

# The Charger *Slant*

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News from a different angle

October, 2009

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## Student Voice

Where do you plan to take your life once you graduate?

*Jon B., junior, says:* I want to be just like Kanye West – the voice of our generation. Except without the South Park parody. And the SNL auto-tune fiasco. And the Taylor Swift scandal, and getting called a jackass by the President afterward. And the constant weak apologies. He's such a talented performer, you know.

*Grant O., sophomore, says:* Well, I'm a baseball player. And I think I'm going to make it to the bigs in a few years, so then I'll pretty much be set for life. I mean, I'm a pretty solid athlete already. My coach says I'm really good at shooting jump shots or whatever they're called.

*Nate N., senior, says:* I just want to start a family, and live the classic American dream – I've already got the girl picked out, and when you're in love the bills will pay themselves. The only thing in my way now is her girlfriend.

*Nikki E., junior, says:* The sky's the limit! I could be the President of the United States – or an astronaut, or a famous actress. One thing I'm not going to be is a housewife or secretary or anything like that. Men just want that from us because they're sexist. And completely inferior.

## Artists' Corner

*I'm Just a Natural*

By B. Goode

I'm just a natural.  
Yes, it runs in my blood it's –  
    Ingrained in me –  
    Hereditary –  
It's how I am and always will be.

What is it that you see?  
It's just my playboy tendency.  
I'm a flirt; I'm a ladies' man;  
I get girls like no one else can.

It's not like I can't go steady;  
But when a hot chick's around –  
    I'm at the ready –  
    Born and bred –  
To get her in bed.

What does my girlfriend think?  
About how I get around like a skating rink?

Well, you want the truth?  
Hell, why would you?  
The girl who loves me sure doesn't.

His upbeat demeanor, in fact, betrays little of the hardship he has endured. The early days of Brite's career were not easy; and countless hours he spent alone honing his cap-screwing skills, ever since he was a young child. "There were some days I just almost couldn't take it. Beautiful days; there would be a street band marching around outside, and the neighborhood kids all playing stickball or kicking a can around or something. And me, I wanted to have some fun too. But I was dedicated. Screwing things has always been what I love to do."

The work, and the paychecks, became constant at least – but sparse at best as time went on, and so an idyllic life of comfort remains elusive to Brite. "No, a lot of frills I just don't have. But I can still get by just the same. Television, cars – who needs 'em? I've got me an old transistor radio; it'll pick up just about any signal you can throw at it. And a bicycle-built-for-two to ride, just in case I want to keep myself some company on the way to wherever it is I'm going." Brite's tandem bicycle proves indeed to be an excellent vehicle for conversation as I interview him on a leisurely ride through the local park – paying no mind to the plaque-peddling ice-cream vendors who assail us along the way.

Nonetheless, Brite nobly refuses to allow his optimistic attitude to be eroded by the rather harsh reality of his way of life. "What I do, it ain't just what I love. There are folks out there depending on me. Every tube I seal – that's one less cavity, one less case of gingivitis in the world. What I do, it ain't easy. But it don't matter, those caps ain't ever gonna start screwing themselves on, no sir."

When I point out to Brite the modern advent of machines and illegal immigrants to do such mundane work, Brite responds – his tone of voice suddenly icy – "Oh, and I suppose you'd like a busboy doing brain surgery on you? This is serious business, son. Please – leave the real work to the professionals."

*Did this article make you smile? You almost certainly owe the beauty therein to a hard-working individual very much like Brite. Support the National Toothpaste-Cappers' Guild of America by brushing thoroughly after every meal, and applying toothpaste liberally.*

## An unsung hero Keeping the balls dry

*By J. Bouti, October 2, 2009*

Heroism is not a concept confined to the pages of comic books.

Nor does courage exist only on the silver screen. Though the larger-than-life protagonists of recent theatrical features such as "The Dark Knight," "Watchmen," and "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" have come to exemplify modern society's standards for derring-do and ballsiness, one need look no further than a pocket protector and pair of contacts to find the true meaning of the word "hero."

Case in point: Gordy Geuttiger, 17. A senior at Clark High School, Gordy knows the clash of helmets and bite of jockstrap better than anyone across the home sideline ever could. He is the metaphorical windshield wiper to the lean, mean, football machine that is the Chargers: he is the Varsity Towel Boy.

"Towels. Can't live without 'em," he says coolly as I interview him. "I used to want to be a quarterback or a lineman or something like that. Wanted to be the guy that was out on the fifty every night. I knew I had the body for it, had the guts for it, but I tried it out and man, it just wasn't my style. Well, the next year the towel boy spot opened up – ole Balvineda graduated – and right there man, that's when I got into the fold."

Respect for Gordy and his work is unmistakable throughout the Charger team. "Gordy? What a guy!" comments Donovan Malarkey, senior and varsity starting quarterback. "Man, that kid is, like, the backbone of our team, he holds it all together, you know. I mean, towels are something all of us count on every single night, and we have good old Gordy to thank for it. We wouldn't have our four-year winning streak without him."

And here he stands now. It is game day. 6 o'clock, P.M. The locker room reeks of adolescence mingled with egregiously over-applied spray deodorant. Clark's varsity team – a killer squad comprised of some of the greatest athletes

ever to grace the gridiron – gears up, pads and cups and all. The venerable coach, old as dirt but tough as nails, riles up his boys, urging them to “win one for the Gipper!,” his impassioned words resonating through the room as though it were a concert hall.

With all the noise and hubbub and aerosol Axe, it would be easy not to notice Gordy – the intensity in his composure paralleling that of any star athlete. “Keepin’ ‘em high and dry,” he remarks in his characteristic drawl as he folds towel after towel with almost machine-like precision and speed. “Baby, your team ain’t making any yards if their hands are slick, you hear me? These here towels keep the motor in this hundred-yard engine runnin’ hot.”

7 o’clock. Twenty minutes to game time. The boys are on the move. The pounding of their hearts is almost palpable down the length of the tunnel, the air electric like a charged defibrillator. But Gordy is calm, collected – driven by his sense of purpose and direction. “I do what I do – I do it for the people,” declares Gordy resolutely as he wheels his towel-cart out to the field, close at the heels of his team. “They come out here Friday night, what do they want to see? Good football – and damned if our team don’t deliver.” And with that he walks out into the blinding stadium lights.

Clearly, the joy Geuttiger takes in his work is something few could ever be so fortunate as to appreciate. As he watches the game unfold from behind his cart, the look of pure bliss on his face is unmistakable, his visage mesmerized with the sight of the strong, broad hands of Clark’s superlatively masculine varsity team gripping and tossing and spinning the glistening pigskin through the bracing October air. “It’s true,” he admits. “I’m a ball player at heart. But you know, when it comes down to it, man, towels are my one exception. Nawumsayin’?”

*Interested in joining the Charger towel staff for next year’s season? Spots are available on the tennis, wrestling, ping pong, and girls’ soccer towel squads. Please contact Trainer Hansen for personal, fully-qualified, hands-on instruction in towel-handling and etiquette.*

## All bottled up

### The trials and tribulations of a professional toothpaste-capper

*By J. Bouti, September 21, 2009*

Imagine a world without toothpaste.

To most, this is not a pleasant thought. A smile would be an insult; to talk at any less than arms-length, a slap in the face. Kissing would be utterly criminal. The world, indeed, would be a much darker – or perhaps yellower – place.

Consider, then, to whom we owe the luxury of our dentally-hygienic society. Dentists themselves, truthfully, can receive little credit – their drills bring as much toothache as their bills bring heartache, and a visit to the office of one is, by most, regarded as pleasantly rare. In actuality, we owe the cleanliness of our mouths to a very different type of individual: the toothpaste tube cap-screw.

Case in point: Julian Brite, 42. Brite never attended dental school, never performed a root canal; he knows not the difference between a cuspid and a canine (there is none.) Yet between his worn but nimble fingers rests more power than any nitrous-oxide slinging dentist could ever hold; for hands like his are what bring to common people like us the plaque-fighting, enamel-strengthening elixir that is toothpaste.

“Toothpaste-cap screwing is my true passion,” he says of the profession he has held for over two-thirds of his lifetime. “You know, down where I grew up, you couldn’t get away with not having good teeth, no sir. ‘Don’t leave no gap unflossed,’ my mother used to tell me. And I’ll be a-livin’ by her words ‘till the day I die. There ain’t no cavities in heaven,” he adds with a toothy grin.

Brite’s appearance and personality seem the perfect accompaniment to the effervescent, minty product that he so dutifully bottles. Crow’s feet punctuate his bright blue eyes, and his smile is pearly-white; he carries himself with the manner of an old friend – one with a slight Creole accent – yet exhibits a sort of youthful exuberance, which is, indeed, reminiscent of “that fresh-from the dentist feeling.”