

# Cougar Connection

Cypress Creek High School

9815 Grant Road

Houston, TX 77070

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## District under new rule

*Mr. Donald Thornton named new superintendent*

By Laurie Nimberger  
Editor

The Cy-Fair schools have a new leader.

As elected by the Board of Trustees, deputy superintendent Don Thornton becomes the successor to Allen Labay as the new Superintendent of the Cy-Fair District June 30.

Thornton has been involved in various roles in the district for the past 22 years. After graduating from Lamar University and serving as a teacher/coach in Liberty County, Thornton taught government at Cy-Fair for two years. He was then named former superintendent T.S. Hancock's administrative assistant. After being promoted to director of personnel,

assistant superintendent and assistant deputy superintendent, Thornton was named deputy superintendent to Labay in 1977.

"I'm quite happy the Board has seen fit to elect Mr. Thornton as my successor. It is my belief that he is the best deputy superintendent in the state and I know he will make a great superintendent. He has the knowledge and energy to keep the district moving ahead in all areas of academic and extra-curricular affairs," Labay said.

Thornton is also involved in the community. He is a Metropolitan Baptist Church member, an Allied Champion Bank director and an originator of the Cypress-Fairbanks-Families-In-Action.

As well as being a member of the Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators, The Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of Elementary Principals, Thornton has been a member of the state accreditation team for evaluating Texas colleges and universities for many years.

Thornton is the successor to Allen Labay, a 26-year veteran of the Cy-Fair District. He started as a business manager in 1958, when the district had only 2,000 students housed in seven buildings. Today, after his past seven-and-a-half years as superintendent, Labay presides over the fourth largest of 22 Harris County Districts. The student enrollment is a little over 30,000 students, housed in 28 buildings with three more on the way.



**"I think we have to make sure that our resources are going toward issues that benefit the education of boys and girls. If we have to make some kinds of cuts it ought to be service-type things that don't affect the teacher's ability to function; doesn't deprive the teachers of materials and supplies that they need for carrying on instruction," Thornton said.**



## When Valentine's Day has no heart

by Greg Pettit  
Staff Writer

Whatever happened to love? It seems the days of civility are gone. We have substituted the days of romance and sincerity for cheap thrills and false affection. I can hardly believe the things I see that people use to meet one another.

Only in our age of self-seclusion is it possible to meet a future date by reading a bumper sticker. Yes, believe it or not, this service is provided both casually and profitably by a number of freeway matchmaking companies. Unfortunately, it does not stop there. Even here in our own school we are offered a computer dating service by the Literary Magazine. With the advance of modern technology it is now possible to find your perfect match at Cypress Creek.

After filling out an unusual questionnaire with quite limited choices, your scores are sent to the master computer to be analyzed, criticized, and categorized. Through this process you will be scientifically paired up with the person (or persons) who most suitably fits your personality.

Most people consider this good for a few laughs, but the true believers know that this is more than just a cute joke. A do not wish to poke fun at these people, for the pains they endure to meet their mate can be never-ending. Learning schedules and scouring yearbooks to help set up "chance" meetings is a task not always understood by the socially elite.

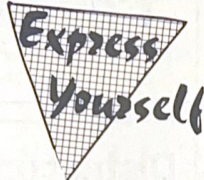
On the other hand, perhaps the insincerity of this project is more thought out than I had imagined. For, is this not the month of Valentines? The month which is renowned as the one time in the year when folks get together and actually say they love one another?

However, love has changed in the rush of mass-marketing. Now love is expressed in little cards containing cute little animals and enough hearts to build a bridge between the continents. Along with the surplus of cuteness also comes a strange new abundance of loved ones, who often weren't acknowledged as alive. Every package of cards contains at least ten little notes. The one time someone shows affection, he shows it by ignoring how he feels the rest of the year and giving everybody a token of his love.

What's worse is that these cards are most often accompanied by a box of candy. It's almost as if a bribe is required to be loved. Too bad no one ever thinks of giving candy the rest of the year when people really need it.

It has been said before, but it is nonetheless true. The holidays are too commercialized. It seems now that commercialization is what a holiday is. We need to learn to celebrate the regular days in our lives.

I don't want to ruin your day, but just think for a minute. This Valentine's Day, do us all a favor and forget all the tooth-rotting candy, the cute little bunnies, and the skimpy lingerie. Give the gift that's good year-round. Just give a hug. It's cheaper and makes everyone feel better.



I was just sitting and thinking about school and grades. How about an article on grades? Of course, they are understood to be an accurate judgement of an individual's intelligence. Correct? Not in my opinion. Why don't we ever receive recognition for the good things we do in life? How about somebody needing a shoulder to cry on and the friend who's always there? Let's see how many parents would actually open their eyes to other things in life besides "grades." There are so many kids today who are pressured so much to get great grades on report cards. Sure, I understand that this is important. But what about leisure — and I mean constructive leisure. Not just sitting around watching "Leave It To Beaver" or "Andy Griffith" — I'm talking taking a day/weekend to go to a museum and actually enjoy it or maybe take a day to go downtown and snap some photos. What about reading a good book? Sometimes I'm so overwhelmed with my schoolwork I forget what teenage years are for — to have fun...to have time to do all the things you might not have time for later in life. Just a thought.

by Jill Wittenabel

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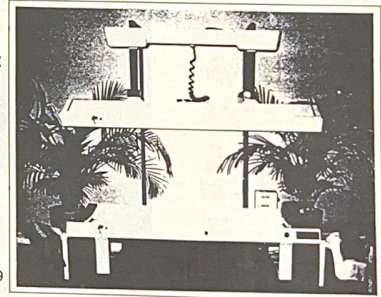
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# Keeping up grades hard on working students

by Laurie Nimberger  
Editor

"I'm sorry Miss Jones, but I could not do my math homework because I had to work from 3:30 to 10:30. When I got home, I fell asleep while doing my English report and then..."

For many teachers this dialogue sounds very familiar and rings a bell for many students also. Finding enough time to be a member of both the working and student world can be difficult when responsibilities have to be met for both.

"I have those kinds of days where you have to work but you don't want to and when you do want to work, there's no work to do," sophomore Ken Bullock said.

According to Janet Rankin, a labor market analyst for the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Atlanta, given a time during a high school year, 50% of all high school juniors and seniors are employed, while 30% of all freshmen and sophomores are employed. Mrs. Betty Womack, Vocational Counselor, estimated that 20% of all CC seniors and 10% of all juniors are employed. Of the student population, 14% are in vocational classes which require students to hold a job. The bureau reported that never before have so many high school students worked and attended school.

"I like to work. My dad thinks I'm a workaholic. I think I just like money. But I like what I'm doing. I'll do it a lot," sophomore Todd Fisk said.

According to some teachers, not every student should work. Government/Economics teacher Ms. Linda Croto feels that if a student can handle a part-time job, it's good because of added responsibility and spending money. "But during a student's senior year, there are a lot of demands on time and a person has to decide where their priorities are. Students should not commit themselves for more than 20 hours and if homework suffers then the job should be dropped," Croto said.

There are many positive aspects of working, according to students.

"Surprisingly, my school grades have improved 99% since I started work. I have

found that I am able to balance my job and my school work," senior Christine MacMillan said.

Time scheduling is a must. Many students say that this scheduling helps them in other ways, too.

"At times, when I arrive home from school, I am too exhausted to do homework, but with a job I also learn to plan my time more reasonably and fit homework into my schedule," senior Jennifer Lambert said.

Others feel that the experience they receive on the job is important.

"Working is good because it helps me to gain experience for the future. The job can be put on my resume for future employers to look at," senior Lee Chenoweth said.

The money that is gained by having a job is another positive aspect of working.

"It's good only because it gives you more

freedom from your parents, since you don't have to ask them for money all of the time," senior Chris Stanley said.

Instead of lazing around, having a job gives students a sense of responsibility and worthiness.

"I think if I didn't have a job — I'd spend all my time bumming around the being lazy. When I don't work for a long time, I get accustomed to being lazy," senior Jenny Fisher said.

Many parents and students feel that these are some of the several positive aspects of being a "working class" student. Of course, there are those who wish not to work and they seem proud of it.

"Unemployment is fun. Just think, you're part of one of the biggest organizations in the world," senior John Schweneker said.



working for a living. Students like Senior Sheri Procell who hold down jobs must learn how to budget their time and keep up grades. Most agree that the money is worth it.

# A part of high school life most students could do without:

## Grading

by Adrienne Anderson  
Staff Writer

People stay up all night studying for tests or doing last-minute projects. Then they stay up the next night wondering how they did. Why the sleepless nights? Because students are worrying about their grades.

Grades monitor progress or show how badly a student is doing. They can be something to brag about or something to quickly forget. Grades, no matter what they are, may be the most essential part of high school.

Recently, the grading scale in Texas has undergone a change. A's and B's each have a ten point range, while an "average" C has only a five point range, along with a D. Everything below that is, of course, an F.

Students have mixed feelings about the new system. Most K-level students say they prefer the new one, while L's feelings vary. Some L's are making low B's instead of high C's, but others have been adversely affected. Since the C-range is so small, the C student is now making a D.

"I think the C range should be wider, but D and F shouldn't change," sophomore Kari Lileng said.

Other students agree.

"It's kind of too easy. A and B is definitely too broad," one junior said.

Students who like the new scale like the fact that their B's are now A's.

"My grades look better because I seem to get quite a few 90's, which are A's now. Getting an A is so much easier," sophomore Stephanie McDonough said.

Other students feel the same.

"It's a lot easier to get A's now, not that I had a problem with it before. I think the C range is fine, because I don't think of it as average, at least not for me," one freshman said.

Teachers' views about the new scale seem to be the same.

"Like the old one better. It gave the C student more of a chance. Now it's an unbalanced curve," senior English teacher Carol Keflinger said.

Other teachers agree.

"I like the old one better for our school. It's a bit more demanding and represents yet higher standards," freshman English teacher Kit Aguren said.

What would happen if Cypress Creek decided to get rid of numerical grades and go strictly pass or fail? Some colleges tried this system, but have not abandoned that practice.

"It would be hard to find other ways to motivate yourself in a pass/fail system. It's hard to adjust from trying for an A to just a C," Dr. Sarah Jerome, Director of Instruc-

and competitiveness, though there are a lot of "late bloomers" who haven't made goals yet," counselor Donna Shrake said.

Though studies have shown that top grades don't necessarily mean financial success, the exception doesn't make the rule. Though many high school dropouts have become successful, there are also many in prison, according to Jerome.

People think their grades don't matter when it comes to getting a job after college. Not so, according to Diane Messer, a consultant at Cypress Creek Employment Con-

sultants.

"If your college GPA is low, you usually have to start at a lower position with a lower salary than if your GPA was higher. When it's low, you have to work your way up," Messer said.

Eighty percent of Cypress Creek students go to college, compared to thirty and forty percent at other schools. The "college market" is extremely competitive now, so it is getting harder to get into college.

Rice University is a very competitive school, and many factors determine just who gets in.

"Class rank is not necessarily used. It's not always the grade that matters, but also the quality of the subject. Physics 11K is much more impressive than physical science," Richard Stabell, Dean of Admissions at Rice University, said.

According to Stabell, applicants must do well on the SAT and three achievement tests, because the 4000 applicants must be narrowed down to 1000.

The application is very important, too. It is something a student does for himself, and shows his grammar and spelling abilities. Students should also tell how a job experience changed them, not just "I worked 20 hours a week."

"Applications are designed to make a good match," Stabell said.

For most Creckers, college is their goal. After that, who knows? For the time being, though, grades are what the majority of students are worrying about. We can always sleep on the weekends.

**A**  
*High GPA shows you can apply yourself and meet deadlines...though there are a lot of "late bloomers" who haven't made goals yet. Mrs. Donna Shrake, Counselor.*

Most students have negative attitudes about grades. According to Jerome, grades are a yardstick that shows a teacher what they need to reteach and a student what needs to be re-studied.

"Grades should add points to what a student knows, not subtract, but that attitude is not endorsed by 100% of all teachers," Jerome said.

Does a person's grade point average measure their success in life?

"A high GPA shows you can apply yourself and meet deadlines. It shows pride



## A minute with Pat

Patrick Hays  
Staff Writer

Uh, there goes the ball. Yeah, kiss that cute girl over there, yeah, the one on the left, 3, 2, 1...Allright...OK. That's a wrap. So much for 1985. It's gone, done with, pure history, never to be seen again; not even at theater near you. 1985 was a very interesting and productive year and I have a few awards and "what-have-you's" to be distributed, let's go by category.

### MUSIC:

**Best Albums of 1985:**  
STING: The Dream of the Blue Turtles  
U2: The Unforgettable Fire  
RUSH: Power Windows (here comes the mail)

**Worst Albums of 1985:**  
STARSHIP: Knee Deep in the Hoopla  
MOTLEY CRUE: Theater of Pain  
LOVERBOY: Lovin' Every Minute Of It  
**BEST SOLO ALBUM:**  
STING: The Dream Of The Blue Turtles  
**WORST SOLO ALBUM:**  
DAVID LEE ROTH: Crazy From The Heat  
**BEST JAZZ ALBUMS OF 1985:**  
ANDY SUMMERS and ROBERT FRIPP: Bewitched  
STEVE MORSE BAND: The Introduction

**BEST VIDEO OF 1985:**  
TIE: Anything by TALKING HEADS/Easy Lover — PHILIP BAILEY and PHIL COLLINS  
**WORST VIDEO OF 1985:**  
TWISTED SISTER: Leader Of The Pack  
**BEST ALBUM COVER OF 1985:**  
KIM MITCHELL: Akimbo Alogo  
**WORST ALBUM COVER OF 1985:**  
WASP: The Last Command

### BEST COMEDIAN:

Joan Rivers (get some new material)  
**BEST QUOTE:**  
Robert Plant's silence when asked about a Led Zeppelin reunion following Live Aid.  
**WORST QUOTE:**  
Louie Welch on a certain group within our city.

### MOST OVERRATED:

Bryan Adams  
**BEST MOVIE:**  
White Nights  
**WORST MOVIE:**  
Creature



**THE 1985 "DISAPPEARED FROM THE ENTERTAINMENT SCENE" AWARD:**  
Michael Jackson (Where is this man? I think he made his money and ran.)

**THE 1985 "WE KNOW HOW TO RUIN A SONG" AWARD:**  
93Q — Money For Nothin', Dire Straits 93Q and 104KRBE — Never, Heart 93Q — Broken Wings, Mr. Mister

That's just about gonna cover it. I hope you had a good 1985 and I hope you have an even more wonderful 1986. Drive safely, kids.

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## Boys' basketball makes the grades

by John Cilla  
Contributing Writer

It's that time of the year, hoop fans. It's time to take a look back at the basketball team and see how they have progressed at the halfway point of the district 15-5A season. The team had a little trouble in the non-district portion of the season due to the fact that they played some incredibly talented teams in order to beef up for the district wars.

District time rolled around, and the team started off with a bang. However, this bang fizzled in a couple of heartbreaking losses to archrivals Cy-Fair and Klein Oak.

At the present time, the basketball team has an overall record of 10 wins and 13 losses and more importantly, five wins and four losses in district play. This record ties us with Cy-Fair and puts us two games behind Klein Forest in the struggle for the last playoff spot in the district. We are also four games behind undefeated Klein Oak in the race for the district 15-5A title.

Now that we've been briefed on the team's exploits so far this season, it's time for Professor John to give his midterm grades.

**SHOOTING** — In a word, it's been inconsistent. At times our shooting has been nothing short of brilliant, but at other times, it's been awful. If the team shoots consistently well, they can beat anybody in the district. Unfortunately, the team has blown a few shots that just should not be missed. The shooting needs to become less streaky and more automatic.  
**GRADE — B-**

**REBOUNDING** — The rebounding has been a case of a split personality. Our offensive rebounding has been a pleasant surprise. As a matter of fact, it has been very impressive. On the defensive boards is where we are getting creamed. You can't expect to give the opponents two or three shots every time that they come down the floor and come up with wins. To get to the playoffs the team must limit their opponents to one shot per trip down the court. We are a very good offensive rebounding team, and a very poor defensive rebounding team.  
**GRADE — C**

**DEFENSE** — Beside the lapses in rebounding that were just mentioned, the defense has been very solid. The constant motion and pressure employed by Coach Pasche this year has kept us in the district race. Because of the team's lack of dominating height, quickness and pressure have become the main reasons for the defensive success. Our defense has kept us in some ball games that under normal circumstances, would be runaways. If not for the rebounding problems, we'd be talking A+.  
**GRADE — B+**

**WINGMEN** — The wingmen have played their roles very nicely. Chris Lovil's aggressiveness and intensity is a great thing to see out on the court. If he channels his intensity towards his game and doesn't lose his head out there, Lovil should continue his consistency on the court. Dave Beckmeyer, although not flashy (in the game at least; his pre-game slam show is spectacular), puts out with consistent productivity night after night.  
**GRADE — B+**

**RUNNING GAME** — The fastbreaking style of the team has been a pleasure to witness this year. We have the quickest team in the district, and the fastbreak has been our most dangerous weapon. The layups do need to start dropping with a little bit more frequency.  
**GRADE — A**

**FREE THROWS** — Our foul shooting has been average. There is no other way to describe it. We do need to start getting to the line more often, but as for converting them, we should hit more, but so should everyone else.  
**GRADE — B-**

**GUARD PLAY** — The play of the guards has been basically solid. David Gott was doing a good enough job, but lately Roy Dealy has been playing very well and so has been getting a little bit more playing time. The passing has been very good and the shooting, although streaky, has been good on the whole.  
**GRADE — B**

**POSTMEN** — The posts have performed extremely nicely so far this season. Duce McCollisch still seems to be a tad shaky due to his previous injury, but is progressing. Mark Dempsey has been excellent at the post this year. Scott Salter's play off the bench has also been of high caliber. Byron Youngblood and sophomore David Sundlin have also been producing in their limited action. The postmen desperately need to hit the defensive glass harder, but overall their play has been impressive.  
**GRADE — A-**

**COACHING** — As usual, Coach Norman Pasche has done an excellent job in directing the squad this season. He seems to know when it's time to be loose with the players and when it's time to kick them in the pants. By the way Coach, congratulations on the new addition.  
**GRADE — A**

Recalling everything mentioned, the basketball team gets an overall midterm grade of a B for this season. Let's hope that come late February that grade will be raised to an A.





## Girls bring flawless record into post-season play-offs

by Adrienne Anderson  
Staff Writer

The girls' basketball team has dominated the district for the past four years, and history is repeating itself. Besides being undefeated in district play, they are ranked 11th in the state.

What makes the basketball team such winners?

"Hard work, a great attitude, good school and sports programs, and a sense

of humor," Betty Maaskant, girls' basketball coach, said.

The girls' record is 13-0 in district play and 21-3 overall. Over the past four years the girls have accumulated a district record of 47-2, and according to Maaskant, would like to see the record extended to 50-2.

According to junior Stacy Miller, the toughest game was against Cy-Fair. When the team is faced with a potentially tough game, preparation begins in practice.

"You have to work hard and get your moves down. It's important to know what you're doing so you don't get nervous and choke," Miller said.

The team started out the season with

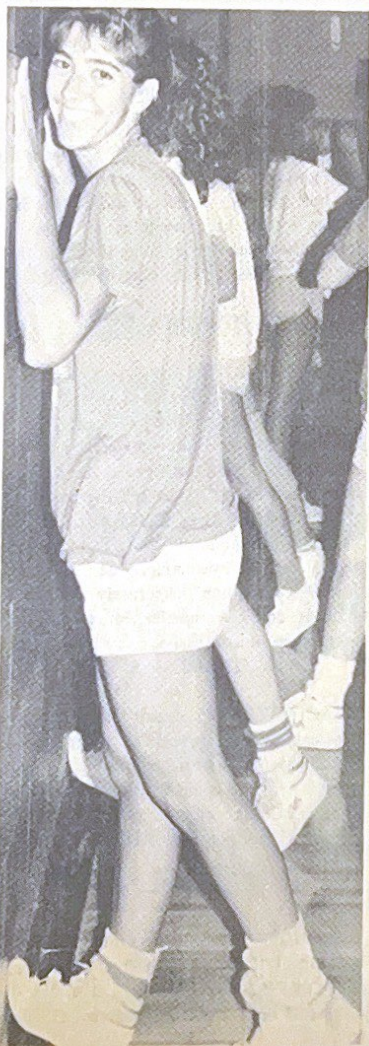
three goals. The first was to win a varsity tournament, which they did by winning the prestigious Clear Creek tournament. The second was to win over 20 games, which they already have. The third is to be undefeated district champs and to win the area game.

According to the team, Maaskant has a lot to do with their record.

"She's a good coach and really knows what she's doing. She knows every player individually so she can motivate them individually," Miller said.

On this year's team, there is no "star player."

"We have ten stars. Our success is directly attributed to team play, good fellowship, and hard work," Maaskant said.



## Swimmers rule the pool

By Laurie Nimberger  
Editor

Undefeated and victorious. Describing the CC varsity swim team is quite easy when the record for the boys and girls teams are 8-0 (as of January 24).

The teams have had a great year due to some outstanding swimmers.

"On the girl's team, we are led by freshman Andrea Ciro. She has broken a four-year-old school record in the 100-yard breaststroke and the 200-yard individual medley, as well as coming close to school records in a number of other events," Coach John Webb said. Other swimmers that have made their mark this year are sophomore Christine Gramling in the 100-yard butterfly, junior Susanne Taylor in the 100-yard breaststroke and senior Tracy Goetz in distance freestyle events.

This year the boys have had great performances from Drew Anderson and Ted Watson in spring freestyle events while Jeff Thibault has twice broken the 100-yard backstroke record.

"Jason West seems ready to go for it all in the breaststroke and Mike Cathey has come back strong after having a bout with mono last fall," Webb said.

The District meet is February 21 and 22. Coach Webb feels that Cy-Fair will be a main competitor in the meet because of their improved swimming program. The next three dual meets before district will decide where the supporting swimmers will be placed in the meet. Webb feels that they won't have too much difficulty placing, although all of the three teams from the dual meets have good swimmers.

The regional meet will be different this year due to the addition of two new regions, statewide. Coach Webb hopes to repeat as regional champs. He feels the region that CC is in is the fastest in the state.

"In our region meet it is very hard to predict who will qualify for the state meet since all of the races are so very close. I feel that we should get both boys relays through (medley and freestyle), and Jeff Thibault, Jason West, and Drew Anderson should make it through the regional competition unless they get seriously ill. After that, we'll be scratching for every qualifier we can. Hopefully, we will come up with some great swims and get a few more to state," Webb said. He also hopes to get the two girls' relays qualified from the regional meet. Webb feels that Ciro, Gramling, and Taylor will qualify, while Goetz has a good chance, also.