

# Senior Reflections...

## Student Body President

Alec Ferrell

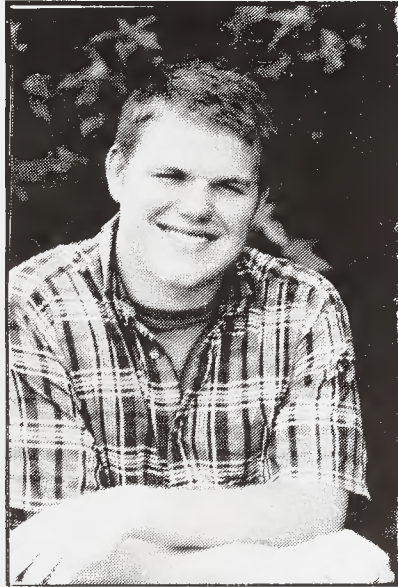
I remember monkey bars.

Not necessarily monkey bars, per se, but swingsets as well. And sand boxes, jungle-gyms, 4-Square, naptime, kickball: these are the memories I cherish when I think back on my schooling. To this day, I embrace those lost days of learning how to have fun, how to be young, and how to be human more than any other aspect of my education. In fact, I not only embrace those fleeting memories, I feebly struggle to regain them.

You see, I don't want to grow up. As of the moment I write these words I've got a little more than two weeks of my childhood left. And I am really scared.

Once high school is over, and that diploma is in hand, "the real world" is no longer a facet of guidance counselor folkloric threats or MTV induced brain garbage. Many of us try not to live in the real world, through whichever means of escape one may choose to use, and some can actually pull it off. But for me, as well as most of us, the real world will do its best to sweep me up in its unforgiving hand and drown me in the sea of reality. No more single-file lines, no more "have your parents sign this quiz," no more attendance policy larder, no more swish-n'-spit - the real world is a monster as elusive as time itself, and once you convince yourself that it's just a myth and can be avoided, it consumes you right then and there. It's gonna get you, and I'll get mine too, baby.

But lo! There is hope! Take a second for yourself right now, and think. Think hard. Think of that one memory



in the most remote corner of your mind: find that day, the one day that stands out more than any other. Maybe not your best day, but that one golden, grand day of your childhood, when you were probably in 2nd or 3rd grade, most likely about this time of May, and the weather was better than it has ever been since. Perhaps you were jumping rope, or scraping your knee, or observing some bugs, or just living and relishing in not knowing that there was anything beyond the enjoyment you were feeling. If you can remember a day like that, and can keep it living in your dreams, no "real world" can ever drown you, no tyranny can ever befall

you, no injustice can ever win. There will always be hard, often cruel times. But because you remember what it was to be truly happy and free, and existing in itself seemed like a beautiful game that could never be lost and would never end, there is nothing that you cannot do.

I sincerely apologize for the lugubrious mood and dumb nostalgia, and you are probably wishing that this idiot guy would stop dragging you down, but it isn't everyday that someone asks you to publicly announce the farewell to your youth. I'm not sure how else to feel. I imagine that once that tassel has turned I will feel much differently. But here I am. John Alec Ferrell, the 1995-1996 Student Body President of Grimsley High School in Greensboro, NC, USA, Earth, who is going to graduate in about 18 days - and all I want is to go back to the playground.

These past 18 years have held many surprises for me, and seeing all of you grow up with me has always helped me realize that I was never alone. And to those in the senior class I am graduating along side of, I hope you know that as well. I fulfilled my four-year sentence and, as George Costanza says, "I'm out baby, I'M OUT!!!" And you all did it as well. So scream it out loud and be proud of what you have done, because you are a graduate of Grimsley High School.

To the remainder of the Student Body, I have a bunch of advice, take what you need and throw back the rest: you are the only person who you will ever have to be with for the rest of your life. Make your decisions wisely. Get to know yourself and those around you. Use your brain, individually and collectively. Create your own paths, be your own person, and help to not make the same mistakes that other generations have made (but know that mistakes

are *always* going to happen, take them in stride). And finally, in the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, "No one can make you feel inferior unless you let them." Work together, all of you, to help bring peace in our time,

**"Create your own paths, be your own person, and try to not make the same mistakes as other generations."**

for *all* time. Good luck with your futures, and make the absolute most of them that you possibly can. 'Cause it all goes by so fast...

Lastly, I address Grimsley High School. I came into these halls a wild-eyed, bushy tailed fourteen-year-old, feeling like the universe was mine to conquer, like a rebel without a clue.

I leave *knowing* that the universe is mine to conquer, and I have most definitely found some clues. To employ one last cliché, Grimsley has helped me to help myself. I know now that I, and all others who think and feel and live, can do anything that I put my mind and heart and life into. I bid farewell to my high school and let go of my babyhood, and fly towards the future with open arms. And I hope to see all of you there, with happy memories in your mind, love in your heart, and a smile on your face.

# ...four years as a Whirlie

## Senior Class President

Michael Shuman

As my 13th year as a student in the Greensboro City or Guilford County School System dwindles down, I have noticed myself becoming extremely reflective. I've been pondering all the things that I've done the past 13 years and especially thinking about all the things that I didn't do. It seems like I remember the stuff that I didn't do more vividly than the stuff I did. Why is this?

I have learned a whole lot while spending numerous hours in uncomfortable, wobbly desks in my four years at Grimsley. I've learned the chemical elements, how to conjugate French verbs, the fundamental theorem of calculus, but most of the important lessons that I learned at school have taken place outside of the classroom. These lessons weren't taught to me by text books, but instead they were taught to me by the people here at Grimsley. Our diverse student body has taught me more than I could ever learn while melting in a classroom on a blistering August afternoon.

One main lesson that I have

learned during my tenure as a Whirlie is how important it is to get involved. Whether you're on the football team or one of the guys in the band who



holds a cymbal for the drummers, it is important to do something for school. It's not important because you owe it

to Grimsley to help better the school, but you owe it to yourself to simply better yourself. By getting involved, you not only enjoy high school more, but you can also help prepare for things down the road. The only problem with getting involved is where to start and what to choose.

High school is a time of new experiences and a time of choices where many decisions must be made. Whether you have to decide between Biscuitville or Burger King for lunch, or whether or not to wear your green spandex pants with plaid halter-top, lots of important choices must be made daily. But with these choices come serious consequences.

These consequences, whether good or bad, lead to the question why or especially why we didn't do something. Such as why did I eat that cafeteria food for all those years, or why did I never attend a swim meet or a speech and debate tournament. Instead of regretting

missed opportunities, make sure you learn from your mistakes.

When we walk down the aisle on June third at eight o'clock, our heads will be filled with joy and sadness as well as relief and regret. We'll regret all the opportunities that we never took advantage of during our brief stay at Grimsley. We'll ponder all the things that we missed. Instead of regretting missed opportunities, remember to take advantage of everything to come. Make sure that you learn from your mistakes in high school and take advantage of all the opportunities that will face you for the rest of your life. Good luck!

**K**

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