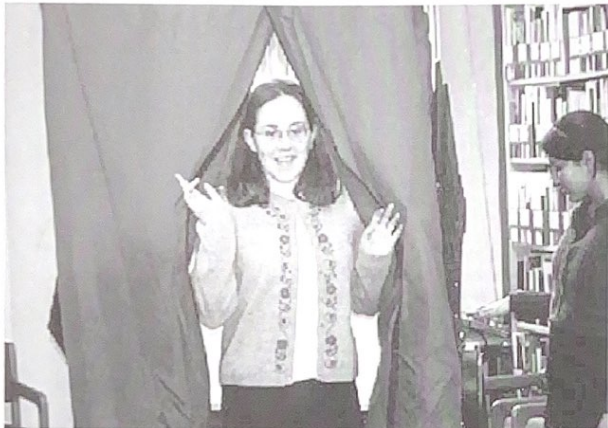




THE ARGO

Volume 233 Issue 5

The Newspaper of the Rutgers Preparatory School



Under the supervision of then Vice President Babi Das, Beth Urban emerges from the voting booth.

Prep in International Affairs

by Deepti Anbarasan

On Thursday, February 11th, a group of thirty-four students accompanied by Ms. Dewar, Mr. Feliz, and Ms. Hoffman, attended a four-day Model U.N. simulation in Washington, D.C. Representing three countries, Chile, Kuwait, and Ukraine, this group arrived at the Hilton Hotel determined to work hard and have a good time in the process.

The first day proved to be the only day when the students had time to enjoy the outside attractions Washington, D.C. had to offer. While some diligently began to prepare their speeches for their committees, others used this time to walk around, relax and shop. The first committee meeting was held the first night. Representatives from each of the three countries split up into different

committees and debated their stands on issues like refugee rights, disarmament, bioengineering.

On Friday, the Model U.N. delegates got a chance to meet and talk to the real delegates in the embassy of their respective countries. Students were able to learn more about the culture of the country they were representing. This information became vital later on when the delegates wrote resolutions in an attempt to solve the problems that the U.N. is currently facing.

This debate on resolutions continued until Saturday night, when the formal banquet and the delegate dance were held. All the delegates were able to loosen up and take a break during these events. On Sunday,

the General Assembly Plenary came together for the last time to vote on resolutions they felt were beneficial and comprehensive enough to be passed.

Overall, Model U.N. certainly proved a positive experience. Most delegates agreed that it was interesting to meet and work with others from all across the country. Many played an active role in the discussions, including those who went for the first time, freshmen Justin Hollander, Steven Lapicki, and Sandeep Murthy. Senior Homin Lee left with an important and impressive accomplishment of having been able to pass one of his own resolutions in his committee. Hopefully, next year will be even better with even more active participants.

Students Shine at the Winter Show

by Isaac Chahal

As every year at Rutgers Prep, "The Student Spotlight," this year's Winter Show, was another big success. With a variety of skits and songs, the drama department and people involved really showed what they can do.

The Winter Show is made up of skits performed, directed, and sometimes written, by students who take on responsibility for the overall production. This year's Winter Show opened with Nathaniel Holt's excellent rendition of "Take Me Out To The Ball Game," followed by the popular Abbot and Costello skit, "Who's On First," acted out by Nathan and Andrew Venezia. This skit was a crowd-pleaser, and Nathan and Andrew earned the first of many standing ova-

tions given that night.

This year's Winter Show also featured some members of the sophomore class. In a fifteen-minute skit, directed by Aubrey Hebda-Bolduc, Justin Slawson and Dan Meagher reenacted Shakespeare's famous "Romeo and Juliet." In this scene, Dan dressed as a girl (Juliet) and spoke with a high voice for a majority of the scene, while Justin (Romeo), was madly in love with Dan.

Another big part of the Winter Show was the performance of two skits, written, directed and acted by Lon Zimmet. The first starred Kevin Mallon as Lance Sellers, a pornography producer extraordinaire, Lauren Michaels and Nathan Holt as porn stars, and Lon Zimmet and Chris

Wang-Iverson as helpers with the production of the movie. This scene had it all. Not only did it feature Nathan Holt ripping off his shirt, but Lon somehow also managed to include a live fish into the scene.

Ben Feldman, Isaac Chahal, and Lon Zimmet starred in the other scene written by Lon, "Losers." This scene portrayed three high school buddies sitting in Lon's bedroom arguing whether to continue playing video games or go to a party. Not only was this scene well written, it was also funny and entertaining.

Overall, the Winter Show was a great success and a lot of fun. If any students have an interest in drama, they should get involved in the upcoming years.

Thoughtful Speeches Inspire Informed Voting

by Jose Torres

This year's School Council elections proved that the democracy for which our forefathers so valiantly fought is alive and well at Prep. The nominees for this year's elections ranged from students who had never run before to candidates with years of council experience. The students who ran for office this year exemplified the intense student involvement and the student diversity that permeates our RPS community.

For the office of treasurer, the candidates were Aaron Chahal, Nilaja Ford, Pam Grutman, and Ben Mantell. These candidates assured the school that their math skills would help increase and regulate the council budget. However, it was Aaron Chahal who captured the winning votes from the student body, saying he would try to be as successful as the Chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve.

Lauren Michaels and Tommy Roy represented the sophomore class in their bids for the office of secretary. Tommy said that one reason he wanted to get "hooked up" was to miss classes. In the end, it was Lauren who was triumphant.

By far, the largest group of candidates were the students vying for the office of

vice-president, who provided the student body with some of the most interesting and appreciated short speeches. The candidates were Sean Cannon, Casely Doryumu, Fred Kim, Neeraj Kumar, Samantha Simon, and Anthony Suzara. The candidates were colorful and gave energetic orations about how they have "love" and want to improve the school through persistent effort. However, the last man standing was Anthony, who won his seat in council after a run-off with Fred Kim.

Finally, for the presidential office the candidates were Dan Marketti, Beam Seilaudom, and Andrew Venezia. Each presented their dreams for the future of the school and each promised to create a more efficient student council. After a tight run-off between Beam and Andrew, the school elected Beam the president.

After fierce competition between candidates and tight run-offs, the School Council has been elected by students and faculty. The voices of the Rutgers Prep community have been heard. Hopefully, with a new council, a new era of student community relations will be established.

Music Trip

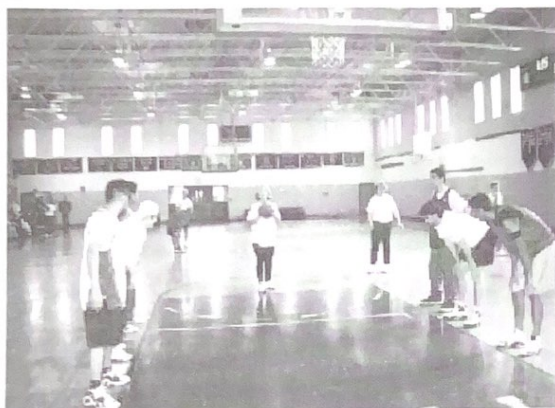
by Kristen Checchio

From February 24-27, four students from Rutgers Prep participated in the American Choral Directors Association National Honor Choirs. Lee Jablow, Michael Szeles, Ari Harkov, and Kristen Checchio all had the opportunity to sing with some of the best singers in the country, from Hawaii to Maine.

Lee, a 6th grade student at Prep, sang in the Boys' Choir, Ari and Michael both sang in the High School Choir, and Kristen Checchio sang in the Women's Choir.

All rehearsals were held at the prestigious Palmer House Hilton of Chicago, just minutes from world-famous Madison Ave., not that anyone had time for shopping. Rehearsal schedules were grueling and left little time for sight-seeing or school work. Some days, there were a two-hour rehearsal followed by a four hour rehearsal, and then another two hour rehearsal. Mrs. Szeles, Mrs. Hunt, and Ms. Collins also attended the conference, providing the support and experience for the singers.





Senior Faculty Basketball Game

by Jose Torres

This year's Senior vs. Faculty basketball game proved that our graduating class can compete with an obviously more disciplined faculty, and still keep a close exciting game. Although the faculty had experience on their side, the seniors had athletic ability that helped to produce a game to remember for years to come.

The faculty team included Dr. and Mrs. Loy, Mrs. Klinger, Mr. Santowasso, Mr. Tyree, Mr. Szeles, Mr. Mento, Mr. Kearman, Mr. Brunson, and Mr. Damanaki. The playing seniors were Vivek Dabas, Homin Lee, Denya ChinQuee, Isaac Chahal, Nikki Rao, Ben Feldman, Assad Mian, Kevin Mallon, Mitch Francisco, Josh Chervin, Renee Gbewonyo, and Lon Zimmet. The first quarter was intense and tight until the last second when a spectacular

right-handed hook shot from Mr. Szeles beat the buzzer to give the faculty a two point lead, 17-15.

The second quarter was also a close encounter. This time, however, the faculty added some "young blood" to their arsenal by putting in Mr. Kernan and Mr. Damanski. Mr. Kernan dominated the low post and proved too good for the seniors. Mr. Damanski proved that he could be "like Mike," with a huge dunk at the end of the quarter. However, the seniors put up a good fight under the leadership of RPS basketball stars Nikki Rao, who scored five points, and Rene, who scored ten points. The half concluded with a 25-24 faculty lead.

By the third quarter, though, the faculty was determined to blow the game open.

They became more defensive and caused forced shots from the seniors. Offensively Mr. Neil, and Mr. Tyree lit up the back court with three-pointers, impressive shots which added to the 31-25 faculty lead at the end of the third quarter.

The fourth quarter was no different. The faculty ran away with the game. In the end they won: 56-46. Credit must be given, however, to the seniors who put on one of the best athletic displays ever witnessed in a Seniors versus Faculty game. But the faculty proved to be better organized. As Nikki Rao put it, "They are very disciplined and fundamentally sound. We just have to accept defeat. They expect to win and they know how to do it." The seniors should be acknowledged for keeping the game close and for a job well done.

Trip to "Rent"

by Gina Tarlton

On February 11, SADD, in order to raise AIDS awareness, sponsored a trip to NYC to see the hit Broadway play, "Rent". The big yellow bus was loaded around 5:00pm that night and headed for the Big Apple. More than thirty students from our community took the trip. Mrs. Patti, who attended the trip, reported that the group was "excellently behaved" and "represented the Rutgers Prep community very well." Mrs. Pink also commented that the group was "great and perfectly behaved."

The production was fabulous. Mrs. Pink also stated that she "loved it." It was an

excellent, energetic, and captivating production." The singing and dancing were certainly an aspect of the performance that no one could easily forget. However, the message conveyed by the lyrics and the dancing was far more important. Melissa Panzer noted that "the play is so effective because it reaches a younger population of people that tend to be careless and really need to be made aware of the dangers of AIDS." The play was refreshing because it took AIDS awareness out of the textbooks and lectures and made it something real.

After the show we were privileged enough to meet

with the cast and have our questions answered. Kelly McWilliams liked this part, saying "it was a good experience. We got to talk to the hot guy." Mrs. Pink was especially astounded by how "articulate, intelligent, and committed" the cast was. This gave us a chance to interact with the cast and get their views on the show. After a session of questions and answers we boarded the big yellow bus and headed home. All were thoroughly satisfied with the night well spent.

French Club Dance

by Walter Gindin

On Friday, February 19, the French Club held a dance which featured a DJ, who played a variety of music as well as a band, Dristum, in which Rutgers Prep's own Abeed Hossain plays. Many people showed up from both Rutgers Prep and Franklin High School. The dance was a huge success according to Ritesh Malik, club president, and the French Club hopes to continue adding pleasure and excitement to the Rutgers Prep community.



Kevin Mallon urges Jaydalia Jones to "nugimashoo" in a Japanese ski.

Interview with a President

by Babi Das

A week after School Council Elections, Beam Seilaudom, the newly elected School Council President sat down to talk with *The Argo*.

The Argo: Why did you decide to run for president?

Beam: I really love council. After seeing what Isaac did and what Angela did, I felt I had the experience to run council.

A: Name your most important goal for the coming year.

B: To improve relations between council and the rest of the school. Right now council seems really closed off to the rest of the school.

A: How do you plan to do this?

B: In April we are going to have a spirit month. Spirit month is kind of hush-hush right now.

A: How will spirit month help your goal?

B: It shows that council isn't just a bunch of dress down days, blood drives and stuff like that.

A: Why do you think the student body doesn't pay attention to council?

B: I think it's something they take for granted.

A: How will you get students to appreciate your work?

B: We are going to try to reach out to students as much as possible with posters and announcements.

A: Are you planning to do something different with morning meeting?

B: I plan to rotate the other council officers when making announcements. Maybe one day we'll do a song and dance for you to liven things up.

A: How else will you get the school more involved?

B: I am going to make announcements inviting people to more council meetings. And there is going to be an agenda on the bulletin board. Last week, some people who are not council members came and they suggested an idea. And I want that to happen. I want people to feel they can be open to council.

A: What will you do to make meetings more exciting?

B: Give out candy.

A: What kind?

B: Whatever you want.

A: Do you think Council has a responsibility to address academic problems at our school, such as the recent controversy surrounding the alleged wide-spread cheating on certain exams?

B: Um, I think council is here for the school. If the community feels there is a problem within the school, then council should address it.

A: Should we continue talking about the cheating problem?

B: I don't know how much council could do about that. It's been addressed many, many times. I'm not really sure council could do much more than it has already done.

A: Are you going to have another hypnotist?

B: Uh . . . I don't think so.

A: Okay, now the serious stuff. What's your favorite ice cream flavor?

B: Mint-chocolate chip.

A: Your favorite TV show?

B: Well, I watch TGIF. But don't put that in there.

A: Your favorite movie star?

B: Ben Affleck. Oh, and that guy in *She's All That*.

A: Freddie Prince Jr.?

B: Oh yeah.

They're Getting Candy Now

by Maura Pritchard

For the first time since its creation, the Academic Team was finally given psych bags on School Council's Spirit Day. After three months of weekly competition, the Academic Team's 1998-99 season has drawn to a close. For approximately twelve weeks, students from the RPS community competed against eleven other high schools in College Bowl fashion.

The J.V. team, led by juniors Kristin Checchio and Samantha Simon, was rounded out by sophomores Jason Dalal, Rehan Shamim, and Ivan Kanevski. The J.V. team members were the "conference champs"; the team's win in the final meet of the year (against Montgomery High School) furnished it with the first place position. Also competing

against Montgomery, the Varsity team, comprised of seniors Heather Crossner, Babi Das, Sahil Khanna, Minesh Patel, and Maura Pritchard, was victorious, thus ending its season with a winning streak.

Currently, Kristin, Heather, Babi, Minesh, Maura, and Samantha are attending B.R.I.T.E. (Bridgewater-Raritan Invitational Tournament of Excellence). For the next three weeks, they will compete with students from all over New Jersey with hopes of attending the Nationwide tournament in May. On March 27, this group, joined by Jason Dalal, will attend a second tournament sponsored by Rutgers University. Judging by its accomplishments during the season, the RPS Academic Team will undoubtedly achieve success in the months to come.

Success, More than Just a Win

by Amanda Rabinowitz

Even though the coed swim team did not win a single match, the winter season was a success. Led by Coach Nes Forney, this year's team had an enormous disadvantage from a lack of male swimmers, the only two being junior Gavin Riley and freshman Stephen Lipiki. Though the girls' team was comprised of strong swimmers, they were unable to compete with other males on opposing teams. The question still remains, if the team did not come away with one win, what made it successful?

The answer was the addition of many new swimmers, including breast-stroker Ryan Patterson. Many new freshmen who had not swam before made great strides of improvement over the course of the season, which will benefit the team in the years to come. Under the strong leadership and guidance of the two junior captains, Kelly McWilliams and Gavin Riley, many members of this year's team were forced to extend their abilities and compete in challenging races.

The team started out large, but shrunk to a few dedicated players during the season. Those who stayed with the challenge experienced enormous improvement as individuals.

The season ended with an outstanding performance at states. Though Gavin Riley and Stephen Lipiki put forth valiant efforts, since their team was so small they did not place in states. The girls' team, however, placed third out of eight schools in the state Prep B tournament. This was an important victory because the five teams the Argonauts beat were also the teams RPS had lost to during the regular season. Freshman Ryan Patterson received a third place medal in breast-stroke.

Under the guidance of Coach Forney, this year's team had a great season. Future teams can build on the strength that these swimmers possess, and will only lose one senior, Amanda Rabinowitz, who dropped six seconds off her time in her last race. Hopefully next year, more boys will join to add victories to the team's record.

Finishing Strongly: Girls' Basketball

by Alyssa Botwinik

The Rutgers Prep girls' varsity basketball team, led by Coach Klinger and Coach Shifman, finished the season strongly. They were champions of the Gill Tip-Off Classic and placed third in the Rutgers Prep Holiday Tournament.

With Alyssa Botwinik as captain, the team had various key wins over Princeton Day School, Timothy Christian

and Bound Brook High School.

Though they reached the quarterfinals in the Prep B tournament, the players hope to do even better next year. With-out seniors Alyssa Botwinik and Jasmine Orders, the next year's team will be led by Emily and Jessica Wilson, Megha Rao, Risa Peterson, and Kristine Goetz. The girls look forward to a successful season next year.

Volleyball Review

by Jaydalia Jones

During the 1998-99 season, the girls' volleyball team began with a promising start. Coached by newcomers Miguel Cabrera, Bonnie Feinman and Mrs. McCoy, the team was comprised of thirteen varsity players and fifteen junior varsity players. Both coaches brought a fresher and more competitive style of play to the sport.

With this different style, the varsity team, led by senior captains Allison Schechter and Jaydalia Jones, ended the season with a 12-4 record. With sheer aggression and focus, the team was able to defeat teams that were given a higher seat. The J.V. team, comprised of mostly freshmen, was able to step up to the challenge and ended their season with a win against Morristown Beard School.

Although next year's team will have lost valuable seniors, it will allow a chance for the younger players to show their skills. Returning varsity players, juniors Christie Schueler, Emily Scherb, Rachel Kendall, Portia Hunt, Kristin Checchio, and sophomores Catherine Tucker and Lauren Michaels, will be joined by upcoming players including Veena Choubey, who helped to lead the J.V. team with her forceful serve.

"And One!!!": Boys' Basketball

by Nakul Rao

A record of 9-12 is not what one might call a successful season, but success can be defined in more ways than just wins. None of the players on this year's boys' varsity basketball team had more than one year of experience playing at this competitive level, yet every time they stepped onto the basketball court, regardless of the opponent, they put aside personal issues and played as a team. Led by the unstoppable scoring of Sekou Davis and the three-point shooting of senior Nakul Rao, the team started the season on fire, winning four of its first six games, by an average of nearly twenty-four points per game.

After losses to top schools, such as Wardlaw-Hartridge and Plainfield High School, the hopes for this young team could have been crushed, but they bounced back in time for the county tournament. The first team Prep played was Somerset Vo-Tech, which proved to be no contest in the Somerset County Tournament for Prep. This was true because of the seven three-pointers from Nakul Rao and the points from Rene Gbewonyo and Sekou Davis. This victory was the first Argonaut win in the county games for over seven years. Rene would continue his remarkable playing skills against sixth-ranked Montgomery, scoring a career high of twenty points, grabbing eight rebounds

and collecting six steals, in a 47-41 loss.

As the state tournament drew closer, more and more teammates began to step up and show their value to the team. Sekou Davis led the way, averaging fifteen points a contest, Dan Marcus and Anthony Suzara posted career highs of fifteen and twenty points respectively, and Nathan Holt solidified the middle, averaging close to eight rebounds a game.

Unfortunately, a controversial loss to Morristown Beard in the quarterfinals shattered all hopes of a State title, but unlike most teams, the Argonauts ended their season on a winning note, dismantling Saddle River 78-40. This would be the last game wearing the Rutgers Prep basketball jerseys for seniors Isaac Chahal, Rene Gbewonyo, and Nakul Rao.

Nakul set a school record for the most three-pointers in a game, with nine in his last game, making an unforgettable ending to an entertaining season. Nakul led the team averaging over seventeen points and eight rebounds a game. Sekou averaged just under fifteen points and six rebounds a game. Finally, Rene averaged twelve points. The seniors will be missed, but the experience and exposure that all the underclassmen earned will aid them in what should be a very exciting team next year.



RPS Wrestling Success

by Mehul Nagarsheth

During the winter season, this year's wrestling team has accomplished many achievements. Under the illustrious leadership of coaches Bob Dougherty and Mike Lamb, and team captains Marvin Quesada and Fred Kim, the wrestling team has achieved an outstanding record of 7-8-1 against some of the toughest teams in the area, including Peddie, Lawrenceville, and St. Benedicts.

With returning conference champions Adam Goetz, Andrew Venezia, Fred Kim, Ari Crystal, Andrew Oppenheimer, Marvin Quesada, Ryan Smith, Kyle Ernst, Homin Lee, and Andrew Hobbs, the wrestling team

has successfully maintained the role of being conference champions. Newcomer freshmen Robert Cheese, Matt Newton, Justin D'Agostino and Dan Caulfield, and junior Blaine Piraneo have been important contributors to the team's success.

Andrew Venezia broke his former record with a whopping 22-11, scoring the most team points of thirteen. Sophomores Ari Crystal and Adam Goetz followed the team point succession with a total of 111 and 94 respectively. Robert Cheese tied Crystal's "Fastest Pin" record of eleven seconds this season. Adam Goetz became publicly feared after re-

ceiving several forfeits against some competitors, including public high school teams.

On February 20th, the Rutgers Prep Argonauts received the title of State Champions in the Prep B Division, defeating the teams of Pennington, Wardlaw, and Hun. Adam Goetz and Andrew Venezia both placed third in the state championship, with the rest of the team following their lead.

Next year, the wrestling team is going to try to uphold their conference and state championship titles through hard work, without key seniors Marvin Quesada, Ryan Smith, and Homin Lee.

The Argo

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Racing off to College: Is Sailing the Way to Go?

by Dave Rosentraus

The seniors have been through a rough first half of the year. Besides trying to keep up academically, the seniors had to decide to which colleges they wanted to apply. Then they had to go through the dreaded application process (which involved many meetings with Mr. Richardson). Now that all the applications are taken care of, the seniors can relax—or can they? As if visiting colleges, looking at glossy packets, and being asked the question, “So, where are you going to college?” by every person a senior encounters isn’t enough, Rutgers Preparatory School offers, or rather requires, a class which is supposed to help seniors prepare for the four-year stay at college.

Running Off To College, or ROTC (with no reference to the real ROTC, I’m sure), kicked off its first event by inviting a speaker to come and talk to the seniors and their parents about college. The meeting looked promising, even though it meant missing the latest “Dawson’s Creek” episode. There were plenty of free cookies and soda for all. I believe the snacks were just used to lure us in to what I believe was two wasted hours of my life. And I am not alone in this opinion, as I found out in school the next day. Not one senior who attended the meeting enjoyed it.

The speaker was the main problem. He lacked dynamism and ate most of his words. I was hardly able to hear most of his speech and he had the problem of leaving uncomfortable silences lingering in the room. From what I did hear, he talked a lot about his college experience but did not say anything about what we should do to prepare for college. I believe that anybody who went to college could have done as well as this speaker as long as he or she was willing to tell amusing, or not so amusing, anecdotes about his or her college years.

On the other hand, the parents made some very good points about their worries, but unfortunately, there was nothing really relating to the kids. Homin Lee, a senior, was probably the best speaker there. A lot of parents are worried about their kids being away from home. Homin, whose parents live in Korea, told the story of how he has been living here without his parents for four years, a seventeen-hour plane flight away from home. It was very moving and everybody clapped at the end of his story. Homin’s speech was the highlight of the night.

At one point, the speaker was talking about his sailing experiences in Europe. Fed up with the entire situation, senior Marvin Quesada posed

the question, “Is sailing the way to go?” No one will ever know because the speaker answered the question with profound silence, which when listened to will give you as much information about fly fishing as the first ROTC meeting gave the seniors about running off to college.

The next ROTC event was almost as good as the first (sarcasm). We had a presentation from an admissions officer at Rutgers and two students currently attending Rutgers. The meeting would have been ok if the whole senior class was applying to Rutgers and wanted information about the school. Everything she told us about college was restricted to things that would only happen at a large state school. The only information she gave us that could be applied to all types of schools was about time management. But at least I and most of the senior class have already heard many things about how we will have freedom next year and that our time is very precious. The second meeting was about as informative as the first.

By this time of year all the seniors who are going to college have had so much advice and information thrown at them from every which way, the only way left for seniors to prepare is to pack up and go next fall.

A Senior Retreat

by Lon Zimmet

Perched above the rest of the school in an area which suddenly seems too cramped, that familiar sinking feeling of exhaustion begins to seep in. Boredom sweeps through the lounge, and then the casual indifference swells into resentment as it courses through everyone’s veins. As the senior class listens absently to announcements, which mean less and less with each passing day, it is painfully obvious that there is more missing in this scene than just the chess pieces. The enthusiasm has evaporated, the anticipation has vanished, and contrary to what anybody says, the seniors are definitely not excited first.

Four years is beginning to seem like a lifetime.

But then again, for some of us, it really has been a lifetime.

As an end finally comes into view for the first time, the Class of ‘99 has grown increasingly restless and disenchanted. The giggles and expectations of hopeful freshmen, having soon regressed into the sighs of sophomores and then silent moans of juniors, have now totally devolved into the ceaseless bitching of present. The Senior Class, worn down after four years of pressure, now seems more disgruntled than the post office after Mother’s Day. School pride has reached an all time low, as confidence and spirit have been repeatedly trounced by the thefts (widely thought to be the theft work of a senior), frequent accidents in the parking lot, and a lame social scene.

The thefts, an ugly trend which rose from dormancy earlier this year, have been a prominent factor in the class’s declining morale. Evi-

dently, some noble, industrious crusader has decided to turn our class into his own personal piggy bank, making withdrawals when he has the opportunity. Thus far, the saint has graciously removed money, video games, and even a wallet or two from bookbags and jackets from all regions of the lounge. The brewing mistrust and suspicion in every student’s heart has swelled until finally reaching the point where nobody feels safe leaving even pocket lint in the lounge. Popular opinion maintains that the culprit is a senior, and while everybody is forming their own conspiracy theories, no measures to find the fiend have been taken.

Another added groan this year is that the Senior parking lot has turned into the front lines of a merciless war. And as the casualties pile up, the area is earning the reputation of the Bermuda Triangle of parking lots, where cars come in but are never quite the same again after they leave. The situation has become so disheartening and hopeless that some seniors don’t dare to park with the rest of the class, but rather hide at the opposite end of the parking lot. So much for class unity. There’s just no sense of adventure anymore.

But even more annoying than the theft and the accidents, at least according to a vocal few, is the lack of a social scene. Time was, the senior class would be the dominant social presence in the school. They threw the parties; they drew the attention; they commanded the respect. Yet, nowadays, the parties are scarce, and a phrase common in the lounge on a Thursday or Friday is generally, “there is just nothing to do this weekend.” The consen-

sus so far is that senior year has just been boring. Furthermore, this senior class has apparently commanded little respect. When asked to describe the senior class, underclassmen have commonly referred to its members as “a**holes,” “losers,” and “JAPs (Jewish American Princesses).” If I had only known about these glowing tributes beforehand, I could have gotten a great Peer Recommendation for college.

Whether these are the causes or the effects of a year full of disappointment and brewing disenchantment, they are not the only factors. This senior class has encountered disciplinary actions, both public and private, unparalleled by any class in recent memory in both number and severity. All of the acts—whether a result of the restlessness, the pressure, or a combination of both—exhibited an unprecedented, blatant disregard for the school’s principles, indicating that the students simply don’t care anymore. We have given up on our attempts to be good little boys and girls, or at least given up on trying to hide our endeavors.

Even with our dubious behavior, the administration has been patient and gracious. Despite popular opinion, the administration is not looking to screw us over. Quite the contrary, the administration has actually been working to appease the class. Everybody groans about the unfortunately titled ROTC meetings (which, believe it or not, are intended for our benefit), but nobody shows any signs of gratitude after the administration extended the “No Strings” privileges rule to the entire second semester, rather than just 4th quarter.

The fall of the Seniors

Help Us Win

by Stephen Montanino

Let me ask a question. When you hear the term “Prep Athletics,” what comes to your mind? I’ll bet most of you wanted to laugh or thought that phrase to be an oxymoron. This is the problem I want to address.

First of all, the school in general is not the problem—the problem is the Upper School student body. How many games did those of you who weren’t playing a sport attend this year? Not many, right? In fact, with few exceptions during the boys soccer season, almost all of the upper school spectators were active athletes.

At most games we had a maximum of twenty upper school students attend our games, and practically all were runners or tennis players. Something is wrong with that. Understand that I don’t expect people to make all of our games, or even watch the entire game, and certainly not away games. But we had such low attendance during the season, at times it was embarrassing to take the pitch and see more Wardlaw or Saddle River supporters than Prep fans cheering from the hill. It was disappointing. Granted we ended up with a 4-13-1 record this season in soccer, but honestly, a little show of support at the right times is a tremendous boost and our record is truly irrelevant to the issue. Coming out to see three or four games, meets, or matches per season can’t hurt anyone that badly.

It wasn’t just soccer—in basketball we lacked support, any support at all!!! At the Pennington Prep game, after we finished warming up and I took my spot on the bench, there were eighteen people in the stands, nearly all of whom were fans of Pennington Prep. It felt like a scrimmage or a practice. That’s simply pathetic, and as a consequence, we played like it was a practice and lost.

At the game against Wardlaw we had the biggest turnout yet, but not by the Upper School students. There were four U.S. students. That was all. We probably had scores of elementary and middle school students from the after school group. Yes, the game was on a day off from school, but so what? All the better to come out and see the game on a day with no homework. I know that schoolwork is hard and long practices make it even more challenging, but coming to a few games in support of your school won’t cause you to fail your Geometry course for the quarter.

cannot be blamed on the administration, and it’s growing increasingly clear that it is not only the school that we’re sick of. After three and a half years together, it’s obvious that every member of the Class of ‘99 has outstayed their welcome with each other. This started becoming clear after one student produced a response of “Not Applicable” in the voting for the “Best looking guy” superlative (ahem). The things that we never said at all Freshman year, and later whispered behind each other’s back, gradually became the things which we scream across the lounge with little remorse. To be perfectly blunt, none of us can stand each other, and we no longer care enough to hide it. After years of tolerat-

Finally, how many of us have cracked jokes and said we thought we had already lost (I know because I’m guilty of this too sometimes). This attitude of “it’s all a joke” and the lack of support at games lead to losses; when people think it’s a joke or don’t think they can win, they won’t; it’s that simple.

I can’t lay all of the RPS athletes’ problems on the non-athletes, however. Commitment to sports by athletes at this school is lacking as well. During soccer both JV and Varsity had about thirty-eight to forty players collectively. During the pre-season, we had maybe seventeen players at practice. We had mid-season additions, and guys who would show up for the first game and skip all of pre-season. You can’t build team unity with scattered attendance. As a direct result of poor attendance, RPS soccer did not have the unity we needed until the very end of the season and at that point it was far too late.

For basketball, everyone showed up the first two days of pre-season but after teams were formed, guys started missing practice. At one practice on Saturday, we had six out of thirteen guys show up. It got so bad at one point, coach Neal had to threaten people’s recording time.

I also have a problem with what I’d call “the mid-season slack off” when people would just skip practice. If you don’t want to commit, then quit! People can’t be fair-weather players and expect to win. I understand missing practice once, when ill or when other activities get in the way, but people were missing two or three practices a week. It’s hard to win when guys miss two or three practices a week. It’s hard to win if you don’t have a whole team. I know we can improve all of this, and all it takes is follow-through on commitment.

In conclusion, I feel Prep lacks commitment and pride in sports, which leads to lack of school spirit. Yet, everyone here is very committed to academics (which is a good thing), even perhaps more committed than necessary; maybe some of that energy can rub off on our social commitments? One word: Commitment. We all have it in our own ability to commit 100%. So it’s time to answer the call and take some pride in our school’s sports. Let’s create a tradition of athletic excellence at Rutgers Prep to join our tradition of academic excellence.

ing each other, it appears that most of us have reached the breaking point, and no longer feel the need to continue any charade.

After three and a half years of work, of late nights and very early mornings, it seems that the sun has finally gone down on the Class of ‘99. It can no longer be dismissed as merely senioritis, because it has now evolved into a mass senior retreat from all of the ideals, morals, and tact which has held the class together since freshman year. The sullen faces in the lounge already forshadow what the next four months may hold.

Only four more months, and still not a chess piece in sight.