

Dear Seniors: 'Nobody's business' harming peers

BY CHEYENNE CARMACK

The first day of kindergarten I broke three red crayons, lost my ice cream money, and tearfully walked away from the kitchen set that someone else had beat me to.

Needless to say, I didn't get off to a very good start.

Two days later, however, I woke up early, gathered up my *My Little Ponies* lunchbox, my Buffy and Mack workbook, and my three dimes, for an ice cream.

I was determined to like school, despite the scary bathrooms and the boys in my class that told me they ate liver and eyeballs for lunch.

"It's one thing to start well," Mr. Jason Wilson reminded me earlier this week. "But it's another thing to finish well."

For me, as a runner, and now as a senior, that holds immeasurable truth.

Can you identify with that? Have you ever felt like quitting before you had barely even begun? Or gotten to a certain point and decided you could go no further?

My first day of school was just that for me, as well as many days out on the track when I've entertained thoughts of just giving up.

But do you know what I did? I went back to school the very next day. I took my ice cream money and my Buffy and Mack workbook, and gave it another shot.

It really wasn't so bad.

Now I sit here, only able to smile and remember all those times—good and bad.

The perspective changes so much as you move from the beginning of something, to the end.

We're nearing the finish of our high school lives, as you all know. We've "been there, done that," and we can only hope that the next four months will be as memorable as the past thirteen years.

At this point, it doesn't really matter how you began. It doesn't matter where you were or what you have been. The only thing that matters is how you choose to finish.

I hope you can believe that, because it's true.

Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. I've heard that my entire life, and only now is it beginning to sink in.

Four months. If life were a long distance race, that would be the final few meters.

Don't just survive it. Give it your all. You'll look someday, and be glad for it.

Day after day we turn our eyes from the silent killers with obvious signs.

While peers and friends slowly ruin the chance of a future, we choose to entertain merry thoughts or meaningless chatter.

We pause for only a moment of silence before we resume our giggles and gossip. "None of my business we say," and believe it.

It's time we make it our business. Drugs are destroying our friends, our classmates.

Drugs are emptying pockets and heads once full of dreams.

Drugs are reaking havoc on kids, and everyone pretends not to notice.

Narcotics and prescription drugs alike are controlling the lives of numerous students around the state.

From your common, over-the-counter drugs like Tylenol or aspirin to more dangerous illegal drugs like marijuana or cocaine, local teenagers are giving way to peer pressure and experimenting or becoming addicted.

Numerous factors are contributing to the drug problem. Some students fall into a questionable crowd of 'friends,' while others are straight-up offered drugs.

"If I wanted any kind of drugs, I would know where to get them...I've been offered them before," said one RCHS student.

Another student believes the reason this problem has grown so large is the fact that it combines two key ingredients.

"People have problems they want to escape from. Other people will make a dollar any way they can—even at the expense of others," said the student.

Basically, anything for a high and anything for a dollar.

Will we stand by and just allow an educational institution to become a place that incubates drug addicts and destroys (instead of developing) a future?

By all obvious standard, RCHS has taken effective measures to rule out any drug problems among its students—at least while on school

grounds.

Security cameras, drug dog visits, random locker and car checks, and even the actual testing of rocket athletes prove that the faculty and staff are trying to solve the problem.

The problem is, the adults don't know where to look. You can't complete a puzzle without the pieces.

And the students (including the ones who do know, and disapprove of drug use), aren't talking.

No one wants to get someone in trouble.

But then, no one would say to a friend, "Go ahead. Kill yourself."

By ignoring the problem, that is essentially what we're saying.

If you know someone with a drug problem, or you have one yourself, please take the responsibility and do something about it.

We need to wake up today, and stop this senseless epidemic. If we don't, someone we love may not wake up tomorrow.

—The Rocket staff



The Rocket

Rockcastle County High School
P.O. Box 1410
Mt. Vernon, KY 40456
email: norton28@highwired.com
Adviser: Susan Norton

Editor: Cheyenne Carmack
Asst. Editor: Lindsey Parsons
Business Manager: Tara Cox

Staff Writers: Jarrod Burdette, Joe Clark, Amy Clark, Billy Haddix, Cathie Midkiff, Shana Noe, Melissa Paquette, Josh Royland, Cassie Smith, Tasha VanZant, Steven Ward

Letters to the editor should be limited to 250 words or less, and must be signed. The staff and adviser reserve the right to edit a letter, or refuse to print it.

The Rocket is published six times a year by the journalism class at Rockcastle County High School. All stories and ads are prepared using the Macintosh and LaserJet 2100M and printed by EAC Web Printing, London, KY.

Support 2001 Project Graduation!

There is a variety of ways to support the senior class and the 2001 Project Graduation! In addition to the donations of several local businesses, here are some ways you can contribute to the fund:

— Buy a raffle ticket for a John Deere LT155 riding mower (15 hp, hydrostatic trans, 38 inch cut). Tickets are \$5; each ticket is a donation. Valued at \$2700, with only 1500 tickets sold. The winner will appear in the Mt. Vernon Signal.

— Place an Avon order with a senior or a senior parent. Sales will continue thru February 23. *Money should be turned in by this deadline, seniors!

— Attend a gospel singing! March 24, at Bible Baptist church the Jubilee Echoes, and possibly others will perform in concert.

— Students, attend a dance! There will be a project graduation dance March 9 from 8 pm to 11 pm in the RCHS cafeteria.

— SENIOR PARENTS: If you have not had the opportunity to attend a planning meeting, those are held on Monday nights in the high school library at 6 pm.

There will be other opportunities to get involved and support the senior class, but you wouldn't want to miss out on some of these great chances. If you have ideas or would like to make a donation, please contact the high school.

