



Courtesy of the Development Office

The Rebel Poor stage a revolution in Urinetown, the winter musical.

“A Privilege to Pee” Is a Privilege to See in Urinetown the Musical

By DIANA JIANG (III)

Excitement mounted as the audience in the sold out Macrae Theatre waited anxiously for the curtains to be pulled back and the show to begin. “Urinetown,” the 2002 Tony-award winning musical, was this year’s musical production, directed by Stephanie Romankow and comprising 25 cast members.

In regards to the show, actor Katie Jennings (VI), said, “The entire cast has worked really hard. The musical is a team effort, dependent on every cast member, and we are all really excited!”

Written by Greg Kotis and Mark Hollman, “Urinet-

own” is about a small town experiencing a drought, causing everyone to pay a fee in order to use public restrooms. No one can “pee for free,” and anyone caught peeing in the bushes is sent to Urinetown. The people sent there never return, so the remaining citizens have no idea where or what it is. Urine Good Company (UGC), run by the rich Mr. Cladwell B. Cladwell, played by Jake Kreeger (V), claimed that the UGC needs money to research a way out of the drought. Years passed, however, without sign of letting up. Everyone is getting desperate, especially those who do not have the money needed to use the “public amenity.” When Mr.

Cladwell’s daughter, Hope, played by Katie Jennings (VI), arrives at UGC from the “most expensive university in the world,” the plot thickens.

One night, Hope meets Bobby Strong, played by Ricky Zacharias (IV), whose father has just been sent to Urinetown. Bobby feels guilty about not helping his father, but Hope tells him to “follow your heart.” It is love at first sight for the young couple, and they unwillingly part from each other. The next day, Bobby takes Hope’s advice and leads a rebellion against Mr. Cladwell, so that the poor no longer have to pay to pee. When Mr. Cladwell and his men confront the rebels, the rebels kidnap Hope and take her to their secret hideout.

Believing that Mr. Cladwell will do no harm to Bobby since they have Hope, his daughter, Bobby returns to UGC headquarters and is consequently sent off to Urinetown for causing the disturbance. The audience discovers that being sent to

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Web Access to Social Sites Denied on Campus Computers

By CHANTAL BERMAN (VI)

In a break with the non-filtering technology policy that has existed at Pingry for the past several years, the administration and the tech team quietly imposed a web filter in the days before winter break on such social networking websites as MySpace.com, Facebook.com and Xanga.com. As a result, students can no longer access these websites from any computer currently using the Pingry server.

Director of Technology Mr. Quoc Vo explained that he had received several requests from parents to block access to these sites. The parents, he said, expressed fears that their

sons and daughters could be posting and accessing profanity, personal information and inappropriate pictures during school hours.

The decision to filter these sites was deliberated and carried out by the Administrative Group, consisting of Mr. Cox, Mr. Leef, Mr. Conard, Mrs. Geacintov, Mr. Pratt, Mr. Corvino Sr, Miss Boisvert, Miss Hoffman, Mr Vanasse, and Mr. Vo.

On the reasons for the ban, Mr. Leef said, “There was really a wide spectrum of things taken into account, the primary reason being that these sites are just inappropriate for use during the school day. They are distracting students from what school should really be about. And of course there’s also the prospect of students sharing information that they

shouldn’t.”

While Mr. Vo said that there is “no hard data” detailing how many students were accessing sites such as Facebook from school computers, Upper School Head Mr. Jon Leef said that much of the evidence cited by the Administrative Group was anecdotal, coming from teachers and other faculty members who witnessed students using these sites during their frees and sometimes during class time.

Mr. Leef insisted that the web filter doesn’t reflect the administration’s trust in students. “The web filter decision was less about the Honor Code and the Tech Agreement and more about being pragmatic,” he said. Mr. Leef added that the ban was never discussed with

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Courtesy of Google Images.

The popular website Facebook.com is not accessible from school computers.

At Top Schools, 2006 Applicant Pool Is “More Competitive”

By CATHERINE CHONG (V)

As second semester seniors gradually succumb to full-fledged “senioritis,” many still anxiously await their admissions decisions from the regular applicant pool. Many seniors, however, already experienced that same feeling back in December while waiting for the early admissions decisions.

In this year’s senior class, 64 out of 103 students who applied were accepted under

early decision, early action, restrictive early action and early decision two. In the class of 2005, 68 out of 119 students were accepted under the same plans. While the percentage of students admitted early this year was 55.3 percent, 62.13 percent of the Class of 2005 was admitted early. The less than 7 percent drop is not a large percentage, but it was a decrease that was all too familiar in schools across the nation.

Many blame this decrease

on increased competitiveness of this year’s senior class in schools nationwide, while others blame it on universities’ decisions to decrease the number of students admitted early.

Although Director of College Counseling Mr. MacLellan has only heard rumors that the early applicant pool was more competitive this year, he knows that it is true for some schools. “I’ve heard from col-

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Inside The Record



J. Ellwanger (VI)

Max Cooper (VI) dances with a lucky senior citizen at the Intergenerational Prom on February 14. See page 9.

Friday Night Lights?

Columnist Andrew Sartorius (IV) proposes a plan for updating the school’s outdoor athletic facilities. P 3.

Pam Stenzel: Informer or Performer?

The Pingry community reacts to guest speaker Pam Stenzel’s controversial speech. P 4-5.

The Mysterious Breakfast

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Winterfest: Cold and Lifeless

Cassie Osterman (III) looks at the ups and downs of this year’s Winterfest dance. P 8.

Midterms: Good or Bad?

Midterm exams get a three-year checkup to determine their future at the school. P 8.

Alumni Making Headlines

The Record investigates the lives of former students who have made an impact on the world. P 10-11.

Which teams do you follow?

Learn about this season’s sports teams and their valuable players. P 12.

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Alumni Rock Out: Guster, Houston Calls, Tally Hall

By OLIVIA DELIA (IV)

As artists with unique sounds, alumni Adam Gardner ’91 of Guster, Rich “Okie” Okamoto ’00 of Houston Calls, and Andrew Horowitz ’01 of Tally Hall have each created distinct identities for themselves in the world of alternative rock music.

ADAM GARDNER '91

A member of the nationally renowned band, Guster, Gardner is recognized at a level which he modestly calls “pseudo-fame.”

Formed in 1992 as GUS, Guster came into existence in 1995 and has released five alternative rock records appearing numerous times on television and radio. Their next album, “Ganging Up On the Sun,” will be released in June on Reprise Records.

Additionally, Gardner is now working on a project called the Lee Vees, collaborating with Dave Schneider of The Zambonis to create Hanukkah music: “There’s no cool Hanukkah music out there.

I jokingly suggested that he and I write some original rock songs that happen to be about the holiday. The second I said it, he lit up and we both grabbed guitars and started writing what is now the album ‘Hanukkah Rocks.’”

Environmental activists, Gardner and his wife, Lauren, formed Reverb, a project aimed at raising “awareness and support for the environment through building upon

the powerful connection between musicians and their fans... via an interactive eco-village while working to ‘green’ the tour and the music industry as a whole.”

Since 2004, Reverb has worked with artists such as Barenaked Ladies, Alanis Morissette, Dave Matthews, Jack Johnson, Avril Lavigne and Bonnie Raitt.

This year, Reverb and Guster are teaming up to launch the first

annual “Campus Consciousness Tour,” a “green” tour (which will restrict bio-diesel to the buses, wind power offsets to replace energy used during concerts, etc.) with an eco-village of kiosks for non-profits, alternative energy associations and eco-friendly products, as well as community service projects, discussions and a food drive.

Gardner began attending Pingry in the ninth grade after starting his first band in eighth grade with fellow Pingry graduate Cort Corbin ’91. As his Independent Study Project senior year, Gardner wrote and recorded “Final Flight,” a six-song EP made with Corbin and Stewart Range ’91.

Gardner explains that Mr. Jim Little, former director of the Buttondowns and Men’s Glee Club, “taught me all the subtle nuances of music—the stuff that isn’t written on the music staff. He taught me how to express myself through music—a true gift.”

“Forced” to take piano lessons

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Courtesy of Google Images

Guster, including Adam Gardner '91, performing live.

EDITORIAL

Reason #735 to attend Pingry: Just in case we ever forget where we land on the sliding scale of good vs. evil, there will always be something around to remind us. From professional moralizers (installments of Randy Cohen's *The Ethicist* displayed in the Upper School Office) to digressional proselytizers à la Pam Stenzel, our school and indeed the world are full of self-fashioned moral compasses, presumably to make sure that, during our tenure as teens and beyond, our own ethics don't head too far south.

Recent events at our school have prompted us to ask many questions: How much moralizing is too much? Can a person's background taint their message? How important is it to get the facts straight when delivering a moral issue? And can we ever really appreciate the moral convictions of a person we don't like or agree with?

In this issue, Record writers attempt to answer these questions and more (see Commentary, pg. 5) And yet, as the Record goes to press, I can't help feeling as though we've missed the larger question: Is all the moralizing really working?

Certainly, intentions are in the right place; high-class pseudo criminals of the Jack Abramoff variety have shown that money and brains don't exempt anyone from ethical equivocation. One may wonder, what if notoriously crooked lobbyist Mr. Abramoff had been apprehended at an earlier stage in his criminal career by the Honor Board? Or, what if every resident of Botswana, where 37.7 percent of the population has HIV/AIDS, were slightly more wary of unsafe sex? And, conversely, if Pingry were to leave us to our own moral devices, would we then be destined for a life of deception, corporate crime, and indiscriminate unprotected sex? Somehow, this sounds implausible.

At Pingry, I believe, we have a tendency to parade ethics like we invented them. And while it's comforting to believe that an assembly or two in the Hauser Auditorium will recalibrate our moral compass during its teenage flux, in reality, what they really do is reinforce (or sometimes contradict) convictions that have been formed long ago by sources outside the checkerboard halls.

The proverbial compass is a product of the world, and it may not always point towards the clock tower. I am, and always have been, an avid Randy Cohen fan, but I know of few people who base their life decisions on his weekly column; likewise, browsing her website, it's clear that Pam Stenzel's high school performances speak most clearly to those students who have already chosen abstinence as a lifestyle. For better or worse, it's ultimately we who make our own decisions. Pingry can help, but only so much.

- Chantal Berman

The Ethicist Part One: An Introduction

I am writing "The Ethicist" column, modeled after Randy Cohen's column of the same name in the "New York Times Magazine," as a means to promote greater student understanding of the Honor Code by illustrating how ethical questions arise in the everyday lives of students. Dean of students Mrs. Joan Hearst has generously decided to support this effort through weekly postings of excerpts from Cohen's column on her door.

My idea to start the column was sparked after leafing through "The Beginning of Wisdom," a book written by English teacher Herbert Hahn and published by the 1961 board of trustees that chronicles the school's first 100 years and finding Appendix A: The Songs of Pingry. Part of the "Anniversary Hymn," written by former Headmaster C. Bertram Newton, reads, "Praise God that when our school began/ Its builder was a man/ Who founded it on simple truth/ And deep respect for youth/ So, lacking other wealth of fame./ It took his honored name./ And, with it, faith in honest work/ That will not cheat or shirk." I think this song truly embodies the ideals for which our school stands.

In contemplating this song, and the others, I began to fear that we, to a certain extent, have lost sight of Dr. John Pingry's original goals as represented in the Honor Code. The abuse

of off-campus privileges, by seniors and juniors alike, demonstrates this tendency.

A junior leaves campus during a free period in order to go to get something to eat. What is that person going to say if he gets caught? "Yes, Mrs. Hearst, I went off campus even though I know I'm not supposed to," or, "No, Mrs. Hearst, I would never do that." This is where the paradox lies: will that person have been influenced by the Honor Code and answer honestly? Neither answer is necessarily commendable.

The root of the Honor Code lies in taking responsibility. I'm sure the administration would be much happier if all of the juniors stayed on campus, but as long as the juniors know that if they go off campus "illegally" that they could potentially get caught, and as long as they don't lie if caught, in effect, the Honor Code has done its job. Even though they have committed a dishonorable act, they have not lied about it. The issue still remains that they knowingly

Katie Jennings (VI)
THE ETHICIST

committed an infraction.

Now, I'm not saying that if you lied during your junior year of high school you should be branded a liar for the rest of your life; rather, I offer words of caution. It frightens me that after Honor Board assemblies, the majority of students laugh and continue their day. I urge you to actually take more than two seconds to think about the Honor Code and its effect on your actions.

You might tell your English teacher that your computer broke and hence couldn't hand in your paper. Now did you really have technical problems or did you not do your paper? Why should your teacher believe you? Responsibility begets trust.

There are three types of students in this school: people who follow the Honor Code, people who break the Honor Code and don't get caught, and people who break the Honor Code and do get caught. If you break the Honor Code and you don't get caught, does that make it right? If you were to break the Honor

Code just once, say by cheating on a vocabulary quiz, does that permanently put you in the category of Honor Code breaker, or can you redeem yourself?

It is human nature to rationalize so that we can justify our actions. For example, one might rationalize, "I am just going to cheat on this one history test, so that I maintain my average, but then I will never do it again." This rationalization might sound ok to you as you are undertaking this plan, but try telling that to your teacher. You might think, "Who cares? It's just affecting me." In essence, however, you are undermining the entire system.

When you think about our school, think about the greater community. Think about how your actions might affect the others around you. The true essence of the Honor Code is taking responsibility for one's actions.

The point of my column is not to indoctrinate, but to facilitate continuous communication between the student body and the Honor Code, through the posing of ethical questions with which we, as a community, are faced.

We welcome "The Ethicist" submissions at thepingryrecord@gmail.com

The root of the Honor Code lies in taking responsibility.

With Seniority Comes Privilege

For juniors who now enjoy the privilege of driving to school, it is sometimes difficult to understand why other privileges closely intertwined with driving, like off-campus and late arrival, are not extended to the junior class. Senior privilege is an integral part of high school life, however, and should be protected.

To understand why senior privileges should remain specific to seniors, one must first understand that driving is, in itself, a privilege for juniors that we would not enjoy at many other schools. It is not at all uncommon for schools to allow only seniors to drive, and given current parking constraints, we are lucky to retain this privilege.

Giving the right to park in the athletic entrance parking lot to seniors only, proposed by Student Government and approved by the administration, makes practical sense. Seniors leave campus far more frequently than juniors, who can only arrive in

Dan Davidson (VI)
SCHOOL OPINION

the morning and depart in the afternoon. Therefore the hassle of having to walk to the far parking lots is worse for seniors than for juniors.

The senior privilege issue deals with much more than mere practicality. An increase in privilege as we move to higher grade levels is a sensible idea. The growing process is accentuated by an increase in both the allowance of new things and responsibility for these new privileges as time goes by. For example, as freshmen we lament having to bring water out to our games. We do it willingly, however, with the knowledge that our sacrifices in lower grades will increase our happiness when we reach an age we no longer have to make such sacrifices. Similarly, junior drivers such as myself should sacrifice prime parking spaces so that they may be assured them next year.

I am happy enough simply to be able to drive. Therefore I am more than willing to endure a short walk every morning and afternoon for the remainder of this year, knowing that I won't have to make these walks next year. Let senior privileges remain for seniors, and allow the process of growth to flow naturally throughout our time in high school.

A Web (Filter) of Lies and Distrust

Several years ago, the administration promised students that the school would never block any website again. The Honor Code, according to Upper School Head Adam Rohdie, was enough to keep students from visiting objectionable sites for illegitimate reasons. Even if a few individuals took advantage of the new system, he believed, the student body as a whole could be trusted to handle its

new privileges responsibly.

Times change, though, and so do administrations. Recently the school imposed a filter of social networking websites like MySpace and Xanga, censoring websites for the first time in years.

Why the change? Several students were posting personal information on those sites while at school. In a climate of fear about online predators, the administration decided to quickly and quietly impose a blanket ban on such sites.

It is easy to understand why they took such a step. After all, most uses of social networking sites are a violation of the Technology Agreement—a document every Pingry computer user has signed. Given the transgressions that have occurred in the past, the reasoning goes, there's no better way to enforce compliance than to make it impossible for students to transgress at all.

The Honor Code, however, says that "students should understand and live by standards of honorable behavior, which are essentially a matter of attitude

Adam Goldstein (VI)
SCHOOL OPINION

and spirit rather than a system of rules and regulations." The existence of a Web blockade implies that students cannot be trusted to do the right thing on the Internet—a radical policy shift that both contradicts the Honor Code and undermines students' trust in the administration's past promises.

The web blockade implies that students cannot be trusted.

Of course, if there were no legitimate academic uses for social networking sites, it would be hard to argue with blocking such sites. (The administration is well within its rights to regulate drugs, guns, and nuclear weapons on campus, for example, because the use of those items is always a hindrance to academic pursuits.)

As it turns out, though, social networking sites do have legitimate uses. MySpace Music, for example, has royalty-free music tracks that can be downloaded freely and legally, which makes them perfect for use in film students' movie soundtracks. Health students can use Xanga to uncover teenagers' attitudes towards subjects like stress. U.S. History students can study popular reactions to events like

presidential elections by reading what people had posted on their weblogs the day after. Now none of these resources are available at school.

Certainly, if the Web filter were removed, some students would abuse the privilege of accessing social networking sites, just as some students cheat on papers despite signing the honor pledge. However, the spirit of the Honor Code—and indeed, the very idea of "innocent until proven guilty"—suggests that the presence of individual infringers is not reason in itself to block all students' access to certain sites.

If the administration wants to block a site, therefore, it should satisfy a much more rigorous test than simply showing the site has illegitimate uses; instead, the administration should show that a website is not even capable of admissible uses. Until the administration can find a site that truly has no legitimate uses, it ought to follow the wise precedent set by Mr. Rohdie and remove the Web filter entirely.

Adam Goldstein is a programmer, author of two computer books and regular speaker at several technology conferences.



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Does Publicizing Donors Cheapen Our Ethics?

As I thumbed through this year's Fall/Winter issue of the Pingry Review, I was once again disappointed to see that the Annual Report not only included a list of which families had donated to the school, but also a list of which families had given the most money.

To be fair, donating is an integral part of Pingry's finances. As the Review details, the school had a surplus of \$150,419.85 last year, with 2003-2004 donations totaling \$1,365,000 (or five percent) of last year's annual revenue. Additionally, annual giving for 2004-2005 was even greater, at \$4,763,014. Although the money needed from philanthropic support is significant, the question still remains as to whether or not the publication of donors' names is appropriate. After all, several donors are listed as "anonymous" in the Review.

Why is anonymity granted to those donors who desire it, but those who choose not to donate are exposed by glaring omission? Why is publishing names even necessary to elicit donations? Isn't giving namelessly a

Evan Rosenman (IV)
SCHOOL OPINION

far better deed than giving simply for the purpose of recognition?

Also, is it wrong for those families wealthy enough to donate to give to another cause? In the past year, both foreign and national natural disasters have elicited many dollars. Parents who choose to give extra money to people in need rather than to a

I hope that there is a way for our school to stay afloat without compromising its values.

preparatory school should not be made to feel any less worthy.

The Review encourages donating by referring to it as "giving" and "participation" and placing the most generous donors in groups with such names as "The Scholars' Club" and "The Magistri Fellows." The highest echelon, the "John F. Pingry Society" is for donations of \$20,000 or above. This means that one would

have to give roughly half the amount of the national median household income to the school in order to enter the "Society." Gifts below \$1,000 do not receive any special recognition.

The next question is of the necessity and effectiveness of this segment of the Annual Report. Will parents really look at such extensive efforts to document who has or has not contributed money and feel more motivated to give? Or will their response be the exact opposite, one of surprise and disgust? The issue goes beyond mere efficiency in soliciting donations; it is one of morality and class. Are we really willing to compromise so much of what the school teaches (tolerance, consideration and honor) in the quest to maintain a significant, but small, portion of our revenues?

Because I, too, enjoy the benefits of a wealthy school, I hope that there is a way for our school to stay afloat without compromising all the values it instills in us. Otherwise, maybe the Pingry that has influenced my morals so strongly never really existed at all.

Is Big Blue Falling Behind?

A few weeks ago, I was invited to The Lawrenceville School to participate in a squash lesson. I had never entered the school before, so I was expecting to see a campus quite similar to Pingry's. Upon driving through the entrance, however, it was obvious that my expectations were largely incorrect. I was stunned to see that Lawrenceville had an artificial turf football field, a fully functioning ice hockey rink, a pool, five basketball courts and squash courts.

On the drive back, the following questions stuck in my mind: Why do Pingry's athletic facilities lag so far behind? If our school has the money to finance a brand new middle school and entrance plaza, why won't it spend money updating its derelict sporting facilities?

To be fair, many of our indoor facilities are excellent, including the pool, the basketball courts and the weight room. It is our outdoor facilities that are lacking. Because of overuse, many of our fields have little or no grass, which can increase the rate of injuries. In addition, when it rains, water pools up on the fields, preventing teams from practicing outside for as long as a week. What, therefore, needs to be done to prevent these problems and ensure that Pingry keeps up with other private schools that have far better facilities?

Andrew Sartorius (III)
SPORTS OPINION

I have two suggestions in answer to this query. My first suggestion is that the school install artificial turf on the football field, the World Cup field and the field hockey field. There are many more advantages that come with having turf instead of grass fields. The first, and probably the most important, is that artificial turf lowers the risk of injuries in athletes. Studies have shown that artificial turf reduces the chance of injuries in

Artificial turf lowers the risk of injury in athletes.

the knee, back and joints.

In addition, artificial turf lowers maintenance costs by over \$60,000 a year. Although a turf field costs an average \$500,000 to install, very little maintenance (less than \$1,000 a year) is required. On the other hand, a grass field costs an initial \$150,000 to install plus \$60,000 of maintenance per year.

This situation is comparable to buying a house (a turf field) versus just renting one (a grass field). Initially, buying the house costs more, but in the long run, it is the most cost-efficient path. It would take just over six years before the price of the turf field would be lower than the price of upkeep on a natural grass field.

Finally, an artificial turf field would be a good idea for the school because of its durability. Turf fields are available for use every day of the year, barring extreme circumstances. In rainy weather, the surface would not become muddy but would remain usable. The situation that was encountered this year on homecoming, in which all the games were rained out because the fields were inundated with water, might not have occurred had the school installed multiple turf fields. Also, turf fields can be used over 2,000 hours a year, while grass fields can only be

used between 350 to 500 hours per year. Higher availability also raises more possibilities. The school would be able to host the Somerset county finals in soccer and field hockey, instead of Basking Ridge High School.

In addition to installing turf fields, I suggest that the school also install lights on the football field. One of the benefits of installing lights is that more students and teachers would attend games. Very few members of the community usually attend the Saturday afternoon football games, but with the installation of lights, games could be moved to Friday nights, which would increase attendance and spirit at the games.

Although the lights would cost an estimated \$200,000 to install, the energy expenditure of the lights would be quite low (only \$6.50 an hour for one bank of lights). The addition of lights, however, poses potential problems. Neighbors might complain that the light from the field disrupts their evening activities. The solution to this problem is to introduce a curfew. The lights would need to be turned off by 9 pm on school nights and 9:30 pm on weekends. Another potential problem that might arise is that the proposal would need to pass through the Martinsville City Council before the lights are allowed to be built.

I am not suggesting that turf fields and stadium lights are an absolute immediate priority. In fact, I would be satisfied to wait until the school could give the project its complete attention and make the improvements in as unobtrusive a manner as possible. Even though I am happy to wait, however, rival schools are not waiting. Every day, other institutions put forward proposals to improve their outdoor athletic facilities, but our school does not. For such an athletic powerhouse in a variety of sports, we are, sadly, falling behind the times.

Sources: DJC.com, ArlingtonSoccer.com, Goliath.frostburg.edu

Shades of Gray in the Grading System

Though we hate to admit it, our school focuses largely on grades. However, the current grading system of As, Bs, Cs, Ds and Fs is not giving each student a fair representation of his or her academic work. Letter grades are not specific enough to fairly represent individual academic achievement.

The current system is a 14-point scale consisting of four separate parts: first semester grade, the midterm, second semester grade, and the final. In this system, A+=14 points, A=13, A-=12, and so on. Using this system, there are too many possibilities for mathematical simplifications to alter a student's grade.

The system tries to mollify this blunder by tacking pluses and minuses onto the letters. Kudos for this consideration, but

pluses and minuses are not enough, and as long as we are expected to obey the Honor Code, we should not have to settle as far as fair representation goes. It is unjust for the Honor Code to demand students to act honorably and fairly when the underlying system of the school, the grading system, is not fair itself.

I believe, therefore, some changes should be made to more fairly represent our grades.

The following is a scenario in which any student might be cheated out of a grade that he or she may very well deserve. Imagine

that you receive a 96.4 average on your first semester in math class, and a 93.4 average on the midterm, second semester, and on the final as well. According to our current grading system, these percentages are changed into the letters A, A-, A-, and A-. These letters are then equated with the point values 13, 12, 12, and 12, respectively. When averaged with proper weight given to each point value (semester grades are each worth 40 percent of your total grade, and finals and midterms are worth 10 percent each), your point-system average in this class would be a 12.4. 12.4 points according to our 14 point system is an A-. Not bad work for a challenging math

course, but you deserve better!

According to the system that we should be

using, you truly deserve an A. Calculating the actual numeric averages, rather than deferring to the 14-point system, your average turns out to be a 94.6 percent, a solid A. The discrepancy is undeniable, and this scenario is not by any means the only one in which the flaws of our system can cause grading errors. It is scary to even think about how many students the 14-point system has misrepresented.

Defenders of the 14-point system argue that this system is fairly accurate, and that all grading systems have their own downsides and some degree of er-

Melissa Loewinger (V)
SCHOOL OPINION

ror. Complacency in regards to this fact, especially in Pingry, home of the revered Honor Code, is unfair to the students and does not give us the respect we are due. By our current grading system, a student deserving of an A can receive an A-, or any other 1/3 off of a letter mark.

If the school were to abolish the 14-point system and just go according to num-

bers, individual achievement would be judged more fairly. Every percentage point a student earns is an indicator of effort and should therefore be accounted for. An 87 percent is a far cry from an 89 percent. By using a strict numerical system and eliminating the letter medium and the point medium, grades would be two steps closer to their source, and students would know that they are being represented fairly.

Some changes should be made to more fairly represent our grades.



By Matt Laud (V)



SPECIAL REPORT:

Sex Education in School

Eighth and Ninth Grade Health Classes Cover Sex and Drugs

By NADINE REITMAN (VI)

Unlike Mrs. Pam Stenzel's version of sex education, the school's policy cannot be taught in an hour-long assembly period. Though the policy is far from Mrs. Stenzel's, it does have some similarities.

Taught in eighth and ninth grade health classes, sex education at the Martinsville campus focuses on abstinence, factual information and rational decisions. The school teaches that complete abstinence is the only 100 percent effective way to avoid both pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). In addition, the eighth grade health curriculum covers condoms and other forms of birth control, as well as detailed information about STDs and HIV/AIDS.

The majority of sex education at Pingry is taught in eighth grade. The objective of the eighth grade health curriculum is to "provide factual information so students can make healthy and

appropriate choices," explained Health Department Chair Mrs. Susan Marotto. She noted that classes cover decision-making exercises as well as the factual health information.

During the sexuality unit, the students look at the role of the media in teen pregnancy and sexuality, history and religious perception of contraception, genetic testing and how AIDS has made an impact on society's views of alternative lifestyles. Each unit, however, is primarily student driven with the use of research, Power Point presentations and class discussions to teach

the given subject. If students of any age want to know where to get tested for STDs and pregnancy, they should ask nurse Mrs. Joanne Childs or any of the Health Department teachers. In addition, health classes do cover that information. "If a student comes in wanting to know where he or she can get tested, I'm not going to give the student a phone number and send him or her away. Instead, I'd close the door and have a discussion with the student," explained Mrs. Marotto. Ultimately, Mrs. Childs and Mrs. Marotto would refer a student to his or her family physician or Planned Parenthood (see Information box below for contact information).

Mrs. Childs explained

that she has never liked the idea of condoms in school because "it sends a mixed message. Distributing condoms creates a false sense of security about the protections that they provide. Many students are likely to conclude that if school, in



Courtesy of Google Images

The male condom.

spite of announced risks, offers condoms on request, many students will conclude that the risks are tolerable." In addition, she warns that condoms do nothing to make sex emotionally safe.



Courtesy of Google Images

Birth control pills.

appropriate choices," explained Health Department Chair Mrs. Susan Marotto. She noted that classes cover decision-making exercises as well as the factual health information.

In eighth grade, students learn about abstinence and condoms in detail but also touch on other forms of birth control. In addition, they learn about the male and female reproductive systems, sexual assault, nutrition and alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Though condoms are taught to be the second-best way to prevent against infection and pregnancy, students are not given any hands-on experience. There are photos of condoms in the Power Point presentations given to the classes, and the students are taught how and when to properly use both the male and female condoms, but they never see or touch actual condoms. (In fact, students would not be able to see condoms in school even if they wanted to because there aren't any. The health of-



Courtesy of Google Images

The female condom.

Resources for Sexual Information

Planned Parenthood NJ Centers Closest to Pingry:

- Morristown - (973) 539-1364
- East Orange - (973) 674-4343
- Plainfield - (908) 756-3736
- Dover - (973) 361-6006

Planned Parenthood Centers Offer:

- Counseling on a range of topics, which include birth control, abortion, pregnancy options, HIV/AIDS and STDs
- Testing for HIV/AIDS, other STDs, vaginal infections, urinary tract infections and pregnancy
- Pap smears, breast exams and annual checkups
- Emergency Contraception (including intrauterine devices)
- A variety of birth control options including pills, Ortho Evra ("the patch"), NuvaRing ("the ring"), condoms, and Depo-Provera ("the shot")
- Abortion operations (available at some centers)

* Visit www.plannedparenthoodnj.org for more information and other New Jersey centers.

* Visit www.ppfa.org/pp2/ppmetronj/ for detailed information regarding sexual health, STD testing and disease prevention.

Pamela Stenzel, Guest Speaker and Author of "Sex Has a Price Tag," Has a \$3,500 Price Tag

By CHANTAL BERMAN (VI)

Following abstinence speaker Pam Stenzel's appearance at the Martinsville campus, students immediately became interested in Mrs. Stenzel's background. As Web pages loaded and magazine pages turned, suspicions were confirmed that Stenzel is, indeed, a Christian conservative with a strong background in abstinence education and pro-life advocacy.

As she mentioned in the assembly, Mrs. Stenzel was born to a 15-year-old rape victim in 1964 and was later adopted by a family with eight children, seven of them adopted. At the age of 18, Mrs. Stenzel enrolled in Liberty University's Psychology Program.

Liberty University is a self-described "independent fundamentalist Baptist university." It was founded in 1971 by Rev. Jerry Falwell, a Christian conservative well-known for his leadership of the "Moral Majority" during the 1980's, his adamant support of Creationism and "world evangelization" and his controversial statements, which include blaming "abortionist, feminists, gays and lesbians, and the ACLU" for the terror attacks of 9/11. Perusing the Liberty University website, one can find that the 50,000 students at Liberty Univer-

sity are required to attend church and chapels three times weekly, and are forbidden from using tobacco, drinking alcohol and practicing "sexual promiscuity." Liberty's Psychology Department, from which Mrs. Stenzel earned her



Courtesy of PamStenzel.com

Mrs. Pamela Stenzel.

degree, calls itself a "sound academic program with a Christian emphasis."

After graduating from Liberty University, Mrs. Stenzel served as Director of Alpha Women's Center (AWC) in Minneapolis, Minnesota, from where she draws much of the material used in her speeches, books and videos. AWC, according to its website, is a Christian organization that is "passionately pro-life." Current CEO of AWC Dick Zahn writes that his mission is to "present the good news of Jesus and see souls saved for eternity. We also want to see the lives of babies saved from abortion." AWC

was established in 1985 and has since opened several centers in and around Minneapolis.

Mrs. Stenzel went on to found Enlighten Communications, Inc., an organization which, according to its website, "empowers parents, youth leaders and educators to lead informed discussions on sexual abstinence and the benefits it produces."

Mrs. Stenzel's book "Sex Has A Price Tag" currently ranks 43,329 in bestsellers on Amazon.com, where it merits five-star reviews from users who describe themselves as "concerned parent" and "grateful teen." The "Sex Has A Price Tag" video proved very successful for Mrs. Stenzel; since its creation in 1993, it has been translated into eleven languages, won the Charleston, South Carolina, Film

Award in 1995, and inspired Mrs. Stenzel to go on lecture circuits full time.

Mrs. Stenzel has since produced other videos, including general interest films "Time to Wait For Sex" and "Sex, Love, & Relationships." Mrs. Stenzel has also targeted specific audiences with her films; "Character Matters" is a film for parents, while "Take A Look in the Mirror" is a film for girls only.

In addition to her own initiatives and media, Mrs. Stenzel

has helped to develop public school abstinence-only curriculum, which has been endorsed by President Bush and members of his Cabinet. In fact, Mrs. Stenzel traveled to the White House in May 2001 to meet the President and participate in his "Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Program," a major tenet of which is abstinence-only education in schools.

Mrs. Stenzel has often appeared on popular conservative television shows, from secular programs such as Fox News' "Hannity & Colmes" to ABC's "Politically Incorrect with Bill Maher" to religious programs such as Pat Robertson's "The 700 Club" and "The Dr. Laura Show."

According to Enlighten Communications, a speech by Mrs. Stenzel costs between \$3,500 and \$5,000.



Courtesy of Google Images

One of Mrs. Stenzel's books.

Students, Faculty Share Opinions

Manipulation

By JEREMY TEICHER (VI)

Pam Stenzel is a powerful speaker. The way she holds herself onstage, the way she emphasizes certain words, and her emotional connection with the audience all make for a gripping presentation. Mrs. Stenzel, however, manipulated this powerful emotional connection with the audience in order to instill fear and guilt.

Sure, I can appreciate Mrs. Stenzel's opinions about sex. I may even agree with some of the points she made about certain risks. But I absolutely do not appreciate or agree with the manipulative manner in which she presented her information. Take her stance on abortion, for example. She may not have said this outright, but she essentially called abortion murder. Remember when she spoke about how she was conceived in a rape and that she was glad her mother didn't choose the "death penalty" for her? Thanks, Mrs. Stenzel. The personal connection she made with the facts made me, a pro-choice member of the audience, feel as if I were against her as a person. I was forced into feeling guilty simply because I disagreed with her. I don't think her methods are an effective way to communicate facts about sex to teenagers.

When she did speak about premarital sex, many of the students did not appreciate being called "less valuable" to their future spouses than their virgin counterparts. Mrs. Stenzel said that we "should not dare" to lie to ourselves about sex, that if we so much as get slightly intimate with another person, then we have cheated our future spouses. Well, how dare Mrs. Stenzel stand on stage and yell that some students are less "meaningful" or "dirtier" than others? Who is she to impose her value system on a diverse audience, and even worse, make some students feel incredibly guilty for choices that they made? I won't even touch on her facts about contraception effectiveness, but no matter how many statistics she shrieked, the emotional message hiding behind her facts was very clear: if you don't agree with what she says, be afraid. Very afraid.

WJM?

By ISAAC DAVIS (V)

"Would Jesus Masturbate?" This is the title of the nine-page paper Pam Stenzel co-authored and emailed to my brother in response to his query into her views on masturbation. She claims that she gets this question all the time, and this paper is what she and fellow "educators" have produced to clarify their viewpoint.

I believe the title speaks for itself, but just for clarity, allow me to elaborate. The paper cites numerous biblical references explaining why God wants teenagers to repress every sexual emotion they feel until they are married. It has a lengthy section on the "Harmful Effects" of masturbation and debunks some popular "myths" about it. (Did you know that there is no scientific evidence to support the theory that masturbation relieves sexual tension?)

Her essay explains how addictive masturbation is and compares it to cocaine. In this paper, teenagers are compared to animals ("Are we saying that we can teach dogs to control their bowels inside a house, but we cannot teach young people, created in God's image, to control their sexual expression?"), and, much as Mrs. Stenzel did on February 7, it suggests that all teenagers are naïve, sex-crazed and must be restrained before we wreak havoc on a moral society.

I urge you to read this paper (just contact me if you'd like a copy) to see for yourself what Mrs. Stenzel ultimately seeks to achieve. After hearing her speak to us and reading this paper, I sincerely believe that she is waging a war not on teen pregnancies and STDs but on sex and sexuality itself, and she is disguising her crusade as religion and science. Don't be taken in by the disguise.

Spreading Fear

By SHANNON MICH (V)

Pam Stenzel's lecture on February 7 utilized fear tactics to frighten the audience into abstinence until marriage and consequently succeeded in getting attention for the wrong reasons. Mrs. Stenzel had an impressive impact on the student body. Her use of near-apocalyptic statistics and warnings allowed her to secure the attention of a large audience for the entirety of a 60-minute assembly period. Unfortunately, the same facts and figures that initially strengthened her presentation overpowered the underlying message in her speech.

Discussions following the lecture focused primarily on the statistics and admonitions of her speech. A quote from the movie "Mean Girls," "If you have sex, you will get Chlamydia and die!" seemed to be the overall theme. Unfortunately, the far less scandalous message of Mrs. Stenzel's lecture—sex has important physical and emotional consequences that should not be ignored—was lost in the wake of her controversial statements.

Worse still, the impact of using fear tactics does not stop at compromising one vaguely fanatical presentation. Resorting to fear tactics undermines the claim that teenagers are capable of making healthy and responsible decisions. Despite the partial truths of her cautions and ominous threats, it was ineffective to condemn us all to lifetimes of pain and empty relationships. Her dramatic warning that "you get what you are" ultimately detracted from the significance of the issue and undercut the dignity of the audience by assuming our impressionability.

Although Mrs. Stenzel had noble intentions, her use of fear to influence the outcome of such a personal decision is demeaning and insulting. As students, we have the right to an informative, unbiased presentation that influences our decision-making processes only by the use of facts, not by appealing to primitive fears. In attempting to shock and frighten the audience into adopting her perspective, Mrs. Stenzel does a disservice to both her own message and the fundamental issue of teenage sexual behavior.



By Matt Laud (V)

Tolerance

By DR. MIKE RICHARDSON

The kind of debate that followed Mrs. Stenzel's presentation is a healthy one. The fact that some people disagree with her approach is also healthy and promotes the kind of intellectual atmosphere on which higher education is based.

What I, personally, found disturbing was not what Mrs. Stenzel said but how some people reacted to her message based solely on her background. I heard phrases like "Christian conservative" and "faith-based" being thrown about as if they were sufficient reasons to dismiss anything she said. I believe that this quickness to dismiss a messenger based on his or her background shows a lack of tolerance that is based on stereotyping, the ultimate goal of which is to discriminate.

Equally important, this kind of discrimination is anti-intellectual and all too symptomatic of the kind of debate that tends to show up on various talk shows that have become staples on AM radio and cable television. These kinds of shows, whether they are "conservative" or "liberal," do not really advocate any kind of debate and are often antithetical to democracy. They rely on name-calling and the attachment of some kind of label to someone's argument as a means of dismissing his or her ideas as absurd or "crazy."

This is no different than what propagandists have done for thousands of years; it is typical of the kind of dehumanization of the "enemy" that often takes place when countries are in the midst of war. If you were to look at magazine articles from the period of World War II, you would find that all Germans and Japanese were portrayed as half-monster/half-human. The same was true during the Civil Rights movements (particularly after the Civil War) in the way that blacks were caricatured.

Now this type of stereotyping has become the standard in any kind of debate. All too often the debate becomes a mere yelling of labels like liberal, conservative, pinko, right winger, hawk, dove, ect. When this happens, something precious is lost. Tolerance is the key because it allows for a range of thoughts and opinions to be presented and makes for more educated decision-making. Diversity means nothing if we immediately close our minds because a speaker like Ms. Stenzel went to Liberty University or has been described by her detractors as "faith-based." So let this be a true test of our tolerance, for we are most challenged when we hear something with which we do not agree.

Changing Times

By COURTNEY JACKSON (VI)

I appreciated and respected Pam Stenzel's encouragement of abstinence. I understand why she is motivated to speak to students all around the country since sex is sold everywhere in our society and has led to many teenage pregnancies and STD infections.

In our day and age, however, abstinence until marriage, unless enforced by one's own moral, ethical, cultural or religious values, is completely unfeasible and unrealistic.

It is true that there was a time when abstinence before marriage was acceptable for women; during the baby boom era, most women got married between their late teens and early 20's. Marriage and sex almost went hand in hand in terms of timing. The female role in the American society demanded that women get married young and have children; therefore, abstinence education was not really an issue.

Women's roles, however, have changed a lot recently. Today, women are educated, active competitors in the work force; they have developing careers and are not required to get married. In fact, many choose not to. This has allowed women the freedom to make their own decisions about their sexuality. As a result of this "independent women" theory, many women marry much later in life and do not need husbands to rely on. As a result of being independent, women are entitled to healthy sex lives, which are inevitably part of their biological curiosity and desire. Thus, sexual experimentation with multiple partners is naturally expected.

Having sex before marriage in this new millennium is a huge aspect in terms of composing your own identity and evaluating who you are. It deepens your understanding of your own expectations for yourself and your future spouse. It seems like many of today's failing relationships are due to a lack of communication, largely about sex.

I think waiting to lose your virginity until your wedding night is a huge risk in itself because it is so unpredictable and you are, in a way, gambling between your own happiness and possible disappointment. Through sex, you may learn things about yourself that you wish you had known before you were married.

The Real Facts

By SAM ADRIANCE (V)

When I first sat down to write this article, I intended to defend the abstinence speaker, Pam Stenzel, who we listened to in assembly early this February and has since been vilified by many members of the community. I was going to say that it was ok that a few of her statistics might have been a little off, until I did some research. First, let's get the facts straight:

Chlamydia is extremely common, and 75 percent of people who have it don't know it. Also, while it can be cured with antibiotics when discovered, it can lead to infertility without treatment. Herpes and genital warts (HPV) can be transferred during sex even with a condom. So far, Mrs. Stenzel has gotten everything right.

It is very rare, however, for either genital warts or Herpes to spread unless it is during an outbreak of either of the diseases.

A strain of HPV can cause cervical cancer; however, it is not necessarily connected to the HPV virus that causes genital warts. The leap Mrs. Stenzel made in connecting sexually-transmitted genital warts to cervical cancer is not a legitimate connection to make based on the facts available. HPV strains 6 and 11 are the strains that cause genital warts. Strains 16 and 18 are the ones that cause cervical cancer. Though rare, these strains can be transmitted sexually, so it is a serious, if unlikely, risk of sexual activity that supports frequent testing.

Furthermore, while HPV is a virus that, in the words of Mrs. Stenzel, "can't be cured," it usually leaves the body within six months to a year, and leaves the person immune to that particular strain.

I count, just here, one major factual inaccuracy and two major manipulations of fact. Despite her faulty statistics, Mrs. Stenzel did give us reason to discuss sex, and I certainly know a lot more about STDs now than I did before, if only because it spurred me to do my own independent research. Let's use this, therefore, as an opportunity to learn—about sex and also about not believing everything you hear.

Sources: Wikipedia.org, Healthatoz.com, SFSI.com

Hidden Messages

By DR. SUSAN DINEEN

While the debate and research that has followed Mrs. Stenzel's speech has been healthy, I hope that we will never again invite an unidentified faith-based abstinence educator as the keynote speaker to provide our students with sex education. While I would agree with those who argue we should not stereotype evangelical Christians or anyone else, I think it's wrong to sanction—or appear to sanction—a speaker who uses her religious beliefs about sexual sin to scare and intimidate an audience of students. Students are vulnerable enough about sex and the very real threats posed by STDs. They don't need or deserve that kind of treatment or the cynicism that invariably follows it.

I also question the reasoning that because Mrs. Stenzel did not use religious vocabulary or symbolism, her presentation was fine for our non-denominational multicultural audience. In the end she presented religious opinions without adequately explaining that they were religious and personal, not universal. She presented opinion as fact. At the risk of being accused of more stereotyping, I would liken Mrs. Stenzel's supposed neutrality to an unidentified Nazi party member coming to Pingry in the early 1930's, being introduced as an expert on racial relations, and then threatening students with life-long psychological and physical problems if they considered inter-racial marriages. Is the problem about stereotyping Nazis—or abstinence educators—or identifying the source of moralistic positions, particularly when those moralistic positions are being used to promote psychological theories as fact, theories designed to instill divisiveness and fear? As an educator, I think it's important to examine sources to better understand how and why speakers have formulated their positions.

If we're going to have evangelists in to talk about sexuality, I propose we identify them as such and then have some other psychological, medical and spiritual speakers come in as well. Headmaster Conard's remarks a week after the assembly suggested that we will continue to pursue sex education in that fashion, a message I applaud.

A Call for Balance

By NADINE REITMAN (VI)

Everyone seems to have his or her own reason to dislike or negate Pam Stenzel's "educational" performance on February 7. Though I do not agree with her message or the way she presented it, that is not my main qualm. I am most concerned that our school did not present any other sides to the sex education argument. I think it is legitimate to have an abstinence speaker, just as long as he or she is only one of many speakers about sex.

National statistics suggest that even Pingry students are having sex, so what do we actually learn from an abstinence speaker? If students are having sex, then they need factual information about sex. Students need to be informed about all the possible consequences, not just STDs and ways to guard against them. Students also need resources to turn to after they have had sex about where they can get tested for STDs and pregnancy, who they can talk to other than their parents and where they can find medical attention without a parent's insurance card.

Since Headmaster Conard hinted at an assembly after Mrs. Stenzel's speech that the school would be addressing sex from other angles, I think the administration and PSPA should consider teaching the following subjects: the realities about STDs and how to protect against them, support services for sexually active students, the emotional side of having sex and being sexually active in a responsible manner.

Since the abstinence argument has had its limelight, it is now time for a truly educational sex talk.

Alumni Steal the Spotlight in the Music Scene

Continued From Page 1

at the age of eight—and “made fun of by all the tough kids” as a result—Gardner now appreciates the foundation he has for his musical pursuits of piano, trumpet, and primarily guitar and voice.

Gardner majored in Psychology at Tufts University where he met his future wife, Lauren Sullivan, and fellow band mates Ryan Miller and Brian Rosenworcel; of his time at Tufts, Gardner remarks, “Who would’ve thought my rejection from Harvard would be so good for me?!”

For more information about Adam Gardner and Guster, visit www.guster.com.

For more information about Reverb, visit www.rockreverb.org.

ing trumpet in ska band Face First, where he wrote and played music for more than five years.

In 2002, while working on a double major in Child Development and History at Tufts University, Okamoto realized that the band had “reached a musical wall

were misplaced at best, so we removed them, and the keyboard lines that now grace those songs are actually afterthoughts... It took a little while to carve out our own musical style, but I think we’ve got the idea now.”

“Beyond the creativity of mak-

tra, wind ensemble, a jazz quartet as well as musical theater productions, accompanying singers, and “the list goes on,” he says. “I was very active in Pingry music and as a result my musical foundation was solid.”

In 2005, Horowitz graduated from the University of Michigan with a double major in Music Composition and English Literature and Language. It was at the University of Michigan that Horowitz met the young men who eventually became Tally Hall.

Formed in 2002 and based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Tally Hall is a self-proclaimed “wonky rock band.”

“Tally Hall was named after a food court that’s near where the rest of the band grew up,” says Horowitz of the enigmatic title. Their debut album, “Marvin’s Marvelous

Mechanical Museum,” released in November on label Quack!Media, is also named in honor of this food court after an arcade machine in the court’s center.

Horowitz has won multiple notable awards including the 2004 John Lennon Scholarship Competition for writing “Good Day” as well as two Hopwood Awards from the University of Michigan for writing fiction and poetry. Additionally, mtvU, a channel of the MTV Networks, named Tally Hall one of the top five college bands in the country in 2005.

Currently, Horowitz is working on two side projects which were put on hold this past fall in order to focus on Tally Hall. He explained that the first of these projects is an actual Toy Orchestra, “a rock band for toy instruments. In its first formation we played about a dozen concerts with fifteen members. The idea was that anyone can create music.”

Horowitz’s second development is a hip-hop duo with his brother Steven Horowitz ’04, called the Baker Bros. The two remixed Jay-Z’s “The Black Album” with contemporary classical music; of the project, Horowitz said, “Mixing and the art of engineering is an instrument all in itself.”

For information about Andrew Horowitz and Tally Hall, visit www.tallyhall.com.



Courtesy of Google Images.

Members of the alternative rock band Houston Calls. Keyboard player Rich Okamoto '91 is on the right.

RICH “OKIE” OKAMOTO '00

Accepted into Pingry as a kindergartner, Okamoto is what he considers “the true definition of a lifer.”

His musical career began in fourth grade under the tutelage of Mrs. Austen. Around tenth grade Okamoto began singing and play-

ing music, the best part of playing music is to see how it contributes to people,” said Okamoto. “I like playing to kids every night. It’s gratifying to have someone come up and shake your hand, or ask for an autograph, or want to take a picture. I’m glad that these... songs mean something to someone other than us, and that we get to share that with people.”

Signed to Rushmore Records, a subsidiary label of Drive-Thru Records, Houston Calls released its debut album, “A Collection of Short Stories,” this past August. Okamoto will be playing with Houston Calls at the Hamilton Street Café in Bound Brook tonight, March 10. For more information about Rich Okamoto and Houston Calls, visit www.houstoncalls.com.

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ANDREW HOROWITZ '01

Recognized within the Pingry community for playing keyboard in Tally Hall, the two year headliner for Spring Fling, Horowitz began attending Pingry in fifth grade.

Three years after learning to play piano—at the age of 8—Horowitz was composing music. He now sings, plays guitar, drums, percussion, and “a bunch of random instruments.”

During high school, Horowitz played for jazz ensemble, orches-

And Now, for Something Completely Different

By SAM ADRIANCE (V)

“Adaptation” may be the strangest movie you’ll ever see, and it will almost certainly be the most original. Charlie Kaufman’s masterpiece is already three years old, but if you still haven’t seen it, you should move it to the top of your list. Kaufman, also the screenwriter of “Being John Malkovich” and “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind,” brings brilliance in screenwriting to “Adaptation” that no one has accomplished before.

Last for a way to adapt the somewhat plot-less book “The Orchard Thief” by New Yorker writer Susan Orlean into a movie, Kaufman puts himself and his made-



Courtesy of Google Images

up twin brother Donald (who also got a screenwriting credit for the film, making him the first non-real person ever to be nominated for an Oscar) into his own film.

The film chronicles the writing of the screenplay of the novel “The Orchard Thief,” incorporating Orlean and both Kaufmans (one real, one fictional) as characters in the story. “The Orchard Thief” is the non-fiction account of exotic plant collector, breeder and dealer John Laroche (Chris Cooper).

Trying to summarize the plot of “Adaptation” is a somewhat futile exercise, but the movie mainly incorporates content of “The Orchard Thief.” Using extensive creative license, Kaufman connects the characters

from both his story and Orlean’s novel.

Nicolas Cage plays both Charlie and Donald Kaufman. Cage draws a clear and well-acted distinction between the self-conscious but sophisticated Charlie and the dull but confident Donald. Often talking to himself on screen, Cage displays tremendous versatility. Meryl Streep as Orlean and Chris Cooper as the eccentric “orchid thief,” also give excellent performances.

The brilliance of this film, however, is in the writing. Kaufman juxtaposes the two halves of the film much the same way he juxtaposes himself and

his imaginary brother. The first half is intellectually sophisticated and interesting but ultimately pretentious and slightly boring, whereas the second half is blatantly overdone and Hollywoodized but much more exciting. Kaufman uses these intentionally trite events to demonstrate the way that he has taken his own art-movie pretensions to an extreme within his own life, in order to protect himself from being emotionally hurt. In the way the story dramatically shifts, Kaufman finds the value in the exciting but crude way that Hollywood approaches movies and life.

Ultimately, “Adaptation” is a brilliantly original take on the possibility of film that deserves a chance from anyone who considers himself a movie lover.

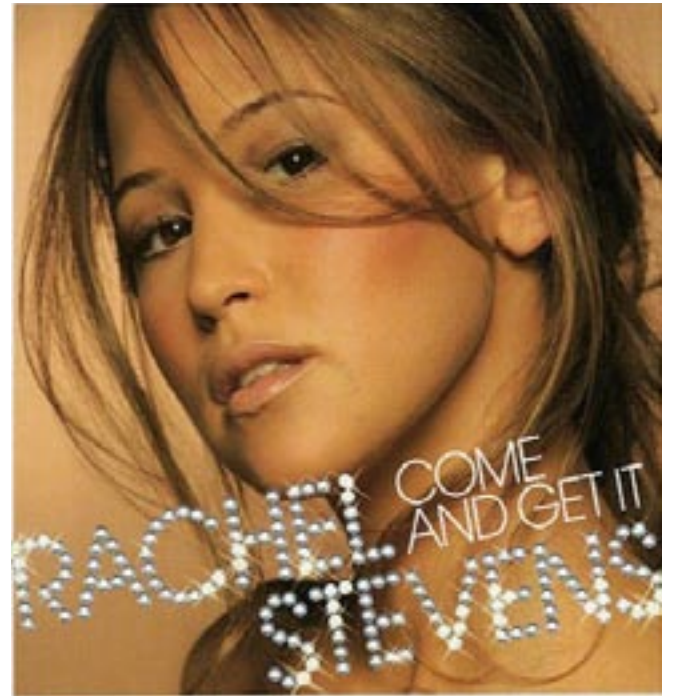
“Come and Get” Rachel Stevens’ New Album

By ALEX SNAPE (V)

S Club 7 reached their peak in the late 90’s with hits like “Never Had a Dream Come True,” “Two In A Million,” and a hit show on ABC Family. In late 2002, all seven of them split, and only one has had legitimate success as a solo singer: Rachel Stevens.

in general. The heavy drums and guitars that drive the song merge skillfully with Rachel’s sultry lyrics.

While the album flaunts its stronger upbeat songs, it also maintains a more serene vibe with “Nothing Good About This Goodbye” and “I Will



Courtesy of Amazon.com

The predominant brunette of the group has achieved success in the UK with five top ten singles, and a top ten album Funky Dory. Rachel’s sophomore album, Come And Get It is a sophisticated artfully crafted batch of modern pop songs. Working with S Club producers Jewels and Stone and Richard X, Stevens has easily come out with the best pop album of 2005.

The second single off the album, “So Good,” achieved top ten success in the UK due to its refined production and earnest lyrics. The song displays defiant lyrics like “I’ve made it on my own again / I’ll get back on my feet again / I know I’m gonna feel so good”, which blend brilliantly with Rachel’s chilling “oooooh” complementing the other vocals. The most recent single is the playful and suggestive “I Said Never Again (But Here We Are)” that shows influences of Adam and the Antz and 80’s glam rock

Be There.” The latter, while clogged with clichéd lyrics, radiantly pours glossy electro synth lines over sensuous orchestral harmonies. “Nothing Good About This Goodbye,” on the other hand, provides the album with an anthemic, yet dark, love song that flourishes with lyrics of loss and regret: “Only now I’ve let go/Honey I just don’t know/Sit right here and watch the sky above for a sign.”

Even with all the standout and acutely crafted pop songs, “Come And Get It”’s main criticism has been Stevens’s somewhat lackluster delivery of some of the songs. Had some of the songs been given to other artists, they could’ve been more positively received. While the album does lack depth and intimacy, it recompenses itself by supplying pop music with one of the best collections of catchy choruses and amicable melodies in years.

Sunrise and Cereal, the Bliss of the Morning

By RYAN MACGIBBON (VI)

To the ears of one whose eyes have been encrusted by sleep, the shuffling sound of cereal pouring into a glass bowl can be enlivening. As each morsel hits the bare glass with a plink, awareness begins to open once again. By now, eyes have been rubbed slowly, almost stretched open, and within the visual field lies a heaping bowl of one’s preferred cereal.

No matter what that preference is, all cereal holds an intriguing appearance. Picking and examining a single bit from the mound, one finds that each type of cereal is unique. There are the simple and classic O’s of Cheerios. There are the fanciful and colorful marsh-

mallows of Lucky Charms. Trix are even in the shapes of various fruits. This great diversity results in an awakening of the senses. Cereal is actually much more than sustenance; it’s the peaceful second alarm clock of the day.

Once the pores of sensation have been opened, the cereal bombards the eater with an almost magical mix of texture and taste. Fresh cool milk glistens on the surface of the uppermost cereal pieces. They jut out of the milk pool like drowning

victims grabbing for one last gasp of air. They must be saved, but only with the proper instrument; a large silver spoon works best, plunged deep into the bowl.

The first bite brings a rush of sweet smooth milk and leaves a mouth chewing con-



Courtesy of Google Images.

tently, satisfying crunches leaving the mouth intermittently. The following bites are hardly comparable, and then the cereal takes on its secondary objective as nourishment. To cope with this reality, take large bites with a hope of

recapturing the initial taste and texture. This will not be achieved, but is much less depressing than finding the last bits of cereal soggy. To close out the morning ritual, the remaining milk, which may or may not be sweet, must be sipped deliberately, trying not to ingest the fine cereal remains that wallow at the bottom of the bowl.

After this awakening rite of cereal consumption, take in the slow colors of a clear sunrise or smell the damp air of a cloudy morning. Make the day like the preparation of a bowl of cereal, each action held with some sort of intrigue. The first bite will be found in the soft comforts of bed. Sleep, like large spoonfuls, clears away all else and brings the start of a day anew.

How to Crash the Oscars

By DARINA SHTRAKHMAN (IV)

ABC is in for a "Crash" landing in the Oscar ratings. The Academy Awards were down 10 percent from last year's ceremony, based on preliminary Nielsen Media Research ratings.

The ceremony, where "Crash" won a surprise best picture trophy, drew a 27.1 rating and a 40 share. Each rating point is equivalent to 1.1 million homes, while the share indicates that 40 percent of the TVs in use last night were tuned to the awards.

The ceremony's central lesson: Play a real person trapped in wrenching drama, win an Academy Award. It worked last year for Jamie Foxx in "Ray" and this time around for Reese Witherspoon's portrayal of June Carter Cash in "Walk the Line" and Philip Seymour Hoffman as the glory-hungry writer in "Capote."

Witherspoon, who joined co-star Joaquin Phoenix as country legend Johnny Cash in singing in the film, gave credit for her performance to her mother and grandmother. "They taught me a lot and a lot of characteristics that a woman should have in life, and how tough women are and how strong we are," she said backstage.

Hoffman's performance captured Capote's charm and the author's self-serving style as he gathered material for his groundbreaking book, "In Cold Blood."

Asked what the late author would have thought of his portrayal, Hoffman said backstage: "He's a pretty elusive guy, so I don't know. I don't know. It depends on if he liked me or not and I don't know if he would."

"Crash," featuring an ensemble cast in intersecting story lines over a violent, disturbing 36-hour period in Los Angeles, was lifted by a late surge of praise that carried it over "Brokeback Mountain," which had won most other key Hollywood honors. "We are humbled by the other nominees in this category. You have made this year one of the most breathtaking and stunning maverick years in American cinema," said "Crash" producer Cathy Schulman.

"Brokeback Mountain" captured best adapted screenplay for Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, and musical score for Gustavo Santaolalla.

Supporting-performer Oscars on Sunday went to George Clooney in "Syriana" and Rachel Weisz in "The Constant Gardener." Clooney's win capped an exceptional year in which he made Oscar history by becoming the first person nominated for acting in one movie and directing another. The Edward R. Murrow tale "Good Night, and Good Luck" earned him directing and writing nominations.



Courtesy of Amazon.com

Matt Dillon and Thandie Newton star in *Crash*.

Put a Spring in Your Step with Hot New Spring Fashions in Tops, Bottoms, and Shoes

By BETH HOMAN (IV)

Since December 21, the winter solstice, the days have gotten longer and the weather has gotten warmer. Though many of winter's activities, including indoor sports, are enjoyable, the winter season must come to an end and spring will soon be on its way. Along with it come the new spring fashions of 2006.

This year women's clothes are all about the small additions: buttons, bows, and ruffles are what it's all about. Another embellishment for clothing that will be hot this spring is embroidery; any stitching on shirts or jeans will be in style. But don't get rid of your plain white shirt from last year — all you have to do is go out and buy some engraved buttons to replace the boring old ones.

If you'd prefer to go out and buy some new clothes instead, and let's face it — we all really just want to go to the mall this weekend — stop by Anthropologie. They've got the cool buttons, the frilly shirts and even the busy flower prints and earth tones that are coming back into style this year.

A classic designer that fits the fashion this spring is Ralph Lauren. Although the articles of clothing shown at

the Ralph Lauren spring trunk show were extremely expensive, the Katherine blouse, a blue ruffled shirt that cost about four hundred dollars, was the epitome of the coming spring fashion.

B C B G Max Azria also has the neutral colors and ruffled spring dresses that are essential for this year's spring fashion. For spring 2006, the

Max Azria Collection woman takes a carefree approach to dressing, blurring the lines between comfort and luxury. The collection captures her eclectic style and cool sophistication.

Another good designer for the future months is Lela Rose, who uses sequins, pearls and silks to create a pretty blend of classic and modern looks that really exemplify the coming fashions.

You may ask, what about accessories? There's always the classic string of pearls, but beads are a great idea for the neck or wrist this spring.



Strappy sandal by Brian Atwood.



From left to right: BCBG Floral Silk Halter, J. Crew Blouse, Polo Ralph Lauren Floral Wrap.

Strokes of Genius on Album "First Impressions of Earth"

By GARRETT KEATING (V)

In 2001, The Strokes' debut album "Is This It?" was praised as one of the best albums of the year. Comprised of Albert Hammond Jr., Fab Moretti, Nikolai Fraiture, and front man Julian Casablancas, The Strokes were widely recognized for their blend of music that sounded like a 1960's underground rock band that you couldn't quite remember. "Is This It?" was extremely innovative, yet you couldn't help feeling like you had heard it before. It seemed to revive the alternative genre, bringing forth similar artists, such as The Vines and The Hives. The unclear and bleak vocals of Julian Casablancas made "Is This It?" an appropriate soundtrack in the wake of 9/11.

Unfortunately, their highly anticipated second album, "Room On Fire," left much to be desired. With the exception of a few songs, "Room On Fire" was a diluted duplicate of their first album. In what seemed like an attempt at recapturing the magic of their debut record, The Strokes fell short, leaving fans wondering what happened to their unique New York sound.

Due to the general disappointment of "Room On Fire," their latest album, "First Impressions of Earth," initially drew skepticism from critics and fans before its release. The first single on the album, "Juicebox," comes on strong, with its fast-paced base line, intense guitar riffs, and angry vocals. "Juicebox," however, does not represent the sound of the entire record. Rather, it serves as an example of the band's new

eclectic style.

The album almost feels as though it is a collaboration of different artists, with tracks ranging from the upbeat to the manically depressing. This original sound, which branches far from their first two albums, revolves mainly around Casablancas's recent alcoholic abstinence.

of The World," and "Red Light" reveal the album's positive influences, and could be played at any form of social gathering. The album also carries a dark side, with songs such as "Vision of Division" and "On the Other Side," which have disheartening lyrics that are reminiscent of Radiohead.



Courtesy of Amazon.com

Anyone who has gone to a Strokes concert before knows what they're in for. A fan that does his or her research knows that in buying that ticket, he or she runs the risk of going to see a drunken attempt at singing the lyrics. On the new album, however, Casablancas's vocals are much clearer, which is a direct reflection of his sobriety.

"First Impressions of Earth" almost seems to parallel Julian's switch in lifestyle. Tracks such as "You Only Live Once," "Ize

Clean and sober, Casablancas now brings a bright energy to the album, something nonexistent in both "Is This It?" and "Room On Fire." The lead singer, however, still retains his gloomy and heart-rending ways on "First Impressions of Earth."

Strokes fans will find this new album gives them both everything they loved about "Is This It?" plus a completely original sound. I strongly recommend this album and, at fifteen dollars, it is definitely worth buying.

Watts is Electric in King Kong

By TAHA RAKLA (III)

This year's biggest and perhaps most anticipated movie was King Kong. This update remains fairly faithful to the 1923 original. The basic plotline is as follows: big monkey is found, big monkey falls in love, big monkey is captured, big monkey is abused, big monkey is killed.

Throughout his career, Director Peter Jackson has made

a habit of making movies unnecessarily long. All of the action scenes in King Kong were long, but also visually amazing, so I wouldn't suggest cutting out those scenes. However, there was one particular side plotline that was completely unnecessary: the movie wasted time

resolution.

Ten more minutes were wasted with a gratuitous computer generated scene on an icy pond in Central Park with Naomi Watts' character Ann Darrow. The scene was a little funny at first, but then it got tiresome. There were also some other awkward dramatic moments between Kong and Ann that could have been shorter. The movie should have been cut down to at least

two hours and a half. Three hours taxes one's patience and is physically numbing.

the most intriguing part of this rendition was Jack Black, a strange actor to pick for such a serious role. For the

first hour of the movie he's difficult to take seriously. His erratic eyebrow movements and profound lines proved to be a difficult combination to watch. Later in the movie, however, his performance becomes stronger when his character becomes the real villain of the story and King Kong and Ann become the main characters. Creepiness obviously suits this comedian-turned-scoundrel.

King Kong would have been perfect at perhaps two hours long. 7/10.



Courtesy of Google Images.

Naomi Watts and Adrien Brody star in *King Kong*.

creating a coming-of-age story with one of the young boys on the ship that helped find King Kong. After the ship arrives at New York, the boy completely disappears from the movie, his plotline left hanging without

Professional Set, Professional Show in Urinetown the Musical

Continued From Page 1

Urinetown means death by being pushed off the UGC building. The news shocks the rest of the rebels, but after Little Sally, played by Ashley Ulker (VI), recounts Bobby's last words of love and "hope," Hope takes charge of the rebellion. The rebels storm into UGC headquarters, killing the guards and finally, Mr. Cladwell himself. They rename the company the "Bobby Strong Memorial Toilet Authority," and everyone can finally "pee for free."

All the actors worked extremely hard during rehearsals. They had to work on not only acting, but singing and dancing as well. During some rehearsals, they were split into groups, and one group would work on the dance routine while another practiced singing the songs.

Director Mrs. Stephanie Romankow encouraged the actors to put emotions into their work. "I want to feel the adrenaline coming through your veins," she said. Clearly everyone took her suggestion to heart and created the spine-tingling finished product. Zacharias (IV) believes that "finally figuring something out - individually or communally - is plenty rewarding."

Sam Waterbury (V), who played Officer Lockstock, commented, "Urinetown is hilarious, and it's great to work on a show that you actually enjoy. The cast is so great. Every day, I laugh at the same jokes, because they're funny everyday. Everything is fresh, even though we've done it 1,000 times."

The pit band performed the music for the show from their on-stage hideaway. The pit band included flutist and French teacher, Mrs. Jane Roxbury, percussionist Connor Sheehan (III), trombonist Rob Tilson (VI), pianist Annabel Suh (V), saxophonist Dan Davidson (V), clarinetist/saxophonist and adjunct faculty member Mr. Shapiro, and pianist and conductor Dr.



Courtesy of the Development Office
Sam Waterbury (V) and Ashley Ulker (VI) perform a scene during a production of Urinetown.

Andrew Moore. Mr. Mark Watson was the show's vocal coach.

Behind the scenes, faculty members and crew worked with sounds, lights, stage-managing, and creating the set.

The director of set design, Mrs. Jane Asch, is a professional scenic artist who has been working with Pingry dramas for many years. For Urinetown, she first designed and created the blueprints for the set. Then, while the actors were rehearsing scenes, the crew was busy sawing, cutting, painting and putting the finishing touches on the set.

To Mrs. Asch, "What's remarkable is that the kids were doing this." She enjoys theatre in that everyone works together as a team, and would especially like to "extend a 'thank you' to Tom Varnes, Stephanie Romankow, Trish Wheeler and Al Romano for being wonderful collaborators, saying, "It's a privilege to be working with them."

Faculty member Ms. Trisha Wheeler was the choreographer, assisted by

students Heather Benjamin (V) and Mai-Yin Piccard (V). Many of the dances were spoofs of other musicals, including "Fiddler on the Roof" and "Les Miserables." Ultimately, Ms. Wheeler feels that "It's been a really, really, fun cast to work with."

The entire show could not have been realized without the dedication of stage managers Chantal Berman (VI) and Nadine Reitman (VI), whom Sam Adriance (V) described as, "two of the most amazing girls you will ever meet."

Others who worked behind the scenes include technical director Melinda Zoepfel (IV) and technological assistants Cameron Lan (III), Martha Johnson (III) and Scotty Ekenthal (IV). Mrs. Victoria Grant and Mrs. Shelly Hartz also contributed to the production by organizing and finding many of the props and costumes.

With amazing set design, music, and an extremely talented cast, Urinetown was an extremely successful production.

By MELISSA LOEWINGER (V)

It has been four years and three midterms since the administration decided to establish its current midterm policy. The main goal of the midterm was to "reduce student stress and overload. It didn't make sense to have one test review an entire year," said former Upper School Director Adam Rohdie. Despite the good intentions behind the midterm, after having time to assess its effects, many students and teachers alike feel that the current midterm policy has been more deleterious than beneficial, and therefore has not accomplished its goal.

Midterm policy is decided and implemented by the Academic Committee, which is a group consisting of all the department heads. A new midterm policy was going to be decided on Friday, February 17. This did not occur because, as Head of the Academic Committee Mrs. Geacintov said, "The teachers feel they need more time to define the word assessment. My prediction, however, is the decision will be departmentally divided. The week set aside for midterms will become just another normal school week during which the departments that choose to do so can administer a midterm exam in class. We will probably have a day off from school thrown in somewhere to serve as a semester break."

In general, Mrs. Geacintov said, the math and foreign language departments strongly favor the current midterm policy. Head of the Math Department Mr. Tramontana said, "I am strongly in favor of the midterm because it gives students a chance to revisit topics discussed through the fall. In math, it's a value. Another test taking experience makes kids better test takers in the future. I have also noticed that there is an extra desire to seek extra help from the department, which in itself is a good thing."

Dr. Murray, representing the History Department, said of the midterm, "I have mixed feelings. I do not support going back to what we had before. I originally supported the midterm because I did not like the full year final in which students are expected to cram and have a detailed knowledge of Chapter 1. That is inhuman. However, within my own department, the total support for the midterm has declined because of the lost teaching time. Current midterm policy is flawed in that it hasn't solved the initial problem of student stress, but has created new problems."

Mrs. Geacintov said that the Science Department differs in opinion amongst the various sub-

jects, saying, "Some science teachers want to give the mid-year exam in March, but that is impossible. It would not be a mid-year exam!"

English Department Head Mr. Shilts likes midterms but concedes that the majority of English teachers dislike the midterm. A midterm is especially problematic for the semester English courses that juniors and seniors take, Dr. Dineen said, and often teachers assign an in-class essay or some sort of assessment weighted as a normal test or paper.

Current Upper School Director Mr. Leef joined the faculty during the midterm's experimental period, and because of this timing, the 2004-2005 Academic Committee postponed reassessing and determining a definite midterm policy for a year. Mr. Leef has declared himself open to new ideas, saying, "There is more than one way to do things. Cumulative exam exercises are valuable, but the price is time. It takes a lot of time. Is it worth the time? I don't think midterms are necessary."

Mr. Leef mentioned some alternative options that he would prefer, saying, "Why can't you give a June test and the teacher

just tell students what the test is going to cover, and not make the kids scramble for their September notes?"

At Mr. Leef's previous school, Rye Country Day, he said, "We had our exams in March. That worked out in a great way."

Differing opinions among students still exist. Annabell Suh (V) said, "I'd rather just have finals because on finals there were less details. Midterms cause a lot of stress in the middle of January, we lose class time, and we have to rush through things. Also, seniors still have to take midterms during application time."

Michael Kreisbuch (VI) believes that midterms were a good idea, but that there is not enough time in the school year for them, saying, "They should extend the school year a week."

On February 21, a letter from Upper School Director Jon Leef to parents announced, "While a final decision has not been made, the traditional midterm exam format will not be in place for this coming school year. While there will be no formal Semester Break, we will move to a four day Presidents' Day Weekend from February 17-20.

No Hypnotist, No Heat



Courtesy of Google Images.

This is what you should have worn to Winterfest.

By CASSIE OSTERMAN (III)

Coming on the heels of the popular homecoming dance earlier in the year, Student Government had high hopes for Winterfest. Attendance, however, fell far below expectations, leaving most attendees disappointed with the turnout.

"It would have been good if more people had come," said Maya Artis (III). "By the end of the Friday night dance, it was apparent that only half the number of students that went to homecoming had come to Winterfest."

"The dance wasn't well advertised," Zara Mannan (III) said. "The students were given very short notice. The announcement of Winterfest, which took place on Friday, January 9, came the

first day back from winter break, which gave students only four days notice."

Even so, Winterfest has a history of poor attendance, according to Senior Class President Adam Goldstein (VI).

Last year's Winterfest incorporated a hypnotist, whose readings and predictions were a popular attraction. With the success of homecoming fresh in their minds, however, Student Government expected that a Winterfest dance could draw more people than the hypnotist did. They hired the DJ from homecoming instead of a hypnotist.

The dance took place in the Hyde and Watson gym in the early evening. To create a more intimate space, the overhead curtain was lowered to separate the gym into two halves.

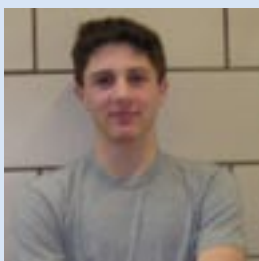
The decorations for Winterfest were reduced from the homecoming dance, which featured a huge indoor tent and many sit-down tables. "The décor was kind of boring and bland," Artis said.

The food received good reviews, however. "There was a large buffet, bearing all kinds of drinks and food, set up along the wall. The food was incredible," Mannan said.

Reactions to Winterfest's "skibum" theme were mixed. Although a large majority of Student Government members supported the choice of theme, "it wasn't a theme that anybody could relate to," said Mannan. "Maybe it should have been a Hawaiian-oasis theme."

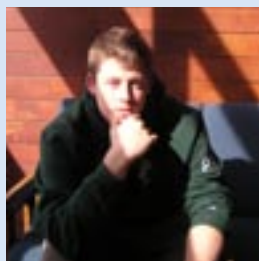
"The dance had a lot of potential," Mannan said. "We learned some things about what works and what doesn't, so we'll know how to set it up better for next year."

Word in the Hall: Are Senior Parking Privileges a Good Idea?



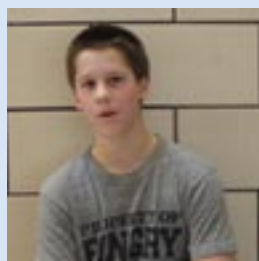
BEN MACKOFF (V)

"It's ridiculous because the real world does not favor anyone."



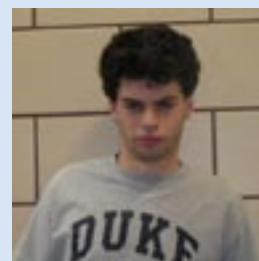
JUSTIN OPLINGER (VI)

"I think they're great because they're really convenient."



WILL STAMATIS (III)

"Why do they get privileges?"



JEFF ZIMMERING (V)

"What parking privileges? Wait, I'm not supposed to be parking there?"

Students Dress Up, Get Down, and Give Back Every Performance, the Crowd Went Crazy

By JILLIAN LUBETKIN (V)

Pingry is prized for its strong sense of community and its emphasis on the importance of community service and outreach. The community service committee, with advisor Ms. Hartz, helps students construct their own opportunities and

discover their own ways of giving. Students that show initiative and generate their own projects highlight some of the school's emphasis on helping others.

On Friday, January 13, Pingry's Upper and Middle Schools held the first dress down day of 2006. Inspired by his baby sister who has

Down Syndrome, Anthony Parisi (II) decided to collect money for National Down Syndrome Society. He teamed up with Meredith Skiba (IV), who volunteers at the Stepping Stones School and Early Intervention Center for children with developmental disabilities, and Evan Rosenman (IV),

who is a founding member of Support Our Siblings Autism Foundation.

The \$1,250 raised was split between the three organizations. The students augmented the dress down day with a bake sale that raised almost \$500. Anthony was pleased by the success of the project, and said, "If you don't have a cause close to your heart, think about it closely and work hard at it."

Hanna Morris (I) is another student willing to share her time and talents. Hanna decided it would be fun to record books on tape. She researched institutes for the blind and decided to send recorded books for preschoolers and kindergartners to St. Joseph's School for the Blind in Jersey City, the only school for the blind in New Jersey. She has recorded almost a dozen books and has inspired friends to do the same.

Hanna, Meredith, Evan, and Anthony all created their own projects after finding causes that they were passionate about. Other Pingry students have also shared their time and resources in upcoming community service opportunities, such as the Intergenerational Prom on February 14, when students ate, talked and danced with local senior citizens while the sounds of the But-ton-downs, the Baladeers, and the Jazz Band set the mood. Another community service option is visiting to the Market Street Mission in Morristown to bring toys to those who have none. For community service opportunities both in school and in your town, contact Community Service Coordinator Mrs. Shelley Hartz, or Community Service Club President Jen Hetrick (VI).

By DAN DAVIDSON (V)

Paul Zindel's "Every 17 Minutes the Crowd Goes Crazy," the Drama Department's first ever winter play, demonstrated the depth of acting talent in the community. With many actors participating in the winter musical, the black box winter play still provided a thoroughly entertaining, albeit brief, performance.

Directed by alumna Alicia Hogan '02, the play revolves around a group of children who have been abandoned by their parents and left alone to fend for themselves. The interactions between the children, along with their own personal reflections on the situation, constituted some of the most enjoyable parts of the play. These same scenes also displayed the best acting, with very believable conversations between characters and heartfelt soliloquies that enraptured the audience.

While many of us may think that finding ourselves home alone would be great, the performance truly emphasized that our parents, although not always our favorite people in the world, are always there for us when we need support.

Many viewers thought the most unique feature of the play involved the interludes featuring commentary on the popular culture-dependent lifestyle of today's average

teenager. While some perceived these brief scenes as out of place or over the top in their presentation, actor Ned Adriance (III) disagreed, noting that these scenes were "the best part of the play in that they were a really close representation of what has become modern advertising and popular culture."

Although an immediate response is to blame the parents for the mental unraveling of their children, these thought-provoking interludes make one ponder the role that society plays in determining the happiness of its members.

The most common complaint regarding this otherwise stellar presentation was its brevity. There was little plot development, and some felt that this was a waste of the talent with which the actors played their parts. This complaint was vastly outweighed, however, by the quality of the overall performance.

The terrific performance of "Every 17 Minutes the Crowd Goes Crazy" proves why we should all try harder to see our peers perform in all walks of life.

Ted Moller (V) was impressed by the quality of the acting and also "enjoyed the personal setting of the attic theater because it made the messages of the play far more powerful."



J. Ellwanger (VI)

Senior Balladeers serenade a lucky senior citizen at the Intergenerational Prom.

More Applications, Competition

Continued From Page 1

leagues and others in the field that, across the board, the admissions rate was particularly tough this year. I can't state that as fact, but schools like Georgetown released a statement that the early applicant pool had increased but they accepted fewer students to create more space for regular decision applicants. I'm pretty sure others did the same."

According to Yale Daily News, Yale accepted 724 of its applicants, resulting in a 17.7 percent early action admissions rate. In the spring, Yale will be accepting 1,150 more students with an admissions rate of 6.8 percent.

Yale received a record 20,903 of total applications this year, a 7.5 percent increase from last year. Yale President Richard Levin attributes the spike in the number of applicants to Yale's new financial aid policy. In addition, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions Jeffrey Brenzel stated that this year the Admissions Department particularly searched for students coming from poor families.

Other Ivy Leagues schools also said that they have received more applications this year than in previous years.

The University of Pennsylvania received 20,350 regular-decision applications, an increase of 8 percent from last year. Similarly, Columbia University experienced a 9 percent increase, receiving 19,730 applications, while Brown University received 15,871, a 6.7 percent increase. Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard and Princeton have not yet released admissions data.

While Princeton has not released its regular decision admissions information, it has still released its early decision statistics. Princeton accepted 599 of the 2,236 early decision applicants, an acceptance rate of 27 percent that decreased by 2 percent in comparison to last year's acceptance rate.

This year more applicants applied and many of them were highly qualified. "We found this early decision pool to be very powerful," said Dean of Admission Janet Rapelye in the Daily Princetonian.

The average SAT scores at Princeton, however, were similar to earlier classes', with the only exception of a new writing section. The average critical reading, math, and writing scores were 720, 730, and 720 respectively.

The middle 50 percent of this year's senior class received an average score of

610-720, 620-710, and 610-720 for critical reading, math, and writing respectively.

Williams, consistently a top-ranked liberal arts school, admitted 221 of 554 applicants, accepting 41 percent of the class of 2010. The number of applicants also increased by 5 percent.

The average SAT scores for the accepted students were 708 on Critical Reading and 711 on Math.

Mr. McClellan points out that despite this trend, Pingry's senior class has not suffered too grossly, saying "Pingry has always surpassed the average acceptance rates, and this year is no exception."

MYSPACE, XANGA AND FACEBOOK BANNED IN SCHOOL

Continued From Page 1

students but that the Administrative Group "made the best decision possible."

He continued, "These kinds of decisions are ongoing conversations. We are still in the process of developing computer curriculum for both middle and upper schoolers, and we are also planning cyber-safety talks with students and parents."

Students, many of whom were previously unaware of the web filter, have had mixed responses to the ban. Tai Demaio (VI) said, "I like it, because now all the middle schoolers can't go on and take up all the broadband width," while Ashley Walker (VI) said, "The filter is ridiculous and unnecessary, because people can get around the barrier."

Many students, however, are largely indifferent to the filter. As Carl Ruggiero (VI) put it, "I don't use Xanga or Myspace or Facebook, so I don't really care."

For a student's response to the Web filter, turn to Commentary on page 2.

Fashion, Fine Arts, and Finance for Seniors

By JEN SOO HOO (VI)

Friday, January 27, 2006 was originally a dress down day, but not for seniors. The Pingry Alumni Association organized their seventh annual Career Day for all seniors to dress up and participate in. In 1999, Jackie Sullivan, Director of Alumni/Parent Relations started this program with the goal for seniors to learn more about different future careers through the eyes of previous alumni.

The day started in the Macrae Theater listening to the Keynote speaker, Jane Sarkin O'Connor '77. Ms. O'Connor is currently the Features Editor of Vanity Fair Magazine. She told the seniors that she was just like them when she was their age wondering, "Where am I to go?" She told the students about how she originally wanted to become a medical doctor, but later switched to an English major because she wanted to be part of the magazine world.

She related her struggles in moving up from an Editorial Assistant position of Interview magazine to Features Editor of Vanity Fair, working with recent Hollywood stars such as Brad Pitt, Nicole Kidman and Lindsay Lohan. She explained her issues adjusting to her new



Courtesy of the Alumni Office.

Seniors listen to State Senator Tom Kean talk about his work on Career Day.

job and said, "The only way I could make it work was to make it work for myself."

Having a keynote speaker set the tone and direction for the rest of the day. Ms. O'Connor's final words of advice were, "Do everything to the best of your ability, be indispensable, have a positive mental attitude, and strive for excellence. If you do this, you will succeed."

The seniors then headed out to attend three consecutive 45-minute career sessions chosen in advance. The choices were Advertising/Marketing, Behavioral Science, Fine and Visual Arts, Investment Banking/Finance,

Law, Media, Medicine, Entrepreneurship, Sports Management/Marketing, Engineering and Politics. Overall, the three most popular choices were Entrepreneurship, Advertising/Marketing, and Investment Banking/Finance.

These sessions were supposed to be informative and helpful in students' decisions for future careers that would suit them. Some seniors knew what they wanted to pursue as a career while others didn't. The point of Career Day was to provide an opportunity for everyone to gain more information about potential careers that interest them.

Mr. Charlie Stillitano '77, current CEO of Champions World, even took it one step further by handing out free T-shirts at the end of the Sports Management/Marketing session.

Although the day was considered a success, everyone still had different opinions about Career Day and what they liked about it. Adam Goldstein (VI), whose favorite session was Politics, thought the Keynote speaker was "overwrought." Sarah Oberrender (VI), who like the Media session the best, thought Career day as a whole was "actually very interesting and fun".

Life After Graduation:

From Pretty in Pink to Entourage, Show Business Takes FourSight

By HALLIE BIANCO (IV)

George Heller '97 runs his own production company, Four-Sight Entertainment, where he represents writers and directors for film and television, and is a producer. This entails finding and working with writers he represents and acquiring properties and rights to produce.

Since he went to college for screen writing, Mr. Heller said the part he enjoys most about his job is "living vicariously through our writers by reading screenplays." He also likes "being the owner of my business and being my own boss."

Outside of his work, Mr. Heller "loves California because you can go one hour and ski and another hour and go to the beach." He also loves the outdoors and spends his free time biking, running and, of course, "keeping in touch with Pingry through the website."

Mr. Heller got his big break

through Pingry and The Record when he interviewed fellow alum Andrew McCarthy '80, star of 80's classic "Pretty in Pink," for an article. "I got him do a phone interview...and then I kept in touch with him and I stalked him and called him and I convinced him that I would stop if he got me a job as his assistant. So

"See as many movies as possible, read as many scripts as possible, and just make movies." - George Heller

the summer after eighth grade I worked as his assistant in New York making this really bad, cheap horror movie called "Dead Funny," which no one ever saw. I got him coffee and stuff. He had grown up in Westfield, and in Summit there was this bakery called Trost's Bake Shop, and he

remembered their coffee cake. He said he'd hire me if I brought him coffee cake, so every morning I'd go get him baked goods. I credit him and that experience with being where I am today."

His advice to kids interested in the movie business is simple: "See as many movies as possible, read as many scripts as possible, go to film school, and just make movies." He also recommends Mr. Delman's class, saying, "I owe a lot of my success to him. I took his class and that was the first time I had held a camera and it's just an amazing class."

He also has some movie recommendations that his firm has been involved with: "We're executive producing 'Haven' with Orlando Bloom and Bill Paxton and 'The King' with Gael Garcia Bernal and William Hurt. His firm also represents Cliff Dorfman, who is one of the writers of the HBO show 'Entourage' and is nominated for a Writer's Guild Award.



Courtesy of Google Images.

The cast of HBO's hit show "Entourage." George Heller represents award-winning Entourage writer Cliff Dorfman.

Comedy Writer Ruprecht '87 Is the Word Man Behind Letterman

By DARINA SHTRAKHMAN (IV)

Another career day speaker, Tom Ruprecht '87, has also hit big in the world of media. Mr. Ruprecht said

that his favorite teachers were "Pat Lionetti, who let me write silly little things for The Record, which really got me started on my way," and Dean Slyuter, "who allowed me to take a creative approach to writing papers and provided a lot of wise advice that helped me better my style."

After graduation, Ruprecht went on to the University of Pennsylvania, where he majored in English. "I enjoyed some of the literature classes I took there. Of course, there were other classes (such as 19th century poetry) that I absolutely despised. I don't know what it is, but the moment I see poetry, my eyes just glaze over. I can't tell you how happy I am to be at a point in life where no one can ever force me to read another poem."

Ruprecht has since gone on to first intern for "The Late Night with David Letterman Show" and then get hired as a full-time comedy writer for him. He highly recommended finding a good internship, saying, "My internship with Letterman gave me more practical knowledge than any class I had in college." He has also written for GQ Magazine and his op-ed pieces have been featured multiple times in the New York Times.

He enjoys his job mostly because, "I really enjoy the immediacy of doing a show every day. It's a blast being able to write jokes about what's going on in the world that day and have it be on TV a few hours later. Of course, doing a show every day also creates an incredibly stressful environment and makes me a prime candidate for a future heart episode, but it's a small price to pay to keep you people entertained!"

He said that he first got interested in writing when

bookstore one day when I guess I was in 10th grade. Anyway, I started browsing through a book of Woody Allen's short stories, and I recall actually thinking, 'Wow, this is actually his JOB to write this kind of stuff! How can I swing something like that for myself?' And thus a mediocre career in comedy writing was born!"

In terms of advice for aspiring comedy writers, Ruprecht's advice is absolutely honest and startlingly

"Comedy writing is a competitive field, there's no question. Everyone is looking for some magic solution about how to break in and there is none." - Tom Ruprecht

ly simple. "Comedy writing is a competitive field, there's no question. Everyone is looking for some magic solution about how to break in and alas there is

none. First and most important is to write and write and write and write (oh, and then write some more). I realize you are all probably hoping for a piece of advice that somehow doesn't involve painstaking effort, but it's really important. Another thing...is the entertainment world is changing (for the better) in that a ton of new opportunities are popping up. I'd advise young writers to seek out ways to get their stuff seen on the Internet. In a profession full of depressing odds, this is a good thing."

He added that "equally important, an internship allows you to see what it's like to work in a professional environment. It also allows you to see if this is a type of job you even want to pursue. Be prepared for the fact that you're at the bottom of the ladder. Trust me, nobody wants to hear an intern griping about the fact that they have to do photocopying. Just go into it realizing that's the gig, keep a good attitude and work hard, secure in the knowledge that if you do a good job, it will lead to other, better things."

On the Bestseller List: Gernet '74 and Karp '92

By EVAN ROSENMAN (IV)

David Gernet '74 has undergone a meteoric rise in the publishing world. The founder of the Gernet Company, a New York literary agency, Gernet's clients include John Grisham, Peter Straub, Stewart O'Nan, and drummer-turned-autobiographer Tommy Lee. Yet, while being

bond. Gernet describes Grisham as a "very good friend" and says he is "smart and articulate, but very down-to-earth."

When Grisham's agent died in 1995, he asked Gernet to become his agent, and the following year the Gernet Company was born. Gernet personally handles about 15 clients while the agency has about 60 in total.

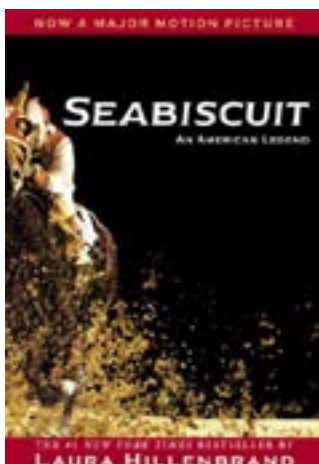
While he claims not to have a particularly unique approach to business, Gernet only works with those writers whom he considers friends. "I just happen to feel that it would be very difficult for me to do my best work on behalf of someone who I dislike," he says. "I want to believe in them personally." Furthermore, while the Gernet Company only accepts about 15% of unsolicited materials submitted by authors, its founder looks for only one thing in manuscripts, namely, the ability to write.

Ability is "so apparent, so quickly, it's kind of remarkable," said Gernet, who further acknowledges Pingry as the place where he learned to recognize good literature.

An absolutely pleasant interviewee and quite clearly a "regular guy" himself, Mr. Gernet was forced to wrap up our conversation quickly to pick up one of his four children. He shared a final few words on Pingry and the effect it has had on his life: "There's no question that what I did in high school...steered me toward this career because it was in those years that I realized what I cared about. Pingry helped me discover

writing and books. Without [it] I might never have discovered that."

And with a few words of farewell, it's back to the wild world of publishing, and family, for Mr. Gernet.



Courtesy of Amazon.com

JONATHAN KARP '92

By DARINA SHTRAKHMAN (IV)

When it comes to book publishing, Jonathan Karp '92 seems to have the magic touch. This former head of Random House and current Editor-in-Chief of Warner 12 has worked with everyone from Alan Alda to Donald Trump on their respective memoirs as well as published a string of hit books including "Seabiscuit," "The Orchid Thief," "Shadow Divers," and "The Dante Club." Mr. Karp has said that his current job as Editor-in-Chief was a long time coming. "I've always loved books and admired authors," he explained. "When I was a newspaper reporter, I was devouring books by major American writers of fiction and nonfiction. Their work seemed so wise and commanding. I figured the best way to learn about good writing was to be in an environment where I could be exposed to great writers like them, so I answered some classified ads in The New York Times for editorial assistant jobs and was hired by Random House because I could type 100 words per minute. I stayed for 16 years."

His current company, Warner 12, an offshoot of TimeWarner, is famous for only publishing twelve books a year, one every

month. This, Karp said, gives the company optimum time to focus "relentlessly and exclusively" on the selected author's work.

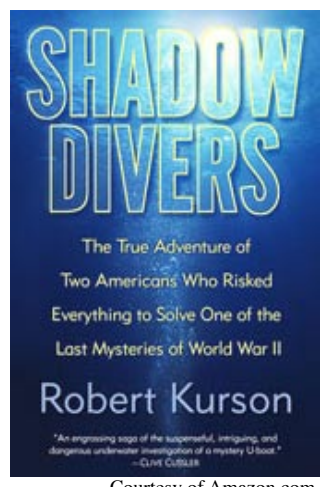
When asked how he chooses just twelve books a year to publish, Mr. Karp explained, "The one word answer in terms of our standard is singularity. We're a filter basically and we take that pretty seriously. Our standards include originality, exclusivity, and I'm really looking for affirmation, redemption, something positive. A little bit of sizzle is absolutely necessary. But basically, you kind of know when you've got something special."

For those interested in his line of work, Mr. Karp said to "follow your curiosity and your passion. The rest will follow." He added that "silence and timidity will get you nowhere."

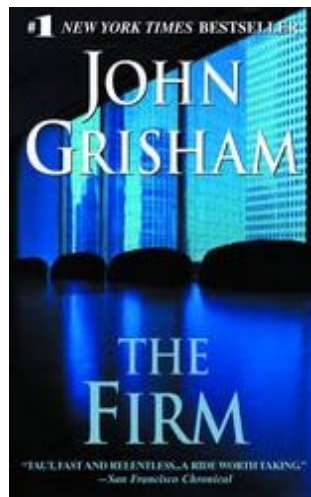
In a wonderfully candid moment, Mr. Karp ended with, "I frankly can't believe they pay me to do this; I love it."

Karp came to Pingry as a freshman in 1978 and graduated in 1982. In addition to JV baseball ("Mr. Tramantona cut me from the varsity because I was basically good field, no hit"), he wrote for The Record all four years, was the Editor-in-Chief, and had a column called "The World According to Karp," which was a reference to one of his favorite novels, John Irving's "The World According to Garp."

He said, "I'll always be grateful to Pat Lionetti for setting me on my way and for being the first teacher to inspire and encourage me as a writer and an editor."



Courtesy of Amazon.com



Courtesy of Amazon.com

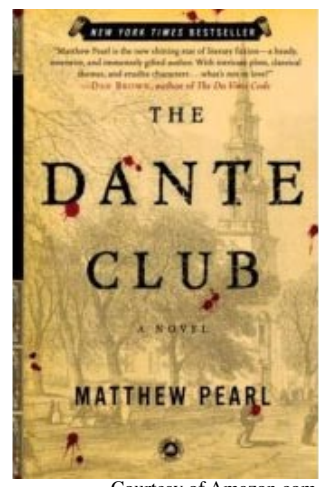
interviewed, Gernet is humble, courteous, and refreshingly down-to-earth.

When speaking of his career, Gernet attributes his success "first and foremost to luck. Anyone who does not admit that luck plays an enormous part in their career is just being dishonest. I was very lucky."

He remembers that during his later years at Pingry, "you had to write every week, so part of your high school life was writing." This, he says, has served him "better than anything else I ever learned, studied, or did."

After graduating from Pingry, Gernet attended Brown University and then started a nonprofit company promoting music. Eventually, he moved back to New York to choose a career.

He took a secretarial position at a publishing house and rose to the position of editor-in-chief at Doubleday by the age of 32. Two years later, he bought the publishing rights to John Grisham's second novel, "The Firm," for \$200,000 dollars, and thus began their partnership, which grew into both a professional and personal



Courtesy of Amazon.com

Alumni in the Work Force

Beyond American Pie: The Bender Brothers' Hollywood Hits

By DARINA SHTRAKHMAN (IV)

Prior to interviewing one of our most famous recent graduates, I entered the name Chris Bender into the search box of IMDb.com. The feeling that resulted could only be described as more than slightly overwhelming. Mr. Bender, who graduated class of 1989, has produced some of the most buzzworthy films of the last decade, ranging from "American Pie" and "Monster in Law" to "Red Eye" and "A History of Violence."

He explained that his interest in movies and storytelling stemmed from his childhood. "When I was younger, my dad purchased one of the first home video cameras and my brother [Mike Bender '93] and I used to make short movies and then edit them with two VCRs," he reminisced. Another factor was simply "growing up in New Jersey with not much to do other than seeing movies all summer at the AMC theater in Morristown."

"It was always in the back of my mind to pursue a career in film," he said. "I just didn't have any direct contacts. I hadn't taken film classes at Pingry although looking back, I know I would have enjoyed it. During my sophomore year at Bucknell I interned at Life Magazine, which exposed me to industries outside of my circle. Prior to that I was mostly interested in investment banking. With that in mind, when I graduated, I wrote letters to 30 or 40 production companies and

studios and followed up with cold calls and spoke with whomever answered the phone looking for a way in. The only available opportunity that resulted from all those letters and calls was an unpaid internship in the publicity department at New Line Cinema. Despite having little interest in publicity at that time, I rely on those contacts and that experience today as a producer. Additionally, due to that internship,

"When you're a director or writer you're generally forced to focus on one project at a time.

I'm really happy as a producer for now."

- Chris Bender

I was later introduced to a young writer whom I ultimately developed 'American Pie' with."

At New Line, Bender was given his first paying job working as a company "floater" and then as an assistant in theatrical distribution. "Both these jobs gave

me to become a literary manager at an upstart production/management firm Zide Films, Bender met and hired Mr. J.C. Spink, a fellow Bucknell graduate with an interest in producing. After a year and a half, the duo left Zide and started their own production company, Benderspink, out of a three-bedroom house in Hollywood where they were also roommates.

Bender seems to genuinely love his job and does not plan on switching to any other aspect of the movie industry. "When we started our company, we managed fourteen young writers and we developed their screenplays in order to initiate their careers while also providing us with material to produce. By working with young writers on multiple projects, my screenplay development skills continually improved. I enjoy working on more than one project at a time. When you're a director or writer you're generally forced to focus on one project. I'm really happy as a producer for now."

He then detailed his encounters with celebrities: "Yeah, you still get starstruck, because there's always going to be someone that you haven't met yet whose work you admire. What's nice about working in this industry is that you can sit down and meet someone famous about a project and then you realize that you're in it for the same reasons, to tell a great story. I worked on 'Monster in Law,' with two huge movie stars and I remember sitting down for



Courtesy of Google Images.

Rachel McAdams acts in "Red Eye," a film produced by Chris Bender '89.

the first time with Jane Fonda and I very much felt like a kid from New Jersey, very much out of place, but once it became a creative conversation, I was comfortable... for the most part." Mr. Bender came to Pingry as a freshman in 1985 after attending public school in Florham Park. He fondly recalled being "a runner and swimmer," and added candidly, "I was also involved in an assortment of clubs so that I could enhance my college application." Some of his favorite teachers included Mrs. Grant, "because freshman year in her class was the first time I explored and enjoyed creative writing," and Mr. Bourne "because he was just kind of funny; I actually enjoyed physics." His favorite Pingry memory is "definitely my friends, whom I'm really close with, more so, I found, than most people my age. We still have annual get-togethers despite being all over the country. The whole high school experience at Pingry was wonderful, a lot of which inspired the

first 'American Pie.'"

His advice to aspiring writers and producers is both motivating and comforting. "The nice thing about the film business is that, unlike many other businesses which require specific schooling, you don't necessarily need to go to film school. You just have to find a way in. When I look back on what got me to where I am now, there wasn't really a formula. It's really perseverance, hard work, and taking advantage of every opportunity and contact you make. If you can find a way into the film business, suddenly, you'll see an entirely new world of opportunity that you never knew existed. I started in the film business as an unpaid intern only knowing that I wanted to be involved in cinematic storytelling. I wasn't sure if I wanted to be a director, a writer, or a producer, but I took every opportunity that I could to learn about the business while always keeping an eye out for the next opportunity to get a little closer to my original goal."

MIKE BENDER '93

Not to be outdone by his producer brother, Mike Bender '93 has achieved tremendous success in his own right, as a Hollywood screenwriter, writing such films as "Not Another Teen Movie" for Sony Pictures. After working with such Hollywood hotshots as Tom Cruise, Will Ferrell, Ben Stiller, and Jack Black ("I've been writing the short films for the MTV Movie Awards for six years and pretty much everybody has come through at some point"), Bender says he no longer gets star-struck. "Once you move out here, you see enough of those people and their real lives and realize they're just as boring as the rest of us. Unless I see someone I really admire, like maybe if I ran into a director like Mike Nichols, somebody that I really respect, I might get nervous."

His advice is simply to do what you love. "Honestly, I would just say that it's really easy. Whatever you feel creatively passionate about, especially with writing, just do it. I think the best thing to do is to write not so much what you know (so many people say to write what you know) but more what you love. The type of movies or books you enjoy, that's what you should try to emulate."

Bender joined Pingry as a member of the freshman class in 1989. Mr. Romano, he said, was his favorite teacher. "I did a few drama classes with him and my senior year I did an ISP where I had to write a play and he was my advisor. I became good friends with him and respected him very much." He also fondly remembered Mr. Keating as "the first person to give me some encouragement on writing." His interest in the movie industry started early. "My junior year of high school, I did a bunch of internships, including one at Universal and enrolled in a screenwriting class at New York University's Tisch School." After graduation, Bender attended Middlebury, where he majored in English and graduated in 1997. "In college, I took a lot of creative writing and literature courses. The film department was small there so I focused on reading classics and doing a lot of short story writing. After college, I started working for "Life Magazine" and thought I would do publishing and then realized my passion was for film."



Courtesy of Google Images

Jennifer Lopez and Jane Fonda in "Monster in Law," produced by Chris Bender '89.

me invaluable insight into how a finished film moves through the distribution and marketing pipeline." After leaving New Line

Prestigious Political Position for Steve Elmendorf '78

By DARINA SHTRAKHMAN (IV)

All you need in order to comprehend Steve Elmendorf's political prowess is to enter his name into the NYTimes.com search engine. Over the course of his 20-year career, Elmendorf '78 has worked for such prominent Democrats as Dick Gephardt and presidential candidate John Kerry.

Elmendorf came to Pingry as a freshman in 1974. Since he was "not a big sports guy," he enjoyed writing for The Record. By the time he graduated in 1978, he had also completed his ISP, working on the campaign of Peter Shapiro for Essex County Executive. His favorite memories include a "wonderful group of friends, many of whom I still stay in touch with."

After graduation, Elmendorf attended Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, where he majored in history. At Trinity, he participated in Student Gov-

ernment and was Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper.

After the experience with the Shapiro campaign, Elmendorf continued to help out for various elections. Between 1982 and 1984,

"Whether through ISPs, internships, or any other method, try to get in to politics any way you can. Get a taste of politics to see if it's really what you want to do." - Steve Elmendorf

he worked on the Walter Mondale for President Campaign. He then moved to Albany, where he worked for Governor Cuomo for a year. His next stop was Seattle, where he worked for United States Senator Brock Adams for two years, before moving with to his Washington office and working there for another four years.

Elmendorf then got his biggest break working for Dick Gephardt for fourteen years, the last six of which he spent as Gephardt's Chief of Staff.

He cited Gephardt among his favorite politicians. "Dick Gephardt was a terrific guy and a great public servant. I also got to work a lot for Bill Clinton during his term, and he certainly was uniquely talented."

When asked about how today's politically interested youth should go about getting into politics, his advice is simple: always take opportunities. "Whether through ISPs, internships, or any other method, try to get in any way you can. It's great exposure and a way to get a taste of politics to see if it's what you really want to do. Of course, work on a presidential campaign at any level if you can. Every opportunity I've had since working for Mondale, I would say, came from my initial work on that presidential campaign."



Courtesy of Google Images

Above: Steve Elmendorf '78 has worked and campaigned with such prominent Democratic politicians as Dick Gephardt, Walter Mondale, and 2004 Presidential hopeful John Kerry, right.



Courtesy of Google Images

Girls' Ice Hockey Has Fantastic Season After Doubts About Having a Team At All

By KATHLEEN SOO HOO (IV)

Girls' Ice Hockey has had a successful season so far in terms of both growth and development. Many schools do not even have girls' ice hockey teams, and Pingry is fortunate to have one.

At the beginning of the year, the future for the girls' hockey team did not seem good as many seniors had left, and there was not a lot of interest from the rest of the underclassmen. It seemed,

for a short while, as if Pingry would have to join the many other schools that did not have a girls ice hockey team.

Luckily, however, many freshmen and several other underclassmen decided to play and the team was formed. Pingry, again, was able to distinguish itself in this aspect from other schools. The team was off to a rocky start after losing their first four games. However this was because only seven out of the fourteen girls on

the team had played ice hockey before, and three or four out of the fourteen girls had never skated. Another disadvantage was that they only had fourteen girls on the team, while the normal number is fifteen.

Despite these drawbacks, Pingry still managed to keep the goal difference to a relatively small number. After beating Summit 9-1, the girls had a renewed start and only lost by two goals to huge rival Princeton Day School.

They kept up this energy for the next two games which they won. Angela Ramirez (IV) summed up their progress by saying, "The key to our success has been our teamwork because it is not like the beginning of the season in which we were just relying on the top players, but now everyone contributes their part to the team's success."

The season went on, with the girls fighting hard until the PREP Finals's versus Princeton Day School. Earlier in the season, the girls had lost twice to this team 7-0 and 6-2. However, the girls still remained pumped and focused and ready to try their best. At the end of the game, Pingry tied 3-3 with goals by Angela Ramirez (IV), Lisa Harris (VI), and Liz Moore (V). The game went into overtime, and with only three minutes left on the clock, Toland Lawrence (IV) scored the winning goal.

This game was a great comeback for the girls and it showed just how much they had improved throughout the season. As Coach Mags said before the game, "Records are only predictors, not indicators." This year, the girls' ice hockey team was able to proceed onto the finals, and along the way each team member learned a lot and had a lot of fun.



The girls' ice hockey team.

Courtesy of L. Harris (VI)



C. Jennings (VI)

Tai DiMaio (VI) is a great fencer, just ask him.

Senior Fencer DiMaio Defends Saber Title

By WILL BRUNDAGE (IV)

Senior fencer Tai DiMaio titled in saber on March 11 2005 at Rider University. DiMaio has gotten off to a great start in the 2006 campaign to reclaim his title. He has already won districts and posts a record of 24-3. DiMaio was featured in the Star Ledger as the stand-out athlete during the week of February 6.

DiMaio started fencing in eighth grade and commented that he "picked it up pretty quickly. At first I thought the sport was a joke but I later began to realize how much stress it puts on the body and mind. It takes a lot of athletic ability and mental strength to fence at a high level." The sport puts a lot of pressure on the individual because the fencer constantly has to be a step ahead of his or her opponent on the strip.

DiMaio motivates himself to be successful by thinking of his uncle, who was being

recruited by "Farm League" baseball teams but became partially paralyzed after an accident. "I can look at my uncle and realize that I shouldn't take anything for granted and live every day to its fullest," he said.

As a fencer, DiMaio's biggest strengths are his athleticism and his strategic thinking. His ability to think on his feet is extremely important because fencing is a sport of quick reflexes. For every move there is a counter-attack. He has to be able to plan out the duel in his mind so he knows the right actions to take for every one of his opponent's moves.

"Fencing has taught me discipline and responsibility for my actions," explained DiMaio. Though the senior is not sure what college he will attend next fall, he plans on continuing his fencing career at the next level.

Katie O'Connor Makes a Splash In the Pool

By ERIN TONER (V)

Katie O'Connor is this year's captain of the girls' swim team. Their '05-'06 season has been phenomenal, and the team can proudly claim a 11-0 record in the regular season, the first girls' swim team in school history to be undefeated. O'Connor herself has had a rewarding season. O'Connor swims in the 50m, 100m, 200m, 200m relay, and 400m relay freestyle. The relays are her favorite event to swim, and she has been to Meet of Champions every year with the relay team. Just recently, she placed top ten in the 100 free at counties.

O'Connor started swimming just as a hobby during the summer, and then joined club swimming when she was 11 yrs. old. Once she joined the Pingry team, she quit club swimming and dedicated herself to the team. With the additional Saturday and morning practices that are mandatory in the beginning of the season, it would be a challenge to do both. All the effort is completely worth it, however. O'Connor describes

both the team and the sport as "rewarding."

When talking to O'Connor, one can have no doubt that she is completely committed to and truly cares about the team, which she describes as "ridiculously close." Everyone supports each other on the swim team, and they also provide motivation for each other. However, it turns out that, unlike some other sports, there isn't much distinction between the girls' and boys' teams. Both boys and girls are united and supportive of each other, and the coaches do not limit themselves to helping just one gender. Even so, beating the boys in practice is one of the things O'Connor enjoys the most, "other than winning, of course."

Not only is the team incredibly supportive, but so are the coaches and her parents. The coaches "push her to do her best," and her mother comes to every meet. Whatever the means of motivation are, they seem to be working. The whole girls' swim team is on a roll. "I'm really proud of the girls this year," O'Connor said, "No one knew what to expect."



Courtesy of K. O'Connor (VI)

Katie O'Connor (VI), far right, and her relay teammates.

A season with an undefeated record was truly the result of long, hard and ultimately rewarding hours of work. The biggest victory so far was the meet against Scotch Plains, ranked #4, to whom Pingry lost last year. The team barely lost their semi-final meet against

Villa Walsh on February 22. The Meet of Champions took place on March 4 and 5. O'Connor attended the meet all four years of her Pingry career. O'Connor anticipates swimming at Georgetown next year.

The Boys' Hockey Team Ices Competition

By ANDREW SARTORIUS (III)

What began as a season of many questions for the boys' varsity hockey team has ended as a season of relative success. The team seemed to be headed for a difficult campaign this year as it lost ten seniors to graduation last June. Last year, even with the ten seniors, the team failed to find any consistency, finishing with a losing record of 9-12-3, and lost 4-1 to Bridgewater in the SCIAA finals.

It was thought that this year would be an especially trying year because of a lack of leadership and experience from the team's senior players. However, Coach Mr. Magadini had a different outlook. In an interview with the Star Ledger on December 1, Mr. Magadini said, "They're all working hard. It's a good bunch of guys. Practices have been crisp. I'm happy with the way things have been going". Led by junior captain Dan Ambrosia, senior Bard Riccardi, and Star Ledger Newcomer of the Year sophomore Dan Weiniger, the team has done well this year, amassing a record of 10-10-4.

Through the first five games, the team defied expectations and had three wins, one loss and one tie, beating the third ranked team in the prep school standings, The Hun School, as well as Jefferson Township and MKA. Then, the wheels seemed to come off and

Big Blue looked as if it was falling

towards another mediocre season. During their next five games, the team had one win and four losses, including a 5-1 defeat at the hands of Hillsborough in the first round of the SCIAA tournament. They also suffered a 9-2 defeat to the fifth ranked team in the Star Ledger top 20, Morris Knolls. Following a 5-2 defeat to Morristown Beard, the team finally began to pick up its game. A solid 4-3 victory against Whippany Park followed this defeat, and after a slight four game relapse, when the team tied two games and lost two, the team was back to its win-

ning ways.

Recently, the team went on a four game unbeaten streak, including a 9-1 victory over Parsippany Hills and a 2-0 win over the fourth ranked prep school, Pennington. In the game on February 9, the team's winning streak was reversed in a 6-1 loss against Pope John, the third ranked team in the Star Ledger poll and in a 10-4 loss against nineteenth ranked Ridge. The team finished up its season by participating the Mennen Cup and the state tournament. They lost to Morris Knolls at the Mennen Cup, but won their state playoff game against Monsignor Donovan on

February 27. Their last game, in the second round of the state tournament, was on March 7.

Considering Big Blue's expectations at the beginning of the season, this year has not been a wasted year, but rather a year in which all members of the team have been able to rack up consistent playing time and gain valuable first team experience. According to freshman Timmy Naratil, "Everyone has played a lot this year, which has helped make our team stronger. Hopefully, because of this, we can perform better next year."



Courtesy of NJ.com

Goaltender Bard Riccardi (VI) tries to save a West Morris player's shot.