

Youth

Speaking Out

By Stephen Schott
McQuaid Jesuit High School

It begins when you enter the wonderful world of high school. People (mainly adults) start asking questions — easy ones at first, like, "What's your favorite subject?" or, "What clubs or sports are you in?" or my favorite (and one that's not so easy) "Who's that girl that keeps calling and why were you late last night?" The second part of the question is obviously not related to the first.

These are just a buildup, though, to something bigger — THE Question. The question you will grow to dread. The question that will, when answered, literally take its toll. It usually goes something like this: "You're in high school, eh? That's good, that's good. Where ya plannin' on going to (Get ready. Your life's about to change)... COLLEGE?"

And so begins the mad college rush. No matter what grade you're in, you begin to feel the pressure. Suddenly your European history grade seems to be the difference between trade school and Harvard. No matter what you do, that one failed quiz is going to condemn you to a life of poverty and anguish. Your life is in the balance, and time is running out.

So you purchase your first college book — one that has sold over six million copies and

was on the New York Times best seller list. A book, listing four pounds of colleges, is guaranteed to "find the college that's right for you!"

The first college we all look up is the one our parents went to, or, if they didn't, a famous sports school. That first college is usually disappointing. It is described as "impersonal" or "easy." And you begin to realize that it's a big world out there.

The college mail begins with the PSAT Student Search. Suddenly you are receiving letters from people who "know the kind of student you are." Congratulations to them. Now, if only you knew.

Sometime after, it's time for The Tests. The SAT, ACT and Achievement Tests. Although you hear how they don't make as much of a difference as they used to, they become intimidating nonetheless. If you buy an SAT book, you probably won't use it, that is, until the second time you take the test.

Hopefully, by your last high school summer, you will have a list of prospective colleges you can count on two hands (and feet, if you're unsure). This last summer is a good time to visit a few of these prospective colleges and get a first-hand feel for them. After all this, you must narrow your list to a few colleges and apply.

College applications require a lot of time — approximately four years. Most of them also require an essay and an interview. So twice you must show off your ability to communicate (or meander through country fields with rubber boots on). Many applications require teacher recommendations, so soften up those teachers — or at least one, anyway. Then, with a sigh, you mail out those little pieces of yourself and anxiously await to find

out if your life truly does have meaning.

That brings us to a little bit of advice. A lot of people feel that they're not good enough when applying for college or a job. That is never true. If you show off the real you, that is the best thing you can ever do. It makes you an original human being, and that's what colleges are looking for.

You may not be the captain of the football team or the top of your class, but there is something special about a person who is proud of him/herself. If you don't get accepted at that one special school, at least you know you applied as yourself. And if they don't like you, you still do.

"Cheaters never prosper." Be honest about everything on your application. First of all, if you're caught lying, you're through. Secondly, what if you get rejected from a school you lied to? You would never know if the real you would have been accepted.

The Boy Scouts' motto is "Be Prepared." Make it your motto, too. Before you go for interviews and tours, research the colleges so you can ask intelligent questions whose answers cannot be found in a book. Also, be sure to rehearse answering the kind of questions an interviewer will ask you: your future career, goals, etc.

The last and most important thing is that college is your choice. If you don't want to go, don't. You're an adult. You should be able (Hi, Dad!) to make your own decisions. Be sure to pick the college that's right for you, not for your parents and friends. You don't want to blow what could be four exciting and fun years. Try to get an early start on this whole process if you want to go to college. There's plenty of planning to be done. Good luck.

Coming of Age

By Christopher Carstens
NC News Service

Some things aren't supposed to happen. Bridges should never crumble, buildings aren't supposed to collapse — and your parents should never get a divorce.

Some things aren't supposed to happen, but sometimes they do. When your family, your support and protection, falls apart, the disappointment and hurt are powerful.

When teens talk about their parents' divorces, they often say, "There's less fighting now." As one girl put it, "I'd rather have a whole family, but at least I'm not living in a war zone anymore."

Even so, the first year after a divorce is an emotional roller coaster for parents. As they adjust to single life, it can seem as though the adults are being really selfish and that they just don't care about their kids much anymore.

Actually, most parents are physically exhausted from stress and depression. Parents going through a breakup are often moody and confused, and sometimes they take it out on their children.

It is important for you to remember that the divorce is not your fault. Teens often believe that somehow they messed up their parents' marriage. If only they hadn't had that argument with Dad or insisted on that party dress, everything would still be fine. It's a rare teen who doesn't feel this way at least occasionally after a divorce.

Divorce is an issue between two adults. They didn't marry you, and they didn't divorce you. Divorces are almost never caused by what kids do. Broken marriages are brought about by many different issues, but teen behavior is rarely a major factor. It isn't your fault.

Maintaining your relationship with both of your parents can be tough. These three ideas can be of some help.

First, take time to be with your parents. To keep those relationships sound, you need time with each parent, and each needs time with you. If you repeatedly cancel your visits with your father so that you can be with your friends, don't be surprised if you and he start to drift apart.

Second, don't carry stories or information back and forth. Avoid "tattling" on one parent to the other. This is guaranteed to get you right into the middle of any persisting conflicts.

Finally, try to avoid taking sides. Since parents often feel guilty about the divorce, each would like to be the "good guy" with the other as the villain. If you take sides with one, you cut yourself off from the other. Try to remember that you have two parents, both of whom have made mistakes. Don't get on one parent's team against the other.

Divorce is a painful, difficult thing. Marriages are not supposed to end up that way. When they do, the following months are difficult for everybody. It helps to remember that the situation does get better, and that you still have two parents who love you. Try to give them the chance to show it.

Aquinas Institute

What did you fear about the first day of school?

GRADY MONKS, freshman: My fears of the first day of high school were that I didn't know anybody, and I didn't really know what kind of clothes were right to wear. I was also afraid of getting lost and getting picked on by upperclassmen. I was afraid of the teachers and how much homework I would get.

AMY REITER, freshman: Every year, people are always nervous, especially the freshmen. Personally, I was scared about not fitting in. Of course, everyone is always nervous about forgetting materials for class, but I made it through the first couple of days. Now I feel very comfortable at Aquinas.

DAN ATTRIDGE, freshman: The fears I had about the first day of high school were

whether or not I'd make new friends, forget homework, get detention, get egged on Freshman Friday, and whether I'd find a place to sit in the cafeteria.

KARLA PALERMO, freshman: The fears I had about the first day of high school were: Dropping all my books on the stairs.

Losing a book and getting in trouble with that teacher.

Forgetting my homework or a book in my locker.

Being late for class.

Being egged on Freshman Friday.

DAN PROVENZANO, freshman: There were so many that I can't pick one out! Just kidding. I knew a lot of people, and I only had

As Teens See It

a few worries such as going up the wrong stairwell, forgetting a book or my homework in my locker and last, but not least, the mysterious Freshman Friday. But after the first few days, I felt at home. People were friendly and helpful.

'Miss Polonia' contest set for St. Stanislaus soon

The Polish Women's Alliance of America is sponsoring its annual "Miss Polonia" contest on Saturday, Oct. 8, at 7 p.m. in St. Stanislaus auditorium, at the corner of Norton Street and Hudson Avenue in Rochester.

Contestants must be of Polish descent, sin-

gle, between the ages of 16 and 21, and residents of Monroe County. Contestants will be judged on poise, personality, intelligence and appearance.

One queen and two alternates will be chosen to represent the Polish Community at var-

Class reunion scheduled for St. Agnes High School

The Class of 1958 at St. Agnes High School is planning to have its 30th class reunion at the Wishing Well Restaurant, 1190 Chili Ave., Rochester, on Tuesday, Oct. 11. Any class mem-

ber who hasn't received notice should contact Mary Ellen Whalen at (716)381-3598; Sue Lang Schenkel at 924-4286; or Elaine Walker Reisenberger at 227-6785.

ious city Rochester-area functions throughout the coming year.

Bottle, can drive on tap at Aquinas Institute soon

The Aquinas Institute Marching Band and Color Guard is sponsoring a bottle and can drive for Saturday, Oct. 1, and Sunday, Oct. 2, in the school's parking lot, 1127 Dewey Ave., Rochester.

The drive will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on both days. Call John and Barbara Merklinger at (716)426-0514 to arrange for pick-up.

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We received 45 correct entries identifying Little Suzie as the person the Everly Brothers were trying to wake up.

The winner was Kelly Shay of Our Lady of Good Counsel

MUSIC TRIVIA

This week's question:
 "Sunshine On My Shoulder" was a 1974 hit for whom?

A: _____

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip Code _____
 School _____

Rules:
 Each week, the Courier-Journal, in conjunction with the House of Guitars will feature a Music Trivia contest. All you have to do to enter is answer the question, fill in your name and address and the school you attend (if applicable), cut out the coupon, and send it in to the Courier-Journal. If more than one correct entry is received, a drawing will be held and one winning entry will be drawn. If yours is the winning entry, you will be mailed a coupon for a free album or tape of your choice redeemable at the House of Guitars, 645 Titus Ave.
 All entries must be received within seven days of this paper's issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following each drawing.

The Courier-Journal Music Trivia
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