

## Where are the hellos in the hallways?

BY RACHEL SHAUGER

The long hallways of NCSSM, though seemingly benign, are the source of a problem affecting everyone but distressing almost no one.

This problem is the lack of people greeting each other in the hallway. Although it may appear to be a small trouble, it is actually a festering plague of disconnection which could lead to an epidemic of unfriendliness if we do not identify and treat it.

In general, the difficulty is that members of the NCSSM community do not greet people unknown to them in the hallway. Each person seems to have his or her own tactic of avoidance. Some stare at the ground, pretending not to notice the other person, and then they raise their head when they think the other person is out of sight. Others go for the less guilty approach; one might find them staring at a mural, fixating on the rainbow outside the robotics lab, or trying to focus on what a beautiful day it is outside in order to seem preoccupied. And some look down, trying to gauge when the other will greet them, and look up for a brisk "hi," afterwards feeling relief and pride for having skillfully avoided floundering.

This avoidance of others is most often caused by a desire to escape awkwardness or making a social blunder. Many think that it is easier to evade others than to create a simple connection by saying "hello." Although some may find it a blunder to make one's self vulnerable to an awkward situation, failing to acknowledge fellow humans would be a greater mistake.

Jon Miller, instructor of English, remembers that when he attended Davidson College as an undergraduate, the school

enforced a rule that all freshmen had to greet everyone they came across and hold the door for the person behind them. Miller said he thought "the educational value of that was so [the freshmen] would notice other people and pay attention to them, so that we don't all live in our own secluded little worlds." Miller said that it worries him that he can tell as soon as a person rounds the corner that he or she is not going to greet him.

"The importance of greeting each other is to make one another feel good and to establish a connection."

-Jon Miller

other feel good and to establish a connection. It might not be a very good connection, but it's some connection—a beginning," Miller said.

It is important to create a connection like this so that we do not lose sight of others and become wound up in our own cocoons of solitude. To greet one another is

to reach out and maintain an open communication between people. Although for only a small moment, we can feel happiness because someone took

the care to pay attention to us and tend to our needs of cheer.

It is vital to remedy this hallway-greeting problem through our own example. We must dismiss thoughts of how awkward a situation might be and embrace the possibility that we can brighten someone's day by simply making eye contact and seeking out a "hi" instead of gazing at the floor. The only solution is to practice this easy greeting and to get over worries of being artless.

By not greeting each other in the hallway, we create a rift within our community, and we subdue common friendliness. It is important that we not lose sight of the little things that make up our lives and that we try to reach out to others in this simple but effective way. I hope that the community of NCSSM will begin to take it upon themselves to greet one another when passing in the hall, to establish even the slightest connection that we can hold onto and cherish.

## Recycling efforts not up to par

BY KATHLEEN HÉRERT

Most communities try to make recycling as easy as possible, but the NCSSM recycling system is a bit on the ragged side. Students see the rows of recycling garbage bins throughout the school and feel good that they are trying to do their part in saving the world. Unfortunately, what looks like a care-free system is a complete mess.

There are various garbage bins throughout the hallways, some labeled and some not. The bins, full of recyclables, don't always make it to the recycling center. Frequently, yellow signs are seen in front of the cans outside the PEC, signaling that the recycling couldn't be picked up because there was too much trash mixed in. So then these bags of mixed recycling and garbage are dumped in the landfills. The point of these good intentions to recycle is lost if everything ends up in the same place.

The administration constantly warns students to be conservative in their use of supplies. Humans throw away 50 million tons of paper and 67 billion cans and bottles every year. Not many know that it is illegal to throw away aluminum in North Carolina. Our recycling must be put into a more organized system. SLI Steve Jones said, "I think that it's a big mess. All of the recycling containers around school are labeled individually, yet the blue bins in the pit are grouped -- metal/cans/bottles and paper. Why don't we just have two containers around the school?" If this suggestion were implemented, trash bag usage would be cut, and recycling would be easier and convenient.

Teacher Dr. Marion Brisk has tried for the past several years to have a composting pile for the campus. She said that her students working with this project found between one third and one half of the trash thrown away here can be recycled. But she also said that one of the reasons people usually don't recycle is because they do not see the importance.

Recycling insures that people will not someday be living on top of old landfills because they have no where else to live. In a more positive light, some members of the NCSSM community approve the school's recycling efforts.

"So many schools and work places don't have any access to recycling at all, so the fact that we even have a system in place shows that we are more committed than most to preserving our resources," said Junior Jessica (JT) Taylor.

There are problems with what is in place on campus now, but not to the point where people can not make a difference in the amount of garbage that is produced here. World wide recycling efforts start with a single person recycling.



Jennifer Cook looks toward the window as Nash Page passes in the breezeway. Many students try to avoid awkwardness and minor rejection by not greeting others in the hall.

## College applications cause angst

BY EMMA HTUN

So, we've just come back from an extended and I'm sure we're all nice and rested, right? Spent the break lazing around, sleeping, and hanging out with friends, didn't we? Well, if you were a studious and smart senior, you would not have involved yourself in an excess of these activities. Why, though? We've earned our break, right?

The answer is, my friend, a fun little thing called college applications. As November 1st, the traditional date for Early Action or Early Decision applications came and went, many were going through forms, lists, and essays. Even if seniors were not turning in early applications, many of us know by now the virtue of doing things early. Especially in these days, when college applications require copious amounts of paperwork, doing things ahead of time is definitely a good plan.

Is it just me, or are college applications ridiculously pains-

taking? Follow a riveting trip in the art of filling out an application through the eyes of a REAL senior applying for college.

Part One: I fill in standard information at first; you know, simple things like name, address, high school...seemingly innocent questions that belie the ferocity of what is to come. I hesitate at the ethnicity question, remembering the rumors of percentages of chances by different races in getting their top choices, but I decide to ignore them and fill out my race.

Part Two: Now I come to the "Extra-curriculars and community service" section. "Please list the activities you have been involved in by order of their importance to you." I always hate questions like these. How in the world are we supposed to remember how many hours we did French Club in 9th grade? Do people even keep records of this?

Part Three: Essays. The monster. Essays can be amaz-

ingly complicated or amazingly simple. Should we write about a traumatic experience or an overcame obstacle? How about an activity that we like doing?

In short, applications are evil, evil things that make house-keeping look like Christmas.

But wait, "watching tv" doesn't count right? So do we glorify a club that we're in to make ourselves look better? By this time, most of us are pulling our hair out in frustration.

Part Four: Truster. Recommendations...another hassle.

Trying to find a teacher to write a good rec is often difficult, and it's hard to decide whether to choose a teacher who likes you or who gave you good grades. Setting up a time to meet with your English teacher to help review and revise essays that you've written adds another component to interaction with teachers as you go through your application checklist.

Those are the four main parts of an application, but of course there's the matter of sending transcripts (which with the Uni-Center here becomes more complicated), SAT scores (another instance where College Board tries to take your money), and actually sending the application off (why are there about fifty different addresses for each component of the app??)

In short, applications are evil, evil things that make housekeeping look like Christmas. With all the fuss, it's a miracle anything even applies to colleges.