

GOING GREEN

District green initiative focuses on making schools eco-friendly, conserving resources. » pg. 4

Txters Bware!

A new legislative campaign is targeting teens who text while driving. » pg. 5

(Counter) Protest

Members of a Topeka church picket SM North. See how North students responded. » pgs. 4-5



NO DAY BUT TODAY

»Rent service project draws positive reaction from community

{By Brittany Williams}

This year alongside the production of RENT, SM North chose to take part in a service project. Collecting canned and boxed goods to donate to Johnson County Human Services and joining with Coalition for a Warm Drive, the "No Day but Today" service project has been organized by theater teacher Maureen Davis and focused on reoccurring themes throughout RENT. "We decided to do this because we wanted to put emphasis on something positive," Davis said. All proceeds from RENT, A.R.T. improvisation shows and No Day but Today bracelets were donated to the North Student Assistance Fund. The project focused on the national issue of homelessness. "It's not something that happens far away," Davis said. "This is a problem some of our students face. We just want people to be aware of something more than themselves."

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On Nov. 4, 2008, Barack H. Obama was elected President of the United States. Here's what's happened...



ONE YEAR LATER

» Students discuss impact Obama's presidency has had on their lives, future of the United States

{By Ephraim R. Chaney}

Where he stands

»A look at Barack Obama's stance on current hot button issues

- Education:** Obama wants America to have the highest proportion of college graduates by 2020. Obama has considered the possibility of longer school days/years.
- Health Care:** President Obama says that he is committed to working with Congress to pass comprehensive health reform in his first year in order to control rising health care costs, guarantee choice of doctor and assure high-quality, affordable health care for Americans.
- Immigration:** Obama supports removing incentives to enter the country illegally and provide ways for undocumented immigrants in the U.S. to gain citizenship.
- Marijuana:** Obama does not support the legalization of medical marijuana, but wants federal authorities to focus on bigger issues than marijuana dispensaries which comply with state laws, but not federal laws.
- Gay Rights:** Obama supports gay rights, such as removing the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy, though he has voiced opposition to same-sex marriage in the past.
- Taxes:** President Obama has cut taxes for 95% of all working families as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Obama has also voiced support for repealing the Bush tax cuts, which would raise taxes for some.

Source: www.whitehouse.gov

One year has passed since the historic Election Day, Nov. 4, 2008. On that day, the United States of America elected a new president, Barack Obama.

The election was significant due to the large number of young adults (ages 18-24) going to the polls.

The election had a major impact on several students at SM North, including alumna Meg Swagerty, who volunteered for candidate Obama's campaign.

"I think that working for his campaign has really given me a sense of pride in our government and our country," Swagerty said. "It was out of my comfort zone at first, but as I got into talking to citizens about their beliefs and values, I really enjoyed it."

Swagerty's perspective of Obama has not changed from the time she campaigned for then-candidate Obama to now.

"I am glad I worked hard for something I believed in," Swagerty said, "and that, I think, is benefitting our country."

Senior Molly Cady's perspective of President Obama also hasn't changed.

"Mostly, he's making me pleased to have cried on Election Day," Cady said about Obama's performance.

While not every student shares the same sentiments about President Obama, many agree that he has a tough job.

"I don't envy the job he has to do," senior Kalen Petersen said. "Right now, he has a lot on his plate."

From trying to stop the worst of the troubled economy to battling terrorism in the Middle East, the president has been busy in the 288 days Obama has actually been in office. However, being a busy official is part of the job description. North students recognize that Obama's presidency will not be any less difficult.

"Well, I would say yes [Obama has a lot to multitask]," Cady said, "but I've only been alive during four presidencies, and one of

them, I didn't even care about."

Also, Obama took it upon himself while campaigning as a presidential candidate to promise sweeping changes to the health care industry, a more diplomatic approach to foreign policy, the closure of the Guantanamo Bay prison, the withdrawal of troops in Iraq and a new strategy in Afghanistan.

Some may say that, as a candidate, Obama took it upon himself to work tirelessly.

Some would agree that Obama has worked hard to achieve his goals, although he may not have worked toward the same goals they have.

"I think that he has worked very hard to fulfill his campaign promises," Petersen said. "It's just not the work that I would have him do."

"I personally disagree with several of his decisions," Petersen said, "but I think he has proved his ability to be an effective leader."

President Obama's leadership has been questioned by many as partisan bickering has slowed the legislative process.

"I think that Congress right now is in a big tangle as far as the health care debate goes," Petersen said.

The tangle Petersen referred to has been escalating from one of Obama's campaign promises, health care reform. As a part of his campaign, Obama promised an overhaul of America's health care system; as president, Obama has been trying to cajole Congress into creating new legislation by last August. Many of these policies would have a significant impact on North students hit hard by the recession.

Senior Jordan Warren expresses concern toward the partisan attitude of Congress. Warren feels that to create the best legislation for the citizens of the United States, whether it is policy from the Obama administration or Congress, everyone should work together.

"[Congress] needs to get over themselves and try thinking of the bigger picture," Warren said.

»continued on pgs. 4-5

- »Barack Obama is born in Honolulu, Hawaii to a mother from Kansas and a father from Kenya.
- »Obama works as a community organizer in low-income Chicago neighborhoods.
- »Obama graduates from Harvard Law School *magna cum laude* and returns to Chicago.
- »Obama is elected to the Illinois state Senate from Chicago's 13th District.
- »Obama is elected as a United States Senator with a 53% lead over his opponent.
- »Obama is elected President of the United States with a 7 percent lead over John McCain.

OBAMA TIMELINE

Aug. 4, 1961	June 1985	1991	Nov. 4, 1996	Nov. 4, 2004	Nov. 4, 2008
»Barack Obama orders the closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility by Jan. 22, 2010.	»Obama sets the date for U.S. troops to pull out of Iraq at Aug. 31, 2010	»Obama proposes an Afghani army of 134,000 and a police force of 82,000 by 2011	»Obama announces Cuban policy changes, including easing family travel restrictions.	»Obama voices his support for a public option in a speech given before Congress	»Obama approves new regulations on private industry to curb greenhouse gas emissions
Jan. 22, 2009	Feb. 27, 2009	Mar. 27, 2009	Apr. 13, 2009	Sept. 9, 2009	Sept. 30, 2009