

Subject: January Newsletter
From: Fitzpace@aol.com
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To:

Linkage

A Newsletter for SLTP Alumni and Staff

January, 2003

Early Bird Applications a Success !

Last week's deadline for the Early Bird Applications for LTC and ALC brought a flurry of applications. Already 2 of the ALC's are near the cut off mark! A couple of the applications were obviously Christmas presents because they were decorated as such!

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Are you a Blogger?

Recently the SLTP LT's joined a growing trend among student organizations nationwide. They became **bloggers**. A BLOG is cyber-speak for a Web Log. Essentially it is a bulletin board where groups may post comments, ideas, thoughts, etc. And for student organizations it provides serious opportunities for brainstorming or thorough discussion which too often is limited due to time constraints.

Part journal, part clipping service, part running commentary on the interests of the members, WebLogs offer some of the best online journalism around. The best sites combine the Web's greatest attributes -- personalization and interactivity.

There are a whole bunch of free Web Log Services that offer free hosting and formatting tools -- Diaryland (www.diaryland.com ; Pitas (www.pitas.com) and Blogger (www.blogger.com)

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An Assembly *by Ed Roberts Westbrook HS*

Today I had one of those moments that made me proud to be an SLTP graduate and staffer. Our school day revolved around an assembly featuring the Dudley Boys of the WWE talking to us about "Staying on top." I respect my administration for trying to excite some members of the student body by bringing in their heroes, but I pretty much stereotyped the assembly before I got there: Two huge dudes would sit on stage, talk about their job, how hard they worked to get there, and then some genius would yell out, "Can I have your autograph?" during the Q&A portion. I pretty much had it right (one of my buddies asked for the autograph) until a sudden turn in discussion.

D-Von, the articulate one, mentioned how he and his partner Bubba Ray often went to schools to discuss problems facing that particular school. They disclaimed that whatever they said was probably going to be a repeat of everything our teachers and parents have ever told us. Anyway, Bubba Ray offended most of the audience when he said that our problems didn't really matter compared to those of kids in some of the other schools that he had visited. I understood what he meant, addressing a largely middle to upper-middleclass crowd. But what about the kids in single-parent homes or the poor ones trying to fit in with their more well off peers?

Then he dropped the line that actually caused me to move to the edge of my seat. He said that the only problem he was told that our school had is bullying. My reaction was, "good, our administration realizes this." Then he pointed to a freshman boy in the front row and said, "You were the one who told me that when I walked in right?" The poor kid kind of shook his head, embarrassed and aware of the reaction that awaited. I scanned the auditorium at that moment and saw that some kids were slouching in chairs while others erupted in howls to mock the thought that bullying was an issue. So the ever sharp Bubba Ray asks the audience, "Are there any bullies out there?"

What, they we're gonna stand up and form a line to the stage? He and D-Von were visibly uncomfortable with the issue, admitting that they had never discussed it in the hundreds of assemblies they had done. I thought that was absurd, that bullying exists in every school they've ever been at. These guys travel around the country speaking at all kinds of schools, so why shouldn't they talk about something pertinent to every single one of them? That way, they would avoid their fear of duplicating the same lessons most faculties try to teach.

Bubba Ray went on to say in as many words, "Bullying is bad. Don't do it."

D-Von told a personal story about a kid who bullied him and then ended up being thrown out of an apartment window because he tried bullying his own brother. Their attempt was noble for being made up on the spot. I chuckled when D-Von said, "a coach told me one time that if you fail to plan you plan to fail." First off, his coach stole that from John Wooden and second, that's a terrible bit of advice to give after a speech in which he, "winged it".

Later in the afternoon I was talking about the assembly with a kid in my class while we were working out. This kid was one of those who mocked bullying as an issue during the assembly. But he got the same feeling I did about the fact that the Dudley Brothers had never spoke about bullying. "How can you have never talked about something that goes on in every school?" he asked. I thought back to the last two summers to the plays we have presented at SLTP addressing the issues that no one else is truly prepared to deal with. It will be infinitely more effective than two WWE stars looking to kill time before their event at the Mohegan Sun.

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The Rose

The anthem for the SLTP staff is "*the Rose*". Recently the staff celebrated the New Year with our annual Family Brunch. We gathered at Nichols bringing our Moms and Dads and lots of wonderful food. There we tried to help our parents and families understand SLTP and why we feel so strongly about what we do. It was a fun filled morning. The new

CC's took their office. We celebrated some achievements. We presented 3 scenes from this summer's play "Stop, look and Listen." And we closed out the program with the entire staff (all 60) circling the room to sing and sign "The Rose."

Shortly afterwards Julie Stewart, one of our newest staffers, posted the following interpretation of the song on our BLOG.

"some say love, it is a river that drowns the tender reed, some say love, it is a razor that leads the soul to bleed. some say love it is a hunger, and endless aching need. I say love, it is a flower, and you, its only seed."

This means that many people, probably most people, feel that love and goodness are things that are unattainable, but always hungered for. and because that hunger isn't fulfilled, it's painful and just absurd to want them so badly. In SLTP, love is the flower that we plant and nurture. Love and goodness are the products and fuel of all our work and commitment we plant the seeds, and whether or not we see them grow, we know that we planted them and started something potentially beautiful.

"It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance. it's the dream afraid of waking that never takes the chance. Its the one who won't be taken who cannot seem to give, and the soul afraid of dying that never learns to live."

This is saying that when someone refuses to do what they could, they miss out on something possibly great. when a person won't think of their dreams as something that could be reality, and won't take the initiative to try and make it a reality, than that dream has an occurrence rate of zero. But given a chance, that dream could take shape and possibly reach farther than ever imagined. That's what we do. We need to attempt realizing a dream of acceptance and true, good student leadership, because "student leadership is the answer."

"When the night has been too lonely, and the road has been too long, and you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong, just remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snows, lies the seed that with the suns love, in the spring, becomes the rose."

This is saying that there will be difficult times in our lives and we will feel like giving up on our dream because everything seems so impossible. we might feel like our hopes are unfounded and unrealistic. In these times we have to always know and have faith that good will come again into our lives and all will have love if they allow themselves to have it. In SLTP we need to know that even when it seems like we're not reaching anybody, we are. We are doing good in this world. the snow will melt and the sun will shine somewhere because of what we do together.

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A Survey

Please answer the following questions (respond to SLTPLEAD@aol.com) . . .

1. Are there hazing incidents at your school?
Which teams?
2. Does physical bullying exist at your school?
Who are the targets?
3. Have you ever been bullied?
4. Which is worse -- physical or social bullying?
Why?





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The 2003 SLTP Conference Schedule

at

Nichols College in Dudley, Massachusetts

Where leaders learn HOW to make a difference!

DifferenceMaker Showcase - April 7

Leadership in Athletics Conference - June 29 - July 1

Officer Training Seminar - - July 1 - 2

LTC's - - July 8 - 12; July 15 - 21; July 29 - Aug 2; Aug 5 - 9

ALC's - - July 8 - 12; July 30 - Aug 2; Aug 6 - 9

TLC - - July 16 - 21

Adviser Certification - - July 30 - Aug 2

The ReEnergizer Conference -- November 29

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