



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper

"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"

Volume C No. 6

November 20, 2009

stuspectator.com

School Evacuated Due to Fire in Bathroom



A fire occurred in the third floor boys' bathroom on Friday, November 13.

By VICTOR MA
and KAITLYN KWAN
with additional reporting by
ROBERT COLGAN

Stuyvesant High School was evacuated at approximately 11:45 a.m. on Friday, November 13 after a plastic hand towel dispenser in the third floor boys' bathroom

was set on fire. Although smoke from the fire set off the alarm, an announcement was made over the loudspeaker shortly after to ignore the bells.

"At first, no one left the building even though we were aware that there was a fire. When the Fire Department arrived, they

told [Assistant Principal Organization Randi] Damesek that she was to evacuate the building," Principal Stanley Teitel said. Teitel, however, was not in the building when the fire occurred because he was visiting Yale University with juniors on the college

continued on page 4

English Department Faces Budget Loss

By JOANNA GAO
and POOJA DESAI

Due to a lack of money in its budget, the English department can no longer purchase any more books required for English classes.

Most of the English budget goes towards purchasing either New York State Textbook Law (NYSTL) or non-NYSTL books. However, the Department of Education only reimburses schools for NYSTL books.

According to Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman, Stuyvesant chooses to purchase more non-NYSTL books than NYSTL ones because of a lack of NYSTL titles available.

"Unfortunately, a typical English course uses around 10 to 15 [books] for the whole year, whereas my physics class uses one textbook," Principal Stanley Teitel said.

To compensate for the lack of money, many teachers have been asking their students to either buy the books themselves or print out the pages out from Google Books.

"I've already had to ask students to purchase books, like 'Paradise Lost' and 'Disgrace,' or get them from the library," English teacher Mark Henderson said.

"It's really unfortunate because it's a waste of paper and ink for the student," junior Sam



Because the English Department no longer has a surplus of money in its budget, students may be asked to purchase their own books.

Rim said.

Sophomore Evan Gao, however, said "I don't really care. It's not any harder to read from the packet than it is to read from a book."

Due to the tight budget, both the Alumni Association and Parents' Association have been trying to get preliminary donations for the English department.

"We are very grateful for all the help from both the Alumni Association and the Parent's Association," Grossman said. "There has been a bigger surplus in past years, but we're making it work."

By ISAREE
THATCHAICHAWALIT
and EMMA LICHTENSTEIN

At a recent Student Union (SU) Budget Committee meeting, the team requested 8,000 dollars to fund away and overnight tournaments, but only received 1,500 dollars. Although the team only started applying for funds from the SU recently, they received all of their requested funds, a total of 7,600 dollars, last year. This lack of funding from the SU, coupled with the original 20 percent budget cut from the school, left the team unable to cover the fees of away tournaments, teacher chaperones and coaches.

"I'm sure all of our students as well as our faculty are aware that these are tough economic times," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "We don't have enough money to fund everything."

At the start of the season, a message was posted on the team's Web site to the students' parents. According to the letter, the team's current level of support from the school was cut, and the likelihood of further cuts was a possibility. Thus, parents organized an emergency fundraiser known as the Emergency Fund.

The Emergency Fund is a special grant organized by team parents and the Alumni Association that will give Teitel money for the express purpose of paying teachers to accompany team members. The fund amounts to

Speech & Debate Team Hurt by Budget Cuts

15,000 dollars. However, this will not cover the costs of attending competitions and housing team members at away tournaments.

In a recent e-mail sent to all team members, senior and Speech and Debate team President Claire Littlefield said, "After [the Villiger Invitational], team travel will be shut down indefinitely. Currently, we barely have enough funds to pay the bills we've already incurred, let alone get to Villiger. It's going to take a lot of hard work and creative fundraising, and maybe even a miracle, to put Harvard, Nationals, or even States back in our future. In the meantime, we will only be participating at local tournaments."

The team typically attends two to three local tournaments every month, mostly small-scale competitions in the New York City area. Last year, they travelled to several national-level invitational tournaments, including the Yale, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, Harvard, George Mason University, Emory and Villiger Invitations. Furthermore, they sent qualifying students to the Tournament of Champions for Congress and Debate, the National Forensic League National Tournament, the Catholic Forensics League (CFL) Grand National Tournament and the New York State Championship.

According to Littlefield, not being able to attend away tournaments "is a tragedy." She stat-

ed, "The juniors and seniors on the team this year are more talented than any year I've been on the team, and they should have the opportunity to showcase their skills and hard work on a national level. We love attending local NYCFL and Manhattan Debate League tournaments (MHL), but they cannot provide the level of competition that our most talented members deserve."

"I am slightly disappointed because it's my senior year and I was expecting to compete on the national level and compete often," senior and Policy Debate captain Sandesh Kataria said. "I have been waiting for three years to attend tournaments that usually seniors only go to such as the Emory Invitational."

However, senior and Speech and Debate team Vice President Joseph Puma remains optimistic. "Everyone loves going to away tournaments, but I don't mind not going to a few if it means the team will have money in the future and if it means the team can continue to exist," Puma said. "I love every second that I am working on the team."

The number of coaches that the team was allowed to hire this year was also limited by the financial cuts. In previous years, there have been approximately six coaches. However, this year, there are only four coaches for a

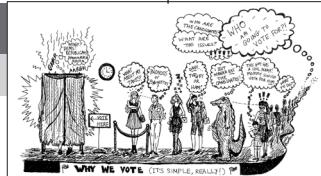
continued on page 3

Features

Article on page 6.

From Textbooks, to Politics

While most Stuyvesant students could not vote in the recent election, a schoolwide poll allowed them to voice their opinions.



Article on page 15.

Thirty Days...and 50,000 Words Later

Think you can write a 50,000 word novel in one month?
Hear from these students who are trying.

Arts & Entertainment

News

Public Natural Gas Drilling Hearing Held at Stuyvesant

continued from page 1

the earth's existence."

The public was allowed to enter the theater and sign up to speak at the hearing starting at 5:30 p.m. DEC representatives stood outside the auditorium during that time to answer questions and present a series of maps showing both the New York watershed and Marcellus Shale basin, and how thick the shale is in each area.

Over 160 people signed up to speak at the hearing, including government officials, environmental organization representatives, and drilling company representatives. Each person was allotted five minutes to speak, and a stenographer was present to record everything down for later review. DEC employees informed the audience that written comments could also be put on record if submitted through either mail or e-mail before Thursday, December 31.

The first speaker was Deputy Mayor for Operations Representative Edward Skyler. Once Skyler began speaking, an audience member marched on stage and said, "We want a total statewide ban. We don't want more hearings." The audience cheered while DEC officers escorted the man offstage. Skyler then continued with his testimonial, which advocated banning drilling in the New York watershed.

The second speaker was Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer who said, "The prospect of natural gas drilling in the New York City watershed is the greatest environmental threat facing New Yorkers today."

"The prospect of natural gas drilling in the New York City watershed is the greatest environmental threat facing New Yorkers today."
—Scott Stringer, Manhattan Borough President

and after drilling.

Stringer provided Pennsylvania as an example of how problems can be caused by inadequate regulation. "Con-

Free H1N1 Vaccinations for

New York City Schoolchildren

By KAREN ZHENG

Information and parental consent forms regarding free vaccines against the H1N1 influenza virus were distributed in homerooms on Thursday, November 5. By signing and returning the forms, parents can have their children vaccinated through the city's new "Points for Dispensing" initiative, which strives to ensure that no public or non-public school student

have not been seen already at their schools or doctors' offices. All of the clinics are in schools. Stuyvesant will not be offering vaccinations because it was not chosen as a location.

The clinics are expected to accommodate up to 500 people per hour, and will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays and from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Each of the 29 clinics is intended for children who live in that borough, and will operate for only one weekend. Anyone under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Clinics first opened on Saturday, November 7 and will run until Sunday, December 13.

"If the mayor and the chancellor realize there are still a large amount of students who still want the vaccine [after December 13], I can't imagine why they wouldn't extend the program. It will really come down to demand," Principal Stanley Teitel said.

According to the packet distributed by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, "the risks from inactivated 2009 H1N1 vaccine are similar to those from seasonal inactivated flu vaccine," which include soreness, redness, swelling, fainting, headache, muscle aches, fever, and nausea in a small percentage of recipients. Life-threatening allergies can occur but are very rare. It is advised that students tell the person giving them the vaccine of any severe allergies that they might have.

Sophomore Allison Xiao is

"It is a good way to get a large population vaccinated quickly."
—Stanley Teitel, Principal

goes unvaccinated because of lack of access to the shot.

Over five November and December weekends, vaccine clinics will be held in each borough for middle-school and high-school students. Elementary school students age four and older can also be vaccinated, or given an intranasal spray, if they



Val Gladstein / The Spectator

A hearing was held by The Department of Environmental Conservation on Tuesday, November 10 discussing the Marcellus Shale gas well drilling.

taminated drinking water [is] fouled by sludge and sediment and brown bubbles," Stringer said. "Believe it or not, in some [Pennsylvanian] homes, you can light the tap water on fire."

Stringer added that the filtration systems New York would have to build would cost between 10 billion and 30 billion dollars to construct and a million dollars per day to operate.

The third speaker was Councilman Jim Gennaro, who advocated replacing the current draft with a ban on hydrofracking, because there is no requirement for full disclosure of the chemicals used during the process.

Other speakers who were critical of the SGEIS were representatives for organizations such as River Keeper, the New York Urban Program at the Natural Resources Defense Council, and Earth Justice.

One of the few in favor of hydrofracking was Business Council of New York State CEO Kenneth Adams, who was met with 'boos' and hostile laughter from the public when he began to speak.

"Marcellus Shale natural gas development will create jobs and provide economic growth for many financially depressed communities in upstate," Adams said. Adams then described the revenue that would be produced from making natural gas a major source of energy in New York.

Vice President of Chesapeake Energy Scott Rotruck also advocated expanding natural gas drilling in New York. Chesapeake Energy is a drilling company that voluntarily decided not to drill in the New York watershed. However, Rotruck said,

"We can drill safely in any water-

"Marcellus Shale natural gas development will create jobs and provide economic growth for many financially depressed communities in upstate."
—Kenneth Adams, Business Council of New York State CEO

shed." He stated that one benefit of this would be a decrease in dependency on foreign oil. One audience member shouted "liar" during Rotruck's speech.

Although he did not attend the hearing, biology teacher Jerry Citron said, "The DEC has a mixed track record with respect to environmental regulation. The science still has not come out to suggest that if the gas companies try to extract gas that it's not going to cause harm."

After hearing all testimonies from the hearings, the DEC will make any necessary changes to the SGEIS and produce a finalized copy to go into effect next year.

Tours of Stuyvesant Given to Other Schools

By NICOLE ZHAO and KATIE LEMBRIKOVA

According to Principal Stanley Teitel, a teacher from P.S. 328 contacted him to set up a tour because "she wanted to inspire [the seventh graders] to study hard," he said.

Volunteers from ARISTA, Stuyvesant's chapter of the National Honor Society, led the 17 students and two adults from P.S. 328 on the tour for approximately two hours during the school day.

"We've done this before," Teitel said. "[It's a matter of] them requesting from us."

"At this point, Stuyvesant isn't just a school anymore. We are not just a prestigious school either. We represent a sort of culture. And whether that culture is a good model for others or not is all up to us, the students," senior and ARISTA president Nicole Leung said.

A tour was also given to three university professors and the principal of a Bedouin school in Israel on Monday, November 9. Bedouins are descendants of desert-dwelling nomads of Arabia and the Sinai region. According to Teitel, the Bedouin school opened in August 2009 and is currently for 10th graders only.

"[The school wants to] take children who normally do not have a vision of going to the university after high school and is trying to inspire them to go to the university to try to better the community," Teitel said. "They've come to us to ask for guidance."

Because mathematics and

"They've come to us to ask for guidance."
—Stanley Teitel, Principal

the sciences are subjects that the school would like to stress, Assistant Principal Mathematics Maryann Ferrara, Assistant Principal Biology Elizabeth Fong and Assistant Principal Chemistry and Physics Scott Thomas each led the group of educators on a tour and allowed them to observe classes.

According to Ferrara, on her half-hour tour with the group, she discussed "the variety of courses [Stuyvesant] offers, the level of courses, the importance of Math Team and Math Research," she said. She also had them observe a Multivariate Calculus class, an Advanced Placement Calculus BC class, a Statistics class and an Introduction to Computer Science class for 10 minutes each.

"I think that's pretty cool that they think Stuy is really great and they look at Stuy as a model," senior Kenny Yu said.

Alumni Organizations Step Up Efforts to Unite at Penn Club Fundraiser

By ZOE WU
and ISABELLE NG

The three alumni organizations of Stuyvesant High School, the Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association (SHSAA), the Campaign for Stuyvesant, and the Friends of Stuyvesant are planning to merge into a single organization, which is tentatively going to be called the Stuyvesant Alumni Foundation. Although discussions had begun more than a year ago, a significant step towards the process merger was made at the Stuyvesant High School Endowment Fund Gala Reception. The fundraiser was coordinated by Cynthia Hernandez ('01) of the Campaign for Stuyvesant and took place on Friday, November 16, at the Penn Club of New York.

The SHSAA, the oldest of the three organizations, was established in 1952 and currently organizes alumni events while raising money for Stuyvesant High School. The Campaign for Stuyvesant, founded in 1999, and the Friends of Stuyvesant, founded in 2003, each primarily aims to raise an endowment for the school. An endowment is "a huge fund of money that is invested so that only the interest is directly spent," Hernandez said.

The money raised from the organizations is usually spent on various areas, such as new school supplies and funding for after-school activities.

According to Chairman of the Campaign for Stuyvesant Paul Weichsel ('49), there had been conversations about uniting

"The idea is that the bringing together of all three [organizations] would make a more powerful group."
—Neal Hurwitz ('69), Executive Director of the Campaign for Stuyvesant

the three organizations for past few years. The efforts intensified when Principal Stanley Teitel, who founded the Friends of Stuyvesant, formally approached the other two organizations with the idea a little more than a year ago.

"The idea is that the bringing together of all three [organizations] would make a more powerful group," Executive Director of the Campaign for Stuyvesant

Neal Hurwitz ('69) said.

Because there are three Stuyvesant alumni organizations, fundraising efforts for the school have not always been effective. The separate organizations have not only led to confusion, but also made potential donors question the legitimacy of each. "Having three organizations diffuses your efforts," Professor Weichsel said.

Though the organizations remain separate at this point, the Stuyvesant High School Endowment Fund Gala Reception at the Penn Club was seen as a significant step towards the process.

"It was to celebrate the impending merger of the Alumni Association, the Campaign for Stuyvesant, and the Friends of Stuyvesant," Hernandez said.

While the event was organized by the Campaign for Stuyvesant, representatives from the other two organizations including President of SHSAA Robert Sherwood ('68), were in attendance. Money raised at the fundraiser will not be given to the school immediately; instead it will go to the endowment of the combined organization, should it be formed. However, if the organizations do not merge, each respective organization would keep the money it raised. The actual amount raised still needs to be calculated, but regardless of the exact amount, the event succeeded in "showing everyone that we are really merging," said Development Associate of the Campaign for Stuyvesant Josh Ralske, who noted that the merger of the three organizations was a relevant topic during the

fundraiser.

Hernandez likewise noted the progress made at the event. "It is not just about the amount, it is also about building friendships," she said.

Also in attendance were the A Cappella group, string quartet, and fencing team from Stuyvesant High School. Seniors Kenny Yu and Evan Smith gave speeches "about how things were going at Stuy[vesant]," Yu said. According to Smith, he and Yu were approached by Computer Science Coordinator Mike Zamansky, who is also an alumnus of Stuyvesant, at the request of the event's organizers.

Both Yu and Smith believed that the event succeeded in getting the merger message across.

"I learned a lot at the fundraiser," Yu said. "I think the whole point of the fundraiser was to show [the alumni organizations] are coming together."

Smith agreed that the goal of the three organizations working together "was very consistent throughout," Smith said. "Overall, the message of the fundraiser was very positive."

Despite the progress made at the gala reception, much work remains to be done in trying to bring together the SHSAA, the Campaign for Stuyvesant, and the Friends of Stuyvesant. While there are obvious advantages to the merger, it might be difficult for long-time volunteers at each because "you realize your own organization will eventually disappear in the process," Professor Weichsel said.

The new organization would

consist of a board of nine members and an executive director chosen by the board. Since all three organizations are 501C's, or tax-exempt organizations, there are legal issues to be addressed, such as the transfer of all the money into one organization.

Still, Professor Weichsel pointed out that all three organizations are willing to consider the more important advantages of the merger and have made "tentative commitments," he said. Among the commitments, the three organizations plan to hire an executive director for the combined organization, and each will contribute money towards the hiring.

The name for the new organization is yet to be determined. At the moment, "Stuyvesant High School Alumni Foundation" appears to be the most probable choice. Hurwitz also noted that the organizations have not ruled out combining into the SHSAA, which could be advantageous since SHSAA has been established for many years. No date has been set for when the merger will actually take place, as acquiring a charter from New York State will take some time. Even after the new organization is established, there will likely be an interim period for existing organizations to slowly tie up, according to Weichsel.

All difficulties aside, there is great optimism that the merger will help the school raise more money. "I think we should be doing this [unification] all along," Professor Weichsel said.

Students Hold Protest Against DOE Bake Sale Ban

By NABANITA HOSSAIN
and ISAREE THATCHAICHAWALIT

Students from New York City public schools gathered in front of City Hall on Friday, November 13, to protest the Chancellor's Regulation A-812, which states that students are prohibited from selling items not approved by the Department of Education (DOE) from the time school starts until six p.m.

"Bake sales aren't about junk food. They are about school activities."
—Robert Jackson, city councilman

The protest's purpose was to gain support and publicity for the petition against the bake sale ban. The protest also included a bake sale, for which students brought in baked goods and sold them, asking for signatures for the petition instead of money. According to senior Anya Lehr of Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, who organized this event, about 1,000 signatures were added during the protest alone. The petition now has around 6,000 total signatures and Stuyvesant has the most student signatures with 1,000.

Lehr organized the protest

mainly through a Facebook event page, called "BAKE SALE BAN PROTEST." Regarding her decision to organize this event, she said, "I'm in Model UN, a lot of my friends are on sports teams, and I'm also the president of a club that relies a lot on bake sales. Taking bake sales away means taking clubs away."

"Students do not want to pay for their [school] trips to Costa Rica, Mozambique, Greece and Rome or Madrid out of their own pockets. Bake sales used to be a way for these classes to be immersed in their studies, with less damage on their families' pockets," said senior Seth Hoffman of the Beacon School, who is one of the creators of the bake sale ban petition. "[Bake sales] are important to not only funding for extracurricular activities, but also to the culture of schools."

About 100 people showed up at the protest. They were mostly students, but there were also several parents. "We were expecting a lot more people, but it was a Friday and kind of rainy," Lehr said. However, senior Annie Yang, who was in charge of collecting signatures for the petition at Stuyvesant High School, said, "More people showed up than I expected."

The protesters chanted and held signs, which said things such as: "Bloomberg: \$100 million reelection campaign? We wouldn't need bake sales with money like that!" and "We're not obese—we're starved for funding."

Two city council members, Gale Brewer and Robert Jackson, and a representative sent by the DOE also attended the protest.

The two councilmen both made speeches at the protest. "Bake sales aren't about junk food. They are about school ac-

tivities," Jackson said. Referring to the Chancellor's reason that bake sales needed to be banned to help prevent obesity in New York City schools, he said. "This bake sale [ban] is like a Band-Aid when you need major surgery."

"They were totally in support of us. They agree with us that we should have our bake sales back," Lehr said. "It was especially important that the city council people came. They're the ones who can change this and make a new law and also tell their fellow council members about this."

The protest also gained attention from the media. "There was a lot of press coverage," Lehr said. "It was on the Channel 11 news [Friday] night, and hopefully it will be in some newspapers."

Yang was one of the people interviewed by the Channel 11 WPIX-TV news crew. "They asked what was going on and why we were doing this, and we said that we need money for our clubs," she said.

"I think it was really important that the press was there so that more people than just students are aware," Lehr said.

In regards to the protest's success, Yang said, "I thought it was pretty successful. We got a lot more signatures and lots of support."

"I hope that [the protest] worked, and I'm going to keep trying to make it work. People should be proactive and get things done instead of just complaining about it," Lehr said.

"The next step is to get signatures from even more people and get our voices heard by the Department of Education in order to make compromises with them and change this regulation," Hoffman said.

Speech & Debate Team Hurt by Budget Cuts

continued from page 1

team of 210 members.

"Our coaches are dedicated, talented, fantastic individuals who are paid very little for the amount of time and hard work they devote to the team," Littlefield said. "Students often have to stay until seven or eight o'clock after school to get a slot with a

"Financial cuts have really harmed us. We've already had to cut a few tournaments that the team has been attending for twenty years."
—Julie Sheinman, Director of Forensics

coach, because there are simply too many people who need to work on their pieces."

Despite the financial issues, the team has been performing "phenomenally well," Sheinman said.

The team attended a national

tournament at Yale University on the weekend of October 2 and came in ninth place. Additionally, the team won the Sister Mary Raimonde Commitment to Service tournament hosted by Regis High School on Saturday, October 24. The speech team won two out of the three local tournaments it attended. In particular, the Declamation portion of the team, which is composed of freshmen and sophomores, won at the St. Joseph Hill tournament, which took place on Saturday, October 10.

Sophomore Batsheva Moriarty placed second in her division for Declamation at St. Joseph's, gaining one half-qualification for States. "We've been doing really well this year," Moriarty said, "especially since we beat Regis at their own tournament."

The team will continue to attend NYCLF and MHL tournaments in the local circuit. Additionally, members will continue to try and raise funds. This includes reaching out to corporate sponsors and the Parents' and Alumni Associations, holding fundraisers such as magazine drives, inviting guest speakers and charging tickets and making a T-shirt to sell to the student body.

"In terms of the team's performance, I can assure you that if we raise the money to attend the State Championship, or any other tournament, the team will be incredibly successful," Littlefield said. "We have an extremely talented group of orators, actors and debaters this year who are all dedicated and driven to succeed. If we raise enough money to attend nationals as defending Champions, we will be ready to defend our title."

News

News-in-Brief

Nutrition Gets a Tasty Guest Speaker Treat

Kerry Heffernan, the executive chef of the Southgate Restaurant in the Essex House Hotel, spoke to biology teacher Dr. Daniel Piloff's third period Nutritional Science class on Wednesday, November 4.

Heffernan, who was the first guest speaker to ever address a Nutritional Science class, demonstrated several cooking techniques and related them back to the study of nutrition.

Heffernan's presentation was centered around the different types of proteins found in food, and how the behavior of these proteins, when cooked, dictates the techniques used in their preparation. He gave tips on real world applications: "Proteins won't caramelize well if moisture is present," Heffernan said.

The first demonstration completed by Heffernan was the searing of a chicken breast to contain just enough fat to cover a cooking pan. Heffernan then proceeded to prepare mayonnaise and flan.

The culminating dish prepared by Heffernan was a crème brûlée, a type of french custard with a caramelized top. "This is to demonstrate the many differ-

ent textures a protein can take on," Heffernan said.

The class was actively involved in Heffernan's presentation, with students helping to serve the cooked food, and several students assisting in the searing of the chicken breast.

The class's response to the guest was very positive.

"The demonstration was amazing. It was hands-on which made it really interesting, and at the same time it was extremely informative. The food he made was delicious," junior Shelley Li said.

Stuyvesant Alumnus Arrested for Stealing a Cell Phone

Mark Goryachkovskiy ('09) was arrested on Friday, October 23 near Stuyvesant High School for stealing a cell phone from a 17-year-old student from Queens.

According to an article in the Downtown Express, an 18-year-old male witness saw Goryachkovskiy take the phone from the victim's backpack and told Goryachkovskiy to return it. Goryachkovskiy took out a gun and threatened the witness. He then punched the witness and fled.

Police arrived on the scene and arrested Goryachkovskiy. The gun he had in his posses-

sion turned out to be a pellet gun.

Goryachkovskiy pleaded not guilty in his hearing. He was freed on bail and will have a court appearance on January 27, 2010, according to the Downtown Express.

The Stuyvesant High School administration and Goryachkovskiy declined to comment.

Writing Across the Curriculum Policy Revised

Principal Stanley Teitel revised the Writing Across the Curriculum policy for the mathematics department, allowing mathematics teachers to assign two shorter writing assignments instead of one long assignment.

Mathematics teachers were generally optimistic about the new policy.

"I had a problem originally as to how to make it meaningful to the students," mathematics teacher Dawn Vollaro said. "[The new policy] will definitely make it easier."

"I don't find it that difficult to just have students write things down," mathematics teacher Gary Rubinstein said. "I'm not finding the policy that difficult to implement."

School Evacuated Due to Fire in Bathroom

continued from page 1

trip.

According to an article published on The New York Times Web site on Friday, November 13, "Fire Forces Evacuation of Stuyvesant High School", the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) received an emergency call at 11:42 a.m. and sent 12 trucks and 60 firefighters, the minimum number required for any kind of fire, to Stuyvesant. The fire was under control by 11:59 a.m., and no one was injured.

Students missed the end of 5th period along with the entirety of 6th period. They were let back into the school before the beginning of 7th period, at around 12:30 p.m. The third floor remained crowded with firefighters, so seventh and eighth period classes on the third floor met in the theater. According to a memo sent to all staff, the FDNY was called because custodians felt that they could not "put out the fire as they had done with fires in the past." Because of the amount of black smoke caused by the burning plastic, authorities were mandated to evacuate the building.

All fire and smoke, however, was contained in the bathroom and not present in the hallway or any of the classrooms.

Since the evacuation, there have been several more fires on various floors. All of them, however, were extinguished immedi-

ately and did not require evacuation. According to Teitel, the administration is still investigating who started the fires and cannot disclose further information regarding any of them.

As a result of the evacuation, a revised fire evacuation plan was issued to all teachers. The plan specified instructions and new exit routes for teachers with both instructional and non-instructional periods. Teachers who are not teaching that period are required to assist with crowd control in hallways and staircases. The purpose of revising the schedule was to better organize future evacuations.

Students expressed generally negative views about the evacuation.

"It's less organized than all the drills have ever been," senior Jenny Dai said. "It took forever to get downstairs."

Sophomore Liam Downs-Tepper agreed. "It didn't seem particularly well-organized," he said. "It was a bit chaotic; teachers were telling us to shut up and get moving, [and] it just wasn't so friendly of them. I didn't feel the love. I just felt the urgency and the fire at my back."

Librarian DeLisa Brown, however, found the evacuation fairly well-ordered. "Considering the number of students you have, everyone's very well-behaved," she said. "People are hungry and cranky and trying to be as patient as they can."

ADVERTISEMENTS

STUYBILL

*The Student Union and the Parents' Association proudly present
A special fundraising performance to benefit the students of Stuyvesant H.S.*

**ONE NIGHT ONLY
DECEMBER 4, 2009 – 7:30 P.M.**



Neil Berg's
100 YEARS OF BROADWAY

"An amazing show! What a fun, crowd-pleasing, gala evening with fifty of the greatest characters in Broadway musical history on stage performed by many of the artists who actually played these roles on Broadway."

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW
WWW.STUY-PA.ORG**

Orchestra \$50 • Mezzanine \$30 • Balcony Adult \$20 • Balcony Student \$10

Murray Kahn Theater, Stuyvesant H.S., 345 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10282

ADVERTISEMENT

OLYMPIAD ACADEMIA

Olympiad Academia

450 7th Ave. Suite 804 New York, NY 10123
Office (212) 239-2797 olyacademia@gmail.com

Official Blog

www.olympiadacademia.org

2009 Fall Program

GPA Improvement

September 14, 2009 Start / Mon – Thurs (4 days a week)

- Improve your GPA by 5 points or more.
- Choose one among three options: 2 days, 3 days and 4 days/week
- Students may stay after class until 9 PM to study independently.

**7th Grade****8th Grade****9th Grade****10th Grade****11, 12th Grade**

- English (Essay, Grammar)
- Math - Science
- Social Studies & History
- AMC 8 & AMC 10 & AMC 12

4 ~ 6 PM

Up to Honors, AP, and IB Levels

- English (Essay, Grammar)
- Math A & B, Pre-Calculus, Calculus AB & BC, Statistics, Linear Algebra, Multivariable Calculus
- Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology
- World History, US History, Art History
- Spanish, French, Japanese
- Computer Science

Choose One:

4:00 PM ~ 6:00 PM/5:00 PM~7:00 PM/6:00 PM~8:00 PM

SAT I - 20 sessions / 80 hours September 12, 2009 ~ End of January 2010

- ① Tuesday / Thursday Class
 5:00 PM ~ 7:00 PM (English only)
- ② Saturday Morning Class
 9:30 AM ~ 1:30 PM (5 different levels available)
- ③ Saturday Afternoon Class
 2:00 PM ~ 6:00 PM (2 different levels available)

SAT II Intensive Review for Oct. and Nov. Tests

Saturday classes begin on August 22, 2009.

Sunday classes begin on August 23, 2009.

Biology Sun 1:00 PM~3:00 PM**Chemistry** Sat 1:00 PM~3:00 PM**Math Level 2** Sun 1:00 PM~3:00 PM

Weekend Courses

September 12, 2009 ~ January 23, 2010 / Saturdays and Sundays

- SAT I Math perfect scorers and PSAT Math perfect scorers may take AMC 10 & 12 classes instead.

**SSAT, ISEE, SHSAT**9:30 AM
 ~1:30 PM**PSAT + Essay**

9:30 AM~1:30 PM

**PSAT + Essay or SAT I**

9:30 AM~1:30 PM

**SAT I**

9:30 AM~1:30 PM (5 different levels available)

**SAT I**

2:00 PM~6:00 PM (2 different levels available)

Manhattan

Conveniently located steps away
 from the Penn Station**Open 7 days
 a week**

A C E 1 2 3 Train & LIRR

2010 Olympiad Prep Courses

Students who cannot take the olympiad exams at their schools may do so at through Olympiad Academia.

USA Biology Olympiad (USABO):Saturday Class (Advanced) September 12th Start / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours
 Sunday Class September 13th Start / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours**U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO):**Saturday Class (Advanced) September 12th Start / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours
 Sunday Class September 13th Start / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours**U.S. Physics Team:**

Saturday Class Starting October / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM

USA Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO):**AMC & AIME :** September 12, 2009 ~ February 7, 2010 / 48 hours**USAMO :** Starting February / 48 hours**AMC 10 (2/9 Test)**Tuesday / Thursday Class 5:00 PM~7:00 PM
 Saturday Class 1:00 PM~3:00 PM**AMC 12 (2/9 Test) & AIME (3/16 Test)**Tuesday / Thursday Class 5:00 PM~7:00 PM
 Saturday Class 1:00 PM~3:00 PM
 Sunday Class 1:00 PM~3:00 PM**USAMO (4/27 Test)**Saturday Class 3:00 PM~5:00 PM
 Sunday Class 3:00 PM~5:00 PM

Visit the Official Blog of Olympiad Academia at www.olympiadacademia.org
 For tuition and other details, reach us at **(212) 239-2797**

Features

By SHILPA AGRAWAL
and JENNY FUNG

1, 2, cha-cha-cha...3, 4, cha-cha-cha...

Clearly Stuyvesant students find ways to use numbers even when not in math class. Students who enroll in ballroom dance as their senior Physical Education (PE) class know that the progression of natural numbers can be put to use to sense rhythm, which is a key component in performing a dance with grace.

Because ballroom dance is very popular among seniors, not all students get to take it. Seniors who didn't get the chance first term are hopeful for second term. Senior Lily Ostrer, who hopes to take ballroom dance in the spring term, said, "There are a lot of exciting PE classes senior year, but ballroom is different from everything that is offered, and it seems to go against the

"They have to have proper form and etiquette."
**—Silvana Choy,
physical education teacher**

stereotype of Stuyvesant classes because it involves being creative in physical ways."

Yet ballroom dance is one of the most difficult and time-consuming classes the physical education department offers. When the term nears its end, hoards of dancers practice their routines on the first floor, inching their way to perfection. According to ballroom dance teacher Silvana Choy, the students have to pick their own music and make their own choreography for a final project for the class.

"[Choreographing your own dance] should be fun. [Choy] was showing us a bunch of video clips on dances in previous years. It's going to be interesting to see what we can come up with, and it will be a great way to get to know someone who you may not know as well," said senior Marley Lindsey, who is currently taking the class.

However, students take away more than dancing skills from the class. "Number one, the class teaches respect. It teaches them how to respect one another and how to respect themselves" said Choy.

Students are assigned their dance partners based on height. "They might choose a partner they may not like, but they have to make it work," Choy said.

Most of the students who sign up for ballroom are beginners who have no previous experience in the dance, but many adapt very nicely to the class.

"It's a class where all levels are welcome [...] when I started up, I was an absolute beginner,

Dancing with Style



Ballroom dance is a very popular choice for a physical education class among seniors.

but now I can do so many dances [...] [the atmosphere] is very easy-going, and very comfortable, and you don't have to feel uncomfortable about anyone laughing at you," Lindsey said.

Regardless of skill or level of background experience, the final performance is a blast for performers who are dedicated to the dance. The performance is judged based on students' use of steps learned in class, steps learned outside of the class, conjunction of the music and corresponding steps, and the overall execution.

"They have to be disciplined

because they have to have proper form and etiquette," Choy said.

Students learn many types of ballroom dance. Meringue, rumba, cha-cha, waltz, tango, swing, foxtrot, and hustle are all part of the curriculum. Students are assigned their dance by drawing out of a hat.

While Choy's favorite dance to teach is the waltz, the Latin dances are sometimes the hardest to teach because the instruction occurs at the beginning of the curriculum.

"When the kids first come into the class, they are not familiar with one another. So when I

teach them [Latin dance] sometimes it is quite a shock," Choy said. "I feel that this class gives the kids a lot of confidence. Some kids come in here so tentative, so shy. Then, it's amazing, the transformation. They walk out of here with their heads high."

Choy was first assigned to teach ballroom dance in September 2002. In order to teach the class, she registered for private ballroom dance lessons herself.

All of her hard work has paid off, however. "I love to teach the class. It's a lot of fun. They [the students] are very enthusiastic and very motivated," Choy said.

From Textbooks, to Politics

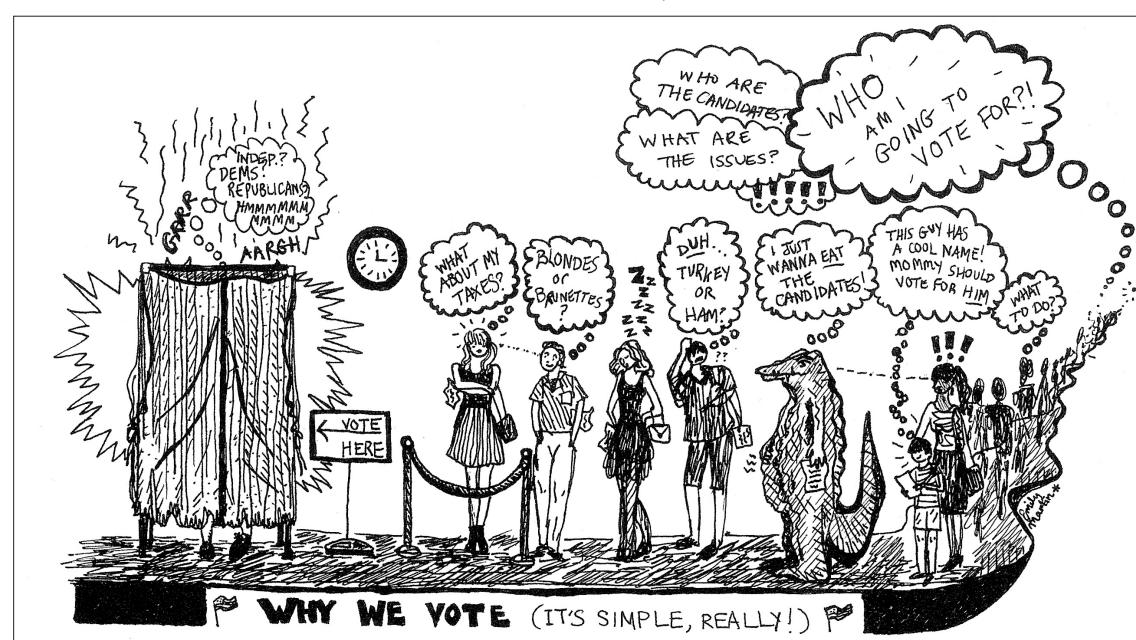
By LEA BELTRAMINO

To students, Election Day is merely a day off from school. Another 24 hours to finish math homework or cram for a history test, but not to choose who gets to run our city. But this year, within the walls of Stuyvesant High School, students' opinions were counted.

"Although democratic principles are fine to be valued and all, in time of need, there needs to be a limit as to how far we will set them in stone."
**—Taha Ahsin,
senior**

In the week before the election, Social Studies teachers distributed ballots to everyone in class. Students were to fill out who their vote would have gone to for Mayor, Comptroller and Public Advocate. The results were announced during third period on Wednesday, November 4.

In the New York City Elections, Mayor Michael Bloomberg won a third term in office by a slim margin of five percent of the vote. On average, he won only 8 more votes than Democratic



candidate William C. Thompson at each polling site, according to the Daily News. However, in the school election Bloomberg won with 1431 votes, or 57.08 percent, compared to Thompson's 36.10 percent.

The mayoral election was of particular interest this year because of Bloomberg's controversial decision to run for a third term, which led to the abolition of New York City's term limits. Some voters opposed his candidacy on principle.

"[Bloomberg] said before that he wouldn't change term limits, and he thought it was disgusting, so I don't like it that he's changing his entire view on it," junior Jimmy Cheung said.

On the other hand, some felt that Bloomberg was justified in overturning term limits. "Bloomberg's third term was justified because in an economic crisis, New York needs a mayor with a clean track record for improvement, experience, and knowledge on how to run with an economic state of mind," se-

nior Taha Ahsin said. "Although democratic principles are fine to be valued and all, in time of need, there needs to be a limit as to how far we will set them in stone."

When asked about their decisions, students seemed to be influenced by many different factors. "I voted for Thompson because I believe that Bloomberg's button-down corporate efficiency went out of style quickly. Thompson would have brought a more intimate feel to the office, something I feel is valuable in our system of government," junior Ady Vijay said.

Those who voted for Bloomberg, however, argued that he has done his job successfully for the past two terms. "Although I didn't put as much thought into my decisions for the other city-wide positions, I felt most strongly about choosing Bloomberg for mayor. I like what he has done for the city in the past couple of years, and believe that he has proven his reliability," sophomore Grant Weisberg said.

But many students were not

aware of the backgrounds and platforms of the candidates, especially for the Public Advocate and Comptroller elections. "Although some students taking government classes were a little more knowledgeable, on the whole, students just don't have a stake in local politics or are just not fed information on their local politicians," Ahsin said. "When it came time to fill out their ballots, students voted based on arbitrary factors, such as the education, the party, or even the previous job of the candidate."

Students who didn't know enough about a candidate to make a decision often voted based on party affiliation. "I wasn't familiar with many of the candidates, and although they might not admit it, I doubt most Stuyvesant students were either," junior Carolyn Dean-Wolf said. "However, being a Democrat, I felt safe in voting for the Democratic candidates."

Both the New York City and Stuyvesant elections reinforce this point, with John Liu win-

ning 76 percent of New York City votes and 83.36 percent of Stuyvesant votes.

Some students didn't treat the election seriously at all. "Even though we're given these ballots in school to fill out, it's hard for most of us to take them seriously, since it won't affect our lives in anyway. For example, in history, half of my class jokingly 'voted' for our history teacher, writing in her name on the ballot. It's not an accurate description of what the voting process is like when we're older, since as adults, we're more likely to think through the choice we make, and in what way it will affect us," junior Priscilla Odinnah said.

Though the results of the mock election were somewhat questionable, the election gave students a chance to participate in a process from which they are normally excluded.

"I think it's a good idea to have the mock elections in school because people should get used to voting. It's an important part of being a citizen," junior Kevin Jin said.

Paola Sokareva / The Spectator

Features

Victory Pro Sapientia

By MAX WYCISK

Every year, over 1300 students from around the country enter the Siemens Competition for math, science and technology. The applicants formulate research papers based on actual experimentation and submit them with hopes of winning the grand prize, a 100,000 dollar scholarship and the honor that comes along with it.

This year, junior Stephanie Chen was named a finalist and senior Jack Greisman a semifinalist on October twenty-third.

Greisman chose to focus his project on the sporulation of bacteria, which he describes as "a mechanism used by several types of bacteria to survive in adverse conditions," he said. Greisman chose this topic because "sporulation is a unique evolutionary adaptation, and it's actually pretty cool," as well as a long time interest "in studying how these cells are able to differentiate in these ways," he said.

Greisman has been studying this mechanism for over two years both in the lab of New York University with Professor Dr. Patrick Eichenberger and the Stuyvesant laboratories during a science research 10-tech. Greisman, however, sees a real life benefit to his work, outside of the realm of the competition. "I determined a potential binding site for a drug that could inhibit the resistance of bacillus endospores" Greisman said in an email interview. Bacillus endospheres are well known for causing anthrax, and the hypothetical drug designed by Greisman could one day serve as an invaluable tool in the fight against bio-terrorism.

Although the mental rigors of the competition and hours of research may be viewed by some as the greatest challenge of the contest, Greisman said that he thought the hardest part was meeting the October 1 deadline. "It's hard to have all your laboratory work done by this time, let alone have a paper written," Greisman said. By doing so much research in advance, however, Greisman felt he had an edge over all other

competitors.

Greisman has been working with professor Eichenberger for two years on his project and has used this valuable time in a lab and the experience of his teachers to develop the research for his project, getting almost a two year head start on many of the contestants. "I felt that I had enough of my research completed to convey a strong sense of my work over the past two years or so," Greisman said.

While Greisman entered the competition alone with only the help of his mentors, Chen decided that she wanted to work in a group, teaming up with two of her friends from Francis Lewis High School to enter the competition.

Chen, who wants to be either a heart surgeon or a research scientist someday, feels

"I felt it would be a wonderful opportunity for me to learn about the mechanics of a machine similar to the MRI machine, and learn about a science different from medicine."
—Stephanie Chen, junior and Siemens Regional Finalist

that apart from the winnings, she has a lot to gain from the competition. "I felt it would be a wonderful opportunity for me to learn about the mechanics of a machine similar to the MRI machine, and learn about a science different from medicine," Chen said.

Chen's project focuses on using an electron spin resonance (ESR) machine to date teeth from archaeological sites that show evidence of hominid activity. "I decided to choose this topic because I was intrigued that both the ESR spectrometer and MRI machine worked by detecting movement of subatomic particles," Chen said.

Chen, who entered the contest looking to become a better research scientist, estimates that she and her team spent almost 800 hours doing research and experimentation, most of it at the ESR lab at Williams College. They also spent a considerable amount of time at the Robert F. Kennedy summer science institute where they received a lot of guidance from experienced research scientists. "Dr. Blackwell and Dr. Blickstein, instructors at the institute, made sure we were preparing our samples correctly, and they helped us with our research papers," Chen said.

While Chen and her teammates are thrilled to have advanced so far, their work is not finished. From Thursday, November 19 to Sunday November, 22, they will travel to the Siemens Regional Finals at Carnegie Mellon as part of a three day event for the grand prize.

During the final round of competition, Chen and her team will compete with nearly a hundred other finalists by presenting a memorized presentation summarizing and explaining their project to a panel of judges.

Both Chen and Greisman put a lot of mental energy into their works, but the rewards for their efforts go far beyond having their name put down on a list of winners. The experiences they gained from the contest set them further on the path of achieving their ultimate career goals.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Friday and Saturday, November 20 and 21

*Fall Musical:
The Pajama Game*
Theater, 6PM on Friday
7PM on Saturday

Tuesday, November 24

Culture Festival
Buffet: Cafeteria,
4:30-6:30PM
Performances: Theater,
6:30-9PM

Wednesday, November 25

Alumni Visitation Day

Thursday, November 26

Thanksgiving

Friday, December 4

Open Mic

Library, after 10th

Thursday, December 10

*24th Annual
Medical Ethics Symposium
Cybermedicine:
My Computer - My Doctor*

Theater, after 10th

Friday, December 11

*Student Union
Winter Carnival*

Cafeteria, after 10th

Are You There God? It's Stuyvesant

By SADIE BERGEN
and HANNAH O'GRADY

Senior Naveed Akter begins his day at dawn with the first of five daily prayers. The four others occur at different points throughout the day, some during school hours. Akter is also an active member of the Muslim Students Association (MSA) and makes frequent trips to the mosque. Being a practicing Muslim, he said,

"People who know I'm a Christian expect me to act a certain way."
—Tiana Stute, junior

"is like taking four APs."

While some Stuyvesant students rush to basketball practice or rehearse lines for the fall musical after the final bell rings, others, such as Akter, are devoting themselves to a very different type of extracurricular: their religion. But whether these observant students join others of the same faith in one of the many religion-based clubs at Stuy or practice on their own, all say that taking their religion seriously also places serious demands on their time.

For practicing Muslims, the demands are around-the-clock. Many have to excuse themselves from class to make a trip to Stuyvesant's prayer room. Akter requested that the location of the room remain undisclosed.

Shoshana Akbas, an observant Jew, also experiences time constraints because of her religion. For her, it is weekends that pose a challenge. Her religion prohibits her from doing any work on the Jewish Sabbath, which lasts from sunset Friday to Saturday night. That leaves Sunday to get all her work done. "It's hard when teachers give more homework over the weekend," she wrote in an e-mail interview.

Religion affects not only the amount of time observant students have to do things, but also how they spend their time, and who they spend it with.

"I realize that people who know I'm a Christian expect me to act a certain way," said junior Tiana Stute, who is not a member of a religious organization at Stuyvesant although she participates in a Christian youth group outside of school. "Being a Christian and a follower of Jesus means that you have to devote yourself to trying to be like Him and you have to remember to uphold His name because that is what you'll be associated with."

Akter finds himself gravitating towards fellow Muslims students, as those are the people whom he feels he has the most in common with. Islam also dictates that he must "go straight to marriage," he said. This eliminates any possibility of dating, which is often a large part of high-school students' lives.

In an environment as large and diverse as Stuyvesant, the many religious clubs that exist give students a place to connect

with people who share their faith. Stuyvesant also has an Atheist and Anti-Theist Association. Junior Vishal Prasad founded the club on the Marxist idea that the critique of religion is the foundation of all meaningful discussion.

"I don't think enough people are educated in how to be logical and empirical in their thinking. We are trying to get people to think like logicians or theologians," Prasad said.

The club's ten members meet on a weekly to biweekly basis.

The MSA, on the other hand, has 40 to 50 participants, and provides an outlet of kids working to "maintain Muslim values in a non-Muslim environment," Akter said.

The MSA helps students who don't necessarily know why they are Muslim, or are only Muslim "because their parents are," Akter said.

"Teenagers question their purpose in life, wondering 'Why am I here?' Religion helped me find my purpose, as it explains one's entire life," Akter said. He explained that there are so many outside influences at Stuyvesant that might contradict the teachings of Islam, and for him, the MSA provides an affinity of kids working to avoid those influences.

Senior Christie Chen finds her outlet in the Seekers, of which she is an officer. The Seekers are a 20 to 30-member club affiliated with the NY Seekers Christian Fellowship, an urban youth alliance.

"Belonging to a group [like the Seekers] is good for any student because you build this core group of friends," Chen said.

The clubs strive to do more than simply provide a source of companionship. In addition to praying and Bible study, the Seekers hold weekly meetings and partake in community service projects such as Operation Christmas Child, for which they fill shoeboxes with goodies and

"Religion helped me find my purpose, as it explains one's entire life."
—Naveed Akter, senior

send them to needy children.

Despite the camaraderie formed among students of the same religious leanings, many religious students see the diversity at Stuyvesant as a positive thing. Akbas, for one, relishes the diversity at Stuy, especially because everyone at her middle school was Jewish. "I had never met an immigrant, and didn't have a friend who wasn't Jewish and didn't live in a certain neighborhood. It's good to meet different people who have different perspectives," she said. "I find people are generally respectful and understanding, even if they themselves do not chose to live in a way that incorporates religion."

Features

Learning Outside The Box



By MEGHA CHERIAN

Of the many ways in which Stuyvesant students choose to spend their summers, volunteering abroad is only one. However, seniors Brian Last and Nisa Beceriklisoy, are certain that the choices they made to volunteer abroad were the correct ones. Both Last and Beceriklisoy plunged into two similarly intensive intellectual experiences while also making a difference in their respective communities.

Last participated in the Amigos de Las Americas (AMIGOS) program in Nicaragua for six weeks this past summer. AMIGOS provides high school and college students with community service projects in Latin America that contribute to the health, education, and environment of the inhabitants. As stated on the AMIGOS Web site, the program "builds partnerships to empower young leaders, advance community development and strengthen multicultural understanding in the Americas."

Last had to "organize meetings with community members and teach classes about Environmental Health entirely in Spanish every day to little kids," she said. In addition to teaching, she helped create two soccer teams for the community. "We decided it would be a good way to organize the teenagers," Last said.

AMIGOS volunteers are met with many challenges and successes. "One of the most difficult challenges I think I faced was dealing with the differences in socioeconomic status," Last said. "Many members of the community didn't know how to talk to my partner and me because they were so unac-

customed to the presence of Americans. There were a lot of stereotypes I hope we eventually broke."

Senior Nisa Beceriklisoy also volunteered in Nicaragua. However, Beceriklisoy went as a member of the Trek for Knowledge program. For Beceriklisoy, Trek was "a free way to travel and help people at the same time," she said. "We did many cultural workshops like talking to all the villagers who lived through the Sandinista revolution.

"We did many cultural workshops like talking to all the villagers who lived through the Sandinista revolution, and teaching the kids basic English."

—Nisa Beceriklisoy, senior

tion, and teaching the kids basic English."

Volunteering in developing countries required significant adjustment for both Last and

Beceriklisoy. They had to grow accustomed to extremely sparse living conditions. "There was no running water and only a limited amount of houses had any electricity, which was usually a lightbulb that went out constantly," Last said.

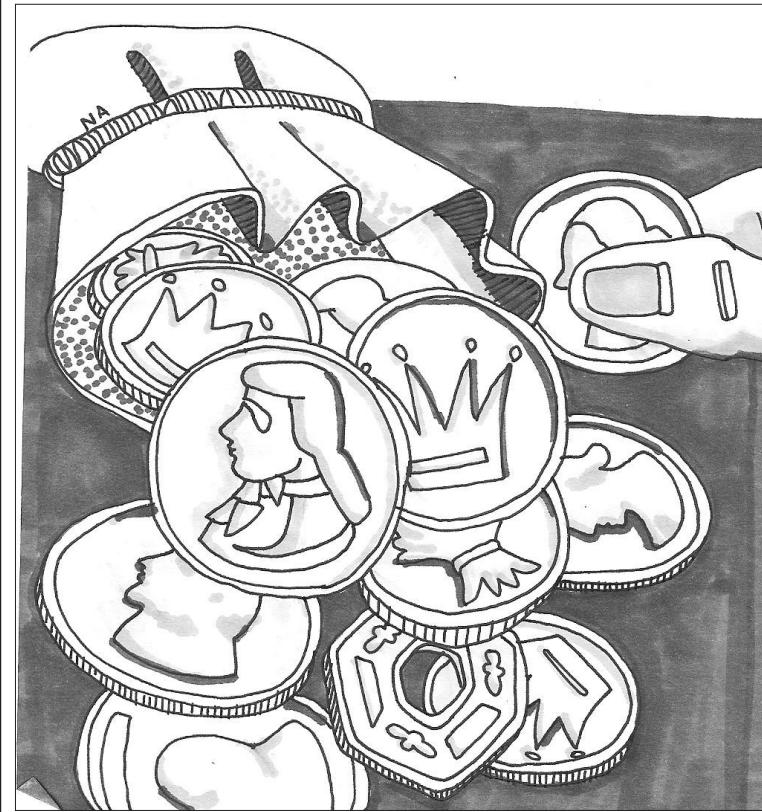
"Every day we had rice and beans for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, sometimes with something added, but usually not. Towards the end of the Trek I couldn't bring myself to eat more than a quarter of a plate of food," Beceriklisoy said.

Before she embarked on her journey, Beceriklisoy did not know what to expect. She now feels that "traveling to Nicaragua put a face on the kids not getting a proper education in the world," Beceriklisoy said.

Last, in venturing outside of her home environment, gained a new perspective from her experience. "I think any time people are forced to be in situations that are outside of their comfort zones they learn something about themselves," Last said. "I also gained a lot of respect for my elementary school teachers, because teaching eight-year-olds the water cycle in Spanish was probably the most difficult thing I've ever had to do in my life."

In participating in AMIGOS and Trek for Knowledge, Last and Beceriklisoy, respectively, escaped the distracting hassles of everyday life, and helped to build a community vastly different from their own. SAT prep and summer school may seem like the most direct ways to acquire knowledge over the summer, but in delving into such challenging yet rewarding programs, Last and Beceriklisoy found a way to learn outside the box.

Rushing for Gold, Talking With Money



By DANIELLE OBERDIER

The California Gold Rush. Perhaps in junior year, while studying American History, you were asked about it on a test. You had studied, so you bubbled in the right answer. But besides those two points, the event's history had had no lasting effect.

However, for Ray Lent ('70), a Stuyvesant alumnus, this textbook system of learning history was not enough. Lent plans on instituting a program called "If Money Could Talk," in the summer of 2010 that will use coins from the Gold Rush era to teach California history to New York City public school students. He also plans on hiring interns from Stuyvesant.

Lent, a member of the last

all-male Stuyvesant class, works as a wealth manager of his own firm, Placer Partners, in San Rafael, California. Though he spends the majority of his days acting as a sounding board for his clients' investments, philanthropy and legacies, his business brought him into contact with a rare collection of coins left over from the California Gold Rush.

He donated the rarest ones to museums and civic centers because of their historical value, keeping the more common coins for his program. "All coins have something to say," Lent said. "I wanted these less valuable coins to be used as teaching materials in grade schools so the kids can learn about California history, U.S. history, and economic literacy."

The New York Historical Society, upon Lent's request, agreed to sponsor the project and designate internships to high school students who were willing to tutor the kids.

Lent immediately thought of Stuyvesant High School as a source for interns. "I lost touch with the Stuyvesant community for a number of years," Lent said. "But I connected 20 years ago and since then I've been looking for opportunities to help kids who are currently going there."

Lent hopes to recruit a group of sophomores and juniors from Stuyvesant who would spend six weeks of their summer at the New York Historical Society. The program is still in its early stages of development and specific plans for the internships are yet to be decided. However, Lent hopes that by the end of each Stuyvesant student's study at the New

"This story could stir the thought process of alumni to give back to Stuyvesant and create a balance between doing well financially and doing good civically."

—Ray Lent, ('70)

York Historical Society, he or she would have mastered the material well enough to distribute it effectively to students at New York City elementary schools. "By the end of our second year, we plan on having developed a content-specific course for fourth and fifth graders," Lent said.

Lent's main goal in establishing "If Money Could Talk" is to use his good fortune in finding these coins to install a philanthropic project in New York City public schools. However, Lent foresees other benefits from the program as well.

For one, he hopes that Stuyvesant students' in-depth learning about West Coast history will make them more open to various environments for college. "A lot of Stuyvesant alumni came to California later, like I did," Lent said. "But a lot of kids at Stuy don't get exposed to colleges in the West. If they were already interested and more familiar with colleges out there by the time they conducted their college search, this might change."

Lent also hopes that he can inspire other Stuyvesant alumni to give back through the lens of their own careers. "This story could stir the thought processes of alumni to give back to Stuyvesant and create a balance between doing well financially and doing good civically," he said.

ADVERTISEMENTS

You practice video games daily, but will you practice daily for the SAT/ACT?



6 questions + **6** minutes a day = **GUARANTEED** point increase

WilsonDailyPrep, an award-winning online SAT/ACT course, provides daily questions, student accountability, and a **GUARANTEED** point increase.

All it takes is 6 minutes a day.

Only \$139 FOR 3 MONTHS

Higher scores at half the cost
of other leading online test prep companies.

Daily practice ensures success



For complete program details visit
www.wilsondailyprep.com

or call **800.888.0692**



Raise Your SAT Score by 350 Points! SAT/PSAT Prep



I went into C2 with a 1790 on my SAT. After 27 classes with C2, I scored 2180. My essay score also improved from a 3 to a 5. I think that all of my tutors were great! They really paid attention to my needs, and accommodated my schedule perfectly.

-Francesca Y.

- Regents Exam Preparation
- SSAT/ISEE/SHSAT/ERB/SCAT
- SAT/SAT II/ACT
- Reading Comprehension/
Essay Writing/College Writing

- Vocabulary/Composition
- Algebra/Calculus/Trigonometry
- Biology/Chemistry/Physics/
- Individualized Curriculum
- AP Subjects/IB Courses

\$50
OFF
C2 Skills Assessment
WITH COUPON
New Students Only

C2 education
be smarter. 212-564-3737
MANHATTAN
30 West 32nd Street (Between 5th & Bway), 3rd Floor
www.c2educate.com

Need help with your college applications?

We specialize in :

- Personal essay editing
- Practice admissions interviews

Each client works directly with our founder, Paul J. Kim, Esq.

- Stuyvesant High School & Harvard University Graduate
- 15 yrs - Harvard admissions representative

Client college admissions since 1990 include:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| • Amherst | • Notre Dame |
| • Columbia | • Princeton |
| • Cornell | • Swarthmore |
| • Dartmouth | • U Penn |
| • Duke | • West Point |
| • Georgetown | • Yale |



Contact us!

- www.CrimsonSherpa.com
- Paul@CrimsonSherpa.com
- 917-586-8849

Bringing the classroom into the home.

Tutor Profile:

Berkeley Mathematics Ph.D.
Teacher at Prestigious Manhattan Private School
10+ Years Experience

Independent School Tutors

The Best Teachers and Tutors - All Subjects

(646) 339-3134
help@istutors.com
<http://www.istutors.com>



Editorials

STAFF EDITORIAL

Fixing the Four Year Formula

"I'm not taking Calculus," senior Liam O'Brien said, "but I'm learning what I care about, and that's what's important to me."

O'Brien, along with 129 other students, has decided not to take math in his senior year. Some of these seniors are simply not interested enough in math to commit themselves to another full year of it, while others have already exhausted Stuyvesant's math offerings.

However, a new policy, proposed by Principal Stanley Teitel at a School Leadership Team meeting held on Tuesday, October 20, would require all students to take four years of math instead of three. According to Teitel this would alleviate some of the programming problems encountered this year when students who changed their minds about math were unable to fit into a class.

But Teitel's new policy would be problematic. First, there is the question of resources—does Stuyvesant really have enough money to create as many as five new math classes? A new math teacher would be needed to be hired to teach these classes. Many courses, including Freshman Composition, the Sophomore Writing Seminar, and several social studies electives, have been scaled down already or cut completely due to budget constraints. Cutting humanities classes even further to accommodate a four

year math requirement would be unfair to the students who would rather take an elective other than a calculus class.

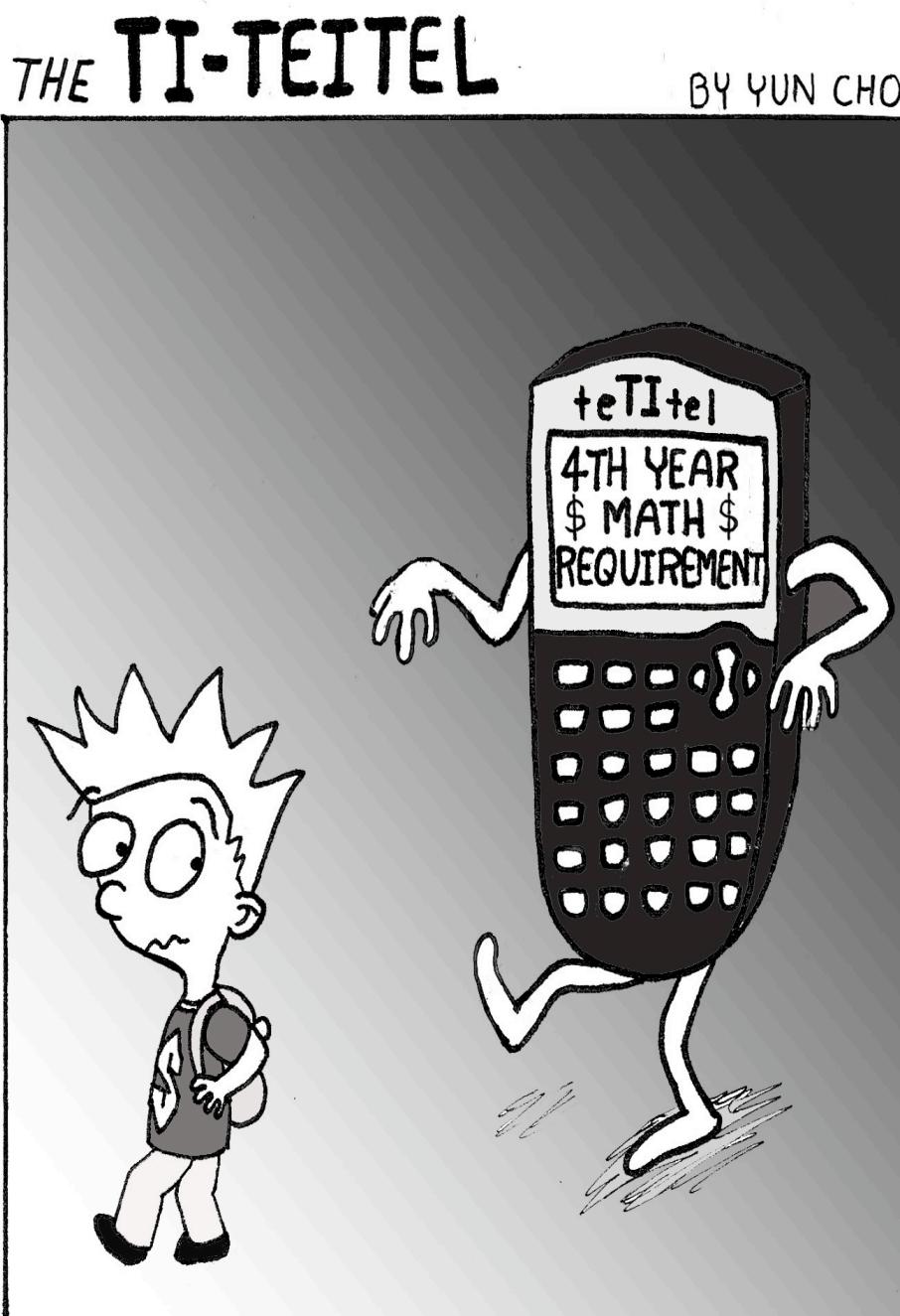
According to an article published in The Spectator on Monday, November 9, "Teitel Discusses Possibility of Four Year Math Requirement," Teitel also cited college admissions as one of the reasons for the new policy, arguing that four years of math are usually required to get students into "top tier" colleges. But getting students into college is not Stuyvesant's sole purpose. High school is a unique experience unto itself and Stuyvesant seniors are mature enough to be trusted with the ability to shape that experience to fit their interests. Forcing students to take a class they aren't interested in or suited for would not help their transcript and would only serve to make them unhappy with their courses.

However, it is true that the decision not to take a fourth year of math is one that requires some consideration. According to Teitel, several seniors opted not to take math when registering for courses during the spring of their junior year, but later regretted their decision, leading to a programming scramble to get students into math classes. Because of the chaos, some of those students could not be programmed for a math class that late in the game.

But this problem can be solved without mandating a fourth year of math. Instead, students could be automatically scheduled for math for their senior year. A new stage of online programming could be implemented during which students who know that they do not want to take math would indicate this to the programming staff. This "Stage Zero" of programming would come before the normal Stage I, when students sign up for Advanced Placement courses. Students who opt out of math would then be required to have a meeting with a guidance counselor, where they would be informed of the possible ramifications of not taking math their senior year and get their guidance counselor's advice, but ultimately the decision would rest with the student.

Forcing students to opt out of a fourth year of math rather than forcing them to opt in would help to eliminate some of the confusion and last minute program changes that are inherent in the current system, while still allowing students to make a decision that is best for them. Though college admissions are important, Stuyvesant's main priority must be finding a way to give students the most well-rounded and fulfilling education possible. That is what students are really here for.

OP-ART



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



*"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"*

SPORTS EDITORS

Scott Chiusano
Eddie Cytryn

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITORS

Christina Bogdan
Anna Menkova

ART DIRECTORS

Yun Cho
Singha Hon

LAYOUT EDITORS

Lodoe Sangmo
Vivian Sze
Laura Ye*

COPY EDITORS

Divya Dayal
Sara Li

BUSINESS MANAGERS

Denny Kim
Jamie Yu

WEB EDITORS

Victor Ma*
Marcin Skok

FACULTY ADVISOR

Kerry Garfinkel

Please address all letters to:

345 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10282
(212) 312-4800 ext. 2601
letters@stuyspectator.com

We reserve the right to edit letters

for clarity and length.
© 2009 The Spectator
All rights reserved by the creators.

* Managing Board Members

The Spectator

We are compiling an archive of past issues.

We are looking for issues published before 1995.

Please send any newspapers to:

The Stuyvesant Spectator
345 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10282

If you have any questions,
e-mail us at:
archives@stuyspectator.com

***Do you want to reflect
on an article?
Or speak your mind?***

Write a letter to the editor and e-mail it to letters@stuyspectator.com or drop it in The Spectator box in the second-floor mail room.

FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 5, Alexander Shin was incorrectly named in the byline for "Academic Intervention Services: Getting Extra Help."
- In "Academic Intervention Services: Getting Extra Help," junior Ramkumar Balasubramanyan's surname was misspelled.
- In "ARISTA, an Alternative," junior Latchini Gopal's first and surnames were misspelled.
- In "Energy Monitors to Be Installed in Computer Rooms," Dr. Farokh Eskafi's surname was misspelled.

Opinions

Junior Ramblings: Chewing My Way through the SAT

Michael Silverblatt / The Spectator



By SAMIRA SIDDIQUE

Many people have signature nervous tics. Some shake their legs uncontrollably, some bite their nails, and others curl their hair around their finger. The girl sitting behind me during the SAT chewed gum—and cracked it every 15 seconds.

**I walked out
feeling
foolish and
frustrated—
I should
have been
prepared for
distractions.**

The build-up to my ridiculous test-taking experience was long and productive, making the outcome even more irritating. I had prepared sufficiently for the test, even taking a Princeton Review course for seven weekends to feel more "ready." I listened to Nirvana while making embarrassing vocabulary flash cards (word: "abstruse." Sentence: Lil' Mama's speech is

"abstruse." A commonly used phrase by her, for example, is: "Izz poppin'!" Mnemonic picture: a container of lip gloss).

By the time the November SAT test date came around, I was surprisingly calm. There was nothing else I could do the night before but relax and follow my pre-test routine.

First, a copious amount of baked goods needed to be available to me—not because I love cake, which I do, but because my parents insisted that this would make me happy. For the SAT, our collection of desserts was heightened to a gluttonous overload of sugary goodness. My mom brought home pumpkin pie, chocolate-chip cookie dough ice-cream, cookies and raisin-bran muffins. I had some pie and ice-cream.

Second, it was absolutely crucial that I choose a "pump-up" song and listen to it while doing crunches vigorously and punching invisible punching bags. In past years, this song was "Get Low," by Lil' Jon, but for this occasion, I opted for "Danger! High Voltage," by Electric Six. After I got amped up for the following morning, I did some yoga and then went to sleep.

Adhering to the advice of the College Board and my mom, I ate a "good breakfast"—oatmeal and eggs sunny side up. My mom drove me to the testing center, and after she gave me some last minute advice

The build-up to my ridiculous test-taking experience was long and productive, making the outcome even more irritating.

("don't talk to anyone and sit by yourself once you're inside"), I took out my SAT admission ticket and ID card and was ushered into Fort Hamilton High School.

Expecting a group of students jittery with anxiety in the dimly lit auditorium, I found myself instead surrounded by people who couldn't care less about the SAT. And to my delight, my friend was there as well, equipped with Fig Newton bars for snack breaks. Amidst a group of orange-tinted people that smelled of pungent Armani Exchange cologne, we were escorted from the auditorium to the testing room.

During pre-test preparation, two students asked the proctor if she had any extra pencils, and one girl asked if anyone had an extra calculator. "What do we do with the bubbles?" the girl behind me asked about the scantrons. When we were ready to begin the SAT, a hapless boy's nose started to bleed. Even though my proctor explained that he should "just give up and go home," the boy was adamant about still taking the test.

"Try hard, you know, if that's your sort of thing," my proctor said to the rest of us. With

a final thumbs-up to my friend across the room, I opened my booklet.

I wrote satisfactorily for the essay section, and five minutes before the section's time ended, my proctor abruptly yelled, "Five minutes left! Amen, children; keep working!" The bloody-nosed boy had stopped bleeding by then. The second section, writing, went by quickly and we had a five minute break afterward.

Section three was a math section. I was working diligently, TI-89 in hand, when I felt an incessant tapping on my shoulder. Perplexed, irritated, and frankly horrified, I turned to see scantron-girl behind me, motioning for an eraser. Disgusted, I glanced at my proctor, who was reading a miniature Bible, and brusquely placed my eraser on the girl's desk. I could not regain the intensity of my earlier concentration, so I haphazardly answered the last few questions in the section. When the next break came, I took back my eraser and assertively told the girl not to speak to me during the test.

I breezed through the next

sections, thinking in the back of my mind about the gyro I was going to eat afterward. Then the orange-skinned and spiked-hair boy in front of me took out his iPhone to look up word definitions. The girl behind me began to chew gum obnoxiously—on the verge of devouring her own tongue. Some other girl was clanking her gold hooped earrings together. The proctor was reading her Bible and making "mmm" noises. A girl began to sigh and clear her throat frequently. It was a medley of sounds I did not want to hear (like Kidz Bop!), especially not at that moment.

In a heightened state of concentration, though I was more tuned in to taking the test, I was also more sensitive to the distractions around me. In the last moments of the SAT, I realized my prolonged nervous tic. My long-term preparation, from taking the prep course to eating baked goods the night before the test, demonstrated my need to be completely in control of the test-taking experience.

With one last distraction—a boy dropped his water bottle and yelled a profanity—the SAT ended. "Children, you are done! Amen," the proctor said.

I walked out feeling foolish and frustrated—I should have been prepared for distractions. Everyone has his or her own nervous tic, but it is not fair of me to be unable to handle other people's nervous tics because of my own.

In my extensive preparation, I failed to grasp the reality of the situation—that I was taking the SAT with many other students in a cramped room, and we were all bound to panic in subtle (or not so subtle) ways. It is unfortunate that my SAT experience was affected by such petty circumstances. But at least now, I know to make different choices for a more accommodating SAT experience in the future. Next time, I'll be ready—aided by my consumption of baked goods and the inspiration of my Lil' Mama vocabulary cards.

In a heightened state of concentration, though I was more tuned in to taking the test, I was also more sensitive to the distractions around me.

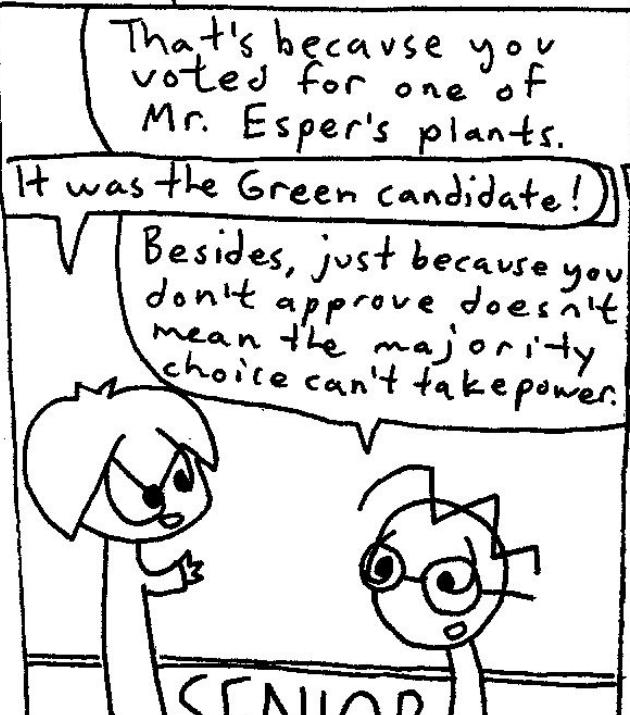
OP-ART

PICKLE ON A STICK

Curse the Student Union and its inaction! I didn't cast a vote for any of the lot of them!



www.pickleonastick.com



garreth o'brien

Majority? If the people had spoken, Mickey Mouse would be SU president.

Mickey hasn't been relevant since "Steamboat Willie". Pikachu, then.

I prefer Togepi's healthcare plan.



Opinions

Death of a Language



By GAVIN HUANG

As China's influence in the world continues to grow, my parents continue to press the values of resuming my Mandarin Chinese and written Chinese studies. I gave up learning the language one year ago—I was past the age where I could effectively take on a whole new language. My sister and I dreaded the weekly lessons, which were grounded in rote memorization of daily conversations and traditional poems. According to the Asia Society, the average literate Chinese person knows between three to four thousand characters. Learning how to read, write and even speak Chinese is a long, arduous process for a non-native speaker because the language is not alphabetic. One has to learn each and every new character.

One of the larger difficulties of learning Chinese, though, is the language's high level of internal diversity. The fact that there are several distinct dialects makes learning Chinese all the more difficult. I grew up learning Cantonese, and living in Chinatown, I had few problems communicating with others because much of the traditional immigrant base in the community was Cantonese. More recently, though, as more Mandarin-speaking immigrants move into the neighborhood, people who grew up exposed to only Cantonese are having more trouble communicating with them.

A New York Times article, "In Chinatown, Sound of Future is Mandarin," published on October 21, 2009, revealed that changing immigration patterns and China's rise on the world stage have led to

Mandarin eclipsing Cantonese in Chinatown. With Mandarin as the official language in China, more families feel the need to have future generations learn Mandarin instead of Cantonese. In my Chinese school, Mandarin classes outnumbered Cantonese classes two to one, even though most of my friends came from Cantonese-speaking families.

Dialects in China, with the exception of Mandarin, are used almost exclusively in the regions they originated from. Cantonese is used mostly in the southern province of Guangdong while standardized Mandarin originated in Beijing. The regional differences are connected to other more symbolic differences in heritage and history. "Some Cantonese-speaking parents are deciding it is more important to point their children toward the future than the past—their family's native dialect—even if that leaves them unable to communicate well with relatives in China," the article says. The purposes of a language extend beyond communication. The language itself, its linguistics and its aesthetic, are part of the culture. Choosing to learn one over another sends strong messages about one's identity.

While many non-Chinese speakers are aware of the different dialects in the Chinese language, fewer are aware that there are also two different writing systems. In my school, I was taught traditional Chinese, while simplified Chinese was discouraged. Simplified Chinese (used in mainland China and much of the world) is taught at Stuyvesant, as required by the New York State Board of Regents. The system was created by the

Chinese government in an attempt to increase literacy rates in China. Under this system, many Chinese characters were simplified, some more heavily than others. More recently, the Chinese government considered simplifying the written language even further.

As in the case of spoken dialects, traditional writing and simplified writing can be very different and sometimes incompatible. Like the standardization of Mandarin Chinese as the official language, the creation of the simplified system was meant to invoke a sense of unity and make the language easier to learn and easier for people to communicate. Proponents of traditional Chinese argue that this modification destroys many colorful aspects of the language. Much of learning written Chinese comes from exploring the aesthetics of the characters and the origins of the words. To give that up in favor of practicality is overlooking much of the language's beauty and elegance.

While it does not seem plausible to teach Cantonese as a class in Stuyvesant (given the large number of dialects that exist, it just wouldn't be fair), students would benefit from learning both simplified and traditional writing in Chinese classes. Traditional Chinese is still used in many parts of the world outside mainland China and is still used within the country for ceremonial purposes because of its cultural significance. At Brooklyn Tech, some teachers choose to teach the traditional form alongside the simplified Chinese tested by the Regents Exam.

Often, we are told that the importance of studying a language lies in connecting with the culture, and we may do so in the form of readings or a deep exploration of the country's history. But from my short-lived experience learning the language, I found that the structure and form invites a strong look into the past. Chinese may not become a dead language in the sense that Latin is a dead language, but as time progresses, the choice of learning only Mandarin and the simplified writing system may cause the Chinese language to lose the internal diversity and tradition that has made it unique. If we do not reevaluate the way we teach Chinese, future generations run the risk of losing these cultural aspects, as we head into a more complicated and globalized world.



By DANIEL SOLOMON

When dealing with New York City politics, education is an inescapable issue. Therefore, it is no surprise that education was a major stumbling block for both candidates in this year's mayoral elections. The campaigns took an ugly turn as Michael Bloomberg and William Thompson exchanged barbs over their records on the issue, with Bloomberg portraying himself as a no-nonsense reformer and Thompson accusing him of inflating statistics to give the illusion of progress. Some thought that, in his unsuccessful bid for mayor, Thompson lobbed unfair attacks against his opponent. Not only was his criticism of the Bloomberg's education policy legitimate and prescient, but it can also be proven with statistics.

a scientifically selected sample of students, found that "results on the [NAEP] show New York's fourth-graders dipping down and its eighth-graders nudging up in math since 2007—even though the state-designed math test has shown wild gains for both grades over those years. The glaring discrepancy renewed criticism that the state's exams have been watered down in recent years." By lowering the scores needed to pass state tests, Bloomberg, Chancellor Joel Klein and state politicians were able to create the illusion of progress.

The ultimate measure of student achievement is undoubtedly the high school graduation rate. The Department of Education (DOE) claims that the graduation rate has soared 15 percent in recent years. While the graduation rate has risen, so has the discharge rate—that is, people who leave school without having their withdrawals counted as dropouts. These statistics are also smoke and mirrors, hiding the inconvenient truth that we need an educator, not a litigator, running the DOE.

According to "High School Discharges Revisited," a Public Advocate's Report published on Thursday, April 30, 2009, "approximately one in three New York City high schools [...] graduation rates would drop by 15 percentage points or more if discharges were counted as dropouts in the graduation calculation."

Transcript discrepancies have also raised questions about whether those receiving diplomas actually deserve them. In its annual audit of school graduation rates, New York City's Bureau of Management Audit found inconsistencies in 9.6 percent of the 197 scientifically sampled transcripts they reviewed in July 2009. The office concluded that "that with limited oversight by the DOE in determining whether State and DOE graduation standards are met. [...] Schools [...] made questionable changes to student transcripts, and did not maintain evidence that student transcripts were properly approved." Essentially, the statistics are skewed in two ways: shady credit counting and the purging of bad students.

These problems stem from poor accountability. The most important step in achieving real progress is strict accountability measures. While Bloomberg and Klein have created school report cards to track the success of each building under the DOE's control, these progress reports lack rigor. According to The New York Times, 97 percent of schools received As or Bs on these reports, but a school only needed to earn 75 out of 100 on the scoring, which was determined primarily by progress and improvement on standardized tests. The reports need to be changed to hold educational institutions and educators accountable for student achievement.

Bloomberg took the reigns of the schools from the state in 2003 and promised a new day for New York City, one in which people would flock to the city for great schools rather than flee to the suburbs. When this failed to materialize in practice, Bloomberg created this fantasy on paper. Students need real progress, not the semblance of progress.

I look forward to the day when a mayor doesn't have to spend 100 million dollars to convince a recalcitrant public of his record on education, but the day when that record will speak for itself.

The Unlettered Letter

By LOULLYANA SANAY

I looked over the white sheet, observing the table with letters, teachers' names and course titles. I was doing "excellently" in some classes, and "satisfactorily" in others. However, all these 'E's and 'S's simply made me anxious for the next report card—when I would receive a more accurate description of how I was doing academically.

Letter grades are not intended to be as specific as numerical grades because the first term is supposed to serve as a "try-out" period for students adjusting to new teachers and classes. The letter grades are intended to be general warning signs for students' future grades. Numerical grades naturally represent a more accurate depiction of a student's performance than letter grades. There is a greater accumulation of work by the second term, and teachers form stronger relationships with their students by then. Though it is logical to have numerical grades later on in the semester, it is not necessarily reasonable to have letter grades in the first term.

Letter grades, given primarily in the first term of each semester, are extremely arbitrary and do not allow students to know exactly

where they stand academically. If letter grades are meant to be warning signs for future grades, then they should be as accurate as possible so students can better improve their grades.

We should have an accurate depiction of our grades in order to tailor our study habits to improve or maintain the grades we receive. Students who receive 'N's or 'U's should realize that they must improve their classroom and study habits. But putting a numerical grade in place of the 'N' or 'U' would more clearly show the scope of how poorly a student is doing, and may even cause the student to be more motivated to improve. In the case of a student who misses a lab, though, he or she automatically receives a 'U,' which does not indicate the student's performance in class at all.

Though teachers have different grading standards, they should grade the students' abilities as accurately as possible. Students would have a better sense of self-improvement if they received precise grades, instead of receiving an ambiguous letter grade, which could represent many different numerical grades. A student receiving all 'E's on his or her report card would not realize what numerical value these grades really represent. An 'E' representing

a grade of 90, for example, does not give one the same satisfaction as an 'E' representing a grade of 99. This also would not indicate how much more the student could improve.

Some teachers have a policy in which they do not give 'E's at all for the first term, and others give only 'S's because they believe that there has not been enough material to judge the student on. If there legitimately has not been enough material, then this policy makes sense. Otherwise, letter grades serve as "judgments" anyway, so we may as well receive accurate judgments. If a student can receive an 'S' in one class after barely passing every test given, while receiving an 'S' in another class for attaining a grade worthy of an 'E', then there is obviously no set standard that the student can follow to try to improve his or her grade.

First term grades are important because they serve as progress reports and potential warnings to the student for future report cards. However, the grades would be much easier to improve, or maintain, if they pinpointed exactly how a student were doing. We should be warned about future numerical grades by getting numerical grades to begin with.

During the race, Bloomberg touted higher test scores as proof that student achievement had increased and that the education system had improved. Indeed, from 2006 to 2009, the number of students receiving threes and fours on city standardized reading tests jumped from 50.7 percent to 68.8 percent, while passing rates on the math tests rose from 56.9 percent to 81.8 percent. However, much of this progress is dubious. Dr. Merry Tisch, the Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents, told The New York Times in "New York City Shows Gains in Math," published on June 2, 2009, that "there was reason for caution amid the impressive results. She said that the tests had become too predictable, and that the state was considering raising the scores required to pass next year."

According to The New York Post, the federal government's standardized test, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), conducted among

Cartoons

Thoughts

by Robert Vinluan

Sometimes people tell me, 'Hey Robert, your cartoon looks exactly like you'.

And then they say, 'My God, you're an amazing artist. Please have my babies'.

Okay, they don't say that second thing.

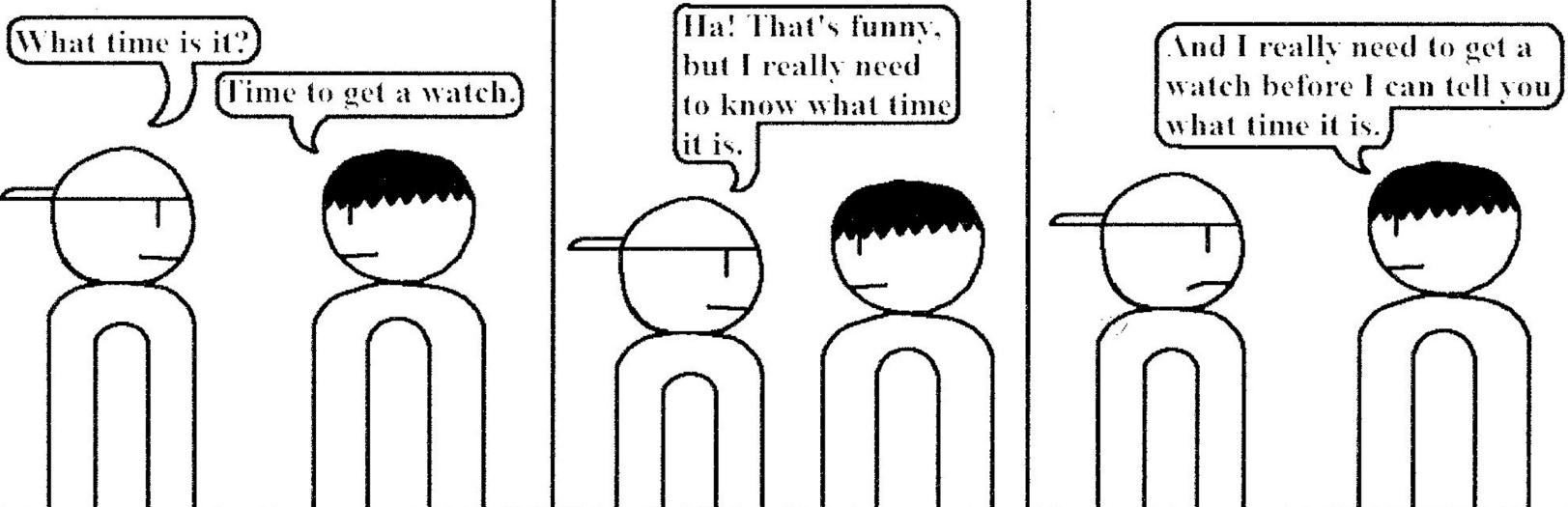
But either way, I try to be modest. This cartoon actually looks nothing like me.

I wear my watch on my left hand.

FACE IT!

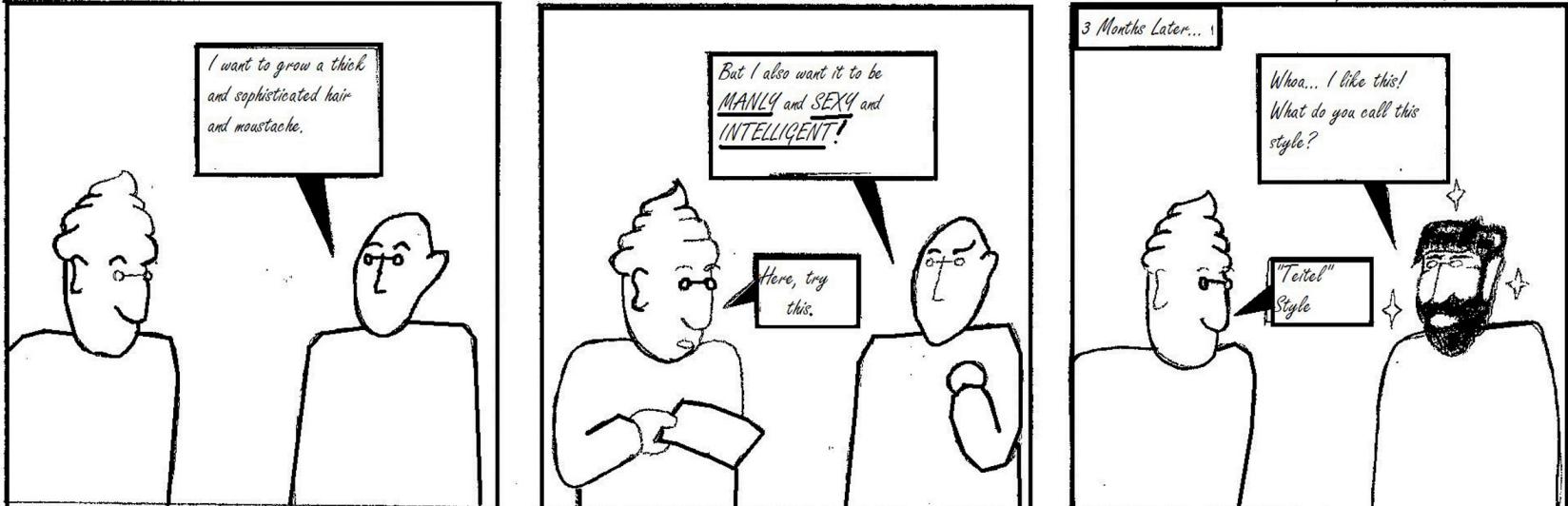
By Benito Kestelman

More Face It! Comics at <http://www.uselesscinema.webs.com>



Moustached

By Jonghyun Lee



A schedule, B normal

Why does everyone act like all Stuyvesant students are weird and neurotic?

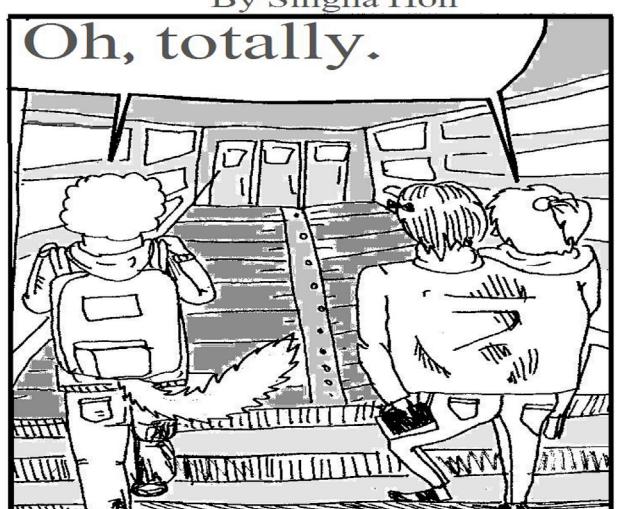


I mean, yes, we do get a little crazy over grades, and no, we don't get much sleep, but besides that we're just like any other high school student.



By Singha Hon

Oh, totally.



Arts & Entertainment

Bombs over Broadway

By THOMAS BERG

As I sped through traffic, it was clear that big dangers lay ahead. For the first seven minutes or so, the sheer density of longboarders easily overpowered automobile traffic. But as the Broadway Bomb progressed and some skaters dropped out, it became more difficult to fight off traffic. Sometimes the responsibility rested on one racer to keep the race going. Even if there was a red light, as long as someone was in the middle of an intersection, traffic stopped. I myself sometimes found it necessary to skate into the middle of an intersection to maintain the momentum of the race. As I neared the end of the race, I took a fall in the middle of traffic, slid and scraped my right arm and shoulder. But I jumped back up and finished the race somewhere between 30th and 40th.

The Broadway Bomb is the most notorious longboarding event in New York City. The race consists of "bombing" down 8.5 miles of Broadway from Columbia University through Columbus Circle, the pedestrian mall at Times Square and Union Square to Bowling Green. The Broadway Bomb originated in 2002 amongst a small group of daredevils. This year, between 250 and 300 people participated in the race. The race, which took place on Saturday, October 10, attracts celebrities from various skating disciplines; this year, Chris Yandell of Yandell Skates shared his unique boards and riding styles. Longboarding



Longboarding, a sport much like skateboarding, is a new sensation among teenagers.

seems to attract older skaters than skateboarding does. Those at the race ranged in age from 13 to 50. Considering the magnitude of the event, I had expected to see at least one other Stuyvesant student sporting his or her longboard at the Broadway bomb. But no. Maybe next year.

Longboarding, like skateboarding, originated in California. The sport is a form of skateboarding that encompasses the disciplines of downhill racing, slalom and 'dancing,' or moving along the board while skating. Longboards are usually 23 to 40 inches, but can be up to eight feet long. Longboarding's main appeal is the comfort of the ride and the relative ease of

use. The boards have large, soft wheels and flexible decks that absorb the shock from bumps and cracks in the road.

Longboarding has also caught on at Stuyvesant. Seniors Calvin Hu, Omar Ahmad and I recently created the Stuyvesant on Longboards club, through which we aim to excite other students about longboarding and offer them safety tips. We're also hoping to arrange deals for buying or borrowing starter boards.

Each year the Broadway Bomb has been held, the police have become more aware of the unsanctioned race. The dangerous race has been dubbed with the tagline "You might die," and part of the thrill is the illegal

weaving through traffic. During the five minutes before the race began, police arrived at the 116th Street and Broadway starting point in cars, large armored vehicles for transporting large numbers of arrestees and a truck with 50 or so portable iron fences. Fortunately enough, there was only a single arrest—one longboarder violated the speed limit. On several occasions during the race, the police even took it upon themselves to direct traffic. There have yet to be any casualties in the Broadway Bomb.

The winner of the race was Mark Shaperow, a tattoo-artist who has lived in New York City for the past two years. The second place winner, known as

Collin, was cheered on at the after-party by his wife and son. The third place winners, Theseus Williams and James Soliday, met up near the end of the race and reasoned that rather than racing (and fighting with) each other for the third place

Each year the Broadway Bomb has been held, the police have become more aware of the unsanctioned race.

title, they would cross the finish line with arms crossed and tie. At the after-party, they even tore a 100-dollar bill, their prize money, in half.

The after-party was held at a small clearing near South Street Seaport. One man sustained a bloody eye in the fight for a free longboard deck that was thrown into the crowd. He sported his prize and his wound proudly. It's quite a testimony to the passion of the participants when the ceremony is sometimes more dangerous than the race itself.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Do you want to reflect on an article? Or speak your mind?

Write a letter to the editor and e-mail it to letters@stuyspectator.com
or drop it in The Spectator box in the second-floor mail room.

The Spectator

We are compiling an archive of past issues.

We are looking for issues published before 1995.

Please send any newspapers to:

The Stuyvesant Spectator
345 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10282

If you have any questions, e-mail us at: archives@stuyspectator.com

Arts & Entertainment

Thirty Days...and 50,000 Words Later



By MOLLIE FORMAN

There are 825-words in the article. A long way from 50,000.

The National Novel Writing Month, more fondly known as NaNoWriMo, was founded in 1999 by Chris Baty, an anthropologist from San Francisco. This is an annual contest that begins on November 1 and ends at midnight on November 30. It challenges participants to write a 50,000-word novel in a single month. Anyone who fulfills the required word count is a winner as soon as her work is entered into an online database.

The popularity of NaNoWriMo is mostly due to word of mouth. Participants at Stuyvesant, including senior Shoshana Akabas and sophomore Cecelia Kim, learned of the contest from their friends, while sophomores Leah Chevan and Vivian Ng became involved after reading Internet articles. The creators offer a comprehensive Web site with a detailed FAQ, friendly message boards, and a simple registration system.

The purpose of the writing exercise is to "throw out your inner editor and forget about all the things that normally hold you back," said Akabas, who participated last November as well. She wrote about a student election.

This year, Akabas is writing about "a young boy who has an imaginary friend, among other psychological problems," she said. "It's a little bit of a heavy book." Other writers, such as Kim and second-time participant Chevan, are writing fantasy pieces about dark fairies and enchanted windows, respectively. Ng is focusing on a high school drama about a mute girl whose self-esteem issues keep her from forming personal connections. The number of different genres

being explored shows the creative aspect of the contest.

While most of the writing that students do must be proofread and perfected, NaNoWriMo offers an opportunity to write without consequences. The contest is not judged by quality, but by quantity; winners are determined after their word counts are verified by a counter on the Web site. Their work is immediately deleted from the database to provide security measures against plagiarism. Thus, the stresses that come with submitting work for critique is eliminated. "The kamikaze approach forces you to lower your expectations, take risks, and write on the fly," Baty wrote on the NaNoWriMo Web site.

There are several guidelines that are to be followed, though there is no way for them to be enforced. For example, writers are not allowed to begin their novel before November 1. According to the site's FAQ, "You'll care about the characters and story too much to write with the gleeful, anything-goes approach that makes NaNoWriMo such a creative rush." Outlines, however, are encouraged.

With simple time management skills, students are able to manage. Kim firmly believes that schoolwork comes first, but finds ways to fit in writing time. "I work on the commute, the time right before I fall asleep, and in between completing different homework assignments," Kim said. "It's pretty incredible."

"I try to write for about twenty minutes to half an hour every day, but I have schoolwork and it'd be irresponsible to spend more time than that," Akabas said in agreement.

Chevan's parents set ground rules for her before the month began, allowing her to write as much as she wants as long as she

finishes her homework and gets at least six hours of sleep. "Perhaps I raise my hand a bit less and yawn a bit more," she said of the effects of the extra work.

The collective atmosphere of NaNoWriMo is extremely beneficial. While writers are not allowed to collaborate, the community of authors is always ready with a kind word. The participants are divided into regions, with municipal liaisons who dole out advice and keep contestants up to date on new developments. Kim finds that the pep-talk e-mails sent several times a week from Baty or guest authors such as Gail Carson Levine are great motivators, and Chevan uses the message boards and weekly write-ins to connect with other writers. "All of the people in NaNo New York are very encouraging and understanding," she said.

Motivation is important for such an intense assignment. In comparison to the amount of work required, the rewards for achieving the target word count—a printable certificate and bragging rights—may seem meager. To the participants, this doesn't matter. "I write for fun, so the reward is the writing itself, and it's really cool when I get to this stage when I'm almost halfway through and you can sort of see the book taking shape," Akabas said. "It's pretty incredible."

The importance of NaNoWriMo is the equal acceptance that it gives to all types of writers. "It's just a fun exercise to enjoy, and I think that even a math-crazed genius would enjoy writing something," Kim said. Chevan believes that you don't have to enjoy writing, or even be good at it, in order to participate in NaNoWriMo. "All it takes is an idea and a large mug of coffee, tea, or hot chocolate," she said.

Post 'Em Up

By DANIEL FLESHMAN

Whether they're passed out on the streets, stuffed into lockers, or covering our bedroom walls, posters are an important part of our lives. Crammed between the usually-crowded China Red and the Mudville 9 Saloon, Philip Williams Posters, located at 122 Chambers Street, is often unnoticed by Stuyvesant students, or offhandedly dismissed as "that poster place." What students don't know is that every day, they are passing something of a museum, one of the largest and most diverse poster collections in the world.

Philip Williams Posters was founded 35 years ago on the Upper West Side, and moved to its current Tribeca location three years ago. The museum is said to house the largest vintage poster gallery in the world. The original gallery featured a variety of posters, dating back to the 1870s, ranging in categories from "animals" to "work ethic." Philip Williams, the owner and the museum's namesake, is an avid collector and has traveled all over the world to build his enormous collection.

"Posters are a great art form," Williams said. "They give you a feel for the time period and are much more personal than other kinds of art."

The walls of the museum are covered with original posters from every era imaginable, ranging in price from 15 to several thousand dollars.

Along with several old American posters, Williams has managed to accumulate hundreds of originals from many foreign countries, including the former Soviet Union. The section devoted to political posters, for example, features dozens of socialist realist posters from the early Soviet era. One such item, valued at approximately 2,000 dollars, is a propaganda poster from the 1930s, encouraging the viewers to support Stalin's new five-year plan. Other posters include advertisements for both American and foreign films, flyers advertising musicians, and British and American World War I-era posters.

Walking through Philip Williams Posters is unlike visiting any other museum. While other museums offer a range of art that can give you a subjective viewpoint of a certain historical era, walking through this collection makes you feel like you are entering a different time period with every step. Instead of focusing on the artist's inner struggles or beliefs, posters give you a feel for the sentiments and values of each era throughout history, bringing

you closer in touch with them.

Though there are hundreds of posters on the walls of the museum, the visitor is only seeing a small fraction of the museum's vast collection.

"We have a lot of originals. Only a few of the originals hang on the walls. The rest are in safe boxes," said Kaira, an employee, who declined to give her last name.

Aside from just about any poster imaginable, the museum also exhibits and sells unconventional and quirky postcards, sculptures, paintings and figurines. A colorful painting hanging on the wall shows a series of cartoonish drawings of influential twentieth century figures such as Pablo Picasso and Muhammad Ali. Another side of the unique store houses a strange brown clay figurine of Jesus in green garments on the cross. The strange, yet interesting hodge-podge of slightly unusual art somehow mixes together very successfully.

A few Stuyvesant students have stopped in on several occasions for some poster-window shopping, or even to buy a few of the unique items.

"It's a pretty unique place for the area," senior George Kruchin said. "The posters there are diverse and really catch your eye."

"The posters there are very diverse, interesting, and really catch your eye."
—George Kruchin, senior

"If I were to decorate my room, I would definitely go there," senior Tasfia Nayem said. "The posters and figurines [are] really cool and there's lots of variety."

If you are hunting down a 19th century poster promoting the Chinese Exclusion Act or simply can't live without the collector's edition 50th anniversary poster of *I Love Lucy*, Philip Williams Posters has the perfect poster for everyone.



Philip Williams Posters, located at 122 Chambers Street, houses one of the largest collections of vintage posters.

Arts & Entertainment

New Life for Old Halloween Costumes

By ANASTASSIA BOUGAKOVA

Halloween's over and done with. You've collected enough candy to last you for months and you're ready to take down all the decorations, when you notice the huge sparkly mess with wings hanging in your closet. There's no way you can keep it in there until next Halloween. Maybe you can stuff it into those boxes way in the back of the your closet. But it seems there's no space in there either; the boxes are overflowing with the tulle, glitter and fake blood of costumes from Halloweens past. What do you do?

For the artistically inclined, there is the "costume remake" option. You can use material from old costumes for your everyday apparel. If your old superman costume no longer fits, you can cut out the logo and paste it onto a blue shirt. Make a fun shirt to wear in support of your favorite hero. Alternatively, you can make new costumes from old costumes. The wings from an old fairy princess costume can turn any plain white shirt into a usable costume. Add some black paint, and the wings can turn a drab black shirt into a Batgirl costume.

If you don't want to destroy the fragile memory of your childhood trick-or-treating days by cutting up your costume, you can pass it on to younger siblings, family friends or your neighbors. You can even help younger

kids remake your old costumes into something more to their liking—a practical and cheap idea. "I give my old costumes to my sister and she makes stuff for herself out of them. It saves money and it gives her something to do," sophomore Edwina Tam said.

Another option for the philanthropically-inclined is donating your costume to a charity or thrift store. Many thrift stores around Stuyvesant accept Halloween costumes year-round. Monk's Thrift Shop in Greenwich Village is a great place to donate costumes and shop around for new ideas. "I'd like to think that someone else is enjoying my Halloween costume as much as I did," sophomore Emily Atlas said.

If your costumes aren't in good enough shape to be donated, you should try turning them into Halloween decorations for next year. You can stuff a Halloween costume with straw and paper and hang it up for a spooky effect. Accessories like cat ears and plastic fangs can also be strategically placed around the home for easy Halloween décor.

Next time you see your costumes, don't just shove them into the unexplored depths of your closet. Decide what you're going to do with them. You don't have to be Martha Stewart to do something fun and inventive with items that are usually used only once a year.



Not Another Teen Movie



Courtesy of Adam Salky

DARE, a movie that focuses on the controversies of teenage life, is playing at the Village East Cinema through Thursday, November 19.

By ALAN SAGE

The opening credits are accompanied by an animation of a teenager rejecting a call labeled "mom" on a cell phone—enough to make any teen viewer blush.

The first scene portrays a sickeningly typical high school drama class, with Alexa (Emmy Rossum), an A student prototype, complaining about Johnny (Zach Gilford), a bad boy prototype. And then a funny thing happens:

The film takes off when Alexa interprets 'live' as 'have sex with Johnny.'

"DARE," a 2009 Sundance Film Festival selection directed by Adam Salky, transforms from a typical teen flick into a beautifully-done art film about ménage à trois encounters, homosexuality, and societal roles.

Granted, the (perhaps intentional) torturous onslaught of clichés goes on for about the first third of the film. While Alexa drives with her friend Courtney (Rooney Mara), the two draw out their "puh-lease's" and attempt hip slang by referring to Urban Outfitters as "Urban." The audience is subjected to another typical drama scene, in which Grant (Alan Cumming), a pretentious actor, tells Alexa that if she wants to be an actress she needs to 'live' more.

The film takes off when Alexa interprets 'live' as 'have sex with Johnny.' Alexa decides to attend a party at Johnny's house and subsequently thrusts herself on Johnny. She seductively asks him, "Do you want to rehearse?", referencing the sex scene between her and Johnny in a play for drama class. Rather than smoothly responding, Johnny acts confused—he doesn't understand the reference. Even once Alexa leads Johnny into a room, their motions, and especially Johnny's, are naturally awkward. At this point in the film, one begins

to realize that "DARE" is not a typical teen flick.

Johnny is perhaps the most well-developed character in the film. Film watchers seem to hold an undeniable affection for bad-boy characters who don't play by the rules but show they aren't invincible—Kikuchiyo in Akira Kurosawa's "Seven Samurai" is one example. As the film goes on, Johnny's bad-boy caricature slowly disintegrates to reveal his many quirks.

The first quirk Johnny reveals is his confused sexuality. When Alexa's outcast friend Ben (Ashley Springer) gives Johnny a ride home, the two young men somehow end up making out in Johnny's pool. As with the Alexa-Johnny sex scene, the motions are awkward and realistic. The shots all have a blue tint, presumably caused by reflections from the pool, and the color makes the scene feel as hazy and confusing to the audience as it does to Johnny and Ben.

When Ben tells Alexa about his interesting evening, the two begin to vie for sexual attention from Johnny. Meanwhile, Johnny shows that he's not just interested in sex but likes Alexa and Ben for their company. It doesn't seem like a natural emotional shift for Johnny, who before Alexa's advances enjoyed the company of popular-kid caricatures and didn't have a problem with shallow friendships. But his disinterest does serve to contrast with Ben and Alexa, who generally play by the rules and treat Johnny as a symbol of their sexual excursions; Johnny, on the other hand, doesn't play by the rules but treats people as people.

One of the most beautifully shot scenes of the film is a little 'dress-up party' which Courtney holds for Alexa, Ben and Johnny. Alexa and Courtney's brightly colored costumes and the char-

acters' slowed-down movement give a drunken ambiance to the sequence. When Johnny tells Alexa and Ben how he likes them as friends and cares about them, the drunken feel enhances Alexa and Ben's long silent stare at him. As Johnny begins to comprehend his role in the triangle, he kneels down near a toilet and breaks down in tears. Not the horrendous sobbing that plagues too many movies, but a far more effective quiet sniveling.

At the end of the film, Alexa and Ben have dinner together after high school graduation. When Alexa takes a walk into the street, she happens to see Johnny. After a brief and unsatisfying encounter, he walks back into the theater

Everything feels strange and foreign, as it does to Johnny.

where he works. Another theater worker asks Alexa whether she is an actor or in the ensemble, and when she replies neither, he asks who she's supposed to be. The film becomes a study of what teenage social roles imply—who plays the game and who refuses to conform.

"DARE" is playing at the Village East Cinema through Thursday, November 19th.
181-189 2nd Avenue
(212) 529-6799
village.east@readingrdi.com

From the Archives:

FINAL EXAMS WEEK OF JAN. 25

The Spectator

OF STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL

TRACK MEET SATURDAY

Henry Shire

VOL. XXXVI—No. 14 NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.—JANUARY 14, 1932 BY SUBSCRIPTION

English Tutor Lauds Kipling Before Arista

Traces Poet's Progress To Short Story

SUMS UP POET'S LIFE

Reads "Tommy" and "The Grave of the Hundred Dead"

"Rudyard Kipling is known least as a poet, and for that reason I shall treat his poetry for you," declared Mr. Hyman Mostow, teacher in the English Department, when as guest speaker before the Stuyvesant Chapter of the Arista Society he delivered an informal address in the school library the day before Christmas.

"'Kim,' 'Captains Courageous' and 'The Light That Failed,'" said Mr. Mostow, "were the only full length novels that Kipling wrote, and they do not persist, perhaps, as the most commendable part of his writings. Rudyard Kipling, after all, was a better story teller than a portrayer of human emotions, as his popular short stories and poems show."

In swift, sure phrases the speaker went on to biograph a short history of the British journalist, author and poet.

Traces Kipling's Writings

Tracing Kipling's authorial progress from the period of juvenile story writing to novel and short story writing, Mr. Mostow paused to dwell on the brilliance of the Englishman's poetry. Hanging on every word, the Arista men followed Mr. Mostow while he read "Tommy" and "The Grave of the Hundred Dead," popular ballads by Kipling.

Throughout, the speaker held his audience in the grip of his splendid pronunciation, sincere feeling and sparkling emphasis.

Discusses Poems

In the poem "The Grave of The Hundred Dead," Kipling condemns the British terrorism in Africa, when he pictures the bloody massacre of some hundred natives by soldiers who butchered the natives to atone the death of a white man. By doing this Kipling courted the certain royal disfavor of Queen Victoria.

Then the honor men followed Mr. Mostow through the reading of "Tommy."

"I went into a public house as sober as could be,

They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none for me"

Atop a shelf in the library, Dante's plaster lips seemed to curl into a sneer. Plato, his cohort on the books, stared unmoved. As Mr. Mostow concluded his reading of the simple plaintive little ballad, the statue of a simple poet, Robert Burns, appeared to smile whimsically down. It seemed doubly reassuring when the Arista men broke out into a generous round of applause as the speaker put down his book, concluding his charming informal address.

HOCKEY TEAM LOSES TO BOYS' BY SCORE OF 3-0

Last Period Rally by Boys' Beats Stuyvesant Puckpounders

A vainly fighting Scarlet and Blue hockey team succumbed to the puck chasing representatives of Boys' High School in the last five minutes of combat, 3-0, last Friday evening at the Brooklyn Ice Palace, before a capacity crowd of spectators. The alert Dutch defensemen courageously stopped the onslaught of the Blue and Gold forwards until the waning minutes of the clash, but the Stuyvesant wings could not force the disc into their opponents' cage. Time and again, the Scarlet skaters fought their way to within scoring distance, but each attempt was frustrated by the hard-checking Brooklyn goal guardians.

First Period Scoreless

The first period, while devoid of scoring, was featured by close, hard, checking and relentless attacks by both sextets. The Stuyvesant attack was spirited, but slightly lacking in precision, and consequently few shots were taken at the Boys' High net. When the Brooklyn stick wielders did break through the Scarlet and Blue's defense, they found Max Pomada impossible to feint out of position. The closing minutes of the opening period found the Dutch players trying earnestly but rarely getting into scoring position.

Fight in Second Half

A near free-for-all fight was the outstanding feature of the second and last period. Laspia, the Boys' High left defense man, resented a vigorous check by Brennan, and proceeded to let his fists fly as they sprawled on the ice. Players of both teams soon swarmed about the two warriors ready to take a hand for their own cause. Goalie Pomada left his net and proceeded to sit Laspia on the ice once again. Further disorder was averted by the two referees, and Laspia, instead of receiving a penalty, was ordered out of the game for the remainder of the evening. A substitute was also called.

(Continued on Page 3)

IN MEMORIAM

The faculty and student body extend their deep and sincere sympathy to the family of Irving Silver who died suddenly last week of spinal meningitis. Irving Silver, while at school was one of the most popular students and greatly admired by his fellow classmates for his athletic ability, his manliness, clean personality and sunny disposition. His loss is greatly felt by his team mates, coaches, teachers and school chums.

Chess Contest Premier Award To Zakrofsky

Conquers Spritzer in Final Title Game

After five rounds of hard, tiring play, Charles Zakrofsky emerged as victor, defeating Spritzer, runner-up, last Thursday, in the Chess Club room, after forty moves had been recorded in the final round of the intramural chess tournament. Zakrofsky played the black side of a French defense, and a novel feature of the game was castling on the Queen's side by Zakrofsky. The game lasted forty minutes, with President Rubin acting as referee, holding the contestants to the "touch and move" law. Today, at the regular club meeting, Zakrofsky will be presented with a book on chess analysis in recognition of his winning the first Stuyvesant intramural chess tournament. Rubin announced that a similar tournament will be held next term and that the winner of this match, Zakrofsky, be considered as the fourth board member of next term's team.

Term's Work is Completed

The meeting will conclude the term's activities. Elections for next term will be held, and President Rubin will act as chairman. At this meeting a summary of the term's work will be made by Secretary Bunter. A few hints regarding the program of the chess team for next term will also be given.

The Stuyvesant chess team has completed its schedule. Tabak and Ressler will be the mainstays of next term's team.

Isaac Kashdan, former graduate of Stuyvesant finished second in the Hastings Tournament in England. Mr. Kashdan had won seven and a half, drawn three and lost no games. He was half a point behind Flohres of Czechoslovakia. Mr. Kashdan has been invited to play, next month, in a tournament at which Dr. Alkine, the world's champion, will also participate.

PHILIP KAMMER WINS ART POSTER MEDAL

The reports of the result of the poster contest conducted by the Music Department in conjunction with the annual Concert given by the orchestra, proves that there are many fine artists in Stuyvesant. A good word was said for every poster submitted, of which the poster of Philip Kammer was selected as the best. He received a gold medal for his work. Herman Corson took second place, and a silver medal which accompanies it, while Thomas De Petro, who received first prize in the Indoor Meet contest, followed, and was rewarded with a bronze medal.

Those who also did remarkable work but were not good enough to place were Luigi Ferrari, John Abbate, and Joseph Princiotta.

The judges for the contest, the Messrs. Danielson, Christman, Fischer, and Dr. Rabus, the first two of the Music Department and the latter two, drawing instructors.

Stuyvesant Alumnus Prominent Chessman

Isaac Kashdan, former Stuyvesant chessman, is in second place after eight rounds of master chess play, at Hastings, England. Kashdan is the only American invited to this international assemblage, including nine other famous chess players from India, Holland, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and England. Mr. Kashdan is at present the champion of the Manhattan Chess Club. He is considered the unofficial champion of the United States, and by many, as the next world's champion.

"Chief" Nino Castro, Leo Mazzeo, James Macahill, Arny Manoff and Joe (Continued on Page 3)

Hotel Pennsylvania Scene Of Upper Class Merriment

Seniors and Escorts Enjoy Social Evening

GRADUATES PRESENT

Henry Ferrente's Music is Exceptionally Good

High above the wet, gleaming streets of midtown New York, some two hundred and fifty seniors and their beautifully gowned escorts danced away the night on the roof-garden of the Hotel Pennsylvania, Thirty-third Street and Seventh Avenue, at the semi-annual Stuyvesant Senior Promenade last Friday evening.

Owing to the efforts of Chairman John McLoughlin, Arthur Macaulay, Fred Hoven, and James Parker of the Prom Committee in securing such excellent music as was provided by Henry A. Ferrente's Orchestra, and in obtaining of the popular roof garden, the Prom was run off with its customary smoothness and completeness of detail.

Faculty Advisers Foresee Success

Mr. Murray Bruce, Dean of the Senior Class, and Mr. Benjamin Rosenthal, Maitre D'Affaire, were unanimous in their expression of pleasure at the evident success of the event. Both faculty members predicted a happy time early in the evening when they sensed the carefree feeling of congeniality among the graduates-to-be.

Throughout the evening the dance floor was constantly crowded with gliding couples as waltz succeeded fox-trot and the hours slipped by into the morning. In their immaculate tuxedoes, the seniors and their gorgeous companions provided a picture dazzling to the eye by its colorful splendor. The roof garden, with its luxurious furnishings and spacious casement windows provided a fit setting for so gay an affair.

All Seek the Balcony

Not even the lightly falling rain could deter the more romantic "pre-grads" from taking their "affinities" to some sheltered nook on the open balcony to gaze, perhaps, half-wistfully at the beauty of the lighted skyline.

On the floor, happy hours of the past must have been reborn as the "old grads" renewed lifelong friendships. Prominent among the alumni present were Edward Belsky, Edgar Coddington, Frank Litsky, Louis Ceggerson, and Lou Font, whose names time has failed to obscure.

Messrs. Ollendorf, Romme, Bruce, Rosenthal, Brundage, Jaret, and Mr. and Mrs. Conahey, represented, in part, the assemblage of the faculty.

John McManus, Efraim Hernandez, and David Blatt were noted as some of the more popular honor men present, while Al Farber, Max Pomada, Arthur Heisch, Joe Germino, Maurice Ferrara, Don Rith, George Zappala, and a host of other athletes were seen constantly on the dance floor.

"Chief" Nino Castro, Leo Mazzeo, James Macahill, Arny Manoff and Joe (Continued on Page 3)

Sports

Boys' Cross Country

Boys' Cross Country Misses States

continued from page 20

the Championship race.

The team went into the City Championships ranked sixth in the final pre-race poll. "For us, being Manhattan champs is not enough. Stuyvesant undoubt-

"We have a very young team. We have four sophomores, three juniors, and three seniors in our top 10."
—Mark Mendes, coach

edly has the best Cross Country team in Manhattan, but our true competition lies in the outer boroughs. City champs is

what we have been training for all season, and we will not be defeated easily. This weekend, we will see which team is truly the best in New York City. Every runner on our team will need to run their best if Stuyvesant is to qualify for the State Championships," Chen said before the race.

Although Hyman-Cohen placed second in the city with a time of 16:58 at cities, Stuyvesant's next runner, sophomore Konrad Surkont, came in 14th place. They both qualified individually for the State championship, but Stuyvesant as a team placed fifth overall in the race and only the top four teams qualify for states. It is the first time since Mendes has began coaching at Stuyvesant that the team has not qualified for states.

"We had a very young team. We had four sophomores, three juniors, and three seniors in our top 10," said Mendes.

Although having such a young team this year might have cost them a trip to states, it could benefit them next year. Four of the top seven runners will return next year, giving them another experienced team. The loss of Hyman-Cohen will be crippling, but Mendes still has the depth to rebuild a strong team next year.

Boys' Soccer

FC's Season Cut Short in Third Round

By EDDIE CYTRYN

In the 74th minute, Stuyvesant senior Drake Berglund controlled a pass at the top of the box and pounded a low shot. Six-foot-two Francis Lewis High School junior and goalie Christopher Herrera sprawled in front of the ball and blocked it. Senior Cody Levine brought in the rebound and shot. Herrera again stopped the ball from the ground and thus ended the Stuyvesant attack.

After finishing the regular season in third place in the Manhattan A division with a 7-3-2 record, Stuyvesant's boys' soccer team, Stuyvesant FC, defeated Benjamin Cardozo High School and John Adams High School in the first two rounds of the playoffs. They met the Francis Lewis Patriots in the quarterfinals on Tuesday, November 3.

Francis Lewis immediately applied pressure. Throughout the first half, the Patriots won the headers and dominated possession of the ball. In the 20th minute Francis Lewis senior and forward Ricky Rada settled a lob pass swung out wide, took two steps and fired a shot that sailed just high over the goal.

"In the first half we did not play well enough," Stuyvesant coach Feliks Fuksman said.

Five minutes later Francis Lewis was awarded a free kick from just outside Stuyvesant's box. Francis Lewis senior and captain Sebastian Guenzatti kicked the ball over the four-man wall. Senior and captain Alex Sandler dove to his left and punched the ball up off of the cross bar before jumping on the rebound. Stuyvesant went into halftime down 1-0.

Shortly into the second half, Francis Lewis won a corner kick. The corner was deflected in the box where Guenzatti poked it in. Francis Lewis seemed to pick up where it left off in the first half.

Down 2-0, Stuyvesant FC regrouped. "We knew that it was anyone's game, that we had to challenge the balls and play the game the way we know how to play," Fuksman said.

Stuyvesant evened the time of possession and controlled the tempo. In the 52nd minute senior and captain Andres Fernandez's free kick crossed to junior Arik Raviv, who played it down the wing where he won a corner kick. Berglund's corner was low and towards the near post. Raviv dove and headed the ball wide of the net.

"They were playing well. They had us back on our heels," junior Colin O'Connor said. "We needed to get something

started. We had the chances, we just couldn't put them away. [Herrera] came up with some great saves."

Late in the game, Stuyvesant FC created more opportunities against the increasingly porous Patriot defense. After several near misses in the 74th minute, Stuyvesant FC again coordinated an attack. Berglund received a throw-in from Levine and passed back to Levine who sent a long pass across the field to Raviv. Herrera kicked away Raviv's hard left-footed shot from just out of the box.

With one minute left on a Francis Lewis corner, senior Khalid Kamran headed a ball past Sandler into the near corner, extending the Patriots' lead to 3-0 and officially ending Stuyvesant's season.

Many members of Stuyvesant FC thought that this year's team had a good chance to win a city crown. The team will lose eight seniors, including both starting and back-up goalies Sandler and Andrew Cook. "We are losing the spine of our team," Fuksman said. "We are just going to have to fill in those spaces."

"It's going to be hard but every team loses players," junior Adam Yabroudi said.

ADVERTISEMENTS

CHINA QUEST

2009
summer in china

info@chinaquest.org
www.chinaquest.org

**Find Harvard/Yale Educated Editors
for your College Admissions Essay**

Go Visit



www.GuruFi.com
Your education. Your GuruFinder

- Experienced Editors from Top 20 Unis
- 1 or 2 Day Service
- Money-Back Satisfaction Guarantee

pace plumbing corp.

41 Box Street
Brooklyn, NY 11222
718 389 6100 24 hours

Pace Plumbing in New York City
Pace Fire Protection in New York City

**Yes, We Can.
Yes, We Have.
Yes, We Will.**

For nearly 40 years, under the same ownership, Pace Plumbing Corp has provided commercial building owners and managers with all phases of construction, service and maintenance. Our product is plumbing and fire sprinklers. Our service is integrity, responsiveness and problem solving.



Want to place an ad?

Contact us at:

specbusiness@gmail.com

Sports

Boys' Football

The Thrill of Victory and the Agony of Defeat

By NICK GALLO

Another season gone by, and another disappointment for the Peglegs, Stuyvesant's varsity football team.

This seems to be a recurring theme for the team. After posting a 2-8 record this year, including six consecutive losses to close out the season, the Peglegs have had just one winning season since 2008.

"This season was nothing like we hoped," senior and offensive and defensive lineman Athithan Selvendran said. Selvendran, like many of his teammates, had predicted prior to the season that the Peglegs were poised to have a successful year. Needless to say, the Peglegs greatly underestimated their competition within the Public Schools Athletic League Cup Division.

No single game could emphasize this point more clearly than the Peglegs' Homecoming showdown against the Lafayette Education Complex Patriots on Friday, October 9. The Patriots came into that game riding a 32-game losing streak, having not won since the fall of 2006. Ironically, their last victory before the losing streak was also against the '06 Peglegs. While many fans thought this game represented the turning point of the season, the players believe that their downhill slide began even earlier.

"The turning point in the season came in the fifth game against George Washington [High School]...when I tore my ACL [anterior cruciate ligament]," senior and quarterback Eric Lind said. It would be hard to argue with Lind that the Peglegs' loss of their starting quarterback was a crippling setback. The loss of



The Peglegs believe that their unsuccessful season can be attributed to their lack of consistent execution.

Lind was especially significant since the Peglegs had changed their offense in every season for the past four, partially a result of head coach Mark Strasser taking over before last season.

"Our running game never got going as well as we hoped it to for whatever reason, and a lot of our points were based on passing plays," senior and linebacker, fullback and captain Ari Fima said. "Without him [Lind] we had an inexperienced sophomore quarterback [Cailen Kaplan]."

However, when asked if their

struggles this season could be attributed to the coaching staff, Fima disagreed. "In the end it all comes down to our execution so the blame has to go on us," Fima said.

It is hard to pinpoint a single factor that led to the Peglegs' disappointing season. Unlike in other sports, such as baseball or tennis, where one can overcome physical disadvantages with skill and craftiness, the success of a football team relies largely on the brute strength of its players. Stuyvesant is not a school that

sports six foot tall quarterbacks and 275 pound linemen. After all, even with all the conditioning and weightlifting the Peglegs did before and during the season, football is not the top priority for the team, academics are.

And while football not being their top priority has been the excuse for the former Pegleg teams, the attitude of this year's squad is quite different.

"We could just as easily be 8-2 or 7-3 if we played up to our talent level," Lind said.

"None of the teams were bet-

ter than our team, we made mistakes that caused us losing our games," Selvendran said.

The players believe that it was not their lack of ability, but rather their inability to execute on a consistent level, that led to their losing season. The reason for that may simply be that they did not have enough time to develop as football players during their busy school year.

"These kids have a lot of things on their plate—schoolwork, college—and it's tough for them to put the necessary amount of work into football in order to be successful," Strasser said. "But we stuck through it all as a team, that's all that matters."

Surely, none of the Peglegs could have seen this coming: six games below .500 in a 10 game season, especially when the expectations at the beginning of the year were so high because of the strong senior class that was returning. Although their disappointment may be hard to deal with right now, the Peglegs must also remember how they never lacked heart in any game, whether it was a win or a loss.

"We can learn to keep playing hard and to never give up and although the season didn't go as planned I'm sure everyone will remember the fun we had over the last four years," Fima said.

Perhaps that is the best way to put it. No team wants to end the season at the bottom of the standings, and the Stuyvesant Peglegs are no different. But if there is one thing they can come away with from this season, it is that they worked as hard as any team they faced. Knowing that they cannot blame their sub-par season on a lack of effort may be the consolation the Peglegs need to make up for a disappointing year.

Break a Leg



continued from page 20

touch the person who had touched him back, even if it meant coming back out at the end of an inning after a fielder tagged him out.

Even more ridiculous, he refused to ever turn right, because a baserunner only turns left when rounding the bases. Therefore whenever a play in the outfield required him to move to his right, he actually spun around to his left before running towards the ball.

Whether it's a matter of adhering to certain work habits, or performing strange rituals, superstitions are a part of many athletes' game plans. They give people feelings of confidence that they will have good luck, or "create positive feelings between team members," as junior Diana Hou of the girls' swimming team said, which "can definitely benefit a player's mental psyche. And in a race where a player can out-touch you by 0.01 seconds, you need to be prepared in as many ways as possible."

Girls' Swimming

Penguins Swim for Second City Championship

continued from page 20

curing first place in every race, with their only non-first place finish handed to them in diving. "We were pretty confident. We put all our best people in there. It was really well played," Qian said.

The Penguins advanced in the playoffs to face off against the Townsend Harris Turtles in the semifinals on Tuesday, November 11. The Penguins defeated the Turtles in the city championship last year, and although Townsend Harris may have hoped for an upset against the higher seeded Stuyvesant, this was not to be. Stuyvesant dominated the semifinal meet with a score of 68-34. Stuyvesant's A team in the 200 yard medley relay, led by Qian and senior and co-captain Emma Dries, secured first place. The Penguins had first place finishers in all but three individual races.

After winning in the semifinals, the

**"The girls are all
really hard
workers and are
very dedicated."
—Kristen Sabala,
coach**

competition, which will be held from Saturday, November 20th to Sunday, 21st in Rochester, NY. Unlike in the dual meet season, swimmers with qualifying times from multiple teams across the city compete at Opens. Qian did not place first at opens, but qualified for States cut times earlier in the season in the 100 yard backstroke, breaking the school record with a time of 1:01:43.

Although they will be swimming against a lower seeded Brooklyn Tech in the championships, the Penguins cannot afford to be complacent. Tech is coming off an upset of the second seeded Francis Lewis High School, and will definitely be a tough team to beat. The Penguins, however, are extremely confident going into the city championship. "We need to fine-tune everyone's stroke, and we should have a good chance to repeat," Sabala said.

Others see the second consecutive championship as a sure thing. "We are definitely coming out as winners," Qian said.

**"We are definitely
coming out as
winners."
—Ashley Qian,
junior**

Penguins also won the swimming Opens, or PSAL Swimming and Diving Championships, on Saturday and Sunday, November 14 and 15. Even if a swimmer hasn't made the cut time to qualify for States, plac-

THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

Break a Leg

By CORY BERHOOZI

Bertrand Russell, a British philosopher, once said that "Fear is the main source of superstition." But when you are pushing your body and mind to their limits at practices, mustering your deepest reserves of strength and courage, and leaving everything you have out on the court, field, track, or pool, it can be pretty tough not to feel a bit of fear from time to time.

As almost any athlete can attest to, fear is a big part of sports. Fears of failure or mistakes rarely leave the mind of a committed athlete.

Whether you call it luck, or fate, there is always something in sports that seems beyond the control of the players. "[I] think a bit of luck is involved in anything," said junior Audrey Fleischner, who plays on Stuyvesant's girls' varsity basketball and softball teams. "A player can shoot exactly the same way every time, but sometimes their shots just don't go in. It's as simple as that," she said.

Athletes at all levels often have certain superstitions and try different methods of controlling their luck and diminishing their fears. These can range from simple quirks to bizarre rituals. And while the particularly outlandish ones may seem rather strange to some, it is to be expected that many athletes have some sort of superstition. It's pretty rare that you'll see a teacher cross themselves as

they step out of a classroom after a successful lesson, and accountants don't usually wear the same underwear during tax season, but quirks like this are seen all the time in sports.

Wade Boggs, a former Major League Baseball (MLB) third baseman with the Boston Red Sox, New York Yankees, and Tampa Bay Devil Rays, a 12-time All-Star and current member of the MLB Hall of Fame, is known as one of the most superstitious players that the MLB has ever seen. Boggs ate chicken before every game during his career, and was sometimes called the "chicken man" because of it. He entered the batting cage at 5:17 p.m., ran sprints at 7:17 p.m., and drew the Hebrew word "Chai," meaning life, into the batter's box before every at-bat.

Habits like these may seem pointless or inconsequential, but to the players they possess supernatural advantages. At some point in their careers, most athletes have superstitions. "Freshman and sophomore years I used to be really superstitious but now I got more logical and rational when I realized that they didn't affect my races," senior Daniel Hyman-Cohen of the boys' track teams said. "But they can help a lot with focus," he added.

Michael Jordan, widely considered the greatest basketball player of all time, wore his University of North Carolina (UNC) basketball team shorts under his Chicago Bulls uniform through-

out his professional career. As a matter of fact, to hide these shorts, he wore slightly longer Bulls shorts over them. In doing so, he began the trend of wearing longer shorts in the National Basketball Association.

Fleischner has "a build-a-bear dressed in Knicks uniform," named Stephon (after Stephon Marbury of the New York Knicks) with which she sleeps only on the night before basketball games, she said. "I don't even know why I do it," Fleischner said. "I just always have. It might make me seem crazy, but it's just what I do, and I'm sure every player, even if they don't admit it, does a little something like that before a game."

During the softball season, she uses the same mitt that she has had since the very first softball game she played when she was eight. "I believe it's contributed to every win since," she said. "To get a new mitt, I believe, is to risk ruining my softball groove. What if for some inexplicable reason I'm incapable of catching with a different mitt and all my talent is lost?"

Yet, this is nothing when compared to one of the more bizarre examples of superstition. Kevin Rhomberg played only 41 games with the Cleveland Indians in the MLB during the early 1980s, but managed to make a bit of a name for himself with his superstitions. Every time he was touched, he had to

continued on page 19

Boys' Cross Country

Boy's Cross Country Misses States

By OLIVIA CHU

Despite an impressive victory at the Manhattan Borough Championships, the boys' cross country team suffered a devastating fifth-place finish in the City Championships, held on Saturday, November 14. Stuyvesant finished a mere 15 points behind fourth place Bronx High School of Science. Although they swept the top five places at the Manhattan Borough Championships on Saturday, October 31 without senior and captain Daniel Hyman-Cohen and senior Elvis Mitropolous, this did not satisfy a team that was hoping to be a contender at States.

Mendes noted that the team has not lost a Borough Championship this century. Junior Andy Chen said that the team "[expected] to win Boroughs," and that it is the City Championships that really matter, since the top four teams from cities advance to the State Championships. Chen said that the team usually advances to States. "This year it's iffy, since we've had injuries and sicknesses," Chen said. "We are in the fight for states—it's just not as certain as usual."

Junior Oren Bukspan noted that Boroughs did not do much to raise the confidence of the team. "The victory was nice, but it was also expected," Bukspan said. "Most runners were unsatisfied with their performances, but a victory is still a victory."

When the championship part of the season nears, Men-



des tries to decrease the mileage his team runs so they will not tire for their important races. Early in the season, the team runs between 40 and 60 miles per week, according to Mendes, though he said, "Mileage drops and intensity increases as we approach the Championship part of the season."

Last year's City Championship team has all but disintegrated. Three of the runners graduated and only two members of last year's team, Mitropolous and Hyman-Cohen, ran in

continued on page 18



Courtesy of Eddie Cytryn

By EDDIE CYTRYN

The Monday after I attended the Yankees' Championship parade, I faced the dilemma of the absence note. Do I give my actual whereabouts on that day or do I make up the ever-useful doctor's appointment? I chose a third option, the very vague "prior personal commitment."

While the average reader may recognize this statement as a complete lie, embedded within the statement is in fact a good amount of truth.

Let's start with the "prior" part. I have been a die-hard Yankees fan my entire life. I watched former third baseman Scott Brosius hit two home runs in Game 3 of the 1998 World Series. I cried when Luis Gonzalez's blooper landed just beyond the infield and beat the Yankees in Game 7 of the 2001 World Series.

Until this year, the Yankees had not won the World Series since 2000. While nine years to fans of most teams might not be a long time between championships, it is an eternity in Yankee years; the Yankees are expected to win it all every season. Anything less is a disappointment.

Girls' Swimming

Penguins Swim for Second City Championship

By PHILLIP GODZIN

just try to make it better."

Most of the credit, however, belongs to the swimmers themselves. "The girls are all really hard workers and are very dedicated. They swim five days a week," Sabala said. "They all work well together." The Penguins have had several outstanding swimmers help them come out victorious. One of these swimmers, junior Ashley Qian finished first in 18 of her 20 races this year, including setting a school record in the 100m backstroke. "I've been improving in all my strokes," Qian said. "I know if I can work a little harder, I could definitely break it again."

Ironically, their seeding caused the Penguins to be paired with Bronx High School of Science Wolverines, the team that dealt them their only regular season loss in five years. The Wolverines also beat the Penguins in the semifinals just three years ago. After defeating Bronx Science earlier in the year by a score of 78-24, the Penguins quickly disposed of the Wolverines once again. They overwhelmed them 68-34 in the quarterfinals on Thursday, November 5. The Penguins showed their dominance in the meet, se-

continued on page 19

Prior Personal Commitment

These nine years were stained with steroid scandals and the continual signing of aged superstars in an attempt to create another winning club. Clubhouse chemistry was gone and the classic team from '98 had all but disintegrated.

In 2004 the Boston Red Sox rallied from three games down facing elimination to beat the Yankees in the American League Championship Series. They went on to win the World Series, breaking an 86 year "curse."

New York fans were no longer able to chant "1918!" The Sox won again in 2007. The tumultuous span from 2000-2009 tested the mettle of Yankee fans.

Next is the "personal" part. After nine turbulent seasons, the 2009 Yankee team had the same type of chemistry as the teams of the late 90s. I found it more enjoyable to watch a team comfortable with itself go out and play baseball the way it's supposed to be played. I dedicated hours of my summer to watching their games and, even though it was a school night, painted my face and went to the first playoff game in the new stadium.

I watched every playoff game on TV, even when they went into extra innings well past midnight. I put off my homework, and sleep became secondary. I constantly received complaints from neighbors about being too loud when I yelled or making too much noise on the ceiling when I jumped around. But it was all worth it.

Finally, the "commitment"

part. The parade was my reward, a celebration not only of the championship but also of the dedication of the fans.

Millions of New Yorkers lined Broadway. They call it the "Canyon of Heroes" because of the tall buildings on either side of the street and the parades that march down the heart of it.

Ticker tape rained down from the offices. Rolls of toilet paper were thrown back and forth across the street. It was 10 in the morning, but the smell of beer was already prominent. For the moment, everyone acted as friends. Strangers hugged like family. There was a mutual feeling of accomplishment.

My friends and I took pictures and started chants. We shared our stories about the games we went to during the season. We jumped and pushed and shoved, but mainly just to keep warm. And then the Yankees came. We tried to catch a glimpse of all the players. I saw A-Rod at the front of his float with both hands in the air and C. C. Sabathia holding up an index finger. My friend told me I missed the mohawk-headed Nick Swisher. The actual procession only lasted for a little over an hour.

In school the following Monday I quietly slipped the note to each teacher to sign. I tried to avoid eye contact so as not to draw any questions. One teacher read it and smiled, knowing the detailed version of the story. However, most of them simply signed the sheet without pausing. They did not even glance at reason.