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*"The pulse
of the
student
body."*

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To The Stuyvesant Community

Tensions Swell as Religious Events Compete

By JON EDELMAN

During the past few weeks Stuyvesant has been witness to an upswing of religious activity, with clubs of various faiths holding large closing events for the school year. These have included Jesus Day, Mitzvah Day, and the publication of a booklet by the Muslim Arts Club. The Seekers, members of a Christian organization, continue to host before-school prayer meetings, while the Muslim Students Association hosts after-school sessions.

"Jesus Day was held on May 13 in the cafeteria after school," said sophomore Seeker Akia Cain. "Each group in Jesus Day is called a sub-ministry. The praise group sang, body worship danced to a song, and evangelism prepared the goody bags, which contained testimonials from Seekers and verses from the Bible. There was also a raffle, where we gave away J-Day T-shirts and books. Also, a pastor spoke. We raised most of the money by selling candy."

According to sophomore Budget Director Josh Siegel, the Seekers did not apply for SU funding this year. However, "we have no rules about funding religious clubs," said Siegel.

Recently, the Muslim Arts club published and distributed a pamphlet entitled "Are You Uninformed About God?" Its introduction stated that its goal was to "enlighten the reader and promote the unification of all people as human beings striving to obtain moral and spiritual happiness." It featured short essays written by a Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and an atheist student, all about their relationship, or lack thereof, with God. According to faculty advisor and Assistant Principal of Social Studies Jennifer Suri, it was released without first being shown to her for approval. The club had no previous experience with publishing pamphlets at Stuy, and was unaware of the proper procedure. Future booklets will be previewed by Suri.

Mitzvah Day, a Jewish celebration held on May 24, was conceived by Race and Gender Prejudice teacher Warren Donin as a response to what he believed was an under-representation of Judaism in Stuyvesant's religious events.

"We have a Jesus Day, which I have no problems with, and Muslims who pray, but who takes care of the Jewish kids?" asked Donin. "It isn't during school hours because of the policy about religious

continued on page 3

Mixed Reactions to College Office Interactions



Tracey Hsu / The Spectator

The college office, located on the second floor, works primarily with juniors and seniors to guide them in the college process. "The college office is like a travel agency," said Principal Stanley Teitel.

By JIN-JI KIM

"The college office is like a travel agency," said Principal Stanley Teitel. "It takes a look at your circumstances and advises what would be the best for you."

Though some might not consider college an exotic locale

to escape from pressure as they would a vacation, the college office has long been open to help the students aspiring to get into colleges of their choice.

The college office works primarily with Stuy students during their junior and senior years to aid them in the college-choosing

process, dealing with issues such as financial aid, summer jobs, and internships. According to college advisor Dr. Lydia Schulman, the college process officially begins during the junior year. Students meet in small groups of three with a college advisor to choose a pool of about 10 colleges that would be appropriate for them. The students are divided according to their homerooms and averages to insure that the information can be delivered efficiently. During the interview, personal interests, economic flexibility, different courses offered, and parental preferences are all considered.

As the fall of the senior year approaches, the college office's involvement in students' college process becomes much more in depth. Individual meetings are held in the beginning of the year to narrow down the student's choices to seven colleges.

Teitel believes that they are very effective.

"By the end of a 20-minute appointment, you have a good idea of which colleges you are applying for," he said. Teitel said that a specific requirement is that each student must apply to at least one "safety" school.

To assist students, the college office posts lists of scholarships, open houses, summer programs, and internships on its

web bulletin, updated every two weeks. In addition, the college counselor and her advisors help students to prepare the necessary documents with guided deadlines.

By the end of this school year, the college office will have assisted more than 700 with getting into and paying for college.

"If you did go to the college and stayed there for 4 years, the college office has made 'a good fit' and has done its job," Teitel remarked.

Many upperclassmen agree that the college office helped them in their selection and in other related businesses.

"They asked me specific questions that helped me to look in the right direction," said senior John Pham. "They have a good database with the scholarships, and they will help you greatly with getting the exact papers that you need for the scholarship. With all their help, it felt like the college advisor took an extra step for me when I was applying for a scholarship, which I appreciated."

In addition, some students appreciate the fact that the college office does offer you the names of competitive colleges that serve as alternative options to the Ivy League schools.

"They let you know that

continued on page 3

Stuy Sophomores Face a New SAT

By ROBIN LIPP

"It's not fair. I don't understand why they have to change it. I'm not going to know what the new test looks like and it's not like there are any practice tests," said sophomore Reyna Ramirez. Starting with the class of 2006, students must face a challenge that looms closer each day: the new SAT exam.

The major changes to the new SAT include the addition of a student written essay, the elimination of analogies, and the expansion of the math section to include topics from third-year college preparatory math. "The colleges have always viewed writing as an absolutely essential skill, and writing is so essential that they're now incorporating it into the SAT," said college advisor Dr. Lydia Schulman.

Although some students are pleased with the changes to the test, others fear the new essay portion of the exam and do not feel prepared to be the first class to take it. Students are now faced with a choice: to take the old SAT by the last testing date in January of 2005, or to take the new SAT in the spring, and face the essay and expanded math. Some students have even decided to take both tests in order to get the best (or worst) of both

worlds.

Students voiced their decisions and concerns regarding the right time to take the SAT. "I want to take them both to see the difference in my scores," said sophomore Jiang Yio, who has chosen not to take a prep-course for the SAT.

"I want the chance to take the old SAT, but if I do poorly the first time around, I'd like the chance to do better on a new test," said Ramirez.

Other students prefer to take only the new test, but are upset about the change. "I don't think a new SAT will help anyone, I just think it'll make people want to take more review courses," said sophomore Nick Morgan.

Some students are happy about the changes to the exam. "I'm happy about the change...there's an opportunity to write and I like writing. People are worried that there's no review material, but how do they know it'll be so much worse than the old test?" said Yio.

To quell students' fears, the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which handles the SATs, has recently made a practice SAT I with the newly adopted format, available for students to use. The practice test can be

continued on page 4

Meningitis Hits Stuyvesant

By REVAZ SURGULADZE

On Thursday, May 20, as students watched the clock waiting for tenth period to end, a voice over the public announcement system asked all students to report to the second floor entrance to receive an "important notice" regarding viral meningitis.

As students left through the second floor doorway after tenth period, they received notices alerting them that two members of the student body had been diagnosed with viral meningitis, an inflammatory condition of the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord.

Students were warned to watch for signs of the disease. The notice outlined the symptoms of viral meningitis, which include fever, headache, stiff neck, and listlessness. The disease is caused by various different viruses that may enter the body upon contact with the bodily secretions of those already infected with the virus. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is planning to have viral testing performed to determine which viruses caused the disease in the two students.

The school administration

is working with the DOHMH to investigate the cases and determine whether they are related.

"We are working to give information to the parents to keep them informed," said Assistant Principal of Pupil Services Eleanor Archie. "We put out a phone message to let parents know about the notice on our Web site [www.stuy.edu]."

The administration has decided not to close the school or conduct any cleaning procedures.

"We are not closing the school or cleaning the air by the instruction of the DOHMH," said Archie. "The virus is not airborne. It is spread by contact. So the DOHMH has advised us not to take such measures."

School Health Doctor Bernadette Ficina explained that people with viral meningitis usually recover within one or two weeks.

"Patients recover spontaneously just as with the flu," said Ficina. "Treatment for the virus is systematic. Patients should be treated to relieve the symptoms. Otherwise, antibiotics are unnecessary."

The administration has advised students who are feel-

continued on page 4

U.S. History Regents Exemption Put Into Effect—For Some

By EUGENE THEODORE

Starting this year, getting a 3 or higher on the three-hour Advanced Placement United States History Examination allows students exemptions from the U.S. History Regents. According to Assistant Principal of Social Studies Jennifer Suri, juniors who do not score 3 or higher will be required to take the Regents the following January. Because students do not find out about AP scores until July, all seniors must take the Regents whether they have taken the AP test or not.

Students taking U.S. History can also take the SAT II U.S. History offered by the College Board. According to Suri, if a student scores a minimum of 560 and writes a “m u l t i - s o u r c e , i n d e p t h r e s e a r c h p r o j e c t t h a t d e m o n s t r a t e s t h e a b i l i t y t o u s e p r i m a r y a n d s e c o n d a r y r e s o u r c e s ” f o r t h e i r A P U . S . H i s t o r y t e a c h e r , t h e y c a n a v o i d t a k i n g t h e R e g e n t s . S t u d e n t s w i l l s t i l l b e r e q u i r e d t o t a k e t h e g l o b a l R e g e n t s d e s p i t e t h e S A T I I a n d A P o f f e r e d .

According to an online post by the New York State Education Department dating back to March 2003, the exemption has been in effect since last June’s Regents, though Principal Stanley Teitel has only this year waived the Regents for those who took the AP U.S. history exam.

“It’s a gamble,” he said, “but hopefully it will work.” Suri explained that the reason to enforce the decision within our own school came about because of the high number of students who take the AP U.S. History class. She adds that it will lighten the burden on history teachers, who have to grade each individual Regents. The test will require fewer proctors and rooms in which to administer the test.

Some students expressed disappointment that Teitel did not extend this state-wide policy to the other departments which are also allowed to have

“It’s a gamble, but hopefully it will work.”
– Principal Stanley Teitel

the Regents exempted. They include world history, foreign language, and science. According to the Department of Education Web site (*www.nycdoe.net*), students can be exempted from the World History regents by scoring a 470 or higher on the SAT II World History exam.

The state’s Department of Education also offers Regents alternatives in foreign languages. According to Assistant Principal of Foreign Language Dr. Rolf Schwagermann, the minimum scores for exemption from the Regents range from the mid to high 400s. However, in those languages—such as German, French, and Spanish—which has both a listening and reading comprehension SAT II

offered, both examinations must be taken to be exempt from the relevant Regents. According to the Department of Education Web site, exemptions from the Regents are also granted state-wide in science. A score of 520 and above on the SAT II Biology exam and 1200 minutes of hands-on laboratory work would exempt students from the biology Regents, while a score of 540 on the SAT II Chemistry and 530 on the SAT II Physics exam would also earn exemption. However, none of these exemptions are honored by Stuyvesant.

However, many students, including those not in the AP U.S. history class, feel that the exemption policy is both fair and logical.

“If you take an SAT II, it’s pretty obvious you know enough to do well on a Regents and if you don’t want to sit for three hours and take it that makes sense and should be okay,” said sophomore Maisie Breit.

“The Regents are made to fit the entire city,” junior Vadim Yerokhin pointed out. “Not only is our regular history course probably more than adequate for the Regents, the AP kids shouldn’t have to waste their time studying for a dumbed-down test.”

By ANITA MA

There’s more to science than textbooks and equations. Assistant Principal of Chemistry and Physics Dr. Olga Livanis hopes to prove just that with the introduction of the Banner Design Competition at Stuyvesant.

Chemistry and physics classes of the Regents or Advanced Placement Level can participate in this new contest by submitting a science banner by Friday, June 4. According to Livanis, one banner will be selected for each subject and then hung in Stuyvesant throughout the 2004-2005 school year. The chosen physics entry will be hung on the eighth floor, and the one chosen for chemistry will be hung on the ninth floor. In addition, the winning classes will be rewarded with a pizza party in the cafeteria.

Some general limitations have been set for the competition. The banners must be nine feet high by three feet wide, with either a chemistry or physics motif. AP chemistry student and senior Yun Liu, who is creating a banner combining both physics and chemistry said, “I didn’t like the idea of treating



Senior Jonathan Wai of Dr. Carlos Cheng’s AP Chemistry class poses with his class’s banner.

chemistry as just high school chemistry, and physics as just high school physics, apart and cold from each other, separated by a floor. But I still think it’s great to issue this contest, to get

spective to the scientific disciplines. Chemistry student and sophomore Evaline Cho said, “We can decorate empty spaces in schools while heightening school spirit through student involvement. Students have fallen asleep in classes before, but if you were to have an activity, such as this contest, students can be motivated to learn something since we’ll be seeing science in another way.”

The contest has brought about some enthusiastic reactions from both students and teachers. Physics teacher Julia Nolen said, “It’s nice to take a break from the same old problems. It’s a creative outlet.”

Junior Benjamin Hardy agreed. “In my class, we’re working on a physics quilt. We can review what we’ve learned [over] the past year while creating something unique and interesting to look at. It’s an enjoyable project,” he said.

“It’s a pretty cool idea to wed chemistry and physics with art. Apart from some very rudimentary concepts, physics and chemistry are very closely related. In many respects, these sciences are a form of art,” Liu said.

Kern of All Trades

By MARTHA MCGILVRAY

Students see him everywhere: in the theater, in the library, and in the halls. Some don’t know him at all; others know him only as Kern. “I don’t know much about him, but I think he’s a really nice guy who helps the kids a lot,” said sophomore Anna Starikov.

Kern Levigion is not what you would expect from the average maintenance staffer. In fact, his responsibilities are so varied it’s hard to say just what it is he does at Stuyvesant.

For the past 12 years, Levigion has been in charge of both in-school projects and outside organizations’ projects within the school. Levigion manages the theater, the telephone system, the audiovisual system, and has assembled the countless benches scattered throughout the halls. He also supervises Stuy’s weather station camera, which may be used by NBC for its own weather

broadcasts. “If it’s not someone else’s union duty, then it’s mine,” said Levigion.

“Whenever something breaks that the teachers don’t know how to fix, like the VCR, he comes and fixes it, and saves the lesson,” said sophomore Victor Liu.

Levigion is adored by Stuy’s tech crews. “He’s a wonderful person because he sides with the students and helps us whenever something goes wrong,” said costume director and junior Alexa Yim. Levigion also helps out with Open Mic, during which Stuy students have a chance to read their short stories and poems in front of an audience of their peers. “We’re really grateful to him for all his help,” said Olga Kamensky, senior and president of the poetry club.

Levigion’s charges are not limited to Stuyvesant-related activities. He is in charge of Battery Park City concerts held in Stuy, and was involved with the TriBeCa Film Festival.

Naturally, not all aspects of his job are so loveable. One of the everyday obstacles that Levigion contends with is students vandalizing school property. One of Levigion’s pet peeves is students painting on the stage, even after they have been told not to do so.

Levigion’s job is not the only varying thing in his life. Last year, Levigion’s hair went from long and white to short and dark brown. Levigion donates his hair to an organization called Locks of Love, which provides people undergoing chemotherapy with wigs. The last time he donated, he gave a whopping 16 and a half inches. He is now letting it grow out again.

Levigion is truly Stuyvesant High’s Jack-of-all-Trades. Next year, he may be installing a new greenhouse in the Stuyvesant library. However, his ever-changing tasks are what make his job attractive. “I love it. I never know what to expect,” said Levigion.

At the Close of a School Year, a Host of Languages Honored

By SARAH SOFFES and EUGENE THEODORE

At a school whose reputation demands respect for its students’ advancement in fields of mathematics and the various sciences, the humanities and languages are often forgotten. However, as the year draws to a close the Foreign Language Department is proud to reward the efforts of those students who have excelled in their language studies as well, adding to the ever growing language societies of the school.

Italian

The national Societa Onararia Italica celebrated its 50th anniversary nationwide and with it, Stuyvesant’s first chapter. The requirements for entering the society are a 90 average in language and 80 overall, with members being

drawn from students in their second year of Italian and higher. This year, 74 members were inducted under the supervision of Italian teacher Vito Recchia, Assistant Principal of Foreign Language Dr. Rolf Schwagermann, Assistant Principal of Pupil Services Eleanor Archie, Assistant Principal of Organization Randi Damasek, and Principal Stanley Teitel.

“The Italian Honor Society is the [group of] students who have the highest average and a high general average, for the knowledge of Italian language, culture, and understanding between different languages and cultures and to reward students who excel,” said Recchia.

Besides being its first year, the ceremony this year had an added importance, as the local chapter was then dedicated to the memory of Anacleto Tiseo. Tiseo was an Italian teacher at

Stuyvesant for 20 years before his death last year.

Spanish

Celebrating its 26th year since consummation, the Severo Ochoa Chapter of America’s La Sociedad Honararia, held its honors ceremony last November. With over 90 students being granted membership to the national society, the event featured guest speakers including Schwagermann and Teitel. Departmental staff and parents of the inductees were invited to attend.

Aside from the speeches, the pledge, and the food, the ceremony also included various artistic elements. Two couples danced a traditional Latin routine. A pianist played a well-known contemporary Spanish piece, and various members sang Spanish verses while others read poetry.

The members of the society however are not just fourth year students who fill out overall applications which looks at their GPA. Under Arlene Ubieta’s guidance, Stuyvesant’s Spanish Honor Society has volunteered at the Red Cross, expedited the adoption of South American children by American families, and they even manufactured toys which were donated to hospitals whose child-clinics are mostly Hispanic.

The society celebrates the conclusions of yet another session of studies with an end-of-the-year dinner. This year, it was held on June 1. These members, as well as other students who take Spanish, were awarded for their exemplary performance on the national exam sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

Japanese

A language society being introduced is a chapter of the Japanese Honor Society. On Thursday, May 27, the Stuyvesant chapter of the National Japanese Honor Society held its first-ever induction ceremony, organized by Japanese teacher Chie Helinski. 43 students drawn from the second year of the language and onwards with an overall average of 85 and a Japanese average of 90 have been chosen. According to Helinski, aside from the guest speakers and sushi dinner, two students demonstrated the art of karate while six others sang along to the Koto, a Japanese instrument.

continued on page 4

With Elections Over, New Caucuses Prepare For Next Year

By THERESA LANGSCHULTZ

After two weeks of being bombarded by colorful campaign leaflets, Stuyvesant students cast their votes on Friday, May 28 in the annual general elections to decide the winners of the Student Union, Senior, and Junior caucus races.

The Student Union election, narrowed down from the primary elections that featured junior Taresh Batra and sophomore Sasha von Olderhausen, junior Alex Yu and sophomore Eleonora Bershadskaya, and junior Josh Weinstein and freshman John Taylor, came down to a race between the Batra and Yu tickets.

Yu and Bershadskaya, who won by a vote of 472 to 430, are excited for the chance to work for the student body.

“We just want to get started ASAP and actually come through with our promises,” Bershadskaya said.

Yu agrees, adding that “in order to prevent a shaky start, it is imperative that we first create a new Student Union for 2004-2005 by filling the appointed positions available to students.”

All applications for positions, ranging from communications director to budget director, are due to the pair by Friday, June 11. From there, they will conduct interviews and appoint positions by the end of finals week.

This year’s senior caucus election was won by juniors Maria Cheung and Nick Lerangis, according to the Student Union Web site. Cheung, happy with the outcome, first plans on finishing off her role as Junior class Vice President.

“We’re going to continue with newsletters – the September 11th Health Registry promised us \$1,000 for Junior prom if we can put out three newsletters for them, so we’re working on that,” she said. “We want to start planning one of our campaign promises, video night, early. We’ll start by taping us around the senior bar next year, and we’ll gather everyone together to play it back at the end of the year.”

Cheung feels that the three newly elected caucuses will be able to compliment each other in the coming year.

“We’ll definitely be able to

work well together,” she said. “I just met the Junior caucus and they were really sweet, asking for advice already, so I don’t anticipate any problems.”

Though the elections went smoothly, some votes in the Senior caucus elections went to a ticket not on the ballot – the ticket of David and tree. Started by junior David Louie, the ticket received 28 votes. Louie did a little campaigning of his own.

“My friend came up with the idea, and the tree was a gift I gave her,” he explained. “Originally, I was going to run, but I didn’t have a running mate.”

Out of 11 primary teams, the Junior caucus elections came down to the ticket of sophomores Kristen Ng and Ashik Siddique, and Josh Siegel and Jackie Hseih, 170 – 131.

According to Ng, unlike many others, she did not wait around to hear the results.

“I was on a bus going upstate to a Bible conference,” she said, “and got the call from Ashik. No balloons and people jumping out of cakes, just a groggy me on a noisy bus with a cell phone.”

Tensions Swell as Religious Events Compete

continued from page 1

involvement in the public schools. We just use the school as a meeting point, where we’ll go to a ‘Mitzvah Tank’ across the street, where a rabbi will instruct Jewish girls about lighting candles for Sabbath, and will show Jewish boys how to put on a tefillin. Ice cream and candy will be dispensed, paid for out of my own pocket, Mitzvah Day doesn’t cost the school anything. T-shirts will be given out that say ‘ERACISM’. They can’t inadvertently proselytize, like the Jesus Day shirts, which is prohibited in Judaism. Anyone, however, is welcome, regardless of religion.”

The recent surge of religious events at Stuy has sparked strong opinions in the student body. Responding to Donin’s charge of possible proselytism, Cain said “I don’t think shirts

have the power to do that. I don’t want people to become Christians because we wear cool T-shirts. I want them to believe and know that God exists and that Jesus loves us, and God gave up his son so we could live forever.” Cain feels that Mitzvah Day is also appropriate. “It’s love, and when you love someone, you want everyone to know. How could I have a problem with it?”

Junior Inessa Gelfenboym thinks the religious meetings are beneficial. “If people who all share a religion want to get together and pray, or write, or celebrate their religion, it’s generally good. People shouldn’t be discouraged from believing in a religion. I know some people think that some of the things these groups pull are propaganda, but people are very conscious of their beliefs at Stuyvesant, so it’s really not a big

deal.”

However, sophomore Maya Steward disagrees. “It’s actually kind of shocking to see flyers for Jesus Day or the Mitzvah Tank plastered on the bulletin boards. I never really thought that we would have to deal with separation of church and state living in New York City and all, but when Stuy funds religious organizations like Seekers, it makes me wonder...I don’t think it’s fair, or half-way legal, for the school to give so much money to religious organizations.”

On the whole, the various religion-influenced events have represented the major faiths of Stuyvesant students. They also represent religion-related publicity at a level unseen in previous years. In an era in which religion seems to be growing more and more important, Stuyvesant seems to be echoing the trend.

Mixed Reactions To College Office Interactions

continued from page 1

there are some very good colleges out there that you haven’t heard of,” said senior Salma Siddique. “For many Stuy students who have strong inclinations towards the ivys, this is a good thing to hear.”

Senior Sheridan Johnson believes the college office helped her as well. “I had difficulty choosing my safety schools,” she said. “The college office offered me a wide array of choices, and helped me narrow them down.”

Even underclassmen feel that the advisors from the college office have helped them quell some of their fears about the process. According to sophomore Tim Janas, “If we have any questions about the college office, [college advisor] Ms. Rubin answers them and calms us down in math class,” he said.

Nonetheless, students raise some serious grievances against

the college office for its future improvement. Primarily, they are disconcerted about the “seven colleges” limit. “There should not be a limit on the number of colleges that you wish to choose,” Pham said.

Another issue some students have with the college office is the interview process itself. “I understand that they are busy, but they should be more concerned. I think that they want the job done as fast as possible, not as efficiently as possible,” senior Pamela Tieu said.

Furthermore, some students are unsatisfied that the college office does not have much information regarding the schools specializing in the field of arts. “I am an art person so I wish to go to an art school. Yet, the college office did not have much info on liberal and specialized art schools,” said junior Beryl Chung.

In addition to organization, the conclusion reached by the

students was that there were not enough advisors to meet the needs of all students. The seniors noted that in order to decrease the amount of time that the students must spend waiting for the advisors, there must be an increased number of advisors, or better planning.

“I have heard that the PA is funding the college office to hire professional college counselors starting from next year. That is good, because there are too few advisors per a student class that is massive in number,” Siddique said. This problem might not be alleviated, as Shulman and fellow college advisor Diane Cleary might leave after this term at Stuyvesant.

Many students also feel as though the college advisors are less than optimistic about students’ chances at some schools. The methods implemented by other New York City schools offer pieces of the college experience provided by the Stuy col-

The Scoop on Japan Bowl

By XIAOTIAN CHEN

On Saturday, April 3, members of the Level Two and Three Japan Bowl Teams were on their way to Washington, D.C. The National Japan Bowl Competition was to be held on the following day.

The Japan Bowl is an annual, day-long Japanese language and culture competition. It is for non-Japanese high school students who are learning Japanese as a foreign language. Its format is similar to that of “Jeopardy!”.

There are three levels of competition composed of students taking second, third, and fourth year Japanese, respectively. Each school may send one team per level consisting of two or three students. Out of the 40 students who tried out for Japan Bowl this year, only nine were selected.

Although the Japan Bowl is not well-known at Stuyvesant, it is recognized throughout the United States and Japan. NHK broadcasting, the Japanese equivalent of PBS, sends a crew to interview the winners and cover the competition every year. In addition, the U.S. Ambassador to Japan and the Japanese Ambassador to the U.S. attend the award ceremony held at the end of the competition. Among the many prizes is a 10-day trip to Japan for the winning fourth-year team.

The Stuyvesant teams were chosen by Japanese teacher Chie Helinski. Helinski selected the students based on their

“interest and willingness to work hard in addition to their ability in Japanese.” She said, “I am not so much interested in keeping the same students over and over again so that they can win—although other schools do this very often. To me, the process of learning together is much more satisfying and precious than doing it to win.”

Training for the Japan Bowl was hard work for the team members. “Every Wednesday we had our regular meeting in which we practiced Kanji and Katakana [Japanese writing systems], proverbs, onomatopoeic expressions, and listening comprehension. Sometimes, during long vacations, we would meet up with Sensei [Helinski] at Grand Central Station and listen to hours of oral questions,” said sophomore Kathrin Verestoun of the Level Two team.

Junior Alex Gitsis of the Level Three team said that during the Japan Bowl, “I was nervous even though we prepared a lot [for the competition]. That’s something you can’t change, no matter how hard you study, because it’s only human nature to be nervous.”

Despite their hard work, none of the Stuyvesant teams were able to win first place this year. The Level Three team came closest, placing second in its region, losing by five points to Philips Academy in Andover.

Even though the results of the competition were a disappointment for some members, they were nonetheless satisfied with their experience.

Big Dance / Little Turnout

By ELIZABETH KESTER

On Friday, May 15, the Student Union and the Big Sibs co-sponsored the second Big Sib/Little Sib Dance this year. It was held, as usual, in the first floor lobby and ran from 6 to 10 P.M. The estimated attendance of 80 to 90 people (the majority of whom were Big Sibs, required to go to the event) did not match the attendance numbers of the fall Big Sib/Little Sib Dance. Senior and Student Union Chief Financial Officer Eleonora Srugo offered an explanation for the low attendance, citing the AP exams as a major cause. “It did not seem worth it to stay in school after two long weeks of staying up late and studying for APs just to

go to a dance.”

Srugo also blamed the lack of publicity for the low attendance. “There were no announcements or homerooms so people could not easily spread the word about the dance.”

The reactions of those who did attend were varied. Big Sib Chair and junior Maddie Ehrlich said, “People had a great time - there were lots of people on the dance floor.”

Senior and former Big Sib Adar Eisenbruch, who did not attend, described the dance in less flattering terms. “It was better than getting kicked in the stomach by a horse,” he said.

Ehrlich is of the opinion that one of the main benefits of the Big Sib/Little Sib dance is the interaction between the freshmen and upperclassmen. “Dances like these are great ways for Big Sibs to connect with their Little Sibs,” said Ehrlich.

However, freshman Ben Wexler, who did not attend, does not agree with the sentiment that a Big Sib/Little Sib Dance is responsible for strengthening the relationship between a Big and Little Sib. “No, [the dance] did not bring me closer to my Big Sibs. I was already close to them,” he said.

According to Srugo and Ehrlich, there will continue to be Big Sib/Little Sib dances in the future. “Despite the lower attendance, it is still a great event, and is usually the first opportunity the new Big Sib Chairs get to feel the responsibility of their new position,” Srugo said.

“Together, the Big Sibs and the SU enhance both themselves and each other by bringing their own elements to the mix and helping to ensure a welcoming freshman experience for the Little Sibs, and a strong, involved, Stuyvesant career for everyone else,” Srugo said.

Stuy Walks the Walk

By ANDREW SAVIANO

“Fill the streets. Raise money. Fight AIDS,” said the signs advertising the AIDS Walk. On May 16, 2004, thousands of people gathered for a six-mile walk near Central Park for this single reason.

“I participated in the walk to show my support for the cause,” said junior Amanda Schneider. “AIDS affects many people worldwide and is a problem that people must be made aware of.” Walkers like Schneider participate in these events to spread awareness about the disease through methods like fundraising and publicity.

In order to further promote prevention of the spread of HIV, STD prevention devices, such as condoms, were given out at the event. Walkers also received informative pamphlets about early prevention and detection of AIDS and other STDs.

This walk alone, one of the many that occur internationally, raised a total of \$5,426,397. This money is used to provide for services such as the Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC). WNBC NY, Telemundo, Delta, Time Warner, and Gap Inc. were

among the walk’s many sponsors.

Organizations like the New York Gay Men’s Chorus walked in drag. Some others chose to wear costumes as well. For instance, the Star Walkers, who each raised over \$1,000 for AIDS Walk, wore crowns to show their support.

As a member of Key Club, a Stuy community service organization that walks together almost every year, freshman Carol Tsoi recalls the event. “[I] guided the walkers across the street and cheered them on as loudly as I could. After two hours of continuous screaming of cheers, my voice was hoarse and I could hardly speak, but I loved it nonetheless.”

Key Club Divisional Secretary and senior Deborah Vishnevsky, remembers being showered with thanks and compliments for coming to the event. “We [had] a blast... The AIDS Walk is one of the biggest in New York and it’s a lot more oriented toward youth.”

Vishnevsky said, “It’s one of those things that can only happen in New York. Everybody should try and do this before they graduate.”

Stuy Sophomores Face a New SAT

continued from page 1

found online, and some students have taken this as an opportunity to see what the test will be like, and to practice taking it with the new format. In addition, Stuyvesant will be offering a two-week preparatory class for current sophomores to learn the new PSAT format.

“I like the idea of the new SAT...besides, I took a practice test and it didn’t seem much harder,” said sophomore Hannah Kim.

Teachers at Stuyvesant plan to prepare students for the new SAT next year. “We’re not

changing the curriculum, the curriculum is never motivated by testing,” said Assistant Principal of English Eric Grossman.

“However, we do plan to prepare the students for testing. My sense is that familiarity and practice over the course of the curriculum should be enough,” said Grossman.

Schulman recommended that students “read challenging work” to prepare themselves for the new test.

Instead of worrying, some students have chosen to look at the brighter side of this change. “Maybe we’ll have a bigger curve,” said Kim.

Meningitis Hits Stuyvesant

continued from page 1

ing ill or experiencing any of the aforementioned symptoms to stay at home. Otherwise, students are expected to come to school.

As the administration reacts to the situation, many students are alarmed at the risk of contracting the disease. Though some individuals, indifferent to their health and well-being, discarded the notice as soon as they received it, many concerned students are taking the

preliminary measure suggested by the handout.

Junior Tigran Jamharian is being more cautious to avoid becoming infected with the disease.

“I make sure to wash my hands thoroughly after using the bathroom, and I avoid sharing drinks with my friends,” said Jamharian.

Some students like sophomore Anton Gringut considered staying home last week because of the threat of contracting the disease.

“When I first heard about the disease, I was really concerned,” said Gringut. “I was concerned that I would not have been able to avoid the disease in school. I almost stayed home... because I was so paranoid.”

As for the students who were infected with the disease, they have fully recovered and returned to school. According to Archie their names are not being released by the administration because of confidentiality concerns.

At the Close of a School Year, a Host of Languages Honored

continued from page 2

German

On Wednesday, May 19, the Stuyvesant chapter of the German Honor Society, Delta Epsilon Phi inducted seven new members. Currently composed of about 90 students between sophomores, juniors, and seniors, a 95 minimum average in German is necessary over three terms. Like the Italian society, students are pooled from the second year of language studies and higher. A cozy ceremony because of its small size, each inductee was handed a lighted candle with which he or she is “to spread the light of knowledge” to the rest of the world, around a 25-year old Stuyvesant German Club banner flanked on either side by the national flags of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

French

The last of these language observances will be held on Friday, June 11 by the Voltaire Society, Stuyvesant’s chapter of

the French National Honor Society. Completely organized by French teacher Marie Lorenzo, some 20 students will be honored for their excellence in the language. Students with a 95 average in French and enrolled in the fourth and fifth year classes are honored with induction to the society.

Usually held in Room 505, the ceremony is smaller than it used to be some 25 years ago. According to Lorenzo, there used to be four fourth-year classes and two or more fifth-year classes. However, as more and more incoming students tend to pick Spanish as their language, as Japanese and Chinese grow in popularity, and as Greek and Arabic are introduced this year, the ranks of the French classes continue to dwindle.

Lorenzo feels that this is unfortunate. “French is so important. You hear expressions all the time used in English but there’s so much more to the language,” said Lorenzo.

Still, it is refreshing to see that although Stuyvesant students are mainly recognized for their excellence in math and sci-

ence, they can also excel in the languages of other nations. According to Schwagermann, these skills, despite the profession students choose down the line, will be very helpful.

Over the years, the Spanish-taking population at Stuy caucus has expanded at the cost of other languages. “Spanish has grown because the population has changed, and as students grow up and get jobs, they’re bound to find that knowing some Spanish will come in handy,” said Schwagermann.

However, engineering majors are often required to minor in German, and diplomats are often required to learn French, long considered the world’s diplomatic language. As the United States grows economically closer to Japan, even business executives must learn the tongue. Most medical and legal professions require some knowledge of Spanish in order to deal with the increasing Latino population. As Schwagermann said, “It is great that you can go forward with the knowledge you have acquired here and put it to use.”



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Junior Varsity Football Game

Junior Varsity Football Game

Varsity Football Game

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Entertainment

Special Ceremony Honoring Former Stuyvesant Pegleg
Football Coaches, Captains and Players

Editorials and Opinions

A More Familiar Test Than You'd Expect

The SAT I has become synonymous with stress. It has been hyped as the key to college and an indicator of intelligence, causing student to study its structure and content intensively.

When the decision was made to change both its structure and content, the class of 2006 was put in a difficult situation. Starting in March 2005, they will be among the first groups of students to take the new SAT I exam.

Before more unnecessary panic sets in, the students taking the new SAT I need to stop and consider the situation. Though new material will be added to the test, it is not beyond students' academic abilities. The mathematics section will now include exponential growth, absolute value, and functional notation, material currently covered on the SAT II: Math IC and IIC tests. The writing and grammar section will resemble the SAT II: Writing test, currently required by most colleges.

As students know exactly what is being covered on the new exam, there should be nothing unexpected. Information about the material that has been added and removed is currently available and easily accessible. Most students would eventually have prepared for the Writing and Math

SAT IIs anyway, and the unchanged material can still be studied through existing test prep sources.

Over the past few years, students have been accustomed to practicing by taking past SAT I exams. Next year, however, they will not have the luxury to go out and buy review books containing past exams.

Yet perhaps this is a good thing, and even advantageous to many students. In the past, one of the biggest issues surrounding the SAT I has been the extensive training some students undergo. They take the practice exams so many times through review books and prep courses that it becomes second nature to them when they take the actual test. For a test intended to measure one's reasoning skills, students able to afford prep courses gain an unfair advantage over others by learning effective test-taking techniques. As of now, the only prep available for the new SAT I is on the College Board Web site (www.collegeboard.com), free of charge and accessible to all students.

The new SAT I makes unfair exam preparation impossible, eliminating some of the unjust outcomes of test prep. For once, the dreaded exam may be as fair as it has ever been for all students.

Sexism @ Stuy

By JACKIE HSIEH

Several weeks ago, a classmate raised his hand and made an appalling comment in my English class: "There is no such thing as a woman athlete," he claimed. He felt that, as a gender, we females are incapable of being athletically strong.

A few days later, when I was playing volleyball with a few male friends after school, the boys jokingly brought up the subject of my participation in a sport. Although they were merely teasing, I was quite frustrated by their attitude, a mentality that reflects the sexism present in Stuyvesant.

Stuyvesant's particular brand of sexism is less a set of obstacles preventing girls from achieving in certain areas, but more a set of preconceived

notions about where girls can and cannot achieve. These notions lead people to joke around and make comments, perhaps unaware that these jokes and comments are hurtful. Of course, not everyone shares in these notions.

"Truthfully, I think that when played to potential, girls and guys are completely equal in sports," said sophomore George Wang. "But in Stuyvesant's case, it seems that most of the female students don't take exceptionally to the sports that they are doing."

This "knowledge" of being below par in sports stems more from lack of experience than real inability. Girls need to show more aggression when it comes to sports. They need to participate in order for others to view them as equals.

Unfortunately, when girls

do participate and perform well in Stuyvesant athletics their achievements are underrated, even by other female athletes.

I asked the 11 girls on the Stuyvesant softball team to name the Stuy team they felt was strongest or most athletically capable and successful. Out of the 11 girls surveyed, only two considered a girls team to be the strongest in Stuy (one said girls volleyball and the



other said girls soccer). Of the other nine, seven replied, almost without hesitation, that the boys swimming team was the strongest. One chose the boys baseball team, and the other said the boys track team was most successful.

Later, all six boys I surveyed on the handball team also chose Stuy's boys' swimming team as the strongest team.

Boys swimming has indeed been a very successful team, with a win record of 11-0. They may well deserve to be noted as our school's strongest team, but I ask myself why other girls teams with equally impressive records do not have the same reputation. According to the PSAL Web site (www.psal.org), girls soccer has an 11-1 winning record, girls tennis has a 9-0 record and girls volleyball has hit an amazing 10-0 winning

streak.

Junior Annie Zhou is a member of the girls' varsity volleyball team. She feels that her team has not been receiving the recognition it deserves. "Fewer people come to our games. Nobody comes to the important games, like when we had our playoffs."

This isn't just a matter of Stuyvesant not supporting its sports teams. "I know a lot of people watch boys basketball, but I guess it's because they don't know [about our games] or they just don't care," says Zhou.

"It's a little bit everywhere," said English teacher Colette Brown, of sexism at Stuyvesant. "I'm always amazed when girls do it to themselves, as they sometimes do."

Many students such as Zhou have observed that girls stray away from athletic participation. This separation lowers expectations further and only contributes to the problem. One of the many steps to be taken to end sexist attitudes at Stuyvesant (and everywhere else) is for girls to step up to the metaphorical plate, and participate with more assurance, instead of playing into the stereotype of "the girl on the sidelines". What this entails is action. It is up to us girls to prove our own.

At the same time, Stuyvesant needs to give more recognition and publicity to the girls who do participate and achieve: our female sports teams. Every athlete trains and works to his or her greatest potential, and every athlete deserves credit for that fact, male or female. The accomplishments of both sexes should contribute equally to the pride of our school.

The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



"The pulse of the student body"

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Filling the Streets and Fighting AIDS

Even before I'd reached 59th Street, I spotted many walkers on the train, all wearing T-shirts that read "AIDS Walk NY 2004." In this mass of matching shirts, I wondered how I would ever find the Stuy team. When I arrived at the general sign-in tables, I looked anxiously around for familiar faces amid the throng of AIDS walkers.

People poured in like a flood. The great zeal and celerity with which they came contrasted my loneliness, as I stood motionless.

Just as I began to despair, my friend Shirley saw me. We signed up and walked down a seemingly endless line of teams, names stretching from A to Z. Finally we saw the raised sign reading "Stuyvesant HS." Then we took our places, flexed our muscles, and waited for the signal to begin the long march with fellow Key Clubbers, proud to represent Stuyvesant.

The 6.2-mile walk was vigorous. Our reputation as a school certainly preceded us, as we attracted much attention. I heard some boos from Brooklyn Tech; another group remarked, "Oh look, Stuyvesant! They're all Asian!" I have to admit this last comment was all too true.

During the latter half of our team walk, we were overwhelmed by the Manhattan Center Team. We tried desperately to shout louder, attract the most attention, and raise our identity sign higher, but all in vain. We could not avoid the fact that we were outnumbered.

The AIDS Walk was a pro-

cession, more powerful and meaningful than just a walk for money. It was a collective New York effort to fight and conquer AIDS. It was extensive, spanning from 59th Street to Cathedral Parkway at 110th Street and back to Central Park. What a journey.

Food and drinks were handed out freely, providing us with energy. Yelling and clapping volunteers on the sidelines cheered us on to the very end. I was impressed by the energy and the spirit of all the walkers and volunteers.

After the second checkpoint, at about 108th Street, my legs began to feel as if they were on fire, but as I was reminded of those unfortunate children and adults afflicted with AIDS, the soreness and stiffness was nothing in comparison. The pain began to register as success: Every sore step marked the distance I'd already come and the approaching finish line, and I began to walk faster.

I saw a poster that read, "I walk because a whole generation is at risk." I was walking to fight AIDS, and it was a pleasure to walk. By 1 P.M., our team had completed AIDS Walk 2004, a four-hour phenomenon. Somehow, I felt I could go on walking all day. The literal march was over, but the metaphorical one was not.

Next year, I want to be a more active fundraiser. I want to be a Star Walker. I look forward to Aids Walk 2005 with bigger ambitions.

- Dening Kong

C O R R E C T I O N S

- The last issue of *The Spectator* was printed on May 21, 2004.
- Concerning "Spring Comedy: 'ZAP!' to It" from our May 21 issue:
 - "ZAP!" will be performed on June 10 and 11.
 - Alyson Stevens's name was misspelled.
 - There are 29 characters in the play.
 - Nick Lerangis will no longer play Inspector Swift; he was replaced by sophomore Jake Arluck.

Opinions

The End of Endurance

By MICHAEL GSOVSKI

It is 3:12 in the afternoon on thursday, May 27, and I am in gym class, my last class of the day, doing step aerobics. I am keeping up with the beat as well as I possibly can. Since I have no rhythm, ever filling the niche of the uncoordinated nerd, I am having problems with this relatively simple task. My legs ache as if they were stretched on a medieval rack. The sweat from my forehead drips into my right eye and it burns. It burns!

The blood is draining from my brain and I don't care. "You can worry later, when your feet are stationary," I tell myself. "Three more minutes of this and you'll be free," I repeat. "You'll be able to put the aerobic step away and get a cool, crisp drink of water."

It's almost the end of school, and I am knee deep in it. *What* I am knee deep in requires no explanation, for we are all wading in the same substance. School is now a sick joke, as the weather warms, and my mental endurance wanes: read textbook, regurgitate information, study for test, place self at mercy of test, and repeat. It takes effort to pull myself away from the AOL Instant Messenger icon to the Microsoft Word icon on my computer and do my work. As I drag myself along in these last painful days of the

academic year, SAT IIs and Regents loom just over the horizon. As I lean over the abyss, and the tide of work threatens to push me off the brink, I keep up the exhausting struggle. "One month, and you'll be free," I tell myself. "You'll be able to put the textbooks away and be lazy, creative, and slothful for two full and blissful months."

Of course, I am never completely free. Over the summer, each square on the calendar brings me closer to the September day when I must return to this building. As with this gym class, no matter how relieved I am when the period ends and I can finally get that longed-for drink, I know the hours are passing. The count-downs has started again, each second bringing me closer and closer to the aerobics step where I bounce up and down every gym day, turning redder than the Soph-Frosh SING! Kool-Aid Man. When the beat finally ends, and we can leave school to cool off and get our brains a much needed drink, we must keep in mind the short span of our escape. The summer break lasts only so long. Too soon, the aerobics will start again, and Stuyvesant will step to its workaholic beat once more. Make the most of your summer. It's your only break in the nine long months of endurance. Drink up.



The second term of my senior year (which I'd like to call the Fun-Begins-Now term) has brought me to the understanding that for a good portion of my time at Stuy, I didn't do things because I wanted to. Rather, I did them because I needed to. Now I stand on the cusp of breakthrough. I have come to realize that, for most of my high school experience, what I (and other students) lacked was a sense of control over what we were doing. For me, this led to a lack of control over myself, and my emotion. Toward the end of my senior year, I have finally begun to take control. For me, control is based upon three postulates:

Postulate 1:
Learning How to Be Alone

Solitude is not an exercise in detachment from someone or something. It means learning how to depend on yourself, instead of others. In four years, Stuy hasn't taught me lessons in community bonding and strong ties, but in the importance of

being alone. Not in the sense of reverting to hermitage, but in the sense of being content with being alone. Reading a book, biking, or walking home are all examples of knowing when to take time out for yourself. By having this time to yourself, you become better able to bring your actions and emotions under your own control.

Postulate 2:
Experiencing Everything Possible

Although, for various reasons, senior year has been my least favorite year, it has encompassed a cornucopia of events. Each experience is another notch on my stick: another emotional situation successfully handled and learned from. I dropped in, out, and back into friendships. I had my first kiss with my first girlfriend. I reeled from my first breakup. I had my heart broken twice (and possibly three times). I had my first go with substances. I made month-long, day-long, hour-long, and 15 minute-long friends. Depression. Elation. No pressure. I took a test for the first time with no worries of how I was going to do. I found people who could relate to many of my problems and one who could relate to all of them. I went through Stuy knowing hundreds of people and making countless friends and only now do I realize that in the end I may leave only

knowing three or four of them completely. I try to take it all in stride.

Postulate 3:
Being Frivolous

Frivolity leads to a detachment in its own way: Nonchalant enjoyment lessens the gravity of events. There is nothing better than being frivolous—not indefinitely, but for a sustained period of time. The summer is the best time to experiment with this flippant mood. The summer of my senior year, which I hope to call the Summer of One Last Times, I intend to be as frivolous as possible. It will be a culmination of four years of regret and missed opportunities seasoned with new experiences. I'll read books. I'll take bike rides. I'll have more time (for the last time) with my friends. My four years at Stuy have been colored by one of two feelings: either that the world and I were breaking down together, or that I was falling apart as the world stood firm. And now, for the first time, I feel like the world is spontaneously combusting, as I stand firm, laughing. I know I'm finally in control.

—Don John

Junior Ramblings

The Campaign Trail: Election Fever!

Just like SING!, Stuy election season charges the air with competitive tension. Screaming campaigners deafen the ear with their chants and insults. Hastily folded leaflets litter the ground, and brightly colored signs slather the bulletin boards. Such are the two weeks of Stuyvesant High School's Student Union elections. Enemies are made, friendships are questioned, and campaign flyers are stuffed into every possible crevice: hands, pockets, trash cans, or ceiling ventilators. I remember coming to Stuyvesant as a freshman and instantaneously wanting to be class president. I was young, idealistic, and convinced that I could shake things up. Unfortunately, I was not alone in my ambitions. 18 other pairs of candidates decided to rain on what I viewed as my parade. I will never forget that election. I was funded by my childhood piggy bank: my own personal slush fund. My campaign consisted of a lengthy letter in tiny font printed on fluorescent orange paper. The ballot for that election was ridiculously long, full of candidates that I had not once seen campaigning. To my dismay, some of them managed to beat me anyway. Over the years, I have seen my share of weird elections. For instance, I have seen people shave their heads and write messages on their shiny craniums. My favorite campaign has to be that of two members of *Broken Escalator*. Despite their senior status, they ran for Junior Caucus last year. Their flyers stated that they had been rejected or thrown out of just about everything they'd tried to get into, and arrested on various criminal accounts. And they almost won, based on write-in ballots. As I write this, I am awash in campaign literature collected from all campaigns during my time at Stuyvesant. Still an aspiring politician, I've collected every piece of campaign literature possible since day one of freshman year. To this day, I've kept a large Fed Ex box in my closet that I open only once a year to dump the literature of past elections on my kitchen table for deep analysis. I always look for design inspirations for my own flyers, and issues and ideas of others that should be carried on. My campaigns have changed over time, just as I have. Freshman year I was an

attack dog, ruthless and mean. (That didn't work at all). Sophomore year, I tried a more balanced campaign, integrating issues and people from all parts of the school into my platform. I did better, and got second place by 40 votes. Now as I sit here thinking about the upcoming election, I am not optimistic. Three times I have given it all I had, and, though I went into this election knowing that I am unlikely to win, I'm glad to be running. Most people view elections as the worst time of year, when everyone's after your vote, and brightly colored trees are being chopped down at an alarming rate to make campaign posters. For me, elections have always been a time to reflect on the past and how we have all changed. Even so, my heart still beats with indignation when I come across my freshman campaign literature, sporting the slogan "Achieve with Nick and Steve!" and think: I know I had the best platform! I mean, an in-school ATM machine! How cool would that have been? — Nick Greenough

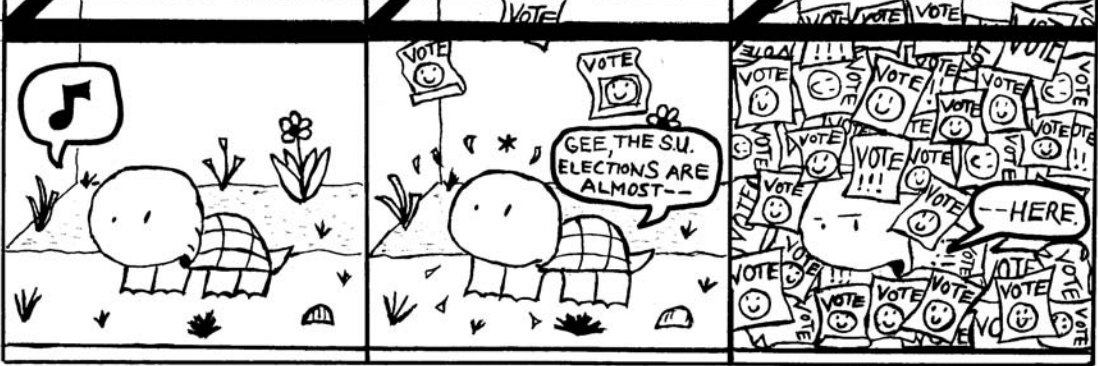
Nick Greenough ran for Senior Class President in the 2004 SU election.

It's the Time of the Season

After tenth period ends, you go to your locker, take some books out, and put other books in. You kindly decline offers to hang out. You walk out of the bridge doors and cross the bridge with determination. You swipe your MetroCard at the turnstile. You get on the train, and go home. But this isn't about you, it's about me...and *my* after-school ritual is different. At least three days a week, I go to my locker, exchange books, and leave the school. But instead of crossing the bridge, I make a sharp right and go to the park. Going to the park isn't just a hobby—it has filled the lives of so many Stuyvesant students with laughter and relief. Every time I go there, I know to expect an hour-long game of Ultimate Frisbee, a slew of sunbathers, relaxed TriBeCa residents, and a couple hundred Stuy students who always seem to find something they can do. Volleyball, soccer, frisbee, backgammon—you don't need to be on a team. These sports are all open to the public. The park has become a place to seek refuge, but not just for us Stuyvies. The tanners provide great diversity (Not everyone can be active—some people just need to relax.), but they also provide obstacles for the sports players. We often find ourselves avoiding the mostly-naked men and women who reside near the trees and benches, or shouting "HEADS!" at them, which means "Don't move an inch unless you want a concussion!" The most amusing incidents I've witnessed in the park have been encounters between the sports players and the peo-

ple sitting innocently on the grass. One time, this woman was lying on the grass, reading, and talking on her phone. She was a very chic woman with sunglasses and a flowing dress; you would think she'd be very nice and rational (not that we judge books by their covers). At the same time, there was a game of Frisbee going on; her being situated exactly where the Frisbee decided to land every time a throw was not caught. Apparently, she got fed up with this pattern because she took the disk in her hand and refused to give it back. She just sat there, scolding the Frisbee players. As one of the park employees was walking by, she called him over. An exchange occurred, the Frisbee was returned to its owners, and the game continued. I think the woman and the park employee eventually became friends, because I later saw them walking away together. This unifying aspect of the park is part of what makes Stuyvesant so unique. TriBeCa is a wonderful neighborhood, fostering community amongst us by providing a place for us to hang out after school. And in the relaxed atmosphere of the park, unexpected friendships can spring up, as between Ms. Sunglasses and the park employee. Dodging and tossing frisbees, we're brought together with people from our school to whom we wouldn't ordinarily speak. Go to the park. You'll be amazed at how many people in our school play sports. — Jeremy Wooster

Class ~~But~~ President! by Brigid Black



Arts & Entertainment

Happy Hour in the Village:
Your Top 5 Hot Spots

By DAISY DUAN

Body art parlors. Punk rage boutiques. Accessorized sex shops. The mention of the Village springs to mind the various stores offering unique, outrageous, yet trendy stocks of goods. The arty area is not only a tourist magnet, but also a common hangout for students. With its close proximity to Stuy, many of our own often travel down the streets to seek out the latest fashion or the most distinctive styles. If you're thinking of giving yourself a special treat while cruising through this historic neighborhood, these nifty places should be on your list.

5. Bloomie Nail Salon
(120 2nd Ave., East Village)

Located on 2nd Ave, across the street from St. Mark's Place, its dark signature-store nameplate does not necessarily attract attention. Upon entering, however, you are greeted by warmly-lit beige stage lights, oceanic wave patterns clambering across the wall, and pretty, exotic-looking female employees sporting candy-colored

eyeshadow. The salon offers eight varieties of manicure and five types of pedicure. Prices range from \$10 to \$35 for basic manicures, including paraffin (your feet dipped in wax), spa, French, and hot cream, and up to \$95 for its special Bloomie French tips. The store also exhibits exotic tip designs, including, but not limited to, Elvis, Mona Lisa, the Playboy bunny, and Chinese characters. Bloomie is a renowned nail salon that offers a variety of waxing, spa, facial treatment, body massage, and tanning packages, in addition to their nail selections. Most importantly, its comfortable and artistic interior designs and its customer-friendly staff make Bloomie worthy of a relaxing afternoon.

4. Urban Outfitters
(374 Ave. of the Americas, Greenwich Village)

Among the many clothing boutiques in the Village, Urban Outfitters stands out as the one most frequented by teens. The two-floored shop contains an enormous stock of T-shirts, pants, shoes, skirts, acces-

sories, furniture, and miscellaneous gifts. The boutique's jewelry (\$10-\$20) is of creative elegance; it includes palm tree hoops, butterfly drop earrings, shell cluster necklace, Celeste dangle earrings, and its newest fashion, the flower band ring. They offer a wide selection of skirts (\$30-\$40) including mini-flair, fleece, ruffle wrap, and denim. The store is perhaps best known for its unique assortment of shoes, especially the motley-colored Converse All Stars (\$68-\$88). Urban Outfitters' hip and slightly avant-garde style sets the trends for countless students to follow.

3. Orpheum Theater – STOMP Performances
(126 2nd Ave., East Village)

This small theater, consisting of only 347 seats, has been hosting STOMP performances since 1994. This 1 hour and 40 minute-show has been a popular pastime across the globe ever since its discovery in London. STOMP is a percussion symphony of everyday

continued on page 10

“Saved!” in Grace

y MAX POLLACK

Saved!, the new comedy starring Mandy Moore, begins in the same vein as your typical teen dramedy. There is good girl Mary (Jena Malone). Then there's her popular friend, Hilary Faye (Mandy Moore), whose stunningly perfect exterior is just a façade for her hole-ridden interior. And there's the teen dreamboat, Patrick (Patrick Fugit). The twist is that they are all Jesus zealots, who attend American Eagle Christian High School (AECHS).

One of the characters that deviate from this formula is Hilary's wheelchair-bound brother, Roland (Macaulay Culkin). He is the dry-witted cynic, who is the first to see through Hilary's superficiality. Culkin delivers a superb and hilarious performance in the first role many of us have seen

him in since fighting off Joe Pesci and Daniel Stern in *Home Alone 2*. Roland is balanced out by Eva Amurri's portrayal of Cassandra—the lone Jew rebel

The main issue...
is how to interpret
Christianity to fit
the modern day.

in AECHS who wears her Magen David with pride. The unlikely romance between Roland and Cassandra is captivating, serving the movie's comedic and dramatic aspects equally well.

The quality performance

by all of the teen actors is complemented by those of two savvy screen-and-stage veterans, Mary-Louise Parker (*Angels in America*) as Lillian and Martin Donovan (*Insomnia*) as Pastor Skip. Donovan is amusing to watch as the wannabe hip principal, who has to deal with tough inner issues on whether to do what he feels is right versus what he knows the Bible says is right. Parker thrives as the walking, talking personification of Christian hypocrisy, simultaneously doubling as Mary's mother. It is Lillian's Christian hypocrisy that brings us to one of the major themes in this movie: satirizing fundamental Christianity.

Dannelly's critique in teen dramedy turned satire (or perhaps the other way around) is evident in different facets. Through this movie, Dannelly

continued on page 10

A Liar's Tale

By KATHY WANG

After May 11, 2003, it was almost impossible to put “Jayson Blair” and “the truth” together in one sentence without causing controversy. On that Mother's Day, America learned of the latest journalist-turned-fabricator. Since then, Blair's name has been almost synonymous with lying—he was even dubbed a “world-class Pinocchio” by one critic. Now, almost a year after “igniting the largest journalism scandal in decades,” Blair attempts to defend and redeem himself in his recently published memoir, *Burning Down My Masters' House*.

This memoir details Blair's life at *The New York Times* and the events that eventually led to his collapse as one of its top writers. Blair recollects the anxiety-filled days and sleepless nights when suspicion arose from other reporters and editors that Blair had been plagiarizing and lying about certain information in his articles.

To give us background information, and more importantly, to gain the readers' sympathy, Blair takes us back to his teen years, growing up as a black in the primarily white South; the racial discrimination he overcame to land his position with *The New York Times*; his struggle with drug and alcohol addictions; a mental illness that went undiagnosed for too long; and a suicide attempt that would have put an end to his seemingly perfect tenure at *The Times*. In light of his roller-coaster experiences, Blair also examines the extent to which an individual is in control of his or her fate.

Blair admits to lying in his articles, which often appeared on the front page, and his “toe-touch,” or short non-work-related visits, which he used to place datelines on top of articles. That was considered normal in the newsroom, but Blair went as far as to make “no-touch visits,” writing entire articles in *The Times* headquarters and his Park Slope, Brooklyn apartment, and retrieving all the

information he needed from telephone interviews, the Internet, and private photo archives. Despite the fact that Blair acknowledges the truth in the names ascribed to him—“plagiarist,” “fabricator,” “liar,” and “thief”—the memoir is used too often to defend himself rather than to apologize to *The Times*, the readers he misled, and the numerous people he misrepresented in his articles. The book sometimes transitions from honest and reflective to immature and lopsided in a matter of lines.

As is obvious from the title of his book, Blair blames racial prejudice as one of the main reasons behind his resentment towards society and his consequent dependence on drugs and alcohol. Blair uses his back-

ground to try to explain his actions but simultaneously tries to justify those actions. However, Blair's tactic is effective; the reader can't help but be lured into pitying Blair's experience in

society, in which “it is not an uncommon vice to be caught as a black man living within the white world, being truly accepted by neither.” A careful reader may also notice the placement of the apostrophe after the “s” in the title, which Blair accounts for by saying that many people, especially those who helped him on his journey to success, have been betrayed by his actions.

Even though Blair's actions are irreversible and have permanently smeared the reputations of *The New York Times* and journalism in general, one has to give him credit for at least attempting to explain himself and for producing a well-written book. A glimpse into the structure and procedures of America's most respected news publication is a bonus. All in all, *Burning Down My Masters' House* is worthwhile reading, even if the credibility of the contents is questionable. If you gain only one thing from *Burning Down My Masters' House*, let it be an appreciation of your English teachers' advice to avoid plagiarism.

If you gain only one
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See Improv
Coverage
on page 11

Photos by
Naomi Gordon-Loebl
and Jane Sussman

Left: Michael Borohovski
Right: Sarah Outhwaite



Arts & Entertainment

Authors Bring Their Books to Life

By **RACHEL ENSIGN**
with additional reporting by
JANE SUSSMAN

On Monday, May 17, room 229 looked more like a sound stage than a classroom. Huge, blinding lights in the corners of the room illuminated the old-fashioned, commemorative wooden desks. An array of monitors sat outside, manned by men with headphones and fancy sound equipment. In front of the door were a series of velvet ropes, the kind indicative of an important event. Inside, however, stood no glamorous celebrity or scantily-clad model, but simply, a white-haired man in a suit, with kind eyes and a soft Irish accent.

The man was Frank McCourt, author of the renowned memoirs *Angela's Ashes* (1996) and its sequel, *Tis* (2000). McCourt visited Stuyvesant as part of C-SPAN's "Students and Leaders" program, which is designed to bring accomplished leaders into public schools. The program involves many different influential figures in society, including

politicians, newscasters, and community activists. McCourt has had very close ties to Stuyvesant. He taught a writing class at the old Stuyvesant High School on 16th Street for 18 years before retiring to write his memoirs. "I loved it here. It was very hard and very challenging, but very, very rewarding," said McCourt.

Frank McCourt's conversation kept returning to one of his greatest loves, teaching.

Assistant Principal of English Eric Grossman recommended English teacher Annie Thoms's freshman composition class, which read *Angela's Ashes* last term, to participate in this event. "My students loved it, and I think C-SPAN did a great job. It was totally unscripted, just real students and their real questions," said Thoms.

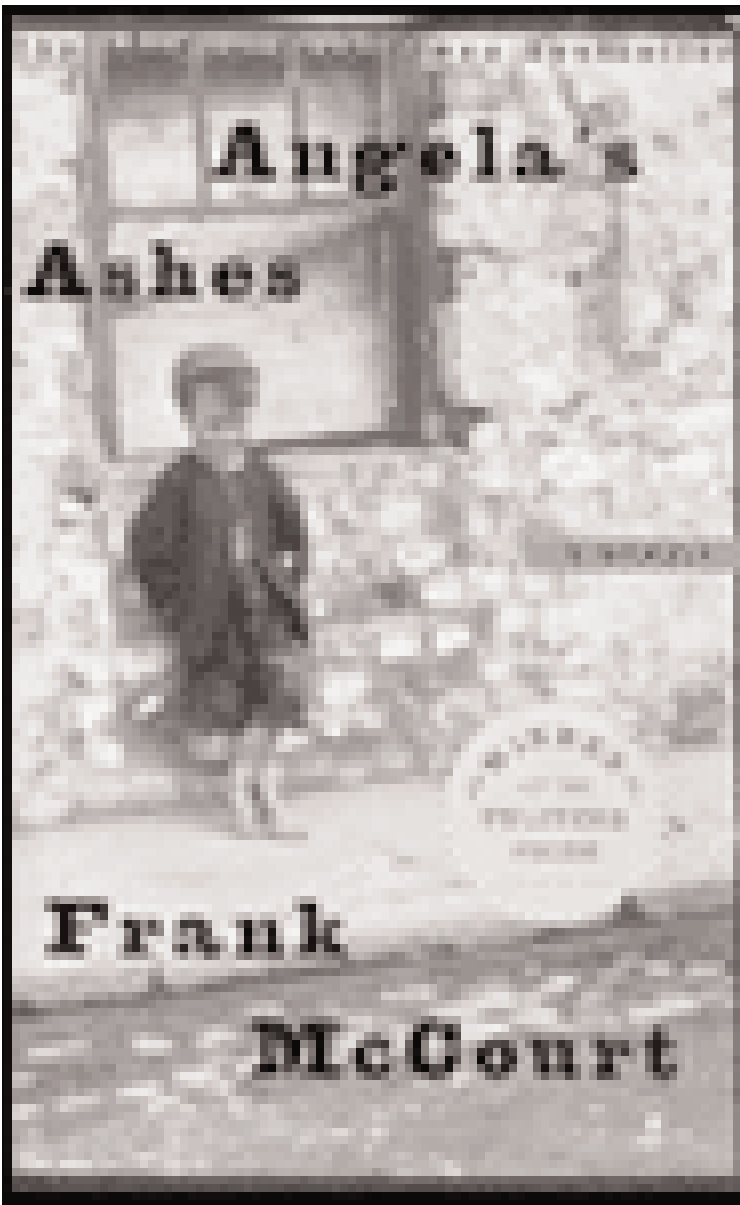
While McCourt was allowed to talk about whatever he want-

ed, the conversation kept returning to one of his greatest loves, teaching. "I asked the students today to raise their hand if they wanted to be a teacher, and not one of the 32 students did. It was the same back when I taught here. I only knew of two kids who wanted to go into the profession, and I would never trust either of them with kids," said McCourt. Although the students may not have shared his enthusiasm with regard to the teaching profession, they were enchanted by McCourt and his experiences, and particularly his advice to "Do what you want to do. Don't do what your parents want you to do."

Thoms said, "He was incredible, mainly because he speaks the way he writes. He is such a spinner of tales."

Freshman Michelle Luo, who introduced McCourt, agreed. "He is a really influential public speaker and I think it was a really good opportunity for us to be there to listen to him talk.

continued on page 10



Courtesy of www.barnesandnoble.com

Author Frank McCourt came to visit Annie Thoms's freshmen composition class as part C-SPAN's "Students and Leadership" program.

Music and Art Make Strong "Show"ing

By **MICHAEL GSOVSKI**

The Stuy artistic community turned out in force for the Centennial Concert and Art Exhibition held in the Murray Kahn Theater and first floor lobby on Friday, May 28. Walking in, it was clear that this year's crop of talent, particularly from the Basic Art, Mixed Media, Watercolor, and Computer Graphics classes, had created some fantastic work, but the truly impressive aspect of the presentation was clearly the Senior Acrylic Painting exhibition, "Artistic Catharsis." It seemed to be divided into three main categories: paintings of children, paintings of Stuyvesant, and paintings of

nature. None of the representations of Stuy stood out, but some of the landscapes and portraits were quite striking.

While some of these paintings were blase in terms of the colors used, the vast majority were wonderfully rendered and achieved a surprising level of artistic creativity. Of the paintings of children, there were many that elicited an emotional reaction, but the most effective was Rtita Valkovskaya's "In the Stroller," a masterfully crafted work painted exclusively in varying shades of gray, focused on a child with an ambiguous expression, sitting contently in a stroller.

Many of the landscapes seemed to be of museum quali-

ty. The colors were vibrant and varied, illustrating a wide selection of locales from under the ocean to tropical islands to expansive, rolling fields. The most breathtaking was Chong San Chan's "Big Round Ball," which depicted a sunset over a beach at low tide. The sunset itself was amazingly textured, showing the dulling of the colors as the sun disappeared behind the ocean.

For the concert segment of the event, the symphonic band opened with three grand pieces, "Espirit de Corps" (Yager), "Victory at Sea" (Roberts) and "The Great Gate of Kiev" (Moussorsky, arr. Leidzen). "Espirit" was a very rousing and spirited composition that excit-

ed the audience and prepared it for the rest of the show. The brass playing over a light and quick flute section created a wonderful dynamic. "Victory" was a more subdued piece; its slow tempo combined with its feeling of determination made the piece memorable. "Kiev" was a powerful, bombastic, almost processional tune that sounded like it could be appropriate at a coronation, and its earth-shaking force was one of the most impressive effects of the evening.

The chamber choir followed the band with two traditional church songs, "Sicut Cervus" (Palestrina) and "Exsultate Justi"

continued on page 6

Not So Miserable

By **GRACE DUGGAN**

It has been four years since New York-based trio Blonde Redhead released an album. Following 2000's *Melodie Citronique*, the group was forced to take a prolonged hiatus after lead singer Kazu Makino was thrown from a horse and critically injured in 2002. After her recovery, the trio began work on their seventh full-length record, released in late April 2004. Known for their unique sound and avant-garde style, the members of Blonde Redhead continue to evolve as musicians with the bittersweet and ethereal *Misery Is a Butterfly*.

Makino formed Blonde Redhead with identical twin brothers Amedeo and Simone Pace in the early 1990s in New York City. Makino, a native of Japan, moved to New York in order to continue her education. The Paces left their native Italy to study at Boston's Berklee School of Music and moved to New York City after graduation. Simone plays percussion and various electronic instruments on the album, while Makino and Amedeo share lead vocals and guitar.

Misery Is a Butterfly opens with "Elephant Woman," a moving track including string accompaniment and Makino on the clavinet (a rare member of the keyboard family) that only adds to the celestial tone of the record. A prime example of the group's writing style, it lacks the traditional verse-chorus structure found in much modern music. "Elephant

continued on page 6

Donating Hair to Show They Care

By **ALEX MENGLIDE**

Most of us are familiar with getting a haircut: We sit on the chair and gaze at the mirror as the stylist chops off the locks we have grown to take for granted. Our eyes follow the hair as it falls to the floor, and once a pile has accumulated, we watch as somebody hastily sweeps it away. Rarely do we pause to consider those who do not have any hair at all, and who yearn for the locks we so casually cut off.

Locks of Love is a nonprofit organization that was started in December 1997. It creates hairpieces for children under 18 who have been afflicted with long-term medical hair loss. Over 2,000 hair donations are received each week, the majority coming from children who wish to aid their peers. The organization is driven by a desire to restore the self-esteem and con-

fidence of children, particularly girls, who have lost their hair.

One notable donor is Kern Levigion, the Stuyvesant's machinist, who cut off his hair for the charity last year. Sophomores Sammi Krug and Allison Petrosino have donated their hair, in addition to alumnus Jennifer Jaye, daughter of Assistant Principal of Mathematics Danny Jaye.

"I was very proud of her," said Jaye. "It's a very heartwarming thing that someone would try to provide comfort for a child who is experiencing serious health problems."

Math teacher Jim Cocoros donated his hair to LoL about three years ago, and is planning to do so again.

"Dealing with long hair is a pain in the rear end," said Cocoros. He had heard of different organizations involved with making wigs for children, and

was drawn to LoL when Oprah Winfrey profiled it on her show. "After seeing it on *Oprah*, I figured it was on the up-and-up," said Cocoros. "Losing your hair has got to suck," he said, feeling inspired to support children who suffer from medical hair loss.

A handful of female students from Stuyvesant have shown interest in donating their hair to LoL this year. Levigion is putting together a hair drive in June, in which anybody who wishes to will be able to cut his or her hair and send it to LoL. Cocoros will participate, along with a handful of senior girls who will cut their hair after attending Senior Prom.

LoL welcomes men and women of all ages and races to donate their hair, the only stipulation being that the ponytail is at least 10 inches in length. It usually takes six to 10 ponytails

Arts & Entertainment

Happy Hour in the Village: Your Top 5 Hot Spots

continued from page 8

objects, in which performers choreograph dances using percussion objects such as mops, garbage can lids, cans, dustbins, and hammers to create a rhythmic performance. During the show there is no speech, no dialogue, and no plot. Several movies have been made about STOMP, the latest being *Pulse—A STOMP Odyssey* and *Cookin*. The Orpheum Theater schedules one performance daily from Tuesday to Friday, and two shows on weekends. Prices range from \$35 to \$60, with the exception of \$35 seats for the Sunday night show. STOMP is a much-hyped show and would be a well-spent Sunday night for

first dates and family outings alike.

2. Alphabet (47 Greenwich St., West Village)

The Village is the mecca of quirky playthings and the hipster shops that proudly pimp them. Alphabet is a cozy little spot unexpectedly squeezed in among walls of red brick. Once inside the vaguely-lit room, antique shelves arranged against the brick walls flaunt stacks of gifts that put the “fun” in funky. There are toys such as a radio-controlled rat (\$16) and action figures of Jesus, Sigmund Freud, and Mr. T. Besides those, there are also bath and body

products, such as a 5” serenity Buddha (\$13) and an “applied chemistry set” of various scents contained in test tubes. Some oddly endearing gifts include a set of crinkled porcelain cups from Japan (\$58) and a purse decorated as a coffee cup (\$27). A variety of innovative T-shirts (\$18-\$22) are also sold, such as one saying “Super Fro—From Hong Kong to Harlem,” in which Jackie Chan meets Shaft “T”. Alphabet is a great place to grab a few things to liven up your dusty bedroom shelves.

1. Cloister Café (238 East 9th St., East Village)

When you walk down the busy, countercultural street of

East 9th Street, you may notice an entrance to a garden. The Cloister Café consists of one of Manhattan’s largest outdoor gardens and an indoor dining room and full bar. Inside, the walls embody stained glass windows of saints, collected from churches around the world, giving the room a taste of European architecture. Dim red stage lights decorate the floor border, matching the color of the flower motifs on the ceiling tiles.

Perhaps the most pleasantly exotic scenery is the garden itself. The green shrubs crowding the garden and delicate red roses in clear vases standing on the table fill the garden with the fragrances of nature. Cleverly,

ivy vines are wired atop the garden, creating a forest shade. Located in the center of the garden is an elongated fountain, dug deeply into the center ground, stretching across the entire parameter. Statues of gargoyles are hidden amid the bushes, brushing up the final touch to this medieval staging.

The dining room is aromatic, setting the mood for fine French and Italian selections of breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Popular entrées include filet mignon, chicken parmigiana and salmon steak. Though the Cloister Café is not best known for its food, it stands tall as an oasis of romance in a desert of loud tattoos and angry leather.

Not So Miserable

continued from page 9

Woman” is no exception to the band’s tendency toward vague and nuanced lyrics. Simple but intricate, Makino and Amedeo write from first-person perspectives reflecting on love, hope, and despair.

Melancholy is a prevailing aspect of this album, accentuated by the ubiquitous appearance of strings. “Melody” makes clever use of repetition to create an especially dark and mysterious sound, juxtaposed with wavering vocals from a despondent Makino. Two of the stronger songs on the album, “Falling Man” and the title track, contain more complex arrangements and intense, heightened vocals. With haunting lyrics, “Magic Mountain” ranks among the better songs on the album.

Although the majority of the album exudes a somber tone, there are two significant departures. “Pink Love” combines a more forceful guitar section with an interlacing of Makino and Amedeo on vocals. The upbeat “Equus” seems almost entirely out of place, presumably because Skuli Sverrisson plays bass on the track. However, it retains the orchestral sound found on the rest of the album.

Misery Is a Butterfly is among Blonde Redhead’s softer albums, as well as one of its strongest. Its music is reminiscent of artists like Sigur Ros, Bjork, and the Flaming Lips, but the band maintains a sound uniquely its own. Blonde Redhead’s unconventional style on *Misery Is a Butterfly* forms the foundation of the wistful texture and sound of this worthwhile album.

Authors Bring Their Books to Life

continued from page 9

In a way, everything he said might have an impact on my life, no matter how corny that sounds,” she said.

Despite his passion and ardor for teaching, he has no intentions of returning to school, as he is currently writing his third book, which will come out next year.

Though he blended in with the student population, 27-year-old author Jonathan Safran Foers made a splash in Grossman’s Great Books class. Foer was invited by English teacher Emily Moore, a personal acquaintance, and surprised the class of seniors. His appearance even caused students (and teachers) not regularly in the class to stop by. The discussion centered on Foer’s debut novel, *Everything is Illuminated* (2002),

which began as a thesis paper at Princeton University, where Foer worked under such authors of prestige as Joyce Carol Oates

Frank McCourt’s and Jonathan Safran Foer’s visits seemed to excite the students who have read their work in class.

and Jeffrey Eugenides.

Foer asked and answered questions, and commented on books and his experience as a writer. “The thing that’s so great

about books is not the certainty of meaning, but the uncertainty . . . it can last longer after you read the last word,” he said.

His reason for becoming a writer is similar to that of many people who turn to the arts—a need for expression. He said, “I had a hard time saying things in my normal life and I was trying to find a different language to articulate myself . . . every character is me, every single word on the page came out of me.”

In addition, Foer offered some advice to students: “A successful book, in my mind, is something that you believe, something you’re moved by.”

Frank McCourt and Jonathan Safran Foer’s visits seemed to excite the students who have read their work in class. Now, if only Tolstoy and Fitzgerald could return from the dead.

Music and Art Make Strong “Show”ing

continued from page 9

(Viadana). The former used a round to keep the overall arrangement light and ethereal while the latter used the entire chorus to lend weight to a fast and otherwise light arrangement. The next piece, “Liebslieder,” was delivered with such delicacy that the music was quite sweet to the ears, a quality usually lacking in choral music.

The next two pieces of music, “My Old Kentucky Home” (Foster, arr. Moore) and “Sing Alleluia Clap Your Hands” (Albrecht) brought down-to-earth music back into the mix, as opposed to the solemn Latin pieces. The former exemplified sweet, melodious, southern comfort, and the latter was a great example of rollicking gospel music, though the clapping was thoroughly regimented and controlled.

The concert chorus’s performance was not as impressive or enjoyable as the previous performances, though it began with promise. “Amazing Grace” (Traditional, arr. Lojeski) was performed well, and the sudden introduction of an up-beat tempo midway was a refreshing change from the normal choral arrangements. Another exceptional piece was “One Tin Soldier” (Lambert and Potter, arr. Shaw), an old anti-war folk

song; sung with emotion and feeling, it evoked a great response from the audience.

On the other hand, “When I Fall in Love” (Young, arr. Robertson) and “Ol’ Man River” (Kern, arr. Hare) would have been better suited to soloists and lacked emotion. In fact, true solo performances were the missing link in the musical presentation. (The three “soloists” listed for “Ol’ Man River” do not count because they were fighting the accompaniment of the entire chorus to be heard.) The chorus then teamed up with the orchestra on a slice of Americana called “The Promise of Living.” An example of classic Aaron Copland, it extolled the values of hard work and perseverance for a better life in rural America.

Delivering two gems from their five-song repertoire was the symphonic orchestra. The Symphony Concertante in E Flat Major for Violin and Viola (Mozart) and the first movement from Piano Concerto No. 1 in B Flat minor (Tchaikovsky) were heads and shoulders above the other pieces. In the former, violinist seniors Samuel Dishy and viola-player Willy Naess worked together to bring out the best in the music. They played up and down the scales with such seamlessness and apparent effortlessness that it made the piece seem easy, though it was

an astounding feat.

While the second piece was split between the piano and the rest of the string section, pianist and senior Matthew Kim stole the show. (It is also worth mentioning that he provided excellent accompaniment for “Amazing Grace.”) His fingers flying up and down the piano, Kim really stunned the crowd, especially during his solo, when he brought out a particularly rich tone from his instrument.

Symphony #104 (Haydn), “Prelude and Fughetta for small orchestra” (Stuy’s own orchestra conductor Joe Tamosaitis), and “Pavane pour une unfente defunte” (Ravel) were all competently executed but were not quite as riveting. Finally, the evening ended with a short excerpt from “O Fortuna” (Orff) from the combined efforts of the concert chorus and concert orchestra. The classic apocalyptic masterpiece was brought to frightening heights by the constant pounding of the orchestra’s percussion and low brass.

It was encouraging to see so many students in attendance, considering the usually parent-packed crowd. The Centennial Concert and Art Show was a success, and one would hope that we do not have to wait for the bicentennial to experience another such professional and enjoyable presentation.

Saved! in Grace

continued from page 8

attempts to tackle many issues that face Christianity today, which are, for the most part, ignored. The main issue that encompasses the rest is how to interpret Christianity to fit the modern day. Pastor Skip attempts to modernize AECHS through Ebonics in Bible study and Christian rock groups for prom. When a romance between the Pastor Skip and Lillian begins to bud, the issues that burden Pastor Skip are divorce and the pursual of love afterwards. In an obvious critique of the Church in general, the principal essentially ignores his feelings and tries to obey what he believes the Bible says.

Other issues tackled by the movie, and not so much by the Church, are homosexuality and teen pregnancy. During an enticing game of underwater secrets, Mary’s boyfriend reveals to her that he’s gay. In an attempt to do what she believes can cure this so-called disease, Mary sacrifices her virginity. This in turn leads to her impregnation, and her

alienation from the majority of the society at AECHS. Instead of facing these issues head on, Mary’s boyfriend is sent to Mercy House, and her mother contemplates the same for Mary. This again is an open criticism on how born-again Christianity deals with such issues.

Dannelly attended a Christian high school himself, so it should be duly noted that he did not construe all this from the depths of his imagination. Although he does satirize this form of Christianity, the movie really shows how faith prevails. All the characters go through some metamorphosis, and their true selves are shown.

In a last bit of satire and irony, it is the Jewish rebel who embodies the Christian ideals that the other characters are striving to achieve. Hilary Faye is finally exposed as the blemished person she always was inside, and her supposed faith is uncovered as false and materialistic—which is, really, Dannelly’s one persevering message throughout this movie: True faith lasts.

Dannelly’s one persevering mes- sage throughout this movie: True faith lasts.

Arts & Entertainment

“My Chicken is Black” and Other “Lines” Run Amok at First-Ever STC Improv

By LILLIAN GAO
and MELISSA COLORADO

The cacophonous sound of “badger, badger, badger, badger...MUSHROOM” echoed around the Stuyvesant library many a time on Friday, May 28. Strangely, there were no bouncy badgers with off-kilter baritone—just nine or so student actors taking on a rather robust version of the variety show, “Whose Line Is It Anyway?”. It was part of the first-ever STC and People’s Improv Theatre (PIT)-organized Improv performance, a show delightfully unscripted and thus, delightfully irreverent.

The three segments of the show, as the representative for PIT, Kurt Braunohler, explained,

w e r e
M o v e a b l e
People, Freeze
Tag, and
Whose Line Is
it Anyway?. In
People, two
actors played
out a scene
prompted by
an audience
m e m b e r ’ s
suggestion,
while stand-
ing limp as
two volun-
teers moved
their body

parts for them. Throughout the several rounds of this game, the actors performed quite a motley bunch of suggestions, ranging from “Star Wars” to “Michael Jackson,” which caused junior actor Jacob Perlman to lustfully assert, “So... little boy” to senior costar Anna Genika as a way of commencing the scene. Actors, given this freedom to wing their own lines, came up with such classics as “I can see your butt” (junior Michael Borohovski to sophomore Hector Seay, who was, indeed, mooning him full-on) and “I want you so bad” (sophomore Ilia Koudriachov to a Pokemon).

Freeze Tag followed People in the same refreshingly ingenious vein. Once again, an audience member called out a suggestion for a scene, but as the two actors performed, Braunohler or an actor standing in back of the spotlight may call out “Freeze!” at any point. The actors then froze in their positions and one actor from the background replaced one of the actors in the spotlight. They then began an entirely different scenario.

The final portion of Improv,

Whose Line Is It Anyway? starts with the same vague scene format as for People and Freeze. At any time, Braunohler would call out one of the actors’ names; the actor would then blurt out sentences written on a piece of paper, filled out by an audience members prior to the show, and somehow incorporate it into his performance. This segment was easily the most spontaneous, since the audience was free to write whatever was on their minds, bar little. The frequent appearance of the aforementioned “badger, badger...,” phrase, part of a ditty sung by badgers on a popular Web site, in multiple scenes annoyed the actors to no end but made everyone else dissolve in giggles.

For a pro bono half-hour show, it was exceptionally well attended and organized. Most surprisingly, the actors did not have to audition, but boldly underwent two weeks of preparation, which included doing scene work and playing the Zip Zap Zop game. Such exercises would hone their skills

“Basically, I just wait for [the person in the scene with me] to make a comment and then I make as many phallic references as possible.”

– Ilia Koudriachov, sophomore

at speaking impromptu and reacting to spontaneous scenarios. According to Borohovski, the most important thing in improvisation is to “not be afraid to say what you think.” And afraid he wasn’t, given to uttering a few restricted words in his height of passion during a scene.

Junior Sarah Outhwaite, STC Coordinator and Improv actor, concurred, listing the qualities of a good Improv actor to be quick-mindedness and openness to ideas and creativity, so that “you don’t try to hide your thoughts.”

Koudriachov had a more pragmatic outlook. “Basically, I just wait for [the person in the scene with me] to make a comment, and then I make as many phallic references as possible...it’s all downhill from there,” he said.

Outhwaite hopes to make Improv an annual event. She said, “The actors’ performances are gauged entirely by the audience’s reaction.” Judging by the waves of belly laughs from the onlookers, even if it was to giggle at the term “lung implants,” “badger” will linger forever as a testament to Stuy’s first Improv



Naomi Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator

Above: Emanuel Cavaleri

Below: Hector Seay

Left: Ilia Koudriachov and Hector Seay



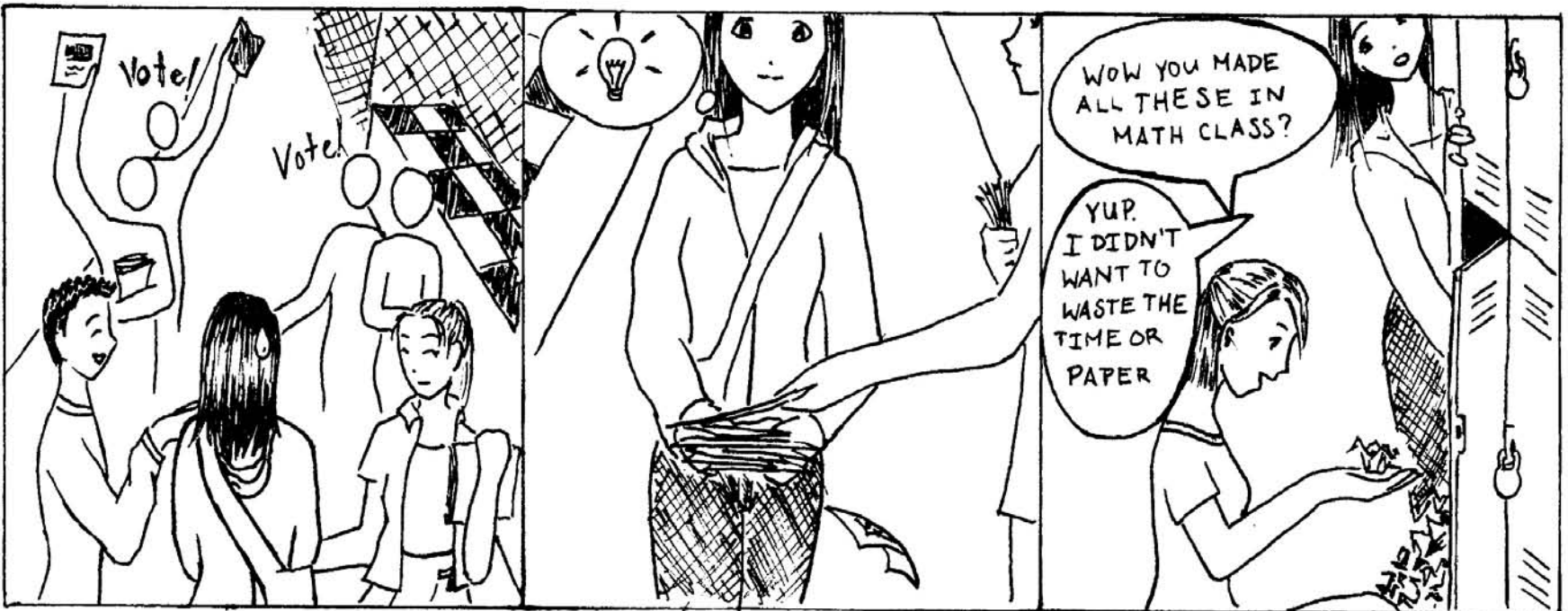
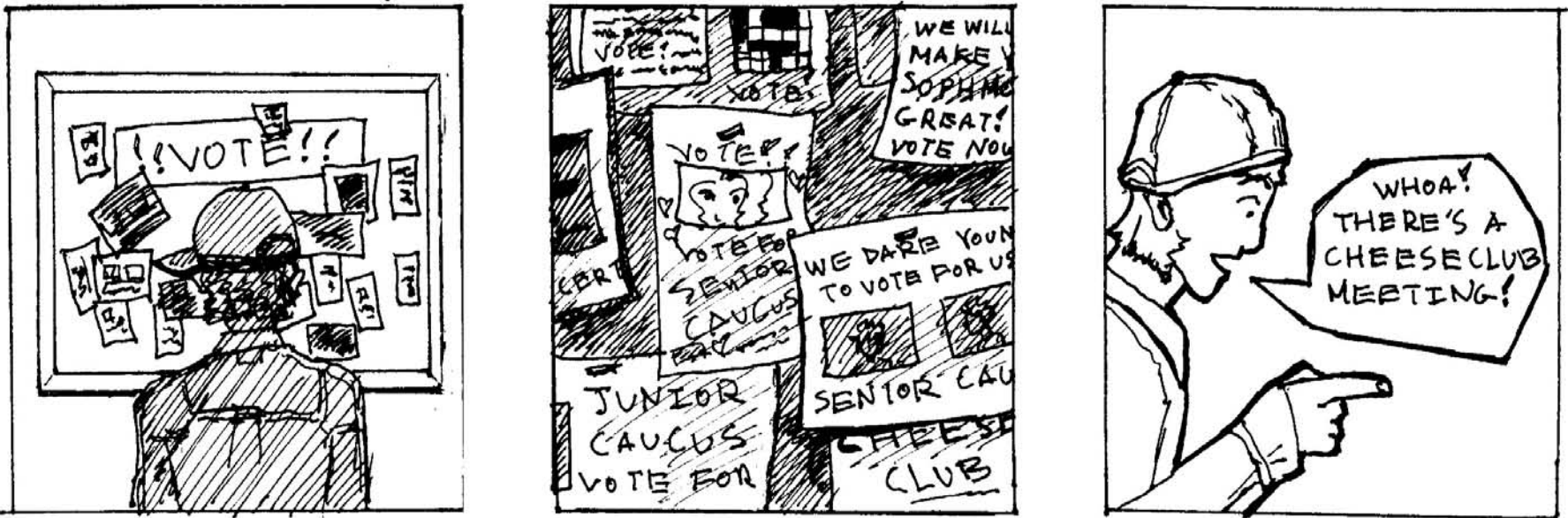
Naomi Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator



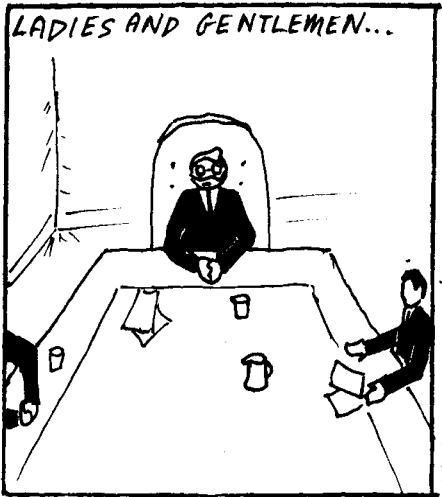
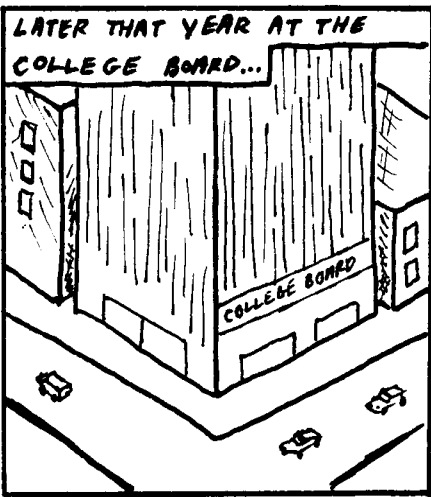
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Cartoons

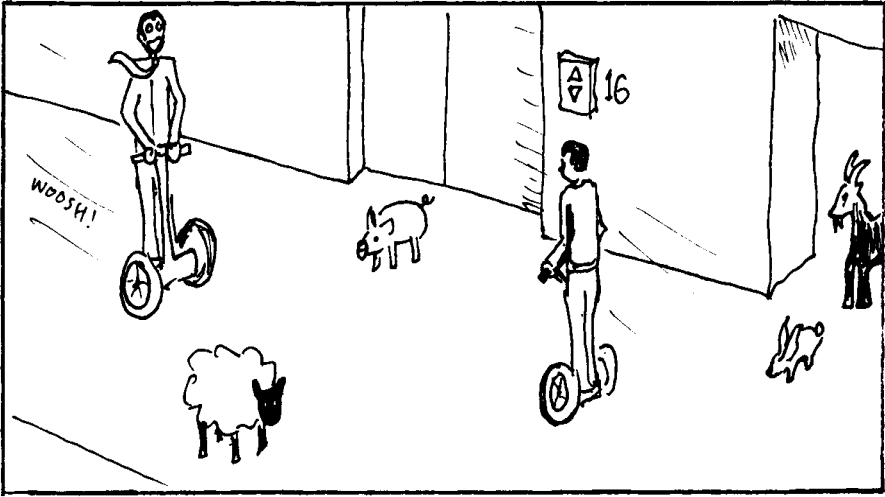
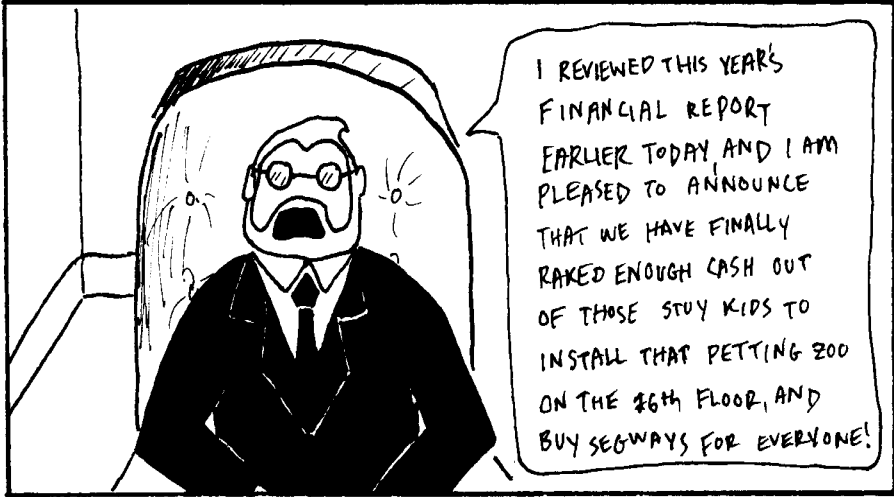
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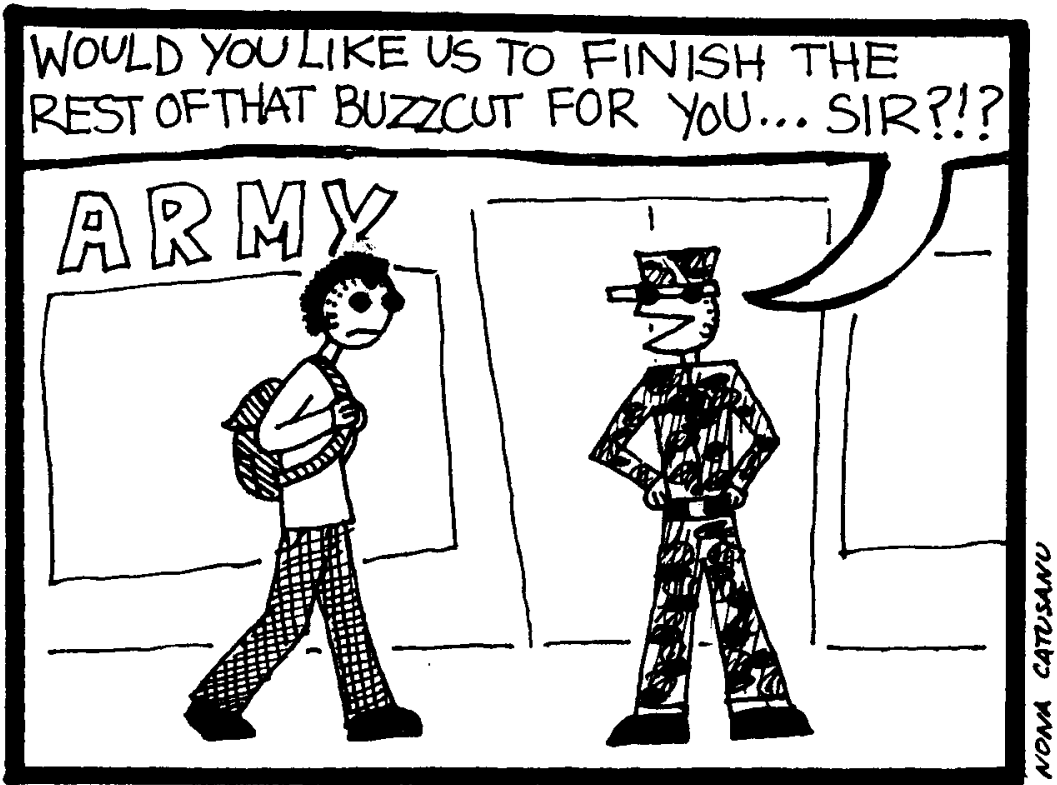
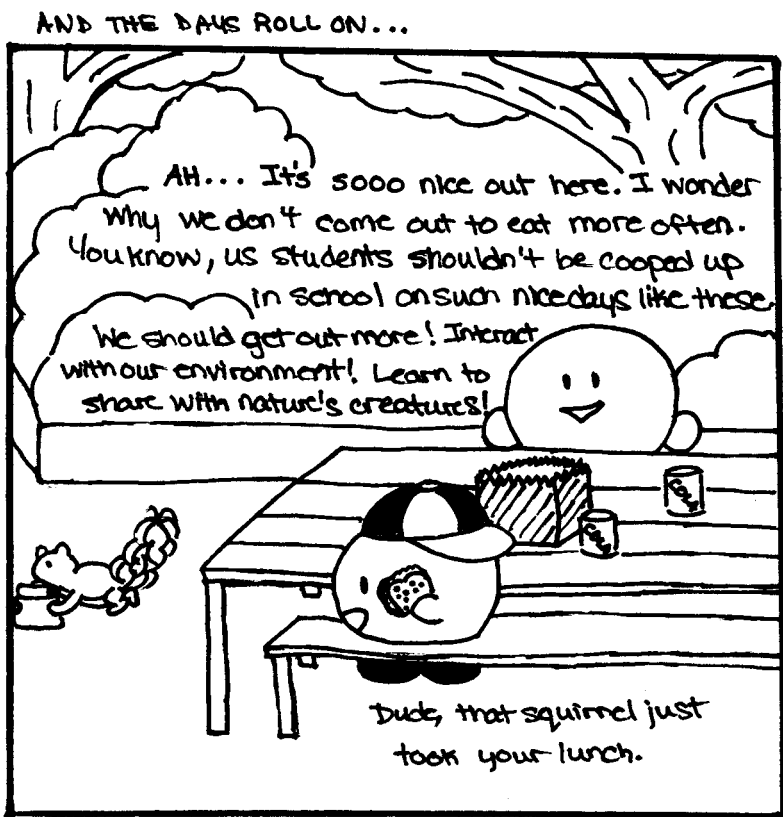
WINNIE CHEN



NATALIE GUKASYAN



Cartoons / Sports



Sports
Scoreboard

Boys' Spring Sports

Boys' Baseball (13-3)

5/26/04 - Playoffs

Stuyvesant	11
Norman Thomas	5

5/29/04 - Playoffs

Stuyvesant	2
HS Telecommunication Arts	7

Coed Spring Sports

Golf (8-2)

6/01/04 - Playoffs

Stuyvesant	2
Bayside	3

Girls' Spring Sports

Girls' Soccer (11-1)

5/26/04 – Playoffs

Stuyvesant	3
Midwood	1

6/02/04 – Playoffs

Stuyvesant	2
Hunter College HS	0

Girls' Softball (5-11)

6/01/04 – Playoffs

Stuyvesant	1
Townsend Harris	24

Softball Ready For Playoffs

By WYNDAM MAKOWSKY

The Stuyvesant girls’ softball team (formerly the Peaches, but now nameless) is just about to start their postseason. With the regular season over, the team is going to be a part of postseason play despite a 5-11 record. However, their record is not a good reflection of their season. The team faced many off-field obstacles that hurt their play. Foul weather and streaks of consecutive games without practices hindered the team’s play.

In April, the softball team felt the first spring rain more than everyone else. When it rained, the team was deprived of any practice time that it should have had. Also, many of its games were rescheduled due to the weather. With the rescheduling, games were packed into busy weeks and there were streaks of five games in five days and four straight games in just as many days. Said senior co-captain Jenna Paleski, “[The stretches] beat us up.”

Senior co-captain Danielle Sandella agreed, saying that it was “really hard and tiring.” There was no time to practice during the stretches, and the team couldn’t properly analyze its mistakes in its previous games.

In addition to the bad weather, Stuyvesant had trouble finding places to practice. Since Stuyvesant does not have its own athletic fields, the team sometimes did not have a place to practice. Also, all of their games were away, which meant the team had to travel to their opponent’s fields. Traveling to the fields sometimes took over an hour, and once the girls got there, the fields were sometimes

overbooked. For example, there were three teams scheduled to play on the same field for one game. Coach Anetta Luczak said that due to all the weather problems, the PSAL overbooked their fields.

Though Luczak said that the team “could have done better,” she still said that everyone made very good progress throughout the season.

Paleski agreed. “We played hard with a young team. It was a successful season,” she said.

Sandella said, “Considering the loss of starters [from last year’s team], we did very well.” All of the rookies showed vast improvements,

defense improved as the season progressed. In the earlier games, most of the defense was sloppy.

Paleski said, “We had an

better and was highlighted by a close game in which Stuyvesant held division-leading Murray Bergtraum High School to seven runs. Sandella said that the defense played in that game was “the best in all [her] years.”

The team’s main pitcher, Sandella, was the only starting pitcher during the infamous five-game stretch. She and sophomore pitcher Mary Hammond helped to anchor the team’s defense. However, since Sandella is graduating this year, Luczak is looking for one of the returning members of the team, perhaps Hammond, to step up and fill the position of the team’s go-to pitcher.

batting average) in the PSAL A Division. Leading the way is Paul (.659 batting average), senior Lydia Chan (.600) and Paleski (.579). Also contributing to the team with their hitting were sophomore Joanna Chien, freshman Charlotte Austin, and freshman Jennifer Bido.

The season was filled by some great games. In one, Stuyvesant held powerhouse Murray Bergtraum to seven runs, and only lost by two runs. Paleski said that “Bergtraum mercied us the first time, but we played well the second time.” Stuyvesant sophomore Jessica Eng, who scored a run, and sophomore Perri Osattin, who hit .333 in the game and stole a base, were the offensive leaders of the game.

In another game, this time against Manhattan Center, the team scored six runs in the second inning to beat Manhattan Center by two.

Sandella felt that the girls’ first game against Walton was their best game, in which they humiliated Walton with a 15-5 final score.

Even when the team was down, it still had good spirits. The bench was consistently loud, and the cheering never stopped. Said Paleski, a four-year member of the team, “This was the loudest bench we’ve ever had.”

Sandella, another four-year veteran, said, “This was the best team spirit we’ve ever had.”

Though Stuyvesant had a losing record in the regular season, they will still play in the playoffs. They will start the post-season against Townsend Harris High School on June 1.

“This was the loudest bench we’ve ever had.”
– Jenna Paleski, senior

especially freshman catcher and first baseman Natalie Meltzer, who filled in well for sophomore regular catcher Jamie Paul, who missed a few games. Also, Luczak felt that the team’s

entirely new infield. Almost no one played the same positions that they played last year. [It] took a while to settle down.”

However, toward the end of the year, the defense got a lot

If there were any holes in the defense, the offense more than made up for it. The team as a whole led the division in walks and stolen bases. Stuyvesant has the top three hitters (based on

Athlete Spotlight: Paige Fern

continued from page 16

especially as juniors. However, Fern rose to the occasion last year, racking up 14 assists in 13 games and leading Stuyvesant all the way to the semifinal match against Tottenville High School. Tottenville scored two goals in the final six minutes to defeat Stuyvesant and go on to win the City Championship. But at the time, Fern was hurting emotionally and physically.

Two days before Stuyvesant’s opening round playoff game against Townsend Harris High School, Fern tore her meniscus, the wedge of cartilage in her right knee, her dominant leg. To most people this is an injury that requires surgery, but not to Fern. Surgery was not an option; she could not stand being without a soccer ball on her instep. She blocked out the agonizing pain through the playoffs and through the summer, returning for the 2004 season better than ever. Shelly puts it best. “There’s no one as aggressive and as consistently focused as her. She will play to the death,” she said. In four years Fern has yet to miss a game, despite injuries, even one as severe as a torn meniscus.

Fern is the poster child for

blood, sweat, and tears. She’s played soccer from age four and soon picked up basketball, starring as a two-sport athlete. For two years at Stuyvesant, Fern played both varsity soccer and basketball, finally forgoing tip-offs for kickoffs. “I couldn’t do both basketball and soccer,” Fern said, “and I had a better future at soccer.”

Fern hones her skill by playing soccer all year round. She is a member of the Hazlet United Select Club, a nationally ranked travel team based in New Jersey. During the summer she plays with college players, and during the winter weekends she trains for four hours, from five to nine in the morning.

Fern has proven that hard work pays off. In February she won the NY1 Scholar Athlete of the Week award, a \$2000 scholarship that is presented to leaders on and off the field.

Fern currently has a 96.4 grade point average and was recruited (early decision, no less) by Amherst College. During the summer, she volunteers 16 hours a week at Traumatic Brain Centers of New York, where Fern works with car accident or stroke victims who have lost memory or motor functions, helping them regain the ability to do every-

day tasks.

In the 2004 season, her final one in the PSAL, Paige once again racked up 10 assists, while adding 11 goals. “She is our strongest skilled player,” Fisher said, “and is unselfish to a fault. She wants to get everybody involved.” Her play has earned her a nomination for the Heisman Wingate Award, presented to the most outstanding girls’ soccer player in the PSAL.

The Mimbas opened the playoffs against Madison on Thursday May 20, and Fern immediately set the tone, scoring a goal in the first two minutes of play. “Now, during the playoffs, she’s taking her game up another level,” said Fisher. She scored another goal and the Mimbas cruised past Madison 6-0.

On Wednesday, May 26, the Mimbas faced Midwood High School where they won 3-1. For days this game was the only thing on Fern mind as she prepares to once again lead her team to victory with her play and leadership. As she rested up Tuesday evening (her bedtime is 9 P.M.), Paige’s Instant Messenger away message says it all: “Let’s get ready to rumble ‘cause Midwood can’t touch this...MIMBAS ROCK!!!”

Lobstars Cap Off Another Successful Season

continued from page 16

of love afterwards. In an obvious critique of the Church in general, the principal essentially ignores his feelings and tries to obey what he believes the Bible says.

Other issues tackled by the movie, and not so much by the Church, are homosexuality and teen pregnancy. During an enticing game of underwater secrets, Mary’s boyfriend reveals to her that he’s gay. In an attempt to do what she believes can cure this so-called disease, Mary sacrifices her virginity. This in turn leads to her impregnation, and her alienation from the majority of the society at AECHS. Instead of facing these issues head on, Mary’s boyfriend is sent to Mercy House, and her mother contem-

“We hoped to make it past the second round of the playoffs, and reach the semis, which we have done in years past.”
– Madeleine Gray, senior

plates the same for Mary. This again is an open criticism on how born-again Christianity deals with such issues.

Dannelly attended a Christian high school himself, so it should be duly noted that he did not construe all this from the depths of his imagination. Although he does satirize this form of Christianity, the movie really shows how faith prevails. All the characters go through some metamorphosis, and their true selves are shown.

In a last bit of satire and irony, it is the Jewish rebel who embodies the Christian ideals that the other characters are striving to achieve. Hilary Faye is finally exposed as the blemished person she always was inside, and her supposed faith is uncovered as false and materialistic—which is, really, Dannelly’s one persevering message throughout this movie: True faith lasts.

Dominating Hitmen Advance in Playoffs

continued from page 16

dent Young can get the job done, as he said, “[Young] is one of the best number two starters in the city.”

Should the team defeat the High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology and advance to the quarterfinals, the Hitmen’s likely opponent—if the seedings hold true—will be fourth-seeded Herbert H. Lehman High School. While Lehman would be a very challenging opponent, a pitcher with the pedigree of Becker (multiple playoff victories and a no-hitter) gives the Hitmen a legitimate chance.

Tough Loss Caps Great Season

continued from page 16

Next year, the team hopes to make it past the semifinals, but since many key players are seniors, Sandler is counting on a major youth movement. With many spots to fill, Sandler is looking for some athletic under-

From that point, the team can only dream about a potential semifinal rematch with top-seeded James Monroe Campus High School, the team who knocked the Hitmen out of last season’s postseason in a memorable 3-2 contest.

Regardless of how far the team advances in the upcoming weeks, Hahn is very pleased with the progress the young team has made this season. “I feel very good about the team. We hit a wall in the middle of the season, but we overcame it. Each game it seems like different people contribute to our success, and I most definitely think it can continue throughout the playoffs,” Hahn said.

classmen he can train to play the more difficult small handball, even if they are only used to playing the big handball. Sandler will have to rebuild the team to get back to this year’s form, but if the past two years serve as any indication, the Dragons will be back and better than ever next year.

Furies Cool Down in Playoffs

By JOSH ZHOU

Rejoicing over obtaining the last playoff spot in the city, the Furies, Stuyvesant’s girls’ handball team, were brought back down to earth on May 14 in a game against the Boys & Girls Lady Kangaroos. Ranked 15th going into the postseason, the Furies knew that they had a big hill to climb in order to advance in the playoffs. This was even more evident when they found out they were matched up against one of the powerhouses in the city, Boys & Girls High School.

As the game against the experienced Boys & Girls team progressed, the Furies’ lack of control in their off-hands (the weaker hand) became evident. Boys & Girls pounded low-power serves to the Furies’ off-hand; serve after serve and ensured weaker serve returns. Stuyvesant’s three singles players and the first doubles team were all held within 10 points in a 21-point match. The second doubles team of juniors Ruth Kwan and Stella Chiu was able to pull off an emotional victory, winning 21-19. During that match, the two sides traded serving opportunities back and forth—neither team was able to string together a scoring streak. The final break came when Chiu returned and killed a weak serve, rattling the opposing team and finally taking the game

away. Playing strenuously for over 45 minutes, Chiu said, “This was obviously a disappointing way to end the season, but they were the stronger team. The only thing we can do at this point is to learn from our mistakes and move on.”

Head coach Eric Connolly

“This was a great season, I’m looking forward to next year. The future looks bright.”
– Coach Eric Connolly

agreed with Chiu and said, “Our girls have nothing to be ashamed of. They played their hearts out and I am proud of the efforts.”

Engaged in a fierce three-way battle for the division title during the regular season, the Furies came together as the season progressed. After suffering close defeats against division rivals LaGuardia High School and the High School of Humanities, the Furies went on a four-game winning streak. The

season turnaround came on April 22 in their second game against Humanities. Since Stuyvesant had lost two games at that point, the Furies knew that the game against Humanities was a must-win if they wanted to make the playoffs.

During the game, each player played with great concentration and energy. After four matches, the score was tied at 2-2. All eyes in the gym fell to third singles player, junior Judy Luo. Luo disappointed neither her team nor the crowd, squeaking by with a final score of 21-20. In the match, the rallies were long and points were hard to come by. After Luo’s match, she was mobbed by her teammates in celebration. Connolly said, “This was our best game of the season. It was a team effort and we played great handball.”

Departing from this year’s squad will be seniors Dana Tong, Winnie Poon, Jessica Tsang and Mona Ng. As the first and second singles this year, Tong and Poon provided valuable leadership to this young squad. The seniors will surely be missed next year. However, the current juniors and sophomore standout Annie Chang have really improved their skills and will present a big threat next year. Connolly sums up the season: “This was a great season. I’m looking forward to next year. The future looks bright.”

Boys’ Track Crowned

By DAVE EL HELOU

What has a crown but is not royalty? It has a triple crown, but is not royalty—it is the Stuyvesant boys’ track team. With its recent victory at the Manhattan Borough Championships on May 14, the team is now a four-time triple crown winner. This achievement signifies that it has won the Manhattan Borough Championships in cross-country, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field for the past four years running.

The outdoor track season ended for most schools at the Manhattan Borough Championships. Meeting all expectations, the Stuyvesant team was able to capture the Borough Title. The team was able to score in many events and won top spots in most of the relays. Juniors Alex Dean and Nick Silverman finished first and second, respectively, as the anchors in the 3200-meter relay. Dean finished with a time of 10:25.3, while Silverman crossed the finish line 1.5 seconds later. Freshman David Silberberg finished with a time of 10:38.8. Junior Nick Greenough finished second in the 3000-meter run with a time of 10:25.8. Sophomore John Morrell finished in fourth with a time of 10:52.7. Senior Harrison Newman won the triple jump reaching a height of 44’10.5” and the high jump with a height of 6’0”. The team also finished in second place in both the 4 x 800-meter relay and 4 x 400-meter relay.

On May 29, members of the track team competed at the PSAL City Championships and perhaps qualify for the New

York State Championships. It is likely that the team will do well in the City Championship. According to Coach Mark Mendes, “[Senior and co-captain] Josh Livingstone is one of the favorites to win the 1600-meter relay.” Newman has an excellent chance to win—or at least score highly—in the high jump and triple jump. Greenough will likely score in the 3000



Steeplechase, with juniors Dean and Silverman expected to score in the 3200-meter run. Senior and co-captain David Kessel will probably score in the triple jump. Mendes added, “Our 4 x 800-meter rely team to be chosen from Livingstone, [senior] Chris Campbell, [senior] Eugene Epshteyn, [junior] Emmanuel Bierman, and [junior] William Winkelman also should be in the hunt for medals and points.”

As this outdoor track season draws to a close, the team is preparing for next year’s cross-country season. Mendes said, “Prospects for next year’s cross country season look very promising.”

“We have a solid underclassman contingent that will surely be able to lead the team in the future,” said Kessel.

The team is confident that it will be one of the top teams in the city next year. The freshmen have developed into a strong team and will be a strong sophomore party. For example, the Stuyvesant freshmen performed well in the May 22 Soph/Frosh PSAL Championships. The freshman team of Michael Lam, Yona Prochnik, Charles Lang, and Silberberg won the 4 x 800-meter relay. Silberberg set a school freshman record in the 1600-meter relay.

The only problem the team faces for next year is that it will be losing many of its star seniors, whom have successfully led to team to three borough titles this year. “The team will suffer losses in sprinting and field events,” said Morrell.

Nevertheless, the team is planning to work hard during the coming summer to prepare for next year and look forward to recruiting new runners for next season.

On Tuesday, May 25, the team will take part in the Pentathlon portion of the PSAL City Championships at DeWitt Clinton High School, and the PSAL Championships will conclude on Saturday, May 29. After these competitions, the team will begin to prepare to defend its triple crown next year.

Girls’ Outdoor Track Caps Off Successful Season

By DANIEL KIM

As the end of the spring track season approaches, the girls of the Stuyvesant outdoor track team have many accomplishments to be proud of. They have grown from a group of unpolished, novice runners into a powerful, solid team that took third in the Manhattan Borough Championships last month—a major accomplishment considering that they were not able to place above fourth in the last several years.

The team consists mainly of underclassmen and juniors due to a large group of graduating seniors the team lost last year. However, next year the team will lose only three seniors, Liubin Yang, Justine Murphy, and captain Klaudia Chang, as opposed to the usual eight to 10 seniors the team misses each year.

Without a doubt, the team’s strength has been in its distance runners. The girls’ cross-country team placed third in the city, and since many of its runners also joined outdoor track, the team has gotten stronger distance-wise. In the 1500-meter run during the Borough Championships, junior Laura Coogan, junior Hannah Pinski, and freshman Christina Argueta swept the event, placing first, second, and third, respectively. In the 3000-meter run, Stuyvesant also dominated, as Argueta took first and Pinski placed second.

The team’s weaknesses have been in its field events and its sprinting. The team’s only shot putters are Murphy and sophomore Rebecca Cooper, and the team lacks discus throwers, high jumpers, long

jumpers, and triple jumpers. However, Chang said, “[Sophomore Elizabeth Collins Wildman] and [sophomore] Linda Li learned the high jump, and I learned the triple jump, but none of us did it at a major event. [Junior] Coral [Yip], Linda, and [sophomore] Elisa [Lee] have been attending the pole vault clinics, but haven’t been able to do it at meets, due to unfortunate circumstances.” Chang then went on to say that she hopes that they will branch out even more next season.

The rookies undoubtedly have been able to carry their own weight this year. Freshmen Tiffany Chi, Natalie Zych, and Argueta have all performed admirably this season, with Chi placing sixth in 3000-meter run in the Borough Championships, and Zych coming in fourth in the 1500-meter run at the PSAL Officials Meet on April 25.

At the Soph/Frosh City Championships at DeWitt Clinton High School, Stuyvesant’s underclassmen contingent also did well. Argueta came in third in the 3000- and 1500-meter races, and the freshman team in the 4 x 800 relay (consisting of Chi, Jing Hi, Zych, and Argueta) placed third. The sophomores were also successful, with Cooper and Lee notching second and third, respectively, in the 1500-meter racewalk.

The team’s last meet of the season, May 29’s Outdoor Track & Field City Championship, is also the most important. Although most of the team doesn’t qualify to compete, the girls who do are mainly distance runners.

Chang said, “We’re within the top 15 teams in the city.”

S P O R T S

Lobstars Cap Off Another Successful Season

By DANNY OSTROMETSKY

The girls' tennis team, the Lobstars, has maintained a perfect regular season record for over five years. After capping off yet another perfect season this year and capturing the Manhattan Division A title for the fourth year in a row, the Lobstars were confident going into the playoffs. "We have a really strong team this year, so we knew that we'd be good competition," said senior co-captain Maryann Chu.

The team started the playoffs strong, swiftly eliminating Susan Wagner High School without losing a single match in the first round. On May 10, the Lobstars advanced to the next round to face Tottenville High School, nudging out their opponents with a score of 3-2. They advanced to the semifinals against Cardozo High School, the defending city champions. Although they lost this match with a final score of 5-0, the Lobstars established themselves as one of the four top tennis teams in the city.

According to senior co-captain Madeleine Gray, the team had accomplished its goals. "We hoped to make it past the second round of the playoffs, and reach the semis, which we have done in years past," she said.

Sophomore and second singles player Kerry Weinberg said, "I did not expect us to get to the semis because last year we played Midwood in the quarters and I assumed we would play an equally tough team this year."

Despite their loss to Cardozo, the season is not yet over for the Lobstars. Because of the team's semifinal appearance in the PSAL City Championships, they have qualified to participate in the Mayor's Cup, a prestigious citywide scholastic tournament in which the best teams play. As Gray explained, "The top four public school teams and top four private school teams are invited to play against each other." This tournament is not only a chance to prolong the girls' tennis season and avenge their loss to Cardozo, but it is also an incredible opportunity to play on the same courts as the pros do during the U.S. Open in late August.

The Lobstars' winning season is even more amazing because they had to both adjust their starting lineups (due to the graduation of some key starters last year) and adjust to their new coach, Howard Barbin. Gray admits that the team became closer as the season wore on and it finally "gelled and came together as

continued on page 14

Dominating Hitmen Advance in Playoffs

By DAVID FELTON

"The entire team came to play today. Our bats finally woke up and our offense had the breakout game we were looking for. The home team really got up for the playoffs." These words from junior hitter Alex Zedlovich reflect the triumphant feelings of the Hitmen, the boys' baseball team, regarding their 11-5 victory over Norman Thomas High School in the first round of the 2004 PSAL A Division Playoffs. The 12th-seeded Hitmen will clash with the fifth-seeded High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology in the second round.

While the victory over Norman Thomas was not surprising (the Hitmen had defeated Norman Thomas 8-4 earlier in the season), the enormous offensive output from the normally pitching-heavy Hitmen was a pleasant surprise. The Hitmen soared to an early 5-0 lead behind the bats of Zedlovich, junior third baseman Nat Young, and junior first baseman Jonah Miller. Later on, a sixth inning three-run home run from senior captain Billy Becker put the game out of reach.

Though Becker did not have his best pitching performance that game, the All-Manhattan

starter certainly pitched well enough to win. Helping his own cause, Becker's three-run homer cancelled out his sub-par performance on the mound. The generous run support provided Becker with an uncanny cushion to work with. As he later said, "Scoring all of those runs helps the pitcher tremendously. Knowing that you can afford to make a mistake makes pitching so much easier, and hitting the ball the way we did felt great."

While the Hitmen were ecstatic about the win, the team

was not as thrilled with the 12th seed given by the PSAL prior to the playoffs. Having decisively won the underrated Manhattan West A Division with a 13-3 record (three games ahead of sec-

ond place finisher Martin Luther King Jr. High School), the Hitmen expected a higher seed heading into the playoffs. Coach Matt Hahn believes that there is an anti-Manhattan bias within the seeding committee. He said, "The seeding committee feels the competition in the Manhattan divisions is not as strong as in the other divisions."

The team's complaints appear to be valid, as many of the teams seeded above the

**"We hit a wall in the middle of the season, but we overcame it."
— Coach Matt Hahn**



Brian Schaffler pitching for JV baseball against Bronx Science.

Peter Velez / The Spectator

Hitmen failed to win their divisions and finished with worse records than the Hitmen. Further questioning the credibility of the seeding committee is the fact that eighth-seeded Dewitt Clinton High School, a school that failed to win its division and finished with a lower record than the Hitmen, lost its first round game against unheralded Richmond Hill, the 25th seed. Despite the frustration with the seeding, Hahn put the controversy in perspective. He said, "This is the highest seed we have had in the last 20 years. The 12th seed really is not so bad."

Looming in round two for the Hitmen will be the fifth-seeded High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology on May 29. Hahn said, "I think it's a great matchup between two excellent programs at the same level. We have played them the past two years, and even though they are the higher seed, we match up well against them."

Young will start for the Hitmen in what is probably the most important game of his high school career. Becker is confi-

continued on page 15

Athlete Spotlight: Paige Fern



Naomi Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator

By JESSE ROSENTHAL

Dedicated. Gritty. Just plain unbelievable. These are all adjectives that can be used to describe senior Paige Fern, the Stuyvesant Mimbis' star soccer player.

Soccer is Fern, and Fern is soccer. She was practically dribbling a soccer ball before the rest of us were even standing. As teammate and junior Katie Shelly said, "There is no one more dedicated to Stuyvesant soccer."

Fern is a four-year varsity starter. Breaking in with the

team in the 2001-2002 season, she won the Rookie of the Year award (five goals, four assists) and helped Stuyvesant win the PSAL City Championship. The next year she doubled her statistics, scoring eight goals and dishing out 10 assists to lead Stuyvesant to the playoffs. In her junior year, Fern was rewarded for her achievements by being named co-captain by Coach Phil Fisher.

Few players possess the inner fire and the leadership to lead others on and off the field,

continued on page 14

Tough Loss Caps Great Season

By TODD SCHER

Although the season ended in disappointment, it was an overall huge success for the boys' handball team, the Dragons. Stuyvesant destroyed its league competition, finishing the regular season undefeated at 12-0, earning them the number three seed in the PSAL playoffs.

In the quarterfinals, the Dragons easily beat Fort Hamilton High School by a score of 5-0, and they beat Van Arsdale High School by a score of 4-1. In the semifinals, though, they were defeated by the second-ranked Midwood Hornets. The most impressive part of their season was their ability to make it so far without many of their best players, who had graduated last year.

The Dragons did not go down without a fight. In their final match, Stuyvesant gave Midwood all it could handle, but the Dragons were within two points of the city finals. The first doubles team of juniors Ricky Cheng and Brian Yuen, which had only lost one match during the regular season, lost 21-19 in a game that could have sent the Dragons to the finals to face the defending champions, Forest Hills High School. Stuyvesant had a chance thanks to the splendid play of third singles player, senior Tiankan Li, who is considered the team's "secret weapon" by Coach

Robert Sandler. The second doubles team of junior Andy Wong and senior Musa Al Haj Ahmad also played superbly. First singles player senior Lok Tin Tse and second singles player senior Chengzh Gao both had amazing years but met their match with the two best players in the city from Midwood. Going into the semifinal, Tse was undefeated on the year and Gao had only lost twice.

Coming within two points of the finals is a heartbreaker, but Sandler is still very proud of how well his team played to the semifinals. "We weren't even on the map two years ago, and now we have gone to the top four in the city two straight years," he said. But what most impressed Sandler was that "the team got just as far as last year without three of our starters from last year's team."

Li expressed his discontent. He said, "Losing to Midwood was a great disappointment for the whole team, especially the returning members of the team because it was also in the semifinals where we lost last year." But Li did reiterate that "it was a great season and we have nothing to regret."

Tse, although clearly seething with frustration after suffering his first loss of the season, agreed that the handball team did have "a very successful season."

continued on page 15