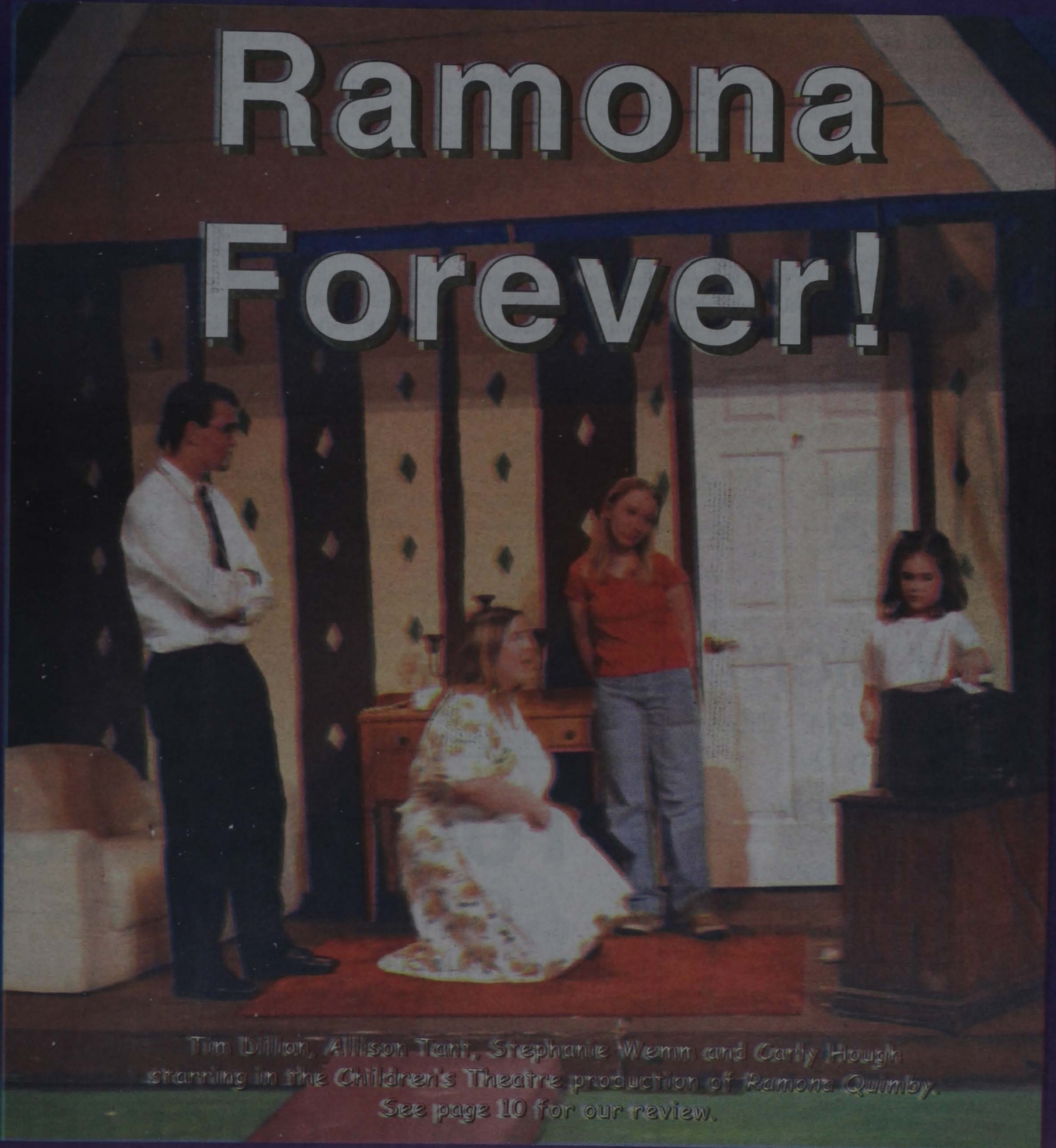


The Mercury

Ramona Forever!



Tim Dillon, Allison Tait, Stephanie Wenn and Carly Hough
starring in the Children's Theatre production of *Ramona Quimby*.
See page 10 for our review.

Underwood fails

Associated Press

CLARKSBURG, W.Va. - Gov. Cecil Underwood has earned failing grades for his position on several clean air initiatives.

A report released Wednesday by 10 Southern and Appalachian environmental and public health groups evaluated Underwood and seven other southern governors for their stances in four categories.

Underwood was one of two governors given an "F" grade in every category.

"You can't do much worse than that," said Rebecca Stanfield of the U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

The report criticized Underwood for suing to overturn a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rule to require reductions in power plant pollution.

Underwood spokesman Dan Page said the administration has drafted its own plan to cut pollution from power plants that isn't as harsh as the EPA plan, which would be too expensive for power companies to implement and could force layoffs in that industry and the coal industry.

"This administration cares about West Virginia," Page said. "You do have to achieve a balance between the environment and the economy."

From mountain tops to plateaus in three easy steps

By Marianne Gelsi
Staff Reporter

An educational forum on mountain top removal was held in Spencer. A coalition of concerned citizens, environmental groups, and the Vice-President of Arch Coal attended the meeting. The issues discussed circled around a permit that was passed allowing 3,100 acres of mountain top to be removed in Blair.

Fortunately this brought on a lawsuit by the occupants of this area and judge Haden enjoined the permit, until a full trial can be held.

Arch Coal argues that it will have to lay off miners and move their equipment, which will cause hardship for both parties. The citizens are trying to protect their environment and sustain the ecosystem.

So far there have been 800 stream divergences according to the testimony of the DEP (Division of Environmental Protection). According to the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, guidelines were installed to protect and restore the natural habitat disrupted by mining. Arch Coal and the DEP overlooked these laws.

The rally had been well organized. Although applause was not allowed and strict time was placed upon the speakers, the opposing sides still managed to turn it into a sporting event that had people hooting and applauding.

A couple of GSC students were in attendance. Mary Wildfire stated that "I was disappointed because I had hoped that the participants might be more open minded and eager to set light on the issue than just win." At this time the project is postponed for six months and miners are laid off.

Byrd and Rahall fight for permits

Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. - Rep. Nick Rahall and Sen. Robert C. Byrd are urging federal and state regulators to work faster to fix problems with the permit process for mountaintop removal mining.

Byrd and Rahall, both D-W.Va., met Wednesday with representatives of the state Division of Environmental

Protection, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the state Office of Surface Mining and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Byrd and Rahall said the agencies have not worked quickly enough to implement the terms of a federal court settlement that allowed some permits to be issued.

"I would not presume to suggest whether all or any of

the outstanding permits should be granted, but surely decisions can be reached in a more timely fashion," Byrd said.

Mountaintop removal mining uses large earth-moving machinery to strip away the rock and dirt from coal seams. Excess material is disposed of in nearby hollows. Environmentalists say the process damages the environment.



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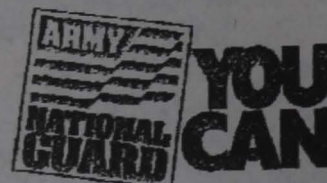
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Faculty Spotlight: Dave Kennedy

By BJ Woods
Staff Reporter

Dave Kennedy is a professor in math and math education courses. He resides in Buckhannon with his wife, Holly, and daughter Emily.

Professor Kennedy has been teaching at Glenville State College for the past 5 years. He states in a questionnaire that the major change at GSC has been the new Quic Shop. He also writes that the Quic Shop is the greatest thing since the

GSC Percussion Ensemble. When asked what his one wish for GSC would be, Kennedy wrote that he would like Rt. 79 to magically change course and run through Glenville.

Kennedy was asked what he sees for the future of the Math Department at GSC. He stated, "I hope that we create more and more ways to relate the math in our courses to the real world. Students shouldn't need to ask, 'Why do I need to learn this?'" Kennedy also com-

mented on the new math courses in the department. "Professor Caulfield offered a History of Math course last fall. I created and offered a new Discrete Math class which is now required for Math 5-12 majors. It included symbolic logic, map colorings, and challenges such as tracing your way around a path using each edge exactly once. Professors Caulfield and Peck have also revised the modern algebra course to make it more discovery oriented."

Kennedy believes in challenges and changes for the better for the students at GSC. "Currently, I have two changes in the works. One is to require mastery of arithmetic skills as a prerequisite for Math for Teachers II. Another and much bigger project is to develop a new course, possibly called the Nature of Math, for non-majors to take instead of Math 101 for General Studies credit. This course would sample a variety of areas in math that would be

much more interesting and useful than algebra." Kennedy will find out in April if the curriculum committee will consider the idea.

Kennedy's one wish for the Math and Science Department would be that it gets more phone lines. Kennedy showed his sense of humor in writing that the one big difference in the overall students that he teaches today from when he started is that "some of the same students are still here."

College Television Network brings music, news . . . and free monitors

By Terry L. Estep,
Staff Reporter

The addition of a 24-hour music and entertainment channel to the Heflin Center's cafeteria has led students into a "wait and see" attitude.

The College Television Network (CTN) is a nationwide satellite feed providing music, news, weather and sports. CTN is owned by Ted Turner's Cable News Network. "It offers popular videos, it doesn't have vulgar language or promote violence," explains Student Housing Director Jerry Burkhammer, who passed the CTN proposal to former Food Services Manager Bob Stockett.

The monitors are provided

to the college free of charge. Funding for the program comes from national advertising, which greatly enhanced its appeal. Programming and advertising for the College Television Network is designed for the 18-25 age demographic.

Advertising is limited to eight minutes per hour.

"The best part is that it's free to the college," adds Burkhammer. "We don't have to do anything but leave the monitors on while the building is open. If students don't like it, nobody is hurt."

Three monitors are located in the cafeteria. A fourth monitor, in the Heflin Center lobby, is available for commuters.

In addition to national

advertising, the monitors can be used to flash text announcements for campus events, a feature Burkhammer and others are eager to use.

Further adding to the lure of the service is the option of showing short locally-produced broadcasts, which may become available in the future.

Initial student impressions of the TCN broadcast were cautiously positive.

Junior Representative Brandi Sandy, watching a music video debut on the station, stated "Wow. It's nice for now."

Basketball player James Arnold was more enthusiastic about the programming. "I think it's a good idea, and it sounds like there's a lot of variety."

Library News

By Sherrie Hardman
Staff Reporter

Robert F. Kidd library staff members Janet Bosley, Ed Messenger, and Gail Hamric are participating in a four year master's degree program offered through a live, interactive transmission of courses from the University of South Carolina.

This program will give the staff members master's degrees in library and information science and allow them to

stay in their own community. Most of the courses consist of a combination of live, interactive transmissions, web based resources, Saturday classes, and online discussions.

This program utilizes the Distance Learning Center, which is located on the ground floor of the library. The director of RFK, Rick Tubbing stated, "The librarians will be able to provide better and more professional services for the students and patrons of the library."

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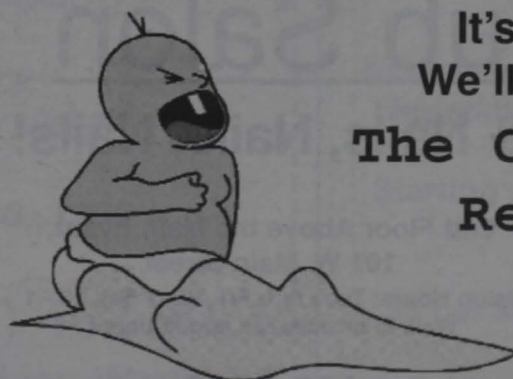
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Chess tourney results

By B.J. Woods,
Staff Reporter

The GSC Chess Club held a chess tournament on March 30th.

For the fourth time in a row, Brandon Riffle was the champion. For the first time ever, everybody in the tournament won at least one game and everyone lost at least one game.

Brandon Riffle, President of the chess club, got a pawn behind in a game against Professor Kennedy, but Kennedy misjudged a rook trade and Riffle took over the game. Then in the next game, Brandon fell a rook behind against an impressive tournament newcomer Darrell Roane, but battled back to win.

But the road to the trophy

game would not be easy. Kenny Osborne navigated his way to a draw against Riffle, and overwhelmed Professor Kennedy in another game. When Riffle came head to head against club treasurer, Ernie Tingler, it was Tingler who was triumphant. In fact, Tingler won three out of four games to enter the trophy round as the leader, with Riffle in second.

In the trophy game, Tingler, playing the white

pieces, recklessly pushed his queen's pawn, survived a couple of scares and found himself dead even in the middle game.

Riffle used his knights to gain the upper hand, finally achieving checkmate on the 59th move and claiming the championship trophy. Tingler won a chess book for his second place finish, which he will surely use to make another strong run at the title next time.

Later this semester, the Chess Club will host a new event: Loser's Chess. The idea is to try to lose all your pieces (except the king.) Whenever a capture is possible, it must be made. This "alternative" chess tournament should happen the second half of April.



Freshman 101

By W.E. Owens
Staff Reporter

A 2 credit-hour Freshman orientation class may be offered this Fall at Glenville State College. Tentatively labeled "GSC 101," the class is intended to assist new students in their transition to the realm of higher education.

At present, the class is projected as a pilot program to establish how incoming students can be assisted in navigating their college career, and will include two sections of twenty volunteer students each.

All GSC faculty and approximately 200 students were surveyed at the beginning of the Spring semester to determine what components the course is to consist of; the survey was comprised of 23 separate interests such as Career Awareness, Stress Management, and the Financial Aid process.

The greatest difference between the focus in surveyed faculty and students resided in the use of the internet and e-mail. Debbie Simon, GSC's Director of Enrollment Management and one of the faculty responsible for implementing the class, said, "I don't think faculty realize that students don't have as much access to [internet and e-mail.]"

Confronted with the idea of this class earlier this year, GSC interim President Dr. Bruce Flack suggested selected faculty and staff

attend a South Carolina conference Feb.18-23, entitled "The First Year Experience."

This conference was attended by Dr. Simon, Dr. Joe Evans, interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Sharon Kraus, GSC's Director of Assessment, and English Professor Wayne de Rosset.

"We were very fortunate," declared Simon "because those people who conducted the conference were William Gardener and Betsy Barefoot, founders of 'The First Year Experience'."

The conference consisted of a variety of presentations from people who were starting First Year Experience programs, those who had extensive experience in it and those who had tried to implement it and experienced failure.

There have been attempts at similar counseling programs, though previous efforts had not been as well organized and researched and were not offered for college credit.

"In order to retain students, you have to make things conducive for those coming in so they feel comfortable," stated Simon. "We had an orientation session through Student Services, but it was not a structured format. We felt we needed to have something that went throughout the semester, helping students make the transition to college."

ALICE WALKER

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Shakespeare in Vietnam

By Amy Smith
Staff Reporter

Dr. Edward F. Palm, Head of the Language Division here at Glenville State College, presented a paper during Easter Break at the annual meeting of the American and Popular Culture Associations, held in San Diego. Palm has presented at this conference three times in the past.

This paper was a product of Palm's original archival research that he has been doing for the past three summers. Palm received grants from GSC and the West Virginia Humanities Council to fund this project.

The paper, "Prospero in Vietnam: A Postcolonial View of Landsdale, Ledere, Dooley and Their Construction of the 'Other'" uses

Shakespeare's play, *The Tempest*, to draw parallels to the Vietnam War and three influential political people who played a major role in the early stages of that conflict: Edward Landsdale, a member of the CIA who was sent to Vietnam in 1954 to serve as a mentor to the Prime Minister, Ngo Dinh Diem; Dr. Thomas Dooley, who played a role in rallying American support for

Diem's regime, and William J. Ledere, who co-wrote "The Ugly American." These men were compared to characters in "The Tempest" to shed light on the underlying motivation for their actions.

Taking a New Historian approach, a type of literary critical analysis, Palm argues that even though these men may have had good intentions for

Vietnam and its people, they instead exhibited imperial attitudes and repeated the same actions of those they sought to replace.

Palm says of the experience, "It's an importance conference, one many of the top people in my field attend. I'm pleased to have been established there and to have represented Glenville State College among that group."

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

By Sherrie Hardman
Staff Reporter

Date rape is a common problem among college aged individuals. Date rape is defined as an individual forcing a person with whom one is involved to perform unwanted sexual acts.

According to statistics, 90% of women raped knew their assailant and almost three quarters of those did not identify the experience as rape. More than 80% of rapes occur off campus and 50% of those occur on the man's turf; such as his house or car.

One date rape problem is the fact that the victim does not discuss the violation with anyone. It is vital for the victim to get help in dealing with the emotional problems, but more than 90% of those victims do not go to the police. At the time that the rapes occur, about 70% of the men and 55% of the women were drinking or taking some form of drugs.

Victims of date rape need to believe in themselves and understand that being forced to have sexual intercourse is not their fault. Rape is a crime of violence and power, not

sex.

The victim should call the police or a crisis center as soon as the incident occurs. This can be very difficult because victims may feel ashamed or embarrassed; however, they should call someone, possibly a friend or family member to help deal with the problem.

Some rules that victims of rape need to follow are: Do not change clothing; if the victim does change clothing, each piece of clothing should be placed in a separate paper bag for evi-

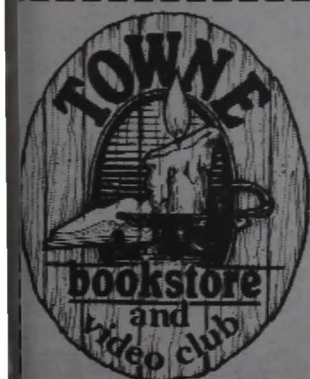
dence. Do not take a shower. Go directly to a hospital or call 911 so that evidence may be collected. This will aid the prosecution in making a case and could be the determining factor of getting the attacker off the street.

If you or someone you know is a victim of date rape and need assistance call local police enforcement or HOPE Inc. Task Force on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault at 462-5352, or the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE.

Senior Art Show

By Sherrie Hardman
Staff Reporter

Tony Summers presents his Senior Art Show, "Voyeurville", April 7-16 in the Fine Arts Gallery. The work contains an interesting display of abstract art done with an assortment of mixed media and oils on vinyl. A reception will be held on April 16.



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Corrections



In the April 5 issue of *The Mercury*, on page 5, the headline for the Easter Egg hunt should have identified Chi Beta Phi instead of Chem Society as being the sponsors.

Page 3's article "Sexual Assault Awareness Month" contained an error. Hardman points out that the first sentence should have read "April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month."

We regret any confusion.

Pirates hope to sneak into National League Central contention

By Alan Robinson
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH - Yes, the Pittsburgh Pirates still are a low-payroll, low-revenue, low-expectations team that plays in one of baseball's smallest markets and maintains one of the game's lowest profiles.

So why don't they act like it?

They generate so little attention outside Pittsburgh that their front office could be accused of employing stealth technology. Yet these low-rent occupants of a high-profile division that is home to Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa have unpretentiously gone about one of the most ambitious off-season face lifts in the majors.

The big question is: Will anyone notice?

After an overachieving second-place finish in 1997 deluded them into thinking they were better than they were, the Pirates fell out of the race by late May a year ago and collapsed down the stretch, losing 25 of their final 30.

That breakdown led them to jettison many of the not-ready-for-prime time prospects they rushed to the majors and replace them with five new but experienced position players and a starting pitcher.

Going, going, gone from an underwhelming 69-93 team: third baseman Aramis Ramirez (back in the minors but expected to return), shortstop Kevin Polcovich, shortstop Lou Collier, second baseman Tony Womack, right-hander Jon Lieber, left-hander Ricardo Rincon and outfielder

Mark Smith.

The new kids in town: left fielder Brian Giles (Indians), center fielder Brant Brown (Cubs), third baseman Ed Sprague (Athletics), shortstop Pat Meares (Twins), infielder Mike Benjamin (Red Sox), left-hander Pete Schourek (Red Sox), rookie second baseman Warren Morris and rookie right-hander Kris Benson.

"I think we're the most improved team in our division," said managing general partner Kevin McClatchy.

The downside is they were the NL Central team most in need of improvement. And, as manager Gene Lamont said, "I don't think anybody will be thinking about salaries the first time we play Los Angeles or Atlanta."

The pitching was adequate with a 3.91 ERA that was sixth

best in the league, but the power (an NL-low 107 homers) and fielding (15th worst in the NL) were pathetic.

The 1998 collapse convinced McClatchy, Lamont and general manager Cam Bonifay to augment a youth movement designed to put a contending team on the field when the Pirates' new ballpark, PNC Park, opens in 2001.

The overhaul will cost them a modest \$6.5 million this season — about what the Dodgers will pay Kevin Brown through early June — and left behind only three 1998 opening day starters: first baseman Kevin Young, who was rewarded with a \$24 million contract after driving in 108 runs; right fielder Jose Guillen and catcher Jason Kendall.

"We realized we just couldn't keep bringing up kids and expecting them to perform like they had been here a long time," Lamont said. "You can't bring 'em up just to bring 'em up."

They don't have the tens of millions of dollars to shower on a Bernie Williams or Randy Johnson, so the Pirates are trying to grow their talent — Benson, the No. 1 pick in the June 1996 draft, had an 0.75 spring ERA — or let other teams do it for them.

Giles and Brown were part-time players with their former teams, but have been promised 500 at-bats apiece and the opportunity to blossom into stars in Pittsburgh.

"I think we're going to be a lot better than people think," Giles said. "I don't think we're too far down the road from being contenders."

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Pittsburgh Steelers release Will Wolford

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH - The Pittsburgh Steelers have released offensive lineman Will Wolford, a day after signing free-agent tackle Wayne Gandy to a four-year, \$14 million contract.

Wolford, who played guard and tackle for the Steelers, had been considering retiring anyway following his 13th NFL season, in which he played through a torn chest muscle. The team released him on Wednesday.

He previously played for Buffalo and Indianapolis.

Wolford, 34, even had a retirement party this year but remained open to returning if the Steelers were not able to replace him. The release of Wolford, who made \$2

million last year and had a cap value of \$2.575 million, will bring the Steelers' back under the salary cap.

Wolford would have made \$2.1 million in 1999-00.

Also Tuesday, the Steelers said right tackle Justin Strzelczyk underwent his second knee operation in less than a year after reinjuring the right knee ligament he tore in October. He is expected to miss most, if not all, of the 1999 season following the surgery last week.

Strzelczyk had been expected to return and challenge former first-round draft pick Jamain Stephens at right tackle, only to be hurt while rehabilitating the knee for training camp.

Science with the Particle Lady

Aroma therapy as alternative medicine

By B. J. Woods,
Staff Columnist

There are very few places one can go to in this day and age that they would not be able to find some type of alternative medicine. One such type of medicine is aromatherapy.

For those who believe in alternative medicine, aromatherapy is a way to improve the quality of life on a physical, emotional, and spiritual level.

Aromatherapy is already a part of our lives although we may not have associated the name with the experience. Everyone has emotional responses, both pleasant and unpleasant, to certain scents.

Some scents bring pleasant memories while others remind us of the unpleasantness of a specific time in our lives.

Aromatic medicine, the ancient beginnings of the art of aromatherapy, was recorded in both Egypt and India more than 4,000 years ago. The Egyptians used aromatic plants to create massage oils, medicines, embalming preparations, skin care products, fragrant perfumes, and cosmetics. Plant aromatics were also used in India as part of the ancient medical practice known as ayurveda. Many of these practices are still in use today in parts of India.

At the beginning of this

century, particularly in France and England, a movement by noted doctors and scholars in the naturopathic and medical communities prompted a reawakening to the benefits of natural medicine and aromatherapy. Today in England, United States as well as around the world, aromatherapy is a commonly accepted alternative medicine.

There are three types of aromatherapy benefits that can be experienced in a variety of ways: cosmetic, massage, and olfactory aromatherapy.

Cosmetic aromatherapy is when there is the use of essential oils in facial, skin, body and hair care products.

Essential oils can tone, cleanse, dry, or moisturize. Certain oils are appropriate for various skin and hair types.

Massage aromatherapy involves the use of essential oils to supplement the healing touch of massage therapy with wonderful aromas. One way that this can be accomplished without much cost to the consumer is to add a few drops of oil to one ounce of pure vegetable carrier oil, such as almond or grapeseed, and then apply liberally during massage.

The main benefit of olfactory aromatherapy is the fact that merely inhaling is all that is needed to get the

experience. Direct inhalation or diffusion will enhance emotional wellness relax or rejuvenate. Pleasurable scents unlock odor memories, trigger our emotions, and release stress.

Caution and intelligence must be used when deciding to use or not to use aromatherapy. The results of aromatherapy is very individualized. No two people will have the same responses; it all depends on the surroundings, time of the day and the mood of the person.

For comments or suggestions please feel free to contact the Particle Lady at Til next week, take care as you journey down the halls of science.

Alzheimer's enzyme found

By Jeff Donn
Associated Press

In what could be a key step in finding a treatment for Alzheimer's, researchers reported today that they have found an enzyme that activates the mind-robbing disease afflicting some 4 million Americans.

One of the researchers, Dr. Dennis Selkoe, a neurologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, said scientists are "very much on the road" to treatment. He said drugs designed to block the enzyme could enter clinical trials within three years.

But some scientists questioned whether the search team had identified the actual enzyme or one that simply works in concert with it.

"The case is far from settled either way," said John Hardy of the Mayo Clinic.

Alzheimer's patients are known to have toxic plaques, or buildups, of amyloid beta proteins in their brains.

Selkoe, Michael Wolfe at the University of Tennessee and others found evidence suggesting that a previously known brain substance called presenilin is the enzyme that controls production of amyloid beta proteins. Scientists previously believed presenilin played a role in Alzheimer's.

Dr. Sam Gandy, a New York University cell biologist who works with amyloid proteins, said the study published in the journal Nature offers "very exciting and persuasive evidence."

But he cautioned that the enzyme and the chemical on which it operates must be purified and allowed to interact alone to be certain other unseen chemicals are not involved.

Computer Dude

"Local Internet Service Providers"

By Rob Kerns
Staff Columnist

Q: For our area, which Internet Service Provider (ISP) is the best and why?

A: Well, I can tell you right off the bat that, due to our extremely rural locale, America On-line (AOL) and the Microsoft Network (MSN) are out. Neither company has an access number within the local calling radius of Glenville. If you happen to come from an urban setting, I still would not recommend either AOL or MSN. Their membership fees are so costly—\$19.95/month for AOL (figures current as of this writing)—that you could quite

probably find a better deal with a local vendor.

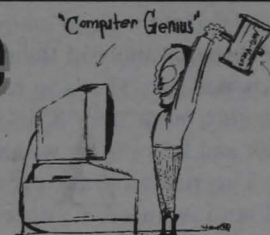
The local vendor in Glenville is Ramco Technologies On-line (www.rtol.net). For "less than \$1.00 a day" a person gets unlimited access; support for e-mail, telnet, gopher, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Usenet News—a network of newsgroups similar to on-line bulletin boards, and 10Mb of free space for a personal webpage if one chooses to use it.

However, if you are not from Gilmer County or are outside the local calling radius for 462 numbers, there is another ISP that seems to be popular in the surrounding

counties to the East and North of us: Mountain Net (www.mountain.net).

I know a few students from Braxton County who use Mountain Net and are satisfied with the service. I attempted to acquire figures on the prices for the Internet service provided by Mountain Net; however, I was unable to contact the company before the paper had to go to press.

Overall, if you have a 462 number, I highly recommend Ramco Technologies On-line. I have used AOL in the past but switched over to Ramco when I learned of their services. Objectively speaking, for this area, Ramco is the best choice.



GSC Week

It's coming...

The Mercury

Volume 70 - No. 20

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Tickle-Me Slobodan

As of this writing, NATO is continuing its airstrikes against the Serb military in Kosovo. Grumblings of approval for ground troops as a peace-keeping force are growing louder, and many Americans want the war to be over and finished in time for the prime time lineup, so we can be comfortably force-fed the latest gadgets, toys, shampoos and conditioners.

Why are we as a nation so impatient?

We sit through so many soundbites, updates, special reports, and because many of them packaged with theme music and title cards that say "Crisis in Kosovo," the media is often blamed for dragging out a story. Can you blame cable news for being thorough and keeping up with every nuance of a story?

The nation was fed up with the Clinton-Monica scandal and wanted Congress to move very quickly toward censure and put it behind us. Now they want to finish up the NATO airstrikes, wondering why Slobodan Milosevic hasn't finally given up and gone away.

It takes time.

The legacy of the Vietnam conflict is an American feeling of terror at going into any area and getting involved without a clearly-defined exit strategy. Critics believe airstrikes alone cannot accomplish our goals in Kosovo, and that we will eventually have to send in ground forces.

Even then, the story does not end. We'll still have the refugee problem and peace-keeping efforts to study and report, giving truth to the statement that the duration is longer than the war.

The "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo must be stopped, and America and its allies have the strength to put an end to it if the American people will be quiet long enough to do it.

To divert America's attention long enough to fight the war, someone should market collectible action figures or a Tickle-Me Slobodan doll that alternately says there's no problem and rages against NATO. You could even release a Boris Yeltsin doll with Kung-Fu grip and a computer chip that says "Let sanctions work." Americans can focus on the price of the doll and leave the fighting to those who can do it.

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Reader's Corner

By Heather Eberly
Staff Columnist

My little brother just got shipped to Albania. The details are kind of sketchy, but apparently they gave him a gas mask, a flack jacket, and a gun to go and build an airstrip. He's a plumber in the Airforce; why does he need a gun? I'll admit, I've not been following this whole mess very closely, but I could have sworn I heard Clinton say that we weren't going to send in ground troops. If this was so, then why is my brother there as we speak? I realize that he signed up voluntarily, but come on, he joined the Airforce. It is common knowledge the unless you're a pilot, you don't really get much action.

Now I understand that somebody needs to stop Milosevic and his little

"ethnic cleansing" plan, but why does it have to be my brother? Why does it have to be the United States for that matter? I'm quite tired of being the "World's Policeman." The U.S. has enough problems here; why can't some other country pull the weight for a change? I know I'm just asking a lot of questions and not offering up any form of answers, but I really don't have any. I'm trying to understand this myself.

I don't want to go into the whole "make love, not war" schpiel; that's not what I'm saying. I realize that some people cannot be reasoned with and drastic measures must be taken. I just don't want my little brother involved in them. I know that my brother will probably come out of this perfectly okay, but I now realize what the fam-

ily members of all those killed in previous wars must have gone through. I would not wish this on anyone. Not knowing what's going on over there is aggravating. I realize that we have all sorts of media now, but the government still regulates what makes it to our televisions and newspapers and what doesn't.

I don't want any of you to take offense at any of the things I've said in this column; I just like you to think about some of this stuff. At our age, we tend to distance ourselves from such matters. We need to take notice and think about how things are being done. It's just a thought. Hey, if you can think of any good answers to my question, feel free to write in. I love to hear them.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The Mercury 200 High Street - Box 207 Glenville, WV 26351
All articles submitted for publication in The Mercury must be typed and double-spaced. Stories and announcements should be addressed c/o Will Owens. The deadline for stories and announcements is Wednesday at 5 p.m. for publication in the next week's paper. All photographs should be submitted to Sherrie Hardman, photo editor.

Gilmer County teachers speak out on Rossano and school to work

Mr. Phillip Rossano's analysis of the School-to-Work initiative reveals how far removed from reality many higher education really are. As educators, we find his attack on vocational education most disturbing.

Being teachers in a secondary school that was a leader in the School to Work movement before Senate Bill 300 and State Board Policy 2510 were enacted, we can assure you that college prep students were anything but forgotten.

Our involvement in modifying the curriculum has resulted in more demanding courses for the college-bound students, as well as the vocational student. In fact, we have increased our graduation requirements over the last five years above the state minimum requirements. Our students will be required to have additional math, science, computer skills, fine arts and four core courses from their chosen program of study. This reflects a win/win situation for all students.

We are of the opinion that these changes have resulted in more focused education for all. The "college-prep" students have to take higher level classes, as do the "vocational"

students. Because of this, students cannot simply take "introductory" courses that do not challenge their ability or prepare them for entering today's most demanding world of work.

In the past, many of our brightest students did their best to avoid the more rigorous classes simply because they feared "lowering their grade-point average." We have even known of students who had expectations of entering the medical profession but not taking chemistry classes simply because they feared getting anything but an "A." All too often this was with the approval of their parents!

Our students simply will be required to lay down a strong foundation for future success with no easy way out. With the approval of their parents and guidance counselors, students will be encouraged to select classes that will have greater bearing on whatever path they choose to pursue after high school.

Yes, Mr. Rossano, our students are encouraged to participate in work-based experiences. This is particularly true since one of our goals is to prepare all

students for the world of work. For example, how could a student planning to become a paralegal or lawyer be at a disadvantage spending a small amount of time observing and working in the office of an attorney. Students get a sample of what their "chosen" field is about and can more readily make decisions to change or continue before entering college, training, for the workforce.

Furthermore, we are particularly disturbed at Mr. Rossano's statement "all that parents want is for their children to be free to take courses that prepare them for college and not be **dumbed down** into vocational classes against their will."

The reality is many students do not go to college and of those who do, a large percentage do not complete a degree. Most of the jobs of the future will not require a traditional liberal arts degree. Jobs will require more technical skills that will demand post high school training.

The old days of classifying students as academic or vocational have ended. All students need academic and vocational skills. When the liberal arts colleges realize this, they too will make the changes needed

to attract more students and will be more likely to preserve the jobs of their professors. Many colleges seem to be in a time warp and now is the time for them to wake up and join secondary educators who are striving to meet the needs of their students.

Of the 28 credits Gilmer County requires for graduation, ten are elective in nature. Under our plan, students have a wide range of choices, but still have a focused education that will prepare them for the workforce or academia.

We have successfully eliminated the "general" track that often prepared them for nothing but failure. If our students are going to be a cut above the rest, they needed a more challenging curriculum, not one that was watered down. Requiring 28 credits for graduation when students could earn 32 or more credits (based on the potential to receive dual credits from the college), will help take us into the new millennium with confidence.

Finally, without trying to sound too acrimonious, we can only hope that the next time Mr. Rossano dines out that he does not ask the chef what

"dumbed down" vocational classes he/she took. Or, the next time his car breaks down with a major problem, we hope he doesn't ask the certified mechanic about his/her "dumbed down" vocational classes. It is this kind of self-serving elitism that gives some of us more fear than anything he mistakenly believes to be happening in our schools. The changes made as a result of Senate Bill 300 are good for ALL the children of West Virginia, not just those who will traditionally attend college.

Gilmer County High School Teachers

[Editor's Note: The following names were signed to the letter -- Jennifer Morris, Virgil Paul Peggs, Scott Golinsky, Robert Archer, Anita Roberts, Joe Brannon, Melanie Hartshorn, Sandra Foster, Linda Rock, Debra Butler, Tabatha Beall, Mary B. W. Strickland, Janice Collins, Rosemary Williams, Twila Moyers, Anna Jean Rogucki, John Wolfe, Rebecca Sprouse, Connie Meadows, Ronald Murray, Russell McClain, Matthew Call, Willard Wright, John Brannon, Marie Schimmel, Amy Shreves, David Jaffre, Anne Gerstner, Frances Fitzwater, Patrick Leggett.]

Cafeteria televisions a bad idea

Commentary by
Cris Gravely,
Staff Columnist

Theft on campus has never been in the spotlight, that is until recently when a large amount of furniture disappeared from the Heflin Center lobby. Childish as it was, it was still theft. Add to that the fact that the furniture wasn't that nice to begin with and you have a not-too-bright criminal with no fashion sense. Now there are four beautiful new television sets

just tempting fate, sitting quietly in the Heflin Center lobby and cafeteria.

Normally, this would be a cause for celebration on the part of the student body. "We get to watch cable and eat fabulous food!" is what many of you are thinking. Wrong. The televisions will only pick up a national college programming channel, not MTV or ESPN. So you, the students, get to watch bad programming to match the bad food.

Also, the cafeteria is noisy enough as is with all the

chomping, talking, laughing, and the occasional portable stereo. The added noise of the televisions will do nothing to add to the atmosphere and enjoyment of my dining experience. The volume from the televisions, in order to be heard above the din of idle chatter and retching, will have to be extremely loud. In turn, the people sitting around will talk louder. Then someone will turn up the volume on the television... I think we all see where this is heading.

Clean up will not get any

easier for the Food Services staff, either. It is only a matter of time before a large wad of wet paper is stuck to the screens of the shiny new televisions. Who will clean it up? The employees of the cafeteria, who will be none too happy about that. Watch the food, folks. You never know what might turn up in it.

Then there is the problem of possible theft. If a not-too-bright person could steal a whole set of furniture from the lobby, what is to stop someone just a tad more intelligent from

thieving the televisions from the same place? I understand that the college is trying to improve our student lives with these new additions, but they are truly tempting fate by placing the televisions where just about anyone could steal them.

The televisions are a nice idea, but in the end they will be more trouble than they're worth. The problems outweigh the advantages and will continue to be until they are stolen. I may be wrong, but time will tell. Anyone else need a nice new television?

The Matrix breathes life into tired formula

Reel World Movie Reviews by Chris Vannoy

"The Matrix," written and directed by Andy and Larry Wachowski, and starring Keanu Reeves and Laurence Fishburne, is a mish-mash of plots and themes from other movies. However, like Quentin Tarantino's "Pulp Fiction," the movie comes off as fresh and new.

"The Matrix" tells the story of Neo (Reeves), just your average, run-of-the-mill computer hacker. Through the course of the movie, Neo falls in with Morpheus (Fishburne), who teaches the naive Neo about the true nature of his world.

The world Neo lives in is really an artificial construct created by artificial intelligence (AI). Seems that the AI needs a power source now that the sun is blotted from the sky, so it uses the bio-electrical impulses of the human mind, and creates a

world to keep their "batteries" occupied.

Prophecies of the remaining "freeworlders" tell of oddly enough, "The One," who will bring the Matrix to its knees. The question is, "Is Neo The One?"

"The Matrix" features top-flight special effects, and a very Hong Kong feel to the action scenes. What the movie really is, though, is a philosophy movie neatly packaged into a pretty standard science fiction/action movie.

How do we know that what we see in the world around us is what is really there? How do we know that the next step we take has a floor beneath it? This neat philosophical concept of "object permanence" forms the backbone of the movie.

The movie also features themes from sci-fi classics such as "Tron" and "Blade Runner." It uses a tired formula of man versus machine and invigorates it with a deeper context and more spectacular special effects.

Ramona rules

By Amy Smith
Staff Reporter

This year's production for the annual Glenville State College children's theatre was "Ramona Quimby." The play, based on the children's books by Beverly Cleary, was adapted for the stage by Len Jenkin.

It tells the story of Romana Quimby, a third grader with an overactive imagination, as she faces the hardships of a very adult world.

"Theatre is a game; it is a game for the actors and also a game for the audience," the director, Dennis Wemm told the audience in his opening remarks.

This was certainly true for this production. The play moved at a lively and steady pace and it was clear that everyone was having fun. The characters, appropriately cast, held the audience in rapt attention.

Carly Hough, who portrayed the main character Ramona Quimby, did a fantastic job of facing the trials



Terry Estep, Mercury

Mrs. Griggs (Heather Eberly), schools Ramona (Carly Hough), Howie (Alex Wemm), and Susan (Savannah Richmond) the friendly tooth family.

and tribulations of life in the world, but was unafraid to enter the workforce to support her family when her husband lost his job.

Ramona's Aunt Bea, played by Abbie Burge, and Hobart Kemp, her love interest, played by Chris Vannoy, were a dynamic duo. Both had commanding stage presence and gave energetic performances.

Allison Tant in the role of Ramona's mother, Dorothy, accurately played a loving mother who did not only make the best cookies

after Wood, it's really about the last days of Bela Legosi Legosi, of "Dracula" fame, gradually faded from public view and into the throes of morphine addiction before Wood rescues him for his grand, but ultimately horrid aspirations at film-making.

The school room was very clever and, like most of the other sets, was wonderfully designed on wheels. The quick and professional scene changes added to the upbeat rhythm of the play. The cast and crew displayed amazing feats of teamwork, making the play a success.

Mastercheeze Theatre: It's no Gouda

By Heather Eberly and
Chris Vannoy
Staff Columnists

She Said:

My pick for this week is "Jack Frost", the cheesiest, campiest horror flick ever made. No, it's not the one with Michael Keaton, that one has better acting, I'm sure. The "Jack Frost" I'm speaking of has the worst acting, plot and special effects you will ever insert into your VCR.

Written and directed by Michael Cooney, "Frost" takes a completely idiotic premise and runs with it. Without even trying to take itself seriously, "Frost" combines the horribly lousy acting with the most

abominable one-liners in the history of B horror movies.

The plot revolves around the main character Jack Frost, a serial killer whose DNA combines with a chemically altered substance which transforms him into a snowman. Yes, folks, a snowman. Frost, in snowman form, proceeds to go on a killing spree involving all sorts of interesting and poorly executed (pardon the pun) death scenes. Look for the bathtub scene—it's almost too much, but not quite.

As Frost tracks down his arch nemesis, Sheriff Sam, we get to meet the awful collage of townsfolk who say 'darn' and 'heck' in all the wrong places. This movie is one that you

have to see, if only to say that you saw it. You'll feel guilty for seeing something so bad and loving it so much.

He Said:

"Ed Wood," directed by Tim Burton (Batman, Edward Scissorhands) and starring Johnny Depp, earned Martin Landau his first Academy Award for his portrayal of an aging Bela Legosi.

For those who don't know, "Ed Wood" tells the story of, oddly enough, Ed Wood, the king of bad movies. His masterpiece of cheese, "Plan 9 from Outer Space" received the award for "The Worst Movie Ever Made" by the Director's Guild of America.

While the movie is named

after Wood, it's really about the last days of Bela Legosi Legosi, of "Dracula" fame, gradually faded from public view and into the throes of morphine addiction before Wood rescues him for his grand, but ultimately horrid aspirations at film-making.

Shot entirely in black and white, the movie is an enthralling look into the culture and personalities swirling around B-movies.

The movie itself is also a stark look at America's fascination with failures, both artistically and personally. In what society other than America's would there be a movie made about some one who was the worst at what they do?



He Said
She Said
Movie Reviews

LIBERTY MEADOWS by Frank Cho



WELCOME, EVERYONE, TO LIBERTY MEADOWS' FIRST ANNUAL WIENER DOG RACE. THE RACE WILL BEGIN SHORTLY AFTER WE DIVIDE YOUR DACHSHUNDS INTO GROUPS. THERE IS A SNACK BAR BY THE MAIN GATE. SO SIT TIGHT AND ENJOY YOURSELVES AS WE MAKE THE FINAL PREPARATIONS.



OH, AFTER LUNCH, DON'T WANDER OFF TOO FAR. THERE WILL BE A HALF-TIME SHOW FEATURING RALPH AND LESLIE'S MONSTER TRUCK EXTRAVAGANZA.

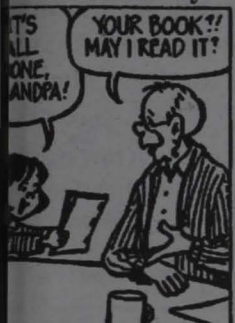


CORRECTION: THE MONSTER TRUCK HALF-TIME SHOW HAS BEEN CANCELED DUE TO MECHANICAL PROBLEMS. WOULD THE OWNER OF THE BLUE BMW PLEASE CALL YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY?

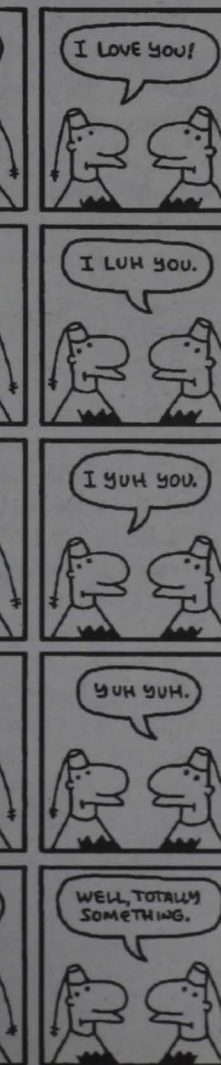
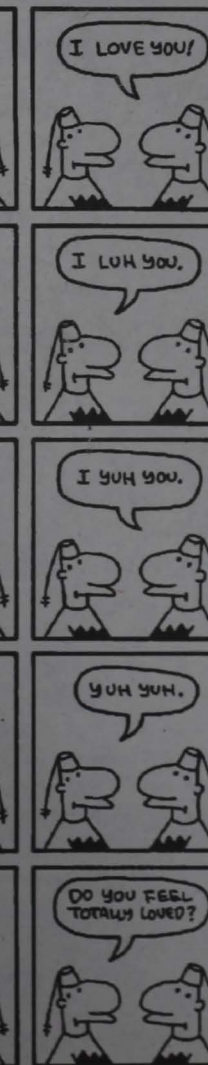
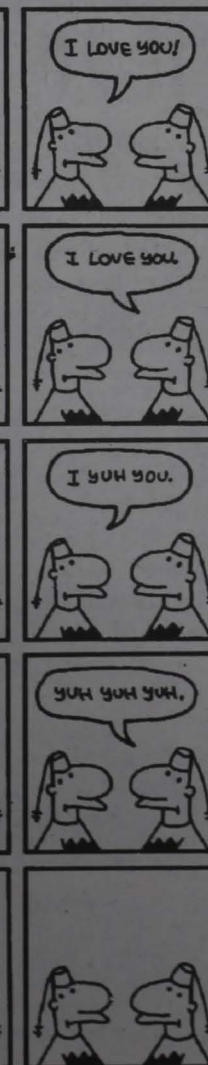
DOZU by Doug Marlette



THE BIG HAPPY by Rick Detorie



IN HELL by Matt Groening



Miss Anna

Horoscope by Mistress Anna (AP)

ARIES: (March 21-April 20) -- It's time to let well enough alone. Learn to recognize when you've done all you can, and move on. Hindsight is always 20-20, so learn from mistakes and decide to do better next time. If you exercise a little patience, your rewards will be evident.

TAURUS: (April 21 - May 21) -- Love is everywhere during the week. Either a current love is rekindled or you may be in for a new attraction. In any case, the rules have changed, and even if with an old flame, the relationship is completely new. Being around positive people will lift your spirits.

GEMINI: (May 22 - June 21) -- If the attitudes of others seem to be holding you back, it's time to be a little more self-centered in order to get yourself back into the swing of what is good for you. A little separation from others can be a good thing. Opportunities will abound, look for them.

CANCER: (June 22 - July 23) -- You have a reason to be proud of your output and quality of work this week. Work will provide you with a welcome respite from other worries. If your attitude concerning a relationship does not seem to change, you may be looking at the situation from the wrong view. Don't try so hard.

LEO: (July 24- August 23) -- If you have been running yourself ragged, preventative measures may be needed to keep your health up to par. Money is likely to be tight for the near future, but don't let it stop you from making plans to get away on vacation. Your lover is an absolute joy to you.

VIRGO: (August 24 - September 23) -- If you ponder over the "what if's", even more questions will arise. It's not worth putting yourself through such self criticism. What's done is done, and you can only resolve to do better next time. Your drive for perfection is unrealistic, for there is no such thing as perfection.

LIBRA: (September 24 - October 23) -- If there is a

change in plans this week, make the best of the situation. Something very promising may come of what seems to be a missed opportunity. Your love life is getting back on track, so take the opportunity to work out details, and go slowly with your mate.

SCORPIO: (October 24 - November 22) -- Your hard-work is not always noticed or appreciated by others. Whatever you do must satisfy you first - relying on others will keep you feeling disappointed. Sweet memories may cause you to look back on the past with a sense of loss and some regret - the good old days.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 23 - December 21) -- It just might come to blows with a loved one during this week. Give each other time to cool off before approaching the subject in a reasonable mood. Good news about money may lighten up your mood a bit. The way you use information presented to you pleases your superiors.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 - January 20) -- Your nature insists you follow the rules, but an acquaintance who is more of a free spirit, prefers spontaneity - learn from him. Don't fall into the trap of judging others, remember that you don't know what motivates and influences others to do what they do. Take a firm hand on money matters.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 - February 19) -- Your personal brand of creativity is crying out to be let loose, allow time for this expression to take place, and don't be too attached to producing immediate masterpieces. If a problem is backing you into a corner, focus your energies on diffusing it.

PISCES: (February 20 - March 20) -- Keeping your feelings under wrap will create the illusion of control. If you take the risk of expressing yourself to a loved one, no one will care if you break down. It's going to hurt falling down - but you are better off jumping in, instead of watching from a distance.

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