



THE PROPHET

UNION CATHOLIC REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

JUNE 9, 2003

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Calendar

June 11

Exams: Monday 1,
Monday 2

June 12

Exams: Monday 3,
Monday 4

June 13

Exams: Monday 5,
Monday 6

June 16

Exams: Tuesday 5

Underclass Superlatives

HERE THEY ARE: THE OUTSTANDING MEMBERS OF THE JUNIOR, SOPHOMORE, AND FRESHMAN CLASSES AS VOTED BY THEIR PEERS.

Juniors

Most school spirit	Nathalie Cortés	Eddy Thornton
Most outgoing	Sara Mason	Joe Palinsky
Most outrageous	Liz Morasso	Mike Watkins
Most artistic	Jen Hillyer	Mike Rubel
Most likely to become famous	Jess Vogt	Eddie Hernandez
Most likely to succeed	Christina Iafe	Dan Sandiford
Favorite teacher	Mr. Donahue	

Sophomores

Most school spirit	Martha Soos	Brian DeOliveira
Most outgoing	Michelle Holland	Brian DeOliveira
Most outrageous	April McKee	Justin Zoleta
Most artistic	Elyssa DiGiovanni	Michael Diaz
Most likely to become famous	Natasha Larrinaga	Vinny Napolitano
Most likely to succeed	Marybeth Tran	Andrew Timmes
Favorite teacher	Mr. Tanyag	

Freshmen

Most school spirit	Destiny Blair	Evan Chaillet
Most outgoing	Stephanie Ambrosio	Javier Colon
Most outrageous	Katelyn Primich	Tom Creanza
Most artistic	Jen Hudak	Jonathan Cardaderio
Most likely to become famous	Ashley Moore	Tarrell Calloway
Most likely to succeed	Jacqueline Arce	Kazimierz Filus
Favorite teacher	Mr. McManus	

Class Officers Elected

Katelyn Primich and Liz Colombo

THE CLASSES OF 2004, 2005, AND 2006 HAVE ELECTED CLASS OFFICERS FOR NEXT YEAR. NEXT YEAR'S SENIOR CLASS president and vice president will be Leonard Tate and Christina Iafe; junior class president and vice president will be Brian DeOliveira and Lindsay Keogh; and sophomore class president and vice president will be Dawn Alipero and Ally Walls.

Although Leonard Tate was not available for an interview before press time, new senior class vice president Christina Iafe said that she believes she can make an impact on the class's long-awaited senior year. Christina hopes to encourage service activities for her class. "I would want my class to be known for giving back," with activities such as a year-long food drive. She was excited by her electoral success. "I'm also glad to be vice president so that I get a chance to work with my good friend Leonard Tate." Christina has been on student council for two years and has occupied many other leadership roles at Union Catholic.

For the first time in recent memory, a class reelected both of its officers. Brian DeOliveira and Lindsay Keogh will be returning as president and vice president of the Class of 2005. Brian said that he was "honored to be elected to serve my classmates," while Lindsay was "pleasantly surprised" by the election results.

In their first class-wide election, the Class of 2006 selected Dawn Alipero as president. Dawn hopes next year on the executive board is fun. "As president, I want to have the sophomores get more involved in pep rallies and do more activities, and be more than normal sophomores. Next year, I guess I'm going to have to work hard and be more responsible." Dawn promises to give the sophomore class good pep rallies and fun activities. Working hand in hand with Dawn will be vice president Ally Walls. Ally served as homeroom representative this year, where she feels she gained the skills and preparation needed to take on a larger leadership role. Next year, she hopes to incorporate more events for the whole school, and also some special events specifically for sophomores. "When I heard the results I was really nervous and a thousand thoughts rushed through my head," said Ally, "but being on Student Council this year and knowing what it's like, I'm sure I can handle it."

***The Prophet* is a publication of Union Catholic Regional High School, Scotch Plains, New Jersey.**

Letters to the Editor

Want to share your opinions in *The Prophet*? *The Prophet* accepts letters from all members of the Union Catholic community.

All letters to *The Prophet* must be signed. However, we will withhold your name upon request. *The Prophet* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and length. Letters may be placed in *The Prophet* mailbox in the main office or given to any editor-in-chief.

Contributions (articles, photographs, cartoons, etc.) are also accepted. Please see Mr. Leib in Room 206 or an editor for details.

Editors-in-chief Kristine Intel, Christina Iafe, Amanda Ballate

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Michael Diaz	Katelyn Primich
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Nikol Jean	Allyssa Walls

UC Celebrates 40th Anniversary Weekend

Liz Colombo, Megan Stahlberg, Joe Varvara

UNION CATHOLIC HELD ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION over the May 2 weekend. Each day of the weekend featured different events in order to draw in as many alumni as possible. Over 2,000 alumni families attended the celebration.

In 1962, when Union Catholic opened, it was an all boys' school on one side, and an all girls' school on the other side. The Dominican Sisters represented the girls, while the Marist Brothers represented the boys. In 1980, the two schools merged to form a coed environment. One purpose of the 40th anniversary celebrations was to blend the two traditions and histories.

On Friday, May 2, a wine and cheese party was held in the gym attended by over 600 alumni. Staff members were honored for their contributions to the UC community. Señor Zehnle received an award for the effect his "one room schoolhouse" has had on Union

Catholic in the 34 years that he has been teaching here. It was an uplifting, spirited event, with people staying for hours after the event was supposed to end, talking about their days in UC.

On Saturday, UC hosted Family Fun Day, attended by 700 alumni. Eighty current UC students helped out, making the day's events go smoothly. Held in the courtyard, Family Fun Day events included games, a barbecue, a magician, a clown, and visits by emergency vehicles for the children. On Saturday night, 400 people attended a semiformal gala at the Pines Manor in Edison.

Sunday morning's events included a Mass and a brunch. Rev. James Massa '78 was the chief celebrant, joined by many other graduates and faculty members who have become members of the clergy. The Thornton family, with members

representing the all-boys' school, all-girls' school, and co-ed school, presented three different diplomas from their schools to the altar. After mass was held, 500 people attended brunch, the last event of the weekend.

According to Mrs. Wischusen, director of development and alumni relations, the weekend has been in the works for two years. Many alumni helped out, along with current UC students. Many alumni came to at least one of the events. The school was open during the events so that former students could look around. Many spent time in the building, reminiscing and noting how the school had changed.

Mr. Merola, member of UC's first graduating class, attended the reception on Friday and said it was wonderful. "It was great to see everyone, and the walks of life they had taken." He added that it was good to see members of UC classes from his era all the way up to today, especially his former students. "The people who worked on the anniversary celebration did a great job, and I'm really happy that Sister [Percylee] did it."

As a gift, the alumni presented the school with a new trophy case in the main hallway, which represents the forty years of Union Catholic. "The anniversary has given us the chance to reflect on all that has been accomplished," noted Sister Percylee. "Our alums are making a difference in the world, and I know that the time spent at UC has influenced that success."

Sophomore April McKee, who worked at the Family Fun Day, felt it was great to help out. "It was interesting for me to talk to people who went to the school more than 20 years ago, and to hear about what it was like for them." This bonding of students, former and current, is exactly what the 40th Anniversary Weekend was organized to accomplish.



Junior Prom a Big Hit

Richard Gutierrez

UNION CATHOLIC'S JUNIOR PROM WAS HELD FRIDAY, May 9, at the Berkeley Plaza in Berkeley Heights. Festivities started at 8:00 p.m. and continued until midnight. All four UC classes were represented as well as numerous dates from other schools.

The Berkeley Plaza was a "well decorated establishment," according to Junior Dan Sandiford and his date. The outside of the hall was illuminated with streams and streams of white Christmas lights. Union Catholic's prom room was located on the second floor. The rooms were nicely decorated and, upon arrival, pictures of the couples were taken by Mrs. Nunes. For the first hour or so, all in attendance greeted each other, compared tuxedos and dresses, and made small talk.

During the first hour, there were constant calls for professional photographs of the couples. Chaperones, including Mrs. Doherty, Mr. Cahill, Mrs. Carolan, Mr. Donahue, Mrs. McManus, Mrs. Nunes, and Mr. Marotti, had little to worry about during the first few hours of the prom. Two local police officers were stationed at the door to ensure that no one left early.

Two hours and hundreds of pictures later, dinner was served. Food on the open buffet ranged from meats to salads, from Italian to American to Spanish. The DJ played smooth listening during the beginning while everyone settled, talked, and ate. By 10 p.m., the music picked up. The lights went out, spotlights were put on and everyone was invited on the dance floor. An array of songs was played, some classics, some new. "Cotton Eye Joe" was a big hit. By 10:30, everyone was up and having a good time.

The chaperones also let loose and joined in the crowd. Mr. Cahill "busted a couple of nice grooves", according to junior Matt Lubin. Mrs. Doherty and Mrs. Carolan were also spotted on the floor.

At 11:45, the last song, "All My Life," which had been selected as the theme of the prom, was played. Everyone took his or her complimentary wine glass and left. Outside, students compared

limos, from a stretch Escalade to a party bus.

"The prom was good times," said sophomore Molly Burke. "I can't wait 'til mine next year. The room was very nicely decorated and the outside was very pretty!" On the other hand, junior Kim Chervenyak said, "I had a decent time, but I expected more out of the evening."

The prom ran very smoothly and all those present wished to thank Mrs. Nunes for orchestrating everything so nicely.

College Planning: It's Not Too Early

Katie Czado and Brian DeOliveira

HIGH SCHOOL: A TIME FOR MAKING WONDERFUL MEMORIES and having lots of fun. But the thought of college planning soon seems overwhelming. It can be challenging to know exactly where to begin with your college search. The first step in your journey toward college is to know how to get off the ground.

Too many people assume college searching begins in their junior year. However, Sister Catherine Carroll, sophomore guidance counselor, advised that, "You should definitely begin by tenth grade, if not earlier." Students should understand that it is really never too early to begin searching. Looking through books, picking up the brochures of all sorts of colleges, or browsing through websites will increase your knowledge of what you want to do or where you might want to go. Sister Catherine also recommends *Peterson's College Guide* as a great source providing information on colleges that a student might not necessarily have looked into. Many facts should be taken into account: the option of staying near home or going out-of-state, the price, your major, and the level of competitiveness.

But before a student can be accepted into the college of his or her choice, he or she must take the SATs. What is the best way to prepare? "Personally, the vocabulary note cards helped

me out a great deal,” said junior Nathalie Cortés. “After taking the SATs, I felt that my performance was tremendously enhanced.” These small tips and techniques can improve what might be lacking before taking the big test. After taking the PSATs, a student can see where he or she might need work and what to study. SAT courses are great for working on those problem areas and will give you techniques that can maximize your time management. An SAT prep class teacher herself, Mrs. Dellanno suggests summer reading will “exercise your mind to become accustomed to thinking and to build your stamina.” Reading newspapers, educational magazines, and fiction and nonfiction literature will improve verbal skills. She encourages purchasing an SAT practice book to use over the summer and to “force yourself to work a half an hour a day.”

But before everything starts looking intimidating, or even if it already has, just remember that people are here to help and resources are there to inform you of important information. The road ahead might be challenging, but it’s not overwhelming when a student has a plan.

Essex Catholic To Close After This Year

Amanda Ballate

BISHOP FRANCIS ESSEX CATHOLIC REGIONAL HIGH School in East Orange, an all-male Catholic high school operating under the aegis of the Archdiocese of Newark, will close at the end of the current school year. The school first opened in Newark in 1957 to serve young Catholic men and educated about 5,000 students from Newark and surrounding communities. However, the school has faced serious economic difficulties in the last decade. Despite efforts by dedicated staff and volunteers who have served on the school’s board of advisors, the archdiocese nevertheless decided to pull the plug on the school in May.

Essex Catholic, like Union Catholic, Roselle Catholic, Mother Seton, and four other regional

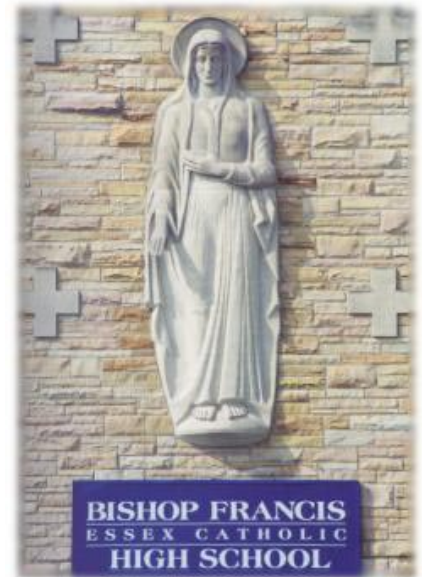
high schools in Bergen and Hudson Counties, is run by the archdiocese. In the past ten years, the archdiocese has provided more than \$5 million in direct operational support to ensure that payroll, utilities, and benefit programs continued running smoothly. However, the archdiocese decided not to provide future support for Essex Catholic.

In a letter to parents of current students, Principal Brother Howard McKenzie, CFC, wrote, “The closure of a school is not an easy experience for

anyone concerned. However, an understanding on your part of the heroic efforts that have been made and will continue to be made on behalf of your sons will make the experience easier for them and for us to handle. We believe, in

fairness to your sons and our students, that they would be better served in continuing their education in other Catholic schools with larger populations and, therefore, greater financial resources or, should you choose, in other private or public schools.”

UC Director of Admissions Mrs. Thornton believed the closing of Essex Catholic is “sad for the diocese and the students. It’s a shame that some schools are thriving and others are not.” She added that UC will make every effort to accept Essex Catholic students who wish to come here. Miss Mackenzie, head of the Lay Teachers Association representing faculty at eight archdiocesan schools including Essex Catholic and Union Catholic, felt that the school “served a unique group of students and others schools may meet their needs. Now there is a number of teacher who after many years find themselves without a job.”



Class of '06 Survives Freshman Year

Nicole Desiato and Ally Walls

AS THE SCHOOL YEAR ENDS, MANY FRESHMEN CAN'T believe that graduation is only three years away. While looking back on the good times and the not-so-good times, however, one opinion predominates among the majority of the students: the school year went very quickly. "Freshman year has gone by fast," said Heather Lonergan, "with all the new friends and classes." According to Amy Dooley, "The individual days went slowly, but the year as a whole flew by."

For all of the students, freshman year at Union Catholic has been a new experience, serving as their first taste of high school and a step closer to the real world. This year's freshman class was the largest enrolled at UC in two decades and one of the most diverse. A poll taken during Foreign Language Week found that members of the class of 2006 come from numerous backgrounds and speak more than twenty different languages fluently.

Was it anything like the freshmen imagined it would be when they first arrived? Lauren Hahn said no, it wasn't. "I thought it was going to be a lot harder. I also thought everyone was



going to be really mean. All the people here are so nice!" Melissa Lagera feels that the teachers during her freshman year did a good job preparing her for her high school future. "My work ethic has improved so much since middle school," she noted, "and that should make sophomore year much easier."

Many freshmen agreed that attending a regional high school allowed them to meet new people from all over the area. Evan Chaillet said that his favorite part of the year was "meeting so many new people and making new friends." The year has also been an adjustment period for

those students who had never attended a Catholic school. "I like wearing the uniforms better than my own clothes because it is so much easier," said Joanne Schurtz, who previously attended Terrill Middle School in Scotch Plains.

Many feel that making new friends wasn't as big of an issue as they thought it would be. "Everyone said it would be scary, but it wasn't. Playing on the soccer team helped a lot," Caitlin Feeley said. Many agreed that playing on a sports team helped a lot, especially fall sports because it was the beginning of the year.

The school year may be ending, but the memories of freshman year will carry throughout the UC experience.

Juniors Enjoy Rites of Passage

Kristine Manalo and Joseph Palinsky

AS THE END OF THE YEAR APPROACHES, THE UC community prepares to bid a fond farewell to its seniors. While the seniors were busy preparing for their graduation, their successors, the juniors, were readying themselves to become seniors. The junior class has a mix of emotions about this upcoming event. Some, such as Daniel Sandiford, are happy. "I'm very excited. By this time next year I will know what college I'm going to and I will have my life ready to be mapped out for me and by me." Others, like James Yeager, are less happy. "It makes me sad (for lack of a better word) knowing that I only have one more year left to be with these people who I'll probably never see again." "I'm excited that it'll be my last year," said Jennifer Kakalettris, "but at the same time, I know I'll be sad too."

There's also a kind of anticipation floating in the air while the juniors wait for June 9. June 9 is the date that Mr. Marotti has set for the junior "welcoming" into the courtyard. Despite the fact that it is much later than usual, the juniors still seem to be excited to enter the courtyard.

Aside from the courtyard "initiation" the juniors must also begin to think into where they would like to attend college. All year long, Ms.

Modlin, their guidance counselor, constantly reminded the juniors of college. "You never see fat ninjas, name a fat Ninja. Oh, and finding a college is really nerve-racking," said Lauren Moore, slightly swaying from the topic. Many people find the looming presence of college to be very depressing, as it marks the end of their time at Union Catholic. "As the end of my four years at UC approaches," said Eduardo Hernandez, "I feel that my time here was spent growing as a person, and really deciding what I want to achieve and strive for when I go out into the REAL world."

Environmental Club Ends Successful Year

Matthew Lubin

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB HAS SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED another school year. Maintaining one of the largest high school recycling programs in the area is not an easy task. However, the enthusiastic work of its members make it feasible. In addition to recycling in the building, special projects included the acorn collection, Human-I-Tees fundraising for rainforest preservation, a soda can tab and used battery collection, and the annual tree planting.

Much of the club's success was due to the exceptional dedication of Sister Mary Raymond, the club's moderator, and the Executive Board: President Daniel Sandiford and Executives Matt Lubin, Steve Perlas, Elyssa DiGiovanni, and Christian Onwuzurike. "The Union Catholic Environmental Club, with the outstanding leadership of the Executive Board, achieved a high level of accomplishment for the year 2002-2003," said Sister Raymond. "This could only have been realized with the support and cooperation of the students, faculty, staff, and administration of the Union Catholic community."

"The Environmental Club has come a long way this year," said club President Daniel Sandiford. "We're proud of the members and the participation of the student body." Recycling

does not work if people don't dispose of recyclable materials in the designated bins. Fortunately, at UC those bins are located at numerous spots throughout the building.

The environment is a very fragile entity. Unfortunately, more and more people fail to take simple steps to preserve it. Educating students and adults to the numerous benefits of recycling is a core goal of the club. "The successes of the Environmental Club this year have helped to make our school more aware of the current environmental issues," said Elyssa DiGiovanni. UC recycles 100% of materials it can recycle. Since garbage collections are billed by volume, recycling saves UC thousands of dollars during the school year.

Most of the student body is not aware of the work that goes into running such a organization efficiently. The club is responsible for designing a custom system annually. It's dependent on membership and the size of the student body. Other factors add work to the job, such as building inspections, bookkeeping of all recycling operations that go on in the building, and coordinating with local contractors to collect the massive amounts of paper and cans that is recycled.

Mary Kay Makeovers

Christina Iafe

MARY KAY COSMETICS REPRESENTATIVE DAUN DeSimone Clark recently gave makeovers to a group of UC students as part of a promotion to give girls a special look for prom night. UC's Prom Coordinator Sister Irma Gazzillo thought it was a great idea to treat the girls to a little fun.

Students signed up for the free service during lunch and had appointments made for a free period. The makeovers began with an explanation of the company and Daun's own personal experience with Mary Kay. The girls then washed their faces and begin applying the makeup colors of their choosing.

"Everyone is beautiful coming in," said Clark, "but the makeup just enhances that, and that's what we're all about." Makeover recipient junior Jen Hillyer agreed. "It was nice to get out of class and have a little fun during school."

New Year, (Not So) New Staff

Nikol Jean

NEXT YEAR'S *PROPHET* STAFF IS THE MOST ECLECTIC ever. With a mix of juniors and sophomores chosen to work for *The Prophet* next year, as well as an unprecedented number of freshmen, no event should go unnoticed.

"Being an editor has really inspired me to improve my own writing and further my interest in journalism," said co-editor Christina Iafe. Christina and fellow editors Kristine Mintel and Amanda Ballate, are returning for a second year as editors, a first for *The Prophet*. In the past, a completely new staff was chosen each year (almost exclusively seniors) and an editor voted from among them. That system didn't allow for experienced students to remain and guide the newer ones.

Another major change in *The Prophet* is the presence of sophomore students in the journalism class. Laura Mortkowitz was chosen this year to be the first sophomore on *The Prophet* staff. At first, Laura found the experience "definitely weird. I felt a little out of place in class because I didn't know anybody. But when I wrote my articles, everything worked out fine. And all of the staff members treated me just like everyone else." As a result of Laura's success, four sophomores will be on the staff next year, while Laura will be the assistant editor.

The new system makes for a better paper, and that always benefits everyone. By having a staff with a large number of returning students, *The Prophet* will display a continuity that has been previously lacking. And with more underclassmen on the staff, the continuity should continue for years.

Next year's staff promises to be excellent. Junior Joe Palinsky, a returning staff member, agrees. "I'm looking forward to next year because the staff looks like it's going to be hard working and a lot of fun." And sophomore Jasmine Marshall is "very excited about [being on *The Prophet* staff] because this is something that I have wanted to do for a long time."

Why are these members so excited to work on the paper next year? At the first new staff meeting of the new staff, there was a noticeable difference between this year's and next year's staff. It's not just the fact that there are an overwhelming number of girls on the staff next year (although that is part of it). It's because most of them have a love for writing and always dreamed about working in journalism. The last two years have seen a complete revamping of *The Prophet* into a regular feature of UC life.

"The new staff is the strongest in my memory," said Mr. Leib, faculty advisor to *The Prophet*. "We have a large number of returning staff members as well as an outstanding crop of new students with a proven ability to write well. *The Prophet* should be the best it has ever been."

Next year's staff includes co-editors Amanda Ballate, Christina Iafe, and Kristine Mintel; assistant editor Laura Mortkowitz; juniors David Ault, Katrisse Corbin, Rick Gutierrez, Carlos Homs, Nikol Jean, Matthew Lubin, Kay Manalo, Lauren Moore, Joe Palinsky, and Pamela Seiple; sophomores Elizabeth Colombo, Katie Czado, Brian DeOliveira, Michael Diaz, Jasmine Marshall, Megan Stahlberg, and Joseph Varvara; and freshmen Nicole Desiato, Katherine Martinez, Katelyn Primich, and Allyssa Walls.

Flap Over Yearbook Pictures

Kristine Mintel

JUNIOR RACHEL DIKEN HAS BEEN TOLD BY ASSISTANT Principal Mrs. Andrews that her senior picture is unacceptable and will not appear in next year's yearbook. The administration felt that Rachel was wearing too much make-up as well as too much jewelry. As she was handed her senior picture proofs, Rachel said she was given the choice to "get retakes without so much make-up or get a paper signed by my mother stating that she was notified that her daughter's picture would not be in the yearbook."

UC students have been doing everything in

their power to convince the administration to change its decision. Junior Cassie Perez has been Rachel's main supporter and has organized a petition drive. Currently there are more than 300 signatures on the petitions, including some faculty members'. "We are hoping that the administration will see that it is the students' yearbook," said Cassie. "We understand that there are rules but it is ridiculous that Rachel's picture can't appear because of her make-up." Thus far, according to Cassie, every student who has been asked to sign one of the petitions has done so.

"It is really surprising how many people got really upset and came up and said something to me," said Rachel. She does not think the petitions will affect the outcome of the situation, but believes they will illustrate just how upset the student body is. Although she was made aware of the petition drive, she was completely uninvolved.

"Nothing about this is in the handbook," noted Rachel. "I am not trying to cause a problem, and if I had thought I would be doing that I would have chosen a different school to attend." Her mother is infuriated with the administrative decision, according to Rachel, and is insistent on her daughter's picture appearing, as is, in next year's yearbook. Her view is that if Rachel was allowed to go to school looking the same way she appeared in her senior picture, she should not be facing this issue in the first place.

"Sister Percylee wants to discourage extreme make-up and neckwear," said Mrs. Andrews. "Anything extreme is going to be questioned." She also noted that Rachel's make-up in earlier school pictures was subtler. Sister PercyLee said she was not able to comment. "Nothing has come before me officially. I would not share anything about the private matters of a student."

Both Mrs. Andrews and Miss Webber, Yearbook advisor, pointed out that the appointment card sent home in the mail informing students of their senior picture date and time did in fact address the issue. The card read, "Hair should be neatly arranged in your usual style; avoid extremes in hairstyle and make-up." Rachel responded, "This is my usual style—I didn't do anything differently."

Rachel is prepared to stand up for her beliefs and, if necessary, transfer to another school. She has already discussed the issue with Mr. Marotti, who said that Rachel's leaving the school was the last thing he wanted to happen. Rachel has found pictures in previous yearbooks of people whose make-up and jewelry she believes were even more exaggerated than her own. "I am not trying to make a fashion statement. I am not trying to do something extreme. This is the only way that I feel comfortable." Rachel will be meeting with Sister Percylee after graduation to discuss the controversy and hopes to find a compromising solution.

Class of 2003 Is Graduated *Kristine Mintel*

AS THE CULMINATION OF UNION CATHOLIC HIGH School's 40th Anniversary celebration, 169 members of the Class of 2003 received their diplomas on Saturday, June 7, in the UC gym.

The guest speaker, Mr. James Venezia, UC teacher and administrator, was a member of UC's first graduating class in 1966. Quoting Yogi Berra, "The future ain't what it used to be," Mr. Venezia explained, "We don't live in a vacuum. Our world is one of constant change and we as faculty and students must live in that change."

The class valedictorian, Lauren Bowe, delivered the commencement address. She discussed words of wisdom her parents had shared with her: Every person's life is a blank canvas. The graduates represent a "group of artists waiting to exhibit their art to the world," said Lauren. "We stand alone with a paintbrush, palette, and world waiting for our arrival; each day of your life waits for you, waits to be painted." She challenged her classmates to see the rain outside as an opportunity for nature's growth rather than as a hindrance.

Ernesto Cerimele, Student Council President, noted that this class had received over \$5 million in scholarship money, and would be attending 57 different colleges and universities in 20 states and three countries. "We know that we are ready for the world," he quipped, "but is the world ready for us?"

National Academic Championships

Laura Mortkowitz

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE TESTS IN SOCIAL STUDIES, English, and science are administered annually to students in honors and accelerated classes. Students in grade nine have their own test, while there is a different test for those in grades ten through twelve. Local scores in each category go into the national competition, and results are known in May or early June.

Since these tests are based on a national curriculum, not everything on the test has necessarily been taught in the UC class. The National Language Arts League test emphasizes mechanics and usage to see how well a student can apply what he or she has learned. This year's winners are senior Rob McGuire, junior Brian Navoa, sophomore Karina Linares, and freshman Bradley Lord.

The science competition is broken down into multiple subcategories: Biology 1 and Chemistry 1 (for first year students), Biology 2 and Chemistry 2 (for advanced placement students), and Physics. The physics medallist is Robert Handley. The biology medallists are Elizabeth D'Antuono (level 2) and Victoria Spellman (level 1). The chemistry medallists are Marybeth Tran

(level 2) and Andrew Timmes (level 1).

The social studies competition is broken into two categories: geography and current events. The winners of the National Geography Challenge are sophomore Elyssa DiGiovanni and freshman Victoria Spellman. Unlike the other competitions, the current events test is taken four times a year, in November, January, March, and May. The scores for each test taken are added together and the highest cumulative score is the medallist winner. The current events medallist is George Roselle.

Spring Sports Showcase

Jasmine Marshall and Katelyn Primich

THE SPRING SPORTS TEAMS—TRACK, BASEBALL, SOFTBALL, golf and tennis—are back, planning to go places this year. The cold, wet spring has been difficult for the athletes but that hasn't stopped them from giving it their all on the practice field and the playing field.

Several teams had shaky starts as they got back into the rhythm of things. But all have made progress as the season progressed. "I think the track team has begun to open new doors for success in the future," said Merissa Rose about the spring track team. "Right now, some of the members are moving onto counties."

Walk for a Cure

Liz Morasso

On June 22, the Alliance for Lupus Research will hold its "Walk for a Cure" at Giants Stadium to help support research on lupus. Lupus is a disease of the immune system, causing it to attack the joints, organs, and skin, causing pain, health problems, and other complications. It affects more than 1 million people in the United States alone and is increasing among young people, especially those aged 15 to 25. As someone who suffers from this disease, I know first hand how important a cure is for all who suffer from it.

All of the proceeds from this walk go to the ALR and anyone can sign up to join my team, Lupus Shmupus. It's a great opportunity to get together with friends and family and have a great time for a great cause. All contributions are fully tax deductible up to the limit of the law. Your support would be greatly appreciated and any potential walkers or sponsors should see me, Liz Morasso, for a registration form and more information about the walk. You can also go to <http://www.lupusresearch.org>. Thank you for your help.



Bob: Disgracefull Swan

Coming only to Union Catholic's school newspaper,
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The softball team was in the run for the conference championship with a 13-5 record. Seniors Suzanne Hennessy, Liz D'Antuono, Kristen Rizzo, and Stephanie Massaro are trying to make this the best season yet. According to sophomore Danielle Chapla, "We are a very strong team, and we have the chance to go really far."

The tennis team's season was not as strong as had been hoped. Senior Vinny Passafiume believes his strongest characteristic, "Never giving up even if the odds are against me," was shared by his teammates. "One of the best things about our team is the laid back attitude that helps us all out," said senior Matt Esposito. "Tennis never gets any fans or respect. I hope for the underclassman that some fans show up and cheer them on next year." Mr. McManus, who played tennis for UC and has been tennis coach for five years, believes the team's will improve next season.

The baseball team reached the state tournament again this year, but lost to Delbarton in the first round. "Our hitting is the one thing we need to work on," believes junior Brandon Garcia. "The core of the baseball team has been together since freshman year," said junior Rick Gutierrez, "and that gives us strength."

The JV softball team went from winning no games last season to a record of 12-2. Most of the team members are freshmen. The new underclassman, who were a huge contribution to the team's roster, seem to have good spirit and anticipate being on the varsity roster next year. Beth Bodek, Jen Louriero, and Jen Hudak all agreed that the everyone on the team has a positive attitude.

Braveheart: An Appreciation

David Ault

ONE OF THE MODERN CINEMA MASTERPIECES OF THE heroic saga genre is Mel Gibson's *Braveheart*. Gibson tells the story of the medieval Scottish leader, William the Wallace, who united his people during the 14th century against English invaders.

Braveheart is characterized by rousing battle scenes, inspiring speeches and personal sacrifice. It is the way in



which these are woven together that make the film, as *The New York Times* suggested, "one of the most spectacular entertainments in recent years."

In the initial moments of the three-hour movie, Gibson deftly reveals, in a few dramatic images, the roots of Wallace's hatred of the English interlopers and the beginning of his personal campaign to unite the Scots against them. He takes literary license with the truth in order to enhance the dramatic tone, inventing the murder of Wallace's father and brother during his childhood and a romance with a French princess, while ignoring the fact that Wallace was deposed by Robert the Bruce as leader of the Scots and

lived for many years as an outlaw in the Scottish highlands. But these factual errors do not detract from the viewer's enjoyment of the drama.

The film's battle scenes are impressive in their scope and length. Using innovative camera techniques and special effects, Gibson gives the viewer an unvarnished view of the gore and confusion of hand-to-hand battle in the medieval world. The result of this meticulous attention to detail is a sense that this medieval battle is actually occurring before their eyes. Gibson enhanced this realism by using real horses in the battle scenes even though this meant weeks of planning so that none of the animals would be injured. Despite the appearance of bloodshed and chaos, the carefully choreographed scenes were completed without a single serious injury.

The gains a far deeper meaning and relevance from the superb writing of screenwriter Randolph Wallace, himself a direct descendent of William the Wallace. The speeches inspire in their simple and direct call for justice for the people of Scotland. When William the Wallace rides past his outnumbered troops as battle impends and shouts "Courage men.... Remember, they can take our lives but they can never take our honor!" the impact on the viewer is emotionally strong as though the event was occurring today.

In the end, the English succeed in killing William the Wallace. But his death, more than any other factor, united the clannish Scots and led to the ultimate defeat of the English at Bannockburn, as Robert the Bruce urged the ragtag band of Scots to fight "For Wallace!"

Ultimately, the power of this masterful work lies in its simple yet eloquent depiction of David against Goliath, right against wrong, a black and white world in which there is no question of who the heroes and the villains are. In a real and cinematic world in which moral issues often seem blurred beyond our power to evaluate them, *Braveheart* provides the modern movie viewer with an opportunity to cheer for the good guys without having to figure out who they are.

Rockfest at Union High

Lauren Moore

Union High's semi-annual Rockfest was held on May 16 and was a huge success. Three Under Six (the house band), Lost in Jersey, Surreal, Buicks to the Moon, and Fog of War rocked the stage from 8 p.m. until midnight. Not only was Fog of War the main event, it included four members of Union Catholic's class of 2003: Rob Whitaker and Andy Jacques on guitar, Ray Crego on bass, and Christian Lapa as lead vocalist.

"Rockfest was an amazing concert, but no doubt the band that stole the show was Fog of War," raved junior Mike Watkins. "No

other musician from any of the bands could come close to Ray, Andy, Christian, Rob, and Andy's cousin," noted junior Kyle McPherson. "Fog of War is the true definition of a 'headliner.' The music is lively and made even non-UC people get moving around. It's a true pity if anyone who has a love for music, missed that night," he said.

Three Under Six, Lost in Jersey, and Surreal each had a pop-punk/emotional sound. They played originals as well as covers by bands such as Taking Back Sunday, The Ataris, and Finch. Buicks to the Moon presented their unique rock sound.

Rockfest is held in the Union High gym twice a year. It's a chance for local bands to perform and have fun with their friends. Proceeds go towards scholarships and the Union High theatre department. Many UC students came out to support the event. "The bands were actually pretty good and did some cool covers. I enjoyed it," said sophomore Molly Burke.

