

## Home sweet home

At the beginning of the year, the new juniors and the seniors came to find the quality of life at NCSSM had improved from the previous years. The seniors were impressed with the changes that had occurred over just one summer, and the juniors quickly took advantage of the changes.

On Move-In day, volunteers met the juniors as they drove up to the school, helping them unpack their cars and carry items up to their dorm rooms. The volunteers helped the juniors settle in as good-byes were said and parents left. Coming into the empty rooms, the students found a little box full of items for everyday needs. On their beds lay mints welcoming the juniors to Science and Math. Moving in was also easier for the seniors this year. Seniors moved in on Monday, giving them two days to reacquaint themselves before school started.

As time passed and students became used to their different lifestyle, they began making the most of their new entertainment opportunities. The Student Activities Board has provided students with a wide variety of activities to do in their free time, such as the new van loop organization. This year, there is much more consistency with schedules and destinations. Also, SAB has been coming up with new activities for the students. One of these was the game "Singled Out", a simulation of the MTV game show where two new couples are paired and win a free dinner. Sign up sheets are always posted outside the Student Activities office for such events as football and soccer games. SAB is providing tickets for these games and lottering them off to people who are interested. These extra activities have had a good turn out and keep students on campus during the weekends.

Every year, after the first month of school, NCSSM holds Parent's Day, a time when the parents visit their sons and daughters and learn more about student lives at NCSSM. For the first time, there were performances at the morning assembly on Parent's Day. For the entertainment of the parents and students, the different choruses sang, students danced and the athletics at this school were introduced.

Several other changes have been made on campus to make this school better. One of these is the new rule that prohibits smoking on campus. This discourages students from starting smoking after they go to school here and encourages smokers to quit. It also makes the environment better for the non-smokers who live on campus. At the request of the students, we are now given access to VCR's and can use them in the residential lounges. Changes like these have made the residential life of NCSSM better for the students.

With all the changes and the increased activities, the quality of life at NCSSM has become a better place for everyone. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this.

## SLI's should relax

Last week a student in Hunt was given a level for being out of his room at 12:05 p.m. A girl in Bryan returned from her shower to find she had been locked out of her single by the SLI on duty. Instances like these have made many students wonder if levels are being given for the right reasons.

Although we realize the necessity for rules and punishments, SLIs have been over-enforcing the rules, making the punishments ineffective. The purpose of levels is to prevent students from breaking rules, but following the Code of Conduct to the letter does not guarantee this. Lately this approach has had the opposite effect.

The acronym "SLI" has almost become synonymous with "regulator" because of the fact that some students feel they have to hold their breath when one walks by or they will be given a warning or a level.

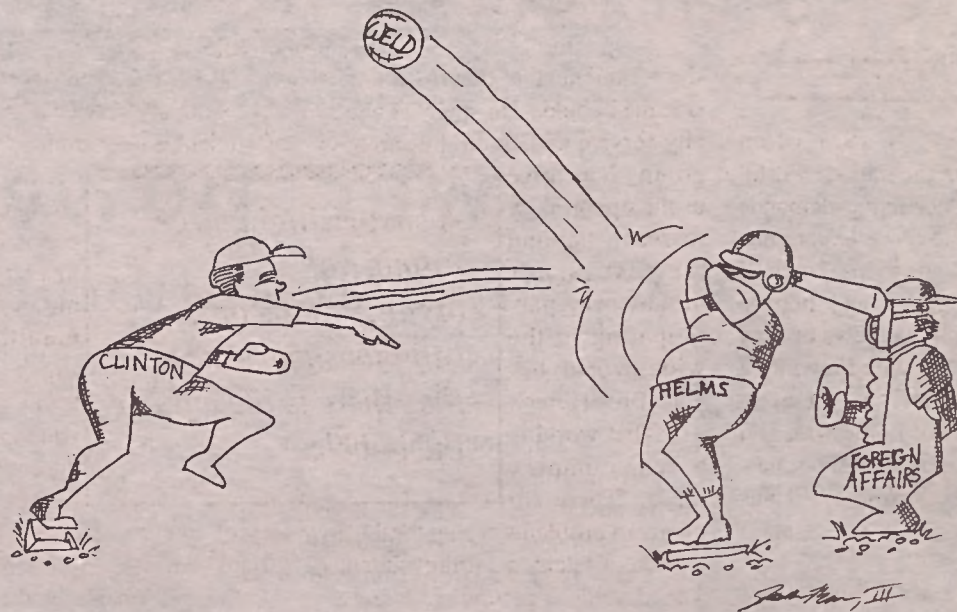
SLIs have other roles than "Law Enforcer." They are the ones students should be able to turn to if they have social, emotional or academic problems. But many students feel they have been unfairly punished with Level I's this year.

This creates a rebellious atmosphere within the student body, preventing them from feeling comfortable talking to SLIs very freely. By overdoing their job in one area, SLIs have prevented themselves from being able to do their job in other areas.

This is not to say SLIs shouldn't regulate. The rules should always apply to everyone. But there can be more effective consequences than levels.

SLIs could try explaining the reasons behind the rules in the Student Handbook. Many juniors have thought they understood these rules, until they got caught for unintentionally breaking them. This would also help students understand why the rules exist, in the case when they originally didn't agree with the rule and thus ignored it.

Considering that such mitigating circumstances are involved with many Level I's, SLIs should handle each situation more flexibly. This is what would truly be in the students' best interests.



## What's cooking in the cafeteria

The request to write a "Letter to the Editor" in this edition of the Stentorian came at an opportune moment. I knew immediately what I would write about: the CAFETERIA. It is not exactly controversial, but it is dear to my heart. My only problem was writing the article so it would not be perceived as "promises, promises," "same old, same old," or "here we go again." At some time in one's life it is good to stand up and address solutions, not problems. Take lemons and make lemonade. To that end, we are currently taking many steps to upgrade the quality of our food and the food service environment. This project, which has been placed on the top of my priority list, will be realized in phases. It is essential that we begin to take steps immediately to make significant changes in the cafeteria in order to enhance this aspect of our

students' overall "Quality of Life."

First of all, we are looking to you, the consumer, to provide the directions/solutions. We will start the process by forming a student committee consisting of some SGA members and concerned students. The committee's challenge will be to provide new, innovative recommendations as to menu variety and content.

Secondly, the committee will also be asked to provide short and long term recommendations on furnishing, equipment and anything else that can enhance the overall aesthetics of the entire cafeteria. This is your home and we want you, our students, to take pride in your surroundings. We are going to complete the cleaning of the entire dining area of the cafeteria on the next Beautification Day. Thanks to those who helped on the last one! Once this

part of the project is completed, we need your continued support - it doesn't cost anything not to put food on the blinds, walls and ceiling in the dining area. Please treat the school like your home -- It is!

Finally, we need everyone's support in order to make a major impact in our effort to take care of what we have. Although the funds are limited, we have enough to start an excellent Phase I. Using funds, however, to replace items like the box of 110 mutilated eating utensils accumulated since August, is counterproductive. Waste not, want not.

Through our efforts, yours as well as ours, we can definitely make it a brighter day in the cafeteria.

Sincerely,  
Joan Barber  
Director of Student Life

## The Stentorian

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