

CELEBRATING POSITIVE CHOICES

# Listen<sup>®</sup>



# Snow QUEEN



Rachael Scdoris—Snow Queen, p. 8



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LISTEN MAGAZINE • VOLUME 59 • NUMBER 2

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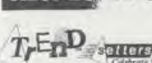


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## Backatcha

### FRIENDLY SKIES



**D**o you—or would you—like to fly? I don't. The first time I flew after 9/11 it was raining. I wondered how it would feel to fly again. (My actual thoughts were, "They call that a plane?! I've killed mosquitoes bigger than that!")

It was rough, but I stayed in my seat. I was pretty proud of myself too until I spotted a young girl—maybe 15—who appeared to be traveling alone and very comfortably. There was no panic-stricken, "Get me out of here" look on her face.

You should never stare. It's not polite. That's what my mother taught me. But, I couldn't help it. At her age I was awkward and geeky. I could barely find the bathroom in a strange building without getting lost.

Life is not fair. That's what I figure. Some of us get good looks or an athletic body or intelligence or some other great talent that people wish they had and some of us are comfortable climbing into a small tin can and hurtling through the air. You don't get to pick what you're good at or what you get. You've just got to make the best of what you have.

Lots of people live their whole lives without realizing their potential. They get stuck focusing on the bad stuff in life and don't look for the good. Or they fall into a trap along the way, like using drugs or alcohol, in the mistaken hopes that it will make things better. The only way things are going to get better is if you rise above them. Make good choices and you'll see good results, if not always around you, definitely inside you.

That day our plane took off in the rain, but as soon as we got above the clouds the sky was blue. It always is. We just can't see it from underneath the storm clouds. Above them the skies are always friendly and waiting for us to rise high enough to discover them.

Until next time, have fun, be cool, and make good choices, ■

**Céleste Perrino Walker**  
Managing Editor



## The Big Kahuna



**U**ntil we moved to Freemont I never fretted a whole lot about fitting in. Back in St. Albert, I went to a French Immersion School, was president of the Science Club and a member of the Mensa Society. All of my friends were honor students, Science Club keeners, and severely allergic to team sports.

Freemont is what is known in Western Canada as a hockey town. Population: 1,100—slightly less on non-game nights. I moved there with my parents on a chilly February weekend. Two more months till my birthday, I kept telling myself, when my best friend Heather would come for a visit.

My first class was computers. A small dark-haired girl introduced herself. "Hi Erika. I'm Rachel." She smiled at me. "I think you'll like Freemont. Especially if you love hockey. Do you love hockey?"

"Well, no . . . actually. It's just not my thing . . . you know?"

Rachel nodded.

**"It's not my thing either. But you and I are in the very mini minority."**

The computer assignment was easy. Rachel finished first.

"There's some extra material here if you're ready for it, Rachel," Mr. Gerein said. As she walked to the front to pick it up, a faint sucking noise came from the far corner of the room, followed by a muffled giggle.

"That's enough," Mr. Gerein said sharply. Rachel returned to her seat, two tiny spots of red high on her cheeks.

She stuck by me the next few



days. I liked her and we had a lot in common. But there were more incidents like the one in computer class, and each time I felt myself drawing back, pulling away from her.

On Thursday I started my after-school job at the Co-op Food Store. Carlie and Tyler, the most popular girl and guy in my class, also worked there. I found myself stocking shelves with Carlie. At first it was kind of stiff, but after awhile we both loosened up. For awhile we talked about work—safe topics.

"St. Albert is near Edmonton, isn't it?" she asked eventually.

"Lucky you! You must have gone to all the Oilers home games."

I could have told the truth. I had never been to a hockey game in my life. Hockey bored me rigid. So why didn't I? I guess because I figured the truth wasn't what Carlie wanted to hear. Or what I wanted her to hear.

So I fudged. "Well, admission is pretty steep. I didn't get to all the games."

"Too true! Dad took us to a



Calgary Flames game last winter, the whole family. He practically had to mortgage the farm." She giggled.

"Do you play?" I asked.

"Only since I could walk."

We met Tyler for our break at the coffee shop across the street. We three talked like we'd been lifelong buddies. It was great. Once or twice I found myself stepping back, watching us, watching me,

Provincial team. This weekend!"

It would also be my birthday weekend. My parents were letting me have some kids over. So, Saturday afternoon Carlie made the Provincial team and that night my entire homeroom was at my house whooping it up when my mother came to the door with another birthday surprise—Heather.

Carlie and Heather liked each

great. Whether it's sports or music or science or whatever.

What really matters is figuring out what your talents are and working as hard as you can to be the best that you can be."

# The Very Minority

By Shirley Byers Lalonde



and a couple of the things I said made me flinch.

Like suddenly I was a number one hockey fan. But, at the same time, it was so easy. All I had to do was pay attention and say what they wanted to hear and I was part of the popular crowd. I kind of eased away from Rachel after that. I mean, I was still nice to her and I never, ever joined in the not-so-subtle harassing that she was forced to endure.

I went to every hockey game to which I could possibly walk, drive, or crawl. I hung with the important people. I fit in. I did manage to convince Carlie her hockey team would be better off without me. But I became their number one fan. Naturally, Tyler and I were the first to hear her news.

"You'll never believe this. I've been asked to try out for the

other from the start. I stood beside them, watching my two best friends from my two different worlds talking and laughing together. I was sick with tension. I thought it was only a matter of time before they figured out they were best friends to two different Erikas. But that wasn't quite what happened.

"So, Carlie," Heather said, popping the top on a can of root beer, "tell me about this hockey team you'll be on."

Carlie grinned. She needed no encouragement to talk about hockey. After she filled in Heather, she asked, "Do you play hockey?"

Heather shook her head. "No, I'm a total sports klutz. Science is my thing. I do the science fair circuit. My long-term goal is a career in medical research."

"No kidding?" Carlie's eyes were big and round. "I think that's

I was standing there, stunned, wishing I could hit the replay button on the last few months when a voice said softly.

"Something wrong, Erika?"

Rachel stood next to me. Her lips were smiling, but not her eyes. There was sympathy, empathy, and maybe just a little vengeance. Who could blame her? I'd dropped her when I'd had a chance to be part of the "in" crowd.

I didn't know what to say.

"I've figured out that there's one thing worse than being part of the very mini minority," Rachel said. "And that's living a lie." Her eyes locked with mine. "That's got to be the toughest gig of all." ■

The Very Mini Minority first appeared in *With*, Sept/Oct 2001





**K**aryn and Cory are 15-year-old twins who both started to smoke when they were 14. Both their parents smoked, but wished that they could stop. The twins planned to stop after a few weeks, but it took just the first week to learn to enjoy cigarettes. Then they smoked with a small group of friends in the doorway of a department store at the mall whenever they could get together. Sometimes it was cold, but they had fun hanging out there, especially when some of the customers gave them disapproving stares.

Karyn stopped smoking before the first month was over, mostly because she hated spending the money for cigarettes. Cory decided to wait till the start of baseball season a month later. In the next few months he gave up smoking, several times. Each time he would claim that he had smoked his last cigarette, but before the day was over he smoked another. By the end of baseball season, he gave up trying to quit.

There is nothing easy about giving up cigarettes, but for some people it's harder than others. Scientists say there are three kinds of smokers: those who become addicted with the first few cigarettes, those who become addicted after smoking for awhile, and those who never become addicted. Not many people fall into the last group, but these people often brag that quitting wasn't any trouble at all. Most smokers have to try many times before they succeed in quitting. Many never make it. Some people who have quit using cocaine and heroin report that giving up nicotine is just as hard.

When Cory was 16, he fell in

love with Karyn's best friend, Tammy. Since Tammy wouldn't have anything to do with him as long as he smelled like an ashtray, he promised to quit. Cory didn't think he smelled awful, but he had heard that smokers lose their sense of smell. Maybe he did stink. Besides, he could use the money he spent on cigarettes to buy other things.

Cory knew by now that he was addicted to nicotine. He read all the "Quit smoking" ads, but it was cheaper to stop without a pill or a patch. He tried a free program on the Internet that suggested he keep a journal of cravings. During a smoker's day, craving for nicotine peaks about every four hours, so a cigarette adds nicotine to what remains in the blood and brain from the previous one. This pattern more or less continues for most smokers. Along with the journal that showed he smoked about every four hours, he followed a list of instructions for people who want to quit. [See: **Tips To Help You Quit**]

Cory got past his quit day and each time he got a craving for a cigarette he'd remind himself that since he no longer smoked, he would smell better, and soon he'd be able to smell things better and food would taste better. Cory no longer had to find a place to smoke, and he had more money to buy things instead of cigarettes.

Cory missed the first cigarette in the morning most. The first cigarette of the morning replaces the mild nicotine withdrawal smokers experience during the night. Both Karyn and Tammy promised to help Cory quit smoking. This time he promised himself he would really stop. He welcomed support from his friends who never smoked or who had quit smoking. And he contacted a Web site that helps people who want to quit.



Karyn and Tammy were both glad that Cory stopped smoking. So was he. Now he complains about smoke from other people's cigarettes and pressures his parents to stop smoking. They promised to try harder.

### Tips to Help You Quit:

- 1 Choose a quit day and make plans at least five days before the quit day.
- 2 Make a list of reasons you want to quit. Post the list where you can see it frequently and carry it with you at all times.
- 3 Remember that cravings are usually short-lived. When you crave a cigarette, tell yourself you need to get past the next five or 10 minutes. To fight the craving drink a glass of water, chew gum, take a short walk, or do something else to help keep your mind busy until the craving passes.
- 4 Make a list of things that go with cigarettes, such as coffee, talking on the phone, being with other smokers. Try to drink a different beverage, talk on the phone in a different location, especially one where smoking is not permitted. Hang out with friends who don't smoke.
- 5 Make a note to remind yourself that the worst will be over in two weeks.



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- 6 One day before quitting, get rid of all your cigarettes.

### How to Handle The Days After Quitting:

Know what to expect. After giving up nicotine, withdrawal symptoms may include headaches, tiredness, trouble concentrating, and irritability. These will pass and you will feel better than ever once you are nicotine free.

Join a group of people who are giving up tobacco.

Keep moving. Walk, ride a bike, stretch, play games. Do

something to keep active.

Keep busy. Go to a place where there is no smoking: a movie theatre, a restaurant, the home of a friend where no one smokes.

Use your hands. Do puzzles, garden, knit, paint, draw, clean a closet. Hold something in your hands to replace the cigarette, such as a pencil, a stick of cinnamon, roll of paper.

Reward yourself at the end of each day with something, like a call to a friend you haven't talked to for awhile or one who has quit smoking, a special time to read, an hour to listen to your favorite music. ■

### SOME RESOURCES TO HELP YOU QUIT SMOKING

American Cancer Society—Quitline Service: 877-937-7848

American Heart Association—800-AHA-USA1

American Lung Association—Quitline Service: 800-548-8252

National Cancer Institute—Quitline Service: 877-44- UQUIT

Online support to help you quit smoking:

<http://www.quitsmokingsupport.com/>



# Rachael Sedoris: Snow Queen

By Michele Deppe

**L**et the rest of the world count carbs. Rachael Sedoris packs only the fattiest foods for her big competition. " 'Cause that's how you stay warm out there!" she says. 'Out there' is Alaska's frozen tundra, where Rachael will race her sled dogs for over a week. And her diet will be a junk food lover's delight.

"When you're racing, most people fall into two categories," Rachael explains. "Either you're starving and you'll eat anything, or nothing sounds good and you're just eating to survive. I am in the second category, so I take stuff that I like; stuff that's quick to eat. Snickers, Pop Tarts, and Gummy Bears are my favorites. And Twinkies, but they're kind of interesting. They never freeze!"

This musher puts those Twinkies to the test, racing sled dogs in bone-chilling temperatures that often hover around 35 degrees below zero. Not only does Rachael traverse treacherous mountains, frozen lakes, and maintains her team of 16 dogs, but she's actually going to sleep out there, too. "I'll be

taking everything I own, in terms of cold weather clothes," she says.

In March 2005, Rachael Sedoris is

As depicted in movies like Disney's *Iron Will*, dogsled racing can be downright deadly. So, it's not much of a surprise that the Iditarod was inspired by real life-threatening circumstances. In 1925, people in Nome, Alaska, were suffering from an outbreak of diphtheria. A dog team relay delivered the life-saving serum, running over 670 miles through minus 50-degree temperatures and hurricane-force winds. A musher named Gunner Kaassen, and his team, lead by a dog named Balto, traveled the last 53 miles in only seven and a half hours. (Want to see Balto? He's exhibited at

tackling one of the toughest endurance races in modern history. The 19-year-old will put her courage to the ultimate test and run the Iditarod.

Cleveland's Museum of Natural History in Ohio. Seriously! He's stuffed and on display.)

In 1967, as a memorial to the emergency delivery, the annual





Iditarod race was born. Rachael's run will cover over 1,100 miles and take at least nine days, maybe as long as 17. She'll compete against over 60 other participants, many of whom are very experienced men determined to win the prize money. Last year's winner of the 2004 Iditarod collected an astounding \$720,000 in cash and prizes (one prize was a Dodge pick-up truck valued at \$40,000). In case you think the purse defies the rule that "it takes money to make money," consider that your average musher will spend about \$50,000 to participate in the Iditarod. All of that transportation, training, equipment, and dog chow don't come cheap!

So, there you've got a broad-brush portrait of bravery: a teenage girl and her dogs racing across frozen tundra, against seasoned men. But that's not the whole story. Rachael Scdoris copes with another challenge every day of her life.

She's legally blind.



Born with congenital achromatopsia, Rachael is both near-sighted and farsighted, and color-blind, with 20/200 vision. (Meaning, she cannot see past 20 feet what a sighted person could see at 200 feet). Rachael says, "Everything looks flat, and I can't see at all in bright light."

(Like the bright light that bounces off of snow!)

The Iditarod Committee is allowing Rachael to have assistance from her friend and experienced musher, Mark Stamm, who will run his team alongside her. Via a handheld radio, he'll warn Rachael of hazards that others can see, like fallen trees. Although Rachael has a difficult time spotting the orange and black trail markers that will guide her along the route, she admits that her biggest fears are "The extreme temperatures, and, most of all, moose!"

One of Rachael's heroes is Libby Riddles, the first woman to win the Iditarod. Rachael always focuses on what it will take to win, instead of how it would feel to fail. "The Iditarod is the biggest goal I've ever set for myself," Rachael says. "I just know what I want and

and managed her own dog team since the age of 8, and began competing when she was 11. Rachael's dedication is deep. Her life is spent cleaning kennels, training puppies, exercising her team and feeding them. When the team acts up, Rachael disciplines them, but she describes herself as a 'pretty mushy musher.' "Most of the time I am sweet-talking them," she says with a laugh.

The dogs are also business assets. Rachael and her Dad operate a sleddog tour company called the "Oregon Trail of Dreams," in Bend, Oregon. They own about 80 Alaskan Huskies. When people come to take a dog sled ride, Rachael gives little demonstrations, showing how she controls the dogs with basic commands, including "whoa" (for stopping), and "gee" and "haw" (right

even though it's a pretty lofty goal, it's important to go for it when you really want something."

Although she's a fierce competitor, Rachael adores her dogs and considers them her pets. Her experience with sled dogs began at 18 months of age when she rode in her dad's sled bag. She has trained

or left). If you ever visit her, here's a tip: Don't answer Rachael by saying "okay," because that's the command for the dogs to start running!

Rachael Scdoris doesn't let her disability get her down. At age 15, she was the youngest musher ever to complete a 500-mile race, The Wyoming Stage Stop Sled Dog





Rachael Scdoris is a legally blind sled dog musher. She says: "The Iditarod is the biggest goal I've ever set for myself. I just know what I want and even though it's a pretty lofty goal it's important to go for it when you really want something."



Race. She is the spokesperson for Atta Boy dog food, she carried the Olympic Torch for the Salt Lake City Winter Games, and her story has been featured on *National Geographic World* and *Animal Planet*, in *USA Today*, *Teen*, *Sports Illustrated for Women*, *Seventeen*, and *Time for Kids*. Currently, Rachael is enrolled in general courses at Central Oregon Community College. "I don't have a major yet, but I love to learn," she says.

During high school, Rachael excelled in running track, worked as a fashion model, sang for an audience of over 5,000 people, all the while keeping up a 3.5 GPA.

She's had some tough times, but she refuses to think negatively or numb her pain.

"In high school I had a lot of friends from all different groups, and they got in serious trouble with drugs," Rachael reflects. "And alcoholism runs in both sides of my family, but I'll never drink or do drugs. That's no way to handle your problems." The champion has gleaned much of her outlook on life from her greatest mentor, her dad, Jerry, whose employment policies include the following phrase: "If you need alcohol or drugs to function, don't apply."

In addition to being mentally

tough, Rachael keeps in shape with work and doing sit-ups and push-ups. "I love anything physical," she says. "I love riding my neighbor's horses, rock climbing, swimming, and pretty much anything that doesn't involve a ball."

Rachael has spent the last year qualifying for the Iditarod. "My best finish so far has been the 400-mile Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon in Minnesota, coming in sixth. Actually, I really just hoped to finish in the top 10 because that's where the money is. I cried a little, prayed a lot, and my dogs were really tired at the end . . . but it was really cool!" ■

© Photos Courtesy of American Nutrition, Inc.



# Archoo!!

By Jean Ann Williams

★ QUIZ ★

**D**o you know enough about colds and flu to protect yourself? Take the virus quiz to find out how you can help your immune system battle through cold and flu season without a sniffle. Caution! There is more than one right answer to each question.

## Questions:

### Colds include

- a can be contagious up to three weeks
- b fever
- c sore throat
- d runny nose

### Flus include

- a occasionally sore throat and runny nose
- b itchy rash
- c only mild hacking cough and mild fatigue
- d headache, achy muscles

### To ease a sore throat

- a run a vaporizer to moisten throat
- b gargle with warm salt water several times daily
- c suck on fruit-juice ice cubes
- d eat ice cream

### To ease fatigue

- a do intense exercise during or after illness
- b sleep often
- c do minimal socializing
- d gripe, complain, keep up with normal activities

### Viral infections are spread through

- a hand shaking, drinking after someone
- b kissing will not spread germs
- c toilet seats
- d water fountains

### Sneeze into . . .

- a cloth hanky
- b tissue, then throw away and wash hands
- c someone's face
- d your sleeve

### To soothe cold and flu symptoms

- a smoke cigarettes or hang out with someone who does
- b take steamy showers to clear congestion
- c use licorice root tea to soothe an irritated throat
- d eat lots of hot spices like chilies, pepper, curry, onions, and garlic

## Answers:

- c/d. a & b—flu symptoms
- a/d. b—not a flu symptom. c—cough can become severe, extreme fatigue may last two to three weeks.
- a/b/c. d—milk makes the throat feel more puffed up and filled with mucus.
- b/c. a—intense exercise may cause a setback, but mild exercise like walking will help correct muscle weakness. d—be positive, rest and relax.

- a/c/d. b—direct contact is the number one way to become infected.
- b/d—better than sneezing into the air, the tissue or cloth traps germs. a—hankies spread germs from repeated use. c—most colds are caused by invisible droplets called rhinoviruses that are in the air you breathe or surfaces you touch.
- b/c/d. a—will increase the chances of respiratory infections.

Grapefruit seed extract (GSE) works like an antibiotic and is sold in health food stores in liquid and capsule form. The liquid is bitter, so capsules may be easier to take. Check out [www.nutritream.com](http://www.nutritream.com), click on Treating Common Ailments—like cold/flu, acne and cold sores—for more information on uses and dosages of GSE.

### Did You Know?

- You can catch a cold from yourself when your weakened immune system allows dormant viruses to thrive.
- Crushed or capsule garlic kills viruses.
- Echinacea and vitamin C will cut down the length of illness, as will Zinc lozenges, which work best if taken at first sign of a cold and may work faster than vitamin C. You can find Zinc lozenges at health food and drug stores.

### Tip of the Month:

**T**o use a friend's lip-gloss, take the cap and scrape off the top used layer. The gloss applied to your lips is now unused by someone else.







**N**ot everybody who goes to college wants to party. In fact, many of them don't want to even deal with the aftermath—vomit in the hallways and filthy bathrooms, not to mention the noise and the property damage. More and more, colleges are offering “Chemical-Free” or “Substance-Free” housing.

Chemical-Free means that all residents must sign a form stating that they will not use drugs defined as cigarettes, marijuana, alcohol, or other intoxicants (don't worry, we can still have our morning lattes!) on or off campus. This means that if your Resident Advisor sees you staggering around campus, you had better have sprained your ankle training for a marathon or else the police will be called to escort you from campus. The following day, you will have to remove your belongings from your room and find someplace else to live—in severe cases, where violence or destruction is involved, that someplace will have to be off-campus.

So why live chem-free? There

are a number of reasons. One is the level of noise on the floor—since no one's holding a party next door, it's much easier to study or relax in front of the TV. Not having drunks screaming at the top of their lungs at 2:00 a.m. when you have a test the next day is another bonus. You don't realize how quiet it is on a chem-free floor until you've spent a Friday night elsewhere.

Clean bathrooms are also near the top of the list. I've seen Sunday mornings in non-chem-free halls, and I can safely say that they're disgusting—vomit, urine, and in some cases, feces, and bloody tampons make you really consider holding it in. The cleaning lady on my chem-free floor is envied among the staff because the worst thing she has to clean up on Monday is two days worth of hair in the shower drain.

A chem-free floor is generally a safer environment as well. Without angry frat boys lurching around, we feel safe enough to leave our doors unlocked until we go to sleep. We don't have to worry about people making off with our door decorations or breaking into our rooms while we're in the shower. I hear about theft often on other floors, but rarely

on my floor. Violence is another issue; it's a well-known fact that some people become violent when they've been using drugs. By living on a chem-free floor, you remove yourself from a situation that might present itself as an opportunity for assault, and therefore you stay safe.

Despite what many people think, there are alternatives to drinking and using drugs on a college campus. More and more, the attitude of partying as part of the college experience is fading and campuses are promoting alcohol-free events every weekend. Don't worry, they're not dorky. In fact, they're anything but. Movie nights, video game tournaments for games like Mario Party and Dance Dance Revolution are common, as well as arts and crafts, like making Frisbees and jewelry, and drug-free parties with awesome themes, like the 1980's—no high on earth can replace the thrill of dancing all night to Cyndi Lauper!

Just because you're at college doesn't mean you have to use drugs. College should be an experience you remember, not one filled with drunken moments you'd rather forget. ■





# Regretting Lost Time

By Andrew Eisenman

**S**uddenly it's May of my junior year and summer is hastily approaching. Funny how it seems like just yesterday I was an ambitious freshman impatiently anticipating getting my driver's license and dreading the SATs, still two years away. Unfortunately, the past two years zoomed by before I had a chance to grasp them.

Back then, though, all I cared about was having fun and building a reputation for myself. Alas, it wasn't until the second half of this year that I realized my last chance to stage a major comeback was rapidly dwindling away.

When I look back on the last

three years, my inability to reach my potential is haunting. It's not that I haven't worked hard in high school; it's that I could have done more. The C's could have been B's, the B's could have been A's, and somewhere along the way I could have signed off AOL and plunged into a Spanish textbook or actually read that obnoxious Aldous Huxley novel.

What eats at me the most, though, is not the fact that my GPA is lower than I'd like it to be. It's that my GPA doesn't reflect my potential as a student according to my own standards, along with my family's and teachers'. Those irritating little numbers are a constant reminder that I have underachieved for the past three years.

Sure, I have challenged myself by taking Honors and A.P.

courses, but what good is a challenge if you don't meet and conquer it? Sure, each mistake is a learning experience, but how many learning experiences did I need before I got the right idea? I could blame my low stats on a tough class or an unfair teacher, but upon further self-examination I have concluded that there is only one person responsible for my blunders: myself.

At a time when the massive college search has been launched and neurotic juniors scurry and scramble to find a college that suits them, I find myself in a rather bothersome quandary. In narrowing down my list of prospective colleges, I find that at my top-choice schools I linger on the border of acceptance. For the schools I plan on applying to, my SAT scores are mostly above average, but the most important factor to the majority of colleges, my GPA, severely wounds me.

Now, with less than a month left in my most important semester of high school, I am frantically trying to pull my grades up. My advice to those who still have a couple years left is to not sell out academically. Because I made that mistake, my most trusty companion, the *Princeton Review's The Best 351 Colleges* is also, at times, my worst enemy. Reflecting on the past three years, I've concluded that the work we center our lives around in high school is foundational for future success and is definitely worth doing. ■



Andrew Eisenman was the Feature Editor of his high school newspaper, *The Torch*, where this article was originally published.



# Little Fish **BIG** POND

Are you afraid of being a little fish in a big sea when you head off to college? If you don't want to flounder and fail due to poor grades, here are some tips from college students who successfully made the transition.

## Should you live in a dorm, or get your own apartment?

Andrea chose dorm life because she "figured it would be a good experience and a way to meet people. It was helpful being there the first year. There were people there to remind you about things, help you find buildings, and let you know what was going on." Amy and Kim decided to live in an apartment because "it was cheaper and we were paying for our own expenses." Check out your options before you decide.

## Is college as easy as high school?

Erik had a hard time and failed a biology class his first term. "For me that was a wake-up call . . . I paid for that class with my own money. I didn't get credit for it, so it was essentially wasted money. I realized then that college was not a cake walk." Lacey and Kassi also had to figure out a way to balance their new social life with study. They realized high school and college are not the same when they found themselves getting C's instead of A's.

## Where can you find a good place to study?

Lacey found it difficult to study in her dorm room. "There were always people coming and going all hours of the day. I finally found a spot in the library where I could go to study." Kassi felt her dorm room was best "between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m...always something too distracting going on during the day."

## Why do some kids fail their first year?

Andrea, Kassi, Erik, and Lacey all agree—kids party too much, skip class, and don't take things seriously.

## What tips do these college students have to help you succeed?

Andrea suggests: "Become involved in things on-campus, whether it's groups, clubs, or just an on-campus job. Form study groups with people in your classes and meet often."

Erik's advice is: "Always give yourself enough time to fully get things done. Don't feel bad if your friends are mad that you can't go out. Everybody bails on a few nights of going out. In the end, it's your grades that count."

Kassi recommends: "Take some comfort items with you like a blanket, teddy bear, pictures of old friends from back home. Get involved . . . in intramural sports, clubs on campus, or sign up for activities going on around campus."

## How do you avoid being a little fish in a big sea?

First, get to know the campus and the buildings. Go to orientations. Utilize the campus services. Find other students with similar interests. As Andrea states, "It can be a little bit scary and intimidating, but also fun and exciting." Once you get acquainted with school, you'll find yourself seeing the same people and developing friends. Before you know it, the first year is over and you'll be helping the new freshman figure out how to survive in the turbulent waters of their new school.





**Q:** I think I may be pregnant. I'm seventeen and had unprotected sex with my boyfriend a month ago. This can't be happening. What do I do?

**A:** The first thing you need to do is take a pregnancy test. Most drugstores sell them. Better yet, health clinics will usually give them free and they are administered by trained staff. If you are, then you need to tell your parents. Obviously, because they need to know, but most of all, you are still a minor. Legally you have very little say in what's going to happen. Also, it is most likely you do not have the finances to back up the next few months of doctor bills. They will have the ability to do what needs to be done.

I am sure you are feeling many mixed emotions right now. However, you made a mistake and now you need to take responsibility for the consequences. There are many support groups out there that aim to provide comfort for underage mothers. Take advantage of their guidance as you go through the next few months. Also, many adoption agencies are looking for newborns and many programs now let you choose your child's new parents. It is not the end of your life, but the beginning of someone else's. Remember that.

**Q:** I started smoking weed a year ago. I told one of my friends in class and he totally flipped out. I do it just for fun. What's the big deal? %^&P

**A:** Well, absolutely everything. 8^0 My, my. Here we go:

1) It's a drug. Obviously it is bad for you if it even is a synonym of that word. You've had it pounded into your head for years: Drugs are bad. Did you just forget that part? :^P Anyway, it's a mind-altering drug. In other words, it changes the way the brain works. Now, I'm thinking your brain works the way it does for a reason. Inhaling something that messes it up goes against nature.

2) It has many short-term effects. They include: problems with memory, distorted perceptions, loss of coordination, and usually an increase in heart rate. So even just a couple hours after smoking marijuana you have already killed many of those cells that have been pumping away for years.

3) Not only are there plenty of short-term effects but, the long-term ones are even worse. Smoking weed can lead to cancer, blocked airways, and a damaged immune system. Now come on man, you need that immune system as well as every other organ you come with. You are a package deal and you won't function properly if you start destroying the pieces. And finally,

4) It is illegal. If the first three reasons weren't enough, then focus on this one. You really do not need the problems that will come if you are caught and arrested for possession of marijuana. Not only will no one trust you; no one will respect you. Imagine trying to get a job after college and the mistake you made in high school costing you a well-paid position. It's not worth it. Trust me. 0;^)

# listen

Send your questions to:  
[heynat@listenmagazine.org](mailto:heynat@listenmagazine.org)



# road trip



Tina



Ally



Lisa

Story: Monica Cane / Illustration: Shane Johnson

## So Far in Road Trip

Lisa tries to make up with her friends, but they're starting to think she's a drag and she's starting to think they aren't the friends she thought they were.











# That Other Oxy

By Tamekia Reese

## STREET NAMES FOR OXYCONTIN

**N**ext time someone asks if you have any Oxy, don't automatically reach for the acne medication. Oxy is a common street name for OxyContin. Here are a few more: Killers, OC, poor man's heroin, hillbilly heroin, Oceans, Oxycoffins, OxyCotton

**S**arah sat on the couch feeling left out. She was at a friend's party and nearly everyone there was snorting Oxy. Her friend Jesse danced over to her and said, "Come on, don't be a party pooper. Remember what I told you? It's no big deal." She handed Sarah a couple of pills and made her way back to the center of the room.

Sarah looked at the pills and thought about her conversation with Jesse earlier that day. Jesse said that Jake, a guy Sarah had been crushing on since elementary, said he thought she was really pretty, but a little stuck-up. According to Jesse, Jake said he'd ask Sarah out if she'd do *something* to show that she knew how to have a little fun.

Glancing from Jake to the pills in her hand, Sarah remembered



Jesse's words, "Maybe tonight's your chance to show Jake that you're not all that stuffy." *Maybe Jesse's right*, Sarah thought to herself. *If I take these, just this once, it should get Jake's attention. What do I have to lose?* After all, she thought, popping the pills into her mouth and chewing, *like Jesse said, it's no big deal.*

## No Biggie?

Maybe you've never heard of it. Or maybe, like Sarah, you think OxyContin is no biggie. If so, you're in for a great shock. OxyContin is addicting and killing an increasing number of people each year. And most of those people are teens, like Sarah and you.

Approved by the FDA in 1995, OxyContin is a highly addictive painkiller prescribed to cancer patients and others who suffer from chronic pain. But, because of the heroin-like high that it produces, OxyContin has now made its way to the streets and has been linked to *at least* 460 deaths nationwide.

## The Appeal?

So what's the big appeal for something that's caused so many deaths? Some claim it's the ease with which they can get OxyContin. For others, like 15-year-old Amy, it's not having to worry about it being "laced" with other drugs. "With Oxy, I know exactly what I'm getting," she says.

And for others, it's achieving a high that *seems* cleaner than taking drugs like crack or cocaine. According to David Rotenberg, the Executive Director of Adolescent Services of the Caron Foundation, one of the world's largest and oldest drug treatment facilities, "It feels somehow cleaner to snort Ritalin, for example, than it does to snort crank that you buy in some shady

neighborhood." Though it may feel safer, Rotenberg notes that it's not. "Essentially the effect is the same. Many prescription drugs fall into the same categories as street drugs and they're every bit as dangerous."

## Not Just a Trend

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), in 2001, almost 3 million teens between the ages of 12 and 17 used prescription-type drugs non-medically *at least* once in their lifetime. And Oxy makes up a big portion of that.

Rush Limbaugh, the radio talk-show host shocked everyone with his public admission that he was addicted to OxyContin. Though he's completed rehab, OxyContin still has a grip on his life. He may now face criminal charges for purchasing the drug illegally. Jack Osbourne, the 17-year-old of *The Osbournes*, also completed drug treatment due to an OxyContin addiction. OxyContin, like most drugs, does not discriminate. It doesn't matter if you're male or female. Rich or poor. Black, white, or blue. If you take OxyContin, you *will* become addicted. Think it won't happen to you?

## Addicted

"When I first tried it, I felt invincible and like I could do anything," Sarah says. "I wasn't shy talking to people. I felt free." As Sarah was invited to more parties, she found herself using more and more Oxy. When she couldn't get it, her body would ache and her stomach would be in knots.

Rotenberg says, "One of the first ways you'll notice you're addicted is having physical withdrawal symptoms when you don't have it." But, Sarah says, "I

always felt I had control over it, that I could stop anytime." Even when she began stealing money from her parents and other relatives, she still didn't feel she was addicted. "I finally realized I needed help when my friend Jesse overdosed. She didn't die, but she could have. And so could I."

## Ready to Sweat?

Just because Sarah was lucky enough not to die from taking Oxy doesn't mean it's a no-risk buzz. OxyContin abusers suffer quite a few side effects, including: constipation, nausea and vomiting, sedation and dizziness, headaches, sweating, weakness, insomnia, convulsions, and death.

## Getting DeOxyfied

Sarah says even though it was hard at first, going to rehab was the best thing she's ever done for herself. Her parents agree that the \$7,300 fee was worth every penny.

Of her addiction, Sarah says it's pathetic that she risked her life for a guy. "The ironic thing," she adds, "is that we didn't even go out because I was too strung out on Oxy." She's not disappointed though. "If I have to take drugs to show a guy I'm fun to be with, then he's not worth my time." ■

## WEB SITES

- **Painfully Obvious**  
[www.painfullyobvious.net](http://www.painfullyobvious.net)
- **Drug Story**  
[www.drugstory.org](http://www.drugstory.org)
- **National Institute on Drug Abuse**  
[www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov)
- **The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA)**  
[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)



**G**ET A JUMP ON THE COMPETITION! START BUILDING YOUR RESUME NOW. WORDS OFTEN HEARD FROM THOSE NEW TO THE WORK FORCE ARE, "HOW WILL I EVER GET EXPERIENCE IF NO ONE WILL HIRE ME BECAUSE I HAVE NO EXPERIENCE?" THE ANSWER IS TO TAKE MATTERS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS. DON'T WAIT; PLAN AHEAD. IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU ARE A HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE OR A JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT; NOW IS THE TIME TO START!

- ▶ Everything in a resume is calculated to give prospective employers information about the applicant. Any time experience is listed, you must also give dates and duties performed. Check out the activities and duties listed below and see what participation in those activities tells a potential employer about you. Possible jobs are listed that are suitable for the experience gained.

#### 03/04 School Year:

##### YEARBOOK STAFF

Duties: My team was responsible for layout of all pages pertaining to the Freshman Class. We took candid shots of students, sold ad space, and were required to meet deadlines.

- ▶ Teamwork is good. Not everyone works well with others. You've had a taste of salesmanship, which equals social skill. The fact that you are aware there is such a thing as a deadline is a big plus.

##### Job Possibilities:

Newspaper, Printing Company

#### 2002-2004 Summer months only:

##### LAWN MAINTENANCE

Duties: Mowing, weed whacking, and garden upkeep for two steady customers.

- ▶ Steady customers show you are dependable. It isn't necessary to say one customer was your grandmother, as long as you really did the work.

##### Job Possibilities:

Plant Nursery, Lawn Service or Garden Center

#### 2000-2004 School Years

##### 4-H CLUB MEMBER/OFFICER

Activities: Participated in livestock judging and helped work the County Fair Booth. I was regularly assigned concession stand duty and filled out annual reports.

- ▶ This shows you know something about animals and have some social skills, perhaps leadership qualities. You can count change and you've had a touch of record-keeping. The time span shows you have staying power.

##### Job Possibilities:

Veterinarian Assistant, Humane Society, Farm Supply or Clerk

#### 05/01/2004 to 05/15/2004

##### UMPIRE

Duties: Umpire for the Summer Baseball League. The job entailed umpiring 4 games per week, marking the field prior to games and cleaning up the grounds after.

- ▶ Red flag! Note the dates. This applicant didn't stay the course. Was he fired? If he quit, why did he last

only two weeks? This guy probably isn't going to get past the front door.

##### Job possibilities:

Sporting Goods Store

#### 2002-2004:

##### COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

Duties: All aspects of working at soup kitchens during major holidays. Distributing flyers, collecting, cooking and serving food, as well as kitchen cleanup.

- ▶ This applicant has social skills and isn't afraid of work.

##### Job Possibilities:

Restaurant, Nurse's Aide or Campaign Worker

**F**urther help is within your reach. Speak with your school counselor, your parents, or a trusted teacher if you aren't sure which classes support the job interest you are striving for. If your intention is to work part-time during college, office work is easier than digging ditches for extra money. Taking business and computer classes for your electives now will help you land that kind of job later. Early planning is also beneficial when it comes to applying for scholarships. Get busy now and the word, "Experience," on your resume will never be followed by,

"None." ■



# Taking Charge

**Sometimes I find it easier just to go along with the crowd rather than face criticism. Any advice?**

—Rochelle

**M**y best advice is for you to take charge of your life, be in control, take pride in your decisions not to be a follower, and don't pay attention to unwarranted criticism. Most young people who do what everyone else is doing out of fear of being looked down upon eventually find themselves in trouble. Believe it or not, people are usually more respected when they show their strong side and stick with their principles and values. It may take practice for you to change, but it can be done. Be your own person and do only what you honestly feel is right. I guarantee that your future will be less stressful and more rewarding.

**Last week I was pressured by some of my friends to smoke marijuana. Now I feel horribly guilty. How can I get over feeling this way?**

—Rory

**T**he best way to deal with guilt is to learn from what you did and move on, remembering not to make the same mistake again. Lots of teens get in situations that are as

dangerous as using drugs. Many of them are able to move on and let the past go, but there are those who don't get off the hook so easily. Some teens commit crimes or get involved in activities that have an enormous negative impact on their lives. They end up paying the price for many years to come. The guilt and shame from these actions can be both overwhelming and nearly impossible to deal with. Your guilty feelings are telling you that you did something wrong. Take personal responsibility for your actions and move forward, being careful not to make the same mistake again.

**What's worse, heroin or cocaine?**

—Marcus

**T**here is no distinguishing between harmful substances like these. All mood and mind altering drugs have the potential to cause problems, including addiction, and are not only dangerous, but can be fatal as well.

**Why is my girlfriend always angry when she's drinking?**

—Paul

**A**lcohol changes people's attitudes and behaviors, causing many young people to get in trouble with the law because they make choices that are not consistent with their values and

morals. A large percentage of assaults, including homicides, are committed by people under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. I would encourage you to share your concerns with your girlfriend and try to get her to see just how dangerous booze is and how it changes the way she acts. Hopefully she'll be able to stop drinking and lead a healthy and sane life.



**G**o ahead, ask Gary his advice on some of those big questions. Gary Somdahl is a dad who puts his skills as a licensed youth chemical dependency counselor to the real-world test all the time. His latest book is **Drugs and Kids**.

Send your questions to:

**ASK GARY**

*Listen Magazine*  
55 West Oak Ridge Drive  
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.





In my junior year of high school, my life spiraled downward. I started to hang with the partying crowd. Going from an A-B student to barely getting above a D wasn't like me. But I didn't care. I liked being with my friends, smoking, drinking, and partying. I never had to worry about having enough money for cigarettes because my friends would always buy them.

I used chewing gum, breath mints, and candy so my parents wouldn't know about my life with my friends or my addiction to cigarettes. The one time my mom smelled smoke on my breath and lectured me, I acted innocent so she didn't push it. After that, I was more careful.

Every day was pretty much the same; we'd hang out at the mall, smoking, laughing, and planning our next party. Although I partied every weekend, my parents thought I was at Mandy's\* or with some other friend. They were strict about curfew, though. So, even when I did go to a party I always made sure someone could get me home. Until that one Friday night I will never forget.

Mandy had invited me to a

party. By this time, cigarettes weren't enough for me; I smoked pot and drank too. I could hardly wait. That night we got wasted. I smoked so much and drank so heavily my head just spun. Everyone had passed out and I couldn't wake Mandy up.

What am I gonna do? I thought. If I called my dad, he'd kill me. But if I didn't find a way home, I'd be dead too. Smoking my last cigarette, I picked up the phone.

My dad picked me up a half-hour later. I thought for sure he'd yell all the way home, but he didn't. He didn't say a word. My mom exploded before I got on the porch. I thought, "My life is such a mess."

I wanted it to end. I felt miserable inside and out. Not just because my parents were angry with me, but because my life had no meaning. I used to wake up excited about life, now I woke up coughing with this horrible taste in my mouth, craving a cigarette.

For the next few days, I hibernated in my room, thinking about everything I'd done. It felt good not to have the pressure of friends breathing down my neck. I even picked up my history book and studied.

Bright and early Monday morning Mandy approached me about another party. I told her flat out, "No!" I was proud of myself. She thought it was because I got grounded, but that couldn't have been further from the truth. I just plain didn't want to go.

That's the day I started making better choices. Within a short time my grades improved and I had all new friends—friends who didn't smoke. Which was weird, because I

still did. Cigarettes had a hold on me. When I was with my friends I rarely ever lit one up. But when I was alone, I'd get the urge and go buy another pack.

One day Vanessa and Ashley, my two cousins, who are also a part of my new group of friends, invited me to movie night at their church. Since we had so much fun together, I figured why not. But once I got there, I realized it wasn't just another movie.

A lady stood up front and started talking about a group called Get R!EAL. At first, I thought, "This is going to be boring." But, I couldn't believe my ears. One by one, teenagers my age and younger, stood up, talked about how they'd started smoking and how they quit. I learned that cigarettes contain deadly chemicals like nail polish remover, formaldehyde, and ammonia. "Yuck!" I thought. "No wonder people get cancer."

After I left the church that night, I kept thinking about everything I had heard. That's the night that I decided to throw my full pack of cigarettes in the trash. I wish I could have thrown my desire for cigarettes in the trash that night too. Every day I battled intense cravings. When I did, I just called up my friends and we'd hang out.

**WANT TO GET INVOLVED?**

Amber plans to participate in a SIT IN, which will take place in a restaurant smoking section. A group from Get R!EAL will sit in ALL the seats of the smoking section, holding up their posters and handing out flyers, trying to make every restaurant realize that they need to be non-smoking. So far, their accomplishments have turned Greeley, Colorado, into a smoke-free town. All smoking is done outside of business establishments. For more information log onto their website <http://www.getrealcolorado.com/> or call 1-800-886-7689 ext. 2512.



IS SMOKING REALLY WORTH IT?

# GET REAL

BY AMBER AGUILERA AS TOLD TO ELISABETH A. FREEMAN



When I was with them I never thought about smoking. And after a few weeks the urge to smoke went away.

Once I quit smoking, I decided to join my cousins for another movie night. This time the lady told us about how they were going to carry signs and hand out flyers at the local mall. By raising awareness of the bad

effects of cigarettes she hoped to reach people before they ever started smoking. I knew from experience the devastation of smoking. I didn't want anyone to struggle the way I had. So, I volunteered immediately and signed up.

Our day at the mall went great. We met a lot of people, handed out informative flyers, and even

talked to other teenagers who said they smoked. Although most of them told us they probably wouldn't quit, they were shocked by the amount of toxins in each cigarette. Smoking is hard to give up, that's for sure. But, I'm so glad I did. Now when I wake up in the morning I don't cough, I don't gag, and I don't crave a cigarette—I'm excited about life. ■



# Cache the Fever

By Michele Deppe

Hidden **TREASURE**  
is waiting for **YOU!**



There's no need to plumb the depths of the ocean  
or charter a plane to a deserted island. So, why  
let pirates have all of the fun?

OFFICIAL  
GEOCACHING  
PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB  
This is an official game  
CACHING.COM



**K**yra, Justin, and Emma look a little strange to passersby. Three teens, staring at a clump of trees. Hands on hips, puzzled faces. Glances pass between them. Justin examines a handheld GPS unit, double-checking the signal.

"It should be right here!" he says.

Suddenly, Emma shouts, "I've got it!" as she charges toward a massive, leaning sycamore tree by the pond. Kyra and Justin take off after her. A few minutes later, laughter emanates from the reeds.

The hidden treasure is there all right, but they've had to go through mud to unearth the wooden box nestled in a fallen tree. They write a quick note in the logbook, retrieve some loot, and leave some behind.

Later, the trio inspects their plunder and talks about the scavenger hunt. "We were so close, and didn't see a thing. Sometimes it goes like that," says Justin, a tall high school

sophomore. He runs a hand through his hair and then flashes a wicked sort of pirate grin. "Then Emma remembered one of the clues, and, like, immediately, the cache was obvious!"

"Yeah, something about lightening striking in a summer's sky. Very poetic," Emma says. "I remembered that last summer a tree fell down by the water and the one next to it has sort of leaned in a funny way ever since. We were pretty sure it got zapped, so that's how I knew where to look. Not to mention the name of the cache was 'Never Twice!'"

Kyra adds her two cents. "I didn't remember the clue, but I like what we got!" She shows off a friendship bracelet in earthy colored beads. Strict to the geocaching rule, 'if you take something, leave something,' Kyra says, "I left the Christmas music CD I got this year. It had some good bands on it, but I mostly like indie artists."

### **So You Wanna Be a Pirate?**

The three friends got into geocaching when Justin's older brother brought home a second

hand GPS unit that he had picked up at a clearance sale. It didn't have a built-in compass, but Justin's dad had one of those in the garage. After checking the Internet for caches in their area, Justin discovered that his zip code was loaded with opportunity. Not too surprising, considering that there are over 115,000 active caches in over 209 countries!

This is definitely a go-anywhere sport. "One of my e-mail pen pals went to a really cool geocaching event," says Emma. "It was down in Florida, and it was called 'GeoWoodstock.' I guess a geocachers association down there put it on. Anyway, when you go to something like that the cache has really good stuff and you get to swap stories with other people about their caches. I'd like to go to something like that and meet people who go geocaching in cool places like Australia."

Justin says, "I got to go on an event cache when I was visiting my cousin in England. It was really cool because the theme was chess and it was tricky to figure out. Of course, that cache had a higher rating, too. (Ratings go from a simple 1 to a very difficult 5 and you may even need to use a kayak to reach the

### **Don't Leave Home Without It:**

Before you leave, tell someone where you're going and include the following in your pack: GPS, notebook and pencil (for writing coords during multi-stage caches as well as your starting coords just in case you get lost), extra batteries for the GPS, a compass (in case you forget the batteries), water bottles, any travel bugs you need to place, cell phone, bug dope, sunscreen, Leatherman multi-tool (hey, ya never know) and, of course, trade items.







## Know your lingo, Matey!

**CACHE:** Pronounced "cash." Means the treasure and / or its hiding place.

**GPS:** Stands for "global positioning system." Created for the U.S. military, there are a network of 27 satellites orbiting the earth, 12,000 miles away, which give data to an electronic GPS device. The feedback from the satellites enables the GPS unit to approximate your location within 6-20 feet anywhere in the world.

**How much mo'?** For

about a \$100, you can buy a Garmin Geko 201 GPS unit at Wal-Mart. You might be able to pick one up cheaper on eBay.

**Travel Bug:** A trackable tag that is attached to an item so its progress can be followed online. Sometimes called a "hitchhiker," because it moves from cache to cache.

**TSLs:** Took Something, Left Something.

**TNLN:** Took Nothing, Left Nothing.

**Mugglers:** Non-geocachers, tourists and hikers who may be near the cache area. Cachers must be secretive so they don't give away a cache location by accident.

**FF or First Finder:** The first person to find a newly hidden cache. There is sometimes a special FF prize.

**Coords:** Longitude and latitude coordinates that tell you where a cache is hidden. These are posted on the web in the description of a cache.

**CITO:** Cache In, Trash Out.

**Spoiler:** Details in a post that give away where a cache is hidden and may "spoil" the hunt. Cachers usually warn when spoilers are included in their log entries.

**WANT TO KNOW MORE?** Check out [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com). The number-one Web site for finding caches.

remote caches!) We were hungry, then we were lost and we quit, but I got to wander around a couple of villages in Britain that most tourists never see."

### It's a Set-up

Emma and her friends haven't hosted a cache yet, but they probably will soon.

"We've been trying to figure out a great location, because that really makes it fun for everyone who is trying to find it," she says. "It should be on public property and not so easy to find that people mess with it. And we want to do a puzzle or mystery cache, like the chess-game one that Justin did in England, so that takes a little bit more planning to figure out what you're going to do."

"My uncle set one up," Kyra adds. "His cache was a micro, which means it's like smaller than a 35 mm film canister and usually there's no prize, you just sign a book. He had the coolest location, in an old churchyard. Some people who signed in were visiting here from France. We were

really surprised and it was fun to e-mail with them after."

### Getting Out of the House

"I used to just walk around the mall with my friends," says Justin. "It got really boring. Now, we're all over the place. We kind of get an idea of where a cache is on the map and drive to the general area. Then we get out and start walking with the GPS, following the arrow, and that's when the fun begins. It's like treasure hunting and it beats looping the mall for three hours!"

Kyra insists that knowing where you've left the car is a must. "What you don't want to do is get several miles into some woods and not remember where you've parked. Take it from me, that can easily happen and usually when it's raining!" ■







# You've Landed the Job, NOW KEEP IT

By Karen Luna Ray

**G**etting the job was the easy part! Now, can you keep it? It's all about developing a good work ethic. The following quiz will give you insight into employers' expectations and help pinpoint problem areas you may experience on the job. If you have yet to venture into the work force, remember forewarned is forearmed. Wear the employee's shoes in the following scenarios and test your knowledge on how to keep a job once you get it.

## QUESTIONS

**T F** Arriving 10 minutes late to work on a regular basis isn't a problem.

**T F** Your boss won't mind if you take a quick break to chat with your friends.

**T F** Borrowing money from the cash register is a no-no under any circumstances.

**T F** It's okay for your best friend to spend a day at work with you.

**T F** As a convenience store employee, you should pay for your deli snacks even though other employees don't appear to be paying for theirs.

**T F** Your baby-sitting client stipulated no visitors on the job. Your best friend is furious because you won't let her visit you there. You are doing the responsible thing.

**T F** You aren't expected on the job until 6:30 p.m., so there shouldn't be a problem if you call the boss by 5:30 p.m. to say you can't make it tonight.

**T F** You can prop the phone on your shoulder, talk, and ring up purchases at the same time. Customers won't mind.

**T F** A customer in your co-worker's section is irritably waiting for service while your co-worker chats on the phone. You should ignore the customer.

**T F** You've dressed conservatively at your waitress job so far, but today you want to wear low rise jeans and a top that shows off your midriff. It is best to ask if there is a dress code before the "new you" shows up for work.

## ANSWERS

**1 FALSE** Arriving on time shows you are dependable.

**2 FALSE** Breaks with friends tend to get longer and longer. It's easy to overlook the customer when chatting with friends.

**3 TRUE** Do not borrow from the cash register, not even if you know you will pay it back.

**4 FALSE** There may be insurance issues if your guest is hurt while helping you, not to mention a tendency to "let down" on the job when one has visitors.

**5 TRUE** Pay for your snacks unless the employer says otherwise. Anything else may be construed as stealing.

**6 TRUE** Accidents happen quickly with small children and are more likely if the person in charge is distracted.

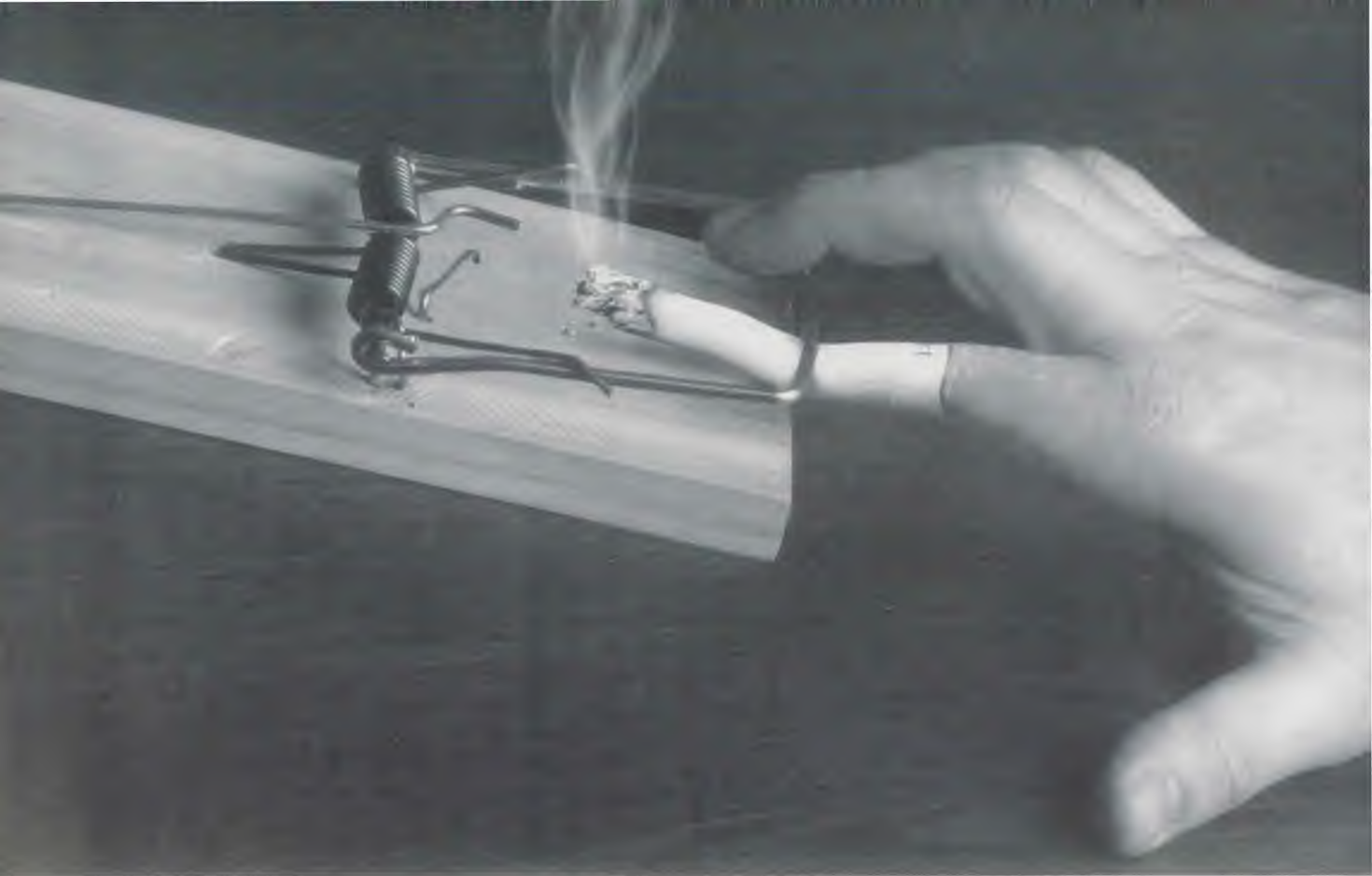
**7 FALSE** Short notice is inconsiderate. The employer, left scrambling to find someone to cover for you, will be annoyed.

**8 FALSE** Fewer mistakes are made when your full attention is on the matter at hand.

**9 FALSE** Never ignore the customer. Employers treat customers well so they will return, even the unpleasant ones. If the problem is a common occurrence, take it up with the coworker and/or manager.

**10 TRUE** Ask first. Trendy attire may be fine in a business where teens hang out, but the elderly Mrs. Johnson isn't going to appreciate a bare tummy anywhere near her food when it is served. ■





# The Tobacco Trap

By Zachary Goldstein

**C**urtis started smoking cigarettes when he was 16. At first, it was just something to do to alleviate the boredom of long, hot summer days in the small mining town in Pennsylvania where he was born, where his father was born, where even his grandfather was born.

The first few times he smoked,

he coughed, gagged, and almost threw up. *Why in the world, he thought, would anyone want to do this?* Yet, as he knew, a lot of people in his town—young and old, male and female, teachers and students—smoked.

After his first few attempts at smoking he backed off. Whatever people saw in it, it wasn't for him. He just sort of avoided questions about why he didn't; tried to nonchalantly shrug them off, that's

all. Then, every now and then, he'd have a smoke, if for no other reason than just to head off the questions. Much to his surprise, the next few times it didn't bother him as much. Still, with all he knew about smoking, and seeing some of the old miners in the town walking around with oxygen tanks because of Black Lung disease, he wasn't really interested in doing anything that could hurt his lungs.

But then the hot, listless



summer ended and the cold, windy nights of winter began. Hanging around his friends, all of whom smoked, Curtis more and more often joined them. He found he actually enjoyed it. What a change from the first few times when his friends all laughed at his coughing and gagging.

Smoking soon became as easy as breathing. It wasn't until much later that year when Curtis caught a bad cold, that he noticed something that he hadn't noticed before. Because of his cold and a tad of bronchitis, he figured he better not smoke for a few days, at least until things got better. Within a few hours, however, he began to feel worse than ever. Along with his cold symptoms he felt moody, weak, and nervous. Though his mouth hurt, his throat hurt, and his lungs hurt, all Curtis could think about was how much he wanted a cigarette. In his state of health, for him to be longing for a cigarette made about as much sense as someone freezing to death in the Arctic wanting to suck on a popsicle!

All at once it hit Curtis what was wrong—he was addicted. He had never, never thought it could happen to him.

Sadly, Curtis's story has been and is being replayed over and over again, all across the United States and Canada. More than three million kids under the age of 18 smoke cigarettes regularly; at least half of the smokers declare that they are dependent on them, which isn't surprising since the nicotine in tobacco leaves is one of the most addicting substances known to man. The tobacco habit is considered as difficult to break as an addiction to heroin. *Heroin?*

The decision to smoke is almost always made during the teen years when teens believe nothing bad could ever happen to them.

Many keep using tobacco products throughout adulthood, not always because they want to, but because they are addicted to a product that is powerfully habit-forming. Whether they start because of peer pressure, to rebel against their parents, or because they think it's cool—millions of teens get hooked on a habit that will kill hundreds of thousands of them a year when they're adults.

Since the first Surgeon General's report on health and smoking in 1964, an endless amount of research has shown how smoking hurts your health. Tobacco is currently known to cause heart disease, chronic lung disease, and stroke, not to mention cancer of the lungs, esophagus, larynx, mouth, and bladder. Tobacco smoke is filled with dozens and dozens of chemicals that are deadly all by themselves. So, when packed together with each puff of smoke, it's no wonder they kill people.

Cigarette smoking kills more than 440,000 people a year. That's one in every five. To grasp what the "440,000 a year" means, think of it this way: imagine, on an average, three World Trade Center attacks a week per year. That's how many people die from smoking-related diseases in America.

Many tobacco companies gear their advertising to 12- to 18-year-olds. They catch their attention by emphasizing youthful vigor, sexual attraction, and independence. These advertisements are sneaky because it is difficult to tell the difference between hype and reality. Many lawsuits have been filed against tobacco companies for advertising a dangerous product where kids can see it.

How much does a pack of cigarettes cost? Ask the 19-year-old

boy with throat cancer. He'll tell you it costs too much. People have tried to stop cigarette production altogether, but it's still out there and people, lots of them, are dying each year because of it.

Curtis eventually got over his cold and his bronchitis, but he still hasn't gotten over his smoking addiction. He's 18 now, off to college, with a two-pack-a-day habit that costs him more than he can afford.

He'd like to quit. He's tried at least three times and each time fell back into it. But he says he's going to quit, if not this year, then maybe next. And if not next year, then maybe the next. Or, maybe once he's out of college and doesn't have the strain of exams and school. Or maybe after he gets married and becomes a parent. Or maybe?

Sure, eventually he'll quit. After all, every year at least 440,000 people quit—permanently. It just takes a little time and a lot of suffering, that's all. ■

**The U.S. is the single largest tobacco exporting nation in the world, with more than 30 percent of the world's tobacco exported from its shores. In 1990, 49,000 people were involved and working in the tobacco-producing industry, making up approximately 0.4 percent of the total labor force.**





# Listening



Dear *Listen*:

► I was really interested in the poem about ecstasy. [Listening, Sept. 2004] My aunt did drugs in high school and a lot of her friends died from OD-ing on drugs such as that. I've never actually lost a friend to drugs or alcohol, but I know what it feels like to wish to take the place of someone else—to switch places with them and know that they really should have lived or experienced something I did. I also liked the poem entitled "Glass on the Table," because of the way the author looks at certain things. I liked the descriptive words and how she envisioned things. I would like to see, maybe, more than one page of the Listening section to widen the variety and make it more than just poems. It would give us a look into people's lives who maybe don't have an anchoring for poems.

Ashley, 15  
Hagerstown, Maryland

**D**rum roll please... this month's winners are **Ashley and Brenda!** Thanks for telling us what's on your mind! Don't miss your chance to score a fab *Listen* T-shirt. Send us your feedback today. You can "e" us at [editor@listenmagazine.org](mailto:editor@listenmagazine.org) or send a letter by pony express to Editor, *Listen Magazine*, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740.



Dear *Listen*:

► I did not know about the contents in tobacco. ["A Pinch of Bug Killer," Sept. 2004] It intrigued me and I would definitely enjoy sharing those facts with others that I know. Also to have actual figures on how much money not smoking can save, that really brings the point home. While I might know that it saves a lot, that article really shows how much it saves. ["To Become Healthy and Wealthy," Sept. 2004] Also, the actual drug in cough medicine. While I knew that it had drugs, I didn't know which ones. ["Not Just Cough Medicine," Sept. 2004]

Thanks,  
Rachel Bishop



To whom this may concern:

I just wanted to write and say that I thoroughly enjoyed your article in the Sept. 2004 issue about Dr. Denoble. I found the work he did very fascinating! It's interesting that someone actually does presentations like that at schools. I think it's definitely a very good way to warn teens about the harmful effects of smoking! I would love to read more articles about subjects like this one! Keep up the good work!!

Brenda P.  
Berkeley Springs, WV



# what's next

## The Unlikely Story of Beckie Scott

She won the bronze medal in cross-country skiing at the 2002 Winter Olympics at Salt Lake City. Or did she?

## The Big Bounce

Looking for a cool way to get fit and have fun? Bounce!

## Groove

The bands are hot and substance free.



## Too High

GHB, a cheap way to get high or a cheap way to die?

## Who Killed Kerrie?

Alice is a pusher—can she be pushed back from the edge?

## Wazzup With Gangs?

Living on a gang's turf? Everything you need to know to stay safe.

## My Friend Was Arrested

What to do if a friend gets arrested.

## Are You a Risk Taker?

We all take risks, but some of us scoff in the face of danger and sneer at risk. Do you? Should you? Take our quiz and find out.

## Scrapbooking

Looking for an indoor hobby that will give you great memories of your time in high school? We've got the solution!

## A Test Of Honor

How far will Marcy go to pass physics and stay on the softball team?

continued from page 17.)

## road trip

### TELL US WHAT

### YOU THINK

1. Did Tina and Ally take the joint from the hitchhiker? Why or why not?
2. What do you think Lisa should do at this point in the trip?

Send your vote and any comments to:  
monica\_cane@yahoo.com



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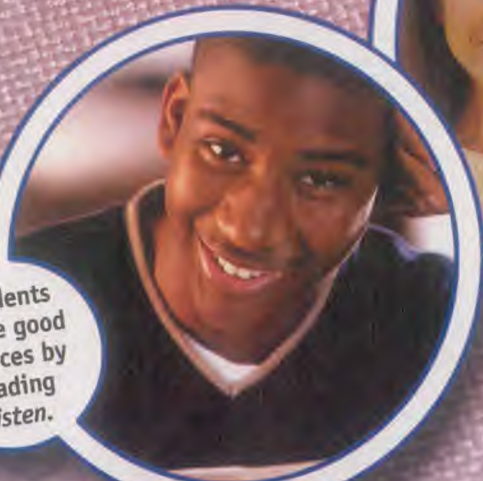
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