

of voters in years. This startling attendance led to some set backs, but on the whole, the Iowa caucuses appear to have

voters were looking for someone new that promised massive change," **jr. Nicholas Rea** said. Obama increased his

past religious status as a former Baptist minister. **Sopn. Chris-topher Holland** said. Obama drew 35 percent of his votes from women, while Sen. Hillary Clin-

truckabee got 22 percent of his votes from women and was the only candidate in Iowa to draw more than half of

HOW, ONLY THOSE WHO WILL

who will take the presidency, as there are still more caucuses to come.

McKeeman reflects on exchange experience in South Africa

Leland McKeeman
Report in the field

I woke to a clamor on the roof. Monkeys. As I walked to the shower still half asleep, the maid greeted me. "Sawubona, Lay-land. Unjani?" "Ngiyaphila, wena?" I said in return. It was turning out to be just another day in South Africa.

I arrived at the airport in Johannesburg in early September, eager, anxious and filled with questions. What will my host family be like? Which of the eleven languages will I be speaking? Will I be able to make new friends with ease? One part of me was excited to spend my year abroad, experiencing the people and the culture, while the other was just grateful not to walk the circles around our school again.

Between castrating goats, seeing a behead-

ed warthog, learning Afrikaans, driving by a murdered body, playing backyard rugby and doing a fair share of partying, I have been going to high school. Since Oct. 1, I have attended an all boys public high school with much stricter discipline than our schools. If a student does not rise when a teacher enters the classroom, wears his hair too long, his shoes unpolished, his uniform not tucked in or is disruptive at all, he is liable to receive a detention. Despite all the rules, they remain teenage boys—the most frequently asked question was "How hot are the girls in America?" Thankfully, I brought the 2007 yearbook, so they could judge for themselves.

Despite being a thirteen hour plane ride away from the United States, America remains on the

radar for most South Africans, due to ubiquity of American pop culture.

When asked where I live in the States, I've given

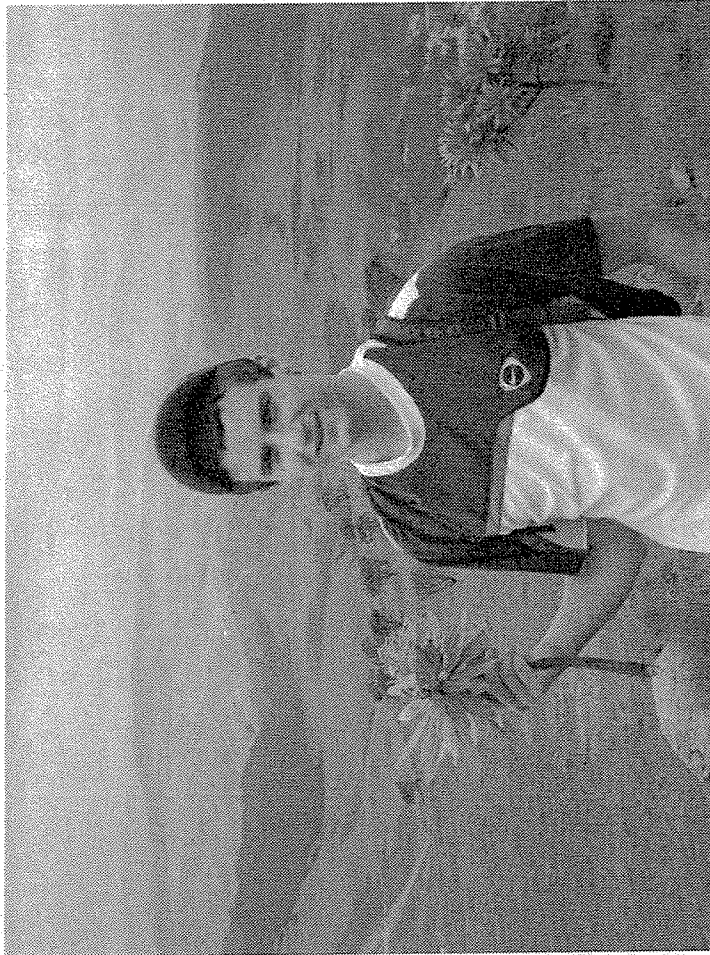


photo contributed by Leland McKeeman
McKeeman, a senior, is currently a foreign exchange student in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. He shows off South Africa's national flower, the king protea.

Many times have I been asked, "Do you know Beyonce/Eminem/50 Cent?" One student re-

Being an exchange student has given me the opportunity to challenge stereotypes about America and its people and to foster knowledge about our culture, beliefs and ways of life.

While there are many similarities, South Africa is truly a world apart. Never before have I witnessed children as young as six or seven begging for money at intersections, someone asking for employment at my home, or violent crime.

South Africa's high levels of crime, unemployment and HIV have made me realize how fortunate we are to be citizens of the United States. But more than anything, the sheer separation from my previous environment has helped me see how important my friends, family, our school and Rochester are, and have been, in my life.

The Mayo Advocate

January '08
ISSUE 05