

Departing Assistant Headmasters Dr. Macrae and Mr. Rohdie chat outside the Upper School office. D. Spett (VI)

Mr. Rohdie Announces Departure, Too

By CHANTAL BERMAN (IV)

Headmaster John Neiswender summoned the Upper School to the auditorium on December 3 so that Mr. Adam Rohdie could announce his resignation as Upper School director and assistant headmaster.

Teary-eyed, Mr. Rohdie told students he had accepted the job of headmaster at the Greenwich Country Day School in Greenwich, Conn., effective July 1.

Mr. Rohdie's resignation came one month after Middle School Director Dr. Robert Macrae '82 announced his own resignation to become headmaster of the Cincinnati

Country Day School in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Mr. Rohdie has been at Pingry since 1989, save a one year leave to get his master's degree. He has served as dean of students, Middle School director, head of grades 11 and 12 and, currently, Upper School director and assistant headmaster.

Mr. Rohdie teaches American Dreams and previously taught History 8, U.S. History and A.P. U.S. History. He has coached Varsity Boys' Basketball, Middle School Baseball, Junior Varsity Lacrosse and Varsity Boys' Soccer.

In his years at the school, Mr. Rohdie developed several new courses, adjusted the

curriculum and took pride in being a good teacher. He was instrumental in creating the student Honor Board and the mentoring program for new teachers.

Mr. Rohdie formed a personal bond with students, and for many he is their favorite role model at the school. Students and faculty alike laud him for his intelligent,

thought-provoking speeches and for knowing everyone's name.

"It's terrible to lose such an influential leader," Lisa Thomas (III) said. "He has a great ability to bring the school together."

Student Government members regard Mr. Rohdie

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Committees to Find New Division Heads

By DAVID SPETT (VI) and ROHAN MATHEW (VI)

With Mr. Adam Rohdie and Dr. Robert Macrae '82 leaving at the end of the year, the search has already begun for two new assistant headmasters and division

directors. Headmaster John Neiswender is confident the school will be fine and that the search process will run smoothly.

The headmaster has formed four committees of Middle and Upper School students and faculty. The committees will meet in January and February to go over résumés and interview the top five candidates for each position.

Ultimately, Mr. Neiswender will select the new division directors, though that decision has caused some students to demand more input in the process.

But Mr. Neiswender feels the process is quite open and allows for significant student involvement already. "I have to make the final hire because the person has to work with me," he says, pointing out that few other schools let students have any say in faculty or administrative hiring.

The headmaster disagrees with students who have started a petition requesting that the committee members be elected by a popular vote. He says it's more important that he choose

members who can get the best sense of the prospective division directors.

"It's not like we're electing people to represent a constituency," he says. "I need people who come from different segments of the student body and who will only represent themselves."

Mr. Neiswender plans to visit the top candidates at their own schools before inviting them to Pingry. "When you visit someone's home turf, you find out what their style is," he says. "I don't want to bring anybody to campus who I wouldn't hire."

If students want to participate in the selection but were not chosen for the committees, Mr. Neiswender says he will try to accommodate them unless it becomes "too much to handle." Students who want to get involved may be able to give tours to candidates, though they will be very busy and "it will be difficult to involve a large number of individuals," the headmaster says.

Mr. Neiswender says he

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PEER SCHOOLS HAVE UNIQUE ACADEMIC COURSES AND IDEAS

By ROHAN MATHEW (VI)

Other local independent schools have educational goals similar to Pingry's, though their curricula often attempt to reach those goals in different ways.

The Lawrenceville School in Lawrenceville requires two trimesters of religious studies and two trimesters of interdisciplinary studies. Rather than coordinating courses between departments, the school created an interdisciplinary department with courses like Mediterranean Middle Ages that combine art, history, philosophy and geography, Dean of Studies Mr. Dominic A. A. Randolph says.

The school also offers a Capstone course for qualified seniors that studies current issues, like the 2004 presidential election. Famous speakers lecture to the class every week.

The school has decided not to incorporate character education to teach ethics. "We've had discussions about it, but are wary of defining it as part of the classroom," Mr. Randolph says. "We believe that students will model the behavior of the community and a specific emphasis is not necessary."

Lawrenceville has also removed all honors designations and eliminated tracking in all courses. "We've found that tracking is not helpful because it sets different expectations. It's better to set clear outcomes for everyone to achieve," Mr. Randolph says.

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Most Approve of Festival

By DAVID SPETT (VI)

Fifty-one percent of the student body said in a Record poll that the religious content of the school's Winter Festival is appropriate for the school.

The Festival, held this year on December 10, 11 and 12, is the holiday concert featuring all of the school's instrumental and choral groups. It is a tradition that began before the 1950's.

Twenty-eight percent said the Festival's religious content is inappropriate. Eighteen percent said the repertoire of songs should be diversified, while 20 percent said religious songs should be eliminated. Still, the plurality — 31 percent — said the concert should not be changed.

Students who did not attend or perform in the Festival had a significantly lower approval rating — 28 percent — of its religious content. Fifty-two percent said it was inappropriate.

All students were invited by e-mail to take the poll online. Three hundred forty-five, or 49 percent of the student body, responded.

Gwen Tobert (VI) said the Festival's religious content is inappropriate. She felt there is a plethora of good, non-religious music that could have been selected. "It's supposed to be the Winter Festival, so let's sing about winter, not religion," she said.

Alumnus Dr. Aaron Welt '67 disagrees. He attended the school when chapel services were held every morning and said the Festival "is a marvelous celebration of diversity."

Music teacher Mr. Sean McAnally said there are two main considerations in choosing the songs for the Festival: the strength of the performers and the style and mood of the piece.

He said the department has made "great strides" in secularizing the Festival from ten years ago, when it was far more religious, though it still contains several "sacred" songs.

Since Dr. Andrew Moore became music department head, he said he has since been trying to make the Festival more multicultural. Last year, the concert had an African theme, and this year the theme was Latin American.

"We're not stuck on tradition," Dr. Moore said. "The culture of the school has changed, and we've tried to change with it."

Still, the music teachers said the quality of music is more important than whether it is religious. "Music associated with this time of year is often incorrectly associated with Christmas," Mr. McAnally said.

Dr. Moore and Mr. McAnally felt playing or singing does not mean musicians believe in the words or message of a song.

In response to those who said religious songs should be removed, the music teachers said that is a possibility, though the quality of the concert would be sacrificed and some people would still be offended.

"Who would be the final arbiter of what's religious?" Mr. McAnally asked, adding, "There's a point at which it could get too ridiculous."



Kindergarten student Charlie Kellogg performs the annual lighting of the candle with Robert Zacharias (VI). N. Lee (IV)

Inside The Record



D. Spett (VI)

Girls' Varsity Basketball player Julie Hamilton (IV) takes a free throw shot during a scrimmage against Manville.

Date Rape Victim Speaks

Katie Koestner spoke at an Upper School assembly on December 5 about her experience with date rape while at William and Mary College. P. 5

Woodbury Outlets Are Cheap

Only an hour away, Woodbury Commons offers an outdoor shopping experience with all the brand names at affordable prices. P. 7

Bregman Interviews Celebrities

Senior Alex Bregman is the youngest red carpet reporter today. He has interviewed celebrities like Will Ferrell, Robert DeNiro and Jay-Z. P. 6

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Editorial: Inform the Students

Those who have recently voiced opinions in assembly are right that the search for new Upper and Middle School heads should involve more students. Most people were surprised to hear that student committees had been chosen without any opportunity for students to express interest. Meanwhile, those not chosen for the committees feel unable to influence the decisions.

Only nine students make up each committee, and Mr. Neiswender and Mrs. Hearst chose each member personally based on criteria unbeknownst to us. More than those 18 students would undoubtedly like to have input before the applicants are narrowed down to five for each slot and invited to visit. And most students do not know how to give such input.

Mr. Neiswender spoke to the Student Government on December 15 and said those not on the committee could participate in other ways, such as leading candidates on tours of the school or giving feedback after candidates have visited classes. He stressed that students should talk to him anytime about their opinions.

The problem, then, is not that most students cannot get involved; it is that students do not know how to get involved. We were not informed that committees would be selected until after they were chosen. We had no chance to show our interest in taking part. And even now, the administration has made few announcements explaining how students can contribute to this stage of the process.

The entire student body should feel included in the selection, and this can be accomplished through increased communication. The administration should update students on the search's progress and, more importantly, what roles students can take on at this point. The headmaster's speech briefing the student body on the process was a good start.

But we need more. We should be told before the fact, rather than after important decisions — such as the formation of student committees — are made.

Administrators surely listen to individual who have the initiative to approach them with opinions. But we cannot form opinions if we are not well informed/

The opinions expressed here reflect the views of the editorial board.

For Richer or Poorer

Seventeen-year-old Ally Hilfinger, daughter of Tommy Hilfinger and star of MTV's "Rich Girls," decided she needed a break from city life.

So she and four friends jetted off in a private plane to her family's estate on a secluded island called Mustique, where they swam in her edgeless backyard pool and tanned on her private beach. All this was taped by MTV for broadcast on cable television.

When the show aired, thousands of viewers sat in awe in their La-Z-Boy couches on suburban streets and gaped at life with a pretty smile and a limitless American Express Gold card.

Doubtless, Pingry students were among the thousands tuned in to the Mustique beach that night. Yet what we don't realize is that, while we drool over private shopping hours at Barney's and trips to Malta, the average American dreams of nothing less than the life we lead.

As Pingry students, we spend our days at one of the best schools in the country, discussing the intricacies of

Danielle Peretore (V)
CULTURAL OPINION

Thoreau's "Walden" with our phenomenal English teachers during sixth period. We chat over lunch about the finer details of the Betsey Johnson dress that so-and-so wore to the lavish sweet sixteen last Friday night. Many of us return home to 4,000 square foot plus homes in some of the richest counties in the state with the richest per capita wealth in the country.

We have no concept of just how enviable and privileged our lives are.

Even our travels are luxurious. Mr. Bourne recently took a travel survey in my physics class, and, when he asked how many people had been to Europe, every single hand shot up. Two people had also traveled to Africa and three to Asia.

Yet at my old school, a small-town parochial school, I was the only student in my class who had traveled to Europe. Only two or three others had traveled

beyond the East Coast. Most of my former classmates lived in houses no larger than 2,000 square feet in their entirety.

They held down jobs because they needed the money, not so they could write it on their college applications like many of us. They have never owned anything by Ralph Lauren or The North Face and likely never will.

But, most importantly, many of my old classmates now go to public school or attend parochial school on financial aid. I had a friend who openly told me, "I can't go to Pope John because my brother is starting parochial school and we can't afford it." This same girl took care of her brother every day after school and cooked dinner so her tired mother could rest when she got home from her minimum wage job.

These are people who know about sacrifice. Many parents struggled bitterly to pay for parochial education and to keep their kids out of public schools, though every year I would watch another parent sadly lose the financial fight. Their children are products of this struggle: terribly self-conscious and constantly straining for little status qualifiers, like a new Abercrombie shirt, to prove they aren't different from anyone else.

My old classmates looked at my life in awe, yet by Pingry standards my life is barely average. My trips abroad are no longer noteworthy, and the labels on my clothing fall significantly below the standard. During my freshman year, I was so embarrassed by my inability to recognize "important" designers that I finally asked my mom to take me to the Short Hills mall. I didn't spend the day buying anything, but rather simply memorized all the brand names thrust at me.

As we watch shows like "Rich Girls" or "It's Good to Be" and dream about private yachts and exclusive vacation homes, we have no concept of just how enviable and privileged our lives really are. I hear people talk all the time about "the Pingry bubble," but do they have any idea just what that means?

A tiny hole is punched in the bubble when we go on Bridges trips or volunteer at the battered women's shelter. But, all too often, community service opportunities don't fill up because we're simply too busy seeing the latest Ben Affleck movie or shopping with Daddy's credit card.

For me, it took growing up in a middle class environment and some good friends to point out that I once held a skewed view of how lucky I am. But, for many of us who think Bridgewater is a ghetto, life is not in perspective.

Next time you sit staring at J.Lo's tennis ball of an engagement ring or P.Diddy's parade of cars, think about the pearl necklace sitting in your drawer or the fully functioning car sitting in your garage. Because "It's Good to Be" just who we are.

The Record welcomes all letters to the editor. Anonymous submissions cannot be printed. Submissions may be edited due to length constraints. Send all correspondence to pingryrecord@yahoo.com.

A New Tradition

My first Pingry memories came when I

Jeremy Jordan (VI)
REFLECTION

out west in Cincinnati.

was four years old and staring up at the greatest number of books I had ever seen. I had no idea it was even possible for someone to own that many books, never mind actually read all of them.

Of course I was at one of Mr. Hanly's famous faculty barbecues in the headmaster's house on the Short Hills campus. This is the same type of house Mr. Rohdie will live in, way up north in Connecticut where they get even more snow than we do. And the same for Dr. Macrae, who will be way

thing I can say for Cincinnati is that the Bengals are finally playing well, though they're still no one's Super Bowl pick.

I used to imagine going off to college and coming back to see Mr. Hanly, Mr. Rohdie, Dr. Macrae and all the others. I figured Mr. du Bourg would still be leading all the Winter Festivals; Mrs. Tomaino still getting everyone into college; Dr. English still having the last word on who got accepted; Mr. Jaegar still getting everyone their athletic uniforms; and Mrs. Stone still telling me to tuck in my shirt. None of those things can happen now, for it seems every important face in this school has changed.

A couple years ago, the music department had to deal with the loss of both Dr. Gesualdo and Mr. du Bourg, who departed after 68 years at Pingry combined.

Seventy-five percent of the college advisors have turned over in the last three years; Mr. Fayen is the only remaining member. Only a few years ago, Mrs. Tomaino was "Mrs. Everything." The retired Mr. Allan dedicated 40 years to this school — in perspective, Mr. Rohdie hasn't even turned 40.

At Convocation Mr. Neiswender announced the members of the 25-year club and stressed that they were "the backbone of the Pingry community." I don't see the backbone I remember. When I went to Short Hills to play in their concert, I knew the little kids were wondering where that crazy old man was, conducting with his arms flailing all over the place.

Nearly four years later I can still hear the Balladeers singing "For the Longest Time" on stage to Mr. Hanly. I feel bad saying it, but in a way I'm glad to be leaving now. For the longest time I've been hearing speeches and stories, from "A Child's Christmas in Wales" to the kitty condo. I can't help but wonder what the new traditions are going to be.

CORRECTIONS

From the December 1 issue

The article "Mr. Raby Loses Race for Warren Township Council" reported that Mr. Raby received 32 percent of the vote, when he actually received 37 percent. The article also said the Democrats fared worse than last year when they fared better.

The headline "Faculty Emeritus Mrs. Tomaino Helps Organize Willow School" was incorrect; Mrs. Tomaino is not a faculty emeritus.

Regarding the article "Faculty Members Disagree on Value of Required Character Education Book," Mrs. Diana Abreu did not feel the book was too long. She felt it was the best book on character available, although she said parts could have been said in fewer words.

The caption to the front page story "Dr. Macrae '82 to Leave in June" incorrectly stated that the students pictured were in Middle School; they were actually freshmen.

The athlete profile on page 8 said Paul Kolb is the boys' swimming captain and Jack Zoephel is the assistant captain; actually, it is the other way around.

We regret the errors.

A Little Thing Called Decency

As we all know, our society and generation is bombarded by moral dilemmas. Every day we're faced with decisions that question our morals or willpower. We're lectured constantly about ethics, values and making the right decisions.

Usually, after enduring these speeches, we roll our eyes and blatantly ignore the comments intended to direct our behavior. It's understandable for the majority of us to think it's unfair to be lectured to; after all, we are responsible for our own actions.

When the issue of alcohol and drugs came up at one of our assemblies, most students scoffed and complained that the school shouldn't have any say in our weekend activities. Many maintained the belief that if the wrongdoings didn't occur at school events or during school hours, it is unjust for the school to punish us.

I'm not a prude, nor am I a goody-two-shoes, and I have a social life just like everyone else. But I can't help but be a little annoyed when I see how some of our student body represents the rest of us.

Students who go against a basic set of morals not only portray themselves as careless

Marissa Bialecki (IV)
SCHOOL OPINION

and ignorant, but also give the rest of us a similar reputation.

It's safe to say that most of us have heard someone from another school comment on a Pingry student's wild behavior at a party. I have no problem with someone creating a bad name for him or herself, but

I don't see what's so fun about a night you can't remember.

it's unfair that the rest of the Pingry population is so labeled as well.

I don't see what's so fun about a night you can't remember. Sure, some of you are saying, "It's my life, it's what I want to do, and there's nothing wrong with it." But there is something wrong with behavior that breaks the law and bashes your own dignity and reputation.

It's wrong for someone to behave in a way that violates a standard code of ethics. You can say that it's not the school's place to monitor your actions outside of school. But, if no one else is watching out for

your disrespect for morals, who will?

We all know that Pingry is helping our individual reputations as well as the school's reputation as a whole. But, at the same time, the school is trying to instill in each of us a sense of right and wrong. As educators, isn't that their job?

The lessons the school attempts to teach about values aren't supposed to apply to in-school situations alone; they also apply to situations outside the Pingry world.

If you still disagree with me, try thinking of it like this: if you see a drunken peer at a party, you may laugh or even join in the fun. But take the same drunken student and place him on a street in New York City. If you were to see him, I bet you would be shocked and wonder, "Why is he alone? Is he okay? What is he doing?"

These hypothetical settings are different, but the drunken student is the same. So why should reactions to a drunken student be any different based on the setting?

All I ask is that you're aware of your actions as well as their impact on you and on those around you. Take into consideration a little thing called decency.

Appropriate Festival

The Record's latest poll raised questions about the religious content of the Winter Festival. After reading the poll, what first came to my mind was Handel's Hallelujah Chorus: "And He shall reign forever and ever, King of kings and Lord of lords."

We know the words well, regardless of whether we believe the H in "He" or the K in "King" should be capitalized.

The Festival has been a tradition at Pingry for many years. Our school was founded as a Protestant school, and, even though it is no longer affiliated with any one specific religion, it is important to recognize tradition.

Though the majority of the music in the Winter Festival is Christian, there has always been an effort to incorporate other religions. People must consider that just because they sing a particular song does not mean they must believe its words.

Nowadays people are afraid to discuss topics like religion. We live in a religiously toler-

Katie Jennings (IV) RELIGIOUS OPINION

ant society, though the majority of Americans, according to countryreports.org, are Christian (84 percent, as of 1989), followed by people with no religious affiliation (10 percent), Jewish affiliation (2 percent) and other affiliations (4 percent).

Students should regard the Festival as a learning experience, just like the cultural dance assembly or Indian food day. The Festival cannot be thought of as an attack against a religion because no specific religion is represented. Accepting the Festival is just a part of accepting American culture and the idea of free expression.

Having been to so many Bat Mitzvah services, I know almost all the words to the prayers sung at them. But that doesn't mean I am violating my religious beliefs by attending. I am simply expanding my cultural horizons.

When you really think about it, Christianity is often ignored

because of its popularity; it is so common that we forget about it. In our history classes we spend a few days on Christianity and a month on Islam.

In all this haste we fail to recognize and appreciate Christianity and its rich traditions in culture, history and music. We shouldn't forget it: the Festival is a time to sing songs with which everyone is familiar and to learn music that has been around for centuries.

There are people who attack the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance because it doesn't recognize the difference between church and state. Ask yourself: is it really that big of a deal? Have we become so influenced by political correctness that anything pertaining to religion cannot be said without being considered taboo?

Regardless of your beliefs, or if you don't have any at all, the world is a better place when you accept everything it has to offer. That's not to say that all traditions are good or that all should be followed, but I know the world would be a pretty boring place without religion. It adds color and individuality, and I therefore suggest that critics learn rather than condemn.

Editorial: Making People Listen

This holiday season, Pingry students have a lot to be thankful for. As Danielle Peretore (V) writes, it is often easy for us to forget how privileged and lucky we are.

Most of all, The Record is thankful that our last issue — which dealt with character education and censorship — was accepted openly by the administration as a means for thought and discussion.

Ultimately, the goal of journalism is just that: to incite change, provoke thought and provide a check on people in power. Having that freedom, even at the high school level, isn't the norm at other public or private schools.

The opinions presented in our last issue sparked significant debate and controversy, which is really what the newspaper is intended for. The Record was dedicated two assembly speeches, one by Mr. Neiswender and one by Mr. Rohdie, who expanded on the issues we addressed.

Other changes were provoked by the issue, too. One faculty member told us it made her decide to quit the character committee. Others expressed disagreement and elected not to take down their "good character" signs in the hallways.

Writers for The Record will continue to praise when they feel praise is due and criticize when they feel criticism is due. Freedom of expression and the right to disagree is an integral part of a unique and thoughtful student body.

In this issue, columnists give their opinions and try to effect change on a variety of issues. Chantal Berman (IV) questions some of the school's purchases; Gwen Tobert (VI) and Katie Jennings (IV) square off on the appropriateness of the Winter Festival; Jeremy Jordan (VI) reminisces over Mr. Hanly's administration; and Marissa Bialecki (IV) contends the school has a right to punish students for Honor Code violations committed off-campus.

You can get involved in effecting thought and change, too. Journalism has the power to influence the way people think, and it can thus change lives. We encourage anyone interested to listen at assembly and come to our next assignment meeting.

The opinions expressed here reflect the views of the editorial board.

Inappropriate Festival

The Winter Festival has changed significantly since I first came to the Martinsville Campus in seventh grade. However, one thing that hasn't changed is that it remains a Christmas festival rather than a winter festival.

Pingry used to be a Protestant school, and its student population remains predominantly Christian. But as the demographics of the school have changed, the music program has been slow to catch up. Even this year, the Festival still contained several sacred songs, all of which were Christian.

The audience stood up and sang along when these songs were performed, as if they were in church. Does the audience do this at any other school concert? Surely, if Pingry were a public school, the "Winter" Festival would be declared unconstitutional for violating the separation of church and state.

I'm Jewish, and when I was at the Lower Campus I remember singing many sacred Christmas carols, but not one sacred Jewish song. This made me feel insulted; I was forced to sing about Jesus Christ and call him my savior, but the only Jewish songs I could sing were meaningless jingles. I'm not in the choir anymore, but not a whole lot has changed. The Festival contains more multicultural songs, but many of them are only cute jingles. The sacred songs in the concert are predominantly Christian.

Look at the Glee Clubs, Buttontowns and Balladeers: the overwhelming majority of these groups' members are Christian. I know I don't want to sing about Jesus Christ the lord. Christians may make up the majority of students at Pingry and in the country overall, but the founding fathers didn't intend for there to be tyranny of the majority in America. Do you think the Christians at Pingry would be happy if they were told to sing to Allah or

Gwen Tobert (VI) RELIGIOUS OPINION

Zeus? I don't mean to suggest that we should try to recognize every single religion in our concerts, since this would be virtually impossible and would leave out atheists. I would prefer that the religious content of the Festival be eliminated so that it can properly reflect its name as the Winter Festival. There is plenty of quality secular music to choose from that could celebrate the holiday spirit without making reference to religion.

I believe Pingry ought to sacrifice its tradition of songs like "Laudate Nomen Domini" and "The Hallelujah Chorus" to spare even one student from feeling left out. If we were able to do away with being an all-male, all-Protestant school with chapel every morning, surely we can give up a few inappropriate songs in our Festival.

At public school, the Winter Festival would be unconstitutional.

More Spending Is Not the Cure

Picture yourself, for a moment, as a caring and involved Pingry parent taking a tour of our school. Entering the cafeteria, the new floor drifts into view, a beautiful shade of cloudy gray, much better than last year's yellowish hue or the drab checkerboard of two years ago. Perched upon the brand-new, well-designed wooden tables and chairs are plastic cups and napkins that lovingly declare the word "Pingry" in pretty blue cursive.

Turning towards the Middle School, you see a brand new LCD screen displaying a slideshow of portraits of students at work and play. And, as you stroll the corridors of the arts wing, you peer through a skinny glass window into the new — but closed and locked — board room, a plethora of leather and expensive equipment.

Your conclusions? Nice building, interesting layout, a little on the chilly side. And for a school at which tuition has risen astronomically in the past decade, we

sure know how to spend money. Certainly, one cannot argue with the necessity of many expenditures, such as the new tech lab, which has improved and simplified technology. Or the new arts wing, which has been a blessing to the art, music and drama departments.

But ask yourself, is it really indispensable that we enjoy, for all of our 25 minute lunch, the tables and chairs that cost the equivalent of several students' tuitions? Sadly, Pingry is not alone. We are only a minute, isolated community representative of a much larger trend that is something of a phenomenon: the constant pressure to spend money. This somewhat clueless philosophy, the need to purchase in response to adversity or even boredom, is as real as it is alarming.

Why else do so many popular magazines recommend shopping as an antidote to depression? Why else can a simple word such as Armani, a poster brand for being

overpriced and extravagant, immediately invoke images of success, happiness and sex appeal, while one such as Wal-Mart conjures those of mediocrity and cheap sunglasses?

As we quickly approach the holiday season, the most heavily commercialized time of the year, retailers will prey on the notions of family values and holiday spirit to entice buyers to buy.

As always, spending will peak as Americans hit the malls to shop for the gifts that, according to J.C. Penney logic, will cement family ties for the year to come. But are ice cream makers and Sports Illustrated subscriptions, those impersonal tokens of affection that will inevitably be discarded or returned for full store credit on January 2, really the kind of factors to which we trust to our closest relationships?

To us, as prep school kids in the so-coined "age of indulgence," MasterCard may seem

Chantal Berman (IV) SCHOOL OPINION

like the ultimate form of OTC Prozac, but several malls and a few Burberry scarves later, we should start to wonder: why is it that we place so much value on frivolous and superfluous aspects of life? Is retail therapy really a miracle drug to cure the common cold of melancholy and the plague of monotony that so often settle over Martinsville?

Pingry is leagues below the national average for independent school financial aid; presumably from a lack of funds, but there's certainly no deficit when it comes to paving the new parking lot.

For schools, teenagers and holiday shoppers alike, there is a fine line between necessity and excess, and infinitely many problems that can't be remedied with a fat wallet and a trip to the Bridgewater Mall.

For whatever ailment — wounded image, damaged conscience or crumbling relationship — rest assured that the remedy of cold, hard cash is rarely effective and never without side effects.

Letters to the Editors

Dear editors,

Regarding the December 1 article about Mr. Raby's "disappointing" loss in the Warren town council election: is this article from the same Record that filled its October 31 issue with editorials lamenting the lack of student awareness when it comes to politics?

Throughout the article, the reader perceives a deep sense of failure by the Democrats in the election. The article started by proclaiming that Mr. Raby garnered "only 32 percent of the vote." It also pointed out that the Democrats lost by an 11 to 6 margin, which is quite wide. At this point, the reader assumes that the Democrats must have run a very poor campaign.

Unfortunately, the article fails to point out that this is most certainly not the case. Although the author reports that Mr. Raby got 32 percent of the vote, he and Mrs. Schwartz actually received 37 percent. Also, the article didn't make any mention of the positive

steps that the Democratic Party has made in Warren in the last two years.

In last year's election the Democrats received 27 percent of the vote. In 2001 the Democrats didn't even have a candidate. This year's 9 percent increase is a sign that the town's many Republicans are either fed up with the back-door politics in the town council — something else your article failed to mention — and/or are willing to cross party lines and vote for someone who represents what they believe is best, regardless of their party affiliation.

Clearly, losing a race for public office is disappointing, but when I talked to Mr. Raby he pointed out the same facts I mentioned above and seemed optimistic about the Democratic Party's future in Warren.

Hopefully in the future, readers of The Record will get both sides of the story.

Daniel Davidson (III)

Dear editors,

I was dismayed to find in the December 1 issue of The Pingry Record an "advertisement" listing the number of issues that each Pingry publication has produced so far this year. While it is commendable that The Record has put out three issues, it does not imply, as you do, that the other magazines have something wrong with them, or that students should not write for them, but exclusively for you. The other magazines face the problems of more in-depth articles and complex editing (especially Polyglot) that require more time to put together an issue that is not riddled with typographical, grammatical or factual mistakes. Additionally, Vital Signs has been hurt by Mrs. Landau's extended absence.

Isn't it slightly demeaning not only to the other magazines but also to yourselves to imply you are superior to them?

Noah Mamis (VI)

Dear editors,

The arguments presented in last month's commentary section seemed largely one-sided; the majority of the writers criticized the administration's indoctrination and censorship. I want to clarify my opinion, which I believe is shared by Pingry's silent majority.

It is my firm conviction that the school's censorship is placid, harmless and well-meaning. The censorship I disagree with — the Dress Code — was not the focus of the issue. Instead, students wrote of an adulterated media and the administration's tight control of our consciences, perhaps oblivious to the freedom that came with the publication of such opinions.

"Party Boy" was not pulled off stage, lambasted publicly or even given time constraints for his performance. He boldly made his statement and was given a reasonable two detentions. I say "reason-

able" because to do otherwise, to allow partial nudity devoid of artistic merit to go unpunished, would — the administration fears — usher in more extreme exhibitions and, more practically, cause complaints from sensitive parents.

Alas, I am in the deferential majority; it seems the articles were blowing up a trivial issue to appear proactive. I don't feel anyone is telling me what is right and wrong — I make that decision for myself.

The character education initiative isn't indoctrinating, nor is it based on black and white moral distinctions. It is just a cheesy way of getting us to not cheat, steal, lie or slander. Although I don't support it — because it is, like most things I hear at assembly and read in The Record, egregiously preachy — I don't pretend to feel violated by it.

James Somers (V)

Rohdie Explains the Curriculum

By CAITLIN BERGH (VI)

The Long Range Plan mandates constant reassessment of the school's courses. It says the school must "continue to strengthen a well-balanced, academically challenging liberal arts curriculum."

One method for achieving this, Assistant Headmaster and Upper School Director Mr. Adam Rohdie says, is to send teams of teachers to competitive schools to find their best practices.

Another method is what Mr. Rohdie calls the "top-down" assessment, which is an evaluation of the curriculum with respect to requirements of colleges and the "Advanced Placement world." A.P. courses are always re-evaluated, dropped or added, he says.

For example, Mr. Rohdie says the College Board is creating an A.P. World History test, so the history department will have to decide if it wants to teach A.P. World History in upcoming years.

A.P. courses are important to the school's curriculum, Mr. Rohdie says, mainly to prepare students for the rigors of college. He says they help students become good readers, writers and problem solvers.

Mr. Rohdie says the best way to evaluate A.P. courses' success is to ask alumni, which he does every year. The positive feedback he gets from college freshmen, who are successful in their new environments, shows that Pingry is doing something right, he says.

Curriculum mapping is another way for department chairs to plan the curriculum. This, according to Mr. Rohdie, entails plotting course material both "horizontally and vertically."

Plotting horizontally ensures students are learning new and important skills in each class. If students are reading "The Crucible" in English in September, for example, horizontal plotting ensures they are not reading the same book in history in May.

Mapping vertically lines up the material learned in each grade. If eighth grade English teaches thesis statements, for example, ninth grade English should teach topic sentences.

Mr. Rohdie says this minimizes repetition and ensures that students have accumulated the skills necessary for college-level work by graduation.

Despite the annual reassessment and modification of the curriculum, Mr. Rohdie says two constants always remain: the teaching of morals and the emphasis on interdisciplinary studies.

Ethics are not so much

taught, Mr. Rohdie says, as they are a "platform upon which the curriculum is based." The "fine-tuning of students' moral compasses" is a part of Pingry's mission, he adds.

The same is true for interdisciplinary courses. Fifteen years ago no one knew about interdisciplinary studying, Mr. Rohdie says, though the concept has since become "central to good curriculum development."

Peer Schools Offer Unique Academics

Continued From Page 1

The school tries to give each graduate a "set of fundamental skills like critical reading and thinking," Mr. Randolph says. The school is moving towards seminar-style classes to "ensure that everyone can work autonomously and write an analytical essay," Mr. Randolph says.

Newark Academy in Livingston offers the International Baccalaureate (I.B.) program, one of only 10 independent schools in the nation to do so.

I.B. is an intense two-year program in 11th and 12th grades. Six major courses, as well as a 4,000-word research paper and a philosophy seminar, are required for I.B. students. "I.B. emphasizes skill acquisition, while A.P. courses generally are content-based," Upper School Principal Dr. Richard DiBianca says.

Fifteen to 20 students per grade participate in the I.B. diploma program and take rigorous exams at the end of their 12th grade year. They receive a diploma, which alone can gain them admission into international universities. "We offer the I.B. program for the intellectual gravitas, to have a sense of international awareness and to cater to a variety of people," Dr. DiBianca says.

Newark Academy senior Molly Crane says, "A particular advantage of the academy is that students who do not qualify for honors or A.P. classes in their early years do not feel excluded from taking those classes later

on. There is a lot of room for choice."

Regarding moral education, Dr. DiBianca says, "it emerges all the time in classroom discussion, so no explicit instruction is necessary."

"Our primary goal is to emphasize intellectual engagement and intrinsic motivation over academic engagement, or just 'doing the work,'" he says. "But overall, kids here like learning."

At Princeton Day School in Princeton, one year of religion and philosophy are required to graduate. These courses study traditions and ethics, Director of Academic Affairs Mr. Warren Gould says.

Like Lawrenceville and Newark Academy, the school does not place an emphasis on character education. "The minute you make a particular designation, it disconnects the faculty and administration from the students in an unbeneficial way," Mr. Gould says. "But we do value community service and require all students to complete 50 hours by September of their senior year."

According to Mr. Gould, the school continues to restructure its history program. They have moved the required American History course from the 11th to the 10th grade to coincide with the American Literature class taken that time. The history requirement has also been decreased to two years.

"We are most concerned with skill acquisition. We want our students to be reflective and good thinkers," he says.



N. Lee (IV)

Mr. Bowes and Mrs. Kastl teach the eighth grade interdisciplinary class as a team.

Eighth Grade Interdisciplinary Pilot Teaches English and History

By REBECCA SPEISER (VI)

The history and English departments have collaborated to create a new interdisciplinary course called American Journey. This year, half the eighth grade students are enrolled in the course, which covers American history and literature from World War II to the present.

Three classes are currently participating in the new pilot program, and each class meets for back-to-back periods with the same students. English Department Head Dr. Jane Ashcom says the new schedule provides a better focus for eighth graders and eliminates one course from their hectic schedules.

Participating teachers, including Mrs. Molly D'Antonio and Mrs. Evelyn Kastl in the English department and Mr. Michael Webster and Mr. Anthony Bowes '96 in the history department, observe each other's classes and often teach as a team. This arrangement allows the two periods to be combined

into one 88 minute class, which Dr. Ashcom says can facilitate more coordinated projects and in-depth presentations.

Although the course is new, the basic curriculum from History 8 and English 8 has not changed. Students still study the same literature and time period, but the teachers reinforce connections between the two subjects.

For example, Mrs. D'Antonio says she used a PowerPoint project to emphasize the connections between Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" and McCarthyism. She says the material becomes more relevant when students can connect it to knowledge of other disciplines.

Next year, American Journey will be required for all eighth graders. According to History Department Head Dr. Jim Murray, the departments plan to incorporate a similar interdisciplinary course into the seventh grade curriculum, although that is still a few years away.

Two interdisciplinary courses are also currently offered in the Upper School. Juniors and seniors can enroll in Freedom: Limitations and Responsibilities and American Dreams.

Freedom, taught by Mrs. Lydia Geacintov and Mr. Tom Keating, is a seminar that studies literary, philosophical and historical works that relate to freedom. The teachers use films, field trips, short stories and novels to provoke discussion.

Katie Lawrence (VI) says the class is very interesting and adds, "I love the debates we get into."

American Dreams, taught by Mr. Adam Rohdie, is another interdisciplinary class that centers around three main issues that face America: race, gender and class.

Jes Taylor (VI) calls American Dreams "a great class in which students are free to speak their minds and listen to the opinions of others." Jeremy Jordan (VI) agrees, saying, "It's my favorite class ever."

COMMITTEES ARE FORMED TO SEEK NEW DIRECTORS

Continued From Page 1

believes strongly in student participation in the hiring process "as long as everyone knows where the final decision lies." He says students give him the best advice because "they can see right through the candidates," and he adds that he will meet with the committees and will seriously consider their input.

The qualifications for the positions, the headmaster says, are many. He hopes to find new division directors with at least master's degrees and significant experience in teaching and administration. He is looking for candidates who will remain at Pingry for at least five to seven years before becoming headmasters of other schools.

Ultimately, though, "it's the fit with Pingry that's most important," he says. "We're not tied down to any particular

Continued On Page 5

Department Heads Note Curriculum Changes

By CAROLINE SAVELLO (IV)

This year, academic departments are revising and reviewing both Middle and Upper School courses as well as planning future changes to the curriculum.

Dr. Jim Murray, head of the history department, says he is interested in more in-depth studies. "There is not much room in the curriculum right now because we devote most of high school to the required courses," he says.

This year's addition of the World Religions course, taught by Dr. David Korfhage, is a step towards more electives. Dr. Murray says the course "addresses a real gap in our curriculum. We want to provide more courses that tap into student interest, rather than the desire to earn A.P. credit."

English Department Head Dr. Jane Ashcom says Upper School English teachers are in the process of mapping the curriculum, which will detail exactly what occurs throughout each course.

Grades 7, 8 and 9 have already completed this process,

and 7th and 8th grade teachers have already revised their curricula based on the results. Dr. Ashcom says the mapping will facilitate future revisions of the curriculum, though it is a long process and not all grades have completed it.

Dr. Ashcom says this year's form IV English curriculum has been revised slightly after discussions with 10th grade English teachers. Die Sijie's "Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress" replaced Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein."

Changes in the science department this year include the elimination of a separate Honors Biology course, which has been replaced by an elective honors designation. Students who are

interested must be willing to complete extra projects and receive additional in-depth instruction in key areas.

According to Science Department Head Mr. Chuck Coe, the

and connections.

Mr. Coe adds that he is trying to distance the curriculum from standardized tests, as "national curricula which cater to the SAT II are often too superficial and recall-oriented." Freshman biology will continue to focus on molecular, rather than ecological biology.

Mr. Coe also says that the department is in the process of expanding senior elective options. Next year, Mr. Tommie Hata will teach a research-based science course for juniors and

seniors that will merge various scientific and mathematic disciplines, including molecular biology, complex chemistry and advanced physics.

Foreign Language Department Head Mr. Norman LaValette says a separate Spanish 1B is now being offered to Short



"Pingry recognizes that it must adapt to change. It aims to review critically and periodically its curriculum, methods, and facilities and to remain open, flexible, and responsive."

—The Pingry Curriculum Guide

change is a result of the department's dissatisfaction with the national Introductory Biology curriculum. Mr. Coe says he and other teachers have spoken with college faculty from around the country who agree that a survey-level course like freshman biology should focus on skills, ideas

SMART STUDENTS VISIT RUTGERS U. FOR SCIENCE TRIP

By CORI HUNDT (III) and HADLEY JOHNSON (III)

Biology teacher Mr. Tommie Hata took seven sophomores on a science trip to Rutgers University on December 1. The trip was part of a project for a program called SMART: Students Modeling a Research Topic.

For the program, students used state-of-the-art modeling technology to construct physical models of molecular structures.

Mr. Hata first became involved in SMART by attending a workshop in Milwaukee, Wis. on bimolecular modeling with Dr. Richard Elbright, a scientist at Rutgers.

The trip to Rutgers included a presentation by Dr. Elbright on the current research of RNA polymerase, the molecule that the SMART team is studying. Students were also given a tour of Rutgers' science facilities, including their research lab.

Mr. Hata says the purpose of the trip was "to see what scientists really do. High school science is generally only facts, but real scientists solve problems and try to understand certain processes or mechanisms."

Through the SMART program, Pingry is building working relationships with local scientists that Mr. Hata hopes will encourage SMART to continue in the future.

The students who attended SMART practiced using the latest technology in model building, called additive building. These are rapid prototyping technologies that "build from the ground up," Mr. Hata explains.

Next year, Mr. Hata will institute a science research course for upperclassmen that will involve model-building in molecular biology. "This would greatly benefit the program," Mr. Hata says, since it is currently an unscheduled extracurricular activity.

Date Rape Victim Tells Story At an Upper School Assembly

By SUSANNAH BRAGG (VI)

Katie Koestner spoke to the Upper School on December 5 about her experience with date rape and her attempts to educate people on the subject.

Koestner has dedicated herself to making sexual assault a public focus. She appeared on the cover of Time magazine in 1991 and worked on the HBO project

She spoke about the events of a night that eventually ended in rape. "I think you all knew the end of my story before the first word I spoke," she said. "And I didn't."

"I'm telling you the story of the worst night of my life," she went on, "and you can tell I've told it before. I don't know if I'm real to you. This is my issue. I'm the one with a story."

Koestner addressed the men in the audience who might be thinking, "I'm not a rapist. It's not my problem." To them, she said, "I'm going to tell my story 1,000 times if there's just one brave man who stands up somewhere and says rape is wrong."

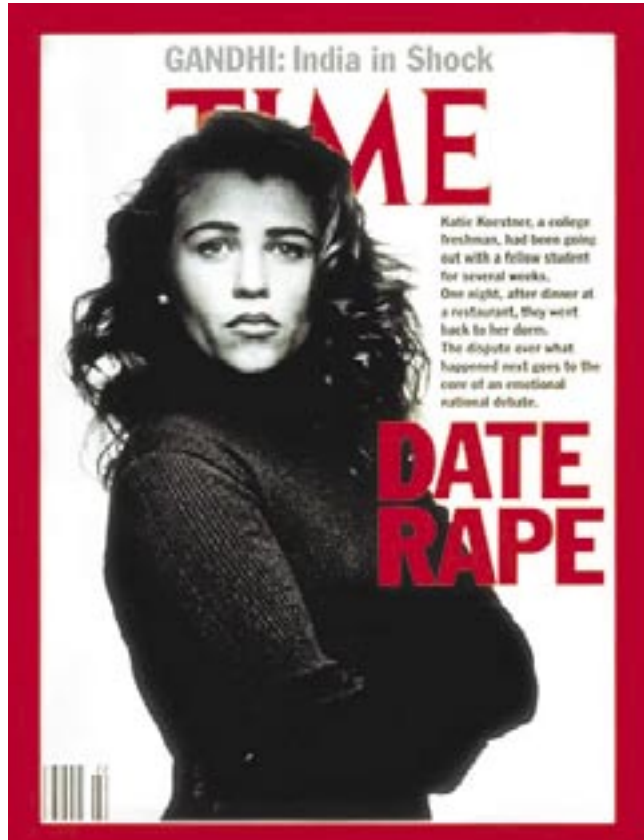
Koestner said she was not lecturing students on sexual activity, drinking or styles of dress. "Your confidence will help you the most," she said. "Ask what you're willing to take and what you're not."

She received a standing ovation. "This was one of the best assemblies we've ever had," Sonam Sharma (VI) said.

"Her small voice commanded the respect of the entire audience," Casey Huser (V) said. "Everyone wanted to hear what she had to say."

Bryan Zupon (VI) criticized some parts of the speech. "I felt she was looking for sympathy, and I don't deal well with weakness. I'm apathetic to the whole thing," he said.

A number of students agreed that the assembly would have been inappropriate for Middle School students. Sharma and Zupon also said they were disturbed when so many people screamed with joy about an early dismissal right after the presentation.



Courtesy of TIME Magazine

Katie Koestner, made up to look like a victim, appears on the cover of Time Magazine on June 3, 1991.

"No Visible Bruises: The Katie Koestner Story" in 1993. She has also spoken on The Oprah Winfrey Show, NBC Nightly News, Larry King Live, Good Morning America and MTV, among others.

Koestner talked about a guy she had been hanging out with in college. "I liked him a lot," she said, "and I don't want you all to forget that. Because sometimes I think this all would be crystal clear if it weren't that I liked him."

After Koestner was raped, she did not know to get a rape kit for evidence and was told that her bruises were only enough to prove rough sex.

Two thousand people signed a petition stating that Koestner had lied. Students egged her window, vandalized her car and broke into her apartment. Most hurtful, she said, were "the women who called me 'slut,' 'bitch' and 'whore.'"

Koestner has received some hostile responses to her speeches. A man at one school yelled, "Look at you, Katie. I would have raped you, too," while those around him pounded on desks.

HEADMASTER SEEKS NEW DIRECTORS

Continued From Page 4

criterion."

Though three teachers have requested to be considered for Middle School director, Mr. Neiswender says he would prefer to hire from outside, as "it is important to bring new ideas to the school."

Mr. Neiswender reiterates that he has found new division directors before and that his process "has always worked successfully." He lauds Mr. Rohdie and Dr. Macrae on their work at Pingry and says it is natural for them to have ambitions and to want to head their own schools.



Courtesy of the Alumni Office

Will Munger (V) calls potential donors in one of the Alumni and Development Office's phonathons.

Alumni Office Conducts Annual Fund Phonathon

By ADAM KOWALSKI (IV)

The Alumni and Development Office conducts 10 Annual Fund phoneathons each year, and the last ones were held on December 9 and 10.

The phonathons are operated by volunteer students and directed by Ms. Coral Butler, director of annual funds, and Mr. David Fahey '99, assistant director of alumni programs.

The goal of the phonathons is to raise money for the Annual Fund. Mr. Fahey says the Annual Fund is critically important to support the school's general operating budget. More specifically, the money raised from the phonathons is used for faculty salaries, maintaining campus buildings, and supporting athletic activities.

The first set of phonathons took place at the beginning of the school year. Each one lasted three hours, running from 6 to 9 in the evening to not interfere with athletics.

During this set of phonathons, students called alumni who donated to the phonathon last year and asked them to donate again.

The next set of phonathons were held this month, though one on December 8 was

canceled due to a lack of volunteers. On December 9 and 10, more volunteers were available, and they called new alumni who had not donated in the past to ask them to contribute.

The remaining four phonathons will be held in April. Mr. Fahey says school alumni are the only people solicited during the Annual Fund phonathons.

While the Board of Trustees and the administration jointly determine how the raised funds are used, an important objective, according to the Alumni Volunteer Handbook, is that funds "have an immediate impact" on the school.

The handbook also says that the money raised through phonathons is needed because tuition cannot pay for the entire budget. More funding is needed to support the 41 clubs and 28 sports teams, the handbook says, and for students to have a true "Pingry experience."

Donations to the annual fund, Mr. Fahey adds, can be made by anyone in virtually any way, such as cash donations and in-kind gifts.

M.S. Student Search Committee

Form I

- Giancarlo Riotto
- Christiana Coleman
- Grant Thomas
- Katie Parsels

Form II

- Brian O'Toole, Chair
- Stockton Bullitt
- Jay Sogliuzzo
- Aly Kerr
- Ije Eboh

M.S. Faculty Search Committee

- Mrs. Roxbury, chair
- Dr. Ashcom
- Mr. Corvino
- Dr. Lowery
- Mr. Boyer
- Mrs. Romankow
- Mr. Bowes
- Mrs. Silbermann (PSPA)

U.S. Student Search Committee

Form III

- Mai-Yin Picard
- Jeff Zimering
- Lisa Thomas
- Jason Kluger

Form IV

- Rachel Van Wert
- Brian Combias

Form V

- Caroline Savello
- Marta Popiolek

Form VI

- Robert Zacharias, Chair

U.S. Faculty Search Committee

- Mr. Keating, chair
- Mrs. Castaldo
- Ms. Kilgore
- Mr. Tramontana
- Dr. Murray
- Mrs. O'Mara
- Mr. Boyd
- Mrs. Lang (Trustee/Parent)

Troupe Performs 'A Christmas Story'

By DANIELLE PERETORE (V) and JULIE JOHNSON (V)

Throughout December the Trilogy Repertory Company is performing "A Christmas Story" in the Macrae Theater of the new Arts Wing. Remaining dates for the play include tonight and tomorrow night.

Director Hugh Wallace adapted the play from a 1983 movie that was based on a story from radio commentator Jean Shepherd's short story collection, "In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash."

"This is a story I've wanted to bring to the stage since I first saw the movie 20 years ago," says Wallace, a longtime fan of Shepherd's. He refers to the play as "a touchstone to a simpler time."

The story follows Shepherd's memories of his 11th Christmas and is narrated by Ralph (Jean's alter ego) sitting to the side of the stage as if telling the story on the radio.

Actors in the play include



R. Mathew (VI)

Trilogy Repertory actors rehearse the play in the Macrae Theater.

several children from Somerset County, including Jonathan Wilkins, a Basking Ridge sixth grader who plays Ralphie.

Two scheduled performances on December 5 and 6 were snowed out, which left remaining performances on December 13, 19 and 20 at 8 p.m. and on the 14th at

3 p.m.

The Basking Ridge-based Trilogy Repertory Company began holding performances in the "Little Theater" at Ridge High School not long after their founding in 1981. But in 1999, Ridge High School closed the Little Theater, and Trilogy has since been seeking

a new home for their performances. The company also conducts theater and costume workshops in museums and local schools.

Tickets to remaining performances — \$15 for adults and \$12 for students and seniors — can be obtained by calling 908-604-4800.

THE BUTTONDOWNS PERFORM CAROLS AT THE MORRIS MUSEUM

By CATHERINE CHONG (III)

On December 8 the Buttondowns sang Christmas carols at the Morris Museum on behalf of the annual Holiday Tree Festival.

The museum, located in downtown Morristown, serves approximately 200,000 visitors each year and is considered to be one of New Jersey's leading cultural institutions.

The Buttondowns were one of several local school and community music groups that performed for the Friends of Morris Museum. The Holiday Tree Festival included an exhibition and sale of over 300 different trees, wreaths, garlands and table centerpieces from December 7 to 13. All proceeds helped fund the museum.

Students who are familiar with the museum were glad the school could help it. "It's a good place to go with friends and especially your family," Alex Snape (III) said. "I went probably 1,000 times when I was a kid. I loved all the cool exhibits."

Buttondowns Ed Suh (V) and Michael Page (V) remember singing at the museum since they were freshmen and said going there has been a long Pingry tradition.

The program was approximately an hour long. The Buttondowns performed 12 songs, including "Personent Hodie" and "Mary Had a Baby." The selection represented a mixture of traditional and untraditional Christmas carols, as well as two pieces in Latin.

"I'm not a big fan of the Latin songs," said Austin Conti (III), a new member of the Buttondowns. He added, though, that he was "excited to sing at this new place. It just made me smile."

The Balladeers also have a tradition of caroling during the Christmas season. This year they caroled at the Bridgewater Mall on December 15.



Alex Bregman talks to Will Ferrell at the premiere of 'Elf.' Courtesy of Alex Bregman (VI)

Bregman Interviews Celebrities For 'Alex All Access' Website

By CAITLIN BERGH (VI)

You may be surprised to learn that Alex Bregman, a senior here at Pingry, is the youngest red carpet reporter today. He has attended countless movie premieres and interviewed many of our favorite celebrities, all at the age of 17.

The job started when Bregman began working for a company called FredTV last June. He was interested in television broadcasting, he says, because "it's the best way to get a message across quickly and effectively."

When he applied for an internship at NBC's "Today" show, they were impressed by his determination at such a young age and helped him start Alex All Access, his current business and Internet site at alexallaccess.com. The company's motto is "Bringing you closer to the celebrities."

Now, Bregman attends red carpet premieres, where he interviews the talent in various movies. He also attends other celebrity events, like the Video Music Awards (VMA's) and the Academy Awards, about once a week. He admits, though, that he has more time to attend all the

events in the summer when there is no school.

Some of Bregman's favorite interviews have been with Britney Spears, Pamela Anderson, Michael Douglas, Robert DeNiro, Tom Cruise and Will Ferrell. His interview with Billy Crystal, on the other hand, was one of his worst (Crystal is "pretty obnoxious," Bregman says). But he adds that "all celebrities are pretty egotistical. They're movie stars."

It wasn't always easy for Bregman to conduct his interviews. He says, "Since I'm the youngest one there, people originally didn't take me seriously."

It was difficult, he continues, to gain the respect of celebrities. In fact, he says he owes much of his success to an accident. At the VMA's last year, Bregman was mistakenly placed in the red carpet line behind "Access Hollywood," instead of towards the back of the line of reporters, which is organized in order of importance. The mistake, Bregman says, helped him gain more credibility as a reporter and has enabled him to get celebrity interviews much more easily.

When interviewing Holly-

wood's hottest stars, Bregman says, "unfortunately, you have to be just as egotistical as the celebrities to get an interview." He adds that interviews can make him very insecure and that he has to be "assertive, very loud and rude."

Bregman admits that being a red carpet reporter is not something he wants to do for the rest of his life. He quotes Matt Lauer, who once said red carpet reporting is "the most cutthroat world in TV." From experience, Bregman agrees.

He hopes that Alex All Access will help him one day start a career as a television anchor, and he aspires to one day have Matt Lauer's job. "Ever since I was young," Bregman says, "I wanted to be a New York Yankee, but anyone who's ever seen me play baseball knows that's not going to happen."

Instead, Bregman says, "I've decided to go into broadcast journalism."

Students Go on Trips for Model UN and Congress

By LAUREN SALZ (IV)

Forty-one students attended Rutgers Model United Nations in New Brunswick and nine went to Princeton Model Congress in Arlington, Virginia from November 18 to 21.

At Model UN, students debated resolutions in individual committees and, if passed, they continued to the General Assembly. Similarly, Model Congress committees voted on legislation that was later debated in the full House or Senate.

Students said the experience was challenging. "It was really difficult to negotiate with the 50 other countries on my committee," said Ramyata Joshi (IV), who represented the Czech Republic in the Model UN Social, Cultural and Humanitarian committee. "A lot of delegates were uncooperative or didn't follow their country's position."

Students at both conferences had some fun and passed joke resolutions or bills. "The best part of the conference was when the Armed Services committee authorized the invasion of Canada," said Nick Scott-Wittenborn (IV), who attended Model Congress.

The Model UN Economic and Financial committee passed a resolution blaming cows for the high concentration of methane gas emissions. They also proposed instituting vegan-free zones.

Amidst all the work, students had little free time. Committee meetings started at 9 a.m. and sometimes went as late as 11:30 p.m., often only with short breaks for meals. According to Dr. Alfred DeSimone, faculty adviser to Model Congress, Arlington was a bad location

because it did not have many restaurants. Students instead had pizza delivered to their hotel rooms.

In New Brunswick, students had more dining options. Many frequently got a cup of coffee from Starbucks to keep them going through the long committee meetings.

On Saturday afternoon, Model Congress members had eight hours of free time, allowing them to go shopping or sightseeing in Washington, D.C. Students chose to visit museums in the national mall and later attended a social mixer.

Award ceremonies took place on Sunday. At Model UN, Sonam Sharma (VI) received the distinguished delegate award for her work in an advanced committee, the International Court of Justice. At Model Congress, Stewart Anderson (VI) and David Spett (VI) received honorable mentions in the Armed Services committee and the Environment and Public Works committee respectively.

Dr. DeSimone said he liked the Princeton Model Congress conference because students could represent their own views rather than those of a state or congressional district. Students submitted bills to the conference beforehand, which he considered more efficient than writing them at the conference.

The overall reaction of students to the conferences was positive. "It was a great experience to see how the United Nations worked," Andrew McConvey (IV) said. "I had no idea how much cooperation and negotiations were needed to get something done."

Lower School Comes to Wrap

By DANIELLE PERETORE (V)

The Lower School paid a visit to the Martinsville Campus on December 9 for the all-school Holiday Festival followed by the second annual Great Wrap-In.



M. Drell (VI)

Lower School students come to the Martinsville Campus to wrap presents for charity.

Each Upper School student, with the exception of seniors, who served as helpers, was paired with another Upper School student and assigned a Lower School buddy. The same Upper and Lower School buddies will partici-

pate together in the all-school Field Day in May for events like relay races and carnival games.

For the Great Wrap-In, all students were required to bring a gift for Mr. Nazario's Lift for Learning charity, which supports needy families in Union County. After the Festival, students were sent to the gyms and the cafeteria, where they bonded while wrapping the gifts.

The event is part of a concept Headmaster John Neiswender calls OnePingry. "The wrap-in is a wonderful example of students from both campuses helping each other in order to help others," he said.

Students liked the activity. "The wrap-in was a really positive experience," Jonathan Roberts (V) said. "It was great for school spirit and brought the two campuses together."

Assistant Headmaster Mr. Adam Rohdie added, "This year's Wrap-In was a tremendous success and better than last year's. And it helped that it didn't snow."

Af-Am Scholars' Club Plans Year

By JEREMY TEICHER (IV)

The African-American Scholars' Club says it is off to a good start this year. According to club president Obi Eboh (V), one of its functions is to share African-American culture with the school community.

Mrs. Marnie McKoy and Ms. Nia Kilgore are the club's faculty advisors, but the students organize most of the events. Events planned for later this year include another food day, a dance, the Martin Luther King assembly and a Black History Month photo gallery.

The MLK assembly "addresses issues that concern everyone," Mrs. McKoy says. "The purpose of it is to be provocative and to get the whole community to discuss questions and issues they may not have otherwise discussed."

Members stress that the club is not exclusive by any means, and Mrs. McKoy says some club members are not African American. "All are welcome to attend," Ms. Kilgore says.

The club recently sponsored "bring a friend day," when all members were encouraged to invite someone to a club meeting.

The scholars have never met to reach a consensus on the issue of diversity at school, though club



S. Bragg (VI)

Kathryn Stanley (IV) shares an idea with the club.

secretary Gaston McGary (IV) says, "Pingry is seriously lacking the student, faculty and staff diversity it could achieve."

Ms. Kilgore points out that "diversity is not just numbers. An institution must celebrate cultural appreciation to make that institution truly diverse."

There is no typical agenda for each meeting. "If the students are in the midst of planning a program or event, the discussion centers around that issue," Ms. Kilgore says, "or someone may bring up different topics for an open discussion."

Another club aim is to "help unite the small minority of African-American students," McGary says.

Ms. Kilgore says students of color need to connect with one another because they can get lonely being in the "constant minority." She stressed that the African-American students do not generally join the club because they feel unwelcome at school, but just for the extra comfort and support.

The African-American Scholars are also active at the Short Hills campus. "There are bowling outings and other age-appropriate activities for the younger kids to get to know one another," Mrs. McKoy said.

All the club members' families meet each other at an annual barbeque before the start of school each year.

Mr. Rohdie to Leave in June

Continued From Page 1

as a crucial link between the student body and the administration. "Rohdie has so much influence because he knows the students so well," Nikhil Srivastava (V) said. "It will take a long time for a new Upper School head to build those strong relationships with us."

Mr. Rohdie said he decided to leave because becoming headmaster is a great opportunity for him. "I share many of the core beliefs of the

Greenwich school," he said, "and being headmaster will give me freedom to do things I've always wanted to do."

Although Mr. Rohdie said he never set out on a course to ultimately become a headmaster, he is ready for that responsibility at another school.

Mr. John Hanly, former Pingry headmaster and one of Mr. Rohdie's mentors, said, "It's very sad from the Pingry perspective, but Mr. Rohdie's moving on was inevitable. He has extraordinary qualities of leadership and the ability to make tough decisions without

being put off by obstacles."

Mr. Rohdie started thinking about leaving Pingry a year ago, when he became a finalist for headmaster of The Peck School in Morristown, though he ultimately decided against leaving his colleagues and friends. Upon visiting the Greenwich Country Day School, though, he felt "drawn to the warm and family-friendly atmosphere."

Mr. Rohdie knows it will be difficult for Pingry to lose two assistant headmasters. "It's a weird coincidence that Dr. Macrae and I both got jobs at the same time," he said. "We're great friends, and I'm really going to miss him."

Mr. Rohdie will live on campus and looks forward to a significantly shorter commute. He said he plans to stay in Greenwich for at least a decade, adding, "It will be a great place for [my son] Cal to go to school."

The school teaches kindergarten through ninth grade, and 70 percent of the faculty live on campus. Although Greenwich has a reputation for being wealthy and conservative, Mr. Rohdie said the faculty, parents and students were down to earth.

"It's always a challenge for independent schools to keep kids grounded despite their affluence and how much they've been given in life," he said. "It will always be my first priority to create moral citizens."

The greatest challenge, Mr. Rohdie said, will be for him to connect with younger children in the same way that he relates to Pingry's Upper School students. He plans to spend time with the head of the elementary school to learn to deal with the younger age group.

Mr. Rohdie believes that Pingry will ultimately be fine despite his departure. "This school is bigger than one person," he said. "But I hope the value I've added in my 15 years will remain after I'm gone."



Courtesy of New Line Cinema

Will Ferrell is almost hit by a taxi in 'Elf.'

Ferrell Offers Family Laughs in 'Elf' Film

By CARL RUGGIERO (IV)

Having a hard time getting into the Christmas spirit? Will Ferrell and the box-office hit "Elf" may be just the pick-up you need. Ferrell's portrayal of an adult elf named Buddy breaks the stereotypical image of an elf as a half-pint Santa helper.

Buddy, an orphaned infant who crawled into Santa's toy bag one Christmas Eve and got taken to the North Pole, was raised by workaholic elves. He is naïve and believes he is as much an elf as his three-foot counterparts, yet when he overhears a conversation concerning his human roots, he confronts Papa Elf (the ever-funny Bob Newhart), his adopted father.

Upon discovering his true heritage, Buddy journeys to New York City to find his biological father, Walter Hobbes (James Caan). Buddy discovers that his real father is a jaded and dishonest publisher of children's books and that he is on Santa's infamous Naughty List.

His father is not the only jaded one, however. Everywhere Buddy goes in the Big Apple, he meets people who lack both Christmas spirit and common kindness. Buddy decides to attempt the nearly impossible: prove that he is really one of Santa's elves and bring back his father's and New York's Christmas spirit.

Will Ferrell is both imaginative and convincing in playing the role of the innocent Buddy. Although the movie's plot is for the most part hilarious and original, it depends heavily on our collective idea of Christmas cartoons and classic movies.

The nostalgia starts off right in the opening scene, with the appearance of the claymation figure of Sam the Snowman, the narrator of the old cartoon "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer." Using

both slapstick and dry humor to entertain its audience, the movie simultaneously alludes to Christmas classics such as the despairing bridge scene in "It's A Wonderful Life" and the store called Gimbel's that is Macy's rival in "A Miracle On 34th Street."

The last 15 minutes of the film diverge slightly from the original plot of the awkward Buddy in jaded NYC, and the ending is a bit clichéd. But still, "Elf" is an entertaining and funny film the whole family can enjoy.

Woodbury Has Brand Names for Less

By LAUREN SALZ (IV)

Looking around the hallways, you see J.Crew sweaters, Burberry scarves, Kate Spade shoes and, of course, Ralph Lauren Polos. Buying a school-appropriate wardrobe can be very expensive; I know that a lot of people may have moments when they dread looking at the cash register total. Isn't there anywhere we can buy this couture for less money?

The answer is Woodbury Commons, an outdoor outlet in Central Valley, N.Y. Woodbury Commons is relatively close: only about an hour from school by car. To get there, take Route 287 North to Route 87 and get off at exit 16. Parking can be difficult, but valet parking is available.

Woodbury Commons boasts 220 outlet stores and an extensive food court, including a sit-down Italian restaurant. Unlike many outlet centers, Woodbury Commons offers clothing in all standard sizes and colors. The stores are well serviced and there is no sifting through endless bins of sale clothes.

Woodbury Commons includes a wide variety of stores. Higher-end stores, such as Gucci, Dolce & Gabbana, Giorgio Armani, Prada, Zegna, Movado, Chanel,

Burberry and Kate Spade have many of their products at highly discounted prices. A Burberry scarf, for example, originally priced at \$219, can be bought for \$100.

One store I would highly recommend is J.Crew, which often has promotional sales. For example, you can buy one regularly priced item and get another regularly priced item at 40 percent off.

Also, AAA members or Continental OnePass cardholders can obtain coupon booklets at the information desk, including a 20 percent discount at J.Crew on purchases of \$80 or more.

Another good store is the Polo Ralph Lauren Factory Store. Juliette Jordan (IV) says she "went crazy" there. Women's slim fitting Polos, retailing at \$52, are available for \$39.99; cable knit sweaters are \$59.99; men's button-down collared shirts are \$49.99. Shoppers can also get \$25 off a \$150 purchase — or \$75 off a \$250 purchase — when using the store's Holiday Coupon Book.

Sports apparel stores such as Fila, Puma, Adidas and Nike often offer bargain prices for the same merchandise sold in department stores. The North Face Outlet is selling their adult



Courtesy of Mr. Adam Rohdie
Mr. Rohdie's prized royal can pyramid.

WHO Toppled It?

John W. Pratt

Prime Suspect



By DAVID SPETT (VI)

Mr. Rohdie, along with Michael Kreisbuch (IV) and Michael Rosenman (V), made a pyramid of cans one morning before school. The cans were

from Mr. Nazario's Thanksgiving drive.

Mr. Rohdie said he was soon approached by Mr. Neiswender and Chief Financial Officer John Pratt and told the pyramid was a safety hazard. So Mr. Rohdie constructed a barrier of cardboard boxes to keep people away from the pyramid.

"The next thing I knew, it was gone," Mr. Rohdie said. "I think Mr. Pratt took it down. Get Pratt!"

When asked if he was responsible for the pyramid's removal, Mr. Pratt declined to comment.

When asked if his can pyramid's disappearance was the reason for his recent resignation from the school, Mr. Rohdie declined to comment.

Popular Artists Hit and Miss as Their New Albums Hit Shelves

By STEVEN HOROWITZ (VI)



Jay-Z – The Black Album

On the final solo album of his impressive career, Jay-Z ducks out of the music industry on top of his game. He uses clever, honest wordplay and beautiful beats to depict stories and images.

The best song on the album is "December 4th," produced by Just Blaze and featuring Jay-Z's mother, Gloria Carter. Horns and violins give the track a 70's feel while Jay emotionally bears himself by describing his painful childhood.

Between verses, Jay's mother speaks about him from her perspective, giving the track a powerful and honest sentiment.

In "Moment of Clarity," an equally powerful song produced by Eminem, Jay makes peace with his deceased father and describes the hardships of being in the rap industry.

Jay-Z's last solo song, cleverly titled "My 1st Song," proves that Jay-Z is the best rapper alive. With an intro from Notorious B.I.G., the song features Jay bidding farewell while explaining why he continued to make albums throughout the years. Jay closes the album with his popular catch phrase, "It's ya boy."

This album clearly shows that Jay's success over the years was not a fluke. His original style and continued achievement paves the way for the next generation of rappers.



Britney Spears – In the Zone

On her fourth studio album, Britney Spears attempts to showcase the range of her "talents" by engaging in several different genres, including rap, techno and, of course, glossy pop. She seems to have grown out of her school-girl days, but callow messages still plague her music.

The leading single, "Me

Against the Music," is a party song featuring Madonna. Numerous layered vocals cloud the track, and the lyrics explain her sudden fever to have a dance-off "against the music."

A shocking appearance from the Ying Yang Twins (two "dirty south" rappers) on the song "I Got That (Boom Boom)" is like hearing Hilary Duff and Ice Cube together; they are simply incompatible.

In "Outrageous," produced by R. Kelly, Britney sings about how hot and outrageous she is. But even the heavy bass cannot save Britney from this failed narcissistic venture.

The ballad "Everytime" shows a different side of Britney. In this song, Britney begs for forgiveness from an imaginary boy and claims she now needs him, despite having previously dumped him. The silky piano and slow tempo of this song would make it more appealing to smooth jazz listeners.

Overall, Britney's message is a shallow one, and it seems she is trying too hard. Her superficial lyrics and banal melodies are starting to get old.

The Strokes – Room on Fire

This sophomore effort from the Strokes is creative and refreshing. A mixture of distorted and repetitive guitar riffs under heavily filtered vocals by Julian Casablancas proves to be a delicious combination. Although their last album, "Is This It," is very similar in style, the style is The Strokes' own: a combination of 80's grunge rock and 90's pop.

The album opens with "What Ever Happened," a punchy and unpredictable song written by Casablancas. The lyrics entail Julian's letter to an ex-girlfriend who dumped him but whom he continues to stubbornly pursue. He says, "You say, 'Please don't make it harder.' / No, I won't yet."

The Strokes' single, "12:51," is a pop-rock song. Optimistic claps punch the melody, while the rich sounds of the guitar add to it. The simple yet continuous chord progressions make the song interesting.

"Under Control" is the best song on the album. Consisting of a 70's soul vibe at a mid-tempo pace, the track is filled with appropriate riffs. The track carries the listener through the whole breezy summer song, starting abruptly but ending casually.

Room on Fire is a carefree and laid-back album that manages to truly make the singer's voice seem like an instrument. The Strokes' originality in an industry dominated by conformity guarantees their success.



Courtesy of Woodbury Commons

Woodbury Commons is an outdoor shopping experience.

Ski Team Has New Players, High Hopes

by Catherine Chong (III)
RECORD STAFF WRITER

The ski team lost many players in the past two years, but the coaches and returning skiers are excited to work with new members. Last year, the girls' team placed third in the Prep League and the boys' team placed fourth.

There are two new coaches this year, Ms. Hope Gordon and Mr. Tommie Hata, who join returning Coach Malla Godfrey. Coach Gordon has not had any race experience but is an expert skier, and Coach Hata is new to skiing.

The girls' team is looking forward to improving. Last year it only had two experienced racers, but this year five girls have returned and are joined by three new skiers.

The boys' team is also looking to improve with five new skiers, three of which are freshmen. Alex Snape (III) has been skiing for 10 years and racing for three, as has Ben Mackoff (III).

Also, Greg Mintz (VI), who suffered a broken foot last year, rejoined the team as captain. "He should be one of the best skiers," Sarah Tarplin (V) says. Mackoff named Gideon Oppenheimer

(V) as another promising member. Over the summer the team attended ski camp at Mount Hood Meadows Ski Resort in Oregon.

Last year, Tarplin was asked to compete individually at States. This year, however, both the boys' and girls' teams hope to qualify by having a .500 season.

The ski team races every Wednesday against other teams in the Prep League, which is a league of the Interscholastic Ski Racing Association. Big rivals are Don Bosco Prep and Blair Academy for the boys and Immaculate Heart Academy for the girls.

Beginning in January, the team will ski at Mountain Creek on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Team members say their practices should not take too much time because they will be off on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

According to Coach Godfrey, team coordinator and Upper School Spanish teacher, this season should be terrific. "I have the best students and the best coaches," she says, "And the captains are knowledgeable, helpful and supportive."



Nikhil Srivastava (V) wins a bout against Elyse Feldman (V).

S. Bragg (VI)

Fencing Team Faces Rebuilding Season

by Catherine Chong (III)
RECORD STAFF WRITER

This year is a "transition year" for the fencing team, according to Girls' Fencing Captain Lauren Phillips (VI).

This year's boys' captain is Max Haines-Stiles (VI), and the coaches are Mr. Ted Li, Mr. Victor Nazario, Mr. Thomas Varnes, Mr. Tatyana Stankovych and Mrs. Vasily

Stankovych.

Phillips says some fencers and coaches are pessimistic about the upcoming season due to the loss of 11 seniors and most of last year's girls' sabre squad. However, she says, "There is definitely a lot of talent and an ability to go far. Goals are very high, and our success will depend on how everything falls into place."

Phillips says she as well as Rita Chen (VI), Tina Christakos (VI), Sonam Sharma (VI) and Elyse Feldman (V) will lead the girls' team. Last year Phillips and Christakos

were top fencers for the girls' title-winning sabre team.

Adam Goldstein (IV) says Haines-Stiles, Alex van den Bergh (III) and Adam Pantel (IV) will be the boys' top fencers this year.

There are a few changes to the team's schedule. As opposed to past years, entire teams, rather than individual squads, will compete against each other.

Coach Li was somewhat pessimistic about the teams' hopes for the year. "At the end of the season, we will still exist," he jokes. "Splitting the varsity in half at dual meets

guarantees a losing season but a powerful tournament team. We'll have a good team next year at least."

"Every past year, the goal has been to win," girls' player Ameesha Sampat (IV) says. "But this year it's to get everyone to fence."

The teams' first tournaments are the Santelli Girls Team Tournament on January 10 and the Cetrulo Boys Team Tournament on January 11, both at Voorhees High School in Glen Gardner. The NJSIAA Individual State Finals will be on March 6 at Drew University.

Athlete Profile

Liam Griff (VI): Soccer and Basketball Captain

by Sumeet Shah (VI)
RECORD STAFF WRITER

In his fourth year playing basketball and his third year on the varsity team, senior Liam Griff is an outstanding athlete. He started playing organized basketball in fourth grade and is one of the best basketball players this year. Last year he averaged 19.5 points per game as well as eight rebounds, six assists, three steals and an occasional blocked shot.

Griff works at basketball

during the off-season as well. He plays in the AAU Basketball League for the Morris County Bulls. Their season lasts from March to August, and Griff usually plays either guard or small forward. He also plays these two positions on Pingry's team.

"Liam is a true team leader," says Mr. Tim Jaqua, head coach of Boys' Varsity Basketball. "He is a strong part of the team and exhibits great effort, enthusiasm and shooting ability from the outside." Griff is also captain of the basketball team

this year and hopes to lead the school to the state tournament, a tough goal to achieve.

Michael DiLeo (VI), who plays power forward and center, also had exultant comments. "Liam is an excellent basketball player who leads others by example," DiLeo said. "As captain this year, he is definitely a hard worker and very well-respected by his teammates."

Griff helps coach girls aged four to nine on the Summit girls' recreational basketball team.

Griff excels at soccer, in which he plays outside full-back, and at lacrosse, in which he starts as right attackman. He has three varsity letters in soccer and will earn his third in lacrosse this spring.

Griff has many plans for the future in terms of basketball. He hopes to play in college, but does not care which division he plays in. When asked if he would consider playing professional basketball, Griff replied that he has, but maybe in Europe. Another goal of his is to slam dunk over Los Angeles Lakers center Shaquille O'Neal.

Coach Jaqua has a feeling Griff will be successful in leading Pingry into the playoffs and the state tournament. "Liam is an excellent role model, and his efforts will help ensure the success of this year's program," Coach Jaqua said.



Liam Griff (VI) shoots a free throw.

R. Mathew (VI)

Current Sports Records

BOYS' BASKETBALL



First game today
at Boonton

BOYS' ICE HOCKEY



1 - 1 - 1

BOYS' SWIMMING



1 - 3

GIRLS' BASKETBALL



First game today
at Boonton

GIRLS' ICE HOCKEY



0 - 1

GIRLS' SWIMMING



2 - 2

BOYS' FENCING



First game Jan. 7
at St. Benedict's

SKIING



Great Slalom Race
at Mt. Creek on Jan. 7

WRESTLING



Beast of the East
Tourney today to Sun.

GIRLS' FENCING



First game Jan. 8
at Oak Knoll

SQUASH



1 - 0

**Go
Big
Blue!**