

Koffeehaus: a forum for talent

By BEN BOGARDUS

Students looking for fun on the weekends at NCSSM often have the opportunity to experience the creativity and inventiveness of their peers at the school's own version of open performance, called Koffeehaus. Many people routinely sing songs, read poetry, or express themselves whenever they are inspired to do so.

Although Koffeehaus is just a few hours long, a good bit of planning that goes on behind the scenes. Senior Jake Reardon is a host and main member of the Koffeehaus crew. He calls meetings and makes sure acts run smoothly.

"I entertain the audience betwixt breaks with insanely corny jokes and improvisational skills," Reardon said of his position.

Along with his co-host Katie Tygielski, Reardon makes a theme for each show, rehearses a bit, and converses with Julie Graves about the content and order of the performances.

The organizing of Koffeehaus is no simple task.

"We all do different parts of it; everyone has a different job," said Reardon. Hot chocolate and other "delicious foods," as Reardon put it, are prepared by Senior Aaron Schmidt, alias "Shreds," along with SLI Steve Jones. Seniors Robert Davis and Kate Millay put out humorous posters advertising the event, and senior Alex Cole-Weiss helps decide the order of the acts. Organizers converge and debate the many aspects before carrying out their individual duties.

Carl Schissler, a consistent

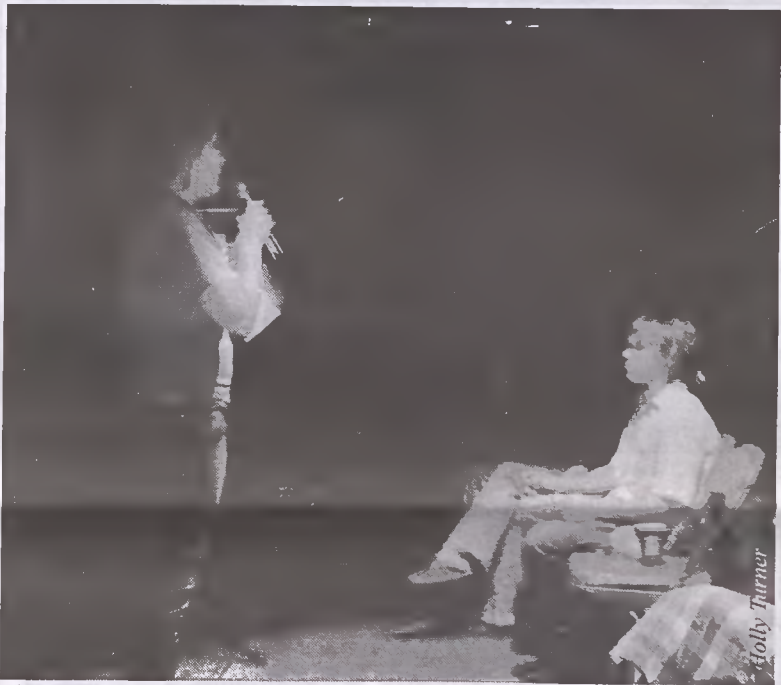
performer at Koffeehaus, expressed the need for more juniors to take interest in the production of the event, however. "It was better last year, we need more people to get interested in the dance afterward," he said. After each show, all the chairs go back against the wall and the main performers at Koffeehaus hold a jam session while the audience dances.

Members of the Koffeehaus crew would like to see more of any kind of dance and magic tricks. They want people to show off their talents, play what they write, and share their passion with the rest of the student body. Occasionally, a group will perform a skit, such as recent excerpts from Monty Python, but poetry happens the least, and the playing of music still dominates the scene.

Despite the open atmosphere of the event, there are some restrictions on the acts that can be performed. Profanity is forbidden, along with sexual performances. "You don't want to mock people; and clothing is required," Reardon said. Of these restrictions, Schissler said that students "can't make sexual references, or play 'Scotty Doesn't Know.'"

Reardon and Schissler both agree that Koffeehaus is well worth the two hours that it lasts.

"This community is capable of handling Riley Zeller-Townsend," a grand senior who, along with Schissler, performed a heavy metal song with his peers in a black dress.



Chelsea Sokolow on mike at Koffeehaus

DDR mania sweeps campus

By JASMINE LAGRONE

The DDR craze has been sweeping across the NCSSM campus and in places around the world. DDR actually originated in Japan. What exactly is this game about and what has it attracting an entire club to play it regularly? These are the kind of questions that the Stentorian hoped DDR co-presidents Matthew Long and Amy Varner would answer.

Concerning the game's different modes, players can change the arrows' speed, which makes it harder or easier. Players can also alter the arrows' style or color, depending on their speed. Additional features involve commanding the arrows to disappear half-way up the screen and having them spin around in a circle as they ascend. Different people advance through levels at varying speeds, but it may take two years or more to move up to the heavy level. Charles Hews [the DDR Club's technical director], however, only took one year according to Amy. On the other hand, many individuals advance to the standard level in only a couple of days.

There are also several games that have sprung from DDR. DDR co-president Matt Long

stated that one such game, called The Groove, "adds a level beyond heavy called expert." It has a lot of different songs, and the songs are about twice as long as a normal DDR song. According to Amy Varner, "some of the newer players really like it." Amy also recommended "Step Mania, a free computer program that's similar to DDR" because it's "much cheaper than buying a Play Station 2." Additionally, Matt Long mentioned that "people can purchase the Etoy, which has a hands and feet mode." Since the camera can see the player, hands are involved in certain parts of the game.

After learning so much information about DDR, one is probably left wondering about how much it would cost to buy such a system. Well, the total cost of a DDR system includes purchasing "a Play Station 2 [in addition to buying the actual game] along with pads, which can cost anywhere from \$50 to \$150" according to Matthew. Although some pads only cost about

\$15, they usually don't work at higher difficulty levels.

The DDR Club plays on Thursday nights from 6:00 to 8:00 PM in the Student Center. Amy Varner believes that NCSSM students enjoy playing DDR because it's "something mildly physical that can be done inside besides just hanging around." Also, "it's a good excuse to talk and laugh with people and something that many enjoy in groups." Matt Long actually had his interest developed through having his "entire social group built around playing DDR last year." This dance revolution is here to stay.



Briant Robey, Scott Schwartz play DDR

Mini-Term trips span the globe

By GRACE KIM

To some, one of the first things that comes to mind when one sees or hears the word "adventure," is the idea of traveling the world. This idea comes to the imagination in many forms—it could mean battling blood-thirsty mosquitoes in the Neotropics or sipping a glass of well-aged Merlot while contemplating the lavender fields of Provence. Well, the mini-term courses at NCSSM provide that (minus the alcohol, thank you very much), and these opportunities are here to claim. This is only the tip of the iceberg of all the amazing trips proposed for this year.

Ah, Paris—the city of love! But, that shouldn't be the reason to sign up for this trip. Diane Futrelle, John Kolena, and Gabriela Stefan are the sponsors of

PARIS

Barcelona, Provence, and Paris: Masterpieces and Marvels. Students will visit the spectacular architecture of Antonio Gaudi and tour the artworks of Picasso and Miro. They will walk through the home of Claude Monet in Giverny and explore his gardens and lily ponds. In the Louvre, they will find the Mona Lisa of da Vinci and in the Musée d'Orsay—van Gogh's Starry Night. Why does one go to Paris if not to climb La Tour d'Eiffel and watch the gargoyles of the Cathedral of Notre Dame come to life?

Ever wondered why Disney World's Cinderella's Castle looks the way it does? It's not a random question—in Germany, students will see Neuschwanstein, the inspiration for the castle of our friend

PRAGUE

with the glass slipper. Allison Van den Berg, Jamie Lathan, and Kevin Cromwell are the sponsors of Bohemian Voyage. Students will visit the Dachau concentration camp from World War II, visit the Swiss Alps, and experience the charms of Prague. "Prague is changing rapidly, and many people say that if you want to see it as it was for centuries, the time to go is now before it becomes too Westernized," said Van den Berg.

Rosemary Munroe proposed Essential Ireland: Language, Culture, and Society. Students will explore Dublin, home to great writers such as Joyce, Shaw, Beckett, and Yeats. Visits to St. Patrick's Cathedral,

Trinity College, the Cliffs of Moher, and the Queenstown Museum are also included. Students may kiss the Blarney Stone, learn how to play the bodhran, the Irish drum, and have a workshop in Irish set dancing! "...students will come away with an overview of the

BELIZE

beauty and diversity of both rural and urban Ireland," said Munroe.

Ecological Research in Belize is sponsored by Leslie Brinson and Myra Halpin. On an isolated island in Belize, students will conduct research projects as well as go snorkeling daily in different reefs, and observe parrots, dolphins and other gorgeous animals and plants that apparently cannot be found in Durham. Students will "beast" it with baths in rainwater, outhouses, and solar panels. "Belize... was not about being a tourist; it was about being out in the tropics all the time," said senior Alex Cole-Weiss, who went to Belize last year.

However, one of the rules concerning mini-term trips at NCSSM is that students may only have one extended trip, a trip that takes place off-campus for longer than three nights, out

NEW ORLEANS

of the two years here. Fortunately, there are trips that do not exceed this limit. In fact, most of the offered courses plan to take trips off-campus.

For example, Hurricane Katrina: Impact and Response will involve researching on campus with Justin Tye and Lauren Carr, and gaining hands-on experience in New Orleans while working with volunteer organizations dedicated to helping the victims of Hurricane Katrina. "...this is an opportunity to learn about the societal struggles we as a nation face following a devastating natural disaster," Carr said.

Now, there are so many choices—how does one choose? "... [Be] aware of the places and ideas that [you] want to know more about, the experiences that

DUBLIN

appeal to [your] senses, imaginations and open little doors in [you]... I'd ask each student... to do a little reading and [to research] the place they're considering and monitor what happens in their imaginations as they read," Jane Shlensky advises.