



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper

*"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"*

Volume XCIX No. 7

December 1, 2008

stuy spectator.com

Stuyvesant Faces \$304,000 Cut This Year, Larger Cut to Come

By **WILSON LAI**
and **AMIT SAHA**

The New York City Department of Education (DOE) announced earlier this month that it will be enacting several budget cuts for the city's public schools for the 2009 and 2010 fiscal school years. Stuyvesant students were notified of the upcoming budget cuts on Thursday, November 6 when a letter from the DOE was posted on the school website. The letter stated that the DOE would face \$180 million in reductions this year and \$385 million the following year. Stuyvesant's budget will be cut by \$304,000 this year with a projected \$754,000 cut for the 2010 fiscal year. "The \$304,000 is a definite," Principal Stanley Teitel said.

Stuyvesant was one of 74 schools included on a list released by the DOE on Thursday, May 22 announcing budget cuts for the listed schools' current school year. Stuyvesant faced a cut of \$955,135, or 5.32 percent of its budget. The expected cuts were cancelled when the New York City Council restored \$129 million to the city's education budget.

This time around, the budget cuts will affect all New York City schools, not a specific few. "As long as they don't take away different amounts from different schools, I guess I'm okay with it," junior Nelson Chau said.

Some students are concerned about the effects the budget cuts

will have on classes and extracurricular activities at Stuyvesant. "Stuy still needs its elective and extracurriculars for its students," sophomore Raymond Liang said. Teitel had earlier considered limiting student programs to at most seven instructional periods and lunch in order to deal with the eventually-restored budget cuts for the 2008 fiscal year.

Other students agree. "All our classes and our activities help us explore our world so that we may have a better understanding of the world around us, and that privilege should not be taken away from us by budget cuts," junior Xiangyu Xie said.

Teitel stated that the new budget cuts would not have any effect on classes for the remainder of the current school year. "So far, classes are not affected," he said. "We had programmed all our classes in case something like this happened. Unless something else happens this year, students won't notice a thing."

"[Teitel] kept [last year] in mind when he prepared this year's budget," Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm said. "He deserves a lot of credit. I think he's demonstrated his goal is to protect the classroom. He'll focus on cutting from other areas before turning to the teachers and students."

Parents' Association (PA) Co-President Paola de Kock expressed concern over the new budget cuts. "The PA is going to try to raise money, but we can't

pay for instruction," she said. "We've paid for a lot of stuff the DOE should be paying, like copy machines and supplies."

"This country, this state, has to come to terms with its children," de Kock said. "All children have the right to a free public education."

"This is like déjà vu," Blumm said. "This is exactly what we went through when we were hit last time. The PA did a wonderful job last year, and they'll have to do the same this year, too. Basically, whether it's schools, healthcare or anything else, the pie is getting smaller. And everyone's going to be fighting to keep their piece of the pie, which is what we have to do."

To deal with the upcoming \$754,000 cut that Stuyvesant will face in the 2009-2010 school year, Teitel may decide to give students fewer classes and he "might have to cut afterschool programs and extra-curriculars," he said.

According to Teitel, it is unclear exactly how and to what extent the future budget cuts will affect Stuyvesant students.

"Next September, no one can put away the cuts we'll face," Blumm said.

"I don't think things economically are getting better by the day," Teitel said. "Governor Paterson announced a 2.1 billion-dollar cut to the state budget, with 585 million coming from education, and 244 million of that from the New York City DOE."

Urinetown



Sam Gerstenzang / The Spectator

Urinetown, the musical, was performed on Friday, November 14 and Saturday, November 15. Above, Hayward Leach plays hero Bobby Strong. See page 9 for more photos and a review.

Stuyvesant Gets Another 'A'

By **MEGAN HAREWOOD**
and **ANI SEFAJ**

Stuyvesant received an A, for the second straight year, under the Department of Education (DOE) rating system for public schools. For the 2007-2008 school year, Stuyvesant has an overall grade of 68.9 out of 106.5 and is ranked in the 73 percentile among city schools. This was a decrease of 6.2 points from the previous year's grade.

According to the DOE website, the New York City Progress Report "measures student year-to-year progress, compares each school to peer schools, and rewards success in moving all children forward, especially children with the greatest needs."

Schools that receive high grades "are eligible for rewards," according to the report, which include possible bonuses for principals and, if the school continues to progress, for teachers too. Schools that receive low and failing grades "face consequences."

Stuyvesant received a 9.1 out of 15 in school environment, 21.8 out of 25 in student performance and 38 out of 60 in student progress. All of the numbers translat-

ed into A's in their individual categories, creating an overall grade of an A.

Some students expressed surprise about Stuyvesant's percentile rank. "I was happy that Stuy got an A, but I was surprised that most of these grades were in the 60 or 70 percentile," sophomore Daniel Mendelsohn said. "I'm wondering what will be done to raise these scores."

Principal Stanley Teitel will not make any major changes to Stuyvesant because of the Progress Report results. "We're not going to change the focus of the school because of this report," he said.

According to The New York Times article "Letter Grades Look Simple, But Are Really Complex" by Jennifer Medina, the 10 schools that received the highest Progress Report grades have poor average SAT scores.

The DOE ranked relatively low the 10 schools with the highest average SAT scores, of which Stuyvesant is number one.

"We are a good school and are deserving of an A. Yet, as with most one-size-fits-all evaluations,

continued on page 2

Racial Disparity at Stuyvesant

By **RACHEL KIM**

Among the 1.1 million students attending New York City public schools, 40 percent are Hispanic, 31 percent are black, 14 percent are Caucasian and 14 percent are Asian. However, these statistics are not mirrored at Stuyvesant. Of 3,247 students, 67.36 percent are Asian, 27.43 percent are Caucasian, 3.05 percent are Hispanic and 1.97 percent are black.

The racial divide is more severe in the 2012 graduating class. Of the 841 freshmen, 70 percent are Asian, 25 percent are white, 3 percent are Hispanic and 2 percent are black.

"Stuyvesant clearly does not represent the general population of New York City," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "We admit our students based on an exam, nothing else."

According to the DOE's "Specialized Admissions Round," a report stating the standards of admissions to specialized high schools, students are accepted "solely on test results, the student's ranked order of the schools, and seat availability."

"It's obviously quite jarring to see tremendously low numbers of black and Latino students

at Stuyvesant today," Advanced Placement Government teacher Matthew Polazzo said.

In the 2007 SHSAT, 28 percent of students from public schools who took the test were black, 23 percent Hispanic, 30 percent Asian and 19 percent white, according to The New York Times article, "Racial Imbalance Persists at Elite Public High Schools," published on Friday, November 7.

There have long been accusations that the SHSAT, a two and a half hour exam comprised of 45 verbal questions and 50 mathematical questions, is biased against blacks and Hispanics.

In January 1971, superintendent of Community School Board Three on Manhattan's West Side Alfredo Mathew claimed that the SHSAT was "culturally biased" and that the test worked to "screen out" black and Puerto Rican students, according to a 1999 City Journal article, "How Gotham's Elite High Schools Escaped the Leveller's Ax."

Senator John Calandra and Assemblyman Burton Hecht passed the Hecht-Calandra law in May 1971, which ruled that admission to specialized high schools can only be based on students' test scores.

However, the accusations persisted. Community activist group Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and former Mayor John Lindsay said in a 1996 Executive Summary report called "Special Apartheid II," that "developing the skills and academic competence to compete successfully for admission to Stuyvesant or Bronx Science requires course work which is not available to most black and Latino students in the public schools."

In response to these claims, the DOE expanded The Specialized High School Institute (SHSI) program, a free SHSAT preparation course aimed at increasing the number of minority students at specialized high schools. Students are eligible for the program only if they are economically disadvantaged students, as defined by Title I-Free Lunch status, scored a Level 3 in the fifth grade English Language Arts and math examinations, and have at least a 90 percent attendance rate.

Qualified sixth-grade students receive applications to SHSI at their schools in January. Applicants are randomly accepted to the summer program and

continued on page 2

Opinions

Article on page 7.

The Real Frontrunners

An inside view of the SU's election process... told by a former candidate.



Article on page 9.

Arts & Entertainment

'Urine'ing for Success

The STC starts off the season with rebels, ghosts and a bunny's death.

News

Stuyvesant Gets
Another ‘A’

continued from page 1

there is a lot the [progress report] doesn’t cover. The criteria they are using doesn’t really get at how well students are doing,” Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said. “Student progress is a big part of this grade. Yet, our students are already statistically good in their Regents scores, their SAT scores and their attendance. There’s not a whole lot of room for progress.” “The problem with the [grading] system is that it’s perfectly possible for a failing school to get an A because 60 percent of the grades for the schools are based on improvement,” Parents’ Association Co-President Paola de Kock said. “No reason-

able student or parent would choose a school based on the score.” “[The evaluation] is a very, very expensive process that is not designed to improve education. They just collect a bunch of data and crunch numbers and no one can tell you how they come up with the numbers,” de Kock said. “We don’t need this colossal waste of money to tell us the obvious—that Stuy is a good school.” “I’m very satisfied with the grade that we received,” Teitel said. “Stuy should be getting an A,” junior Jeffrey Wu said. “Although the school has its flaws, it’s still one of the best public schools in the city.”

ADVERTISEMENT



Operation Fly Inc. is a student-led 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that serves five locations in Washington DC, Baltimore, Chicago, Boston, and New York. Our challenge to this generation can be summed up in one question: “Why wait?” Why wait when we can make a difference NOW? What better way is there to challenge this ideology than by combating the problems that hinder many of our citizens from achieving their fullest potential? Homelessness, poverty and financial burdens are among these obstacles which put a damper on the achievement of success. We at Operation Fly, Inc. hope to rectify this injustice and to bring out an influential impact on the general welfare of society.

We are hiring for the following departments:
Outreach
(for-profit tutoring and scholarship program)
Marketing
(fundraisers and galas)
Event Management
(Homeless Donations and semi-annual ceremonies)
Public Relations
(Corporate Sponsorships, Media Agreements and Government Relations)
Human Resources
(Chapter Expansion, Conference Planning and Volunteer Development)

To apply, click on the “Employment Application” link on the corporate site at www.operationfly.org.
For more information contact us at corporate@operationfly.org or matthew.degioia@operationfly.org

“Soar to new possibilities!”

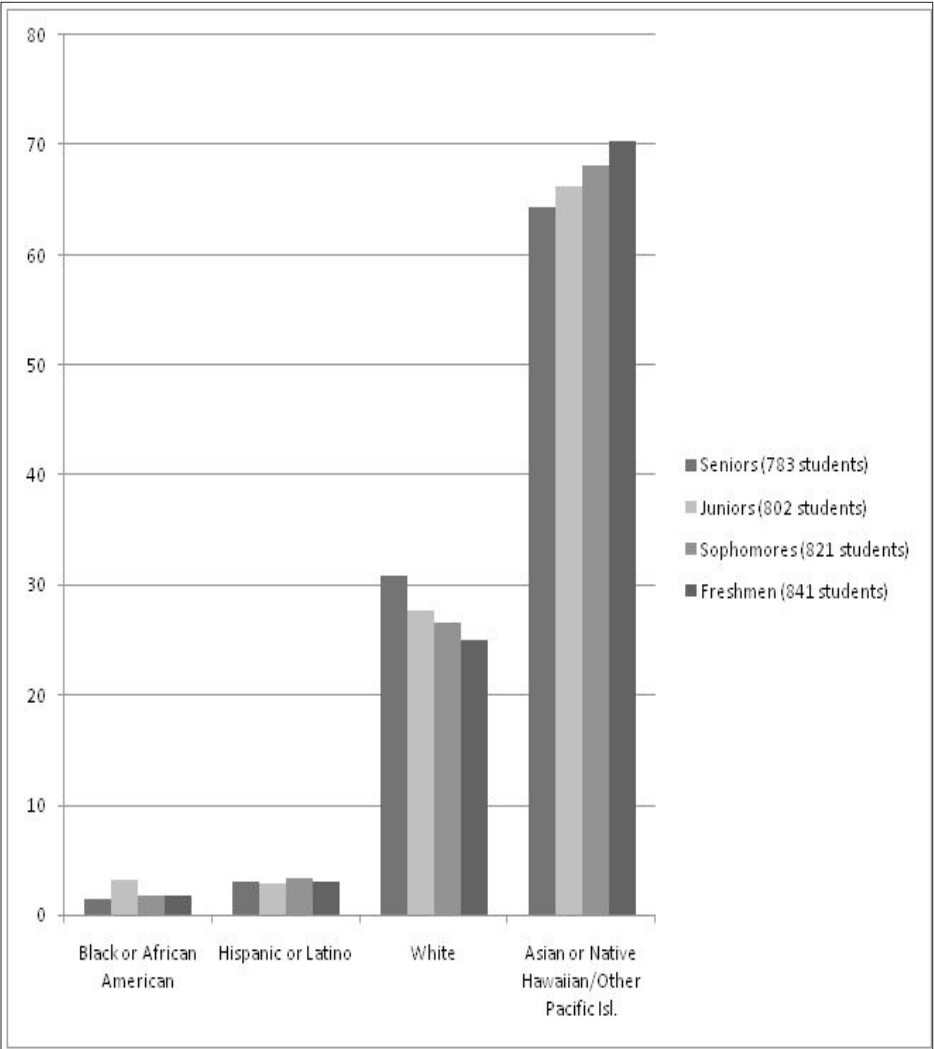
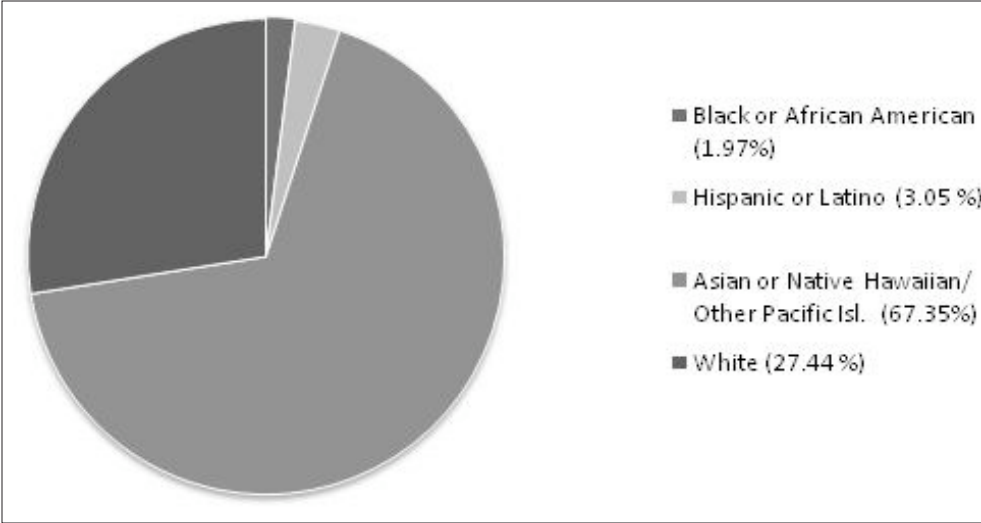
Racial Disparity at Stuyvesant

continued from page 1

are notified in May. The SHSI lasts for 16 months and is divided into two sections called “Seventh Grade Foundations” and “Eight Grade Intensive.” The SHSI “includes rigorous coursework in literature, writing, mathematics and science, as well as group guidance activities,” as stated on the DOE Web site. The SHSI also focuses on teaching “study habits, time management, critical thinking and test preparation skills.” “It was really difficult,” senior and SHSI attendee Juan Mendez said. “But if I didn’t go to SHSI, then I wouldn’t have known about Stuy.” 58 percent of the Asians, 49 percent of whites, 21 percent of Hispanics and 19 percent of blacks participating in the SHSI and took the exam were offered admission to specialized high schools. The SHSI is supposed to accept students based on financial need. However, there were accusations that the program was biased against Asian and white students. The Center for Individual Rights (CIR) filed a class action lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York on Monday, November 19, 2007, arguing that that the SHSI excluded Asian and white students because of their race. CIR represented Stanley Ng, who claimed that the school guidance counselor refused to give his daughter an application for SHSI. After contacting the DOE, Ng was informed that SHSI was only open to students of certain races. In a private 2007 DOE memo distributed to guidance counselors and junior high school principals, minority is defined “American Indian, Alaskan Native, Black (not of Hispanic origin), Hispanic (including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban and Central or South American origin), Pacific Islander, and other ethnic group underrepresented in science and engineering.” The verdict stated that “the policy or practice of defendant of discriminating against them on the basis of their race or ethnicity violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.” The SHSI now accepts students solely on economic status. Students who scored just below the SHSAT cutoff score, are recommended by their school guidance counselors, and are economically disadvantaged may qualify for the Summer Discovery Program. Qualifying students receive intensive summer work and gain admission to one of the specialized high schools.

The DOE has also created five new specialized high schools. The High School for Math, Science and Engineering at City College, High School of American Studies at Lehman College and Queens High School for the Sciences at York College were created in 2002. Staten Island Technical High School was named a specialized high school in 2005. The Brooklyn Latin School was created in 2006. Hispanic and black students comprise a higher percentage of the student body at the aforementioned high schools than at Stuyvesant. Despite the DOE’s efforts to diversify the racial makeup at specialized high schools, the number of black and Hispanic students taking the SHSAT has decreased, according to “Racial Imbalance Persists at Elite Public High Schools.” “[The reason] may be self-selection,” English teacher Anne Thoms said. “Students know that it is very likely that they will be the only black student in the class.” Mendez claims the decline is due to the lack of junior high schools publicizing the SHSAT. “My school didn’t tell us about what the test was going to be about,” he said. Students also attend private academies to prepare for the SHSAT and other standardized tests including the PSAT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests and Advanced Placement exams. Mega Academy, a predominately Asian preparatory academy, sends 65 percent of its students to Stuyvesant every year. “It’s unfair how people with money to pay for prep schools have a better chance of getting into Stuy,” senior Hanming Zhang said. “I’d like to see the school more evenly divided among different groups,” Social Studies teacher George Kennedy said. In a more diverse environment, “students can hear different opinions in the classroom,” he said. Sophomore Neil Desai said that racial and ethnic awareness could be further promoted at Stuyvesant. “Some students lack an interest in other cultures,” he said. Senior Lee Schleifer-Katz agreed. “We’ve been trying to increase awareness to some extent,” alluding to the recent Culture Festival and Student Union Video Homeroom movie promoting the festival. “I have never seen a more integrated school. There is a total acceptance of everyone here,” guidance counselor Jay Biegelson. Despite the lack of racial diversity, “the best thing about this school is that you’re exposed to the best students in the city,” he said. “That’s what makes Stuyvesant so special.”

Racial Breakdown of Stuyvesant (2008-2009)
Out of 3247 Students



Crazy Commutes

By DOT WELDON

Sophomore Priscilla Odinmah was sitting on the F train, singing a song to poke fun at a friend. But another passenger, who was “either homeless or mentally ill,” she said, took it the wrong way and decided to approach the group of students, yelling threats from across the busy train.

For many frequenters of the subway, this story may sound familiar. Stuyvesant students spend hours every day commuting from home to school and back again. With the amount of time that is spent on the subway, students are bound to witness some bizarre situations. In fact, not many people can say they haven’t had some ludicrous encounter with an incapacitated hobo, a soul-singing trio or a zealous preacher. These strange experiences provide riders not only with something more interesting than reading advertisements, but also a great story to tell. And in Odinmah’s case, her story was certainly one to remember.

The approaching passenger appeared to be personally of-

fended by Odinmah’s singing. Certain that he was the one being serenaded, the man believed that the teens were “referring to his loneliness,” she said. To counter the supposed personal attack, “he yelled at us for not understanding the meaning of the song’s lyrics,” she said, and even went so far as to threaten the group with arrest. “He was shouting at us, saying, ‘I’m the police! I’m going to arrest you,’” Odinmah said. Although it was all too clear the man had no authority to follow up on his threat, “it was still pretty intense,” she said. Odinmah and her friends were saved by a rabbi who calmed the man down. The rabbi referred to the man as Jeffery, offering him a bar of chocolate to lure the man back to his seat. Eventually, Jeffery did sit down—only to get up again to yell at other passengers on the train. At least, Odinmah said, he left her and her friends alone. “It was quite the train ride,” she said.

When it comes to bizarre subway stories, many other Stuyvesant students have a few to share. Like Odinmah, freshman Joseph Frankel was threatened by a passenger on the train for

spilling a drink on the subway. When the train started to move and the drink splashed a lady sitting next to him, she said, “Who do you think you are?” according to Frankel. When met with no response, the lady said, “I am gonna knock you out, child!”

“He was shouting at us, saying, ‘I’m the police! I’m going to arrest you!’”
—Priscilla Odinmah, sophomore

Other stories are less extreme. Junior Thomas Ng simply witnessed a homeless man sleeping spread-eagle under the subway seats and other passen-

gers’ confusion over how to react to the unconscious man.

On the contrary, freshman Connor Justice hasn’t ever been yelled at, but he still had to go through the excruciating experience of listening to a “crazy guy with dreadlocks,” said Justice, a boom box and a powerful set of lungs scream along to the music for an entire train ride home.

If an hour or so a day is enough time on the train for students to witness the absurd, then Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Station Agent Jay Stromer, stationed at the 66th street Lincoln Center terminal, has seen it all. Stromer deals with a multitude of passenger grievances, including parents who have lost their children, children who have lost their parents and the elderly who have misplaced their false teeth. Because of his job, Stromer is intimately acquainted with all sorts of undesirables who cause mayhem on the subway. He has on more than one occasion shut down power to keep people from getting injured on the track, including one man who was simply “inebriated and just lying on the track bed,” he said. Stromer had to pull a lever that powered down

the tracks in his station and then called the police to remove the man from the rail.

Unfortunately, the homeless and the insane are not the only ones causing trouble on the platforms. According to Stromer, the three o’clock rush is one of the worst times to ride the subway. The bustling crowd of excited teenagers fresh out of school gives rise to an extraordinary amount of violence. With all these fights on MTA property, Stromer has witnessed more shoving matches and sucker-punches than he’d care to remember. Schools kids, he said, can get pretty crazy.

Despite all the strange and even shocking occurrences, Stromer insists that the subway is the most fascinating way to travel. “The subway is the great common denominator of New York City,” he said. “The person sitting next to you could be a CEO or he could be homeless.” Undoubtedly, the diversity of people on the train serves to make the trip more interesting, as do the unusual encounters with them—providing riders with not only entertainment, but a good laugh after the surprise has worn off.

Stephen McClellan: Renaissance Man

By JUDY CHEN
and SAMIRA SIDDIQUE
with additional reporting by DANIELLE OBERDIER

On a winter morning in New York City, a Stuyvesant student’s trek to the subway station through massive slush piles may be the most difficult part of getting to school. For biology teacher Stephen McClellan, decking out in mountain biking gear, snow boots and his signature yellow waterproof bag is just the beginning. He then mounts his mountain bike, and his journey to Stuyvesant begins.

From Bushwick, Brooklyn to Lower Manhattan, McClellan rides his bike to school on a regular basis, enduring pain daily from handlebar paisley, a condition where the nerves in your hand constrict. McClellan want-

According to junior Margaret Borowczyk, Stephen McClellan is “the best bio teacher in the department.”

ed to fulfill his pledge to ride his bicycle to school every day last year, no matter the weather con-

ditions. He had always enjoyed riding bikes and it was “not as crowded as the subway and great cardiovascular exercise.” He also enjoys seeing the city and the seasons change.

Even on days when snow and sheets of solid ice cover the Brooklyn Bridge, McClellan still rides to school, opting for his mountain bike. He recalls a day when his mountain bike broke down and he had to ride his road bike, which has thinner tires. While on the Brooklyn Bridge, a car drove past him through an icy puddle, and an actual wave broke on him and his bike. He then had to “slide down the bridge” and couldn’t pedal since it was so icy. Luckily, no one was brave enough to bike on the bridge that day to see McClellan basically “fall the length of the Brooklyn Bridge on a bike.”

Unfortunately, McClellan has not been able to ride his bike for the past month “due to injuries,” unrelated to the past incident. He now temporarily rides the subway to school.

Aside from his choice of transportation, McClellan has some things in common with Stuyvesant students. During high school, McClellan took many honors classes in chemistry, physics and calculus, but also balanced his time by being very physically active in sports. There was also a period when he enjoyed skateboarding and listening to hip-hop. He then began listening to “all kinds of rock” and even claims to know a member of the band “The Queers.” After high school, McClellan went to school in North

Carolina, where he studied pre-med and industrial hygiene—“basically environmental stuff.” He then moved to Colorado for five years “just to snowboard and go mountain biking.” But he also worked in an engineering firm as a lab manager of applied sciences, and in a wastewater treatment facility in the mountains of Colorado.

During this period of his life, McClellan worked a variety of “odd jobs.” He drove buses, which involved learning to parallel park 40 foot long vehicles. He did industrial painting, which involved hanging from ropes upside down and painting hot steam pipes while he and his friends sang Nirvana songs. He clicked records and worked for a drug company. He was a bus washer, a dish washer, a cook and a bar tender. He also worked on an oyster farm in Alaska, while living on a boat, where he learned how to grit oysters, and how to grow oysters.

After working for a geotechnical engineering company in California, he decided to be a part of the NY Teaching Fellows Program, where teachers from various backgrounds collaborate to serve in underserved science schools. He worked at a school in the Bronx for several years before he was recommended to be a biology teacher at Stuyvesant High School three years ago. McClellan’s signature teaching style involves what he calls “visually engaging” outlines using PowerPoint presentations. Even more, he tries to make the chapters in the biology textbook less intimidating by making his presenta-



Before teaching Biology at Stuyvesant, Stephen McClellan worked as an industrial painter, bus driver, dish washer, bar tender and at variety of other odd jobs.

tions colorful. “Having tech in the classroom is very beneficial, even though I have to put in a lot of time, and money, for videos and nice projectors,” he said.

Junior Margaret Borowczyk, who had McClellan as a Biology teacher in freshman year, calls him the “best bio teacher in the department,” and enjoys how McClellan “fashions a Sierra Club (environmental organization) style beard, uses the term ‘macho squid’ in explaining oceanic mating rituals, explains that trees can be deciduous, unlike arms, and points out the hottest new ‘ecological vacation spots.’”

Junior Claire Littlefield enjoyed the personal anecdotes that McClellan inserts into his lessons. “He tells numerous amounts of stories about numerous ways he injured himself. I

found that pretty entertaining,” Littlefield said.

Aside from his visually attractive teaching style, McClellan has been a vegan for 10 years, and is now a vegetarian—a result of his concern for “animal rights” (he has five cats and once had a ferret). McClellan maintains his diet by usually cooking his own food. He even makes his own vegan soup at work in a croc pot.

So when he’s not spending his time mountain biking, sometimes all the way to Pennsylvania, or backpacking along the Appalachian Trail to Connecticut with his friends, or even driving across the country for his 19th time, McClellan constantly inspires his students with his amusing stories, amazing recreational activities and elaborate teaching tactics.

53

Number of Principal suspensions

80.3

Percent of teachers who have taught for more than 2 years at Stuyvesant

75.8

Percent of teachers who have taught for more than 5 years at any school

92.0

Percent of Stuyvesant teachers who have a Masters degree or higher

(for the 2007-2008 school year, according to Stuyvesant Comprehensive Educational Plan)

Features

Sleepless in Stuyvesant

By ABBY SCHAEFFER

It’s not surprising that a recent Spectator survey suggests that lack of sleep and being a Stuyvesant student go hand-in-hand. A famous quote in Stuyvesant is, “At Stuyvesant, you only get two out of three: good grades, friends and sleep.” When considering juniors and seniors, the yawns are not unexpected. But according to the survey, freshmen and sophomores are going to bed later and later as well, even with fewer advanced classes and extracurriculars.

Perhaps a lack of sleep is defensible by claiming that there aren’t enough hours in the day. As classes run for over seven hours, students spend most of their day away from home. In the recent survey of 120 Stuyvesant students ranging from freshmen to seniors, nearly 88 percent said that their commute to and from school normally takes an hour or less. In addition, about 70 percent determined that they usually get home between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Taking extracurricular activities into account, the school day lasts longer than just 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The majority of freshmen surveyed participate in at least one extracurricular activity, while the majority of seniors participate in at least two. According to junior Connie Li, a member of

the ultimate frisbee team, athletics is an important experience in her high school career. “I’m a sporty person,” Li said. “Being on a team just kind of motivates me.” However, Li usually arrives home at 8:00 p.m., which is “pretty late to start homework,” Li said.

But the work only continues at home. Many students take advanced classes that require more time and effort than the norm. One in three freshmen had already had at least one advanced class in the form of math honors, while sophomores and juniors typically have one or two. The majority of seniors had at least two advanced classes. Throughout the years at Stuyvesant, the workload seems to increase, partially by choice of the students.

“I don’t think people overstock on [Advanced Placement (AP) classes] for college. Only those with really low or really high grades actually want APs to show off,” senior Mahfuzur Miah said. Perhaps the passion alone can justify the amount of time one must dedicate to certain classes. “If you love the topic, it’s worth it regardless,” Miah said.

According to the poll, most freshmen and sophomores need two to three hours to finish their homework, while juniors and seniors need three hours or more. Underclassmen don’t have as many burdens in terms of classes as upperclassmen, yet they may

still find themselves having trouble with time management.

Procrastination also plays a big part in the homework process for all grades. “Unless you have a very easy schedule, you’ll pay for [slacking off],” senior Ben Schneider said. “If you get into the habit of doing your work late or doing poor-quality work, it will either result in less sleep or lower grades.”

The survey reported that students sleep around six hours every night on average, which is at least three hours too little. “The general consensus is that teenagers should be getting nine to 11 hours of sleep,” wrote associate professor Dr. Kurt Lushington, acting head of the School of Psychology at the University of South Australia, in an e-mail interview. According to Dr. Lushington, who has lead studies on teens and sleep, a lack of sleep has many repercussions, among them poor concentration, hypersensitiveness to minor stressors and loss of motivation. It can also lead to aggressive behavior and a diminished immune system.

“We should all be concerned by sleep loss,” Dr. Lushington wrote. “We need to talk about the role and importance of healthy sleep habits. We need to find a work, school and life balance that respects our health in this 24/7 culture.” While it is obvious that getting inadequate amounts of sleep is detrimental

to both body and mind, some Stuyvesant students are proud of all-nighters. It’s almost a mark of achievement when the rigor of one’s courses begins to have an adverse effect on one’s health.

“Students seem to wear [an all-nighter] as a badge of honor, and they spin it into a positive thing. The school’s not thrilled with it. But once it becomes a norm, it’s hard to say it’s a negative thing,” social worker John Mui said. “We throw that phrase around—time management. But you’ve got to have a plan. When you wing things, it takes longer.” Being a Stuyvesant student also apparently affects eating habits as well. Students may opt for some extra minutes of sleep over breakfast, or spend their lunch period doing homework and studying. Of the surveyed freshmen and sophomores, 75 percent eat breakfast nearly every day, compared to only 58 percent of surveyed juniors and seniors. As for lunch, 76 percent of surveyed underclassmen eat lunch on a daily basis. Meanwhile, only 63 percent of surveyed upperclassmen reported eating lunch on a daily basis. Some students even reported that they didn’t have lunch periods as a result of packed schedules.

Junior Eileen Kim is ambivalent about not having a lunch period. “It’s bad in that I don’t get a period to relax every day, but it’s good in that it prevents

me from procrastinating,” she said. According to her, lunch was usually a time for starting homework early or last-minute studying. As the poll statistics show, upperclassmen tend to take on more activities and courses and tend to sleep and eat on a less regular basis than their underclassmen counterparts. Some characteristics of life that Stuyvesant students share are affecting our health. The survey supports what many have always known—that the Stuyvesant student body isn’t particularly healthy, at least in their sleeping and eating habits. And while many students are aware of this fact, many eventually get accustomed to the little sleep and the irregular eating habits.

Health teacher Lisa Weinwurm believes that this is, in a way, normal. “Teenagers in general don’t necessarily have the healthiest habits and it’s not the best thing. But if you don’t change habits, you’re learning behaviors that carry on to college and the rest of your life,” she said. She understands, however, the pressures and stresses that cause these unhealthy habits. In the end, Weinwurm has three pieces of sagacious advice for the sleep-deprived and meal-skipping Stuyvesant student. “Listen to your body. Know when to ask for help. Keep open lines of communication,” she said.

ADVERTISEMENTS

mtc

ENJOY YOUR MATHEMATICS!

① Secure the Mathpedia!

-Thirsty for math? Quench it with new method.-

World's best math test prep books

NEW MATHOD

-MATHEMATICS Of Dream- series

SAT I · SAT II · AMC · AIME · USAMO and other math contests!

• Red course (p.374 / \$70.00); Limited edition	Manhattan	Queens
• Orange course (p.414 / \$80.00); Limited edition	Korea Books	Hankook Books
• Green course (p.442 / \$90.00); Coming soon	(212) 564-1844	(718) 762-1200

② Learn from the author!

-Having difficulties in math? Entrust them to MTC.-

USA top level math training camp

INTO THE STORM!

-Special Training Of Real Math-

Math B · Precalculus · Calculus(BC) and math team competitions!

- Math team members and advanced math students only.

All about the math.....(718) 229- 9200

www.mathtrainingcenter.com

Ace the Final

SAT

ACT

Geller Test

Ace the Final,
the specialized tutoring company
designed and staffed by
Stuyvesant Alumni

For more information about one-on-one tutoring or group classes,
please call, email, or visit us at

212 283 5670 | contact@acethefinal.com | acethefinal.com

18,919	31,662	37,050	183,022
Amount of money allocated for library books in 2008	Amount of money allocated for computer software in 2008	Amount of money allocated for computer hardware in 2008	Amount of money allocated for textbooks in 2008
Thanks to: The Department of Education			

Cartoons

"HIATUS"

By Aidan Bonner

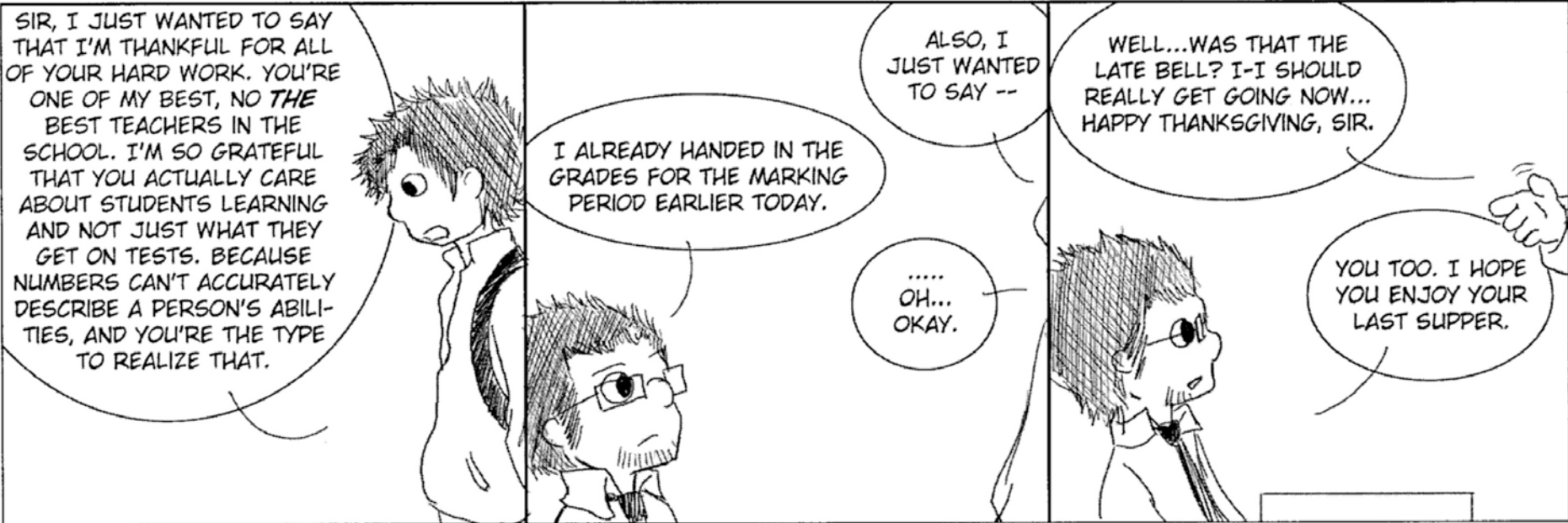


STUY. JUST...STUY... by Jin Suh



LACK OF HOLIDAY SPIRIT

ERICA CHAN



Delinquents

MONIKA TUCHOWSKA



Editorials

STAFF EDITORIAL

The Breakdown

When his appointment is made official, Eric Holder will be the first African-American to hold the position of United States Attorney General.

Holder and president-elect Barack Obama’s Chief Campaign Strategist David Axelrod, both Stuyvesant alumna, are testaments to the opportunities that a Stuyvesant education provides. However, as the number of black and Hispanic students enrolled at Stuyvesant continues to decrease, such opportunities become less available to New York City students of these races.

According to an article published in the Friday, November 7 edition of The New York Times, “Racial Imbalance Persists at Elite Public Schools,” two percent of blacks and three percent of Hispanics who took the SHSAT were granted admission to the Stuyvesant Class of 2012, compared to 24 percent of whites and 72 percent of Asians. The disparity reflected in these statistics is disturbing, and we agree that some action should be taken to address this unsettling trend.

Admission to Stuyvesant is based solely on the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT), which over 20,000 students from all over New York City take each year. Of these applicants, 28 percent are black, 23 percent are Hispanic, 30 percent are Asian and 19 are percent white. Although the majority of those admitted to Stuyvesant can be classified as either white or Asian, there is a large amount of variety within those groups. Students with varying interests, talents and beliefs are brought together by the ability to pass a test. We are a community of learners, and most of us want to be here and be challenged. Whether the kid sitting at the desk next to

us is white or black or Asian or Hispanic doesn’t matter. What’s important is that he or she contributes to Stuyvesant’s learning community.

On the other hand, our school’s racial homogeneity has negatively impacted our social and overall educational experiences. If blacks and Hispanics were more represented in our classrooms, our education would benefit from the ability to hear other perspectives on the topics we study. Also, we as a student body tend to self-segregate according to race when it comes to choosing friends, a phenomenon perpetuated by the disproportionate representation of certain groups. If there were a greater racial balance within our school, we might be less likely to cling to those similar to us. Ultimately, racial diversity must be addressed not only to better the educational experience of Stuyvesant students, but as an act of social justice.

The New York City Department of Education has recognized the racial imbalance within the Specialized High Schools and has, over the past few years, invested in attempts to get more minorities to pass the test. However, in recent years, black and Hispanic enrollment has actually been decreasing. This is a complicated issue, grounded both in problems with early education and a lack of awareness about the schools and the test. No one has been able to pinpoint the exact cause, much less find a solution.

One attempt that has been made to curb this trend is the Specialized High Schools Institute. Founded in 1994 to give blacks and Hispanics a greater chance for success on the SHSAT, members of those racial groups

who enroll in it are three times as likely to get in. However, a 2007 lawsuit has changed the criteria for admission to the program from race to income. We admire the attempt to give lower income students a greater chance at being admitted to the Specialized High Schools, but the City needs to acknowledge the importance of maintaining a program that gives more opportunities to blacks and Hispanics who are currently underrepresented.

There are some small steps that we, the Stuyvesant student body, should take to provide equal opportunities to black and Hispanic middle school students. For example, a coalition of students, under the leadership of Big Sibbs, ARISTA and the Guidance Department, could form an outreach program. These students and guidance counselors would travel to middle schools in underrepresented neighborhoods to inform students about Stuyvesant. Then, interested students who demonstrate the potential to get into Stuyvesant would be matched with a Stuyvesant student from one of these organizations, who would tutor this student for the SHSAT. This might not significantly increase the percentages of minority students here, but it would be a start. A few students would have an excellent education that they may not have otherwise received.

America strives to be a country of equal opportunity, but cannot necessarily guarantee equal outcome. Not every student that graduates from Stuyvesant can be as successful as Eric Holder has been, but it is our responsibility to play our part in ensuring that all of New York City’s students have an equal opportunity to receive an excellent education.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: Metal Detectors To Be Implemented During Finals Week

I am pleased that Principal Stanley Teitel has taken an interest in combating cheating at Stuyvesant. During my four years there, cheating was rampant, and with this measure, the administration has shown an attempt to defeat this academic evil.

That being said, I am disconcerted by his move. By using metal detectors for the week, Teitel will do very little, if anything at all, to address Stuyvesant’s near-indestructible culture of cheating, which both tantalizes students with easy 100s and effortless A+s and contributes to Stuyvesant’s

free, friendly and stress-driven community dynamic.

It is easy for Teitel to use cell phones as a scapegoat for the problem of cheating—cell phones, after all, have been blasted by the Department of Education. But removing cell phones will not end the problem. Teitel needs to attack the problem through positive, but firm, policies and a partnership with parents and students. He should not use an aggressive and one-time action.

I conclude with several questions that linger in my mind: If

one week of metal detector use successfully curbs cheating, who is to say that one semester will not be successful as well? How about one year? Or ten? What student, parent or teacher would be able to refute the argument that metal detectors should be installed permanently?

Should students be checked by metal detectors every day to eliminate cheating, if, perhaps, something far greater is removed in the process?

—Victor Zapana (’07)

23rd Annual
Medical Ethics Symposium
Mind, Body and Beyond
Murray Kahn Theater, after 10th
Thursday, December 18th
Free food and raffle

The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



“The Pulse of the Student Body”

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Sam Gerstenzang*

MANAGING EDITOR
Melissa Chan*

NEWS EDITORS
Paulina Karpis
Rachel Kim
Arianna Moshary

FEATURES EDITORS
Danielle Oberdier
Abby Schaeffer*

OPINIONS EDITORS
Rebecca Elliott*
Gavin Huang
Kiran Sury

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITORS
James Dennin*
Alan Sage

SPORTS EDITORS
Luc Cohen*
Christopher Zhao

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITORS
Sean Gordon-Loebl
Stephanie London
Diane Yee

ART DIRECTORS
Ava Hecht
Andy Pratt

LAYOUT EDITORS
Lodoe Sangmo
Vivian Sze
Laura Ye

COPY EDITORS
Divya Dayal
Jonathan Lerner

BUSINESS MANAGERS
Janet Kim
Grace Lee

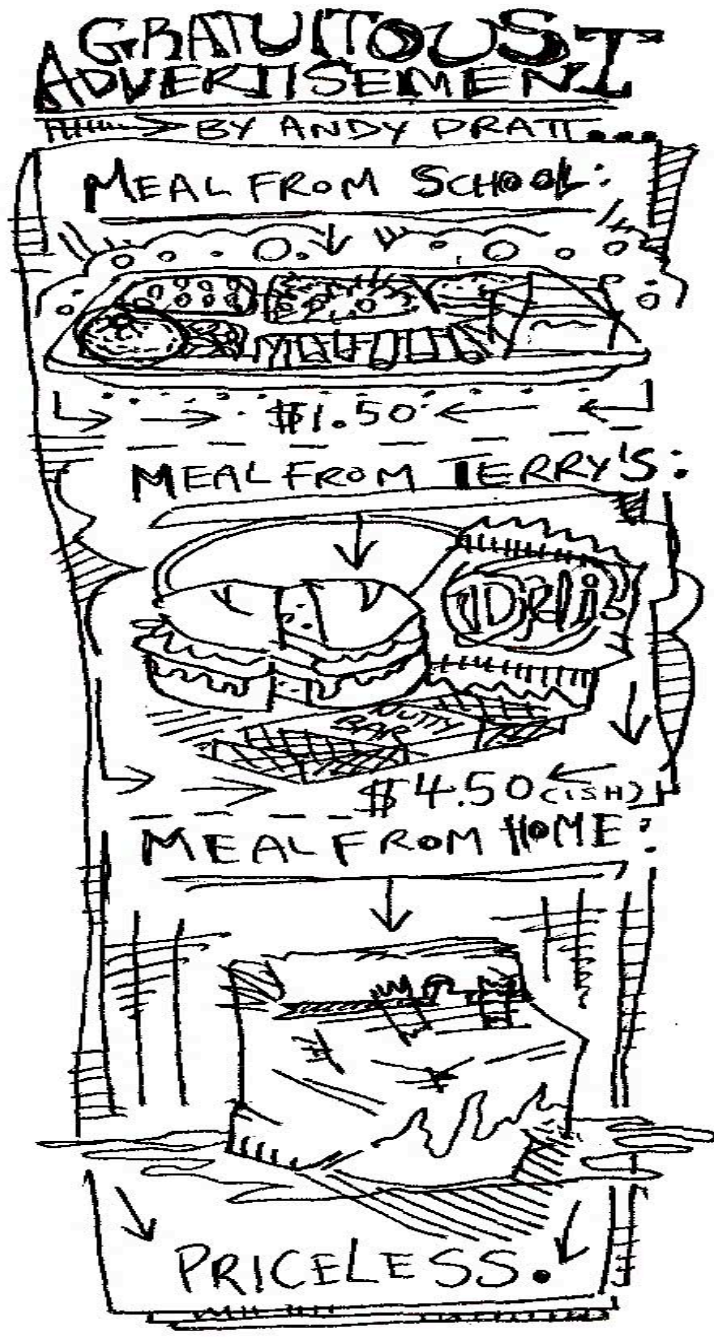
WEB EDITORS
Victor Ma
Jenny Ye

FACULTY ADVISOR
Kerry Garfinkel

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

We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and length.
© 2008 The Spectator
All rights reserved by the creators.
* Managing Board Members

OP-ART



FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 5, both Christopher Zhao and Charlie Gingold wrote “Athlete Spotlight: Nick Goldin-Varsity Football’s Golden Boy.”
- In Issue 6, Arianna Moshary did additional reporting for “Club/Pub Fair Reorganized.”
- In “Leslie Bernstein: Beat Outside-the-Boxer,” Bernstein did not paint Guidance Counselor Meredith Negrin’s home. In the outline of the lower right photo, it should have read wooden purses, not persons.
- In “And Three Makes Seven,” the grade of Robert Stevenson was misidentified. He is a senior. In the outline of the photo, Willa Beckman’s grade was incorrectly stated. She is a sophomore. The actor of Henri was misstated. Beckman plays Henri.

Opinions

The Real Frontrunners



Michael Silverblatt / The Spectator

By ANI SEFAJ

My name is Ani Sefaj and I ran for Sophomore Class President. My journey began early this year with a simple goal. No, this goal was not to inspire ‘Hope’ or ‘Change’ or to become the first Albanian Class President at Stuyvesant High School. My goal was to have a movie made about my historic rise to the highest office in the sophomore grade. But sadly, this was not to be—mostly because I didn’t win, and partially because the documentary was a sham. But luckily, readers, you can still find out the real story, the dirty secrets behind the election, from yours truly.

In mid-September, I approached my soon-to-be-running mate, Keiji Drysdale. Although hesitant at first, Mr. Drysdale was quick to get on the ticket after I

mentioned some of the perks of being Sophomore Class President or Vice President, namely the rights to ride the elevator and use the Student Union’s private jet. After a coin flip, it was decided that Keiji would be the Robin to my Batman. And so, the most powerful ticket ever created to win the class elections popularity contest was formed.

On an October afternoon, the candidates were instructed to line up outside the Student Union Office to be briefed on the requirements and rules of campaigning. I laughed at the would-be competition and feigned interest during the meeting.

Our first objective was to get 100 signatures, which I managed to do by third period the following day, after passing a signature sheet around each of my classes. Second was to find photos of Keiji and myself. Luckily, we always keep glamour shots of ourselves in our lockers. Lastly, we needed a list of 10 campaign managers. We thought long and hard about this over a power lunch, and came up with a list of campaign managers to appeal to every demographic at Stuy. The potheads, the athletes, the popular Asians,

the math team members. Everyone was targeted—well, except the quiet Asian kids. Although they make up the majority of our school and might vote in record numbers, we realized that it would be unrealistic to expect them to do so.

Our next goal was to write up a campaign statement. Although we were intent on making our platform, “Ani – Keiji: Down with the bitches and hoes,” we were forced to reject this because of an arbitrary SU rule about vulgarity, and instead splice together a 150 word statement of empty promises.

And then the campaign began. It was a dangerous game. Making posters, locating that ideal poster spot, ripping down other candidates’ posters who’ve already taken that spot, the shady deals to campaign for other people online (and get them disqualified)...I still feel dirty after what I did. I’ve scrubbed and I’ve scrubbed, but I swear, they don’t make water hot enough. But the Ani – Keiji ticket was in the top two after the primaries and moved on to the general election. The only competition left was Mohammed and Kathy,

or MoKatz as I affectionately call them.

And here our glorious run came to a quiet end. It was at this time that I learned I could not be both Sophomore President and apply to be an editor of The Spectator, because of a conflict of interests. I told this to Keiji and it was decided that we would continue running, win the election, and then I would do something incredibly stupid to get myself impeached so that Keiji could ascend to the presidency. I imagined the headlines of The Spectator. “Ani Sefaj Wins Sophomore Elections,” by Ani Sefaj, and a week later “Sophomore President Ani Sefaj Pees in Drinking Fountain, Gets Impeached,” by possibly soon-to-be-editor Ani Sefaj.

But time went by and our interest in the election fizzled. In late October we decided that being president and vice president wasn’t cool anymore. I also had second thoughts about peeing in a drinking fountain to get impeached. You see, I have a shy bladder, and with all those people watching in the hallways, it would have been impossible.

Keiji and I began to tell oth-

ers to vote for MoKatz and not for us. And Election Day went by, not with a bang, but with a whimper. MoKatz won. And somehow the Ani – Keiji ticket still had 63 votes from 63 people who were just too attached to the idea of our presidency.

My quest to become class president ended in defeat. Yet, I learned a great deal from my experiences, and the time has come to impart my knowledge to the next generation of campaigners. Elections are a joke, but everyone already knows that. Although it is common knowledge that the elections are a popularity contest, it is not entirely so. While you are guaranteed to win if you have at least 100 friends, you have to make sure that these friends aren’t the lazy kinds who decide not to vote in the face of a long line. And lastly, do not place so much importance on poster making. It’s true that a funny poster might win a vote or two, but word of mouth and threats work so much better. I hope that this article has left you, dear reader, with a sense of pride in our school’s democratic election system.

Cut it Out



Rosa Huang / The Spectator

By DANIEL SOLOMON

Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Chancellor Joel Klein are at it again. To combat recent budget deficits, they have announced a plan that would strip New York City public schools of \$180 million this year and \$385 million the year after, for a total of \$560 million. This will result in Stuyvesant receiving a 3.5 percent budget cut, which will undoubtedly adversely impact certain aspects of our high school experience.

According to the Department of Education (DOE)’s Division of Budget Operations, Stuyvesant’s budget amounts to \$17 million annually. With the cuts, the school will lose \$304,000 this year.

Our school already receives far less on a per-student basis than the average school does because the DOE uses the Fair Student Formula (FSF), which determines a school’s budget, not based on enrollment, but on what the students need. Under the FSF, we receive less than what we would under a need-blind and, what I think is, fair allocation of funding. Even with that, we will still be shortchanged \$55,000, according to the preliminary budget for Stuyvesant High School, Fiscal Year 2009. Although our school has successfully coped with a lack of funds in the past, we are as much entitled to a quality education as anybody else.

This latest belt-tightening threatens to severely limit the amount of courses we are offered and how many we can take. It may potentially restrict club activities, which are overseen by faculty advisors who need to be paid. Unlike previous threats, this one seems very real and comes in a time of economic crisis.

I hope everyone likes walking up and down broken escalators because in his

letter outlining the cuts, Klein proposed drastically scaling down maintenance and repair costs for schools. On top of these cuts, many of us already have to shell out money for basic things in what is supposedly a free education, whether it’s 30 dollars for lab fees or 450 dollars to participate in a school sport like junior varsity football. The least the DOE could do is keep our school clean.

What Bloomberg should do is hunker down on wasteful spending, much of which he is responsible for. One Village Voice piece this week, “The Transformation of Mike Bloomberg,” revealed many aspects of his mayoralty, namely his multiple conflicts of interest and evidence of corruption. For years, he has covertly sold off public properties to his robber-baron friends and showered them with millions of dollars of gifts, which are tax-payer money in the form of no-bid contracts. These contracts, unlike others, are not open to competition to other corporations that may be able to offer better services for lower prices. This same administration, according to the Daily News, paid \$20 million to redesign school bus routes that resulted in just giving kindergarteners Metrocards.

It is the same mayor who approved the sale of 110 Livingston Street, the former headquarters of the then-Board of Education, to Two Trees Management for \$45 million, far below market value, as reported by The New York Times in 2003. The same Bloomberg, who tried to force the sale of the West Side rail yards for \$200 million cheaper than the highest bidder offered. The same person who vehemently opposed an additional one percent millionaire’s tax, something which would have gone a long way to close New York’s budget gap, according to another New York Times article in 2008 “Poll Finds Wide Support for Tax on Millionaires.” And now, he and Klein have the chutzpah to demand 3.5 percent of Stuyvesant’s budget?

Regardless of whether the nation is in a recession or depression, education spending should never be reduced to the level that is being proposed. A good education is essential to success and to breaking the poverty cycle many disadvantaged children live in. Quality public education is instrumental in determining the prosperity of the city and nation. Last June, when Bloomberg and his cronies attempted to do this with the specter of a recession overhead, the City Council stood tall, rejected his plan and restored the proposed cuts back to Stuyvesant’s budget. Now the Council should follow the example it has set.

Cheater Cheater



Tincey Wang / The Spectator

By EMMA DRIES

Students steal a glance across the aisle, carry scaled down cheat sheets under their desks and plug formulas into graphing calculators before sitting down to take a test. They scratch verb conjugations into their desk and develop intricate hand motions to show that number four on a chemistry test is answer choice C. They spend all night on Facebook instead of studying, and come in the next day begging the kid in front of them to position his or her Scantron within easy sight. These are just some of the ways students get away with illegally bumping up their grades on tests and quizzes.

No matter what the reason, Stuyvesant students seem to be especially willing to cheat. The motivation to cheat isn’t always based on average teenage laziness. Students sometimes cheat because they have too much work to find the time to study. Excessive pressure to do well may also be a factor.

Considering this, we can look to parents as a part of the problem. “I know plenty of [Stuyvesant] people whose parents expect the very best in them. My cousin, who went to Stuy years ago, had a father who would yell at him whenever he didn’t get 100 on a test,” junior Tasso Bountouvas said. While there isn’t any justification for cheating your way through a class, excessive pressure from parents with high expectations just adds fuel to the fire. Parents need to understand that academics aren’t everything.

Reasons for cheating can also originate in the classroom. Within the same subject, teaching styles and test difficulty can vary from widely. Someone working extra hard in a class with difficult tests may end up with a worse grade than someone who is slacking off in an easy class. Even worse is

when a teacher gives impossibly hard tests that include material not covered in class. Such frustrations can lead to cheating. To remedy these situations, the administration should focus on hiring more competent teachers.

In the end, we can’t fully blame parents, teachers or the administration. Many different things provoke cheating, but it’s ultimately the student’s decision. However, it is extremely unlikely that students will suddenly understand the depravity of cheating and put an end to it.

Teachers should enforce stronger punishments, and they should look to teachers who already have strict anti-cheating policies as examples.

Therefore, teachers should become more intolerant of cheating. They should enforce harsher punishments, and they should look to teachers who already have strict anti-cheating policies as examples. These policies include automatically failing students on tests they get caught cheating on, failing students in the whole course or forcing students to meet with the dean. Cheating can go on your permanent academic record. Think about having to explain that on your college applications.

Some teachers also try to catch cheating after a test. Some photocopy students’ individual answer sheets before handing them back. Others ask students to circle their answers in pen before handing in their tests. A few check all their students’ Scantrons by hand before handing them back. Some teachers pace the aisles and tell students to keep their eyes on their own papers. Many provide a few different test forms to be distributed in alternating columns. It’s important that more teachers adopt these methods to decrease the number of people who escape punishment.

It’s extremely idealistic to assume that people will listen when they’re told that cheating is wrong. People cheat for many reasons, some of which are slightly understandable, but all of which are unjustifiable. The administration should be encouraged to crack down on cheating.

Arts & Entertainment

Mix Grill: Not So Middle Eastern After All



Mix Grill, a restaurant located on Church Street, offers budget-friendly Middle Eastern dishes.

By TAMMUZ HUBERMAN

There is an aroma of spices all aroThe aroma of spices abounds. Waiters gossip with you while you wait for your food. The atmosphere is like that of any Middle Eastern restaurant. However, the new Middle Eastern fast food joint on Church Street, Mix Grill, is anything but.

Mix Grill offers a combination of Middle Eastern fare as well as typical American dishes that dominate much of the menu. The menu has a large portion dedicated to egg sandwiches and omelets (\$1.50 to \$3.25). Mix

respective spits, however, makes ordering a Mix Grill shawarma a worthwhile experience.

Mix Grill’s décor certainly doesn’t add to its appeal. The store consists of one small, wooden counter and about four chairs. The food is kept in a glass display and often looks rather stale.

“You couldn’t pay me to eat there,” sophomore Abbie Kouzmanoff said, after witnessing an employee lick a gloved finger. Mix Grill received 32 health violation points in September for inadequate lighting and signage, though the problem has since been dealt with. Mix Grill did not receive any violation points in a follow-up October inspection.

The eatery is open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day except Sunday. According to Jedidi, the busiest time at Mix Grill is between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. The usually fast service slows down a bit, but is still fast enough for students to grab a quick lunch. “We gained popularity very quickly,” Jedidi said. “It’s been really heavy from the first day.”

For those on a budget, you can’t beat Mix Grill’s prices. Nothing on the menu is over \$6.50 and portions are generous. “The prices are really great,” Greenberg said. “Even for some of the more American foods, it might be cheaper to get it at Mix

Grill also sells burgers, bagels, soups and salads (\$1 to \$6). “The menu is really varied, but I usually get the few Middle Eastern dishes since the other ones can be found almost anywhere,” customer Sarah Greenberg said.

Despite its generally eclectic menu, Mix Grill offers a sizeable selection of typical Middle Eastern dishes. The grill offers the classic Middle Eastern shawarma (\$5), a sandwich composed of shaved meat (usually lamb or chicken), lettuce and tomato, all wrapped in pita bread. “The lamb shawarma is our most popular meal,” said Saif Jedidi, the owner of Mix Grill. “People usually get it with the platter so then they get a larger portion.” The shawarma platter is offered for \$6.50.

While the grill offers these Middle Eastern dishes, the food’s quality is questionable. “For what it’s worth, I prefer my greasy lamb from a pushcart,” said sophomore Daniel Frankel after tasting the shawarma sandwich. “Mix Grill’s shawarma sandwich was pretty awful.” Watching a rather dangerous-looking knife shave lamb and chicken off their

“You couldn’t
pay me to
eat there.”
—Abbie
Kouzmanoff,
sophomore

Grill than at a deli or diner.”

Many of Mix Grill’s customers come for its Middle Eastern fare and stay for its American—although some don’t stay at all. “The so-called Middle Eastern dishes are pretty bad,” said Danna Rabin, an Israeli native and customer at Mix Grill. “If anything, the American food there is so much better.”

Mix Grill
195 Church Street
Between Reade and
Chambers Streets

Culturefest: Dancing and Dining

By RITA KIRZHNER
and HAYWARD LEACH

With dazzling performances and delicious food, Stuyvesant’s second annual Culture Festival is a chance for students to celebrate ethnicities through a night of entertainment.

Held on Friday, November 21, the festival included an hour and 15 minute buffet-style food service in the cafeteria, where tables of food were set up and arranged by country of origin, and a talent show afterwards.

This year, the Culture Festival sold around 500 tickets, a vast improvement from last year’s

Students
wound through
the cafeteria,
scooping up
food from
different tables.

sale of 250. According to senior and budget director Anamika Saha, the heads of the Culture Festival plan to create a fund for next year’s Festival with the profit made this year.

The lines for the food were enormous, but were organized well by the ARISTA members acting as the event’s food servers. Students wound through the cafeteria, scooping up food from different tables. Varieties of sushi rolls—California, eel, spicy tuna and more—dominated the Japanese table, but students were only allotted one piece each.

Sophomore Teresa Yan found that other tables satisfied her desire for a medley of food. “The Indian table had a lot of home cooked foods that I liked a lot.

They gave me a good feel for the culture,” Yan said. The Indian table achieved their goal of presenting guests with a wide selection of Indian dishes, offering biryani rice, curried chicken, fried vegetables with mango sauce and bowls of orange sweet rice. Some students prepared food for the festival, but the majority of the event’s buffet came from local restaurants. “The Chinese food came from China Red and Chapham in Chinatown,” Saha said. The Indian food came from Salaam Bombay, and the sushi was ordered from Haines Sushi.

The food was delicious, but the service had its share of problems. The food was served cold, and the organizers ran out of paper plates. Not that this deterred the students from the food, as they began eating out of plastic cups. When the food supply ran low, servers gave significantly smaller servings to stretch what remained of the buffet.

Once everyone had eaten their fill, the crowd left the cafeteria and milled towards the auditorium, where the show hosts, seniors Angi Guo and Niloy Iqbal, began the evening with playful jokes.

The performances kicked off with a traditional Indian dance. The dancers, clad in decorative saris, performed with grace and were received with mass applause. Later, martial artists displayed their talents, bounding onto the stage with kicks, jumps and loud yells. Other acts included hip-hop dance groups and a solo on the guzheng, a traditional Chinese harp.

Easily the most crowd-pleasing performance of the night, the South Asian Skit had students laughing and cheering throughout. While introducing the skit, performer Iqbal said, “Please don’t be offended. It [the skit] just gives us a chance to laugh at ourselves.” The hilarious skit consisted of a conversation between three cou-

ples: one American, one Indian and the other Bengali. It included many jokes between the different cultures that brought bursts of laughter from the audience.

The culture festival, more than anything else, is a chance for students to learn more about their culture, and introduce them to new ones.

Although the actors were sometimes inaudible, sound technicalities did nothing to change the crowd’s enthusiasm.

The culture festival, more than anything else, is a chance for students to learn more about their culture, and introduce them to new ones. Senior Jennifer Yeon, a dancer in a Korean hip-hop group, said, “A few years ago, I kind of grew out of Korean culture. The culture fest has begun to get me interested in Korean pop-culture again.” Yet some students think the cultures represented are too limited. “The name [of the festival] is misleading, since only Asian cultures are represented: China, Japan, India, Bangladesh and Korea. Some people might think that many different cultures are participating,” sophomore Raymond Tse said.

Although there were few cultures involved, the participants of the Culture Festival pulled off an entertaining and enjoyable evening, plastic cups and all.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Olympiad Academia

188-16 Northern Blvd. #202 Flushing, NY 11358
(Located on the second floor of HSBC)
Phone (718)762-6364, (718)309-3933

SAT I (PSAT included) - 9/8 Start

- 1) Wed 6-9pm: English Reading & Writing
- 2) Fri 6-9pm: English Reading & Writing
- 3) Sat 10am-2pm (3 sections):

English Reading & Writing (3 hrs) + Math (1 hr)

- 4) Sat 3-7pm (3 sections):

English Reading & Writing (3 hrs) + Math (1 hr)

- 5) Saturday 10am-2pm & 3-7pm: Includes advanced classes for those who scored over 2000 on the SAT

- 5) SAT I English & Math 1:1 tutoring available

SAT II (prep. for May & June 2009 tests) - 2nd week of October ~ April 2009
(7 months)

- 1) Biology: Sat 6-8pm (total 56 hrs)
- 2) Chemistry: Sat 6-8pm (total 56 hrs)
- 3) Physics: Sat 8-10am (total 56 hrs)
- 4) Math (Pre-Calculus & Math Level II):

Fri 7-9pm (total 56 hrs)

- 5) U.S. History (SAT II + AP): Fri 5-7pm (total 56 hrs)

- 6) World History, Spanish, and English Literature 1:1 tutoring available

Essay Writing (Instructor: Greg Marks, Ph.D) - 9/10 Start

- 1) SAT I Essay: Tues 7-9pm
- 2) College Application Essays: Mon 7-9pm

Olympiad

- 1) Biology Olympiad: 9/16 Start. Sunday 1-4pm
- 2) Math Olympiad: 9/15 Start. Saturday 6-9pm
- 3) Chemistry Olympiad 1:1 tutoring available
- 4) Physics Olympiad 1:1 tutoring available

Arts & Entertainment



‘Urine’ing for Success

By ALLEGRA WIPRUD
and HYEMIN YI

Musical theater often takes itself too seriously. Save shows such as “Urine-town.”

Directed by senior James Dennin, junior Annalise Lockhart, assistant directed by sophomore Serena Berry and produced by sophomore Jaimie Meyers and senior Alexa Solimano, “Urinetown” was the Stuyvesant Theater Community (STC)’s 2008 fall musical. A musical satire (and satire on the musical genre), the show takes place in a drought-ridden city where private toilets have been outlawed. A corrupt mega corporation, the “Urine Good Company” (UGC), controls the public ones.

As Officer Lockstock (senior Ray Hicks), the UGC’s corrupt enforcer, introduces the audience to Urinetown, Little Sally (junior Molly Balsam) pops in and the two go on to discuss what would kill a show—bad subject matter and a bad title. With such an opening scene, it’s clear that the most prominent aspect of “Urinetown” is its ability to take itself lightly. Hicks filled in at the last moment after the administration removed other actors from the cast for academic reasons, but still maintained an incredible chemistry with the rest of the cast.

The show had a rocky beginning. The lyrics of the opening song, “Urinetown,” were difficult to hear. A failing sound system and the chorus’ poor diction did not make for a good combination, though emphatic conducting by junior Alex Jaffe always got the frequently confused chorus back on track.

“Follow Your Heart,” a number sung by protagonist, rebel and romantic hero Bobby Strong (junior Hayward Leach) and Hope Cladwell (senior Ella Gibson) was by far the most aesthetically pleasing. The two, connected by the hope for a new world of private toilets, end the number with a kiss. Leach and Gibson were clearly the strongest singers of the cast.

One of the most memorable numbers of the production was “Don’t Be The Bunny,” sung by Caldwell B. Cladwell

(sophomore Abie Sidell), the “bad guy” owner of the UGC and his staff. Cladwell instructs his daughter Hope on how to be the winner in life rather than the victim through the analogy of a victimized rabbit’s gruesome death.

For the most part, the first act was decidedly mediocre. The forceable removal of Old Man Strong (junior James Slade), Bobby’s father, and “Follow Your Heart” remained some of the most captivating moments. The earlier numbers like “It’s a Privilege to Pee,” sung by senior Dylan Tramontin were adequate but offered the audience few surprises. However, the stagnant blocking (stage placement) of some sections, such as the line-up of townspeople in the beginning, was made up for by the impressively arranged Act I Finale, when Hope is taken hostage.

Hard-to-hear sound lyrics added to the first act’s problems, though sound became progressively better as the show went on. Technical problems also diminished during the Saturday performance.

The second act begins in the rebels’ secret hideout. Bobby finds out that Hope is the daughter of Cladwell, and the restless rebels want to “Snuff That Girl.” In general, this segment’s jazz-influenced choreography was perhaps the least cohesive. After the rebels kidnap Hope and bring her to their hideout (subtly noted by a sign labelled “secret hideout”), Bobby reappears, and calms the rebels. He then leads them in a thoroughly enjoyable gospel number, “Run, Freedom, Run.”

After Bobby’s murder by Officers Lockstock and Barrel (Felix Handte), which included Leach’s well-flowing performance of “Why Did I Listen to that Man?,” the revolution continues with Hope leading the rebels to the office of the UGC. The rebels kill off Cladwell’s followers in a clichéd but well-executed “dramatic” slow-motion fashion. The revolution triumphs and everyone can pee whenever he or she wants, wherever he or she wants, with whomever he or she wants.

Despite some weak choreography, the second act was far more impressive than the first. Innovative blocking

like having Bobby’s ghost appear on a ledge closer to the audience towards the end of the show finally provided much craved-for uniqueness. The final performance of the “Urinetown” number was far more energetic than the opening rendition, and the cast successfully brought the show full circle.

The drab and cartoonish set was perfect for the show, providing the necessary ambiance without becoming distracting. An enormous dollar bill, painted with the face of capitalist giant Cladwell, served as an impressive backdrop for Cladwell’s headquarters.

The sound system was clearly at its worst during both showings of Urinetown. It seemed that only three or four characters wore body microphones, and the stage microphones were wholly inadequate. Though most of the dialogue was audible, much of the singing was not.

“Fiscal constraints have prevented us from restoring the sound and lighting systems to full working order,” said senior Thomas Ansorge, one of the sound directors, in reference to the broken systems. There were also some strange problems with the rather drab lighting—parts of scenes played out in the dark, though this problem diminished during the second performance.

“Urinetown” was an excellent choice for the fall musical, given the times. Between environmental mismanagement, a poverty-stricken populace, a leader of the people promising hope and change and the rise and fall of exploitative corporate giants, the events in the show seem reminiscent of recent events. At the end of the show, Lockstock comes onstage to tell the audience that the townspeople are now dying from a drought. When her father tells her that “life is a beating,” Hope responds, “Then life is wrong. Life should be beautiful.” The message of hope ends in failure by the end of the show—hopefully, not also the fate of our era.

*James Dennin and Leili Saber
were not involved in the editing
or writing of this article.*



Photos by Sam Gerstenzang



Sports

Girls' Volleyball

Vixens' Season Stopped Short

By CODY LEVINE

The Vixens, Stuyvesant's girls' varsity volleyball team, opened the playoffs with a victory over the Secondary School for Law, Journalism and Research, after receiving a first-round bye. Stuyvesant, which entered the playoffs seeded third, had played the team before and had



“We’ve had a great year.”
–Phil Fisher, coach

handled them with ease. This turned out to be detrimental, as the overconfident Vixens started off slow in the first game of the best-of-three match, which was held on Sunday, November 16, at Hunter College. “They came out strong and kind of took us by surprise,” junior Marantha Dawkins said. “We got it together though and finished strong.” Senior and captain Tina Khiani blames jitters for the slow start, but the team bounced back from an early deficit to win the first game 25-16.

This was the first playoff experience for five of the starters. “I was kind of nervous at the beginning and we were down 15-13 in the first set. After the timeout we just rallied and won some points,” said junior Imelda Ko,

one of these five. “It was a good learning experience.”

The team didn't have much time to savor the win. Their second round match against McKee/Staten Island Technical High School was two days later on Tuesday, November 18. McKee/Staten Island Tech was the sixth seed, and many members of the Vixens believed that they would be a formidable opponent. “We don't expect easy points and we expect to have a lot of long rallies. It won't be over quick,” Khiani said before the game. “It might even go into three games.” Nevertheless, she expected to win.

While Khiani was right in that the match went to three games, the Vixens came out on the losing end. After losing the first match by a score of 25-20, Stuyvesant rallied to win the second game 25-17. They then went on to lose the third and final game by a significant margin of 25-10, ending what was once a promising season.

Although McKee/Staten Island Tech was a solid team, the Vixens thought they should have won. “We did not play to the best of our abilities today,” freshman Melissa Chin said. “They played better than us.”

Coach and physical education teacher Phil Fisher agreed. “We had more talent, but talent doesn't always win the game,” Fisher said. Nevertheless, he believed that the season on the whole was a success. After five starters graduated last year, this season was intended to be a rebuilding one for the Vixens, but they managed to turn themselves into serious contenders. “We've had a great year,” Fisher said. “I

know you're feeling down now, but when you look back at it in a couple of days and realize, hey our expectations might have been high.”

Fisher believed that Khiani's performance as a captain was exemplary, both on and off the field. “She did a great job leading a very young team to a wonderful season,” he said. Earlier in the season, Fisher nominated Khiani for the Heisman-Wingate award, which is given to the best player in New York City in each respective sport. The winner is expected to be announced shortly.

The end of this season marks the end of the seniors' high school volleyball careers. Four seniors in total, two of them starters, will be graduating, leaving a void that the younger players must fill. With star players such as juniors Ko and Alex Albright, as well as rising star Chin, Stuyvesant looks to do just that. Chin's development, in particular was one of the bright points of the season for the Vixens. “It'll be awesome to see how much better she gets with time,” Albright said about Chin. “She is going to be an amazing player.”

The outgoing seniors will not only miss playing volleyball, but they will also miss their teammates. “I always say the Vixens are like my sisters, they always have been, always will be,” Khiani said. “We have such a strong bond and nothing could ever break it.”

“As a senior, I realized how great the Vixens are, and we're such a good natured team and really supportive,” senior Eunju Namkung said. “I'm going to miss it.”

Boys' and Girls' Bowling

Stuyvesant Bowling Teams' Pins Not Aligned in Playoffs

continued from page 12

Boys' Bowling

er's form.

Although victory in the first round came with relative ease to the Hookers, they knew that their next match, to be held on Monday, November 17 against the 10th seeded New Dorp High School, would be much more challenging. “It's sort of strange for us because this game was so easy, while our next game will be much harder,” Man said.

Although some team members approached the next round of the playoffs with apprehension, some were more confident. “These lanes are at least oiled well, so several players will have a chance to bowl better,” junior Leo Ernst said.

Several players shared Ernst's confidence. “We underperformed here,” junior Zachary Weiner said of the Lehman Match. “We downplayed it a little and did not come in with the right attitude. We can definitely improve”

Unfortunately for Stuyvesant, confidence was not enough against the higher seeded New Dorp team. The Hookers bowled well – six out of the eight bowlers scored above their regular season averages – but they still could not match New Dorp. In the match, its A-team averaged 198 pins each, and its B-team averaged 154 pins each. New Dorp won the match in two straight games, putting an end to Stuyvesant's playoff run.

This was a disheartening loss for the Stuyvesant team, because they bowled one of the best games of their season. “Their [New Dorp's] averages were much higher [than ours] to begin with, and they really just performed better than could be expected,” Man said. “We certainly did not under-perform.”

Although Stuyvesant's bowling season is officially over, they went out with a bang. “We did as well as we could've at this point in the season,” coach Timothy Pon said about Monday's loss. “Seventy-five percent of the players scored above their averages.” There had been notable improvement in each player's performance over the course of the season, Pon noted.

In addition to individual development, the bowling team had more unity. “There's been a real team chemistry this year,” Man said. “When you have that kind of morale, everyone bowls better.”

continued from page 12

Girls' Bowling

formance was very commendable—we really stepped it up for the playoffs.”

In the second round of playoffs, the Pinheads played eighth seeded Abraham Lincoln High School on Monday, November 17. Because Lincoln was seeded only one slot higher than Stuyvesant, there was no clear favorite and the match was up in the air. Lincoln was carried in the regular season by senior Marissa Gargiulo, who averaged 196 pins a game and once bowled 245 pins in a single game. The rest of the team, nonetheless, had averages that were comparable to Stuyvesant's.

Stuyvesant approached this match with confidence. Coming off what he called a “commendable” first-round performance, Bologna was assured that his team had the potential to make this game just as easy as their previous one. “We cannot let a bad ball ruin our next frame,” he said. “We have to take each frame independently.”

The Pinheads knew that they had to go into the second round with optimism and concentration. “We just need to focus,” senior and co-captain Anna Zhang said. “We usually focus by the middle of our games, but we need to get started sooner.”

Despite these attempts to increase their focus, the Pinheads lost two games to one. Lincoln won the A-game by a score of 538-502. Stuyvesant then took the B-game, 457-410, forcing a third game. Lincoln won this final C game, 578-500.

Although this match knocked the girls' team out of the playoffs, they do not consider it a disappointing performance. “They got the better of us. They had some issues with their bowlers as well, but they were able to come out on top,” Bologna said. “We were very evenly matched. We have good bowlers, they had one really good bowler. It kind of evened out. We were in the match the whole time.”

The Pinheads have come a long way. “After losing so many seniors last year, a lot of people thought that we weren't going to do as well this season as we did,” Bologna said. “We managed to take our division this season, as well as making it to the second round of the playoffs. My goal is always to make the playoffs. So it's been a successful season.”

Girls' Swimming

Penguins Win 2008 Championship, Avenge 2007 Loss Against Reigning Champs

continued from page 12

With their semifinal win, Stuyvesant is now slotted to compete against the first-seeded Townsend Harris High School in the PSAL City Championships, which will take place on Wednesday, November 25 at the Flushing Aquatics Center. With Townsend Harris as the city champions for the last three years in a row, the task of defeating them seemed tough until the Opens Swimming and Diving Championships, a citywide swim meet in which qualified swimmers from all PSAL teams vie for points in certain events.

Stuyvesant ended with 440 points, significantly more than second-place Townsend Harris, who ended with 287 points, and had won Opens for the last two seasons. In addition, five Stuyvesant swimmers were selected to the PSAL city team that traveled to the State Championships on Friday, November 21 and Saturday, November 22 in Buffalo, New York. Seniors Marta Sowinski, Nora Cunningham, Abigayle Erickson, junior Stephanie Jou, and sophomore Lauren Ng were five of the 18 girls selected for this year's state competitors. Sowinski won first place in the 50 yard freestyle event, and two

Stuyvesant relay teams won first place as well. Cunningham, Sowinski, Erickson, and Jou won the 400 yard freestyle relay, and Cunningham, Sowinski, Jou, and Ng won the 200 yard freestyle relay that also shattered the Stuyvesant record for that event.

The Penguins capped off a memorable season on Tuesday, November 25, when they won the PSAL City Championships against the Turtles of Townsend Harris High School. In a much-hyped rematch of last season's City Championships, Stuyvesant turned the tides and took their revenge for the 2007 season, winning by 21 points.

SPORTS CALENDAR

Boys' Basketball	Girls' Basketball	Boys' Bowling	Girls' Bowling	Boys' Fencing	Girls' Swimming	Girls' Volleyball
<p>Wednesday, December 3 Season Opener vs. Murry Bergtraum High School</p> <p>Murry Bergtraum Gym, 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Tuesday, December 2 Season Opener vs. Baruch College Campus High School</p> <p>Stuyvesant High School-3rd floor gym, 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Wednesday, November 12 First Round of Playoffs vs. Lehman High School 2-0, Stuyvesant</p> <p>Monday, November 17 Second Round of Playoffs vs. New Dorp High School 2-0, New Dorp</p>	<p>Wednesday, November 12 First Round of Playoffs vs. Fiorello H. La Guardia High School 2-0, Stuyvesant</p> <p>Monday, November 17 Second Round of Playoffs vs. Abraham Lincoln High School 2-1, Abraham Lincoln</p>	<p>Friday, November 14 Championship Round of Playoffs vs. Hunter College High School</p> <p>5.25-3.75, Stuyvesant</p>	<p>Monday, November 10 Second Round of Playoffs vs. Brooklyn Technical High School 54-40, Stuyvesant</p> <p>Tuesday, November 25 Third Round of Playoffs vs. Townsend Harris High School Flushing Aquatic Center, 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Sunday, November 16 First Round of Playoffs vs. Secondary School for Law, Journalism, and Research 2-0, Stuyvesant</p> <p>Tuesday, November 18 Second Round of Playoffs vs. McKee/Staten Island Tech 2-1, McKee/Staten Island Tech</p>

Girls' Golf

Birdies Grounded
in PSAL Semis

By YIFENG ZHAO

The Birdies, Stuyvesant's varsity girls' golf team, lost 4-1 to Benjamin Cardozo High School in the semifinals of the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) playoffs at the Marine Park Golf Course on Thursday, October 30, ending their debut season. The team compiled a 6-2 record in the regular season and finished second in the Bronx/Manhattan Division, behind only the perennial division powerhouse Bronx High School of Science, against whom its only two losses came. They entered the playoffs seeded fifth out of eight teams.

Their performance was a pleasant surprise for coach and English teacher Emilio Nieves. "My primary goal for the season was for us to have a winning record, and we exceeded that," Nieves said.

Some members of the Birdies also thought that their performance in their first season surpassed expectations. "Our team did really great this year considering it was our first year," junior Jane Choi said. She attributes the team's rapid improvement to practice. "Our improvement came from going to the golf course practically like every other day," she said. "Going to the golf course to play really helps you improve really fast."

The Birdies advanced to the semifinals by overcoming heavy rain and upsetting fourth-seeded New Dorp High School by a score of 4-1 on Wednesday, October 29. The PSAL uses a 9-hole match play format, with one player on each side competing with an opposing player. Whichever player wins the most holes wins the match, and whichever team wins five matches is the overall winner.

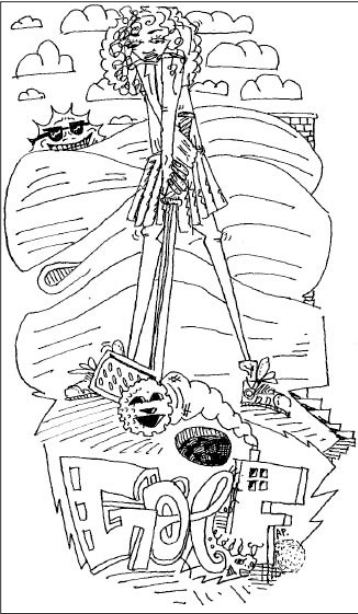
**"My primary goal for the season was for us to have a winning record, and we exceeded that."
—Emilio Nieves, coach**

Freshman Sarah Soo Hoo won a closely contested first match against New Dorp sophomore Christa Golden four holes to two. The rest of the matches were equally close, with the exception of that of Stuyvesant freshman Melissa Watt, who defeated her opponent 5-0.

"I just kept thinking, if I win these first 5 holes, I get to get out of this disgusting weather," Watt said. "No matter what, I'm not letting her win."

The Birdies faced much stiffer competition the next day in the semifinal round. Benjamin

Cardozo High School was the top seeded team in the playoffs and had not lost a regular season game since 2004. On top of that, they had won three straight PSAL titles from 2005 to 2007 and reached the finals last season. The Birdies were the clear underdog, but were determined to try for an upset.



Despite their efforts, Cardozo's more experienced players outmatched Stuyvesant's when it came to putting and hitting the green on drives. "Before the games, the girls were very relaxed and they played like they had nothing to lose," Nieves said. "I thought the girls played very well, but they [Cardozo] were just a little better than us."

Both of the first two matches were decided on the second to last hole, with Soo Hoo and fellow freshman Jessica Plotnikov both falling to their opponents 4-2. Besides those two games, Cardozo won by very lopsided scores, although Watt salvaged victory for the Birdies by defeating her opponent, Cardozo junior Jennifer An, 5 to 1.

Watt has not lost a match since the fourth game of the season against Bronx Science. Nieves said that her improvement and contributions to the team were some of the key factors of the season. Watt attributes her development to advice she got from Nieves, taking lessons during the season and to many hours of practicing with the team. "During our last few matches, we realized it was only our first year playing, and we weren't expecting much out of ourselves," she said. "The lack of pressure surely helped us succeed during the playoffs".

After their elimination, the team remained upbeat about their future and satisfied with how the season went. "Although we did not win against Cardozo, we all played very well and were very proud of our team for getting that far," Watt said.

Nieves said that the team would benefit from this year's experience as well as more practice over the offseason. With four of their top five players returning next year, the team has good reason for their optimism. "As a first year team, I didn't have really high expectations," Soo Hoo said. "But now that I've seen how far we've come, I'm pumped up for next year."

Girls' Basketball

Phoenix Rises Again

By NORMAN YU

A new season brings new expectations and goals. For the Stuyvesant Phoenix, the girls' varsity basketball team, it's making the playoffs. After finishing last year with a 5-9 record which does not fulfill the required 0.500 win record for playoffs, the Phoenix look to regroup and reclaim their spot this season.

Although only one senior, former captain Katherine Pan ('08), was on the team last year, she will be missed for her contribution to the team. "Katherine Pan was the most energetic and responsible member of our team last year. Kate and I have big shoes to fill as leaders this year," senior and co-captain Tina Khiani said. "Kat certainly was our inspiration leader. We all really miss her already but since there was only senior, there aren't too many new people on the team."

"Furthermore, the bulk of the team already knows each other's playing styles so it won't be as big of an adjustment," senior and co-captain Kate O'Dowd said.

With only two freshmen joining the team, the team will pick up where they left off last season, and has set high expectations for themselves. "This year, we have all of our starters back and two great new additions. Our coach has told our team that she has



With two freshmen joining the the girls' varsity basketball team, the Phoenix aim to reach the playoffs by working hard and being dedicated.

higher expectations this year because so many of us are returning and we all expect to make it into the playoffs," Khiani said. In reference to the rookies, Khiani has said that she is impressed with their play in practice and O'Dowd describes them as young, vivacious and athletic with much to give.

While reaching the playoffs is the Phoenix's main goal, there's much to work on."Key factors are willingness to work hard, complete dedication, and a lot of stamina," Khiani said. Although these will help in reaching the

playoffs, co-captain O'Dowd has an another reason. "We have a really good chance of making the playoffs this year because we got spirit," she said.

"I expect everyone to step up this season. We can't just let things happen to us—we all have to take action and put effort into making this team the best it can be," Khiani said. With a new season at hand and high expectations, time will tell whether the Stuyvesant Phoenix can bring it all and compete hard for a successful season.

Boys' Fencing

Untouched For Two Straight Years

continued from page 12

been so far the best boys' team I've coached, Hunter, Townsend Harris and Staten Island Tech should all have stronger teams next year while we are losing

some key players," he said. "We'll need to work very hard in the new and off season if we want to continue with our streak."

Blitzer agreed with Winston. "It was a good feeling, but next year will be harder," he said.

The Untouchables did not,

however, worry about next season immediately after winning the championship. Instead, they found time to celebrate. "On our yellow-bus ride home, we sang 'We Will Rock You' with claps, stomps, and everything," Sin said. "We totally shook the highway."

ADVERTISEMENT

SAT/PSAT Prep.

Raise SAT Score by 350 Points!

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

-Francesca Y.

- * SAT/ SAT II/ ACT etc.
- * Algebra/ Calculus/ Trigonometry
- * Biology/ Chemistry/ Stuyvesant Physics with Mike Ternoey
- * AP Subjects/IB Courses
- * Reading Comprehension/ Essay Writing
- * Vocabulary/ Composition

"My daughter Lily recently took the SAT. Her scores were 800 in both math and verbal and 740 in writing. We were so glad for the results of her SATs. She would not have been able to achieve them without your help. We are very grateful for the personalized instruction and assessments."

-Catherine L.

TEACHERS

- David Kim, A.B., Harvard University
- Sophia Huang A.B., U of Chicago
- Jason Keller B.A., Cornell University
- Yakov Brukhman, B.S., NYU
- Jim Narangajavana., A.B., Harvard University
- Peter Lukacs, B.S., M.I.T
- Wendy Hsiao B.A., Cornell University
- Brigitte Radigan, B.A., U of Penn
- Esther Greer B.A., Yale University

Education Centers

1-800-777-7000

Mahattan

1461 3rd Ave. 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10028
(Between 82nd and 83rd St)

www.c2educate.com

\$50 OFF

Diagnostic Test
With Coupon
New students Only

THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

Boys' Fencing

Untouched For Two Straight Years

By HOWARD LAM

The Untouchables, Stuyvesant's boys' varsity fencing team, won the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) City Championships for the second year in a row. Their 5.25-3.75 victory was against longtime rival, Hunter College High School, on Friday, November 15 at Roberto Clemente State Park. Stuyvesant, after earning a 10-0 regular season record just like they did last year, entered the playoffs seeded first and easily won 8.5-0.5 in both the quarter and semi-finals against Benjamin Cardozo High School and Tottenville High School, respectively.

"We entered the playoffs confidently," senior, captain and A1 fencer Ken Sin said. Nonetheless, he added, the team was careful not to underestimate its opponent again, as it did last year, when it managed to inch by Tottenville in the finals by a close score of 4.75-4.25. "When we found out Hunter was going to be in the finals, we were half happy and half anxious," he said. "We had beaten them in two previous meets in the season, but we knew they still weren't easy and that any fencer could lose to any other fencer on any given day."

PSAL fencing matches consist of three different games: A, B, and C, A being of the highest skill level. Two fencers participate in each game, and the A1, B1, and C1 games are of a slightly higher skill level than the A2, B2, and C2 games, respectively.

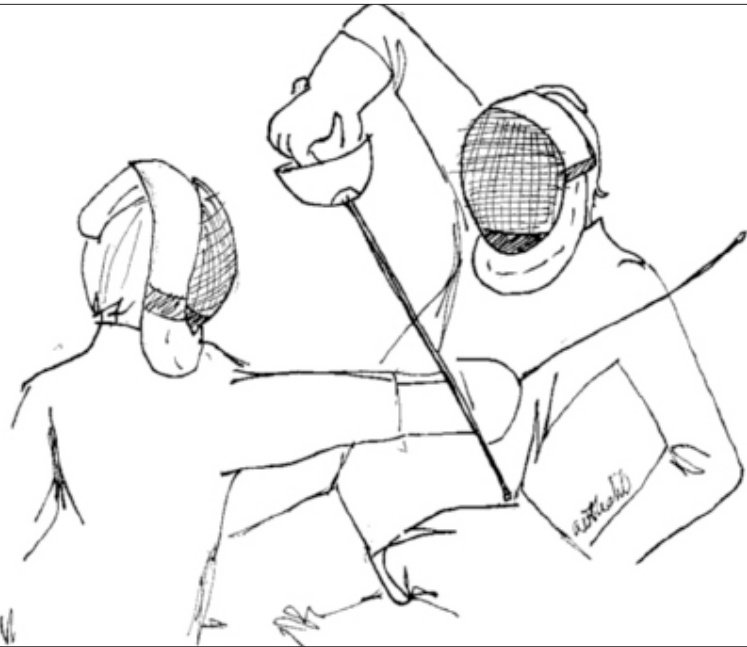
In the finals against Hunter, both the A and C bouts were tied. This meant that the B bouts would either win or lose the championship for Stuyvesant. Junior and

B1 fencer Ian Armstrong lost his first bout but swept his second 5-0, while senior, captain and B2 fencer Muzhou Lu won his bouts 5-2 and 5-1, respectively.

"This was our hardest match," Armstrong said, comparing the finals to the rest of the season's matches. "Several of our starters

games," he said.

Although the final match was unexpectedly close, it was not nearly as competitive or eventful as the last year's final match against Tottenville was. "It was pretty predictable," Lu said. He said he was not so much excited as he was just happy. "I just



underperformed, with Muzhou the only starter who won both of his bouts."

"My matches were not that challenging," Lu said. "If I were to fence them any other time, I would have taken more risks, but to guarantee my team's victory, I had to play it safe." Lu said he stuck to basic techniques like parry-ripostes (a block or evasion quickly followed by an attack) and feint attacks, a type of fake-out, during his bouts. "Simple actions work the best during PSAL

picked up the phone and called Jonathan Tang, last year's captain, and told him we were bringing back the trophy."

"We lost to Hunter in the finals when I was a freshman, and it was great to meet and decisively beat them three times this year," Armstrong said.

After just winning the championships, however, Coach Joel Winston is already thinking about next season. "Although this has

continued on page 11

Girls' Swimming

Penguins Win 2008 Championship, Avenge 2007 Loss Against Reigning Champs

By CHRISTOPHER ZHAO and WACIRA MAINA

Without even a pool to call their own this season, the girls' varsity swim team's recent triumphs and accomplishments have made quite the statement in the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL). After defeating Curtis High School and Brooklyn Technical High School in the playoffs on Thursday, November 6 and Monday, November 10, respectively, Stuyvesant advanced to the PSAL City Championships against Townsend Harris High School—the defending city champions for three years in a row.

The Penguins proved themselves to be favorites for the City title on Sunday November 6, as they won the annual Opens Swimming and Diving Championships at Lehman College in the Bronx for the first time in six years. In addition to their victory at Opens, five members of the team qualified for the State Championships which took place on Friday, November 21 and Saturday, November 22 in Buffalo, New York.

For a team that struggled to even locate a pool for practice little more than a month ago, this recent string of success has not been taken for granted. Even without home field advantage, as the Stuyvesant pool has been undergoing massive construction, the Penguins have won each and every one of their regular season games this year. Though they won the Bronx-Manhattan PSAL

division, Stuyvesant—led by their senior captains: Nora Cunningham, Abigail Erickson, and Kei Okochi, entered the playoffs seeded third overall in the city, right behind Townsend Harris High School and Brooklyn Technical High School, respectively.

After a first round bye, the Penguins soundly defeated Curtis High School 64-34 on Thursday, November 6. In addition, their 200 yard freestyle relay time was only about three seconds off the state championships cut time of 1 minute 43.65 seconds. Despite the win, it wasn't a secret that their competition this year is stiff. "It's more competitive now [...] the teams are better than before," junior Clarissa Lam said.

The Penguins then waddled on to the semifinals, against Brooklyn Technical High School. Not letting Tech's higher seed unnerve them, the Penguins came out on top with a 54-40 victory. Tech had been regarded as one of the city's best teams this year because of a rookie, freshman Annie Zhu, who quickly helped Tech attain an undefeated regular season record. Zhu has competed in the past Olympic trials. She currently holds the PSAL records in the 100 breaststroke and the 200 Individual Medley and is seeded first to win both these events in the State Championships. Ironically, Stuyvesant has recently been holding practices at Brooklyn Technical High School.

continued on page 10

Boys' and Girls' Bowling

Stuyvesant Bowling Teams' Pins Not Aligned in Playoffs

By JACK GREISMAN

Boys' Bowling

Stuyvesant's boys' varsity bowling team, the Hookers, made it to the playoffs with a 13-0 record. They lost only one game (each match is best two out of three) in the entire regular season. This performance gave Stuyvesant the 23rd seed in the 45-team playoffs and paired them against Lehman High School, the 42nd seed, for the first round match, held on Wednesday, November 12 at Leisure Time Lanes.

Stuyvesant rolled in with a great deal of confidence—perhaps too much. They bowled casually, assured that they would win. "We were pretty laidback because they were the underdog," senior and captain Simon Man said. "We knew it would be an easy match, so we had fun." Out of the eight players who bowled, only two rolled above their average. Junior Tony Shan bowled a 156, 44 pins above his average, while junior Steven Lau bowled a 174, almost 30 pins above his average. Although Stuyvesant did not perform as well as expected, it beat Lehman High School with ease, winning Game A 551-516 and Game B 498-465.

After the match, Stuyvesant practiced with a playful and nonchalant atmosphere. As the team took practice rolls, they joked around while critiquing each other.

continued on page 10



The girls' varsity bowling team, the Pinheads, finished the regular season with a 9-1 record and made it to the second round of the playoffs.

Anna Menkova / The Spectator

Both Stuyvesant bowling teams are mainly held back by lack of funding. The teams do not have enough of a budget to allow for regular practices, which would consist of them having to rent lanes consistently. "Unfortunately we do not have as much funds as we would like, because I would like to practice more often," Bologna said. "But, we do our own fundraising—bake sales and stuff, to try to let us practice."

Although the boys' bowling

team is in the same predicament, both teams deal with it differently. The boys' team resorts more to small group practice sessions on weekends, while the girls' team holds fundraisers to allow themselves to practice as a team.

In addition, coaching is handled differently between the boys' and girls' teams. Pon expects players to practice on their own time with their teammates, so that they can help one another improve their games.

Bologna has a more involved approach. "They've learned a lot about bowling through practices, and the reading material I've given them," Bologna said. "Some even watch videos to hone their techniques."

Although each coach has a different approach, it seems as if both methods have worked—both the boys' and the girls' finished their regular seasons on top of their respective divisions in the regular season.

Girls' Bowling

After the Pinheads, Stuyvesant's varsity girls' bowling team, won their first round playoff match against 24th seeded Fiorello H. La Guardia High School on Wednesday, November 12, the atmosphere was celebratory. Teammates congratulated each other and shared baked goods, while coach and physical education teacher Peter Bologna recorded the match's statistics.

Stuyvesant finished the regular season with a 9 – 1 record. "We started out really strongly," senior and co-captain Karen Mui said. "Then we became relaxed. Towards the middle of the season we let it slip a little, but we've been improving steadily since then." Stuyvesant's strong regular season performance earned it the ninth seed in the playoffs.

In Wednesday's match, five of eight bowlers matched or beat their average scores for the regular season. The best example of this was Irene Ng, who bowled 188 pins, compared to her average of 126 during the regular season. Ng managed to close every frame, meaning that she bowled either a strike or a spare each time. "They did exceptionally well today," Bologna said of his team. "My A team bowled to their potential, and my B team had a very standout game. Their per-

continued on page 10