



The Spectator

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"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"

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Senior Pajama Day 2008



Diane Yee/The Spectator

Two JV Football Players Poisoned At Practice

By LUC COHEN
with additional reporting by
PAULINA KARPIS
and EDDIE CYTRYN

Two sophomores on the junior varsity (JV) football team, wide receiver Nick Heim and running back Michael Bucaoto, drank Gatorade that contained copper sulfate crystals at a practice on Tuesday, October 7, at Pier 40. Neither was aware that the chemical was in their drinks. Both players got sick as a result of the incident, and Bucaoto was hospitalized. One sophomore, also on the JV team, who obtained the crystals that were later put in the water, was arrested and removed from the football team. As of now, the school's administration is unsure whether he will be suspended or expelled from school, and whether the remainder of the JV football season will be cancelled.

This sophomore stole the crystals from an in-class chemistry demonstration. He then gave the crystals to a sophomore trainer for the JV team, and told her to put it in cups of Gatorade that were available to members of the team. Both Heim and Bucaoto got sick

immediately after drinking the Gatorade. Both vomited, and Bucaoto, who drank more, began coughing up blood and had to go to the hospital, where he remained for much of the night. The severity of the symptoms was unclear before their conditions stabilized. Fortunately, the students recovered in time to attend school the next day and play in the homecoming game on Friday, October 10.

The sophomore who stole the chemicals was apprehended by the police at practice at Pier 40 on the afternoon of Tuesday, October 7. He was arrested and expelled from Stuyvesant. Six other players, who were aware to some degree that people could get hurt, but did not report the plot to coach Christopher Burrows, were suspended from the team. "They all had some knowledge that something was going on," Singer said.

An anonymous trainer familiar with the perpetrator's motives said there was no ill intent. Instead, he did it as a sort of joke and wanted to see if people would take it seriously. Some were shocked and disturbed that an event this serious could happen. "I wasn't great

friends with them but they were close acquaintances because I saw them every day at football," Heim said of those who plotted to put the copper sulfate in his drink. "They were big parts of the football team and it's scary to think that they did this."

Chemistry teacher Brian Dibbs said that the incident was particularly concerning because copper sulfate is "a pretty poisonous chemical," he said. He said that if students would do this as a joke, they probably were not aware of the potentially catastrophic results. "You have to teach kids these are not toys. They are dangerous. You can't mess around with these chemicals," he said.

Heim said that he was initially worried, and is still a little shocked, because of how dangerous copper sulfate is. "I first felt angry at the people who had given it to me," he said. "But I was also very nervous because I knew that the chemicals in the drink were dangerous and potentially fatal." While Dibbs doubts that the negative effects of such small quantities of the chemical would be quite that

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"THIS IS SPARTA": Behind the Scenes of the Facebook- Generated Phenomenon

By SARAH KAPLAN,
LILY PINCHOFF
and AVA WOYCHUK-MLINAC

Teachers and students alike hate the Advanced Placement exams. Students have to write long grueling essays and then the teachers have to read them. But this May, a single sentence broke the usual pattern. The phrase was simple, yet it caused confusion among exam graders with three words—"THIS IS SPARTA!"

THE PLANNING

Last December, seniors Jake Bryant and Kevin Xu of Ward Melville Senior High School in East Setauket, New York came up with this idea and put it into action on their English Regents. Their idea was simple—to get students to write the iconic phrase "This is Sparta" from the movie "300" in capital letters in the middle of their Regents essays, and then cross it out with one line. This way, no one could be penalized, as the phrase would have to be counted as a mistake.

In May they decided to take it a step farther. Xu created a Facebook group "to spread this to the rest of the country (and the world) including college students getting ready for finals and essays," he wrote in an e-mail.

Facebook users flocked to join the group "Everybody write 'THIS

IS SPARTA!' on your AP and school essays." Today, 32,156 people are in the group. "The goal of the prank was to freak out AP graders and teachers, relieve stress before and during the AP exam and have a really great laugh," Xu wrote. He felt that AP graders could appreciate the prank since "it must stink to be grading hundreds of exams during the summer," he wrote.

THE EXECUTION

The mission was clear. By the first day of AP week, 10,000 students had joined the Facebook group. Over 30,000 had joined by the next Sunday. Now all that was left was for the students to take their tests—a challenge in and of itself—and to write the famous words in their exam booklets.

One of these students was junior Henry Lin, who wrote "THIS IS SPARTA" on his AP World History exam. "I thought, 'Why not?' It was a fun, spur of the moment thing to do," he said.

Most students simply crossed the phrase out so that it wouldn't be counted, but some found more creative ways to work it into their tests. Senior TJ Hart from Milton High School in Milton, Georgia, used the phrases "THIS IS SPARTA" and "This is madness" as variables on his AP Computer Science exam. Brian Stern, a junior at Radnor High

School in Radnor, Pennsylvania, took the AP Music Theory test last May and had to come up with an alternative method to slip the words into his exam.

"While there is no essay section, part of the [AP Music Theory] exam requires the test-taker to write out chords for a song, based on musical notes given. I titled the first one 'THIS IS SPARTA.' For the second, I wrote lyrics to the melody: 'This is Madness,'" Stern wrote in an e-mail interview. "In addition, there are two sight-singing sections [...] so for them I sang softly 'this is Madness,' and for the second I responded by shouting in tune 'No! This Is Sparta!' The exam proctor was speechless, and as I left the room, various students who heard me applauded my efforts."

Students feel that the phenomenon demonstrates the power of students when they are organized with a common goal. "Since tens of thousands of students have had to take APs, SATs, etc., it only makes sense that they would want to 'get back' at the College Board by showing that the students have the choice to completely screw up their tests, and that the students are in charge," Stern wrote.

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SU Launches Web site After Long Delay

By ALEXANDER SHIN
and ZOE WU

The Student Union (SU) Web site was launched on Tuesday, October 14. It had been under construction since the beginning of the school year, which hindered communication between the SU and the student body.

Senior and SU Information Technology Director Daniel Goldstern said he created a new SU Web site this summer, but had not been able to launch it earlier because of several technical problems.

He said he couldn't transfer the domain, www.stuysu.org, before obtaining the account information from George Tsvin ('07), who created the previous SU Website in 2006. Goldstern said he was unable to get in touch with Tsvin during the summer, so he had to wait until September.

Once he obtained that information, Goldstern said the Web site server expired, which further delayed the launch. He also had to wait for a response from a computer software company to obtain a secure shell, which allows a remote computer to have access to the content of a Web site.

Students who are involved with Clubs/Pubs were affected by the delay. In previous years, students registered their clubs

and reserved rooms online for their meetings through the Web site.

Since www.stuysu.org was down, SU members had been handwriting Club/Pub charters for students who were registering their clubs. All clubs must register every school year. "It was not as effective," Kim said.

Without a Web site and a signed charter, it is problematic to just allow clubs to meet," senior and SU Club/Pub Director Allen Granzberg said. "I would have liked the site to be up earlier, but that was out of my control."

If a club/pub needed to use a room for an important meeting, they had to ask Assistant Principal Organization Randi Damasek or Coordinator of Student Affairs Lisa Weinwurm. "The reason that this procedure is necessary is because of liability issues," Granzberg said.

I wanted to register my club, but the Web site wasn't up, so I couldn't get my club charter," junior Benjamin Xie said. "Because of the delay, I can't register for a room."

It's been quite some time since the Web site was down. I've been waiting for over a month now, and I am a bit frustrated," junior Ashley Bowie said.

The absence of a Web site

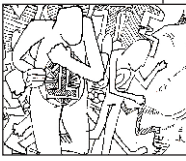
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Opinions

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The Pop-Tart Bureaucracy

Student Union policy turns club/pub fundraising into a barren candyland.



Arts and Entertainment

Article on page 10.

Frontrunners: Capturing the Candidates

Student Union elections jump from Stuyvesant to the big screen.

Pool Closed Because of Hanging Acoustic Tile in Ceiling

By ROBERT COLGAN

Stuyvesant’s pool has been closed since Thursday, September 25. One of the sound-dampening panels that hang from the ceiling has come loose. The panels, called baffles, are attached to the ceiling by two metal chains, one of which is now detached from the ceiling.

Principal Stanley Teitel closed the pool immediately when he was informed of the problem.

“[The baffle] weighs about 40 pounds, and of course it’s got to be at least 25 to 30 feet in the air, probably more,” Teitel said. “If that panel comes down and hits somebody, someone will get hurt. So I immediately ordered that no one is to be in the swimming pool until it’s fixed.”

Three other baffles have fallen from the ceiling in the past and had to be reattached. Teitel said he now wants all of them checked to be sure they are secure.

“As long as we’ve gone to the trouble of emptying the pool and bringing in the scaffolding, I don’t want to have to lose the pool again two months from now when another one breaks loose,” Teitel said.

To fix the baffles, the pool was drained and scaffolding will be built in it up to the ceiling. The scaffolding will begin to be built “in short order,” Teitel



Sadman Islam/ The Spectator

Principal Teitel has closed the swimming pool because a loose sound-dampening panel on the ceiling poses a safety hazard to swimming classes and the swim teams.

said.

According to Teitel and Assistant Principal Health and Physical Education Martha Singer, it will probably be at least a month before the pool is ready for use again.

Swimming classes and the girls’ swim team, the Penguins, have unable to use the pool since it was closed.

“I teach six swim classes, so obviously none of them can go in the pool, but every freshman and sophomore in the school

needs to take the FitnessGram,” physical education teacher Silvanna Choy said, referring to the fitness test required by the city. “I would’ve had to pull them out [of swimming] anyway.”

“We’ve been doing curl-ups and stuff like that. They don’t have a spare gym for us, so basically there’s nowhere for us to go,” freshman Nicole Radova said. “We’re going to have to do the pacer, and it’s basically like 20 students running in the lobby.”

Lifeguarding classes and the girls’ swim team, the Penguins, have been unable to practice in the pool as well.

“We haven’t been able to swim for like a week now,” senior and co-captain of the Penguins Abby Erickson said. “It’s not such a good situation that some of our girls haven’t been in the pool in over a week.”

“It’s been hard. We’ve been doing dry-land, which is exercises on land, so we’re still getting muscle, but it’s just different, not being in a pool. We had a meet today, actually, so we felt it,” senior and co-captain Nora Cunningham said.

According to Teitel, he has arranged with the physical education department at Brooklyn Technical High School for the team to practice at that school’s pool starting Wednesday, October 8.

SU Candy Selling Policy Revised

By MAO HU
with additional reporting by BRIAN SOU

In an effort to stop students sellingcandy for personal andto meetthe New York City Department of Education (DOE) standards for nutrition, Student Union (SU) will now purchase candy that meet DOE standards sell tclubs, publications and teams in specially marked boxes. Clubs, publications and teams must purchase all fundraising candy through the SU.

According to DOE Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and NutritionWeb site, only foods approved under SchoolFood regulations can be sold in “student government association stores, vending machines, and fund raisers,” as stated on their Web site.

Approved candy cannot exceed 350 milligrams of sodium per portion, have than 3percent fat, or contain artificial coloring, flavoring, sweeteners, or glutamate. Snacks, such as Frito Lay Baked Potato Chips, Cinnamon Teddy Grahams and Sun Chips, are permitted. The complete list of acceptable snacks is listed on the

SchoolFood Web site.

French teacher Gabriele Dehn-Knight was in favor of students selling healthier candy.

“I don’t feel that it’s a good idea to sell candy considering how unhealthy it is and the problems with obesity in today’s society,” she said. “It’s a distraction for both students and teachers during class”

The said in a meeting with club/pub presidents on Monday, September 15, that all fund raising candy must be bought through the SU and sold in specially marked boxes. main purpose of this policy was to reduce the number of students selling candy for personal profit.

“There’s really no way to track down people who sell for their own profit without having candy sold through the SU,” and SU President James Kim .

However, this has yet to be enforced.

According to junior and SU Vice President Casey Griffin, Principal Stanley Teitel initiated the policy that the SU facilitate all candy selling activity. However, he did not give specific guidelines that distinguished between clubs and students selling for personal profit. This slowed down its implementa-

tion.

Kim said that the SU is currently in the process of buying candy to sell to clubs, publications and teams.

“In two weeks, things will be running more smoothly than before,” Kim said.

Sophomore president of the Super Smash Brothers Brawl club Mohammad Hossainwas upset by the delay.

“We’re not able to sell the prohibited candy or the candy we’re allowed to sell because the SU can’t get its act together and it’s hurting the clubs who need it the most,” he said.

Due to the delay, many clubs and teams cannot raise enough money to fund their activities.

“We basically depend on candy selling to raise funds,” sophomore Treasurer of the Red Cross club Ashley Qiansaid.

“We need to raise 6,000 dollars for our registration fees, and without candy sales, I don’t know how we’re going to do it,” unior Director of Procurement for the Stuyvesant Robotics eam Emily Mattesonsaid.

“It’s one of our main sources of revenue that we now don’t have,” eniorand Treasurer of the Stuyvesant Robotics team Jonathan Meedsaid.

said. “That’s not the point of a Web site. That’s not the point of a computer.”

The new Web site has a new layout and will eventually include more content, like a video home-room gallery, a calendar of SU events and photo albums. “Please be patient while we make this transition - we hope to start serving you, the student body, at our full capacity as soon as possible,” Goldstern wrote in a post on the Web site.

Paulina Karpis Wins 1010 WINS Award

By RACHEL KIM

Senior and The Spectator’s News editor, Paulina Karpis, was awarded the prestigious 1010 WINS Tomorrow Newsmaker’s Award in its fourth consecutive year of competition. She was awarded the 10,000 dollar Mitesh Anand scholarship. Anand was a former 1010WINS employee who recently passed away.

“I was really surprised,” Karpis said. “It was unexpected. But at the same time, I was really happy because it is such a great honor.”

The 1010 WINS Tomorrow’s Newsmakers contest is an annual competition that recognizes individuals who are dedicated to journalism. There are five categories: Arts and Entertainment, Business, Public Service, Sports and Student Broadcaster. Karpis won in the Student Broadcaster category.

“It’s not surprising that another Stuyvesant student won,” said former Arts and Entertainment editor Ivana Ng (’07), who won the award last year. “Stuy kids are really hard-working.”

Ng “tried to promote the competition to the Stuy population,” she said. After she won the contest, Ng requested that the contest information be posted on the monthly College Bulletin and class of 2009 website.

“I knew that if Stuy kids applied, one of us would win,” she said.

The application process for the Student Broadcaster category began in July 2008. The students had to be a New York City residing high school junior and complete an essay describing their interests in journalism.

There were 20 judges who picked five finalists out of 80 applicants.

The judges determined the finalists based on their “interest and capacity in forging ahead with a communications-broadcasting degree, after school activities [and] accomplishments related to field,” as stated on the Tomorrow’s Newsmakers Award website.

“All the students were extremely smart, well rounded, community oriented individuals, and were all worthy of consideration,” Contest Coordinator Deborah Gordon wrote in an e-mail interview.

The five Student Broadcaster finalists were notified in August.

The 25 finalists were then invited individually to the 1010 WINS studio for an interview that would air on the radio. Karpis’s segment aired on Friday, October 4.

“I was really honored to be selected to the finalist group,” Karpis said. “I was competing with really dedicated journalists.”

The public could then vote for a finalist at the 1010 WINS Web site. There were 1,000 online voters. According to Gordon, Karpis received the most votes out of the 25 finalists.

The award ceremony was held on Tuesday, October 7. All the finalists were honored and the winners of each category were announced.

“This year’s group did a lot more extracurricular work, and had more hands on experience in their fields than the previous years’ entrants,” Gordon said.

Karpis wrote a column about dance in the Australian magazine Sassy Girl and appeared on the cover of its first issue. When she was 14 years old, her essay about her post 9/11 experience was published in “The Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul: the Real Deal Challenges.”

Due to her publication in “The Chicken Soup,” she was interviewed by NY1 and ARD, a public radio network based in Germany. Karpis has also met with Congressman Vito Fossella, Spike Lee and Reg E. Gaines and received letters of congratulations from Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Senator Hilary Clinton and Governor David Paterson.

Karpis won the 2008 Alexander Hamilton Citizenship Achievement Award for her academic success and achievements in community service, which include tutoring, volunteering for the Family Torah Center and Habitat for Humanity Youth Immersion trip to Tacoma, Washington that she attended this past summer.

Karpis was also first place in the 2007 New York State high school essay contest co-sponsored by the Journalism Department and the Society of Professional Journalists on the topic, “Why Free News Media Is Important.”

“I’m really grateful to the people at 1010 WINS because they created such a great opportunity for high school student,” Karpis said.

The New Bell Schedule

By MASHA GINDLER

Stuyvesant altered its bell schedule this school year. A, B, C and D days are now called Regular, Homeroom, Special and Conference days, respectively. The change was implemented so that there would be a clear distinction between the name of the day and the gym and science schedule, which is labeled A or B, for that day.

The lengths of the periods and days have not been altered. “It still does what it does,” said Principal Stanley Teitel. He said he received no specific complaints.

The new bell schedule is already being used on the Stuyvesant Web site. The blue schedule cards students received when school started also reflect the change.

When Stuyvesant first opened at its current location, it originally followed a five-day A, B, C, D and E schedule. Gym classes were held everyday for half of a semester.

The current gym and science

schedule was added to accommodate city requirements for physical education. They were given A/B names that clashed with the bell schedules even then.

“I’ve mentioned it years ago,” physical education teacher Larry Barth said. “It was confusing saying it was A [or] B days because of the A/B gym and science schedules.”

The change was announced to teachers in a recent faculty meeting.

Students were not formally told of the change as it was expected that they would notice online or from the blue cards. “I heard from one of my friends,” freshman Nicholas Fasano said.

Some students hardly noticed the change. “It’s the same thing,” sophomore Winman Lei said.

Others preferred the new system. “It was a bit confusing when the both the bell and gym schedule was the same,” junior Yul Kim said. “I like the new one more.”

SU Launches Web site After Long Delay

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made communication difficult between the SU and student body. “[It’s] hard to get in touch with students outside the SU,” Kim said.

This year, according to Kim, the SU has been communicating with students through Facebook, the Big Sibs emailing list and paper advertisements.

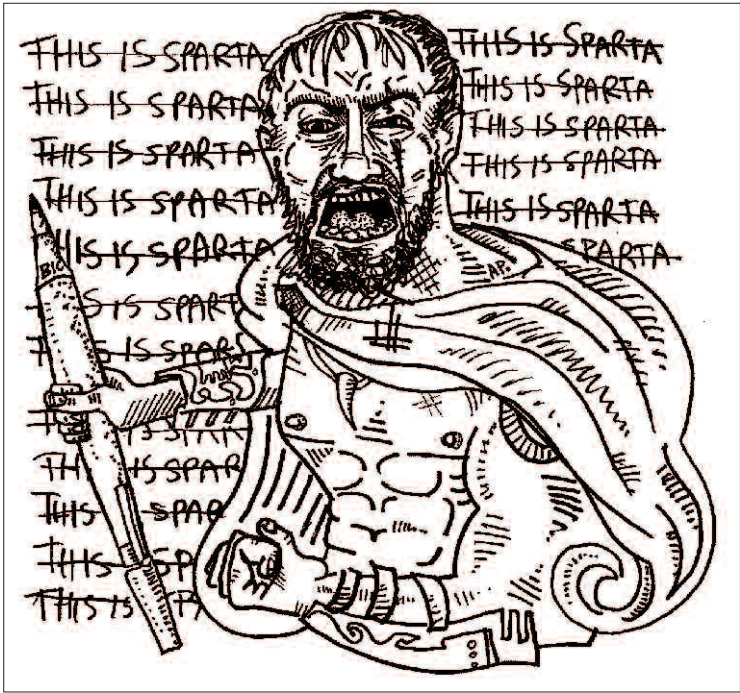
The old Web site, which Tsivin programmed, was used up

until this year. According to Kim, SU members “thought it would best to just create a new Web site,” because the old one created problems.

Whenever we tried to email SU members, the Web site would shut down,” Kim said. “It also was not an aesthetically pleasing website.”

The old Web site wasn’t exactly functional. I mean, it was pretty much [the SU] doing everything manually,” Goldstern

Behind the Scenes of the Facebook-Generated Phenomenon



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THE AFTERMATH

The effects of the stunt have been expansive. AP readers nationwide had a good laugh, and the coordinators of the prank are already planning for next year. Two articles have been written in The Examiner about the phenomenon. Students who took part this year were pleased with the results as can be seen on the Discussion Boards in the Facebook group. Subjects include "SUCCESS!!!!!!", "Best

Usage of 'This is Sparta'..." and "Next Year?" "Reader reactions to the prank were varied," head of College Board communications Jennifer Topiel wrote in an e-mail interview. However, according to an article published on The Examiner's website on June 16, 2008, the reaction was overwhelmingly positive and made the grading process easier. "I hope to do it again for the next AP exams but I need a new line," Xu wrote. What will this line be? Wait till next May to find out.

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One Pod, Separate Peas

By EMMA ZIEGELLAUB
EICHLER and
DANIELLE OBERDIER

We've all discussed twins in our biology or genetics classes. Some of us have even made embarrassing mistakes involving the twins we know. Being a twin at Stuyvesant is very different from being a twin at many other schools. At many schools, twins are not allowed to be in the same class. At Stuyvesant, however, twins have the same chance of being in the same class as any other two people.

Seniors Helen Cabot and Julia Cabot have been going to the same school since preschool. However, they find each other's presence at Stuyvesant to be especially helpful. "A motivation for me is Julia because I don't ever want to disappoint her. She always pushes me to try my hardest and she is usually the one to make me study the extra hour when all I want to do is close the books and go to sleep," Helen Cabot said. "When we don't understand something, we work through it and always make progress. It's comforting

"Even when we don't have the same teachers, sometimes Helen can explain something to me differently than the way I learned it and make it easier to understand"
— Julia Cabot, senior and twin

to know I have someone to study with and someone who cares if I do well." Julia Cabot agrees. "Even when we don't have the same teachers, sometimes Helen can explain something to me differently than the way I learned it and make it easier to understand," Julia Cabot said.

Though studying together is one of many advantages of having one's twin at the same school, confusion with teachers is often an issue. Junior James Sun, whose twin brother is John Sun, said, "the only dis-



Seniors Julia Cabot and Helen Cabot are one pair of twins at Stuyvesant who enjoy having their sibling with them.

advantage of having a twin at Stuyvesant that I can think of is having a teacher hate me and accidentally hate John too." Julia Cabot said, "It is a little annoying being in the same class and teachers can't tell us apart at first, but eventually our teachers take in our differences."

Nevertheless, teachers aren't the only people who get confused. Helen Cabot said, "Having a twin at Stuy definitely made it more difficult to establish myself as an individual. It seems at first people always know me as the second half of the Cabot twins. Sometimes I feel like people feel like they know me if they know Julia, which is not the case at all." On the other hand, some people dwell on differences rather than similarities. "The two most annoying questions are 'Who's the smarter one?' or 'Who's friendlier?' If someone really wants to draw comparisons then he or she should get to know both of us and then decide," Helen Cabot said.

Some twins find that they thrive more after choosing separate roads for high school. Junior Lily Ostrer is a fraternal twin who no longer goes to school with her sister, Isabel Ostrer, a junior at the Dalton School, and she is "really glad" about it. The Ostrer twins went to small schools until high school. In elementary and middle school, Lily Ostrer explained, it could be "fun and really convenient," especially when they had the same homework, but it was "harder to be seen as an individual. We're definitely treated more like individuals rather than a set now that we go to different schools."

Some think that competition over their schools could be a sore point, but Lily Ostrer said that her "sister didn't want

to go to Stuy [because] we definitely wanted to be at separate schools." Despite Stuyvesant's reputation, she said her sister "was really glad [because] we spend enough time together as it is, and I think we would get

"We also often get asked whether we can read each other's minds. I don't think I've come up with a good enough response to such a ridiculous question"
—Lily Ostrer, junior and twin

along a lot worse if we spent more time together." She added that sharing a room is "the cause of enough arguments."

Overall, the pros seem to outweigh the cons. James Sun said, "The major advantage of having a twin at Stuy is having someone I can talk to. He can always help with issues because we go to the same school."

When people hear I'm a twin, a very typical response is, 'Oh that's so cool! I've always wanted a twin!' Ostrer said. "We also often get asked whether we can read each other's minds. I don't think I've come up with a good enough response to such a ridiculous question."

13

Number of incoming sophomores

9

Number of seniors that left before completing the 2008-2009 school year

9

Number of juniors that left before completing the 2008-2009 school year

639

Number of unclaimed lockers

10.74

Percent of seniors taking multivariate calculus

1.74

Percent of juniors taking multivariate calculus

2.02

Average number of APs seniors are taking this year

1.43

Average number of APs juniors are taking this year

Thanks to: Assistant Principal of Technology Services Edward Wong and Program Chairperson Sophia Liang

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- 1) Biology Olympiad: 9/16 Start. Sunday 1-4pm
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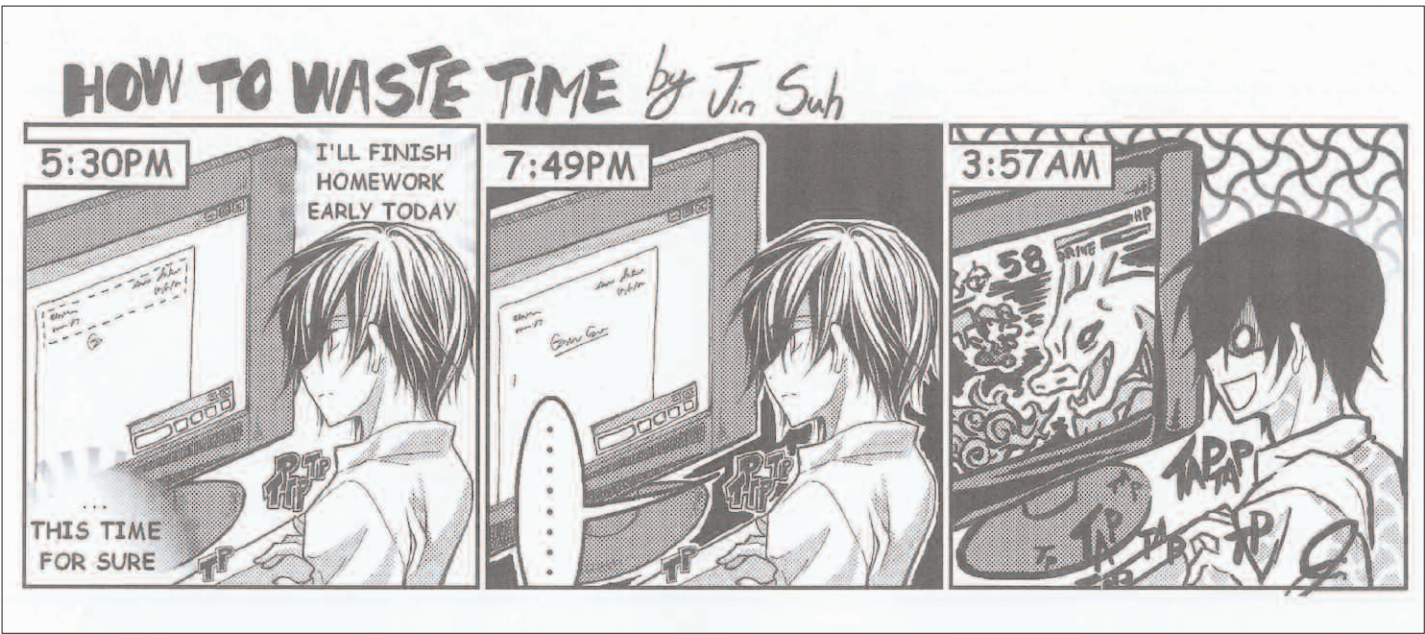
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Cartoons



Editorials

STAFF EDITORIAL

SU: Coming Soon?

Internet users and club presidents should be forgiven for doubting the Student Union’s (SU) existence in the first six weeks of school. We couldn’t find it either.

The Stuyvesant SU Web site was finally functioning on Tuesday, October 14. The Web site had been down for the first six weeks of school due to technical difficulties.

The Web site is supposed to provide information about the SU, alert the student body of upcoming events and allow clubs and publications to reserve rooms and submit charters. The new, Halloween-colored site provides a barren events calendar, an email to send questions and room-requests, and many pages that are “coming soon.” The SU’s delay in creating a functional Web site means that clubs have not been able to hold meetings or submit charters. As a result, no clubs have received funding from the SU. And even if clubs

had submitted their charters, a budget meeting has yet to be held this year.

During their campaign, SU president James Kim and vice president Casey Griffin promised to both improve school-wide communications by means of a new SU Web site and "make the club/pub experience better by expanding the number of rooms available in the grid administration and make club funding easier," according to their platform statement. The SU did take a step in the right direction by creating a new Web site. But the excessive delay is unacceptable. The SU has not gotten clubs and publications running and has been virtually inaccessible—it has failed to be an integral part of the school community.

According to its constitution, the SU “will serve to improve student life with respect to education, extra- and co-curricular activities, and

other areas of student life.” To best serve the student body, the old Web site could—and should—have been kept running while the new one was being worked on. Or, even if the Web site were not up, there should have been sign-up sheets so students could reserve rooms off-line. Clubs should also have been able to submit charters and budget request forms.

Voter turnout reflects the SU’s perceived importance to the student body. 1050 voters participated in the 2006 elections, the race documented in "Frontrunners," while 700 voted in the 2007 elections and only 475 voted in June of this year. More students will vote if the SU can demonstrate that its elected officials actually impact the Stuyvesant community.

The SU must get its act together and fulfill what the elected officials promised in their platforms. The student body depends on it.

The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



“The Pulse of the Student Body”

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The Columbia Scholastic Press Association recently awarded The Spectator a Gold Medal in its annual 2008 critique.

The Editorial Board would like to thank our staff and sponsors.

OP-ART



The Spectator

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FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 2, the number of sophomores cited in “New High in Class Size” was incorrect. As of Monday, September 8, there were 823 sophomores.
- In the Sports Calendar, the date of football homecoming was misstated. It was on Friday, October 10.
- In Issue 4, in “Frontrunners’ To Be Released in Theaters,” the time when director Caroline Suh started filming was incorrect. She began in May 2006.
- In “Stuy Alumni - Where are They Now?” Filipp Kotsishevskiy’s surname was misspelled.
- In the photo outline of “An Indian, or Not So Indian Chef,” the location of Lassi was incorrect. Lassi is in Greenwich Village.
- In “Broadway Fundraises for Stuy,” a quote was misattributed. Junior Tasso Bountouvas, not Ella Gibson, said, “As soon as I found out about the free tickets, I told everyone to go.”
- In the photo credit for “Ballerz Fall to Beacon, But Step Up to the Challenges Ahead,” Eileen LeGuillou’s surname was misspelled.
- In “The Method to My Madness,” Van Cortlandt Park was misspelled.

P.E. vs. ZZZ's



By EMMA DRIES

What would you do with 40 more minutes in your day? “Sleep,” said senior Allison Fowle, a member of the Stuyvesant girls’ swim team. I can safely say that the majority of Stuyvesant students don’t get enough sleep at night. But instead of constantly complain-

ing about it, what if there was something we could do to change it? On an average day, I get home from school around 7:00 p.m.. Swim practice ends at six, and then I have to shower, change and make my daily 20 minute walk home. By the time I’ve eaten dinner, unpacked my bag and pulled out my textbooks, it’s close to 8:00 p.m.. Then I start my homework. I have it easy. I am one of only four people on the swim team who actually lives in Manhattan. Many people living in the outer boroughs do not get home until 8:00 or 8:30 p.m.. With Stuyvesant’s workload, they don’t even have the opportunity to sleep until midnight. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), an adolescent should be getting nine

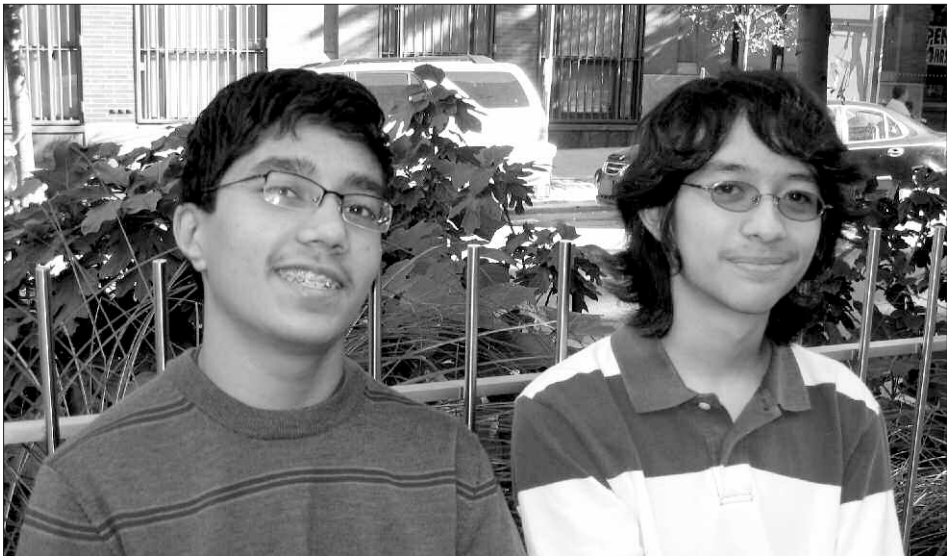
hours of sleep every night. Physically active teenagers should get even more. According to the New York City Department of Education (DOE), to graduate, all public high school students are required to earn four credits of physical education (PE). Up until last year, Fiorella Laguardia High School, among other schools, allowed students who were active participants on sports teams to not take PE. With an extra 40 minutes in school to work, I, and other members of Stuyvesant sports teams, would have an extra 40 minutes to sleep. There was really no reason to revoke the policy that excused sports team members from PE. Students participating on any Public School Athletics League sports team at Stuyvesant definitely meet or exceed the NIH’s

suggested amount of physical activity of 30 minutes per day. A 40-minute PE class is necessary for those who are not getting a reasonable amount of exercise a day, but is unnecessary and excessive for teenagers who play a sport regularly. Enacting this policy would not just relieve current athletes. The possibility of not being forced to take PE would make joining sports teams more appealing. Athletic extracurriculars are important, and a greater draw to join a team is beneficial to both the school and the students. Naturally, many gym teachers are opposed to such a policy. “All Stuyvesant students have to take physical education. What makes athletes special? It’s a class, like anything else. Kids on Math Team aren’t exempt from Math

class,” PE teacher Howard Barbin said. However, the policy has less to do with giving athletes special privileges, and more to do with allowing students to balance athletics with classes. It’s highly unlikely that the DOE will change its policy. Unless, of course, we can prove to them that it really needs to be reconsidered. Writing letters to the DOE is one way that high school students can get their opinions on this issue heard. Also, if we were willing enough to create a formal petition, wouldn’t it be a stronger argument if we convinced PE teachers and coaches to sign? The extent of your involvement in this issue depends on how much you care for that extra sliver of time every day. Now, what would you do for 40 more minutes in your day?

Point

The Wikipedia Fallacy



By CHRISTOPHER NATOLI and VARUN SHARMA

Wikipedia, “the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit,” as its slogan goes, generally gets the evil eye from teachers since technically anyone can come along and incorrectly edit an article, and users will accept those edits as fact. There are, however, over 150,000 active registered editors who monitor articles regularly, as well as over 400 bots—programs that automatically check for vandalism—and an uncountable number of beneficial editors who haven’t registered, according to automatic statistics from Wikipedia. Also, more frequently vandalized articles can be locked so that only administrators or users registered for more than four days can edit those articles. Many tests have shown that problematic edits rarely survive the Wikipedian force for more than an hour before being corrected, with most of them being corrected within a few minutes. The incorrect edits that do manage to hide are often

in trivial articles that aren’t related to scholastic work, and are still eventually reverted. On the rare occasion that we inadvertently use false edits, we’ll recognize them when they contra-

Many tests have shown that problematic edits rarely survive the Wikipedian force for more than an hour before being corrected, with most of them being corrected within a few minutes.

dict information from other sources we use. Since projects require multiple sources, we’ll be sure to check any impor-

tant facts multiple times. This is a skill teachers should trust us to have, and if we don’t, checking our other sources with Wikipedia helps develop it. Since Wikipedia draws information from many sources (which articles usually cite at the bottom of their pages), Wikipedia is better than most other Internet sources and even other encyclopedias. In 2006, librarians at www.libraryjournal.com evaluated Wikipedia and, unsurprisingly, approved it as reliable reference material. With over 2.5 million entries, it is the most wide-ranged encyclopedia or source you can find. When looking at other, “more reliable” sites, it’s clear that they’re edited solely by the creator, and probably every few weeks or months if you’re lucky. Meanwhile, there’s an army of people constantly editing and revising and perfecting Wikipedia articles. It’s curious how students are urged time and again not to use Wikipedia, a collection of information from many sources, while any other Web site is allowed.

Counterpoint

Wikipedia: Corrupting Our Children



By ANI SEFAQ

For the record, I do not hate Wikipedia. In fact, late at night, with a research project due the next morning, and a mouse-hand itchy to copy and paste, Wikipedia has been a kind and understanding friend. As a showcase of communal knowledge, it is astonishingly interesting and useful. But as a showcase of communal knowledge, it can often be unreliable as a research tool. Wikipedia has been in the media numerous times since the user-edited encyclopedia was first published. The popularity of the online encyclopedia has exploded as more people find out about the service. Yet, due to the fact that Wikipedia allows any person with internet access the ability to add or edit content, there are many errors in the information found on this website. The difficult part is determining what information is correct and what information is false. People often attempt to play practical jokes on Wikipedia. The listing for the comedian Sinbad claimed that he had died of a heart attack, when the man was still performing shows. Even someone from The New York Times office edited the page of George Bush to include the word “jerk” 12 times. Sometimes, the practical jokes become more than just a joke. According to an August 2007 New York Times article, “Seeing Corporate Fingerprints in Wikipedia Edits” by Katie Hafner, corporate networks have been editing their entries for their benefit. In 2004, someone using a computer at ExxonMobil made substantial changes to a description of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska, portraying the company in a positive light. In another case, someone from PepsiCo

removed parts of an entry that focused on the negative impact drinking Pepsi has on your health. This type of misinformation is one of the dangers you face when using Wikipedia. However, it was a 2005 incident in which a Tennessee publisher was incorrectly linked to the Kennedy assassination on Wikipedia, that came up first when I googled “unreliable wikipedia.” And being the first search result, it really challenged the user-edited website’s reliability and accuracy in my mind. But then I thought to myself, what harm truly came of this, other than giving an unappreciated Tennessee publisher his 15 minutes of fame. Imagine, we currently live in a world where people can change who they are simply by accessing Wikipedia. As of this article, I’m still deciding how to edit the article I created on myself, whether I should be known as the final prophet of God or the true identity of Captain America. For some readers, this notion that Wikipedia facts may not be true will throw skepticism on all previous information that they have received from the website. “How will we ever trust that acetic acid is in fact an organic compound best recognized for giving vinegar its sour taste and smell,” you may ask yourself. But rest assured, the honorable users of Wikipedia are on the job, policing the website day and night. These average citizens are taking it upon themselves to edit this website and keep it up to the highest intellectual standards. That kid who never does his homework in Spanish class, the security guard at BMCC, and those sketchy guys at the Battery Park basketball courts who might or might not be thinking of stealing your wallet—all of these people are performing an invaluable service. However, on rare occasions, an inaccurate fact may slip by the scrutiny of these ever-ready watchdogs. The problem with this is that when an individual uses a search engine such as Google, Wikipedia is very often one of the first few results. Because Wikipedia articles with inaccurate facts might be the most readily available, our teachers tell us not to rely on Wikipedia for factual information intended for a research project. So reader, I leave you with this parting bit of information. In a May 2008 One News Now online article, “Wikipedia Under Fire for Posting Porn” by Charlie Butts, an interesting fact was written about the website. It stated that Wikipedia has gained popularity among elementary school kids who find it amusing to look up mature content on the website, bypassing their school’s internet security systems. So if you promote Wikipedia, you’re destroying our children’s values.

Opinions

Out of the Loop



Sam Devine / The Spectator

By MAHDI RAZA

Warning: if you're looking for help finding programs outside of Stuyvesant that will enhance your learning experience, you're pretty much on your own. When I came to Stuyvesant, I expected teachers not only to teach well but also to inform us of educational programs that would expand our knowledge beyond the curriculum. Unfortunately, most teachers have developed such regimented daily routines that they don't mention helpful extracurricular programs.

There are several required parts to a teacher's job, like making sure the class learns the required material and helping students who are falling behind. What should also be mandated is taking the initia-

tive to help students seek more than just a grade. For example, teachers should mention places where students can explore a certain subject in greater depth. Spending a few minutes each week informing students about an internship or seminar that examines organic chemistry, computer programming or real-world applications of statistics would make a huge difference for many people.

My Advanced Placement Biology teacher, for example, routinely provides us with information about college seminars with notable scientists and other engaging topics, and encourages us to go by promising extra credit. The seminars provide an engaging way for high school students to acquaint themselves with advanced science topics and

may inspire them to follow a certain career path or research topic. They could also encourage meaningful class discussions because students are more likely to take an interest in a class when they believe the teacher takes an interest in them.

As a host to information about many enriching programs throughout the city, the guidance office is one contributing factor in this issue. The majority of students limit their use of the guidance office to programming and colleges because they are not aware of the many resources it provides. Throughout students' early years at Stuyvesant, they rarely

Teachers should mention places where students can explore a certain subject in greater depth.

see their guidance counselors after the initial first weeks of a semester. Guidance counselors can foster a better relationship

with their homerooms by holding meetings with homerooms every month and talking about general issues that are affecting students such as time management, testing and finding extracurricular activities. Guidance counselors could also evaluate the progress of students after their freshmen year and help find them the extracurricular activity they would be interested in.

The current situation leaves many students dependent on rumors from friends who are prone to making errors when informing others. During my freshman year, I heard about the Columbia Science Honors Program from a friend, who misled me into thinking it was every day after school. I later found he was wrong when I went to the program's website and read it was on Saturdays for two hours. But by then, the damage was done. The registration date for the test had passed and I had to wait another year to join the program.

The most convenient way to provide information to students while allowing teachers to maintain their daily routines is through a link on the Stuyvesant Web site. The creation of a posting system, like the history department's web page on internships and summer programs, would allow teachers and guidance counselors to post information on programs when they hear about them. This would also encourage students to visit the

The majority of students limit their use of the guidance office to programming and colleges because they are not aware of the many resources it provides.

guidance office with follow-up questions about the programs. Furthermore, students should be able to share their own information in the same-posting system. To ensure the posts are about real programs and are appropriate, guidance counselors and department heads could act as moderators. This type of system would be convenient to everyone since the school Web site is accessible and students often check it for updates.

We are often told by teachers to broaden our horizons and to not hesitate to learn new things. If teachers do believe this, then it's time for them to do their part in expanding our learning experience.

The Pop-Tart Bureaucracy



Jack Greisman / The Spectator

By SARAH KAPLAN

They used to be a familiar sight at Stuyvesant: vendors with boxes of candy bars cradled in their arms and buyers reaching across opposite escalators to purchase that crucial pop-tart to get them through Advanced Placement (AP) Biology. Candy-selling had become a tradition here. But this year, vendors are a lot harder to find.

This is because the Student Union (SU) has implemented a new policy this year that requires all candy selling to be operated through the SU. According to senior and Club/Pub Director Allen Granzberg, clubs will have to

The full details of the policy have not been explained to clubs and publications, even though they were forced to sign a contract agreeing to it.

buy candy from the SU at the SU's price, which will possibly be higher than what clubs would have to pay if they bought their candy directly from a store. When the club members have sold their candy, they will have to give all profits back to the SU to be put into their own account regulated by the school's accountant.

The new policy has been poorly thought out and poorly implemented. It will limit the ability of clubs to obtain the funding they need when they need it and will make the system of fundraising much more bureaucratic. The full details of the policy have not been explained to clubs and publications, even though they were

forced to sign a contract agreeing to it. Clubs still aren't sure how the policy will affect them.

"We really know very little about the new SU policy since there has not been a formal announcement and all we know is based off of speculations and rumors," senior and robotics team Director of Marketing Daryl Vulis said. "A clear statement from the SU earlier on in the school year would have been appreciated."

In addition to the confusion, many clubs had already bought hundreds of dollars of candy before they were aware of the new policy. The robotics team has around 2,000 dollars worth of their own candy that they now will be unable to sell.

The new policy was created by Principal Stanley Teitel, health teacher and Coordinator of Student Affairs Lisa Weinwurm, senior and SU president James Kim and Granzberg, without any consultation of the club/pub presidents. Many of the new policy's details make fundraising harder for clubs and give the SU and Weinwurm much more control over club fundraising. Clubs will have to apply to obtain boxes and will only be able to sell candy after their application has been approved by Granzberg and Weinwurm.

The clubs will then be given a set time frame for when they

are allowed to sell candy. This system will not improve sales—students will probably be less motivated to sell candy if they have to go through all that trouble to obtain a box. It makes the fundraising process even more inefficient than it was before. Clubs will also have to apply to take funds out of their school bank accounts

Many of the new policy's details make fundraising harder for clubs and they give the SU and Weinwurm much more control over club fundraising.

and wait a two-day period for their request to be processed and approved by the SU. This is because Teitel and the SU are concerned that clubs are using funds improperly. But who's to say that the SU knows

how clubs should spend their money better than the clubs do?

Granzberg has also stated the new policy was implemented to limit the number of individuals who sell for personal gain and to comply with the Department of Education's new health regulations which state that candy cannot be sold in schools on a daily basis. Improving health standards and preventing students from selling candy for their own benefit are admirable goals, but there are much better ways to obtain them. The SU could reinstate last year's sticker policy, which allowed clubs to sell candy only if they have an SU-approved sticker on their box. Or, they could publish a list of healthy foods that clubs can sell and comply with the new regulations. But if they are going to insist that all candy be bought directly through the SU, the SU shouldn't have control over when clubs fundraise or how their money is spent.

These new candy-selling guidelines are hopelessly bureaucratic. And like all bureaucratic systems, the new policy is unfair and extremely inefficient. Hopefully, those AP Biology students will be willing to wait a while for their pop-tarts.

Arts & Entertainment

The Nuyorican: Mecca of the Spoken Word



The Nuyorican Poets Cafe, located on 3rd Street between Avenues B & C, hosts a monthly open mic which attracts a diverse crowd.

By DANIEL FLEISHMAN

Many hip-hop devotees would say that hip-hop died when the Sugarhill Gang released their 1979 single, “Rapper’s Delight,” thrusting the genre into the mainstream and away from its improvisational roots. For cynics who feel this way, the small, but well-respected, Nuyorican Poets Café may just be the remedy.

Established in 1973, The Nuyorican Poets Café is an outlet for amateur and professional artists of the spoken word. It was co-founded by Miguel Piñero, a Nuyorican (Puerto Rican New Yorker) playwright, best known for his prison-drama play “Short Eyes.” Throughout its existence, it has been a non-profit organization, harboring a philosophy of free expression. It is owned and controlled by a Board of Directors and hosts music, theater and

“The atmosphere of the Nuyo is dope.”
—Alexis Wint, junior and poet

poetry performances, as well as film and visual arts.

Walking into the Nuyorican a few hours before show time, I was greeted warmly by Rome Neal, a member of the Board of Directors and by Pepe the Bartender, who did not wish to give his last name. I was immediately offered some cheap and delicious homemade banana pudding (\$5.00). I thought they would be surprised at someone my age and appearance coming into their café, but they were not.

“We draw a very diverse crowd,” Neal said. “White, Black, Asian, young, adolescent, senior citizens, all ages and races.”

“The atmosphere of the Nuyo is dope,” said junior and spoken word poet Alexis Wint, whose first performance was at The Nuyorican. “Everyone is really supportive of the performer going up and the crowd can be tough, but there is always a lot of love in the venue,” she said. Wint has performed at The Nuyorican several times in her career.

The Nuyorican hosts an open mic on the first Wednesday of every month. Those who want to perform in the open mic write down their names on scraps of paper, which are thrown into a bag for random picking by the emcee.

When the performance started, the diversity was striking. Performer after performer went up on stage to read his poem or rap about whatever inspired him or her. There were no limits or restrictions on what was performed. The speakers were all accompanied by a superb jazz band, which provided a bass line and rhythm for each performer.

One of the more experienced performers was David Avendado, a 25-year old Mexican immigrant who has been writing since his late teens and performing for almost as long. “In my poems and essays, I concentrate a lot on topics such as freedom, reason and love and their interaction,” Avendano said. “It’s mostly very personal poetry.”

Another reader was Samson Lahti-Parsell, a 24-year old English major at Hunter College and somewhat less-experienced poet. He has been writing for half a decade, but this October’s open mic was his first ever performance. “I’m nervous as hell,” Lahti-Parsell said. His poetry focused mostly on class difference and on pointing out aspects of everyday life which often pass us by.

Admission to The Nuyorican is usually anywhere from \$5 to \$15, varying with the event. There is also a discount if you present a flier.

The bar at The Nuyorican offers a large variety of drinks

not available to minors, and basic snack foods such as potato chips. Sometimes Neal will also

“It’s important to share the written word with young people”
—Rome Neal, member of Nuyorican Café Board of Directors

make his delicious banana pudding.

In addition, The Nuyorican is sensitive to the financial constraints of budget-wary patrons—there’s no one-drink minimum. “We want to make this place as feasible for people to attend as possible,” Pepe said.

“We get a lot of high school students,” Neal said. “It’s important to share the written word with young people.”

Upcoming events include YOU(th) VOTE, a BET-sponsored political poetry performance on Wednesday, October 22, a Saturday, October 25 performance of Madwoman: A Contemporary Opera, and a Latin Jazz Jam with Willie Martinez and La Familia Sextet on Thursday, October 30.

The Nuyorican is always open if you need to let off steam on a late night, happen to find yourself walking down East Third Street or if you just want to spend an evening basking in the glory of free speech.

Nuyorican Poets Cafe
236 East 3rd Street (between Aves. B & C)
New York, NY 10009
(212)505-8183
www.nuyorican.org

Unearthed from the Slushpile: Babyshambles

By JAMES DENNIN

While music is filled with the names of incredibly famous groups from pop sensations like the Backstreet Boys to the ever-popular Beatles, solo artists have a certain flexibility that is harder for groups to have. Individuals can join and leave bands as they please. Pete Doherty was a brilliant, young, promising artist by himself, who happened to form the greatest song writing duo with Carl Barat since John Lennon and Paul McCartney. It’s true that listening to Babyshambles’s second album “Shotter’s Nation” is like listening to the nonexistent third album of The Libertines—Doherty first became famous as a member of The Libertines, who then went on to form Babyshambles. However Doherty, alone, remains one of the best songwriters in modern pop music.

In the days before his foray into songwriting, he was a poet. By listening to the songs we see that years of over-exposure to the public and tabloid articles have done nothing to stifle his gift for lyricism. Doherty’s words are as powerful as ever, exploring unique rhyme schemes and unconventional perceptions of love.

No I
Never said it was clever
I just like it in leather
Lookin’ for the light
Behind your eyes

While Doherty’s band members provide more than competent instrumentation for his melodies, the band is unable to replicate the same improvised yet tuneful sound embodied by his former band, The Libertines. Many of the songs feel somewhat out of place, like the awkward “Baddie’s Bookie,” which seems almost slapped together on top of Doherty’s vocals. Maybe only Barat knew how to make rhyme out of Doherty’s madness—but there are songs which come across as unified yet chaotic, brash yet beautiful, youthful yet tinged with loss.

The album’s second track, “Delivery,” is one such song. Doherty sings about his battles with drug addiction and his struggles as an artist. He

speaks of the Shotter’s nation which gives the album its title—a shotter is British slang for a drug dealer—and hopes that he can gain redemption through his art, “This song may deliver me/straight from the horror to you.” The words are layered over a pair of simple guitar lines which effectively set the stage for

Doherty’s words are as powerful as ever, exploring unique rhyme schemes and unconventional perceptions of love.

Doherty’s brooding.

Babyshambles gradually add in their instruments, often starting with Doherty’s guitar and layering the rest of the band in what sometimes becomes a magnificent crescendo. The effect can be dazzling, as with the start of “You Talk,” where a pair of chords gives way to a lively plucked bass and an exuberant rhythm section. “You Talk” is one of the few points on the album where Doherty does his best lyric work and drummer Adam Ficek’s ferocious drumming offers a welcome contrast to Doherty’s gentle warble.

On The Libertines’s second album, Doherty and Barat sing a duet, the near perfect “Can’t Stand me Now,” which seems like a conventional ballad about a dysfunctional couple. Listeners wonder if they aren’t singing about the relationships in their lives—but to each other. It’s hard to think of a pair as brilliant in their songwriting and as tragic in their inability to maintain a respectable image. While their dysfunctional relationship has led to fights and break-ups and burglaries—Doherty was sentenced to six months in jail for breaking into Barat’s home—“Shotter’s Nation” shows that it’s also led to many, many great songs.



From Thursday, October 16 through Thursday, October 30, the Theatre Communications Group will be hosting free shows of genres ranging from classical to experimental throughout New York City. A small number of the original 8,000 free tickets can still be reserved at www.freenightnyc.net

Arts & Entertainment

“Frontrunners”: Capturing the Candidates

By ALAN SAGE

“Would you get mad if I didn’t vote for you?” Candidate for Student Union (SU) president Hannah Freiman seems far too busy campaigning to pay attention to Sharel Itzkovich’s (’07) rather unnecessary comment in director Caroline Suh’s new film, “Frontrunners.” But the audience notices, and enjoys the 70-minute long juxtaposition of high school kids being politicians and being high school kids.

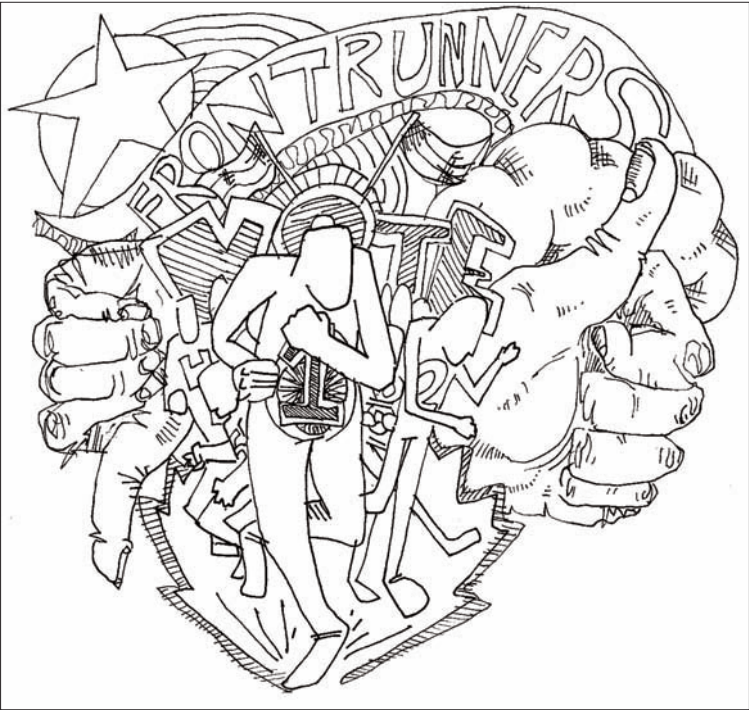
The film, which documents the 2006 race for Stuyvesant SU president, begins by introducing all four of the candidates—Mike Zaytsev, George Zisiadis, Freiman and Alex Leonard. Their brief introductions are followed by political commentary from Jon Edelman (’06), whom the directors label a “senior/unofficial pundit.” Unnamed Stuyvesant students offer opinions throughout the film, including a student discussing the importance of improving school lunches.

Director Caroline Suh tries to offer the audience a picture of the current SU before focusing on the election. She includes a budget meeting sequence, featuring the president of a French literary club appealing to then-Chief Financial Officer Zaytsev for \$200. However, for the most part “Frontrunners” centers on the upcoming elections.

For the majority of the film, Zisiadis steals the show. His

frequent witty remarks almost seem to outshine the film itself. He campaigns at the top of the bridge because students “have to tilt their heads up and look at you, that establishes a sub-conscious notion of superiority

tory in the election, and running-mate Marta Bralic lazily leaning on a third floor hallway, occasionally blurting out “Make the right choice” as a half-hearted attempt to gain freshmen voters. Such shots



and leadership,” as Zisiadis explains in the film.

While “Frontrunners” isn’t exactly an inspirational film, it succeeds in avoiding glorification of the Stuyvesant elections—an achievement, considering that Suh made the film to present a microcosm of the national election. One sequence shows Zaytsev, who believes that he is assured vic-

remind the audience that it was a genuine high school election.

The film occasionally treads a fine line between drama and melodrama. The coverage of the Primary Elections is rather exaggerated. Overly dramatic music accompanies history teacher and former Coordinator of Student Affairs Matthew Polazzo’s broadcast over the loudspeaker about vot-

ing in the primaries.

However, it does an excellent job of documenting Zaytsev’s and Bralic’s emotions after learning of their defeat, with Zaytsev’s cocky façade deteriorating, to the delight of the audience. Zisiadis proceeds to offer another humorous uplift—after the primaries, the film finds the SU president-hopeful consuming a pint of Cold Stone ice cream in celebration.

The presidential debate between Zisiadis and Freiman emerges as the highlight of the film. While Polazzo did admit that “the debate was done in a much more professional manner” because it was being filmed, its mix of professionalism and sloppiness made it perfectly fit for Stuyvesant.

The debate sequence begins with two clumsy students attempting to hang a “Stuyvesant High School” canopy parallel to the ground. The mix of professional politics with high school students becomes evident when, at the suggestion of physical education teacher Lawrence Barth, Zisiadis asks Freiman the clever question “If you lost, what would you attribute it to?”

“Frontrunners” then proceeds to cover The Spectator editorial board’s debate on whom to endorse. Former Editor-in-Chief Wyndam Makowsky (’07) talks to his fellow editors about how “the SU is George’s life.” The Editorial Board ends up endorsing Zisiadis, which Zisiadis

describes as “pretty intense.”

The coverage of the general elections is similar to that of the primaries and equally melodramatic. The camera follows both Freiman and Zisiadis from their homes as they pensively commute to school. The film concludes with Zisiadis’s victory in the election.

“Frontrunners” accurately depicts Stuyvesant life and the system of the SU elections. Other than a few quotes about George Bush from a Republican student, the film successfully avoids imposing a link between the SU elections and the national elections on the audience.

As a work of art, “Frontrunners” is only mildly successful. The candidates’ vibrant personalities carry the film for the most part, but it never develops any theme. By striving to avoid glorification of the elections—which was accomplished in most of the scenes besides the actual election days—the director purposely tried to stick to raw footage. The genius of any film, though, lies in the editing.

Most audiences probably won’t find “Frontrunners” terribly inspirational. However, it has its humorous moments, and it captures the candidates’ personalities well. Overall, the film could be summed up as “pretty intense.”

Frontrunners is playing at Film Forum, located at 209 West Houston Street, New York, NY 10014.

Game Over!



Chinatown Fair Video Arcade attracts large crowds despite its small space and lack of “penny arcade” games.

By MICHAEL SILVERBLATT
and HYEMIN YI

The pixilated graphics. The joystick. And most of all, the 80s.

Now that Tetris, PacMan and just about every other arcade game can be downloaded from the internet, the classic “penny arcade” has become harder and harder to find. Yet a few remnants from the arcade era still exist in the far-out corners of our city.

One of these remnants is Barcade, located in Williamsburg. Barcade houses over 30 “vintage” games in a lofty room with relaxing music, and, of course, a bar. Barcade is “an affordable rendering of games from our past,” said Navin Kamath, a Manhattan

resident and first-timer at Barcade. “And [the setting is] not cheesy.”

Classic games like Punch-Out, Donkey Kong, Tetris, Frogger and Ms. Pacman can all be found at Barcade. For anyone who played video games as a child, the names and looks of the games should be familiar. In addition, the throwback prices—all games are a quarter per play—have many locals addicted to Barcade games. “I have a friend who stops by after work, plays a game, and leaves,” said Ashley Giombetti, a Brooklyn resident.

But as both Giombetti and Kamath said when we first approached them, “Are you even allowed to be here?” After 40 minutes of steering clear of the bar, the bartender finally

noticed us and we were asked to return to Barcade no earlier than our 21st birthdays.

It is possible, though, to avoid the bartender if you keep a low profile.

Back in Manhattan, most of the remaining arcades are more adamant about refusing minors’ entrance. Dave & Busters, located in Times Square, requires one 21 year-old to accompany every six minors. The more child- and adolescent-friendly arcades, like the ever-popular Broadway City Arcade, have almost all closed down.

One of the few remaining Manhattan arcades open to minors is the Chinatown Fair Video Arcade. Upon entering, one immediately notices how tight the space is. The lighting is dim, but the gamers almost seem to radiate with energy. A typical sight at Chinatown Fair is a girl in a gray t-shirt and black sweatpants clutching the bars of a “Pump It Up” machine (a Dance Dance Revolution-type game), getting an “excellent” with every step made.

Unfortunately, Chinatown Fair doesn’t offer many of the classic “penny arcade” games. Street Fighter II, Marvel vs. Capcom, Tekkn 5 and Time Crisis 4 are easy to find, but there’s no sign of Donkey Kong or Frogger. The newest games with more realistic graphics attract the largest crowds at Chinatown Fair. Games require up to \$1.50 in tokens for one play.

While Chinatown Fair is worth a visit for any nostalgic

The more
child- and
adolescent-
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down.

gamers, a visit to Chinatown Fair isn’t necessarily a pleasant experience. The crowd is pas-

sionate about gaming, but is often hostile towards newcomers—if you’re going to visit the arcade, plan on receiving a few stares.

Now more than ever, accessible arcades are dying out, and for minors, arcades are almost nonexistent. The challenges of this level may have become too much for the classic arcade.

*Barcade
388 Union Avenue,
Brooklyn/Williamsburg
Brooklyn, NY 11211
(718) 302-6464*

*Chinatown Fair Video Arcade
8 Mott Street, Manhattan/Civic
Center
New York, NY 10013
(212) 964-1542*



Barcade, a video arcade located in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, offers classic games such as Frogger and Pacman for a quarter per play.

Aaron's Costumes Corner



Sadman Islam/The Spectator

By AARON GHITELMAN

As the temperature starts to drop and the colors of the leaves start to change, Halloween approaches. It is one of the most widely celebrated holidays here at Stuyvesant, with many students strolling into school in various different costumes. For student-athletes who have not yet decided what they will dress up as, it's not a bad idea to choose a costume that demonstrates your appreciation (or lack thereof) for the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) and Stuyvesant sports. So, without further ado, here is your first ever list of the Top Eight PSAL-related costumes.

8) The Standard Wrestling Unitard: While this does not quite flatter my physique, I'm sure that

some people can pull it off. And, for better or for worse, it does not leave much to the imagination.

7) Pier 40 on a Rainy Day: Wear a green outfit, preferably one with artificial turf attached to it. Spend the entire day pouring water on yourself. At the beginning the rain won't affect you, but by the end of the day you are drenched. And you'll stay soaked for up to three days after Halloween.

6) PSAL Football Referee: You'll wear the standard pin-striped referee shirt and pants with one special addition: thick blinding sunglasses (Kanye covers are optional). This is only to make sure you can not actually see any illegal moves in the back.

5) Member of Woopegsooie "The Official Booster Club of Stuyvesant High" As those who frequent any number of Stuyvesant sports games, but mainly our home basketball games, know, there is nothing cooler than painting your body. Consider getting a group of friends together so you can each dress up as one. You'll paint letters on your chest so when you all stand together you can spell out a word. If you have four friends you can spell out S-T-U-Y, six friends R-E-B-E-L-S, and, if you're really popular and have 10 friends, S-T-U-Y-V-E-S-A-N-T.

4) Lincoln High School bas-

ketball star Lance Stephenson: Wear the Railsplitters star's Navy and Silver number 1 jersey. Not only did he average 23.3 points per game as a junior last season, but he lives the fantasy of every Stuyvesant student. He doesn't have to apply to colleges—they apply for him.

3) Cricket Whites: This is a white knit sweater and white slacks or white sweatpants. No joke here, seriously. I think they are actually pretty cool. I'd say they are the classiest uniforms in sports.

2) Anything Related to Double Dutch: This includes any costume that includes a rope, or better yet, a jump rope. See: Ghitelman, Aaron, "Don't Jump In." The Spectator, Issue 1. September 4, 2008.

1) PSAL Basketball Commissioner. You have a lot of freedom with this outfit to take it in whichever direction you want; you can wear a suit, regular street clothes, whatever. Just make sure to not watch any videos all day, even if one of them will prove that you miscalculated the score of the playoff game that sent the Runnin' Rebels home last year. While you may be tempted to swallow your pride, watch the video, and realize that making mistakes is only human, don't. That would be too easy.

Boys' Bowling

Rollin' With Success

By JACK GREISMAN

"Well—," senior and bowling team captain Simon Man was mid-thought when he heard his name being called. He quickly excused himself, and walked over to the lane and picked up his bowling ball. After pausing briefly to concentrate, Man began his motion and promptly bowled a strike. After high-fiving the members of his team, Man walked over and contin-



ued—"Sorry about that," he said. Stuyvesant's boys' bowling team is having another successful season. They are currently 4-0 following a win against Food and Finance High School on Monday, October 6. Stuyvesant's high scorers against Food and Finance were Man with 176 pins, and senior Harry Truong with 173. Stuyvesant won all three games in the match, and managed to get all 12 of its members to bowl.

Coach Tim Pon looks forward to another promising season. "We're going to do very well. I'm expecting [the team] to have

another undefeated season. We haven't given up a regular season match in [more than five] years," he said.

The Hookers' perfect regular seasons can be attributed to their weak division. "We don't have much of a challenge. We don't have any serious threats till the playoffs," junior Leo Ernst said. Ernst is leading the team with an average of 158 pins a game, and has a season high of 179 against Bayard Rustin on Monday, September 29. The highest score of the season, however, belongs to Man with 189 pins.

Despite their clear success, a main problem for the bowling team has been practicing. Due to their limited budget from the school and the relatively high cost of practicing, the team only schedules several official practices each season. "This year we were given a little bit more money than last year. We've had two practices already, and I will likely schedule a third just before the playoffs," Pon said. Due to these intermittent practices, the team members have to make bowling an individual priority. "People who live together try to play together. I go to Maple Lanes in Brooklyn with some team mates to practice," Truong said.

Man also makes personal efforts to improve his bowling due to the lack of scheduled practices. "I practice with Stanley [Chung, a fellow team member] on weekends in Queens. If we had more practices, it would give us time to work with our fundamentals, which we can always improve. It'd also give us better team chemistry."

Still, the captain expressed confidence for a successful season. "I feel the team has really good potential. I think we have a good shot in the playoffs."

Two JV Football Players Poisoned At Practice

continued from page 1

significant, copper sulfate is commonly classified as harmful if digested.

Because a significant portion of the team was either involved in the incident or knew about it but didn't try to stop it, Singer was initially considering suspending the rest of the season. She and Principal Stanley Teitel met on Friday, October 10, to

discuss the team's future. "Our first response was to cancel the entire season, because of the seriousness of the incident," Singer said. "That's still on the table, but we didn't have a lot of time with the day off." Since they only discussed it on Wednesday and there was no school Thursday, they said there was not enough time to make the decision before Friday's homecoming game. The team was

allowed to play the game, which they won, 14-6, but Singer and Teitel are still discussing the future of the team's season. Singer expects to have made a decision regarding whether or not the season will continue by Friday, October 17.

"A team should be a cohesive group," Singer said. "When somebody does something it can and should have an effect on the others."

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Girls' Swimming

Penguins Respond to Loss of Habitat

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The Penguins are doing whatever they can to make sure the incident does not affect their performance. "We had a lot of momentum going," Cunningham said. "We were really excited with the new coaches, we've been having

hard practices, and we were getting in really good shape. It was looking good, but we're trying not to let that momentum slide."

For seniors like Okochi and Cunningham, it is possible that they will never be able to swim in the Stuyvesant pool again. While Cunningham admits that

this is hard for her, she emphasized that the pool itself is not what is important. "We still have the team, and the team is pretty special," she said. "We've had issues every year and we've dealt with them, so we'll just make the best of it."

Strike this group of penguins off the endangered species list.

Football

Close Homecoming Loss Ends Peglegs' Playoff Hopes

continued from page 12

made some good plays," Wheatley Schall said. "That's what you've got to do."

Affuso then converted on the field goal, bringing Stuyvesant to

within two points. After failing to recover an on-side-kick, however, the Peglegs failed to gain possession of the ball to try to make one last push. They lost, 22-20, and their hopes of making the postseason dissolved.

Despite being eliminated

from the playoffs, the Peglegs plan to take their remaining three games seriously. "The season still means a lot to all of us," Wheatley Schall said. "We want to win the other three games and go out with a winning record like last year."

Fencing

Can't Touch This

continued from page 12

look] very strong this year," he said. "The prospects look good and we're hoping to re-gain our title." While the new freshmen and sophomores have not yet received many opportunities to play, Winston has been

impressed with their dedication. The Untouchables know that the title won't come without hard work, though. "We train for three hours five days a week after school," said Sin, who's been on the team since his sophomore year. "Every day we practice conditioning and footwork in addi-

tion to one-on-one personal sessions to help the players individually."

With their skill and rigorous training schedule, it is very likely that the Untouchables will be making an appearance in the finals once again.

THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

Fencing

Can't Touch This

By WACIRA MAINA

The crowd roars as the two fencers stare each other down. The referee ushers them to approach the line and they take their positions. In a second, their hands tighten around their weapons. The tension in the air is palpable. One runs forward and the other sidesteps, effortlessly landing a counterattack. The fighters dash towards each other again, and another blow is landed, followed by a counterattack. The point total quickly adds up, and about five minutes later, the players walk back to their respective ends as the shadow of a smile gleams through the winner's headgear. No, this is not a scene from Star Wars, this is Stuyvesant fencing.

The Stuyvesant boys' varsity fencing team, the Untouchables, was in top form as it won its opening game against the High School of Art and Design on Friday, October 3. Led by senior captains Ken Sin and Muzhou Lu, the Untouchables were able to defeat their opponents while conceding only two of the 15 duels. Junior Max Blitzter, who won both of his bouts, believes that this strong victory foreshadows the team's success for the remainder of its matches. "It's going to be wonderful," he said of the season.

Ian Armstrong, a junior who won his duel without getting touched once, believes that the team will be successful not only because of its talented starters,



Stuyvesant's fencing team, the Untouchables, started off their season with a dominant victory over the High School of Art and Design.

but also due to the strength of those who don't get in matches very often. "We have a lot of tough fencers, but one of the greatest things is that we also have a very deep team," he said.

In Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) fencing, each team is composed of about six starting players and multiple substitutes. Matches are one-on-one, and the first to get five "touches" on the other player is the winner. Generally speaking, a "touch" is when one player successfully makes contact with another player above the waist using his or her foil—the type of sword, as opposed to the saber or epee, used in PSAL fencing. Some places, like the back of the neck,

are off limits. The team with the most total wins is the victor of the match.

The Untouchables finished last season with an undefeated 10-0 record. Then, they succeeded in doing what the New England Patriots could not: convert a perfect regular season into a postseason title. Stuyvesant defeated Tottenville High School on Friday, November 16 of last year by a close score of 4.75-4.25 to secure the PSAL City Championship. Coach and technology teacher Joel Winston said that the team is capable of performing at the same caliber this season as it did last season. "[We

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Girls' Swimming

Penguins Respond to Loss of Habitat

By LUC COHEN
with additional reporting by
CHRISTOPHER ZHAO

Antarctic penguins are struggling to adjust to the melting of the polar ice caps due to global warming. The Penguins, Stuyvesant's girls' varsity swim team, are now beginning to empathize with their avian namesakes after humidity from the Stuyvesant pool caused a ceiling panel—suspended by a rusted metal chain—to collapse on Thursday, September 25. Until further notice, the pool will be closed for the remainder of the girls' swimming season.

This isn't the first time the panels have fallen in the pool area. In the past they had fallen on the cemented sides, and not directly into the pool. "It didn't really affect our swimming at all, since it was in the corner and not above the pool," senior and co-captain Kei Okochi said.

The pool closing alters the Penguins' schedule of both practices and meets. "We haven't had swim practice since Friday, [September] 26," senior and co-captain Nora Cunningham said. "Since then we've had dry-lands every day, so we're working to keep in shape." Dry-lands are ground exercises like running and calisthenics. Since then, the

Penguins have resumed practicing in the pool. On Tuesday and Thursday mornings, they swim at New York University (NYU), and on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons, they practice at the Brooklyn Technical High School pool.

"It's a little inconvenient," Okochi said of the new practice schedule. "But it's not that bad."

In addition to having practice at other locations, all of the meets originally scheduled to be held at Stuyvesant's pool will instead be held at the opponents' pool. While Okochi doesn't believe this will significantly affect the team's performance, she expressed disappointment in not getting a final chance to experience the intense atmosphere in a home match against the Penguins' bitter rival, Bronx High School of Science. "I was especially looking forward to the Bronx Science meet, and that was supposed to be a home meet," she said. The location of the annual face off has been moved from Stuyvesant's pool to Bronx Science's home at Lehman College. To the Penguins' dismay, they will not be having the home atmosphere and crowd support that they were scheduled to have this season.

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Football

Close Homecoming Loss Ends Peglegs' Playoff Hopes

By NICHOLAS HAN
and LUC COHEN

After winning the first two games of the season, Stuyvesant's varsity football team, the Peglegs, had, as of Thursday, October 9, lost their last three. The Peglegs lost to Springfield Gardens by a score of 26-18 on Friday, October 3, at Pier 40. Although they were down 20-6 by the end of the first half, they bounced back to be within two points in the fourth quarter. Nonetheless, they could not complete the comeback. Despite the loss, senior, running back and co-captain Dionicio Herrera, back after recovering from knee surgery more quickly than expected, finished the day with 111 yards on 18 carries and a touchdown. Senior, quarterback and co-captain Nick Goldin also performed well, finishing with two touchdowns (one

receiving, one rushing), eight tackles and one interception while on defense.

Goldin attributes these losses to their own mistakes. "On defense we have not tackled well and we've been giving up big plays," he said. "On the offensive side of the ball, it's been the opposite. We're not getting the big plays and we're having to score by driving down the field."

After the Springfield Gardens loss, the Peglegs knew that they had to win all of their remaining four games to make the playoffs. "To finish the season strong, it will take strong leadership by the seniors," head coach Mark Strasser said. "Teams are tested in this type of situation by how the leaders react. The only thing we have to work on is being consistent. We will play great football for 80 percent of the time, and then we lose focus and make a mistake. We have to stay

focused and play great 100 percent of the time."

Going into their homecoming game against third place Trojans of George Washington High School on Friday, October 10, at Pier 40, the Peglegs knew they had to win in order to keep their playoff hopes alive. Some players were hoping that support from the crowd here would give them the energy that helped them win at homecoming last year. "We always get a big boost playing in front of a lot of great fans during homecoming," Goldin said.

If eighth-place Stuyvesant could beat third-place George Washington, the team would be much more confident going into the final three games. "If we can taste what victory is like again, I'm sure the team will be hungry for more," Herrera said.

As Strasser noted, many seniors would be motivated by the emotional significance of the

homecoming game. "This will be the seniors' last game at Pier 40, and the added excitement of homecoming would get anyone up for this game," he said. "It will be a special night for everyone that attends."

The Peglegs got off to a slow start under the Friday night lights, as George Washington got off to a 6-0 first quarter lead off an early rushing touchdown. Early in the second quarter, however, senior receiver Nicholas Wheatley Schall scored the first of his three touchdowns in the game, which accounted for 18 of the team's 20 points, on a pass from Goldin to even the score at 6-6. Then, about midway through the second quarter, an interception by senior Simon Greenberg set the stage for another Goldin-to-Wheatley Schall touchdown pass, this time followed by a converted field goal by junior kicker Michael Affuso.

When halftime was called, the Peglegs were leading by a score of 13-6. The cheerleaders did 13 push-ups to match the number of points the Peglegs had, senior Charles Kuang, dressed as the mascot Pegleg Pete, entertained the crowd, and everyone in the Stuyvesant section of the bleachers seemed to be in good humor.

At the beginnings of the third and fourth quarters, George Washington scored touchdowns, while Stuyvesant's offense was silent, making the score 22-13 in the Trojans' favor. But with three minutes left in the fourth quarter, junior quarterback Eric Lind fired a first down pass to Goldin, opening the door for Wheatley Schall's third touchdown reception of the night, this time coming off a pass from Lind. "Eric played well at quarterback and

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SPORTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, October 21	Wednesday, October 22	Thursday, October 23	Friday, October 24	Friday, October 24	Saturday, October 25	Saturday, October 25	Wednesday, October 29
Boys' Soccer vs. Lab Museum United Central Park— North Meadow 4:00 p.m.	Girls' Swimming vs. Bronx High School of Science Dewitt Clinton High School Pool 4:30 p.m.	Boy's Bowling vs. Murry Bergtraum High School Leisure Time Recreation— Lane 26 3:45 p.m.	Girls' Volleyball vs. Norman Thomas High School Stuyvesant High School Gym 5:30 p.m.	Boys' Fencing vs. High School of Art and Design Stuyvesant High School- 6th Floor Dance Studio 4:30 p.m.	Boys' and Girls' Cross Country Manhattan Borough Championship Van Cortlandt Park 9:00 a.m.	Boys' Football vs. Evander Childs High School Evander Childs High School 11:00 a.m.	Girls' Bowling vs. High School of Fashion Interview Leisure Time Recreation— Lane 6