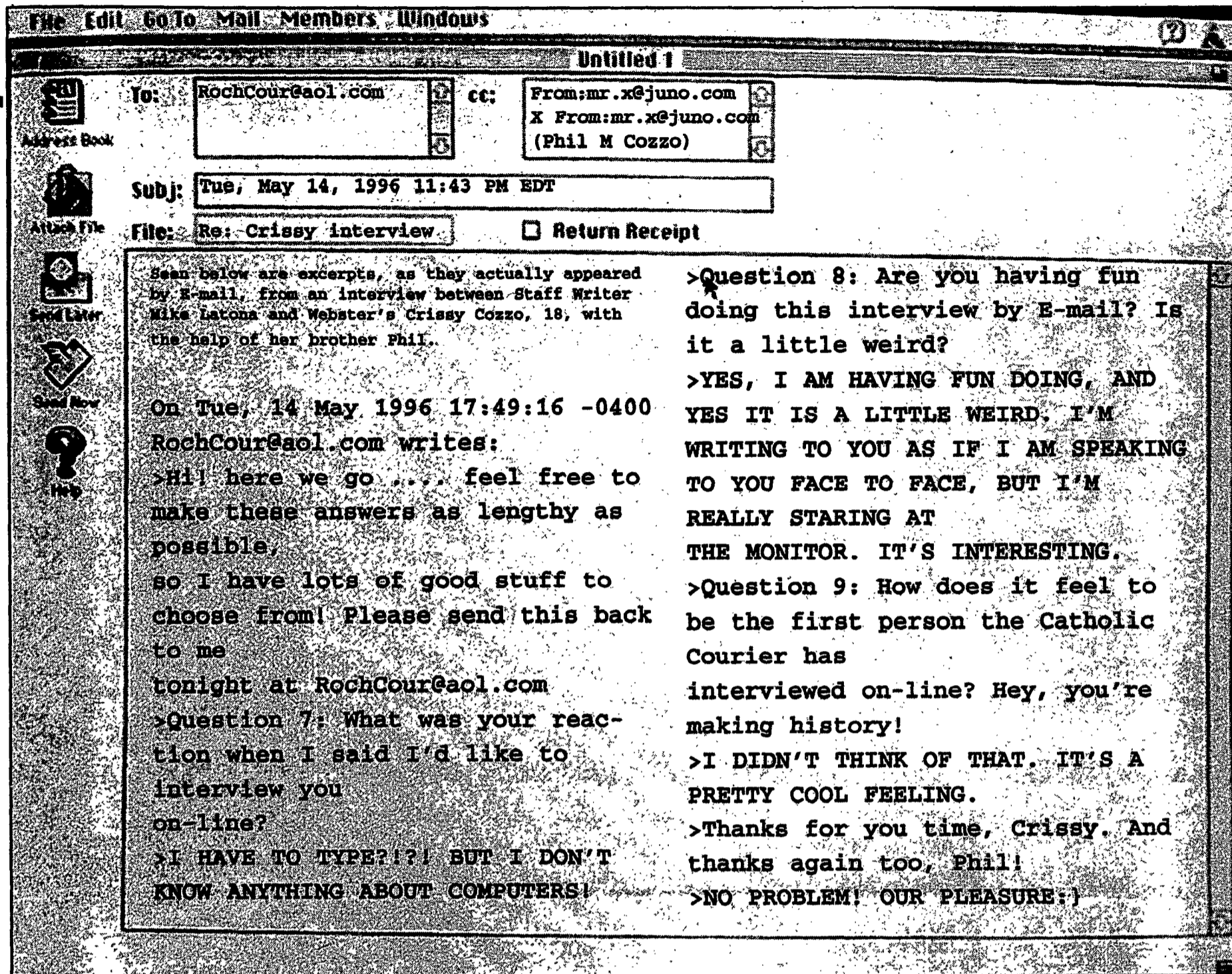


Story by staff writer Mike Latona  
Photographs by staff photographer S. John Wilkin



Crissy, 18, a parishioner at St. Paul's Church in Webster, said she plans to major in biology in college, with a potential career in medicine.

"Many areas of medicine include the use of computers," she explained. "Testing relies on computers through CAT scans and MRIs, and computers are used in surgery. I'm definitely going to have to be familiar with computers to get by."

Crissy added that she's looking forward to using E-mail while at college so she can correspond with family members and friends. Currently, (in addition to conducting newspaper interviews), Crissy uses her computer to write school papers and play computer games such as solitaire.

Her affinity for computers runs in the family. Phil, 15, is such a computer veteran that he and a couple of friends find their computer applications course at Webster Junior High School to be "rather boring. We finish the work quick," Phil said.

He added that he has furthered his computer education every time he turns his machine on.

"I'm pretty much self-taught," Phil said. "I've sat down in front of my computer and searched through different directories, reading the 'help' and 'read me' files. Sometimes there are big, huge books that come with (new) computers, but there's a lot of good information right on the com-

puter. I've really learned a lot."

Another computer whiz is Kevin Savino-Ricker, 15, from St. Mary's Church in Elmira. His computer activities range from performing business duties for his videotaping operation, to checking out the Internet for practical tips about out-of-state living.

"My family is planning to move to the Carolinas after I'm done with high school. I can get information on cost of living, taxes, occupations and crime rates," Kevin explained.

The Internet, Kevin noted, can also benefit people seeking religious information.

"You can get into all sorts of denominations," he said. Kevin also pointed out that the Vatican now has its own "page" on the World Wide Web, probably the best-known part of the Internet. Each Web page contains pertinent information about that "web site," and can even transmit sound and video along with text and graphics.

However, not all material traveling the information superhighway is appropriate for general audiences. For example, Kevin expressed concern about the lack of government sanctions against pornography on the Internet.

"Any 12-year-old with an average computer can get into that without anyone knowing about it," Kevin said. "It's more serious than people think."

Another potential drawback of computer usage is the amount of time involved.

"If you spend all day and all night with it, you'll have no social life except on the Internet," stated Matt Price, 14, from St. John of Rochester Church in Perinton. "And chances are, you'll never meet that person. It's not like you can do anything with them; all you can do is talk."

"If all a person does is eat, sleep and get on the computer, that person is missing out on a lot," Crissy commented. "There is so much more to life than staring at a screen. I think a person should moderate between spending time on the computer and doing other things."

Yet by taking a healthy approach, Kevin maintained, the positive aspects of computer usage far outweigh the negatives.

"It's something that's going to benefit you in the long run," Kevin said.

For those who consider themselves computer illiterate, Kevin offers some encouraging words.

"It really is a lot easier once you start," he said.

"Computers," Phil added, "are only as hard as you make them."

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A Day in the Life of a Prom Couple.**