

Mead junior loves golf and other sports

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FERRIS

The student in this feature was randomly selected from a yearbook randomly pulled from a pile on the Vox floor. The idea for this feature is based off of David Johnson's column "Everyone Has a Story," published weekly in the Lewiston Morning Tribune.

It started as fun and games. Now, it's a passion.

Robert "Bobby" Etten, a junior at Mead High School, started to play golf when he was a kid.

"My friend and I just went chipping and putting (at Par 3) because it was free and we just kept going and going," Bobby explained. Golf is now an important part of Bobby's life. Besides being on the Mead golf team in the spring, Bobby also spends five hours a day, four days a week, working at Par 3. He picks up golf balls and other items on the course. This job works out particularly well because it allows him to continue to work during the school golf season.

"My golf team goes to where I work to

practice, so I hit balls with them for 20 minutes and then go straight to work," Bobby said.

For practice, Bobby plays courses with nine holes, but for fun and competitions, he plays those with 18.

To Bobby, the most important thing to remember when getting ready to compete is to remember to bring all the supplies you may need, especially golf balls.

"If you run out of golf balls, you're out of the game," Bobby said. According to Bobby, it is against the rules to even borrow balls from other players if you lose the ones you have. For this reason, he personally always brings "too many" golf balls, just to be safe.

Besides golf, Bobby used to also participate in sports like football, wrestling and baseball, to name a few. Although he only has time now to play golf through school, he also enjoys snowboarding in the winter. He particularly enjoys going off large jumps and riding rails.

Snowboarding, according to Bobby, came pretty easy to him because he had already done a lot of wakeboarding and skateboarding. By the end of his first

day, he was already on the black diamond course (the second hardest course at 49 Degrees North).

"I've never really gotten hurt, so I've been really lucky," Bobby said about this high intensity sport. "I do wear a helmet though. It's not necessarily the cool thing to do, but there's been lots of times that I think wow, if I weren't wearing a helmet, I'd definitely be done for the day."

When he grows up, Bobby wants to be a "rich man."

"I used to want to be a physical trainer but I don't think that's a very good job for a rich man," Bobby said with a laugh. All kidding aside, he definitely wants to go into a career that involves sports in some way or another.

"I'm familiar with sports and know what's going on. If you were to just throw me into a law firm, I'd be completely lost," Bobby said. Besides a career in sports, Bobby also has another hope for the future.

"To play golf with Tiger Woods would be really cool," Bobby said. "Actually, I wouldn't want to play him because he's so good. It would make me look embarrassing. To meet him would be cool though."



Lauren Colton / Photo Editor

Bobby Etten, a junior at Mead High School, is the first student the Vox has profiled in a new series where we will randomly pick an area teen from local yearbooks and share their story.

Pro-anorexia sites encourage eating disorders

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Type in "Pro-Ana Nation" on Google and you are presented with 2,800,000 websites in 0.1 seconds. Pro-ana or pro-mia is an online community of anorexics and bulimics seeking to support one another. However, sites range in what their aims are.

Groups.myspace.com/proanation consists of 1282 members, at the last count, promoting anorexia as an attempt for perfection. Their site is devoted to helping each other be anorexic or bulimic.

Their homepage lists the rules of the group:

"No fighting ... the last thing we want is hatred to top of our already difficult lives as ana girls.

"No people coming in and saying 'fat is nice too' because it's not. Get over it.

"No people trying to recover, it ruins our motivation...

"We are all as one, fighting for perfection, you're not alone, remember [that], we're a nation."

In their forum they post their weight stats: comparing their max weight, current weight and minimum weight. They express their ultimate goal weight, sometimes as low as 88 pounds, but for others as low as they can go. They also offer tips on how to suppress their appetites and hide their disorders from family members, adding updates on how they are doing or how little they eat.

Most members, however, discourage the bloggers who are "trying to get an eating disorder."

"The sad thing is... I would honestly love to be able to see my body the way other people do. To get their honest opinions I guess, but to be able to actu-

ally see myself the way others do," one poster said.

The creator of Pro-Ana-Nation.com says she recognizes the seriousness of anorexia or bulimia.

"Eating disorders will not make you feel thin, proud and beautiful ... This site is intended for the disordered minds that have not been able to recover," she publishes on the homepage.

However, a disclaimer must be agreed to before entering the site:

"By entering this website you agree that the webmistress and pro-ana-nation.com can not be held responsible for any physical, mental or other consequential damages caused by your visit to this website. You also agree that you are not viewing this website because you want to 'become' anorexic or bulimic, or because you want to shed some pounds. This is not a weight loss website."

Many girls feel they cannot talk to their friends or family about their anorexia or bulimia. Pro-ana-nation.com has a "buddies" list if you need someone to pair up with to talk to that understands the effects of the disorder.

Though you have to be 18 to register on the website, there are girls claiming to be as young as 13; the oldest being in her mid forties.

Several websites such as www.webiteback.com have renamed themselves in an attempt to distinguish from sites promoting anorexia. Webiteback.com is a post-proana website. saying the site "comes after the madness."

"We on WBB are actively choosing to say it is no longer acceptable to hurt ourselves," the statement on their FAQ page claims, "and we will take as long as it takes to bite our eating disorder back. If we are not strong enough we, we will become stronger."

Positions open with Teen Advisory Council

The Chase Youth Commission's Teen Advisory Council (TAC) hopes to fill 100 positions this year in their effort to give teens and youth the opportunity to voice opinions and make a difference in the community.

The students on the Teen Advisory Council work to implement projects for the Chase Youth Commission.

This year they will work to create the 2007 Chase Youth Awards, the Youth Issues Voice Forum, BOBfest: the Battle of the Bands, Spokane's Promise and Communications. There will be ample opportunity for those who like to write to compose articles, scripts and media materials.

TAC members will make presentations and network with elected officials and local agencies.

"TAC gave me the opportunity to work with people my own age, to bring

a unique perspective to the attention of City and County leaders, and to educate the community that youth are a resource, not a problem," Matt Rivera, TAC Executive Officer said.

The next TAC meeting will be Oct. 10 from 5-6:30 p.m. at the East Central Community Center. For more information or to receive a Teen Advisory Council application, contact Michael LeaderCharge of the Spokane Regional Youth Department at mleadercharge@spokanecity.org.

"I think TAC is perhaps what Mayor Chase had in mind when he supported youth involvement: An organization comprised almost entirely of young people who are responsible citizens, who care for their City and County, their community and their home," Rivera said.

U-High student succeeds despite hearing loss

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University High School junior Courtney Hammond begins each day at 5:45 a.m. when her alarm clock begins to vibrate. Most teens wake up to the screech of a sounding alarm, but even the shrillest alarm couldn't wake Courtney, she was born deaf.

Courtney's parents, Sue, a media assistant, and Steve, a software engineer, learned she was deaf at nine months and began to sign shortly thereafter. The couple began looking for ways to help their daughter live with her hearing loss.

Her parents agreed their main concerns were how to communicate with her, and what kinds of challenges would she have to face in the future, especially regarding education.

At age two, Hammond's parents decided to get her a cochlear implant.

"Getting Courtney a cochlear implant was the hardest decision we have ever made," Hammond's parents said in an e-mail interview. "However, we are really happy that Courtney has it and is doing well with it."

A cochlear implant is an electronic device that is partially implanted in the inner ear and outside with another microphone device that attaches to the side of the head.

According to the American Academy of Otolaryngology, which specializes in the treatment for ear, nose and throat disorders, "The device bypasses damaged parts of the auditory system and directly stimulates the nerve of hearing, allowing individuals who are profoundly hearing impaired to receive sound."

Hammond does not wear her implant to bed or around the house in the morning when her hair is wet, because the water would damage the device. Since Courtney cannot hear without the implant, this is the time when the Hammonds use sign language the most.

At school, Hammond uses an interpreter in her classes, to sign what the teacher is saying.

"People do ask why I have an interpreter, I usually tell them [the interpreter] signs what the teacher says," Courtney said, also in an e-mail interview. "After that, almost all of the people want to learn one or two signs."

Courtney said her friends treat her like a normal person and joke around with her.

"I have a friend that calls my cochlear implant my 'ear' and another friend that always says, 'Can you hear me now?' from the Verizon commercials," Courtney said.

If she is in a group and cannot hear what other people are saying, her friends help her out by signing the things she is missing.

After school, Courtney plays tennis, a sport she loves. She uses an interpreter for this too, because if it is windy the wind goes past the implant and she can-

not hear other players or the coach.

Courtney also enjoys listening to music. She can do this by plugging an adapter into her cochlear implant from her MP3 player.

"I absolutely love music. I don't really have a favorite band but I enjoy listening to anything from Jack Johnson to Bon Jovi, except rap," Courtney said.

Courtney also drives, but does have to make small adjustments to accommodate her implant. Driving with the windows open causes wind to rush by the implant and make a static sound, and the radio has to be turned low so she can hear everything around her.

"If I have to call someone on my cell phone, or if my batteries die, then I have to pull over. After all, I only do have one 'ear,'" Courtney said.

Sue and Steve describe the things about Courtney that they are most proud of, writing, "She works hard and succeeds, and she is always happy, kind and caring while she works towards her goals."

Courtney intends to graduate from University High School with honors, then go to college at Spokane Falls Community College and transfer to Eastern Washington University. She plans to major in print graphic design and minor in art.

She hopes that her children get to experience both the deaf and hearing world.

"If I do have a deaf child, I would get my child a cochlear implant because it would give them a chance to blend in and experience things that they could have not experienced without [one]," Hammond said.



Courtney Hammond

Courtesy photo

WikiScanner traces Wikipedia edits, discredits it as a reliable resource

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Teachers tell students not to use Wikipedia, saying it is not a reliable source. Why? Where does all that information come from?

In an effort "to create a fireworks display of public relations disasters in which everyone brings their own fireworks, and enjoys," Indiana University student Virgil Griffith recently invented a program called WikiScanner that tracks edits made on Wikipedia entries.

Griffith, now a graduate student of the California Institute of Technology, says he was also curious about "what 'interesting organizations' were up to." The program combines two resources: Wikipedia's records of the IP numbers of all computers used to edit entries, and a list of IP addresses matched up with their respective companies and corporations. Since its release, WikiScanner has discovered numerous edits by well-known companies and organizations to the Wikipedia entries about themselves or rival corporations.

The US Democratic Party has also been accused of making changes to the profile of conservative radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh.

The IP address of the computer that posted changes called Limbaugh "idiotic," a "racist" and a "bigot" is registered to the Democratic National Headquarters which shares a building with the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC). However, Doug Thornell of the DCCC points out that the change was made "close to two years ago" making it "impossible to know" who had made the edit.

In 2004, a user on a computer belonging to ExxonMobil altered a Wikipedia entry about the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska, allegedly downplaying its impact on wildlife, while emphasizing the company's compensation payments to the victims. The scanner also discovered that in 2006 someone using a computer registered to PepsiCo removed paragraphs about the negative health effects of the soda.

According to Griffith's website, WikiScanner also found that a computer registered to Diebold, an electronic voting machine company, was used to remove information from its Wikipedia article. The information removed was about the chief executive officer of the company, Walden O'Dell, and called him "a top fund-raiser" for George Bush. The paragraphs have since been restored, but Diebold officials have not publicly responded.

Although the edits can be traced back to the

company or organization that controls the network on which the change was made, the individual who physically made the change cannot be tracked.

"Technically, we don't know if it came from an agent of that company," Griffith said on his website. "However, we do know that edit came from someone with access to their network. If the edit occurred during working hours, then we can reasonably assume that the person is either an employee of that company or a guest that was allowed access to their network."

WikiScanner as an area of the site dedicated to "salacious edits" and lists shady edits by several companies including Walmart, MySpace, Microsoft, Fox News and Sony.

The founder of the Wikimedia corporation, Jimmy Wales, told The New York Times that Wikipedia has no official rules about who edits what, but that the site's "talk" pages should be used when editors have a conflict of interest.

"If someone sees a simple factual error about their company, we really don't mind if they go in and edit," Wales said, adding that if a revision is questionable "the best thing to do is log in, go to the 'talk' page, identify yourself openly, and say, 'I'm the communications person from such and such a company.' The community responds very well, especially if the person isn't combative."

Wikipedia's main page boasts that they are "the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit" and has attracted a lot of media attention lately. Some teachers in both high school and college academia view the site as a shady resource.

Mark Robbins, an English teacher at Lewis and Clark High School, calls the site an "unreliable source."

"Although the source of the information may be credible, you have no idea," Robbins said. "There are better, more consistently credible sources and databases available to student."

However, some view the site as a potentially trustworthy resource that must only be monitored to preserve honesty.

"I'm very glad that this has been exposed," Susan P. Crawford, a visiting professor at the University of Michigan Law School told the New York Times. "Wikipedia is a reliable first stop for getting information about a huge variety of things, and it shouldn't be manipulated as a public relations arm of major companies."

"We really value transparency and the scanner really takes this to another level," a Wikipedia spokesperson told the BBC. "Wikipedia Scanner may prevent an organization or individuals from editing articles that they're really not supposed to."