



The Spectator

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"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"

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Courtesy of Jan Juracek

See pages 12 and 13 for more pictures.
See pages 3 and 4 for Election '08 coverage.

Metal Detectors To Be Implemented During Finals Week

By KAITLYN KWAN
and CHRIS LEE

In an attempt to prevent cheating on final and Regents examinations using their cellular phones, Principal Stanley Teitel announced at the Student Leadership Team meeting held on Tuesday, October 28 that metal detectors will be used during finals week from Monday, January 26 to Friday, January 30. If detected, cell phones and iPods will be confiscated and parents may retrieve them after finals week ends on Friday, January 30.

The metal detectors will be used during finals week and removed afterwards. The Department of Education (DOE) will provide the metal detectors, which will not affect Stuyvesant's budget.

Students will be required to remove all metal objects such as belts and keys before

being scanned by the metal detectors.

"DOE policy is that students may not bring cell phones or any other electronic devices to school," Teitel said. "I'm simply going to enforce the policy."

According to the DOE "Citywide Standards of Discipline and Intervention Measures," bringing a cell phone and other electronic communication/entertainment devices to school without proper authorization is a Level 1 infraction. Possible disciplinary responses include: reprimand from a school official, in-school disciplinary action, parent conference, student/teacher conference and confiscation of the device.

"Making sure that students don't bring cell phones will help reduce cheating,"

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Freshmen Take First of Three Math Periodic Assessment Tests

By EMMA LICHTENSTEIN
and AMIT SAHA

Freshmen, who have not yet taken the Math Regents or whose Regents scores are not on file, were required to take the first of three Periodic Assessment Tests in late October. The results of the tests will determine how prepared students are for the new Integrated Algebra Regents curriculum, which will fully replace the current Math A and Math B Regents curriculum by June 2010.

The Department of Education (DOE) created the Periodic Assessment Tests. According to the DOE Web site, "Students take Periodic Assessments throughout the school year to give teachers more information about what students have learned."

The DOE is phasing out the current Regents curriculum in favor of a new three-part curriculum, which consists of Integrated Algebra I, Integrated Geometry, and Integrated Algebra II and Trigonometry. The Math A and Math B curriculum will officially end with the final administration of the Math B Regents exam in June 2010.

The Instructionally Targeted Assessment, the first of the Periodic Assessment Tests, was administered on Wednesday, October 28 and consisted of 24

multiple choice questions. It covered a variety of Math A Regents topics, including area, volume, ratios, percents, algebraic equations, and the commutative and associative properties.

"I would have done better on the test at the end of seventh grade, when most of the topics were still fresh in my mind," freshman Libby Dvir said. "Now, that we're doing logic and geometry, I forgot all the algebra."

Freshmen who were required to take the test were notified via a letter from the math department.

Students and math teachers alike were confused about the purpose of the exam. "When I first got the letter I knew the test was for people who haven't taken the Math Regents yet, but I didn't understand why the [DOE] wanted us to take it," Dvir said. "It's not even the Regents."

"Either the city or the state wanted assessment on students who didn't take a Regent yet," math teacher Dawn Vollaro said. "We know very little about it."

"The Periodic Assessment Tests are completely different from our annual placement exam administered to incoming freshmen in June," Assistant

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Four Stuyvesant Students Recognized in Siemens Competition



Anna Menkova / The Spectator

The Siemens Foundation recognized seniors Tiffany Yau, Gabrielle Flamm, Alexandra Larsen, and Angi Guo for their work in science research projects.

By NICOLE ZHAO

The Siemens Foundation named senior Angi Guo a Regional Finalist and seniors Gabrielle Flamm, Alexandra Larsen and Tiffany Yau Semifinalists in the 2008-09 Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology. The results were announced Friday, October 24.

The annual competition recognizes high school students across the nation for science research projects. It is funded by the Siemens Foundation and administered by The College Board.

Guo is a Regional Individual Finalist. She worked with mentor Zhi Qi from the New York

Blood Bank researching a compound that can be developed into an anti-HIV drug.

Guo will present her project at the Regional Finals at Carnegie Mellon University on Friday, November 14 and Saturday, November 15 to compete for a silver medal (the highest distinction possible at Regional Finals), a \$3,000 prize, and a chance to compete in the National Finals for a gold medal and a scholarship ranging from \$10,000 to the \$100,000 grand prize.

Larsen worked with Rudolfo Llinas from NYU researching a biological diagnostic tool for autism. For her project, Larsen used a MEG (short for magnetoencephalography) machine

and found brain activity differences in autistic subjects. "It was really worth it in the end," Larsen said. "It was a very productive use of my time and the summer. [...] I really think what I was researching will have a big impact on the health community."

Flamm and Larsen are both Individual Semifinalists. Flamm worked with New York University (NYU) graduate student Jerome Nwachukwu studying hormone resistant prostate cancer for which there is no current cure. Her research focused on the role of SKP2 in regulating androgen-related gene expression. Cutting off the flow of androgens is a way to eradicate prostate cancer.

Yau, a Team Semifinalist, worked with her partner Tenzing Tsomo from Francis Lewis High School and mentor Bonnie Blackwell from the RFK Science Research Institute. Her project focused on dating an archaeological site in North Africa. Yau had also placed as a Regional Team Finalist in last year's competition as a junior for her research on Neanderthal migration. "It's pretty great to be part of such a prestigious contest," Yau said. "I really like researching."

Guo was surprised when she realized that she was a Regional Finalist. "I was really shocked because I wasn't even expecting to be in the Semifinals," she said.

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Opinions

Article on page 7.

Art (and Science) of War

Catapults and crossbows: Christopher Natoli dreams of adding military science to the Stuyvesant curriculum.



Arts and Entertainment

Article on page 10.

Leslie Bernstein: Beat Outside-the-Boxer

Between woodworking and house painting, Art Appreciation and Technical Drawing teacher Leslie Bernstein adds a beat to the Stuyvesant art department.

News

Freshmen Take First of Three Math Periodic Assessment Tests

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Principal Mathematics Maryann Ferrara said. “The placement test is to help us determine what students learned in middle school so we can place them at an appropriate level of study. The Periodic Assessment Tests were made up by the [DOE] and are meant to assess what students should know in the context of Integrated Algebra, whereas we test in a variety of areas.”

The remaining two Periodic Assessment Tests will be administered throughout the year.

It is possible that the DOE will continue to administer Periodic Assessment Tests for future freshman classes. “I gather that this is a new trend,” Ferrara said. “As far as I know, this policy will continue, but the [DOE] has yet to say otherwise.”

“The Periodic Assessment Tests were made up by the DOE and are meant to assess what students should know in the context of Integrated Algebra.”
—Maryann Ferrara, Assistant Principal Mathematics

Metal Detectors To Be Implemented During Finals Week

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Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said.

"It'll be less tempting to cheat because [students] won't have the apparatus with them," Assistant Principal World Languages Arlene Ubieta said. “I understand students text message each other and there is access to the Internet.”

However, many students do not believe that the policy will effectively reduce cheating.

"Kids who cheat will cheat anyway," Sophomore Caucus President Mohammad Hossain said.

Sophomore Adam Yabroudi agreed. "[The administration] shouldn't punish everybody for some people who cheat," he said.

“If the policy can lessen cheating in our school, then it’s going to be beneficial for

“People could find other ways of cheating. The administration] shouldn't punish everybody for some people who cheat.”
—Adam Yabroudi, sophomore

" Having this policy will just take away from the community feel at Stuy."
—Michael May, junior.

“It’s the proctor’s responsibility to make sure that the class is run respectfully,” senior Jaeyoung Byun said.

Freshman Chris Hao agreed with the policy. “Education is the most important thing,” he said. “People shouldn’t be allowed cell phones.”

the student body,” senior Emily Cheng said.

Junior Alison Roberts said she can “understand the idea behind the rule, but cutting down cell phones is a little extreme.”

Senior Yueyue Shen believes that cell phones are not the primary way that students cheat. "They just peek over at the person next to them," she said.

Some students believe that the policy compromises the safety of the students.

“It’s not justified because cell phones are needed for emergencies,” freshman Jonathan Lessinger said.

"Parents are going to get worried," sophomore Karen Luo said.

Junior Michael May said that the policy will “negatively affect students because they won’t be able to communicate [...] before and after finals,” he said. “Having this policy will just take away from the community feel at Stuy.”

Club/Pub Fair Reorganized

By ISAREE THATCHAICHAWALIT and ZOE WU

The presidents of clubs and publications who attended this year's Club/Pub Fair, on Monday, November 3 in the student cafeteria after 10th period, found several changes in the organization of the event. All communication was done through Facebook and e-mail, and, instead of being assigned

“I hope that next Club/Pub Fair there will be table assignments. It would be a lot easier than just grabbing a table.”
—Zhengyue Liu, senior and President of iDesign

to specific tables, club and pub presidents chose their own tables at the fair.

In an effort at improving communication, Club/Pub Director Allen Granzberg created an event page on Facebook to contact the presidents. The presidents received e-mails giving them regular updates, such as deadlines to sign up for the fair and to submit blurbs for the Club/Pub Handbook.

The response to the use of Facebook and emails has been positive. "I'm fine with it. It's just a convenient way to find people," senior and President of iDesign Zhengyue Liu said.

Sophomore and President of Pose Yana Azova agreed. "It was really good," Azova said. "Someone replied to me in an hour and I got my club charter right away."

The change was intended to fix some of the issues that arose in last year's Club/Pub Fair. In previous years, club and pub presidents were told to set up at specific tables after they signed up to participate in the fair. Last year, club and pub presidents

were given a general area where they were expected to set up their tables in. According to Granzberg neither of these methods of organization worked well.

"We've had clubs showing up late, and there were empty tables," Granzberg said. “Last year when we had a Club and Pub Fair, some clubs combined two tables.”

Additionally, some clubs and pubs also accidentally took wrong tables, sparking arguments among presidents. As a result, at last year's Club/Pub Fair for the incoming freshmen, "some clubs were being pushed all the way down to the end of the hallway [on the third floor]. It just didn't work out," Granzberg said.

To resolve these problems, Granzberg made a change in policy this year. In an e-mail sent out by Granzberg in October, club and pub presidents were told to get to the cafeteria towards the after 10th period to set up the tables, but were not told specifically where they should set up.

Approximately 60 to 70 clubs and pubs showed up at the fair on Monday, and the 500 Clubs and Pubs Handbooks prepared by the Student Union were all given out to students in attendance. A couple of the clubs did not sign up with Granzberg before hand, but were still given permission to set up tables. "We had no problems with that," Granzberg said. "If some club presidents didn't receive an email from us, it was because they gave us wrong email [in their club charters]."

Most clubs and pubs that showed up on Monday were able to find available spaces, though many had to share tables. Those who did have trouble finding tables asked Granzberg for assistance, and more tables were brought into the cafeteria.

Some club and pub presidents said they would have preferred to get assigned tables. "Only if you were strong enough to pull a table you got a table," Liu said. "If not, then you had to squeeze in and share with someone else. I hope that next Club/Pub Fair there will be table assignments. It would be a lot easier than just grabbing a table."

Senior and President of Confectionary Delight Amanda Cheng also had trouble finding a table. However, she was happy with the responses her club got at the Club/Pub fair and had "no other problems," she said.

Another issue was that club and pub presidents might not get ample amount of time to set up their tables. "Ideally, we would have liked to give clubs five minutes to set up [before other students enter]," Granzberg said. "But students just started to come in [after 10th period ended]. There was nothing we could do about it."

The Club/Pub Fair drew a mixed response from the student body. “It was really crowded,” freshman Nancy Duan said. “I didn’t know what was where.”

“[The Club/Pub Fair] was good because there were a lot of groups there but it was hard to find the clubs I wanted to see,” freshman Michael Scheer said. “Maybe a map would have been helpful, but I did manage to find the clubs I was looking for.”

“There were a lot of groups there but it was hard to find the clubs I wanted to see.”
—Michael Scheer, freshman

Last year's Club/Pub Fair was held on two consecutive days, but the event has been reduced to one day this year. According to Granzberg, holding a Club/Pub Fair requires a huge amount of effort since many tables, as well as various equipments for different clubs and pubs, need to be moved into and out of the cafeteria. Scheduling has also been a problem because the cafeteria is often used for other events after school. As a result, the only other day available for a fall-term Club/Pub Fair is in December, which Granzberg does not want to do. There is another Club/Pub Fair, however, planned for March of next year.

Four Stuyvesant Students Recognized in Siemens Competition

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“I was surprised, but it was gratifying,” Flamm said about her initial reaction to being a Semifinalist.

To prepare for the competition, the students took Stuyvesant’s research classes in the late winter and spring, conducted laboratory experiments in the spring and summer, and began writing their research papers in the late summer and fall. Their entries to the competition were due Wednesday, October 1.

“It was an amazing experience, but a very hard process,” Guo said. “I started kind of late [...] the second week of June, so I sacrificed my whole summer [to do the project]. I would be in the lab from nine to five everyday.”

Stuyvesant teachers guide students through the competition process. “I help them

express or communicate their findings [...] and] connect them to research opportunities,” said biology teacher and Research

“It was an amazing experience, but a very hard process.”
—Angi Guo, senior and Siemens Regional Finalist

Coordinator Jonathan Gastel, the Research Advisor for Guo, Flamm and Larsen. “But it’s really them, not me.”

“Dr. Gastel would read my paper like three times a week,”

Larsen said. “He was really giving and he was a great mentor.”

In the past, Stuyvesant had one National Individual Finalist in 2003 (who won the \$100,000 grand prize), four Regional Team Finalists in 1999, and one Regional Team Finalist, Yau, in 2007.

“Whether or not you win, it doesn’t really matter. If you like research, [...] finding things to cure your curiosity, it’s worth it. You don’t have to win anything,” Yau said.

“If you’re interested in science or research, you should definitely try it,” Flamm said. “It’s a lot of work, but it’s rewarding.”

“All of the students worked very, very hard on their projects,” Assistant Principal Biology and Geo-Science Elizabeth Fong said. “All the members of the Science department are equally delighted.”

Obama Wins in Mock Election

By **RUCHI JAIN**
and **CORINNE MERDEGIA**

Stuyvesant students voted in a high school national mock presidential election hosted by Voting Opportunities for Teenagers in Every State (V.O.T.E.S.) on Tuesday, October 28.

Democrat candidate and president-elect Barack Obama won 78.7 percent or 2,339 of the votes in Stuyvesant. Republican candidate John McCain received 10.6 percent or 315 votes. Independent candidate Ralph Nader and

“It didn’t prove anything except that Stuyvesant and New York are both vastly democratic.”
—Keith Rueca, junior

Libertarian candidate Bob Barr received 9.35 percent or 278 of the votes. 50 students, 1.7 percent of the student population,

were undecided.

V.O.T.E.S. is a national project that was created in 1988 by history teachers Jim Shea and Lorrie Byrom from Northfield Mount Hermon School, a private high school in Gill, Massachusetts. Every election year, one public and one independent school in each state participate in the election.

V.O.T.E.S. aims to create “a collective sense of civic knowledge and involvement in a large number of students, most of whom will be eligible voters in the 2012 election,” as stated on its Web site: www.votes2008.org.

63,737 students throughout the country participated in the mock election. The national V.O.T.E.S. results were announced on Monday, November 2. Obama won the presidency with 426 electoral votes, 41,039 or 64.4 percent of the votes and 39 states.

McCain received 112 electoral votes, 18,491 or 29.0 percent of the votes and won 11 states. He lost the 11 states and 23 schools that voted for President George W. Bush during the 2004 presidential elections.

Students also had to complete a separate poll on issues addressing the economy, the Iraq war, the energy crises, the

national deficit, universal health care and abortion. In the national results, 59 percent said that the economy was the most important issue for the next administration. 35 percent said that the government should reform and regulate the financial industry in response to the financial and sub-prime crises.

39 percent said that troops in Iraq should be withdrawn as soon as possible while 29 percent said that troops should be withdrawn only when the Iraqi government has been stabilized.

70 percent said that a continuation of the development of renewable sources such as wind and solar power was the best solution to the national energy crisis. 37 percent said that the best way to address the deficit is to reduce spending on the Iraq war and Iraqi reconstruction.

52 percent said that the quality of patient care would improve as a result of universal health care.

Regarding abortion, 57 percent said that females under 18 years of age must have parental consent for an abortion, 56 percent said that abortion should only be permitted in the first trimester and 66 percent said that partial birth abortions

should be illegal. Partial birth abortions are performed after 20 weeks or 4.5 months of pregnancy.

According to history teacher Warren Donin, this was the first time Stuyvesant participated in a V.O.T.E.S. election. The election was conducted to “get a

“I felt so empowered voting. I missed the real election by like three years. At least with this mock election, I can have a say.”
—John Tang, sophomore

view of how the youth of America would like to see the country headed,” Donin said.

Sophomore John Tang said, “I felt so empowered voting. I missed the real election by like three years. At least with this mock election, I can have a say.”

“[The election] showed me all the different candidates that

were running because I only knew Obama and McCain were running,” freshman Jenny Kam said.

Junior Keith Rueca disagreed. “It didn’t prove anything except that Stuyvesant and New York are both vastly democratic,” he said.

The results of the V.O.T.E.S. mock election reflected that of the national election held on Tuesday, November 4. Democrat candidate Barack Obama was elected as the 44th president of the United States with 349 electoral votes and 64,043,290 or 52 percent of the national votes. McCain received 162 electoral votes and 56,497,501 or 46 percent of the national votes.

History teacher Brenda Garcia said, “This was a wonderful opportunity for students to participate. I teach freshmen and sophomores and to see them with such enthusiasm was a great feeling. It has been a while since I saw so much interest in the election.”

Garcia, who volunteered for the Obama campaign in Allentown, Pennsylvania, said, “While I was volunteering [...], I was touched by the different people who came out to vote. I hope students show the same amount of enthusiasm when they get the right to vote.”

Mock Election Results (from the V.O.T.E.S. Web site)				Issues Poll (from the V.O.T.E.S. Web site)			
	Barack Obama		John McCain				
Electoral Votes	426		112				
Popular Votes	41,039 (64.4 %)		18,491 (29.0%)				
States Won	Arkansas California Connecticut DC Delaware Florida Hawaii Idaho Illinois Indiana Iowa Louisiana Maine Maryland Massachusetts Ohio Michigan Minnesota Missouri New Mexico	North Dakota Oregon Pennsylvania Rhode Island South Carolina South Dakota Tennessee Utah Vermont Virginia Washington Wisconsin Wyoming Montana Nebraska Nevada New Hampshire New Jersey North Carolina New York	Alabama Alaska Arizona Colorado Georgia Kansas Kentucky Mississippi Oklahoma Texas West Virginia				
				1. Which of the following issues do you believe is the most important one for the next administration? 59 % the US economy 14 % the Iraq War 14 % the Iraq War 13% the “energy crisis” 6% health care 5% the War on Terrorism 3% immigration			
				2. American troops in Iraq: 39% should be withdrawn as quickly as possible 29% should be withdrawn only when the Iraqi government has been stabilized 26% should be withdrawn over the next five years 6% should not expect a stated withdrawal date			
				3. The best solution to our nation's energy crisis is: 70% continuing the development of renewable sources such as wind and solar power 13% constructing more nuclear power and clean coal plants 13% allowing companies to further explore and develop drilling sites in the US 4% raising fuel costs to encourage less use in our country			
				4. The best way to address our considerable budget deficit is: 32% to lower taxes so that American consumer spending can stimulate the US economy once again. 37% to decrease spending on the Iraqi war and reconstruction given that Iraq has a considerable budget surplus 26% to limit government spending across federal programs 5% to raise taxes			
				5. Do you believe that the quality of patient care would be negatively affected by a universal health care program? 52% No 48% Yes			
				6. Regarding the ongoing assessment of Roe v Wade and abortion policy: a. females under the age of 18 must have parental consent 57% Yes 43% No b. abortions should only be permitted during the first trimester 56% Yes 44% No c. partial birth abortions should be legal 34% Yes 66% No			
				7. The U.S. government should best respond to the financial and sub-prime mortgage crises by: 35% by reforming and regulating the financial industry 31% undertaking a limited role in correcting the situation. 23% offering loan guarantees and assuming control of some financial institution. 11% doing nothing and letting the market correct itself.			

0.77

Percent of students born in India

0.68

Percent of students born in Hong Kong

0.46

Percent of students born in Ukraine

0.22

Percent of students born in Trinidad and Tobago

5.05

Percent of students born in China

2.06

Percent of students born in Bangladesh

2.03

Percent of students born in Russia

1.57

Percent of students born in South Korea

Thanks to: Assistant Principal of Technology Services Edward Wong and Program Office staff Matthew Hahn

Features

Question of Qualities: What Shapes an Ideal President?

By KAITLYN KWAN
with additional reporting by ANDREW CHOW

McCain or Obama? Prior to Tuesday, November 4, this popular question flooded both the halls and classrooms on a typical day of school. It sparked countless debates, as students and teachers alike argued in favor of either McCain's experience or Obama's policies. And yet, amidst these contrasting opinions about the election at hand, individuals, regardless of their chosen candidate, have opinions about the characteristics that would shape a successful president.

Honesty

According to sophomore Adam Yabroudi, the ideal president is someone who is "strong, dedicated, competent, and truthful," he said. "He has to do what's best for the nation."
"The president should be honest because if he lies about one thing, people tend to assume that he'll lie about everything. It'd be impossible to rally behind him," junior Anthony Lin said.
Others agreed with Yabroudi and Lin, stating that in order for a president to be successful, he must not only have good policies and ideas, but a strong and reliable personality as well.

Personality

"Proposed policies are the most important, but clearly personality traits are also very important," history teacher Bill Boericke said. "They will reveal the extent to which the president is able to respond to circumstances he did not foresee and make wise decisions."
"Virtually every facet of America is wrong. [...] I'm not expecting the next president to do anything major. I just want the president to be a responsible person," junior Matt Leiwant said.
"No matter how well drilled you are in politics, you need to be able to adjust and think on your feet especially on the international stage," Junior Henry Lin said.

Foreign and Economic Policy

Junior Owen Duffy said he would like a president who implements "an economic policy that protects ordinary Americans, like fair trade policies as opposed to free trade, and a stable foreign policy that emphasizes diplomacy as opposed to unilateral action."
"No one really likes what Bush is doing with our country," freshman Matthew Liu said. "Regardless of who wins the election, everyone would like to see a change [in leadership]. Many people have disagreed with how he's dealing with the war in Iraq and the economic problems."
"I hope the president won't become another George W. Bush," freshman Chris Hao said. "I hope he will be able to find a way to solve the economic crisis."

Environment

"The president should support alternative energy sources," senior Eric Lee said. "Also, we have to stop things that just perpetuate violence through reckless spending."
"The way the president deals with the environment is a very pivotal issue in our nation's history," senior Jeffrey Shiaus said.
In the end, despite party differences among students and teachers at Stuyvesant, everyone strives for the same characteristics in a president—someone who is honest, reliable and most of all, a good leader. As junior Aleks Nekrasov said, "We need somebody who's competent and has stable formulations."

An Established Plan

According to senior Anissa Mak, a president should not only be well-spoken, but he should also "have a direction where they're heading, and not just changing direction along the way," she said. "I want someone with a plan for real and who's not just relying on the people around them for financial plan."
"They have to have reasonable goals. Some goals that the candidates are presenting aren't very reasonable," freshman Helen Yeung said. "I want a president that actually has a desire to achieve something good and make America rich again."
"He should plan deeply," Anthony Lin said. "Someone with a plan is bound to help our nation more than someone who's making stuff up as we go along."

In the end, despite party differences among students and teachers at Stuyvesant, everyone strives for the same characteristics in a president—someone who is honest, reliable and most of all, a good leader. As junior Aleks Nekrasov said, "We need somebody who's competent and has stable formulations."

Roving Reporter:

1. What did you think about the outcome of the election?

2. What were you doing on Election Day?

Reporting by Danielle Oberdier
Photos by Sean Gordon-Loebl



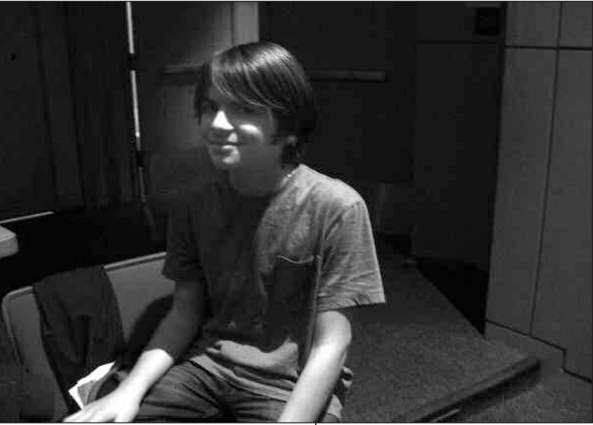
1. "I don't really follow the election. I didn't think either candidate was particularly great. It was the best outcome out of a bad situation."
2. "I was ice skating and eating chocolate."
—Cindy Lau, senior



1. "It was what I expected. I went to sleep around 1:30 or 2 and I went to sleep pretty confident that Obama would win. If I could have voted, I would have voted for him."
2. "I was on my computer on the CNN website."
—Imelda Ko, junior



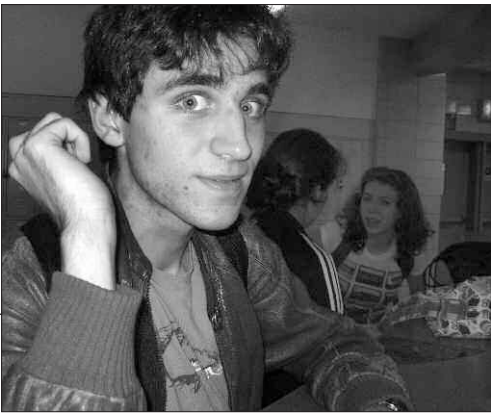
1. "I didn't like either candidate but Obama is better than McCain because his policies are all around better."
2. "I went with my friends to the movies. I didn't watch coverage because it doesn't have much influence on me."
—Gil Eisenberg, freshman



1. "It went the way it needed to go. I feel like a fool but it restored my faith in country."
2. "I was watching CNN. I didn't sleep a wink because I was watching senate results all night and I didn't go to school the next day."
—Wes Schierenbach, junior



1. "I was very happy and relieved."
2. "I was in my house. I was working on my bio homework and when they started giving projections I started watching CNN in my room."
—Joseph Frankel, freshman



1. "I was happy to hear the statistic that 7 percent more black people voted. The voter turnout was definitely more."
2. "I was watching the election coverage at my house. I got home early."
—William Oh, senior

1. "I was really happy. It was definitely a historic election. It makes me proud to be an American again just because the world right now kind of hates us."
2. "I was watching returns on CNN and MSNBC and all the main channels. I even watched FOX a little bit because it's fun to see what they say."
—Deniz Tetik, senior

Parent Visitation Day: View Inside the Fishbowl

By CASSIE MOY

Once every term, Stuyvesant High School opens its doors for parents and guardians, encouraging them to sit in on their children’s classes for an abbreviated school day with 18-minute periods. “Visits are intended to provide parents with the chance to see their children in the classroom context, and to give them a sense of what their daily routines are like,” Principal Stanley Teitel wrote in a Stuyvesant Post Card, a bulletin posted on the school Web site.

Some parents and guardians come because their children are freshmen, and it is their first chance to see how well their children have adapted to the new school. Such was the case with Li He, whose daughter is freshman Niu Tong. “I just wanted to see how the classes were structured, how many students there were in a class, how my daughter was doing and whether or not she’s participating,” she said.

Mrs. He, like most of the parents and guardians who visited, also found the experience to be positive overall. “I saw that the classes were very interactive and that the teachers were trying their best to have each student to answer one or two questions,” she said. “My only concern was about the class size. It’s a little too big. It seemed like there were 36 students in a class.” Despite her concern with class size, Mrs. He believed it to be a good experience on the whole even if she “probably won’t go again.” She

doesn’t feel the need to attend Parent Visitation Day more than once. “I’ll go to the Parent Teacher Conferences to see how

“I always find Parent Visitation Day useful. I have a much better understanding of the classes that my daughter is taking and of the Stuyvesant atmosphere and culture in general.”

— Rita Mitra, parent

my daughter is doing,” she said.

Other parents and guardians attend Parent Visitation Day every year. Rita Mitra, parent of junior Danielle Oberdier, has attended Parent Visitation Day in previous years and plans to attend the following year as well. Mitra wrote in an e-mail interview, “I always find Parent Visitation Day useful. I have a much better understanding of the classes that my daughter is taking and of the Stuyvesant atmosphere and culture in general. It’s eye-opening.” Mitra wrote that many of the teachers

are “committed, engaging, and humorous.” Her favorite aspect of Parent Visitation Day is observing student participation in class. “It’s amazing to see [the students] engaged and thinking so deeply,” she wrote.

Teachers at Stuyvesant also have a generally, if cautiously, favorable view of class visitation. “I don’t have a problem with it,” math teacher Jonas Kalish said. “It gives parents a chance to see what their kid’s day is like.” However, Kalish also noted that though it does give parents insight, it’s also not very realistic and perhaps not the most effective it could be because of the shortened periods. The periods are shortened to allow time for the afternoon Parent Teacher Conferences held after dismissal. English teacher Jennifer Choi voiced similar sentiments about Parent Visitation Day. “It’s a great way for the parents to see how their kids are doing,” she said. “The super short day is an issue.”

In addition to the abbreviated schedule, there are other downsides to Parent Visitation Day for the teachers. “It’s a little hard on the teachers to have parents in the classroom,” Kalish said. When asked if he felt pressured by the parents’ presence, he said, “I’m aware of it, but I don’t do anything different.” Choi also said she didn’t change or tailor her lesson plan for Parent Visitation Day because she prepares her lessons months in advance. While she doesn’t worry about her lesson plan,

Choi faces other difficulties during class visitations. According to Choi, while the majority of the parents were very polite, there are, however, a few that sometimes make Parent Visitation Day an awkward experience. Because some parents or guardians arrive late, don’t turn off their cell phones or pass notes, class visitation can be “kind of disruptive,” Choi said.

And lastly, the ones who are at the invisible center: the students themselves. There are those who are indifferent to Parent Visitation Day and see it no more than just a particularly short day. Sophomore Emma

“Everyone’s antsy. I feel like the teachers are wound up as well and feel like they need to impress the parents.”

—Candice Bautista, junior

Carleton needed clarification on what and when, exactly, Parent Visitation Day was. And after an explanation, Carleton was just as apathetic. “It was nice to have a short day,” Carleton said. “But I don’t think we did much.”

Freshman Michael Ren also

said that the class visitations didn’t particularly affect him, either, but he thought it was a good thing in general. “It’s pretty useful for the parents,” he said. Parent Visitation Day gives a fairly accurate view of student life at Stuyvesant, according to Ren.

Other students were more ambivalent. “My feelings are mixed,” junior Shahrier Hossain said. “It’s cool that [the parents] get to see how good the teachers are, so they might understand why we get the grades we get.” But, “it was also kind of annoying,” he said.

On a short day, an influx of visitors who are unfamiliar with the building can be an added difficulty to Stuyvesant students’ commute to classes. Additionally, some students experience added pressure with their parents being in the same classroom.

Junior Candice Bautista said, “It’s embarrassing because parents don’t get to see what students are like on a regular day,” she said. “Everyone’s antsy. I feel like the teachers are wound up as well and feel like they need to impress the parents.”

With the parents tending to have the kindest views and the teachers and students leaning towards either apathy or ambivalence, there is no single blanket statement to throw over the matter of class visitation. Eye opening or unrealistic, a big deal or a non-issue, it all depends on who you are and if you’re the observer or the observed on Parent Visitation Day.

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Editorials

STAFF EDITORIAL

Celling the Students Out

Using cell phones to cheat on tests has become more and more of a problem over the past few years, especially during finals week. While many of Stuyvesant’s less tech-savvy students still cheat the “old fashioned way,” Principal Stanley Teitel has decided to respond to this phenomenon by installing metal detectors during finals week. To prevent students from texting each other answers during tests, Teitel originally planned to collect cell phones before finals and return them afterwards. However, students are not supposed to have cell phones in school in the first place. Therefore, Teitel decided to institute metal detectors for the four days, which should theoretically have no effect on students who theoretically never bring cell phones to school. This is not the correct approach to combat cheating. Students intent on cheating will still find a way to do so, cellular phones or not. Rather, the administration should address cheating itself, not its instruments. Students have been cheating with

pencils and paper since before cell phones became available—confiscating phones is not going to solve the problem. The administration should focus on training more attentive proctors and instituting stricter cheating prevention policies. During Advanced Placement exams, students are required to leave their backpacks in their lockers. Adopting a similar policy during finals week might prevent some instances of cheating. While administrators can make Stuyvesant a more pleasant environment, it is up to the students to prove that the metal detectors are unnecessary. Students should value Stuyvesant’s educational opportunities and take it upon themselves to practice academic honesty instead of using any means possible to attain high grades. In the past, some teachers have resorted to showing students the final beforehand if they haven’t covered the entire curriculum. Finals have also been reused two years in a row, fostering the growth of a black market for finals.

From a practical standpoint, metal detectors have the potential to make finals week even more chaotic than usual, increasing crowding and the time required to enter the building. And although Teitel plans on warning the student body about the metal detectors, many students will still bring phones to school, not realizing that simply stowing phones in backpacks will not be good enough. Even though Teitel’s policy promises increased security during finals week only, we are concerned the detectors may stay past their welcome. The school’s current administration tends to favor security over freedom—making metal detectors permanent may prove to be too great a temptation. During the past few terms, the school has forced students to purchase school locks, required that students swipe out at lunch and enacted a number of other sweeping security reforms. Temporary metal detectors are a permanent security measure waiting to happen.

The Spectator thanks the Stuyvesant Alumni Association for their generous donation.



OP-ART



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



“The Pulse of the Student Body”

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The Spectator

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FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 5, Hannah Whalen’s surname was misspelled in “Underclassmen Election Results Are In.”
- In “Read the Writing on the Wall,” it should be noted that Jan Raphael Cornel’s first name is Jan Raphael and his surname is Cornel.

Opinions

A Troubled Site to See



Emily Koo / The Spectator

By LEENA MANCHERIL

Historians plan to call the early 2000s the Age of Technology. But these historians obviously haven't been studying Stuyvesant High School's Web site for the past six years.



The current school Web site, with its bland colors and dull features, portrays a school that specializes in unoriginality.

Assistant Principal Technology Services Edward Wong added two new features to the Web site this past year: Language Translations and the Photo Gallery. However, these additions were only made in response to parental complaints, not because of an interest in renovating the Web site. "[Principal Stanley] Teitel said that many parents

complained of a 'lack of communication between the parents and the school.' It was a mandate from him to add the translations," Wong said. The Photo Gallery feature existed about five years ago, but "then we lost the photos for some time before I added new ones to the site," Wong said. Members of Building Stuy Community and current Webmaster, junior Sean Wong, have also renovated department pages and helped create the Stuy Cubed link (a website dedicated to the Memory Cubes, a Stuyvesant public art project).

Past Web sites have included a Virtual Tour application with which users could navigate through the school's hallways, an aesthetically pleasing, creative homepage, and a quote written under the Bell Schedule every day. Oddly enough, past versions of our Web site seem to be more technologically advanced than our current one, which was created in 2002.

When comparing our Web site with those of other high schools in the city, it's frustrating to see that their sites are much more developed than ours. The current school Web site, with its bland colors and dull features, portrays a school that specializes in unoriginality.

There are many simple things Wong and the Webmasters could do to make the Stuyvesant Web site more appealing. Instead of the current pictures of the school building, candid pictures of students in class, talking in the hallway and participating in after-school events would help depict a livelier atmosphere. Our school colors are blue and red so there is no reason why the only two colors the Web site uses are blue and white. The addition of features from past versions, such as the Quote of the Day segment or the Virtual Tour application,

could easily make the site more attractive.

Also, an improved homepage would give prospective students a good first impression of Stuyvesant. More importantly, current users will find an updated site more useful for looking up infor-



Oddly enough, the past versions of our school Web site seem to be more technologically advanced than our current site.

mation about the school. And if the student body as a whole took an active role in improving the Stuyvesant Web site, these goals could be achieved. Building Stuy Community and the Webmaster Program are initial steps into encouraging students to get more involved with our school Web site, but they are not enough. Proposals for format changes could count as an extra credit assignment for Technology and Advanced Placement Computer Science classes associated with computer technology (Graphic Arts Communication requires students to create an original logo pertaining to any subject). Stuyvesant is popularly thought of as a school of computer geeks and, in this case, students should live up to their stereotype. There's nothing wrong about being obsessed with Java.

Smoke Signals



Tincey Wang / The Spectator

By JUDY CHEN

The ground shook in a Southern California courtroom. Cameras rolled. Everything went out live on television. Judge Judy fled the scene before announcing a verdict.

There was no set procedure during Judge Judy's incident this past July. And like the people in that California courtroom, we don't know for sure whether Stuyvesant students would do the same thing if there was a real fire in our 10-floor building.

Many students already know what fire drill flaws exist in Stuyvesant. The slow shuffle of the students due to traffic jams does not suit the supposed gravity of the situation. Teachers' psychic-like ability to predict

when fire drills are scheduled takes away the element of surprise. Even more interesting is when students find out about an imminent fire drill and also prepare. In minutes, students are already forming plans to go out for lunch if the fire drill happens during their lunch period. Some decide not to go to class until after the fire drill.

We also tend to take advantage of fire drills. We always hope that one will occur during our least favorite class or take our time exiting the building and coming back. It's certainly not the right mentality and certainly not the reason drills are done.

During any fire, panic would be the primary response from students and faculty members. Though drills try to prepare us for surprise incidents, many students would probably run as fast as they could rather than assemble into lines.



The teachers' psychic-like abilities to predict when fire drills are scheduled take away the element of surprise.

In order to simulate a more realistic situation, teachers and students should not be notified ahead of time if a fire drill is going to happen.

Eight fire drills are required before December, and 12 drills total are required by the end of the school year. In order to simulate a more realistic situation, teachers and students should not be notified ahead of time if a fire drill is going to happen. People will be better prepared psychologically for a real fire. Announcements should be made by the administration before alarms are tested. This way, teachers won't think twice about getting their students out when a real fire drill happens.

Stuyvesant High School is a large building, and it can be difficult to get over 3,000 students out of it. But there are still problems with the school's fire drill system that are repairable. If we correct these flaws, we'll be less like to panic like Judge Judy.

The Art (and Science) of War



Angie Koo / The Spectator

By CHRISTOPHER NATOLI

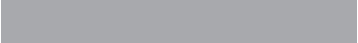
His legacy is seen everywhere in our school—from the large painting of him on the second floor, to the ironic name of our football team, and more obviously, the name of our school itself. He is Peter Stuyvesant, Director-General of New Amsterdam up to the day it fell to the British. But if he'd been more "General" than "Director," he might not have been defeated. Mr. Stuyvesant could have used a better understanding of military science, and as modern carriers of his legacy, so could we.

I was disappointed when my Advanced Placement European History class skipped from the causes to the effects of the Thirty Years' War without even mentioning the complex war itself. But with so much to cover, it's understandable that there isn't enough time to study certain wars, pivotal battles, brilliant generals and determinative alliances. Yet war is a crucial component in history, and the complexities behind it deserve their own class: Military Science. As with many electives, there's much to explore in military science than just the name suggests. The tactics used in significant battles, the effects of new weapons and vessels, the core differences between the Western, Russian and modern Chinese systems of warfare and the importance of geography are all deeply interesting subjects in themselves. And all are worth studying for an aspiring military scientist, or just someone who's interested in the topic.

At the same time, the class has potential to be entertaining as well as instructive. Given a scenario (supplies, soldier count, geography, etc.), the teacher could leave the solution up to the class, dividing it up into two or more factions and having them battle it out. A deep discussion would easily follow since there

are many possibilities and factors to mention for any situation. In this way, historical battles could be analyzed in ways that would be impossible in a time-pressed history class. Better yet, few resources are necessary. Chalk and a blackboard are all that's needed to describe situations and strategies, and crumpled up pieces of paper can act as military units on the battlefield (or in this case the floor).

Not only would a Military Science class teach strategies and analysis, but also a powerful skill: problem-solving. Military Science teaches problem-solving in a way math and science classes don't—when you only have three tanks, 2,000 lives at stake and half



War is a crucial component in history like the economy, and the complex science behind it deserves its own class.

as many guns as soldiers, about to fight a well-trained and well-fed army on their own land, do you run? Or do you make a last stand? Given limited supplies and real people on the line, you need cunning, reason and creativity—skills that can be applied in any job.

Military strategists are crucial participants on the global stage. Nazi Germany would have crumbled in weeks without the military brilliance of Hermann Goering, and the United States—and the world—wouldn't be the same without Ulysses S. Grant or Dwight D. Eisenhower. Napoleon wouldn't have been nearly as close to conquering the world had he not learned from brilliant generals of the past. The subjects behind physicists, writers, politicians, musicians and artists—all important factors in shaping society—are taught at Stuyvesant, and so should the subjects behind generals and admirals.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: Perils of the Grade Trade

In "Perils of the Grade Trade," an editorial by Gavin Huang that appeared in The Spectator on October 31, 2008, Huang assumes that all Stuyvesant students have the mentality of an investment banker towards their education. He overlooks the students who don't care about what anyone else gets on a test. Huang forgets to mention the friends who want to know each other's test grades because they want to see each other do well, or the students who are apathetic to others' grades. Of course, every class has a few students who receive 100 on every test and ask everyone around them what they received, but they don't make up the entire student body and hence don't define us.

If, like those few students, you choose to view every test or assignment as a chance to outshine your peers instead of as an opportunity to learn something or improve your average, then every day does become a rat race.

As for grade inflation, there are some classes that teachers don't take seriously and, as a result, neither do the students. But there are also the teachers who can help you discover something about yourself and can inspire you to consider a new career. At the end of that class, does your grade or the grade of the kid who slept every day really matter anymore?

—Rebecca Chowdhury, senior

Opinions

Staten Island: More than Just a Dump



Emily Koo / The Spectator

By DONNA KOO
and ELSA THOMAS

At Stuyvesant, we have been asked many times which borough we live in. The response to our answer is usually along the lines of “Eww Staten Island? Isn’t that where the dump is?” Sometimes, we’ll get “Oh, Staten Island. So you ride the ferry to school every day?” and on special occasions, someone will reply “Aww it must take a long time to get to school every morning.” There was even a Facebook group saying Staten Island should really be a part of New Jersey. But if students took the time to learn more about Staten Island, they will find that it isn’t as bad as it seems.

Often, the stereotypical image of the Staten Islander comes from people and sources that haven’t actually been on the island. People might find it shocking that not all Staten Islanders are like those portrayed on MTV’s True Life: I’m a Staten Island Girl episode or that the island doesn’t match Urbandictionary.com’s definition of “a place where the makeup is thick and the accents are thicker.” Not every girl is tanned orange with manicured nails and perfect blonde hair or parades around in Uggs boots and Hollister t-shirts. Not all the guys are “guidos” (arrogant, overly macho Italian-Americans), a term that is

commonly associated with the island. Yes, there are rich kids with fake tans and spiky hair, but not everyone on the island is like that. We act and dress just like kids in the rest of the city.

The real Staten Island, contrary to popular belief, is not as small as it appears to be on subway maps.

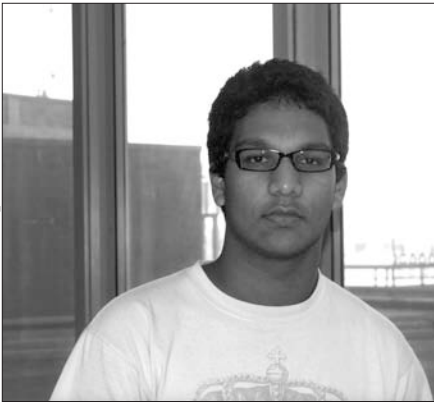
Another misconception is that Staten Island is tiny and isolated from society. The real Staten Island, contrary to popular belief, is not as small as it appears to be on subway maps. It is actually the third largest borough in the city (after Queens and Brooklyn), making it bigger than Manhattan and the Bronx. Unlike other boroughs with subways, we have a railroad instead that runs through the island and connects to a complex bus system that allows Islanders to travel all over the borough. And of course, there’s the Staten Island Ferry, which takes many students to and from school every day and is free. There are many ways Islanders can get around the

city. Just because it takes us a little longer doesn’t mean that we’re isolated.

Then there is the idea that Staten Island is just a big, smelly dumpster because of one treasured landmark: the Fresh Kills Landfill, better known as the Dump. With all the jokes we get about living in a smelly borough, people must have forgotten that the Dump closed in 2001. Although it caused displeasure for a few nearby residents, the Dump did not affect the lives of most people on the island. In fact, it is now the resting place of debris from Ground Zero. Islanders are generally proud of having the formerly largest landfill in the world—so large that its peak was taller than the Statue of Liberty and could be seen from space with the naked eye! But just because the Dump was very large doesn’t mean the entire island is a smelly dump.

Many people don’t realize that there are also many attractive things to do on Staten Island. Every day, New Yorkers travel large distances to shop at Staten Island Mall. Why? It could be because the mall contains the only Aerie and Hollister Co. store in New York City. Another attraction in Staten Island is the War Memorial Ice Skating Rink, a large indoor skating rink located in Clove Lakes Park. Though not as popular as Bryant Park’s rink, the rink has two rinks where people can skate freely. Other popular points include the Staten Island Zoo and Snug Harbor.

Staten Island is the most mocked borough. Many times, this is because the people who talk about Staten Island don’t know much about it and base their comments on stereotypes and misconceptions. If people are willing to learn more about Staten Island, they will see that it’s not as bad as others make it out to be. So next time someone says something like, “Ew, Staten Island,” why not tell them that Staten Island is more than just a dump.



Jack Greisman / The Spectator

By KASUN NAVARATHNA

We’ve all logged on to a computer at Stuyvesant to discover that someone has switched the keys of a keyboard or connected a mouse to the wrong computer. Some students even leave behind a web browser opened to a site spamming tons of pop up ads. While Rick Astley’s “Never Gonna Give You Up” is a mesmerizing song, computers are vital resources and should be treated as such. Not, as some think, as a way to annoy others.

Most of the pranks involving computers occur at the school library. People use these computers constantly, and almost any technological need can be filled. Because of the number of people using the library computers for different things, the damage that the computers have undergone is understandable. The more freedom people have to use something, the more likely it is that someone will try to abuse that privilege. Take,

The act becomes less of a prank and more of an act of vandalism.

for example, the typical prankster. He gets a computer under the pretense of homework, but instead installs some software and walks away, watching as the next user struggles for 10 minutes. Although this constant cycle is annoying, it’s something we accept. The computers in the library are for general use, meaning that they just need to be functional. They only need to fulfill the basic needs of most users. Computer pranks only become unacceptable only when they happen on computers meant for special classes with their own needs.

Tools, Not Toys

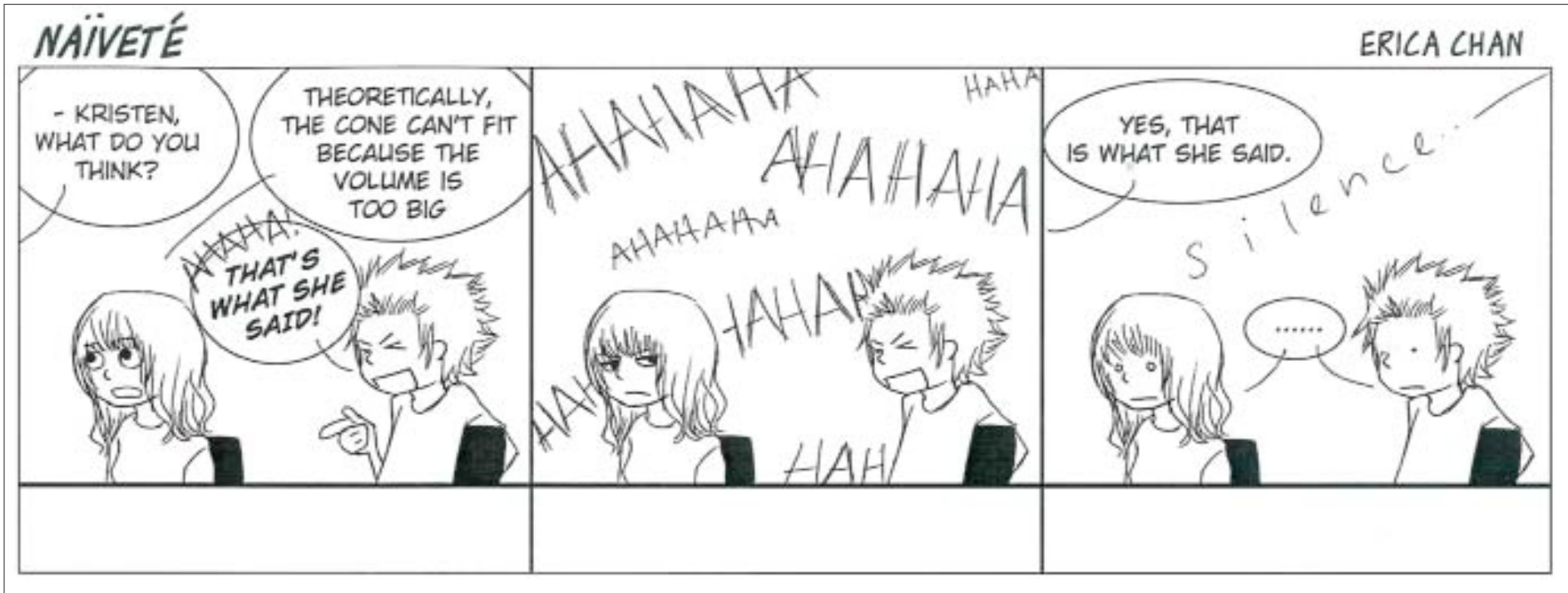
One of these classes with specific computing needs is Digital Photography. This course requires the use of Adobe Photoshop to edit photos and needs a high amount of computing power. Recently, the photography room received brand new iMacs. For media related classes such as digital photography, these new computers are important upgrades, allowing Photoshop to load and work faster. Pranksters however, target these brand new computers as well. They take many of these media related classes and try to extend their reach into classes that actually need the computing power for a specific need.

While Rick Astley’s “Never Gonna Give You Up” is a mesmerizing song, computers are vital resources and should be treated as such.

The most common pranks also have the unwanted effect of slowing down a computer. While these antics are just annoying in the library, they can be quite harmful in a media intensive class. Take for example, joke viruses that pranksters use to fool users into thinking the computer is broken. I once discovered that someone was downloading one of these joke viruses on the new iMacs in the photography lab while working on a photography project. While the joke virus isn’t necessarily harmful, it was bundled with adware, which can drastically slow down a computer. The adware would have also made the iMac unable to run Photoshop because of its overworked processor. Students would have been denied a brand new resource because someone could not resist the temptation to annoy others in a different setting.

Students shouldn’t sign up for a class if they plan to take advantage of the provided computers by pranking others and slowing down the computers. While comical at first, this only makes life harder for the next user. When students move on to more specialized computers, the act becomes less of a prank and more of an act of vandalism. No student would break the chalkboard, as it is instrumental in most classes. As valuable learning tools, computers should be treated the same way.

Cartoons



Cartoons

PICKLE ON A STICK

Obama won!
I guess Americans aren't that stupid after all.


www.pickleonastick.com

Well, they're still stupid enough to vote only for the choices shoved under their noses, blocking out the possibility of new political movements and making it a competition between two mediocre nominees making robot calls in Ohio.

VOTE PAUL

garreth o'brien

But yeah, I guess they're not that stupid.



METAGIRL

IN... **"CHANGE WE CAN'T BELIEVE IN"**

BY TIM KIM

YES WE CAN! YES WE CAN!
YES WE CAN! YES WE CAN!

OBAMA BIDEN '08

HONESTLY, DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S A BIT OUTDATED?
THE ELECTION IS OVER ALREADY.

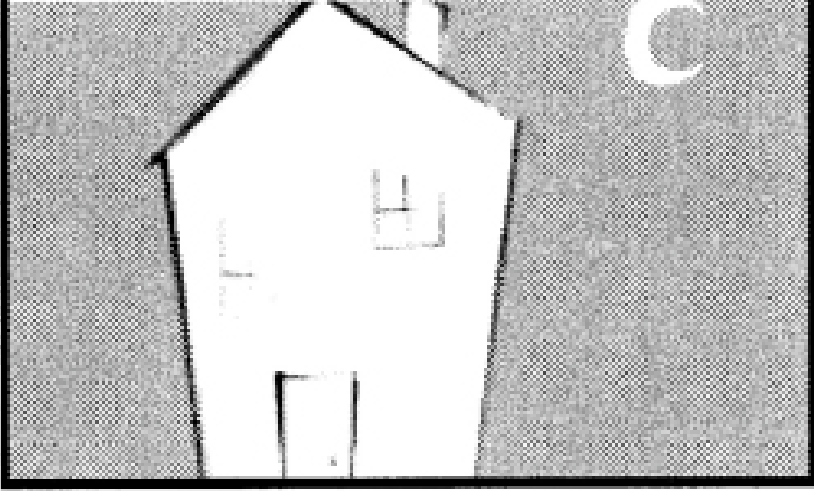
OH YEAH? WELL WHAT ABOUT YOUR CRUMMY ACADEMIC IDEALS? ISN'T IT TIME YOU TRIED TO DO SOMETHING OTHER THAN WHAT THE SYSTEM HAS PRESCRIBED TO YOU?

OH YEAH, I ALMOST FORGOT TO TELL YOU: THE TERM PAPER IS DUE TOMORROW.


OBAMA BIDEN '08

trick or treating

normal kids go trick-or-treating at houses.



stuy kids go to Staples.



MAYBE I'LL GET A CALCULATOR!!

Arts & Entertainment

Dance Dance New Amsterdam

By RITA KIRZHNER and HYEMIN YI

Located on Broadway and Chambers street, just across from City Hall, the small official building of Dance New Amsterdam is not very noticeable. Its plain beige doors are the same as the others that run down the street, and the buildings only way to distinguishing feature i them is a through the colorful window display in the window. Yet the outer appearance does little justice to what lies inside.

Behind the doors is an impeccably clean and vibrant hall, with flyers posted on boards giving information about the organization. At the desk against the far wall sit several members who joyfully greet any person that enters, ready to assist and direct. Student dancers roam around the rooms, going up and down the stairs and stopping here and there to chat. The atmosphere is lighthearted and relaxed.

Dance New Amsterdam (DNA) is a studio for contemporary dance, “promoting artistic excellence in dance performance” as stated on the organization’s website. Founded in 1984 in NoHo, it was originally

known as Dance Space Center until it changed its name in February 2006 and moved to 280 Broadway. DNA’s rooms host 170 classes each week, taught by professionals from diverse backgrounds. The organization is a wonderful tool for emerging and aspiring artists, and the number of classes offered suits anyone that is interested. Some more popular classes include Ballet, Modern/Roots, Contemporary Jazz, Street Jazz, Hip Hop. Dance New Amsterdam also offers classes that do not involve dance, such as Yoga, Pilates, Thai Massage, Anatomy Awareness, and other body related activities.

The studio is open from 9 A.M. to 10 P.M., Monday through Sunday. Each class costs \$18 without a membership, and \$16 with a membership (annual membership fee is \$30). Classes are two hours long, and there are often modern artist guests that come to teach.

Besides visiting Dance New Amsterdam for classes, there are phenomenal performances in which students and members participate. Performances are held through the fall and spring seasons. Performances are generally held in the theater on the

second floor. Ticket costs vary depending on the type of performance. The show is created by teachers of different classes who collaborate to combine ideas and styles.

The Halloween themed Performance Project ran from Friday, October 31 to Sunday, November. The show was fascinating and unique, with a surreal quality. The dancers seemed almost nonhuman because of the spontaneous and somewhat jerky motions mixed with flowing movement. The chemistry in the room between the dancers and their roles in the dance was extraordinarily chilling, and it was incredible how much they committed themselves to fitting their parts. Their facial expressions were perfectly formed to convey the emotion in each dance. Beautiful but eerie background music accentuated the mood of the presentation. The physical contact between the dancers was intense and crucial to the performance.

The building itself is very informal. Everyone is respectful while being casual, and it is easy to approach any students or other members of Dance New Amsterdam. Rebecca



Dance New Amsterdam, located on Broadway and Chambers street, offers classes in Ballet, Jazz, and Hip Hop.

Anna Menkova / The Spectator

Gray, a student of DNA whothat was in the Performance Project, said her favorite thing about the studio was that “it’s not pretentious.” “Everyone is really nice here and I feel that the place is very welcoming” she said.

Most students at Dance New Amsterdam are in college or are older, but there are opportunities for everyone to get

involved. The studio is far from intimidating, and draws in serious and dedicated artists. A little curiosity and interest is all one needs to have a reason to stop by the studio and take a look. DNA offers a chance to learn and improve atin dance, or simply spend a pleasant evening at an excellent show.

Leslie Bernstein: Beat Outside-the-Boxer



Fine arts and technology teacher, Leslie Bernstein, is known for her talent in percussion, as well as her love of woodworking.

Harry Poppick / The Spectator

By THOMAS BERG and JENNY CHE

Few people would recycle wood from a forklift’s platform. Fine Arts & Technology teacher Leslie Bernstein recycled it into a metal-spiked coffee table of doom. Bernstein’s interest in woodworking stemmed from childhood play. Whether working with plastic or wooden parts, she was always able to create something on a grand scale. “I always liked building things,” she said. “I’d have these huge Lego towns that I designed myself.” Her father, a fan of woodworking himself, always had tools lying around. However, “since he wasn’t really handy with them,”

Bernstein said, “he never showed me anything.” It wasn’t until she joined her high school tech crew and built theater sets that she became serious about woodworking. While dabbling in metalworking, printmaking, drawing and painting, Bernstein monitored at SUNY Purchase’s (the college she was attending) woodshop, where students came in to work on their projects. Bernstein found that she greatly enjoyed “working out three dimensional problems,” she said. Bernstein also helped other students design jigs, templates necessary for duplicating designs. Whenever classmates encountered a problem, “I could suggest something new to try to meet their vision,”

Bernstein said. Bernstein still prides herself in her own senior project—a series of wooden purses, made through vacuum wood lamination. “It fuses fashion and woodworking, which has always been one of my goals,” she said. “I brought one with me to prom.” Her other works include a hardwood drum, a bed with a built-in dresser and a mahogany table, which contains dozens of metal spikes along its surface. “I seem to like to create things that hurt people,” she said. Bernstein also built two benches out of recycled wood—she dreamed of “mass creating and selling [them] to museums,” she said. However, the plan fell through because “I didn’t have the money or the shop,” she said. Environmentally friendly art, or “green design,” has remained one of Bernstein’s passions. A college professor interested in reusing wood first suggested the idea to her. “Back then nobody had heard of green design,” she said. Bernstein has since worked with wood salvaged from support platforms of forklifts, called pallets, and from orange barriers that surrounded manholes.

“I bought them from a company that specialized in pallet wood,” said Bernstein. Since the wood is bought rough, she had to work carefully and clean it out before using it. “For all you know it might have nails in it,” she said. After graduating, Bernstein spent several years working as an art handler at various museums, including the Neuburger and Guggenheim Museums. She eventually made her way to Christie’s, a worldwide art-auctioning service with a New York office, where she unpacked and framed paintings. “It was really great. You’d have these great works of art come in and you get to touch them, and you’re thinking, ‘Wow, I’m touching a Picasso,’” she said. Bernstein also served as an assistant to the Starn Twins, two experimental photographer brothers, and made wooden frames for their photography. All the time, “I learned about a lot of

contemporary artists that no one had ever heard of,” she said. In 2003 she joined the Stuyvesant staff as a Fine Arts & Technology teacher. “I got into teaching because I worked in a corporate atmosphere for a little bit and HATED it,” Bernstein wrote in an e-mail interview. She currently teaches Art Appreciation and Technical Drawing. Bernstein feels she has learned a lot from working at Stuyvesant. “I was never terribly interested in the classics, and I knew more about the modern styles,” she said. “But to teach I had to understand the background and the history too.” As she taught her students, her own horizons expanded as well. “I really liked how she played music for us when we were doing our work,” junior Masudur Rahman said. “It was a simple gesture, but it really felt like relaxing just hanging out while doing some stained glass-works.” “One day a week we get to just draw whatever we want,” said freshman James Lang. “It’s a very calm workshop time.” Once Bernstein began teaching, she took a hiatus from her art career. However, she soon “got antsy again.” She took several classes at Fashion Institute of Technology in Interior Design, Presentation Technique, Drafting and AutoCad, also shaping wood for her own projects in Stuyvesant’s woodshop. Bernstein

oversees the Stuyvesant Theater Community Tech Crew during shows and also helps during SING!, all roles reminiscent of her college years in the woodshop. “She’s not uptight at all, but she’s also really concerned with our safety,” said junior Lee Kuhn, who was on the 2008 Soph-Frosh SINGz! Tech Crew. “She lets us have fun, but she knows when to step in.” She is also known for her natural beat boxing and drumming talent. “I’ve been doing it ever since I can remember. I guess it might have something to do with my meticulous nature,” Bernstein said, referring to her combined love of percussion and woodworking. Amazingly, Bernstein has also found the time to paint the homes of numerous teachers including English teachers Kerry Garfinkel, Katherine Fletcher and Annie Thoms and Guidance Counselor Meredith Negrin. “Ms. Bernstein not only helped paint our apartment, but helped me pick out colors and taught me and my husband how to paint it ourselves,” English teacher Annie Thoms said. Her current project is replacing her cats’ litter box. “I just took in my friend’s cat, and now he’s giving urinary tract infections to my cat. I’m hoping that if I build them this sort of palace, they’ll stop and just be happy.”



As part of her senior project, teacher Leslie Bernstein showcased a series of wooden persons.

Courtesy of Leslie Bernstein

Arts & Entertainment

Byun the Builder

By FEIYANG ZANG
and DAPHNE ZHEN

College applications, prom and the struggle to hold on until second term are usually the main concerns of Stuyvesant seniors. But the life of senior Jaeyoung Byun is a bit more complicated. He is struggling not only to get into college, but also to become an architect.

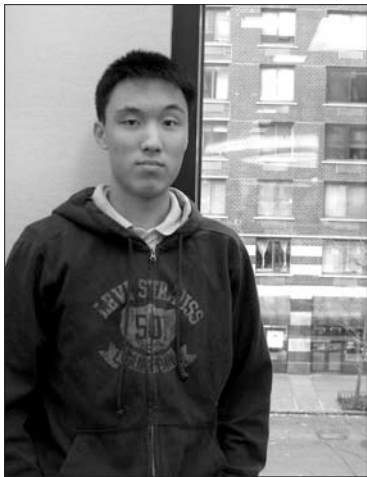
His architectural credentials are already impressive, considering Byun recently had some of his work shown at the Hun Gallery in Manhattan, and has also designed a building.

Byun's passion for architecture began when he was five. He was flipping through a picture book and became fascinated with the buildings in it. "I love how they just fit together so perfectly. I am awestruck by the specific structures that suit specific needs," Byun said. Ever since, he has been carefully observing buildings and structures.

Architectural interest runs in the Byun family. Byun's uncle and cousin are architects who have helped turn architecture into a serious passion for him.

Byun's credits his artistic development to the drawing classes he takes outside of school. His art teacher, Jihun Lee, helped Byun develop his artistic abilities and build confidence in his drawings. Byun said, "He [Lee] taught me that a tree that I draw is still a tree even though it might appear not to be a tree to others." The drawings Byun does for Lee's class are usually not architectural designs. However, it was in Lee's class that Byun learned techniques that later helped him attain an artist's eye for color and design.

Byun thrives in his challenging art class. "I have had Byun as a student since he was five. He is a



After a continued interest in architectural design, senior Jaeyoung Byun designed a building.

talented and hard-working student. But what sets him apart from the other students are his diligence and his talent for incorporating his religious faith with his work to make something amazing," Lee said.

Byun has also interned at a construction firm run by a family friend. He was chosen as one of 30 students to take the "Introduction to Architectural Design and Theory" program at Columbia University. The program is highly selective, so when Byun got rejected, he took matters into his own hands. He went directly to the office and asked them to accept him. "I refused to be rejected. I wanted to definitely get in that year," Byun said. His determination earned him a spot at the prestigious program. There, Byun learned basic concepts of architectural design.

He now continues his studies by attending architectural design classes at Cooper Union every Saturday. The class is an intensive training program for aspiring architects. Brandon Jay Todder, Byun's classmate and friend, said "The program only accepts talented individuals. And Byun is one of those."

Byun had 13 of his pieces on display at the Hun Gallery art show. Some notable ones are "The Nude" and "Imaginative Reality." "The Nude" is a drawing of a naked woman done entirely in pen ink. Byun had wanted to take an object of everyday life and use it to create a unique and stunning piece of art. "Imaginative Reality" was chosen as one of the top 25 paintings to be displayed in the same gallery for a week. The painting centers on an island, representing a utopian society. A person is looking at the island, but is not able to reach it. The vast ocean surrounding the island is discouraging. "You know you can swim to the island. But

it's just too distant," Byun said.

The center of the exhibition is the building he designed, Roman 8:28. The building isn't being built but this is the first building he has ever designed by himself. Byun incorporates his religious background into the building—as we can see by the name he chose which is a verse from the Bible. The building symbolizes the interaction of God and man. At the base of the building, there are two towers that represent God and humans. The towers almost seem to intermingle with each other, crossing one another again and again. "It shows that God will always be a part of humans' lives. We are tied to Him," Byun said. His strong religious beliefs are a large part of his architectural designs and art pieces. "I want to show my interest in religious faith in all my art," Byun said.

**“You know
you can swim to
the island.
But it’s just
too distant.”
—Jaeyoung
Byun, senior**

Byun is not interested in fame. "He's really modest about his accomplishments," junior Kenneth Chen. Byun values more the thought process that is put into creating a work of art.

Like anyone else, Byun makes mistakes sometimes and his drawings don't turn out the way he wants. However, instead of giving up, he directs his emotions into creativity and transforms the subject into something different. Some of his most respected and well-known pieces started out as unsatisfactory sketches.

Byun enjoys challenging himself with his art and is constantly searching for new ideas. Some of his drawings of abstract pieces are vessels to tell a story or to express what he's feeling. He feels that he draws his pieces with an intention that he's not even sure about.

Byun has applied for the prestigious architectural program at Cooper Union for college and is waiting anxiously for the reply. Between being featured at art galleries and designing buildings, Byun is clearly well on his way to becoming an architect.

And Three Make Seven



"And Baby Makes Seven," this year's studio drama, consisted of a cast of senior Yara Ganem, junior Willa Beckman, and senior Robert Stevenson.

By JENNY CHE

Few shows have been as minimalistic as this year's studio drama.

"And Baby Makes Seven," directed by juniors Tara Anantharam and Justy Kosek and produced by sophomore Daniela Gilsanz, was held in the library on Wednesday, November 5 and Thursday, November 6. The play, written by Paula Vogel, depicts the struggle of a slightly dysfunctional family to bring a baby into their chaotic life.

The show opens with three young children (sophomore Willa Beckman and senior Yara Ganem) squealing and giggling in bed, arguing about how children are born. Beckman plays Orphan, a feral boy raised by dogs, while Ganem simultaneously plays both the brainy Cecil and the French Henri. When Uncle Peter (senior Robert Stevenson) appears, the innocent conversation becomes sexualized.

The children are afterwards revealed to be the fantasy offspring of a lesbian couple, Ruth (Beckman) and Anna (Ganem). The women created three imaginary children, hoping to form a family. Anna dons a pair of glasses to become Cecil, while Ruth uses a heavy French drawl for Henri and a high-pitched stammer for Orphan.

A desire to bring a real child into the world forces the women to seek other methods. They invite Uncle Peter, a gay man who is amazingly accepting of his friends' eccentricities, to conceive with Anna and form the seventh member of the family. However, the boys feel threatened by the unborn baby and display this by fighting even more. As the tension rises, the women continuously change character to resolve the children's conflicts, often with a simple spin or head turn.

After much discussion, the two regretfully agree to kill off the boys one by one. Henri has recurrent dreams of his red balloon, which returns to "take him away," while Orphan contracts rabies from savage dogs and Cecil kills himself to rejoin his brothers. During the deaths, Ruth and Anna begin to realize their own weakening power over their children's fate.

Beckman's characters were by far the most engaging. Her clear separation of the characters made them fully developed individuals rather than just figments of Ruth's spontaneous imagination. Henri at times seemed sly and suspicious, but as he approached his impending doom, the Frenchman became mournful, bidding adieu to the audience when he met his red balloon. Beckman sharply contrasted Henri and Orphan, who would offer naughty growls and arrogant sighs of satisfaction whenever he got something he wanted. One of Beckman's strongest scenes was a fight between Orphan and Henri over a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

"The part that I personally thought made the show was Willa's performance of the death of Orphan," said junior Joseph Puma, an audience member, referring to the almost grotesque scene of Orphan's slow, painful deterioration. "She conveyed her emotions very well. It was easily the best part of the show and the most powerful scene."

Ganem's dual portrayals of Anna and Cecil were harder to differentiate. With little change in personality or tone of voice, Cecil seemed only to emerge with the adornment of glasses. However, Ganem did an excellent job portraying Anna's weakening will to destroy her creations.

Stevenson was relaxed throughout the show, giving in easily to the children's orders and the women's requests. He played the part of an almost helpless father figure determined to give his child a life without fantasy siblings. As Peter intimately confessed his nostalgia for women's breasts to Anna, Stevenson maintained a solemn face despite his subtle advances, provoking several laughs in the audience.

**“Studio productions are definitely more personal. There is a lot more one-on-one work.”
—Robert
Stevenson
("Uncle Peter"),
junior**

Despite its minimalist set, consisting of a sofa, a makeshift kitchen and a dining table, "And Baby Makes Seven" made excellent use of the library. At one point, during a trip to the zoo, Stevenson, Ganem and Beckman hopped on to the librarian's desk by the front entrance to gaze out at the animals. In addition, well-executed sound effects and music added to the show's overall effectiveness. Playing "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" after Peter's narration on the sexual reproductive system was a nice touch.

In general, "Baby" succeeded in relating the atypical story to the audience. The small-scale production allowed the slate and actors to work intimately on the complexities of the play. "Studio productions are definitely more personal," Stevenson said. "There is a lot more one-on-one work."

Disclaimer: James Dennin was not involved in the editing or writing of this article.

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Halloween 2008: Roving Reporter



The Blues Brothers

Computer Science teachers JonAlf Dyrland-Weaver and Mike Zamansky dressed up as **the Blues Brothers**, a band formed in 1978 from a musical sketch on Saturday Night Live. “Mr. Zamansky wanted to do a team costume. We were deciding between Men In Black and the Blues Brothers, and we chose the Blues Brothers because there was more of a performance aspect to it,” Dyrland-Weaver said. After two rehearsals before the day of Halloween, Dyrland-Weaver and Zamansky performed 11 times for their computer science classes and in front of the senior bar. “It was incredibly exhausting. By the end of the day, our feet were heavier,” Dyrland-Weaver said. Even though a large majority of students did not know who the Blues Brothers were, “they still enjoyed the performances. I recommend the movie to everyone,” Dyrland-Weaver said.

The Candidates

Seniors Amitav Chakraborty, Tom Sanford, Jared Dummitt and Danielle Blackman dressed up as **Barack Obama, John McCain, Joe Biden** and **Sarah Palin**. The group effort came together after Sanford convinced Dummitt to be Biden. Chakraborty was recruited as Obama, and together they found Blackman to be Palin. “Halloween was four days before the election, so being the candidates was the most appropriate costume,” Sanford said. During their free periods, the candidates went with one another to classrooms to improvise skits. “The secret to being a good Barack Obama is three things: a deep voice, a smile that stretches across the face, and an introspective stare at a 45 degree tilt. And you have to have the perfect eyebrows,” Chakraborty said. For a great John McCain, “don’t lift your arms too high. And Maverick,” Sanford said.



Matt the Flamingo

Senior Matthew Gottesman dressed up in a homemade costume as a **flamingo** for Halloween. “It started as a hairdo, but that didn’t really work out, so I adapted it to be a flamingo,” Gottesman said. He wanted to create a duo with a Queen of Hearts from Alice and Wonderland, but this did not come to fruition. Gottesman, who enjoys sewing, has made his own Halloween costumes in the past; he dressed up as a ragdoll in his sophomore year. Even with a busy schedule, Gottesman made sure to “make [his] last Halloween at Stuy special,” he said.



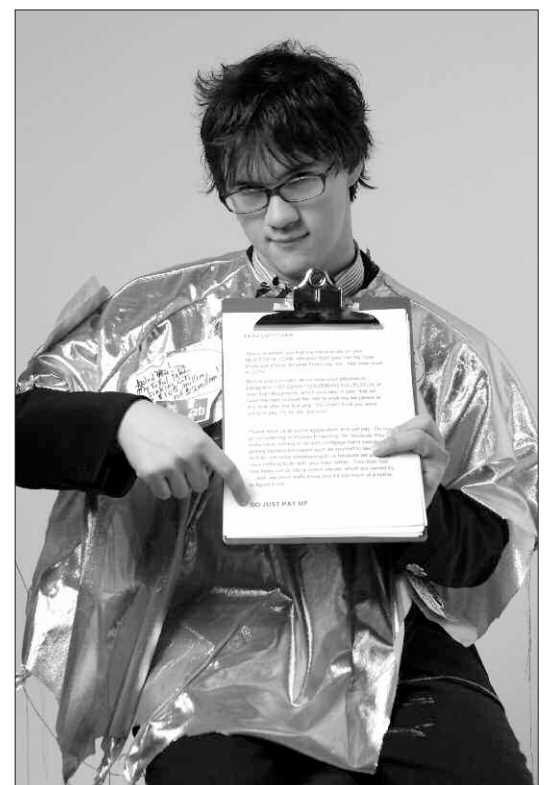
Village People

Seniors Nick Rozar, Nick Bauer-Levey, Nick Wheatley-Schaller, Nolan Becker, Andrew Ermogenous, Christopher Zhao, Aaron Ghitelman and Tarek Elesawi were **the Village People**, a disco group from the 1970’s. What started as a group of three sailors grew after Rozar gathered more members. “After watching videos on Youtube.com we decided we needed to come up with a dance to rock the school,” Rozar said. Senior Jennifer Yeon choreographed the group’s dances, which accompanied ‘YMCA,’ ‘In the Navy,’ and ‘Macho Man.’ “They asked me for some dance moves and we just put it together,” Yeon said. Their performances took place in classrooms and in the hallways. “It was a success. The atrium was crowded, and people seemed to enjoy watching it,” Yeon said.

Reporting by Jenny Ye Photos by Stephanie London



Halloween 2008: In the Studio



Courtesy of Jan Juracek

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Girls' Swimming

Athlete Spotlight: Abigayle Erickson, A Penguin at Heart

By HOWARD LAM

Abigayle Erickson, senior and co-captain of the Stuyvesant girls' varsity swim team, has been swimming for almost her entire life. Her father's side of the family had avid swimmers. Her two older siblings, her cousins, and her father swim regularly at summer leagues or the YMCA.

It was not a surprise then, that when she was two years old her dad brought her to swimming lessons at Asphalt Green, a local swimming center, nearly every Saturday morning until she was 10. One of her swimming instructors then suggested that she try out for their club team. "I tried out with a friend from school, which made me a little less nervous," Erickson said. "When the coach told our parents we made the team, I remember thinking whether I wanted to join or not, but my dad and my friend's mom had already signed us up."

From there, she began swimming for the Asphalt Green Unified Aquatics (AGUA) team ever since, now for almost eight years. She currently swims between seven to 10 times a week. Although this number

varies depending on the amount of school work she has and how the Stuyvesant team practices, a typical week for the AGUA team alone consists of three two hour long morning practices, a four hour long practice on Saturday, and three hours on Sunday.

Looking back on the time she's spent on AGUA and the Penguins, Stuyvesant's girls' swim team, Erickson said that she really loved being on both teams but adds that the biggest difference between the two is the atmosphere.

"At AGUA, there is also a feeling of team, but more in the sense that everyone is helping each other to achieve personal goals," Erickson said. At Stuy, the emphasis is much more on the team as a whole because everyone's performance affects the outcome of the meet, which is one of the reasons I love being on the Penguins."

Since joining the Penguins her freshmen year, she has been named Most Valuable Player in both her sophomore and junior year. "Each of those years were from a different coach," senior and co-captain Nora Cunningham said. "That really says a lot about her dedication

and talent. She is the swimmer that we can always rely on to swim her best."

On top of that, this is also Erickson's second year serving as a captain on the Penguins. Together with senior and co-captain Kei Okochi, she has led the team to an undefeated season last year. The Penguins are also 7-0 this season with the addition of fellow senior Nora Cunningham as a new captain. "It is definitely easier being captain as a senior than it was as a junior. Sometimes it gets difficult to manage my club swimming and being captain of the Penguins, but Kei and Nora are awesome and we work together really well," Erickson said.

"Since I was elected as captain just this year, Abby really helped me adjust to the job," Cunningham said. "In addition to being formidable in the water, Abby's also one of the sweetest people I know, is always willing to do a little extra for the team, and really encompasses what a leader should be."

"I've never heard her complain about anything," junior and Penguin rookie Clarissa Lam said. "She's always up for anything the coaches throw at her. At meets when she has to

swim multiple or really hard events, she just does it and she does it well."

"Abby is very organized with everything she does," junior and Penguin Stephanie Jou said. "During our nutritional talk, she had everything color-coordinated so that it was easier for her to separate what topics she had covered and what else was needed to be discussed. Without Abby and our other two captains, we wouldn't be where we are now."

At the swim meet against Bronx Science High School on Monday, October 27, the Stuyvesant Penguins won by a landslide of 29 points (64-35), winning first in every event and breaking the 400 yard freestyle relay record by over half a second.

Erickson swam and won first place in four of the available 11 swimming categories, including the 200 yard medley relay, 200 yard individual medley, 500 yard freestyle, and 400 yard freestyle relay. "You could tell the girls really wanted to win," Erickson said. "There were some really, really close races, but our girls always managed to get their hand on the wall first."

After defeating Curtis High

School and Brooklyn Technical High School in the first few rounds of the playoffs, Stuyvesant once again earned a spot in the Public School Athletics League (PSAL) Championship. The Penguins square off against the Turtles of Townsend Harris High School on Tuesday, November 25 at Lehman College in the Bronx. The meet will showcase a rematch of last season's Championship, in which Townsend Harris defeated Stuyvesant.

In terms of pursuing higher education, Erickson has been looking mostly at small schools, where she hopes to continue swimming. Although she said she would prefer division III schools, two of the four top choices on her list, Lafayette and Davidson, are division I. She is not really sure where she wants to spend the next four years yet and has not applied early anywhere.

"For now, my goals are just to break some more records for the Penguins and make Sectionals," Erickson said. "I've had such amazing experiences swimming and I hope that will only continue for the next four years."

Girls' Track

Sharon Mason Replaces William Silver as Girls' Track Coach

By SCOTT CHIUSANO

With its season coming to a close, Stuyvesant's girls' varsity cross country team is beginning to plan ahead for the start of the indoor season. The cross country season saw its fair share of achievements: the varsity team placed fourth in the borough, while the junior varsity team placed second. With an accomplished cross country season behind them, the girls are anticipating the arrival of a new addition to their team: head coach Sharon Mason, who will be joining them at the beginning of November.

Sharon Mason, who was born in Jamaica, has dedicated her life to running since she arrived in the United States as a child. She attended and ran track for Beach Channel High School, where she made it to the City Championships twice, qualifying for the 400 meter finals and finishing sixth both times. She went on to the City College of New York and became the Division III 400 meter champion in 1986. In 1994, Mason was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame, and two years later she began her first coaching job at Samuel J. Tilden High School. There, she coached several talented runners to success, including the number one junior varsity runner in the 2008 cross country season.

However, she decided to move on to a school that has a better established track and field program. "I enjoyed my time at Tilden and had great success there, but due to the current reorganization, it has become increasingly difficult to get and maintain a team," Mason said. This year the cross country team at Tilden fielded only seven girls in total, so Mason decided to move to a school where more girls were dedicated to running. "I decided to coach at Stuyvesant because I feel there is an opportunity for great success because of the discipline and academic status," she said. Stuyvesant's cross country team, led by senior

captains Molly French and Irina Starkova, has some promising members. Mason hopes to develop Jenny Fung and sophomores Lindsay Bauer and Hannah O'Grady into a strong and competitive team.

The team's former coach, William Silver, will still coach the girls' cross country team. According to junior and captain Vanessa Ventola, Silver works at the New York Road Runners Foundation, an organization which promotes track and field events in New York City, during the hours when the team has practice. This works during the cross-country season, when the team practices at Central Park, where he works, but not during the indoor and outdoor track seasons, when the team practices at school.

As a result, during the indoor and outdoor seasons, Silver left most of the work of coaching the team up to his captains and more experienced runners. The captains often looked to the boys' track coach, Mark Mendes, for specific workouts. "Our team is used to running fairly independently, and quite a lot of responsibility tends to fall on the captains and manager," French said. Despite Silver's less active role with the team, the girls still appreciated the work he did for them and enjoyed his presence. "He's a really nice, kind of fatherly guy," Ventola said. "We're all pretty attached to him as a person, but as a coach it wouldn't really work."

Mason has already taken some of the burden off the captains by calling an interest meeting for indoor track on Monday, November 10, which is when the girls will meet their new coach for the first time. Planning interest meetings had always been the captain's job, but Mason decided to take things into her own hands. "A coach that takes a more active role in managing the team would take a lot of pressure off of them [captains and managers], which would be beneficial," French said.



Coach Sharon Mason talks to co-captains Molly French, Dan Ping He and Connie Cheng

Ventola anticipates a rise in dedication and success will result from Mason's encouraging and pushing of the team. "A lot of the girls felt that because we didn't have a real coach, they didn't have to be real members," she said. By working harder, Ventola believes, more and more girls will start running faster times and placing higher in meets. "That wasn't happening before, and I expect it to happen now."

Mason wants to make the team more competitive by placing them in more meets with better competition. In order to do this, Mason plans to focus on each runner's best attributes so she can find which events they are best fit for. That way, runners can perfect their performance in events that they have the greatest potential to do well in, therefore maximizing the team's chances of getting selected to compete in elite meets. "I would like to attend more invitational meets where the competition is more advanced," Mason said. "The only thing I think I will have to change would be the type and objectives of the workouts. I would like to include event specific workouts, therefore moving the girls into specialized events."

Because Mason will play a larger role in organization and training than Silver did, the team's captains will be able to focus more on running and motivating, and less on managing. "I am sure I will have a ball working with the young ladies," Mason said. "The numbers are great. The discipline and attitude that I have witnessed in the past are all reasons why I feel we will do some great things this year."

Boys' Soccer

Ballerz Fall to Francis Lewis, Fall Short of Season's Hopes

By SCOTT CHIUSANO

The Stuyvesant varsity boys' soccer team ended their season on Wednesday, October 29 with a 6-1 loss to Francis Lewis High School in the second round of the playoffs. Francis Lewis, the number one seed in the playoffs this year and runner ups from last year, was a team the Ballerz knew would be difficult to beat. Despite the tough loss, the team has already begun to look ahead to next season, which with 10 returning starters, looks to be a very promising one.

In the first round of the playoffs, the Ballerz defeated the number five seed, Midwood, 2-0. However, the coach and players both expected a larger win. "We actually anticipated a better performance against Midwood, and were disappointed with a 2-0 victory in a game we clearly dominated throughout," Coach Adam Goldstein said. The two goals of the game were both scored by junior Cody Levine, who led the team with 10 goals at the end of the season. Both players and the coach knew they would have to step up their game to beat Francis Lewis in the next round.

Unfortunately, the team came up short. Although Francis Lewis scored only two goals in the first half, and Stuyvesant countered with one of its own by sophomore Arik Raviv, they were unable to stop Francis Lewis's onslaught of offense in the second half. "Our defense was not used to playing such a good offense. Francis Lewis has their offense

down to a science," sophomore Tobi Idowu said. Stuyvesant only had six shots on goal, compared to Francis Lewis's 20. "We hung tough for periods of the game, missed our chances to draw level or take leads and ultimately succumbed to the pressure of a very strong and fit team," Coach Goldstein said. The Ballerz hung tough this year against other teams that were older and more experienced than them, proving that they will be even more competitive next season. "We are losing only one starter this year, and the team will be made up of mostly upperclassmen next year. We will go into next season with the same mentality, but with our juniors and seniors more experienced," Idowu said. The team's leading scorer, Levine, will return next year as a senior, as will their goalie, Alex Sandler. "Next season a stronger focus will be placed on preseason. This will give us the opportunity to work on our conditioning and on the field tactics in order to overtake the league's best teams," Goldstein said.

With a bright future ahead of them, the Stuyvesant varsity soccer team will try to put their disappointing playoff loss behind them, after learning from it. "This year's underclassmen expect to return next year with the focus on winning the PSAL championship, which we feel is strongly within our grasp. We have 10 returning starters from the Francis Lewis game hungry for greater on-field success," Goldstein said.

THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

Track

Boys’ and Girls’ Track Teams Participate In City Championships

By JOHN CONNUCK

Both Stuyvesant’s boys’ and girls’ cross country teams found success at the Manhattan Borough Championships, which were held on Saturday, October 26, at Van Cortlandt Park. As a result of their performances, each team earned a ticket to the City Championships, which were held on Saturday, November 8.

The girls’ team struggled through Boroughs, but enough members beat previous times to help ensure them a spot at the Cities. “It was a low spirited day for all of us, and we were all a little shocked, but we were later informed that we did qualify for Cities,” junior and captain Vanessa Ventola said. “We look forward to running Cities next week and I would say all of us are expecting much better times than at Boroughs.”

At Boroughs, Stuyvesant’s top four girls finished in places 16, 17, 18, and 19 overall in the varsity five kilometer race. Ventola finished 16th, with a time of 23 minutes 48.6 seconds. Right behind her was senior and captain Irina Starkova, who finished in 23 minutes 55.98 seconds. Although none of them ran personal bests, they each qualified for Cities, and Stuyvesant came in fourth place overall.

Although Ventola and senior and captain Molly French both beat their times from Boroughs, Stuyvesant did not see the same success at Cities because more teams with greater levels of talent were participating. In a race of 155 runners who qualified for Cities due to their performance at Boroughs, Ventola placed 71st, with a time of 23 minutes 17.22 seconds, and French placed 91st in 24 minutes and 6.65 seconds. The team did not qualify for the State Championships.

The boys’ team came in first place overall, winning them the title of Manhattan Borough Champions. This year marks the ninth time in a row that they have accomplished this feat since coach Mark Mendes took over in 1998.

Despite an already dominant performance, the boys also look to improve heading into Cities. “The times weren’t as fast as we could have potentially run, in part because we are tapering for City Championships this Saturday,” said junior Pace Lee, who placed fifth in the 5K with a time of 19 minutes 18.24 seconds. Stuyvesant swept the first three places in the 5K, with junior and captain Daniel Hyman Cohen, senior and captain Eleazar Jacobs



and senior Cary Abma placing first, second, and third with times of 17:53.15, 18:16.71, and 18:41.04, respectively.

After winning the Manhattan Borough Championships, the boys’ team clinched fourth place out of the top 20 teams in all of New York City. Hyman-Cohen led the team once again at Cities, placing second overall in the 5K with a time of 16 minutes 34.14 seconds.

The first, second, and third places were taken respectively by McKee/Staten Island Technical High School, Curtis High School, and Brooklyn Technical High School. “It’s tough losing to another specialized school,” Mendes said. “We don’t like doing that.” Nevertheless, he was proud of the team’s effort in what he believes was a solid performance.

The team went on to compete at the State Championships, which will be held on Saturday, November 15.

Rowing

Rowing Team: Build, Build, Build Your Boat

By EDDIE CYTRYN

As winter approaches, the Hudson River is getting colder and rougher. Most teams that row in its waters hibernate during this time of the year, when there are no races. However, the Stuyvesant Rowing Club is already working diligently on building its own new boat, hoping to put it in the water when the rowing season resumes next spring.

At a boating workshop located at Pier 40 called Floating The Apple, the Stuyvesant Rowing Club’s co-presidents, seniors John Wittrock and Robert Lee, along with junior David Rice and other team members, assemble their latest project: a new Whitehall gig for the Stuyvesant Rowing team. The boats are named after Whitehall, England, where this type of boat originated. The gig is 25 feet long and is built on a flat-bottom keel that prevents it from tipping over in the water. Unlike the very slim boats used in crew, these are wider and allow for four rowers and a coxswain. The coxswain steers the boat and directs the rowers.

The Rowing Club works on the boat for a few hours daily at Floating The Apple, which, in addition to maintaining the workshop, is a New York City-based non-profit organization that works to promote rowing around the city. “I really like the fact that you can be here with your friends and race boats at the same time,” Wittrock said.

Stuyvesant’s Rowing Club was started in the fall of 2006 by Lee, who was then a sophomore. Lee became interested in rowing after he took a summer course in 2006 about rowing and building boats. “During the course, Mike Davis [Director] of Floating The Apple gave me the idea of starting a rowing club at Stuyvesant and I decided to go with it,” he said.

“The club was started as a way to introduce kids to the water and get them out rowing,”



The Rowing Club meets daily to complete the building of a new boat.

Hanna Kim/The Spectator

said Wittrock, who has been rowing since he was young. “It wasn’t formed with a team atmosphere in mind but we have won a few races. Our main objective though is just to have fun.”

The club does not belong to the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) since there aren’t enough rowing teams in other New York City high schools to form a league. In the spring, however, they enter competitions against high schools and colleges from throughout the Northeast.

Because they are not an official team, they do not have a coach, although they are helped out heavily by a volunteer named Phil Yee. They do a lot of self-coaching, with seniors and coxswains helping out the younger members.

Rice became interested in the Rowing Club as a sophomore. “I started getting into shape and I wanted to do some kind of aerobic activity,” he said. “I heard about an interest meeting last year and it’s been really great.”

With 125 members, the Rowing Club is one of Stuyvesant’s largest. However, it only has access to seven gigs, but would like to build more

like the one that they are working on now in order to accommodate more members as the interest grows at Stuyvesant. The gigs are lent to them by Floating The Apple, so they don’t have to pay. They receive the funding for the materials from Eugene Lang College, which is sponsoring the project as a part of a boat-making course it offers.

The building of the new gig has given the club a chance to learn more about the structure of the boats and has given them some quality time for team bonding. “It’s an educational experience but we also really enjoy being there,” sophomore Daniela Gilsanz said.

“It takes the same teamwork off the water building the boats as it does on the water,” Lee said.

The team hopes that the boat will be ready by March– in time for their spring season.

Members of the team agree that building their own boat provides more gratification than simply buying a ready-made one. “We don’t mind getting our hands dirty,” Wittrock said. “We want to make one for ourselves.”

Fantasy Meets Reality



Diane Yee /The Spectator

BY SHALIYA DEHIPAWALA

It’s early November, and Stuyvesant’s Fantasy Football players are beginning to prepare for the Fantasy post-season. For them, the question is not whether to take the SAT or ACT. It’s if they should pick Aaron Rodgers or Brett Favre as their quarterback.

As some Stuyvesant fantasy sports fans may soon learn, not every NFL player is destined for the fantasy playoffs. Draft Dallas QB Tony Romo? Ouch. Pin your hopes on the Chiefs’ running back Larry Johnson? Better luck next time. For you unlucky few who have made such catas-

trophic mistakes, I have devised a temporary fix for your Fantasy Sports needs: a Fantasy Stuyvesant.

Fantasy Sports have exploded in popularity over the last decade. Players draft real-life professional athletes for their imaginary teams. The better the athlete performs in real life, the more points his fantasy owner receives. At the end of the season, the player whose team accumulates the most points wins the league title. Most leagues are hosted online, so anybody who uses the internet can play. My apologies, Senator McCain.

Fantasy Sports give fans the ability to construct their own all-star teams, which can come as a condolence to fans of teams that have made ill-advised deals for players. Upset about the Giants’ decision to raise wide receiver Plaxico Burress’s salary, only to watch him skip practice and yell at his coach? No problem! You don’t have to make the same mistakes in Fantasy Sports. “It’s fun to be a G.M. [General Manager],” junior Brandon Sirkisoon said. “You can make up for the blunders the real coach makes.”

Fantasy Stuyvesant would sweep the student body, capturing its imagination in the same

way that fantasy sports have captured the imagination of this country. Stuyvesant students have a penchant for criticizing school management. Indeed, complaining about and second-guessing the administration already constitutes an entire section of The Spectator—Opinions.

A Fantasy Football roster contains a couple slots for each offensive position. Similarly, Fantasy Stuyvesant teams would have room for all members of the Stuyvesant community: administrators, teachers, security guards, Student Union (SU) officials and students. Fantasy players would receive points based on each position’s performance in certain categories.

For example, security guards would score two points each time they tell a student to get off the sixth floor, double that if the student actually listens. Security guards also have the potential to score 1,000 points each time they actually improve a student’s safety (point values are based on the statistical probability of an event).

Teachers score one point for each “Quest” they give to their students. Quests are a combination of a quiz and a test. Often equal in length to tests, Quests,

in providing a huge loophole around a policy allowing teachers to give tests only on certain days of the week, lets teachers burden students with surprise tests for which they are unprepared.

While these quests may seem unfair, the SU will always be there as a voice for your concerns. SU officers are a very dynamic aspect of a Fantasy Stuyvesant team. They score one-fourth of a point every time they try to make other students care about the SU. This point value may seem to render SU officers insignificant, but Stuyvesant Fantasy players should not be discouraged from drafting them onto their team. With more than 180 days in the school year and over 3,000 indifferent students, the potential for points is great. More waffles, please.

Running backs are widely considered to be the most important position on a Fantasy Football team. Fantasy owners depend on them for consistent points throughout the season. Administrators fill that role in Fantasy Stuyvesant. Rated for their consistent ability to confiscate electronics, administrators provide a steady stream of points for their Fantasy players. Points are directly proportional

to the value of the confiscated item. A phone, a suspicious pocket bulge, or a smile on a student’s face will send the administrators converging on their prey. Defenseless freshman will have to wait three days to get their phones back, but you’ve just notched yourself 400 more points.

One crucial aspect of a fantasy team is the risky player drafted late in the selection process, otherwise known as a ‘sleeper.’ Sleepers are often young, obscure players not seasoned enough for an earlier pick. They are called sleepers because they are not expected to perform well. Occasionally a sleeper “awakens,” rewarding the player who drafted him.

If you’re looking for a metaphor here, forget about it. Simply enough, Fantasy Stuyvesant’s “sleepers” are measured by their ability to sleep in class without being caught. Is the junior sitting next to you taking five APs without a lunch? Hand him a pillow and watch the points pile up.

Anything is possible in Fantasy Stuyvesant. There might even be a position on your team for a sports columnist.