



# The Argo

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Rutgers Preparatory School

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## In Recognition of Mr. Harrison Burns

Regis Renard

Mr. David Harrison Burns died July 14, 1991 at the age of 45 from a heart attack in his second home in Almunecar, Spain. Mr. Burns was the Art Department Chairman at Rutgers Preparatory School for 18 years.

Mr. Burns taught classes with a happy grin and a unique sense of humor. In talking to just a few of his many students, one can observe the powerful impact he had on them as both a respected educator and as a peer. "Mr. Burns was someone you could look up to but who also treated you as an equal", according to Jason Kaplan. "He always spent plenty of time with the students trying to help them develop whatever work they were doing", said Lisa Rupinski, and Dennis Timko added, "Not only did he paint and draw, but he helped us out in our photography classes. He always had a joke to tell and a nickname for everyone." "Hey Harrison!!! He was a great guy and a great teacher!", Paul Kermizian exclaims when he hears a reference to Mr. Burns. Most importantly, as Rachel Kahn has said, "No one could ever hate him. He was a great artist, and most of all a great friend."

Mr. Burns was not only revered by his students; he managed to gain the respect of the administration and faculty as well. Mrs. Carol Howell said, "I had been collaborating with Mr. Burns in the Creative Arts Dinner for 14 years. He was

very professional, yet easy to work with. I could always count on him for help. I admire the amount of caring nature he held for the students, friends, and colleagues. He was a very likable person." Mr. Andrew Lennigan, former student, then fellow teacher, summed up the general sentiments, "Harrison was my teacher, my colleague, and my friend. I am very lucky to have received so much from one so generous. It is a great loss for the school and I miss him terribly."

Mr. Burns was also a well established artist in New York. His exhibits drew widespread critical acclaim. At the New York memorial service for Mr. Burns, speaker Frederick Castle said, "That the art of Harrison Burns is so well thought out...and well produced in its arrangements, that in the end there is left a unique viewing of objects in its melange that makes it the art of Harrison Burns."

For those who did not know Mr. Burns, his 1979 painting "Buck IV" hangs in the Sophomore lounge and can offer a glimpse into his tremendous skill as an artist and as a human being. For those who did know Mr. Burns, it can act as the source of many warm memories. There will be a memorial service for Mr. Burns on Sunday, September 22 at 2:00 in front of the Elm Farm Building. All are welcome to attend.



Photo by Caroline Elio

## The Newest Post-Graduate

Melissa Allegre

This summer Mr. Peter O'Neill from the Wooster School in Connecticut took over the responsibilities of Headmaster of Rutgers Prep. Mr. O'Neill visited Prep last Spring and was very impressed with what he saw. "[Rutgers Prep] has a great bunch of kids and it's the diversity that makes this place thrive," he commented. He's very comfortable with the atmosphere and added that the "helpful staff" has made his job easier.

In his brief time here the most difficult thing Mr. O'Neill has had to deal with is the unexpected demise of faculty member Harrison Burns. "Although I didn't know him personally, I could tell his death had a profound impact on the faculty and

staff...I heard a lot of things about him and [his death] was a surprise," Mr. O'Neill said, expressing his condolences over this loss for Prep.

As Prep's interim Headmaster, Mr. O'Neill stated that his main goal is to provide an easy transition for Prep to the next school year, at which time a permanent Headmaster will be selected. At the Academic Convocation, Mr. O'Neill spoke about his idea of what "interim" means for him. He said that he felt "uncomfortable" with the Webster's Dictionary definition of interim as "meanwhile". He prefers to think of his tenure at Prep more along the lines of the Oxford's Unabridged Dictionary definition of interim as "an interlude." Mr.

O'Neill feels that "an interlude can act as a bridge; a means of moving from one part of the composition to the next".

At the Senior reception, Mr. O'Neill likened himself to students in the Senior class—he noted how he, like the Senior class, was in his last year at Prep, and that he too was applying to various places, with the difference being that he was applying to future jobs, while the Seniors are applying to colleges.

So far, Mr. O'Neill has made a positive impression on both students and faculty. Senior Regis Renard's statement sums up the general attitude at Prep: "I'm happy to have him here. So far, he seems like a pretty nice guy."



Pictured Left to Right: J. Halpern, A. Sheridan, N. Martin, W. Nichols, M. Cruz, J. Brinker, K. White, M. Hodkinson, S. Mory, A. Salawu, C. Simons, B. Lloyd, N. Rosenbaum, M. McCue, D. Hush, S. Barber, P. Leroy

## Peer Leader Retreat

Scott Mory

On August 26, seventeen students and teachers left Prep on their way to the Annual Peer Leadership Retreat in Blairstown. On the trip, everyone in the group engaged in a great deal of talking and sharing. The result of this was that all those who participated in the trip got to know each other well and, though this, grew closer. One of the responsibilities the students had was to cook all

the meals and to take care of the house chores. On Tuesday morning, the group went to Camp Mason for a series of problem-solving games on an Adventure Course. The activities on Monday and Tuesday morning were part of the arduous Co-leader selection process. The fourteen Peer Leaders are Jeff Brinker, Nadine Rosenbaum, Mairén McCue, Kendall White, Brian Lloyd, Shaun

Barber, Madai Cruz, Amy Sheridan, Scott Mory, Dejon Hush, Colin Simons, Nicole Martin, Akin Salawu, Mark Hodkinson, and Scott Mory. The faculty members who accompanied them are Mrs. Halpern, Mr. Nichols, and Ms. Leroy. The peer leaders agree that everyone had a "great time" and that it was "a nice way to end the summer."



# Whatta Dress Code!!!

David Lee

In today's high-powered world, what we wear and how we look often seems as important as what we think and how we act. Fashion or dress attracts enormous amounts of attention in all spheres of society; Rutgers Prep is no exception. For years, the dress code has been a staple of conversation and debate between the students, faculty, and administration. This year is no different, and the new changes in required dress have initially caused quite a stir, especially among the male contingent of the student body.

The Prep Handbook stipulates, "Boys wear slacks and a dress shirt with a tie. If they wish to wear a full turtleneck, they must wear either a blazer or a sweater." In effect, this is basically a demand that all male students

wear ties about 99% of the time. At first glance, this might seem to be a reasonable change, but it does have many drawbacks.

First of all, since only dress shirts and turtlenecks can be worn (and no new sweaters turtlenecks), half of our wardrobe is left hanging. This is the end of rugby shirts and polos (which aren't made for ties), short sleeve shirts, and most pattern shirts (which usually clash ridiculously or look foolish with ties). Thus, we are left with a couple of white dress shirts and a turtleneck that was previously used only for skiing. This will suffice for a week, maybe two, but then the shrinkage factor comes into play (as well as the fact that everybody starts to notice that you've been wearing the same shirt every other day), and the male students are in

an unenviable position.

Furthermore, the new dress code limits the diversity of the students. Rutgers Prep prides itself on its multi-cultural student body, and clothing is a major aspect of any culture, but if everyone is dressed uniformly, the diversity is lost. On the first day of school, nearly all the boys wore the same style white dress shirt, to go along with our distinctive GAP pants and Bass or Dexter shoes (we'd been wearing the same pants and shoes all along). Granted, we all looked neat and proper, but generally we all looked the same (except for Eric Tavel). The only room for self-expression arose from our choices of ties, but this allows for very little flexibility and variation in how we dress.

You may have noticed that I eliminated any

discussion concerning the female students at Prep: simply because they have little to complain about. Every year limits on their dress are expanded and ours restricted. According to the Handbook, "Girls wear dresses or blouses with slacks or skirts." Recently, the girls wear dresses only during Commencement, and "blouse" can mean just about any type of shirt. The girls get away with murderous infractions of the dress code, wearing cotton tees, tanktops, and other clothing that violates the rules we are forced to follow. My purpose is not to dwell on their violations, for I do not resent them for violating the dress

code. What I do resent and wish to point out is the inconsistent enforcement of the rules practiced by the faculty and administration. The handbook admits that there is a large "gray area" in the dress code rules and states that "the school will make the final decision" regarding what is legal. This opens the door for the kind of favoritism that leads to certain people (and sexes) being punished more often. Recently, one female student (name withheld by request), when asked how she was able to get away with wearing jeans, a t-shirt, and sneakers, responded, "I'm a girl". I rest my case.



"Don't they know that they clash!"

## Senior Grievances

Scott Slade

On the first day of school, the seniors were besieged in homeroom with a host of new and stringent rules and regulations. The general response was surprise and outrage.

If a Senior does not arrive and check-in with his or her advisor by 8:20 exactly, the student receives a tardy (which is reported to all prospective colleges) and loses the privilege of going out to lunch that day. "What if you're late only three minutes late?" someone asked; the answer was, "Late is late." If a Senior has been tardy or absent more than five times in a quarter, he or she will then be ordered to meet a "review board," with parents present. It is not uncommon for someone to be, God forbid, sick twice in one quarter, and should they be out three days both times, they will also have to meet with the "review board." Whether the board excuses that student or not, it seems to be a useless waste of time in everyone's busy schedule.

Finally, to heap insult on top of insult, we have been assigned seats for all Baldwin Hall assemblies.

Some Seniors, who had expected to finally sit along the front of the stage, after years of being forbidden to do so, have found themselves in permanent side seats next to underclassmen and, to make us feel even more adult, in alphabetical order as well.

These complaints have been dismissed so far as quibbling over small inconveniences. Even if they are "small inconveniences," they add up to become much more. They show a basic lack of respect toward the Senior class. We had expected to be granted privileges along with the added responsibilities which we have taken on. Instead, many have been curtailed or taken away.

To make matters worse, the reasoning behind the new rules is faulty. "The new rules are there," we have been told, "because Seniors have abused privileges in the past." What that means, pretty much, is that we are being punished for sins that we did not commit. In History class today, I learned that the United States Constitution prohibits this kind of "ex post facto" punishment.

It has been noted by

many that this year's Senior class has been distinguished in its leadership in academics, athletics, and extra-curricular involvements, yet we are under greater restrictions than those Seniors to which we are so favorably compared.

The mentality behind this is dangerous, because it assumes that all people of one age group will always act alike and commit the same mistakes. The administration has assumed that we will act in a certain way because we are Seniors. The result will probably be a greater backlash of behavioral problems than would otherwise have occurred. Thus, on the first day of school, one Senior angrily said, "The school started out with a bad attitude towards me; maybe I could give them a bad attitude back," and others agreed.

If all Senior classes are so untrustworthy, don't we at least deserve a trial period under the "old rules" to prove we would not abuse

The ARGO welcomes responses to editorials.

## Fall Sports Preview

Sam Finklestein

As the 91-92 school year begins, the playing fields are once again filled with Prep's finest athletes. The Fall sports include Boys' Soccer, Girls' soccer, Cross-Country (coed), and Girls' Tennis.

Boys' Soccer is returning from a problematic season last year, but shows tremendous improvements in ability and cooperation so far this year. Many of last season's starting players, along with several new talented players, are gearing up for a challenging schedule.

The Girls' Soccer team is small, which will mean more demands on every player. However, the team is close-knit, and the skill of players should produce a successful season.

Boys' Cross-Country is returning from a perfect season in which it was victorious in both the Prep division Conference and State

tournaments. Six of last year's seven Varsity runners are returning, and all have improved their times during the off season. The runners are all confident that nothing will impede a repetition of last year's success. The Girls' team is full this season for the first time in three years. This bodes well for the girls, as they are all gifted with enough speed to have a season comparable to that of the boys.

The Girls' Tennis team also looks stronger than it has in the past. There has been a large turnout for the team, including both experienced and inexperienced players. Coaches Gary Paul and Heidi Nesvogel plan on improving every player's game with drills and strategy work. With experience, depth, and two concerned coaches, Girls' Tennis has the chance of becoming a major power this season.

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