

WAVELENGTHS

Voice of the Greenwave

Ashbrook High School, 2222 South New Hope Rd., Gastonia, NC 28054

Academics take heavy toll

By HEATHER SMITH/
Staff Writer

Carrying a heavy book bag can cause big back problems.

According to recent studies by D. Michael Pedigo, president of the Arlington, Virginia based Pedigo Association, wearing a book bag that is too heavy or wearing it incorrectly can lead to neck, shoulder, and back pain. Improper usage can also lead to permanent back and spinal problems.

"The improper use of backpacks can lead to muscle imbalance that could turn into chronic back and neck problems later in life," said Pedigo. "Most of it is preventable though."

Some Ashbrook students say the reason their book bags are so heavy is that teachers give too much homework. Another effect that could weigh a book bag down is a problem Freshman Justin Soos has.

"My parents want me to bring my books home to study," said Soos. "So with A/B schedule, that means I'm taking home textbooks

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Soap now available in bathrooms across Ashbrook

By CATHERINE
STOVER/Staff Writer

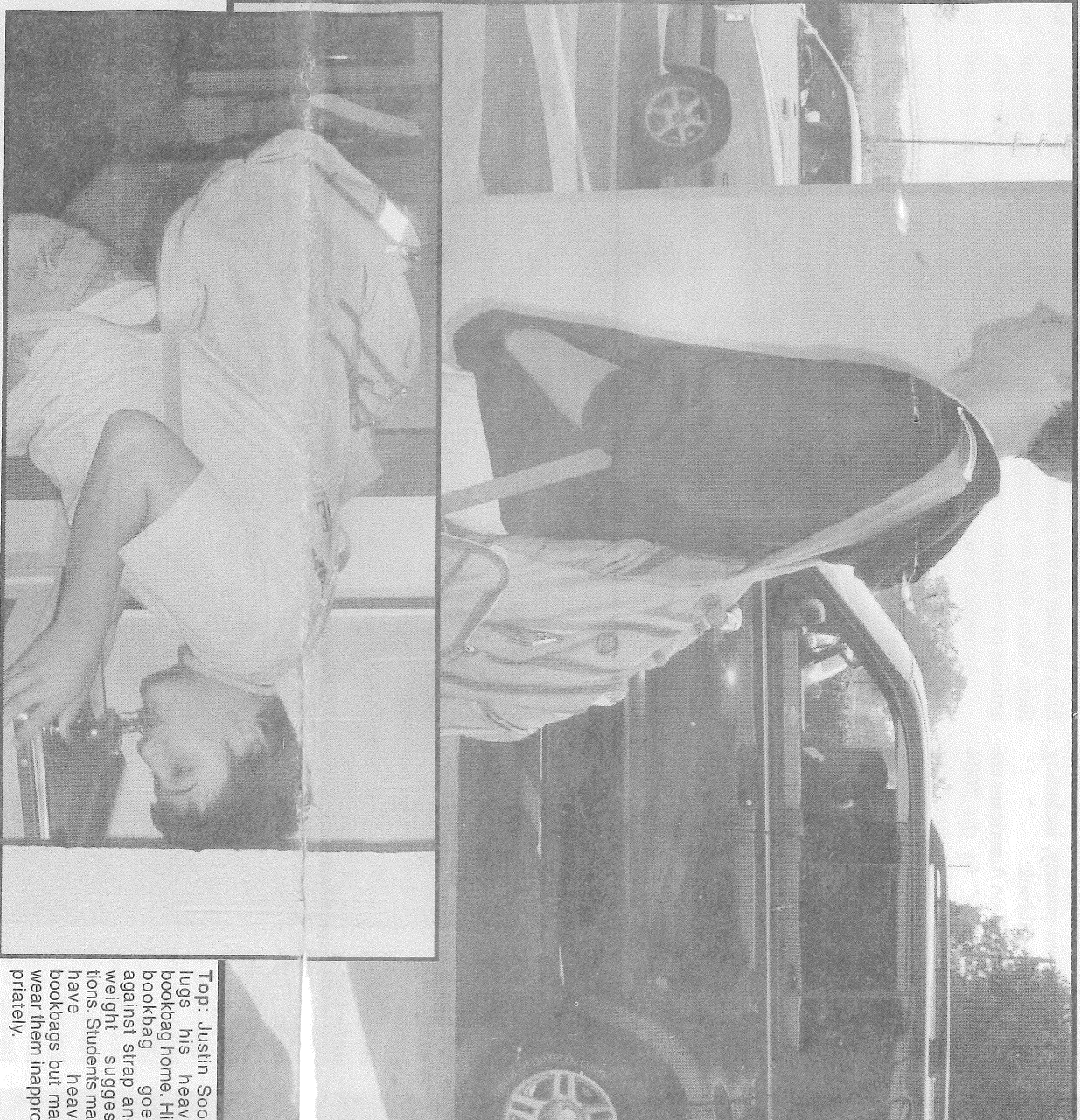
Ashbrook students and faculty are concerned about an outbreak of the infection MRSA.

Due to a recent outbreak of Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) at a Charlotte Mecklenburg School, Gaston County Schools is taking every precaution to

avoid an outbreak of MRSA. Ashbrook's athletic trainer Larry Carpenter feels Ashbrook is in a preventative mode right now.

"It's not an epidemic or a true outbreak," said Carpenter. "It's a new strain of infection and used to be confined to hospitals and prisons but has gotten to the community."

Gaston County now



Photos by Preston Neill

requires all athletes and their parents to sign a "Student Information and Agreement" sheet on MRSA, and the athlete is required take a course on MRSA before they are allowed to participate in their sport.

According to the class, athletes participating in a contact sport are at a higher risk of getting MRSA. Before games each athlete will be

checked for any suspicious bumps. Any cuts should be covered to prevent bacteria from getting in the open cut.

"There's a greater risk in athletics because there is body-to-body contact," said Carpenter. "The athletes were the first ones that we targeted."

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Above: Athletic trainer Larry Carpenter checks an Ashbrook student for possible signs of MRSA. Ashbrook faculty and students are taking careful precautions to prevent the outbreak of MRSA.

Tables turned: School gets report card

By BRYAN COCKREND/Co-editor

Teaching the test, as many teachers claim, is not a substitute for teaching the class.

Ashbrook's performance on the North Carolina School Report Card may have proved this point, failing several categories or finishing below the district and state average in nearly every category.

In fact, Ashbrook only scored above the district or state averages in performance on physics and chemistry EOCs. American

Indians at Ashbrook also performed higher than the district and state averages, but they were the only ethnic group to do so.

Rebecca Wilson, one of Ashbrook's assistant principals, believes that the Ashbrook's fault is that it is too diverse.

"There are many more subgroups here than anywhere else in the county," said Wilson. "It's harder for more diverse schools like Ashbrook to pass than a one-sided school

like East Gaston or Hunter Huss."

Whatever the fault, Ashbrook did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), and is now under the "school of progress" designation by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

Ashbrook only met 15 of 17 AYP targets for the year. No Child Left Behind is an unfunded federal mandate, which means that the state must enforce the see *Report* page 9

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Students from low socio-economic households also suffer at school
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New calendar stirs negative response

By OMNIA BAYOUMI/Staff Writer

Teachers, students, and administrators are not welcoming the proposed changes to the school calendar.

According to the proposed 2005-2006 school calendar, classes will start on August 25, three weeks later than last year's August 2003-2004 school calendar. The late start date means that exams will be pushed back to after Christmas break. Also instead of a 6 week grading period it will be a 9 week grading period, and teacher work days will be limited.

Ashbrook chemistry teacher Anthony Giacobbe feels that these changes are harmful to students and teachers.

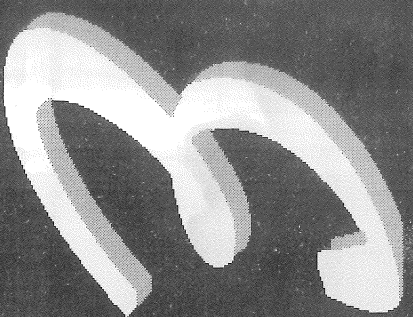
"Whoever developed this calendar does not have any interest of the students or teachers in mind," said Giacobbe. "This will be another item that makes it harder for teachers to do their jobs and it will definitely cause stress for both students and teachers."

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"I like it because we get a longer summer, and the short Christmas break doesn't bother me"

-Shonna Belk
Sophomore



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The purpose of this publication is to apprise its readership of pertinent, school-related information and, as a public forum, to offer them the opportunity to publish their convictions in the form of letters-to-the-editor. An editorial board comprised of the editors and adviser reserves the right to review all letters for ethical standards and to edit them for accuracy.

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EDITORIALS

Students suffering from poverty receive poor education

Despite the fact that America has been one of the wealthiest and strongest Nations for years, millions of Americans are still suffering from poverty, including students at Ashbrook.

Over 35 million Americans are considered "poor" by the 2004 Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines. Poverty in America is far from uniform, varying by age, race, family, and region.

The Health and Human Services defines poor as a yearly income for a family of two under \$12,500, an income for a family of three under \$15,700, and an income for a family of four under \$18,900.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the most common age group suffering from poverty is 0-17. African Americans and Hispanics suffer higher

poverty than Caucasians. One-parent households tend to be associated with higher rates of poverty more than families with two. Southern states have suffered more from poverty than the rest of the country, but the difference has narrowed in recent years.

Poverty does not just affect life at home, but it is also clear to staff, such as Ashbrook assistant principal Rebecca Wilson, that it also affects life at school.

"Ninety percent of the time, they, students in low-income families, can't participate in extracurricular activities or receive extra help due to having to ride the bus home," said Wilson. "In most cases, students in low-income families are forced to work in order to help their families, taking more time away from studying and homework."

According to Wilson, many Ashbrook teachers offer extra help after and before school hours, which gives students an extra chance to get a better understanding for their schoolwork. However, students forced to ride the bus home may not be able to take advantage of this.

Home learning conditions as a young child ultimately affect students for the rest of their educational career. Factors vary from whether or not parents read to them when they are young to the amount of television watched.

According to researchers Hart and Risley (1995), children whose parents or caregivers read to them when they are young gain a considerable advantage in terms of language acquisition, literacy development, achievement in reading comprehension, and general success in school.

The researchers also concluded that three-year-old children in professional families had

can be a very valuable resource at home. Not all families are fortunate enough to have a parent at home because both parents have to work. Plus a good portion of the families cannot afford proper day care or after school help. The burden falls on older siblings who are trained for beneficial childcare.

Family is the foundation that has the commitment of raising children socially, educationally, and morally. School has a major part in a child's life for social development and educational development, but it is no substitute for family and family life.

Over the years the two-parent family has been in decline in the

Scheduling another set of buses for students who stay after school would allow lower-class students a chance to receive that help or participate in after school act. Granted, funding would be needed to pay for gas and drivers;

however, Gaston County could divert Title I money for buses. Quite possibly, other expenditures could be cut. The school could easily reduce the number of travel miles reimbursed to teachers. The central office could reduce the number of conventions and workshops that central office employees attend. The county could reduce the number of per diems that it approves for its employees. It is understood

that county officials need proper staff development, but until sacrifices should be made in order to create these programs.

Also giving the school more resources such as open computer labs during and after school and adding extra classes to give extra attention to each student would help to benefit not only low-class students, but students

in general.

The early childhood development programs at Ashbrook and other high schools could be expanded to include childcare workshops for family members and emphasize methods that could be productive in an after school situation.

There is only one factor to develop all these extra programs and opportunities for low-class students. That factor is money.

The Booster Club and other organizations involved with school as well as devoted parents, teachers, and students could all come together to raise enough money for these developments. We have no problem procuring money for athletic equipment and facilities.

We should all place an emphasis on Ashbrook's main goal. No, it is not taking the most expansive trips, or having the best uniforms, or having the prettiest truck. It is being a school where all students can be successful.



Letters to the Editor

Minor sports would do better with fan support

Dear Editor,

Although I have never been to anything other than fall sports, I run on the cross country team and am currently on the swim team. At football games, practically the whole school comes out to watch. We have a "student only" section where only the students can sit to cheer on the mighty Greenwave.

At cross country meets, it is different. There is no "student only" section and usually the only people that come are the runner's parents and family. It's the same thing at swim meets. There is also rarely ever anyone outside of family at the swim meets. Why is this? Cross country, golf, swimming, and all the other sports are just as important as football, basketball, and baseball. Why do people only want to watch football, basketball, and baseball?

We have cheered our football team far into playoffs. Just imagine how good the rest of the teams would do if there were more fans at volleyball games, wrestling matches, softball games, and all the other sporting events.

BY ERIN COCKFIELD/Freshman

Similar AP and honors courses need to be more efficient

Students taking AP US history after taking honors US history may have noticed that the classes are incredibly similar. Given that history doesn't change (this isn't 1984), a student in AP US history with Jean Miller probably feels like that class is a waste of time, seeing as how the honors class with Steve Huggins would have covered the exact same material. And a student who feels as if his or her time is being wasted in the AP class will probably treat that "wasted time" accordingly. What I propose is for the honors class and the AP class to be back-to-back classes, the honors class during first

semester and the AP class during the second semester of the same year, keeping the curriculum linear throughout both classes so there is no repeating and more opportunity to go into depth with the curriculum. The AP class would obviously be taught by the same teacher as the honors class and would be a continuation of the honors class. This means that a student interested in AP US history would have US history every day, all year, but would have the opportunity to go into much more depth with the curriculum than a current AP US history student does. There would still be a separate honors US history class for students not interested in AP history that would still cover all the curriculum in one semester, but common sense would dictate that a teacher can teach twice as much in a class that is twice as long, and the advantage to any student would be to take both classes.

At Ashbrook, we have a working example of what the US history class should be like. Lloyd White's AP Biology II class is preceded by honors anatomy and physiology, but the two classes are interconnected so that the entire AP biology curriculum can be covered within those two classes. There is still an anatomy and physiology class for students not interested in the course load required by AP Biology II.

And if US history gets the same consideration as AP Biology II does now, it should be applied to other courses with extraordinary time problems. A teacher would be much more capable of teaching AP Chemistry II if it was grouped with honors chemistry so that she could teach her AP students every day, all year long.

BY BRAD SHAW/Senior

Teachers cross exam day lines

The thing that I really don't like about Ashbrook is the fact that some teachers make students come to school on exam days. It really doesn't make any sense. Not only are we required to come to school when we really don't have to but we also stay in class for two and a half hours. I think that is ridiculous.

The Editors go Head-to-Head:

School Calendar in Question

Bryan Cockfield

Preston Neill

The North Carolina General Assembly took the perfect opportunity to show off their infinite wisdom with a new bill that requires the schools to start classes no earlier than the week of August 25.

The plan must have some sort of hidden genius, because there appears to be only one advantage to forcing schools to start on this day: tourism. But some coastal communities claim that Memorial Day is a bigger holiday than Labor Day, and by pushing back the start of the school year, the end of the school year will be after Memorial Day.

Also, the crisis caused by snow where we live is never as great as reported. Gaston County handles snow days poorly anyway, and the calendar does not need precautionary snow days to be built into it for every county in the state. The mountain counties might need it, but for the coastal counties, as well as our county, they are a waste. Pretty soon, the General Assembly will have a bill forcing us to run to the grocery store for bread and milk every time there is a prediction for snow.

Add that to the fact that Advanced Placement (AP) tests will still take place during the same weeks in May, giving classes like AP Psychology nearly a month of down time at the end of the semester while forcing teachers in classes such as AP Statistics or AP Chemistry to finish the curriculum for the exam a month earlier.

On top of the exam dilemma, the later start will push the end of the first semester past Christmas break. This means that students will be taking their first semester exams shortly after coming back from a two-week break. The advantage to our current calendar is that the first semester concludes before Christmas break, giving students an opportunity to wind down their classes rather than worry about them during their break.

Apart from academics, athletics will also feel the burn of the new calendar. Fall sports start competitions around August 25 but take three weeks before that for after school practice. If the school calendar were to change and the athletic calendar were not to, spring sports would finish with a month remaining in the school year. The entire sports schedule for the North Carolina High School Athletic Association may be under reconstruction.

It turns out that a bill that was only backed by tourism lobbyists, which was a long stretch to help the economy at any rate, will only hurt our current education system. Hopefully we will all see some hidden brilliance next year under the new calendar, because right now, nothing seems good about the upcoming transition between calendars.

Staying in a class for two and a half hours doing absolutely nothing or something that can wait until after exams is stupid. I think teachers tend to forget that students forget what they have learned over two and a half weeks. Also we can't even leave when the 90 minutes are over which is normal class time. Also students are not coming to learn, they are coming simply because the teacher said to. Everyone is in vacation mode and they really don't care much, so what do some of these teachers think they are going to accomplish out of this one day of school? I think that teachers are hoping to educate the students one extra day which doesn't work because students will forget.

BY AMBERA BAYOUMI/Junior

Latest edition of 'Kans' promotional videos miss mark

I was watching the 2004-2005 edition of the 'Kans' For Kids' video when I began to ask myself a question, "Remember when the 'Kans' videos used to be funny?"

In fact it was only a year ago that I saw David Moore dancing in a can constructed suit and found myself laughing hysterically. Only two years ago I was watching seniors Rich Abernathy and Marshall Anderson pod-racing with cans and impersonating the wise words of Yoda for their Star Wars themed 'Kans' video. Priceless.

So what was the follow up to these brilliant can masterpieces? That's right, it was can bowling. Can bowling? This can video was supposed to come from a highly anticipated and enthusiastic senior class. This can video was supposed to leave all other can videos in its wake. Sadly, it was poorly edited, only two seniors were involved, and it just wasn't funny.

I'm disappointed that more seniors, especially those with creative minds and acting experience, were not asked to be involved. So this is a warning to the future senior classes. It is important that these

videos are quality work in order to keep the tradition alive and more importantly to get people excited about 'Kans' for Kids.

BY DOUG BRANSON/Senior

Activism towards 'Kans' drive lessened

It's the holiday season again. Christmas music is playing continuously on 102.9, and decorations are lighting up the night skies. Little kids are sitting on Santa's lap in all the malls, and stores are having their big holiday sales. Yet something is different this holiday season.

Kans for Kids has always been a part of the Ashbrook tradition. The annual drive helps Crisis Assistance Ministries stockpile cans to distribute to the neediest families in the community. In years past, our student body has collected thousands and thousands of cans. In 2001 when I was a freshman, the hallway outside of Mrs. Sumner's room began to fill with cans because the adjacent storage closet was completely filled. That same year, Mr. Briggs's Biology class alone collected over 2,000 cans. The generous spirit of the school was simply amazing.

Three years later, that spirit seems to have disappeared. The holidays are a time for giving; however, Ashbrook students are not giving much this year. Though the Kans for Kids drive has been going on for over a week, we have not amassed a fraction of what we collected in past years. It is so easy to check your cabinets for extra cans or ask a few neighbors to spare several cans, yet students are not taking these steps to make the drive a success.

Before the Kans for Kids drive is over, I hope that Ashbrook students will reconnect with the meaning of the holiday season. The saying "It is better to give than to receive" is not an outdated cliché. Giving to a cause like this will not only benefit hundreds in the area, but also give you the satisfaction of knowing you made a difference. I urge all students to do their part in Kans for Kids.

BY SALLY PEACH/Senior

After much scrutiny, the state legislature passed an amendment stating that school cannot start before August 25 and cannot end before June 10. Complying with the new amendment, the new school calendar has gone through a drastic change. Next year's school calendar has been released to a varied reception.

Many people overlook what makes the schedule stronger. By starting late, students don't have to return so early in August, cutting into a good chunk of the tourism season. For some students it will open the opportunity to attend more summer camps and other educational functions in the summer.

However, students may complain that the exam period will be pushed back after Christmas break, but most teachers do enough review in a week long period that the two week break in December shouldn't affect the scores as much as people may believe.

Another complaint about the old schedule was that since most of this area's snow comes in second semester, any make up days usually draw from spring break. Under the new schedule, there are seven days out of school that would help pad the week long spring break.

Last year, some students at Ashbrook had to choose between going to graduation and going to track state championships, because the two events overlapped. Many would agree that placing students in a position like that is unfair since they have just as much right to be in graduation as the other students. With the new schedule, that embarrassing scenario will never happen as school will be still going on for at least two weeks after track season is over.

Other detractors complain that the new schedule cheats them out of Christmas break, since the traditional two full weeks and some change, has been cut to less than two weeks. For many students, by the end of that two weeks, they are ready for school to get back in session to talk to all the friends they didn't see during the break.

Even staying in school to June shouldn't be too much of a problem, since for people who have friends in other areas of our state or even in the nation they don't get out until June and the students in our county couldn't visit with them anyway.

So while students may "complain" and moan about the new calendar, the reality is, it has some really good ideas in it. Which is good, because it looks like this calendar is here to stay.

Teachers are Hazy When It Comes to Hazing

Hazing acts in high school have hit new highs and lows

by KERRY MEUMAN/Staff Writer

According to research, hazing is becoming more and more common in high schools across the nation. Whether it involves students, coaches, parents, alcohol, abuse or vandalism, hazing is in almost every school these days.

According to the North Carolina law, hazing is defined as "To annoy any student by playing abusive or ridiculous tricks upon them, to frighten, scold, beat or harass them, or to subject them to personal indignity."

Hazing used to be seen just in college. When wanting to join a fraternity or sorority, being involved in some kind of humiliating hazing ritual was part of it. The point in going through hazing was to prove that people really wanted to be in the fraternity or sorority that they were pledging. Hazing also gave upperclassmen a sense of power over the younger classmen.

Ashbrook math teacher Jeff Guzaskas was part of a fraternity in college that was reprimanded for hazing.

"In my fraternity at Western, we got busted for making our pledges be our designated drivers. I didn't see anything wrong in it, but they considered it hazing," said Guzaskas. "All the good things we did within the fraternity didn't matter, they saw one bad thing and stuck us for that."

While people typically associate hazing with college life, the population of high school kids hazing in clubs and athletics has grown rapidly through out the years.

High schools have overlooked the hazing problem somewhat, mainly because coaches and administrators seem to view these activities as small or they generally have no idea what is really going on.

"Not once has hazing been a problem since I have been working here at Ashbrook," said athletic director Lloyd White. "The kids know better, so hazing just doesn't happen."

White's words are somewhat true. Ashbrook coaches strongly object to hazing. Punishment is given to students who choose to haze, such as suspension or after school detention. However, hazing has occurred at Ashbrook in the past.

"Toby Partlow and Antwan Pagan played with some of the younger kids on the football team last year," said football Coach Michael Briggs. "They put Vaseline in their helmets, in their jocks and hid their shoes."

Although, this may not seem a serious issue, these hazing acts could have developed into larger problems. In spite of this, these mere hazing acts were soon put to a stop.

"We try and get people to respect each other," said Briggs. "If they haze, they are punished or made to run, which makes them not do it again."

fluid from animals were dumped onto girls sitting on their knees. Groups of girls attacked the underclassmen with punches and kicks. Four girls were treated for injuries including concussions and major cuts. All of the girls involved in the hazing were expelled and charged criminally.

During the summer of 2003, sixty boys and five coaches from Long Island's Mepham High School, Pennsylvania, came together as a team for a preseason camp. The kids spent most of their time running through plays on the practice field.

However, freshmen and some sophomores from the J-V team were expecting to be the subjects of hazing.

It was known in the past at their school that hazing took place, and was just part of the "Mempham football tradition". Hazing acts such as a shaving of a head or a small bruise was what the boys were expecting.

But their expectations soon turned out to be worse than what they thought. An exclusive report in *Sports Illustrated* explained in detail how bad this hazing turned out to be.

According to the article, a senior tackle and a junior linebacker from the team decided to do these hazing rituals during their free time in cabin 13. The 245-pound senior grabbed a J-V player who only weighed about a hundredpounds, while the junior linebacker pulled down his pants, dipped a broomstick in Mineral ice and ointment that burns when applied to skin and forcibly burned the player. This happened to several of the players during their time in the camp.

The boys remained silent about what happened during their time at the camp. Eventually more than a week after the camp had returned home, one of the victims could no longer hide his injuries that he had suffered and ended up telling his parents.

Much like the girls from the powder-puff game, the boys were expelled and charged criminally. As of the end of 2004, no one has been indicted of any of the charges, but the boys have left school.

Hazing, however, is not a new phenomenon. The act itself has existed for centuries, and negative ramifications have been documented for nearly a century.



In his book *High School Hazing*, Hank Nuwer documents the ramifications of hazing gone wrong throughout the last century.

In 1920, thirteen year old Carl Ambrose grew tired of the relentless hazing he received as being a young member of the Wankegan High School, Illinois baseball team. He began to carry a gun with him.

As five masked sophomores attacked him with the intention of tying him up, Ambrose shot 14-year-old Theodore Lux, one of his assailants.

Nuwer also notes one of the first documented manslaughter cases directly related to hazing.

In Manatee High School, Florida, 17-year-old John Acosta bear 16-year-old James Brier to death. In October of 2002, Acosta had attempted to join the school's "interact" club and was subjected to their hazing rituals. When he was denied membership, he assaulted Brier who was on the membership committee.

According to court reports, Acosta felt that he had been pushed to the edge by the hazing, and it was the hazing that made him react in that manner.

In Utah, hazing of any type is seen as a criminal offense.

Seven students from Cottonwood High School

who covered fellow students with an unpleasant concoction were not only suspended from the school but were also arrested and charged with misdemeanor hazing.

These are just examples of hazing incident across America. It proves how innocently hazing may start but how terrible it can end.

Not only is athletic hazing a problem, clubs seem to be involved in hazing too. Hazing in high schools is sometimes overlooked as it is often considered "traditions" because students, parents, teachers, coaches and administrators do not fully understand the definition of hazing and how it operates in different athletics and clubs. In essence, they don't know what's going on.

A club that contributes to hazing activities at Ashbrook is "The Girls Club". It is a club just for girls and was made for community project purposes.

"In general this club is good," said sophomore Cortni Rogers. "However, there are some bad sides to it."

According to Rogers, the old members of Girls Club come back and take part in hazing activities towards the new girls pledging. She said that their actions lean toward the humiliating side.

"My sister was in girls club in the year 2000 and they made her eat a banana out of the toilet bowl while being blind folded," said Rogers. "This wasn't even half as bad as some of the stuff they made them do."

According to an anonymous source who pledged for Girls Club in 2003, last year the hazing eased down a bit and the things the girls had to do were less harsh from what she had heard from past years.

"I heard hazing was twice as bad three years ago compared to when I joined," she said. "They had more elaborate rituals then and they allowed some guys to help them."

Former members have recounted having a concoction of pork waste, lake water, and other undefined elements poured on them as part of their initial hazing.

Yet, hazing still did persist in the club, and the girls were still made to do what they were told, in order to be a member of the club according to what was said by her.

"I had to go to Wal-Mart dressed in ugly clothing and buy condoms and put it on random cars in the parking lot," she said. "I said the alumni girl's name wrong, she yelled, and told me to say it right or she would throw me on the ground next time."

Although this hazing may not seem as terrible as the past years in "The Girls Club", it is still hazing. It is not always about how bad the act may be. It is mainly the overuse on the abuse of power and human dignity.

Another association that involves Ashbrook men is the "Southern Kru". Although it doesn't have official connection with Ashbrook, it involves Ashbrook students. The young men who want to be in it and the things they have to do are considered hazing. They mentioned giving orders and playing drinking games.

"We make the guys who want to be in the 'SK' do things for us like be our designated drivers and get us things when we need them," said one of the members of the SK. "If they don't do what we say, when we say, they won't be in it, easy as that."

Many clubs that involve hazing do not like to be established as a club that does. The "Southern Kru" on the other hand, doesn't seem to care so much what people think of their group of guys.

"We know we haze," said the member. "But that's just how we do things."

With high school hazing on the rise, Ashbrook, and other Gaston County school administrators are realizing just how serious hazing really is. In the old days, getting caught hazing, you would have got detention, or maybe be suspended a few days, but now student offenders are being expelled and some may face possible jail time. These precautions are hoped to reduce hazing.

"To have a team of unity, we can not have any hazing at all," said Briggs. "Anytime we see hazing at Ashbrook, we put a stop to it as soon as we can."

Nick Bass: Going Against the Flow

Gaston County's only male cheerleader breaks with tradition, stereotypes

By CATHERINE STOVER/Staff Writer

Friday nights in Ashbrook's stadium, students from the school and fans from the town gather under the stadium lights to watch the battle of the Greenwave football team challenge their opponent. In the stands the fans are pumped up for the game by the cheers of the cheerleaders. In high school, football is thought of as a male sport and the cheerleaders on the sidelines are traditionally females.

Junior Nick Bass is bravely going against the flow of tradition by being a male cheerleader for Ashbrook.

Although Ashbrook has had male cheerleaders in the past, it is still not seen as a common thing at the high school level to have a male cheerleader. According to the cheerleading coach, Ms. Stewart, other schools are excited to see Ashbrook has a male cheerleader and wish that they had a boy on their team.

"When other schools see that we have a boy they are excited to see him," Stewart said. "They wish that they had one and ask me how I got him."

However Bass feels this is not always the case. As a freshman he tried out for the North Gaston squad. Bass said he felt there were some people that didn't want him on the team.

"I heard some negative things from other members of the team," said Bass. "They said the coach didn't want me on there because she didn't want to have a male on the team."

Bass did not make the squad at North Gaston, and this was a blow to his confidence.

"I was disappointed to not make the team," said Bass. "I got over it pretty fast, though, because I didn't expect to make it."

Bass isn't the first male cheerleader for Ashbrook. BJ Hemphill cheered for Ashbrook until his graduation in 2002. Having a male on the cheerleading squad was no new thing to girls that had cheered with Hemphill their freshman year

but for some of the girls that didn't have that opportunity, it was a different experience.

"BJ was on the squad when I was a freshman so it wasn't different for me," said senior captain Lauren Caldwell. "To some girls it was different because they had never cheered with a boy before."

As a sophomore Bass arrived at Ashbrook. He did not try out for the team his sophomore year because



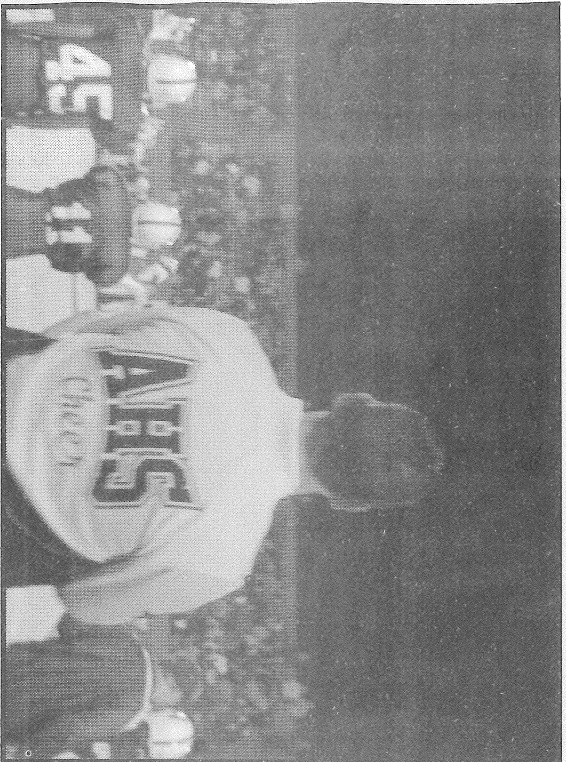
there was a problem with his physical. At the end of the 2004 school year, Bass tried out for Ashbrook's cheerleading squad.

Some of the girls didn't think that he was serious when he first came out to tryouts or would do a good job if he was to make the team.

"I didn't think he was serious or would do as good of a job as he has done," said junior cheerleader Kristin Whitaker. "I think everyone was a little doubtful because so many people joke about it."

Above: Junior Nick Bass cheers at an Ashbrook football game. Bass is the only male cheerleader in the area, following in the footsteps of some of the other male cheerleaders in Ashbrook's history.

Left: Junior Nick Bass pauses from cheering during a game to watch a few plays of the game. Bass has had to endure some people who disagree with his choice to be a cheerleader but maintains a positive outlook and blocks out the comments by other people.



photos by Catherine Stover

been fun but the games are outside so I always worry about the weather," said Bass. "I watch the Weather Channel before games."

Basketball is inside the gym so there is no worrying about the weather. Also when cheering in the gym cheerleaders are allowed to do more stunts and tumbling.

Bass hopes to eventually cheer in college. "I love representing the school and I plan to cheer next year," said Bass.

Other girls on the team were impressed with Bass' tumbling abilities and his dedication to getting better. "When Nick first came out to tryouts I was impressed with his abilities," said Caldwell. "He seemed dedicated to getting better."

Bass made the team and became a member of the Varsity Cheerleading squad. Bass made the team because he received the required points to be on Varsity not on the bases that he was a male. This is Bass' first year on the Varsity team and he is doing well, according to Stewart. He does however have experience to gain.

Male cheerleaders are not a common thing in high school, and there are some students that don't accept Bass and make jokes and about him. Bass tries to block out negative comments and not let them get to him.

"I have noticed some people not respecting him," Stewart said. "Basically it has just been some looks or little snickers in the halls or stands."

Bass wants to please the team and wants the team to look its best at the games. Bass enjoys practices because he knows that working hard in practice it is making the team look its best for the games. Bass truly cares about the team and wants them to show all their ability.

"Ms. Stewart is strict on all of us but it will make us our best," said Bass. Bass likes cheering at the football games, but is excited for when he gets to cheer at the basketball games.

"Cheering at the football games has been fun but the games are outside so I always worry about the weather," said Bass. "I watch the Weather Channel before games."

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Dating Violence When Love

Relationship Violence at an Alarming Rate; Ashbrook no Exception

BY CARIE WILLIAMSON/Staff Writer

Up to one-third of young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 have reported involvement in at least one abusive dating situation.

Dating violence is more than just arguing or fighting. It is a pattern of violent actions or controlling behaviors that one partner uses to get power over the other. This behavior can take different forms, such as psychological or emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. It can occur in both casual dating situations and serious, long-term relationships. Approximately 85% of all people who are victims in an abusive relationship are women.

According to a report released November 29, 2004 from the Education and Justice department, there were about 24 crimes of rape, sexual assault, robbery and physical assault for every 1,000 students in 2002, down from 48 per 1,000 a decade earlier.

As said by Nancy Rue in her book *Abusive Relationships*, when a teen is abused, he or she becomes isolated from her peers because of the controlling behavior of the abusive partner. This isolation often makes it hard to develop new and mature relationships with peers.

The abuser also controls who the victim talks to and communicates with. This can also cause the victim to take focus off of other things in their lives that are important, such as family and grades in school.

Victims usually don't recognize that they are in an abusive relationship and don't realize how they have gradually changed because of the abuse. Signs of emotional abuse that often lead to physical abuse include jealousy and controlling nature. Worrying about how he or she might react to something said or did as well as threats, name-calling, and blaming others are also signs of abuse.

"It's like brainwashing," says Jill Murray, a California-based psychotherapist and author of *But I Love Him*. "Just as it's easy to believe other things he says, like that she doesn't deserve to be treated better."

The effects of being in an abusive relationship can often resemble signs of depression. These signs include loss of appetite, nervousness, weight loss, self-blame, bruises or broken bones, anxiety, and guilt.

A study done by *U.S. News & Report* found that abused girls were eight to nine times more likely to have attempted suicide, four to six times more likely to have ever been pregnant, three to five times more likely to have used cocaine, and three to four times more likely to have used unhealthy dieting methods such as laxatives or vomiting.

Teens who abuse their girlfriends or boyfriends do the same things that adults who abuse their partners do. Teen dating violence is just as serious as adult domestic violence. Forty percent of all young people in the United States will see their parents go through a divorce before they're eighteen, which can cause them to feel more stress and lead to violence.

According to *Seventeen.com*, abusive relationships have good times and bad times. Part of what makes dating violence so painful and confusing is that there is love mixed with the abuse. This can make it hard to tell if someone is really being abused. Young men who are abusers may believe masculinity means physical aggression and fear that acting attentive and supportive toward women will win them disrespect from their peers.

Seeing violence on television doesn't make someone an abuser. However it does make violence seem normal to some. By age 18, the average person has seen 50,000 murders or attempted murders on television alone. A survey taken by Rue of rap music reports that 78% of rap lyrics made reference to violence.

Vicky Crompton, author of *Saving Beauty from the Beast*, gives speeches about emotional violence at high schools around the country.

"Girls don't always know how a relationship should be," says Crompton. "They accept this kind of controlling behavior, someone taking over their thoughts and their lives and telling them what to do."

Sybil Guyer, Ashbrook's social worker, notes a different type of relationship violence. She says that abuse towards men goes on more than many may think.

"There are some cases but it is rare," says Guyer. "Most men feel a need to be macho and so they don't tell."

SAVE (Students Against Violence Everywhere) club at Ashbrook takes the month of April to get involved in relationship violence. SAVE members strive to prevent relationship violence by educating the public about warning signs, consequences and proactive steps to safeguard possible victims. Members of SAVE club take part in crime prevention and conflict management activities as well as service projects within the community.

"We have brochures and hand-outs if someone needs them," says SAVE club president, Maddie Kirlin. "Lots of hotline numbers and booklets are available."

Though many victims may seem helpless, there are many sources available for advice and support. Ashbrook's library has books available to check out, four guidance counselors available and a social worker if someone is in trouble and in need of counseling. Help is also available through numerous hotlines and of course, the police department.

Are you a Victim of Dating Violence?

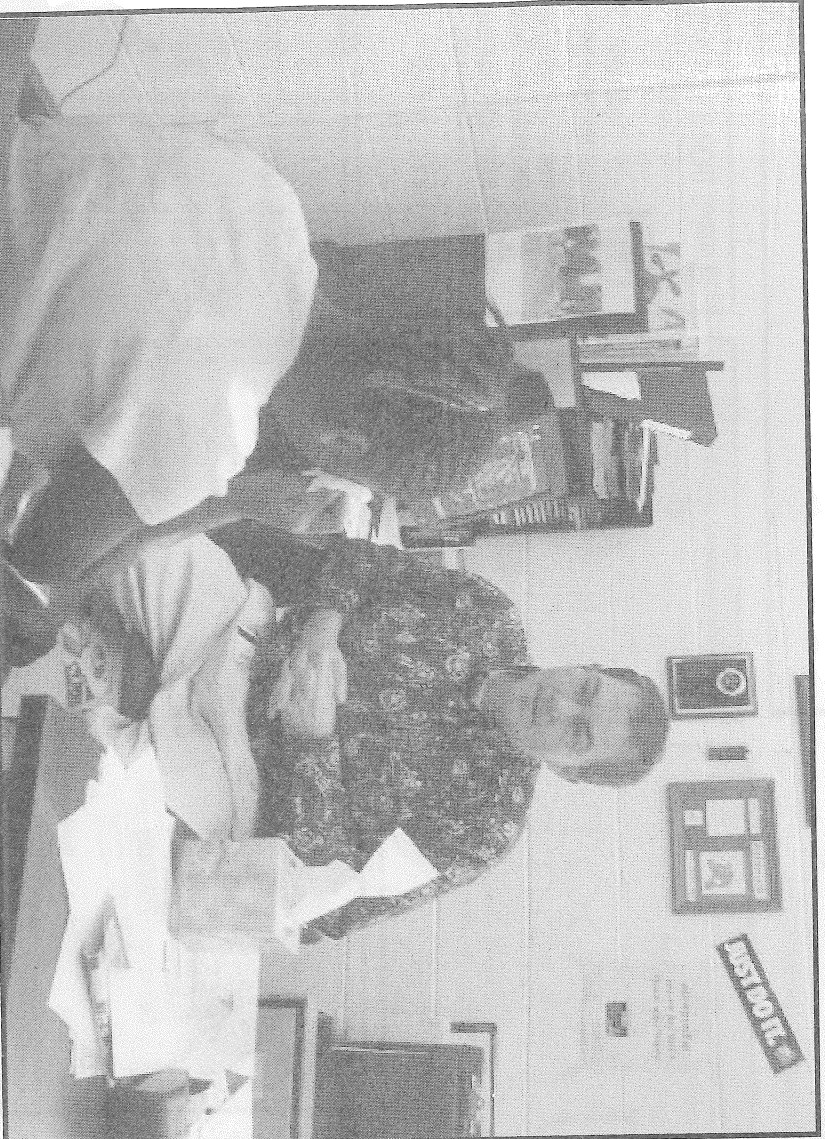
Answer the questions below. If you answer yes to two or more of the relationship, or your relationship is likely to become abusive.

- Are you frightened of your boyfriend or girlfriend's temper?
- Are you afraid to disagree with him or her?
- Do you find yourself apologizing to yourself or others for your behavior when you are treated badly?
- Have you been frightened by his or her violence towards you?
- Have you been hit, kicked, shoved or had things thrown at you?
- Do you not see friends or family because of his or her jealousy?
- Have you been forced to have sex?
- Have you been afraid to say no to sex?
- Are you forced to justify everything you do, every place you go to avoid his or her temper?
- Have you been wrongly and repeatedly accused of flirting?
- Are you unable to go out, get a job or go to school without him?
- Have you become secretive, ashamed or hostile to your friends or family?
- Have you become hostile to your friends or family?

Are you an Abuser?

Answer the questions below. If you answer yes to two or more of the questions, you may be an abuser.

- Are you extremely jealous and possessive?
- Do you have an explosive temper?
- Do you consistently ridicule, criticize or insult your girlfriend or boyfriend?
- Do you become violent when you drink and/or use drugs?
- Have you hit, pushed, kicked or otherwise injured them when they are drunk?
- Have you threatened to hurt or kill them or someone close to them?
- Have you threatened to have sex, or intimidated them when they are drunk?
- Do you make them account to you for every moment they spend with you?
- Do you spy on them or call them constantly to check up on them?
- Do you accuse them of seeing other guys or girls?



Above An Ashbrook student from a friend.

Below, Left Ashbrook student Carpenter office.

Juniata



Student receives consolation after a recent break up.

Guidance counselor Larry provides support to an abusive relationship.

You are in an abusive

friend or girlfriend's

ed every person you see
ing sex with others?
her permission?
because of this

then you are an abuser.

my friend?

were angry?

are afraid to say no?

ay from you?

Some general safety tips when breaking up are:

- If the break up is being planned face-to-face do it in a public environment.
- Tell people when and where the break up will be occurring.
- Plan to call a friend or someone that can be trusted to talk to after the break up to let them know what happened.
- Try not to be alone too much after the break up just in case the abuser wants to come and see their victim.
- Changing routine such as arriving at school at a different time so the abuser won't be able to find their victim as easily.
- Keep a list of numbers of people that can be called to talk to when upset.

Signs of Emotional Abuse

- He or she tells you who to see, what to do, or what to wear.
- He or she blames you for how he feels or tells you how you should feel.
- He or she monopolizes your time and checks up on you.
- He or she calls you names, accuses you of things, or gives you intimidating looks.
- Afraid to disagree with him or her.
- You often cry, explain yourself to him, or say you're sorry.

For Help:

National Domestic Violence Hotline

(800-799-SAFE)

Youth Crisis Hotline

(800-448-4663)

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

(303-839-1852)

By Sherry Flores/Staff Writer

'Morgan', an Ashbrook sophomore, was shocked to find out that she was in an abusive relationship. She is more shocked to realize that she has been in it for three years.

"At the beginning he was real nice and he understood me and made me feel comfortable", said 'Morgan'. "It was never how it is now."

Physical violence happens for many reasons. In 'Morgan's' case, jealousy, the way she dresses and even some of the things she says cause 'Nick' to be abusive.

"One day we were talking and I said some thing about his mom but it was a joke and he punched me on my arm and told me to not say something like that again."

'Morgan' said that she was a little shocked when it happened and thought that it would be a one time thing. She said that he acted as though he was upset and she felt that he had learned a lesson from how bad it made him feel.

"Then one day it happened again," she said. "And for a different reason."

The biggest difference this time was that he seemed a little less affected by the instance. According to 'Morgan', he didn't appear to be upset or remorseful.

Some components of physical abusive relationships are pushing, slapping, biting, and throwing objects or any form of physical abuse.

In 'Morgan's' situation the abuse wasn't something that was present since the beginning. Research shows that 98 percent of girls who are in an abusive relationship don't try to get help of any kind.

"It's hard to talk to someone about my relationship because a lot of my friends just tell me that I shouldn't be so dumb."

This student is one of many in that she has only told her friends but her parents are unaware of the situation. Unlike 'Morgan's' parents, 'Nick's' parents do know what going on but because he is an only child who will be going off to college next year they don't say anything about the subject.

'Morgan' often feels sad, lonely and depressed, as a result she cuts her herself to let her emotions out like other teens who are in an abusive relationship. 'Morgan' is still in it because of fear, manipulation and the apologies that follow every fight.

"Any one who is in an abusive relationship and can get out should," she said. "Because if you let it happen, it only gets worse and it's harder to get out of it."

Morgan and Nick are fictional names to protect the identities of Ashbrook students

By Journey Queen/Staff Writer

Junior Brittany Matthews' relationship was like any other high school relationship.

"In the beginning of our relationship everything was ok," said Brittany. "We would just talk on the phone a lot and learn more about each other. Then I think he became a little too comfortable in the relationship and that's when the abuse starting happening."

It was not until she realized that what she thought was him just being playful was very serious.

According to Matthews, her boyfriend began to call her names, remark about her appearance, and tell her that she was worthless. Plus, he began to accuse her of wanting to be unfaithful.

"At first I didn't really realize I was in an abusive relationship," according to Brittany, "When he would say mean things I just thought he was aggravated and was having a bad day."

Then Brittany's boyfriend would start saying more hurtful things more often or every time things weren't going exactly the way he wanted them to.

"He would say things to make me feel bad," says Brittany, "He would accuse me of things I did not do, put me down and call me names. I tried to not let them get to me but sometimes they got really hurtful."

Jealousy and possessiveness took over the relationship. He did not want her talking to guys at all.

"Anytime I talked to guys he would accuse me of cheating on him," Brittany says, "It seemed like he was becoming obsessed with me. He would call me all the time to find out where I was and whom I was with."

She became scared of her boyfriend. She would always call him right back if she missed his calls and would do anything he said in fear of what he would do or say if she "disobeyed" him. It was like he started controlling her life. At first she just thought he loved her a lot and cared about what she was doing to make sure she was safe but then she started questioning the relationship.

"Then the relationship really started going down the wrong path. I felt like every time we would argue it was all my fault and I took the blame," Brittany confesses, "It lead to me becoming depressed. I would get really upset about some simple things and cried a lot. I wanted to talk to someone about it but I didn't think anyone would really understand but then I knew I had to do something."

Some signs of verbal and emotional abuse are the abuser yelling at the victim, name-calling, say they will leave, threaten to hurt them, manipulate their thoughts, become jealous/possessive, they have unpredictable mood swings, etc.

Professional help was not for her and she felt she could not tell her mother.

"I didn't want my mom to know what was going on," Brittany said, "But I did end up telling my best friend what my boyfriend was doing and saying"

After she let out all of her thoughts and emotions out to her best friend she realized just how bad her relationship was. Talking to her friend and with her help she decided she needed to let her partner go.

"When I broke up with my boyfriend thankfully nothing happened," Brittany reassures, "He just stopped talking to me all together".

Some side-effects to being verbally and/or emotionally abused are the victim begins to doubt their own judgment, express their feelings less openly, make excuses for their partners behavior, become afraid of their partner, feel it is somehow harder for them to talk to others about their relationship and feel emotionally unsafe.

"No one should ever have to take abuse" says Matthews, "You should find somebody that truly loves and respects you or don't be in a relationship at all."

For the love of teaching

Student favorite Randall Lowe manages to make impact at Ashbrook while still staying connected with the students he teaches

BY PRESTON NEILL/Co-Editor

If the walls at Ashbrook High School could talk, one of the constants they would be able to mention would be Randall Lowe.

Lowe has served as an English teacher at Ashbrook since the school opened in 1970 and is the only faculty member or student to have been here since the school's inception. "It's like coming to a zoo everyday and not having to pay," said Lowe.

Lowe's tenure at Ashbrook has spanned over seven presidents, nearly 500 teachers, and over 4000 students. He has also outlasted one professional sports team in the Charlotte Hornets and one mall. When Lowe assumed his job at Ashbrook, Franklin Square didn't exist, movie theaters consisted of one screen, and gas could be found for seventeen cents per gallon.

To be a teacher in one place for so long, one would think a teacher would become rigid in their teaching methods and become the bane of all the students in the school, yet Lowe manages to elude the stereotypes.

"In his class, most students are introduced for the first time to real adult humor and adult play on words," said Sharon Eccles, who has worked with Lowe for almost thirty years. "The students really enjoy it."

However, it takes the students a bit of time to realize that Lowe isn't the rigid impression they may have of him, said senior Doug Branson, who had Lowe last year.

"My initial impression was that he was going to be hard lined. My mother was one of his students and told me that he wasn't one of the nicest teachers," said Branson. "Then again, my mother wasn't a very good student."

Senior Pete Blake agreed that his initial impressions of Lowe didn't hold as true as he would believe.

"When I walked into his class that first day, it was evident that he had been here since the beginning of the school," said Blake. "Stuff was just everywhere."

For a teacher that has been here so long, and came into a new school under the circumstances that Ashley and Holbrook had been merged, the story of how Lowe wound up at Ashbrook seems to be a let down.

"One of my friends taught at Ashley, and he had tipped me off that he was leaving and that there would be an opening there so I

interviewed for the job," said Lowe. "I started the first day Ashbrook opened in 1970."

Coming into Ashbrook, the school was in disarray, with parts of the school not finished and ceiling tiles lying on the ground, said Lowe. "It was new to everyone."

Thirty-four years after the rocky start, Lowe still remains a fixture at Ashbrook and his love of teaching still keeps him coming year after year.

"I love the exchange of ideas, both in seriousness and fun, that can be had in teaching," said Lowe.

Lowe is known throughout the school for his unique humor and approach to teaching. He brings a lighthearted approach to a subject that has been gradually worn down with the advent of the television and the popularity of movies. But in an era where students are looking for the easy out, Lowe manages to still connect with students after all these years, and draw the students into discussions about the works in question, without having to really adjust to the times and circumstances of the students.

"I don't think he's had to adjust at all," said Branson. "Realism doesn't adjust to the times, it applies itself to the times, and Lowe is very much a realist."

"Students have basically always been the same," said Lowe. "They just have different problems, concerns and attitudes."

One student who was strongly influenced by Lowe is theater arts teacher Jonathan Buckner. Buckner cites his junior year in English as one of the big reasons that he is a teacher today.

"Mr. Lowe is one of the reasons I became an English teacher, originally," said Buckner. "When I was a student, he would sit back and let us have a discussion. He would join in, and generally let the discussion go wherever it would, but always tie it back into the topic. And that's a big part of teaching, just directing which way those discussions go."

Lowe's sense of humor was present even back in 1988, when Buckner had him, and was used to teach his students a valuable lesson.

"I'll always remember the sign in his room that said 'No Bozos.' Whenever we did something stupid in class he would just look at us and point to the sign," said Buckner.

"He taught us the idea that high school students are responsible for their own behavior. He doesn't spoon feed people, and when students reach this level they don't need to be spoon fed."

One of the reasons that Lowe has remained a student favorite over the years is the teaching style of the class that is different from what most people experience in an English class prior to their time with Lowe.

"I will always remember that in his class, we had three to five choices when it came to assignments. One of the assignments would usually be a creative approach," said Buckner. "He was teaching to different learning styles before that became a popular idea."

"We have different teaching styles, I'm more organized and task oriented, but I respect the way that he teaches a class," said Eccles.

For someone that has made such an impact on the school for so long, one has to wonder when Lowe will leave the halls of Ashbrook. While no one is talking, or thinking about it yet, what is evident is that his presence will be missed once he does decide to step down, from both faculty and students alike.

"It's really been a joy to work with him, because of his humor," said Eccles. "Even the teachers and faculty need a laugh from time to time."

Principal Page Carver thinks that the impact of Lowe's retirement would be felt throughout the whole school.

"I believe that what gives Ashbrook the edge (over some of the other high schools) is the history and tradition, and (Lowe) has been a part of that," said Carver. "When he leaves it would be like losing another link to the past. He's been a great resource for checking facts. He has also been a great voice of experience, and a good mentor to some of the other teachers."

"I believe that when Lowe leaves, a piece of Ashbrook will leave with him, much to his chagrin," said Branson.

However, as Lowe points out, in something he hopes every student learns from his class, no one has all the answers.

"I'm just taking it year by year now, seeing how I feel," Lowe said.

But in typical Lowe fashion he joked, "I could retire after Christmas."

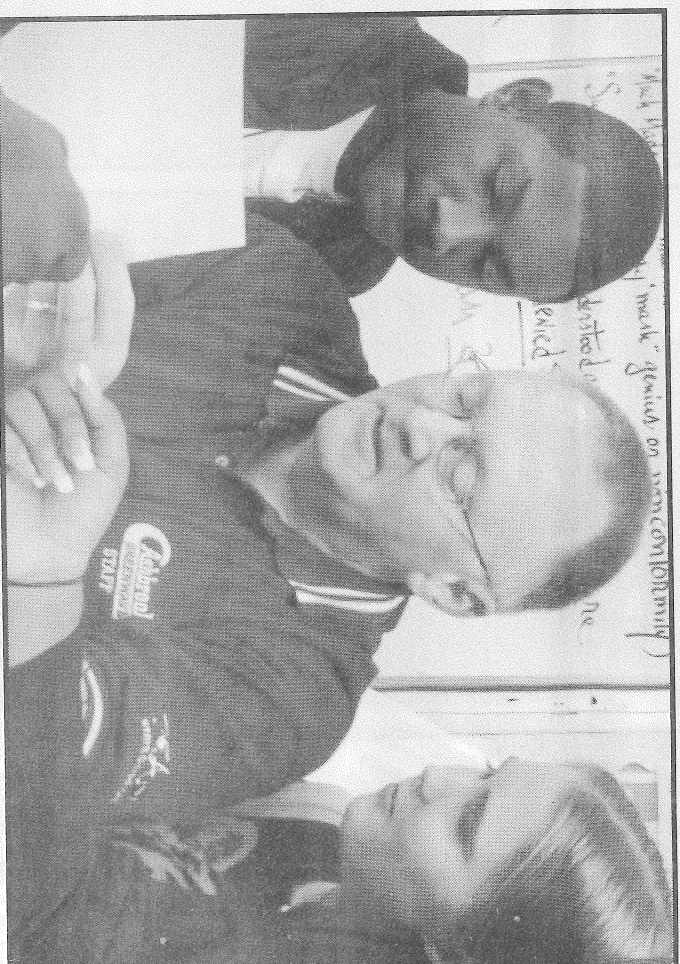


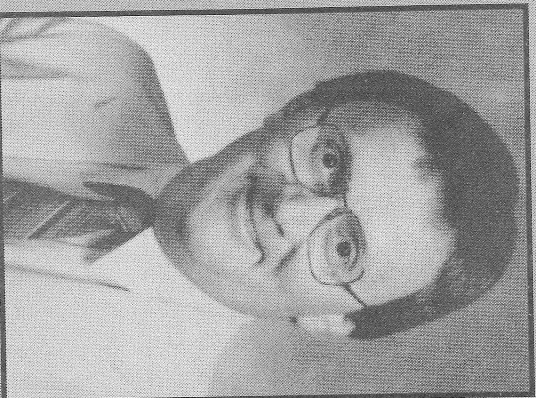
photo by Preston Neill
Randall Lowe assists juniors Bradley Antun and Caroline Lloyd with an English assignment. Lowe was known throughout the school for his ability to communicate with students in a serious and humorous environment, creating an environment that was easy for students to relax and learn.

The Many Faces of Randall Lowe



1974

Watergate breaks but Randall Lowe remains



1985

Motley Crie, Reagan Era, and Randall Lowe



1997

Randall Lowe outlasts the grunge movement



2004

Randall Lowe sees the end of the Red Sox curse
photos courtesy of Leaves of Green

MRSA continued from 1

targeted."

MRSA is a bacterial infection that resists most antibiotics. MRSA is spread by direct physical contact with an infected person, or by touching objects that have come in contact with an infected person. The infected area usually starts out as a small bump.

As the bump grows, it becomes redder and develops pus drainage. MRSA can be treated if it is caught early, but can be fatal if precautions are not taken.

Senior Caitlin Cavin worries about MRSA and takes extra precautions now.

"We're all taking precautions, we wash our hands after practice and are being more careful in keeping our lockers clean," said Cavin. "We're taking it seriously."

Calendar continued from 1

However, Giacobbe was not the only one who was not happy with the changes. Ashbrook assistant principal Rebecca Wilson fears that the new calendar will set up students for failure.

"Test scores are going to go down," said Wilson. "We have to test 95% of students, what are the chances of them coming? And what if it snows what are we going to do then?"

Ashbrook students also find fault with the calendar.

"I definitely don't like it because starting school late would mean that our exams will be after Christmas break and that is not good because it's hard to remember things after a long vacation," said junior Anna Gavvin. "I do like that we are going to have a long summer."

Gaston County School official Reeves McGlohon spearheaded the committee that created the proposed calendar. According to McGlohon, teachers, parents, administrators, and citizens offered input.

"We received feedback formally from about 130 people," said McGlohon. "Developing a calendar is a very difficult job."

McGlohon notes that starting school later and having teacher workdays at the end of each semester are the positives from the calendar. He notes post-Christmas exams and parent conference days on regular school days as negatives.

"The calendar we have will be one that serves our school very well," said McGlohon.

Junior Justin Kistler was also very let down to hear that exams would be after Christmas break because he plans on graduating early.

"There is no time to enroll."

Weight continued from 1

and notebooks for six classes."

If Soos takes home all of his books—algebra, world history, English, and physical science—plus at least two notebooks, his bag would weigh 24 pounds. That is 20 percent of his body weight.

The weight of Soos's bag is not uncommon. According to research conducted by *Wavelengths*, the average weight of an Ashbrook student's book bag averages 16.4 pounds. Students who take a heavy course load tended to have heavier book bags. Senior Leah Holiar's bag weighed 24 pounds and Junior Hristina Vondencharski's bag weighed 25 pounds.

To compound the problem, most students wear their book bags in an improper fashion. Students tend to wear the bags as low as possible which increases the pressure put on the back, neck, and shoulders.

"Most bags are designed to be worn high on the back," said Pegdigo. "This distributes the weight and helps maintain posture. Unfortunately, most students ignore that."

According to the U.S. Consumer Products and Safety Commission, more than 7,000 children were injured last year due to overloaded backpacks. Some weighed as much as 45

pounds. Experts recommend that backpacks weigh no more than 10-15 percent of the person's weight.

A solution to reducing a heavy book bag is a bag with wheels. However, physical therapist Tyler Selby does not recommend book bags on wheels if a child will be using stairs during the day. She says that they are heavier and difficult to safely carry with one hand. Also book bags with wheels could get in the way and cause students to trip over them.

"All it takes is a second to throw your back out and herniate a disc or something like that," said Selby.

One out of three students surveyed by *Wavelengths* said that they had used rolling bags.

"I used to have a rolling book bag," said Soos. "But it got in way and it didn't really fit in my locker."

Problems with rolling book bags go beyond possible health ramifications. Sophomore Jaron Holliday has a personal issue with a rolling book bag.

"It would basically look dorky," said Holliday. "And I am not wearing mine up high either."

Bad posture is another difficulty that heavy book bags may cause. Heidi Orloff of the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington found that kids counter the weight of knowledge by looking like they are staggering under it, walking with their bodies bent forward and their heads down.

When four students were asked why their book bags were so heavy each student replied with the answer that teachers gave too much homework.

However sophomore Dustin Walsh found a simple solution to lighten his bag: "I never do my homework."

Report continued from 1

legislation but receives no federal funding. This requirement puts a large strain on the school systems.

However, some students see these federal mandates as barriers.

"No Child Left Behind is a classic case of legislators trying to create a perfect world," said senior Craig Rawe. "It can't exist. We can't make academic scholars out of everyone."

Rawe is the Vice President of the Student Council and also served as a House of Representatives page in the United States Congress. Rawe's feelings towards the NCLB Act typify most students' feelings that the standards set for the North Carolina School Report Card are too tedious and time-consuming. Wilson agrees.

"Theoretically, it's an easy way to make comparisons," she said. "Actually, (NCLB) is not good in practice."

Before, schools took "normed reference tests" as opposed to "criterion

reference tests". Normed reference tests graded an entire group of students based upon the averages from a small group of students. While this type of test was not representative of the students, it helped teachers teach the curriculum without a final test like an EOC or an EOG. Many believe that the dependency on these criterion reference tests takes away from actual learning.

"Since we've switched to criterion reference tests, scores have gone way up," said Wilson. "Real life learning has not been there. Right now, we give students the knowledge they need to pass a test, but not the knowledge they need for a lifetime."

Wilson cites the proverb, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, but teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." Rawe, along with most students, tend to agree with this adage.

"We shouldn't be teaching the tests," said Rawe. "Some students need to be left behind if we're going to sacrifice real education to make someone in Washington or Raleigh look good."

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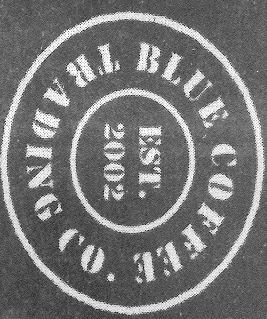
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S

Top Performer:
Brittany Walker
Sophomore



Sophomore cross country runner Brittany Walker completed one the most successful seasons in Ashbrook cross country history. Walker finished fifth in the state 3-A women's cross country meet. Walker also won her second consecutive conference and county championship.

Spotlight

Swimming

East Lincoln 330
Ashbrook 290
East Lincoln ended Ashbrook's three year conference unbeaten streak in men's swimming on November 15.

The team was hurt by the absence of senior all-conference swimmer Trey Taylor.

Ashbrook Leads Big South 3-A Cup Standings

Ashbrook leads the Big South 3-A Wachovia Cup standings. The Wachovia Cup is a competition among conference and state schools to see which school has the best teams. First place finishes garner 10 points, while second place finishes earn nine and so on and so forth. In case of a tie for a place points are split.

Ashbrook has scored 59 points, and leads rival Forsythview by a close 2.5 points. Ashbrook has finished first in men's and women's cross country, soccer, women's tennis, and tied for first with South Point in football. Forsythview has stayed close with second place finishes in women's tennis, men's soccer, and football. Ashbrook looks to maintain and extend its lead with high expectations in both men's and women's swimming and basketball.

SPORTS

Strive for Perfection, Settle for Excellence

BY AUSTIN BRADSHAW/Staff Writer

Ashbrook men's varsity basketball coach Marty Hatchell is known for reciting quotes in the locker room to motivate and inspire his teams.

These quotes vary from basketball to quotes about life in general. Every year each team has their own quote or motto. Hatchell's players feel these quotes do help them in games and in life by making them never settle for anything, but their best.

The 2005 team's quote is "good things happen to people who do right."

Living by this quote, Hatchell has gone from a three sport varsity star to one of the most successful basketball coaches in the area.

Hatchell attended Scotland County High in Laurinburg, North Carolina. He played varsity football his 11th grade year, varsity basketball 11th and 12th grade, and varsity baseball 10-12th grade. He was all-conference in baseball and earned an academic/baseball scholarship to Campbell, where he studied dentistry. Two years later, he transferred to St. Andrews Presbyterian College to play baseball.

Following his graduation from St. Andrews, Hatchell took the head 9th grade baseball, basketball, and football coaching jobs at Lee County Jr. High. Hatchell developed a winning football team, losing only two games in five years, but was denied a chance to move up as a high school varsity coach.

"After that I decided it was time to move on," said Hatchell, "I had reached the peak there."

Hatchell then applied for the defensive coordinator job at Bessemer City High School. He not only received the football job, but also became an assistant baseball coach and the varsity women's basketball coach. With five games left Hatchell got his first taste of varsity men's basketball.

"At the end of the year they fired the head coach and I coached both teams for the rest of the season," said Hatchell, "It was my chance and I never looked back."

By working hard and doing right, Hatchell had good things happen.

After giving up coaching baseball, Hatchell led the Yellow Jackets to numerous conference championships and the 1991 2-A state title game, which they lost to Ayden Griffin. Major League Baseball pitcher Kevin Millwood started on the team and other players from the team went on to play collegiate basketball. During

the course of the season, the team became one of Hatchell's favorites because of their determination.

"That team never quit," said Hatchell, "They were always down late in the game but always managed a way to win."

During his 12 year tenure at Bessemer City, Hatchell won an impressive four conference championships. Along with his successful basketball job, Hatchell split time as a P.E. teacher and a history teacher.

In 1998 Hatchell applied for the vacant Ashbrook High School men's basketball coaching job. A few perks included being a permanent P.E. teacher and it was closer to home. When Hatchell

the conference championship in 2001 as the Greenwave went 19-4. Coming into the 2002 season, Hatchell had high hopes for the season with rising seniors Britton Thomas, Jazz Cathcart, and Jabar Adams.

"Britton (Thomas) is the best shooter I have ever coached," said Hatchell. "And Jabar (Adams) is hands-down the best defensive player I've known."

The talented trio did not disappoint as the Greenwave ran away with the inaugural Big South 3A conference title. Thomas garnered player of the year honors, while Adams and Cathcart were named all conference first team. The team steamrolled through the first



Coach Marty Hatchell uses a timeout to instruct his team during a game last season. After 12 successful seasons at Bessemer City High School, Hatchell is looking for his first state basketball championship at Ashbrook. Victory seems to be within his grasp as Ashbrook has one of the most talented teams in his tenure.

received the job, it was tough for him to leave Bessemer City.

"It was tough," said Hatchell. "Bessemer City had become like my second family."

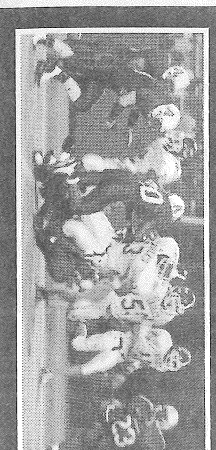
Many of the Bessemer City High School faculty and coaches agreed.

"It was a shame Marty had to leave, but it was a step up on the coaching rung going from a 2A school to a 4A," said Bessemer City High School athletic director, Mike Mahaffey. "He was one of the finest people I have ever known and we will always root for him."

In addition to coaching football, Hatchell's first Ashbrook basketball team went a sub-par 12-11 and failed to reach the playoffs. The team improved vastly in the next year, as the team bought into Hatchell's system and won the Mega-7 4A conference championship with an outstanding record of 21-3. Ashbrook again won

The varsity football team ended its playoff run in the third round with a loss to T.C. Roberson.

see page 12



The loss in experience showed as the team went an un-Hatchell-like 10-11 and failed to make the play-offs for the first time in three years. During the 2004 season the time off from football appeared to have positive results, as a young Greenwave team posted a record of 18-8 and returned to the playoffs where they lost in the second round.

With a core of returning juniors and two seniors, Hatchell's team appears poised for success for the next two seasons.

"With our returning players and depth we hope to win conference," said Hatchell. "But (Hunter) Huss, North and East (Gaston) may give us a run for our money."

Over the years Hatchell has amassed an impressive 7 conference titles at Bessemer City High School and Ashbrook. But what may be even more impressive is Hatchell's record of graduating players. Only one of Hatchell's varsity basketball players have failed to earn their high school diploma. Hatchell feels that success in the classroom is as important as success on the court.

"To be a winner on the court you've got to be a winner in the classroom," said Hatchell. "You have to push yourself and do your best in everything you do."

In other words, good things will happen when they do right.

In addition to graduating players, a large contingent of his players have gone on to play basketball at the collegiate level. His players have gone on to earn scholarships to UNC Greensboro, Pfeiffer, Montreat, and Wingate.

Hatchell has been known to always practice what he preaches. He is renowned by his friends and colleagues for his work ethic.

"He's (Hatchell) got to be the hardest working person I've ever met," said assistant varsity basketball coach Richard Carme. "He hates to lose and he will work his butt off so he won't."

Hatchell tries to instill this mentality in all his players. His stresses patience and discipline as offense and aggressiveness as defense on the defensive side of the ball.

That attitude comes across his current players. Senior Blaine Brooks has heard it several times.

"One of his favorite quotes 'Strive for perfection, settle for excellence,'" said Brooks. "You might think it's kind of corny, but once you sit and think has a lot of meaning to basketball and life."

Instant Offense 101

History against women's basketball

By Powell Latimer/Staff Writer

After bowing out short of a state championship last year, men's basketball team looks for instant offense to ensure a successful season.

The team lost two key four-year starters off of last year's team, but hopes its massive frontcourt of 6' 4" junior Devin Harris, 6' 5" junior Eric Brice, and 6' 6" junior Jamion Holland will help the team emerge victorious in conference.

Harris forced his way into the starting lineup last year and was key part of the team's success in the postseason last year. However, he was absent during the first part of the season as football made its run for the state championship.

Harris, who was playing receiver for the football team until the loss to T.C. Roberson ended their season. The team hoped that Junior Eric Brice can fill Harris' roll for the time being. Brice performed admirably in a starting role in the team's scrimmage against Crest with two one-handed dunks.

While there was a recognizable drop-off without Harris, Brice's performance has cast aside fears that the Greenwave would be crippled without their star power forward.

"He'll be alright," said junior guard Reggie Hopkins. "He had some nasty dunks against Crest, so we'll be alright with him."

The center position looks to be filled by Holland. Holland transferred from Crest and could provide the push that the Greenwave needs to go over the edge and into the state championship.

While the team gets impressive production from its frontcourt, the backcourt tandem of Hopkins and point guard Chris Pierce have the talent and shooting that it takes to win. Small forward Darius Floyd can score any time and any where and has started since his freshman year.

The Greenwave also features a deep bench. While Brice is the highlight player off of the bench early this year, other players can step in to provide key minutes. Senior Blake Brooks can step in to provide spot

minutes. Other key contributors off the bench are sophomore Adam Caldwell and Senior Antonio Surratt. Caldwell got the early-season start against Crest.

"He is getting more experience every day," said Coach Marty Hatchell about Caldwell. "He'll be a role player this year."

However, the main determining factor in this team's success could be how well this team bonds as a unit and embraces the system. Coach Hatchell's system is a modified form of the Princeton offense, which requires off-the-ball screens and complicated plays.

"With Hatchell's system, you're always moving, cutting, or doing something," said former player Chris Long. "It's really complicated. But when it works, it's so easy to score."

In the team's first game, a loss to Crest, the need to embrace the system was evident.

"We took too many outside shots," said Hatchell. "We weren't physical enough on the inside."

That will change with the addition of Harris and as the team adapts itself to Hatchell's system.

Another addition that could boost this team's chances is senior Eric Boyce. Boyce was unsure of whether or not he would play basketball, but now he intends to play, according to Coach Hatchell.

"He should help us out a lot," said Hatchell. "He'll be in the running for the point guard spot, along with Chris Pierce."

This year's team hopes that it can redeem itself after falling short in several contests with Forestview. Confidence is running high within the team that they can reverse the scales.

In fact, the main competition for the conference title may not even be Forestview this year. According to assistant coach Richard Carsner, East Gaston and Berry Academy will be the main challengers.

"Berry is always scary simply because they have the best athletes," said Carsner. "But we'll be fine without Harris. When he comes back we'll be that much better."



Junior Devin Harris awaits the alley-ooop from a fellow team mate in a game against Fried T. Ford High School. Harris, who joined to the team last year, has proved to be a valuable offensive and defensive presence on the court.

Two-Minute Drill by Bryan Cockfield

In the 2001 elections, a school bond referendum was proposed. Gaston County needed approximately 220 million dollars for improvements in the school system. It passed with an outstanding majority of votes, nearly 70 percent.

After the bond was scaled back to 89 million dollars, athletics were clearly being left out. They would only receive two million to spread out to all high schools in the county.

Since then, the bond money had been frozen, even though Forestview received its bond money and other schools, such as Ashbrook, did not, causing

problems in both academics and athletics.

At Ashbrook alone, low-income sports such as cross country, volleyball, and women's tennis are desperate for funds. The county had even tried to charge money for admittance to these fan-lacking sports, and the result wasn't even smaller amount of spectators.

The cross country team did not have enough shorts to go around to the seven men on the varsity team, and last year the men's team even ran a meet at Ashbrook in only their boxer shorts. Some of the runners had to purchase shorts with their own money to run in meets where the entire varsity team

was required to wear the same kind of uniform.

The team has held car washes and has helped sell concessions during various events at Ashbrook's stadium, but still are left out when funds are apportioned to various sports.

This goes against one of county athletic director Butch Adams's goals. He doesn't want schools to charge athletes a fee to participate in sports to cover the cost of equipment, but some students have to pay for their equipment directly any way.

The cross-country team is not alone in their deprivation of funds. Several years ago, one of the light fixtures at the stadium collapsed after an ice storm. As a safety precaution, the entire

history of the program. Over three years, from 96-99, the team recorded 50 wins under coaches Lynn Rhymes and Joe Shepherd. In their last winning season (98-99), the team recorded 21 wins to four losses and were conference champions under Shepherd.

The change (or fall) seems to have come the year following the team's conference championship. The year following a 21-4 overall record, the team plummeted to 3-18.

"The girls just stopped coming out after that championship," said teacher and coach Al Hess. "I don't know."

Coach Hess is the coach of a very successful women's cross country team that won their conference title earlier this year. Other women's programs are successful as well. Women's track, while only having five runners, still sent three of them to the state competition and was a conference favorite until the injury of key runners. Women's tennis won their conference championship this year and sent two players to the state playoffs. Women's golf has qualified for the state championship tournament last year and sent one player to the state playoffs. With other women programs experiencing success, why does women's basketball lose and lose and lose? Several arguments could be made.

The reason for lack of success could be lack of experience, if the team didn't have 3 seniors. Allison Fox, Bethann Urban, and Caitlin Cavin, all have three years of heavy playing time behind them, but have not yet discovered how to win games.

Could the reason be lack of talent? Not on this team. It takes five players from a Grier program that has experienced success over the last few years, finishing over .500 each of the last 7 seasons and reaching the county championship twice.

Ashbrook has the athletes to compete in any stadium was shut down. The track teams and the women's soccer team could not practice at the facility and all meets and games had to be moved elsewhere.

The fixture was eventually replaced, and the track teams were able to run on the track before the conference meet, and the women's soccer team held games at Ashbrook at the end of the season.

The football team may receive the largest amount of funds of the sports, but athletics are not the most important thing at a school. Academics must not be left out.

However, some students only stay in school for as long as they do because they excel in their sport of choice. Schools should give priority to academics, but also realize that the school would better

sport, the only problem is that they don't all play. Women's basketball is a perfect example of this. Many players who played and started in middle school simply don't play in high school. Others quit after a few years with the team. Senior Sally Peach played and started for three years, yet does not return for her senior season because of what she felt was poor coaching.

"Our coaches focus too much on plays," said Peach. "There's not enough emphasis on freelaunching."

Peach is not the only one who quit the team. Diana Amaya and Kayla Short both played at Grier. However, Amaya did not play after her freshman year on junior varsity, and Short did not play in High School.

"I just wanted to focus on softball" said Short. "I didn't want to get hurt playing basketball and miss the softball season"

Could the reason be coaching? Coach Leanne Rhymes went on to coach Mary Hall McCarver at Forestview, Tudor now coaches at a successful North Gaston program and Coach Smith has experienced success in his past jobs.

Women's basketball is not plagued by lack of talent, nor is it saddled with sub par coaching. The program faces one obstacle that only the student body can help it overcome: support.

When the time comes for women's basketball, no one's face brightens up with joy. At the games the stands are bare and empty. There is no chest club for women's basketball, no screaming fans, no "zoo crew". The program is beset by apathy, and there is only one way to reverse that.

Women's basketball team needs student bodies on the sidelines. They need people excited about their team. If the student body showed up and showed up loud at some women's basketball games, then who knows? History could reverse itself.

Itself if athletics were not as neglected.

Some consideration should be given to these students. Without sports in high schools, there would likely be an increase in the dropout rate. As it stands now, we cannot afford an increase in dropout rates.

Some Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools even have on-campus pools. Meanwhile, Gaston County swimmers are forced to swim at the Mount Holly YMCA, a pool built and maintained for water aerobics.

Maybe Ashbrook will never be able to go as far as an on-campus pool, but Gaston County should at least allocate the funds that they have rather than freezing them after showing preference to other schools.

T.C. Roberson Ends Wave Playoff Run

By Austin Bradshaw/Staff Writer

The Ashbrook varsity football team defeated rival Hunter Huss 43-0 to win the victory bell for the third straight year.

On senior night, the Wave used a power rushing attack and big-play passing game to dominate the Huskies. Senior running back Eric Boyce rushed for two touchdowns, while a fellow senior, quarterback Cole Russell, threw for two scores.

"Huss is our rival," said Boyce, "You've got to bring your best game."

Not to be taken for granted was the play of the Ashbrook defense. Much maligned over the season, the defense held an explosive Huskie rushing offense in check. Junior cornerback Antonio Surrait intercepted a pass and returned it for a score to put the Greenwave on top 29-0 at halftime. Ashbrook secured the number four seed in the 3-AA West bracket and defeated Lake Norman in the first round of the playoffs. The Wave defense buckled down after allowing Lake Norman to score an opening drive touchdown. The offense was in gear, as they ran the ball right at the Lake Norman defense, eating up clock and yardage.

"We played Ashbrook football," said junior wide receiver Brett Conner. "We just ran it down their throat."

The second round match-up featured A.L. Brown and the home standing Greenwave. Ashbrook jumped out to a 24-6 halftime lead, due largely to A.L. Brown's problems punting the ball. Short punts and bad snaps put the Greenwave in great field position as they seemingly put the game away by halftime.

The Wonders fought back, scoring twice in the third quarter to cut the lead. The score was 30-22 late in the fourth, but the defense bailed out the Wave once again. With 54 seconds to go and A.L. Brown driving, senior

defensive back Tremaine Boone intercepted a pass to seal the game. This victory set up a date with number one seed T.C. Roberson

It was a tale of two halves as Ashbrook was dominated in the first half on a frigid night in Asheville. On the second play of the game senior running back De'von Mills tipped of a 74 yard touchdown run. Ashbrook countered two possessions later with a 43 yards pass from Russell to junior wide receiver Devin Harris to tie the score at seven. Mills continued to rip off large gains on the ground against the Ashbrook defense, scoring four first-half touchdowns. He also wreaked havoc on the Ashbrook offense, intercepting three passes in the red zone.

A fired-up Greenwave team emerged from the locker room and used the familiar power running attack to drive down the field to make the score 34-14. A 99 yard touchdown pass to junior slot back Clay Patton cut the lead to 34-21, but the lead was insurmountable, as the Greenwave fell in the third round of the playoffs for the second year in a row.

Lost in the defeat was the superb play of Russell. Russell threw for 271 yards and bringing his season total to 1,963 yards and career total to 3,583 yards. Russell leaves Ashbrook as the school's leader in every major passing category and a record of 30-6 as a starter.

The Ashbrook football team finished with a 10-4 record in addition to a conference championship with South Point. Coach Joe Shepherd received Big South 3-A Coach of the Year honors, while Boyce and Harris garnered first team all conference honors. Ashbrook has a strong foundation for next year with nine returning starters on defense. Many backups this year received significant playing time due to injuries, and they will be expected to step up and play important roles.

Mustangs edge Greenwave, End Three-Year Win Streak

By Powell Latimer/Staff Writer

For three straight years Ashbrook swimming has dominated the Big South 3A conference, going undefeated in conference meets. Not one person on either the men's or the women's team had any knowledge of losing a swim meet before this year.

All that changed in 2004.

This year in their first meet of the season, the men's team lost by 40 points to East Lincoln. The women's team lost to South Point in the second meet of the season.

"I wanted to finish my career without losing," said senior Alex Lytton. "I would have done anything to go four years undefeated."

Lytton's first-place finishes in the 100 meter breaststroke, 200 meter IM, and two relays were not enough to secure a win for the Ashbrook men.

Why did the mens' team lose after having essentially the same stars from last year? The reason for their defeat is simple, according to Coach Lloyd White: depth. This problem reared its ugly head in the first meet when senior Trey Taylor was absent for unknown reasons. The team lost by 40 points, which, oddly enough, is the amount of points that are awarded for two first-place finishes and also the difference in points between a first place relay and a second place relay. Coincidentally, Taylor usually was first in the 100 meter backstroke and the 100 meter freestyle as well as crucial legs in two relays.

"If they had been there we would have won," said White. "That just shows you how little margin for error there is."

Despite their lack of quality depth, the team is still lead by the four swimmers that dominated the conference for the last three

years. Alex Lytton, Tripp Lewis, Bryan Cockfield, and Austin Munnel are the "four horsemen" that drive the Greenwave success. These swimmers, along with an influx of swimmers from the soccer team, give Ashbrook a chance to renew its hold on the conference championship.

Another key contributor to the team's success is junior Josh Rutherford. Rutherford is the defending conference runner-up in the 100-meter butterfly, a race won last year by former teammate Jared Lytle. Lytle is now graduated, and Rutherford looks to stake his claim on a first-place finish this year.

The women's team had no excuses in its loss to South Point. There were no histrionics, no key race, only a consistent beating by a very good South Point team. According to coach Lloyd White, the team lacks a go-to type swimmer who can be counted on to win every race.

"The only studs we have are Jessica [Allen] and Sarah [McSpadden]," says White. "And they aren't studs... We're not going to win every race. But we're going to place a couple people in every race."

Seniors McSpadden and Allen are the leaders of a team that is not great like its predecessors but just strong enough to challenge or win meets.

Junior Morgan White is a rising star in the backstroke, and fellow Juniors Mary Knox Dickson and Meredith Lisle are solid. Junior Allie Hess can contribute but is hampered by a painful shoulder injury.

Baring a miraculous jump in talent level, this year's girl's team does not look to have a go-to swimmer next year, facing an equally challenging season when Ashbrook moves into 4A competition.

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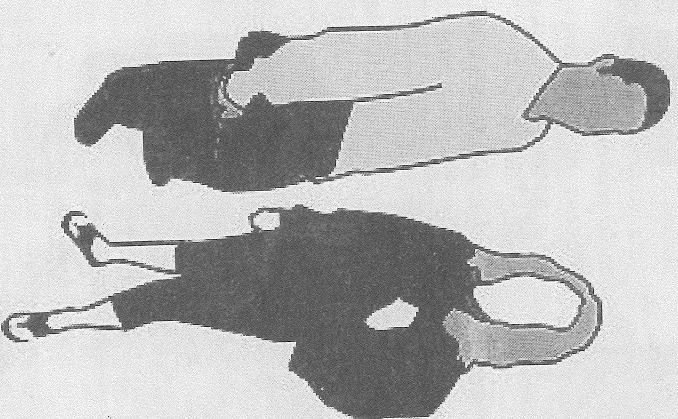
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