



Teitel Considers Implementing Student ID Card System

By PAULINA KARPIS
with additional reporting by
ANGI GUO
and YARA KASS-GERGI

Principal Stanley Teitel is considering enforcing a student ID card system to increase security, which would follow the recent requirement for teachers to wear ID cards.

According to Teitel, if the policy is implemented, new ID cards will be created.

"The IDs that students would have to wear would not have bar-codes," said Teitel. "If a student loses the ID, I wouldn't want another student to use it to scan in."

In making his final decision, Teitel will consult with deans and the assistant principals in his Cabinet.

Many students oppose this proposal. "It is absolutely ridiculous. We have to scan in anyway," said senior and Student Union (SU) President Jamila Ma. "It's making school seem like a corporation and that's not the kind of environment we want for school."

"It'd make the school environment colder," said junior and SU Vice President James Kim.

Junior Mindy Nam agreed.

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Locker System Running Smoothly

By NOAH SKYE RAYMAN

The 2,911 lockers at Stuyvesant were assigned to students without any major problems, though it is too early to tell whether the new system will achieve its goal of reducing theft in school.

Over the summer, administrators had locks placed on every locker. Students had until the end of the first week of school to pay \$11 dollars if they wished to have access to their assigned locker.

After payments were received, administrators e-mailed students their locker combination and instructions on

Administration Requires All Staff Members to Wear ID Cards



A new policy mandating teachers to wear ID badges was implemented at the start of this school year.

By ANGI GUO
with additional reporting by
YARA KASS-GERGI
and JULIE KIM

Under a new security policy effective this school year, all Stuyvesant employees must wear identification cards at all times while in the building.

Principal Stanley Teitel said he hopes this measure will tighten security. "Students can [now] differentiate between someone that is supposed to be there and someone that is not," he said. "If [students] see someone that is not supposed to be there, they should report it to security and we'll go find that person."

"There have been adults in the building without the administration's knowledge. Nothing has happened as a result, but as [the adults] were able to approach students, it is a cause for concern," said Assistant Principal Eric Grossman.

It does not matter where teachers wear the ID cards as long as they are visible. Substitute teachers are given temporary ID cards.

There are no repercussions for staff members who forget to wear their ID card. "If I see someone not wearing it, I would just remind them," Teitel said.

Teitel first introduced the

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unlocking their locks.

Approximately 1800 students handed in around \$20,000, according to Assistant Principal Technology Edward Wong. Students who did not pay will either share lockers or not have one for the year. The school was not compensated for the locks it did not sell.

In past years, the school assigned lockers to each student, but it was difficult for administrators to ensure that students use their assigned lockers.

For the first time, juniors had the opportunity to choose their lockers online over the summer, a policy the Student Union (SU)

proposed last year to Principal Stanley Teitel.

Within two days, around 600 students responded, while the remaining 200 students were assigned lockers. Teitel said he might extend such a policy to sophomores and seniors next year if the new locker system continues.

While the locks and lockers were distributed as planned, there have been some problems. Some students had trouble opening their locks despite the instructions that were e-mailed to their Stuyvesant accounts.

"It's really a four-digit combi-

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What a Waste!

By SARAH KAPLAN

Although New Jersey is visible to anyone in the Stuyvesant building, few people know that the state is home to landfills containing over four million tons of New York's garbage—one-tenth of which could have been recycled. In a society where Al Gore and Leonardo DiCaprio travel the world to raise awareness about global warming, recycling is becoming increasingly important as well, especially in schools.

According to a New

York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) study, New Yorkers toss 300,000 tons of paper into trashcans instead of recycling bins each year. Recycling that paper would have saved enough energy to light 300,000 homes for an entire year.

Instead, the unrecycled paper disintegrates in landfills and releases methane, a highly flammable gas that combines with air to form explosive mixtures. Methane significantly contributes to global warming because it is 23 times more

damaging to the ozone layer than carbon dioxide.

Even though tossing your soda bottle into a normal garbage can may seem routine, such behavior is not only irresponsible but also illegal. All New York City schools are legally required to establish effective recycling programs and to teach students the importance of recycling. Sadly, many schools have failed to meet this standard.

"School recycling is an

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Stuywatch Provides New Outlet for Student Discontent

By PRAMEET KUMAR

Two anonymous students have created stuywatch.com, a Web Site they call "the official unofficial guide to student rights and news at Stuy High." The purpose of the Web site is to unite the Stuyvesant student body against what they believe to be the administration's unjust policies.

The two students, assuming the pseudonyms Hiro and Chase, sent e-mails on September 15 to other students whose e-mail addresses they have in their personal address books or obtained from the mailing lists of organizations such as the Big Sibs. These e-mails invited students to visit stuywatch, where they would find "insightful student news and opinion[s] about the issues that affect student lives."

"We decided to create stuywatch because we felt that there was serious lack of student interest in the things happening around them," the founders said in an e-mail interview.

The Web site boasts a blog maintained by Hiro, Chase and other writers whom they approved to disseminate information, as well as a forum on which registered

users may post comments.

The founders have decided to remain anonymous with the hope that the focus of the Web site will not be on them, "but on the site and discussions it creates," they said.

"I can understand the founders' desire to remain anonymous, for fear of administration reprisals," said senior Daniel Giansante, who is a registered user on the Web site. "But I think the mystery of their identities distracts from their message."

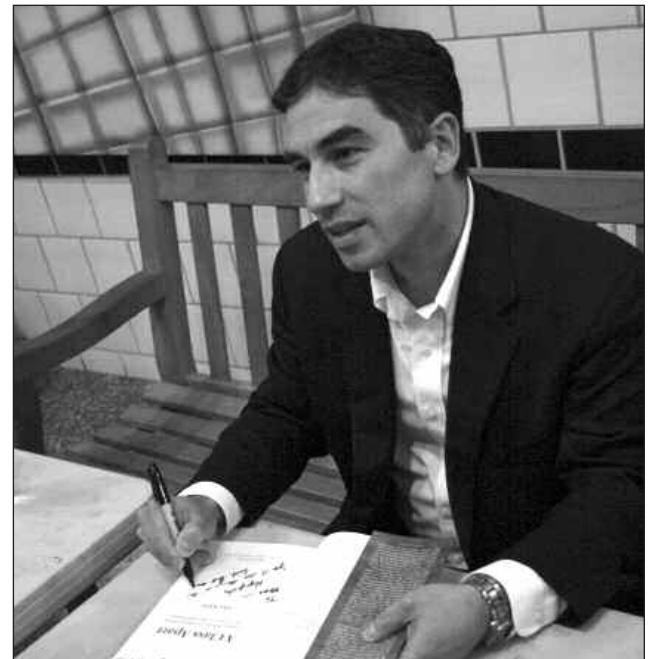
Student Union (SU) President Jamila Ma posted a comment on the Web site that said stuywatch has the SU's support. "We will cooperate with them if we believe that [their motive] is consistent with what the SU strives to do," she said.

"The support of the Student Union is much appreciated," the founders said, "since they have resources that could potentially be useful."

The Web site has quickly become an active place for discussion, with 1,239 unique visits and 6,332 pageviews in the first four days since its inception. As of September 19, there are nearly 130

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Alec Klein Reads at Stuy



Alec Klein ('85) signs a copy of his latest book "A Class Apart" at an event hosted by the Alumni Association on Monday, September 17.

By PRAMEET KUMAR

The Alumni Association hosted a book reading, discussion and signing by Alec Klein ('85), author of "A Class Apart," which chronicled a semester at Stuyvesant.

NY1 reporter and alumnus Roger Clark ('85), a former classmate of Klein, emceed the event, held on Monday, September 17 at 6:30 p.m. in the Murray Kahn Theatre.

Several individuals featured in the book attended the event.

Social studies teacher and former Coordinator of Student Affairs (COSA) Matthew Polazzo said, "[The book] was really accurate in its portrayal of me as COSA. [But] it's a little surreal to read about yourself in third per-

son."

Senior Danny Zhu, whom Klein referred to as a genius at the event and as a "math whiz" in the book, said "I kind of like the way he portrayed me."

Former Assistant Principal Mathematics Danny Jaye said the book was a bit dramatized. "While it's a factual book, it really read like a soap opera," he said.

After reading a short excerpt from the introduction of the book, Klein fielded questions from audience members.

"He was very sure on his feet," said mathematics teacher Joy Schimmel, who taught Alec Klein when he was in high school. "I'm very proud of him."

"[The book] was good," Polazzo said. "I hope it sells well."

Locker System Running Smoothly

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nation," said Assistant Program Chair and former dean Larry Barth. "They get to the third number, and they don't know what to do."

According to the instructions, students, after turning to the three numbers in the combination, must turn the dial left until it stops. This is considered the fourth digit.

"Five million kids came up to me asking, how do you work this thing," said freshman Amos Chiu, who showed several students how to open their locks.

Other students had incorrectly set up the forwarding system from their school account to a separate e-mail account. These combinations are "lost in cyberspace," said Wong.

The locks can also be opened with keys, though the SU and Teitel agreed last school year that

the locks would not have keyholes. The school was supplied with two copies of the master key.

"I might have reneged on the deal there," said Teitel. Towards the end of last school year, according to Teitel, machinist Kern Levigion and Wong said the keyholes would facilitate removing the locks students leave on their lockers at the end of each school year. Without consulting the SU, he decided to include keyholes.

SU President Jamila Ma said the SU "never welcomed the policy," but "we thought we had come to a deal with the administration."

According to Ma, students have gained access to master keys, such as those to classrooms and those to turn on and off the escalators, in the past. What concerns Ma is the possibility that "you can take the key and open up any [locker] you want," she

said. Senior Peter Liu felt similarly. "How long does it take for the master key to get out?" he said. Liu predicts it will take two months.

Neither Teitel nor the deans have access to the keys, which Teitel said are locked away. The combinations are stored outside of the school server and are not in the school system.

If the keys or combinations were to fall into the hands of someone who would use them illicitly, "I don't have a solution for that," said Teitel.

Despite such concerns, according to Dean Robert Rosen, the new locker system has "made a world of difference."

In previous years, deans clipped up to 300 locks daily for the first few days of school when students placed their locks on lockers assigned to others.

According to Barth, minor

conflicts over lockers arose between students under the former policy that have not occurred this year.

The question of increased security—the administration's principal reason for implementing the new policy—has yet to be answered. Rosen said although he was not aware of any locker-related crimes this year, they would be more likely to occur during the winter, when items such as jacks are more likely to be stolen.

"We don't have any evidence," said Rosen, of the preventative effect of the new system. Teitel said he will base his decision to continue the system next year on that evidence.

If the policy is implemented next year, the school will buy a new set of locks and reuse the locks that some students leave on their lockers at the end of each year. Locks will be sold to students in the same manner as this

year. Assistant Principal Health and Physical Education Martha Singer ordered this year's locks because of her experience ordering and selling them for physical education classes. She said students paid slightly more than the cost for each lock, though it was "a few pennies difference." Considering the cost of shipping, "the school is probably losing money," she said.

"It's worth it," said freshman Emily Martin of the 11 dollar payment. Martin said she felt safe with the locks, though "I'm careful what I put in [the locker]."

Senior Rafi Rahman said the 11 dollars were a little much. For freshmen, over the course of four years, it will cost them 44 dollars.

The SU plans to distribute a survey in the coming months to gauge the students' opinions on the new locker policy. "We'll see what they liked and didn't like," said Ma.

A Patchwork Picture: Stuyvesant Through Other Eyes

By STEPHANIE BARTOLOME

We see them every day: serving us pizza, ices and pastries; selling us books; handing us pamphlets on the street; lending us games and Frisbees in the park. And they see us too. These are the very people with which we share an ever-changing community. But what do they think of us? What do they remember? We've read about ourselves in various newspapers, magazines and books, but perhaps we can learn more from what these people have to say.

Anthony Catanzaro,
owner, Portobello's



Sean Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator

I know you take a test, and I know that like 90 percent—well, I don't know what percentage is Asian—but I think it's a wonderful school, it's a free school and comes out with good students. It would be nice if there were some sort of scholarship thing for people who have a little more difficulty with stuff like that, to help them along, though I don't think you do. But on the whole, I have never met any impolite Stuyvesant students, and I have no problem with them. Anybody who's working hard, having a good time but working hard, not going too nutzoid, are fine by me.

Angela Gkiougkis,
Mr. Softee Ice Cream Truck



This girl came, and my sister was working here, and I was sitting in the front, and she goes, 'How much is your ice cream?' and we tell her two dollars. And she goes, 'How much? Down in Brooklyn it's one-fifty!' And my sister tells her, 'Well, here it's two dollars, this is Manhattan.' And she says, 'Forget that, we're going to McDonald's. And she goes and gets her ice cream at McDonald's. And she comes back here and goes, 'Can I have a napkin?' with the ice cream from McDonald's. And my sister was really upset, she's like, 'No, I'm not giving you a napkin!' and she's like, 'You're not going to give me a napkin?' and my sister's like, 'No, I'm not giving you a napkin' and so the girl says, 'Why not?' And my sister says 'Well, because I don't want to and you're not my customer and I don't have to.' So the girl leaves, and then she comes back, and she throws the ice cream inside the truck to my sister."

Iesha Edwards,
employee, Manhattan Books

A student came into the store one day with a Stuyvesant card and he wanted to use it and I didn't know how. So he knew how to use it and he was sitting here telling me to type this, type that, and I'm like, 'Okay.' He was teaching

me, and I'm the cashier here. I thought that was funny."

Gladys Perlman,
Rockefeller Park



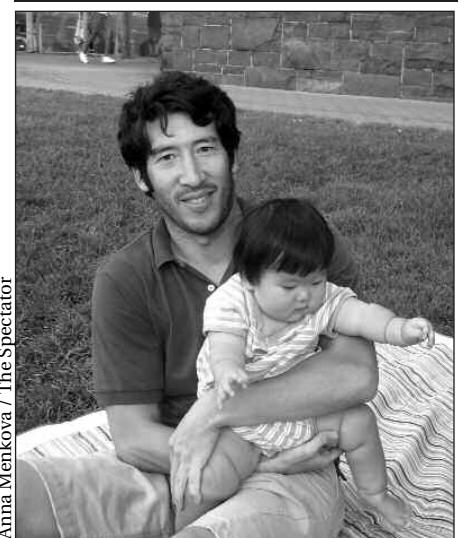
Anna Menkova / The Spectator

"They come over there, to the park house, and they ask me for books, soccer balls and pool table and everything. I ask for ID and the first question I ask them is, 'Good morning guys, good morning, are you sure you have school or you don't have any school?' Because sometimes they come in at ten, or nine, and I check, because I don't want nobody to cut, so I always check, and if they cut class I send them back to school!"

Carly Toyer,
employee, Ceci-Cela

"Every time they come here, they're very polite and make my job easy. There's a couple of regulars that I know go to Stuy, and we'll have our plate of pastries and they'll say, 'Oh I don't care, you pick for me. Pick which one and I'll try it,' and I always thought that was cute and sweet of them."

Bill Seto,
Tribeca Parent



"Stuyvesant students seem very nice. I think it's incredible that right now, [in the park] a lot of parents with very young children are sharing this huge field, with hundreds of high school students and we all seem to be getting along pretty well, especially since we've had it to ourselves for the past two and a half months."

Starting a couple days ago, it's been a

whole new situation for us. We've been

coming out here with our kids, and hav-

ing a big field with just little children, and

now we're sharing it with football-playing

and ultimate-playing and soccer-playing

teenagers. It's surprisingly working out

well. I think it's the only high school—one

of the very few—where this could work."

Latasha Hamlett,
Tribeca employee



"As a matter of fact, it was last Friday, and I was sitting over here [by the Hudson River] and the three boys jumped into that nasty water, right here, with all the stuff, floating around and the police came—and well, I think they're very bright, but I guess at times, they do stupid things."

Danny Castro,
Danny's Icee



"Some people, they graduated from the school. They come back here, and they give me hello, but they finished, they graduated! They come back and give me hello. It is a nice experience, it's very nice."

Anna Menkova / The Spectator



"Actually, I like Stuyvesant. They're good students, but it would be nice if there would be more of a mix of students."

What a Waste!



Anna Menkova / The Spectator

Stuyvesant's recycling program peaked under the leadership of the reSTUYclers in 2005, but is now almost nonexistent.

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absolute mess. The schools that have motivated staff and a good relationship with their custodians can make recycling work, but since schools have so many competing priorities, it is hard for schools to put recycling front and center," said Marni Aaron, the Deputy Director of Public Education for the DSNY.

Stuyvesant is no exception. "[Sorting waste] just falls by the wayside unless it's promoted," said technology teacher and Stuyvesant's recycling program advisor Richard Realmuto.

When the new building opened in 1992, Stuyvesant was very involved with reducing and recycling waste. With the help of Stuyvesant students and the DSNY, Realmuto set up several

recycling initiatives, including paper re-use centers in offices, and petitioned the Board of Education to use more recycled paper.

"We even weighed everything that we collected, and then we were able to take the statistics and we actually had charts showing [...] how much paper was recycled every month," said Realmuto. This process was greatly dependent on support from the student body. "It's really a student's activity. If and when students are involved, that's really when something's going to happen," he said.

Only three years ago, students at Stuyvesant were very involved in recycling. In 2004, Matthew Ritter ('05) founded the reSTUYclers club, dedicated to increasing paper and ink car-

tridge recycling at Stuyvesant. "In Mr. Realmuto's class [...] they watched a video about recycling and that gave Matthew the inspiration to start the club," said senior and Matthew Ritter's brother Scott Ritter, who joined the reSTUYclers his freshman year.

The members of the reSTUYclers helped the custodial staff sort paper waste and recyclable bottles and to raise awareness about recycling. "We'd go around to each classroom and take all the paper about the blue recycling bins," said Scott Ritter, "and bring it all downstairs and put it in a bag for the custodians to recycle."

Unfortunately, the club disbanded after the 2004-2005 school year. "After Matthew left," Scott Ritter said, "nothing really happened. It never started up the next year."

Zharna Shah ('06) was at Stuyvesant when the reSTUYclers were active. "After a while a lot of kids lost interest because it requires a lot of time and energy," she said.

Recycling is not something that students can afford to lose interest in. With environmental crises looming closer, Stuyvesant needs to make a conscious effort to reduce waste, starting with paper. Classes can set up "paper reuse centers" and use minimally used sheets of paper as scrap. Teachers and students should print on both sides of paper and avoid double spacing when possible.

"We only have this one earth" said sophomore Bibi Lewis, "and if we don't take care of it now, who knows what will happen to it in the future."

Administration Requires All Staff Members to Wear ID Cards

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idea of a faculty ID system at a November 21, 2006 Student Leadership Team meeting, along with the locker policy and the use of scanners in the mornings, during lunch and at dismissal.

The teacher identification system was met with different responses from the faculty. Some staff members don't mind wearing the ID cards because they believe the policy contributes to a safer environment at Stuyvesant. "I feel safe here, but I know that anything is possible. So, wearing ID cards, [even] if it makes students a little bit safer, I think should be done," said Grossman.

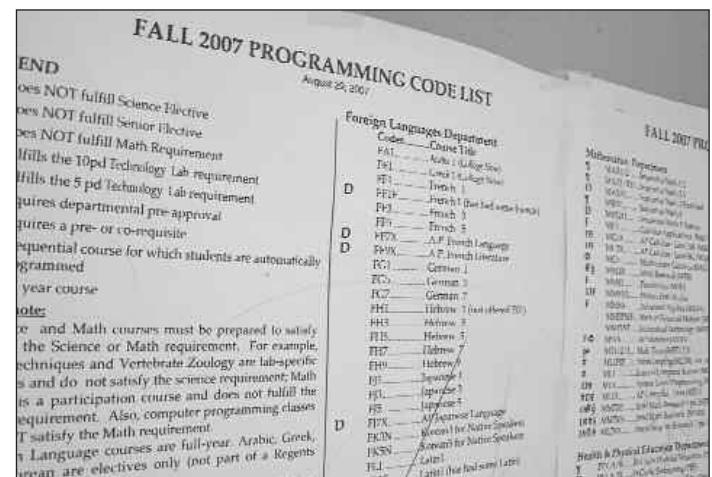
"9/11 was six years ago and because of where we are in Manhattan, it's important to know about our safety," said Assistant Principal Guidance Eleanor Archie. "It's our location that requires this."

"I don't really mind. It's too early to tell," said computer science teacher Ashvin Jaishankar.

Other staff members disagree with the new security measure. "We don't really have a huge staff. Security certainly recognizes us. Are IDs really going to help us at a time of emergency?" said librarian Chris Asch.

"I'm not fine with it, but there can be an adult [here] that shouldn't be here. It's a preventative measure," said math teacher Susan Rubin.

DOE Mandates New Program Codes to Standardize System



The new system of class codes implemented by Department of Education include SG5POG for Oceanography and TGPPGA5 for Graphic Arts Communications.

**By EILEEN CHANG
with additional reporting by
PAULINA KARPIS
and KAITLYN KWAN**

The Department of Education (DOE) required all New York City schools to change their program codes this year to standardize the programming system throughout the city.

"This way, anyone looking at any code in any school would know what course it is," said Assistant Principal Technology Edward Wong, who heads the Programming Office.

"A standardized program code deck allows for reliable data collection. It also allows for consistency across the DOE while allowing for school level flexibility," said DOE Deputy Press Secretary Maibe Gonzalez Fuentes. "Using this code deck, we will know the types of courses being offered in high schools as well as all information related to high school course offerings."

According to Principal Stanley Teitel, this change will facilitate interpreting student transcripts that are sent to colleges during the application process. Previously, Stuyvesant sent legends along with transcripts to help decipher these codes. Legends will be sent to colleges until the Class of 2010 graduates because the program codes currently listed on student transcripts have not been converted to the new system.

Ted O'Neill, Dean of Admissions at the University of Chicago, said the programming code change will not affect the college admissions process. "We don't pay attention to the codes [because] they're different throughout America," he said. "[We examine] course descrip-

tion and course name, not code."

The DOE gave the programming office a 45-page book of guidelines programmers are required to follow.

According to Wong, the book contains "instructions about how to create the new codes," which are longer than the codes previously used by Stuyvesant.

The programming codes that are being required of all high schools have been around since 2004. The first few characters of all codes are standardized across the system while the remaining sets of characters are left to schools to customize as they see fit," said Gonzalez Fuentes.

These guidelines require placing the letter X in the fourth slot of an Advanced Placement course code, instead of the third slot. Many technology codes were also changed. For example, 10th period photography was changed from VRD5 to TQPPDP. The pre-calculus code was changed from ME81 to MM81. In most city high schools, seniors usually take pre-calculus. The M8 indicates that it's a senior class.

Some program codes, including those for foreign language and English, have not been changed.

Assistant Program Chairperson Larry Barth said these new regulations make programming slightly more complicated. However, Barth said, "Like anything new, once you get used to it, it becomes second nature."

Many Stuyvesant students find the programming change cumbersome. The new codes are "too long and unnecessary," said junior Lily Fung.

College Essay Help Coming to Seniors

**By MADDIE BERGIER
and JOAN PARK**

English teacher Jonathan Weil will offer weekly after-school tutoring to help seniors with their college essays, beginning within the next week.

Administrators and the Parents' Association (PA) have been looking for college essay and interview advisers to help students in the college application process.

"A lot of students fall into a hole" when it comes to college essay writing, said college advisor Patricia Cleary, who proposed that the school provide guidance on writing college essays to Assistant Principal Guidance Eleanor Archie earlier last week.

Archie said she spoke with Assistant Principal Eric Grossman about possibly having English teachers help seniors as essay advisers.

On Tuesday, September 18, Weil agreed to help out after school.

"It is really important that the English department is supporting those seniors who are going through the college application process," said Weil.

He said with this after-school program, seniors will have "another set of eyes as they fine-tune these [college] essay."

Weil also teaches Creative Nonfiction, a personal writing class.

Grossman said the English department offers general tutoring, which students can use to get help with their writing. Weil, as an essay adviser, serves a more specific purpose. "Instead of publicizing it as general tutoring, Archie would publicize it as college essay help," said Grossman.

The tutoring will begin as soon as possible. Grossman said

"Their parents aren't native speakers, their peers are too busy and they don't have the funds to get extra help with their essays"
**—Patricia Cleary,
college advisor**

In the past, as well as this year, senior English classes have assigned students to write some form of a college essay as a way to help them in the college application process.

Two years ago, an interview coach came to Stuyvesant to help students with their interviewing skills. Cleary wants to restart that type of workshop.

"Pat Cleary proposed an interviewing workshop and the PA wholeheartedly supports it," said PA Co-President Paola de Kock. "It would reduce the anxiety of college applications," she said. "It's the sensible thing to do."

Students tend to have trou-

ble with the essay portion of the college application process for multiple reasons, according to Cleary. "Their parents aren't native speakers, their peers are too busy and they don't have the funds to get extra help with their essays," she said.

According to Cleary, colleges say "kids are tense and uncomfortable" during interviews.

"You have to sell yourself to colleges. Seniors need a lot of support," said Cleary.

"You want as many people as possible to help you," said senior Anna Fomitchova, who liked the idea of free counsel.

"It would be a helpful resource," said senior Ruth Chan. But Chan was hesitant. "It would depend on how available the advisers would be and how willing they are to help us on an individual basis," she said.

Senior Tim Chang was less enthusiastic. "It makes it much more impersonal in that it takes away from the meaning of a personal essay," said Chang.

"It would be reassuring to hear the feedback of someone with experience when feeling so much pressure and uncertainty," said junior Maria Kuharenko.

Stuyvesant will continue to look for college interview advisers, perhaps looking to other schools as examples.

At Bronx High School of Science, alumni run a mentoring program in which they help current students with their college applications every Friday.

"It's very successful," said the Stuyvesant PA College Committee Co-Chair Florri Levy. She said she has been looking to start a similar program at Stuyvesant.

The tutoring is a "small thing in a larger effort to ensure that students get help with their college essay," Grossman said.

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"[The ID cards] look ugly," she said. "It's unnecessary. Why do we need to be tracked down wherever we go?"

"It'd be really embarrassing. If you take a picture and you don't like it, you'd have to walk around with it," said Junior Dona Ho. "You don't get any privacy."

Members of the Parents' Association (PA) have differing opinions about the potential student ID card system.

"From a parent's point of view, it is a good idea. We are all concerned with where [the students] are," said PA Co-President Leo Yu Wan Lee.

First PA Vice President Larry Sit disagreed. He said, "It's not necessary. [If] ID scanners are not fool-proof [and surveillance cameras] are not fool-proof, then how can IDs be fool-proof?"

"I don't think it's an emergen-

cy now," said PA Co-President Paola de Kock about the potential student identification requirement. "It will be brought up in the next [School Leadership Team] meeting, where it will be reasonably discussed."

"I think about making students safer. Every year schools get hit with violence," said Teitel in justification of his proposal. "It's hard to come up with a policy everybody loves."

Townsend Harris High School in Queens mandates all students to wear ID cards around their necks at all times while in the building. If students don't wear ID cards, they receive demerits. Three demerits warrant a referral, which excludes students from extracurricular activities.

"Nobody really likes wearing them, but you have to," said Townsend Harris senior Priyank Patel said.

Miss Butterfly: Life of an... Opera Singer



Mollie Simon / The Spectator

Junior Francesca diDomenico hones her vocal talents both in and out of school.

By MELISSA CHAN

To most students, the stairwells are a way to get to class. But for junior Francesca diDomenico, they are a rehearsal space.

According to diDomenico, she is the only opera singer at Stuyvesant. She has performed in individual recitals—including one at Steinway Hall—opera concerts, benefit concerts and community outreach concerts at nursing homes.

"She's great for her age," said sophomore Allegra Wiprud, who has sung beside diDomenico in Concert Chorus. "She's got a really nice vibrato, really nice sound of her voice and she's really dedicated to her work."

The young vocalist got her start in art and theater songs, but moved on to opera when she needed a challenge. "I wanted to try singing something that was really hard because I was bored of all the stuff that I was singing," said diDomenico.

It wasn't long before she immersed herself in opera. diDomenico became a member of the New York City Opera's high school program at Lincoln Center and started taking private lessons outside of school.

"We introduced some opera arias as she got into

high school," said voice teacher Jennifer Greene.

"It was really hard, and for the first time, I had to practice outside of lessons," said diDomenico.

diDomenico even gave up six weeks of this summer to attend a prestigious arts program.

The Young Artists Vocal Program of the Boston University Tanglewood Institute (BUTI) is a grueling international music program that trains high school musical artists.

diDomenico was accepted from a pool of 144 applicants for a mere 36 spots. She gave a video-taped audition for which she sang two songs accompanied by a piano.

At the culmination of the program, diDomenico had a final exam or paper for every class. "A lot of people don't think of music as being academic, but there were a lot of classes and we get grades," she said.

Her practice schedule was intensive too. "I would practice until 11 p.m., when curfew was."

Things only get busier for diDomenico when summer ends.

"The deal with my mother is that I can't do opera unless I keep up grades, so I kind of have to balance both," she said, speaking of her commitment to both opera and school.

At Stuyvesant, she is active in a variety of activities including SING!, SPARK, Arista and Concert Chorus. Last year, diDomenico was Soph-Frosh SING! Co-Chorus Director.

"She's a very hard worker," said Greene. "She practices quite often and she's very dedicated to improving and researching the arias that she's studying and making sure she's prepared for her lessons."

Greene isn't the only one with license to critique diDomenico's singing. The opera star reviews her own performances. "I need to work more on gestures because I can vaguely act and sing, but it's really hard for me to gesture and make movements," she said. diDomenico hopes to pursue opera singing as a career.

"She's on the right track and she just needs to keep working very, very hard," said Greene. "She's very resilient in that way and I think that that would help her in pursuing a professional performing career."

"If she really pursues it, she'll go really far," said Wiprud.

diDomenico continues to practice, usually for an hour each day. Once, while practicing in her fourth floor apartment, her doorman heard her from the street. She plans to soundproof her closet, so she can use it as a rehearsal space without disturbing the neighbors.

Hiroshima Survivor and Japanese Photographer Speak of War and Peace

By JOANNA CHEN
and JOHN CONNUCK

As the sixth anniversary of September 11 drew near, students had the opportunity to reflect on the meanings of war and peace. A Hiroshima survivor and a photographer, both from Japan, visited Stuyvesant Monday, September 10, to share their stories in Japanese.

The Japan Society e-mailed Japanese teacher Chie Helinski about the visitors, who were in New York to attend the September 11 memorial services. According to Helinski, they wished to come to Stuyvesant because of the school's close proximity to Ground Zero.

During fifth period, Masahiro Sasaki, a survivor of the World War II bombing of Hiroshima, visited the AP Japanese class to speak about his younger sister, Sadako Sasaki. Sadako developed leukemia due to contamination from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945.

She is known for her efforts in spreading peace and hope by folding over 1,000 paper cranes, continuing to do so until her death on October 25, 1955 at the age of 12. A glass box containing some of Sadako's final cranes was shown to the class.

Multiple books and poems about Sadako's story have been published, including Eleanor Coerr's 1977 non-fiction book, "Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes."

Masahiro Sasaki said although Sadako was in pain, she always tried to reassure the people around her, and put others before herself.

"As for Sadako," he said, "Knowing [that] at the end of your own life, you had the ability still to wrap the suffering of others around your own heart, and hide it [...] You had a compassionate

heart which was always growing. You're convinced of the fact that peace is coming eventually."

Because much of the presentation was in Japanese, the audience was generally limited to students who are learning or speak Japanese, though the event was open to everyone.

"Since [the visitors] spoke everything in Japanese, translating what he said into English made it sound weird and cheesy, but in Japanese it sounded deep," said senior and AP Japanese student Stephanie Lin.

Sasaki also described his experience fleeing toward the river with his family after the bomb set his house and the surrounding area on fire, and described the black rain that fell hours later due to contamination from the bomb.

Students were given time to comment and ask questions at the end of the speech.

Students appreciated Masahiro Sasaki's willingness to share his stories.

"It must have been really tough [for Sasaki] to share [his memories] with everyone. It was a really touching speech, and I don't say that about much," said senior Benjamin Lerner, an AP Japanese student.

"It was very emotional. Students started crying, and the story was very inspiring," Lin said.

After 10th period, all students in Helinski's Japanese classes were invited to attend a workshop hosted by Hirohiko Shoji, a professional photographer from Japan. Shoji founded the World Children Photo Project (WCPP), a nonprofit that aims to teach photography to children around the world.

Through WCPP, Shoji gives disposable cameras to children and asks them to take photos related to the themes of love and peace. Shoji selected some of these photos to feature in his book

"Photos for Peace Taken by Children Around the World," published this year.

Shoji was inspired to start WCPP when he came to New York in 2001 for an assignment to take photos with firefighters in the September 11 rescue effort.

In the introduction to his book, Shoji wrote about his inspiration: "While I was there, a young boy clutching a Stars and Stripes flag looked at my camera and smiled."

Shoji presented the photographs in his book and taught his audience techniques for taking good photos using a disposable camera. Shoji emphasized the connection a photographer makes with the camera as he or she looks closely through the viewfinder at the subject.

He said using a disposable camera, rather than a digital one, requires the photographer to think carefully about the subject before taking the picture.

Students found the workshop to be unique and educational. "I never thought photography would be something I'd be interested in," said Lerner.

"He introduced us to interesting techniques. He connects the spirit aspect with the technical aspect," Lin said.

During the workshop, Shoji gave out disposable cameras to the students, who had two days to take pictures relating to peace. Shoji will develop the pictures in Japan and consider them for publication in his next book or display some of them in an exhibit he hopes to hold in New York City in 2011.

Helinski was pleased to have the visitors speak to her students on the subject of peace.

"The AP kids always studied about war, which inevitably involves peace. I thought it would mesh with the curriculum very nicely," said Helinski.

Chemistry Department Low on Registered AP Teachers

By YARA KASS-GERGI

Only two teachers are licensed to teach Advanced Placement (AP) Chemistry classes this term, down from the four teachers who taught the subject in the 2006-2007 school year.

Chemistry teachers Brian Dibbs and Sushma Arora are each teaching two sections of AP Chemistry, after former chemistry teachers Angela Meeks and Elizabeth Wild left the school. Last school year, each teacher taught one class of AP Chemistry.

Although the department has teachers who are qualified to teach AP Chemistry, only Dibbs and Arora are registered with the College Board, the nonprofit educational organization that runs the AP program.

"AP courses are being standardized around the country," said Dibbs. "The term AP is being tacked on to regular courses to make them seem more sophisticated. Now AP Central requires teachers to be registered to teach AP curriculum." AP Central is the official Web site for teachers involved in the AP program.

This year, the College Board conducted an AP Course Audit, a process through which teachers can gain permission to designate their classes as AP courses. To be approved, teachers must submit their syllabi, which must meet the College Board's academic requirements.

"It was never a problem for AP teachers at Stuyvesant, because we have always gone through this

process," Arora said. "We have teachers like Dr. [Steven] O'Malley, who are qualified to teach, but have not had time to register. We also have three new chemistry teachers who might register as well."

Both Arora and Dibbs said they would like to see more chemistry teachers registered with the College Board.

"I prefer that more teachers are involved in the AP process," Dibbs said. "If one of us [Arora or me] is out sick one day, half of the AP Chemistry students fall behind."

"If an AP teacher chooses to take a sabbatical or retires, then we are back to the same problem," Arora said. "More than four teachers at a time should be registered for AP, just in case."

Arora said that the additional AP class would not strain her workload. "As long as I keep up the pace, I should be fine," she said.

To cover an extra AP class, Dibbs was required to forgo teaching his other science classes. "It's the same amount of periods, but fewer classes," he said. "I feel a little more pressure. It is a little harder because AP is harder, [but] I don't have to learn as many kids' names. So it comes out even."

Arora said that the situation is only temporary and that there should be more chemistry teachers registered with the College Board by next term.

Interim Assistant Principal Chemistry and Physics Scott Thomas declined to comment.

Stuywatch Provides New Outlet for Student Discontent

continued from page 1

users registered on stuywatch and 375 people subscribed to a related Facebook group.

The first few blog posts have been introductory messages stating the purpose of the Web site. Registered users have made 151 posts on the forum, where they are discussing issues such as leaving school premises during free periods, the use of scanners during lunch, the inability to congregate on certain floors, the new locker policy and, according to one post, "a general air of mistrust from the administration with regards to students."

"More than anything else, this is contingent on the support and enthusiasm of the students," the founders said. "We're here to help inform and to stimulate discussion."

They said that stuywatch aimed to be what stuycom.net, another student-run Web site, once was: a place to get news and

discuss issues relevant to the student body.

"Stuycom is dying out," junior Grace Klein said. "This is a good way to unite the school."

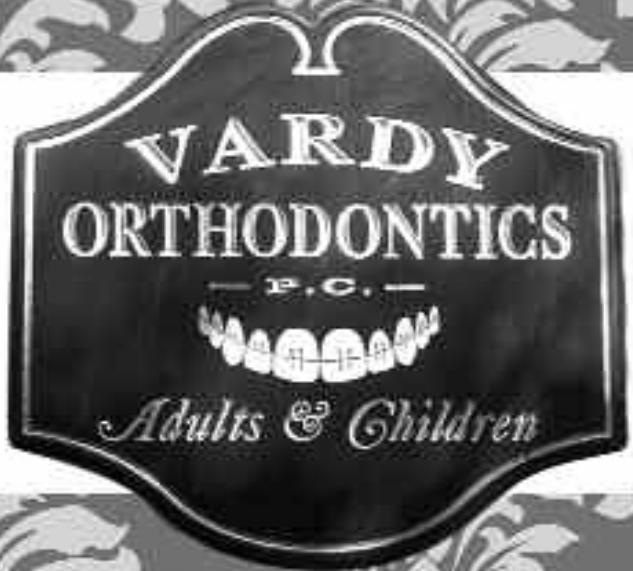
"There was one time when stuycom was a center of fighting for student rights," said senior Scott Ritter, who operates stuycom. "The focus has shifted away, in a sense, from student rights. However, that is still a goal of mine."

Ritter said that he is willing to work with stuywatch. "I wouldn't shy away from it," he said. "We have the same goals."

The founders of stuywatch said they would not resort to encouraging sit-ins or walkouts unless such forms of protest prove necessary.

"Hopefully, we will be able to communicate the views of the student body to the Student Union [...], who can formally enter into negotiations with [Principal Stanley] Teitel about the policies," the founders said.

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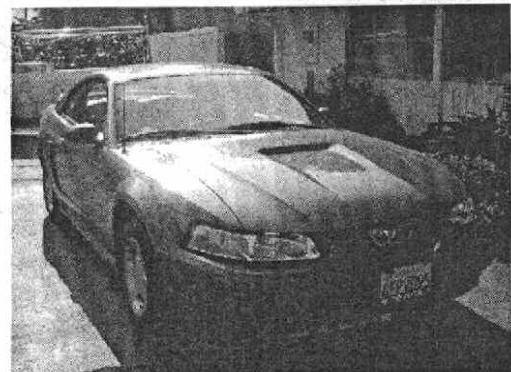
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Editorials and Opinions

STAFF EDITORIAL

It's Time to Restycle

When we were young, Captain Planet, the environmentally-themed superhero, told us to recycle while villains wreaked havoc by polluting and emitting greenhouse gases. Sadly, few Stuyvesant students have taken the captain's message to heart. While the New York City Department of Education legally requires all city schools to run recycling programs and to educate students about their importance, Stuyvesant fails to meet these standards.

The school custodians currently gather recycled papers and bottles from bins by the escalators, and place them on the street for city sanitation department collection. Classroom recycling bins, on the other hand, are simply emptied into the garbage. Custodians don't recycle the contents of these bins because they are often filled with non-recyclable items such as discarded apple cores and candy wrappers. Students are reluctant to make the effort to properly dispose waste when recycling bins are only being used as slightly more colorful garbage cans.

To address this, the administration needs to provide clearly labeled recycling and garbage bins—one of each—in every classroom, and instruct teachers to encourage recycling in their classrooms.

But classroom "trash" can only be recycled if we, the students, put our potentially recyclable refuse where it belongs. Especially at a school where many claim to be environmentally conscious, it is puzzling that we do so little to curb our

waste.

We also need an organized way to move recycled materials from the classroom bins to where they are collected outside the building. Ideally, the administration would arrange to do so, but the task is too large for the existing custodial staff. Only two years ago, Stuyvesant was home to the reSTUYclers, a group of students who fulfilled this role. The organization has since disbanded. But our school has over 3,000 potential reSTUYclers if every student decides to help.

To get things started, Arista, Stuyvesant's chapter of the national honors society, can use their existing network of student volunteers and motivate members to bring recycled materials outside by promising them Arista Credits. Key Club and other service clubs could take similar initiatives.

We can even take it a step further. Recycling is great, but it would help most if there were less waste in the first place. The administration can spread awareness by incorporating the importance of recycling and conservation, as an act of personal and social responsibility, into the school's health curriculum. Teachers can encourage paper conservation measures, such as printing double-sided, or single-spacing when appropriate.

Though we've grown up, Captain Planet's words still ring true: "Think the planet's problems are too big for you to make a difference? Never underestimate your own powers!"

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RE: The Admissions Complication

Regarding your article on "Parents Using Incentives to Get Kids Into Stuy" (September 4, 2007), you did not offer any explanation as to why parents may be pushing their kids to do well on the New York City Specialized High School Admission Test (SSHSAT). As a parent of two Stuyvesant students, I would like to offer an explanation that is true for at least some parents, including myself.

Where we live in Manhattan, there is no local or zoned high school that kids can automatically attend as there used to be in generations past. Contrary to your report, the ninth grade admissions process has changed drastically in the last 30 years. For the non-specialized high schools—most of which are small and without much variety

in class offerings and activities, and/or so new that it is impossible to tell whether or not they would be adequate to meet our children's needs—parents are directed to make a list of 12 schools in order to be guaranteed admission to one.

None of the parents I know could find 12 schools to put on their lists. We listed 5-6 schools. Some parents I know listed only 1-3 schools. Accordingly, there could be no guarantee, or safety school, if one's child was not offered a seat from this list.

Not surprisingly, my two children were not offered seats in any of the non-specialized high schools in the first round. There is also a second round of selection, but the pickings for the seats in the schools on our lists would have been even slimmer by that time. Unless parents

choose to move out of the city or send their kids to private schools, there is no other option except to participate in this grueling ninth grade admissions process.

We, like many other parents we know, love this city and have made a conscious choice to raise our children here. From the time our children entered kindergarten, we have tried to strengthen the public schools in every way possible to ensure that all children get the excellent education that they deserve.

But just in case kids are thinking that parents push their kids to excel on the SSHSAT to get into an elite college, for some parents, it is not about college—it is about getting into ninth grade.

— Diane Goldstein Temkin

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The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



"The Pulse
of the
Student
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345 Chambers Street
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The Spectator

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FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 1, it was misstated that 46 students took health over the summer at Stuyvesant. Around 100 students from across the city took advantage of that opportunity, 46 of which were Stuyvesant students.
- "A Letter to the Incoming Class" incorrectly referred to incoming Stuyvesant students as the Class of 2012. Incoming freshmen comprise the Class of 2011 and incoming sophomores comprise the Class of 2010. In addition, kickboxing class is offered only to seniors, not juniors.

Opinions

Of Choirs and Changes



Although with each year we must adjust to fit the fresh sound brought by newcomers, we should be able to keep touches of the old.

By VALERIYA TSITRON

The sixth period end bell rings. You're walking down the music hallway and you're trampled. The chorus has started filling out, and you're surrounded by big, buff basses and high-voiced sopranos chatting about the new piece they've just sight-read to death. Soon, they've left a large mound of music everywhere, but they're gone. Hang around for too long, though, and you'll be crushed by the incoming eighth period chorus.

Although both Stuyvesant choruses now include over 100 members, the sixth period Concert Chorus was always meant to be bigger, just as the eighth period was meant to be a chamber choir, a smaller ensemble that shouldn't exceed 50 people. Then, as the years went by, the number got steadily larger.

But this isn't the only change.

The Concert Chorus once

sang more patriotic and gospel songs, while the Chamber Choir (now known as the Concert Choir) sang pieces from the Baroque and Renaissance period. Now, the two styles are blending into one. In the Concert Choir, pieces like "My Heart Will Go On" and "Fly Me to the Moon" replace classics like "Ah Dolente Partita" and "Lamentations of Jeremiah."

Because of this shift, we're losing something special. It would be great to have a traditional chamber choir in the music program again, but according to AP Music, Fine Arts and Technology Dr. Raymond Wheeler, budgeting won't let us hire a new teacher or expand the instructors' already full schedules.

That's a shame. With each new generation of choristers, the knowledge of the classical pieces that were once sung is quickly fading. Sadly, this seems to be a trend at Stuyvesant High School. Many students don't know about the changes that

have taken place here because the memory dies out with each outgoing class.

Change isn't always a bad thing. After all, Stuy was once an all-boys school. But lately, change has often meant less autonomy for the students. Before the middle of last year, kids walked around listening to iPods in the hallways. Phones were allowed out after 4:30 p.m. We could leave the building during free periods. SING!, a supposedly completely student-run competition between the grades is now being censored. Is our Golden Age of Stuy student sovereignty over?

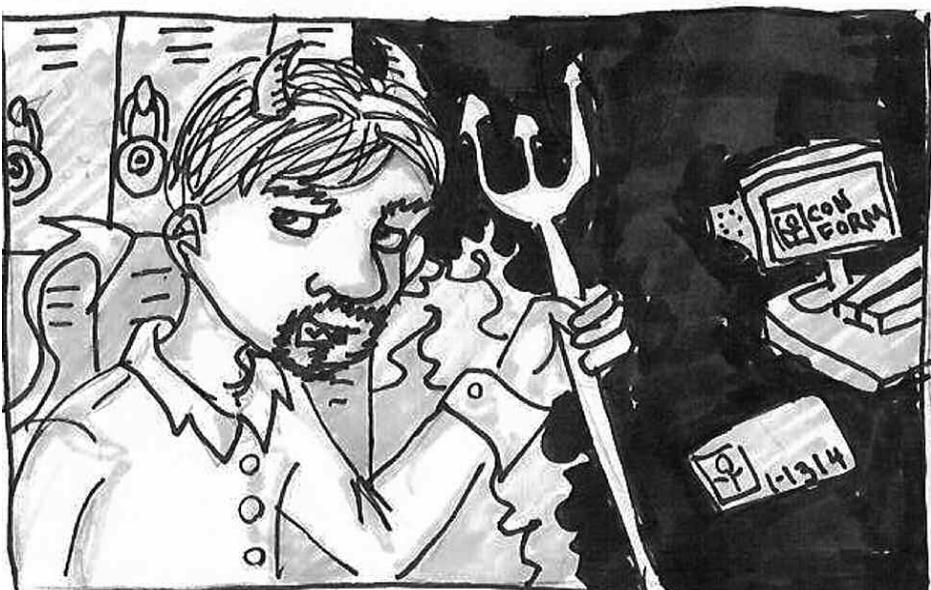
Maybe we shouldn't give up hope. Although with each year we must adjust to fit the fresh sound brought by newcomers, we should be able to keep touches of the old. In Concert Choir, our teacher recently announced that we would be doing a Bach piece for the upcoming holiday concert. For the greater student body, however, the return of many student freedoms will take more than a little whining and hoping.

Stuy policies and practices can evolve so that we still preserve what once made our school so unique. The Student Union (SU) is our chance to represent ourselves on these issues. Unfortunately, when students are called forward to join, few volunteer. Last year, only two pairs of running mates ran for Junior Caucus, rendering the primaries useless.

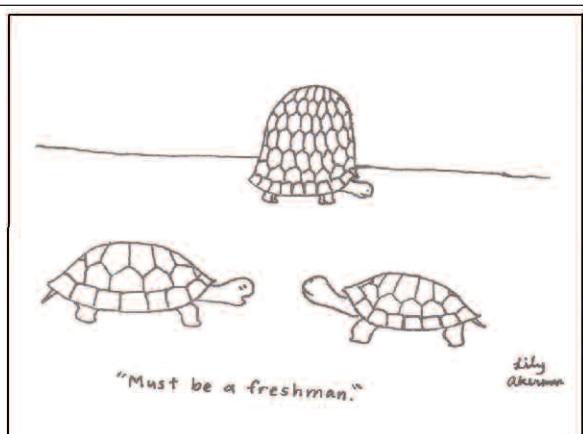
The student body can't expect a stand against the administration if only a select few care to involve themselves in their own government. And if only a few care now, in the years to come, few may remember what Stuy once was.

OP-ART

Teitel's "Trident" by Ava Hecht



OP-ART



The Information Session



Jacob Newman / The Spectator

By MARK CHIUSANO

It's not enough that we have to take SATs. It's not enough that we are forced to categorize our extracurricular activities. We are required to do more than actually apply to a college: We have to sit through information sessions as well.

The information session is an incredible phenomenon that occurs twice daily, five days a week in every mediocre to stellar college in the country. Entombed in air-conditioned rooms, fidgeting on too-plush upholstery, parents and students listen dutifully to the lecturing, cajoling and preaching of former English majors who have decided to take on that most dubious of monikers, Admissions Director.

My dad insists that each college has its own "nuances" that are revealed only at information sessions. There, the stars align and the waters part; the college speaks to you directly.

I've attended too many of these sessions. The nuances have long been lost on me. If you didn't get to an information session this summer, here's what you missed.

"We look at each applicant holistically."

"Let's try to save admissions and financial aid for the last 15 minutes."

"We're a small college with the opportunities offered by a large university."

"We're a large university offering the intimacy of a small college."

"Our faculty-student ratio is 10:1."

"It's 5:1."

"4:1."

"Only full professors teach our courses."

"All of our professors teach undergraduates."

"90 percent of our classes are capped at 30 students."

"90 percent of the game is half mental."

"Even our large classes are broken up into small groups called discussion sessions."

"Our student body is incredibly diverse."

"We have representatives from 15 countries and all 50 states except for Nebraska."

"We even found this great Iroquois kid from Massapequa who lettered in football and plays the French horn."

"Housing is guaranteed for three years, and almost any senior who wants to can find a room on campus."

"We have 21 varsity teams, 10 for each gender, not including football. And we have club and intramural sports for the less athletically endowed."

"Our dorms are being renovated as we speak."

"In fact, it seems that we renovate our dorms every two to three years."

"Our cafeteria food is consistently ranked in the top 10 in the country."

"Our major focus is undergraduate education."

"If you're here for the graduate session, our major focus is graduate education."

"Our alumni network is the largest in the galaxy."

"We have wireless Internet access across the entire campus."

"Our school was founded at the same time as the proclamation of 1763."

"George Washington held a war council in what is now our administrative office building."

"Our crew team has rowed to Antarctica and back."

"[Insert College] is located in a very safe neighborhood surrounded by bitter locals who got rejected from [Insert College]."

"With respect to Advanced Placement classes, we advise you to take the most challenging courses and still get 100."

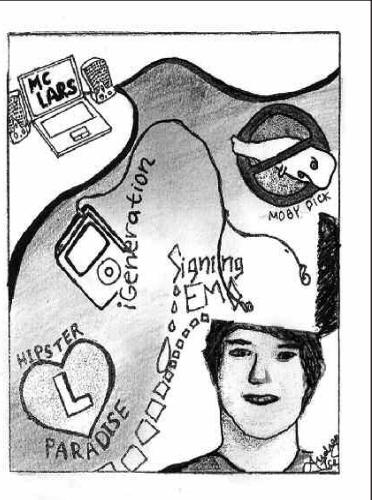
"It may become difficult to differentiate between colleges."

"Good luck in the admissions process. Remember, we're here to help."

Arts & Entertainment

Unearthed from the Slush Pile

Download This Album: Nerdcore Graduates



By SAM GERSTENZANG

When you think of a stereotypical "nerd," you probably don't think of someone like MC Lars. MC Lars is the self-proclaimed creator of "post-punk laptop rap." The Stanford graduate's 2006 release, "The Graduate," is perhaps the most prominent example of the nerdcore genre.

The term nerdcore was first used by MC Frontalot in his 2000 single "Nerdcore Hip-hop." A primarily white subgenre of hip-hop, nerdcore focuses on pop culture and is self-produced by laptop-swinging, self-taught geeks. The genre often contains obscure references to science fiction television shows and computer programming languages.

In "The Graduate," MC Lars raps not only about Star Wars and the history of hip-hop, but also about the impact of the Internet, media and current events on the generation that grew up using the Internet, the "iGeneration," which is the title of his 2005 single ("No Vietnam for us, yo, Iraq, it's on").

Throughout the CD, MC Lars's musical talent is evident in his

laugh-out-loud, lyrical wit. "Ahab" is a foot-stomping synopsis of the classic novel "Moby Dick" ("Peg leg, sperm whale, jaw bone, what!"), and "Space Game" alludes to both sci-fi movies and postmodern art ("I broke through the carbonite, that's how I got free / Jabba, back off, because there's no stopping me"). "Internet Relationships (Are Not Real Relationships)" is another gut-buster, doubling as a warning to the virtually promiscuous.

The CD also features addictive dance songs and memorable lyrics. "Download This Song," a tune lamenting a twisted music industry ("Hey Mr. Record Man / The joke's on you / Running your label / Like it was 1992"), is so catchy that it was 29th on the Australian Recording Industry Association's charts, an impressive feat for nerdcore.

"The Graduate" both criticizes and reveres the rap, hip-hop and punk genres. In "Generic Crunk Rap," for example, MC Lars disapproves of what he believes is an oversimplified and stereotypical message presented in modern rap ("Phrase about my gun, rhyme about my loot / Phrase about these haters I sometimes have to shoot").

At the same time, "21 Concepts," a light-hearted parody of Jay-Z's 2004 single "99 Problems," praises Jay-Z for being lenient with remixes or "mashups" of his own work (an art form similar to nerdcore in that both sample other artists' songs).

Even if you miss one or two of the references to Star Trek or to the 1937 bombing of Guernica, "The Graduate" definitely deserves a place on your iPod.

Visit stuyspectator.com to listen to samples from "The Graduate" and more.

4. Jazz up your note-taking experience with the **Mead Five Star Sound Binder**. Starting at around \$13.99, this product boasts a 3.5-millimeter auxiliary input jack for plugging in any MP3 player to play music through its integrated speakers. With only two tiny speakers, the binder's sound is mediocre, but more than adequate for the student who wants to share his music with a study group during a review session.

Should any other students have the same product, you can link the binders together and play music from one MP3 player. The 1.5-inch binder also has slots for pens and an MP3 player or cell phone, and requires four AAA batteries. It comes in color combinations of black with red, pink, blue or black.

3. If you need to transfer files among many computers, the **SanDisk Cruzer Micro USB flash drive** is for you. At \$39.99, this flash drive is a must-have for any Stuyvesant student. The drive boasts 4 GB of storage in a device the size of a small eraser, but memory is not its only asset. It can also store and run programs that many students use both for school and leisure directly from the drive. You no longer have to waste time installing programs onto the computer you are borrowing—just load them up from the flash drive itself.

Enabling you to carry your music, photos, videos, programs and school work with you everywhere, this little device with large capabilities will be a life saver for many, especially during those

Stacy Wang: Cheerleader, Math Prodigy and Beauty Queen



Courtesy of Miss Chinese 2007

Stacy Wang ('07) was crowned Miss New York Chinese 2007 on Sunday, August 5.

By JOANNA CHEN and JANE YANG

Among hundreds of New York City's Chinese girls, Stacy Wang ('07) has become the pride of a community of thousands. Watched by a populous Chinese audience along the East Coast, the Miss New York Chinese Beauty Pageant is a symbol of pride as well as of glamour and glitz.

Wang left her hometown in Harbin, China at the tender age of 11 and followed her parents to Bayside, Queens. Upon entering Stuyvesant, she immediately became immersed in extracurricular activities—she was a cheerleader, dancer in SING!, president of the Asian Americans for Social Activism club and chairperson of the American Red Cross Queens chapter.

Math teacher Dr. Sixiong Chen, who taught Wang, recalls her penchant for higher-level math. "She was quite good and a hard-working student," he said. By the end of her junior year, Wang had already completed the Multivariable Calculus course.

Other members of the staff, such as former math teacher Tim Novikoff, were surprised to learn of Wang's cheerleading career because of her quiet disposition.

Despite a seemingly full schedule, Wang began training for her first pageant during her senior year. She learned how to walk, talk and dance on a stage while sporting three-and-a-half-inch heels.

Wang had been preparing for her turn in the

spotlight her entire life. In China, she hosted her school's junior Olympics, and won multiple awards in lang song, reading aloud with expression. At the age of nine, she started studying ballet and traditional Chinese dance. Once in America, Wang learned the art of Latin dance.

During the preliminary round of the competition on June 9, 2007, contestants had to do one-minute introductions, model swimsuits, perform a talent for thirty seconds and answer basic questions, all for a coveted spot among the 13 finalists. A lot was at stake, but the contestants were amicable. "After a week, we got a lot more familiar with each other," said Wang. "We ate lunch together every day. It didn't even feel like a competition."

The day after her prom, Wang discovered that out of 50 contenders in the preliminary round, she was chosen as the sixth finalist to advance. The group of 13 finalists stayed at Mohegan Sun, a casino-resort in Connecticut. There, the girls were given star treatment as they shot a movie trailer. Wang acted out a scene from the Hong Kong drama series "Heart of Greed," opposite Hong Kong actor Moses Chan.

The final contest was for the title and a cash prize of \$7,000, as well as a diamond necklace worth \$3,500. Wang modeled her flowing, side-strapped, light pink evening gown with her hair in long curls and performed a snake dance, which incorporated elements of ballet and Chinese and Latin dance, for the talent portion.

Her talent and grace impressed, and after being announced the winner, Wang struggled through the crowd in search of her mother to see the expression on her mother's face. None of the other girls congratulated her.

But Wang has garnered much praise from her friends and former teachers at Stuyvesant. "It was really cool that she won. I saw her face on all the major Chinese newspapers, plus the New York Times. I even saw her on Chinese TV. She is sort of like a local celebrity now," said Sofie Huang ('07), a friend of Wang's.

Wang now attends Carnegie Mellon University and majors in business. Her duties as Miss New York Chinese include attending locally sponsored events and participating in the 2008 International Chinese Pageant in Hong Kong. The international pageant has been known to spawn famous Chinese stars, including the likes of actress Michelle Ye. If she does well at the pageant, Wang plans to enter the entertainment industry and fulfill her dreams of becoming a television hostess.

Math teacher Susan Rubin said, "It's wonderful [Wang] has all those positive attributes—beauty and academics—and she can present herself well." Clearly, the judges agreed.

The 2008 Stuyvesant Gadget Survival Kit

iPrepared



By FARDEEN CHOWDHURY

For some, purchasing back-to-school supplies is the highlight of September. Many enjoy investing in a season's worth of academic necessities. Whether the following supplies will help you study is debatable, but they are far more exciting than a 10-pack of single-subject notebooks.

4. Jazz up your note-taking experience with the **Mead Five Star Sound Binder**. Starting at around \$13.99, this product boasts a 3.5-millimeter auxiliary input jack for plugging in any MP3 player to play music through its integrated speakers. With only two tiny speakers, the binder's sound is mediocre, but more than adequate for the student who wants to share his music with a study group during a review session.

Should any other students have the same product, you can link the binders together and play music from one MP3 player. The 1.5-inch binder also has slots for pens and an MP3 player or cell phone, and requires four AAA batteries. It comes in color combinations of black with red, pink, blue or black.

3. If you need to transfer files among many computers, the **SanDisk Cruzer Micro USB flash drive** is for you. At \$39.99, this flash drive is a must-have for any Stuyvesant student. The drive boasts 4 GB of storage in a device the size of a small eraser, but memory is not its only asset. It can also store and run programs that many students use both for school and leisure directly from the drive. You no longer have to waste time installing programs onto the computer you are borrowing—just load them up from the flash drive itself.

Enabling you to carry your music, photos, videos, programs and school work with you everywhere, this little device with large capabilities will be a life saver for many, especially during those

nights when your printer "runs out of ink."

2. If you're strapped for cash but need an MP3, look no further than Apple. For the price of \$129.99 for 4 GB and \$169.99 for 8 GB, a **refurbished iPod Nano** is a fantastic option for those who desire an MP3 player at a cost lower than that of the original, \$199.99. Apple's simple interface makes its products easy to use, and its huge accessory industry will allow you to personalize the Nano however you want.

A refurbished product is one that has been sent to the factory to be inspected and is being resold to the public. Only products that pass the inspection are repaired. Along with a warranty, the resulting like-new product is packaged with everything that its new counterpart comes with.

Should anything go wrong, you can always exchange it. But these refurbished products sell quick, since the new family of iPods has resulted in significant price cuts in the previous generations. Apple no longer sells refurbished iPod Videos because they are completely sold out, but should you desire one, look to an authorized iPod reseller, such as J&R or CompUSA. The larger the retailer, the more of a product it should have in stock.

1. The absolute must-have product for the new 2008 school year is the **Canon Powershot SD 1000**. Capture all the images you want with this small, 7.1-megapixel camera, which uses SD memory cards cheaper than their media storage

counterparts. The camera has most, if not all, the features a student needs to capture those important moments. One important feature the camera lacks is optical image stabilization, which clarifies shaky images. Since the camera is made by Canon, however, you do get the latest Digic III chip, which has the ability to track the faces of those whom you take pictures of.

For example, if you are taking a snapshot of all your friends, each and every one of them will have a green box around his or her head. Should your friends move around, the box will track their movements, making sure you capture their smile every time with the utmost clarity and sharpness. At \$200 to \$220, this compact camera is a fantastic deal for its price, features and image quality.

The Mead Five Star Sound Binder can be purchased at Office Max or Staples.

The SanDisk Flash Drive can be purchased at J&R, MicroCenter or CompUSA.

The iPod can be purchased at any authorized reseller, such as J&R, CompUSA or online at apple.com.

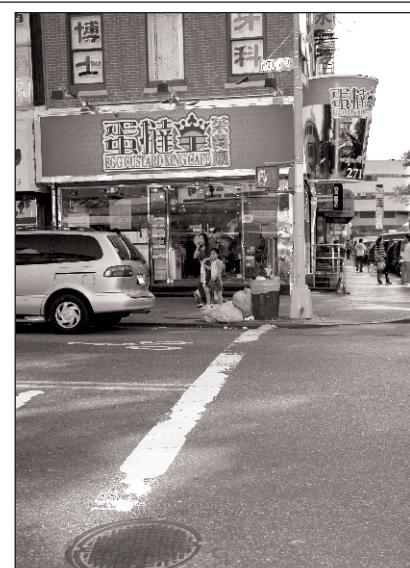
The Canon Powershot SD 1000 can be purchased at Best Buy, B&H or J&R.

Arts & Entertainment

Cafés Beyond Starbucks

By ALAN SAGE

Before Starbucks, cafés used to be places where you could watch the world rush by through the window, shrouded in the warm mist of a cup of coffee. Here are places that can offer you a place to relax and enjoy life—and won't kick you out the second your cup is empty.



Diane Yee / The Spectator

Egg Custard King Café

Egg Custard King Café offers many Chinese delicacies. Though most Chinatown bakeries are packed 24/7, this café has a larger seating area, allowing customers to truly enjoy the store's specialty: the egg custard tart.

"The café has far better bubble tea and sesame balls than anywhere else in Chinatown," said Elena Pearson, who works above the café as a tutor. Her students often drop by the café after a tutoring session to recuperate with bubble tea, which comes with "generous bubble servings," said Pearson.

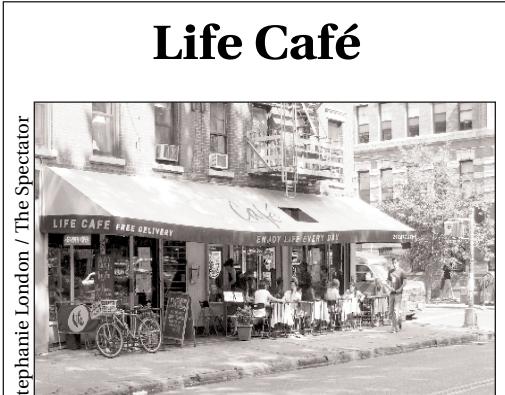
Egg Custard King Café sells both the original custard tart and tarts with a variety of different flavors, including honeydew, almond and banana. The variations are perfect for egg custard

connoisseurs looking for something new, though the honeydew custard tastes as artificial as its green hue looks.

The original custard tart is the tastiest by far. Its flakier crust and creamy texture cannot be beat. The \$5.75 lunch/dinner special, Hong Kong-style baked ziti, is also recommended for its unique combination of Cantonese spices and Italian cooking.

Despite the café's traditional Chinese-bakery décor of simple metal furniture, the place provides a wonderful view of the park across the street.

*Egg Custard King Café
271 Grand St (at Forsyth St)
(212) 226-8882*



Stephanie London / The Spectator

Life Café

A feeling of mysterious melancholy surrounds Life Café. Owners Kathleen and David Kirkpatrick opened the shop in the 1980s, choosing to conceal the deteriorating storefront of the former antique store with old Life magazines.

Life Café gradually transformed into a refuge for artists. The café became a place for listening to music and writers, chatting with other artists and writing poetry. In the '80s, playwright Jonathan Larson wrote some of his Pulitzer Prize-winning rock musical "Rent" here.

Today, the café's walls are the canvases for largely unknown outsider artist John Sunderland's chalk drawings (outsider art is raw, from the soul and outside of the mainstream). The shop also offers Wi-Fi free of cost to customers.

The café serves traditional American fare and the occasional Mexican dish, such as a quesadilla filled with caramelized onion and sautéed mushroom (\$6.50), and Pan-Asian dish, such as organic tofu (\$2.25). There is also a large vegan selection ranging from three-bean vegan chili (\$3.25) to sautéed seitan (a beef substitute made of wheat gluten) with chickpeas and spinach (\$14). Most dishes are relatively inexpensive, but there is an \$8 minimum charge per person.

Though the Life Café no longer hosts music or art shows, it still has the same bohemian atmosphere, perfect for artists looking for some inspiration.

*Life Café
343 E. 10th St (at Ave B)
(212) 477-8791
www.lifecafenyc.com*

Veniero's

Veniero's boasts a 113-year history and a dazzling window display of cakes and pastries. The long, winding line in the take-out area is intimidating, but in the café area, the waiting time in the afternoon is practically nonexistent.

The store has a 1950s ambience. There are golden lamps and beautiful engravings on every wall. Endless mirrors add to the café's romantic aura.

"It's a great place for first dates," said Irene Hwang, a frequenter of Veniero's. "It's airy and comfortable, yet also very intimate."

Though you can't go wrong with any pastry at Veniero's, the Italian Cheesecake (\$3.25), crafted with fluffy ricotta cheese, is particularly scrumptious. The Baba Rum (\$2.10), a small cake soaked in rum, is also a must-have.



Stephanie London / The Spectator

Robert Zeriloi, the Daytime Overseer of Operations, said Veniero's is "a great place for kids to come and have a drink." It has everything you need in a café: quality food, good value, friendly service, free Wi-Fi and spaciousness.

Veniero's is somewhat hard to reach by subway and the waiting time for take-out is lengthy, but the excellent pastries and elegant atmosphere compensate.

*Veniero's
342 E. 11th St (at 1st Ave)
(212) 674-7070
www.venierospastry.com/cafe.html*

Columbus Bakery

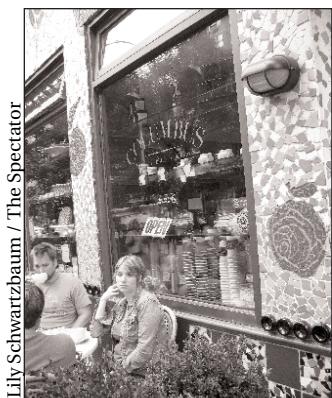
"We'll never frown upon someone buying one cup of coffee and sitting here all day," said Bianca Almonte, manager of Columbus Bakery.

With treats like the blackout cookie (\$2), which combines creamy dark chocolate and sugary white powder, and the sweet and delicate oatmeal-raisin cookie (\$2), you are sure to buy more than just a beverage.

"I really like the high ceiling since it gives it a feeling of great airiness," said first-time customer Alex Hickox, who was sipping an iced tea and working on his laptop.

While the back area of Columbus Bakery feels spacious, the front feels like a "cozy kitchen or a bakery from the past," said Stuyvesant sophomore Hayward Leach.

Columbus Bakery opened in 1995, and has since become like home for Upper West Side moms who drop their kids off at nearby P.S. 9. The bakery is also a great place to sit with friends over pastries in the evening, as dim candles create a romantic quietness.



Lily Schwartzbaum / The Spectator

Almonte said the staff "relies on teamwork and respect, and this creates a friendly atmosphere in the café."

"Bring a laptop, read or bring all your friends, as long as you like the food," said Almonte. With all the tasty pastries Columbus Bakery has to offer, it's not hard to fulfill this condition.

*Columbus Bakery
474 Columbus Ave
(at 83rd Street)
(212) 724-6880
www.arkrestaurants.com*

Flowers Café



Diane Yee / The Spectator

The hippie-themed Flowers Café seems to have it all: super-friendly service, colorful décor, quirky dishware. The shop maintains the air of a friendly neighborhood café—old ladies sit on the bench outside and gossip over coffee.

William and Ronda Frasier, a husband-and-wife team, started up Flowers Café two years ago. William Frasier is "a hippie-wannabe," said clerk Stephanie Guzman.

The café feels just like a home on the Lower East Side. It is warm, energetic and filled with fresh rye bread for sandwiches.

"The atmosphere is definitely very intimate and we're even on a name-to-name basis with many of our customers," said cashier Megan Villacorta. "A lot of people will just come in to say hi."

Perhaps Flowers Café is most enticing because of its

menu. The Wood Stock Sandwich (\$6.95) contains savory roast beef, horseradish and cheddar cheese, and the Downtown Salad (\$7.95) mixes mandarin orange, chow mein, chicken and romaine lettuce. The café also offers a variety of baked desserts, all for under \$5.50, and cups of soup for \$3.50.

"The people are really nice here," said customer Sharon Joseph. "I can be sure every-

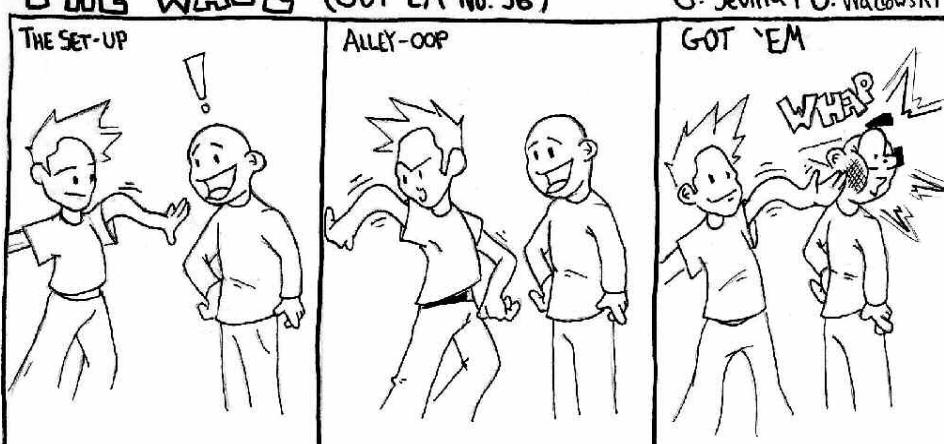
thing I eat here is healthy and not fried." Her personal recommendation is the tuna melt (\$4.75), which is one of the café's "Oldies but Goodies."

Flowers Café is a great place to watch people in the morning and have a cup of the shop's popular raspberry mocha cappuccino (\$3.50).

*Flowers Café
355 Grand St (at Essex St)
(212) 777-8785*

THE WAVE (GOT 'EM No. 36)

G. Sevilla / B. Wadowski



Tropfest Brings a Splash of Short Films

By JAMES DENNIN
and IVANA NG

This year's Tribeca Film Festival (TFF) saw the rise of ticket prices to \$12 from \$18 and the premieres of chick flicks like "Lucky You" and blockbusters like "Spiderman 3."

For anyone who missed Spidey's web-slinging adventures or just didn't want to shell out so much money, the free short films festival Tropfest@Tribeca offers a night of music and cinema this Sunday, September 23 at the World

Financial Center.

An import from Sydney, Australia, the annual short film festival debuted at last year's Tribeca Film Festival with six new short films and another six from Australia's festival. The great turnout prompted Tribeca Enterprises to make Tropfest a separate event.

Of the 16 films being screened this Sunday, New York-based filmmakers made 11. The festival also features films from Australia, England and Norway.

In the tradition of the

Australian Tropfest, each short film incorporates the Tropfest Signature Item (TSI). This year the TSI is a "slice," and filmmakers interpreted this theme both literally—four films feature pizzerias prominently—and figuratively ("slices of life").

This year's Tropfest also features live musical performances. Film screenings begin at 8 p.m., but DJ Shorty will be dropping some beats starting at 5 p.m. He will be joined by Haunt, an alt-country act, and Australian indie rockers Second Dan.

Arts & Entertainment

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- 1) Wed 6-9pm: English Reading & Writing
- 2) Fri 6-9pm: English Reading & Writing
- 3) Sat 10am-2pm (3 sections):
 English Reading & Writing (3 hrs) + Math (1 hr)
- 4) Sat 3-7pm (3 sections):
 English Reading & Writing (3 hrs) + Math (1 hr)
- 5) Saturday 10am-2pm & 3-7pm: Includes advanced classes for those who scored over 2000 on the SAT
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SAT II (prep. for May & June 2008 tests) - 2nd week of October ~ April 2008 (7 months)

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- 2) Chemistry: Sat 6-8pm (total 56 hrs)
- 3) Physics: Sat 8-10am (total 56 hrs)
- 4) Math (Pre-Calculus & Math Level II):
 Fri 7-9pm (total 56 hrs)
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Olympiad

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- 3) Chemistry Olympiad 1:1 tutoring available
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The Spectator Welcomes Its New Crossword Constructor

L
 N A T A N
 S T

A self-proclaimed cruciverbalist (a person skilled in creating and solving crosswords)—who also plays the drums and scuba dives—Last started his love affair with words only about a year ago.

Soon enough, Last became the fifth youngest person, according to New York Times Crossword Editor Will Shortz, to have an original crossword published in Times, in the Tuesday, July 17, 2007 issue.

Last became interested in words because of his “puzzling mind.” “I love reading things like Shakespeare now and seeing the word play,” he said.

He challenges himself each time he creates a new crossword, and has a little fun at the same time. “I’ve kind of reverted back to the five-year-old kid in me that thinks, you know, changing a word by one letter makes it absolutely hilarious,” he said.

Have ideas for a crossword? Want to write your own? If you are interested, please send your own crossword or ideas to Natan Last at comments@stuyspectator.com

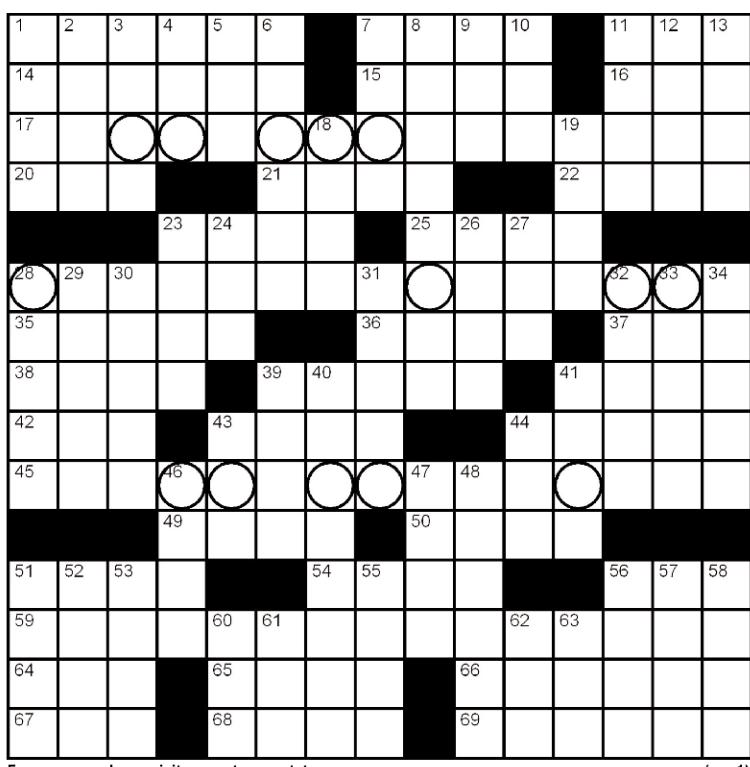
Crossword 101 | By Natan Last

ACROSS

- 1 Prepare for the underworld, say
- 7 Up for the job
- 11 Nickname preceder
- 14 The ___ Dolls
- 15 Call for
- 16 North Korean leader Jong-II
- 17 Be immortalized
- 20 Bleeker and Mac-Dougal, for short
- 21 "Dies ___"
- 22 Signs, slangily
- 23 Art ___
- 25 Female equivalent of Sir
- 28 Wife of Louis XVI that was executed at the height of the French Revolution
- 35 Reputation
- 36 "Give it ___"
- 37 He lives at the Burrow
- 38 Overlook

DOWN

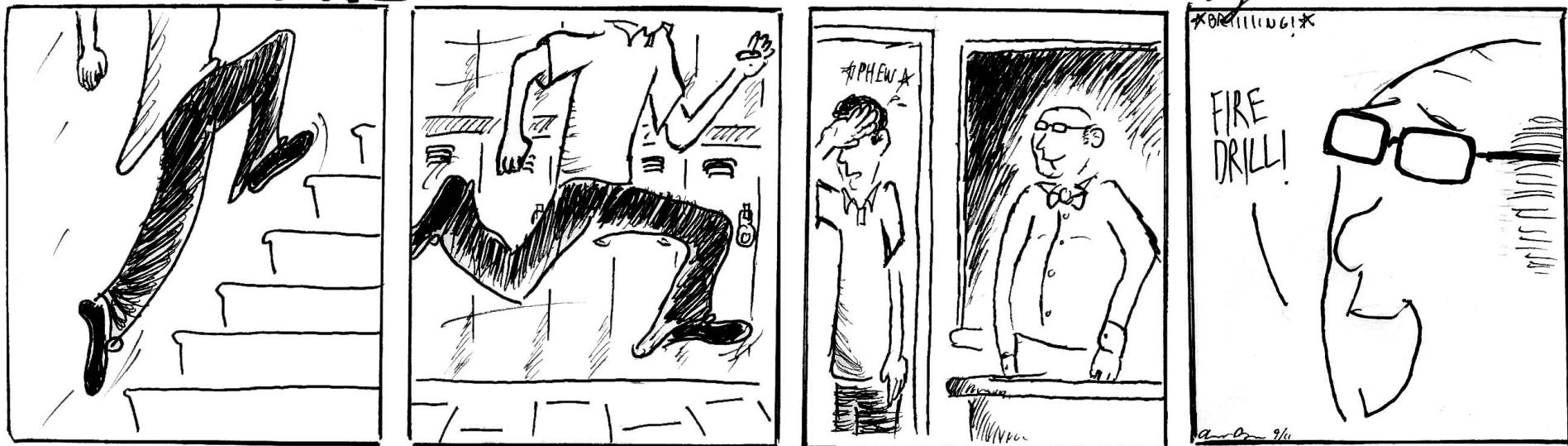
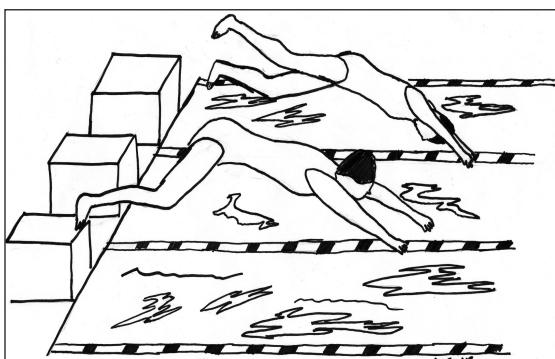
- 39 Butterfly relatives
- 41 Just dandy
- 42 Suffix with differ
- 43 Cover with concrete
- 44 It beats rock
- 45 Follow suit, as per an old saying
- 46 Lion's den
- 47 50 Goals
- 51 "¿Cómo ___ Ud.?"
- 54 Metropolis
- 56 Many a Keats poem
- 59 What the names spelled out by the circled letters have in common
- 64 When doubled, a music hall dance
- 65 "Tickle Me" toy
- 66 Uncle Sam has a white one
- 67 Bases: Abbr.
- 68 Iceman and Colossus
- 69 Gold bars
- 1 They might be over easy
- 2 Irrelevant, as a point
- 3 Physiques
- 4 Fourth word of the "Star Wars" crawl
- 5 Like an ideal ERA
- 6 "Friends" character that categorizes her towels in eleven ways
- 7 Vronsky's lover, in literature
- 8 Monstrous entity
- 9 Hula hoop?
- 10 Sullivan et. al.
- 11 "Konvicted" artist
- 12 Noted role for Shatner
- 13 Robert's wife on "Everybody Loves Raymond," and others
- 18 Its symbol is Fe
- 19 1973 Pink Floyd hit
- 23 Uses a shovel
- 24 Shoe size spec
- 26 Broadcasts
- 27 Whichever
- 28 Played charades
- 29 Kind of acid
- 30 Bob Marley, for one
- 31 Spud
- 32 Excursions
- 33 In shape
- 34 First Spanish month
- 39 When doubled, a seafood dish
- 40 Conquered
- 41 Aficionados
- 43 School grp.
- 44 "Polythene ___," Beatles hit
- 46 Knock off
- 47 Pledge
- 48 Mr. ___, "The Karate Kid" mentor
- 53 Alexander Hamiltons
- 55 Pic to click
- 56 Bus driver on "The Simpsons"
- 57 Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell's "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," e.g.
- 58 Optometrist's concerns



For answers please visit www.stuyspectator.com

(no. 1)

- 61 Shady tree
- 62 2000 pounds
- 63 Droop

"Sad but true"**Girls' Swimming****Penguins Receive a Makeover**

By CONNIE LEONG

Ahmed Elgalad, the newly appointed coach for the girls' swim team, the Penguins, hurried toward the swimming pool while droplets of sweat trickled one after another across his forehead. He had just rushed over from a school in Brooklyn. After greeting the Penguins, who were in the midst of introducing themselves after their stretching routine, Elgalad proceeded to the Pool Office where he found a post-it note sticking squarely on the stainless steel door. Fifteen minutes later, he learned that he had been replaced by another coach.

Elgalad filled in as a physical education teacher for William Clemons after Clemons retired last spring. Last month, Elgalad took Silvana Choy's place as the Penguins' coach. He had been overseeing daily practices since August 28 and had officiated recruitments as well. His coaching career at Stuyvesant ended after only eight practices. Assistant Principal Health and Physical Education Margaret Singer notified Elgalad of his dismissal by phone on Friday, September 7.

"There was an issue of what was best for the girls," said Singer. "It was just not working out because of the time issue." Elgalad found a full-time job in Brooklyn shortly after he became coach, which meant that he could not meet the team at school for practices until 3:45 p.m. The Penguins were starting practices an hour later, resulting in less practice and later dismissal.

The search for the next coach began when Choy decided to take a leave after eight years of coaching. Last year, Choy's attention was divided between her family and team. "You have to be 100 percent committed to be part of the team, and I expect the same [of] myself," said Choy. "I couldn't give the same in return, it's not fair to them. They deserve a coach who can give them 100 percent."

Choy was an excellent coach," said senior and co-captain Brittany Bishop. "She has knowledge of the sport, knowledge of how to coach. It's definitely a great loss, but it's for the better because she's taking time for herself."

The Penguins expect more changes and improvements in addition to the coaching switch. They placed third in the city last year, but hope to perform even better this season. The size of the team has been reduced from 33 members to 26, so each swimmer receives more attention. After highly selective recruitments, six freshmen have joined the team.

Over the summer, underwater cameras were also installed several feet deep in the pool. The coach can now observe the swimmers' technique, strokes and arcs from a different view, allowing him to assess them better and help them improve.

Choy has confidence in the team. "They're going to be fine no matter who's coaching," she said. "They just have that in them. It's more than just speed. These girls have heart and dedication."

also been scheduled.

"Last year, I was happy that we were doing things okay. But now I want all the skills to be performed at a higher level," Fisher said.

While Stuyvesant still has its experienced players, JFK lost four key players who graduated last year.

"[JFK coach Iris Bromfield] always tries to take as many people as she can on the team. She has practice all the time and they work really hard. They'll be considered a weaker team," said senior and Vixens' starter Vanessa Charubhumi. "But knowing their coach, they are going to try and come back [and] bring a strong team to the playoffs, no matter what."

Senior and captain Laura Genes believes there is only one strategy to attack strong teams like JFK. "The best thing we can do is work on our defense, and more importantly, come up with a more successful offense," said Genes.

facing in their Manhattan 4A Division. In addition to their eight-game regular season schedule, the Vixens plan to square off against Benjamin Cardozo High School and Bronx High School of Science. Various weekend tournaments have

cially with this team," said Genes. "So this year, all we can do is to do better than that.

"I think we pose a major threat to everyone in this league," she said.

Varsity Football**Peglegs Fail to Light Up Friday Night Opener, Starting Season 0-2**

continued from page 12

ing team support."

Two more games will be held at Pier 40. The Peglegs will face Alfred E. Smith High School on September 28. The Peglegs will complete the three-game series at Pier 40 on October 26, when they play Lafayette Educational Complex High School.



The Peglegs lost to John Adams High School by 14 points during their first home game at Pier 40 on Friday, September 7.

Girls' Volleyball**Vixens See Fewer Hurdles En Route to Championship**

Gabe Paley / The Spectator

The Vixens scrimmage against each other to prepare for the fall 2007 season.

continued from page 12

To help the team prepare for tough matches, Fisher has set up non-league scrimmage games that should provide more of a challenge than the teams the Vixens are currently

This season will be the last chance for the eight seniors on the team to win a PSAL championship. The Vixens have not won the championship in the past four years.

"We've made it deep into the playoffs every year, espe-

"The best thing we can do is work on our defense, and more importantly, come up with a more successful offense."
—Laura Genes,
senior and captain

**Cassandra Lee:
Taking On a
"Man's Game"**

continued from page 12

can still retaliate," said Lee.

Away from her team she faces a little more awkwardness. Stuyvesant's liberal student body generally accepts her, but others, especially of older generations, have more trouble understanding.

"The other day, my friend's mom came up to me and [asked], 'So, do all of the girls at your school think you're gay?' I was like, 'What,' but she said 'Because you play football.'"

On the field, Lee forgets about her differences. She thinks most of the Peglegs' opponents are aware that Stuyvesant has a girl on the team, but she is hard to distinguish when she puts her long hair inside her jersey.

"Once I'm in pads, they're allowed to hit me," she said. "If they feel awkward about it, that's their problem, but I'm still going to hit them."

Spectator

S P O R T S

Football

Peglegs Fail to Light Up Friday Night Opener, Starting Season 0-2

By DAVID DEGUZMAN

Everything seemed to be in place for the Stuyvesant Peglegs, the boys' varsity football team, to win their season opener. The five sets of Pier 40 bleachers were filled to capacity as the cheerleaders performed cheers and dance moves. And the Peglegs were finally playing on a field they could call home, kicking off the game shortly after 6 p.m. on Friday, September 7.

In Stuyvesant's first home game at Pier 40, the Peglegs weren't able to match the Spartans of John Adams High School, losing 22-8.

"We knew that this was going to be one of our three hard games," said coach Brian Sacks.

The Spartans were demoted from a higher division they played in last year. John Adams finished 0-9 in the City Championship/Bowl Division. Now in the Cup Division, the Spartans brought with them a high level of experience.

The Spartans scored three unanswered touchdowns while senior and Peglegs quarterback Shafi Alam threw four interceptions, despite completing 17 of 35 passes. John Adams committed seven sacks and 39 tackles altogether. Although the Peglegs ran and passed 117 more yards on offense than the Spartans did, Stuyvesant scored only one touchdown, which senior Amos Dai ran into the endzone in the fourth quarter.

With a weak offense in the game, the Peglegs found little that went right that Friday evening. "I don't think we were aggressive enough during practice. We don't practice like it's a real game. We just lollygag,"

said senior James Morrissey.

The season opener helped Sacks identify ways to improve the team's game. "[Alam] made some bad plays. But [he] also made some very good plays near the end of the game," said Sacks. "Our running game picked up in the second half. For us, we need to take what we did in the second half and expand on that for our next game."

The Peglegs were able to score points in their next game, held on Saturday, September 15 against Franklin K. Lane High School on their home field, but lost 18-14. The Knights outran and outthrew the Peglegs, earning 422 total offensive yards compared to the 129 yards Stuyvesant made.

One difference between the two games was the unprecedented fan support for the Peglegs at their first game at Pier 40—impressive for a non-homecoming game. Senior and Peglegs cheerleader co-captain Rachel Sullivan said, "It felt great. We never had this before. We didn't expect that many people."

The event featured live commentary by senior Kelvin Yeung, free refreshments and a halftime show performed by the cheerleading squad. There was little reason not to take the 10 to 15-minute walk to Pier 40 from Stuyvesant High School.

Fellow senior and cheerleader co-captain Sara Yoon was delighted to see the bleachers packed throughout the entire game. "We really appreciate crowd support," said Yoon. "We can't do anything about the team's ability to win. But we can do something about encourag-

continued on page 11

Cassandra Lee: Taking On a "Man's Game"

By LUC COHEN

During practice, players from Stuyvesant's junior varsity football team, the Peglegs, approach their trainers for various reasons. Players ask them to wrap their sore ankles, spray disinfectant on their scabs and toss them their water and Gatorade bottles. However, sophomore Cassandra Lee only asks them to fix her ponytail.

After practice, the players run what seem to be endless suicides—countless sprints of varying lengths. A few players crouch down on the ground, exhausted, prompting coach Christopher Burrows to bellow, "Stand up like men." But Lee keeps running.

"I'm used to it by now," said Lee, on being the only female member of the team. "I've been a tomboy since I was in third or fourth grade, so I don't care anymore. It doesn't really matter."

Indeed, Lee, a runningback, maintains the same tough, dedicated mentality as her male teammates do. Her gender is almost a non-factor on the field.

"She plays with all of us, she doesn't get any special privileges or anything," said sophomore, co-captain and lineman Robert Hesse. "She's just part of the team."

It is likely that this year, she will be a very important part of the team. As a freshman during the 2006 season, Lee didn't see much playing time, but she plans to play more this year.

"She's in position to start right now," said Burrows. "I'll put her in, in any situation."

As one of the smallest players, at just 5' 1" and 107 pounds ("110 on a good day," she said), on one of the city's smallest teams, Lee worked hard to earn playing time. "Cassandra is one of the hardest workers we have on the team," Burrows said. "The



Natalie Grybauskas / The Spectator
Sophomore Cassandra Lee will be starting as a runningback for the Peglegs' junior varsity team for the fall 2007 season.

girl's got heart, and you can't coach that."

Lee developed her love for the game of football long before she came to Stuyvesant. Her father used to play catch with a football with Lee when she was a little kid. She had always been athletic, taking up gymnastics and Tae Kwon Do at two years and five years old, respectively. The desire to play sports led her to play football when she entered middle school.

"All the stuff the girls were doing was not athletically-oriented," she said. "I started playing with the guys, and when they started getting into football, so did I." She enjoyed her new hobby so much that in eighth grade, she joined a Pop Warner league, the football equivalent of Little League baseball.

Being a girl in an overwhelmingly male-dominated sport, nonetheless, is not without its issues. Lee tries not to let it bother her or affect her playing, but some aspects are completely beyond her control.

For one thing, some players, although accepting of her, doubt her talent and ability to compete

with boys. She started in the Peglegs' opening game, a 26-0 loss to Brooklyn Technical High School when the two male runningbacks were benched for skipping practice.

Their physical differences can cause problems too, exemplified by the locker room bonding activity commonly known as "team ball scratch."

"They would get together in a huddle last year during practice, and be like, 'Okay, team ball scratch.' I would just stand there like, 'What am I supposed to do?'" said Lee.

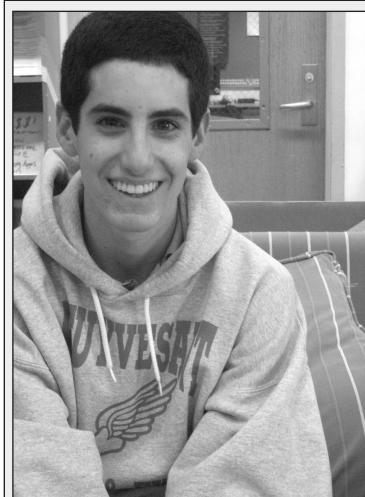
Lee enjoys the benefits of having an entire locker room to herself. "I get a shower stall all to myself," she said. "I don't have to deal with the grab-ass, and all that locker room business that the boys have to deal with."

She might "sometimes miss out on some of the [bonding] the guys have," but Lee's physical differences have evolved into material for light-hearted inside jokes.

"They make fun of me about [...] those kinds of things, but I

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The Human Element



spending the springs in Florida, Arizona, California, Havana, allowed, nay required, to talk continually with the nation's idols, is he not the favorite of the gods?

-Heywood Hale Broun

Heywood Hale Broun, the flamboyantly talented sportswriter and announcer, was a terrific optimist. He loved his job and would never consider an alternative. I wonder what he would have thought about sports writing at Stuyvesant.

Writing about sports has always been rewarding for me. I've always appreciated having the opportunity to do so. For the rest of my senior year, however, I will be working on the Web content of the Spectator.

Here, Sports is forever stuck on the back page. I can count with two fingers the

By MARK CHIUSANO

A few months later I became a baseball writer, that luckiest of men, paid to see every day what others have to pay to see occasionally.

Living in the finest hotels, packed with steak and wine,

number of sports articles that have made it onto the front page in recent years. Are these articles even read by someone other than their subject?

For the most part these articles are well-researched, well-reported and well-written. If they are generic it is the fault of the teams, not the reporters. How many different ways can you describe a five and five season, a first round playoff loss, the hiring of a new coach? Things become difficult to distinguish after a season or two.

But there is a human element in every game, every practice, that just needs to be nudged into the light. The next time you read (or glance at) a sports article, don't focus on yards gained or medley times. Focus instead on the people competing.

The human element is always there. We just need to look to find it.

Girls' Volleyball

Vixens See Fewer Hurdles En Route To Championship

By CHRISTOPHER ZHAO

The Lady Knights of John F. Kennedy (JFK) High School have knocked the Stuyvesant Vixens, the girls' varsity volleyball team, out of the playoffs for the last two seasons. In 2005, Stuyvesant lost to Kennedy in the semifinals of the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) playoffs. A year later, Kennedy eliminated Stuyvesant in the quarterfinals of the same tournament.

As the season opener on Thursday, September 20 approaches, the Vixens feel that this season just may be their best chance of winning the PSAL championship.

"We know what the other teams have in terms of what players are returning, and what players they've lost," said junior and starter Tina Khiani.

Coach Phil Fisher, who has been working with the Vixens since 2002, believes, however, that JFK still poses a threat.

"We can't rest on our laurels from last year. Just because we gave Kennedy a 'super-match' in the quarterfinals last year, [we can't] assume that we're going to be right there next year," said Fisher. "We have to be hungry all season and want to improve, improve and improve, so that we get to the final four this year."

Many Vixens attribute their confidence about the upcoming season to the fact that only one of its players, Gina Jang ('07), graduated from the team last year. The team still has all of last year's starters as well as the dynamic and experience from playing together.

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