



French student Remy Teicher (IV) gets help from Mme. Castaldo on her grammar worksheet.

M. Skiba (VI)

KICENUIK

REVIVES STUDENT

WRITING CENTER

Upperclassmen Tutors

'A great learning
experience'

By JESSICA ZHAO (VI)

Every Friday at CP, a line of students can be seen waiting outside of room 320, rough drafts of essays in hand. They are all waiting their turn to be helped by the tutors at the Writing Center.

Although the tutors are talented and experienced writers eager to assist in the writing process, they are not faculty members but rather Pingry students primarily in forms V and VI.

This fall, Ms. Kimberly Kicenuik, Class of '02 and current Upper School English teacher, announced the opening of a Writing Center, where students can go to discuss and to get feedback on their writing.

"I thought it was a good idea for it to be a student run organization, especially with so many talented writers here," Ms. Kicenuik explained. "In some cases, these students are the most capable of offering criticism and writing advice because they have had the teachers here and know their expectations. The students are able to decipher the cryptic handwriting and comments."

At her alma mater, Harvard University, there was a thriving Writing Center, where she was "a frequent attendee." The Writing Center there had a "physical location in the English building" and ran "all hours during the day, and students made appointments or could walk-in three times a week during the evening."

Ironically, Ms. Kicenuik said, "My best tutor at Harvard was a science major. She had an incredible ability to tell me ex-

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Students Get Ready to Globalize

By JENNY GORELICK (IV)

In our closely interconnected society, the act of studying languages abroad has become increasingly more prevalent. A recent article in the *The New York Times* entitled "Foreign Legions" states that approximately six percent of American students study abroad at some point during their college career. This increasing demand for programs has produced more opportunities to study in foreign countries in various colleges across the United States.



The language program has similar importance at Pingry. Almost every Pingry student takes a language course, either German, Spanish, French, or Latin. In addition, Pingry students perform very highly on the verbal communication SAT II subject tests. The average score of the current seniors on the Chinese with Listening SAT II was a 790, a 678 on the French, and a 724 on the Spanish. Furthermore, of the 268 participants in the National Latin Exam last year, 133 students were recognized as award winners. 30 students were also honored by the National French Contest.

Former Pingry student

and current Paris law student Alex Raiffe '04 notes "Had it not been for the excellent level of instruction I received from Pingry's language department, I would certainly not be where I am today." An ardent French scholar, Raiffe spent his junior year at the University of Pennsylvania studying abroad at Sciences Po Paris, and as he puts it, "I never came back!" Currently, he is obtaining a Master's Degree in Corporate Law from Sciences Po Paris. He plans on establishing a practice in France.

Other alumni have also continued their language

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Veteran Addresses Student Body

By ANDREW YOUNG (III)

On Friday, November 16, the Pingry community welcomed Jack Jacobs, the speaker at the annual Veterans Day Assembly.

A former Pingry parent,



Courtesy of the Development Office

Jacobs won the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest military award in the country. The medal is given to an American soldier by the President in the name of Congress and is awarded to any individual serving in the armed forces. Currently, he works as a military analyst for NBC/MSNBC.

Jacobs started off his speech with a string of witty comments, reflecting his dry sense of humor.

Throughout the entire assembly, he inserted short segments of jokes, keeping the mood rather light and amusing. "He kept our attention through sarcasm. He was hilarious," said Matt English (III).

However, Jacobs also had some meaningful messages to bestow. He emphasized truth

and honesty, explaining how he came to confirm the importance of these virtues by working in the military. Jacobs told the audience that one lie will spawn myriad other lies, noting that eventually the lies will catch up to the liar.

He also mentioned the significance of effective leadership, commenting that clearly communicating an objective was often more important than simply giving instructions. In his view, a team that understood and focused on its objective was much more effective than one with no goal, whether in battle or elsewhere.

In addition, Jacobs described the dire situation that won him the Congressional Medal of Honor. When his battalion suffered devastating casualties after an attack from the Vietcong, Jacobs was able to reorganize and help his troops despite being injured by mortar fragments. He even went back into the battlefield to personally carry 14 men to safety. His objective was simple — to save as many lives as possible — and his

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Strategic Plan Looks Toward the Future

By JENN SOONG (IV)

On October 16, Pingry put forth its much-anticipated 2007 Strategic Plan. A blueprint for the school's goals and foundations, the 13-page presentation was given the title, "Honoring Our Legacy, Defining Our Future." An update from the 2001 Long Range Plan, this year's Strategic Plan is on what Pingry hopes to accomplish in the next three to five years.

When asked about the initial thinking and reasoning process behind the new plan, Headmaster Conard proposed that "it was time for a new plan," especially after the school had completed "several main projects such as the Arts Center and Middle School."

Within the Strategic Plan, the mission of fostering in students a "lifelong commitment to intellectual exploration, individual growth, and social responsibility" is supported by five specific goals: attracting exceptional students, investing in the finest faculty and staff, enriching academic programs, enhancing facilities, and developing our resources.

From a financial standpoint, the plan focuses mainly on financial aid, faculty support, and athletics. With a new indoor athletic facility, the school hopes to provide a fitness center and resources for sports such as hockey, squash, fencing, basketball, and wrestling. Not only will this reduce the amount of time teams need to travel between school and outside arenas, but it will also allow for more practice time.

Mr. Conard commented on the athletic facility, saying, "A motivation for this athletic piece was to be more inclusive" so that teams wouldn't have to "cut kids for space." Although not specifically mentioned in the plan, other athletic improvements will be resurfacing the track and fixing the tennis court cracks and draining problems.

Despite the focus on athletics, the Strategic Plan does not fail to prioritize academics and the arts. In fact, the new sports facility is meant to give the same opportunity to athletes as the five-year-old arts center did several years ago for artists and actors.

Other physical changes the Strategic Plan wishes to achieve include the possible addition of more Harkness tables in classrooms. Mr. Conard hopes that this will put more "responsibility on students" during the learning process and allow for an "exchange of knowledge."

The school will also try to enhance the lab facilities so that there may be more of a "hands-on experience in science programs."

As for enriching academics and modifying the curriculum, Mr. Conard said the main goal is to "ensure that students and faculty are engaged together," so that "honor and character" along with "intellectual engagement" are achieved. The headmaster went on to state that not only does Pingry want

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Inside The Record



Courtesy of J.P. Patrizio (VI)

Ben Spicehandler and J.P. Patrizio model at the senior fashion show.

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Singing in the City

The Glee Club performs at Carnegie Hall. P. 4.

Pingry's Prodigies

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EDITORIAL

Interpreting Learning

About a month ago, a few friends and I spontaneously engaged in a debate about linguistics. I believe that the original word in question was “zeitgeist”: I said that the word was clearly German while several other kids argued that since Americans use it, the word is English. The discussion expanded: did terms like “apropos,” “de facto,” or even “octopi” belong to their country of origin or any country that uses the word at all?

We argued and argued, finally drawing the conclusion that our fundamental beliefs were different, and thus going on would be futile. I left somewhat frustrated about the fact that my friends could not see my point, but forgot about the discussion a few days later.

I recalled this memory when I first read Jenny Gorelick’s feature story on the importance of studying languages (page 5). Though we came to no finite conclusions during our debate, I realized how wonderful it was that we cared enough about the origins of words to discuss something like that at a party.

Pingry open houses and brochures will tell you that, of course, students here care about studying foreign languages. The numbers are all there: we perform well on SATs and AP tests, earn a plethora of awards from national language associations, and most of us go on to take at least one language course in college. By all accounts, our commitment to learning languages is stellar.

And yet, we must remember that Pingry, like virtually every high school in the country, has a foreign language requirement. No foreign language, no diploma. The same thing holds true for the majority of universities. So do students study foreign languages purely because they have to?

I agree with Jenny in saying: no, they don’t. But the caveat is that a solid percentage of people drop their language in high school when given the chance, and an even greater number do not pursue it in college. More and more students are studying abroad, but not necessarily in countries where speaking something besides English is necessary.

Learning languages is difficult; it is clearly a case of reaping what you sow. Ten years from now, you may be able to look in SparkNotes for the summary of that book you barely skimmed in ninth grade or Google the math formula that you never understood in Calc, but the same does not hold true for speaking French. Though you can look up a word or a phrase, the knowledge you will have of syntax and pronunciation will inevitably depend on the time you invested while studying it in high school or college. It is natural that not everybody wants to or is even cut out to pursue one subject so intensely. Just as not everyone is meant to excel at physics, not everyone will be incredible at French.

And yet, I have a certain confidence in saying that people are more capable of learning languages than they may think. Perhaps they stop taking them because they lack interest rather than talent, but that should not be the case. Any corporate manager can tell you how beneficial it is to know the client’s language when making a merger. Any scholar will attest to how incredible it is to read Nietzsche in the vernacular.

As we head down this inevitable path towards globalization, circumstances demand that we be able to understand each other more and more as we are forced to communicate with people all over the world. So invest something in your foreign language: take pride in having learned a new phrase today, look forward to studying abroad in college, or even challenge yourself to engage in a discussion about it with a group of friends. Your future self will thank you for it.

Rethinking My High School Experience

By EVAN ROSENMAN (VI)

As I sit down to write this piece, I can feel the uneasy shivers of nervousness coursing through my body. Am I facing any particular challenges at the moment? Well, aside from mountains of uncompleted homework, no. Rather, this nervousness stems from a looming and terrifying prospect just coming into focus on the horizon: early admission decisions. My sense of unease has been growing for the past few weeks and now, with less than a week remaining until decisions are released, I have settled into a constant disquiet. Imagine the theme from “Jaws” playing in your head twenty-four/seven – that is the basic senior-in-December state of being.

This is a singular and, thankfully, brief period in life. In fact, by the time this op-ed is published, I will already know whether I was accepted, deferred, or rejected. Yet the poignancy and the difficulty of this period remains important, because it is emblematic of the way something can easily come to dominate a life. At Pingry especially, college can hijack students’

outlooks and their choices at a very young age. And if we lose our youth to ensure our futures then something is terribly, terribly wrong.

In the last issue of The Record, I wrote about senior stress and was surprised to see an op-ed from sophomore Jenn Soong discussing the way college loomed large in her life, a full two years before application season. I deeply empathized with Jenn’s statements, because I am pretty sure I started worrying about college while still in the womb. I distinctly remember coming to the Martinsville Campus in seventh grade and thinking, “What should I do to look good for college? Which classes should I take? What clubs should I join?”

Five years later, I stand at the precipice of admissions decisions and wonder, “Was it truly worth it?” I hate to admit it, but my gut tells me, “No, it really wasn’t.” I have expended an enormous amount of effort in mak-

ing myself the best college applicant I can be. Yet, no matter what happens next, what was the cost? What opportunities did I miss out on? What relationships could have been forged or strengthened in the time I spent working on academics or attending my extracurriculars? These are answers I will never know.

The phrase “live without regret” may be a contradiction in terms, but the enormity of regret a college-driven student will eventually face is unsettling. And I am aware of the distinct irony in my renunciation of the drive and motivation that has

pushed me towards achieving my dreams. But I have realized that there needs to be a greater balance. There needs to be more weight given to things we enjoy and less emphasis on pleasing some scary, unknown admissions officer. If we live in a culture of instant gratification, then I think it is time that Pingry students come to embrace it. What

if the time for fulfillment is not the moment you set foot on a college campus? What if the time for fulfillment is now?

Ultimately, there is a time and place for everything. The fall of senior year may be the right time for college dread, for a repeated loop of the “Jaws” theme in a student’s head. But freshman year, sophomore year, and even junior year are not meant to be defined by college. And if they are, then memories of high school will be characterized not by what was, but by what could have been.

I suppose that is my final message for underclassmen: understand that the sum total of your choices now will one day constitute your memories of high school. The impending results of my college pursuit have led me to reexamine the pursuit itself, and I find myself not unhappy, but somewhat ambivalent. I hope that others will not face this ambivalence, and this is my advice: try to be sure that the decisions you make will balance happiness and success. Strive to make high school a joyful chapter, a time that will leave you with few regrets and innumerable happy memories.

*Yet what was the cost?**What opportunities did**I miss out on? What relationships**could have**been forged or strengthened**in the time I spent**working on academics?*

Contemplating Our Past and Future Selves

By NEHA SRIVASTAVA (IV)

It’s holiday time! Well, not quite, but it is rapidly approaching. The excitement is already tangible here at Pingry: we are thinking about vacation plans, spending time with family and friends, and indulging in much-needed relaxation. And of course we are looking forward to receiving presents.

The next time we will see each other, it will be 2008, after New Year’s Day. Hopefully we will be rejuvenated and ready to attack the second semester. Yet this vacation is more than just relaxation; it is also a time to question ourselves.

This is the time to ask ourselves: are we where we want to be? More importantly, are we who we want to be? The answer might be

yes or no. A mechanism to determine this is making New Year’s resolutions. Yet these are becoming an increasingly forgotten ideal. Have we, the younger generation, forgotten about them?

If you google New Year’s Resolutions, the most common are goals like quitting drinking, quitting smoking, getting fit, and eating right. Yet the typical Pingry student doesn’t really need to worry about those things. Instead, students here could find much solace in reducing stress, and maybe even enjoying life more, which categorically applies to students everywhere.

A few days ago at the lunch table, the topic of New Year’s resolutions was tentatively broached but was quickly brushed aside. There were quizzical smiles and incredulous laughter, and we moved onto another topic. We didn’t want to think or talk about resolutions, at least not at school, maybe not in front of our friends.

My father, on the other hand, takes resolutions very seriously. He has the family go around at the dinner table on New Year’s Eve picking out resolutions for ourselves and for each other. Needless to say, conversation often turns to laughter, sarcasm, and unwillingness to partake in such a personal exercise. More often than not, my siblings pick out silly resolutions for

each other, like “Resolve to shower more,” and the conversation becomes a playful insult-fest.

For many of us, New Year’s resolutions are taken lightly, like our weekly horoscope.

We are so busy and focused on extracurriculars, school, friends, and family, that we focus less on our personal aspirations. Maybe we forget that if we really want to — if we are willing

to make the effort — maybe we can change. Maybe for others, the challenge is not making the resolutions, but actually carrying them out. It probably requires continuous effort, and we are already so drained with schoolwork and activities that we have little time to think about them.

But these resolutions are important. New Year’s

has always been a time for reflections and more importantly resolutions for the futures. It’s a time to reflect on the changes we want to make and resolve to follow through on them.

Why don’t we all continue this long-standing tradition and sit down at the dinner table this New Year’s Day and discuss them? There is no reason why we can’t overcome our shortcomings or achieve whatever we want. Just make a mental note. It really can’t hurt.

Last week, I drove past my elementary school and saw the blue and green tiles that lined the first grade hallway. I felt a sharp pang of nostalgia and heartache and immediately saw myself, three feet tall, brushing those tiles with my fingertips as I idly wandered down the hallway. Would our first grade selves be proud of who we are now? Why, and why not? If we take the initiative, we can all still change.

Are we who we want to be? The answer might be yes or no.

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The Editorial Board wishes to congratulate the winners of the ninth grade Student Government election:

**President Will Bartlett
Vice President Nic Fink**

Inciting a Pingry Political Revolution Does School Hinder Our True Education?

By SAM BARON (IV)

A rebel complains about his surroundings, wears a controversial t-shirt that says what he is too afraid to say, dyes his hair, and then sinks back into his self-pitying corner. A revolutionary sees his surroundings, mobilizes, and changes the wrongdoing or goes down trying, inspiring others in the process. The rebel watches, cheering on the revolutionary in his lonely corner.

Our reality may or may not startle you: there are 3,889 dead American soldiers, anywhere from 30,000 to hundreds of thousands of dead Iraqi civilians and a multi-billion dollar war profiteering industry for companies such as Halliburton, Blackwater Worldwide, and Aegis Defense Systems. The abuse of civil liberties is shocking: a Habeas Corpus moratorium via the Military Commissions Act of 2006, as well as the Patriot Act, which has brought the downfall of civil liberties in the name of a "War on Terror," and House Resolution 1955, which essentially defines Orwellian "Thoughtcrime."

There are 200,000 homeless veterans and a President who not only does not know the difference between a Sunni and a Shiite but is augmenting his own power to high levels of authoritarianism.

Social security is running dry; there are 47 million Americans without health insurance, not to mention incompetent 2008 Presidential primary forerunners, and widespread materialism in our country.

But perhaps most disturbing is the general apathy of youth towards all of the above.

The uproar, radicalism, and action, according to 13 members of Harvard's 1967 class, is absent.

A letter from the alumni, addressed to President Drew G. Faust, laments "widespread apathy and political indifference" in Harvard's undergraduates. Its stated goal is not to rebuke the students, but to open up opportunities for political marshalling.

In 2004, only 47 percent of 18-24 year olds voted in

the Presidential election. It may have been an 11 percent rise from 2000, but the number is still shockingly low. Campaigns such as P. Diddy's "Vote or Die" may have contributed to the rise, yet blind votes can be worse than no votes. A study by the National Information Consortium shows that 46 percent of young people never talked about politics or government with their family.

We do not have to be part of the 46 percent. I propose turning the absolutely useless and unused club board into something useful. Take down the club index cards, many of which do not exist, and put up current events headlines and articles. Give space for students to write opinions.

We hear the 30-second sound bytes, see the newspaper headlines, the YouTube videos, but the only political opinion that comes out of here is in a few articles in Vital Signs and a few peeps on Facebook. Are Pingry graduates going to be part of the 46 percent and eventually the 53 percent of non-voters? The only appropriate number for eligible voters in our class of 2008 in the upcoming election is 100 percent.

All I am saying is think. In August, Mattel recalled approximately nine million toys that either contained lead paint or dangerous magnets from China. The recalls have continued, now with plastic beads that, when eaten, become the infamous date rape drug GHB. Concerned parents immediately checked their children's toys, returned

any that presented danger, and moved on.

There was no reaction, as far as I could tell, from students. Is everyone really blind to the greater issues of globalization, or do the world's problems just end at our doorsteps?

This recall should have raised greater concerns about the effects of globalization and outsourcing. Yet it has not. The effects of poisoned toys do not just effect your Christmas shopping; they reek of globalization and outsourcing gone awry. This issue needs more debate amongst the youth than just a glance at the front page of The New York Times.

We as a generation fail to see matters on a large scale. We are too afraid to stand up for justice, and our borders only extend to where we are comfortable.

School provides the best forum for voicing political opinion and taking action. Outside of school, political action will take much more work and involves a greater risk of failure.

It is time that we step away from our safety blankets. It is time that we, as high school students, do not fear to press upon the controversial issues. Pingry has always been keen on issues that have one side and has produced a great, much appreciated response for cancer research, FOP, and the Darfur genocide. I know that there is also opinion here about controversial issues, so let's see it.

Perhaps the best social activism occurring in school today is the Green Group. They go about removing invasive species and keeping

the community informed on environmental issues, all while maintaining a respectful, yet zealous manner.

Yet there are still far too few students who are willing to step out of the crowd and take action. We only mobilize when the crowd mobilizes, whether it be signing a petition for the Jena Six or passively protesting by wearing a color on a certain day.

Colors? At least raise money or write letters while wearing a color.

We must get out of this habit. Politics are not taboo and should be brought up at the dinner, or in our case, lunch table. Now is the time to become educated and to educate others about the current Presidential candidates. Even though most of us are not voting in the upcoming election, the next President will be in power until 2013, greatly impacting our world.

So, are we going to sit back and let the Christian Right conservatives overrun our country with religion-infused policy, or are we going to stop it? Are we going to let a Democrat-controlled Congress slide through its term without fulfilling any of its 2006 promises? We as youth have the power to change society, but we are not utilizing it.

We can shift the blame, saying that we do not have a central leader to rely on, but that is absurd. We are the ones who must step up, take stances on these issues, be loud about them, and take action.

Are you going to be the rebel, or the revolutionary? Do not even bother answering with words. Your actions are so loud; I cannot even hear what you are saying.

By REMY TEICHER (IV)

I do not really remember what I learned in my middle school classes at Pingry. I cannot recall the details that were discussed in history or science classes. I remember wondering why I had to memorize all of these facts and how I struggled doing so. Now that I am in the Upper School, I think it is safe to say that most students at Pingry feel that school can get very frustrating and stressful at times. For me, memorizing those pesky little facts and formulas get in the way of my critical thinking and my ability to view a subject creatively, promoted by my curiosity, my natural sense of wonder, and my determination to know about the world I live in.

People often have the wrong idea of what a good education is. Webster's online dictionary defines education as "the gradual process of acquiring knowledge." It is distinct from "schooling," which the same dictionary defines as "the act of teaching at school" and "the training of an animal." If we are trained to put massive amounts of information into our brain but are not able to critically think and view our subjects creatively, then we are not being educated very effectively.

Mark Twain once said, "I never let schooling interfere with my education." Schooling sometimes fits into the category of education—we are learning information in class whether it is being memorized, or being truly applied and understood, or whether we like it or not. However, education does not always fit in the category of schooling. I find that I absorb so much more knowledge when I am out of class and truly experiencing life.

One would think that these things we learn in school—all these facts—always contribute

to our necessary knowledge and help us grow. Schooling should be more relevant; it should help us have a more successful, fulfilling life. One should be able to walk in and out of every class and say to his or herself, "Wow, that was really interesting. I want to keep learning," or, "I really feel like what we just learned had a logical connection to me and my life." It would be so much more educational to connect every class to daily life and the world around us rather than try to cram all the information in our heads. It is extremely difficult to learn something that you feel is not relevant to you. Why memorize certain facts and formulas? If the formulas are used enough and of real relevance to your

life, then they will be naturally memorized over time. We are at school to learn in class, but what I learn in class has not been the most important lessons that have had true impact on me. Although Pingry is known for its rigorous academics, I find that I learn so much more out of the classroom. When I talk with friends on a deep emotional level and we advise each other, we are educating ourselves by listening to each other and sharing life lessons through experience.

On vacations, I have traveled to exotic places such as Africa, where I can see how other people live and learn from the world. By being put into an extremely different setting and experiencing life in a different way, it is amazing how much I can learn about myself and the small world in which I live in New Jersey.

Life has so much more to offer than what I am tested on in classes. There is an incredible amount of larger learning going on out of class because it is more my reality. This is what I call my true education.

Schooling should be more relevant; it should help us have a more successful, fulfilling life.

Are you going to be the rebel, or the revolutionary?



Word on the Senior Couches: How Are You Coping With Stress?



JESS WESTERMAN

"I dare you to ask me."



DAVE URBANOWICZ

"I play Parcheesi."



DAVID YANG

"I'm not really stressed."



MATT MCCURDY

"I play lots of Super Snake."



KRISTIN MOLINARI

"BAHHHHH!"



Z. Mannan (V)

Glee Club Performs at Carnegie Hall

By ZARA MANNAN (V)

For many Pingry singers, Friday, November 9th was a memorable experience as the high school students in the Women's Glee Club and the sixth grade Pingry chorus group all performed at Carnegie Hall.

The concert was actually the result of a large group effort. A few local schools in New York and New Jersey congregated with an adult chorus from various affiliated choral groups to sing the "Mahler 8th Symphony." It has been a Pingry tradition to participate in this event every five years.

The singers departed from Pingry and arrived at Carnegie Hall at approximately 3 o'clock, just in time for rehearsal. It was drizzling as the students hurried off the bus, which frustrated many who had spent a great amount of time on their hair. But generally everyone was overjoyed to just be in the city. Many students, singers, and instrumentalists were rushing into the building eagerly searching for their appropriate places in the auditorium.

As Pingry was singing the

youth choir part of the symphony, they were seated on the second floor, from which they were able to sing and overlook the entire audience as well as the adult choir and conductor. On the second level, the singers sat in box seats, where the rows were filled with raised stools that had high ledges for singers to conveniently stand on. The two sides of the auditorium were filled with many youth choir singers.

The rehearsal lasted for two hours during which the conductor directed the entire chorus and orchestra through the piece, stopping the singers whenever a note or tempo change had to be addressed.

While many singers were awed by the lush red carpeting and majestic stage of the grand hall, others became tired sitting through a two-hour rehearsal.

They soon overcame the challenge, however, and were well rewarded when at approximately 5:15 the singers were dismissed for dinner in the city. Seniors had the incredible and well-appreciated privilege to eat out with friends and browse the city without adult supervi-

sion. Underclassmen were either escorted to dinner by a chaperone or allowed to go out with a parent.

Callback time was 7 p.m.. Students rushed in, showing a pass at the entrance, and then quickly changed for the concert. By 7:30 p.m. all singers and orchestra members were dressed elegantly, ready for the anticipated concert. Guests started to appear in the auditorium and by 8 p.m., all were ready to begin.

In peaceful silence the audience awaited the beginning of the concert. First four lavishly dressed female soloists and two handsomely attired male soloists entered the concert stage, walking proudly into position while receiving great applause. Finally, the conductor entered, meeting with even greater applause and more enthusiastic cheers from the youth choir. He gracefully moved his hands to signal the orchestra to play, and directed cues for the chorus; the concert had finally begun.

The evening of great singing, wonderful playing, and artful conducting was overall a grand success.

Mrs. Runge, who organized

much of the event and supervises the Women's Glee Club and Balladeers, was extremely pleased with the students' participation.

"Being invited to participate in the 'Mahler 8th Symphony' was a real treat for our singers," she said. "To be able to share their gifts in such an esteemed hall is truly a memory for a lifetime and one which I hope draws the girls back to the hall again and again. I felt they were extremely well-prepared for the complexity of the work."

Hallie Bianco (VI), President of the Women's Glee Club, also agreed that singing at Carnegie was a great experience. "I thought that the trip into NYC was a lot of fun for the entire Women's Glee Club," she commented. "I think it was nice for everyone to perform in a setting other than the Pingry auditorium, and Carnegie Hall is obviously an incredible place to sing."

The concert ended at 10 p.m. and the students departed, either with their parents or on the bus, which arrived back at Pingry a little past midnight. Although the day was long and demanding, all agreed that the experience was wonderful and very rewarding.

Quizbowl Advances on to the Next Round

By SHAAN GURNANI (III)

The Quizbowl team participated in The New Jersey Challenge on Tuesday, November 13. The competition, hosted by NJ News Channel 12, is an educational televised quiz show designed to test students' knowledge of history, arts and literature, science and math. The winners of the competition will receive ten thousand dollars towards their school.

Pingry's Challenge team, led by Latin teacher Mr. Varnes, consists of captain Bobby Blatt (VI), Andrew Sartorius (V), Sam Fisher (IV), Matt Laforgia (V), and alternate Alex Daifotis (IV).

The competition was filmed at the NJ News Channel 12 studio in the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York City. The team brought along five students as an audience.

Although it was a close match, they ground out a

win against Bishop George Ahr High School of Edison, New Jersey.

According to Fisher, they "felt secure going into the match because of the strong Quizbowl team this year."

Thirty-two schools statewide compete in the Challenge and sixteen of them (including Pingry) will advance to the second round, played in February of 2008.

Until then, the team will be hard at work practicing each week during Conference Period in preparation for the upcoming round.

On February 16th, the Pingry-Bishop George match will be aired on NJ News Channel 12. Be sure to look out for more information and watch them on television.

If anyone wants information on the competition or is interested in joining the Pingry Quizbowl team, contact Bobby Blatt, Sam Fisher, or Mr. Varnes.



M. Skiba (VI)

Balancing School and Music

Violinist Kate Dreyfuss

By ANDREW SARTORIUS (V)

When Kate Dreyfuss (IV) began playing the violin at the age of three, she never expected it would come to constitute an important part of her life. "I don't even remember the first time I picked up a violin," she says, laughing. "My mom said I enjoyed music, so she signed me up for some violin classes."

Twelve years and hundreds of performances later, Kate is a student in the Pre-College Division at the Julliard School of Music in New York City. She has played at venues across the country, from Carnegie Hall to the Advanced Suzuki Institute in California. She has served as co-concertmaster in the Julliard Pre-College Chamber Orchestra and has played works from various famous violin composers, including Beethoven and Kreisler. "It's a lot of fun, but I try to keep it in perspective," says Kate.

Before joining the Julliard

School, Kate studied at the School for Strings in New York City under the school's director, Louise Behrend. "She was an incredible role model for me," Kate says. "She helped shape the way I look at and play the violin." As well as attending music schools, Kate played for the New Jersey Youth Symphony, where she was concertmaster of the string sinfonia.

Kate has also attended many summer programs: she has played at the prestigious Junior and Senior Greenwood Music Camps in Western Massachusetts, and the Suzuki Institute in Ithaca, New York. This past summer, she studied at the Yellow Barn Music School at Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts.

For Kate, though, her biggest accomplishment was getting into The Julliard School. "The application process was very difficult," she says. "I had to memorize a list of pieces and then go into the city and play them in front of a panel of judges."

Now, she spends most of her weekend at Julliard: "I'm there every Saturday from nine in the morning to six at night taking lessons in music theory and practicing with the orchestra."

"It's certainly been hard to deal with and juggle school and violin," Kate acknowledges.

What makes the sacrifices and long hours of practicing worthwhile, Kate says, are her fellow students: "There are so many intelligent kids at Julliard and the summer programs I've attended. All of them have so much to say about music."

Asked if she would consider pursuing a professional career in music, Kate pauses to think. "I'm at the point where I'm reaching a crossroad in my life now," she finally answers, "when I've got to make a choice between music or academics. It's going to be a very tough decision for me, considering all the years I've played. But regardless of which I choose, I'll always enjoy playing the violin."

Pianist Ashley Zhou

By EMILY MAE CZACHOR (I)

When I first heard Ashley Zhou, a new student in Form I at Pingry, play the piano at a Middle School meeting, I was astonished by her illustrious skill. I was taken aback by the speed and agility with which her fingers moved across the keys.

Ashley has been playing the piano for seven years, practicing every day for two and a half to three hours. She also travels to Philadelphia each week to take lessons with her current piano professor, Susan Starr.

It may seem a far distance to travel just for a piano lesson, but instruction from Ms. Starr, a world famous concert pianist and a widely known piano professor, is well worth the trip. She has won many international competitions, including the Tchaikovsky Piano Competition when she was only nineteen years old.

Ashley thoroughly enjoys working with Ms. Starr because "she is a wonderful teacher and works well with children."

Ashley has had the incredible opportunity to perform in many well-known performing arts venues, including Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Center, Steinway Hall, the State Department in Washington D.C., Catholic University, and Arnoff Center.

She has also won many competitions. She competed in the World Piano Competition, and won third place in the Concerto Competition, Young Artists' Division. As a winner, Ashley performed in Carnegie Hall this past September. She won first place in the International Young Artists' Piano Competition in Washington D.C., and as a winner, she performed at Catholic University this past June. This past August Ashley was invited to perform at the Child Prodigy Noon Concert Series in the State Department

in Washington D.C.

In addition to her performances at the "great halls," Ashley likes to share her music with people in assisted living centers and nursing homes. As a part of her community service, she plans on performing a solo piano recital at Fellowship Village in Basking Ridge.

When I first saw and heard Ashley play the piano, I could tell by her performance that she truly loved to play. Her favorite type of music to play is classical music, but Ashley also enjoys playing for the Middle School orchestra at Pingry. Her favorite aspect of playing the piano is performing for others.

"I really like being able to share my music with other people," she says, "I enjoy the excitement and adrenaline rush during competitions and performances." Performing also gives her an opportunity to meet other children from around the world.

The Importance of Being Cultured

Students Study German, Spanish, French, and Latin

Continued From Page 1

studies in college. Katy Pinke '06 studied Chinese during her freshman year at Princeton, and the following summer she traveled to Beijing "to study and live for two months immersed in

thereby preserving history and culture."

Many current students also exhibit an interest in furthering their knowledge of languages. German student, Jenna Devine (VI) claims that in college she will most likely "double major in German and English, because I

in their language." She believes that the most important component of learning other languages is the ability to actually converse with fluent people and be "able to hear people's stories and learn about their culture in their own language."

Hannah Goldstein (V), who has previously taken lessons in Italian while staying in Italy, agrees. She says that "the key to studying abroad is knowing the language so that you aren't merely a tourist." Other students, such as Colleen Roberts (III), believe that advancing their verbal eloquence will enhance their lives. Roberts hopes to study Spanish "abroad or in college at some point because it will improve my learning experience." In addition, Latin student, Calvin Jones (IV) says he believes that "studying abroad would allow me to better appreciate Roman culture."

While presently enrolled in Spanish, Ricky Zacharias (VI) plans to expand his articulation by learning "French, German, or perhaps Japanese—languages that I feel will connect me with a more sophisticated world landscape." He believes in studying foreign language because "it incites worldliness; we should take a note from Copernicus and realize that the world does



M. Skiba (VI)



M. Skiba (VI)

the language and culture." She plans on applying "to be a major in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy, with a focus on East Asian Studies." She intends to reside and work in China sometime in the future.

Katie Jennings '06, a former Pingry French student, states that in college she has realized "how interconnected different disciplines are. For example, my knowledge of French has been helpful in better understanding the cultural components of my art history and history classes. Being able to read documents in the original languages makes me feel so much more connected to what I am studying. My goal is to graduate college fluent in French, and I am tentatively planning on studying abroad at the Sorbonne in Paris." However, she also believes that "one of the downsides to globalization is that countries are losing some of their cultural autonomy as business is increasingly being conducted in English. That makes it much more important to learn individual languages,

love literature. Also, being able to understand more than one language opens up a whole new realm of material to me." Similarly, Melinda Zoepfel (VI) plans "to study Italian in college, as most architecture schools have study abroad programs in Italy and I'd like to be able to talk to people there



M. Skiba (VI)

not revolve around America. To understand the human condition, we must understand the place and quality of communication among a people."

While Pingry students and alumni illustrate the increasing tendency to study language abroad, we also have, with our yearly AFS students, people coming from abroad to study with us. This year, Mattias Tinzl (IV) of Austria decided to study overseas because he "liked the idea of getting to know another culture and meeting people I have never seen before. Of course I thought of improving my

English."

Now that Mattias has experienced life as a Pingry student he has "learned that not everything has to be like I'm used to. You can do things in differently. I learned to be much more tolerant."

He recommends studying abroad as he has "had the time of my life and I hope the experiences I have here will help me in the future. It is an adventure. Sometimes I miss home but I think I wouldn't be happy if I didn't do the year abroad."

By The Numbers

57 people took AP Language examinations. Of these, 43 scored a 3 or higher. The percentage of people scoring a 3 or higher are as follows:

AP Spanish Language
At Pingry: 68%
Nationwide: 64%

AP French Language
At Pingry: 93%
Nationwide: 60%

AP German Language
At Pingry: 100%
Nationwide: 67%

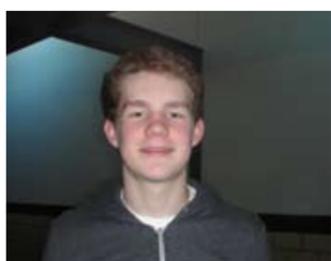
AP Latin Literature:
At Pingry: 60%
Nationwide: 53%

Word in the Hall: Why Do You Study a Foreign Language?



JULIA DOWLING (III)

"Because I want to go to France."



NICK RICE (IV)

"So I can learn a language useful in many countries."



GARRETT SCHUMAN (VI)

"Victor Nazario"



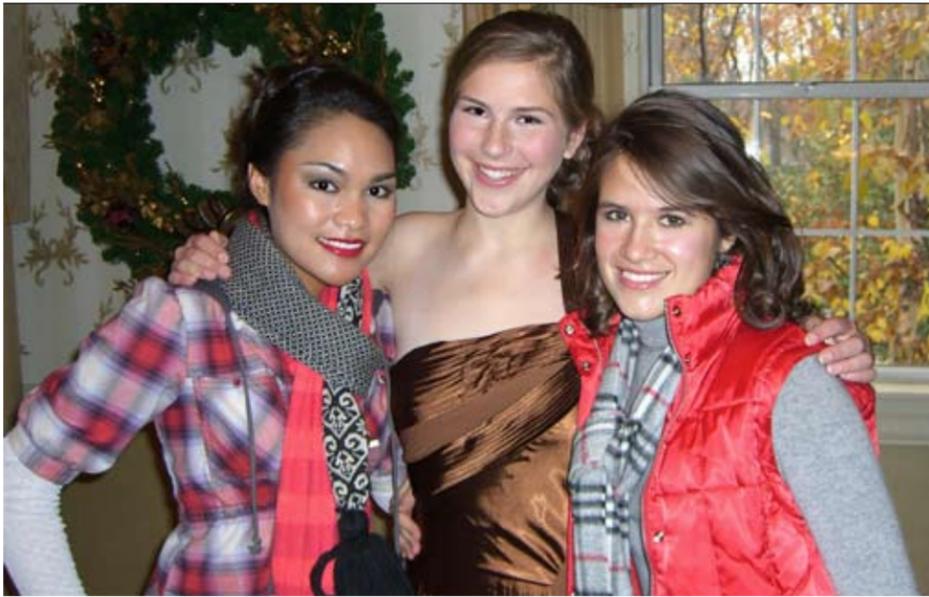
HENRY GADSDEN (III)

"To be able to study abroad."



BIFF PARKER-MAGYAR (VI)

"Because Mme. Castaldo makes my sun rise."



A. Kerr (VI)

Seniors Katrina Soriano, Toland Lawrence, and Angela Ramirez in their outfits.

Seniors Model This Year's Looks in the 'Great Gatsby' Fashion Show

By JENNY GORELICK (IV)

On Wednesday, November 14, seniors participated in "Pingry Goes Great Gatsby," a fashion show for the Pingry School Parent's Association's (PSPA) benefit luncheon. Held at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany, New Jersey, the affair also included a silent auction and raffle.

The seniors modeled clothing donated by Bloomingdales after being pampered by professional hair stylists and make-up artists. Charlotte Conway (VI) enjoyed seeing "all [her] friends looking even more gorgeous than they do in their daily lives" and suggested that "the guys should dress to impress more often!"

Hallie Bianco (VI) was equally impressed by the outfits and said that "for the most part the clothes were beautiful and walking the runway was

so much fun. I did not expect it to be as professional as it was, but the fact that it was made it even better!"

Angela Ramirez (VI) thought "the clothes were very fashionable, fashion forward. They were modern and very cool."

Although other participants were not as pleased with their attire, they all agreed that it was a worthwhile experience as it allowed members of the senior class to become closer to one another. Megan Craighead (VI) said "I think that it was more about the actual experience than the clothes. I have to say that I wasn't the biggest fan of my outfit, but when it came down to it, that didn't really matter."

Kris Mazara (IV) concurred as he "talked to people I normally wouldn't talk to, and even enjoyed it."

Bianco added, "It was a really great class bonding ex-

perience for those of us who were there. I modeled in the same "scene" as other people whom I haven't really ever spoken to, or haven't spoken to in a while, and it was really fun to hang out with all of them, even if it was just for a few hours."

"The whole experience was amazing," Louis Riccardi (IV) concluded. "I wish there were more fashion shows because it's definitely something I would do again."

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER JACK JACOBS COMICAL AND CANDID

Continued From Page 1

selflessness and bravery won him the award.

The presentation ended with a short film containing clips of other Congressional Medal of Honor winners reminiscing about their past. Jacobs told the audience that the number of Medal of Honor winners is gradually diminishing. Most of the winners were soldiers in World War II or in the Vietnam War. Jacobs wishes to record the story of their lives before it is too late.

The assembly finished with a few questions from students. The question topics ranged from trying to find out the origins of Jacobs's dry sense of humor to understanding his goals while serving in the military.

"He kept the audience interested while conveying key points of wisdom," said Jeff Baum (III).

Ricky Zacharias (VI) agreed. "His candor within the frame of wit and humor was refreshing, especially in such troubled times," he said.

Honoring Our Legacy, Defining Our Future

Continued From Page 1

academic rigor, which is quite easily achieved with "assigning 100 pages of reading per night," but rather intellectual rigor to enhance thinking and analytical skills. Although there have not been any permanent changes yet, possibilities such as providing a Chinese-Mandarin language selection and a visiting arts program are being discussed. Another academic change will be the biology and chemistry swap for freshmen and sophomores. Unlike the 9th grade Biology and 10th grade Chemistry courses offered now, students in the future will be learning a semester of each of these sciences in both their freshman and sophomore years.

The school administration also hopes to continue certain long-term goals stated in the 2001 Long Range Plan such as the aspiration to "promote the ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity of the student body." Mr. Conard described the importance of this goal, noting that it is vital that Pingry have a variety of people coming from different backgrounds because the "diversity of the faculty and student body is directly linked to academic

excellence." Although Pingry has been very successful in creating a racially and culturally diverse environment, Mr. Conard hopes that Pingry can see diversity as something beyond a statistic, something that can help students and teachers "explore and understand ideas and people from different perspectives."

In addition to creating a diverse environment, the Strategic Plan also hopes to expand marketing and branding. The driving force behind this goal is, as Mr. Conard puts it, to ensure that Pingry is "proactive in defining who we are and how the market perceives us." Ultimately, Pingry hopes its reputation will be seen as "exceptional and accurate" to not only incoming students, but also to other schools.

As a whole, the Strategic Plan provides a clear outline of what Pingry wants to accomplish in the future and opens the door to many possibilities. Mr. Conard, along with the rest of the administration, hopes that it will "sharpen the focus on our future" and "draw the school vision" in a clear outline that is available to the student body, faculty, and parents to see. To view the entire plan, visit the Pingry website.

Students Help One Another With Their Writing



M. Skiba (VI)

Ms. Kicenuik said, "We are hoping to break the idea that once a paper is written and printed, it is done." Students are asked on the sheet to explain and paraphrase their teachers' comments and make their own observations, as well as noting what they did well and should continue to do in successive essays.

Some future goals are to attract more sophomores and juniors to bring in their essays, and to find a physical location solely for the Writing Center.

Adrienne Spiegel (VI), another tutor, said, "I think the Writing Center has been a good experience for seniors and underclassmen alike. After a slow start we've recently gotten a pretty impressive turnout (the M&M's don't hurt), and hopefully that will continue into the second semester."

Holiday Altruism at Short Hills Campus

By JULIA NOSOFSKY (IV)

As the holidays approach, the Martinsville campus has become involved in various clothing drives and bake sales to help the community. Meanwhile, the students at the Short Hills campus have also partaken in an assortment of community service endeavors throughout December.

Mrs. Cassidy, conductor and music teacher, brought her string players and traveled to Ridge Oak to perform for a room of senior citizens.

The Box Top Drive that has been taking place during the last few weeks of school before break has been a huge success so far too. The money raised will be donated to the Midland School in North Branch, a special education center for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Another exciting project was the collection of over 80 heart-felt letters for troops, written by second and fifth graders. These were sent to Captain Larry Obst, a soldier currently in Iraq who attended both the Lower and Upper Campuses at Pingry. The students also donated and sorted a collection of toiletries, including toothpaste, dental floss, mouthwash, tissues, and Lifesaver candies.

The fourth graders have made a considerable contribution too: representatives from each class went on their annual trip to Newark's Harmony House, which provides housing and shelter facilities for families in need. Students brought an assortment of donated coats and games, then ate and talked with the children there.

Mrs. Kehoe's fourth grade class learned the song "Proud to Be an American" in sign language, in addition to several conversational words and phrases. The song was presented at an assembly. Outside of the classroom, two fourth grade girls donated their hair to Locks of Love, an organization that makes wigs for chemotherapy patients.

Finally, the fourth and fifth grade students, guided by Mrs. Rosenblum and Mrs. Ferris-Rights, garnished lunch boxes to be donated to SHIP, or Summit Helping Its People.

While students in Martinsville are continually involved in community service and have contributed greatly throughout this month, the Short Hills campus has also played a huge part in this communal effort. As the winter break approaches, all Pingry students and faculty have truly come together in the spirit of giving.

Continued From Page 1

actly what I was trying to argue — somehow, she just knew."

Inspired by Harvard's Writing Center and the knowledge that similar organizations exist at the majority of colleges, Ms. Kicenuik approached Mr. Conard and Mr. Leef with the idea. Then she recruited student tutors by asking members of the English department to recommend talented writers, as they were all quite familiar with student writing. Finally, she sent out mass e-mails to recruit more tutors and to bring the Writing Center into existence.

The tutors' primary role is to help students brainstorm ideas and to give them someone off whom they can bounce ideas. The tutors use methods such as asking questions and repeating phrases or ideas back to the student in order to generate an open dialogue.

One of the tutors, Evan

Rosenman (VI), said "It's been a really good experience already just because it's been so rewarding to be able to pass on to the underclassmen the things we've learned in Pingry English."

As a freshman English teacher whose students use the Center, Ms. Yorke '98 enthused about the program. "It is so wonderful to see students who are about to graduate leaving something really meaningful behind," she said. "Not only are they benefiting younger students by helping them with their essays, but they are demonstrating to those younger students that they too, may one day, become a kind of expert and help others."

Another strong faculty advocate is Mrs. Simon, who has had approximately 80% of her freshmen attend the center. "The Writing Center is invaluable," she explained, "because it allow students the opportunity to have another set of eyes on their drafts. Since writing is like playing a musical instrument,

the more you practice, the better you become. The Writing Center is a safe, fun place for students to work together on improving their craft."

Freshmen agree that the program has proven enormously helpful. "It's been great coming into the Writing Center when my teacher isn't available to read my paper. The tutors were great for encouraging me to approach an essay from a different perspective," said Amanda Devine (III).

A recent addition to the Writing Center is a 'comment revision sheet' designed by Ms. Yorke. Due to the diversity of writing backgrounds from which the freshmen come, particularly those new to the school, the sheet serves to make the writing process and evaluation of student essays as transparent as possible. The 'comment revision sheet' acts in place of traditional rewrites, focusing more on the structure, the style, and the content of the essay.

The Tutors

Kerry Bickford

Jenna Devine

Audrey Li

Liz Lynch

Evan Rosenman

Andrew Sartorius

Darina Shtrakhman

Adrienne Spiegel

Jessica Zhao



Courtesy of Yahoo Movies

Children's Classic Hits the Screen

By ALYSIA TSUI (IV)

The film version of "The Golden Compass," the first of the trilogy by Phillip Pullman, proves to be the new amazing epic of the year.

For one, the acting in this movie is superb. Though at first glance Dakota Blue Richards, the actress playing Lyra, doesn't seem to properly fit the physical criteria for the role, she manages to slide into her part perfectly, making a believable character. Throughout the movie, she seems to mature, starting as a wild, immature child and eventually growing into a determined and strong girl. One of the most interesting things about her role is that Richards manages to show the audience the relation between Ms. Coulter and her by making the same expressions when she's lying.

Ms. Coulter is, undoubtedly, one of Nicole Kidman's bet-

ter roles. Her fake smiles and words, and her obsession over Lyra portray her character flawlessly, making you shiver whenever she appears on screen.

Even Daniel Craig pulls off an excellent Lord Asriel, despite the little screen time he is given. Though both play minor characters, Ben Walker and Charlie Rowe are strong as Roger Parslow and Billy Costa.

Though the voice for the daemons is done reasonably well, Ian McKellen unfortunately makes the viewer think that the great Iorek Byrnison is a wise and thoughtful 500 year old bear. The watcher is only reminded of how powerful and belligerent he is when he has a five-minute duel with Ragnar, the usurper of his throne. Also, though Eva Green does a wonderful job as Serafina Pekkala, the movie portrays her as slightly too eerie.

The music for this movie is effective without being intru-

sive. The music that plays when the gypsies are shown is significantly different than the music that plays in the Jordan College scenes. The contrasts emphasize the different cultures that are present within the movie.

Also impressive are the graphic designs of the modes of transportation, from the dirigible Lyra rides in the beginning of the movie, to Lee Scoresby's balloon at the end. At times though, the daemons and the armored bears graphics seem choppy and not quite as real-looking as they might have been.

Those who have read the book may worry about whether or not the movie's storyline follows the same plot. They shouldn't. "The Golden Compass" generally remains close to the text.

While viewers who have not read the book may be confused about some minor plot holes involving the daemons, the armored bears, and other subjects, overall this film is a nice watch for everyone whether they have read the book or not.

Cheap and Chic Accessories Make Great Gifts This Season

By KELSEY HISCANO (VI)

As the holidays approach and the temperature drops, there's one thing on everyone's mind: presents. While we all know that it's fun to receive, sometimes the most important part of the holidays can be deciding what to give. There is nearly nothing as satisfying as knowing you bought the perfect gift for someone you care about.

In recent years, many of the world's top designers have either created less expensive lines or have partnered with nation-wide chains to bring high fashion to the masses. While there are many success stories, one of the best providers of hip, inexpensive accessories and tees is Marc Jacobs.

While both the runway collection, and even Marc by Marc Jacobs, still carry high priced looks, in Marc by Marc Jacobs stores and online you can find Marc's "Special Items." Marc offers a plethora of gift ideas that include rings between four and six dollars a piece, thirty-five dollar tee-shirts that any girl (or guy)

would be happy to have in her closet, wallets and purses all under seventy dollars, and even, perhaps the most coveted, American flag surfboard. Any of these finds is sure to be a hit with both friends and family.

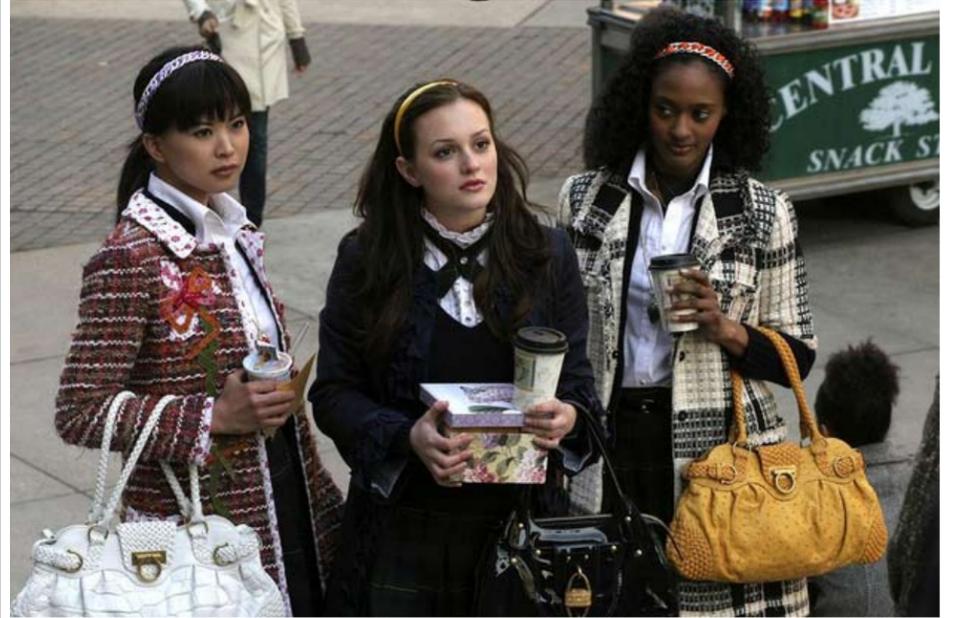
Another place to get some of today's hottest looks for less is at Target stores worldwide. With their groundbreaking Go International campaign, many of the top American and European designers have made their looks both more affordable and more wearable. In stores this month are looks by Erin Fetherston, an upcoming, French-inspired, American designer. Her clothes modernize French romanticism with a collection of chic dresses all under sixty dollars.

Another chain superstore wishing to make high fashion available to everyone is Kohl's, which now houses Simply Vera By Vera Wang. The famed wedding gown designer has given us everything from cocktail dresses to handbags. With prices ranging from fifteen dollars to just under one hundred

(for a trench), Simply Vera is a cheap yet chic alternative for gift ideas with substance.

Along with Vera Wang and Target's designers, this season's Italian designer, Roberto Cavalli, brings his animal prints to nearby stores. H&M, an originally British store, has taken 25 pieces for men and 25 for women from Cavalli to expand their fall/ winter collection. Abundant with blazers and tuxedo tops alike, H&M offers yet another inexpensive alternative for the holidays.

The best way to stay fashionable and buy trendy gifts for friends and family without leaving a dent in your wallet is to search out deals from the top designers. Any girl would be happy with a Marc Jacobs wallet or a Simply Vera handbag. This season, it truly is better to give than to receive. Give the gift of great fashion and receive unprecedented thanks from those who mean the most. Remember it's not about the price tag, but rather that you keep those close to you well-dressed for the holidays.



Courtesy of IMDb

Emulate Blair Waldorf and invest in extraordinary accessories this season.

Versatile New Wyclef Jean Album Released

By NICK RICE (IV)

Carnival, Vol. II: Memoirs of an Immigrant, the newest album from hip-hop artist Wyclef Jean, is one of the most versatile albums out today. Genres, instrumentation, subject matter, and guest artists change throughout the album, giving every song a different feel.

As hip-hop continuously loses traditional instrumentation to be synthesized and computer generated backing music, Wyclef Jean utilizes acoustic and electric guitar, drums, piano, organ, and bass, validating his musicianship. This also enables him to add more traditional genres to his album, such as reggae or even folk. Bright, clear acoustic guitar parts add a beautiful, relaxed sound over thick drum beats and bass lines in songs like "Sweetest Girl."

On the other hand, distorted electric guitar parts give the song "Riot" a much more intense feel. "Any Other Day" features a clearly folk influenced guitar part, again foiled with hip-hop drums and bass to create a very original sound.

Wyclef Jean furthers these musical contrasts with vocal contrasts by choosing a wide range of artists in almost all of his songs. The song "Riot" features both the voices of reggae artists, Sizzla and Saj Tankian, frontmen of the metal

band System of a Down. Other songs on the album features artists from hip-hop contemporaries T.I., Akon, and Chamillionaire, folk singer Norah Jones, and many more. Wyclef Jean even features the African Children's Choir on his song "Million Voices," available on the deluxe version of the album.

Following this trend of variety and contrast, the subject of Wyclef Jean's lyrics change throughout the album as well. Adopted by an American family and brought to the United States from his home country of Haiti, Wyclef Jean sings in "What About the Baby" about family, his daughter, and growing up. In "Heaven's in New York," he sings about his last day on earth; "China Wine" his subject is Chinese singer Sun. While some lyrics range from partying to family to death, in his hit song "Sweetest Girl," Wyclef Jean emphasizes the topic most important to him, immigration. The lyrics and music video to "Sweetest Girl" tell the story of a girl being deported back to her third world, hostile country from a refugee camp.

Memoirs of an Immigrant was released December 4, 2007 and is available as both a regular version and a deluxe version that features the additional songs "Million Voices," "Emmanuelle," and a remix of "Sweetest Girl."

Joe Wright's 'Atonement' Is a Must-See

By JENNY GORELICK (IV)

Director Joe Wright successfully portrays the repercussions of jealousy, the cruel fate of the innocent, and the unattainable redemption sought through storytelling in his eighth big screen production, "Atonement."

An adaptation of the 2001 bestselling novel by author Ian

McEwan, the film commences in England in 1935.

The plot follows the life of thirteen-year-old fledgling playwright, Briony Tallis (Saoirse Ronan), and her false accusation against her housekeeper's son, Robbie (James McAvoy). Briony's older sister, Cecilia (Keira Knightley) is infatuated with Robbie, and Briony's envy of their courtship

and her complex feelings for him result in her lying about his involvement in a rape case.

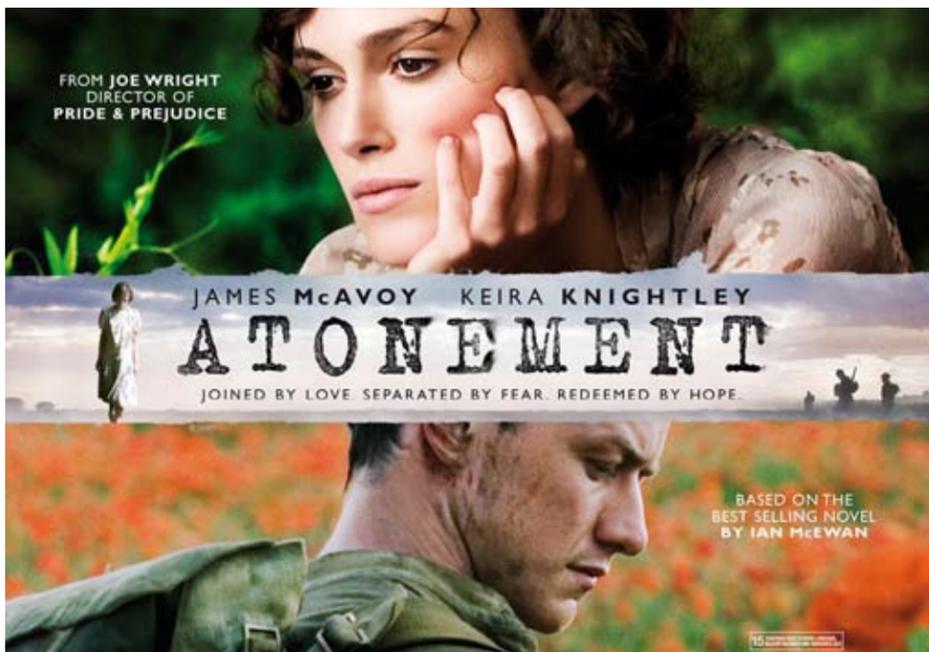
Consequently, Robbie is imprisoned and eventually enlists in the army during the Dunkirk evacuation, while Cecilia and Briony become nurses. Briony's vindictive untruth ultimately produces the separation of the lovers and the severed bond between sisters.

The film stays true to much of the novel and retains the narration through all three of the major characters' perspectives over a period of 64 years.

The poignant film not only delves into the romance of Cecilia and Robbie, but also the severity of World War II. These occurrences are intensified by the gorgeous cinematography and the overlay of music, including the mechanical sounds of a typewriter evoking Briony's role as writer. In addition, the sharp contrast between the breathtaking and vibrant surroundings of the Tallis's charming childhood home and the bleak war-torn Dunkirk help facilitate an increasing desolation in both the situation of the lovers and Briony's escalating guilt over her childhood lie.

With moving and captivating performances by Keira Knightley, James McAvoy, and the three actresses who play Briony in various stages of her life, the movie is bound to receive numerous Academy Award nominations.

Overall, "Atonement" is an emotional and intelligent story that is both beautiful and devastating. Although it is currently in limited release, it is a definite must-see.



Courtesy of IMDb



M. Skiba (VI)

Members of the winter track team get ready for practice.

First Winter Track Team in Over 20 Years

By SCOTT BISSINGER (VI)

The return of Pingry winter track started out as an idea from seniors Tucker Bourne and Andrew Willinger: why not have a club that practices over the winter? At club fair, a massive turnout changed the direction of the then-Winter Track Association. The recruitment of chemistry teacher Mr. Tim Grant and cross-country coach Bob Aromando as head coaches allowed the project to expand from a club to a full varsity sport. Eventually, Pingry established its first winter track team in over 20 years.

The new team is divided into four sections: distance running, sprinting, hurdling, and field. Practices consist of outdoor running as well as indoor lifting with Coach Scott. The races in winter track are slightly different than those of outdoor track because the majority of indoor tracks are 200 meters long, as opposed to 400 meters for outdoor tracks. Winter track members will thus have to adjust to new events, such as the ultra-short 55-meter dash.

Despite being the first

winter track team in years, the team could have a very successful season. The boy's squad is solid in all facets, with Dan Schuchinsky (V) and Matt LaForgia (V) leading a deep distance crew; Dave Urbanowicz (VI) and Grant Thomas (V) in throwing; Ryan Maxwell (VI) and Carlton Bowers (V) in hurdling; Captains Andrew Willinger (VI) and Tucker Bourne (IV) in jumping; and Tyler Reichert (VI) in sprints.

For boys, the team's goals are to win the Colonial Hills Conference meet and the Prep B title, and hopefully to take the title of Non-Public B winter track champions for the first time in Pingry's history.

On the girl's side, prospects are looking equally positive. Captain Olivia Delia (VI) and freshman phenomenon Olivia Tarantino anchor the distance squad, Captain Adrienne Spiegel (VI) and Ije Eboh (VI) lead the hurdling squad, and Captain Martha Gross (VI) and Kate Sowinski (V) top the sprinters. The girls' goals are similar to the boys'—to win the conference and Prep B meets as well as

become Non-Public B winter track champions.

Despite being in the first month of its inaugural season, the team has already become a great success. The team's primary goal is to succeed in these meets, but another key objective is to

develop runners over the winter in order to craft a stronger spring track team.

Over the coming months, the 50 adventurous winter track athletes are aiming to achieve a successful season. They will be reviving the Pingry winter track tradition.

Basketball Team Off to Promising Start

By GIANCARLO RIOTTO (V)

After leading the team to seventeen wins during a tremendous 2005-2006 campaign, boys' basketball coaches Eric and Jason Murdock departed; Eric, a former NBA player, to pursue other career opportunities, and Jason, who played professionally in Europe, to take the head coaching job at New Brunswick High School. The coaches brought a newfound sense of pride and enthusiasm to the program, and their departure was felt: the team won just four games during the 2006-2007 season.

The disappointing season led Mr. Vanasse to hunt for his fourth head coach in four years. He was thrilled to announce the return of former assistant Jason Murdock, who was also hired as a permanent substitute. Coach Murdock's impending return immediately brought a sense of enthusiasm back to the program, as players hoped he could rekindle the winning ways of two years past.

The opening weekend of practices over Thanksgiving break made it clear that such enthusiasm had returned. Coach Murdock was proud of the team's collective effort through the grueling three hour sessions, and the season clearly was kicked off on a positive note.

The core of the team, despite losing several seniors, remains strong. Much of the scoring load will fall on

one thousand point scorer and senior co-captain Jeff Tanenbaum, who averaged over twenty points per game last year and will be counted on for more of the same. The key to the team's success, however, may lie in the ability of the rest of the team to contribute offensively; a one man offensive show simply does not generate many points. Coach Murdock will be counting on senior co-captain Tyler Parsels and seniors Jed Constantino and Andrew Cala to produce offensively, and also hopes that junior sparkplugs Cory Babcock and Todd Feldman can provide offense off the bench. The team was also often overmatched last year against bigger, physical players who exploited their lack of an interior presence. The return of senior Cary Corrigan to the program, as well as the development of senior Jeremy Mykulak and juniors Eric Oplinger and Greg Guest, should add much needed rebounding and athleticism.

The team opened the season on December 14 at home with an impressive 66-42 win against Immaculate Conception, and now will head off on a "road trip" with four away games in a span of eight days. Coach Murdock has stressed the importance of a strong start to the season, as it will provide the team with much needed confidence going into January and hopefully rekindle enthusiasm among

'Bright Prospects' for the Wrestling Team

By ANDREW SARTORIUS (V)

This past weekend, the Pingry wrestling team began their season at the Hanover Park Invitational Tournament. The team, led by senior captains Trevor Topf, David Young, and Mike Martinson performed very well despite missing two wrestlers. Topf advanced to the individual semi-finals and junior Abram Bernstein made it to the 5th place match. This was a "fair showing" according to Jack Muller (V): "Even the guys who didn't place did very well. This was a good start to what should be a good season."

With three freshmen and one junior joining the team, the prospects for this season look bright. "We haven't had a team victory in a couple of years because of half-filled lineups, but this could be the year we turn it around," said Muller. Individually, the team has had more success with Topf advancing to the regional tournament last year. The team goal is to send at least two wrestlers.

However, it will still be a difficult task because the team has significant holes

in the lineup. "Our smallest wrestler is 119 pounds and the lowest wrestling weight class is 103 pounds meaning we're missing the two lowest weight classes. On the flip side, our heaviest wrestler is 189 pounds and we're missing the two heavier classes above that," said Muller. Also, the team will likely be without sophomore Spencer Topf for the entire season after he suffered a season-ending dislocated elbow in practice.

The team will participate in multiple tournaments this year, including the Somerset County Tournament, the Newark Academy Invitational, the Rutgers Prep Invitational and the District 18 Tournament at Hillsborough. According to Muller, this is the most important tournament of the year because it is the last of the year and decides how many wrestlers will advance to the Region 5 tournament and potentially to the state tournament in Atlantic City. In terms of dual meets, the crucial clash of the year is against MKA, a team very similar to Pingry in skill and personnel. "If we're going to have a team victory this year, it will be against MKA," said Muller.



B. Morrison '64

Captain Jeff Tanenbaum (VI) takes a shot.

Save the Date!

Alumni Basketball Game
January 12 • Bristol Gym

All-School Skate
January 13 • Bridgewater Arena

Winter Sports Night
January 25 • Bristol Gym

The editors would like to thank Mr. Bruce Morrison '64 for taking sports photographs and allowing the Pingry Record to use them.