

# Western Spirit

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*"To Provide A Christ Centered Community That Integrates Faith And Quality Education"*

## Save a Life or Two

**BY SILAS WOLFF**  
STAFF WRITER

The Red Cross is coming to the school again for the blood drive and they want people to help donate. The question that may plague a potential donor is why someone should even bother with giving blood to the Red Cross.

Well, a life could be saved that really needs help. There are many people out there who will need the Red Cross for help. The reality is

that there are only a small fraction of people out there that actually donate. With so many different types of blood, the person that donates could have a rare blood type that helps some poor little kid pent up in a hospital, who has been waiting for a long time for someone to donate. The blood drive is very important and it does not matter if the donor is afraid, because when it comes down to it, everyone is. The donor has to think of all the people they will be helping; it is an easy and a selfless thing to do. A donor who is afraid of

needles need not worry; they will be completely cared for. The Red Cross does this for a living and the person giving is not the first person they have meet who is afraid of a needle. The blood drive is happening Thursday, May 18, 2006 from 7:30A.M. to 1:30P.M. in the Cafeteria. In order to participate a donor must be seventeen or older. Most of the people that participate do not like the actual extraction of the blood, but they love the end when they get their free cookie for their participation.



## Save the Last Dance

**BY LAUREN LANGLEY**  
STAFF WRITER

Prom this year was held at the Long Beach Hyatt on April 28, 2006. School got out that day at 12:30. Many of the girls rushed off to their appointments, while many of the guys went home for a nap. After all the preparations, pictures started at 6:30. People were allowed to go take their pictures and then mingle with their friends. At about 7:30, everyone was asked to sit down, and the royal court got to sit at a long, raised table right in front of the dance floor, and about 20 more tables were on either side. Everyone was then asked to go up and get their dinner, one table at a time. Dinner was a buffet with Italian and Mexican food. Everyone's favorite was the ice cream bar, which had a long line for almost an hour. As everyone was starting to finish their meals, Hilltop started to sing. There was even a duet performed by Megan Mulder and Jordan Doolittle. When the senior slide show started, every senior had at least one picture, if not more. Many of the pictures were of the seniors when they were little kids. The next slide show was of the prom court, together and growing up. Each member on the court was also escorted around the room while ASB president, Grace Kuo, spoke about their favorite memories, how

they would like to be remembered, and other little-known facts. A very short skit was put on by Oden the Pirate and a few other students. Oden announced that Derek Barghaer and Katrina Tuason were Prom King and Queen. When asked what his favorite part about being on court was, Derek said, "It was nice to sit at a big table and eat first. But, it is a bummer that I have made fun of the whole notion of prom court for three years and then I ended up being prom king. Talk about irony." The dance started at about 10:00 and continued for about two hours. As the night ended and the last song



Photo by Year Book

"You're Beautiful" started to play, it truly was a "Moonlit Romance".

## Passing the Torch

**BY MATT SUZUKI**  
STAFF WRITER

Here at Western Christian High School, it is very important that we have strong leaders to lead our student body. "ASB is a unique group because as new officers are elected and appointed each year, that gives us new personalities to blend with those people who continue on in ASB," stated Grandma Butler. The significance of having students run for ASB is so that the students can be represented in all of the school affairs. Recently on campus we had a group of individuals run for differ-

ent positions for the student body. The day of the elections was a very exciting day. During chapel all of those who wished to run came up on stage and gave reasons on why to vote for them. Many of those who came up and gave speeches gave excellent performances. They showed the audience that they really cared and could make a change. After all who chose to run for student body had finished their speeches, everyone rushed to the voting poles to vote. The voting took place at Mrs. Schall's room, Grandma's room and Mr. Hernandez's room.

The anticipation for the results of the candidates was very intense. By the end of lunch the results were announced. Grace Kuo won for ASB President and Winnie Su won the position of Vice President. These are the new leaders of the Western Christian Student Body and hopefully they will not let us down. These two courageous women will help build a strong foundation for our future year to come. Not only will they lead us in improving the school, but also spiritually and will help us grow as a school together. In the near school year there will be great changes to come for the better.

# WESTERN LIFE

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## A New Found Cleanliness

By **RYAN SALWAK**  
STAFF WRITER

On Friday, April 14 to Sunday, April 16, a group of students, staff and parents got together and demolished the east side boys' and girls' bathrooms. When Mrs. Nelson was asked why this job was done, she said because "the bathrooms were in bad shape". A lot of students would not even use them. \$3,800 worth of equipment was installed in the new bathrooms and a total of \$14,000 for the whole project, which was donated by many parents.

Mrs. Nelson said she is "impressed and encouraged by the generosity of parents and students". Automatic flushing toilets, partitions, lights, sinks, and faucets were installed in the bathrooms, as well as a new mirror for the boys' bathroom. The floors were also buffed and polished. When commenting on the new bathrooms, Deana Sullender said, "They are very nice," and Mrs. Mercy said, "They are sanitarily fit."

The school plans to renew the west side students' bathrooms this summer.



Staff Photo By Ryan Salwak

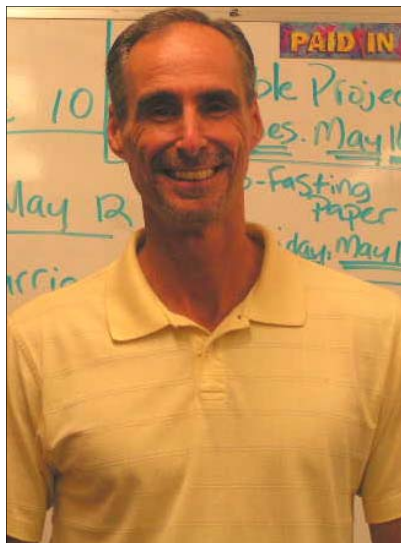
## A "Well-Rounded" Servant of God

By **SARAH ORTEGA**  
STAFF WRITER

Mr. Wheeler grew up in Covina and when describing his childhood in two words, he said, "very busy". He was very athletic and was committed to different sports teams. All throughout high school he was involved in sports. He accepted Christ as his Savior when he was 12 years old at a church youth camp. Before that, he went to church, but it was not until then that he asked Jesus into his life. He went to college at Azusa Pacific University (APU), Fuller Theological Seminary, and participated in a doctoral program at Trinity. His first major in college was com-

munication, but he felt that the Lord wanted him to engage in full time ministry. Therefore, he became a pastor. Mr. Wheeler was a pastor for 18 years at Gateway Community Church, which is in Illinois. This is his fifth year teaching

at a Christian school. He taught at Western in 1991 and when he



Staff Photo by Sarah Ortega

heard of a job opening this year he went for it. Now, Mr. Wheeler teaches sophomore Bible (or Bible 10). "I have a philosophy on teaching. I like to grow relationships with my students because I think that they will know more and learn more from me," he explains. Mr. Wheeler teaches Western's Worship Band. Along

with teaching at Western, he also coaches J.V. Boys Basketball. "Basketball is my passion. I have always had a dream of coaching a Varsity team and seeing how far I can take them. I also love every other sport," Mr. Wheeler said. He was even the volleyball varsity coach this year. Another interest includes playing "Fantasy Football", a computer game in which a person chooses different NFL players to be on his or her team and plays against other teams. Mr. Wheeler is glad that he came back but he will be leaving to Illinois in August to be with his wife.

"My vision is to see young people abandoned to Christ," said Mr. Wheeler.

# OPINION

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## An Eye For An Eye?

BY KATRINA TUASON  
STAFF WRITER

Every wrong deed deserves a necessary and fitting punishment. This has been a concept either taught or implied to most of us all of our lives. Even the Bible depicts the concept of repercussions

after committing sins. The stories found in the Word of God show consequences that occur because of people's disobedience to Him. However, the Bible also says that God holds all vengeance and upholds all justice. Psalm 89:14 says, "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne;

love and faithfulness go before You." This brings an issue to mind: capital punishment.

Most states implement the death penalty for heinous crimes. Some Christians support this method and believe that this is a just way to handle crimes such as murder. Other Christians argue that giving "an

eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" is not the proper way to be like Christ's example. They say that the death penalty is murder, and that though God is just, he is also loving and faithful to forgive. Both sides of the argument prove a valid point. If a person commits murder, what would be a worthy punishment for his cruel actions other than death? Could a heart hardened to the point of taking another person's life be softened to the point of change? If so, it is still doubtful that the victim's family will accept a verbal guarantee that the convict has turned his life around and is now safe to venture the streets without charge or penalty.

In Biblical times, death was given upon the act of many different crimes. There were various ways of implementing the death penalty back then. Some people were stoned, hung, or even nailed on the cross like our Lord Jesus Christ. And though we as Christians are called to abide by the law of our government (unless it contradicts the Word of God), perhaps the government should not hold enough power to take a person's life despite the circumstance. Since the prison system has not proved to be so profitable and effective, no other alternative to the death penalty comes into view.

Though God created all men and He alone should have the authority to take back their lives, our sin has driven us far from perfection. The world is so corrupt that justice is so very difficult to obtain, even with an organized and established government. All we can do is pray for those around us, ourselves, and the decisions made by our leaders. We can uphold justice, and pray that the Lord will be pleased with the way our country handles punishment such as the death penalty.



Staff Graphic by Silas Wolff / Staff File Photo By Ryan Salwak

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**SPORTS**

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# Rayna Bowen: Playing Against the Odds!

BY VY NGO  
STAFF WRITER

Rayna Bowen has been stirring up controversy ever since she was about five years old. Not thinking she would pursue baseball, her father signed her up for T-Ball when she was five years old. "I love playing baseball. I was surrounded by it ever since I was a baby, thanks to my dad," said Rayna. She adores the game and plays passionately. Many have wondered why Rayna chose baseball over softball since many people think that baseball and softball are the same. Baseball and softball may seem similar at the basics, but differ in specifics. The rules are very different; they also

have different types of balls, pitches, and fields. There are many things to adjust to if one decides to make the transition from baseball to softball.

Numerous people know that baseball is a game for men, and softball is for women. Though this is usually the case, Rayna still chased after the idea of playing baseball. "It is hard because the guys treat me differently, when all I wanted was to be treated as a player, not a girl. I have to work twice as hard to prove that I can handle whatever is thrown towards me," Rayna



Staff Photo By Vy Ngo

stated. Though she might have had her troubles with past teammates and coaches, she has found a team that accepted her and treats her equally. "I don't view her as a girl, I view her as a player. Her production and team mentality doesn't make her a girl, but a baseball player," said Coach

Courneya.

There are many challenges that she has had to conquer in order to play. The first mountain she needed to climb was the physical aspect of baseball. It is known that men are built differently than women. "I

have to try to play at the same level as them, though I know that they will always be faster and stronger than me. I am always willing to try to play faster and stronger," said Rayna. Her other challenge was the mental part. She encounters criticism on and off the field by opposing teams and crowds. "I just don't let them affect my game. I take it to them on the field and just play my game. I show them that I can really play by the first throw," Rayna said. Coach Courneya said he would have not put her where she is if she could not compete. He believes that the catcher position works the hardest both mentally and physically. Rayna plays the position of catcher, as well as first base.

# Rewarded For Their Commitment !

BY REBEKAH VALLE  
STAFF WRITER

Commitment is a large portion of what brings a team together. If each member of a team is not committed, the lack of commitment can tear the team apart. Commitment, loyalty, and responsibility go hand in hand. The definition of loyalty is devotion or dedication. The definition of commitment is the state of being bound emotionally or intellectually to a course of action or to another person or people. When a person is devoted to something they enjoy they will bring along dedication. Vince Lombardi, a championship winning coach for the Green Bay Packers, once said, "Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work." Anyone who has been on a team, or worked on a project for school, knows that having one person do all the work is unfair and does not exude greatness. However, if the whole group or team works together as one,

the outcome will be successful.

This year's track team has committed to their job on the team and has strived to achieve their goal. Individually each person has dedicated time and effort. Whether it is raining or scorching hot, they are out running or competing in their respective events. Coach Ramirez is incredibly happy for the team he has this year. Each player has such a great heart and is willing to do whatever they can to help the team. Josh Prince said, "It felt like I ran more than I drove, in order to achieve my



Staff Photo By Vy Ngo

goal as a league champion." Their commitment level has drastically changed for the better because they have been able to send more people to C.I.F. than ever before. In previous years people would not attend practices or train hard. This year they have set high standards and worked very hard to achieve them. Mr. Ramirez is especially proud of Theresa Broad, Jaimie Mills, Lauren Gonzales, and Joy Barge. These girls have put in hard work and sweat and will most

likely be going to C.I.F. as individuals. Ramirez is also proud of the boys, particularly Steve Hunt, Josh Prince, and Eric Paulsen, who will probably be going to C.I.F. as individuals. "It feels good to know that I worked hard for this and it paid off," said Lauren Gonzales. The captains have worked especially hard. Steve Hunt even runs on the weekends to prepare. Even though he was hurt in the beginning of the season, Hunt was first in league and made it to C.I.F. (his main goal). Hunt said, "Not only am I proud of myself, but my fellow teammates as well. Some of my goals as a captain were to encourage my fellow teammates to strive to do their best and to glorify God through all I do." As Lombardi said, "The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand."

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# CALENDAR

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## Creativity At Its Best

BY KALEIGH SCOTT  
STAFF WRITER

Western Christian's art students are painting their way to art college – literally! Love and passion for art brings them together, but their unique abilities set them apart. From talents in ceramics and fashion to drawings and paintings, these students light the way and set the standard for others to follow in their footsteps into an art career.

"Fiona Costales is an amazing artist," says Ms. Garside. "She can do anything." Drawings and paintings are her specialty. "She's great at papier-mâché," Ms. Garside says. She also loves to write. Artistic abilities can really help a writer. "She has a lot of opportunities," says Ms. Garside.

Alice Fong is another very creative and talented student who has the ability to accomplish anything. "It is somewhat rare when a student does so well in ceramics," says Ms. Garside. She plans on going to F.I.D.M. for architecture or interior design.

Samuel Saputra may be a junior, but it is evident that an art career is right around the corner for him. One of the main reasons he is attending Western is to get into art school. His drawings are incredible. Mystic fairy-tale dragons and creatures fill the pages of his sketchbook. "I love to draw," Samuel says. He has a real passion for art. That passion will show in his career someday.

These students are making their way into professional careers in the world of art. They are the proof that passion can take a person anywhere they want to go. For students who want to do the same, "Go for it no matter what," Ms. Garside says, "Never give up." "They are amazing," says Tim Mulko, Ms. Garside's T.A. Soon not only Western, but the world will see.



Drawn By Alice Fong



Drawn By Filna Costales



Drawn By Samuel Saputra

# Q&A

The Western Spirit decided to ask the student body a question as a means of learning more about the hearts and minds within the school. Our question:  
**What are your favorite things to do during the summer?**  
 Below are some responses organized by class.



**Freshman: Jessica Luchtenburg:** "I love summer because I like to sleep and go places to hang out with all my friends."



**Sophomore: Emily Birkland:** "One of my favorite things to do during the summer is to travel to a lot of different places and experience new things."



**Junior: Josh Prince:** "During the summer, I love to go to the beach just to have fun hanging out there."



**Senior: Frederick Mallari:** "I love to go to many different theme parks with my friends during the summer. We have fun going on a lot of the different rides."

# Q&A

The Western Spirit decided to ask the student body a question as a means of learning more about the hearts and minds within the school. Our question:  
**Who is your absolute favorite Disney character? Why?**  
 Below are some responses of teachers.



**Mr. Ramirez:** "My favorite Disney character of all time is Kaa, the snake from *The Jungle Book* because he slithers."



**Miss Miller:** "I like Mulan because she has strong character, good leadership qualities, and she follows her heart."



**Grandma Butler:** "My favorite would have to be Pooh. All my grandkids had nursery rooms decorated with Pooh, so I just love him."



**Mrs. Schall:** "I love Eeyore because he's so awfully cute, and he always looks like he simply needs a hug."

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