

## SCHOOLS

W4 SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 2003

## SPOTLIGHT

## Senior enamored of Air Force

■ Future cadet attends orientation, prepares for classes to begin at Academy in June.

By Michael Dabney

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Meredith Zoch used to have long red hair, but she thought little of cutting it to live her dream.

Zoch, who ranks fourth in her class at Plainfield High School, is going to the Air Force Academy this fall. Before flying out to Colorado Springs, Colo., for an interview this month, she cut her hair to meet Air Force regulations.

## PLAINFIELD

"I've wanted to go (to the Air Force Academy) since I can remember," said Zoch. "In kindergarten, I wanted to be an astronaut, and most of (the astronauts) went to one of the academies for flying. We visited there a couple of years ago on vacation. We walked around the campus, and I knew I wanted to be there."

"She's such an amazing student," Plainfield Superintendent Jerry Holifield said last week when he honored Zoch during the



Ed Andrieski / Associated Press

**Future home:** Meredith Zoch, 18, fourth in her class at Plainfield High, will study aeronautical engineering at the Air Force Academy, which she visited this week. Zoch has dreams of becoming an astronaut.

School Board's monthly meeting.

Zoch was appointed to the Air Force Academy by U.S. Sen. Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind., and attended

orientation at the school this week.

When classes begin in late June, she plans to study aeronautical engineering.

Zoch's parents, Deborah Zoch of Plainfield and James Zoch of Clayton, also are excited about her attending but also a bit cautious.

If she drops out after the first year, for example, Meredith Zoch and her parents will bear the cost of that year's education.

Meredith Zoch applied for the appointment in November and was interviewed by the senator's staff and military personnel in early December. She received the appointment in January and applied to the academy immediately.

She learned of her acceptance in March.

In addition to her academic success, Zoch has taken part in several school activities.

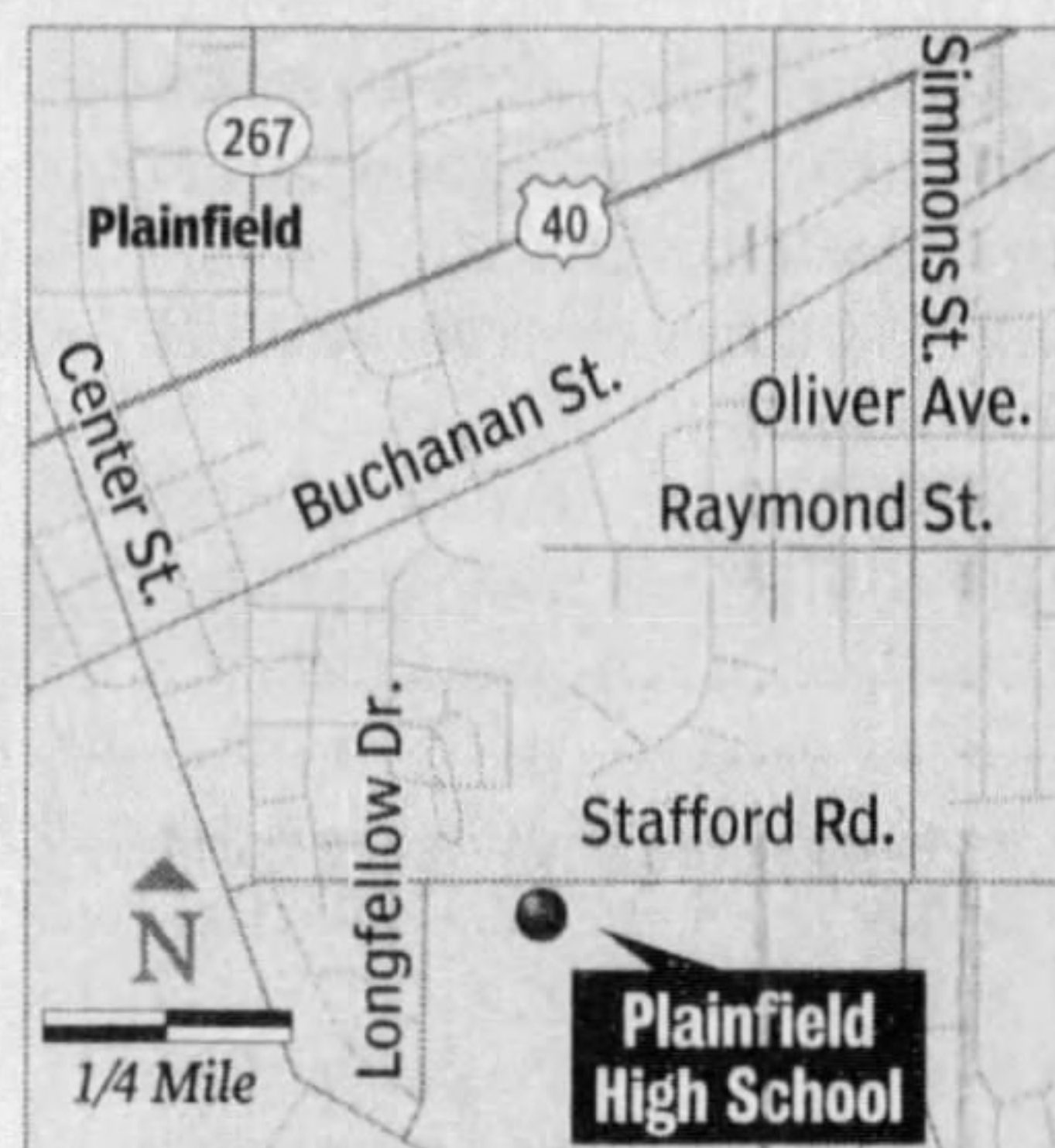
She has been active on the Plainfield Student Council and this year served as Plainfield's representative to the national stu-

## At a glance

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The Star

dent council conference.

She also plays oboe, flute, clarinet, saxophone, percussion and piano and served as a Plainfield High School Marching Band drum major the past two years.

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