

# Mannuscript

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## Homeless student carries on



PHOTO BY A. CHANNELL

*Pitcher copes with disability, loss of both parents in graduation quest.*

**Kennedy Coulter**  
*Staff Reporter*

Waylon Pitcher wheeled himself into the hospital to visit his father, unaware of the life-changing news that awaited him this particular September day. A nurse with an expressionless face walked up to Pitcher and told him that his father passed away the night before.

Tears fell down his face.

"That's not fair," Pitcher said between sobs. "That's not fair."

After a few more moments of grief, Pitcher turned his wheelchair out the door of the hospital. Parentless and homeless, the 20-year-old J.L. Mann senior wheeled himself back to his motel room.

### 'I gave up all religion'

At the age of 5, Pitcher's mother left him and his two younger sisters, Karli and Candace, with their father when they lived in Florida. His mother was an alcoholic and

abused drugs, according to Pitcher, which made the court decide that she was unfit for parental rights. She had few visits with the children and the visits she did have were restricted.

When she was not visiting them, she would call occasionally and keep in touch with him when she could.

"I was the closest to my mother. I was only 5 years old when she left and my youngest sister was only months. So they did not know much about her," said Pitcher.

The situation with his mother presented just another problem to Pitcher's complicated life. All his life, he has been confined to a wheelchair due to spinal bifida.

One afternoon when he was 14, Pitcher's father came home from his construction job with devastating news. His mother had passed away in the hospital from complications with hepatitis C.

At first, Pitcher held back the tears. He tried to be strong for his younger sisters and not show them the pain he felt. He kept his emotions inside when he was around them.

But when he could find time alone, Pitcher would go in his room and cry so

that his sisters could not see him.

"I gave up all religion when my mother died because I did not think it was fair," Pitcher said. "It really messed me up when my mother died... I lost her before I wanted to."

### 'He would do anything for us'

Soon after Pitcher's mother passed away, his father lost his job. He could not find work in Florida, so the family packed up everything and moved to North Carolina. Pitcher and his family stayed in a motel there while his father looked for jobs around the area. His father was not successful in finding a job in North Carolina so they moved again, this time to Greenville. Pitcher and his sisters were enrolled at J.L. Mann.

This time they resided in another motel on Pleasantburg Drive. Since leaving Florida, the only home Pitcher has known has been the confines of a small motel room.

"He would do anything for us to make sure we had a roof over our head," said Pitcher.

Like his mother, Pitcher's father dealt with his own demons through alcohol and

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**Searching for Home:** Twenty-year-old senior Waylon Pitcher has lived in a motel during his time at J.L. Mann and lost both parents. The Patriot family, however, came through for him.

## Coach Cook returns to Florida to wreak annual havoc with freshmen

*Epcot, Universal overrun by baby Pats again.*

**Coralia Balasca**  
*Photo Editor*

Roll on little freshmen-- to Florida! The annual freshmen trip to Florida, though plagued with accidents, made for a great time. One hundred forty one freshmen, along with 34 chaperones took off to Florida at 4a.m. on January 16. Though the adults and students looked forward to different experiences, they were both satisfied with the outcome, according to attendees.

Amy Goodbar, a first year teacher, decided to attend the trip. "I looked forward to getting to know other teachers on a different level than just school, and going around the world in Epcot," Goodbar said. She had so much fun that she said she planned to go next year.

"The trip has been going on for over 27 years, and the last 17 years I've been in charge," said Red Cook, the trip leader. "This year I got such good help with the busses and everything," he continued.

On their way to Disney, the students stopped

in St. Augustine to get a glance of Olde Town and Spanish Fort, making the trip an educational experience. They then attended Medieval Times.

"Even though some of the (hotel) rooms didn't have chaperones, the kids behaved pretty well," stated Goodbar.

The following day, they attended Epcot at Disney World. "My favorite part of

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PHOTO BY J. HUEBLE

**Wastin' Away:** Coach Red Cook gets caught working hard outside Margaritaville at Universal Studios.

## Earthquake devastates Haiti, kills thousands

*Disaster reaches 7.0 on Richter Scale.*

**Sarah Whitten**  
*Business Manager*

The world has come together yet again to aid in a country's desperate survival. After a year of numerous hurricanes, Haiti faces a large earthquake that destroys most of the country.

On Jan. 12, Haiti had an earthquake with a magnitude of a 7.0 on the Richter Scale. Out of a ten point scale, a 7.0 is considered a strong earthquake, which causes serious damage over widespread areas. Relief efforts from countries all over the world have moved in and are attempting to fix a disassembled country.

The epicenter of the earthquake was 16 miles west of the capital city, Port-au-Prince. The city is in ruins, and people are roaming the streets in search of lost people, food, and water. The American Red Cross estimates over 3 million people were affected in some way by the quake in Haiti alone.

An estimated of 200,000 people have

died so far because of the earthquake alone. The death toll is continuously rising due lack of food, water and shelter: the necessities of life. Because of the huge amount of bodies, mass graves are being built to get people off the streets. Over 70,000 people have been buried in mass graves so far.

Aside from the huge number of casualties, 250,000 additional people are estimated to be injured. Medical help is scarce, and is most likely impossible to

find. Of the survivors, 1.5 million people are reported homeless, and with out fresh water. The World Food Program has sent more than 250,000 ready-to-eat food rations that had been distributed in

Haiti by January 19, reaching only a fraction of the 3 million people thought to be in desperate need.

Since the largest earthquake, over 40 aftershocks have been felt throughout the country, bringing fear to all of the people that another quake is coming. On January, 20, another earthquake did hit, and caused further damage and deaths. Registering at

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