

Tattoo writers scoop up awards

Six student writers recently earned National Gold Key awards in the country's top high school journalism contest for pieces they wrote for *The Tattoo*.

Bristol Central High School senior Amanda Lehmert, who won in two categories, emerged a contest winner for the third straight year. Her story about construction dust making students and teachers ill won in the in-depth individual category.

Along with Bristol Eastern High School juniors Jessica Norton and Hila Yosafi, Lehmert also earned a prize for in-depth team coverage for a story about a local teenager's suicide.

Another Bristol Central High School senior, Collin Seguin, grabbed a top prize in the annual contest sponsored by the National Newspaper Association and the Quill and Scroll International Honorary Society for High School Journalists.

Seguin secured his second Gold Key in sports journalism for a column he wrote about baseball's home run derby last season.

Two other Bristol Eastern High School juniors also brought home National Gold Keys. Merissa Mastropiero captured a prize for a news story she wrote detailing some of the failings and problems with the school's new computer system.

The contest honored Joe Wilbur for an opinion column he penned about the flap in Middletown over boys wearing dresses to school.

Published in the *The Bristol Press* occasional Mondays, *The Tattoo* is written by high school students. Reporters Steve Collins and Jackie Majerus are the group's volunteer advisors. Watch for another edition of *The Tattoo* next week.

Questions or comments about this page should be directed to them at 589-5316 or by e-mail to SteveJackie@prodigy.net. The winning stories, along with *Tattoo* archives, can be seen on the webat: http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Majerus_Collins

Brave new world and Keanu, too

By CHANTELLE GARZONE
The Tattoo

Are you into computers? Do you enjoy pushing the limits of the imagination? Are you somewhat paranoid that the entire universe is really a shadow of something much darker?

Well, then you've got a few problems. But the new Keanu Reeves sci-fi flick, *The Matrix*, is sure to tantalize the masses (even if you're not a evil, er, misguided genius).

Bursting with technological wizardry and fast-paced action sequences, *The Matrix* exceeds the standards for today's cinema. Computer-generated graphics shock and amaze even the most skeptical of viewers, while Keanu gives a stunning performance as Neo, the chosen one.

Uh, uh, uh ... I'm afraid I can't tell all there is to know about this movie, you'll just have to see it for yourself.

I will say this, *The Matrix* gives a blunt view on the possibility of a grim future for mankind, if continued on its present course.

So check out *The Matrix* before it leaves the theaters - if for no other reason, there's always Keanu.

Hole's Celebrity Skin was worth the wait

By SHAINA ZURA
The Tattoo

After years of taking in 1994's release of *Live Through This*, Hole fans finally have another album to buy. *Celebrity Skin* is the band's newest contribution to the world of music.

While it carries many of the qualities that define Hole's music, there are definite differences between it and the band's other albums. Courtney Love delivers her characteristic throaty yelling and drawn out singing. She also takes credit for all the lyrics.

Hitting you with statements like "they know how to break all the girls like you and they rob the souls of the girls like you" is something to expect from her. In this respect, the strength and anger of previous songs are paralleled. If you flip through the CD booklet, you'll notice that there were significant contributions by people outside of the band. Credit is given to Corgan, Caffey, and Zandorozny.

Only half of the songs were written without the aid of one or two of the three contributors noted.

This is very unlike *Live Through This*, where all but one song was written by Hole alone. Also, there are less hard guitar bits and rough edges to the music. All in all, the album is a little more mature than their last release. There is slightly less screaming and swearing. There is more melody and recognizable words. It is still a very powerful collection of songs. With statements like "love hates you" and "this world is a war" I think *Celebrity Skin* lives up to the slap in the face tendency of Hole's music.

Canadians check out Bristol plays, music, culture

By HILA YOSAFI
The Tattoo

Bristol Eastern High School's music department recently had a cultural experience right here in Bristol. Band and chorus students from the John Rennie High School in Pointe-Claire, Quebec lived with Eastern students for three days.

Eastern visited the school, which was Superintendent Ann Clark's alma mater, last school year for their annual music trip. Nancy Sweer, Jon Rennie's band director said, "Our kids were so impressed...We came here to learn and we've already learned what nice people you are."

Eastern's band director Richard Theriault said his students got to know kids from another country musically but more importantly, culturally.

Alexandra Morgan, a ninth grader at Jon Rennie said the

people she met in Bristol were more "down to earth."

John Rennie High School has seventh to 11th grade. Upon graduation in 11th grade, students must attend a two year school before enrolling into a four-year college or university.

All the students speak English clearly, without accents. Most can speak French as well.

Sarah Thorpe, an 11th grader from John Rennie, said, "It's so gorgeous here."

Sweer said students in Montreal don't start playing instruments until the eighth grade. Students here start tootin' horns in the third grade.

Junior Patti Archambeault, who plays in Eastern's band, said most of the music students here don't think the Board of Education is providing them with enough for their

Computer glitches not over yet

By CHANTELLE GARZONE
The Tattoo

Flaws in the new computer software at Bristol's high schools have led to confused attendance records and delays in report cards, desperately needed grade point averages for graduating seniors, class rankings and honor rolls.

But administrators say they had to employ a new software program and got the best one on the market.

School officials learned last summer that the company that supplied the software for the school computer system in the past had been bought out and they couldn't use the old program anymore.

After reviewing alternatives, the schools picked a program named School Administration Student Information (commonly called "sassy").

Though students and staff alike have had run-ins with the new system, Bristol Eastern High School Principal V. Everett Lyons said the program is "pretty good."

"It's a learning process for everybody," said Lyons, and it's simply "a matter of finetuning it."

The new program had to be tailored to suit Eastern's needs, for things such as perfect attendance and honor roll, said Mosback.

Second marking period

report cards were nearly a month overdue because half year exams had to be entered into the new system manually.

The honor roll hasn't been released yet because gym doesn't count but the new program identifies it as a course like all the others.

menu-driven program and I couldn't alter the system."

"I have a lot more freedom of doing things the way I want," Mosback said.

Even report cards are being made differently, said Mosback.

Grades are recorded by a

enough to stop a machine," said Veins. "If a teacher writes in two tens for example instead of 100."

The new program "is very powerful, if you put a period in the wrong place it could throw off some information," stressed Veins.

Each student's history - including attendance, scheduling, discipline, and grades - is contained in an icon called an "atom," said Veins.

Even with all of SASI's technological advances, items such as perfect attendance have been thrown into mass confusion this year, according to Veins.

Veins said that the new software counts someone as having perfect attendance even if they are late or leave early.

"For perfect attendance you must be in school everyday all day," Veins said.

Under the new system, field trips are counted as absences and tardies as excused absences.

As far as grade point averages go, Veins said, "We're almost there."

Taking an optimistic viewpoint, Mosbeck said, "I think it will take a year or two to have it up and running to our school specifications."

In the words of Mosbeck, the new program "has its good points and its bad points."

But in any case, it's here to stay.

The fourth marking period might also cause a dilemma because of the problem of averaging final grades, said Principal V. Everett Lyons.

Another major problem is class rank, Lyons said, "because we had to convert and enter all the previous grades" by hand.

Unfortunately, this is just the beginning.

According to Lyons, the fourth marking period might also cause a dilemma because of the problem of averaging final grades.

Despite its complications, Eastern secretary Edith Mosback said the new software is a necessary change in the school system.

"I can open many windows at one time, I can go into grades, schedules, etceteras, while in our old program I could only do one at a time," said Mosback.

"The old system was a

Scantron machine that reads computer forms on which teachers have penciled in the proper bubbles instead of the obsolete method of hand entering each individual number.

Another change this year is that report cards are printed at the school instead of the past practice of sending them out.

Eastern freshman Kristy Harrington said of the new report cards, "They don't come out when they're supposed to and the teachers don't know what's going on."

Daniel Veins, an assistant principal at Eastern, said report cards take longer because of the need to verify all grades.

"A simple bubbling error is

Make way for ducklings!

By MERISSA MASTROPIERO
The Tattoo

The return to school from April vacation presented a delightful surprise for some and a dilemma for others.

Students discovered 14 mallard ducklings and their mother waddling around the east wing courtyard at Bristol Eastern High School last Monday.

Sophomore Bill Mahoney spotted the mother duck near a metal grate in the center of the courtyard while sitting in teacher Nathalie Flynn's fourth period study hall, said Flynn.

Curiosity struck when the mallard seemed to refuse to change position. Garrett Vanadestine, a sophomore in Flynn's study hall, discovered the ducklings in the sewer beneath the grate.



"We don't know how long they were down there. They could have been down there all last week," said Flynn.

The mother duck built a nest within the courtyard under one of the bushes, and 14 out of 15 eggs hatched sometime over the vacation week.

Two janitors and a workman came to their assistance, prying open the grate, and then Walter Hobbs, assistant building supervisor, pulled them out.

"The mother was awfully good," and didn't attack anyone, said Flynn.

Principal V. Everett Lyons now faced the dilemma of what to do with them.

"If we don't get them pretty soon, we'll either have to feed them or try to get them out," Lyons said. "We have to put them in an environment where they can find some nourishment."

Sophomore Lenor Tores and freshman Linda Valdes placed food and water around the courtyard. "They were cute. They were so small," said Valdes. "They looked okay, but there was one that was really limping," said Flynn.

Later on in the afternoon, the mother mallard and her 13 ducklings - one died - exited the courtyard and walked into the building. Upon where the

janitors led them through the building, leading them out through the band room doors, said Hobbs.

"We just kept blocking them until they found their way out," said custodian Chad Lockhart. The mother then "pretty much led them right out to the water" to a stream flowing through Eastern's property, said Lockhart. "She knew where she was going."

Lockhart noticed that one duckling couldn't swim. He said that this was because it hadn't developed the oils that allow it to stay afloat.

Hobbs said, "He was just laying in the water, floating like he was dead. He didn't look too good."

Hobbs grabbed it and handed it to Lockhart. "It looked like it was dead. It was like a wet noodle," said Lockhart. "We were just going to throw it out, but I'm not into that. I love animals."

Lockhart, cupping the duckling in his hands, proceeded to warm it, trying to get it to breathe. Custodian Brad LePane got a heat lamp from the science department.

"We put him in that box, and he came back to life," Lockhart said.

Lockhart is temporarily playing mother for the duckling. With the additional roommate, Lockhart needed some information.

Back to Basics, a Terryville feed dealer, taught him how to take care of the duckling and gave him food.

"That place was real helpful too," said Lockhart.

Lockhart and Hobbs hope to reunite the lone duckling with its mallard family once it's ready to swim.

Until then, Lockhart said, "Now he's doing great, but he still has a little limp."

Pottery in motion



Shaunte Miller-Ligon / The Tattoo
Bristol Eastern High School junior Becky Russo works on a piece of pottery for a class.

One Canadian student said Bristol people were 'down to earth.'

see this school in a year and a half," Ferris told Sweer, "You'll be blown away."

The students voluntarily hosted the more than 60 Canadians at their homes. While most students took one or two, Ferris took in four boys.

Junior Nicole Echagarrua, who plays in Eastern's band and took in two girls said, "I thought it would be a nice thing to do."

Her father, Leo Echagarrua

said, "I'm glad we could return the hospitality that they were so generous to show us when we visited their country."

The visitors toured the New England Carousel Museum in Bristol, attended a dress rehearsal of Bristol Central's spring musical "Oklahoma," and visited Mystic. There was also a joint concert in Eastern's cafeteria that featured the two bands and choruses, which was followed by a dance.

Eleventh grader Lindsay Legault from John Rennie said the Americans and Canadians were "pretty much the same."

Ninth grader Andrew Kerrigan, also from Montreal said the Americans he met pronounced their 'As' funny.

Troy Tagg, a ninth grader also from John Rennie said the international display of flags in the cafeteria, part of a recent effort to celebrate diversity at Eastern, was a good idea.