

## Lieberman raps school violence

By MIKE NGUYEN  
The Tattoo



U.S. Sen. Joe Lieberman has a lot of ideas to keep troubled kids from “exploding” into the sort of violent rage that has led to a number of school shootings in recent years.

In an interview with *The Tattoo*, the former Democratic vice-presidential candidate said many steps could be taken to help prevent violence in schools.

“There’s not a single solution” to school violence, the Connecticut Democrat said recently.

He said he’s had “a long-term concern regarding the violence in the entertainment culture” and its effect on young people.

Lieberman said he wants to clarify the ratings labels on things such as video games,

music, movies, and television shows so that youngsters and parents will know what they’re buying.

With some mixed-up young people, Lieberman said, entertainment culture “sometimes gives them the idea of solving things with violence.”

Among his many concerns

about the effects of violence on teens, he said, is rap music.

“I can’t claim expertise on rap music, but some of it is over the edge in terms of bigotry and violence to women,” he said.

However, “most of the songs I’ve heard come with, I wouldn’t say poetry, but it has a message,” he added.

The type of rap music he’s especially concerned with is ‘gangsta’ rap, he said, “the music that don’t even get played on the radio stations because it’s so violent in nature.”

But Lieberman said he’s not trying to stop any artist or musician from expressing himself freely through music.

“I wouldn’t want to be in the position to censor [that music],” he said. He did say, however, that pressure on the companies that produce and sell recordings

that promote violence is fair game.

Lieberman said he believes that the violence shown on television “does tend to make kids numb” to violence in real life.

of violent entertainment,” Lieberman stated.

Besides addressing violence in forms of media, the senator also thought of some other solutions to stop school shootings.

troubles, you come in with counseling rather than wait until the child might explode,” Lieberman said.

Guidance counselors might be good for getting children to express their woes, but parents also need to take a strict and active role with their children, Lieberman said.

Lieberman said that parents need “to exercise some kind of influence, if not control, over what their kids are listening to [and watching].”

Parents can be the first line of defense in preventing their teenagers or younger children from getting a gun or being influenced by the wrong group of people, he said.

Lieberman spoke with *The Tattoo* during a tour of Connecticut diners and newspapers last week.

**“I can’t claim expertise on rap music, but some of it is over the edge in terms of bigotry and violence to women.”**

The more vulnerable kids, the senator said, “are encouraged to act” violently by what they see. “It’s not good for anybody,” he said.

Studies done about the kids who opened fire on their schools show “the sad and troubling fact” that many of them were “almost addicted to some kind

Lieberman said one key is keeping guns out of the hands of kids.

He said, too, that “we have to try to invest some more money in guidance counselors and psychiatrists in schools,” who can lend a hand when students need help, he said.

“When you see a kid with

## I confess: I love cafeteria food!

By NICOLE BERNOSKY  
The Tattoo

What’s the first word that comes to your mind when I say cafeteria food? Gross, right?

Not necessarily. I just dare you to try it.

The chicken nuggets taste like chicken and the calzones are pretty good. You may be saying, what’s wrong with this girl? I swear – nothing.

The only thing I haven’t tried is the pizza, and from what I hear, that’s pretty good, too.

**Stranger than fiction**

I know you’ve seen many stories on television about how a student will be in line for lunch and the choices for what to eat will be either mystery meat or split pea soup.

Don’t believe it; it’s a lie. The truth is, you can get anything from taco salad to bacon cheeseburgers.

So, next time you’re in the cafeteria and you’re deciding what to eat, just go ahead and buy that tasty cafeteria lunch.

Once you’ve tried it, don’t be surprised if you jump out of your seat and scream, “I love cafeteria food!”

## Good luck, freshmen

By CASSIE NOWAK  
The Tattoo

Becoming a freshman is one of the most challenging events in life. First, you have to go through choosing classes and orientation.

Then comes the pressure and anxiety of starting school and making sure you get good grades to help get scholarships for college.

For me, an incoming freshman at Bristol Central High School, I think high school is going to be an exciting experience, an event that I wouldn’t miss for the world.

I’m sure most freshmen are extremely excited to start school, make new friends, and – even if they don’t want to admit it – are happy that they are starting a whole new school that may be different from the one they just left.

As I start my high school career, I would like to say good luck to all the new freshmen and I hope they have great times and a fulfilling education in the next four years!

## The Tattoo wants you

This is the perfect time to join *The Tattoo*, a teen-written newspaper that appears online and in *The Bristol Press* with the best student journalism in America.

It’s free to join and the only requirement is a zest to learn and a desire to write, take pictures or draw cartoons. In the months ahead, we’ll be covering everything from skateboarding legends to wannabe governors, so sign up now.

In the last eight years, we’ve helped more than 100 students get published, grab scholarships, win prestigious writing awards – and have a grand time doing it.

Call advisors Jackie Majerus and Steve Collins, both of them veteran Press reporters, at 523-9632 or e-mail them at majerus-collins@home.com with questions. They’ll love to hear from you.

**What I say**

**What I say**

# ‘Inflight’ orientation made me airsick

By KATIE JORDAN  
The Tattoo

What do you get when you jam hundreds of bored, hungry, and apprehensive teens into the auditorium of Bristol Eastern High School?

The freshman orientation for the class of 2005, of course!

I should have seen it coming. The permission slip asked us to please return the cut-off portion by August 13th. We got the letter on the 15th.

Still, naïve little me, I walked up the sidewalk that beautiful morning with high hopes. Upon entering the building I was swallowed in a sprawling mob that filled the entire foyer.

The glass is half full, they tell me....

Anyway, I managed to fight my way to one of the tables, miraculously without the aid of a machete. There I was asked my name and team, and handed a little piece of paper.

“Hello, my name is Katie.” Great, a name tag. Nothing warms my heart more than people pretending to be my oldest pal as they read my name off my shirt.

I stood around for a while, pretending I knew

someone. Sure, everyone knows me. I’m “Katie.”

Finally, we got shooed into the auditorium. But not without first grabbing a “boarding pass” – wouldn’t want to forget that. They might not let me into school next Thursday without it.

Of course, after everyone was seated and we were given a brief word of introduction, we all knew who the first speakers would be: the head honchos, the ones in charge.

You guessed it, folks: The BEHS cheerleaders!

They danced around a bit, hoisted each other into the air, and chanted their cheers. Rah, rah, rah! Rah rah rah! Go BEHS, etc. Actually, I’d guess it was the least repetitive part of the orientation.

Then of course came the basic speakers: principal, assistant principals, head of such-and-such, and superintendent so-and-so.

The same basic speeches, too. We’ve all heard them before, many times.

I guess that’s why they put their heads together over summer and added a creative spin. Now we’re not at an orientation. We’re on a plane, listening to pre-flight instructions!

So where’s my barf bag?

After what must have been at least 10 hours in the auditorium, with our seats in the upright position, I might add, we finally got to roam the rest

of the school.

My team, 9-2, went off and had another discussion about the approaching school year.

Then we separated into homerooms and got our new schedules.

Or at least, we were supposed to. I couldn’t find mine.

I looked through all the ones left on the table. Nope, it went straight from H to K. I told my new homeroom teacher, and he asked if anyone else had it. Then he told me to go to the Blue House and look for it.

So I went out into the hallway in the direction he’d pointed and looked around. Was this the Blue House? Probably not. I was confused, so I went back into the room.

Someone came up to me and handed me my schedule. I asked where it had been and they pointed to the other end of the table. Stupid me, fresh from Chippens – there, J comes before K.

Then we went off on a “tour” of the building, lead by two older students.

As we wove our way through the halls, I found myself wishing I’d brought some breadcrumbs or

maybe a spool of string.

I also noticed there were fewer of us than there had been when we started out.

No matter. Eventually we were all lured outside by the smell of food.

I would have had some, but I have this thing about burgers: if I can’t tell the difference between the meat and the charcoal brickette, I usually pass. I made do with some watermelon.

We ate inside, entertained by the antics of, um, these two guys with sequined vests.

Then it was time to leave. Actually, it was about a half-hour before time to leave, but apparently the thing was over so we all had to go wait by the door for our parents to pick us up.

As I headed back to the front door, questions still raced through my mind: will I get lost? Are the school lunches any good? Will I have lots of homework? Will I be able to find my classrooms?

But one question loomed in my mind above all others: what the heck were those cheerleaders doing on the airplane?

**We all knew who the first speakers would be: the head honchos, the ones in charge.**

## Rams ready for fall games



Above, Ram teammates Tim Washington, D.J. Hernandez, Sean Whitman, and Ramessis Santiago after practice last week.

At right, Bristol Central cheerleader Tamara Martin worked with the squad last week.

Jen Plonski / The Tattoo

## Back to the field

By JEN PLONSKI AND MIKE NGUYEN  
The Tattoo

Classes might’ve started on Thursday, but for the fall athletes, school started weeks in advance.

Football players, soccer players, and cheerleaders were out in full force last week practicing for upcoming games and other events.

Senior Tim Washington, quarterback and running back for the Bristol Central Rams football team is excited about this season’s team.

“Our team is going to do pretty well. We have a lot of seniors [and] a lot of leaders,” he said in the school parking lot after practice last week.

About the same time, the cheerleaders were down the hill on the track field getting their routines polished.

While others practiced a cheer, one of the squad members seemed confused. But after watching awhile, she caught on and the whole team executed it perfectly.

“See what happens when you come to practice?” said Debbie Dubrowski, the Rams’ satisfied cheerleading coach.

Those who come to see the games this fall will no doubt see whether that practice paid off.

