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Class Election '97
Special Edition #2
reporting on the class officer elections,
focusing mostly on the Class of 1999

Tuesday, June 10, 1997

Sheridan forced out of election

Class of '98 incumbent president prevented from running because vice principal won't sign petition

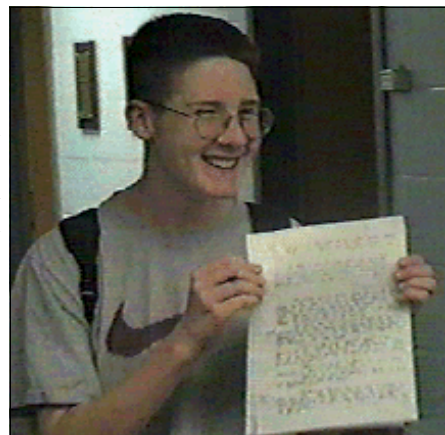
The Sheridan "Dynasty"

1992-93—student council president at Naylor School, Htfd.
1993-94—student council president at Saint Mary's
1994-95—no office
1995-96—NHS sophomore class president
1996-97—NHS junior class president
1997-98—as a senior, will hold no office

Stoddard House Vice Principal Nancy Koplín nixed Tim Sheridan's plans to run for his third straight term as president of the Class of 1998 last Tuesday when she told him she would not sign his petition because, according to Sheridan, she "thought it would be better next year if I focused more on my grades."

In addition to the requisite 40 student signatures and four teacher signatures, a student must get his vice principal and guidance counselor to sign his petition in order to run for office. By refusing to sign, Koplín exercised what amounts to a personal veto of Sheridan's candidacy.

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Above: Tim Sheridan holds up his petition after signing up May 23. Later that day, Ms. Koplín said she wouldn't sign it. Last Tuesday, Sheridan tried to change her mind, but was unsuccessful.

Three-way race for Class of '99 top spot

McBride, Brunetti challenge Stevens; all races contested except secretary



Above: Presidential candidates (from left) Ryan McBride, Jeff Brunetti, and Tim Stevens pose for a group-handshake picture.

The petitions are signed, the speeches are in, and the field is set for the Class of 1999 student officer elections, which will take place Thursday after the candidates make their speeches on Wednesday.

The field of candidates in the election simplified considerably last week as four students who had signed up failed to turn in their petitions or speeches, thereby shrinking four of the five races by one candidate. There is still a three-way race

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The candidates

President:

Jeff Brunetti
Tim Stevens
Ryan McBride

Vice President:

Lauren Correll
Joanna Kornafel

Treasurer:

Sara Colpitts
Jaimie Kwassman

Secretary:

Brynna Johnson
Social Chairperson:
Ali Lucey
Idalina Estanislau

Two challenge Stevens for class president

Brunetti, McBride seek to stop him short of fourth straight year in office

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for president, but the elections for vice president, treasurer, and social chairperson are down from three-way contests to two-way contests, and the two-way race for secretary is now an uncontested election with incumbent Brynna Johnson guaranteed victory.

The general feeling among most sophomores seems to be that all four contested races will be close. The hardest contest to gauge is the three-way split between challengers Jeff Brunetti and Ryan McBride and incumbent Tim Stevens, who has served as a student body president for three straight years, the last two at NHS.

Each presidential candidate cited distinctly different reasons for why he decided to run.

“One of my main reasons was continuation; it flows better if you have similar-minded officers in charge,” said Stevens, “and another reason was, I very much enjoy doing this job. It’s not spectacularly fun, but I like the feeling that I help my class out. I feel that’s very important for me to do.”

“I think there’s a lack of leadership in the office, and there’s really— I think we should be more informed about our situation as a class, financially,” said McBride. “Because from what I understand, I guess we’re not producing as much money as other classes have in the past, due to a lack of participation in school events.”

Asked why he decided to run, Brunetti quipped, “Claudio.” He was referring to the fact that Claudio Gualtieri, his “campaign manager,” was the one who convinced him to run. Brunetti then added more seriously, “People were saying they want to see someone else in there besides Tim, so that was the reason why I ran....People were telling me I’d do a good job if I ran, so I took their advice and I said, ‘Hmm, maybe I’ll run, see what happens’.”

Asked why he would be a better candidate than his



Above: President Tim Stevens works at the sophomore car wash Sunday. Below: Presidential challenger Ryan McBride holds up a sign advertising the free car wash.



opponents, Brunetti said, “Well, I think I’m more responsible, and I’d get things done quicker.” He paused, then added, “I don’t know what to say. May the best man win.”

McBride said that he can’t compare himself to Brunetti because he doesn’t know what Brunetti stands for, but as for Stevens, “I think Tim’s had his two years, it’s been a fun ride for Tim, but I think it’s time for a change.” Asked why he believes that, McBride stated, “Because lack of production, lack of leadership.”

Stevens refused to make any direct comparison with Brunetti or McBride. “I don’t like to attack my opponents directly. I’d much prefer people to make their decisions based on the speeches. I don’t like to bring out faults in other people. There’s no room for that in a high school election.”

As far as what issues they plan to address if elected, all the candidates spoke about getting the whole class more involved in terms of participating in activities and giving ideas to their officers and representatives.

“My first priority is to get more student feedback,” Stevens stated. “Unfortunately, although I said [in my speech last year] ‘I will listen to you,’ not a lot of people have presented me with ideas. And I don’t know if it’s because they haven’t had the opportunity [or] they haven’t had ideas, but I’d really like to get more connected with the class. I don’t know, it might even be my fault. But that would be priority number one, to make sure I’m doing right by the class.”

“If I was elected, I’d really want us to do more things as a class, do more class activities,” McBride said. He criticized what he considers to be the small number of such activities which have occurred this year.

“I think we need to have more class activities to raise more money for our class. What I think some kids don’t understand is, when we graduate, we have to leave the school a gift,” McBride added. “What are we going to leave them if we don’t have any money? Are we going to give them a gift certificate to Dick’s?”

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Candidates look ahead to Thursday vote

Stevens, Brunetti, McBride outline views, express confidence

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McBride said that “the whole money issue” will be the focus of his speech, as well as “the lack of leadership in the office.” Stevens would not reveal what he planned to discuss in his speech. Brunetti said he would talk about “the issue of having someone new in.”

“Our class is too lazy, and we have to start getting up, because these are our last two years as a class together. We have to start getting more responsible, and more active in our school and community,” Brunetti added. “It’s time to start getting serious.”

Stevens, who has long held to a policy of not endorsing any candidates for other offices because he fears that it could create problems if others are elected, declined to comment when asked if he has any preferences in the other races. McBride, on the other hand, did make a few endorsements.

On the vice presidential election between incumbent Joanna Kornafel and challenger Lauren Correll, McBride said, “I know Lauren’s a hard worker. She was president of Junior Achievement, she did a great job. We were in the hole a little bit, she tried to bring us back out. So I think she certainly deserves vice president.”

As for the race for treasurer between incumbent Sara Colpitts and challenger Jaimie Kwassman, McBride said, “Well, you know, Sara’s done a great job as treasurer, there’s no doubt about it. But I guess Jaimie’s got, like, a secret plan or something; she’s got a new thing she’s going to do. So I’ll have to hear about it first” before making an endorsement.

McBride said he had no opinion about the social chair election.

Brunetti, meanwhile, is supposedly linked to several candidates for other offices by the unofficial “Brunetti slate.” Lauren Correll is Brunetti’s vice presidential “runningmate,” and the slate also endorsed challenger Jaimie Kwassman for treasurer, unopposed incumbent Brynna Johnson for secretary, and challenger Idalina Estanislau for social chair. (But Estanislau said Sunday that she is not part of the slate.)

Plans to coordinate campaign efforts within the “slate,” orchestrated by Brunetti “campaign manager” Claudio Gualtieri, seem to have crumbled, however. Confronted with the statement that “the whole slate idea sort of fell apart,” Brunetti replied, “Yeah, I guess it did. But we’re supportive of each other. And we all like each other, so I guess that’s good.”

As far as trying to judge the likely winner of the presidential election, one of the most important factors is how many voters are sick and tired of Stevens after two

straight years—three for those from Kellogg—of his presidency. Asked how big of an effect he thinks that mindset will have on the result, Stevens said, “That is really hard to gauge, because you have people who jokingly say, ‘Oh man, I’m tired of you, I can’t get rid of you,’ and then you have people who are serious about it. And also, you don’t know how many of those

people liked you to begin with. In this case, I’m thinking and I’m hoping that the ‘sick of it’ vote won’t take up a large part of the population, because that’s really not a good reason for voting against me, just because you’re tired of me.”

When asked how much of an effect he thinks the ‘sick of it’ factor will have, McBride replied, “I really don’t even think about it, but since you brought it up, I think you’re right. I think students think there needs to be a change with the elected officers. So I think that will give Jeff and I a couple of votes. But I don’t think it will make that big of a difference.”

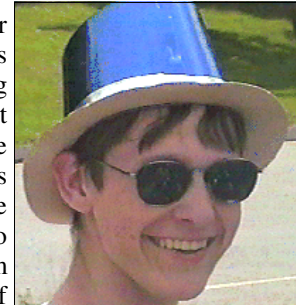
“I’d say about, like, 20 percent of the people would want to stick with what there is. I’d say a majority want a change,” said Brunetti. However, Brunetti said he is afraid that the ‘sick of it’ vote may be split between himself and McBride. “Yes, that’s a major concern of mine. I think we had a better chance of winning if Ryan wasn’t a candidate.”

Asked how confident he is about the chances of winning, Stevens said, “Honestly, I don’t know. I don’t usually take odds on it. I have confidence in myself, but I’m not overly confident like I have it wrapped up, because I know that’s definitely not the case. But I think I at least have—I have a shot at being heard, and because of that, I would say I definitely have a shot of winning.”

“In the past couple of days, I’ve had a few people say, ‘Hey, Ryan, you running? I’ll vote for you.’” McBride said. “But, you know, I really don’t know. I feel good, I feel good, but I always feel good about everything until I get put down.”

“But,” he added, “if I lose or anything, that’s fine. Then the students have spoken, and I’m not their man.”

“Well, you know, you’ve got to be confident,” said Brunetti. “So, I’m pretty confident. I think we’re going



Above: Incumbent President Tim Stevens, seen at Sunday’s sophomore class car wash.

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10 candidates run for Class of '99 offices

Three-way race for president between Stevens, Brunetti, McBride

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to win.”

Meanwhile, as the three presidential candidates gear up for their big showdown, six others are preparing for contested races for lesser offices.

Incumbent vice president Joanna Kornafel is the only incumbent who has not been in office for more than one year. She was elected last year in the only contested race in the whole election. Kornafel is running for re-election because, in her words, “I like being part of the leadership of the class, and I felt that if I didn’t run again, then this last year would have been sort of pointless, because we’ve just started to do class activities now.”

“One of the things I really want to change is that our class isn’t involved enough with participation, and if we don’t get more people involved, then activities won’t be as successful, and [neither will] things like our fundraiser next year and other class activities,” Kornafel said.

Asked why she is a better candidate than her opponent, Lauren Correll, Kornafel responded, “Well, I feel that she’s a very hard-working person, but I have a little bit more experience in leadership, and I think I could maybe connect with the class a little bit better than she does.”

Correll could not be reached for comment in recent days, but in an interview several weeks ago, she stated, “I want to be involved in what happens in our class, and I feel that we need responsible people to do the jobs... and I think we have some [now], but I just want to be a part of it. I want to help make the decisions that will influence how our class is run.”

“Whatever suggestions the student body has for me, I’m willing to take,” Correll said. “If everything’s going all right, I’ll just do what I need to. But if people want things to happen, I need the students to help me, tell me what they want to happen, and I can try to get if for them.”

As for the race between herself and Kornafel, Correll said, “Well, I must say that Joanna is a good candidate, because I know she’s a hard worker, and she’s very friendly, and all that. She’d make a good vice president if she were to win. But I think that I’m very responsible, and I’m a perfectionist, and I love hard work, and I want to get things perfect, so I’ll work as hard as I can to make it so they are that way.”

“I think people know that I’m a hard worker, and they know that I’ll try my best to do the best job for everybody, but I do think Joanna’s good competition. She’s basically the same as me: she gets good grades, she’s

involved, she’s a hard worker. So I think that’s going to be tough competition.”

Another likely tough competition will be the one between incumbent Sara Colpitts and challenger Jaimie Kwassman for the office of class treasurer.



Above: Jaimie Kwassman stands on the side of the road Sunday advertising the sophomore class car wash. Her opponent in the race for treasurer, Sara Colpitts, was also there, washing cars.

“She has done two years,” Kwassman said of Colpitts, “and her performance has been good, yet people have complained about [how] they don’t understand the dues, they don’t understand the way the fundraisers work, they’re not getting the proper numbers with their money, they don’t understand how it works. I just think they need someone who’s going to communicate with them more. I’m going to try to be more on the ball with keeping the records straight [and] making sure that if they have a problem with their record, they can come and see me, and I’ll have it for them; I’ll have everything together.”

“I’m fairly confident,” stated Kwassman. “People that know me very well know that when I do a job, I take it seriously. Whatever I say in my campaign, I do. I will keep my promises....When I’m determined about something and enthusiastic about something, I usually can achieve it.”

Kwassman hopes that determination and enthusiasm will have an effect on the often apathetic Class of ’99.

“We’ve never had anything of *our class*,” Kwassman said, referring to class activities created specifically for the Class of ’99. “I think a spaghetti dinner would be so much fun, but the thing about our class is people aren’t

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Candidates gear up for class election

Total of ten contestants in this year's Class of '99 races

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involved. It would get cancelled in a second because people won't go. And I think we just need to get people more involved in the class....We're the Class of '99, and we're going out. We have to go out with a boom."

Asked how she would personally get the class more involved, Kwassman replied, "I'm a very loud person. I'm very enthusiastic about a lot of things, and I hope that when I'm enthusiastic about something, it kind of rubs off on other people....I'm hoping to spread the enthusiasm and excitement."

"I think that you should publish [Kwassman's] nice little statement—not even a statement, her actions—at that last meeting, when all she would do was say to Miss Yukna, 'But Miss Yukna, there's nothing we can do, we just go [into the homerooms] and they don't do anything.' She herself didn't seem to be coming up with any enthusiastic ideas to get the class more enthusiastic, either," Colpitts said. "So it's not really a fair statement for her to be saying that about anybody else."

Asked why she decided to run for re-election, Colpitts replied, "Cause I like it. I think it's a fun job. I like counting money."

"I've had two years of experience, and I really know how everything works," she said when asked why she is the better candidate. "I've worked well with Miss Yukna, and I've worked with Mr. Snyder, who's the treasurer [of the school], and I've just got it pretty much down to a science."

Asked how much support she'll lose because of the 'time for a change' mindset of some voters, Colpitts quipped, "I think I'll lose Jaimie's friends. I think that's it."

With secretary guaranteed as an uncontested victory for Brynna Johnson because Peter Pellegrini did not turn in his papers in time, social chairperson is the only other contest in the Class of '99.

Incumbent Ali Lucey faces what could be a stiff challenge from Idalina Estanislau.

"I really like being the social chairperson; I like being involved," said Lucey on the subject of her reasons for deciding to run for re-election. "I like doing it for our class. I think it's fun and interesting to run; I'm interested in politics, and I think it's a good experience."

Lucey, who was working with secretary Brynna Johnson on making posters for the class car wash while being interviewed, echoed the familiar theme of encouraging class involvement. "I want to get our class more involved in what they do," she said. "It would probably be more fun, I think, if more people were involved and took part in what we're doing."

"I also want to make our proms as awesome as possible, just plan those really good with the class and the other officers so they're the most fun that they could be," she added.

Asked why she is a better candidate than her opponent, Idalina Estanislau, Lucey said, "I have the experience for the past two years that she doesn't really have. And I've worked hard, and thought of ideas, and helped our class, and I think that with the experience, I'd do a better job as social chairperson."

"I don't think I'm better than her," Estanislau said of Lucey. "I think that we just need some new ideas, that's all. I have nothing against Ali at all."

"Personally, I think that this is going to be a very good race. I think both me and Ali are pretty good candidates, so I don't know. We'll just have to see what happens."

"My main reason for deciding to run was because I think that we need to have more activities as a class," Estanislau stated while taking a break from working at the car wash Sunday. "In the last two years, I don't think we've had enough class activities like this one to bring our class together, so I want to see if I can get some new ideas and try to bring our class together more for the last two years, because they're our most important." Estanislau suggested a class picnic or a class trip to Riverside as possible options for activities.

Asked if she has any opinions on the races for the other offices, Estanislau replied, "I think that Tim Stevens and Joanna have done a really good job in their positions, so I wouldn't like to see them change at all. I think that they should stay there. And Brynna's done a great job as secretary. So really, I don't really think that we need all that much. I just think we need some more new ideas, and to really work harder at it."



Right: Idalina Estanislau (top) and Liz Janelle work at the car

Junior Class President Tim Sheridan prevented from running for re-election

Disqualified by Koplín's decision not to sign his petition

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Sheridan, who says his grades have improved during the course of this year, said Friday, "I don't feel it was right for her to make that decision for me. I think I know what is best for me, and I feel I made the right decision *planning* to run."

"She made the decision for me not to run, where I feel it's not her place," Sheridan added.

Koplín declined to comment about the issue.

Sheridan explained that his grades "were low earlier in the year, and I picked them up drastically." For example, he says, he went from an "F" to a "B" in Algebra, and made a similar improvement in English. But, he stated, "I guess Ms. Koplín was just afraid that if I was a class officer again, the same thing would happen; they'd dip down again. But I felt that, if I brought them up, then I could definitely keep them up. And, you know, I just don't think it was her right to choose my fate."

"Oh, my God! I think that's crazy!" sophomore secretary Brynna Johnson exclaimed when she first heard about what happened to Sheridan. "I don't think that's fair at all. I think he's pretty good president. I don't know about Matt Carbray, I don't know what he's like, but I just don't think it's fair. If he's failing, that's one thing, but if he's eligible, then I think he should be able to do it."

"I think it is really wrong," sophomore treasurer Sara Colpitts said of Koplín's decision. "I don't think that she has a right to say no. It's his decision whether or not he wants to put time into being an officer or whether he wants to put time into his grades. Because, it's not like the kid hasn't passed this year."

Tim Stevens, sophomore president and a good friend of Sheridan's, said, "I guess it would be similar to what happened last year with Nick [Casioppo]'s speech [when Casioppo was disqualified from the election because he wouldn't rewrite a speech which the faculty advisor did not approve of]. Since it is students and teachers are involved, they should have some involvement, but it gets to be a question of when is it too much involvement. Like I heard Tim [Sheridan] say, does she have the right to say what is best for him? And I'm not so sure that she does. It would be different if he absolutely had violated the rules of the election....[but] for her to just say, 'Well, I think it would be best if...' I think that's overextending the boundaries."

"I think she should have signed it, because she's

denying him his right to run," said Ryan McBride, one of Stevens's opponents in the upcoming sophomore presidential election. "I think Tim Sheridan should be able to run. I don't know what his grades are or anything, but I don't think—I think it's a little outrageous that Ms. Koplín won't let him run because she feels that his grades aren't good enough to hold his office."

"He realizes the responsibility he's taking on, therefore I don't think she should deny him of the chance to run again," said sophomore candidate for treasurer Jaimie Kwassman. "If he doesn't think he could handle it, I don't think he'd be running. I really don't think what she did was right. I don't really think it's her decision."

Koplín first decided not to sign Sheridan's petition on May 23, the very first day of sign-up for the class officer elections. Sheridan says he had all the necessary signatures—including four of his teachers and his guidance counselor—when he went to Koplín before sixth period that day. But she refused to sign.

"I went back the day that the petitions were due [last Tuesday], and I tried to explain to her, maybe in a few different words than I did before, that I could do better," Sheridan said. "I tried to give her reasons to sign it, and she turned me down once again."

"I didn't say anything, really, directly to her," Sheridan said when asked how he reacted to her refusal to sign. "There were a few things I wish I could have said."

Despite that comment, and the fact that he ripped up his petition after Koplín again said that she would not sign, Sheridan generally did not seem angry as he spoke Friday about the end of his term as president. Instead, he was quite subdued as he reflected on how much the last two years have meant to him, and he even sounded somewhat emotional as he looked ahead to a senior year in which he will no longer be serving his class as president.

"One small detail to a lot of people, but it really kind of meant a lot to me, was, you know, making the speech at the graduation ceremony," he said. "I would have liked to have given my class one final sendoff, because my class, all three hundred of them, they all mean a lot. Because just by electing me, they show me that they care, and I would like to show them somehow that I care, too."

Sheridan has served as a student body president during four of the past five years. In seventh grade, he was the

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Class of '98: Sheridan out, Carbray in

Incumbent junior president disqualified from race by Koplin

(Continued from page 6)

student council president at Naylor School in Hartford. In eighth grade, he held the same office, student council president, this time at Saint Mary's School. In his first year at Newington High, Sheridan had planned to run for freshman class president, but he was absent the day the speeches were due and thus was disqualified from the race, and Victoria Luiz was elected president. But later that year, Sheridan defeated Luiz in the race for sophomore class president, and his "dynasty" was renewed. He won the title which he holds now, junior class president, in a victory last year over Ashley Meyer.

"I'm upset because a lot of people remember the senior year president moreso than any of the other years, and I would have liked to have been remembered by three hundred-something people that I was their leader," Sheridan said Friday.

"They mean a lot to me," he added, referring to his classmates. "If they can instill enough faith in me to be their president, I think they deserve something in return. They don't deserve a Matt Carbray for president."

Carbray is the man who will take over for Sheridan. He was to be Sheridan's only opponent in the election, and since Sheridan was not disqualified from the race until it was too late for anyone else to sign up and get the necessary signatures, Carbray will be the only candidate in an uncontested race for next year's senior class president.

"I've heard from quite a few people that he's just running for popularity," Sheridan said of Carbray, "and that's not something that anyone should do, for any office. You should run because you want to make a difference. You should run because...you want to do something better than what is being done now. And I think running for attention or running for popularity is certainly wrong."

"If I was already popular, why would I need to run to increase my popularity?" Carbray said when asked to respond to Sheridan's comments. "I thought that I'd be good for the job. I didn't run for popularity."

Carbray stated that he has "always wanted to run for president, because I always enjoy leading and being in a position where I can do something important."

Asked for his reaction to Sheridan's being forced out of the race, Carbray said, "That's too bad....I don't think that's right. First of all, I think that grades are very important, but his grades have nothing to do with how he runs our senior class. I've heard that he's done a pretty good job as president of our class for the past [two]

years, so his grades shouldn't be affiliated with his ability to run for office. But that's Ms. Koplin's opinion."

Carbray said he is disappointed that he won't get a chance to actually be in a race against anyone. "I'm glad that I'm going to win, but I'd rather run against someone," he said. "I figure it would be better if I ran against someone; it would be more enjoyable for both of us to be able to run against each other, have a good election. It's sad that it worked out that way, that he can't run."

When Carbray signed up May 23, jumping into what was then a head-to-head race against Sheridan, he was asked if he had a chance against the two-time incumbent. Carbray proclaimed, "I'm going to whoop his ass."

Now, no one will ever know whether that would have been true. Sheridan, for one, doubts it.

"There is no doubt in my mind that I would have crushed him," Sheridan said Saturday. "I know that sounds really uppity and cocky about things, but I really think that I could have won. There were a lot of people out there telling me that I would have won. There weren't many people— there weren't *any* people out there saying, 'We need a change.' People liked what they saw, they liked what they had, and they wanted to keep it that way."

"I don't know about *that*," Carbray said. "I actually thought I would win. And I was told by a bunch of people that I'd easily win."

Sheridan expressed concern Friday that Koplin's decision to keep him from running may hurt the Class of '98 as a whole if Carbray doesn't take the job seriously. "It may sound really conceited, but me not running, therefore Matt being president, could lead to the downfall of our class, and that's not something I want to see," Sheridan said.

"I think that 'downfall' is very harsh, seeing that I haven't even been in office and he hasn't even seen me do anything," Carbray said. "He hasn't even heard any of my ideas."

Sheridan also said he thinks Vice President Victoria Luiz, who is unopposed in this election, will probably "take care of most of the business" next year.

"That's what a lot of people have said," Carbray stated. "I think that's not right. Saying something like that, without me even showing them what I can do or what I can accomplish, is coming way too early."

"That's their opinion," he added. "I'll have to prove

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Just like that, Sheridan “dynasty” ends

Koplin keeps incumbent junior president out of race for re-election

(Continued from page 7)

them wrong.”

As for Sheridan, he said Friday that he still plans to be active in his class. “So is this the end of Tim Sheridan in the Class of ’98 activities? No, I was already offered by a few of the officers to help out next year. Not officially, but they said they’d appreciate any input I had. And I would be happy to give it to them.”

Even Carbray said he would be happy to get input from ex-President Sheridan. “Yeah, I’m willing to listen to him. No problem. I think it would be better if I could get some input from him. He’d probably influence some of the things that I think of when I’m president.”