

# THAT'S THE WAY LIFE GOES

When I accepted the position of Editor-in-Chief of THE PATRIOT '96, I wasn't cognizant of the challenges for which I was in store. The year got off to a rocky start. Tanisha Portee and I had to teach the other staff members how to design layouts and organize spreads. We showed them the basics and had them to do mock layouts. That was the easy part! Practice layouts were one thing, but the actual layouts were another. They had to be flawless.

Some of our yearbook pictures didn't turn out very well, so we turned to Rob Novit, esteemed photographer for THE PRESS AND STANDARD. After weeks of pursuing after him, he gave us the negatives he had. They helped us tremendously, but this was just the first of a plague of obstacles that would devastate us.

Our first deadline was just one day away. Everything was complete and every spread was perfect, or so we thought. The staff had stayed after school the day before to complete all of the final preparations. We were both scared and excited, but our fear turned into chaos when we faced a major deadline emergency. There were a few "problems" with some of our spread. We were asked to consider making a few changes. The staff voiced our opinions and stood our ground. We prevailed.

As our second deadline approached, we faced a myriad of problems. After days of deliberations, a plan was conceived; the idea went over well and layouts were designed. The problems were defeated with success, but we had only just begun to climb to the other side of the mountain.

At this point in time, May 20, 1996, there are still seventeen more working days left for the yearbook staff. A few more spreads have to be completed, and a few more pictures have to be taken; but I can honestly sit here and say that no obstacle has been too big and no boulder too strong for THE PATRIOT '96 staff to overcome. We'll make it to the other side of the mountain.

As for myself, this has truly been a learning experience. I learned the rules of leadership, the glory of success and the importance of friends. I learned how to keep my cool in stressful situations, but most of all I learned that brainstorming and cooperation are the two best ways to mediate a problem.

As the staff faced problems, so did I. We are all young and inexperienced — even our first year advisor Mrs. Garner, but nothing amputated our spirits. There were many nights when I stayed up with less than five hours sleep to help a friend complete a spread, put labels on pictures or even count characters, but nothing was accomplished in vain. I had the best things in the world on my side. I had a strong-minded advisor, an outstanding staff, an excellent co-editor and friend. Yet there was one thing I held above all — God!

Although I was once told that being on the yearbook staff is a "thankless" job, I'm not so sure. I feel that everyone who opens this book and looks through the pages will be thankful that someone cared enough to help you savor the memories. So as you all receive your yearbooks and flip through them, remember the hard work and dedication that THE PATRIOT '96 staff put into this publication and appreciate it.

— Nichole Proveaux