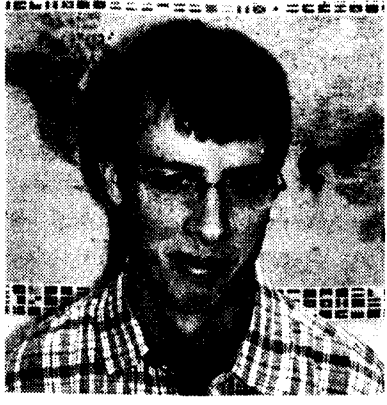


Steve Mayer spouts off



By Steven Mayer
Staff Reporter
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Many perceive a new year to be symbolic of change, or a new beginning. They are horribly mistaken. 2005 will carry on the tradition of 2004, and for that matter, the last five or so years.

Many feel the need to make some sort of insipid resolution at the beginning of a new year; I have only a confession—I have an addiction, an addiction that is quite severe and has manifested itself in a way that it is having pernicious effects on my everyday activities and behaviors. My addiction is to punditry, the art of manipulating imbecility in a way that appeases the worldview of those with an aversion to common sense and decency.

I have grappled with this addiction for quite some time. I have wasted many long nights at home, staring into the television with a zombie-like gaze, attempting to reconcile and understand the populist gibberish espoused by the likes of Bill O'Reilly, Joe Scarborough, and Pat

Buchanan. I am guilty of frequently listening to talk radio as well, but dumbness is never truly complete without visuals—and for this reason, cable news punditry will always have a special place in my heart.

Last December's tsunami provided an innumerable amount of possible cable news commentary. A recent episode of Scarborough Country, which features former Republican congressman Scarborough, was particularly amusing, providing countless instances of spontaneous hilarity. Despite his busy schedule, the Good Lord himself made an appearance, manifesting in the form of Robertson, America's favorite sociopath and authority on all things righteous.

In commentary similar to his statements about the correlation between unregulated homosexuality and subsequent Florida hurricanes, the honorable Robertson described that the sins of the victims are plausibly the cause of the disaster. Wanting to finish on a high note, Robertson professed his earnest belief that the world will meet its demise due to an asteroid colliding with the earth. Sleep well.

In an unrelated story, although perhaps not, America (The Book): A Citizen's Guide to Democracy Inaction was briefly pulled from library shelves in two Mississippi counties, but then put back after public outrage and appropriate ridicule. The book, which has received critical praise, continues to sit at the top of the New York Times Bestseller

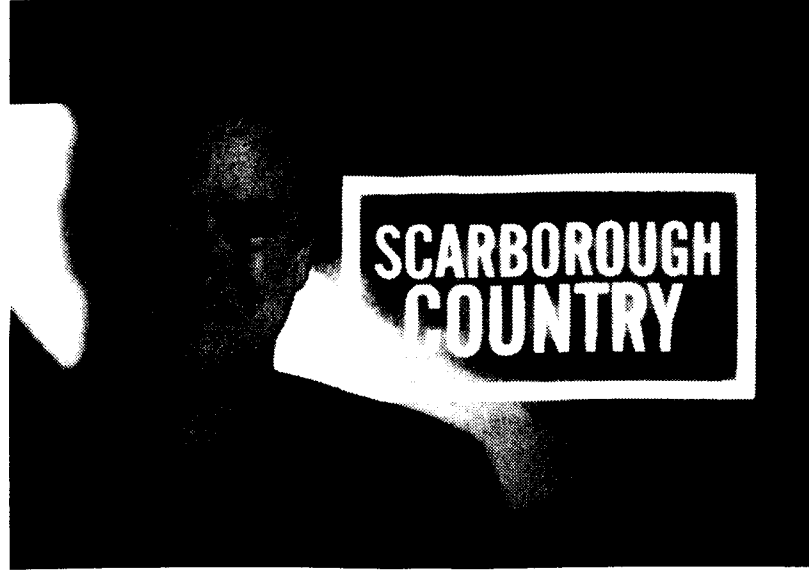


Photo courtesy of Google Images

TV talk show "Scarborough Country" features former congressman Joe Scarborough.

List and is the work of Jon Stewart and the writers of The Daily Show with Jon Stewart.

Although the book did not give substantial information regarding evolution—except a brief mention of the Scopes Monkey Trial on page 82—it does contain hot, raw and very real nudity involving the nine Supreme Court Justices on page 99; because of this, the book was deemed unsuitable for the public's delicate eyes and moral health.

The book was eventually put back into circulation after a 5-2 vote by the Jackson-George Regional Library System board of trustees as reported by the Associated Press. "Our libraries are not a trash bin for pornographic materials," Board Member David Ogborn said eloquently, opposing lifting the ban

on the book, as quoted in the same AP article.

Man's greatest gift to himself, Wal-Mart, had decided to not carry America (The Book) because of the same morally offensive images a few months earlier. The book's publishers were surprised since they felt they had an appropriate amount of red, white and blue slathered on the cover of the book.

If anyone has not yet read the book, it is imperative that you do as soon as possible. There is definitely more truth in fiction.

Also, if you intend on venturing down to Washington D.C. on January 20, behave yourself—The Man will not tolerate His Authority being disrespected, nor shall He show you any mercy for your insubordination.

New year's wrap-up

By Jim Dougherty
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As a year comes to an end, many people like to celebrate the ending of a long year as well as welcoming a new year into their lives. Some go out and party throughout the night and into the early morning hours. Others prefer to stay in the comfort of their homes and watch the ball drop on TV. Either way you celebrate, you are not alone. Billions of people around the world gather to ring in a new year with hopes of being successful and achieving their resolutions.

The oldest of all holidays, New Year's Day celebration started with the Babylonians approximately 4000 years ago. It lasted for eleven days and was celebrated at the time of the first moon after the first day of spring. Around 153 B.C., the Roman Senate decided to move New Year's Day celebrations to

year. Asked if she had any interesting resolutions she was willing to share, Isleib said, "People should have resolutions that they keep in mind every day. Not just one day a year. People should think of how to improve themselves everyday."

As a remembrance and celebration of the year's end, some Penn State Harrisburg students attended parties. Nahid Ibrahim, a freshman Theater major, stated that she watched the ball drop and then partied until 7 a.m. "Needless to say, I spent most of New Year's Day sleeping."

Joseph Brown, a freshman Finance major, escaped from his hometown and traveled to beautiful Montego Bay, Jamaica. Brown partied and enjoyed good company while welcoming a new year. On New Year's Day, tired from all of the partying, Brown took a day for relaxation.

Donna Grady, a freshman Liberal Arts major, also traveled



Photo courtesy of Kellye Way

Kellye Way toasts the camera as she rings in the new year with her friends and a glass of wine.

January 1 in order to establish a regular calendar. To this day, New Year's has always been celebrated on January 1.

Students at Penn State Harrisburg celebrated their New Year in many different ways. Some students went to local parties and some spent time with family. Other students chose to travel for their holiday break and enjoyed themselves in locations away from home. Hillary Isleib, a sophomore Political Science major, spent her New Year's Eve with her family.

"I live in a very small town and the only thing to do is to go out to dinner. So, we went to a restaurant." After dinner, Isleib and her family watched the ball drop at their home.

On New Year's Day, Isleib watched the Rose Bowl Parade like many Americans do each

during the winter break to Disneyland in Anaheim, California, where she celebrated the start of 2005 with Disney characters.

Some students, like Donald Jones, a freshman Structural Engineering and Design major, were ill and unable to celebrate the arrival of 2005.

A survey of student activities during the New Year's holiday revealed that most college students prefer to party and celebrate the start of a new year with friends instead of celebrating in a softer tone with family or loved ones. However, it is important to ensure your safety before you commit to anything.

With the start of 2005, the Capital Times would like to extend their best wishes to all readers for a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year.

College recruiting turns creative

By Scott Bauer
AP Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. - Forget course catalogs and colorful pamphlets.

Think sex, skiing and rock 'n' roll.

When it comes to recruiting students for college, admissions officials are turning to increasingly outlandish stunts to get the attention of high schoolers. Birthday cards, ski weekends and even reality TV shows are being used by colleges and universities to get an edge.

Personal contact with students is in. Indiscriminate mass mailings are out.

"Everybody's trying to do something that isn't the mundane," said Dan Kunzman, vice president of admissions at Doane College in Crete in southeast Nebraska.

The marketing efforts are being driven by the standard issues — college rankings and involved parents. Schools in states including Nebraska also are struggling to fill seats and deal with declining enrollment.

The result is a feeding frenzy among colleges and universities to snare the best freshmen, said Bob Massa, vice president of enrollment at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa.

But not all of the gimmicks are received with open arms.

After the University of Nebraska-Lincoln agreed to let Motley Crue drummer Tommy Lee film his reality show, "Tommy Lee Goes to College," on campus, some faculty members protested. Local domestic violence and family groups also expressed concern that having the rock star representing the university may not be the best image to project. Lee spent about four months in jail after pleading no contest to kicking his then-wife, Pamela Anderson, in February 1998.

The show is tentatively scheduled to air this summer.

At Doane College, school officials apologized after receiving complaints about recruiting postcards that showed a male student surrounded by women, encouraging students to "play the field." They were sent to about 13,500 prospective students in California, where the number of high school graduates is on the rise.

The competition for students has picked up in the past decade or so, Massa said.

The most outlandish recruiting ploys are more likely to be hatched by schools in a highly competitive environment, or ones needing to increase enrollment, boost name recognition or advertise a change in mission, said Manuel Gomez, vice chancellor of student affairs at the University of California, Irvine. All of this puts the student in the driver's seat.

"It's not a seller's market," said Massa, who has been involved with college admissions for 30 years. "It's a buyer's market."

Student recruitment is of particular concern in Nebraska, where

demographic changes in coming years will result in fewer college-age people in the state. Enrollment at the University of Nebraska was down 2 percent in 2004, while it dropped nearly 4 percent at its flagship Lincoln campus for a 30-year low.

High school graduates are expected to increase by more than 10 percent in such densely populated states as California, Florida and Arizona.

"If I had the money I'd rather invite them all to a ski weekend," said Kunzman, Doane's admissions director.

That's what Saint Vincent College, in Latrobe, Pa., is planning for potential students who have applied for admission. Between snow boarding and skiing, students will be given information about financial aid, academic programs and life at the college.

Don Orlando, director of public relations for the college, doesn't try to hide the goal of the free weekend in February.

It's obviously a marketing effort," he said.

With just 1,050 students, Centre College in Danville, Ky., also goes after high school upperclassmen with a personal touch. Prospective students get birthday cards and phone calls from admission staff and sometimes even the college president.

"We look at this as a long courtship," said Carey Thompson, dean of admission. "It can often last 18 to 24 months."

Freshman Andrew Beeler, 20, said his first choice for college was George Washington University, but the personal contact he received from Centre College swayed him to enroll there. One letter had a personal note from a professor about internship possibilities.

"They had been sending me so much information," Beeler said, "it just seemed like the obvious choice."

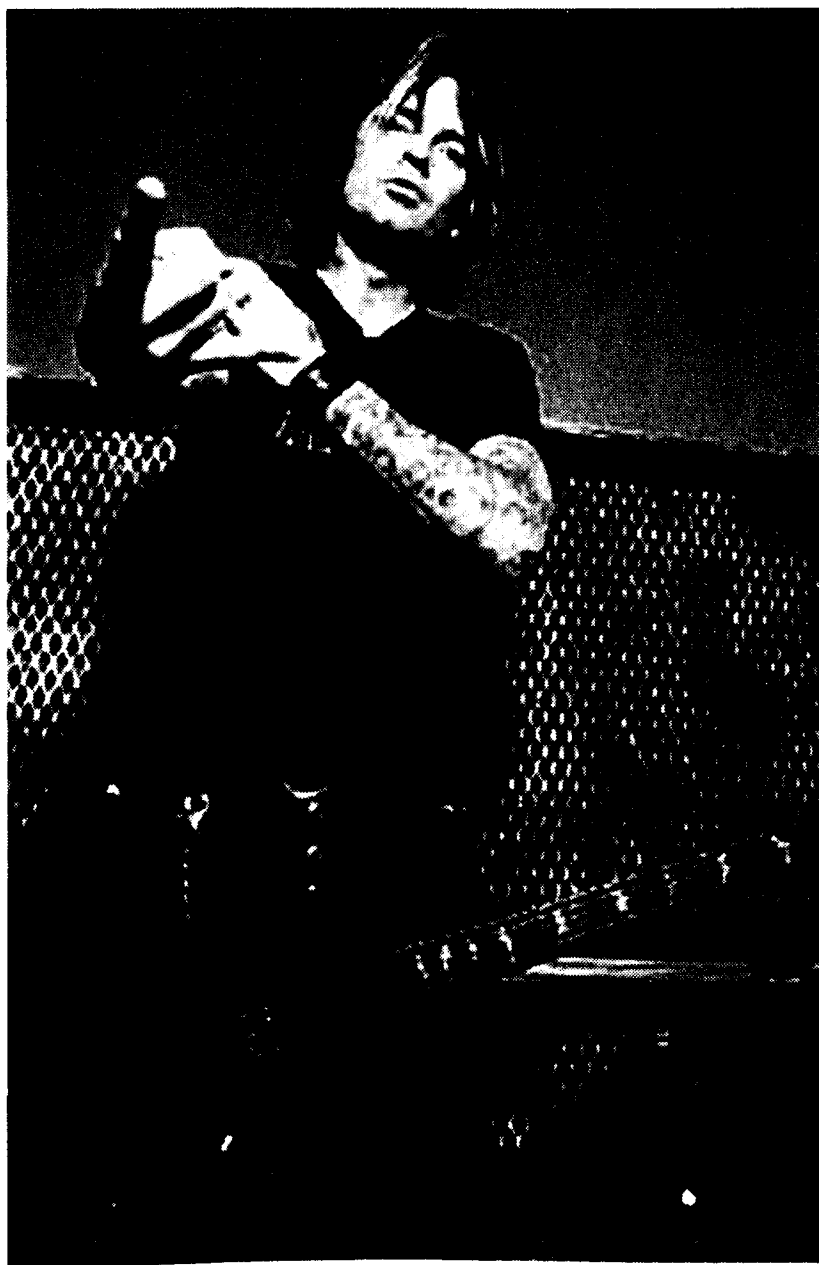


Photo courtesy of Harmony Central Web site

Rocker Tommy Lee recently filmed his own reality show, "Tommy Lee Goes to College."

Top Ten New Year's Resolutions

- 10) Spend more time with family and friends
- 9) Make time for exercise
- 8) Lose weight
- 7) Quit smoking
- 6) Enjoy life more
- 5) Quit drinking
- 4) Get out of debt
- 3) Learn something new
- 2) Help others
- 1) Get organized

*Adapted from www.about.com