

# Clubs Shift into High Gear

## SADD Sleepover a Happy Affair

by Jason Dalal

On Friday, November 7, Students Against Dangerous Decisions (SADD) hosted a sleepover. It was organized by new advisor Mr. Kauffman and President Kris Farley. The purpose of the sleepover was to show students that they could have fun without drugs and alcohol. Roughly 30 students showed up for the sleepover, but many stopped in during the night.

The festivities started in the Field House. Among the activities were basketball, volleyball, football, a moonwalk and a DJ. The Moonwalk was the most popular attraction. It seemed like you could fly; however the general idea seemed to be able to knock down as many of your friends as possible while avoiding the wrath of the supervisors. After dancing and playing till the wee hours of the night, we, with cold pizza in hand, headed

over to the Upper School. Armed with our pillows, we were sprawled all over the three lounges as we watched "The Naked Gun."

One by one the teachers fell asleep. The hours melted away, and we found stranger and stranger things to do to amuse ourselves. A couple students skated on their stomachs throughout the Upper School. Others found it necessary to smash pizza in the faces of others. One young lady climbed on top of the lockers and could not get down.

Finally at 6:00 A.M. we decided to call it a night. Farley said, "It is good to see this many people out here having a good time, and really showing that SADD's purpose is a valid one." Nathan Holt added, "It was definitely a worth while event. I wasn't really sure what SADD did before this. All of us would like to thank the organizers and the chaperones, Mr. Kaufman and Ms. Schwind."

## MECA's Awareness Day

by Theresa Lin

On Wednesday, October 29, the Prep student body participated in a day of awareness. However, this was not about AIDS, leukemia, or diabetes, but about racism and sexism as experienced by various ethnic groups at Prep.

At the beginning of the program, members of MECA (The Multi-Ethnic Cultural Awareness Club) performed several short skits to fuel discussion. These skits portrayed not only racism and sexism from everyday life, but also described how one might respond to such comments when they are directed either towards oneself or towards another person. Another of MECA's skits gave insight into how people from each "side" feel when either giving or receiving offensive comments. Students acted out the thoughts and feelings of both the giver and the receiver of the hurtful remarks. This double view allowed the audience to perceive not only what a sexist or racist person might feel, but also to experience what a

victim might experience as he or she is being confronted and insulted.

When these skits were completed, all classes were divided into discussion groups led by a representative from MECA. Within the groups, we discussed how racism and sexism affect our own lives, what we would do if we were ever the victims, and what we could do to prevent these injustices in the future. In some cases, students and faculty alike were surprised by the comments made by vocal individuals. However, most students felt, by the end of the session, that the discussions reaffirmed confidence in Prep. Many of us learned from the awareness activity that, despite how useless it may seem, we can make a difference in the individuals around us.

FOR MORE REACTIONS AND OPINIONS RELATING TO THE MECA CLUB PRESENTATION, PLEASE SEE PAGE 5

## A Look Inside Excelsior

by Jason Dalal

Among the many clubs that exist at Prep, none tugs more at the depths of the literary mind than Excelsior. The members of this distinguished club analyze and critique various pieces of writing that have been submitted to them. One of our more active members, Luba Reife says, "... writing is more than just words. It is about really discovering your inner passions. Excelsior helps you do that. It is also a place where students can get helpful feedback."

The head of Excelsior, Mr. Kendall, discusses the positive aspects of it all. "It really encourages student writing. Students might think that they are the only ones out there who write, but they find out that it is not true. You really get to see how constructive criticism can transform something good into something really special."

Writing pieces may be submitted by dropping them in the box in the upper school main office. After submitting your piece, you can then come to the next meeting to get feedback. We encourage all people to both submit pieces and join in on the discussions. If you love writing you owe it to yourself to give Excelsior a chance.

## A Closer Look at Ms. Sevchenko

by Babi Das

After just two months in the United States, Kristine Sevchenko has had little time to form opinions about this country and Prep, where she will be spending this year teaching mathematics. She is participating in the Fulbright Scholars Exchange, a selective and prestigious international exchange program which grants teachers the opportunity to teach and explore abroad.

Ms. Sevchenko comes from Riga, Latvia, the capital city of a tiny democratic, Baltic country, formally part of the Soviet Union. Approximately one-third of Latvia's 2.5 million people live in Riga, a port city whose population dwarfs most major cities in the U.S. As one finds in New York City, in Riga it is not necessary to own a car. As a result, Ms. Sevchenko neither owns a car nor knows how to drive. The streets are chaotic and the public transportation system is sufficient. Ms. Sevchenko teaches at a selective math-and-science-oriented high school, one which harbors four Fulbright Exchange alumni. She spoke of the school, with great enthusiasm, noting its rigorous admissions requirements. Nevertheless, since the end of communism, her school has taken a more relaxed tone. She hails this change as beneficial both inside and outside of the classroom. When asked why she applied for the Fulbright Exchange, Ms. Sevchenko replied, "I decided why not? I've got nothing to lose." That and constant pestering from colleagues who had participated in the exchange prompted her to embark on the application process: paperwork, letters of recommendation, an English test,

and an interview. "It seemed like a grand joke at the time," she declared in her exquisite European accent, displaying her characteristic candor. She was selected and, despite hesitations about her own readiness to venture halfway across the world, Ms. Sevchenko stepped on the plane headed toward JFK international airport.

"The biggest shock was arriving at JFK, the giant anthill," she recounted with the awe of any tourist trapped in the slew of gates and terminals; she used the assistance of a grunting, tight-lipped airport attendant to find her way around.

In the classroom, she hopes to make her students independent thinkers; she strives to teach students not simply to memorize formulas, but to understand their basis. While branding students as "the same all over the world," Ms. Sevchenko noted that at Prep, they seem to be "more down-to-earth and more pragmatic."

Understandably a little homesick, she attests that "everything is different," only seconds later amending her statement, "actually many things are pretty similar, and many things are exactly the same, but they just look different." Anyone who has stayed abroad could easily decipher the statement and empathize: there's no place like home. Ms. Sevchenko credited the Prep community, her colleagues in particular, for helping her to adjust by providing a friendly and open atmosphere. However, it is still too early for her to say whether there is anything she will miss about the States when she returns to Latvia. We hope only that she takes back fond memories of her stay at Prep.



Sahil Khanna and his adoring fans do the "Macarena"

## Community Service: Lending a Helping Hand

by Sahil Khanna

The '97-'98 Community Service Board includes a lot of experienced returnees loaded with both fresh new ideas on how to make community service more enjoyable and energetic vigor to carry out those ideas. The club's main goal is to both create as many opportunities as possible for Prep students to get involved in community service and to help students fulfill their requirement. Under the guidance of Mr. Bartlett, the board has found several new events which should make for an exciting year in community service.

One of the new events which the Board has become involved in is Make A Difference Day which took place on Sunday, October 26th. Make A Difference Day is a national

community service day in which thousands of organizations volunteer to benefit their local community. This year, the Board decided to participate in a Halloween Carnival for children with disabilities. The students who came had a lot of fun operating the games and entertaining the children. Make A Difference Day is definitely something that we all hope will become an annual tradition here at Prep.

Old favorites like Habitat for Humanity and Wheelchair Basketball are also included in the fall community service itinerary. The Board has planned a trip to the new Franklin Township Habitat for Humanity site on Sunday, November 9th. For those of you basketball fans out there, the annual Wheelchair basketball game is scheduled for Friday, November 14th. The game

is a chance to see faculty members humiliated by a professional wheelchair basketball team. Last year's record setting success of Wheelchair Basketball has sparked an even more determined Community Service Board to further improve the event. In addition to the scheduled events, there are many on-going opportunities in the local community. For instance, the Franklin Foodbank and Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen are always looking for students to help out.

As a result of the hard work of civic minded students, this year's Community Service Board is on a winning pace. If anyone is interested in joining, obtaining information about ongoing events, or contributing new ideas, please talk to Mr. Bartlett or any member of the Community Service Board.



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## Faculty Pulls Out a Close One

by Lon Zimmet

On June 18, 1815, in a little town called Waterloo, Napoleon Bonaparte suffered his final excruciating defeat. With this loss, he would never regain his power and would spend the rest of his life in exile. Would the majestic Lower Field on the afternoon of November 4 be the faculty's Waterloo?

The sky was angry that day, my friends. Rain was threatening to shake her fist at any moment and the chilling afternoon air made it almost unbearable to remain outside. The teachers have made a tradition to make a killing during this autumn battle, but this year's group of seniors looked like a strong candidate to break the dynasty. This was the year to stand up to the tyrannical, subversive force that subjugate us for four long years. This was the year to end the injustice, to show that we will not quiver beneath the faculty's intimidating presence. It was time for the teachers to meet their Waterloo.

The seniors looked promising in the opening series. Thom Bonanni sacked Coach Tyree, and the teach-

ers' front line could not contain Will Pabst. Dr. Steve "Largent" Loy dropped the first pass that came his way, giving hope for the seniors. Then, in a blaze of fury, new Japanese teacher Mr. Mike Mitchell, who played quarterback at Bucknell University, ran the ball right into the red zone, and a score looked inevitable. Dr. Loy made up for his incompletion by bobbling, but then catching a touchdown on a fourth and goal, one of two he had on the day.

Hope soon began to dwindle as the seniors failed to do anything which resemble offense on their first drive. Tyree came crashing in on almost every play, giving the quarterback Tom "Ken O'Brien" Filipkowski no time to get rid of the ball. The offensive line was thinner than paper, but then again, it is hard to block a human steam roller.

The seniors' cause became more hopeless on their next series when "Neon Deon" Kauffman intercepted a Filipkowski pass. And just as it seemed that things couldn't get any worse for the crowd favorite, the teachers implemented the flea flicker which resulted in a Tyree



Senior Tom Filipkowski struggles to find an open receiver in what would turn out to be a 24-0 loss to the faculty

touchdown.

The situation was desperate, and there's no telling what kind of pressure coach Jeff "Ray Handley" Miklos was feeling at that time. There was bad chemistry on the senior sidelines, and a miracle was in order. The troops were threatening to mutiny but there was one point of light on the seniors' side. A man's heart cried out, "No! We will not go

quietly into the night!" With the crowd's roar of approval, Khanjan Nagarsheth went into the game, ran around for a tad, and was taken out one play later. So much for miracles.

The crowd began to file out with disappointment even before the game was officially over. The seniors fought nobly, but had fallen. It was a brave effort, and they should now return to the classrooms with

no shame in their hearts (ok, well maybe a little). For now, the faculty has proven their dominance once again, and there is nothing left to do except look towards next year's battle in which the students, led by Wes "Too Tall" Rickards and Katie "The Refrigerator" Crisafulli, look to end the millennium on a good note.

## Tennis Season Winds Down

by Angela Lin

On Sunday, October 26, the Varsity girls tennis team gathered at 8 A.M. in the Upper School parking lot in the chilly fall weather, ready to play in the State Tournament despite forecasts of heavy rain. Amidst wishes for hot chocolate and warmer temperatures, the team arrived at Pingry in time to camp out in their usual spot and relax a bit before the first match was called. For senior captains Aarti Patel, Natalie Mantell and Angela Lin, the weather was a somewhat melancholy reflection of their own emotions that day. After dedicating four years to the tennis team, this was to be their last ever high school state tournament together. Though this was an unhappy thought, any sad feelings were quickly dispelled when the competition began.

It was to be an eventful day. Finishing her second year as first

singles player, Mantell gave a strong showing in round one against Ranney. First doubles team Lin and Patel defeated Solomon Schechter and defended their position well in the second round against Hun. Freshman Mallika Tarkas played a tough match at third singles, as did Megha Rao who continued her great season at second singles with a win and entrance into the second round. She then faced Purnell for a third time this season and fought her way to semi-finals. Junior Jessica Belser and freshman Daniella Accurso entered the tournament highly seeded at second doubles, and were thus able to spend the morning cheering for their teammates. Extremely supportive Prep students showed up as well, having traveled all the way to Pingry as further encouragement for the players.

As a result of Sunday's tournament play, Rao will be competing in the semifinals as will Accurso

and Belser on Saturday November 1. A good performance is expected from them all, since there is a good chance the girls will finish the season with a win.

The tennis team played their last home match of the season on Monday, October 27 against Stuart Country Day School. Valiant efforts and very competitive matchplay were seen on the courts, as Prep finished the season with a record of 6-6. And what a season it was!

The team has grown in more ways than one. Through countless hours together on and off the court (more off the court than one would have liked due to the resurfacing), the girls have developed a strong friendship which is expected to grow next year despite the loss of three experienced seniors. Fresh talent from the hard-working junior varsity players and leadership among the underclassmen will surely lead the team to a fruitful season next fall.

## A Disappointing Season for Boys' Soccer

by Ian Liggett

This year's boys' soccer team record was, to say the least, disappointing. At 4-10-1 with 1 game left to play, the team has seen some tough times. With only four seniors, however, there should be bright spots for the underclassmen to look forward to in the future. Freshmen Brent Carpentier, Kunal Kapur, Dan Cary, and Tommy Roy showed a lot of talent and hard work, which should spread to other players in the coming years.

For the four seniors, Tom Bonanni, goalie Alon Tabak, and co-captains Ian Liggett and Ian Japinga, it was a disappointing way to end an up and down career at Prep. The season was not without its highlights, however. A 1-0 shutout over Timothy Christian and a 1-0 loss to Mo-Beard on a late goal were two very well played games. Alon turned in more than his share of spectacular performances for the season, and the defense held its ground denying opponents many opportunities to score on Alon. Alon will be remembered as one of, if not the, finest goalkeepers to ever play at Prep. The offense and midfielders, on the other hand, had their troubles controlling the ball and putting it in the back of the net. Yet somehow they always seemed to find the crossbar and goalposts. A few favorable bounces off those posts and into the nets could have changed the entire season.

The team was better than its record showed. It showed roster and dedication in an otherwise difficult season. The job of the team members, and of next year's captains is to prove that Rutgers Prep is a school that demands to be respected, and one that a team should not be ashamed to lose to.

## Cross-Country Comes Close

by Sean Cannon

Now that the State Meet has come and gone, we can look back upon this season with both a feeling of pride and regret. We have pride in our winning records and Girls' Conference and State Championships, but we also regret our losing record to Gill, our arch cross-country rival.

At the state meet last week, the defending champion RPS Boys' team was dethroned by Gill St-Bernard's. Prep did finish in second with some outstanding individual performances by Jarrett Sutton, Wes Rickards and freshman sensation Adam Goetz, all finishing in the top ten and earning medals. For the lone senior varsity runner, captain Dan Chelie, it was a disappointing way to finish an otherwise successful varsity career. However, the Girls' team easily defended their crown by winning their second straight Prep State title. The team of Emily Wilson, Jackie Sienkiewicz, Shrooti Singh, Christina Weingart, and Kelly McWilliams took 5 out of the first 20 spots for a landslide victory.

While this season was not Prep's most productive, it served as a foundation for teams in the future. It was upsetting for the boys not to repeat as Conference and State Champions, but throughout the year new members of the team stepped up and assured themselves of a spot on next year's team. Newcomers Mike Szeles, Ben Feldman, Devin Sculley and others took advantage of the injury-filled roster and stepped up to fill the void. The Girls' team battled countless injuries to once again come out on top. Now that the majority of the team's runners have several years of experience, next season should hopefully be an improvement over this one.



Junior midfielder Alyssia Botvinik dribbles through the porous Ranney defense on her way to scoring a goal. Prep scored an easy win over Ranney. Despite close losses to Gill and to rival PDS the season has been a success. The Argonauts won an overtime decision over Morristown Beard and also consummated a victory against Saddle River. Last weekend the girls again defeated MoBeard in overtime in the first round of the state tournament. Alyssia