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Out-to-Lunch Privileges Restricted For Freshmen

By NICOLE ZHAO

After three incidents involving Stuyvesant students disrupting neighborhood businesses during the 2008-2009 school year, Principal Stanley Teitel decided to restrict the incoming freshman class's out-to-lunch privileges. According to Teitel, all freshmen will have their out-to-lunch privileges at the beginning of the school year, but will have it revoked if they receive a grade of 'Unsatisfactory' (U) or two or more grades of 'Needs Improvement' (N) for the first marking period.

The freshmen will have the opportunity to get their out-to-lunch privilege back "if they're passing all of their classes in the second

marking period," Teitel said.

According to incoming freshmen, during the first Camp Stuy on Thursday, June 4, Teitel originally told them that no freshmen would be allowed to go out for lunch for the first six weeks of the school year. After six weeks, freshmen with high enough grades would earn the privilege to go out for lunch. However, this policy has been revised.

"[The revised policy] sounds a lot better. We shouldn't just try hard for the six weeks," freshman Jessica Toib said. "It is an inspiration to do better. It's a reason for us to do better. That way we know we have to try hard."

Teitel decided to restrict the lunch policy for the incoming

freshman class after three incidents that occurred during the last school year. These incidents involved students being disruptive in the Whole Foods grocery store, students throwing chicken bones in the Barnes & Noble bookstore, and students sneaking into the Regal Battery Park Stadium 11 cinema and drinking alcoholic beverages. These prompted a call to the school from the local businesses. The students involved lost their lunch privileges and their parents were contacted.

"Some of our students, in some cases, may not be mature enough to deal with being able to go out to

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Stuyvesant Faces Budget Cut

By THOMAS FLAGIELLO
and CHRIS LEE

This year, Stuyvesant faces an approximately three percent a budget cut of 469,947 dollars. This will cause various changes with electives, class size, and faculty. Stuyvesant was set to have an approximately 600,000 dollar budget cut when it received its annual budget in May. However, due to an approximately 200,000 dollar budget surplus from last year, the administration rolled over the surplus, resulting in a 469,947 dollar cut from the school's 17,541,870 dollar annual budget.

With roughly three percent of Stuyvesant's funds removed, students may no longer be guaranteed spots in certain electives and other courses they opted for.

Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said, "We had to eliminate the Sophomore Writing Seminar class that we created two years ago which, if the English Regents is any measure, seemed to help many of the students who took it become stronger writers."

The faculty has already begun to feel the effects of the cut. "A secretary retired, but was never replaced," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "Teachers on sabbatical were not necessarily replaced."

"We are losing a teacher. Going into the summer, we did not have enough sections of English [...] for Mr. Weil to work with Arista and Big Sibs," Grossman said in an e-mail interview. "There is still no provision for Arista/Big Sibs."

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Roving Reporter



Joann Bezault, freshman parent

How do you think Stuy will affect your son's social life?

"Curtis likes to keep a small circle of friends, and that worries me. Especially coming from middle school where you know everyone there."

See page 11 for more Roving Reporter photos. Photos taken by Christina Bogdan and Anna Menkova.

New Classroom Built from Library Space



A new classroom, 615E, has been built in the back of the library to accommodate for a large incoming class.

By SANDY CHAN
and ROBERT COLGAN

A new classroom has been constructed using space in the back of the library, following a proposal first introduced by Principal Stanley Teitel at a Student Leadership Team meeting on Tuesday, February 24, 2009. As of now, the new room, called 615E, will be used as an English classroom but may also be used by other departments if needed.

The new classroom will provide available classroom space

to accommodate the 885 incoming freshman in the class of 2013—Stuyvesant's largest ever. It will reduce the area the librarians are responsible for and, according to Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman, simultaneously convert "ill-used space into well-used space".

Over the past few years, the Department of Education has been accepting more students into Stuyvesant due to the limited amounts of seats available in high schools throughout the city. Due to the large number of students and the limited number of classrooms available, the theater has often served as an alternative when classrooms were unavailable.

"With the largest freshman class ever coming in this year, the school desperately needed classroom space. There are very few other areas in the school that could have been used to that end," Grossman said. "I'm glad that we responded to this challenge so quickly and efficiently."

In addition, the new classroom will "alleviate the use of the theater as well," Assistant Principal Technology Services Edward Wong said.

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New Summer Assignment and Placement Test for Incoming Freshmen

By ALEX WANG

This year's incoming freshmen class was required to complete a summer assignment for their science classes. The freshman had to read a 350-page novel titled "Microbe Hunters" by Paul de Kruif, create a vocabulary list, and write a single-page summary of the book.

According to Dr. Hemal Pathak, the assignment was created not to teach the students information, but rather to help them realize what would be expected of them in their upcoming science classes. The assignment is also part of Writing Across the Curriculum, a policy that Principal Stanley Teitel implemented last year to improve students' writing by having them write in every major subject class.

"There's a big transition to be made from eighth grade at a regular middle school to ninth grade at Stuyvesant," Dr. Pathak said. "Hopefully, students that read the book will learn to appreciate that the facts they see in textbooks, and maybe take for granted, are the results of work done by real, and sometimes very interesting, people."

The book is a series of 12 short stories about scientists, bacteriologists, doctors and medical technicians who create vaccines

to fight off different types of bacteria.

Although the novel is biology-oriented, freshmen taking physics were required to complete the assignment as well.

The idea for the assignment was proposed during a biology department meeting. The teachers were concerned that "students are coming in not really ready to work," Dr. Pathak said. "Microbe Hunters" was chosen because some of the biology teachers had read it when they were in school.

Some students, however, questioned the effectiveness of the assignment.

"Teachers [shouldn't] judge the students just by how much work they do on one assignment," sophomore Wendy Chu said. "Some students will do the minimum, and others will read it cover to cover."

"There was an overflow of facts so it was sometimes hard to keep track of it all," freshman Stephanie Yakoubovitch said. "I understand that it's supposed to be a transition from junior high to high school, but I thought we would have some time to have a vacation from it all."

Teitel, on the other hand, said that the vacation policy, which prevents teachers from assigning more than a single night's worth

of homework over school vacations, does not apply because summer is 10 weeks long. As a result, students are not exempt from doing summer work. "I do not see [summer vacation] in the same way as a 4 day vacation," he said.

Freshman Christina Zeng agreed and said that she didn't mind having to do the assignment. "I'm used to doing summer assignments because my middle school had them too," she said.

"We had to do a summer assignment [in middle school] where we had to read six books and write a report on them," Freshman Shearyar Khan said. "This [assignment] was a little bit easier, even though it was 350 pages long."

In addition to the assignment, the incoming freshmen were also required to take a new science placement test during the first phase of Camp Stuy, held on Thursday, June 4. The purpose of the test was to determine which students would take honors biology or honors physics.

In the past, students who scored within the top 100 on the math placement test were put into the honors biology class. The new science test will place the students in "a more precise

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Features

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Euro Trip: Teitel Style

From boars to bull fights: Principal Stanley Teitel tells of his summer travels.



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Arts & Entertainment

Vintage is this Season's New

Interested in supporting AIDS research? Visit the new Housing Works thrift store two blocks from Stuy.

News

Stuy Teachers Take Field Trip to Nuclear Plant

By LUC COHEN

While many Stuyvesant students were either meeting their Little Sibs or enjoying the luxury of sleeping in on a weekday, the members of the Chemistry and Physics faculty boarded a bus headed to the Indian Point Energy Center in Buchanan, New York, on the morning of Thursday, June 4.

The facility, a nuclear power plant that supplies about 20-25 percent of New York City’s energy, offered a two-hour PowerPoint presentation about the center and nuclear power in general as well as a tour of its reactor. No, the teachers were not attempting to gain superpowers through exposure to nuclear energy. Rather, they wanted to gain a better understanding of nuclear fission, which is part of a unit on nuclear reactions they teach in their Regents courses.

“It was impressive just how enormous this thing was,” physics teacher John Avallone said. “You think about a power plant, obviously I would assume things were pretty big, but you just get in there and see the size of the turbines and realize that they had to put this here and assemble it all and keep it all working.”

Chemistry teacher Samantha Daves organized the trip because both the Regents Chemistry and Regents Physics courses include units on nuclear fission. This is the type of reaction that is utilized by plants like Indian Point to produce energy. The reactions—which consist of the bombardment of uranium with a beryllium alloy in order to produce neutrons and heat—occur in one of four steam generators.

The heat produced by the bombardment causes the water located in the reactor to evaporate, forming steam, which causes the fan blades located within the turbine to turn. These blades are attached to magnets with a wire wrapped around each of them. When the blades are rotated, the wires wrapped around the magnets produce an electric current, which supplies households and other units with power.

“If you experience something anecdotally, you can teach it better.”
—Dr. Steven O’Malley, Chemistry teacher

Chemistry teacher Dr. Steven O’Malley was impressed with how accurately the teachers in his department were teaching the material. “The best thing about it for me was learning that they way we teach it is pretty consistent with how it was taught to us that day at the site,” Dr. O’Malley said. “It was gratifying that we’re teaching it the right way, and teaching it to a level that’s fairly current.”

Many teachers believe that the firsthand experience they re-

ceived on the trip will enrich their units on nuclear reactions and energy. “I’m going to be able to present a lot more detailed facts during my lectures from what we learned,” Daves said.

Dr. O’Malley agreed. “If you experience something anecdotally, you can teach it better because you’ve had at least a little bit of firsthand experience in that field,” he said. “So I can now not just recite what I know in textbooks, but I can actually tell them about our department’s trip that day.”

Politically, the issue of nuclear fuel—which is responsible for about 16 percent of the world’s electricity production—continues to divide the country. Those in favor argue that it provides a reliable source of energy that causes virtually no pollution. Those opposed point out how expensive the nuclear fuel is to maintain and the health risks it poses. The teachers left the trip mainly supporting the expanded use of nuclear power, albeit with some reservations.

“There are some pitfalls, there’s some danger, and the presentation they gave us made me a little uneasy because it seemed like they were so bought into it that they were maybe not skeptical enough. But I’ve always thought that it’s an excellent idea, something we could do as a country”, Avallone said.

“It provides a tremendous amount of energy with virtually no pollution associated with it,” Daves said. “I’m still a little cautious about it. I don’t know if I’d feel comfortable if I had a son or daughter who would go work there, but there are a lot of positive things.”

Black Box Theater Project for 10th floor

By KEIJI DRYSDALE
with additional reporting by ANI SEFAJ

Renovations have been made to room 1025, turning it into a black box theater for acting classes and small-scale Stuyvesant Theater Community (STC) productions.

Black box theater is a type of experimental theater that uses a simple and unadorned stage for performances. Set in a square room, the stage is usually backed by black walls, hence the name, black box theater.

Kern Levigion, the audio-visual technician, proposed the idea in response to last year’s search for a suitable space for the school’s Acting and Shakespearean Literature classes.

The Shakespearean Literature and Acting classes, taught by Philip Mott and Julie Sheinman, respectively, used to use the theater for performances. This led to conflict with SING!, the music de-

partment, and each other, as they all vied for theater time.

Room 1025 was originally a computer room and built 10 feet longer than a normal classroom, making it a perfect candidate to receive a stage. “The idea is that for even classes with a performance component there is some room for versatility,” Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said.

Assistant Principal Tech Services Edward Wong and Levigion spent the summer renovating the room, building the stage, moving walls, and putting up curtains.

Assistant Principal Organization Randi Damesek later suggested that this new space be used for One Acts as well.

In the past, the STC hosted its smaller shows, including One Acts and the Student Comedy, in the library and cafeteria. Using the library to host theatrical events, however, came with certain obstacles that could be avoided by using the black box theater. These

obstacles included assembling the stage, setting up lighting and sound equipment and laying out seats for an audience.

The new theater has not yet received much attention from students outside of the STC, but those who heard about it have shown interest and support. “I like the idea of a permanent structure for STC events,” senior Rosanna Sobota said.

However, the STC has mixed feelings. “It’s nice to know that student theater is taken seriously and a permanent stage has been set up, but there’s a somewhat homey feel to having the stage set in the library,” junior and STC coordinator Daniela Gilsanz said.

As of now, curtains, lights, and a platform have been installed, but room 1025 has yet to acquire a phone and television. Budget cuts have also slowed progress on the completion of the room. “We ran out of money so Mr. Wong had to put some of the costs on his credit card,” Levigion said.

New Gym Lockers, New Policy



Rebecca Zandborg / The Spectator

Gym locker rooms have been greatly improved with new lockers, though students will now have to purchase a lock for their own locker.

By ZOE WU
and KAREN ZHENG

New gym lockers were installed in the fifth floor locker rooms during the first three weeks of July. The lockers were purchased using a 272,000 dollar grant from Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer.

According to Principal Stanley Teitel, all of the old gym lockers, which were last renovated in 1992, have been removed. The lockers in the girls’ locker room were given to the Aviation High School. Unlike the old layout, which featured rows of small lockers on top of larger ones, the new lockers are uniformly sized with three lockers per column.

Teitel asked Stringer for a grant last spring and once it had been approved, it could only be used to purchase new lockers.

The current hallway locker policy will be used for the new gym lockers. “All locker room lockers will have locks on them in September,” Teitel wrote. “Students will purchase the lock as they do for the hallway lockers.”

All freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will be required to purchase a lock for 12 dollars, and will be assigned lockers in order to space out students in the same class. Students will keep the same locker and lock until senior year. According to Teitel, seniors will not be guaranteed lockers because the locker rooms do not have enough for all students.

Some have already expressed concerns over the new policy.

“Many students will oppose to it,” senior Tiffany Choi said. “It is great that we have new

lockers, but the fact that we have to pay for them is not really benefiting us.”

Junior Fannie Law agreed. “A lot of students will probably be hesitant that they have to pay for a gym locker they didn’t have to pay for before,” she said.

Physical education teacher Phil Fisher, however, pointed out the necessity of having a new locker policy.

“I have seen way too many thefts,” Fisher wrote in an e-mail interview. “Just like in the hallways, something has to be done.”

Junior Sharmin Sultana agreed. “Even though it might seem a little too drastic [...] it might be good for everyone,” she said. “The number of thefts have gone down in the hallways so I think it’s for the best if they enforce the same rules in the locker rooms.”

The locker policy will not apply to the lockers by the swimming pool, which were not renovated. According to Teitel, it wasn’t necessary to renovate the pool lockers because they were in decent shape. Students in Swim Gym will use the lockers by the pool for one semester, and then purchase a lock in the fifth floor locker rooms.

Although the policy will not apply to the first floor lockers, Teitel expects the number of thefts to decrease.

According to Teitel, when the hallway locker policy was instated, the hallway thefts “went way down,” he said. “We solved the hallway locker problems, but then the thefts went to the locker rooms [...] So with this policy, if I give you the locks for three years, that’s a good deal.”

New Classroom Built from Library Space

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It was not difficult to convert the section of the library into a classroom because the shelves and books that once occupied the back of the library could be easily disposed. “The shelves back there were either empty, or contained inessential books and periodicals,” Grossman said.

Students have varying opinions about plans for the library. “I think it’s one of those things that people make a big deal out of at first and then forget about after like a week,” junior William Tsai said. “I don’t go to the library too much, and students will find somewhere else to hang out.”

Other students recognized

the need to compromise. “I used to study at the back of the library because it was quiet back there, and I could get a lot more done,” junior Kimberly Lawrence said. “But I guess it would have gotten even more crowded anyway if there are going to be more kids.”

Sophomore Anika Islam sees the need to address the bigger problem of overpopulation in the school. “Stuyvesant needs to stop accepting so many students because we do not have room for them,” Islam said. “Turning the back of the library into a classroom doesn’t solve the real problem [of] overpopulation. Students shouldn’t have to compromise every step of the way.”

New Summer Assignment and Placement Test for Incoming Freshmen

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way,” Dr. Pathak said. The exam tested students’ knowledge of basic concepts in biology, chemistry, and physics.

Chu said the new placement test is a huge improvement. “Somebody great at math isn’t necessarily great at biology,” she said. “And many people that

aren’t so great at math may be great at biology.”

Biology teacher Anne Manwell administered the placement test to some of her honors classes last June in order to create results the department could compare to those of the incoming freshmen.

However, Chu, who took the test in Manwell’s class, said the

results might not have been accurate because the test covered more than one subject. As a result, she did not do as well as her teacher expected, despite receiving good grades in the class.

For freshman Patrick Loi, on the other hand, “It wasn’t that hard”. “It was just a mix of all the material that we learned in middle school,” he said.

Staff Changes for Upcoming Year

By KAITLYN KWAN and ANI SEFAJ

The new school year will bring about many changes to the Stuyvesant faculty. The departure of several teachers prompted the school to hire new staff members to replace them. The social studies department had the most staff changes, including the retirement of Philip Scandura, long time member of the Stuyvesant faculty. According to Assistant Principal Social Studies Jennifer Suri, his retirement coupled with the hiring freeze, which didn't allow Suri to keep David Schepard, led to the hiring of Avram Jezer.

Jezer will teach the Advanced Placement American Studies and Global History Three and Four courses. Josina Dunkel, who is returning from maternity leave, will continue to teach the Advanced Placement European History course and Global History One and Two.

The physical education department had the biggest position to fill with the retirement of former Assistant Principal Physical Education Martha Singer. Former physical education teacher Lawrence Barth will replace her as the interim Assistant Principal.

The change is not permanent because "there's a whole procedure that the Board of Education has set up that needs to take place," Barth said.

"I'm required by DOE regulations to publicly announce that there is a position open. That announcement has to be made public for 20 school days," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "I have to review applications and form a committee of students of teachers, parents, and students, who will provide me with five candidates. I will choose one of them as the new Assistant Principal."

In addition, physical education teacher Anetta Luczak will not be teaching this semester because she is on child care.

For the foreign language department, after Spanish teacher Ricardo Marino left to further pursue his studies, Assistant Principal Foreign Languages Arlene Ubiteta hired Robert Weldon to replace him.

"He speaks Spanish fluently and is a really nice guy. He is also an amateur bull-fighter," Ubieta said. "We're still working on programming, but he will probably be teaching the Regents series."

The math department had to deal with the departure of Joseph Stern, who left to pursue his PhD at Columbia, and the retirement of Susan Rubin. As a result, Assistant Principal Mathematics Maryann Ferrara hired Robert Maksudian to teach the algebra, trigonometry, and geometry courses. As of Thursday, September 3, a second replacement has not yet been found. If Ferrara does not hire a new teacher, she will ask a retired math teacher to fill in as a temporary replacement.

Other changes include the return of physics teacher Wai Lam and English teacher Emily Moore. In addition, program chair Sophia Liang will be teaching English this year instead of math.

According to Principal Stanley Teitel, the budget had an impact on how many teachers the school was able to hire. "We're not doing a lot of hiring. Just when we absolutely need to replace people who have left," Teitel said. "You always want to hire new teachers [but] money's kind of tight at the moment."

To compensate for this, Teitel had to increase the size of freshmen composition classes to around 31 students each. He also eliminated the sophomore writing workshops, and reduced the number of kids taking math team.

"I just don't have the money," Teitel said. "Some of the decisions are kind of tough, but we have to do what we have to do."

Stuyvesant Faces Budget Cut

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experience of the class will be changed."

Some students are concerned by these changes. "If some teachers aren't going to be replaced, I think it's a pretty major impact," junior Austin Joa said. "Having fewer teachers is always bad, for the students and the school itself."

"I think that the budget cut really does impact Stuy," sophomore Sangmee Kim said. "With the increasing acceptance rates and decreasing accommodations, I feel that the budget cut will lessen our opportunities for a greater learning experience, as well as an up-to-date setting for better teaching and learning."

Other students are not as concerned. "I don't think the budget cuts will have much of an effect on the current students," junior Lipi Thaker said.

In spite of the budget cut that Stuyvesant is set to face, Teitel's main priority is ensuring that there is "adequate faculty to cover classes," he said.

In general, "I don't see any major problems," Teitel said.

Lunch Privileges Restricted

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lunch," Teitel said. "When they do something wrong, that reflects on all of us."

According to Teitel, the reason that the new policy applies only to freshmen is that "freshmen are busy making the transition from middle school to high school. If they're getting a 'U' or two or more 'N's,' then they're not making the transition the right way," Teitel said. "I'll decide what to do with the older students another time."

Teitel has not yet decided whether the change will be permanent or not. "I want to see how it works," he said.

Teitel has also not decided what he might do if the disruptive incidents involving students continue to occur despite the policy change. "I'll cross that bridge when I come to it," Teitel said.

One negative effect that Teitel addressed was the possibility of overcrowded hallways during lunch periods. "If enough freshmen fail, it may increase how many students are in the hallway at a time," Teitel said. "I could always use the theater [for study hall] and force everyone out of the hall and into the theater, but I don't foresee that at all. I think the freshmen will come in and do the right thing and not lose their out-to-lunch privilege."

Students have mixed feelings about the change in policy. "It doesn't make a difference," junior Mohammad Hossain said. "Academic records don't always reflect behavior. I understand what Mr. Teitel is trying to do: correlate grades with behavior, but that's not always going to work."

"Since this is for first marking period grades, I think it's particularly terrible. Freshmen are only starting to adjust to teachers and classes. Often a poor mark first marking period is seen as a sign to work a little harder," junior Huma Sayiida said. "I don't find it particularly fair. There are already retributions for poor grades."

However, some students have positive reactions to the change. "It gives students a higher motive to do better. It's a higher motive to do better in school, which in turn, gives you a privilege of getting more freedom," freshman Elizabeth Levitis said.

"I think it's a good idea because obviously there have been incidents at Whole Foods and Barnes & Noble involving chicken bones. What Teitel said about representing the Stuy community, I think, is true," junior Kathy Lin said. "You have to lay down the law somewhere."


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Features

Former Stuyvesant Teacher
Frank McCourt Dies

By JUDY CHEN,
LEENA MANCHERIL,
HELEN SONG
and HANNAH WHALEN

Former Stuyvesant High School English teacher and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Frank McCourt passed away on Sunday, July 19 at the age of 78. Best known for his memoirs based on his Irish upbringing and career as a teacher in New York, McCourt died of metastatic melanoma with meningital complications.

Frank was born in Brooklyn, New York as the oldest of six siblings. At the age of four, his father, Malachy McCourt, and mother, Angela McCourt, moved from New York City to Limerick, Ireland, where they continued to face poverty. When Frank was 11, his father decided to leave his family behind and go to England to make money. By the time Frank was 13, he had stopped attending school and joined the work force to support his family and save money to return to the country where he was born.



“He was
the first teacher
I ever had who
made literature
come “alive”
for me...”
—John Kwok,
alumnus (’78)

Frank left Ireland in 1949 and was drafted into the Korean War. After he finished his service, he decided to continue school. He enrolled in New York University and later earned his master’s degree in English from Brooklyn College.



Frank McCourt, former Stuyvesant teacher and author, passed away on Sunday, July 19, 2009.

His first teaching job was at a vocational high school in Staten Island where he made an intimidating first impression by eating the sandwich a student threw at him. In 1972, Frank switched to Stuyvesant High School, where he taught English and Creative Writing. He had his students read texts such as the “Dead Poet’s Society,” “A Canticle for Liebowitz,” and writings by Irish satirist, Jonathan Swift.

Frank’s former students remember him as someone who relied on a lot of storytelling, reading literature, and as one who asked for frequent student contribution. One former student of his, John Kwok (’78) recalls, “He was the first teacher I ever had who made literature come ‘alive’ for me, instilling in me a strong love and appreciation for literature which persists to this very day [...] Interspersed throughout the class was much humor and laughter, courtesy of him, with frequent singing of classic Irish folk tunes too,” he said. Kwok described Frank as “witty”, “funny”, and sometimes even “irrelevant.”

Frank was also widely revered for his vivacious personality. “One could say he had a wee bit of the leprechaun inside which made him stand out in a school known better for the rigid disciplines of math and science,” said alumnus Paul Horn (’76), who took Frank’s

junior English class in 1975.

Frank’s autobiographical memoir, *Angela’s Ashes*, has been widely studied by freshman English students at Stuyvesant. Gender and class-related prejudice, familial hardships and overpowering love are just some of the universalities in the text of *Angela’s Ashes* that are inspiration for many students who wish to convey such stories from their own lives.

“It captures truths about growing up, family, and culture that we can all understand. It’s also a wonderful way to teach the art of storytelling and the craft of memoir, because it’s so vivid and specific,” English teacher Jonathan Weil said. “The students often use it as a successful model for telling their own stories.”

Indeed, the memoir provides a standard for students, but it also has the power to inspire. “Mccourt’s childhood, like so many childhoods, was messy, painful, and exuberant, and his memoir often inspires students to create their own memoirs that are equally complicated and liberating,” English teacher Emily Moore said.

“It’s a perfect work for our freshmen because the story is told with honesty through the innocent voice of a youngster and because it contains some of the most hilarious scenes in adolescent literature,” English teacher Vito Bonsignore said.

His later published works include *Tis*, which continues with Frank’s life in New York City where *Angela’s Ashes* left off, and *Teacher Man*, a third memoir which chronicles his years as a teacher before he came to Stuyvesant.

When asked to describe Frank, (’59) alumnus Charles DeFanti recalls, “The school was about to move to its grand new quarters downtown. Frank was swarmed by former students, many declaring, ‘We’ve been to the best schools in the country [Harvard, Yale, etc.], but you were by far the finest teacher we ever had.’ [...] Such was the man.”

Courtesy of Charles DeSanti (’51)

Euro Trip: Teitel Style

By GAVIN HUANG

In the classic 1985 picture book “My Teacher Sleeps in School,” a group of kindergarten students is convinced that their teacher has no other home than school. After all, she is always in her classroom before the students arrive and always stays after they leave.

High school students know very well that their teachers don’t sleep in school. Just as we made the most of our summers by working, traveling, attending classes or catching up on sleep, teachers found different ways to spend their vacations.

Principal Stanley Teitel, for example, went to summer school.

“It wasn’t a vacation for me until August 14,” Teitel said.

Once school ended for most of us, summer school began for everyone else. From July 1 to August 14, Teitel and two other principals from Brooklyn Technical High School and the High School for Math, Science, and Engineering supervised a summer school of over 700 students. Around 60 students from Stuyvesant were taking remedial courses at Brooklyn Tech, mostly in English.

“The three of us rotated, the reason being we were on our vacations,” Teitel said. “There’s rarely a day when all three of us were in, but there was always a principal in the building to supervise.”

On his off-days, Teitel came into Stuyvesant to check his email, voicemail and snail mail. He also checked up on construction work going on around the school, including a new classroom addition in the library.

“I usually left around four, which is early for me,” Teitel said.

Finally, on the night of August 14, afterschool students finished their last Regents exams, Teitel and his family

took off to London’s Heathrow Airport, where they connected to a car service taking them to Southampton. There, a Royal Caribbean cruise ship, the *Independent of the Sea*, was docked and ready to make its two-week trip around the Mediterranean.

Teitel stopped at the islands of Gibraltar and Sardinia, Barcelona in Spain, Florence in Italy and Cannes in France. His last stop was a small city in Portugal, where he and his family went whitewater rafting, among other activities.

“I saw a bullfight in Spain,” Teitel said. “It was great, very exciting, although I’m sorry to say the bull lost.”

Although their trip took them around the Mediterranean, he and his family ate mostly on the cruise, which served English cuisine.

“Everyone talked funny there,” Teitel said. “We had a comedian, and he was speaking in English, but I didn’t un-



Principal Stanley Teitel went on a European cruise this summer.

Natalie Fang / The Spectator

derstand a single thing. He was talking too fast. The only reason I knew he was good was because everyone else was laughing.”

Of all the places he went, Italy was his favorite, even with its 100-degree Mediterranean weather.

“Florence was really nice,” Teitel said. “I saw the David. There was a boar in one of the marketplaces, and you would rub its nose for good luck.”

“Maybe we’ll get more money for the budget this year,” he added.

The Cost of Quality Summer Programs

By KAITLYN KWAN

From Summer@Brown to the Columbia Summer Program, the number of pre-college programs students choose to attend over the summer are endless. Many of these programs even go beyond the typical classroom environment and invite students to live on campus. But the costs of some of them can be quite daunting. And with frugality on the rise, attending an expensive program has proven less and less opportune. As a result, some Stuy students decided to take advantage of programs this summer that cost absolutely nothing.

For senior Nashia Kamal, the opportunity to take a free program came in the form of New York University’s Urban Journalism Workshop (UJW), a 10-day program that focuses on the multimedia side of journalism. Because it is free, only 15 students out of hundreds who applied from the tri-state area were offered admission.

“[UJW] was amazing,” Kamal said. “[It] offered us everything—meals, room and board, trips [...] I learned a lot, I met a lot of people, and it gave me an insight into the industry I otherwise would not have had.”

During the program, Kamal

was given tours of the offices of CNN, the Wall Street Journal, Fox News, and the Village Voice. She also attended a live taping of CNN’s “Campbell Brown.”

Although food was provided on most days, Kamal did have to pay for some meals herself. A typical breakfast was at Au Bon Pain, and most dinners were quick bites in the neighborhood.

The meals provided were donations from neighboring businesses, and the tours were set up through acquaintances of the program’s professors. Subway fare for the trips, however, was paid for by the professors themselves.

Senior Henry Lin, on the other hand, paid 8,000 dollars for the Legal Research, Writing and Analysis course at Columbia University. The three-week summer program not only offered a workday five hours shorter than Kamal’s 10 hour one, but also concert tickets and restaurant food. Lin attended Broadway shows and also watched the examination and cross-examination of a witness involved in a murder that occurred five years ago in Brooklyn.

Lin has never attended a free program in the past, but said he believes that “the average expensive summer program [...] will be,



to some extent, better than the average free ones with regards to education. But the high level free ones Stuy students tend to attend erase that difference in educational quality, leaving only lifestyle differences.”

For sophomore Cecelia Shao, who attended a free two-month Chinese class at Hunter College, not living in a dorm had no effect on her experience. Even more, when comparing the free program to a 3,000-dollar one she attended at Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth - one that included a dorm stay, Shao said she had a better experience at the former.

“The field trips were amazing,” Shao said. “[We got] money to spend [...] and [the trips] revealed certain aspects of New

York that I never would have noticed without someone pointing them out.”

During the program, Shao used her newfound Chinese skills to write to an assigned pen pal from Taiwan. She also learned how to play Chinese chess, write calligraphy using traditional tools, and draw Chinese landscape paintings. According to Shao, an added bonus of the program was that those who did extremely well on the final exam were given 1,500 dollars.

For others, however, living in a dorm was significant because it offered a more realistic experience. Students were able to get acquainted with the campus and learn more about the school itself. In turn, this helped college-bound seniors decide which colleges they liked and would apply to in the coming fall.

“Housing and dining [...] were a large part of my experience there,” said senior Ray Min, who took a three-week-long Genetics and Environment course at Brown University. “I was able to use Brown’s athletic facilities, live in dorm housing, and get a feel for the dining hall foods.”

Although the program cost 5,000 dollars, Min would do it again because, “I love Brown. Brown is definitely my dream

school, [and I] had moments I wouldn’t [have had] if I didn’t live on the Brown campus,” he said.

Junior August Jin Rim, who paid 1,300 dollars to attend the George Mason Institute of Forensics (GMIF), said he had an incredible experience living on campus because he was able to meet and befriend his roommate, a student from Florida.

“GMIF also recently opened up a new dining hall too, so we got to eat free buffet-style food every day,” Rim said. “It’s a bit of a generalization to say that expensive programs are better than free programs, but the extra money doesn’t hurt.”

In the end, despite a few nuanced trade-offs—longer workdays and smaller meals—a free program provides students with an experience just as informative as one from a costly program. For those looking to spend little to no money next summer, there are new and inexpensive opportunities present everywhere—just look around Stuyvesant’s College Bulletin (UJW was advertised there in May) or the Internet itself. According to Shao, there’s even a program that pays you to work on a farm in France and learn about where your food comes from.

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▶ 9th Grade	Up to Honors, AP, and IB Levels	
▶ 10th Grade	- English (Essay, Grammar) - Math A & B, Pre-Calculus, Calculus AB & BC, Statistics, Linear Algebra, Multivariable Calculus	
▶ 11, 12th Grade	- Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology - World History, US History, Art History - Spanish, French, Japanese - Computer Science	
	Choose One:	4:00 PM ~ 6:00 PM / 5:00 PM ~ 7:00 PM / 6:00 PM ~ 8:00 PM

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September 12, 2009 ~ End of January 2010

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- ② Saturday Morning Class
9:30 AM - 1:30 PM (5 different levels available)
- ③ Saturday Afternoon Class
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM (2 different levels available)

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Saturday classes begin on August 22, 2009.

Sunday classes begin on August 23, 2009.

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Chemistry	Sat 1:00 PM ~ 3:00 PM
Math Level 2	Sun 1:00 PM ~ 3:00 PM

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September 12, 2009 ~ January 23, 2010 / Saturdays and Sundays

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▶ 8th Grade		
▶ 9th Grade	PSAT + Essay	9:30 AM ~ 1:30 PM
▶ 10th Grade	PSAT + Essay or SAT I	9:30 AM ~ 1:30 PM
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U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO):

Saturday Class (Advanced) September 12th Start / 3:00 PM ~ 6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours

Sunday Class September 13th Start / 3:00 PM ~ 6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours

U.S. Physics Team:

Saturday Class Starting October / 3:00 PM ~ 6:00 PM

USA Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO):

AMC & AIME : September 12, 2009 ~ February 7, 2010 / 48 hours

USAMO : Starting February / 48 hours

AMC 10 (2/9 Test)	Tuesday / Thursday Class	5:00 PM ~ 7:00 PM
	Saturday Class	1:00 PM ~ 3:00 PM

AMC 12 (2/9 Test) & AIME (3/16 Test)	Tuesday / Thursday Class	5:00 PM ~ 7:00 PM
	Saturday Class	1:00 PM ~ 3:00 PM
	Sunday Class	1:00 PM ~ 3:00 PM

USAMO (4/27 Test)	Saturday Class	3:00 PM ~ 5:00 PM
	Sunday Class	3:00 PM ~ 5:00 PM

Visit the Official Blog of Olympiad Academia at www.olympiadacademia.orgFor tuition and other details, reach us at **(212) 239-2797**

Editorials

STAFF EDITORIAL

What am I reading?

In this space, The Spectator publishes staff editorials, which are commentaries on current issues affecting the Stuyvesant community. Discussions are conducted by a Staff Editorial Manager, whose responsibility is to oversee the writing of these editorials. The Editorial Board consists of a group of 26 editors, including the Editors in Chief and Department Editors from 11 departments, both writing and nonwriting, who contribute to the development of the editorial opinion. The points made during discussion are incorporated into articles written by members of the Editorial Board. Staff editorials do not have a byline because they are the collective opinion of the Editorial Board.

Bridging the Budget Gap

With the 469,947 dollar budget cut set for the 2009-2010 school year, the 174 clubs, pubs and various theater productions—including the highly anticipated SING! performance—face steep uphill battles. In its efforts to deal with the budget deficit, the Stuyvesant administration is considering reducing the funds for per session, the money the school pays individual teachers to stay after school and oversee clubs and pubs. All of these after-school events and activities may slowly degenerate into dull versions of their former selves as a result of the lack of funding. We, as a student body, must actively assert our desires and fight to finance the extracurriculars that we hold in high esteem.

While he has been reluctant in the past, Principal Stanley Teitel has given students the opportunity to raise funds for per session. However, our quest to cope with the budget cuts must transcend the weekly bake sales and daily candy sales. Although these methods for raising funds are simple and convenient, they will not meet the demands of a 469,947 dollar setback. The money allotted for after-school per-session last year amounted to 174,389 dollars; Teitel does not yet know how much will be allotted this coming year.

If we wish to continue our tradition of having strong SING! performances and having fully

functioning student organizations such as the Speech and Debate Team, ARISTA and Big Sibbs, we must use all of our resources. We can host creative in-school events that reach out to a large demographic. Last year, the Stuyvesant Free Hugs Club raised approximately 700 dollars by hosting a wheelchair basketball game for charity. If we can develop similar events designed to raise funds for per session costs, we can effectively combat these budget cuts. In addition, by sending out emails to parents and alumni asking for donations, we will be able to move one step closer to fiscal stability.

We can also look into outside sponsors. Many of Stuyvesant's clubs, publications and theater productions delve into topics that may interest companies and entrepreneurs. Organizations such as Big Sibbs can sell ad-space in their handbooks and ARISTA can host more fundraising events. A company or business can sponsor a club, for example, by allowing the club to advertise for the business on their apparel. Although tracking down businesses that are willing to sponsor clubs may take some time, doing so is a needed venture. Instead of relying on the revenue from Snickers bars sold to a handful of students, we can sell to a wider audience.

Another way to actively fight for funds is to contact council-

men and congressmen who are willing to support our cause, especially those who represent districts with many constituents attending Stuyvesant. By calling congressmen and writing letters expressing our need for increased funding, we can fight to maintain our extracurriculars. Showing members of City Hall our passion and dedication can lead to a push for the reallocation of money.

There have been Facebook groups devoted to combating the educational budget cuts such as "One Million Strong Against the Budget Cuts." However, the groups have yet to go beyond acting as an online organization of concerned students. By talking to councilmen and sending out petitions to City Hall, we will be taking a more direct and active approach to the fiscal problem.

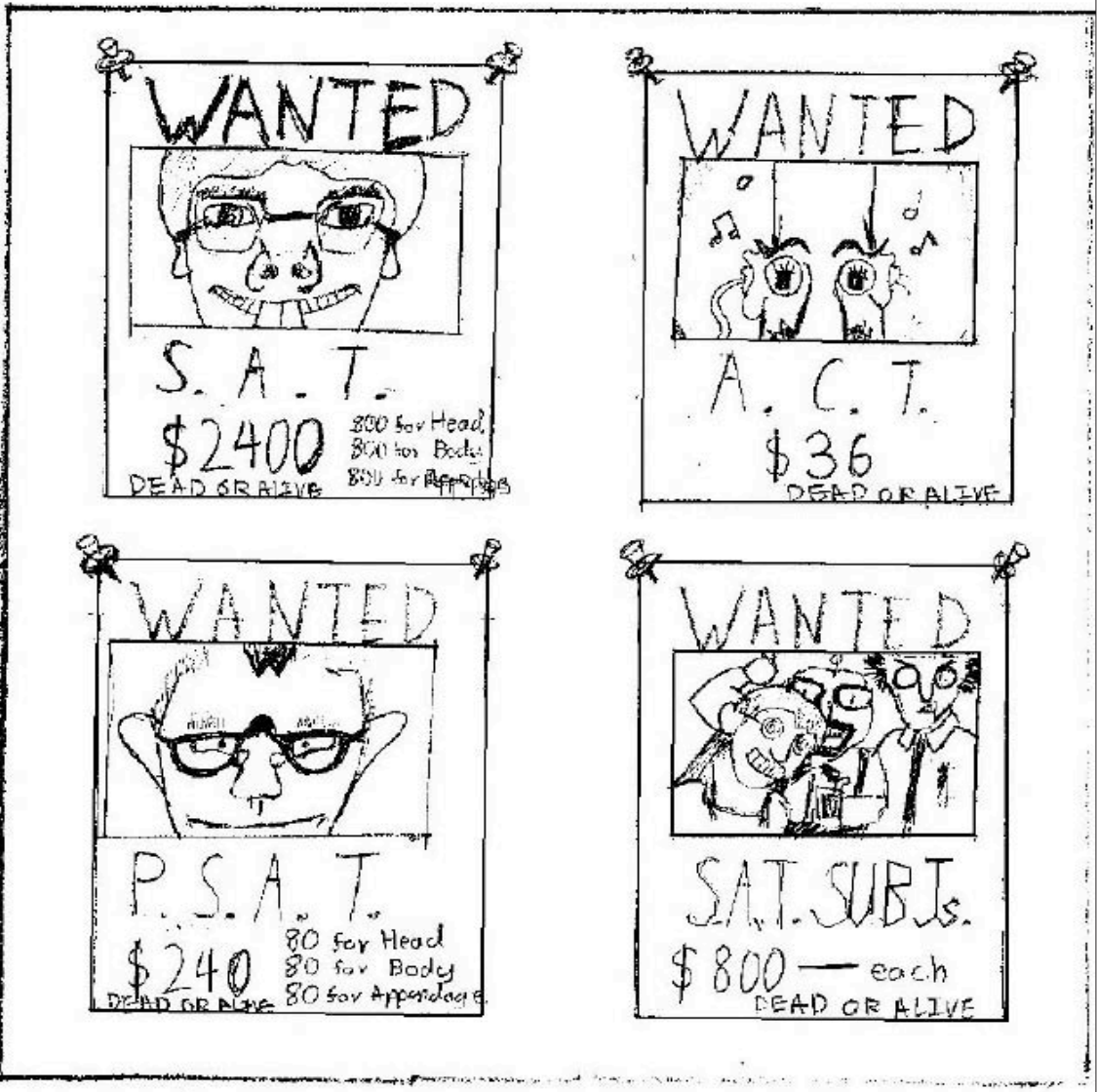
These activities and organizations are crucial to the development of students—they shape our educational experience just as much as our classes do. Not being able to participate in extracurricular activities could hinder our ability to have a multi-faceted high school experience.

We, as Stuyvesant students, may say that we do not have time for fundraisers. However, we must make time. We cannot sit back and hope for change. In our quest to overcome budget cuts, we cannot shortchange ourselves.

OP-ART

Bounties 1

By Jonghyun Lee



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



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The Spectator

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We are looking for issues published before 1995.

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

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FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 16, junior Emily Martin was incorrectly quoted in an outquote for "A Little Village in the Big City." She said, "There are so many things you wouldn't expect to find, but you know it can be found in the Village."
- In "Junior Caucus Endorsement," junior Omika Jikaria's SU position was incorrectly stated. She was the Special Events Coordinator.
- In the outquote for "Renowned Doctors Speak to Students in Library," Dr. Vance Moss was incorrectly quoted. He said, "I wanted to promote the futures of these young adults."

Opinions

Girls’ Education, an Oxymoron for Some



Jack Greisman / The Spectator

By EMMA DRIES

One could say that Stuyvesant has always been progressive. But it wasn’t until 40 years ago that “Stuyvesant eliminated its all-male policy and admitted the very first female students,” began a feature entitled “Alice Chartrand: A Girl Who Broke Barriers,” published in the March 5, 2009 issue of The Spectator. As the first female student admitted to Stuyvesant, Alice Chartrand helped signal Stuyvesant’s transition from being an all-boys’ school to being a co-educational, equal opportunity, specialized high school.

Today at Stuyvesant, 43 percent of students are female. While not a perfect split, it’s far less alarming than the skewed ratio in schools in other parts of the world. According to the World Bank’s Web site, “worldwide, for every 100 boys out-of-school there are 122 girls.” However, “for every 100 boys out of school in Yemen there are 270 girls, in Iraq 316 girls, in India 426 girls, and in Benin 257 girls.”

We often turn a blind eye to the oppression of women across the developing world, mainly because it is far less drastic here in the United States and in other developed regions than in second and third world countries. However, the lack of gender equality in other countries has been a considerable and painfully obvious issue for too long.

A harrowing 15-minute documentary entitled “Class Dismissed in Swat Valley,” produced by Adam B. Ellick and published on The New York Times Web site, details the current deterioration of any semblance of equal opportunity in certain areas of the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

“In the area where I live, there are some people who want

to stop educating girls through guns,” says Ziadin, a middle-aged Pakistani man at the opening of the documentary. Ziadin’s 11-year old daughter, Malala, had aspired to go to medical school and become a doctor, but her dreams were abruptly halted. Since gaining control of the Swat Valley of Pakistan in 2007, Taliban forces have been systematically shutting down girls’ schools and stopping teenage girls from receiving any means of higher education. Though Taliban-controlled territories are not the only areas where women are continually repressed, they are quickly becoming the most prominent, as Taliban influence over Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as the enforcement of Sharia, the Islamic religious law, is expanding rather than receding.

The repression of women is not only morally wrong, causing substantial social problems, but also hinders the developing world’s economic progress. In any country where less than half the population is educated past grammar school, there is no hope for it to grow and prosper as a legitimate competitor in the global economy. Because of the lack of advanced and even primary education offered to females, there are fewer able-bodied citizens available to educate, to provide medical care, and to aid in the initiatives to help a country prosper, and even escape a hideous totalitarian regime.

The United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) is a non-profit organization that has recognized the economic and social implications of refusing to educate women and is dedicated to the furthering of female education all across the world. One of its most notable initiatives is the Gender Achievements and Prospects in Education (GAP) Project. The GAP project uses multimedia from around the world to educate people on the current gender disparity in education. As a student it is difficult to make a significant difference with regards to this issue, but staying well informed on the issue is always helpful. UNGEI, which can be found online at <http://www.ungei.org>, provides continuous updates on different movements and protests around the world regarding gender equality. One of the primary

steps in trying to help women achieve equal footing globally is to help alleviate the ignorance of educated and sheltered people in the United States and other “privileged” countries.

Though alleviating ignorance is seemingly simple, in practice it isn’t. When addressing gender disparity across the world, journalists and advocates need to be forthright and bold. The focus of the entirety of the August 23, 2009 issue of The New York Times magazine was “Saving the World’s Women.” The main article, “Why Women’s Rights are the Cause of Our Time,” written by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, exposes in very vivid detail the plight of women worldwide. However, the article also goes beyond simply attempting to enlighten the general population on the staggering extent of this issue. Kristof and WuDunn make suggestions such as lending money to women at kiva.org or sponsoring a girl at womenforwomen.org. The main reason average citizens have such trouble getting involved is because they operate under the belief that there is not much they can do to prompt change. But with the creation of the organizations mentioned thus far, and the publications of articles such as Kristof’s and videos such as Ellick’s, the possibility of real change is becoming more and more tangible.

As educated people, it is necessary that we strike a balance. Of course we can preach that we mustn’t take the opportunities allotted to females in the United States for granted. We can say that this opportunity we’ve been given is just grounds for us to strive for completely equal footing, not just in terms of education, but also in terms of women’s roles in the American workforce. The legislation that cuts a clear path for women to gain a lucrative career is not a reason for us, even as students, to rest on our laurels. It is clear that the antiquated belief that women are somehow subordinate to men not only physically, but also in terms of intelligence, is still alive and breathing today.

Women may achieve 62 percent of master’s degrees in the United States, but somewhere in Pakistan, an 11-year old girl isn’t allowed to graduate junior high.

Survival of the Fittest



Stephanie London / The Spectator

By KIRAN SURY

This year’s freshman class is the largest ever, and as Stuyvesant’s hallways swell, a current problem will become more apparent. No, I don’t care about overcrowding in the stairwells, the lack of individual attention in the classrooms or the school smelling funky when it gets hot. Those can be solved by some schedule changes and air freshener. What worries me most is the real menace facing students today—growing lunch lines in the cafeteria.

I like to think of lunch lines as a survival of the fittest situation, a case study of Stuyvesant Social Darwinism, if you will. Only the fastest, fittest students will make it to the head of the line to get some food, while the slower, evolutionary-challenged ones will starve at the back. The fed students will go on to stay awake in class, while the hungry ones faint.

Obviously, the students who are awake will get better grades, go to better colleges and thus increase their chance of reproduction and passing on the lunch line gene. Evolution will lead to students who never have to worry about lunch lines at all, and thus the problem will solve itself. It’s all science and genetics—trust me, I learned it in Freshman Biology.

However, some students have developed new group behaviors that enable the less fit to survive. One guy, the “alpha male,” takes his natural place at the head of the line. As other students line up behind him, the rest of his pack slides in next to him. This leads to such a population explosion that the head of the line looks like it sprouted a tumor made of people.

the diary of a mad senior

Eventually, so many scavengers arrive that the line ceases to be a line at all and simply becomes a cesspool of body odor. In what I like to call “the Axe effect,” the pheromone stench from the tightly packed students attracts even more people. While the population influx results in more pushing and shoving, the alpha male allows other students to gather around him because, as any high school student knows, he is free to mate with any females who join his pack.

Like a normal human being, I’m more than content to point out the flaws in this system, and then sit back and do nothing. Unfortunately, my stomach disagrees, so I desperately tried to think my way out of this situation. One option is to introduce an invasive species to thin the ranks, but tigers larger than three ounces are no longer allowed in airplanes, so there’d be a problem in bringing enough over to have any effect. Plus, the tigers might be so effective that the student population would die out and I’d end up eating lunch alone. While that’s essentially what I have now, the loss of background chatter is still a terrible thought.

I try my best to avoid this animalistic charade. Yet, even I have to resort to unscrupulous methods to get lunch. When I do eat cafeteria food, I only get on the line if a friend is there, a perfectly acceptable social convention. It’s all based on your mindset. As far as I’m concerned, when I go to lunch, everyone’s my friend. I suppose we could apply this in large quantities. Perhaps if people grew a conscience, we would stop being jerks and learn to wait our turn. But let’s be realistic here—I’ll take my chances with the tigers.

My Summer Sentence



Tincey Wang / The Spectator

By SAMANTHA SIED

The last day of school is a significant day in every student’s life. Like the American flag, it is a symbol of hope, freedom and summer vacation. And I, like the vast majority of mentally-strained adolescents, intended to spend those two months on my sofa with a remote control in hand.

So, I followed my plan closely: I (unintentionally) tossed my report card into the garbage, grabbed the biggest bag of Cheetos I could find and pulled out the nearest recliner. Now, imagine the look on my face when my mother came into the scene.

“Don’t get too comfortable,” she warned. “You’re starting SAT prep on Monday.”

According to the College-Board Web site, students are not required to take “expensive test-preparation courses to prepare you to do well” on the SAT I: Reasoning Test. Yet there are dozens of pricey books and and hundreds of costly classes designed to prepare students for the examination. To me, this so-called preparation smelled like a hoax, a scam to get desperate parents to throw away their hard earned money. I explained all of this to my mother, who in turn replied that she used my birthday money for the down payment.

But to tell you the truth, I wasn’t nearly as scared of the cost as I was of the experience of going to a prep school for the first time. I have heard of the horror stories—the long hours, the dull teachers, the pale skin, the homework. I cringed in fear at the prospect of returning to my daily Stuyvesant routine.

In fact, I was so desperate to weasel my way out of attending class that I accidentally took a detour on the train and missed most

of the first day. Honestly, I lost my sense of direction between the hours of eight and two-thirty. However, in order to make sure that I’d remember the directions in the future, my mother threatened to sign me up for the fall classes if I ever forgot the route again. I suddenly remembered which train to take the next day.

Soon, most of my nightmares became a reality. For several hours straight, I reviewed grammar, perfected punctuation and bubbled boxes. I read and reread long and confusing passages, varying from an essay on the biological phenomena of cell division to a story about some red-neck romance.

How, a sympathetic reader may ask, did I survive such an ordeal? Salvation came to me in the form of a fat, balding, middle-aged real-life Homer Simpson. Who happened to teach me math.

At first, he seemed no different from the other teachers as he quickly handed out thick packets of classwork, reminding us to concentrate and to read carefully. Soon, the only noise was the sound of 30 pencils scratching on

paper.

But the silence was broken about 20 minutes into the period when he loudly asked a girl in the front row what size her sweater was. Unsure of how to respond, she mumbled that she was a medium. My math teacher dared her to let him wear it. After thinking it over, the girl thought it would be funny and took off her jacket. He squeezed his pudgy arms into the tiny sleeves and after several failures he successfully wore the sweater, zipped-up and all. His face a beet-red color, he paraded around the building like a man showing off his battle wounds—battle wounds consisting of a baby blue sweater with a picture of an eating panda bear.

It was really hard to not laugh at a sight like that. My day was even worth telling my mother, who cracked a rare sliver of a smile. “So, you’re enjoying the classes then?” she asked.

I stopped chuckling for a moment and thought about her question. Truthfully, no, I hated the work, the memorization, the feeling of panic when I wrote my first in-class essay. I hated the fact that I had to sit in a cramped

classroom, forced to do work on such a beautiful day.

However, I couldn’t deny the fact that I did have friends suffering with me (misery does love company) and it was hard to forget my math teacher’s antics. He even planned to have the entire class wear black the next day in an attempt to “freak the faculty out.”

I soon began to realize that although I would rather have stayed at home, lazing around and catching up with my Heroes, prep school wasn’t such a bad alternative to the average summer vacation. Instead of gaining extra pounds and broadening my waistline from excessive laziness, I gained new test taking strategies and broadened my vocabulary. I even got to see an overweight man accomplish the impossible.

For those who think themselves superior because they smooth-talked their way out of test prep: Don’t knock it until you’ve tried it. I may have been stuck inside all day, but at least I gained a pretty funny icebreaker for the next awkward Stuyvesant dance.

Opinions



Stephanie London / The Spectator

By GAVIN HUANG

How much can you really say in 140 characters or less? On the surface, not that much. I was skeptical at first when I heard about this new Web site on which you can “follow” people and read micro-blog posts, or “tweets.” Why did I need this in my life, exactly, when I already had Facebook?

When some of my favorite news reporters, like Larry King, started telling their viewers to follow them on Twitter for updates on their stories, I decided to get an account myself. But what could I possibly tweet about? My life is not interesting. I was averaging one tweet a week, and most of them were about how bored I was and how ridiculous I thought Twitter was.

But my fascination with the site picked up when I started following celebrities like John Krasinski and Rainn Wilson, two actors from “The Office.” Like TMZ and the paparazzi, Twitter furthers our obsession with ce-

lebrities by humanizing them. Because the real celebrities are the ones using Twitter, anyone can, say, send condolences to Wilson when he tweets that his son’s fish just died. While he may not respond (seeing as he has over a million followers), there is a good chance Wilson may personally gloss over the tweet when he is checking his Twitter account. It brings a refreshing level of intimacy to the celebrity-fan relationship.

There are people who think this kind of virtual interaction is unhealthy. When the site was first launched in March 2007, reaction from the web industry was mixed. Some users were uncomfortable with staying “too connected” and receiving constant updates on mundane topics like what breakfast cereal their friends were eating. But what has made Twitter so significant is not necessarily its concept or even what’s being said on the site itself. What’s important is how the site is being used.

When the post-election protests in Iran started on June 13, 2009, I had been using Twitter for two months. News outlets were reporting heavily on the contested elections there, where the incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad “defeated” the favorite reform candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi. Supporters of Mousavi organized pro-

Tweet, Tweet

tests in the streets of Tehran, and rioting eventually spread to other parts of the country. Aside from being the largest show of defiance there since 1979, the protests were intriguing because they were organized partly through Twitter. In a heavily censored country, such a simple micro-blog site is vital for communication because the site itself does not contain any insinuating content and thus can’t be blocked.

Even more interesting was how the rest of the Twitter com-



Like TMZ and the paparazzi, Twitter furthers our obsession with celebrities by humanizing them.

munity reacted. In this historic event, instead of just watching the news unfold, people got involved directly. Users were sharing links to anti-government sites and tips on protection from tear gas. I was sharing

tweets with people protesting in Tehran. I was linked to a chat room, where one of the users was a woman from the Isfahan province. I was sharing video links with a 17-year-old novelist in California. Eventually, Twitter users were getting better coverage of the elections than people watching CNN, which was criticized for its lack of coverage (lending to the fact that the government had shut out most reporters from Iran).

But if you’re not into the whole protest thing, you can always tweet about other topics. A central part of using Twitter is finding a niche of people around the world who enjoy what you enjoy. What’s interesting about the site, and other communication tools on the Internet, is its ability to turn strangers into acquaintances. With Twitter, you can isolate content with hashtags. People will append these hashtags in front of their tweets if they relate to a topic. During the protests, tweets having to do with Iran had the hashtag #iranelection. If you want new music, you can search the hashtag #musicmonday. Want to hear what people are thinking about current movies? Search the hashtag #movies. Yes, there is even a hashtag for the show “NYC Prep.”

Older generations are fascinated by Twitter because it is part of the Internet culture

You can use it to talk about something important like the Iranian elections or use it to complain about your relationship problems.

that’s changing social conventions. We scoff because we’re used to being connected to each other all the time. So what new aspects can Twitter bring? It depends on how you want to use it. Each tweet is a look into someone else’s life, no matter how mundane it is or where the user is from. But it’s up to you to decide whether you want to pay attention to it or not. You can use it to talk about something important like the Iranian elections or use it to complain about your relationship problems. It can be a catalyst for change or just another social networking site.

Cartoons



Arts & Entertainment

New in the Neighborhood

Vintage is this Season's New



Housing Works, a thrift store on Chambers Street, has everything from furniture to clothing.

By JENNY CHE

As store after store shuts down along Chambers Street, a new one opened its doors on Friday, July 31st. The new Housing Works Thrift Shop is located on 119 Chambers Street, making it the second move for the shop in six months since it first opened on Warren Street in February.

“Everything here is second-hand and donated,” said Chanel Auguste, assistant manager of the store. “We accept everything except underwear and children’s clothing.” Even with these limitations, business is booming, as seen by the need for a new, more spacious area. “We just needed a bigger space,” said Auguste. “We had a lot of furniture stored that we were unable to sell [at the previous location] because of the limited room.”

The new space has two floors with high ceilings, creating a gallery-like duplex that holds a variety of merchandise. High-heeled shoes hang from the railing leading into the basement, while books and CDs are stacked on donated bookcases.

All the sales proceeds go to Housing Works, a non-profit organization that serves clients who are homeless or low-income New Yorkers living with HIV or AIDS. The program provides them with housing, meals, medical care and employment opportunities.

“AIDS research gets cut every year, and this is a way to help,” said Auguste. “The thrift side of the program brings in a lot of money for us.” Housing Works also offers free legal advice and assistance to the homeless, along with a long list of health care services.

Rummaging through the filled racks is not unlike searching for treasure. A closer look takes you past the plain shirts and tanks to reveal a wool Tahari dress for \$40 and a silk blouse for \$12. Denim shorts sell for \$5, and assorted prom gowns are all under \$50.

As you walk along the wood-paneled

floors, an eclectic array of shoes greets the eye. These are visibly more used, yet still in excellent shape. A pair of Miu Miu sandals cost, along with the others, only \$20.

“I love it,” said Marietta Smith, a shopper. “Everything is broken in already, and it’s cheap. I’m here everyday on my lunch hour.”

The downstairs section consists of rows upon rows of books. Barely opened contemporary paperbacks are here, such as Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*, as well as older, yellowing novels, like a copy of Henry James’ *Portrait of a Lady* from 1956. Next to them, CD’s sell for \$3 and vinyl records ranging from Beethoven to Bruce Springsteen sell for \$1 each.

Around the corner stand household items and furniture. There’s glassware, pottery, and even metal spoons and forks for \$0.50 each. Heavy wooden end tables and antique rocking chairs are arranged in a circular fashion, all priced within \$200. Higher-end items like handbags and evening dresses are auctioned online, and new items are added every day.

The store’s popularity is easily apparent, with the line to the register constantly filled with shoppers ready to pay, and numerous passers-by stopping in to browse.

“This is great,” said Hannah Genrich, another shopper. “They have everything. And if you see something you like, you have to get it right away or it will probably be gone by the time you come back.”

The thrift store holds frequent sales, and monthly early bird specials offering 40 percent off to lure in new customers. As for student discounts, there are none—yet. “We’re new to the neighborhood, and we haven’t played with those ideas,” Auguste said. “But we’re definitely going to wrestle with them a little.” However, students who wish to help out are welcome to work at the store as volunteers. According to Auguste, who is also the volunteer coordinator, the store is understaffed and relies largely on volunteers rather than on employees. “We only ask for a few hours a week,” she said. “And it’s for a great cause.”

Whether you’re interested in helping out for a great cause, or are merely on the hunt for last season’s perfect suede boots, the Housing Works Thrift Shop offers a truly unique shopping experience where vintage is always in style.

119 Chambers Street.
Open Mon-Sat 10 AM – 7 PM,
Sundays Noon – 5 PM.
www.shophousingworks.com.
212.732.0584

Iceboxes in Summer

By ZOE LEVIN
and DAPHNE ZHEN

At the beginning of the summer, Tribeca welcomed a bakery with a style sweet enough to match neighborhood eaters’ sweet teeth. Billy’s Bakery, a business previously located solely in Chelsea, opened a quaint new location on Franklin Street, tucked between Broadway and Church Street.

Billy’s Bakery, co-founded by business school friends Wayne Doyan and Marc Lino, opened its already famous Chelsea location in 2003. The bakery has been fea-

The bakery has been featured on Food Network’s “Unwrapped” series.

tured on Food Network’s “Unwrapped” series. The Tribeca location, which opened on Saturday, June 20 amidst free samples and fanfare, has a larger storefront and shorter lines. The new branch has a far less cramped, more relaxed atmosphere.

Billy’s offers a diverse selection of irresistible treats and breakfast items as well as a wide assortment of coffees and teas. The bakery’s menu features all kinds of cakes, cookies, brownies, cupcakes, bars and pies. Billy’s offers everything from classic yellow butter cake, decorated with pastel-colored designs, to blueberry buttermilk muffins for breakfast. The bakery serves seasonal treats, including sweet and tart Lemon Bars in the summer and Pumpkin Bars in the winter. Another favorite of Billy’s customers is the Chocolate Icebox Cake, a cake layered with chocolate wafer cookies and fresh whipped cream.

“They’re simple, moist, and absolutely perfect,” said Marsha Green, a regular customer at Billy’s, in reference to the Red Velvet cupcakes. “The cream cheese frosting just adds to its wonderfulness. It’s probably one of the best cupcakes in the city.”

The bakery, adorned with a bench on the outside, offers a 1950s feel, with vintage floral wallpaper and shelves of old pots and pans to accompany its old-fash-

ioned tables. Soft rock music plays in the background. Upon ordering, customers can watch employees icing and baking the cupcakes right in front of them. Billy’s often has fresh samples set up to attract new customers.

Doyan and Lino were interested in the Tribeca space because of the diverse constituency of residents, workers, and tourists. The two founders were also pleased with the central location. “I’ve been to the Chelsea one, but not very often,” customer Fiona Lowe said. “But now I can come more often to Billy’s thanks to the convenient new location.”

Prices at Billy’s Bakery are generally affordable. “Compared to the other bakeries in the city, Billy’s is cheap,” said Johnny Levy, a first-timer at Billy’s. Traditional cupcakes sell for \$2.25 each, while specialty cupcakes like the Red Velvet cupcake cost \$.50 more. Cookies sell for between \$.75 and \$1.50, while bars, brownies, scones and muffins sell for between \$2 and \$3.25. Cake, cheesecake, and pie slices cost between \$4.25 and \$4.75. The bakery also sells apparel, totes, birthday cards, can-



Billy’s Bakery, located at 75 Franklin Street, is a reasonably priced dessert eatery, is likely to become the new spot for Stuy kids with a sweet tooth.

dles and boxes for individual cupcakes. All these items are branded with Billy’s logo, a cupcake-shaped green circle with “Billy’s Bakery” inscribed in yellow script.

A trip to this warm and inviting bakery, just a short walk from Stuyvesant, will surely guarantee sweet, delicious moments.

Tribeca Location:
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Between Broadway and Church Street
New York, NY 10013
Phone: 212-647-9958
7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Monday – Friday
9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Saturday
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Friday
http://www.billysbakerynyc.com/

Opinions in A&E: The Pursuit of Propyganada

By ALAN SAGE

I cried each one of the three times I saw “The Pursuit of Happyness.” But then again, one shouldn’t use tears as a gauge of film’s quality.

In the past few months, I’ve seen two films that deal directly with poverty. One, “The Pursuit of Happyness” (2006), directed by Gabriele Muccino, is a story about a homeless man on the streets of San Francisco who pulls himself up by his bootstraps to become a millionaire, a rare success story presented as a norm. The other, “Killer of Sheep” (1977), directed by Charles Burnett, is a story about a man living in South Central, Los Angeles, struggling to bring occasional fragments of middle-class life to his family.

“The Pursuit of Happyness,” starring Will Smith as Christopher Gardner, whose memoir the film is based on, is certainly

well done. One particularly moving scene features Chris telling his son Chris Jr. (Jaden Smith) that the machine he’s trying to sell, a bone density-scanner, is a time machine. Once Chris Jr. is convinced that they have been transported from a San Francisco subway station into a prehistoric landscape dominated by dangerous dinosaurs, Chris leads his son into what he terms a “cave”—a restroom in which they spend the night.

Chris Jr.’s unconditional trust in his father contrasts beautifully with the cruel hardships the father and son face. In fact, much of the film is beautifully done. But it’s the implausible breaks meeting Chris that reduce the film to a propaganda work. The sole reason he is hired for the stockbroker internship—his key to a better life—is because he impresses a member of the firm with his ability to solve a Rubik’s cube. While Christopher

Gardner’s true story is equally astounding—he was impressed with a stockbroker’s car, and that stockbroker subsequently helped him find a job—the story’s truth doesn’t prevent the film from becoming propaganda; the film is propaganda for the American Dream because it presents an extremely rare success story as the reality of poverty.

“Killer of Sheep,” on the other hand, seems almost documentary-like, capturing snippets of different South Central scenes that together present the audience with a broad picture of poverty in Los Angeles. Throughout the film, a parallel runs between the children of South Central and the soon-to-be slaughtered sheep at the factory where Stan (Henry Sanders), the protagonist, works. In one scene, the children jump across buildings, reminiscent of counting sheep jumping across a fence. The film shows how an environment like South Central

leaves little opportunity for stories like Chris Gardner’s.

The film tackles the more complicated psychological effects of poverty that “The Pursuit of Happyness” simply ignores. One of the earliest scenes in “Killer of Sheep,” for example, shows Stan slapping his son for running away when someone was beating up his brother, telling him, “You soon will be a goddamn man.” Another scene shows Stan and a friend purchasing a new truck motor with money that doesn’t come easily. Having cautiously lowered the heavy motor down a staircase, they place it on the edge of a pick-up truck. After it falls off the back of the truck and breaks, one sees it disappear into the distance as the two men are forced to cut their losses and move on.

“Killer of Sheep” is lushly scored with music by Paul Robeson and Dinah Washington. As Washington’s soulful “This

Bitter Earth” plays, one understands how coping with poverty is just as important as overcoming it. And one can’t help but hear either a hint of irony or a piece of tempered optimism while listening to Robeson’s “The House I Live In.” “The Pursuit of Happyness” deals with coping to some extent, but the aspect of coping is somewhat overshadowed by the contrived “happyness” awaiting Gardner.

“The Pursuit of Happyness” concludes with Chris and his son walking through an expensive area of San Francisco. “Killer of Sheep” ends with Stan leading a pack of sheep, still reminiscent of the children, up to where they’ll be slaughtered. Yet again “The Pursuit of Happyness” proves itself to be a propaganda film, highlighting a rare case of overcoming poverty, while “Killer of Sheep” highlights the cold, harsh realities facing the many living in poverty.

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Girls' Soccer

Spring to Fall:
Two Full Seasons for the Mimbas

continued from page 12

days they have a lot of space to practice, while other days they have hardly any. “It depends on the day and the time, but we rarely have the field all to ourselves,” Greenberg said.

Due to the season change, the duration of the Mimbas season has been shortened. They will still have to play 12 games, but they will now have to play more games closer together. The regular season will be about two weeks shorter than it was the previous season.

This shortened season and lack of available field space have prevented the Mimbas from being able to schedule games at Pier 40, something they were able to do three times last year. The Mimbas also had to schedule four of their games on Saturdays. They have never played a weekend game in the past few seasons. Though the Mimbas have never played a regular season game outside of Manhattan, three of these games will be played in Queens.

The sudden change in seasons has put the Mimbas under some extra, unnecessary stress. However, the Mimbas hope to overcome these obstacles and put together another successful season. Even if it is only three months later.

Boys' Football

Peglegs: Back to the Drawing Board

continued from page 12

who believe that the loss of a strong senior class will hurt this year’s team. Quarterback Nick Goldin (’09), wide receiver Nick Wheatley-Schaller (’09), running back Dionicio Herrera (’09), and offensive tackle Tarek Elessawi (’09) were just a few of the talented players who graduated this past June. “We are not a very deep team so we’ve seen a lot of injuries and have been able to work with other players who can work their way up,” Strasser said. Picking up the slack after the loss of players to graduation and injury will be no small task.

Fima, however, believes the Peglegs will put any and all doubts to rest by season’s end. “I think it’s tough every year to lose the seniors but you just got to overcome it and have new people step up. However, this year is a little harder [...] but they [the underclassmen] are just going to have to step up and do the job,” Fima said.

Senior and kicker Michael Affusso thinks that filling the shoes of last year’s seniors will not merely be a matter of hard work. It will also be a change in the approach, style and game plan of the Peglegs – especially on offense. “We changed our offensive playbook to have more running backs on the field to maximize our talent [...] and our running backs should do well in the new offense, making up for some of the losses,” Affusso said.

With the woes of last season behind them, it is now up to the players of the classes of 2010 and 2011 to prove to their worth. They have to prove that they will be a force to be reckoned with and that they will not repeat the misfortunes of last year. “Every coach and team goes into a season thinking that they are going to win every single game so that is what we expect to accomplish,” Strasser said.

Boys' Soccer

New Coach and Deep Talent Raise Expectations for Stuyvesant FC

continued from page 12

The defense’s statistics seem to speak for themselves. Last season they did not allow more than two goals in a regular season game other than against the 2008 city champion Martin Luther King Jr. Many of these low-scoring matches can also be attributed to Sandler’s performance on goal; in 11 games, he allowed only 10 goals. Senior and forward Cody Levine described the defense as “incredibly strong. They help us stay in every game we play in,” he said.

The depth and experience of the team has helped ease the transition between former coach Adam Goldstein and Fuksman. “Coach Goldstein was a great coach who really brought our team together and had us playing as a cohesive unit,” Sandler said.

In his two-year coaching career at Stuyvesant, Goldstein led the team to a 12-7-5 record, and laid the foundation for a squad that looks to be a playoff threat once again this season. “This year we have 10 returning starters to a previously successful team which should help to build on that success,” Levine said.

“Furthermore, the key players coming off the bench are all a year older and a year better so we look to be a dangerous team this season.”

While on-field skills will certainly be present in the 2009 campaign, intangibles such as depth and experience will be equally crucial in determining the outcome of games against interdivision rivals and city finalists Beacon and Martin Luther King, Jr. “I’m pretty sure we can do as well as we have done in the past. There are a bunch of returning players and a few freshman, so time will tell,” Fuksman said.

Despite a tough division and a new coach, Stuyvesant F.C. is going to be a serious threat in PSAL soccer in 2009. “King and Beacon lost a few players while we actually gained some, so we should do well against them this year,” senior, captain and midfielder Andres Fernandez said. Fiveborosports.com ranked Stuyvesant eighth amongst public schools in its preseason soccer rankings, officially placing it within the elite soccer schools in the city. Seniors such as Sandler, Levine, Traut, and Fernandez look to lead a deep team armed with experience and ambition.

Roving Reporter



Della Chu, freshman

What was the most exciting thing you did this summer?

“I went to a wrestling camp. It was kind of strange because I was the only girl out of 100 guys. I had to deal with their fart jokes all the time.”

Did you do any math over the summer?

“Yeah, teaching kindergarteners 1+1. Otherwise, hell no.”



John Connuck, senior

What did you do this summer?

“I was working at Columbia doing a video production class. It was a really unique experience.”

Did you apply anything you learned in school over the summer?

“Because of budget cuts, I got shut out of video production so I took graphic communication with Ms. Rominecki-Seltzer—congratulations on the baby by the way—which was great but not relevant to the work I did this summer.”



John Biswas, freshman

What is the most exciting thing you did this summer?

I went to Pennsylvania and visited my cousin. It was fun.

How do you plan to get to all of your classes on time?

I didn’t really think about it. I don’t think I can do it.

Shirley Chiam, freshman

What is the most exciting thing you did this summer?

I went to amusement parks.

Have you thought about Stuy at all this summer?

Yes, I’m very nervous.



Catherine Chung, freshman

What was the most exciting thing you did this summer?

“The most exciting thing I did was volunteer at a day care center. It was fun, I actually considered being a teacher for a moment.”

Did you do any math over the summer?

“Yeah, at SAT prep.”

Photos taken by Christina Bogdan and Anna Menkova



THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

Boys' Football

Peglegs: Back to the Drawing Board



The Stuyvesant Peglegs hope to improve their season in the coming year.

By NICK GALLO

When last season came to a close with a 34-12 loss to Franklin K. Lane Campus High School, the Stuyvesant Peglegs stared blankly across the gridiron in silent and palpable awe. After the team's already high expectations were increased by an impressive 2-0 start, a 3-6 overall record and no playoff berth were the last things anyone expected.

"After our final game last year many were brought to tears," senior running back Islam Ahmed said. Ahmed said he hopes to mature into a leader on and off the field during his final season in a Peglegs uniform.

However, the Peglegs have been inspired to work harder because of their disappointing season last year. Current pre-season practices are run with greater intensity than they were last year to prepare for a rigorous 10-game season in what is anticipated to be a hot and humid autumn. "I've seen a lot of hustle in the team

and I think this is going to be a really good group because of how hard they work and how much they want to win," Coach Mark Strasser said.

"We are also training with a lot of energy, no matter if it's actual football drills or just sprints," senior, linebacker and captain Ari Fima said. The Peglegs have been pushed to their physical limits on the hot turf of Pier 40, but they have also had the initiative to train extensively during the offseason. The team will be led this year by seniors and captains Fima, Shota Hasui, Kevin Zeng and Eric Lind. They hope to turn the tough off-season workouts into a winning season in 2009.

"Most of the team has been hitting the gym as much as possible," Ahmed said. But while the Peglegs have trained relentlessly in hopes of making this season an opportunity to redeem themselves, there are skeptics

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Girls' Soccer

Spring to Fall: Two Full Seasons for the Mimbas

By MOIN SATAR

Eight months. In this span of time, the Mimbas, Stuyvesant's girls' varsity soccer team, will have completed not one, but two seasons. Despite overwhelming disapproval voiced by players and coaches, the Public Schools Athletic League decided to move the girls' soccer season to the fall beginning in the 2009-2010 season. The change was made due to complaints from players about conflicts with their club teams, which also played in the spring. This means that the Mimbas will have to play two different seasons in the same calendar year.

This season change means that there will only be a three month gap between the last game of the 2008-2009 season and the first game of the 2009-2010 season. This short gap is enough for most of the returning players to recuperate from the last soccer season. However, it also means that senior Marantha Dawkins, who tore her anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in May, will not be able to play this season. Dawkins would have been ready to play in the spring, but not in the fall.

Now that the soccer season will begin in the fall, some of the players are faced with the dilemma of choosing between two sports. Sophomores Zoe Goldstein and Sharon Romero decided to leave the team to join the volleyball and swimming teams, respectively. Probably the biggest loss for the Mimbas

is that of senior Cassandra Lee, who decided to leave the soccer team to continue playing football in the fall. Lee was a backup goalkeeper for the Mimbas and was second on the team with 12 saves last season.

The Mimbas also face the tough task of replacing the eight seniors on the team last season. Key losses for the Mimbas include the team's leading goal scorer, Gabrielle Beer ('09), leading and the team's starting goalkeeper, Monika Rozkowska ('09). Beer had 18 goals, including four in the Mimbas two playoff games. Rozkowska led the team with 43 saves, 18 of them in the playoffs. The eight seniors took 212 of the team's 274 shots, and scored 33 of their 38 goals.

Unlike the last three seasons, there will be no changes to the Mimbas' division, in which they tied for second last season. Fortunately for the Mimbas, they are not the only team to lose many seniors. Lab Museum United and Bard High School both lost six seniors. Fiorello H Laguardia and Beacon High School lost nine, and School of the Future 10.

Since the team lost many of its players from last season, it will need the contributions of the new girls of the team. "We lost a lot of great players last season," coach Suzanne Lendzian said. "The team needs new players to step up and help the returners out." However, this has been made more difficult due to the season change.

The team's roster will be de-

cided on Wednesday, September 2, a week before school begins, making it impossible for the Mimbas to advertise their team during the school year. Besides the advertising done at Camp Stuy, there was little opportunity to put recruitment posters around the school or to hold interest meetings in order to attract potential newcomers to the team. The team used freshman Facebook groups to try to recruit new players.

The amount of time the team has to practice before their first game has also diminished. "In the spring we were able to have a month of preseason followed by a month of practices before our first game," senior Alexandra Greenberg said. "Now, we are crunching our preseason and first month of practices into one."

Last year, the Mimbas also benefitted from playing a scrimmage before the first game. This scrimmage "gave the players who had never played before a chance to see what playing a real game is like" sophomore Libby Dvir said. Unfortunately, they will not play a scrimmage this year.

The Mimbas still practice at Pier 40, but now have to share the field with the boys' soccer team and the boys' football team. The field space is first come, first serve. Whatever team gets to the field first gets to use as much of it as they want. This has restricted the ability to consistently practice because some

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Runaway Love

Sarah Cohen-Smith / The Spectator



By SHALIYA DEHIPAWALA

Somebody once told me, "Never room with your high school friends in college. If you do, you will not be friends by the end of the year." The assumption is that all of the not-so-endearing quirks that usually go unnoticed are pushed front and center when two friends live together. Even though I understood the logic, I remained skeptical.

For a week in August, the Stuyvesant Boys' Cross Country team lived together while attending Winged Foot Cross Country Camp. The camp's purpose was to provide a non-competitive base-building opportunity for cross country runners.

In plain English, base-building means a lot of mileage. The camp's training regimen consists of a mandatory long run in the morning, an optional one-hour core workout after lunch and an option of either a short four-mile run or 45 minute water workout in the afternoon. Intramural sports tournaments pass the time in between workouts.

Despite its claim of being a team-building experience,

camp stretched our team's camaraderie to its limits. Halfway into camp, in the presence of most of my roommates, I loudly proclaimed, "I don't really like this team anymore." My mood was soured by my muscle soreness, aching foot and sleep deprivation. Still, I became a shining example of the very advice I accepted with great skepticism. I became "Exhibit A" in the argument of why people should not live with their friends.

While at camp, I found out that most members of our team were only capable of thirty minutes of interesting conversation a day. Thirty minutes is perfect for the subway ride home from practice, but we were spending 24 hours a day together. Most conversations turned into a competition on who can whine more about their injuries. (Cutting my knee twenty minutes into camp, I can confidently say I whined the most and the loudest.)

Discontent was prevalent throughout most of the team. Most of the games we played—Apples to Apples, Monopoly and Mao—digressed into frustration and yelling. To be fair, frustration and yelling seem to be central to those games anyway, but the general low morale did not help. That same low morale carried over into our team's early exits from the camp's volleyball and softball tournaments.

It is hard to quantify the importance of morale in sports. Of course both high school and

professional athletes play to win. But, unlike their professional counterparts, most amateurs do not have an incentive for playing well when they know they are going to lose. Most coaches, in an effort to encourage selfless play, stress winning as a team as a greater feat than any personal accomplishment.

Professionals however, have their own stat sheets to pad. If they play well on a bad team they can be traded to a better team. High school athletes do not have the same option and are more vulnerable to quit when beaten.

After the initial obstacles, our team remained together throughout the week and the morale began to rise. With the help of the girls' cross country team, we won the scavenger hunt, which was the largest team competition in the camp. Last August, over half of our team slept through the last run in camp. But this year every single member of our team ran, despite a plethora of injuries.

Cross-country is a unique sport. The majority of the competition takes place far away from the spectators. A runner who is hurting can quit in the middle of the race without anybody noticing. From experience I know that every hill on the cross-country course at Van Cortlandt Park has the potential to break a runner's spirit. However, given the adversity our team overcame in camp, I know that we will be able to run all the way to the city championship.

Boys' Soccer

New Coach and Deep Talent Raise Expectations for Stuyvesant FC



By JACK ZURIER

Between the hiring of new coach Felix Fuksman and the girls' soccer season change to the fall, Stuyvesant's boys' varsity soccer team has had a hot and hectic summer preseason. Coming off a 2009 season in which Stuyvesant F.C. made the playoffs with a record of only 5-4-3, the players and their new coach expect to better their record with a deep core of returning players and a formidable defense. This will hopefully help them rise to the top of a very strong division. "I'm really confident for this season, and I know we're capable of making a deep run into the playoffs," senior, goalkeeper and captain Alex Sandler said.

Stuyvesant F.C. finished third in the Manhattan A division last year, behind Martin Luther King Jr. High School and Beacon High School. All four of Stuyvesant's losses came to these two teams. Beacon finished first in the division last season with a record of 12-0-0.

The veteran Stuyvesant defense is the backbone of a more experienced team this year. "[The team's] defense has been our strength since I got here. [Senior] Paul Traut, [junior] Dan[iel] Beer, and [senior] Raveen Sugantharaj will probably all have strong seasons with another year of experience," Sandler said.

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