He first told me that I should stick to driving in the neighborhood with my mother until we could get used to each other. He then told my mother to

not over react as it could cause even more problems and make the situation more dangerous. She also had to let me adjust the mirrors in her car so that I could see

while I'm driving. Though my mom seemed to agree to all of these things while she was talking to him, she completely disregarded everything he told her by the next day.

So now I've finished six hours of driving lessons. While Tom told me I had been doing really well, I knew that this would not be the case next time I got in the car with Mom. I happened to be correct; the next time I drove with my mother was just as bad as the other times.

The question now is how to get the required 60 hours of driving done if I can't drive with my mother? Neither one of us has mentioned driving for weeks. I often get the urge to go driving in the evening when my little sister is at her dad's house, though I don't dare mention it.

It's sometimes easier to avoid conflict than to try to work through it, especially when it involves potentially deadly things like operating a motor vehicle.

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