



Moore photo

Above, English teacher Terrie Joplin places an IB pin on junior Zach Burnett, signifying his diploma candidacy just before the winter holidays.

IB ceremony honors graduates, diploma candidates

Last year's graduates received their official International Baccalaureate diplomas at the IB ceremony. Current seniors received their IB chords, while juniors received pins.

BY KATE MALEKOFF
Reporter

Twenty-two 2005 graduates returned to their alma mater December 19, receiving their International Baccalaureate Diplomas. The ceremony also recognized IB Diploma candidates and anticipated candidates.

Grimsley's String Quartet welcomed guests into the auditorium, where IB Coordinator Bud Harrelson opened the ceremony, introducing special guests Ashly Morrison, School Board Rep. Marti Sykes, and Instructional Improvement Officer Dr. Barbara Zwadyk. Morrison was on hand to award diplomas to her final class of IB students, having served as the IB Coordinator from 2000-2005.

As the 38 anticipated diploma candidates of 2007 were called onto the stage, IB 11 English teacher Terrie Joplin presented each member with a pin. IB Philosophy and Theory of Knowledge teacher Michael Courts gave the 27 IB diploma candidates their graduation cords, signifying their involvement in the program.

Junior Max VanDoren described the ceremony as "awesome," but senior Lilly Wynn was more excited about seeing the returning Class of 2005.

"It was great to see all the old seniors come back because I hadn't seen them since summer. A lot of them helped me become more comfortable in IB my junior year," said Wynn.

Senior Kailyn Tran realized she would be in the Class of 05's place next year.

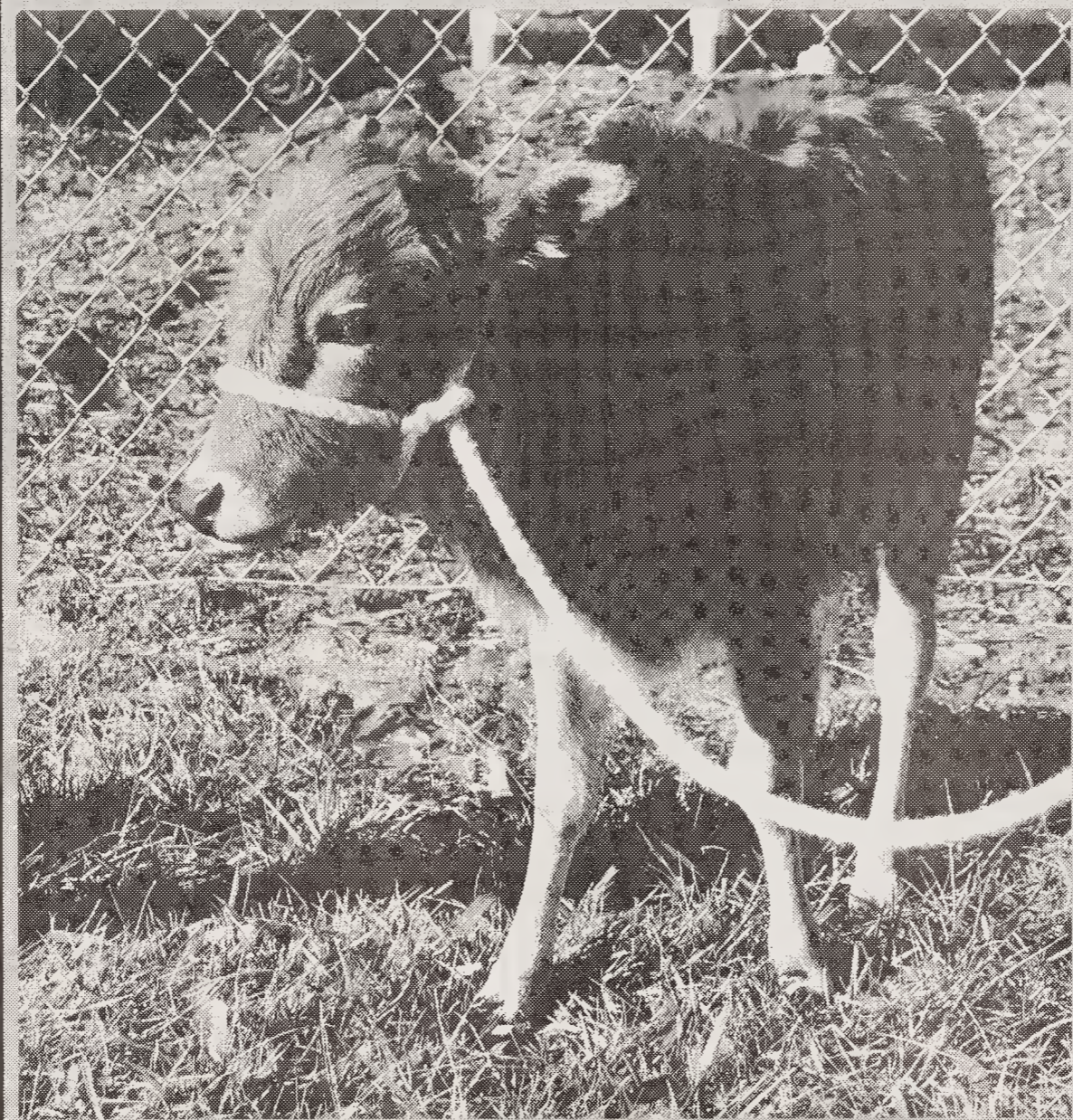
"Seeing the old seniors come back has made me realize how soon I'll be doing the same thing...the nostalgia is already setting in," said Tran.

Becoming an IB scholar is a lengthy process. After showing interest in the program beginning freshman year, particularly for students transferring from other schools, one must maintain good grades in honors classes and enroll in IB classes junior year. IB students must take an extra class, Theory of Knowledge, created to teach students, among other topics, to question bases of knowledge and become aware of subjective and ideological bases. After the students write their Extended Essays, the papers are sent to examiners at the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) to be assessed.

"The most challenging part of IB has been writing the extended essay. I've never written anything like those papers before, so I had no idea what the IBO expected," said Tran.

Diploma candidates must participate in 150 hours of CAS (Creative, Action, Service), which requires a minimum of 50 hours of community service. The remainder of the hours also can be spent in sports,

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Moore photo

Dharma, a miniature zebu, visited school grounds behind the Media Center on Jan. 5, 2006. Accompanied by farm owners Citra and Matura Spradling, Dharma is learning to pull a cart in to help with field work.

Organic farming trend mooves into food stores

Local projects and businesses promote healthy interaction between people and their environments, such as farmers producing naturally grown vegetables to be sold at farmers' markets and organic food stores.

BY LEIA FORGAY
News Editor

Local community projects and farms promote natural interaction with the environment, improving the well being of both the land and the people who care for it. Although economic law and the desire for simplicity often overshadow the benefits of organic farming, many believe that natural products are worth the extra time and money.

"You often hear folks complain about the cost of organic food and healthy food in general. I like to use the 'pay now or pay later' explanation. You can pay now for healthy, tasty food and enjoy eating it, knowing that you are nourishing your body, or you can eat whatever you want and pay later at the doctor's office and the pharmacy to remedy the problems caused by a bad diet," said science teacher Ben Barnard.

Besides the physical advantages, spiritual benefits are also involved with growing one's own food.

"Most people pick one thing and go for it, but there's a lot of life left [to live]. I was raised Catholic but I'm not sectarian. My thought was that God wanted me to be closer to nature and to rely on his energies. In farming, you're more susceptible to God's nature rather than man's nature," said visiting farmer Matura Spradling.

Spradling and his wife run a small farm called Snow Creek Family Organics. They grow 30 different vegetables and own two sheep, a dog, and two cows.

"Dharma [our cow] is a miniature zebu. He is the bull; we bought a cow also. He is about four months old and will grow to be up to 250 pounds. We will teach him how to pull a cart and do work, and we milk the cow. We want to grow our herd. We bought [them] on the way to Charlotte at The Lazy Fire Ranch," said Spradling's wife, Citra. "The name Dharma means the knowledge of the way things are. It is Sanskrit."

For the Spradlings, their lives are as environmentally friendly as possible.

"Weeding and cultivation is all done by hand. We have specialized hand tools; we have a wheel hoe. We use the tractor on particular crops like corn. We do not grow a lot of corn because it takes a lot of space considering what it produces. It also depletes the soil. We also use a lot less fuel for the crops we grow," said Spradling.

Effort required for organic farming may be double that required for industrial farming, but putting forth such extra effort, damage to the environment human health is cut in half.

"Traditional farming methods degrade the soil, decrease

biodiversity, and pollute our environment. Organic farming is healthy for our environment and the food is much more nutritional for our bodies. Moreover, organic farming mimics natural cycles of growth, decay, and the recycling of wastes," said Barnard.

Although organic farms began as small, private projects, they have now grown and are hosted in a variety of locations. Greensboro Day School has a large permaculture garden. Students maintain the garden. Professor Charlie Headington of UNCC created the "edible schoolyard". The Montessori school also features a permaculture garden, which is a project of Slow Food Piedmont Triad.

Slow Food Piedmont Triad promotes the enjoyment and growth of both organic foods and organic markets that support the health of the environment, fauna, and consuming public. Although the organization is rather young, the ideas it supports date back hundreds of years.

"The Native Americans had a system called the three sister system, with beans, corn and squash. Beans produce a lot of nitrogen and corn needs nitrogen. When you plant something in a field and plant [another crop] in it the next year they are able to benefit from the various minerals [produced by the other]," said Spradling.

Pollutants lurk, warm the globe

Gases released into the atmosphere trap heat and create a warming effect on the Earth. Making small changes can lessen emitted pollutants and decrease unhealthy effects.

BY WILL BAKER
Reporter

Global warming remains an important issue and shows no signs of slowing down anytime soon. Earth's climate is changing, but how and why it's happening remains uncertain.

Caused by emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases that are emitted primarily by the burning of fossil fuels and the clearing of forests, these global warming gases haunt our atmosphere with their presence for decades and at times, centuries.

"Global warming makes me feel guilty for driving an SUV," said senior Shelby Westbrook.

Carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide also contain heat and keep Earth's temperature balanced. Human activities such as burning fossil fuels and cutting down forests have caused for the concentration of these gases to increase, due to the rapid production of them and the inability for plants and oceans to soak them up at such high rates.

In the last century, the average temperature worldwide rose by one degree Fahrenheit. In the northern hemisphere, the spring ice thaw occurs nine days earlier than it did 150 years ago, and the fall freeze occurs ten days later.

The 1990s was the warmest decade since the 1800s, when record-keeping began. The hottest years on record are 1928, 2002, 2003, 2001, and 1997.

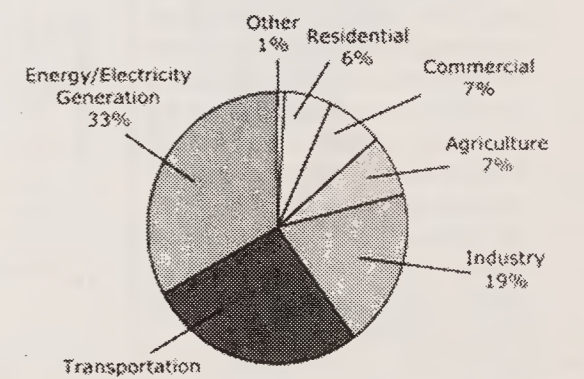
Alaska, Western Canada, and Eastern Russia have average temperatures up as high as four to seven degrees Fahrenheit in the last 50 years. The United States' northernmost city, Barrow, Alaska, has experienced average temperatures rising four degrees Fahrenheit in only the last 30 years.

Over the past million years, the earth's climate has undergone natural changes, however recently, these changes are coming with more rapidity. These rising temperatures greatly impact the Arctic ice. Since 1978, Arctic sea ice has shrunk nine percent per decade.

"Global climate change needs global action now. The alarm bells ought to be ringing in every capital of the world," said the British Environmental Secretary, John Gummer.

By the century's end, at least half of the Arctic's sea ice will melt, and the Arctic region is in danger of warming anywhere between seven and 13 degrees Fahrenheit, as is projected by the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment. Greenland has an ice sheet that holds enough water to raise sea levels by about 23 feet, and at the rate the climate is warming, this rise in sea level is a very real possibility in the far future. Sea levels have risen on average four to eight inches over the last decade, and according to the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), sea levels are projected to rise between four and 35 inches by this century's end. A mere one and a half foot rise would cause a coastline retreat of 150 feet, which would affect some 100 million people worldwide who live within three feet of sea level.

U.S. Global Warming Gas Emissions



Seasonal Melancholy

Seasonal Depression affects more than half a million Americans. Do you have the symptoms?
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Super Bowl XL

One reporter examines the history of the game and the top contenders for 2006.
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