

English III 2007-2008

Expectations

by Bailey Hoover

My mother layers me with bulky fleece under my little green Renaissance Princess costume. "It is just too cold for you to go outside dressed like that. Put some more clothes on," she warns. My dress stretches tight with all the extra clothes underneath, but my mom still manages to get it zipped up all the way. A million of questions circulate through my mind: *Will I get a pillowcase full of candy to hide under my bed? Will there be a haunted house like last year? Why does everyone get dressed up in funny outfits for one night?* I take two minutes to practice my saying: "Trick or Treat," and then I run downstairs, pillowcase in hand, and head to the car.

The unknown creates an extraordinary feeling of thrill in small children. Like a magic trick, the outcome of things that are not expected instills a surprising reaction. Children are pure and have yet to be tainted with the ideals and knowledge of adults. Age brings a growth of knowing what is practical, and what is illusory; teens and adults may choose to suspend belief for the pleasure of returning to that feeling of innocent thrill. For children, practicality does not matter.

For a few years I would stay up all night on December 24th thinking about Santa and listening for hooves on the ceiling and waiting to run to the tree the next morning to see if there were any presents and to see if all the cookies and milk had disappeared. I would toss and turn, trying to fall asleep because I knew that if I fell asleep, the morning would come faster. These holidays no longer seem to satisfy me the same as they used to when I simply believed. If I could only still think that Santa was really Santa, and not Mommy or Daddy -- that he was a chubby man with a long white beard and nine reindeer -- then my holiday experience would be just as surprising and satisfying as it was when I was younger. I would not be immune to the excitement of wonder.

Part of the entire holiday joy is the waiting and hoping for the day to come and not knowing what is going to take place. Now that I know and expect certain things to happen, part of the holiday joy is missing. When those expectations do not come true, disappointment is abundant. So many times, I find myself looking back and saying, "If I had just kept from anticipating, then maybe it would have been more enjoyable." When I was younger, though, I did not understand that Halloween was a day that everyone planned to have a lot of candy in their homes to give to little children like me. I did not expect to receive overwhelming amounts of sugar, which made the day even

A School for the Future

by Bailey Hoover, Kelsey Mack, Katie McDaniel,
Kathryn Pope, Jamie Valle, and Kirsten Wiking

A Sense of Place

Usually, people are attracted to McCall for reasons other than education. Outdoor opportunities abound in Valley County, and many retire or move into the area to create lives that include recreation first and foremost; academics almost always take a back seat to other activities. Suzanne Mack, a McCall resident and parent of two high school students, says: "We did not move here for the schools: if institution were important, we would have stayed in Seattle. But McCall has a raw beauty; there is time to think, a sense of community, and economic diversity."

This summer, renovation of McCall-Donnelly High School began, and the doors will open soon after for educational priorities to take their rightful place in the community. A new name, an upgraded reputation, and a school identity that reflects McCall ideals of community, outdoor appreciation, and diversity can all help the school exemplify McCall's finest qualities rather than being an afterthought in the dreams of those who live here.

Schools should be a "central part of a community," says Bill Anderson, a history teacher and track coach at MDHS. Schools, he elaborates, provide "a common ground that binds tradition." Integration of public involvement would encourage all sorts of opportunities for MDHS students: internships, apprenticeships, productions, foreign programs, and an energy-efficient, "green" building environment would all give our school a distinct nature. With the upcoming renovation, the high school has the resources to accomplish such a melding of community and academics. Greg Dittmer, instructor of Industrial Technology at MDHS, reflects, "[all of these potential changes are] an amazing opportunity."

better. As a child grows up and learns the secrets of Santa, then the holiday becomes less spectacular and more common. The joy of the holiday season comes from not knowing what is going to happen and from the mystery behind every tradition.

I know my report card was mailed today, and I just hope I get to the post office before my parents do so that I can see my grades first. My fingers are crossed as I slide the key into the hole and pull the door to open the box, but it's not there. I guess I will have to wait until I get home. Walking through the front door, I hear, "Oh, good job Bailey, we just received your report card and you have all A's" Their excitement means a lot to me, but my MDHS grades are not satisfying; I realize how easy it is to get an A in those classes. There is always one class though, that if I get an A then, wow, I'm ecstatic -- I run all around the house jumping up and down and I am just so happy. This reaction is a lot different from when I get good grades in other classes because, in this class, for this one teacher, I have to work for my grade, and I'm never quite sure what the outcome of all my effort will be.

The surprise of the unknown creates satisfaction when it finally happens. From being a little child opening presents and seeing Santa's name in the *From:* area of the present's tag, to arriving at a strange house dressed as a princess and receiving handfuls of candy -- each event was more satisfying because I did not know what might happen. Though I have grown up, I still look forward to the tradition of Halloween, yet there is no longer an adrenaline rush when I am out in the cold going house-to-house saying, "Trick-or-treat." Now, seeing that one "A" is as exciting as my youthful holidays because I never really expect to have that grade. Every semester English grade is a huge birthday surprise.

On Common Sense

by Garnet Kwader

Last winter my parents and I took a sixteen-year-old friend of mine ice fishing. The four of us were headed for the middle of the lake when my friend saw someone else's partially-frozen hole and decided to put her right foot in the middle of it, lift her left foot from the safe ice, and hop up and down. She fell through to her thigh.

What is common sense? It is not easily definable, yet it is easily recognizable. It is a desirable trait in almost everyone but clowns. It is natural that you prefer your companions to have it. A nature guide without it could, unknowingly, invite disaster into his party. A spouse with common sense is safer than a reckless one, both physically and financially. It is simply a fact that it is preferable to keep company with common-sensical people.

Perhaps the seed of common sense is something you are either

Building Confidence

The current high school has withstood the test of time, and retains a special place in the hearts of alumni. But as it stands today, the high school structure offers little in the way of being an appealing venue for congregation. Kids go there to learn and to be with their friends, but many agree that the school environment itself is lacking. English teacher Ted McManus says, "We have great faculty and a talented student body but right now we're just stuck in the status quo. We want to give our school an identity."

One year, the cafeteria of the building was closed due to a roof that sagged under its snow load. Lunches were served in individual classes because the likelihood of the roof's collapsing and crushing students was too high. Building regulations state that a roof must be able to support 125-150 lbs per square foot. MDHS's capacity was around 40 lbs., which was extremely dangerous for both students and teachers. Until the current renovation, nothing had been done to fix this problem. Math teacher Bob Burns joked, "The town operates on a mentality of: the roof hasn't caved yet, therefore it won't."

Many other technical problems plaguing our "Home of the Vandals" instigated the upcoming renovations. The leaking, sagging roof caused drywall to crack; electric wiring was not up to code; poor air circulation caused mold growth; narrow hallways created traffic flow problems between classes. Furthermore, "the maintenance of the existing high school takes much more money than do any other schools in the area," says Ron Rodriguez, the custodian of all Valley County schools. "As an estimate, [after renovations are complete] we will probably be able to reduce costs of upkeep by about twenty-five to thirty percent." Taking care of the existing rubber-like gym room floor costs three times as much as it will when a wood floor is installed during the first stages of construction. By reducing money spent on school maintenance, renovations could allow current funding to be redirected toward areas such as academics.

Bonding the Community

The school has not been completely ignored all these years; it has simply taken a while for

born with or without. This would be a depressing thought for many people who seem to have none, so imagine it as a continuously-developing sense. When a child touches a hot stove, he usually learns not to do it again. Is this a learning stage of common sense? If so, this elusive sense may be developed by trial and error. The oldest people I know probably have the most common sense, except when it comes to computers. Since computers are fairly new and the programs on them are constantly changing, older people have less experience with these complicated electronic machines. While I might chastise a peer for being unable to open a word document, I am very patient with my grandparents when they are unable to operate their e-mail. They have common sense relating to things they have experienced in life, but when faced with new challenges, elderly people seem to abandon all semblance of sanity.

When Mark Twain said, "Common sense really ain't so common," he pointed out that this virtue is poorly named. If you have it, you are aware of your surroundings. You also have a certain cognizance of natural equations that can be created using those surroundings. Common sense and impulse control may be synonymous, or perhaps in order to have one, you must have the other. A college fraternity boy knows that if he jumps from the roof of a three-story building aiming for a trampoline below, he is likely to be injured, but he does it regardless. Is he unaware of his surroundings? Does he have no impulse control? Is he without common sense? Or does he purposefully put his inhibitions aside just for the thrill of doing something crazy?

There are several reasons why a person might not exercise common sense. On June 21, 2006, John Kennedy Olano Jr. let emotions override his common sense when he woke in the middle of the night to the overwhelming smell of smoke. He was only ten years old, yet instead of saving himself, he rescued his four younger siblings ranging in age from six years to one month, one after the other. Each time he reached safety he released a child and ran back into the burning building and greater danger to save another. His love for his siblings took control over any sense he might otherwise have possessed.

Fear is another emotion that can trump common sense. Last year around Thanksgiving the Kim family was on their way home from Seattle to San Francisco when they took a wrong turn and ended up with their car stuck in a snowbank in the back-woods of Oregon. Fear for his life and the lives of his wife and two daughters caused James Kim to set out on foot for help. He did not have proper provisions or even slight chances of success. On the other hand, the car was an easy target for a search party to spot. Fear caused Kim to act irrationally and consequently to die, but common sense could have saved his life and much heartache.

Common sense is a survival skill. Some come by it naturally while others must learn through trial and error. My friend's numerous experiences similar to her encounter on the frozen lake

taxpayers to approve bonds to finance the remodeling. The school board has been attempting to renovate since 1993, but only received adequate funding in 2006. According to MDHS Principal Tim Thomas, "our school will be the most environmentally friendly in the state of Idaho." The reconstruction will include the addition of skylights, natural lighting, and a better heating system. Double-paned windows will trap heat inside the building, reducing the amount of electricity used to warm the school. Natural lighting will improve the mood of classrooms (and of students) because it is less harsh than the current florescent lighting.

Renovation of the high school also includes preparation for possible expansion of the school population with four "future classrooms." These rooms were added to the plans in case future growth of the McCall community necessitates a larger space. The school will be equipped to hold 600 students, allowing for better student circulation and providing for projected community growth -- a significant difference from the existing school, which can barely accommodate its 250 students.

Testing Academics

At MDHS, class sizes are generally quite small. Class discussions are uninhibited, passionate, and sometimes ridiculous. Issues ranging from self-imposed socioeconomic segregation of students within American high schools, to the practicality of Zen Buddhism, to whether Voldemort can technically be considered Harry Potter's brother are routinely discussed by students, while teachers listen and offer input. "Yeah, I like having these types of discussions. They're more interesting than reading out of the book or taking notes or something, and everyone gets involved," says Colin Marin, a junior at MDHS. "And for the record, Voldemort is basically Harry Potter's brother. Come on...think about it." Such forums create a free, friendly environment in which students collaborate and explore, rather than simply memorize booklets of answers to multiple-choice questions.

However, the *No Child Left Behind* act passed by the Bush Administration in 2001 mandated that students pass standardized tests of basic knowledge once during their High School careers. Such legislation advocates the belief that standardized

may begin to weave together to form a mesh of perception that could eventually prevent broken bones and bald patches. My friend will probably never have common sense. But she will probably never step in an ice hole again, either.

Sleepwalking

by Kirsten Wiking

I walk with mechanical, precise movements over wet asphalt: one leg steps, then the other snaps forward to catch up. It's chilly outside and I deny the bite of the cold by ignoring it. I am also oblivious to the throbbing of my legs as I climb up the hill. My body is numb, impervious to the sensations both within and without. The grayness outside isn't pretty, and I remain indifferent to that as well. I am just walking from point A to point B -- walk from my house to the store, buy a candy bar, walk back, watch TV. Numb. It's just unfocused marching.

Abruptly, though, my determination is disrupted as a dog springs towards me. I can't help but notice how beautiful this sleek racing hound is. His waxy, lustrous fur lies in uniform flatness against the muscled body that quivers with nerves. His leathery ears lie folded elegantly against a princely, almond shaped head. He forces me to notice his paws as he jumps up and rests them on my chest. They're large -- the size of my palms, with neatly trimmed toffee colored nails. He has a presence of robust good-naturedness and takes obvious delight in licking my face with his soft tongue. Naturally he reeks of the not entirely unpleasant smell of dog breath -- a musky, meaty stench that makes me feel like a little kid.

His harried owner jogs over, clutching a leash that's comically still attached to an empty collar. She chokes out an apology, but I only notice her long, steel colored hair tightly pulled into a perfect, braided bun on the back of her head, and I imagine that when unwound, her hair must dangle down her back. She looks like a ballerina, a grandmotherly, suburban ballerina.

I'm still a little surprised, and now that I've stopped walking, I notice how warm my legs and body feel. It's a comfortable warm, not hot, a tingling sensation that pulses with the blood that's flowing to my muscles. It feels nice against the chilly fall wind that has begun to blow. The wind stirs the fallen leaves around my feet. They are lively, spicy colored leaves that skim lightly along the oily black pavement in a spontaneous dance. Blowing gingerly, the wind gracefully lifts the leaves toward the grey sky that I now notice is the same color as the woman's steel hair. The sky no longer seems blank and ugly. It's a dense, foggy grey that coats the underlying atmosphere like a thick layer of paint.

I begin walking again, a slower, more relaxed stroll. I suck in

testing equalizes classrooms and ensures that students learn similar information. Idaho issues Idaho Standard Achievement Tests to every student in grades one through ten twice a year. ISAT's are infamous among students and teachers for being time consuming, boring, and too frequent. "I hated taking them, they take like two hours, and you have to take like six a year or something," said Emily Mulnick, a junior at MDHS. "I'm so glad that I don't have to do them this year. They're just agonizing and we've done them so many times."

During sophomore year, students must pass their ISAT's in order to graduate from High School. Every other year that they sit through approximately fourteen hours of testing, students simply supply numbers that are used to evaluate Idaho schools and teachers. "In tenth grade, the tests are high-stakes for students, but every other year they're just high stakes for the schools," says Thomas. "If a lot of students fail, then the school is placed on the 'failing' list, and steps are taken to hopefully improve the school's performance next time around."

Some express the concern that this type of system puts unfair pressure on educators to cut down on creativity in the classroom, and to focus instead on coaching students through hundreds and hundreds of multiple-choice questions. "It causes huge anxiety for teachers when they have to worry about being punished if their tests don't meet criteria," Judy Anderson, a teacher at MDHS says. "The tests are a huge time commitment for teachers, and I see their frustration with having to test twice a year."

Many believe that, under the guise of making sure that every child in America absorbs the same knowledge, such government regulation is endangering teachers' liberties and jeopardizing students' potential to learn creatively. "I see the standardized test movement pushed by *No Child Left Behind* as an attack on the public school system by a conservative government trying to privatize education," says Anderson. "If the government makes the public school system fail in the public's eyes, it justifies charter schools and other businesses taking over education."

Thomas disagrees. He views standardized testing as a useful method to measure learning, rather than as a plot to render the public school system obsolete. "Standardized testing promotes equity within classrooms, and ensures that everybody learns the

fresh air and fill my lungs with the clean after-rain scent. It is pure, crisp oxygen that seems to purify anything it touches. Everything around me has suddenly been painted with vibrancy. I notice each unique color, from the brassy, metallic rust shade of a door knocker, to the gritty beige of a child's sandbox. The chilly air cools the film of sweat that has formed across my face; I observe the gentle fatigue of my muscles contracting to pull me up the hill. All of my senses have become hyper-aware.

As I stop and look back at the street that I had walked before the dog caught my attention, I realize that I had been sleepwalking. I had been cruising through a moment in my life in a dream-like unconsciousness -- an oblivious state where colors, sounds, tastes and touches are sacrificed for the free flow of daydreaming thought. Slipping into this state is not necessarily a conscious choice I make, but with certain mechanical activities, I've noticed that my mind zones out, reflecting and drifting through problems and ideas.

Time spent sleepwalking is enormously valuable: my brain is still working on puzzles and thoughts that ultimately give importance to outer life. It is in this inner life, the secret, private world where my brain can wander through any thoughts that appear, that I decide that a dog is beautiful because of his coat, or that the color of the sky can become lovely once it matches the shade of a kind, elderly woman's hair. Losing this private world of contemplation and free thought would cause me to lose my appreciation for the physical world as well.

As I fall back into the rhythm of walking, the outer world again fades from my consciousness. Colors blur and details fade from my attention. My mind slips back into its peaceful trance, back into its free-form dance around the new thoughts that have been inspired by this jolt into physical reality. The movements of walking are again automatic. Just marching: one leg, then the other.

Identity

by Kathryn Pope

Month by month, year by year, I watch passively as my drawers reach their capacity, exceed their capacity, begin disgorging clothes onto the bedroom floor. I pretend that it isn't happening, that the situation will resolve itself, that I don't mind not being able to walk across my floor. I delude myself into believing that it isn't a problem; until one day I cannot find my wallet in the tangles of fabric that erupt from my closet and flow steadily toward the corners of my room.

Faced with the inescapable task of purging my drawers and disposing of the garments that I no longer wear, I inevitably enter

same things," he says. "Teachers do not have to teach to the tests, they can use their own methods and, as long as they teach basic standards, good test scores will follow."

Exploring Options

Even without test constraints, it is difficult for a small school such as MDHS to offer a large variety of class selections and to guarantee extensive availability of classes because of its limited teaching staff. Currently, some teachers must teach two or three subjects to accommodate distributive requirements. Students also struggle with meeting course requirements for graduation. They might like to pursue individual learning plans but because of scheduling restrictions, they cannot take all the classes they want. "Only two foreign language classes are available at the school. I would have chosen German if the option had been available because of my family background, but unfortunately I have to take Spanish or French only," says Junior Kassie Herbst. The newly-renovated High School may help create opportunity, stretch boundaries, and take the current curriculum to new heights. Advanced technology and efficient computer labs may offer students the ability to take courses online during a scheduled period to further their individual plans.

Getting involved in the real world might also give students a new perspective on their interests. Community members could enhance this scenario by coming into classrooms as guest speakers. Emily Mulnick notes, "I would like classes that pertained to certain careers, like architecture." Who better to teach this than a professional architect? Such speakers could come in several times a week to give seminars on different subjects, which would broaden students' knowledge and opinions on world-wide issues.

Mr. Burns says, "In a small town the school should be the center of the town." Like many others, Burns would like to see MDHS become an integral part of the community, working towards hands-on, progressive learning. An interest in internships has been expressed by some of the professional-technical teachers at MDHS. According to Mr. Dittmer, the objective would be for "each professional and technical teacher to enhance their programs by implementing internships, shadowing, and mentoring opportunities within the

a state of near-psychosis. The wool pants from a corner thrift-store in San Francisco? The orange, pink, and brown- paisley vintage night-gown that I wore to prom? The leather flip-flops in which I voyaged across Europe; walking countless miles through museums, sweltering city streets, and historical landmarks?

"You never wear them," says my mother.

No. Nor do I look at them, think about them, or even remember that they exist until they trip me as a try to get a drink of water during the middle of the night.

Forgetting is one thing, discarding is another. Gazing at each item, my brain is inundated with memories. Without these mementos, I might forget these precious memories and nothing would remind me. If I owned only things in immediate use, I would never experience the delightful surprise of picking up a long-neglected object, and letting its history seep back. Had I never come across the White Stallion costume deep in a closet, I probably never would have remembered dressing as the White Stallion for Halloween. Essentially, I would have permanently lost a piece of my history. My fifth Halloween would have vanished to the ages.

Most people seem to operate this way, hoarding souvenirs with almost insane enthusiasm. Most parents, for example, have countless pieces of paper covered with crayon scribbles stashed away in drawers somewhere. Athletes have ribbons or round pieces of metal hanging on their walls. Women own wedding dresses that have been in garment bags for thirty-five years. Practical? No. Tangible evidence of events that otherwise exist only in the cerebral cortex of the brain? Yes.

But people lack any semblance of understanding of this phenomenon when it comes to others. It's so easy to throw away other peoples' junk, and so appealing to keep your own. People rant and rave about cleanliness, the mental stress of clutter, the advantages of living an organized life, when they have boxes of their children's baby teeth in their night-stand and archaic lettermen jackets hanging in the closet.

When it is impossible dispose of our own memories, we discard the keepsakes of others. Someone has to clean out the closet so the skis can fit, after all. This hideous brown sweater doesn't hold a piece of *my* soul...so into the trash it goes! It is understandable, seeing as how the events stored in others people's heads are certainly not in ours. Gazing at a tan pair of knitted mittens that I have never seen before, I think "wow, these are ugly and probably not very warm, I guess I'll throw them away." They are headed straight for the thrift-store bin until my dad stomps over, snatches them up and says: "My mom made these. We can't throw these away."

community."

One such program already exists, led by Health teacher Pam Davis. Her students spend one class block interning at the local hospital. Kelsea Daniels-Moore, a junior at MDHS, says: "I look at this interning as a way to further my education in medicine. I think that this idea needs to be expanded into other academic areas, such as mechanics, because a lot of students seem to be interested in this and it would help them to learn from a professional." Sophomore Rachel Hall agrees: "...students could work in a type of business or trade or something they are interested in, which would help them learn from real-life experiences. They could meet new people, learn new things, and discover new likes."

Other ideas involving community-student cooperation include journalism students' taking part in writing newspaper articles for the local paper, rather than just for a school publication. An auditorium could also build community-school ties. College scholarship advisor Caroline Valle says, "An auditorium would be great for public events like plays, concerts, and meetings. It would provide an immersive community experience." Mr. McManus hopes that one day students could study "Idaho, U.S., and Global issues." He adds, "When I was in school, we had a mock U.N. meeting with students representing countries like Iraq." He wants to institute programs like these into our own school, helping kids to learn and to become more culturally-aware.

Foreign Possibilities

Ideas from abroad can also enhance educational experiences at the new McCall-Donnelly High School. In Sweden, when students graduate from middle school, they choose a focus for their studies that will continue throughout all of high school. A student who is passionate about science, for example, will spend a majority of his time studying topics like physics, chemical reactions, and calculus, while a students interested in art would devote more time to subjects like painting, ceramics, and drawing technique. "Because you're in a class with people who have the same interests as you, and since classes are organized by what program you're in, you're pretty compatible with the students in your class" says Siobhan Edwards, an American exchange student enrolled in an Art

People's lives exist as a series of events that are stored as memories. By throwing things away, you risk inadvertently tossing memories that have powerful connections to certain objects. With no reminders, it seems frighteningly possible to forget. In the same way that a sticky-note will nudge you towards the dentist, a transaction receipt will remind you of getting lost in Venice and searching for a monetary exchange kiosk so you can buy a bus ticket to the hotel where you hope your mother will be waiting. Simply put, people are generally too absorbed trying to preserve their own identities to ponder someone else's. So if I want my drawers cleaned the practical way, I will just ask my mother to do it.

Ambiguous Reality

by Kelsey Mack

As I boarded the football bus headed for Kamiah, an overwhelming smell of sweat and high-school-boy's locker room permeated my nostrils. My nose automatically recoiled at the odor, as if trying to convince my brain that it should not be subjected to such a foul stench. Finally my nose gave up and refused to inhale the smells from this seemingly-innocent yellow school bus. Forced to gulp through my mouth in order to breathe, I tried to continue as if all were well. No one else seemed to notice the lingering odor, which was so strong I could almost taste the moldy, sweat-layered floor of the gym. Finally I worked up the courage and asked a few players: "what is that horrid smell?" With a hint of dignity they chuckled, "our pads," and in the distance I heard, "yeah boyz!" All the pads represent to me is a much-needed afternoon of cleaning; however, to the players these shoulder pads are a prized badge of honor.

Is it possible that reality is different for every person? All events that a person experiences can determine how he perceives the world. Even the memory of an event as good or bad can change the views of people involved. Reality, by definition, means the state of things as they actually exist. Yet the word itself is paradoxical. Each view of the world will be slightly different from person to person. A light traveling across the sky may look like a late night plane, but a young boy might think he has witnessed an alien encounter. Accordingly, reality involves everything observable and imaginable. Reality is thus affected by a person's perceptions, beliefs, and attitude.

The few phrases of: "Are we there yet? How long have we been driving? I'm hungry." drove me past the point of sanity on my family's last road trip. As tears slid down my sunburned cheeks, I recalled the past four-hour drive. It all started with a pleasant morning. I was sad to leave the campground of Neah Bay, Washington, but happy to start back for my hometown of McCall, Idaho. Since my brother had brought a friend on the trip,

program in Sweden. She believes that her classmates, "are happier because they can spend most of their time doing classes that they love. It isn't just slackers who attend "easier" programs like Art -- these are kids who really want to use art in their career, so they work really hard in all of their classes."

This same idea of an academic focus exists in high school classrooms in Austria and in the Dominican Republic. Stefan Emprechtinger, a Rotary exchange student from Austria attending MDHS last year says students in his country, "stay in the same classroom with the same people the whole school day." Adalberto Brea, an AFS exchange student from the Dominican Republic explains that students "are divided by years, so you will never be with a junior in the same class if you are a senior. We don't change classrooms; the teachers are the ones that move."

While they like this style of learning, these exchange students feel they can make more friends by taking classes with students who are all ages. Emprechtinger says, "McCall-Donnelly is definitely an awesome school to come to while on exchange." Before exchange students arrive, they are often unsure of what McCall will be like: "Basically all I knew about Idaho was that you guys had a ton of potatoes," says Emprechtinger.

MDHS has strong sports teams, which allow exchange students to make a connection with their classmates and with the school. Emprechtinger adds, "the greatest help was certainly the soccer team. I got to know many great people who I am still friends with." Adalberto Brea also appreciates MDHS' smaller school over his private school in Santo Domingo: "Because it is a small school and everyone knows you and you know everyone, it is easier to make close friends."

Exchange students appreciate the close-knit feel of MDHS. With a new building, local students and community members could increase this sense of family and "home" while exploring new potential academic, social, and cultural opportunities. New classes, new facilities, and new programs would enhance every aspect of the current school. McCall-Donnelly's face-lift could rejuvenate all aspects -- the architecture, the education, the programs, the Vandal identity. Its upcoming refinement could help McCall Donnelly High School offer the entire

I was given the honor of having the front seat of the car -- a horrible misfortune. When "Mad Libs" no longer sufficiently occupied the two twelve-year-old boys' time, I became target number one. As they secretly devised plans behind my back about how to strategically attack, I sat obliviously listening to songs on my Walkman. Little did I know the bad luck headed my way.

Half-way through our nine-hour drive, the conniving boys sprung their plan into action. One kicked the back of my seat, while the other pulled my hair backwards. This commotion aroused the gawky dog who joined in and bit my arm. This set me off and I screamed at everyone. Afterwards, all went silent. Fewer than thirty seconds had passed, when my brother found it necessary to continue asking: "Are we there yet? How long have we been driving? I'm hungry." Tired of the noise pollution, I broke down and cried. Cody, my brother, remembers the drive as one of the best road trips ever because his friend got to come along. But this was, in fact, the worst road trip I had ever experienced.

Perhaps it is not only that people see with different eyes, but that they trust their own views as correct. *Maybe* I should look past the putrid smells of football pads and view them for what they really are: the armor in an intense game. An open-minded view of the world would enable people to work together and thrive -- creating a more accepting environment where individuals could freely enjoy life together. There is, after all, a possibility that aliens exist. Really, the road trip from Neah Bay could have been a whole lot worse if my brother had not had a friend along. Then I would have been forced to entertain him -- what a drag *that* would have been.

Between the Lines

by Kirsten Wiking

*As Idiom and I marched our usual nighttime stroll,
his tail began to slow its wag
and over my Dear
Idiom stumbled. At this sight,
neighbors from around shuffled to this spot
dressed in Good Intentions. "Everything A-OK here, Chappy?"
"Whoops-a-Daisy, Frank,
looks as though that doggy has
Met the Reaper, ya' know...Kicked the Bucket?"
"Now don't-cha be addin'
Fuel to the Fire Fanny. Say there Sonny, between you and me
and the Cat's Whiskers, I guess ya could say
your little pal's at the End of His Rope, huh? And I don't mean
that Leash!"
But, then, what did you mean? As I gazed down
at my dog's exhausted, gentle form,*

dream.

The authors of this viewpoint are currently seniors at McCall-Donnelly High School. They interviewed MDHS students, parents, teachers, and administrators in the winter of 2008. Written as a project for their 11th grade AP Language and American Literature class at The North Fork School in McCall, the piece required the authors to select a controversial topic in their community, to gather diverse opinions about it, and to synthesize the results of their efforts. The greatest challenge of the assignment was to present information in a positive manner, clearly and concisely enough to be acceptable for publication.

Oh Marabou!

by Kirsten Wiking

My dear Marabou, I sometimes wonder if you know how much I love you. While you sit patiently in that glossy yellow jacket, mocking me with your humble appearance, I walk up the hill every day to the store where you anticipate my arrival. At school, all I dream about is the moment when I can have you again. Once you are in my loving grasp, I can't help but greedily tear off that plastic sheath that keeps me from you. And while I try to deny myself and you, to save something for later, or to share a particle of your delectable being with others, I can't. I must keep every last piece of you for myself. Now, I know that I have cheated on you before, that I have chosen your brother, Daim, once or twice. But please! believe me when I say that I certainly didn't enjoy him as much as I do you and I only had him because some of your other helpless lovers had snatched you first. Addiction is the only word that I can imagine to describe the way I feel about you. I must inhale your rich musky flavor; without it, I'm helpless, trapped in my pathetic dreams of you. Oh Marabou, but how you don't seem to love me as I do you. Do you even care for me at all? My obsession with you has only resulted in depression and sudden depths of loneliness; yet, I can only dream of having more of you. And once I do possess you in your entirety, I can do nothing but savagely tear open your wrapper and devour each square of chocolate in miserable gluttony. Oh Marabou!

*I wanted nothing more
than to just know what had happ-- "Hush-Up now Kidd-O!
A Little Bird told me that your friend is Paying the Debt we all
must Pay:
Taking the dirt Nap...(But Oh! how Idiom did like taking dirt
naps,
in the shade of summer afternoons, as the cool of the dirt pressed
against his belly)...
"But you stay Cool as a Cucumber, you can Bet your Bottom
Dollar
that this'll be easy as Pie."
And thus they ushered my dear Idiom away.
Alone I stood on the empty street corner, until
finally the Faceless Being appeared,
whispering into my ear: "Idiom has Died."
And thus I dissolved into tears
realizing that the news had arrived
A Day Late,
and A Dollar Short.*
