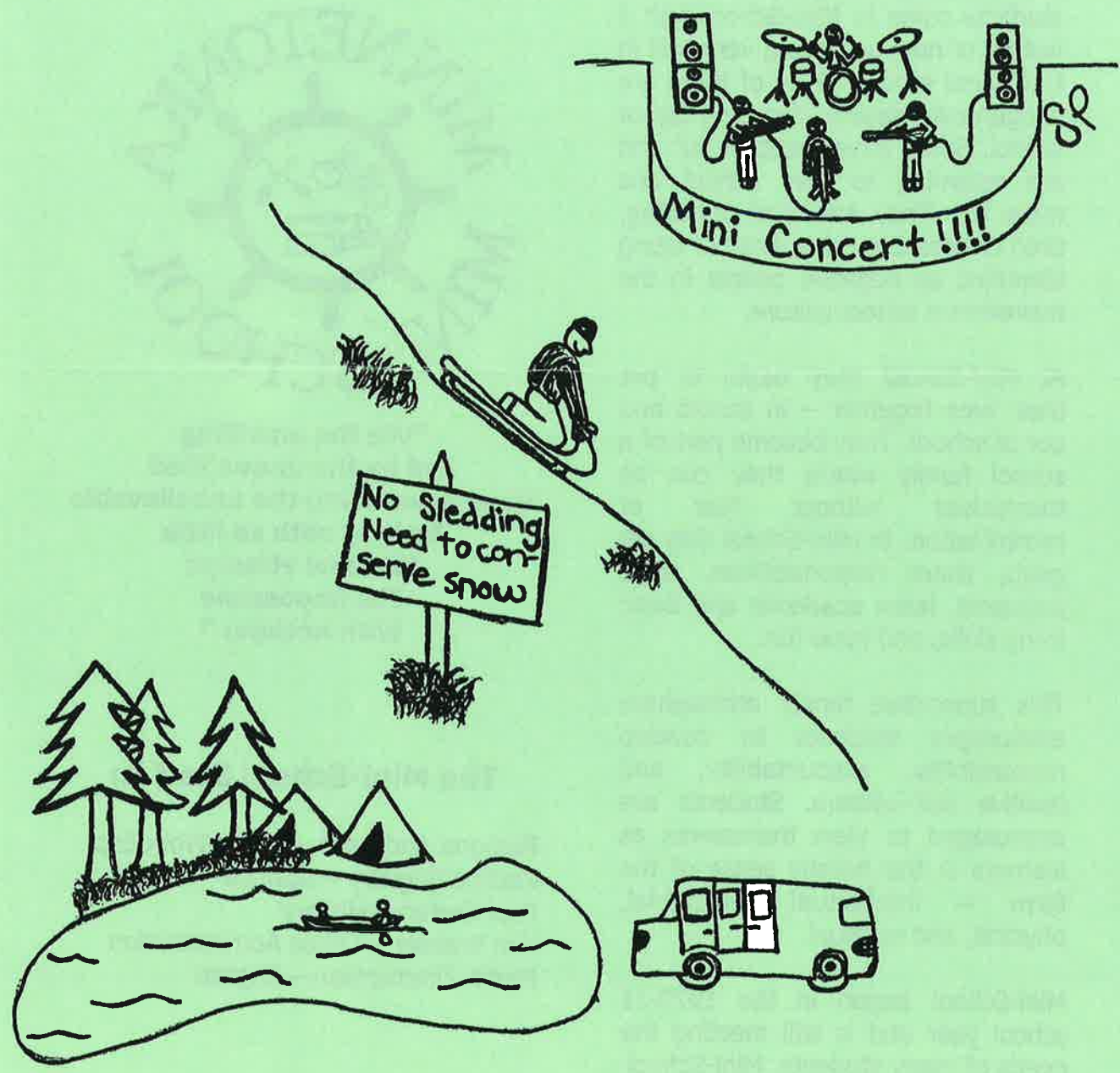


Com - Mini-Cations

Spring Issue 2002



Mini-School Overview

Mini-School is an alternative program located within Minnetonka High School where tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders are working together with a group of teachers to change their attitudes and perspectives. The students come to Mini-School with a history of not succeeding very well in traditional school. Many of them are dangerously close to dropping out of school. Some have dropped out and are returning to give school one more try. They are tired of failing, tired of breaking rules, tired of being identified as negative people in the mainstream school culture.

At Mini-School they begin to put their lives together – in school and out of school. They become part of a school family where they can be themselves without fear of recrimination. In Mini-School they set goals, share responsibilities, solve problems, learn academic and basic living skills, and have fun.

This supportive family atmosphere encourages students to develop responsibility, accountability, and positive self-esteem. Students are encouraged to view themselves as learners in the holistic sense of the term – intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual.

Mini-School began in the 1970-71 school year and is still meeting the needs of many students. Mini-School

now serves not only the Minnetonka School district but neighboring districts as well, due to its affiliation with the larger Area Learning Center.

If you know of a student in need of Mini-School, please contact us at 952-401-5920.



**"We the unwilling
Led by the unqualified
Have been doing the unbelievable
So long with so little
We now attempt
The impossible
With nothing."**

The Mini-School Staff is:

Ramona Anderson – Math, Work Exp.
Pauline Engleby – Science
Paul Gerten – History
Kim Weimer – Office Administration
Merlin Zimmerman – English

Meandering Through Mini-School

By: Pauline Engelby

During my first years as a Mini-School teacher, I was working in the trip room and I came across a box of t-shirts. Printed on them was the quotation, "We, the unwilling led by the unqualified, have been doing the unbelievable for so long with so little, we now attempt the impossible with nothing". I was proud to be part of Mini-School the strong sense of history and pride in achieving important things for kids. I saw the same pride in the kids' faces whenever they returned from a particularly strenuous trip or accomplished their graduation goals. This pride is the thing that makes Mini-School unique. Anyone that has been involved with the program as a student, parent, secretary, teacher, or supportive friend understands this pride. As another year comes to an end I find myself taking inventory and I see that same pride in the faces of our graduating seniors. Mini-School pride is as strong today as it was thirty-two years ago.

Soon we will be acknowledging these accomplishments as well as many others at our annual recognition ceremony. Many of our seniors are especially looking forward in anticipation to the upcoming graduation events, including the pomp and circumstance at Northrop Auditorium. Others will struggle through the final days facing physical and mental challenges of summer school classes, or trips such as the

Wilderness challenge and the Superior Hiking Trip. I sincerely hope these final days are remembered fondly in the years to come.

Mini-School staffers have been hard at work these past few months making final plans for this year and preparing for next year. I am sorry to report our secretary Kim Wiemer will be leaving us at the end of the year. Kim has been part of the staff for the past two years and has been a dream come true. The kids know her as the lady in the office always with the friendly smile and an ear to lend. The staff will find it difficult to replace her efficiency, insight, and friendship. She will be missed by all of us as she goes on to her new life across the border in Wisconsin. We wish you good luck on your new adventure.

Paul Gerten "the new trip guy" has reportedly been in the wilderness with students for a total of forty days (and forty nights) this year with many of Mini-School's brightest and bravest. He most recently returned from the annual spring Boundary Waters Trip with eight students including Megan Burns, Jake Stumme, Jake Rutstien, Tom Mason, Mark Lewis, John Shannon, Tyler Rouse, and Kate Muir, oh yeah and Jackson the dog. Shortly before the trip to the BWCA Paul led a group of twelve students along with Doug Berg "the old trip guy" down the Green River in Utah. The group of eleven included Andrew Beddor, Joe Morseth, Carl Poulsen, Monica Duperre, Dustin Mencil, Tamara

Roberts, Andrew Bernstien, April Brown, Marc Cohen, Lindsay Klug, Jared Yount. The group was out for eighteen days seeing the sights of the southwest including a study of the Pueblo and Anasazi Indians, and ending with an eight-day canoe trip through Canyonlands National Park. When Paul isn't out on trips you can find him in the classroom, teaching students about American History or in the gym playing an animated game of dodgeball.

To add to the Mini-School itinerary of spring trips Merlin "Mer" Zimmerman was experiencing the Badlands of the Dakotas with Jenny Blankenship, Megan Burns, Jake Rutstien, Chris Korolchuk, Kate Muir, Jennifer Pettit, Jake Stumme, and Monica Duperre. Some highlights of the trip included numerous buffalo sightings, and the visiting with the sculpture guy Wayne Porter they met somewhere along the freeway in South Dakota.

Merlin has also been hard at work this year drumming with the Minnesota Pipes and Drums in numerous pipe band competitions around the US and Canada. Merlin was also sighted in the St. Patrick's Day parade in St. Paul and at the Macalester College Highland Fair sporting the latest in kilt fashion.

Ramona has been diligently working with her math students trying to complete their graduation standards in what we fondly call "the pool room" (which, by the way has nothing to do with leisure swimming). Nathan Schwartz, Jenna

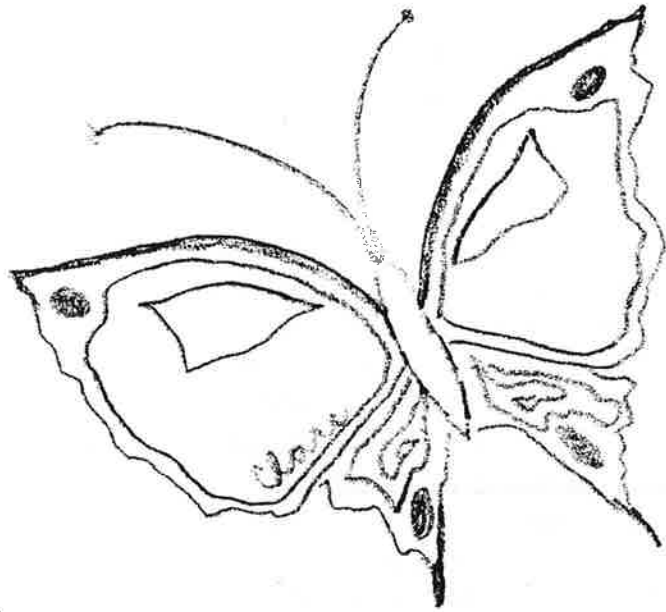
Bergman, Shane Pelino, and Jennifer Pettit have been spotted building their final projects to the precise scale. She has also been hard at work leading us through the maze of state sanctioned ALC rules along with numerous other coordination responsibilities. She also helps the Mini-School staff keep on track with a combination of new ideas and old traditions.

Much of my year has been spent working with kids on their graduation plans and goals. I have picked up where Randy Nelson left off by guiding students through their graduation requirements. Keeping track of students' standards has certainly added an element of complexity to the process. What I enjoy the most about this part of my job is that I get an opportunity several times a year to sit down with kids and talk to them one to one about their goals and desires for the future. When I'm not meeting with students I am in the classroom teaching things like the physics of motion to kids like the Sass brothers Rob and Bill, Ryan Sterns, Dan Johnson, or Nikki Huddleston and Monica Williams.

I also am facilitating the newly reorganized Teen Issues Group, formerly known as Women's Issues. Mini-School has a long tradition of providing support groups for it's students and last year the Mini-Women decided that it was discriminatory to not include both genders in our group. We have adopted new members Tyler Rouse,

Brett Bauman, Josh Zelazny, and Shane Pelino. Congratulations boys and breaking through the glass ceiling.

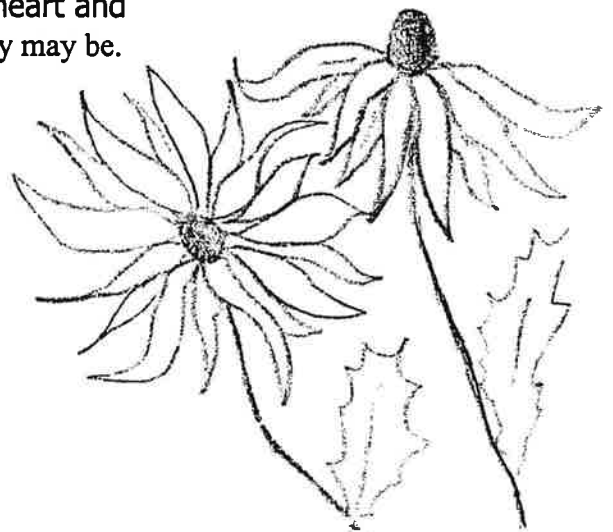
Looking forward into the coming year we are anticipating the return of many of our veteran students as well as thirty-some new students. Graduates will enter into colleges, and jobs, creative educational plans are in the works for returning seniors, new curriculum will be developed, trips will be planned. I know that we will have some successes, make some mistakes, wipe some tears, but most of all we will continue the tradition of developing pride in young Mini-School men and women.



Riddle

By: Monica Williams

I have found the answers to the universe. To some it may be difficult to recognize but we can find the answers in a small object. This object I have heard comes in many sizes. I've never seen one up close but I know it's there. It can become cold with time and hard like a rock, but when you find a warm one it's a treasure you'll never want to let it go. If everyone in the world had one, one that was good for all time, there would be a cure for persecution, prejudice, injustice, and happiness would follow you wherever you go. A heart is the object you seek, so have a heart and be kind to others who ever they may be.



War Protesting : What Is It Good For? The Pros and Cons Debated

By David Zernechel and
Tom Mason

David: Protesting Makes A Point

Protesting is a good way to get your point around and it is a good way to show what freedom of speech really means. It tells people what your point a view is on anything. Why be against a freedom of speech, any ways? Because you don't want to listen and you get sick of people with signs out side walking around and waving there signs? They are doing what is right, or what they think is right for them and this country. And it does get your word around schools, and businesses people who don't want to listen to the protesters. But still, they all have the courage to step out and show themselves to try to stop stuff or start things up like no other way, at all. So, I agree with the freedom of speech and protesting.

Tom: Protesting Is Not Helping Anything

I think that protesting is a way for a certain group of people to be acknowledged for having a certain belief. When people protest nowadays, they are protesting to improve their own life and not really to help the group. But when it comes to war, many "hippies" and people that want peace in the world will protest against war. They will stand on busy street corners and hold up

signs for hours that say "End the War", and "Violence is Wrong", etc... Well, when I see people protesting I think for one that they are crazy and two people are not going to listen to them. When they are protesting they are obviously trying to prove a point. Unless you can get a meeting with the president or get a million people to back you up, no one will even think about let alone listen to what you have to say. Trying to protest against war is very hard and usually doesn't get anywhere because we are at war. People are getting killed and we are fighting for other people's peace and freedom so I think protesting is dumb and it doesn't get us anywhere.

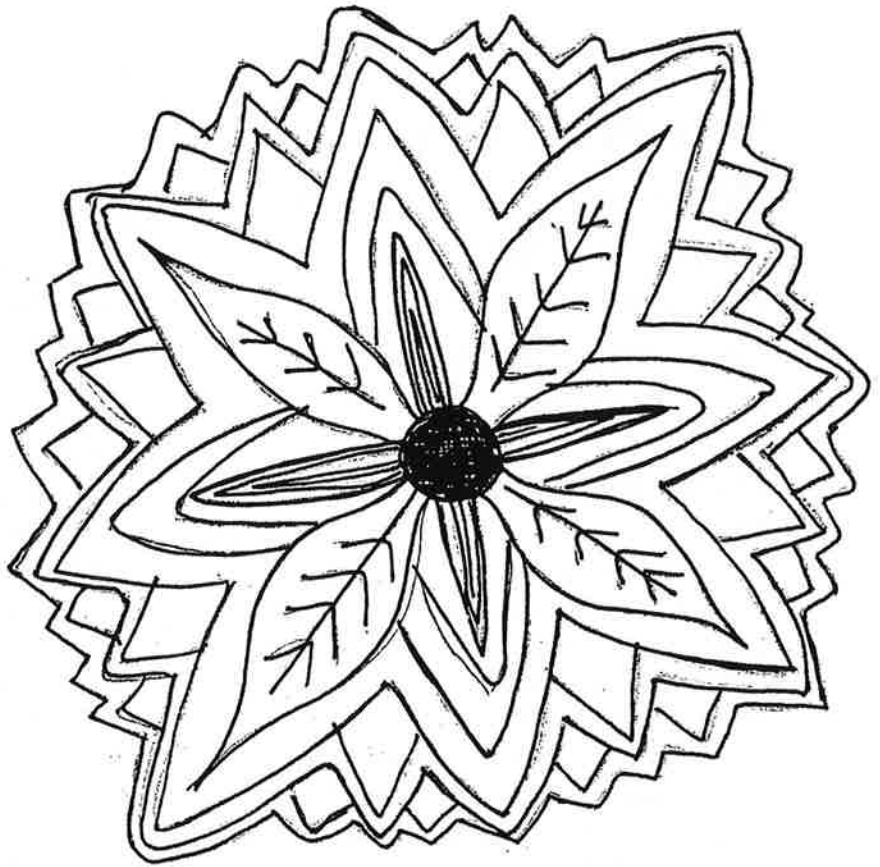
David's Response: Not all protesters are hippies not even most of them and taking the word hippies to all protesters is just wrong. There aren't many hippies left any way. There are the New-Age ones but they're not really hippies at all. In actuality, everyone listens to protesters or reads they're signs. You quoted some of the signs in what you wrote. And if you really want to know, protesting does help. It stopped the Vietnam War, or helped stop it. It got our soldiers back here in the US. That gets you thinking. Protesting does a lot and it always gets you somewhere.

Tom's Response: I agree that people may read the protesting signs but that is about it. That's where the thought stops. People also protest about things that don't really need to be protested about.

Recollection

By Meegan Burns

My mistakes are not regrets
I'll make up for them tomorrow
These details form my present
circumstances
And I love my present sorrow
Born restless so I'm wrong
My resolutions are forbidden
Ripple affects make me who I am
The consequences leave me
wondering
If cause comes before affect
The beginning must be neverending
Spoken words are not often heard
So I'm screaming my life away
We've both had enough of this
lullabye
Yet you insist that I must stay
I'm driven by my ignorance
One day I'll have a clue
The smoke will clear eventually
And somehow we'll know what's true
Ask me not, What is it now?
Instead wonder what it could have
been
We all seem to get caught up in
dreams
When we know we can't do it again



Sickness

By Meegan Burns

Wrapped in my blanket
Shelter me from pain
Cry into disillusionment, Need
A break from this tormenting rain
Killed once in a car crash
The blinding lights an enigma
Fallen from the entity
Found loss is nearly stigma
Cripple my divinity with
Something so easily spoken
Crucify an embryo
Blooming out all emotions
Ridicule the patience
Have put up with enough deception
Stifled laughter electrifies me
Masked a perfectly planned
interception
If my mystery be misguided
Shadowed by infatuation
Nothing is forever lasting
Here goes with retaliation



Grand Theft Auto: An Analysis

Content vs. Cause

By Brett Bauman

According to FBI figures the number of juveniles arrested for serious and violent crimes increased 1600% between 1952 and 1972. The television's introduction to society in 1952 marked the start of a new generation: a generation that spends more than 30% of their conscious life in front of the machine. As psychologists study the profound effects of the infiltration of mass media on the human brain, the effects continue to change our lives dramatically.

Teachers witness the new technology-occupied generation failing to visualize and use their imaginations. The children are always "bored" and need constant motivation. The effects on the family are the worst. Television comes between family rituals, conversation time, and communication. Heavy television viewing is strongly linked with poor educational performance, ADD, depression, anxiety, and eating disorders. Many people develop addictive personalities, and impulse disorders. Some viewers seem to have difficulty with reality. Identity and attention span problems become common, as well.

An increase in criminal behavior is parallel with the television's popularity, also. As the television

generation came of age, drugs became a major problem. The content of the shows and the amount of time spent watching manipulated people, and forced society into materialism. The television generation produced millions of criminals. They seemed to have a different sense of reality, and identity, and many were chemically dependent.

After researching the psychological effects of television and mass media, I questioned the content of a game called Grand Theft Auto. It is a game in which you are an escaped convict on the streets in a virtual city. The graphics are realistic and the quality is stunning. Its popularity perceived by today's youth is profound. In the game you commit crimes for and against gangs and rivalries. Many actual street gangs such as the Yakuza, Mafia, Triads, and Colombian Cartel are operating in town. With an arsenal of automatic weapons, explosives, Molotov cocktails, bats, and a flame-thrower you wreck havoc.

This game is so realistic it makes some people sick. For the audience who enjoys virtual drive by shootings, prostitution, and executions, they're in heaven. But what are the implications and effects of such an evil and explosive game on our young generation?

Hours of committing crimes in virtual reality have a numbing effect on the conscience. As the viewer develops a no-consequence-applied type

attitude, they gain the confidence to commit these adrenaline-pumping crimes in real life. Thus with a staggeringly high criminal per capita environment already, America seems to sponsor its own problems. You can virtually get high and get in heart pumping chases with the police. This game represents terrorism, gang behavior, drug use, and a crime life that simply doesn't exist. It portrays a "thug life" that is simply a figment of popular culture backed by materialistic gangster rap artists living the life and giving kids two-thumbs-up for drugs, crime, and evil.

As kids grow up these days they spend a lot of time watching television and playing video games. The false sense of reality and occupation provided by the machine seem to create a void in the participant. Many people play Grand Theft Auto and similar realistic games for more than six hours a day. Should something be done about the content and material in video games and television? Yes, but Americans fail to understand and react to the problems associated with their precious boob tube.

The Grantsburg Hike

By Josh Zelazny

On November 14, 2001, a group of 23 people met at school for a Mini-School hiking trip. We set sail around 6:00 am and not one person was late (that is very unusual). About half way to Grantsburg, WI we made the usual stop to McDonalds. Afterwards we were on the open road again. Finally we arrived, unloaded everything and packed up our hiking gear! Around 9:30 am we started walking down the trail, continuing until around lunchtime when we stopped at a picnic table and had a snack. After our snack Merlin set off ahead of us while we all rested trying to get enough motivation to get up with the heavy packs on our backs.

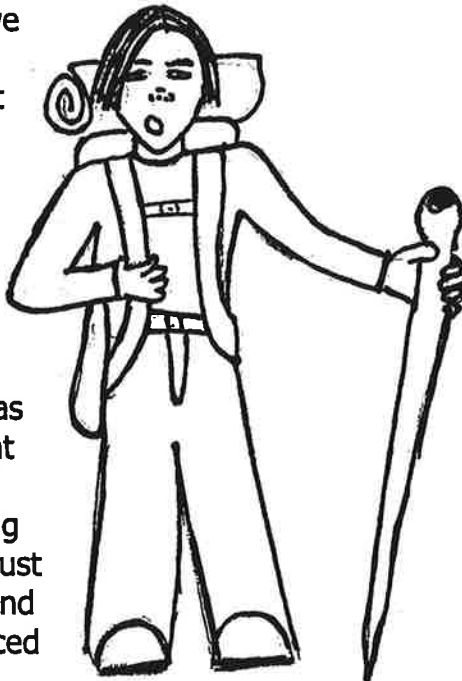
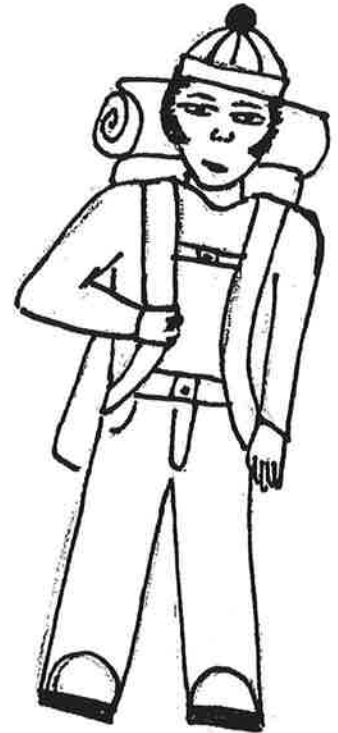
After walking about umm.... another mile we spotted an unbelievably steep hill repeating to myself, "I hope we don't have to walk up that!" but knowing my luck... of course we did! A couple of people decided to take a head start and run for it but soon after they were lying on the trail out of breath. Finally we all made it to the top of the unbelievably huge hill. While everyone was resting others were eating lunch and talking.

About an hour passed by and it was time to start hiking again. We went about another mile and a half and came to notice a huge area missing numerous trees; acres and acres just missing. While we were stopped and looking at this in disbelief we noticed

Merlin doing the same thing we were! After talking with Merlin and Doug later in the day we came to find out that it was called a "clear cut" used for logging.

Finally we reached our campsite and set up camp using tarps because we did not bring tents. We all made bungalows except Kali Johnson and Amanda Sheets, they slept out in the rain. After all of the commotion settled we had school and dinner, then night games. Around 10:00 pm everyone was exhausted and sleeping.

In the morning we ate oatmeal for breakfast, packed our bags and did the same thing all over again. Everyone was walking either in groups or as couples. In our group we heard about the dreadful trip last year because of the early snow and last thing I know, it was the end.



The participants were...

Students: Joe Allen, Jeremy Appollo, Sarah Beegle, Andrew Bernstein, April Brown, Noah Bystrom, Billy Davis, Kali Johnson, Lindsay Klug, Alissa Kuder, Steve Lawson, Liz Mattson, Jake Rutstien, Amanda Sheats, Ryan Sterns, Jake Stumme, Krissy Valdez, Amanda Wegler, and Josh Zelazny.

Staff and such: Merlin Zimmerman, Doug Berg, Charlie Urbia, Ryan Prich, Paula Wegler (providing additional transportation, Thank You!)

A Sliver

Krissy Valdez

You say you love me...and I want to believe.
Then why can't you see, I want more than 3 words and one day a week?

With you
That's all I need.
Yet still I'm craving.
So, why can't you deliver?
I want a bigger part of your heart.
This is not a demand, please just understand.
I won't settle for a sliver.

If that's all you can spare...
I'll take my willingness elsewhere.
Will you just try to find
What you desperately claim is inside?
If you do, I'll make it worth your time.

With you.
That's all I need.
Still more I'm craving.
Why can't you deliver?
I want a bigger part of your time,
Not just a sliver.



Interview with Merlin

By David Zernehel

DZ: What do you do in your spare time?

MER: I am the lead drummer with the Minnesota Pipes and Drums, the bagpipe band that played at the Sept. 11 memorial at the capitol. We compete around the country.

DZ: Do you get paid for that?

MER: No it's a hobby; I do it for the fun of it

DZ: How many years have you been married?

MER: 5 years now.

DZ: What is your ferrite type of motorcycle?

MER: BMW is great for its engineering, but Victory and Harley Davidson are very nice for style and comfort.

DZ: Do you watch t.v?

MER: I do watch some, but I know that I like to watch too much, so I try to avoid it.

DZ: What is your favorite thing about Mini?

MER: I get to see the same group of students all the time rather than getting hundreds of new students every semester.

DZ: How did you get into Mini?

MER: I heard Doug was going to retire. I used to tell him that I wanted his job when he left it, so I

applied, and they decided I would be good at it.

DZ: What is your favorite food?

MER: Pizza and real Chinese food in China

DZ: Do you have any pets?

MER: Yeah, a cat (Newt D. Claude) and a dog (Blondie).

They both are challenging but they do make the home exciting.

DZ: Do you like the school food?

MER: Yeah.

DZ: Were you in any sports?

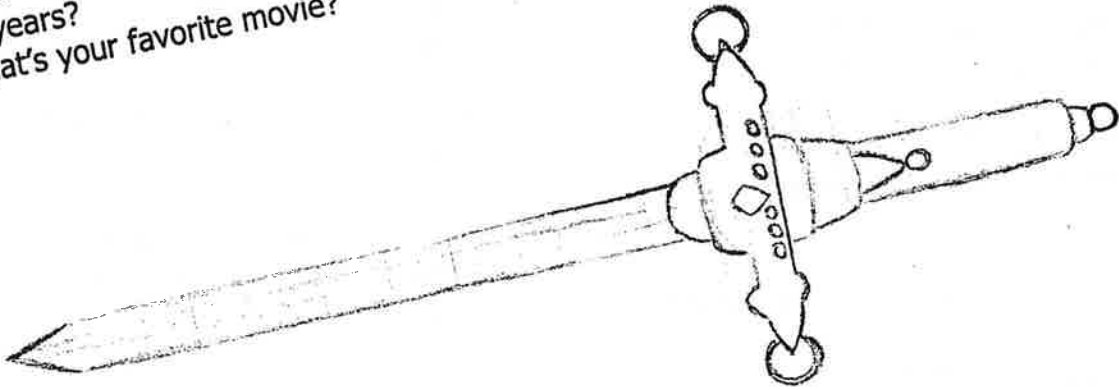
MER: No, because I was injured too often.

New Kids Questionnaire By Natapee and Emapee

Here are five Mini

- 1) What's your favorite superhero?
- 2) Who would you be and why?
- 3) If you could have any car, what kind would it be?
- 4) Where do you plan on being in 10 years?
- 5) What's your favorite movie?

- PJ Hynes
- 1) Spiderman
 - 2) Kid Rock cuz he's with Pamela Anderson
 - 3) Lexus IS 300
 - 4) Florida
 - 5) Friday



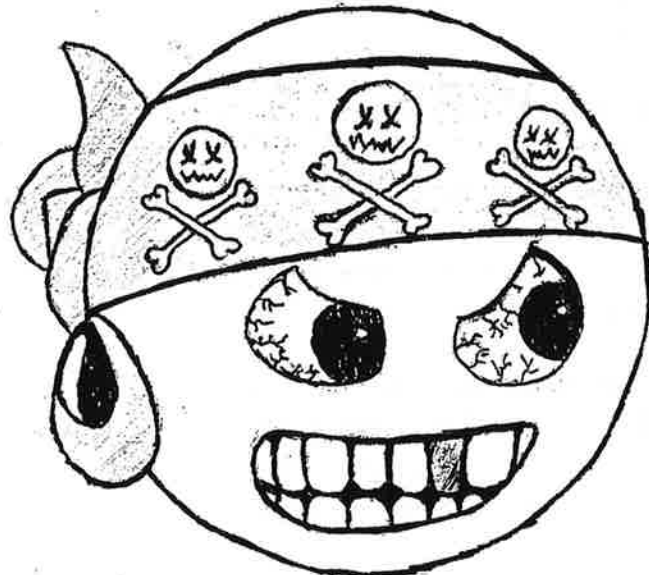
Dan Johnson

- 1) Orgazmo
- 2) Fred Durst cuz he hangs out at the Playboy mansion
- 3) Escalade with nitric and 22 rims
- 4) Jamaica
- 5) Belly

- Wade
- 1) Incredible Hulk
 - 2) He refused to answer
 - 3) 68' Charger
 - 4) In my Chevy truck
 - 5) Full Metal Jacket

Ryan Jackson

- 1) Spiderman
- 2) David Bowie (Tex answered for him) cuz he's cool
- 3) 70' Roadrunner
- 4) I want to be living in a house
- 5) CKY2K



Old Skoolers Questionnaire

By Natapee and Emapee

- 1) What grade are you in? How long have you been here?
- 2) How have things changed since you got into Mini school?
- 3) What are you planning or doing when you graduate?
- 4) If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?
- 5) What's your favorite band/ artist?

Billy Knight

- 1) 13th grade, 4 years
- 2) Teachers, Rules
- 3) Working, Not going to school
- 4) Jamaica, cuz it's warm
- 5) Bob Dylan

Katie Juneau

- 1) 12th, 3 years
- 2) A lot more people
- 3) Finish HTC, be an auto bo technician
- 4) Australia, I like their accent. I like the animals that live t
- 5) System Of A Down or TOO!

Bill Sass

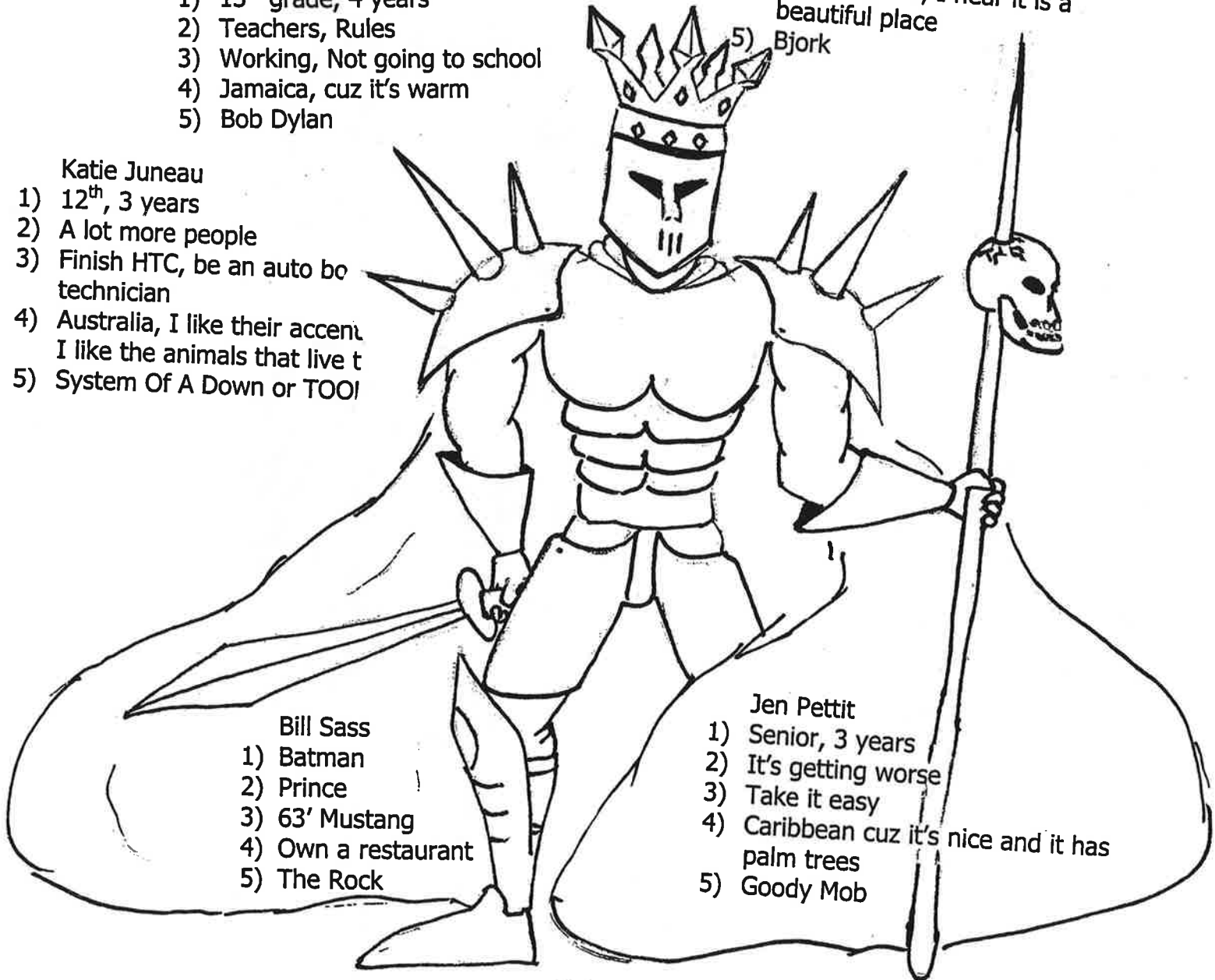
- 1) Batman
- 2) Prince
- 3) 63' Mustang
- 4) Own a restaurant
- 5) The Rock

Monica Williams

- 1) Senior, 3 years
- 2) Doug left sophomore year, the type of kids that come into mini changed and become more diverse, lots more people
- 3) Go to college for something
- 4) Italy cuz I heard it is very beautiful and I want to visit the wine vineyards
- 5) I like everything

Jessica Johnson

- 1) 13th, 4 years
- 2) Attitude of Mini school- used to be more relaxed like letting us watch good movies
- 3) Going to Normandale to be a R.N.
- 4) New Zealand, I hear it is a beautiful place
- 5) Bjork



Jen Pettit

- 1) Senior, 3 years
- 2) It's getting worse
- 3) Take it easy
- 4) Caribbean cuz it's nice and it has palm trees
- 5) Goody Mob

Where Will You Be In Five Years? By Shane Pelino

"Graduating from college," Monica D.

"Working at Sears Imports as a mechanic," John H.

"College," Kelly

"I'll be graduating from college,"
Monica W.

"I'll be in my third year of college
and at my 104th frat party," Shane

"Living in California with my uncle,"
David

"I'll be in my third year of college,"
Josh Z.

"I'll be drinking at a bar," Nikki

"A famous Movie Star," Jake R.

"Sittin' at a bar," Billy

"With Nelly or A.I., going triple
plat.," Hadiyalla

"Taking over the Target Empire,"
Andrew

"Be outa' Minnesota," Goudy

"In the Navy," Sterns

"Graduate from college in Florida,"
Sarah

"Graduate from college and have a
good job," Jenna

"Amsterdam," April

"Hollywood Porn Star," Natalie E.

"A transvestite with a hysterectomy,"
Trevor

"I'll be on the moon," Lindsay K.

"I'll be doing hair and make-up in
Hollywood," Jenny B.

"I'll be out West with friends at a
bar," Annika

"College," Prich

"I'm gonna be a plumber," Jeremy

"Near the end of working at a record
company learning the basics of
knowing how to open my own record
company," Alex P.

"Styling hair," Jen

"I'm gonna own a Hashbar in
Denmark," Billy K.

"I'm gonna be a Rockstar," Katie J.

"I'm gonna make porn and horror
movies and everything," Emily

"I'm gonna be an R.N. in Eugene,
Oregon," Jessica

"I'll be finished with two years at
Normandale and two years pre-
med," Kali

"Working with computers," Dan



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Address Correction Requested

Another great year
has come to an end.

Have a Good
Summer Break