

National Honor Society Student Information

Thomas Smith, grade 11, GPA ----

May 2, 2002

1 Scholarship

My courses at West Lafayette High School have mainly challenged my abilities in the areas of expression (such as music, English, and Spanish) and mathematics. I have been on the accelerated track for math ever since Junior High School. I took accelerated English classes during my 9th and 10th grade years, and will again next year. The challenges that I have not met have almost exclusively been deadlines. Those that I have met have included those of comprehending the subjects at hand, and being able to offer original thoughts on them.

2 Extra-Curricular Activities

I have been a member of the Theatre Arts Club and have attended its related improvisation meetings for all of my high school career, and have been elected leader of the improvisation group for next year. I have also been a member of the Medieval Society since my Freshman year, and am currently King and President. I am a popular King, and several of my subjects have exhorted me to remain King for the next year, although we have not yet held elections.

I have been involved in the school plays and musicals throughout high school, having speaking parts in every production except the first play, for which I helped with the tech crew.

3 Leadership

My summer job last year was counseling at Waycross Camp, which is run by the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis. During my first week there, I learned an awful lot about leadership in a very short amount of time. Compared to getting 7 very tired 13-to-15-year-olds out of bed, showered, and dressed between 7:00 and 8:00 AM every day for a week, my recent 4-day organization of the Duct Tape Ribbon Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, which yielded 39 signatures on a letter to President Bush, was child's play. I have been hired to work at camp again this year.

4 Community Activities

I have been a member of the Bach Chorale Singers ever since 1997. The BCS is an important arts organization in this town, both for the listener and the performer. Before I entered the Bach Chorale Singers, I was a member of the Bach Chorale Youth Chorus, and before that the Greater Lafayette Children's Choir (now the Bach Chorale Children's Choir). Most of what I know about music comes from the Bach Chorale and my church choir, of which I have been a member off and on since the early 1990s, and from the inspired leadership of William Jon Gray, who conducts the BCS and conducted my church choir until the year before last. Also in my church, I have been a member of the Youth Group during the whole time I've been in high school.

I have been a Debian Developer since March of 2001—I write software and give it away. The Debian project maintains a free operating system. Using the software that I and the rest of an international group of volunteers thousands strong maintain, you can run your computer on software that is free—both *gratis* and *libre*¹.

I am a founding member of the Wabash Valley Youth Sinfonia, an organization in its second year and already playing very difficult items from the symphony orchestra repertoire. I am very excited about this group of young musicians.

5 Work Experience, Recognition, and Awards

Obviously, my work guiding children through a week of rather intense church camp demonstrates my leadership ability. In demonstration of my math talent, I have scored among the top 5% in the state on the Indiana Council of Teachers of Mathematics (ICTM)'s tests for the past two years. On the cello, I have gained Division I ratings at the state-wide contests run by the Indiana State School Music Association for the past two years for my solos, this year on my small ensemble, and ever since I can remember on the school's large ensembles. I am a Bach Scholar, meaning that I graduated into the Bach Chorale Singers from the Youth Chorus.

¹To quote Richard Stallman, “free software” is a matter of liberty, not price. To understand the concept, you should think of “free” as in “free speech,” not as in “free beer.” Free software is a matter of the users' freedom to run, copy, distribute, study, change and improve the software.