



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper
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The pulse
of the
student
body.

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To The Stuyvesant Community

Students Fast to Feed the Homeless

By LISA LU

"Get hungry for a change! Fast for a day so someone else won't have to!" read a recent poster advertising Fast-a-Thon04.

On Thursday, November 4, students participating in the Fast-a-Thon skipped their daytime meals and later gathered outside the cafeteria at 4:30 P.M., ready to break their fast together with the setting sun.

The Fast-a-Thon is an event that the Muslim Students Association (MSA) sponsors annually. "The purpose is two-fold," said Assistant Principal of Social Studies and MSA faculty advisor Jennifer Suri. "One, to tell people what Ramadan is. Two, to raise money and awareness for people who are hungry."

During Ramadan, explained senior and MSA co-president Lusana Ahsan, Muslims fast to recognize the people who are starving. Fast-a-Thon is a program developed to involve those who are not Muslims themselves, but would want to help the cause.

In order to raise money for the Fast-a-Thon, members of the MSA, according to Ahsan, informed stores around Stuyvesant that students would be fasting, and asked if they would be willing to sponsor the students. "Each store sponsors a different number of people. [Then] we ask people to sign up in school," she said.

The result is that a dollar goes to the City Harvest for every non-Muslim student who fasts. Muslim students cannot be sponsored themselves because they are already fasting for a religious reason.

City Harvest was chosen as the target charity, Suri explained, because it feeds the homeless and it has no religious affiliation. According to the City Harvest Web site (www.cityharvest.org), it seeks to end hunger in communities "through food rescue and distribution, education, and other practical, innovative solutions." The funding it receives, the Web site also states, goes toward program services, management, and general development.

To some students, the event was a novelty. "I just wanted to see what it's like," said sophomore Jessie Li. "I'm also glad we get to raise money."

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SLT Fighting Back Hands of Time

By ZI CHENG

Politics has been the source of many heated discussions in Stuyvesant's hallways. Rather than Bush versus Kerry, though, recent politics within Stuy involves friction between the School Leadership Team (SLT) and the administration.

The SLT is a committee comprised of students, parents, and teachers that discusses school issues and presents possible solutions to such problems. As outlined in the Comprehensive Education Plan, the SLT plays a role in improving school affairs, deliberating on topics that include the core curriculum, annualization, teacher evaluation, and diversity. The budget and the school's performance on Regents and Advanced Placement examinations are also assessed.

The latest disagreement revolves around the C-30 process, a method of hiring assistant principals (APs). According to the latest Department of Education (DOE) guidelines, a C-30 committee consists of seven parents as selected by the Parents' Association, two United Federation of Teachers (UFT) members (including present UFT Chapter Leader Ellen Schweitzer), three students chosen by the Student Union, one

school aide, and a teacher from the school. Teitel and two administrators, usually assistant principals in a field associated with the available position, also participate.

In the past, Teitel was obligated to submit more than 20 resumés of candidates for a given position to the C-30 committee for evaluation. In November 2003, however, Schools Chancellor Joel Klein issued a regulation that only requires Teitel to offer three to five prospects for interviews and consideration by the C-30 Committee.

Considering Stuyvesant receives numerous applicants vying for such positions, there is concern regarding the ramifications that such a severe restriction on the applicant pool entails, specifically Teitel's increased power over the procedure. "How do we know if quality teachers, or in this case APs, are not excluded?" sophomore parent and SLT Representative Gary Lincoff said. "We are not trying to deprive Teitel of his authority, but at the same time, give us a partnership. The C-30 committee should not be treated as a rubber stamp, but rather as a true advisory council."

Former freshman parent

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Stuy Awarded \$14,000 Grant To Produce Film on TriBeCa



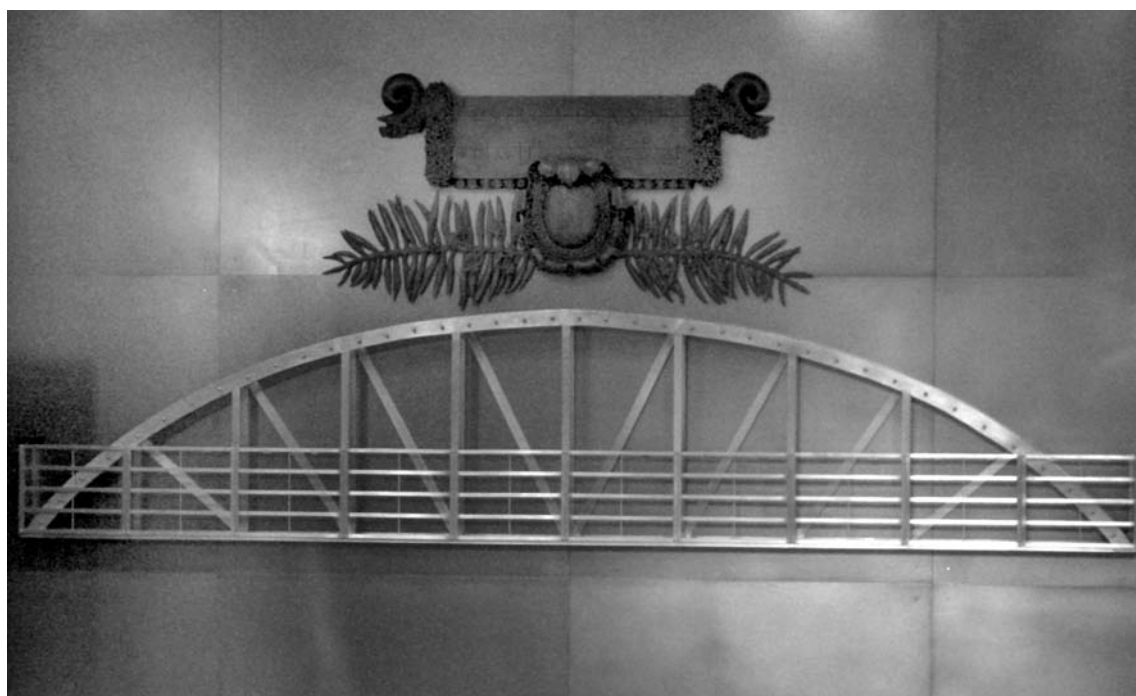
Naomi Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator

The Urban Land Institute has awarded Stuyvesant's video production program with a fourteen thousand dollar grant to produce a film about commuting as it relates to TriBeCa. This grant spearheaded by video production teacher Elka Gould and Assistant Principal of Social Studies Jennifer Suri will fund the project which will be produced by Stuyvesant students. Here, Principal Stanley Teitel and Suri posed with representatives of the Urban Land Institute.

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Bridge Arrives Unannounced



Roman Sheydavasser / The Spectator

A model of the Tribeca Bridge was unveiled on the first floor on Tuesday, November 16.

By NETALIE MATALON

"Such a beautiful memorial deserved at least some sort of ceremony," said senior Nitin Rajput.

Some students shared Rajput's sentiments about the Centennial Commemorative Wall, which was unveiled on Tuesday, November 16 during

an evening ceremony. For others, however, the memorial was not as aesthetically pleasing.

"The Centennial [Commemorative Wall] was voted on by the Parents' Association as a gift to the senior class of 2004," said PA Co-President Lori Pandolfo.

According to Pandolfo, the Centennial Commemorative

Wall is also a means of raising funds for the PA. Until this year, the PA dedicated benches to people who donated \$2,500 or more to Stuyvesant. These people's names would appear on plaques on the benches that would be placed around the building. This year, however, the PA is no longer dedicating benches to donors. Instead, it

will record the names of people who donated large amounts of money to the school on designated slots on Centennial Commemorative Wall.

The memorial was designed by artist Madeleine Segall Marx, who also designed the Richard M. Rothenberg Memorial on the fourth floor of Stuyvesant, dedicated to the former Assistant Principal of Mathematics.

"I was asked to design something that would bring in fun for the school," said Marx of the Centennial Commemorative Wall. "I started with the picture on the front page of the centennial calendar. I noticed the arc on the bottom [of the calendar] looked like the TriBeCa Bridge." Marx constructed the replica of the circular symbol on the old Stuyvesant building, which is situated at the top of the memorial. The remainder of the memorial, which includes the replica of the TriBeCa Bridge, was constructed in the Tallix foundry in Beacon, New York.

The Centennial Commemorative Wall has raised issues with the Centennial Committee, which claims that it had not been included in the decision to construct the memorial.

"Although the Centennial

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Teacher Feature: Susan Rubin

By ALEX JAMES

“I think it’s important that people learn who they are and understand what makes them happy, so they can pursue whatever that may be,” said Susan Rubin, who has taught at Stuyvesant High School as a devoted and well-liked math teacher for almost 15 years. Her unique approach to education and mathematics has inspired many of her students to view the subject in a new, more personal way.

Before coming to Stuyvesant in 1991, Rubin taught first in California, then in New York at Christopher Columbus High School, Park East High School, and later Washington Irving High School.

Rubin’s experiences led to the development of a creative project she offers to her students as a means to receive extra credit in her classes. When she began teaching at the new Stuyvesant building in 1992, the walls were bare. Rubin wanted the building to look more welcoming to the students, and designed a project to help achieve that goal.

Originally, Rubin wished to cover the fourth floor with math posters. However, the majority of those she found in stores did not strike her as creative or fulfilling to her artistic inclinations. She began to offer her students the opportunity to create posters relating to math and hand them in for extra credit. Eventually, the project became open to anything creative that math-inspired students could produce.

Students in Rubin’s classes appreciated the extra credit assignment.

Junior Jamie Paul said, “I really like the idea that people can submit extra credit in her class without being math geniuses. They can express their artistic or

creative talents instead.” As a teacher, Rubin encourages her students to view math as more than a science.

“I feel that everybody is creative. Every kid is struck by math in a different way,” she said. The aim of her creative projects is to encourage her classes to form their own opinion about math and to see how it helps them learn about themselves.

“I feel that everybody is creative. Every kid is struck by math in a different way.”
— Susan Rubin, teacher



Photo by Name / The Spectator

Junior Akia Caine said, “Ms. Rubin’s goal is not for us to memorize, but to understand.”

Rubin is interested in many things outside of math and her role as a teacher at Stuy as well. Among those interests are hiking, running, biking, yoga, reading, music, and especially traveling.

“I took a year off of work with my husband visiting Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Hawaii, and Israel,” she said.

Many of Rubin’s students hold her and her teaching style in high regard. “She’s really nice and is genuinely interested in helping the class better under-

stand the material before moving on. It’s easy to tell that she enjoys teaching the subject matter,” Paul said.

Senior Meredith Gringer agreed. “She is really excited about math and it shows,” she said

Senior Ilona Potiha said, “She is very fair and considerate.”

Rubin’s colleagues also find her to be a hardworking and creative teacher.

“Ms. Rubin is a dedicated professional who puts care and concern into her relationships with every member of the class,” said Assistant Principal of Mathematics Danny Jaye.

Rubin appreciates other artistic additions to Stuyvesant’s hallways as well as the ones her students create.

“She took us on a class trip across the hallway to help us better understand the [Richard M. Rothenberg Memorial] outside of our room,” said junior Dan Katz. This memorial across from room 403 is another example of integrating math and imaginative interpretations of it at Stuy.

The breadth of work Rubin receives from her extra credit projects—from poems to stories to paintings to sculptures—shows her ability to change many of her students’ preconceived notions of math as a dry subject into one that can be artistic and imaginative.

“I love it because I know the kids love it. They are having good experiences through math and that’s the most important part,” said Rubin.

The Odds on Betting at Stuy



The McGill Youth Gambling Research and Treatment Clinic states that 80% of high school students have gambled casually with money at some point in their high school careers. This photo was posed.

By RACHEL ENSIGN

Stuyvesant is a place of constant action, in which most days are accompanied by new surprises. On some of the more unusual days, Stuyvesant students are greeted by urine-soaked stairways, by student arrests, and by newly-instituted policies that dictate who can leave the building at what time and through which entrance. And there are other, more subtle infractions that occur daily. Cheating, drug and alcohol use, and the cutting of classes are all everyday issues.

“There’s just something about the game, I usually play it casually for fun,” said junior Ben Howell, who plays Texas Hold ‘Em, a form of poker. “I’m not serious enough to play in an underground casino or anything, but the concept of putting in 10 dollars and getting 200 is

very appealing,” he said. There are instances where gambling can result in a downward spiral leading to the loss of a student’s financial, social, and academic standings.

Jesse Rubel is a former Stuyvesant student and is currently a senior attending Cardozo High School. As a freshman at Stuy, he began playing blackjack. Later, as Texas Hold ‘Em gained popularity, Rubel began to spend an increasing amount of his time playing it.

“I used to cut class to play cards; I would gamble at least seven hours a week. I was without a doubt addicted to gambling,” said Rubel. “I still owe people [at Stuyvesant] some money.”

When his grades plummeted due to his poor attendance, Rubel transferred to his zone

continued on page 4

HIGH STAKES BY JOHN YI



Math Team Mark Mix-Up Causes Stress For Seniors Applying Early Decision

By CAITLIN RODRIGUEZ

Imagine spending hours, weeks, or even months on your early decision application for your dream school, only to have an error be made on your transcript. That is exactly what has happened to many seniors, like Yuetian Xu, who have participated on the Stuyvesant Math Team.

“For credits for math courses, the formula is total grade over total credit. Math Team is supposed to be just credit. Therefore, Math Team should not be averaged in,” said Xu, a Math Team captain.

“When you change systems, there will always be hiccups.”
—Danny Jaye,
Assistant Principal of Mathematics

Students who are on Math Team receive a grade of “Pass” or “Fail” on their transcripts for each semester of Math Team. These grades show up on the students’ transcripts, but are not included in the students’ grade point averages.

According to Assistant Principal of Technology Services Edward Wong, University Application Processing Center (UAPC), which, until recently, produced school transcripts for the New York City Department of Education (DOE), included Math Team grades on students’ transcripts without accounting for these grades in the students’ grade point average. However, the DOE’s contract with UAPC recently expired, leading the DOE to implement a new transcript processing program, the High School Scheduling system, to produce transcripts this year.

The problem lies in the High School Scheduling system’s default settings, which caused students’ Math Team grades to be averaged into their grade point averages. A grade of “Pass”

was averaged in as a 65, whereas a grade of “Fail” was averaged in as a zero, which for many yielded a significantly lower average.

Assistant Principal of Mathematics Danny Jaye explained that because the new system was implemented so late in the year, the flaws in the sys-

tem were not fully worked out. “When you change systems, there will always be hiccups,” said Jaye.

Fortunately for many Math Team students, the program office was able to resolve this issue by using the school’s in-house computer system,

Daedalus, to recalculate the averages of everyone affected by the mishap. The colleges to which many of these students had applied in November received letters apologizing for the error, along with corrected transcripts.



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SLT Fighting Back Hands of Time

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and SLT Representative and current Recording Secretary of the PA Lauren Coleman-Lochner expressed similar sentiments. “The [former] C-30 process gives the committee insight into the quality of educators out there. Given the concentration of his power, Teitel wants to bypass the process. For other schools with a lack of student and parent support, this

In response, Teitel points out the change was issued directly from the Chancellor. “When the new regulation came into effect, I contacted the Chancellor but was told under no uncertain terms by his office that this measure is inflexible,” Teitel said. “Coming from the private sector, the Chancellor has given principals greater control over appointments but now holds principals to a greater degree of accountability.”

“To be honest, I can appoint my own people onto the Level I Committee if [the current C-30 members] chose not to participate. Considering the situation I’m placed in, I need to have the final call.”

—Stanley Teitel, principal

change may be beneficial, but this is Stuyvesant,” said Coleman-Lochner, vowing to uphold the ongoing boycott taken up by many students and teachers, who presently refuse to participate in the commission.

Senior and SLT representative Meredith Gringer, who firmly rejected the new procedure, said, “We, as students, are not going to waste our time and energy when our opinions don’t matter.” Gringer refers to the evaluation procedure and its demands on not only parents and faculty members, but also the representative students. The lengthy process includes question compilation, application review, interview, and group evaluation.

This added responsibility applies to dealing with the current boycott of C-30 committees. “To be honest,” Teitel said, “I can appoint my own people onto the Level I committee if they choose not to participate. Considering the situation I’m placed in, I need to have the final call.” Teitel further suggested that those unsatisfied with the new system seek change with the DOE.

The overall concern over qualified teachers has been pervasive. “There are a few teachers who may not be suitable for Stuyvesant. While I understand that it takes time for new teachers to adjust, this should not be done at the expense of the students,” said senior David Wang.

Students Fast to Feed the Homeless

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Others, like senior Sheikh Shuvo, have participated in previous years. “It’s a cool thing to do,” he said. “[You] really see a different perspective of hunger as a problem.”

Teachers participated in the event as well. English teacher Philip Mott described it as a spiritual experience. “Fasting cleanses the body physically and spiritually,” said Mott. “[There is] a sense of brother and sisterhood, when [we] decide to have common experiences such as a fast.”

However, fasting for a day is not as easy as it sounds accord-

ing to junior Grace Ng. “I was starving the whole day,” said Ng. “I normally can’t survive a day without breakfast.”

Li had similar feelings. “By

“Fasting cleanses the body physically and spiritually. [There is] a sense of brother and sisterhood, when [we] decide to have common experiences such as a fast.”

— Philip Mott, teacher

energy during the day.”

“Not eating isn’t bad but not drinking is hard, because you can dehydrate,” said junior Ying Liao, who had never fasted before. “But if people can do it for a month, then I can definitely do it for a day.”

Ahsan said that this year the event was more successful than ever, with more than 300 students participating. “Better food too,” Shuvo said, referring to the variety of dishes served during the fast-breaking festivities, ranging from dates to chocolate chip cookies.

At the end of the day, approximately \$550 were raised through Fast-a-Thon04 from more than 300 participants, far surpassing the \$400 raised last year.

Bridge Arrives Unannounced

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[Commemorative Wall] is not linked to the Centennial Committee, Kiki Dinos of the fundraising committee has informed them of this project,” said Pandolfo. “[Principal Stanley] Teitel knew about [the memorial] and agreed to it.”

Building Coordinator R e n e e Levine did not approve of the process involved in putting the memorial up. “I was surprised about it,” she said. “In previous instances, such as with the Rothenberg Memorial on the fourth floor, the process took a whole year. A committee was formed and there were Town Hall meetings in which all Stuyvesant-related people had a say in the project. With the Centennial [Commemorative Wall], that process did not happen. Although I saw a sketch of [the memorial], I personally did not think it was proper to put it up on that wall. I never saw the prototype or final outcome.”

“[The memorial] was not done in a hurry,” said Pandolfo, in response to these complaints. “It had been worked on since last summer, and needed to be done in time for the centennial and in time to raise money for the school with the benches

gone.”

Levine also raised concern over the removal of a glass box reliquary, which was located at the site of the Wall. This reliquary is one of many glass boxes embedded in the walls of the Stuyvesant building. “I was a bit concerned [about the glass box being removed],” said Levine. “I called Kristin Jones and Andre Ginzel [the designers of the glass box system] and they were rather taken back by it.”

Building Machinist Kern Levigion disapproved of the location of the memorial. “I don’t like the background,” he said “The silver steel wall takes away from the beauty of the tiled building. This is where tickets are sold for shows, and a lot of things occur. It’s just a bad location, and people will put benches there which would ruin the steel wall.”

Some students, like sophomore Marta Filonowicz, did not find the memorial aesthetically pleasing. “It’s not that pretty-looking,” said Filonowicz. “They could have chosen something more creative than the [TriBeCa] bridge.”

“The idea was that there would be 100 windows for the donor’s names,” said Marx. “But something went wrong and there are 80 instead of 100. This is going to be rebuilt.”

“Although I saw a sketch of [the memorial], I personally did not think it was proper to put it up on the wall.”

— Renee Levine, Building Coordinator

The Odds on Betting at Stuy

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high school.

“It was the only way I had a chance of getting into college,” said Rubel.

The McGill Youth Gambling Research and Treatment Clinic states that 80% of high school students have gambled casually with money at some point in their high school careers. Additionally, the Clinic, (<http://www.education.mcgill.ca/gambling/en/problemgambling.htm>) states that 4-8% of students are currently having gambling-related trouble (such as addiction) and that an additional 10-14% of high school

students may develop a serious gambling problem in the future.

A study commissioned by the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling, (http://www.ccp.org/youth/high_school_survey.asp) stated that 87% of high school students surveyed had gambled for money at some time. It reported that nearly 20% of those students were either problem or pathological gamblers. Many of the pathological gamblers spent over \$150 a week on gambling and frequently cut school to gamble.

If the gambling occurs outside of school, there is nothing that can be done by school officials to prevent it in the future.

However, the Department



A Double Serving Of Volleyball

Photos by Jeremy Wooster

See volleyball article on page 16.



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IVY Verbal Review

Editorials and Opinions

APs for Stuyvesant, by Stuyvesant

Assistant principals are a vital part of Stuyvesant High School and the leaders of each individual department. In the past, they have been chosen from a list of 20 eligible candidates. In November 2003, Schools Chancellor Joel Klein ordered that only three to five candidates for each position could be submitted to the C-30 committee, which chooses new APs for schools.

Formerly, Principal Stanley Teitel submitted about 20 candidates to the C-30 committee to review. As a result of Klein's order, he now submits far fewer. Inadvertantly, he has assumed more influence in the AP hiring process than is beneficial to the school. The AP application pool is now significantly narrowed by Teitel alone, before it reaches the C-30 committee.

The academic environment of our high school is governed by assistant principals. Their decisions and actions affect the entire Stuyvesant community: students, parents, teachers, and the rest of the administration. A collective effort should therefore be put forth toward hiring new APs whenever such action becomes necessary. The current C-30 committee consists of students, parents, United Federation of Teachers members, school aides, associated administrators, and Teitel.

Voices other than that of Teitel need to resonate in the hiring process to effectively choose from the AP candidates. Although Teitel may have our school's best interests in mind when he selects candidates for C-30 submission, he would benefit from contributions from the rest of the community.

Students come in direct contact with APs in a different context than the principal: they are subject to the grading policies, test dates, and departmental finals that APs organize. UFT teachers have specialized academic knowledge relating to their specific departments that exceeds what Teitel may know. Lacking these perspectives, Teitel cannot see applicants through the fullness of the Stuyvesant spectrum, and may select against desirable applicants.

As hiring a qualified AP is one of the chief concerns of the administration, the teachers, and the students, we propose that all parties be more directly included. Teitel's three to five candidates should be guaranteed C-30 interviews; however, Teitel should submit the remaining applications to the committee for consideration. If the committee finds a candidate to be particularly promising, he or she should also be granted an interview. Teitel's choices would be rounded out by group perspective.

The C-30 committee will then have the opportunity to review all applicants together without breaking Klein's policy. Interviews and discussions would take place after the full committee evaluation of all applicants. Final decisions would be rendered by the entire committee.

Klein's smaller applicant pool is stiflingly inadequate. However, with appropriate changes to the C-30 process, Stuyvesant's needs will still be served, and reflected in the hiring of future assistant principals.

teacher, Mike Zamansky, over the possibility of doing an Intel. Somehow, I convinced myself that what I *really* wanted was a massive dollop of independent research to go along with my mid-year stress.

Yes, I was insane. I am still insane because, much blood and sweat later, I have discovered that I really *did* want that project. I am a mad, mad, mad senior who is so proud of her Intel that she has printed out copies of her paper, and is running about shoving it under her friends' noses, sad-puppy-facing them into reading it.



Nicky Silverman / The Spectator

I am madly proud because I came up with a project in which I was madly interested, and learned mad stuff from the experience. (I wrote a program to create computer generated poetry. If there were room enough in *The Spectator*, I'd talk your ear off about how enjoy-

able this was. The English student within me salivated and barked with glee for about 10 months.)

I am also madly proud because I overcame the stunting notion that I was not quite sharp and abstract enough to go hardcore with anything scientific. This was incurred after many years of high 80s math and science grades.

That assumption has since died a rather violent death.

Finally, I am madly proud because I FINISHED IT! How often does someone start a lovely project, only to be distracted by a pretty, shiny object in the middle? I know I've done that. The act of finishing the paper—handing it in all smooth and stapled—was an achievement in itself.

So. Juniors! What can you conclude from this homily of joy and morbid exhaustion?

That you should all do Intels, of course! Preferably in computer science, because it's just that chill—if you take into account my extreme personal bias.

Really, though. This is one experience that I feel nobody should pass up. I base this entirely upon the argument that what is good for me is good for everyone. If you believe that, go talk to your teachers. Tell them that you are crazy, and that you want to do scientific research. (It's a good combination.)

Of course, the Intel Talent Search is a competition. But as with many lovely things in life, it's not whether you win or lose. It's all about how you pick the project, code the project, freeze the computer, smash the computer, and write the paper. It's about how you play the game.

– Sarah Outhwaite

The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



The pulse of the student body

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* Managing Board Members

Re: Coverage of Cross Country Success

To the Editor:

Last issue's Sports section featured an article titled "Boys' Cross Country Successful at Borough Championships." What about the success of the Girls' Cross Country team? We came in first place for the Junior Varsity and Varsity races, just as the boys did, helping Stuyvesant sweep the Manhattan Cross Country Championship. We were at Van Cortlandt Park that Saturday morning, just as the boys were, freezing in our shorts and singlets. We endured the hills and sprinted against the wind, and some of us set personal records when

crossing the finish line after five kilometers. Like the boys, we also qualified for PSAL City Championships on November 13. So why are we not worthy of an article—or even a mention—in *The Spectator*, while the boys are?

I have been on the team since my freshman year at Stuy, and I know how far we have come since then. We are incredibly dedicated: we run in all kinds of weather, commute to Central Park for after-school practices, and constantly strive

to set new personal records. This summer, 10 of us went to Cross Country camp, which is the highest number of Stuy girls that have ever gone. First place did not come easy for us; we worked for it.

I am glad *Spectator* covered the boys' success. The boys have an amazing team and we always look to them for inspiration. They deserve to be praised for their victory, especially since several of their runners were suffering from injuries, and yet the team still managed to persevere. We just wish somebody had thought to acknowledge the girls for their efforts, as

well. Our team is stronger and faster than it has ever been in the past, and sweeping the Manhattan Championship was a big deal for us. Would it have been so difficult to title the article: "Boys AND Girls' Cross Country Successful at Borough Championships?"

Just a thought.

Sincerely,
Alex Menglide
(On behalf of the
Girls' Cross
Country team)

CORRECTIONS

From the November 12, 2004 issue:
• The photograph of Liz London was taken by Naomi Gordon-Loebl.
• Katie Shelly's name was misspelled in "Top 5 Senior Costumes."
• The photograph of Simon Lee was taken by Anna Wiener.

Point - Counterpoint

Library Restrictions Leave Students in the Hallway

By JOSEPH NGAI

It's the beginning of 10th period and you're finished with classes for the rest of the day. It's cold outside, your best friend has class, and you don't want to go home. Suddenly, you realize that you have work to do and you think, "What better place to do it than in the library?" You walk up to the sixth floor and see a mob at the library entrance waiting to get in. A flustered student is at the door, preventing others from going inside because the library is "full."

This scene has become a part of the everyday routine at Stuy. The library, which was once viewed as a place where computers were available and homework could be done, is now under a strict new policy. Whenever a librarian deems that the library is too crowded or overly noisy, she can restrict entrance to students.

"Bouncers" are stationed at the two doors to make sure that no more people get in.

The library is meant to be a place where students can work in a productive environment. Books are available for leisurely reading or for research, and textbooks are on hand in case students need to study for tests or finish homework. The new policy has turned it into a strictly controlled environment that doesn't even seem to be monitored for the right reasons. Many times the space in the library is not fully utilized when the librarians decide to close it.

The librarians are some of the most underappreciated people at Stuy. They clean the library, re-shelve books, and fix those unruly photocopiers. However, just as they can be

very helpful, they can also be unreasonable at times. Even if there is obviously room available in the library, I have personally been forbidden from entering. Sophomore Lenny Frankel has had similar experiences. He said, "Some of the librarians don't even listen. You might need to go to the bathroom, and they won't even let you go back inside."

Freshman Yan Slavinsky added, "This rule is horrible. I thought that the library was a place where I could learn and

is accomplished, a new method should be adopted.

Most of the time, whether the "bouncers" are scrawny freshmen or athletic juniors, few students are intimidated by them and often they are not able to stop angry students from walking in, even though the library is filled to capacity. A new system would involve giving rowdy students warnings. If those students do not stop talking or making noise, they are kicked out. If a particular student is kicked out of the

library an excessive number of times, he or she would not be allowed in again for the rest of the term.

With the proposed system, anyone who needs to use the library's facilities for educational purposes would be able to, and relative peace could also be

maintained. The librarians would also be pleased, as the noise level would be toned down and the factor of safety would also be considered. This solution would satisfy both parties, the students and the administration, as well as allow for fairness in deciding who should be allowed in the library.

With the current system, many students who deserve and need access to the library have no place where they can go and work in a productive environment. It has been said that the library is where the brain is the most free, and where the most work can be accomplished. The Stuy library should be no exception. But before this can happen, the doors need to be unlocked and the students let in.

The new policy has turned [the library] into a strictly controlled environment that doesn't even seem to be monitored for the right reasons.

read in a quiet setting."

While library time is a privilege for some students, for others it is an absolute necessity. Students who don't have access to the Internet at home or computers of their own use the library computers to type up papers, check important e-mails, or do research. The new policy is affecting these students greatly, especially if it's impossible for them to get to the library before it is filled to capacity.

Head librarian Katherine Mets says that this new rule is only for students' safety. She said, "125 kids in a library with only 90 chairs is a hazard. What if there's a fire drill, or another 9/11?" This is a valid point, but if the library staff wants to make sure that the purpose of the new policy

A Library Bouncer Retorts

By MICHAEL GSOVSKI

My name is Michael Gsovski, and I am a library bouncer.

Hearing this, you may want to form a face of disgust, spit on my name, and curse me out. It's okay, I'm used to it by now.

While my job may carry unpleasant connotations, I can tell you that we, the proud family of the library bouncers, provide a valuable service to the Stuyvesant community. I sense that you are not convinced of this. Please, allow me to explain.

We are not some silly meddling force that blindly decides who stays in the library door and who gets in. We do not enforce arbitrary and meaningless rules. There are many services that we provide for the school that are more important than immediate access to the library.

First, we keep things legal. The library bouncer policy was introduced because of the influx of students into the library caused by this year's rise in free periods. We have two librarians who can legally supervise about 70 students. We already bend this rule to fill the 90 seats we have in the library, but we can't bend it any further. Otherwise, an inspection could give Stuyvesant the kind of attention it most certainly doesn't need.

Second, the possibility of a library fire is not a laughing matter. Our crowd control

keeps exitways unclogged, so in the event of a fire (which is not altogether unlikely given how often high school students accidentally set them) people can escape with their lives. We believe that this is necessary to ensure the quality of your stay in the library, as well as to encourage repeat visits.

Third, our crowd control also keeps the noise level down, so people can come to the library with the intention to study and learn. It is almost impossible to do so with a constant din of differing conversations around you. Those

of you who come to look at anime and video game Web sites when other people need to use them to work need to know I'm going to start coming by the computer banks during slow foot traffic times. The Internet isn't

going anywhere; you can look at the Halo 2 game guide later.

Library bouncers are not fascist pigs or Nazis, as many people have jokingly or seriously called me. We keep the school out of legal trouble, keep things orderly and quiet, and protect the public safety. The minor inconvenience of waiting an extra 45 seconds to get into the library is a worthwhile sacrifice to make. It is an exchange decidedly in your favor, and should ensure you that we are not fascists, but rather servants of your own interest.

So please, just stay behind the library doors until I signal you in, and everything will move a lot faster.

Library bouncers are not fascist pigs or Nazis, as many people have jokingly or seriously called me.

Wise Words From the Condom Maid

By TIFFANY WONG

The first time I received a safer sex kit from the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS (APICHA) was right outside the McDonald's near Stuy. When I got it, I laughed and asked the "condom guy" if there was a condom inside, and he said yes. Also included in the kit were finger cots, a packet of lubricant, and important HIV/AIDS information, including the kinds of testing APICHA offers. I didn't take him very seriously and proceeded to walk away.

This year, I began interning at APICHA. You might have seen our ads on the train, advertising our counseling program. This internship has quite possibly been the best learning experience of my life. I've gained knowledge, friendship, and the

chance to better my community.

At APICHA, we're trained to reach out to the public. We focus on our peers, targeting (but not



limited to) Asians and Pacific Islanders. We try to break stereotypes, dissolve ignorance, and raise HIV/AIDS awareness among people at risk—essential-

ly, everyone. Our goal is to get people tested (which is free and confidential at APICHA) and make them understand how important it is to protect themselves.

Now that I've begun my own outward-reaching, I know how difficult it is to fill the "condom guy's" shoes. Many people are too conservative to accept safer sex kits, especially in the Asian community. Some throw the kits away and tell us that they don't believe they have a purpose. Others are completely ignorant when it comes to HIV/AIDS, and believe that only homosexuals contract HIV.

One of the most important things I've learned about HIV is that there aren't necessarily any symptoms. In fact, the most common symptom of a sexually transmitted infection is no

symptoms at all. An estimated 850,000-950,000 people in the U.S. are living with HIV, and a quarter of them are not aware

Included in the kit were finger cots, a packet of lubricant, and important HIV/AIDS information.

that they have it. It's vital that the public realize that HIV/AIDS is not exclusive of any race, culture, religion, or sexual preference, and that engaging in risky behavior such as unprotected

sex or sharing dirty needles will put anyone in a dangerous situation.

With statistics showing that merely a half of sexually active teens used a condom the last time they had sex, it's no wonder that HIV/AIDS is on the rise. Contrary to popular misconception, AIDS is not a matter for gay people and third world countries. Teenagers are a lot less invincible than they like to think.

After months of being a "condom maid," I hope I have brought some HIV awareness to my peers. I don't hand condoms out for you to blow into balloons or leave discarded on the floor. If this is not treated as a serious issue, HIV/AIDS might someday take a part in your life. Each and every person enlightened makes a difference.

Remember, no glove, no love.

Opinions / Arts & Entertainment

The Extracurricular Blunder

As a freshman, I came to Stuy ambitious, driven, and Ivy-League bound. My sole focus was to excel in academics; extracurricular activities were simply not a part of my Stuy agenda. I regarded cheerleaders as sources of disturbing sound waves, athletes as people with “all muscle and no brain,” and clubs as distracting and unnecessary organizations.

I managed to maintain my nerd complex for all of freshman year.

Come sophomore year, I suddenly felt secluded from even my closest friends, many of whom were engaged in quite a few extracurricular activities. Also, the realization of the necessity of extracurriculars for college and ARISTA applications came like a blow to my head. This realization, combined with the absence of any particular group at Stuy that I could turn to amid stress and fatigue, impelled me to experiment with various activities. I felt stupid for wasting all of freshman year, the year that seems to involve the least amount of work among the four years of a Stuy career.

A period of trial and error, rejection and success in finding activities to join followed. I was accepted to Stuy’s Policy Debate Team, but it was far from an enjoyable experience. I had no desire to spend my precious sleeping hours reading 100 documents on the protection of coral reefs. So that didn’t work.

Then, I tried out for the girls’ basketball team, thinking that I’d be pretty good with

years of experience playing the sport. Being vertically challenged, I was rejected.

After that, I settled for joining Key Club with the intention of doing community service (or making keys, or whatever) just to have an extracurricular activity. Unfortunately, I had no interest in the club and its activities. No keys were being made and I didn’t feel like I was making a



Anna Wiener / The Spectator

Junior Ramblings

difference in my community. So that club went out the window, too.

Now I’m a junior with a pitiful activities list. My extracurricular blunder hit me fully in the face at the Club/Pub Fair last month, where many groups actively preferred underclass-

men to old, desperate juniors with only one and a half years until graduation. Like the military, looking to draft as many 20-year-olds as possible, Stuy clubs search for fresh blood to carry on their torch for the next few years.

Truthfully, I feel old. Two years of academic stress and not enough enjoyable extracurricular activities have taken their toll. My current attempts to join activities are attempts of need instead of interest.

What have I learned from this whole extracurricular blunder? I’m tempted to say, absolutely nothing except for the remarkable uselessness of poor judgment. But instead, I advise you underclassmen to use your remaining years at Stuy to become aware of the millions of extracurricular activities present in this school.

Drop those heavy backpacks on the floor for a second and take a look at the flyers taped to the escalator (all in an unbelievable variety of colors). You just might find inspiration in one of these advertisements.

Start tomorrow, and not next year. Sample the different tastes of divergent activities and devoting yourself to the one or two activities that you find the most appealing or exquisite. Then, by the time you’re juniors, you won’t feel like old, unwanted dolls that were thrown into a dusty toy chest, but unburdened upperclassmen with after-school activities to brighten your day.

– Julia Jiang

Taking a Different Stand

By MAIREAD MAGUIRE

“Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance...” drones the student announcer. A few students rise from their chairs. Some salute the flag, but others just slouch, movements and recitation robotic. Most of the class sits, ignoring the whole ritual. Why is a practice so loaded with political meaning treated as a daily ordeal or a joke?

Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in school is supposed to promote unity and nationalism among students, but more often than not it becomes a divisive issue. Some take offense to the phrase “under God.” Some dislike the nonchalant and even disrespectful attitude students take towards it. Others feel that it means nothing. Many have no opinion, or have never given the issue any thought.

Whether you sit or stand, you send a strong message to your peers and teachers. The Pledge is a powerful thing, and a little thought should be put into how you feel about it.

The Pledge itself speaks to values we all hold: liberty, justice, and unity, ideals which are worth standing for. While the language is not to everyone’s taste, these fundamental ideas remain laudable. Despite this, many students still dislike the Pledge.

For some, standing for the Pledge is perceived as support for the current right-wing administration. This can lead

to alienation among liberal students. Pride in our founding ideals and support for the present administration are not one in the same, and patriotism and dissent can exist side by side. By remembering that the Pledge celebrates unity and liberty, and standing for those principles, we can make it something we believe in.

In today’s polarized political climate, we are forced to examine our views on every issue. There is no room for apathy. Don’t treat the Pledge as a ritual without meaning. If you support the current path of the country, the Pledge is a strong, daily affirmation of your sense of pride in your country. Or, if you disapprove of the administration and our current path, be conscious of your disapproval and convinced of its basis. If you feel no patriotism or motivation to stand, it’s your right to sit, but sit out of conviction, not indifference.

Every morning, the Pledge is tacked on at the end of announcements, rushed and almost forgotten. Such a powerful statement should not be treated this casually. Patriotism should not be enforced. No one is compelled to sit or stand. But examine the reasons behind your actions when the Pledge is recited, and stand firmly behind them. Be strong in your convictions, and always challenge and reexamine them. Act according to conscious thought, not apathy.

Diwali Festival Sheds “Light” on Indian Culture

By PERRI OSATTIN

“It’s like an Indian Christmas.”

While the Indian Culture Club (ICC) led the first-ever Stuyvesant Diwali Festival on Friday, November 12, Indian-American chemistry teacher Sushma Arora explained the traditions behind this holiday. Diwali celebrates the new year and is a time for renewing, exchanging gifts, inviting loved ones to dinner, and cleaning house. Like Christmas, Diwali also has religious and cultural significance.

According to Arora, Diwali comes from the Sanskrit word *Deepvali*, meaning “rows of lights.” It is a five-day holiday that stems from the Hindu celebration of the god Rama’s return from a 14-year ordeal in the jungle, during which he defeated Ravana, the evil spirit who kidnapped his wife, Sita. Diwali has also become an occasion to appease the goddess Luxmi in hopes of becoming wealthy.

White and colored Christmas lights illuminated the otherwise dim dining hall while Punjabi and Hindi music streamed from stereos and Indian films played on television screens.

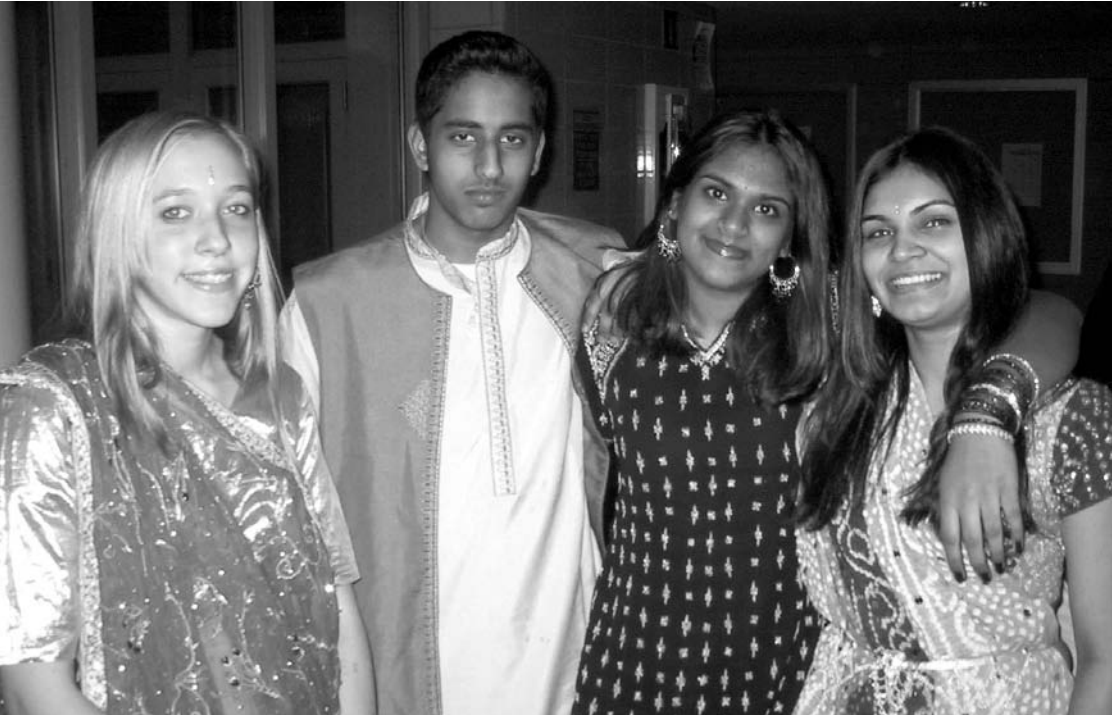
Freshly made Indian foods were available, as well. Samosas (fried pastry pouches filled with potatoes and peas), rava idlis (steamed rice cakes made with chutney), and chicken pulav (basmati rice with chicken) were

served. While the quantity and variety of the food were not very impressive, the cost and quality of the food, particularly the hot and flaky samosas, left nothing to be desired.

Henna tattoos, which cost \$1 to \$2 depending on the complexity of the stencil design, were in high demand. These tattoos have historically been a way for Indian women to ornament themselves for special occasions but have become popular with people worldwide because they are safe, temporary, and highly decorative.

The main event of the Festival was the fashion show, which was emceed by senior Student Union Club/Pub Coordinator and ICC member Nandini Banerjee. It opened with a traditional Indian dance performed by barefooted senior Vina Sinnan. Being a classical Indian dance student, she gyrated and moved her hands perfectly to the rhythm of “Mahboobmere,” a song from an Indian movie called *Fiza*. Stuy students then came down the runway in pairs, the men in simple cloth kurtas and the women in elaborate silk saris, lehngas, and salvar kameezes. These garments featured an astonishing array of rich reds, greens, blues, and purples, while gold earrings, bangles, and necklaces jangled and glittered.

Sinnan returned with freshman Royena Tanaz to perform a modern Indian dance to a music mix called “Rangdini,” which



Gui Bessa / The Spectator

On Friday, November 12, many students wore traditional Indian clothing in celebration of the Diwali Festival.

had both Eastern and Western influences. They ditched the traditional attire for sequined tops and black pants and showed a tremendous amount of skill and enthusiasm, even though they were not always in synch.

The second part of the fashion show followed, again showcasing bold and vibrant Indian fashions, including midriff- and shoulder-bearing saris.

The jazz section of Stuy Squad concluded the event with an Indian-influenced perfor-

mance.

When asked why she was attending the event, senior Esther Jung said, “A lot of my friends are participating and I’ve never really been to an Indian cultural thing before, so this is new to me. And there’s food.”

Health teacher Barbara Garber gave a similar reason, saying, “I’m very interested in other cultures. I love dance and movement and local costumes. Actually, I just saw “Bombay Dreams” [on Broadway] last

night, so [the Festival] has my interest even more.”

When asked why she was involved in the Festival, senior and four-year ICC member Kazi Sanam said, “It’s fun and we should promote our culture. There’s such a large South Asian population at Stuy and they should know about it.”

Junior and three-year ICC member Nameeta Kamath agreed and said, “Diwali is just

continued on page 11

Arts & Entertainment

Shopaholic Takes Stuy

By KAVITHA DAVIDSON

Unbeknown to many, TriBeCa is peppered with fantastic little shops that have yet to be discovered. Here are five of the many hidden stores to satisfy your every shopping need, be it for college interviews, Christmas, or senior prom.

Lappín Paolí

Hidden next to an empty-looking office building, Lappín Paolí sells everything necessary to relieve the stress that textbooks can create. It is a great store for makeup, shampoo, and anything you might need to make your own personal spa. For example, one of their books, *Home Spa* (\$9.95), divulges all the secrets of facials, body soaks, and general relaxation. They also sell many books on Kabbalah and Buddhism, including *Buddha in My Pocket* (\$9.95), a book that helps you find your inner peace.

You can also purchase candles in the shape of Buddha (\$11.95) and wonderful bath oils and air scents. One of the most interesting scent products the store carries is Cucina Aromate d'Ambiance (\$19), a perfume that adds a tasty smell to the air and comes in scents such as Coriander and Olive, Basil

and Tomatoes, and Ginger and Citron. Most notable is Lappín Paolí's signature line of lavender-scented products, which includes Lavender Handcream (\$15.50) and a soothing Lavender Heatwrap (\$27.50), which uses lavender aromatherapy to calm the senses and heat therapy to relieve aching muscles.

However, if all you're looking for is a quick shopping fix, you might want to check out its eyeshadows, which come in an array of luminescent colors and can be found in either large (\$12) or small (\$9) sizes. Finally, Lappín Paolí sells many drug-store conveniences, such as L'Oréal shampoos and Conair hairbrushes.

Lappín Paolí
123 West Broadway
Between Duane
and Reade Streets
(212) 227-4150

A Uno

Next door to Lappín Paolí lies a very successful luxury boutique by the name of A Uno. Established 12 years ago in SoHo, its TriBeCa branch has been open for two. Although the clothes

sophisticate—but with a little edge—and is perfect for an upcoming college interview.

This November, A Uno is spotlighting the many beautiful ruby and garnet necklaces that it carries. For the person trying to find the perfect holiday present, the store carries many unique and fun items, such as a Lulu Guinness umbrella with an imaginative cats pattern (\$46). But its signature item is a Kate Spade-esque green canvas bag from their popular French line, Un Après Midi de Chien (\$58-\$128). These bags are very popular in Paris, but are quite rare in America.

A Uno
123 West Broadway
Between Duane
and Reade Streets
(212) 227-6233

tend to be quite pricey, you can find many affordable accessories here. The store basically carries up-and-coming European designers. Its style is for the working

Its style can be described as for the working sophisticate, but with a little edge, and is perfect for an upcoming college interview.

Shack INC

On the next street is a shop called Shack INC, a very unique store that sells everything a girl could want for the prom. While the store itself looks like a rundown warehouse, the clothes are radiant in their urban, bohemian style. What makes Shack INC special is that every item of clothing is handmade by a tailor on the second floor of the store. Its most extravagant dress, a dusty blue silk gown with flower embroidery, costs \$855, while a less expensive dress, a powder pink silk gown with black lace trim, costs \$385. You can also find a gorgeously unconventional sheath dress made out of floral poplin bedsheets (\$420).

For those girls who don't want to wear a dress to the prom, there are beautiful crocheted skirts (\$210) that come in colors such as tomato red and cream. You can also indulge in a luxurious pair of silk striped pajamas (\$95), or Shack INC's signature peasant skirt made out of dusty plum raw silk (\$180). Finally, keep warm during the winter in one of the shop's intricately hand-crocheted wool hats (\$95).

Shack INC
137 West Broadway
Between Duane
and Thomas Streets
(212) 267-8004



A Uno is a luxury boutique established 12 years ago in SoHo. Its TriBeCa branch has been open for two years.

Ashik Siddique / The Spectator

STELLA

For those looking for holiday gifts, or just looking to spice up their bedroom, this is the shop for you. Carrying everything for bedrooms, bathrooms, and beyond, STELLA is a cute Australian store that carries beautiful linens, soaps, and pillows. The soaps especially stand out in their unusual scents such as avocado (\$9) and honeysuckle (\$15). STELLA also sells many wonderful bath salts. Most popular are its

mimosa bath salts (\$12) and its ginger bath salts (\$8). STELLA's green tea hand cream (\$11) is a bestseller, as well as their green tea soap (\$9). You can also find interesting candles in the shape of whole corncobs (\$23) that come in a variety of funky colors.

However, STELLA's specialty is in its annual line of "Christmas Krinkles," assorted accessories and knick-knacks with a different Yuletide theme

each year. This year's theme is dogs, and also includes a marvelous scented oil aroma jar in the shape of an elf (\$32). Whatever the occasion, STELLA is a wonderful place to shop for your home.

STELLA
138 West Broadway
Between Duane
and Thomas Streets
(212) 233-9610

Times 3

For the best gifts in Manhattan, visit Times 3, a shop that carries an eclectic assortment of gifts for both men and women at affordable prices. Among these are toothpastes in unusual flavors such as orange anise or cardamom cinnamon (\$7), pocket umbrellas in bright colors (\$27), and an array of unique cards, magnets, and coasters.

One of the most interesting items is a turquoise necklace with a silver pendant in the shape of a hand (\$34). Times 3 is also especially proud of its Christmas tree ornaments, which range from \$12 to \$44. In addition, the store carries leather jewelry boxes (\$38) that rival those from Coach, leather wallets (\$38), and a suede poker set (\$25),

complete with an organizer to keep score. For your dads, you

For your dads, you can find unique silk ties with patterns such as martini olives, the lunar cycle, and excerpts from the Wall Street Journal.

can find unique silk ties (\$35) with patterns such as martini olives, the lunar cycle, and

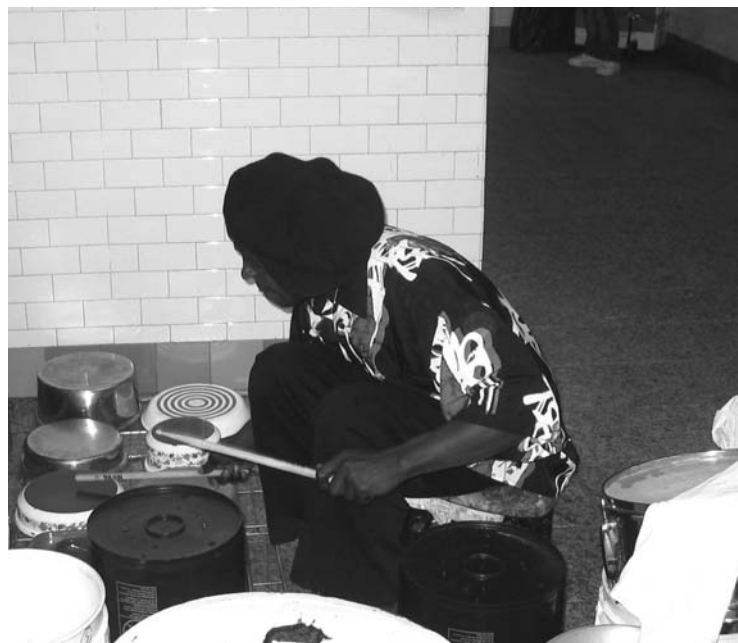
excerpts from the *Wall Street Journal*. For your moms, you can find an adorable pink *I Love Lucy* tea set (\$29.95).

Times 3 also carries mugs, a New York Yankees bottle opener (\$10) that plays an authentic game call when it touches a bottle cap, and pencil-shaped birthday candles (\$6). For a quick remedy, you can find pocket spells for luck, success, health, and even one to mend a broken heart. Finally, you can buy a jeweled, handheld mirror (\$20) for the perfect mix of modern-day vanity and Snow White romance.

Times 3
104 Reade Street
Between West Broadway
and Church Street
(212) 587-3836

Arts & Entertainment

Jahstix:
A Sweet Island Breeze on Your Commute



Jahstix at his usual haunt in the 42nd Street subway station.

By MAX POLLACK

When I enter the subway at 42nd Street, I’m usually greeted by the sometimes unpleasant smells of the station, the bustling of strangers, and the screeching of the 1/9 against the tracks. But, once in a while, something new, something fresh, happens to my fellow commuters and me, and we carry this nugget of an epiphany around with us for the rest of the day. Such a sensation can actually be expressed in one word: Jahstix.

When this subway musician performed “Twinklin’ Tree” for his subway platform audience, the authentic reggae upstrokes to his guitar, coupled with his sweet melodic voice, was like an island breeze that wrapped around me and cradled me into musical nirvana. It had me nodding my head, tapping my feet, and feeling one of those little

shivers racing up my spine.

Jahstix started his musical career in the subway, and though he now plays shows at other venues (i.e., clubs), he still returns to his roots in the subway.

In an interview with *The Spectator*, he talks about what inspires and motivates him to make music. He reveals that there is “something very infectious about the subway.” It is an outlet for his musical creativity. It is the perfect testing area; as he puts it, “People can come and listen if they want, or just ignore it.” Although his sound can be overwhelmed by one incoming train after the next, Jahstix finds a way to connect with his listener. He loves the fact that he can reach people and “put them in a different reality” even for just a few minutes.

His music oozes with the influence of those artists that

inspire him. His voice, look, and some of his style are very reminiscent of a young Bob Marley; his feel for the guitar and the variety of its sounds almost scream Jimi Hendrix; and the overall tone and optimism that the listener takes from his work is comparable to those of Stevie Wonder. All these aspects mesh together with Jah’s creativity and talent to create a musical persona that sounds familiar, yet at the same time is innovative and unique.

Jahstix’s musical fire is fueled by life. He embraces it and is inspired by “the beauty of life, and the balance of what can be and what is.” On his track “Island” from his album *Skratch*, Jahstix takes his audience to a dream world for us to prance around and relish what “can be.” He wants his audience to see life as beautiful—the way he views it. His music is heartfelt. One does not even need to talk to Jahstix to realize this; instead, just listen to the spirit and emotions of his songs.

Though *Skratch* was not a commercial hit, he is releasing a second album in January 2005, which will be recorded in a more professional studio than his last one. (The last album was recorded by himself in a tiny studio) And while this new CD will be slightly more commercial, he’s not selling out, as he said, “I’m gonna do my own thing.”

Jahstix is on the eve of becoming a star act. He has the talent, the sound, the passion, and the intangible ability to connect with the listener, which elevates certain musicians above the rest. All that Jahstix needs is for some more people to stop fumbling for their iPods while waiting for the train, and to just listen and let his music carry them to where it wants to go.

STC Calendar

Tuesday, 11/30

Student director/producer inter views for Winter Dama “Raisin in the Sun” in room 640 af ter 10th.

Friday, 12/3

Improv! in the libr ary at 4:00 P.M.

Admission is \$ 1.

Friday, 12/10 PM and Saturday, 12/11

Performance of Fall Musical, “Once Upon a Mattress”

Monday, 12/13 and Tuesday, 12/14

“Raisin in the Sun” Auditions

Thursday, 12/16 and Friday, 12/17

Performance of “The Last of the Red Hot Lovers” in the teacher’ s cafeteria.

Tickets for “The Last of the Red Hot Lovers” and “Once Upon a Mattress” can now be reserved at www.stuytix.com.

Sweet Treats on Nearby Streets

By NAT YOUNG and JONAH MILLER

In such a large city it is surprising to find so many of New York’s top bakeries in a one mile radius. Fortunately for Stuyvesant students, these eateries are easily accessible for an afterschool excursion. The West Village is home to Balthazar, Sullivan Street Bakery, Once Upon a Tart and The Magnolia Bakery. While they differ significantly, all of these bakeries deliver delicious pastries, breads ,and desserts.

Balthazar is an upscale, but dark and cramped, French patisserie, specializing in beautifully crafted and expertly prepared tarts. In addition, the breads made at this tiny storefront are among the very best in the city. Sullivan Street Bakery is open and airy, though seating is limited to outdoor benches, and is Italian, as can be seen by its Italian breads and unusual pizza. Just blocks north on Sullivan Street, Once Upon a Tart offers a wide array of tarts, desserts, and breakfast pastries, and the most comfortable setting. Northwest of the others lies The Magnolia Bakery, specializing in sweet cakes that drew huge crowds during our visit.

Luckily for you, we put on our trendiest clothes and ventured to the West Village to sample all of the delectable delights,

putting your appetites before our health.

Bread

Jonah Miller: Of the four eateries, two bake up some of the finest loaves in the city: Sullivan Street and Balthazar. My pick is the less ostentatious Sullivan Street. Its breads have crisp crusts that reveal airy interiors, my personal favorite being the classic pane pugliese (\$3.25), named after the region of its origin. The filone loaf (\$6) with its thick and sticky crust is more appropriate for serious breadhounds. The ciabatta bread is ideal for sandwiches, while the raisin walnut rolls are perfect for breakfast. If that isn’t enough to convince you, Sullivan Street is more economical than Balthazar, where a regular loaf can cost up to \$8.50 and a large loaf can cost up to \$20.

Nat Young: I have to give credit where credit is due, and there is no denying that Sullivan Street’s bread is top notch. However, Balthazar’s trumps its counterparts’. The potato onion loaf (\$4.50) is the single best bread I have ever had in my life and is especially versatile because it’s great in the morning toasted with butter or served piping hot at the dinner table. The sourdough pain de seigle (\$4.50) is a dense and savory bread, perfect for sopping up leftover sauces. Although the loaves are relatively pricey, I would gladly pay

double for the best breads one can buy.

Tarts

Nat: I again have to side with the French, as Balthazar delivers unbelievable tarts, such as the chocolate-bourbon pecan (\$6) and caramelized banana varieties. These are not only aesthetically stunning, but are flavorful and perfectly baked. Again, these are not cheap, but, as a lonely bachelor, the simple pleasure that these tarts bring to my life makes it oh-so-worth-it.

Jonah: Go back to France you fruit tart! Why pay through the nose (*nez* to you) when just blocks away Once Upon a Tart meets all tart needs? It offers at least half a dozen tarts in four sizes, allowing customers to spend between five and twenty-plus dollars. The standout is the pear and chocolate tart (\$5); the chocolate is unusually light, but maintains an intense chocolate flavor.

Breakfast Pastries

Jonah: Although Once Upon a Tart has a more diverse selection, the French cannot be topped when it comes to breakfast pastries. The croissants (\$2), scones (\$2-\$2.50), and sticky buns (\$2.50) at Balthazar are sweet and light, making them the perfect way to start the day (or finish it).

Nat: While it deeply pains me to distance myself from Balthazar, I have no problem disagreeing

with my oversized counterpart. I found Once Upon a Tart’s muffins and scones to be superior to those of Balthazar’s. The chocolate-orange muffin (\$2.50) is terrific, especially toasted at home. The cheddar-dill scone (\$2.50) is also exemplary and is satisfying as a breakfast or lunch food.

Our Faves

Nat: The best original dessert I sampled during our bakery excursion was The Magnolia Bakery’s magic cookie bar (\$2.50), consisting of shredded coconut, chocolate chips, walnuts, and a graham cracker crust. It is deliciously rich and sweet, without being overwhelming. This dessert is by no means for the faint of heart (or appetite).

Jonah: My pick sails away from our sweet theme and docks squarely at Sullivan Street Bakery, where some of the most unusual and tasty pizzas can be found for under \$2.50. I tend to pass up the plain (cheese but no sauce) and tomato options in favor of the mushroom, zucchini, and potato slices. The tastiest is the minimalist potato, which has rosemary and olive oil drizzled over thin potato slices on the standard thin crust (no cheese). Each bite bursts with unanticipated flavor, often prompting the purchase of another slice.

Even though we have limited our

list to just four categories, these bakeries offer many more options, such as cakes, cupcakes, brownies, cookies, and biscotti. The Magnolia Bakery in particular specializes in beautiful homemade cakes (upwards of \$18), such as chocolate buttermilk, hummingbird, and coconut layer. The best cookie we sampled was a chocolate-chip walnut version (\$1.25) at Balthazar, which is filling enough to feed a large family (or Nat). The truth is that while some items are especially good at a particular bakery, these shops are easily accessible and offer a wide variety of quality baked goods. With that said, we urge you to raise some dough and try them all.

Balthazar
80 Spring St. (Corner of Crosby)
(212) 965-1785

Once Upon a Tart
135 Sullivan St.
(Between Prince and Houston)
(212) 387-8869
www.ouonceuponatart.com

Sullivan Street Bakery
73 Sullivan St.
(Between Broome and Spring)
(212) 334-9435
sullivanstreetbakery.com

The Magnolia Bakery
401 Bleecker St. (Off 11 Ave.)
(212) 462-2572

Arts & Entertainment

Artist Spotlight: Avery Singer Singer by Name, Artist by Reputation

By ALEX MENGLIDE

Amid all the future Einsteins at Stuyvesant is a community of talented artists. Among them is senior Avery Singer, whose talent is quite multifaceted: She pursues drawing, photography, and experimental filmmaking.

“I think everyone is born artistic. As a child, visual expression is a form of working out your thoughts and experiences. Some people give it up, some people don’t.” Singer is someone who managed to hold on. As she was growing up, her passion for art took a back seat to a desire to do well in school and the acquisition of other responsibilities. At age 12, though, Singer took a class at Parsons School of Design where her artistic side reemerged. She uncovered old sketchbooks and started new ones, developing her talent and challenging herself with new media.

Singer was hesitant about attending a math- and science-oriented high school. “I don’t regret it, though,” she said. “The quality of the people at Stuy is special. Everyone is so intelligent, diverse and talented.” Though Singer—as an artist—considers herself to be a minority at Stuy, she does not seem to mind. “A lot of people haven’t been exposed to art culture and they’re really open to it. I like the intelligent

response.”

While she is encouraged by Stuyvesant students, Singer thinks the school’s art department could be enhanced. “The department lacks classes and teachers,” she said, “and on top of that, you can’t always get into the classes you want.” Nonetheless, she was able to take Computer Graphics Design at Stuy.

“I think everyone is born artistic. As a child, visual expression is a form of working out your thoughts and experiences. Some people give it up, some people don’t.”
—Avery Singer, senior

She has been able to contribute to Stuy’s artistic community. She has done art for Stuyvesant Theater Community productions, co-painted a mural in *The Spectator’s* office, and has helped touch up the “Alice on the Wall” mural on Chambers Street. She also does art and photography work for *The Indicator* and has been hired to take photographs for Stuyvesant events, particularly for Centennial celebrations. When she can, Avery takes art classes and is currently involved in an alternative printing processes course at the School of

Visual Arts.

Lately, Singer has been devoting a lot of time to film-making, approaching it as an art, as opposed to a means of creating documentaries or narrative stories. Her films are usually three or four minutes long. “It’s so challenging because you have to fill those entire four minutes with something interesting and new.” She discusses and shows her films at Four Walls and Ocularis, two film groups based in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

In her junior year, Avery entered her first film, *Rebecca Dancing*—which features current Stuy senior Rebecca English—into the nationwide Scholastic Art and Writing Competition and won the top prize for film in the New York City region. The film was shown at the Brooklyn Museum. Singer is planning to submit other films, *White Eyeliner* and *Nupur*, to Ocularis in December.

“She’s eccentric, that’s for sure,” said English. “Her parents are artists and they have definitely been an influence on her, but she has established a unique style.”

Singer’s “unique style” draws mostly on feminist and identity-related themes. She describes herself as a “self-portrait kind of artist,” and focuses on capturing and portraying her own identity in her art.

Between school, family, and responsibilities, Singer finds it difficult to pursue her



Nadja Spiegelman / The Spectator

artistic interests: “It’s more than just having time. It’s having the energy to make art...to translate your inspiration into images. Grades come easier to me than making really good art.” She hopes to attend Cooper Union, an art-science institution, where her schoolwork and her talents can intersect. “Cooper Union: free and incredible and in the coolest part of Manhattan,” she said, “and they don’t confine you to a major.”

After college, Avery would like to attain a Masters in the Fine Arts, and become either a filmmaker or a photographer.

As someone who is not only talented, but also smart, genuine, and determined,

Singer is a source of inspiration to all aspiring artists at Stuyvesant. To anyone wishing to pursue art, she offers the following words: “Find time, but do other things too. Don’t spend all your time making art. Explore different media, don’t stick with just one. In college, choose the right program with the right people at the right place. Take advantage of free classes in New York City. Keep working at it and you will improve. Keep trying and it’ll come out. Keep looking.”

To see Singer’s work, visit:
<http://postmodernputrid.deviantart.com/>

Infernal Affairs: A Battle of Brains and Bullets

By DAISY DUAN

Recent Hong Kong films have been criticized by the entertainment community as lacking depth, originality, and convincing performances. However, the much-anticipated, star-powered *Infernal Affairs* defies this generalization. When it hit Hong Kong box offices in 2002, it became one of the biggest-grossing films of all time and inspired both a prequel and a sequel. It was later released in the United States by Miramax, featuring English subtitles.

The film begins with a drug lord named Sam (Eric Tsang) giving a welcome speech to his newly trained recruits who are going to help him infiltrate the police force. One of these recruits is Ming (Andy Lau Tak-Wah), who befriends Yan (Tony Leung Chiu-Wai) during cadet training. Yan goes undercover to feed the police information about Sam’s gang, and Ming becomes a respected cop while spying for Sam. During a police chase, Sam’s gang and the police force realize that there is a mole within their respective groups. The story intensifies as each side attempts to discover the identity of the traitor.

The all-star cast includes the most prominent Chinese actors. Lau has dominated the entertainment industry for more

than 20 years, is hailed as the “Heavenly Sky King” of modern pop culture by critics and fans alike, and has twice won the Hong Kong Film Award for Best Actor. Unfortunately, *Infernal Affairs* does not allow enough character development for the complexities of Ming’s personality to emerge, making it seem as

Unfortunately, *Infernal Affairs* does not allow enough character development for the complexities of Ming’s personalities to emerge.

if the character has no motive.

Leung portrays Yan with appropriate sincerity and hidden sympathy as a gang member who has the skills to be a cop. On the other hand, the love interests are out of place in the testosterone-dominated movie because not enough time is spent on developing the relationships. The women seem to be stock characters from the *Police Crime Movie Handbook*.

Nevertheless, part of the

film’s strength lies in its supporting roles. The venerated and father-figure of police force, chief superintendent Wong (Anthony Wong Chan-Sang), and Yan’s loyal gang sidekick Keung (Chapman To Man-chat) strike a chord with the audience; their compassion is in stark contrast to the ambition and violence of most of the other characters. Similarly, the cinematographers shrewdly and effectively represent the contrast between the dark underworld of Sam’s gang and the brightness of the rest of Hong Kong.

Infernal Affairs won seven Hong Kong Film Awards, including Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Actor (Leung), and received nine other nominations. Despite the character development flaws, the movie is worthy of its recognition—the ambitious but well-executed double mole plot causes the movie to focus on the psychological and moral aspects, as opposed to the action sequences, creating an intelligent and thrilling film.

One can only hope these qualities are translated to the American remake, for which Warner Brothers bought rights. The upcoming film will be produced by Brad Pitt, directed by Martin Scorsese, and headlined by Leonardo DiCaprio and Matt Damon.

Diwali Festival Sheds “Light” on Indian Culture

continued from page 8

an amazing festival with people from many different cultures, so everyone has a great time. I’m very excited this year because there are people from non-Asian cultures participating, which makes it that much more special. [The Festival] is a place where we can forget that we’re from different religions.”

A r o r a thought it was encouraging to see so many non-Asians involved: “It’s good to see Americans participating too, girls wearing saris and everything.” For example, sophomore Ellen Lehman, a member of the SU Events Committee, helped set up.

Freshman ICC member Violet Wanta participated because she has been exposed to and interested in Indian culture. “My dad is an architect and he’s traveled a few times to India. We have so many pictures, we have clothing, we have statues of [the god] Ganesh. I am really fascinated by the cul-

ture,” said Wanta.

Senior ICC president Sagar Shah said that the club wanted to have a Diwali Festival last year, but that it lacked the proper organization. That was definitely not a problem this year. The fashion show ran smoothly, and the food and Henna lines were efficient.

According to English teacher Philip Mott, the event was well-organized, well-attended, and had fabulous food and clothing.

In addition, the club’s advertising, which included a large, colorful banner at the bridge entrance and posters around the building, was effective.

People filled the available seats and overflowed onto the floor to watch the fashion show. This came as a relief and a welcome surprise to Shah, who was worried that people wouldn’t come: “I’m grateful that many people showed up. They’re the ones that made it a successful event.”

White and colored Christmas lights illuminated the otherwise dim dining hall while Punjabi and Hindi music streamed from stereos ad Indian films plays on television screens.

Cartoons

GLASS HALF EMPTY by Daniel Markowitz



STUY CASINO BY KAREN FUNG

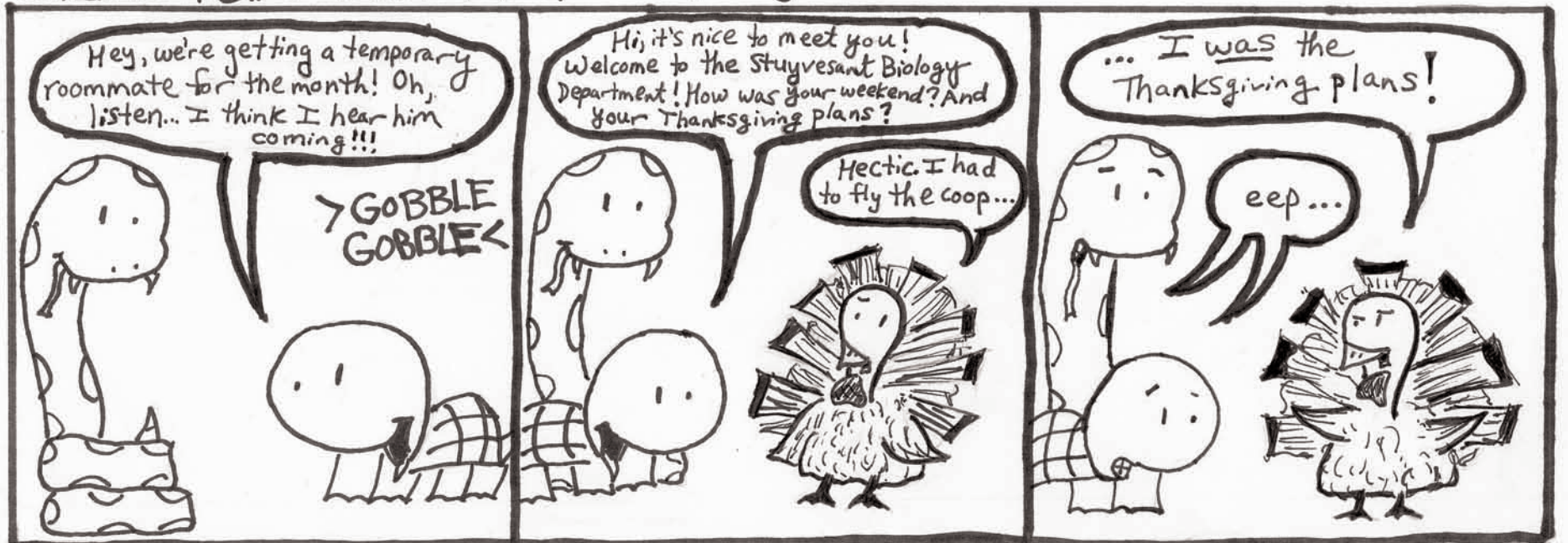


SHS CRIBS

BY JANE SUSSMAN, NICOLE SINGER, AND NAOMI GORDON-LOEBL



Class Pet : Turkey Day by Brigid Black



Vixens Ride Hopes to Championship Match

continued from page 16

time-out. However, the time stoppage didn't stop the Vixens, who went on to win the first game, 25-7. They were helped enormously by the setting ability of Sitaraman and the spiking prowess of juniors Mimi Russler and Rayna Ramirez. In addition, senior Odella Jno Charles provided multiple key blocks.

In the middle of the game, Russler and Sitaraman seemed to be making sure that the team didn't lose focus despite its dominance. Coach Fisher emphasized that the team must treat the new game as if the score was 0-0.

As the second game began, it seemed as if Francis Lewis had gained a new sense of confidence. The teams traded points until the score was 5-5. Then, Lewis started a short run, which put them ahead by three. From there, the teams traded points until it got to be 20-15 in favor of Lewis. Here, the Vixens went on a tear, winning the next 7 points to jump out of a 22-20 lead.

Francis Lewis tied the score up, but, on a few hard spikes by Russler, the Vixens prevailed, 25-22, and beat the defending champs, 2 games to none. Sitaraman said that "we played our best volleyball of the season against Francis Lewis."

Despite a very impressive win, the Vixens still needed to beat the Lady Nights of John F. Kennedy High School to win the city title. The Lehman College gym was packed to the brim with about 400 fans. Stuy supporters sat in the middle, while the mass

of JFK fans sat on the right side of the stands. Though JFK may have had more fans present, there was still an enormous amount of support for the Vixens. The game started late, much to the despair of Coach Fisher: "We've been practicing downstairs. We're pumped up. We just want to play," he said at the time. At about 6:30, and hour after the scheduled start, the Aviation High School Drill

while on Hsuâ€™s serve, committed a rotation infraction that cost them the ball. However, they got it back with the score tied, 7-7. The teams traded off points until a Kennedy net foul

out didn't seem to change anything, as the Vixens dropped the next three points to 21-15, where they caught a break on a Kennedy double hit. The Vixens then won the next four of five

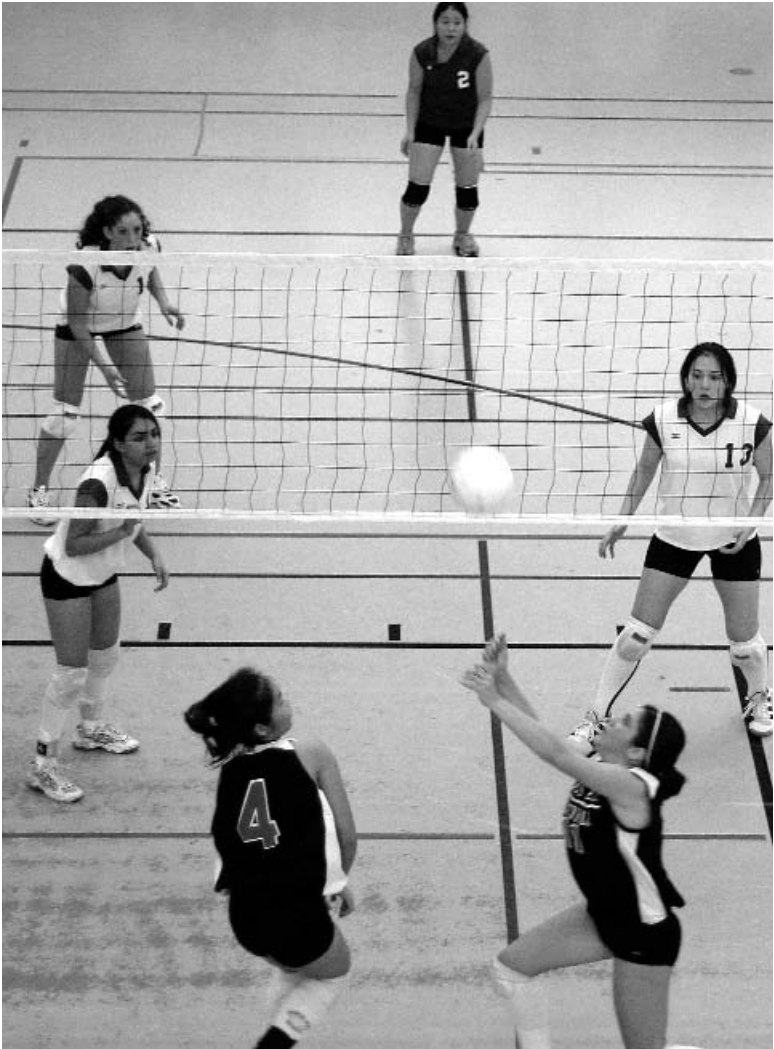
win the game, 25-20. However, despite an opening loss, Stuy still had high hopes for the second game. They played JFK close, despite losing. There was a definite chance that the Vixens could rebound and win the next two games.

As the second game began, JFK opened up a lead, but Stuy overtook them of three straight points. The teams traded points until the score was 8-8. Then, JFK won 3 straight points until Stuy took a time-out at 11-8 in favor of Lewis. The game was starting to look similar to the semifinal game, which started off with a tradeoff of points until the opponent went on a small run. The Vixens eventually got the score close, and was only down by one at 12-11.

However, from there, things started to fall apart. JFK went on a tear, winning the next 12 of 16 points to set up a match point with the score 24-15. Stuy tried to fight back, but couldn't overcome the huge deficit, and lost, 25-17. The Lady Knights were the city champions.

Despite this loss, no shame should be brought to the Vixens 2004 season. As Sitaraman said, "We're really happy with the season. Getting to the finals was the goal. Winning it would have been crazy. But there is no way that anyone can devalue this season. They played superbly, and, no matter what, impressed me, and the rest of their fan base. The level they played at was so high, it blew me away. They played the best volleyball I have ever seen, girls or boys. Though they may not be city champions, they never failed to excite."

Overall, Sitaraman described it as "a happy season. In the end, we weren't crying because we lost the match. We were crying because [the season] was over."



Jeremy Wooster / The Spectator

After an 18 point victory in the first match, the Vixens struggled for points in a much closer second match, but, capitalizing on the errors of Francis Lewis, won with a score of 25-22.

gave Stuy the ball with the score at 11-11. After the teams traded one big spike for another, Stuy took a time-out with the score 18-15, JFK. However, the time-

points in a rally similar to the one that they put together in the Francis Lewis game. However, JFK got the ball back with the score 23-20, and they went on to

Sports Scoreboard

End Of Season

Boys' Bowling
Co-Ed Fencing
Football
JV Football
Boys' Soccer
Girls' Swimming
Girls' Volleyball
Girls' JV Volleyball
Boys' Track

14-0
7-1 City Champions
3-5
2-6
5-8
6-2
10-0
6-0
Varsity, JV,
Freshman and Sophomore
City Champions

Developmental

Girls' Bowling team: 8-2

Sports

The Phoenix Take Flight... Or at Least Flap Their Wings

By JESSE ROSENTHAL

Stuyvesant celebrated the recent record-setting Boys' Cross Country City Championship, but coach and physical education teacher Phil Fisher had more on his mind. As the girls' varsity volleyball season draws to a close, Fisher begins to worry about the upcoming girls' basketball season; he coaches both teams. After a hectic last season, the Stuyvesant Phoenix's 2004 campaign is shrouded in doubt.

In 2003 the squad finished an even .500 (8 wins 8 losses), but after a tumultuous season. Starting center Ula Kudelski missed the first half of the season due to stress fractures in her left leg, returning to average nearly a double double (23.4 ppg, 9.3 rpg). Stuyvesant had to win three of their final four games to make it to the playoffs, and they defeated Hunter College High School 57-38 in the final game of the season, securing a playoff berth. But the strong play in the final leg of the season did not help the Phoenix in the playoffs as they fell in the first round 66-37 to Benjamin Cardozo High School in Queens.

Scant days before the girls took the court against Cardozo, the team struggled with internal turmoil: then-juniors Natasa Siveski and Kudelski and then-senior Maya Ayoub were suspended from the team by Fisher. "I missed a practice but my mother called Mr. Fisher because that's his policy," said Kudelski. "Maya had a doctor's appointment but didn't call, and Natasa didn't get the e-mail from our captain so she was

reinstated."

The team's pounding was due in part to Kudelski's absence. Kudelski, by far the team's leading scorer, dropped 102 points in the final three wins of the season, an average of 34 a game. Fisher declined to comment on this disciplinary action, saying, "It's in the past."

The past may be the past, but the future does not appear to be a shining beacon of hope. This season the squad will only

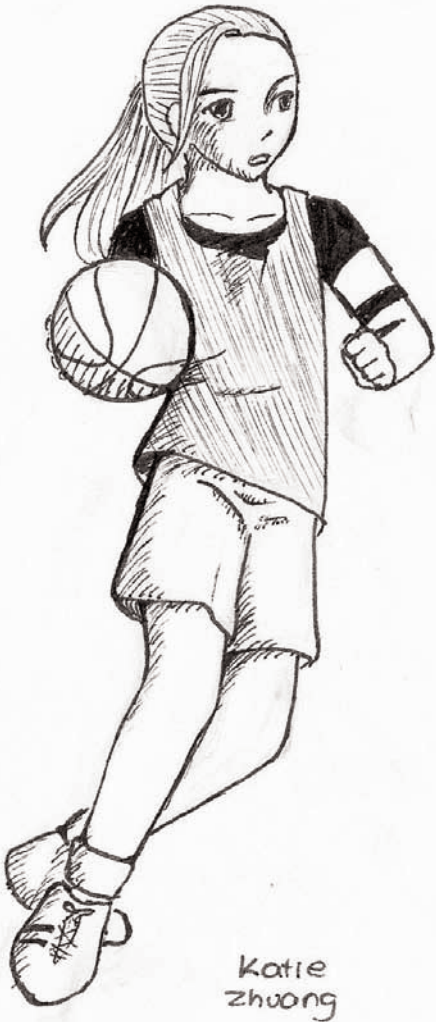
have two returning starters, Kudelski and senior forward Lindsey Newman. Two other starters graduated last year and starting sophomore phenom Tarhata Guamelon (currently a junior) moved to Los Angeles with her family.

Entering tryouts, the team looked sorely depleted and lacked even the existence of a point guard. Fisher remains cautiously optimistic about the position due to the emergence of sophomore Lisha Li, a transfer student from Kentucky.

Still, much of the season depends on the play of Kudelski, regarded by Fisher as one of the best ball players in the division. The six-footer underwent surgery on three ligaments in her ankle in March of this year and had to endure seven months of grueling physical therapy.

The ladies do not receive help from the PSAL this year, due to their schedule and the reshuffling of the division. Playing in the Manhattan A division, the girls will start their season Thursday, December 9 against Manhattan Center, a perennial powerhouse. Their first three games are all against excellent teams.

Fisher plans to take sabbatical next semester. He has coached girls' varsity basketball for 12 years and will leave the hardwood court at the end of the season. Although he would like to go out with a bang and perhaps follow in the footsteps of the boys' foot racers, he harbors no illusions: "We're still in Manhattan A and right now we're just looking to survive."



Stuy Bowling Misses in Playoffs

By MONICA DESAI
with additional reporting by
WYNDAM MAKOWSKY

The pressure mounted as Stuy's boys' bowling team, the Peglegs, went into their first round of playoffs. They had placed as the 16th seed in the league and were facing off against the 17th seed, Forest Hills High School.

Seniors and co-captains Nathan Richards and Roger Quiles, with seniors George Zisiadis and Andrew Cho, worked together to make up the A team, which won the first game by 16 pins. The B team was led by senior and co-captain Benjamin Creed. They were less fortunate, losing the second game by a slight difference. Still, Coach Larry Barth described the match as, "Incredibly close. There was a point where we were up by one pin in the A game, but down by one in the B game. It was an excellent match-up, and was played the way sports should be."

The A team had to play again as the C team for a third game because of the split wins. Richards remarked, "Everyone on the team improved their averages, and Cho bowled incredibly." Cho bowled at a new level with a career high of 244, including 7 strikes.

Yet despite Cho's best efforts, the team was not able to pull through the last game and lost by 50 pins, losing the match 2-1. Richards said, "We had the potential to go further, the pins

just didn't go our way."

Barth said, "The team gave it their best effort, there were no real losers in that game."

This is all true as Stuy's bowling team went 14-0 during the 2004 regular season, 48-2 over the past 4 years. The entire team is not only dedicated, but has talent and eagerness as well. And they also credit Barth, as Richards described him as a great coach.

The team recovered quickly from Forest Hills, and select players went on to the Individual City Playoffs the following day. It was a historical moment for Stuy, as Richards described it. Cho placed first, making him the best bowler in the city. Zisiadis placed second and Richards third, reinstating the incredibility of this year's bowling team, as Stuy swept the event. They will continue on to the Individual City Championships in Brooklyn.

It is with such enthusiasm and skill that Stuy will look to enter next season as well. Barth says, "We keep a few younger players on the team, whose ability and skill will increase over their high school career."

With them and the returning veterans, graduating co-captain Richards said, "The team should win all of their games next year." He predicts Cho will form the backbone of the team, while Zisiadis has great potential as well. All in all, the future looks promising for Stuy's boys' bowling team.

"We had the potential to go further, the pins just didn't go our way."
— Nathan Richards, senior and co-captain

Athlete Spotlight: Kathryn Blakely

The Sweetness of Spares

continued from page 16

having her."

Both Blakely and Creed mentioned that, whenever their matches coincided, Blakely would watch her former teammates knock down pins, and members of the boys' team would come over and cheer on the girls.

While her proverbial family played by her side in Stuy, it was her real family that first introduced her to the art of bowling.

Blakely learned the laws of the lanes from her family at the age of three. By 10, she had stepped up her playing and was participating in mother-daughter leagues.

"It's really laid back and relaxing," said Blakely of the Stuy competitions.

The Stuy bowling team qualified last year for the city team playoffs. Though it was "really exciting" for her, Blakely also found it to be "a lot more stressful" to be playing against new teams and having added pressure on

her.

Meanwhile, in the more competitive individual playoffs last year, for which she also qualified with an average of 127 pins knocked down, she found the atmosphere completely different. "Surprisingly, I was really relaxed," she said. "I didn't have to worry about supporting the rest of the team."

But when she does play with the team, it is her primary goal and motivation to "just to be able to carry my weight on the team."

Blakely's only complaint of Stuy bowling is that the "season's really short." But in that short season Blakely managed to improve her average to 134. For this bowling aficionado, switching from her Converse to bowling shoes is not unwelcome. Neither is the feeling of stepping up to the lane, now with 11 other girls standing beside her.

Said Blakely, "Making spares is the most exciting thing in the world."

Hitmen Fence Their Way to City Title!

By ERIC STEPANSKY

"We were the best, strongest, and deepest team in the league because every starter played a huge part," said senior co-captain Grace Fried of the Stuyvesantvarsity fencing team. It's hard to argue with her when she has a huge trophy and banner to prove it. With a veteran team filled with year-round fencers, the Stuyvesant Hitmen took home the 2004 PSAL Fencing Championship. Defeating Bronx Science High School in their final meet, the team solidified their stature as one of the city's best fencing programs.

Although they can look back on their season with tremendous pride, the fencers will never forget the hardships they went through. A team with no coach in July, things were not looking good for the fencing season.

However, senior co-captains Fried and David Ferguson were not about to let their season slip away. E-mailing every Stuy teacher they could think of, they finally found a coach. "[Social studies teacher] Mr. [Fred] Mirer was our knight in shining armor, coming through for us," says Fried. With a great coach and a serious group of fencers on their side, the team

went on to finish the regular season with a 7-1 record.

Seeded second going into the playoffs, the team received a bye week. Tenth-seeded Frederick Douglass Academy was to be the team's first opponent. "It was only expected that we win by a large margin," said Fried. They defeated Frederick Douglass handily and went on

"We were the best, strongest, and deepest team in the league."
– Grace Fried, senior and co-captain

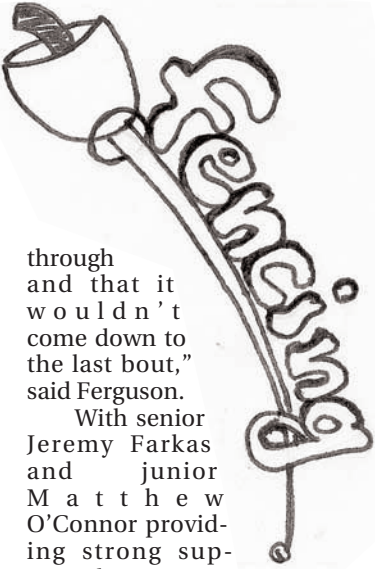
to face Hunter College High School, a fencing program feared throughout the city. "The semifinal match against Hunter was our closest match all season," said Ferguson. With senior Derek Yung fencing an amazing bout to keep the Hitmen alive in the semifinals, the pressure was on for Ferguson to take the team to the finals. With an impressive victory, he did just that.

"In the finals, I was confident that the team would pull

through and that it wouldn't come down to the last bout," said Ferguson.

With senior Jeremy Farkas and junior Matthew O'Connor providing strong support, the team was able to defeat Bronx Science for the first time in three years. Ferguson, who plans on fencing in college, said, "During the last touch, everyone jumped up and ran over and hugged me. It was a scene to remember."

Now that they have won the City Championship, the team would like the Stuyvesant community to take notice. "If the volleyball team takes second, they get a huge *Spec[tator]* article and all sorts of hurrahs. If the Peglegs win more games than they lose, they've had a successful season. We came in second last year and got an article that was basically, 'They lost again,'" said Fried. With a champion team like this in our school, it might indeed be time to appreciate them a bit more.



Rebels Ready to Break Out

continued from page 16

Graduating with Miu were Samson Mesghena and Jacob Smith, who led the team in rebounds and assists, respectively. The loss of these valuable athletes will likely force Connolly to alter his game strategy, and the other members of the team will likewise have to step up their play to a higher level than before.

There is ample reason for hope, though. Sophomore Tammer Farid, a scoring phenom as a freshman last year, is poised to lead the team into 2005 and beyond. In addition, Connolly has added seven upperclassmen to the lineup in response to the gaping hole created by the departure of the seniors.

While a consequence of this is a noticeable shortage of underclassmen that the team could develop for future sea-

sons, these new rookies will bring size and athleticism to the team. Notable newcomers include junior Daniel Wong, whom Connolly described as “a smart player,” and junior Paul Dekhman, who “works hard” and is “very athletic.”

On December 9, the Rebels will play their season-opener against Frederick Douglass Academy, who defeated them in both of their meetings last year and took the division title. The game will be a measure of how well the Rebels can play with the best in their division.

However, don’t be surprised if they upset the division powerhouse; these Rebels have been built to last the season. Connolly summed up the team’s confidence. “There’s a good sense of team unity and everyone has been able to play together, which is something we weren’t able to do last year. We think we could go all the way.”

Boys’ Track Sweeps City Championship

continued from page 16

tory,” said Mendes.

But how did this team in particular have such a strong race? “Team unity,” Mendes said. “We set up our kids by ability and had them run paces together. They feed off each other and the whole group got better.”

This team used this team unity concept in the championship meet. According to Dean, “Our strength is ‘pack running.’” During the varsity race, Silverman ran with Dean, and Greenough ran with Morrell. The tactic paid off as five of their runners (Winkelman, Silverman, Dean, Greenough, and Morrell) all finished in the top 20 places in a field of over 135 runners. No other team came close to stopping Stuyvesant, as they placed almost 40 points higher than the second place finisher, Brooklyn

Technical High School.

The JV team had an even better race than the varsity team. The JV team finished with three runners in the top six places, Peng in first, sophomore Charles Lang in third, and senior Michael Seo in sixth. Other runners for JV placed high in the field of 160 runners, such as sophomore Michael Lam, freshman David Markel, freshman Kevin Strang, junior David Mao, freshman Mark Chiusano, and junior Alexander James, who finished within the top 50 places.

Though they ended up dominating the city championship, Stuyvesant was on shaky ground before the meet. “[Sophomore] Dave [Silverberg] was out because of asthma, [senior] Manny [Bierman] had his knee injured, and I had a hamstring injury,” said Greenough.

Silverberg’s injury was especially worrisome for

Stuyvesant. “He was one of our top four runners earlier, and losing him hurt our depth,” said Dean.

Due to their success at the City Championship, the cross country team brought seven of their runners—the varsity team and Peng—to the New York State Championship on Friday, November 19 and Saturday, November 20. The State Championship has some of the best runners in the country, and Stuyvesant’s goal is to make it into the top 15 and finish as the top New York City team.

With the cross country season over, the runners will now turn to the indoor track season without missing a beat, starting practices on Monday, November 22, two days after States. They will not taper down their intense workouts as well, running the usual seven days and logging on average 40 miles per week.

Penguins Lose to Townsend Harris in Semifinals, But Place Second in Opens

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was favored to win both Opens and City Championships. Twenty-one out of the 26 swimmers on Stuy’s team were eligible to compete, having made the cuts for their events during the regular season. This was the highest representation by any school at Opens, topping even Bronx Science, which had a second-best 19 swimmers competing from their 46-member roster.

On Saturday, the first day of Opens, the top 16 swimmers who would advance and compete in each event were selected, and the heats of Sunday’s finals were thus determined. Many Penguins swam fast enough on Saturday to be placed in the first heat of their respective events, while other Penguins led the second heat for their respective event.

Sunday, the second day of Opens, is when most PSAL, school, and personal records are

broken. Vivian Healey came close to breaking the PSAL record, previously set by Maria Del Mundo of Bayside High School in 1999, in the 200 yard individual medley, but faded in the homestretch with a final time of 2:13.59, which still was good enough for her personal record.

The Penguins faced the Turtles of Townsend Harris on Tuesday, November 23. Both Semifinal meets of the playoffs (Stuyvesant versus Townsend, and Bronx Science versus Midwood) took place simultaneously Tuesday at Stuyvesant. Bronx Science, as expected, moved on to the City Finals in a final score of 53-47 over Midwood. However, the match between Stuy and Townsend was much more close, without a clear-cut choice to prevail and face off against Bronx Science in the Finals.

It seemed that almost every event of the competition was extremely close to the finish. In

the 200 yard medley relay, Stuyvesant’s A relay team was touched out for first by a mere .37 second. Outcomes similar to this one were common throughout the entire meet, as Choy said, “Townsend touched us out when they needed it the most.” By the unofficial “halftime” of the meet, which was marked by the diving competition, Stuyvesant trailed Townsend by a miniscule margin of 22-20.

The rest of the meet was dominated by Townsend as Stuyvesant only placed first in four out of the 12 individual and relay swimming events, but even so, every single Penguin who competed in the 53-49 defeat did a best time.

It was an emotional loss for all the swimmers on the team, especially the seniors. As cliché as it sounds, Amanda Centor, Maggie Kim, Inessa Liskovich, Ekateri Orekhova, Andrea Suozzo, and captains Anne Mohan and Maria Cheung have truly formed the core of this



team. They’ve provided the support and leadership for this team all season long (and for the last four years), and have been pillars of guidance and team spirit for all the underclassmen.

Both the PSAL Finals and the Consolation meet (for third place in the city) will be held Tuesday, November 23 at Lehman College. Stuyvesant is expected to place third over Midwood High School, which will cap off what was undoubtedly a very successful season. The Penguins won every meet this year except those against

Bronx Science, and the recent loss to Townsend Harris.

When asked about her opinion of this season’s performance, Choy said, “For the girls’ seasons, this is the one that I will always remember.” Coach Choy will not be coaching the boys’ team this year, but hopes to come back next year, in time for the 2005-2006 Penguins’ season. If she doesn’t come back, next year’s team—deprived of their beloved coach and this year’s seniors—will have their work cut out for them.

Pirates Ready for Another Climb to the Top

By KRISTEN NG

The Pirates are undoubtedly one of the most celebrated teams at Stuy; they have racked up five consecutive City Championship titles, numerous Opens Championships, and consistently send their top swimmers to the State Championships. And as the weather outside gets colder, members of the boys’ swim team only get hotter as they look forward to burning up the competition for one more year.

The new season brings with it a number of significant changes for the team, in both leadership as well as the roster. Coach Silvana Choy has stepped down due to personal reasons and physical education teacher Peter Bologna has enthusiastically taken over as coach. “I am going to continue a lot of what Coach Choy did with the team

and [use] some of my own coaching experience and styles that will benefit the team,” he said.

The Pirates have made an initially intimidating challenge a little easier for Bologna. “The captains made the transition easy,” he said. “The team has been great with all their support and knowledge.”

As 11 seniors have graduated and left the team, the Pirates are left with a large hole in their roster. They are anything but flustered about this, however, and actually look at it as a chance to rise to the occasion. “We lost a lot of seniors last year, all very good

swimmers. This pushes us to work harder,” said junior Dan Shmueli.

Fellow junior and co-captain Lawrence Chan said, “We

“We still have a great returning team. Last year was fun and we were very successful, and I don’t expect much less this year. We worked hard and were very dedicated, and I know it will be the same this year.”
— Lawrence Chan, junior and co-captain

still have a great returning team. Last year was fun and we were very successful, and I don’t expect much less this year. We worked hard and were very dedi-

cated, and I know it will be the same this year.”

With every new season comes new goals too, and the Pirates don’t set small ones. This year, they hope to win Opens Championships and team finals, as well as send as many people to States as possible. “In the upcoming season the team and I have set out goals we wish to attain, and with these athletes all is attainable,” said Bologna.

It’s not easy to live up to a legacy like that of the Pirates, but assurance and determination are the only things the team knows how to feel. “I am confident about our upcoming sea-

son. We dominated last year, winning Opens, team finals, and setting two new city relay records,” said Chan.

Shmueli also said, “I am very excited about this upcoming season. We have an awesome team, all working very hard to defend our championship.”

Because the girls’ swim team practices after school, the Pirates arrive at Stuyvesant a full two hours before first period every weekday to practice. And as the girls’ swim season comes to a close, the team will start an intense practice regimen to prepare for the tough months ahead. This will include mandatory practice after school five days a week, while still continuing their early morning sessions. But the Pirates don’t mind the intense workouts. Sophomore Edward Sung said, “I hope it never ends.”

S P O R T S

Rebels Ready to Break Out

By ED LU

Last season, the Running Rebels, Stuyvesant's boys' varsity basketball team, stumbled their way to a 3-13 record and finished near the bottom of their division. Plagued by injuries, inexperience, and bad fortune, they nonetheless played with passion and kept games competitive on many occasions, only to have the opposing team pull away to put the game out of reach. With their scars from last year still visible, the Rebels are eager for redemption. Half of the roster has been overhauled as a result of the graduation of six seniors, and the Rebels have the potential to reach much greater heights than they did last year. Head coach Eric Connolly said, "We feel we can compete with any of the other teams out there."

However, this version of the Rebels might have difficulty meshing during the first few weeks of what should be a tumultuous season. The departure of longtime player Jarvis Miu, who led the team in scoring last season, will no doubt hinder the offense greatly.

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Vixens Ride Hopes to Championship Match

By WYNDAM MAKOWSKY

As Charles Dickens once wrote, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." The Vixens, the girls' volleyball team, experienced both in a span of three days. First, on Wednesday, November 17, the Vixens beat defending champions Francis Lewis High School in two straight games to advance to the city finals. However, once there, they dropped to John F. Kennedy High School in two games. However, despite the finals loss, the team still had a spectacular season that will not soon be forgotten.

**"Though they may not be city champions, they never failed to excite."
— Priya Sitaraman, senior**

The Vixens entered the playoffs with a perfect 10-0 record in division play. In the first round, they beat Martin Van Buren High School in two straight games. That was followed up with another 2-0 win over the High School of Humanities. In the quarterfinals, the Vixens finally dropped a game, but still beat New

Utrecht High School, 2 games to 1. Senior co-captain Priya Sitaraman described New Utrecht as "unfairly seeded. They were a good team that no one wanted to play. We played some of our best volleyball of the season against them." Their win over New Utrecht led to a showdown with the Francis Lewis Patriots, a powerhouse team that came into the game with a perfect record.

The game was played at at Lehman College, where the gym was packed with fans. After a motivational speech from Coach Phil Fisher, the Vixens went out to take an early lead. However, the Vixens seemed to start a pattern. When they were serving, they were dominant. However, without the serve, they seemed a bit sloppy. None the less, they still jumped out to a 10-5 early advantage. After, the Vixens completely dominated, and they jumped out to a 19-6 lead before a Francis Lewis

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Jeremy Wooster / The Spectator

Senior Claire Hsu goes up for a spike against Francis Lewis High School's junior Rosamar Marzulli in the second match of their semifinal game.

Athlete Spotlight: Kathryn Blakely

The Sweetness of Spares

By SAMMI KRUG

Starting in the fall season, junior Kathryn Blakely steps up to the hardwood platform and removes her purple satin Converse sneakers a few days each week. She puts aside her bright, eye-catchingly pink messenger bag, stuffed with her binders, papers, and lunch. Then she joins the ranks of the 11 other girls on the Stuyvesant girls' varsity bowling team.

This year Blakely is met with a new challenge beyond that of the lane and gutter, a change to what used to be a familiar routine. This time last year, Blakely wasn't suiting up to stand side by side with the girls on her team. She stood, instead, with nearly a dozen other boys on one of Stuy's few co-ed teams.

Blakely is the only transfer player from the formerly co-ed varsity bowling team to the newly formed, and still developmental, girls' team. The team finished their season with a successful 8-2 record.

"At first I was really nervous," said Blakely. "Maybe



Courtesy of Kathryn Blakely

[the team] expected me to lead." But her jitters were soon assuaged. Everyone was starting out fresh, and everyone was new to the team. "They put so much effort into it, and everyone has a lot of potential."

Still, "I miss the guys," said Blakely while sitting cross-legged on the library floor during her interview. "I was basically one of the guys."

Many teams in Stuy boast how close-knit their members are. Blakely smiled as she talked of her former teammates. "Everyone was like big brothers," she said. "They looked out for me."

"[You could] always count on her," said Stuyvesant boys' varsity bowling co-captain and senior Benjamin Creed. "It was nice

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Penguins Lose to Townsend Harris In Semifinals, But Place Second In Opens

By JAMES KIM

"We got our hands up high, our feet down low, And that's the way we j-i-g-a-l-o!"

On Tuesday, November 16, the girls' swimming and diving team had their postseason drive cut short after a heart-wrenching loss to Townsend Harris High School in the semifinals of the PSAL City Championships. However, their week was not a total disappointment, as they had placed second in the city in the preceding weekend's PSAL Open Championships.

Coming off the momentum of a Round One defeat of McKee/Staten Island Tech in the PSAL playoffs, the Penguins were to face Tottenville High School in the quarterfinals on

Wednesday, November 10. However, in what can only be described as a bizarre move, Tottenville forfeited the match

**"Townsend Harris touched us out when they needed it the most."
— Silvana Choy, coach**

30 minutes before its scheduled start. The motive of this action was unspecified until Opens, when it became known that

Tottenville's bus didn't come to pick them up for the trip to Stuyvesant. The resignation was known to Coach Silvana Choy an hour before the 4:30 P.M. start time of the meet, but the rest of the team was informed approximately 30 minutes later, at 4 P.M. This was due to the possibility of an unsportsmanlike tactic used by some athletic teams, in which a team would unofficially feign a forfeit prior to the meet, so that the "winning team" would then halt their pre-competition warm-ups, thinking that they would not be participating that day.

At Open Championships at Lehman College on November 13 and 14, Stuyvesant certainly did not disappoint. They placed second to Bronx Science, which

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Boys' Track Sweeps City Championship

By GEN KAZAMA
with additional reporting by DAVE EL HELOU

Coach Mark Mendes has been coaching boys' cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track since 1972. Despite spending over 35 years with PSAL track teams, he has never coached a City Championship team. The PSAL, to his knowledge, has never seen a sweep of the Cross Country City Championship. When the 2004-2005 Stuyvesant boys' cross country team stepped into Van

Cortlandt Park on November 13, this all changed.

Seniors and co-captains Nicholas Silverman, Alexander Dean, Nick Greenough, seniors Daniel Blech and Will Winkelman, and juniors Dane Leach and Sergey Morrell ran for the varsity team to claim their championship title by scoring 69 points. (Points are awarded according to the top five runners' finishing place for each team; the team with the lowest score wins.)

The JV team, led by senior Daniel Peng, who won the race,

scored even better than the varsity team by scoring 53 points to capture their title.

Not to be outdone, the freshmen and sophomore teams claimed their titles with scores of 90 and 98, respectively, to complete the city championship sweep.

"In my years coaching, this is the first team that has won the freshman, sophomore, junior varsity, and varsity championships. We're looking into it now, but we think it is PSAL his-

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