



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper

"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"

Volume CI No. 7

December 23, 2010

stuspectator.com

Medical Ethics Symposium Demystifies Cryonics



The speakers at the 25th Annual Medical Ethics Symposium.

By SANDY CHAN

At the 25th annual Medical Ethics Symposium the panel of speakers discussed cryonics, the practice of preserving the bodies of those who have died at extremely low temperatures in the hope that technological advances will allow them to be revived and cured of their current diseases. The symposium, which was called Cryonics: The New Ice Age, was organized by biology teacher Roz Bierig and the students from her two Medical Ethics (SB5PME) classes, and took place in the Murray Kahn Theater

on Thursday, December 9.

"A lot of people went mostly because of their prior experience with cryonics in movies and books, so it was a good choice of topic," junior Cecelia Shao said.

Out of the panel of six speakers, the keynote speaker, Dr. Rosamund Rhodes, a professor of medical education and Director of Bioethics Education at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, lectured on how scientific advances have complicated the definition of death. To be cryogenically preserved, a person must be declared legally dead. However, because

an emergency response team preserves minimal bodily function until the water in the person's cells can be replaced with a cryoprotectant, which serves as an antifreeze, and the cells are held in suspended animation in a tank of liquid nitrogen at a temperature of about -320 degrees Fahrenheit, it is uncertain whether the person should be defined as deceased. She used baseball star Ted Williams, whose head was cryogenically preserved in 2002, to illus-

continued on page 2

Modern Physics Class Receives Grant



Physics teacher Dr. Ali received a 20,000 dollar grant for his Modern Physics class.

The Toshiba America Foundation recently awarded the physics department a grant of 20,000 dollars to purchase specialized equipment for the Modern Physics & Nanotechnology 10-tech course (SP7PMP).

The 10-tech course requires students to complete an advanced hands-on project related to nanotechnology and physics. Assistant Principal Physics Scott Thomas and physics teacher Dr. Jamal Ali applied for the grant to aid students

with these projects. "The students have great ideas, but how are they going to implement these ideas without having the instruments?" Dr. Ali said.

The collaboration between the department and Toshiba America started in 2005, when Thomas took a grant-writing course at Pace University. After looking at grants from various organizations, he discovered Toshiba and wrote a sample proposal for the class, which he then improved and submitted. In

previous years funds went towards investigating plasma physics, conducting research in oceanography, fuel cells, nanotechnology and superconductivity, and purchasing special tools.

"The Toshiba America Foundation is very impressed by our students," Thomas said. "Because of their funding, we have a very comprehensive research program with

continued on page 3

Opinions

A War Worth Fighting

Article on page 9.

More than small change.



New Tenure Guidelines Put in Place

By CHESTER DUBOV
with additional reporting by
EMMA LICHTENSTEIN
and DEVON VARRICHIONE

The New York City Department of Education (DOE) issued new guidelines for granting teachers tenure in the New York City Public School System through a memorandum sent to district principals on Monday, December 13. According to the DOE, the new guidelines seek to make the tenure-granting process more transparent than those previously in place, which granted tenure to educators based solely on the discretion of principals and superintendents, and was often an automatic result of contractual seniority after a three year "probationary" period spent teaching in the district. Teachers who have already been granted tenure are not affected by the change in policy.

The new system requires principals to evaluate teachers using a rubric known as the "Four Point Effectiveness Framework," which measures teacher performance and competence in three areas: Impact on student learning, which is based on student portfolios and standardized test scores; Instructional Practice, based on admin-

continued on page 3

English Regents Moved To June

By KAREN ZHENG

This year, juniors will have an extra semester to prepare for analyzing passages and writing critical lens essays, because the 2011 New York State English Regents will be administered at Stuyvesant in June.

The test, previously a six-hour, two-day exam, has been shortened to a three-hour, one-day exam. In previous years, it was given in January, during finals week. The decision to postpone the test date until June resulted from the unusually early test date offered by the Department of Education: Tuesday, January 11, which is two weeks prior to exams week.

"We were given this date because the Department of Education has to calibrate the marking of the new exam," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "We were then told that because of this, everyone not taking the Regents would get the day off."

"Teachers and perhaps some students would feel frustrated losing a day of classes that late in the semester," Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said. "Beyond that, the work involved for the English department to grade almost nine hundred Regents exams, at a point where most of us will have collected our own final papers for our classes, feels insurmountable."

In a meeting on Tuesday, November 16, with Grossman and

administrator classroom observations as well as teacher work products such as curricula or lesson plans; and Professional Contributions, which are assessed through student, parent and colleague evaluations as well as attendance and punctuality. Every year, principals are to assign teachers a grade of Very Effective, Effective, Developing, or Ineffective in each category. Tenure is only to be granted to teachers rated Effective or Very Effective in every category for two years in a row. There are no restrictions on the number of Effective or Very Effective grades a principal can give in a year.

Tenure recommendations are sent from principals to the Superintendent's Office, which makes the final decision on all candidates submitted. Under the new system, principals must fill out a Tenure Recommendation Form, in which they provide a written rationale for their recommendation, and explain the evidence used in assigning their grades according to the Four Point Effectiveness Rubric, which is also submitted. When writing their recommendations, principals are given access to DOE data regarding teacher

continued on page 3

the Student Leadership Team, Teitel decided to administer the exam in June so that students will not lose an instructional day. Juniors and their parents were emailed with the new testing date on Thursday, November 18.

According to Teitel, approximately 250 juniors will take three Regents in June and 550 will take four.

Grossman acknowledges that having to take an additional exam in June is unfortunate for juniors, but does not see it as a burden. "It's not a Regents that requires any studying. It's really just the time commitment of the three hours," he said. "On top of that, the juniors would have had an extra semester of practice and preparation, which we hope will serve as some kind of compensation."

Juniors had mixed feelings about the change in the test date.

"Moving the Regents to June just adds on to the pile of other exams we have to take at that time," junior Winnie Zhou said. "I'd rather get the English Regents over with as soon as possible."

Junior Aleksandra Burshteyn disagreed. "By January, we haven't really had enough time to prepare for the English Regents. Most people don't know what's on it, so it's good that we have more time to review," she said.

Features

Building the Pillars of ARISTA

The state of ARISTA.

News

Senior Finds That Quantity, Not Quality, Matters on SAT Essay



Senior Milo Beckman surveyed students and found that those who wrote longer SAT essays received higher scores.

**By SHARON CHO
and ISAREE
THATCHAICHAWALIT**

According to a study that senior Milo Beckman conducted for his Advanced Placement (AP) Statistics (MS1X) final project, writing a longer essay on the SAT Reasoning Test will result in a higher essay score, regardless of the content.

The SAT Reasoning Test is a standardized college admission test owned, published and developed by the College Board. According to the College Board Web site, "each essay is independently scored by two readers on a scale from 1 to 6. These readers' scores are combined to produce the 2-12 scale. [...] Essays not written on the essay assignment will receive a score of zero."

Beckman was inspired to conduct the study after taking the SAT for the second time and receiving a lower score on what he believed to be a better essay. "My longer essay got the higher score even though I thought it was the worse essay," Beckman said. "I did some more research and found an old study that said that there might be some correlation between the two."

The 2005 study was done by Dr. Les Perelman, a director of undergraduate writing at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who used all 39 graded sample SAT essays made public by the College Board and found a strong correlation between word count and score on the samples. "I have never found a quantifiable predictor in 25 years of grading that was anywhere near as strong as this one," he said, according to a New York Times article titled, "SAT Essay Test Rewards Length and Ignores Errors" published on May 4, 2005.

"I was wondering if the same sort of correlation would hold on essays actually written by students," Beckman said.

To test his hypothesis, Beckman collected data from approximately 70 students at the end of the Spring 2010 term via a Facebook group named "Milo's Statistics Final Project." In the group's description, Beckman wrote, "I'm testing to see if there's a correlation between SAT essay scores and length of SAT essays," and asked students to log into their College Board account and record the number of lines their essays on past SATs had occupied and the corresponding essay scores.

As several students had taken the SAT more than once, he received information on approximately 115 distinct essays. All students were Stuyvesant students, as per the requirements of the project.

After graphing the data and doing various statistical tests, Beckman found that the longer essays

all received higher scores in every sample he studied.

"The p value was ten to the negative 18, which is incredibly small. That's the chance that this correlation happened randomly and doesn't actually reflect a real correlation," Beckman said. "One in 20 is small enough in statistics to conclude that something's true, but one in ten to the 18th is insane."

Beckman did not expect his results to support his hypothesis so strongly. "I expected there to be some correlation. I didn't expect it to be nearly as strong as it was," Beckman said. "But I mean I already sort of knew that the SAT is kind of a rigged test that tests more how well you take the SAT than anything else, so I don't know."

ABC Good Morning America interviewed Beckman about his study. Other news sources such as the New York Daily News also reported on the project.

According to ABC Good Morning America, the College Board released a statement refuting Beckman's findings, explaining that longer essays sometimes get higher scores because "it's very common for longer writing samples to more effectively convey nuanced, persuasive arguments," the College Board said.

"That's a lurking variable," Beckman said in response, meaning that it is a variable that has an important effect but is not included in the statistical study. "I'm sure that accounts for some of it, but I don't think that you can say that that accounts for everything for such a strong result. [...] You can't say that when there's almost no short essays that receive a higher score [than longer ones]."

Beckman's ultimate advice to future SAT takers is not to write longer essays "if it takes away from the quality of your essay, but you should certainly, if possible, write more than you normally would have," he said.

While some students attested to the validity of Beckman's conclusion, others remained skeptical.

"Judging by my experience, it's pretty accurate," said senior Brendan Huang, who has taken the SAT three times. "I discovered once I started filling up the page, regardless of whether my facts were right or not, I got pretty much a full score out of [the essay]."

Junior Wendy Chu acknowledged that longer essays may garner higher scores, but did not think the two variables were directly related. "I don't think an examiner would look at an essay and say, 'Oh, it's longer, so it'll have a better score,'" she said. "[A longer essay] usually indicates that the person is developing his or her thoughts more deeply."

continued from page 1

trate her point.

However, some students were disappointed by her presentation. "She was the keynote speaker, but all she really did was present some information she got off of Wikipedia," senior and Medical Ethics student Tracy Wong said. "I felt that she wasn't aware that we were a collection of the student body that was interested in cryogenics and that we attended the symposium to learn beyond what Wiki offered us."

Bierig disagreed. "She gave a fantastic presentation," she said. "At least she was honest enough to say where she got her sources. Not everybody walks around and, at lunch, talks about cryonics."

Susequent speakers also cited the lack of information in peer review journals as an explanation for their choice of informal information sources.

Dr. Anne Felicia Ambrose, an assistant professor at the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, noted that cold therapy has been used for centuries. For example, the Greek physician Hippocrates (c. 460-370 B.C.E) condoned the use of low temperatures to control inflammation. She also criticized the process by which we choose who should be given the opportunity to be resuscitated.

"Who should we preserve? Should we preserve the best and the brightest? At present, only the people who can afford it are preserved," Dr. Ambrose said. According to a handout provided to audience members, to be cryogenically preserved, a person must pay a 400 dollar annual membership fee to a cryonic facility, and then up to 50,000 dollars to preserve their head, or 150,000 dollars to preserve their entire body.

Dr. Stuart Apfel, an associate professor of neurology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine,

Medical Ethics Symposium Demystifies Cryonics

questioned the feasibility of cryopreservation. While he stated that, in the past, scientists have managed to revive minuscule pieces of cryogenically preserved rat and monkey brain tissue, they have not managed to revive an entire mammalian brain, let alone an entire person.

Janlori Goldman, a researcher at the Department of Socio-medical Sciences at Columbia University, discussed the legal complications associated with cryogenics. She noted that while organizations like the Cryonics Institute refer to themselves as hospitals, the United States government treats them as cemeteries. She also described the concern of some ethicists that cryonics could lead to overpopulation, and quoted bioethicist Leon Kass, who wrote that the desire to prolong youthfulness is "an expression of a childish and narcissistic wish incompatible with a devotion to posterity."

Reverend Janis Pauliks of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd questioned whether the soul could return to the body if it was revived after being cryogenically preserved and whether the human passion for life, ability to love and desire to create could all be reawakened along with the body. He described the human desire to escape death, which is often viewed as a final destination, as fundamentally problematic.

"The human experience is not only marked by the birth and the death. There's something before and something after," he said, contending that Jesus Christ had proved the existence of life after death as far back as the first century.

Several students were perturbed by his presence at the symposium. "Cryonics is about facts," junior Edwina Tam said. "If you are a person and you are just talking to friends, then it's okay to put your own religion in it as a kind of opinion, but if you are talking to

a whole bunch of people that are trying to learn something, then it's kind of wrong to put your own opinions in it."

Jeanette Rodriguez, a clinical coordinator at the Cornell Center for Reproductive Medicine and Infertility, described how cryopreservation is used to preserve sperm, eggs and embryos that are then used in in-vitro fertilization.

In between each speech, Medical Ethics students performed comical skits. In one scene, a cross-dressed Marilyn Monroe emerged from her frozen state and sang to the president. In another, a girl tried to convince her three blind mice to be cryogenically preserved so they could have a "squeak-uel."

"Most of our brain activity went to coming up with witty skits and cool slogans. Anjan gave us the best ones: 'Ice to meet you,' and the ending skit when Ms. Bierig comes out and asks them how they were all doing and they reply with, 'Just chillin,'" Wong said.

At the end of the speeches and skits, there was a question and answer session. Rhodes, who had the final word, disparaged cryonics. "Since there is no proof that [cryonics] is efficacious, medicine should not offer this as a form of hope," she said. "This is illegal fiction. It's illegal to call it medical research."

The event closed with a raffle composed of gifts from neighboring stores and home-baked goods.

Overall, Bierig felt that the symposium successfully informed students about an unfamiliar topic. "[Cryonics] is something new, it's something different, and for all we know, in five years, it may be something that is not medically ethically acceptable," Bierig said. "At this point, it's out there, it's something we have to contend with."

Thoms Speaks On "With Their Eyes"

**By POOJA DESAI
and CHESTER DUBOV**

English teacher Annie Thoms gave a talk and informal question-and-answer session at the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT) in midtown Manhattan on Thursday, December 9 regarding the play 'With Their Eyes: The View from a High School at Ground Zero.'

'With Their Eyes' is an oratory and interview based monologue documenting the reactions of the Stuyvesant student body and faculty to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The monologue was constructed from interviews conducted with 23 members of the Stuyvesant community—a technique known as "documentary theatre" pioneered by Playwright and Actress Anna Deavere Smith in works such as *Fires in the Mirror* and *Twilight: Los Angeles*. Faculty members, students, building staff and administrators were all interviewed, including Social Studies teacher Matthew Polazzo and Assistant Principal Social Studies Jennifer Suri. All interviews were conducted, compiled and edited by members of the Stuyvesant Theater Community which performed the play for the 2001 winter drama, garnering attention from media outlets.

"Periodically I get emails from people in high school who are playing me [in school productions of the play], which is kind of surreal," Polazzo said.

The play was published by an imprint of Harper Collins Books in 2002. The former Stuyvesant stu-

dents and STC members credited with creating the work are: Taresh Batra ('05), Anna Belc ('03), Marcel Briones ('02), Catherine Choy ('04), Tim Drinan ('04), Ilena George ('02), Shanleigh Jalea ('03), Lindsay Long-Waldor ('04), Liz O'Callahan ('02), Chantelle Smith ('02), Michael Vogel ('02), Carlos Williams ('05) and Chris Yee ('04). Thoms served as both STC faculty advisor and editor of the project.

"Parts of the monologues talked about stuff we [students and teachers] had discussed in our classes to help make sense of what happened on that day," Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said.

Thoms spoke to a New York Literature class, who read 'With Their Eyes' as part of the semester's curriculum. The course is taught by Dr. Michael Schiavi.

"This was the first time I taught the play," Dr. Schiavi said. "I positioned it as a wrap-up to themes that we discussed in class throughout the term. We had also covered Anna Deavere Smith's *Fires in the Mirror* the week before, so I asked Ms. Thoms to discuss how she had used Smith's techniques in her construction of [With Their Eyes]."

In her talk, Thoms fielded questions from the class and discussed the experiences of Stuyvesant High School students and faculty on September 11. She also described the interviewing process she and the student authors went through in order to compile material for the play.

"They [the students at the talk] talked about some of their experiences on September 11," Thoms



English teacher Annie Thoms spoke at the New York Institute of Technology.

said. "It was very informal, my dad came as well, which was nice."

Thoms's father, Dr. John Thoms worked at NYIT for 30 years, where he was a colleague of Dr. Schiavi.

Dr. Schiavi plans to teach the play again in future semesters.

"With Their Eyes was the perfect ending to my New York Literature course," Dr. Schiavi said. "I had wanted to finish the semester with a discussion of 9/11, and what [is a] more personal vision of it than the words of the Stuyvesant community?"

"Ms. Thoms did exactly what I hoped she would," Dr. Schiavi said. "She brought the play to life for my students."

Stuyvesant Student Becomes Finalist in NYS Supreme Court Essay Competition



Karen Zheng / The Spectator

Junior Wendy Chu was a finalist in the "Independence of the Judiciary and Free Press" essay contest.

By SOULIN HAQUE

"Albert Einstein said that there were only two infinite things: stupidity and taxes. The wisdom of Einstein's words cannot be denied, but even he could not have predicted the infinite amount of possibilities technologies have generated," junior Wendy Chu wrote in an essay for

the "Independence of the Judiciary and Free Press" essay contest.

Chu was recognized as one of nine finalists for her 500-word piece in response to the prompt about the ways in which the Supreme Court could interpret the Fourth Amendment, which protects people from unreasonable searches and seizures, in regards

to new technology.

The competition, which was open to all New York State high school students, has been hosted for the past eight years by The Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York and the New York Law Journal, in conjunction with the New York City Department of Education.

Justice Resource Center Executive Director Debra Lesser, who helped preside over the award ceremony, said the competition gave students "the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of law, to demonstrate their understanding of the constitution and also [...] interact with role models in the legal profession."

Though Hunter College High School senior Rebecca Tsytkin was chosen as the Grand Prize winner at the award ceremony on Wednesday, December 10 at the headquarters of the New York City Bar Association, Chu was presented with a certificate of recognition and a 100 dollar savings bond. She also won a one-week summer internship with a New York State Supreme Court judge.

"It was a very competitive contest," Assistant Principal Social Studies Jennifer Suri said. "New York City judges, who were also judges of the paper, said that they hadn't seen a pool of such strong essays."

Chu's essay focused on how Web sites use terms of service, which users are required to agree to before using a Web site, to justify violating users' privacy. "Facebook and Google promise that any disclosure of information will be lawful and caution that there should be little expectation of privacy," she wrote in her essay.

She added that many users are unaware that they are releasing their information. "One study shows that only 0.11 percent of users click on a site's

privacy policy when registering. Even the few users who do click don't comprehensively read the terms, since they usually leave the page within twenty-nine seconds," she wrote in her essay. "The government should pass a law that requires people to click on the terms of services and read it before actually agreeing to it."

Chu first learned about this competition through her Advanced Placement United States History teacher, Dr. Reuben Stern, who informed all his classes about it at the beginning of the school year. However, she was the only Stuyvesant student to submit an essay to the contest this year.

According to Chu, Dr. Stern—who declined to comment for this article—reviewed court cases about the Fourth Amendment with her.

One example she cited in her essay was the case of Ontario v. Quon, in which an Ontario Police Department lieutenant, Steven Duke, searched Sergeant Jeff Quon's text messages on a government pager and found sexual messages unrelated to work. She explained that the Supreme Court ruled that the search did not violate the Fourth Amendment because it was conducted for work-related purposes.

Even so, Chu highlighted the fact that there was dispute over the verdict. "The Court of Appeals argued that there were less intrusive ways to find the information Duke found from Quon's pager. However, in that case, most searches would be declared violations of the Fourth Amendment, impeding the execution of the law," she wrote in her essay.

In addition to Dr. Stern, the staff of the Writing Center helped Chu revise her work. "One of the major problems of my writing was that I made it 1,000 words. The Writing Center helped me cut it down. I also locked myself in my room for

three hours and told myself, if I didn't finish it, I would not come out of the room," Chu said.

Though she did not win first

"Albert Einstein said that there were only two infinite things: stupidity and taxes. The wisdom of Einstein's words cannot be denied, but even he could not have predicted the infinite amount of possibilities technologies have generated."

—Wendy Chu, junior

place in the competition, she still enjoyed writing the essay because it gave her the opportunity to learn about the twists and turns of the justice system. "I didn't really expect to be a finalist. I entered the contest to learn more about court cases," she said.

New Tenure Guidelines Put in Place

continued from page 1

attendance and previous performance evaluations.

"With these changes, instead of me being passive, I have to be proactive or else teachers will not get tenure," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "The chancellor feels that for the most part, once you get tenure you have a job for life, and now he wants us [administrators] to say that teachers deserve to be granted it."

The new tenure guidelines allow principals to hire new teachers to fill vacancies arising from denying probationary teachers tenure.

"Now when I have a job opening, I can post it as an open hire and anyone who is interested can apply," Teitel said. "We can pick them by any process we determine and I can hire anyone from the least seniority to the most."

English teacher Maya Zabar is in her third probationary year, and has not yet received tenure.

"It's in my best interests that obtaining tenure as simple as possible, but I don't know if it's the best system for education. There are a lot of teachers who get tenure a little too easily and they don't deserve it," she said. "I don't know if [the new policy provides] a better basis [for granting tenure], but it's a good idea. Having more people evaluate new teachers is a good thing, but how that's going

to be implemented is unclear."

"I don't think the new system will change much," math teacher Gary Rubenstein said. "The new requirements might make lower-performing teachers work harder, but as with most educational changes, people find a way to make it into the old process. [People seeking tenure] have a few more hoops to jump through, but I'm not sure it will make edu-

"My concern would have to do with the potential for misuse."
—Eric Grossman, Assistant Principal English

cation better."

Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman expressed limited support for the new guidelines.

"The idea that tenure not simply be pragmatic is a good thing. Anything that prompts principals to make more considered and deliberate choices is better," he

said. "My concern would have to do with potential for misuse. For a thoughtful and careful principal, these changes are wonderful. For a principal who is less meticulous and perhaps more limited in vision, I can imagine a situation in which looking at a particular set of numbers might cause them to deny tenure to someone who is really a good teacher."

"I also worry about the use of test scores, which is one of the indicators [of teacher performance] because the scores are not good instruments and it has the potential to turn classes into test-prep factories," Grossman said.

Students interviewed expressed support for the policy changes.

"The new requirement is good because teachers will take their jobs more seriously and pay greater attention to their work, rather than being lazy and slacking off just because they have the guarantee of tenure," junior Emma Hoffman said.

"Just because a teacher has been there for a while doesn't necessarily mean that person should keep his or her position. It sometimes becomes a matter of seniority and bad teaching versus a better system of learning," freshman Eugene Lee said. "Now they will all have to actually teach so that their students will do better on exams and they can keep their jobs."

Modern Physics Class Receives Grant

continued from page 1

lots of printers, microscopes and technology."

This year, the money will be used to buy a charged-coupled de-

"The students have great ideas, but how are they going to implement these ideas without having the instruments?"
—Dr. Jamal Ali, physics teacher

vice camera (CCD), which is a special camera designed to aid users in photonics imaging. "It has high resolution which is very important," Ali said. "You could even do imaging in the near infrared. That means things that you cannot see,

the camera can see, and it covers a small portion of the ultraviolet region as well."

Thomas believes that the cameras will enable students to delve deeper into their research projects for the class. "It gives us pretty powerful tools to do imaging. There are lots of things you can use it for to detect all sorts of elements," Thomas said. "With the CCD, you can look at cells to see imperfections, detect bacteria and viruses, find impurities in air, metals and water, or measure blood pressure. Students in Modern Physics will have to measure many things depending on their projects, and each group can use this technology to do that."

However, the grant alone is not enough money to buy all of the necessary components of the camera. "I need a little bit more money to buy more equipment for this class," Dr. Ali said. "The camera costs at least 19,000 dollars and you have to buy a lens which costs about 3,000 dollars." The physics department may ask for support from the Parent or Alumni Association to fund this.

Dr. Ali expects to have the camera delivered by the end of January 2011, so it will be available for students taking his course next semester. "I want the students to start their projects early because it really requires at least three or four months to finish the projects," he said.

Features

Taking to the Sky(ite)



John Mennell / The Spectator

(left to right) Gosha Kolyshev and Peter Wysinski created a business, Skyite, together.

By REBECCA GAEBLER

Peek into the luggage of any Stuyvesant debater, Model UNer or athlete on the road for a competition, and you'll find photocopies and laptops crammed into already over packed bags. They, along with many other professionals who must travel, are faced with the

predicament of getting work done while away from home.

Two Stuyvesant students, seniors Gosha Kolyshev and Peter Wysinski, have found a solution. Their computing startup, called Skyite, is an online service that provides users with a desktop hosted on the Internet. This makes your computer documents, pdfs and pictures

available online and ready for you to access. The concept behind Skyite was that everything from mail to office suites was becoming an application that is run in a web browser rather than on a user's computer. With the increasing amount of bandwidth available, the desktop is the next thing that will move to 'the cloud.'

Users would have access to a powerful system that would keep all their files and settings regardless of where they logged in from. "There isn't anything like this on the web at this point," Wysinski said. "If we had to compare it to something it would probably be a mix between a VPN solution, OnLive and Chrome OS. Our service is the first to offer a virtual desktop which is accessible from any computer with a web browser."

The program is currently capped at 250 registered users, 60 of which are active and sign in at least once every two days. In the short term, the two entrepreneurs are working with advertisers and experimenting with various compression

techniques to offer a better experience for their users. Furthermore, they are upgrading

"While there is a big difference between a 17 year old and a 35 year old, the 17 year old still sometimes has interesting ideas."

—Peter Wysinski,
senior

their security in order to offer service to corporate users who

have shown an interest in their service. They seem confident, however, that their idea can continue to grow and expand.

"The thing behind entrepreneurship is passion for what you are doing and never giving up. If you keep an open mind to suggestions and stick to your idea, it will work out in the end," Wysinski and Kolyshev said in an email interview.

Wysinski has had prior experience with start-ups, having worked on a Session Initiated Protocol trunk call routing service. Kolyshev has not had previous experience with start-ups, but he programs for Stuyvesant's robotics team and Stuypedia along with seniors Christopher Natoli and Robert Juchnicki.

"It is difficult because you're often a lot younger than the people with whom you're working," Wysinski said. "But as they learn more about you they begin to see that while there is a big difference between a 17 year old and a 35 year old, the 17 year old still sometimes has interesting ideas."

Musicality in a Sea of Academics



Mark Zhang / The Spectator

Stuy performers (left to right) Adam Lieber, Savannah Jeffreys, and Eugenie Thompson.

By EMRE TETIK
and NINA WADE

Your next iTunes purchase could be created by one of your classmates. From singer-songwriters to jazz pianists, Stuyvesant has plenty of musical talent to offer. These musicians and performers are sometimes overlooked due to Stuyvesant's emphasis on academics. Still, they manage to cope with the heavy workload and, at the same time, develop their creative interests.

Keeping it Jazzy

At Stuyvesant, singers can be found in great abundance. One needs to look no further than sophomore Eugenie Thompson. A self-taught singer and songwriter, she displayed her vocal dexterity in this year's Stuyvesant Theater Community production of "The Who's Tommy," playing the role of Sally Simpson.

Thompson has a jazzy singing style, claiming influence from jazz legend Ella Fitzgerald, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones

and Bob Dylan. Fitzgerald was also a source of inspiration for Thompson, who began listening to her and developing her jazz-influenced style in middle school. She started singing at age six, and wrote her first song around that time.

Besides attending a music school for piano since the age of four, Thompson hasn't been involved in formal singing lessons and she doesn't practice in the conventional sense. "For me, it's not really practicing," she said. "It's more like if I have a song stuck in my head, I learn it and mess around with it and have fun."

Though encouraged by her parents to pursue music, Thompson doesn't feel pressured to follow that path. "It's not my priority to become a famous singer, [but] I would love to be able to continue to make music on a regular basis," she said. "Whether it's with a band, for a living, or just a hobby, I feel like it's an important and significant thing to be able to contribute."

For the time being, Thompson is glad to attend Stuyvesant,

even with all its academic pressure. She said, "[Though] it's a math and science school, it's surprising how many people you meet with talent, whether it's musically or artistically."

From YouTube to Belgium: A Star in the Making

Freshman Savannah Jeffreys has been involved with music her entire life. Growing up taking private piano lessons, she was playing the usual jazz and classical pieces before she lost interest, beginning instead to write her own pop and soul influenced songs. Compared by friends to Taylor Swift, Jeffreys says she's not aiming for that country-pop sound, but is instead influenced by classics like The Beatles and Elton John, or current artists like John Mayer and Kanye West.

As for other aspiring musicians, Jeffreys has one piece of advice: practice. "The more you write," she said, "the more motivated you are to play at shows and get noticed."

With the help of her father, Garland Jeffreys (an established

musician himself), she's been able to play shows at local clubs, including Village Underground and The Bitter End, and even in festivals as far away as Belgium.

Along with live performances, she's already started to self-promote on YouTube. In middle school, she started posting her original pieces as "savannahrae13." Nearly all of her videos have over a thousand views, and she's even gained a fan in Germany, who calls her "truly gifted." Bolstered by these comments, Jeffreys hopes to develop a solo career in the future. Currently, she's writing original songs in the hopes that she'll be able to one day record them.

In spite of her musical aspirations, she chose not to attend an arts school. "I can't give up the education at Stuy for LaGuardia," said Jeffreys, after being accepted into both schools. And although she chose not to join chorus, and her songwriting class interfered with A Capella club meetings this semester, she's optimistic about pursuing her musical interest at school next semester. "I'm definitely going to do SING!" Jeffreys said. "I'm really excited."

Piano and Producing with Homework on the Side

The musical talent at Stuyvesant is not confined to singers. It also includes skillful instrumentalists, like sophomore Adam Lieber. A multi-talented musician, he plays guitar and bass, although his specialty is piano.

While able to play many styles from classical to pop, he focuses on jazz, citing jazz piano master and Stuy Alumnus Thelonious Monk (who dropped out of high school to pursue his passion for music) as a main influence.

In addition to his piano playing, Lieber composes original music. Two of his songs, "Million Dollars" and "What It Takes" are available on iTunes. He has performed his original material on occasion, although he admits not playing gigs as much as he would like.

As for other aspiring musicians, Jeffreys has one piece of advice: practice.

music camp and joined the jazz ensemble there at age eight that he really picked up interest for music. He now plays for the Stuyvesant Jazz Band and tries to get as much playing time at home as possible.

For now, Lieber is putting composing on hold as he is currently working on a project where he records and produces the sounds of other musically talented students. Only a few weeks old, the project is still in development and will feature the music of Jeffreys and other undecided artists.

Lieber advises other musicians to do music-related things every day, be it for an hour or only 15 minutes. "Stuy's workload doesn't coincide with a good practice regimen, and I often find myself lacking needed practice time," he said. "But if you really love music and want to play, there is always a little time to pursue your music."

Features

Building the Pillars of ARISTA



Mollie Forman / The Spectator

A student is tutored during her lunch period.

By MADHURIMA CHOWDHURY and ARIELLE GERBER

With over 200 members, ARISTA, Stuyvesant's chapter of the National Honor Society, is one of Stuyvesant's largest organizations and also one of its most prestigious. ARISTA centers around academic achievement and community service, requiring members to maintain a certain average, tutor fellow students and meet community service requirements to remain in the society. No organization, however, is without its problems; difficulties with accountability for tutoring and community service may be sabotaging ARISTA's effectiveness as a meritocracy and resource for struggling students.

Induction

ARISTA's application process is designed to center around community service, which can lead to confusion and difficulty in selecting members and maintaining fairness. In recent years, the process has been reformed so that applicants are required to have an average of at least 90, write an essay describing their leadership abilities and demonstrate involvement in community service and extracurriculars in order to be accepted. This presents a problem, however, because applicants fill out the applications themselves and descriptions of community service are difficult to compare fairly.

The responsibility of maintaining a legitimate admissions process falls largely on the shoulders of Principal Stanley Teitel, who supervises the review of applications. "It's hard to keep the playing field level," Teitel said. "A student might get rejected because it doesn't look like [the student did] a lot of service."

While evaluating each application, it becomes difficult for Teitel to judge what each volunteering hour equates to. "When they tell me that they worked in a church, I don't know—did they do a lot of work, did they do minimum amount of work? I don't know what I'm giving credit for," Teitel said.

Because of the prestige of the

National Honor Society, many students apply to ARISTA simply to add to their college application.

"There's no doubt that many students join ARISTA just to boast about being a member of the National Honor Society," senior and Vice President of Communications Varun Sharma said. "We can't stop them from lying, but we can make room for applicants who have a genuine interest in being active people in the organization."

"I do believe that some students only join for college applications, but as long as they do their job I see no problem in that," senior and Vice President of ARISTA Linda Chio said.

Cracks in the Pillars

Organizing events, creating a tutoring system and staying in contact with hundreds of members can become overwhelming for anyone, especially for students who also have to deal with their schoolwork. It is therefore no surprise that ARISTA, a student-run organization, runs into hurdles during the school year.

"We inherited a lot of the big problems," ARISTA President Ben Garner said. "We're mostly working on increasing effectiveness and consolidating a lot of the ARISTA programs."

Fortunately, Garner has fellow Executive Council members Chio, Sharma, President of Tutoring Committee Joseph Park, President of Events Committee Jeffrey Castillo and faculty adviser and Assistant Principal Mathematics Maryann Ferrara to help create a stable organization. Even with this power structure, however, issues continue to arise.

"Maintaining accountability is very difficult," Ferrara said, "but the Executive Council [of ARISTA] has some ideas for how to solve this and they're working on it."

Teitel believes that the biggest problem in ARISTA is keeping track of the service credits that each student receives. "You need to keep track of all that and there are a lot of people [to keep track of]," Teitel said.

Another problem facing ARISTA is a "lack of enthusiasm

and recognition by our members and the school community," Chio said.

Junior Reema Panjwani, a member of the Events Committee, agreed. "Many members don't take ARISTA as seriously as they should; in fact, at times [fulfilling ARISTA requirements] becomes a joke among students," Panjwani said. "We could take them out of ARISTA, but that wouldn't be solving the problem of making the student body realize the importance of ARISTA in our school community."

Teitel confirmed that some students join ARISTA with the wrong motive. "I guess part of the dedication is that they can write it in their college applications that they are in ARISTA, but I don't know how many people are willing to do the work that goes with it," Teitel said.

Having an undedicated constituency can cause difficulties for ARISTA's student leaders. "The Executive Council is dedicated. They want to do the right thing," Teitel said. "I just don't know how it can get cooperation from the rest of its members."

While some students may not respect the society, its leaders maintain that there are many students who are devoted to upholding the program's ideals. "Thankfully, a majority of ARISTA members are avid volunteers, for both events and tutoring," Sharma said. "Some have a large sum of credits because they eagerly volunteer for a lot of events and tutor regularly."

ARISTA members believe that a lack of communication between the committees' directors and the organization's members is yet another problem that the society needs to contend with.

"For a large organization, I think it is inevitable that communication may become a problem," junior Mimi Yen said. "Personally, I would really like to see increased member involvement in the well-being of the organization, whether it is through a complaint or a suggestion. A successful Honor Society requires the active participation and concern of its members."

Creating New Pillars

In light of the flaws that have plagued ARISTA in previous years, the Executive Council has decided to make drastic changes. The first of these is a new, more stringent credit system. Under this system, there will be three credit checks done throughout the year. Each member needs to garner at least 21 credits every period; these must include eight tutoring credits and 15 events credits. Members can view how many credits they received for every event they volunteered for through various online spreadsheets.

"Our credits system has been made more stringent so that members actually contribute to Stuy and the greater NYC community," Sharma said. "Last year, countless members barely tutored at all and got away with it because of extremely lax policies. We don't want ARISTA members

who don't do anything and consider the organization to be a joke."

"By setting strict rules for credits and strikes and offering various volunteer opportunities, I think ARISTA is able to achieve its goals," junior and ARISTA member Judy Pu said. "Even though we complain, we still don't want to be kicked out; we at least accomplish the bare minimum required to stay in, and by raising that standard, it ensures that we work harder in order to make that requirement."

If a student doesn't meet the credit requirements, he or she will be dismissed from the program. "Members who don't do anything for ARISTA probably won't notice or care anyways

the new, stricter system.

"When we're racing to get enough credits so that we can remain ARISTA members, it defeats the cause, and so it eventually becomes an endeavor to just hold a position instead of being good citizens," junior Nafisa Chowdhury said.

The Executive Council is also reforming the tutoring system. Last year, tutors went to pre-assigned rooms after tenth period to tutor any tutees present. This was ineffective, however, because usually no tutees showed up.

In an attempt to combat this predicament, the tutoring committee has set up walk-in tutoring during all lunch periods. Tutors, who sign up online to tutor for specific periods, sit on the first floor behind the Murray Kahn Theater and aid any students who show up. ARISTA members are required to participate in one week of walk-in tutoring during every marking period.

"We have completely revamped the tutoring system inside and out. That is the achievement I am most proud of," Garner said.

In the beginning of the year, the new system was deemed a success by Executive Council members. Many tutees attended walk-in tutoring, which may have resulted from the fact that ARISTA heavily advertised the availability of tutors during the lunch periods. "We had a board in front of the bridge entrance for a time [about walk-in tutoring] and announcements on Stuy Web site," Chio said.

However, tutee attendance at walk-in tutoring has decreased as the year has progressed.

"Personally, I would really like to see increased member involvement in the well-being of the organization, whether it is through a complaint or a suggestion. A successful Honor Society requires the active participation and concern of its members."

—Mimi Yen, junior

"It seems as though the Stuy community isn't aware that we are here to help them or that we're willing to do so," Chio said. "If anything, we need more tutees to accommodate our large volume of tutors."

The members of the Executive Council have recognized that the effectiveness of their new tutoring program has diminished, but they also asserted that they are fulfilling their responsibility to the student body as best as they can.

"We're giving notices to teachers to tell students who might be falling behind to come to tutoring sessions. We'll advertise more, also," Sharma said. "The fact of the matter is, if there are really very few students who need tutoring, there's not much we can do about it."

Although ARISTA is still rife with problems, the Executive Council is confident that the new policies they enacted have benefited the society and will contribute to its success in the future.

"Based on the changes we've made this year and the overall success of events and tutoring, I believe that everyone is contributing a good deal," Sharma said.

"A goal of ARISTA is to help our members become more responsible and active students in the school and the community," Chio said. "In the case of many of our members, I would say that this goal is achieved."

27

14

29

Years Mr. Wong has been employed at Stuyvesant

Years Ms. Archie has been employed at Stuyvesant

Years Mr. Teitel has been employed at Stuyvesant

Years Mr. Donin has been employed at Stuyvesant

Thanks to: Assistant Principal of Technology Services Edward Wong, Assistant Principal of Guidance Eleanor Archie, Secretary of the Payrolls Grace Piazza, History Teacher Warren Donin

Editorials

STAFF EDITORIAL

The Responsibilities of Student Journalists

In the digital age, a lack of privacy has come to be expected. Imprudent remarks, embarrassing writings and unflattering photographs, which were once forgotten with time, can be disseminated and immortalized on the World Wide Web. People are increasingly wary of unwanted disclosures, which can harm college prospects, hurt job opportunities, and have other negative effects on one's life. But individuals are not the only ones who have been affected; the inner workings of government have been exposed by the mandarins of media, to the delight of activists and the horror of bureaucrats.

One organization in particular, known as WikiLeaks, has become notorious for publishing the classified intelligence of numerous nation-states online. Its founder, Australian Julian Assange, has taken up the mantle of the globe's hackers, embarking on a mission to wrest information from the hands of the powers-that-be and place it in the public domain. His actions have provoked the anger of many in Washington circles, who may have been connected to his detention in Britain over sexual assault charges lodged against him in Sweden. They have reason to be incensed: WikiLeaks's latest document-dump released about a quarter-million State Department diplomatic cables, revealing the intricacies of international relations.

The government's attempts to suppress such communications, whose disclosures they fear will destroy the art of statecraft, are understandable. However, previous revelations have shed light on the United States' misconduct in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, its attempts to relocate prisoners from Guantánamo Bay and its secret tracking of foreign officials, and have thus furthered the cause of transparency in government, something this newspaper applauds. Thomas Jefferson once said that "whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government." Indeed, by allowing regular Americans to see what their leaders do in their name, WikiLeaks benefits democracy and is an indispensable element of civil society.

A group like WikiLeaks derives its potency not only from its ability to release classified information, but also from the way these revelations are covered—or are not covered—by the mainstream media. In America, The New York Times and The Washington Post were given advance access to the documents and proceeded to publish long exposés based on them. However, the Times redacted intelligence that would "endanger confidential informants or compromise national security," and sought to "balance the value of the material to public understanding against

potential dangers to the national interest," as stated in "A Note to Readers: The Decision to Publish Diplomatic Documents," published on Sunday, November 28. This was a wise decision on the part of the Times and we, as members of a newspaper that operates under certain constraints, endorse and admire their approach.

The Spectator has vowed to publish all the news that concerns students, but the boundaries of our journalistic integrity are often compromised by our position as a student newspaper. While we would like to be viewed as a public forum for expression, we, as both journalists and students, must grapple with our two-fold agenda. In the same way The Times's editors opted to withhold information because of their status as responsible members of the global community and of the United States, we sometimes choose to withhold articles whose content would harm the environment in which we learn.

This is not to say that we are dedicated to preserving Stuyvesant's pristine image as the gold standard in education; after publishing an article about administrators' efforts to combat marijuana use, we exposed our problems to the mainstream media and had to assume responsibility when The New York Post picked up the story and painted school officials as irresponsible for allowing such degeneracy to exist here. However, in recent years, we have chosen not to directly address negative information about individual teachers or administrators because such content could, in theory, not only jeopardize teachers' jobs, but also reduce our efficacy as a newspaper; angry teachers are unlikely to provide information to a publication that has marred their reputation, and it would be a travesty if our articles were reduced to lists of speculative student quotes.

The dichotomy of our responsibilities often leads us to question whether we are fulfilling our duties adequately. Our efforts to operate as a legitimate newspaper are further hindered by the presence of the administration, which has been cooperative in recent years, but still can attempt to censor the information we publish. In the 1969 case *Tinker vs. Des Moines*, in which the parents of students who were suspended for wearing black armbands to protest the Vietnam War filed suit against the school, the Supreme Court ruled that students' right to freedom of expression applies in schools. However, in 1983, in *Hazelwood vs. Kuhlmeier*, the Supreme Court decreed that administrators may edit the content of school newspapers that reflect institutional values. This brings into question the legitimacy of calling The Spectator a public forum, especially because we work on school computers and attend a journalism class with a faculty advisor who is

under the administration's purview. However, the true independence of The Spectator lies in the fact that we are not a mouthpiece for the administration, but for our students.

Indeed, the administration has not always given as much leeway to The Spectator as it does now. In 1998, after The Spectator printed several April Fools' articles that criticized individual teachers and attacked the practice of seniority pay, Principal Jinx Cozzi Perullo shut down the newspaper and mandated that the students draw up a charter in concert with the Columbia School of Journalism in order to ensure that The Spectator would be a quality publication. The charter had to be accepted by the Student Union and the administration before publication resumed.

Since then, however, the administration has given us great amount of freedom, even though they have criticized the content of some of our articles in the aftermath of their publication. We have much more liberty than newspapers in schools like the Bronx High School of Science, whose principal makes unilateral edits to the paper. However, we do work with our appointed faculty advisor, Kerry Garfinkel. According to our charter, he, as the arm of the administration, is allowed to advise us on what is fit to print, but the Editor-in-Chief is licensed to make all final content decisions. While we must applaud our current adviser for taking a relatively hands-off approach, future educators who take his place may look upon censorship more favorably and may attempt to impede our efforts to publish certain articles.

Despite the precarious position that our status as a school paper puts us in, it does not and will not excuse us from fulfilling our duties as journalists. While we, unlike completely autonomous publications like the New York Times, must directly answer to a higher power, our self-censorship is extended only to a necessary degree. We make decisions that will not limit our sources of information, and will not unnecessarily and permanently damage the reputations of students or faculty members, or lead to the restriction of student rights.

We will continue to do our best to meet our responsibility to honestly and independently report news and opinions that are pertinent to the students of Stuyvesant High School. At the same time, while we attempt to be faithful stewards of the trust placed in us, some school officials should be more willing to talk to the Spectator, especially those whose very positions call for open and frequent communication with the student body. Nevertheless, we, with ethics, and not full-on capitulation to the administration in mind, will remain, as we have always been, "The Pulse of the Student Body."

The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Ani Sefaj*

MANAGING EDITOR
Samira Siddique*

NEWS EDITORS
Maya Averbuch
Chester Dubov*
Nicole Zhao

FEATURES EDITORS
Hannah O'Grady
Max Wycisk

OPINIONS EDITORS
Shilpa Agrawal
Christopher Natoli
Varun Sharma

ARTS &
ENTERTAINMENT
EDITORS
Sadie Bergen
Emma Pollack
Hyemin Yi

PLEASANTLY EDITORS
Shanna Chen
Harry Ngai
Vivian Sze*

COPY EDITORS
Samantha Levine
Tong Niu

SPORTS EDITORS
Scott Chiusano*
Eddie Cytryn*

HUMOR EDITORS
Chester Dubov*
Sam Furnival

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITORS
Christina Bogdan
Joann Lee
Harry Poppick

ART DIRECTORS
Nils Axen
Emily Martin

LAYOUT EDITORS
Shanna Chen
Harry Ngai
Vivian Sze*

BUSINESS MANAGERS
Karen Paik
Mark Zhang

WEB EDITORS
Jennifer Kuo
Cameron Sun

FACULTY ADVISOR
Kerry Garfinkel

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

We reserve the right to edit letters
for clarity and length.
© 2010 The Spectator
All rights reserved by the creators.
* Managing Board Members

The Spectator

We are compiling an archive of past issues.

We are looking for issues published before 1995.

Please send any newspapers to:

The Stuyvesant Spectator
345 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10282

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

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

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

FOR THE RECORD

- Chester Dubov was not credited in the article "Joel Klein Resigns, Cathleen Black Appointed as New DOE Chancellor".

Opinions

Nothing Gold Can Stay

By TIFFANY PHAN

Whether it is about grades, coming home late, or the choice to talk on the phone rather than help wash the dishes, we all have arguments with our parents. I seldom

Even after the carols have been sung, the resolutions done away with and the golden moments passed, a little pat-on-the-back for your parents once in a while wouldn't hurt.

come home after 6:30 p.m., but on the days that I do, my parents always scold me for coming home too late because I "won't have enough time to do homework." I usually don't mind being around my parents when I get home, as long as I'm not bombarded with their

constant reminders to this or that. Once faced with such reminders however, I usually sigh and reluctantly do what was asked—not realizing that my reaction is quite offensive and forgetting that my parents merely want what's best for me.

I, along with many of us, should be more caring and understanding toward our parents, especially since the holiday season is coming up. Family should be the predominant focus amidst all the Christmas trees, new year's resolutions and holiday cheer because it's the perfect time to put family values into practice. Being thankful for the funny and happy moments, and understanding towards the argumentative and unpleasant ones show that we respect our elders and realize they deserve gratitude for the sacrifices they make for us.

I usually consider my Stuyvesant workload a burden but my parents are weighed down even more by their constant responsibilities (both at work and at home) of raising an entire family. At this age, I often unknowingly take my parents for granted because I'm so used to being loved and taken care of, that I often consider it a right rather than a privilege. That is why this holiday season, I will, along with many others who have such parents, attempt to maintain harmony in our relationships with our parents by trying to take a walk in their shoes.

The holiday season is an

opportunity for many of us to come together and treat our parents well, because the moments we share with them are golden. Special moments like ice-skating at Rockefeller Center or watching the ball drop on New Year's Eve and even simple moments like watching the snow pile on the sidewalk are instances when we should realize we must give our parents the respect and appreciation they deserve.

We should be more caring and understanding towards our parents, especially since the holiday season is coming up.

The enmity between parents and teenagers will most likely never be completely resolved because no relationship can ever be perfectly harmonious. I don't fully put the blame on



Mark Zhang / The Spectator

myself when I argue with my parents some times, because my parents aren't always in the right. Despite this, I will try my best to spread holiday cheer and strive to be as understanding toward parents as possible and take into account their many responsibilities by reacting benevolently to their requests and being thankful for the favors they do for me. Even after the carols have been sung, the resolutions done away with and the golden moments passed, a little pat-on-the-back for all of our parents once in a while wouldn't hurt.

OP-ARTS



Opinions

What Stuy is (Re)Searching For



Natalie Fang / The Spectator

By EVA FINEBERG

"The average person will swallow eight spiders per year," according to the question and answer Web site www.qa02.com. This dubious assertion has quickly become one of the most widely believed "facts" from the Internet. Easy access to the Web makes it difficult to discern myths from accurate information. That is why handing in my term paper this week was a huge relief. The extensive research it required was incredibly exhausting because facts on the Internet contradicted one another so often that I didn't know what to believe.

Library courses and bibliographic instruction will develop our internet skills on a more academic level.

It is often hard to determine which of the 2.93 billion pages indexed on the Web contain reliable information, and

Research instruction will improve both the quality and the quantity of information for both academic and personal needs.

which are rife with fabrications. Though many students can find a fact on Google and get an answer, few can evaluate its credibility. An October 2006 report in the Chronicle of Higher Education, "Students Fall Short on 'Information Literacy,'" Educational Testing Service's StudyFinds, declared that "college students and high school students preparing to enter college are sorely lacking in the skills needed to retrieve, analyze and communicate information available online."

Of course, no such problem could ever affect us, some of the country's most intelligent and resourceful students, right? While this might be the expectation, teachers at Stuyvesant demand a high level of scholarship, and the disconnect between our intended performance and our actual proficiency in online research hinders the level of

work across all disciplines. Students would benefit greatly if a section of our school's curriculum could be devoted to addressing this issue. A unit of research instruction in the beginning of every English class once each year would improve the quality, quantity and credibility of the information collected by students through the Internet. Stuyvesant, as a reputable school with an emphasis on superb academics, should teach information literacy and Internet research techniques as part of our English curriculum.

Perhaps the reason for this lapse stems from a misunderstanding of students' relationships with technology. Born between 1992 and 1995, current Stuyvesant students fall into the category of "digital natives"—referring to anyone born during the modern age of digital technology. Having used computers from youth, we are supposed to be proficient in every aspect of Internet usage. However, computer literacy and information literacy are very different, and students are definitely lacking in the latter. A section of our English curriculum that emphasizes research and information evaluation skills will enable students not only to form more potent arguments based on fact, but greatly elevate their writing as well.

Information literacy, the ability to responsibly acquire and evaluate content from the Internet, has never been taught in detail at our high school and leaves students at a disadvantage that will only increase as they head off to college. Even though Stuyvesant mostly prepares us for the rigorous expectations of college, it falls short in this regard. The lack of such instruction furthers students' ignorance and can lead to inadvertent plagiarism and a reliance on poor quality sources. While colleges will

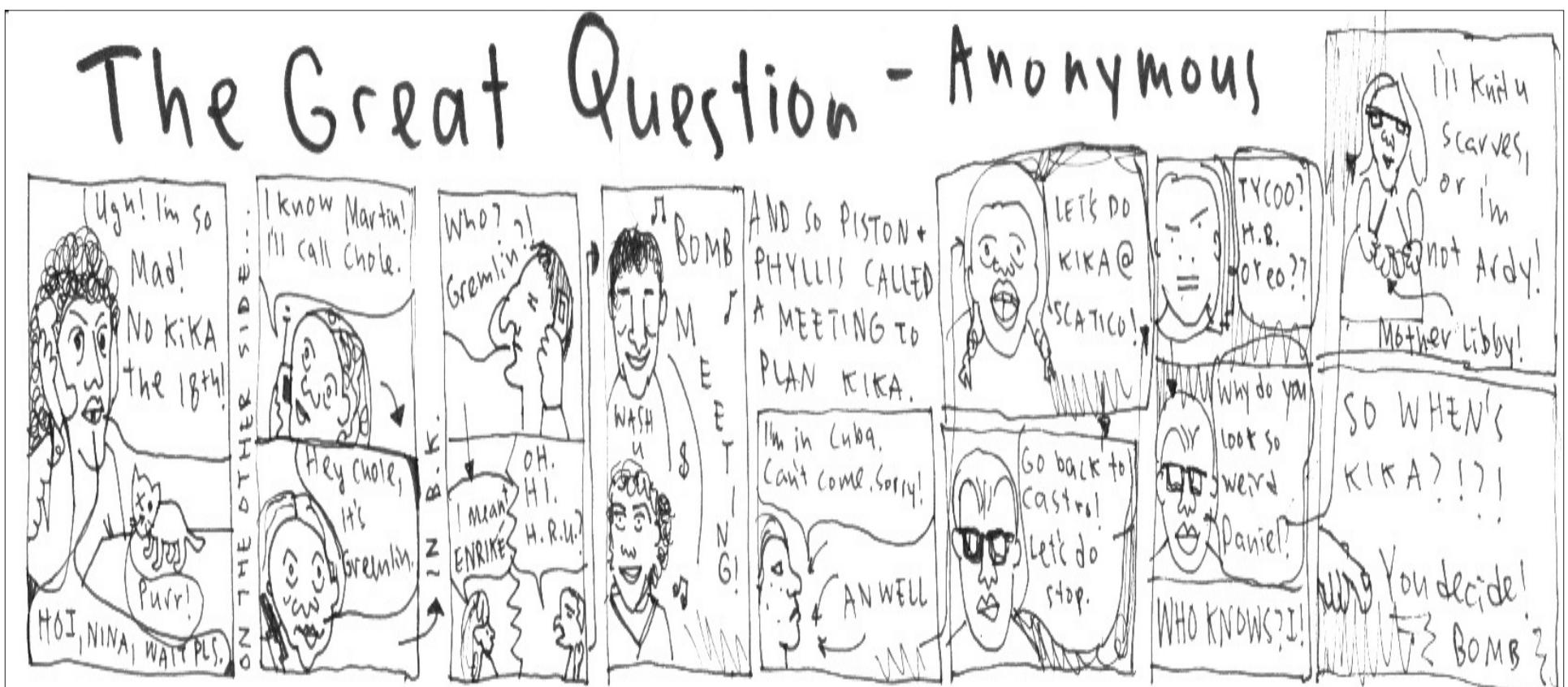
assume we are ready to do serious scholarly research, we graduate with skills far from their standards. Bibliographic instruction will not only better prepare students for their current assignments, but will increase competency in areas other than bubble tests by the time they reach college.

Students need to be taught how to responsibly research and process information so they can do so independently

Students need to be taught how to responsibly research and process information so they can do so independently and effectively.

and effectively. Integrating research into the English curriculum would not only improve the overall quality of our fact-finding skills, but also our ability to learn. While for some, research may be an instinctual skill, this is seldom the reality; in order for students to compensate for that, this coursework must be taught. Once this crucial step is taken, maybe students will finally be able to find what they've been researching for.

Cartoon



Opinions

A War Worth Fighting



By DANIEL SOLOMON

The United States is a nation that seeks out and thrives on conflict. Over the past decade, we have prosecuted an interminable struggle in Afghanistan, invaded Iraq under false pretenses and continued an unwinnable and irrational fight against drug use. The war on terror has sapped America's energetic optimism, shaken its self-confidence and exacted a heavy toll in blood and treasure. The war on drugs, ostensibly undertaken to remove narcotics from the streets, has actually ravaged the inner cities, landed millions in prison and destroyed countless families. Amid the orgies of police action and incarceration, one battle has been forgotten, the ceasefire called too

early: the war on poverty.

Today, because of the recession and the fraying social safety net, the ranks of the poor have swelled considerably, rising to 14.3 percent of the population—or over 44 million people—last year, according to the US Census Bureau. Rates for childhood poverty and food insecurity have also surged to record highs. Indeed, even Stuyvesant hasn't escaped the misery; fully 42 percent of students are needy enough to qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Poverty is an intractable problem and it demands a comprehensive solution.

However, these horrible statistics fail to faze politicians, who would rather subsidize the rich than help society's most vulnerable members. Leaders are happy

to sit down to lavish Christmas dinners while children remain destitute and families go hungry on the holidays. Worse than inaction, Washington exacerbates the plight of the downtrodden by demonizing them and legislating laws that perpetuate poverty.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan redirected funds from the home front to the front-lines. The Bush tax cuts redistributed wealth from the less-well-off to the affluent and created the greatest income inequality since the Gilded Age. The nonsensical drug war, in addition to keeping cartels in business and stoking political instability across Latin America, has been targeted disproportionately at poor minority neighborhoods across the US. It's high time to conclude the conflicts abroad, halt welfare for the wealthy, end persecution of potheads and focus on building a more just and fair nation for ourselves.

The progressive titans of America's past can show us the way. In the fight against inequity, we must summon the courage of Theodore Roosevelt, whose Square Deal was the first attempt to control the plutocracy. We must draw resolve from his cousin Franklin's New Deal, which finally put the government on the side of the people, saved the country from the depths of depression and formed the basis of the social safety net. Most importantly, we must be inspired

by Lyndon Johnson, a president who as part of his Great Society agenda proposed and waged an "unconditional war on poverty."

Amid the orgies of police action and incarceration, one battle has been forgotten, the ceasefire called too early: the war on poverty.

precipitous decline in the poverty rate, which fell too a little over 10 percent by 1975. Right now, just like in 1964, when the Great Society was enacted, people are in dire need of good work and good schools, services that the government can and should render.

There is a strange paradox in America: millions of people are out of work and we have a crumbling infrastructure. The answer is to resurrect the public works agencies of the 1930s, like the Civilian Conservation Corps, and put idled laborers back to work reconstructing roads, building bridges, laying rail tracks and repairing schools. As important as blue-collar jobs are, our ultimate goal for the children of the inner cities should be for them to acquire the skills they need to thrive in the post-industrial economy of the 21st century. That means expanding access to early-childhood education, implementing tough standards for students to meet and opening the doors of higher learning to the underprivileged.

From conflicts, nations can wreak catastrophe or reap rewards. Wars on drugs, terror and poverty are almost impossible to win because all of these things are part of the human condition. However, some struggles are worth waging, and America should renew and never call retreat from the battle against poverty.

Keeping Warm—Stuy Kids in Their Hats

by the Photo Department



ADVERTISEMENT

LET YOUR SCORES • OPEN •



THE DOOR TO NEW POSSIBILITIES

SAT | ACT | SAT SUBJECT | AP

PRIVATE
TUTORING

ONLINE
TUTORING

SAT
ELITE

Average Premium Tutoring SAT Increase: 305 points

Company Average Tutoring SAT Increase: 212 points

About Appelrouth Tutoring Services

At ATS, we invest deeply in our relationships with the families we serve. We listen closely to parents to understand the specific needs of their children, and we craft an individualized plan to help them achieve their educational goals. Our best-in-class results, uncompromising focus on instructor quality, innovative materials, and cutting edge use of technology set us apart from the rest.

Better Tutors. Better Results.

www.appletutors.com | info@appletutors.com

PH 917-470-9779

**appelrouth**
TUTORING SERVICES INC.

Arts and Entertainment

iNeed Apps

Convenient Apps

For the New Yorker, the choice is simple. Similar to the relationship between Batman and his utility belt, the Exit Strategy NYC App is essential to the urbanite identity. The app features entire subway maps, lists of all the public transportation stops and maps that even accurately list street names and locations.

The Weather Channel app can often be the difference between being drenched or happily splashing around in rain boots. Offering full, 7-day forecasts, it has all the perks of The Weather Channel, without all the hassles of waiting for the weatherman to take his queue.

DateCheck, an upcoming dating app, has the ability to find information about your date on the spot. It also contains a sleaze detector and the ability to warn you if he lives with his parents and disclose his annual income, effectively distinguishing the duds from the studs.

Entertaining Apps

Fruit Ninja, highly regarded as the fruitiest addiction a gamer can befall, presents the challenge of having to repeatedly chop up catapulted fruits, all while steer-

ing clear of explosives. After hitting an explosive or missing three fruits, the app offers its sincerest condolences, accompanied by a fun fruit fact.

Angry Birds, a test of projection, evaluates the player's ability to estimate angles and forces

own unique attributes.

The iBook app allows the user to download and access the latest best-selling books and classics. The opening page features a beautiful wooden bookshelf, showcasing the user's personal collection of literature. Take that, Kindle.

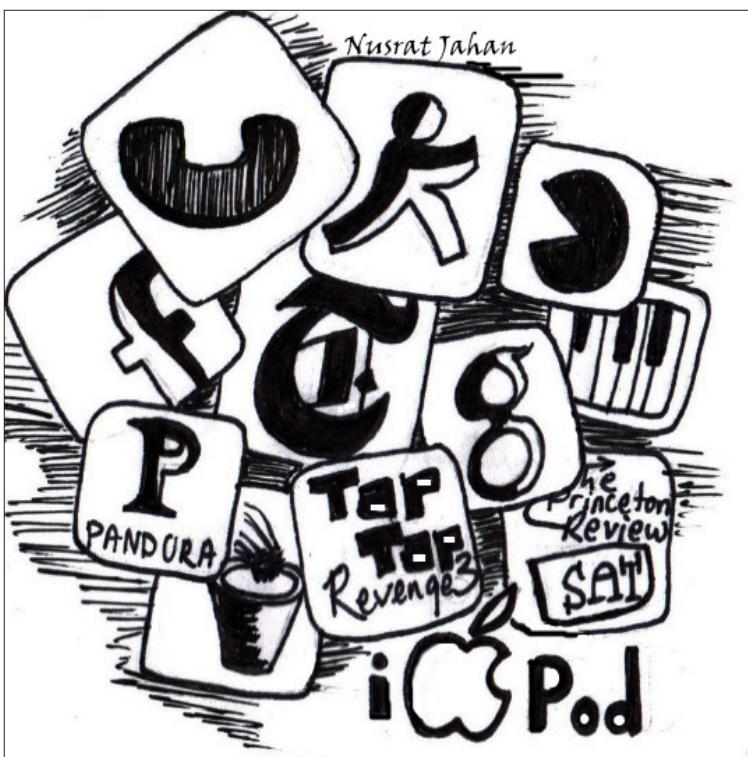
?? Apps

Easily the most unique app out there, the "corn popper" allows users to pop corn kernels into fresh, tasty popcorn. At a touch of a button, the display transforms into a hot stove. After placing a few kernels on top of the app, the corns pop in seconds. Orville Redenbacher would have been proud.

The Fake Smoker app allows the user to light up wherever he wants. Although it has yet to be verified, the designers claim that the app is pivotal in the quest to kick a smoking habit. At least it is right in saying that it is purely digital and completely healthy.

The Pimple Popper is a haven to those who no longer have pimples to squeeze on their own faces. The app allows users to test their pimple popping skills by transforming a sacred rite of passage for puberty-stricken teens into a game.

**But, amidst
the torrent of
apps, it's hard to
distinguish the
useful from the
useless.**



By NIKI CHEN

Since Apple revolutionized the market with its innovative application system, the potential of handheld technology has skyrocketed. The ability to pinpoint an exact location, generate farts, evaluate blind dates and

pop corn, now fits in the palm of one's hand. But, amidst the torrent of apps, it's hard to distinguish the useful from the useless. So, before spending your money, be sure to check out The Spectator's suggestions of the most convenient, entertaining and just plain fun apps on the market.



Chef making dumplings at Rickshaw Dumpling Bar.

By JOSHUA BOGATIN
and JAMES KOGAN

Short on cash and got a craving for dumplings, but don't know where to go? Well don't worry, because we've got you covered. The large number of dumpling shops that can be found in Chinatown and around New York make the question, "Which is the best?" almost impossible to answer. One can always find a new place around the corner that just might be tastier than the last place. While there can never be a clear winner on which shop has the best dumplings, how the best of the best compare can be easily solved with only a good sense of direction and as little as ten bucks.

Prosperity Dumplings
46 Eldridge St
(Between Canal and Hester)

My initial expectations were low. A friend told me that 'five dumplings for one dollar' was as good as it was ever going to get. Surely, the low price must compensate for sub-par quality? However, such is not the case at Prosperity Dumplings. This "hole-in-the-wall" has a questionably grimy appearance, but it is perfect for cheap, student-budget eats. A mere buck will buy you five piping hot and crispy

dumplings that burst with succulent juices when bit. The pork inside their fried pork and chive dumplings is well seasoned and flavorful, while the dumpling wrappers are perfectly thin. Another 75 cents will buy you a big slice of sesame pancake: a slightly greasy, all flavorful triangular slab of doughy bread baked with chives. Traffic at this joint is generally high, so pour a mix of Sriracha (a popular Thai hot sauce), soy sauce and vinegar over your dumplings and head outside to the little park down the street to enjoy your meal on one of the benches.

**The large number
of dumpling
shops that can
be found in
Chinatown and
around New
York make the
question of
"which is the
best?" almost
impossible to
answer.**

Sweet Spring Restaurant
25 Catherine St
(On the corner of
Catherine and Henry)

Located closer to Stuyvesant than the other venues listed, Sweet Spring Restaurant is quaint and simple. With a few tables up front and in the back corners, the place is great for enjoying their sweet and hearty Pork and Chive

Dumplings (5 for \$1.25). More lightly browned than heavily fried, the dumplings have thicker skins than at Prosperity but do not falter with flavor. Try them with the homemade Ponzo sauce (a citrus soy sauce) and chili sauce that stand in glass jars on the tables. "At first I thought the place was shifty, primarily because of the location," junior Pria Islam said. "I found that, for the money, they make some really great authentic dumplings." Consider also trying the Pan Fried Buns (four for \$1.50), which contain juicy balls of pork and onions steamed in luscious and flaky rice dough.

Dumpling Man
100 Saint Marks Place
(Between 1st Ave and Ave A)

The venue serves new and interesting varieties like the banana dumpling or the sweetie pie dumpling, which is filled with pumpkin pie that might interest those looking for alternatives. With a nice fashionable interior and seats that seat you a mere foot away from three, "Dumpling Man" T-shirt wearing chefs making dumplings, Dumpling Man is arguably the nicest dumpling restaurant in this article. Unfortunately, the same can't be said about its dumplings. The banana dumplings (1 for \$1.00 or 6 for \$5.00) taste more like plantains than dumplings, their flavorful filling ruined by a flaky and overpowering wrapper. The pork dumplings (1 for \$0.75 or 6 for \$3.95) are slightly better but ultimately suffer similar shortcomings. The best are the shrimp dumplings (\$0.90 for 1 or 6 for \$4.95), filled with shrimp, corn, whitefish and black bean. The strong flavors stand out, especially the corn, which leaves mild sweetness on the palate.

Rickshaw Dumpling Bar
61 West 23rd St
(Between 5th and 6th Ave)

Diverging from the typical "joint" or "dive" of the Chinatown variety, this tremendous and upscale establishment, with its chic and modern décor, serves

in order to knock down obstacles in order to eliminate the birds' arch nemeses—the pigs. The game has numerous levels, each ascending in difficulty, unlocking new obstacles and new species of frustrated birds, each with their



Prosperity Dumpling is located at 46 Eldridge St.

scrumptious dumplings for what one may call a "Manhattan" price. While six dumplings for \$6.00 is exorbitant compared to the Chinatown prices, the quality is terrific. The Classic Pork dumplings are meaty and flavorful. The Chicken and Thai Basil are even better. Containing carrot bits and tiny glass noodles, the dumplings pair well with the restaurant's spicy peanut sauce,

which is sweet and savory with just a bit of heat. For dessert, try the Chocolate Soup Dumpling (\$2.00)—a rice paste shell covered with black sesame seed and stuffed with rich molten chocolate—a satisfying but expensive treat. The Bar also has a sister Rickshaw Dumpling Truck that frequents its way around the city.

Arts and Entertainment

STC Reforms, Starting with the Studio Musical

By CHRISTINE LEE

This year's Stuyvesant Theater Community (STC) spring studio musical has been cancelled and will be replaced by the Winter Drama. First proposed by STC faculty adviser and English teacher Sophie Oberfield, the change is hoped to produce better quality performances and avoid schedule conflicts with other STC and school shows.

Studio musicals are usually held during late March to mid-April, right after SING! ends. It was canceled this year due to the late start of the Winter Drama (which was pushed back from January to February) as well as the close timing it has with SING! performances, the Spring Comedy and the One Acts Festivals.

"We decided to allocate more time to each of the productions we will be having

**This year's
Stuyvesant
Theater
Community
(STC) spring
studio musical
has been
cancelled and
will be replaced
by the Winter
Drama.**

and make them the best that they can be instead of rushing

through each one," senior and STC Studio Coordinator Yana Azova said. "However, we do intend on restoring the studio musical for next year."

The STC is a student-run organization founded by English teacher Annie Thoms and a group of seniors in 2001. The STC puts on six shows a year: three studio productions and three main stage productions. Studio productions can be viewed throughout the building—in the library, the school cafeteria, or the black box theater—and usually tend to be smaller in scale.

Studio productions include a musical, a comedy/drama and the one-act festival—a collection of short plays written by students. A main stage production, like the Winter Drama, is larger and is held in the Murray Kahn Theater. These performances also include the Fall Musical and the Spring Come-

dy. Students manage all aspects of show production, including costumes, sets, lights, sound and stage.

The upcoming Winter Drama will be "The Marriage of Bette and Boo," a play by Christopher Durang that centers on the newly-wed couple, Bette and Boo, and the problems that occur because of their thoughtless plunge into matrimony. It will be performed in the first week of February.

Along with extending the time for the "The Marriage of Bette and Boo" production, the STC has decided to make other reforms to the club as well. They plan on having professional actors come to Stuyvesant to provide guidance to STC members through workshops. Other policies, such as actors must receiving contracts with a list of STC rules, will also be implemented this year.

**Along with
extending the
time for the
"The Marriage of
Bette and Boo"
production, the
STC has decided
to make other
reforms to the
club as well.**

Dreaming of a Green Christmas

By EMMALINA GLINSKIS

Long, lean palm trees crowd a room where the murmur of a softly rushing brook is heard, where the humid warmth of a tropical wonderland is almost breathable, and where, in the center of it all, stands... a twinkling Christmas tree?

The New York Botanical Garden is a beautiful place with bright, fresh plants and flowers that burst with life during the summer and spring. But what few know is that the garden stays just as stunning and exciting during the freezing, teeth-chattering days of the holiday season.

The Holiday Train Show is one of the highlights of spending the holidays in the city. The event takes the visitor on a tour of the glass enclosed observatory where intricate model trains buzz by replicas of famous New York City sights and mansions. However, these aren't just any toymaker's models. Each building is made completely out of organic material—dried leaves, wood, seeds, pinecones, bark and petals. Intricate and almost completely accurate depictions of buildings hide among flowers or stand freely in the middle of



Emmalina Glinskis / The Spectator

A model of Yankee Stadium was made entirely out of plants at the Botanical Garden winter show.

**The pings, honks
and clanks of
model trains,
subway cars and
coal locomotives
weaving through
lush leaves give
a unique feeling
of Nutcracker
meets Amazon
Rainforest.**

a pond. The buildings do not fail to include the beautiful arches, balconies, urns and other decorations of 19th century mansions in the form of dried plants. With

some models, it is easy to spot the elements of a plant. But with others, like the depiction of the Rose Center for Earth and Space in the Museum of Natural History, it is almost impossible to believe the whole structure consists solely of foliage. Even portrayals of glass are made from a resin of sugar and tree sap, with lights shining from inside to create a feeling of warmth.

The pings, honks and clanks of model trains, subway cars and coal locomotives weaving through lush leaves give a unique feeling of "Nutcracker" meets Amazon Rainforest. Tropical plants are covered in colored lights, and the warm inside temperature is a relaxing break from the winter bite. People walk under famous bridges that reach the ceiling as trains gently move to and fro. It's a calming place and the perfect event to ease the frenzied chaos of family

and relatives coming over for the holidays.

The Holiday Train Show started in 1991 and has become a tradition and a prominent holiday event to look forward to every year. Each model was created by an artist named Paul Busse and is well preserved and scattered throughout the Garden. Most models are easily recognizable—The Empire State Building, Yankees Stadium, Apollo Theater and Metropolitan Museum of Art. However, there are a few equally beautiful, less famous estates from important figures like Lindenhurst and Van Cortlandt. Many models are of New York City buildings that were eventually demolished in the 30s, including the classical style of old Penn Station on Eighth Avenue. The minute details show the full grandeur of buildings that were once littered throughout the five boroughs.

The tickets are a little pricy, with the price going up as you get

**Even portrayals
of glass are made
from a resin of
sugar and tree
sap, with lights
shining from
inside to create
a feeling of
warmth.**

closer to Christmas. It's recommended to avoid going on Tuesday, December 21, through Sunday, January 2, because it gets sold out and crowded. However, group prices are a lot cheaper and a great idea if bringing relatives. The train show ticket provides access to the entire garden's other features as well.

Though the Botanical Garden's location in the Bronx may be a bit of a hike, it's a nice way to spend time with the family over the break. The verdant scenery of this glass-enclosed oasis surrounded by a winter desert is for all ages. The detailed designs of everyday sights give a sense of the magnificent simplicity of living in the city, as well as a way of seeing a talented artist's designs with the wonder of a little kid at a toy shop. It's a must-see for the holiday season for tourists and New York natives alike.

Arts and Entertainment

The Roots of Evergreens

By KRISTINA MANI

Every December, while elves toil away at the North Pole, we anxiously await Christmas morning and the traditions it brings. All season long, happy couples kiss under mistletoe,

As much as we cherish the customs that distinguish Christmas from other holidays, very few of us can elucidate their origins.

children search for presents and families celebrate around Christmas trees. The holiday spirit is an infectious vibe that even Scrooges can't help but succumb to. But as much as we cherish the customs that distinguish Christmas from other

holidays, very few of us can recall their origins.

Contrary to its modern impression, there is an ancient belief that mistletoe propagated from bird poop. In fact, the common name for this plant actually translates to an Anglo-Saxon word for "dung-on-a-twigs." Mistletoe first took on positive connotations in an old Viking legend. As the story goes, Balder, god of the summer sun, one day dreamt he would die. Alarmed, his mother, Frigga, asked all the natural elements, animals and plants to spare her son's life. Loki, the god of evil, then tracked down mistletoe, the only plant that Frigga had overlooked, to poison Balder.

According to legend, sorrow plagued the land, and Frigga's tears transformed into the white berries on the mistletoe which were then used to reverse Loki's curse. She then declared that those who passed beneath mistletoe and shared a kiss would have no harm befall them. And thus, since the Middle Ages, people have hung mistletoe in order to ward off evil spirits.

Similar to mistletoe, the custom of hanging stockings has also assimilated into our notion of Christmas. Centuries ago, in Myra, Turkey, whenever a woman wanted to marry, her father needed to offer a dowry to the bridegroom's family. A Bishop, aware of a particularly poor family that could not afford the dowry, traveled to their home to secretly place the dow-

ry in their drying wool stockings. Since then, children have played the role of the needy families, anticipating the advent of presents in their stockings every Christmas morning.

For generations, the practice of placing presents under an evergreen tree has been a quintessential part of celebrating Christmas. The practice, brought over by German Hessian soldiers during the Revolutionary War, originates from the story of a German missionary, St. Boniface.

St. Boniface once came upon a group of pagan followers who had tied a child to an oak tree as a human sacrifice. In order to save the child, St. Boniface struck the tree down with one blow. It split and a beautiful young fir tree sprang forth. St. Boniface pronounced the tree as a holy symbol of Christ and the promise of eternal life. He instructed them to take the evergreen into their homes and surround it with gifts, giving birth to the Christmas tree.

Unfortunately, not all traditions were started with high spirited intentions. In 1939, a department store asked its employees to come up with a gimmick to attract shoppers. Robert May, an employee at the store, authored the story of Rudolph to exploit Christmas in the name of consumerism. Copies of his story were given to each customer with his or her purchase and sales drastically increased. He published his story soon after and had it

adapted into a TV show, making a cash cow out of Christmas.

We may all celebrate for different reasons, but there is an underlying meaning to every tradition. Traditions vary in

purpose and occasionally have very little to do with Christianity. Over time, Christmas has become a conglomerate of cultures and customs from all over the world.



ADVERTISEMENTS

NEW YORK
LIVING
SOLUTIONS

MICHAEL M. CHAN

LICENSED REAL ESTATE AGENT

T 212 227 0021

F 212 227 1120

C 718 702 5946

MCHAN@NYLS.NET

WWW.NYLIVINGSOLUTIONS.COM

DOWNTOWN OFFICE

100 JOHN STREET, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10038



BROOKLYN DENTIST
DR. JEFFREY TENENBAUM
(DDS)

Open Weekends Till 11 PM

**WE ACCEPT ALL TYPES OF
INSURANCE AND MEDICAID**

53 Church Avenue (Near McDonald Ave)

TELEPHONE: 718 871-4440

EDUCAID
EXPERT PRIVATE TUTORING
AT YOUR HOME - 7 DAYS / YEAR ROUND

*DON'T JUST
TAKE EXAMS
- ACE THEM!*



- Gifted, experienced, & patient, Ivy-League tutors who want YOU to succeed !
- All Subjects / Exams : Regents / SAT -1 / SAT -2 / AP / IB
- Algebra / Geometry / Trig / Pre-Calc / Calc / Linear Algebra
- Computer Science / Statistics
- Biology / Chemistry / Physics
- Spanish / French / Italian & more
- English, (Grammar, Essays, Literature)
- History

(212) 766-5002

(718) 747-0173

www.EduaidTutoring.com

Arts and Entertainment

A Cool Way to Spend a Cold Day



Abe Levitan / The Spectator

The Pond at Bryant Park is located by 42nd St

By MARGOT YALE

An hour long wait. Rough and under-maintained ice. An expensive price. While it is probably the best known ice-skating rink in the city, Rockefeller Center should be left to the tourists. New York City has many other rinks that are more spacious and cheaper. And some of the rinks are indoors, allowing for skating all year round.

Open October through February, Citi Pond at Bryant Park (between 40th and 42nd Streets and 5th and 6th Avenues) is a

great option because it is free. This small outdoor rink is kept in very nice condition, but skate rentals can be a bit pricey, at \$13. However, if you have skates of your own then definitely bring them, because the buckles on their rentals are sometimes broken. Save yourself another \$9 by bringing your own lock for a locker.

There is a concession stand that sells hot chocolate and an assortment of snack foods. Citi Pond's lines can be long, but so are the hours (8 a.m. to 10 p.m. from Sunday to Thursday and 8

a.m. to midnight on Friday and Saturdays) and the quality of the rink is worth the wait.

Bryant Park's better known counterpart, Central Park, has two ice skating rinks, Wollman rink and Lasker Rink, but head to Lasker because it is cheaper for admission and less crowded. Adult admission is only \$6.50, whereas Wollman's admission is either \$10 or \$15, depending upon the day of the week. Lasker has a concession stand, which is a great place to grab a warm bite to eat or a cup of hot chocolate. The rink is located slightly south

of the park entrance at 110th Street & Lenox Avenue. It's open on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., from 1 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Saturdays, and from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Sundays. There are night sessions from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Wednesdays and from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Fridays. The rink will be open until March 27.

Another Manhattan indoor ice rink is Sky Rink at Chelsea Piers. While it is pricier, at \$13 for admission and \$7.50 for skate rentals, it is open all year round. The rink is open from 1:30 p.m. to 5:20 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays, from 3 p.m. to 5:20 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and from 1 p.m. to 3:50 p.m. on the weekends. Chelsea Piers has many other facilities to check out as well, making the trip well worth it.

Though it is out of the way for some, Queens offers the largest New York City Parks recreational complex. Flushing Meadows Corona Park Pool & Rink opened just two years ago and is home to the World Ice Arena, an NFL regulation sized indoor rink. The facilities are very modern and clean. More importantly, the ice is well maintained. Adult admission is \$5 on weekdays and \$8 on weekends. Additionally, skate rentals are only \$5. Hours on weekdays are from 9:00 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. and on weekends from 12:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m., with an additional session on Saturday evenings from 8:00 p.m. to 9:50 p.m. The Arena is located on Avery Avenue and 131 Street. Unfortunately, there is little public transportation to the area, and while the 7 train stops at Willets

Point, it is still quite a trek.

Ice-skating at any of these rinks can be a lot of fun, especially if you are adequately prepared. Warm clothes are a must, particularly for outdoor rinks. Most rental skates are bad quality and uncomfortable, so wear thick socks to protect your feet from blisters, or bring your own skates. Some of these rinks also offer camps over the holiday

**Flushing
Meadows Corona
Park Pool & Rink
opened just two
years ago and
is home to the
World Ice Arena,
an NFL regulation
sized indoor rink.**

break if you want to improve your ice-skating skills and stay in shape over the vacation. Visit any of these rinks for an eventful day during the break.

Why Mallards Are Not a Good Waterbird

By MOLLIE FORMAN

A green tablecloth. A stainless steel teapot. A table and chairs. In the STC's production of the studio drama "Far Away," by Caryl Churchill, this serves as the canvas on which the actors paint an allegory of fear and paranoia, set in a strange world disturbingly like our own.

Directed by senior Serena Berry and junior Phoebe Lau, and produced by senior Mosammad Rahman and sophomore Rebecca Gaebler, "Far Away" is a short play that explores a society where everything, even light and darkness, is at war. Containing three characters and three brief scenes, which take up only 45 minutes, the play goes by almost too fast to fully comprehend its meaning. However, the subtle and powerful performances given by the tight-knit trio of actors served to convey the proper atmosphere of uncertainty, and are ultimately what made the production a success.

The play benefited from its simple set up, which let the audience concentrate on understanding the dialogue rather than getting distracted by the set. A few simple floodlights, operated by Berry, reflected beautifully off of the actors' skin and eyes, and drew attention to their nuanced acting.

The play opens on Aunt Harper and her niece Joan, played by juniors Anastasia Bougakova and Jackie Krass, respectively, sitting at their kitchen table late at night. Joan cannot sleep, and Harper tries to get her back to bed. The girl, however, resists. She sits at the table with her aunt, and begins to recount a horrible and jarring memory of her uncle loading bloody children into the

back of a truck.

This scene is an engrossing start to the play, largely because of the growing urgency in Bougakova and Krass's performances. From the beginning, Harper obviously has something to hide, which Bougakova conveyed with an overbearing, patronizing sternness. Krass played her role brilliantly, employing wide-eyed innocence coupled with gravity appropriate to each situation.

Their conversation unfolds, with Joan describing atrocities she has seen, while Harper rationalizes them, building layers of horror and tension. Harper tells Joan that the bloody children were refugees that her uncle is helping to escape, but the defensiveness in Bougakova's tone, as well her persistence in telling Joan to keep it secret, leave the audience wondering if her intent might be something more malevolent. Joan's final admission that she saw her uncle beating the children with an iron bar is expected, but no less affecting.

The chemistry that made the first scene so tense carried into the next, when senior Jin Rim, as Todd, enters. He sits with Joan, now older, making hats for a corporation that Todd believes is corrupt. While there are dark undertones, this scene, with its endearing depiction of blossoming love, is a welcome break from the intensity of the first one—at least on the surface. The undercurrent of uncertainty is stressed by abrupt blackouts, interrupting any good feelings given off by the couple.

The dialogue has a give-and-take similar to the first scene, but now Joan is the buffer, and Todd the pursuer, until Joan, and the audience, inevitably warm to Rim's bumbling and endearing

charm.

Krass and Rim's charming chemistry remains even as the show takes a darker turn, when it is revealed that Todd and Joan have been crafting their hats for prisoners to wear on their way to execution. The almost casual way that Krass delivered the line, "It seems so sad to burn them with the bodies," is emblematic of how violence in this society is implicit, not explicit, and that young Joan was justified in her initial fear.

The third and final scene finds Harper at home with Todd, now her nephew-in-law, waiting anxiously for Joan to return home. They discuss the state of the world, in which the animals

have allied with one country or another. "The weather here is on the side of the Japanese," says Harper. "The cats have come in on the side of the French."

It makes for a bizarre dialogue, to say the least, but Bougakova handles it with aplomb, dripping with disdain when Todd shows sympathy towards crocodiles. "Crocodiles are always in the wrong," she says, and in the intensity of her eyes, the audience believes it.

When Joan returns, she delivers a monologue in which she expresses her fear of their strange world, and of a war in which she does not know what side they are on. She reveals that not only have the animals and nations al-

lied or fought; nature itself has lost all reason. Their world is one of unnatural violence, and Rim, Bougakova and Krass managed to make it as real as our own.

"Even if the dialogue was a little hard to follow along, the actors made me love the characters," junior Cecilia Kim said.

Central to the play is the notion of human brutality. Harper describes an image of deer twisting their antlers into screaming teenagers, no less brutal than the atrocities we have committed on each other and on nature, for centuries. This play is an allegory and an absurd one at that, but once the artful language is pulled away, all that is left is the stark reality of our own human natures.



Sara Lu / The Spectator

(left to right) Anastasia Bougakova and Jacqueline Krass act as Harper and Joan respectively in the final scene.

Arts and Entertainment

Baking Up a Holiday Storm



By STACY WANG

With winter recess and the holidays just around the corner, it is the time of year to flit from one family reunion to another, sleep 12 hours a day, run out to various stores for some last minute gift shopping, and of course, eat a lot of food. This year, consider giving your friends and family some homemade goodies. Here are two recipes to warm your holiday season further.

Candy Cane Cocoa

- 4 cups milk
- 3 (1 ounce) squares semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
- 4 peppermint candy canes, crushed
- 1 cup whipped cream
- 4 small peppermint candy canes

Yields: Four 1 cup servings

1. In a saucepan, heat milk until hot, but not boiling. Whisk in the chocolate and the crushed peppermint candies until melted and smooth.
2. Pour hot cocoa into four mugs and garnish with whipped cream. Serve each mug with a candy cane stirring stick.

Relatively simple to make, the peppermint candy cane adds a pleasantly unique twist to the classic hot cocoa. Adjust the amount of candy and chocolate to your personal taste.

Gingerbread Cookies

- 3 cups all-purpose flour

- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly milled black pepper
- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1/4 cup vegetable shortening, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup packed, light brown sugar
- 2/3 cup unsulfured molasses
- 1 large egg

Yields: 3-dozen cookies

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

2. Sift the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, allspice, cloves, salt and pepper into a medium bowl. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, using a hand-held electric mixer at high speed, beat the butter and vegetable shortening until well-combined for about one minute. Add the brown sugar and mix for one minute. Beat in the molasses and egg. Using a wooden spoon, gradually mix in the flour mixture to make a stiff dough.

4. Divide the dough into two thick disks and wrap each in a plastic wrap. Refrigerate until chilled for about 3 hours.

5. To roll out the cookies. Work with one disk at a time, keeping the other disk refrigerated. Remove the dough from the refrigerator, and let it stand at room temperature until just warm enough to roll out without crack-

- ing.
- 6. Place the dough on a lightly floured work surface. Sprinkle the top of the dough with flour. Roll out 1/8 inch thick, making sure the dough isn't sticking to the work surface (dust the surface with more flour, if needed). For softer cookies, roll out slightly thicker.
- 7. Using cookie cutters, cut out the cookies and transfer to non-stick cookie sheets, placing the cookies one inch apart.
- 8. Gently knead the scraps together and form into another disk. Wrap and chill for 5 minutes before rolling out again to cut out more cookies.
- 9. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until the edges of the cookies are set and crisp. Decorate with frosting after cooling completely.

The sheer number of ingredients in this recipe makes the prepping a bit laborious, and the dough can be messy to work with. Chilling the dough for more than the suggested three hours is a good idea. Be sure to add plenty of flour to the work surface when rolling out the dough. Working with small amount of dough at a time makes the process easier. Also keep in mind that the dough can be prepared for up to two days in advance.

All recipes used in this article were based off of the following:

<http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Candy-Cane-Cocoa/Detail.aspx>

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/gingerbread-cookies-101-recipe/index.html>

R U a Desperate Senior?

Need last minute help with college essay? No charge to first 3 students; deep discounts to others. Celebrated journalist/novelist/writing prof @ Ivy schools can help. Don't freak out.

Just write or call: info@elizabethbenedict.com. 917 294-6296.

An Interview with Das Racist



By SERENA BERRY

Specialized high schools and elite private colleges are not known to be breeding grounds for rap groups, especially a group hailed by MTV as one of the "25 Best New Bands in the World." Das Racist, a rap group featuring Stuyvesant alum Himanshu Suri ('02), Victor Vazquez, and hype man and Stuyvesant alum Ashok Kondabolu ('02), known as Dap, owe much of their success to their relatively unusual background.

Suri and Vazquez met at Wesleyan University in 2003. The group first became well-known in 2008 with the success of their song "Combination Pizza Hut and Taco Bell." They have since released two free mix tapes, "Shut Up, Dude" and "Sit Down, Man."

During a busy touring schedule throughout Asia and Europe, Suri and Kondabolu took time for an e-mail interview with The Spectator to discuss their music and the effect Stuyvesant had on them.

The Spectator: What activities were you involved in at Stuyvesant? Anything music related?

Himanshu Suri: I was in chorus for three years before I left so I could hang out with my friends more senior year. I was Vice President of the Student Union in '01-'02, during 9/11 when we were relocated to Brooklyn Tech. I was in whatever the Indian Club was called. I was in Big Sibs for two years. I also "stole the show" my senior year in SING!.

Ashok Kondabolu: I constantly listened to music on an Aiwa boom box throughout my tenure at Stuyvesant High School. I believe I occasionally used a mini-disc player to do this.

TS: What influence has Stuy had on your music or the path you chose, if any?

HS: You sound like my mom when you refer to my means of making money as a "path I chose." Stuyvesant was where I met Dap. It was

also where I discovered different types of "wilding out." It was also where 9/11 happened and freaked me out for years to come.

AK: I was "depressed" the latter half of high school and it took me a few years to get busy enough to not have time to feel that way anymore. Stay up my sadkins! I also spent a lot of time with Himanshu and our friend Dashiel and listened to large amounts of music, sometimes on an Aiwa boom box.

TS: How would you describe your music?

HS: Rap.

AK: Bugolgi Riddim!

TS: How does it feel to be getting so much recognition, from "Spin" to "The New York Times?" Did you and Vazquez anticipate the success of Das Racist?

HS: It feels very nice. We always knew this would happen.

AK: Feels bad! Victor did not anticipate the success but enjoys it nonetheless.

TS: Do you have any upcoming projects?

HS: I'm working on my first novel right now and a series of boxes inspired by the art of Joseph Cornell. I'm also writing this from Amsterdam where I am on tour right now.

AK: I'll probably have a "cult" television show" in a few years. I plan on leaving this city for most of the year and living on a farm of sorts with Bronx Science dropout Aleksey Weintraub and six strong dogs.

TS: How did you decide on the name?

HS: Names choose you.

TS: What is your personal philosophy about rap or music in general?

HS: My personal philosophy about rap or music in general is to be good at it. Shout out Mr. Polazzo, Mr. Mott, Mr. Sandler, AND THAT'S IT.

ADVERTISEMENTS

**HIGH IMPACT
LOW STRESS
TUTORING**
NEW YORK ACADEMICS



We are experienced, and enthusiastic educators who help students with:

- Math • Physics • Chemistry
- Biology • English • History
- SAT Prep • SAT Subject Tests
- AP Exams

Mention this ad and get \$15 off your first lesson!

www.tutornewyorkcity.com (347)526-1842 tutor@tutornewyorkcity.com

Humor

These articles are purely fictitious. All quotes are libel and slander.

Department of Health Launches Investigation on Stuyvesant Baby Boom

By ELI ROSENBERG

Last week, the New York City Department of Health launched an investigation on the increasing rate of teenage parenthood at Stuyvesant. Department agents were informed of the pregnancy situation through an anonymous tip from a 9th period health class, whose students were concerned about the conditions.

"These [baby] children are being horribly abused," Department of Health (DOH) Manhattan Bureau Chief Darleen Prince said. "Teen parenthood rates like this are unprecedented in New York Schools."

Ever more frequently, students in the junior class have been seen roaming the hallways with an infant in their hands. With over 40% of Stuyvesant students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, many families simply cannot afford childcare for the infants, most of whom have trouble with the most basic of life functions, including breathing, eating and moving. Yet most display a surprising ability to blink. Students are being forced to bring their children to school, often lugging them around with disregard to their safety. "Stuyvesant is simply not equipped for the influx of infants," Principal Stanley Teitel said.



Courtesy of Ming Li

STUDS.

In the investigation, the DOH agents cited over 700 cases of neglect ranging from children being stuffed into lockers and backpacks to being stolen and thrown over the heads of their 'parents.' Many children were taken into custody and brought back to department headquarters for inspection. "These children have been so appallingly

taken care of they are experiencing some serious health issues. Their skin has begun to harden due to poor hygiene. Their eyes seem so blank and lifeless. It's despicable," Prince said.

Researchers have been trying to determine why the parenthood rates have so dramatically risen. One popular theory proposed by the Biology Intel

research class (SB6R5) states that Stuyvesant students are "unnaturally attractive." The theory claims that through the Specialized High School Admissions Tests, the modern-day equivalent of natural selection, the average Stuyvesant student is at least 35.7% more sexually appealing than their counterpart at less prestigious schools.

By this theory, heightened rates of procreation are inevitable.

This enigmatic step in between attraction and babies has not been defined by the Biology Intel, and, according to the journal Nature, is the "fatal flaw" of their theory. "I try to explain how sex works to the students, but they get scared and confused," an anonymous health teacher and fertility goddess said.

A more commonly accepted theory is that students have merely been 'assigned' these children, as part of a cruel Health Education 'project,' masterminded by the fiendish Assistant Principal Physical Education Larry Barth.

In response to the investigation the Stuyvesant administration has set up some ways to help Stuyvesant students with their new responsibilities. ARISTA is planning to offer a day care service, in order to provide an environment in which the children can sit, seemingly lifeless, while their parents go about their daily business in the school.

"The infants are very well behaved. In fact, they remain suspiciously tranquil for almost the entirety of the school day" senior and ARISTA Day Care Staff Member Mohit Kumar said. "They're about as responsive as Guidance."

Polar Bear Gym Threatened by Global Warming

By JAMES FRIER

Rising average global temperatures, a phenomenon known to the scientific community as climate change, has been the cause of many on-going ecological disasters, such as shrinking polar ice caps and rising sea levels. However, no member of the scientific community fore-

the Polar Bear physical education class (PF5PB). This junior physical education selective thrives in a frigid environment, in which students learn to hunt for Harp Seals, drink refreshing Coca Cola and run around in circles outdoors. However, due to rising temperatures, the natural habitat of the class, recently categorized as "threatened" by the Conservation Bureau of the Department of Education, is shrinking at alarming rates.

"Students will soon have to spend their physical education periods in a warm, sheltered environment," an anonymous source from the Gy-I mean-Physical Education department said.

When asked if the class is already feeling any effects of global warming, Junior Joe Steele said, "BWRAWWRRRR."

Principal and fellow furred mammal Stanley Teitel has expressed sympathy toward the struggling class. "I will do everything in my power to prevent this precious selective from going the way of Velociraptor Appreciation, AP Dodo Literature and the Tech Department," Teitel said.

"With every passing day, the fate of the class looks grimmer. We'll soon be confined to running around in circles on small chunks of ice floating on the Hudson River," Steele said.

In an effort to slow the inevitable destruction of the class's habitat, the administration has put a number of measures in place in order to keep temperatures in the building down, such as eliminating electives such as

woodworking that create 'too much friction.' However, the administration has found the most effective temperature control method was already in place.

"Who knew we were saving the planet by keeping the Air Conditioning on in December?" Principal Stanley Teitel said. "Next time you kids start griping

"I will do everything in my power to prevent this precious selective from going the way of Velociraptor Appreciation, AP Dodo Literature and the Tech Department."
—Stanley Teitel, Principal

about how cold your math class is, take a good hard look at your soul, and think about the poor Phys Ed students."

School Safety Officer Foils Terrorist Plot

By CHESTER DUBOV and SAM FURNIVAL

Portland. Sweden. England. Stuyvesant. In recent weeks all have been threatened by violent terrorist bomb plots. In other locales, the delivery mechanism of choice for the explosives has been motor vehicles, however, according to Stuyvesant School Safety Officer Williams, who was stationed at the second floor bridge entrance, the recent plot involved "Terry's bags, and what appeared to be Pizza Bagels."

"I intercepted the package before anyone was hurt," Williams said. "I caught all the terrorists except for two. One was hired a couple years back by the school. The other had his ID. There was nothing I could do."

"It's a well known fact that these kids could be bringing fashionable material into the building at any time," Williams said. "That's why they need to eat their bagels outside at all costs-- It's a desperate matter of security."

Students were at one point allowed to sit on these floors until concerns over hallway noise prompted the administration to ban the activity in 2005.

Despite allegations that agents of the New York City Police Department School Safety Division are no more than glorified rent-a-cops, the force is endowed with as much unwarranted and illegitimate power as any choral director. The uniformed security guards are full-fledged New York State Officers of the Peace. After their civil service exam, a high school diploma, and a training period of 14 weeks—less than half

the time allotted for full police officers—they are empowered to make arrests, carry handcuffs, and use deadly force while on or off duty. This last power came in handy when officer Williams subdued and handcuffed three freshmen who were congregating around the ninth floor water fountain "suspiciously."

"Discipline is a major problem here," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "The way the majority of [Stuyvesant students] behave, it's a miracle we don't have to call in the National Guard. Doing homework? And on the fourth floor too? It's borderline criminal. The thin blue line stopping us from descending into chaos is composed entirely of [School Safety Officers]."

With such a vital role to play in the school community, it's understandable that Williams takes his work home with him. Unfortunately, the stress of the job and force of habit has caused him to verbally and physically accost anyone who attempts to enter his apartment while holding food, even the deliverymen for Chinese restaurants that he has ordered from. "They disrespected the badge," Williams said reflexively.

Some security analysts praised the vigilance of Safety Agents at Stuyvesant. "It's a well known fact that engineers are incredibly over-represented in terrorist networks," George Washington University political scientist Henry Farrell said. Math and science enthusiasts are "a group that is notoriously associated with terrorist violence and fundamentalist political beliefs."

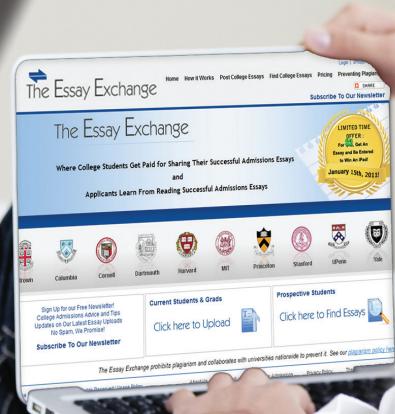
This junior physical education selective thrives in a frigid environment, in which students learn to hunt for Harp Seals, drink refreshing Coca Cola and run around in circles outdoors.

saw the adverse effect rising temperatures would have on

ADVERTISEMENT

It's only \$2 to read an essay that crashed the gates of the Ivy Leagues.

*Buy one in the next
week and get entered
to win a FREE iPad!*



This is a way to figure out how people with your demographic and academic credentials structured and approached their essay writing process and successfully stormed the gates of **America's best colleges.**

→
The Essay Exchange

**All of the essays are
successful essays from
America's top colleges.**

Founded by Harvard Business School and
Harvard Kennedy School graduates.

HURRY
For a limited time,
get entered to win a
**FREE
iPad.**



WWW.ESSAYEXCHANGE.ORG

Sports

Our Metrodome

continued from page 20

home field.

For those who have not noticed, Stuyvesant has a very similar problem to the Minnesota Vikings. Currently, our main gymnasium, the third floor gym, is unable to host our school's basketball games. No, there is not a large pile of snow on the court, but there is a warped portion of the hardwood around mid-court that would be unsafe to play on.

Just as the Vikings had to move their game to Detroit, and then this week had to play on the University of Minnesota football team's field, Stuyvesant's boys' and girls' basketball teams, the Runnin' Rebels and the Phoenix, must play in the sixth floor gym—a stuffy and fan-unfriendly environment.

It is the playoff reward for finishing in first and can be so crucial to a game, especially in football.

The home-court advantage that Stuyvesant had when students filled the stands of the third floor gym has been significantly dampened by the move three floors up. Likewise, the Vikings lost their home-field advantage on Monday Night Football, despite being the home team and playing just miles away from the Metrodome, and were embarrassed 40-14 against the Chicago Bears. The Vikings' first outdoor home game in 29

years provided cold and unfavorable conditions for the fans, and the decreased fan noise showed in the Vikings' unmotivated play. Stuyvesant basketball fans face slightly better conditions than the sub-zero weather of Minnesota, but must now sit in one of two corners of the sixth floor gym, away from most of the action, while the benches and scorer's table take up most of the limited free space on the side lines.

As a fan of all of Stuyvesant's sports teams, I am less motivated to go support the teams when they are playing on the sixth floor. This is not a reflection of the teams themselves, it is simply that the sixth floor gym games provides a much less enjoyable fan experience therefore takes some of the excitement out of the game. This is unfortunate because when the teams needed us fans the most, like in the two overtime games that the Runnin' Rebels have lost this year, we were not there to support them as strongly as we had in past years when games were played in the third floor gym. There is no more deafening banging when the opposing team shoot free throws. There is no more intimidation.

It was rumored that the gym was to be fixed over the Thanksgiving break. However, if it's anything like the installation of the air conditioning at the end of the last school year, the gym will be ready just after the season is over. Construction has been postponed until Christmas break, after which the Rebels and Phoenix will have only a few home games remaining.

The fans at a football game are often called the 12th man. Their ability to disrupt opposing offensive play calling and make others feel as far from home as possible can decide games. However, a silenced crowd can provide the road team with confidence and momentum. As fans of Stuyvesant basketball, we want to be able to experience the thrill of willing our team to win in a tight game. So please Mr. Teitel, fix our third floor gym.

Football

Four Stuyvesant Seniors Selected to All-Star Football Team



Courtesy of Ming Li

Seniors Tzallas, Kumar, Li and Bucaoto (left to right) pose after the 2010 Fugazzi Bowl.

continued from page 20

"This brings respect to our school and lets other coaches know that Stuyvesant isn't just all about smarts."
—Ming Li, senior and co-captain

pact on the game as he did. "It was great to put my pads back on and hit somebody," Kumar said.

Tzallas made the all-borough squad as a center, but maybe his biggest strength as a football player came on the other side of the ball. Tzallas led the team and was second in the league in sacks with seven. He wasn't the flashiest player, but his attitude, willingness to learn and motivation to get better served him well. "Hopefully next year we'll be able to send even more people to the all-star game," Tzallas said.

Unfortunately, Staten Island devastated the Manhattan/Bronx team 34-0 in the all-star game on Saturday, December 11. In all aspects it was a one-sided game. That being said, the Peglegs representatives were playing with the best of the best and having the opportunity to play in the game is something they should all be proud of. Whether this was their last game putting on a helmet and shoulder pads or just a bridge between their high school and college careers being a part of the Fugazzi Senior Bowl is something they will always remember.

"When people talk about Stuyvesant in the next few

years, they'll remember the Stuyvesant players who represented Manhattan and their

"Talent-wise, we stack up with these kids well. The main thing that separates us is our size."
—Michael Bucaoto, senior and co-captain

school to the fullest in the 2010 Fugazzi Bowl," Li said.

ADVERTISEMENTS

FREE ESTIMATE



New York General Construction
General Contractor

WATERPROOFING
ROOFING (ALL TYPES)
INTERIOR RENNOVATION
PAINTING, TILING

CARPENTRY
SIDEWALK
BRICK WORK
STUCCO

WE DO ALL KINDS OF EXTERIOR AND
INTERIOR WORK
TELEPHONE: 718 785 -7802

Manhattan physician is looking for smart, energetic, enthusiastic and inspiring tutors for three young boys. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

Homework: reading skills, mathematics, general enrichment
Language: Hebrew, English, speech/communication skills
Music: piano, guitar and other instruments
Sports: tennis, soccer, basketball etc.
Open to ideas based on the interests and passion of the tutor(s).

Tutor(s) will be needed on weekends, as well as Thursday and/or Friday. Summer assistance is also needed. Contact Melissa at 646-367-7361 or email pathmedical@aol.com with "Stuyvesant babysitter" in the subject line. Location: Chambers Street near Stuyvesant High School.

Sports

Girls' Basketball

Phoenix Look to Reach Playoffs After Frustrating Season



Emily Koo / The Spectator

Senior Audrey Fleischner shoots in the last few seconds of the game.

By OLIVIA CHU

The Phoenix, Stuyvesant's girls' varsity basketball team, finished last season with a frustrating 6-8 record, just one win short of the playoffs. The team then lost seniors Kelly Quinn ('10), Imelda Ko ('10) and Alex Albright ('10), all starters and captains. Nevertheless, the Phoenix, led by current senior captains Shilpa Agrawal, Audrey

"This team has adjusted quite well to losing its three senior starters from last year and the players are starting to gel on and off the court," coach Michelle Fleming said. Despite starting the season 0-2, with two home losses against School of the Future (50-41) and Seward Park Campus (33-27), two of the most challenging opponents in the division, Fleming is confident that her team has potential. "I would consider those losses to be 'good losses,'" she said.

"Though we lost, I have never felt more confident about the team and expect us to continue to play with the same fervor we played with in the first games," Fleischner said. Seward Park was a 15-2 team last year, but the Phoenix gave them a tough game, leading the entire game until Seward's run in the fourth quarter resulted in a devastating five point loss.

Goldman was also impressed by the team's first two games. "We pushed the whole game through and no one ever looked tired, which is a huge step up from past seasons," she said. Goldman added that the team suffered "third quarter blues" last year, but has had strong third quarters so far this season.

The loss of last year's three captains was tough on the Phoenix, though Fleischner noted, "They were obviously very important in terms of their playing and energy and spirit, but the team was aware of the difficulties we would face without them and it has only further motivated us to try that much harder."

"The biggest difference has not been in our playing but in our communication on the court. Our captains last year were very vocal both during games and in practice in terms of calling for the ball and call-

ing out the defense," Fleischner said. "It's quieter without them, which is something we will continue to work on."

Though Goldman, Fleischner and Agrawal may be the leaders of the team, underclassmen have stepped up to fill in important roles as well. "What's really

"We pushed the whole game through and no one ever looked tired, which is a huge step up from past seasons."
—Maya Goldman, senior and co-captain

great about our team is that our starters are sophomores, juniors and seniors, so even though we lose a few seniors every year, the team is still growing and getting stronger," Goldman said.

"Our starting forwards, sophomore Ellie Oates and junior Yiru "Ru" Luo, hustle more than anyone on the court and are rebound machines," Fleischner said. "They will only be better next year. Junior point guard Lisa Qiu controls the game and the team on the court and will continue to do it."

"Ru and Ellie make a great team and always see each other for jump shots from the high post or dump-downs for a quick lay-up," Goldman added. In the first two games alone, Luo and Oates combined to grab 47 of the team's 68 total rebounds, proving their dominance in the paint.

Team chemistry for the Phoenix is not a problem. "The best thing about the team is how much fun we have together. During practice there is constant laughter and we are lucky to have Coach Fleming, who encourages the light atmosphere," Fleischner said. "Nothing we do in practice, even the sprints, suicide runs and the like, feels like a chore because we are always having fun."

The Phoenix have already had a team bonding day, are planning a team sleepover and are exchanging Secret Snowflake gifts—the religion-neutral version of Secret Santa.

With the season still young, the Phoenix hope that their hard work, chemistry, and practice will propel them to a playoff berth come February. The talent and attitude are certainly there in large proportions.

"The future of team is most certainly looking bright," Fleischner said.

"This team has adjusted quite well to losing its three senior starters from last year and the players are starting to gel on and off the court."
—Michelle Fleming, coach

Fleischner and Maya Goldman are looking to improve upon last season and achieve their goal of making the playoffs.

Time to Brawl

continued from page 20

impossible to establish.

During the Runnin' Rebels, Stuyvesant's boys' varsity basketball team, 2007-2008 season a near brawl incited an intense rivalry that still exists. On January 18, 2008, the Rebels fought for a solid playoff seed at home against stiff competition from Beacon High School, a team that had previously defeated the Rebels at home by two points. As the clocks wound down Beacon held on to a three point lead to defeat the Rebels by a score of 57-54, but the real significance came after the game. Words were traded between members of Beacon and Stuyvesant and an eruption from players on each team led to both benches clearing and fans charging the court. The banter between the two teams went on until they were separated by coaches and teachers and the teams returned to their locker rooms.

These high school fights and rivalries, while discouraged by all coaches can have positive outcomes. "The team was really more unified after that," said senior captain Casey Lamountain about his freshman season's team. "Coach [Phil Fisher] wasn't too mad at any of the players, he understood that sometimes emotions can bubble over."

This fight would be the main cause of the Stuyvesant rivalry with Beacon, which continued escalating to the point of Stuyvesant fans researching and calling out the names of the Beacon players' girlfriends as they shot free throws the following year.

This rivalry would be one of the main reasons for the start of Woo-Peg-Sooie, the official Stuyvesant booster club. This club helped to energize the school by selling t-shirts and thunder sticks. "The Beacon rivalry really gets up school spirit and gets the students invested in their school's basketball team, in a way they haven't been before," said current Woo-Peg-Sooie president Jack Zurier.

In an age of advanced technology, rivalries often get started through online social networks. In many cases, players from certain schools write scathing words on event pages for another team's game. This is how the Peglegs, Stuyvesant's varsity football team, began their rivalry with Petrides High School in Staten Island. "It all got started on Facebook," said senior Patrick Smith, a co-captain of the football team. "It was a really physical game and Petrides [high school] was throwing a lot of late hits that the refs were missing and eventually we just started hitting them back and then it just turned into a massive brawl on the field."

Senior and co-captain Ming Li was eventually ejected from the game and had to sit for the remaining minutes of his final regular season high school football game. Despite the consequences of the fight, Smith also believed the incident made them stronger. "We really came together as a team after that fight, it didn't matter that we lost the game because we had each other's backs," he said.

Facebook set the stage for

another violent episode in Stuyvesant athletics last season when the Hunter High School boys' lacrosse team challenged the Stuyvesant Lacrosse Peg-legs by creating an event titled "Hunter Lax Bros vs. Stuyvesant Wack Hoes." Although a series of heated online exchanges from the Stuyvesant players promised that a fight would ensue, the arrival of Assistant Principal Physical Education Larry Barth at the game dispelled all hope of a brawl. However, this did not curb the Stuyvesant player's violent intentions. "We were laying out everybody. The score didn't even matter," senior Mohit Kumar said. "By the end of the game seven of their players had to be taken out because of injuries." The final score of 6-2 in Stuyvesant's favor reflected this desire to hurt the other team rather than to put points on the board. This season's matches against Hunter promise many of the same results.

"By the end of the game seven of their players had to be taken out because of injuries."
—Mohit Kumar, senior

Although fights can easily break out in football and lacrosse, where players are constantly hitting each other, often illegally, in a sport like soccer brawls begin in a more subtle manner. For Stuyvesant FC, Stuyvesant's boys' varsity soccer team, a fierce rivalry was established last year with Julia Richman Educational Campus. After the game, a fight broke out between the players, and parents were even forced to get involved. This year, in their second meeting of the season, things got heated when senior Eric Kiss was purposely elbowed in the face. From that point on members of both teams went in for unnecessary tackles, tripping and elbowing their opponents.

Brawls in high school sports are becoming increasingly common. There are no rules set by the PSAL for suspending players; the consequences are usually decided on a case by case basis. However it is always devastating to see a team's star player be suspended because of a fight, especially when it leads to a team losing an important game. Still, high school players need to stop idolizing professional athletes who start fights, because they are only providing a poor example.

In some cases brawls can bring a team closer together, and often it is exciting to see the passion and fire players exhibit on the field. However, high school athletes need to learn how to control this passion, and to realize that the sweetest satisfaction truly comes from beating a bitter rival, not from fighting one.

THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

Time to Brawl



By NICK HEIM

Clear the benches, drop the gloves and charge the mound. The issue of fighting in sports is a polarizing one for most fans. Where many hockey and baseball fans will be quick to discuss the way in which these "brawls" are part of the sport itself and that nothing is better than watching the competitive

spirit overflow into a player fighting for his team and his city, they will also agree that nothing is worse than having an integral player miss playing time as punishment. Fights can intensify old rivalries and they can create new ones.

Bench clearing brawls in baseball are not uncommon, and one this year between the Nationals and the Marlins cre-

ated palpable tension between the two teams in future matchups. Another brawl, less than a month before the Nationals-Marlins scuffle, between the Cincinnati Reds and St. Louis Cardinals, left one pitcher kicking in self-defense against the backstop. A few of these kicks landed to the head of Cardinals backup catcher Jason LaRue, causing a lingering concussion that forced the 11-year veteran to retire.

Though some may argue that these fights only occur on the professional level, where the players have more at stake, brawls do happen in high school sports. Whereas fights on the professional stage are replayed thousands of times and dissected from every angle, sports fights on the high school level are more veiled with organizations like the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) trying to keep them hidden and in the background. Who said what and which person threw the first shove is at many times

continued on page 19

Boys' Basketball

Rebels Get in Swing of Things



With a final score of 50-37, the Stuyvesant Runnin' Rebels defeated the Julia Richman Warriors at their recent game.

By KRIS LULAJ

The Runnin' Rebels appeared lost. Their taller roster was expected to flourish against smaller rosters. Instead, two games into the season the team was 0-2, losing by 21 points to Norman Thomas High School and by three points to the Bayard Rustin Educational Complex Titans in double overtime, their second double overtime loss including the preseason. After jumping out to seven point leads in both the first and third quarter against undefeated division leader Bayard Rustin, the Runnin' Rebels faded and allowed the Titans to tie the game and eventually clinch a crucial division win. Only a week earlier, the Rebels had dropped a double overtime exhibition game to Brooklyn Technical High School.

Early in the season, the turnover-prone offense seemed to make the same mistakes as those made during last year's late-season collapse. After starting the season 6-4, the Rebels lost five straight games to take themselves out of playoff contention with a record below the necessary .500 mark. "I'm not worried about last year at all," coach and physical education teacher Phil Fisher said. "It's behind me and not affecting how I coach the team this year."

Though the team has since righted their season, winning

four of their next five games, the offense remains a new and developing part of their game. Fisher implemented the "Wisconsin Swing" on offense this season. This offense is based around the concept of constant motion and forming triangles on the ball-side of the court to create a mismatch and an easy basket in the paint. The movement gives the ball handler several different potential targets, eventually taking advantage of soft coverage or a height advantage.

"The offense has helped us. The new offense gives us many more options," senior and captain Casey LaMountain said.

This offense was brought to Fisher and the team by Clayton Hanson, who played for the Division I Wisconsin Badgers. He often helps the team practice on Saturdays and has assisted Fisher at games, almost as a "second coach," Fisher said.

Hanson has been a welcome addition, and has helped explain the nuances of the offense. "He has been running this for four or five years at Wisconsin so he just translates it for us. He's helped a lot in games. He has run practices and drills with us and has pointed out important aspects of the offense," LaMountain added.

The new offensive scheme combined with limited practice time and space has contributed to the slow start. The Wisconsin Swing offense consists of solid

passing, screening and cutting, which requires all five players on the court to be in sync.

Before the season, the Rebels expected to rebound from last season's failures with their taller team of juniors and seniors. However, the squad has not had much time to practice together which has shown through in games. "Our biggest problem is taking care of the ball," junior guard Roy Vlcek said. "If we fix this weakness, we'll have the season we all strive and work hard to have."

In addition to the damaged third floor gym, the Public School Athletic League moved the start of the basketball season from October 15 to October 25, giving coaches even less time to prepare their teams for the upcoming seasons. With practices prohibited until the official start of the season, the late start translated to 10 less days of team practices. For teams like the Runnin' Rebels, with a new offense and many new players, these 10 days could have been crucial in forming on-court chemistry and would have provided Fisher and Hanson a chance to better explain this new offensive system. "Unfortunately, my favorite part of coaching is teaching," Fisher said.

Despite their slow start, the Rebels have found their stride in recent games and the offense has been clicking. Against Hunter College High School, the Rebels won 68-35 in convincing fashion, and had four players score more than ten points, led by Vlcek's 17 points. Seniors Keiji Drysdale and Anthony Chikva combined for 24 points.

These kinds of offensive outbursts have given the Runnin' Rebels confidence in their playoff chances. "If we play the way we practice, and compete to our full potential, wins will definitely come our way," said junior forward Abid Choudhury, who is averaging almost 10 points a game and contributed 11 points in the win against Hunter. "Once we make the playoffs, however, I think that we'll definitely be a team to watch out for."

Football

Four Stuyvesant Seniors Selected to All-Star Football Team

By XERXES SANII

The Peglegs, Stuyvesant's boys' varsity football team, had their most successful season in recent memory this year finishing 6-4 and only two wins away from a playoff berth. At the end of the regular season, four seniors were rewarded for their consistently outstanding performance. Co-captains Ming Li (linebacker), Michael Bucaoto (running back) and Mohit Kumar (linebacker), along with center Vasilis Tzallas were selected as all-stars to represent the Bronx/Manhattan team in the 2010 Fugazzi Senior Bowl.

The four players were nominated by Coach Mark Strasser at the end of the regular season. "These players are leaders and they all have a strong passion for this game," Strasser said. "I knew it would be great honor for them to not only extend their season for one more week but represent themselves and their team to the entire city."

Li, the face of Stuyvesant football, was a warrior throughout the entire season. All year he battled injuries to both knees. He sacrificed for his team, played both sides of the line and worked his way onto the all-borough team. In fact, Li was the only player from Manhattan to start on the all-star team. He described playing in

this game as an honor and a "once in a lifetime experience."

"This brings respect to our school and lets other coaches know that Stuyvesant isn't just all about smarts," Li said.

Bucaoto was the Peglegs' entire offense at times this season. He managed to rack up 1156 total yards from scrimmage, while also running for nine touchdowns. On the defensive side of the ball he recorded a pair of interceptions. With his speed and ability to explode through the hole, Bucaoto was able to take over games and lead Stuyvesant to victory. He was very confident in his and his teammates' capabilities, especially with respect to the rest of the all-stars.

"Talent-wise, we stack up with these kids well. The main thing that separates us is our size," Bucaoto said.

Kumar brought toughness and leadership to this year's team. He was a defensive catalyst and led the Peglegs with 65 tackles on the season. Kumar also ran for a touchdown. The devastating hits he delivered to opponents fired up not only himself, but also his teammates. The whole team showed him great respect and while the defense aspired to have as much of a presence and im-

continued on page 18

Our Metrodome



By CHARLIE GINGOLD

Last week's most widely viewed viral video in the world of sports—besides the one of Jets' strength coach Sal Alosi's infamous trip of Dolphins player Nolan Carroll—was the unbelievable footage of the deflation of the Minnesota Vikings' Metrodome.

After many days of inclement Minneapolis weather, including a huge snowstorm, the roof of the dome broke. The ensuing video captured the roof as it sank, finally reached its breaking point and ruptured, dumping snow onto the 50-yard line.

Minnesota was scheduled to play at home that Sunday against the New York Giants, but due to the deflated Metrodome, they had to move the

game to Detroit for a Monday night matchup. Even though the Giants were already the favorite to win, the Vikings lost one of the only advantages that they had, home-field advantage—an advantage so often cherished and sought after in sports. It is the playoff reward for finishing in first and can be so crucial to a game, especially in football.

The Metrodome, known as the loudest domed NFL stadium, provides the Vikings with as great of a home-field advantage as any other team in professional sports. The game in Detroit played out as expected with the Vikings getting crushed by the Giants 21-3. However, the bigger issue was the state of their

continued on page 18