

On the MOVE

HEADING IN

Story by Staff Writer **Mike Latona** PH

Lisa Johnson felt strongly about playing softball this spring.

And appearing in her school musical at Nazareth Academy. And working her part-time job to help defray college expenses. And maintaining her No. 5 ranking in her senior class. And preparing for her prom and other graduation-related activities.

So when it came time to decide about softball, Lisa's thoughts were going in as many directions as a ground ball on a rocky infield.

"I was kind of wrecked that week," admitted Lisa, 17, a parishioner at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

She finally made up her mind while playing catch one day with her close friend Jessica Benthin, another softball team member. In the end, she followed her heart.

"I've been playing softball since I was real little," Lisa said. "And a lot of my friends play softball. I can relate to those people more."

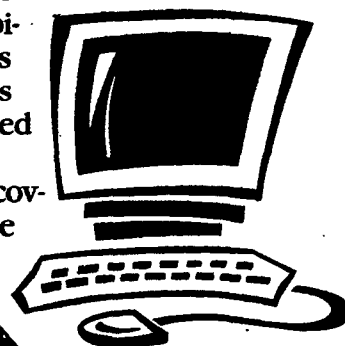
So Lisa opted against the school musical, and reduced her part-time working hours until the softball season ends. In the meantime, the Nazareth pitcher feels comfortable about settling on

softball — with one exception. "When it was snowing (during early-season practices), I was like, did I make the wrong decision?" she laughed.

Actually, Lisa has found softball to be a comfort in her busy life, rather than a burden.

"It relieves a little stress," she said. "I have to do something to relax for awhile."

Cramped schedules such as Lisa's are typical for high-schoolers who include athletics in their already packed itineraries. And, as Sarah Echter has discovered, it can simply be too tall a task to



Lisa Johnson, a senior at Rochester's Nazareth Academy, juggles school, work, sports.

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