

The Pingry Record



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MAY 2003

MIDTERMS ARE COMING!

BY DAVID SPETT (V)

Stress, anxiety, cramming, all-nighters, grades, pressure ... it's all coming with next year's midterms! Just kidding.

In actuality, Mr. Neiswender hopes that the decision to add midterms next year will reduce student stress. Instead of dealing with information in a big, year-long clump, he explains that it will be easier for students to study for midterm exams. "The old system just didn't make a lot of sense," he says. "We had to wait until June to test material from September."

Mr. Neiswender notes that most schools and universities test on a semester basis. He says that more frequent exams on less material make the information more distinct, helping students "get a better handle on it." Furthermore, he adds that "the more you get



Rebecca Speiser (V)

Students will have to hit the books next January!

used to taking tests, the better you become at taking them."

Junior and senior English classes formerly without exams will now have both midterms and finals. The headmaster explains that "there are English exams in college, and some of our alumni claim to have a hard time preparing for them because we don't have those exams here."

Although the exact exam structure has not yet been decided, Mr. Neiswender says that the new midterms and finals will probably be 90 minutes in length. They will take place over three days, with two exams on Wednesday, two exams on Thursday, and one exam on Friday. An optional "Review Day" to see teachers and ask questions will take place on Tuesday.

The midterms will be held from January 21-23 and the finals from June 2-4.

Make-up exams will be

scheduled for Friday afternoon. Students not taking an exam that afternoon will be free to go home early.

Midterms will be followed by a four-day "Semester Break," with no school from Saturday, January 24 until the following Tuesday, January 27. "This is very much a college model," explains Mr. Neiswender.

Material taught in the first semester, the headmaster notes, will not be included in the second semester exams. The only exception is "year-long themes" presented by teachers at the beginning of the year. "Those themes will be made clear to everyone," Mr. Neiswender says. He adds that each class's midterm and final will essentially follow the same format.

The headmaster explains that "only themes and second semester material will be included on the final exams." He

gives an example that in English class, first semester novels might be included on the final exam, though specific grammar included on the first semester exam would not. "It's up to each individual teacher and department head," he says.

Some students have expressed concern that the new midterms will be too close to the return from Winter Break. In fact, they will take place only two weeks after vacation ends. Mr. Neiswender feels, though, that "it should be plenty of time to prepare. We'll come back from break and have plenty of time to start our review. It works for most schools."

The headmaster explains that to hold the exams before Winter Break, the entire school schedule would have to be altered so that the middle of the year would land in De-

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'Our Town' Opens Macrae Theater

BY ELIZABETH SEBESKY (IV)

Members of the 2003 Drama IV class created a moment of Pingry history with their production of Thornton Wilder's "Our Town," staged in the new Macrae Theater on April 24, 25, and 26. As the first performance in the new state-of-the-art wing, it was dedicated to "all those drama students present and past, whose creativity and commitment have made this wonderful space possible."

Mr. Al Romano, director of "Our Town" and head of the drama department, explains, "I thought this would be a wonderful way to open the new theater with an American play that reasserts traditional American values



Courtesy of Pingry.org

This picture on the Pingry Web site blends portraits of actors from the teaser.

and that requires the audience and actors to create the reality on the stage."

Seating about 230 people, the theater was appropriate for the small-town setting of "Our Town." John Kissel, who played George Gibbs, said, "Acting in front of a full audience really helped me to feel the character I'm playing much more than in practice. It just forced me to commit 110%."

The relationship between the actor and audience was facilitated by the intimacy of

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Iraq War Teach-in Ignites Controversy

BY CHIP SHAFFER (IV)

The war in Iraq has affected everyone in some way. People have watched friends and family members go off to fight or, at the very least, noticed the nonstop news coverage on TV.

When the U.S. invaded, some were shocked and angry while others supported the action. Many continue to hold strong opinions both for and against the war. Because some Pingry students and faculty wanted to voice their feelings against the war, Seniors Aaron Sussman, Rebecca Livengood, Sarah Saxton Frump, Jon Mangin, Anne Kroeger, Jane Sawyer, and Sonia Alam originally planned an anti-war rally for Saturday, March 29.

The rally was canceled, however, because it would have required the presence of police. While the rally was initially open to anyone inside or outside the school, the administration decided to turn the event into a forum exclusively for the Pingry community. Anyone could sign up to speak and express views on the war.

After the change in plans was announced, Aaron Sussman sent a letter to all of the seniors in which he ex-

pressed his "support and anticipation" for the forum. He also stressed that though the assembly was not mandatory, "this forum is being run by students, not the administration." As such, he hoped everyone would attend to hear different opinions on the war

one that the forum was indeed just that, a forum, and was not trying to impose one view over another. She concluded by saying that "knowledge is good and understanding of important affairs necessary." Neither in favor of nor against the war, the forum was a way



Dr. Susan Dineen

Alex Levey (VI) and Aaron Sussman (VI) close up after a day of peace reading outside the school.

and support fellow classmates.

Almost everyone attended the forum, which took place on Wednesday, April 2. Just before it began Rebecca Livengood reminded every-

for ideas to be shared and beliefs to be expressed. And indeed, many ideas were expressed. From adamantly pro war to pro peace, all partici-

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Susannah Bragg (V)

Seniors Lauren Miller, Denise LaForgia, and John Kissel eat a healthy breakfast to start the day.

RUBEN • ARTS CENTER • TUITION • AND MORE

A Perspective On Assemblies

Two similar assemblies have been presented this year, one by the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation on October 11 and the other by the AIDS Resource Foundation for Children on March 7. Both days were Jeans Days, and students were required to make a charitable donation to dress down. Each charity was then asked to make a presentation during the assembly period.

While these assemblies were well-intentioned and included moving presentations from survivors of the diseases, I found both to be less educational than they might have been. With all due respect to the Pingry parents who shared their traumatic experiences with us — as well as to the organizers, who spent much time and effort in preparation — these assemblies could have been more effective if they had advertised less and taught more. My issue is certainly not with the people involved, but with the advertising.

At the breast cancer assembly early in the year, a lengthy video was shown, with various people pictured on camera saying “thank you” to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. A few women also presented, talking about the charity’s activities and describing what they do.

The presenters also spent time sharing their personal experiences with breast cancer. Though these firsthand accounts were valuable, moving, and certainly took courage, I believe the surrounding advertising prevented them from receiving the emphasis they deserved.

Another educational aspect of the assembly was part of a pamphlet that was given to all students. It included a small insert that explained how to perform a breast self-examination. Once again, however, the pamphlet mostly encouraged us to donate to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

A more recent assembly by the AIDS Resource Foundation posed similar problems. The presenter, Mrs. Faye Zealand, gave us a history of the charity and told us numerous stories from her past. She thanked us for donating but explained little about the severity of HIV and AIDS in our world.

The educational aspect of this assembly came when Yahya, a teenage boy with AIDS, shared his experiences and life story with us. Yahya’s story did provide insight into what it’s like to live with such a life-threatening and life-altering disease, but he had less time to speak than Mrs. Zealand.

Yahya’s speech also didn’t fully convey how dangerous AIDS truly is. He said at one point that he wasn’t too worried about the disease because of the medicines that are available to help it. As some members of my History class astutely noted, Yahya was probably only trying to keep a positive attitude, but it worries me that such a statement could give the impression that AIDS isn’t very dangerous because of the medicines available for it.

In truth, AIDS remains an uncured pandemic. UNAIDS estimates that over 20 million people have died from it, with 40 million others forced to live with it for the rest of their lives. In South Africa, as Marissa Drell reported in a recent Vital Signs article, one in every nine people is HIV positive.

Mrs. Childs and Mrs. Marotto, co-coordinators of the breast cancer assembly, strongly disagree with me. They say that the purpose of their assembly was not to “teach about the diseases,” because we already do that in health classes. By inviting representatives from the charities, they were more interested in helping students identify with the traumas associated with these diseases. They wanted to demonstrate that fundraising for research can lead to hope and a cure.

They also feel that my opinion “is not shared by the majority of the students and faculty who attended.”

Perhaps that is so. I know that these assemblies had good intentions, and I certainly think that Jeans Days for charity should continue. Nevertheless, we may be making a mistake by simply asking charities to make presentations. It seems as though they are unable to present the kind of valuable, educational information that I, at least, would prefer. Since it is important for us to know where our money is going, perhaps the charities could instead give us sheets or pamphlets that describe what they do.

—David Spett

Time to Reflect And Cut Loose

Recently, when pressed for a definition of “senior cut day,” I was challenged to explain this momentous event in the life of all Pingry seniors. What are the origins of cut day? What is the purpose? What does it mean?

Unless you are a senior, cut day has no meaning, no relevance and, in fact no significance. However, for a senior, cut day represents a turning point, a milestone, a right of passage, the beginning of the end of high school life, and the first tentative steps toward college and adulthood. It’s a day for *celebration*, a day for *reflection*, and a day for *contemplation*.

Celebrate the past four years — we made it through the good times and bad; we grew older and wiser, experienced the joys of victory and the pain of defeat; we endured the homework, rose to the SAT challenge, embraced the college application process, drove an automobile for the first time and now the end of high school is in sight.

It feels good, it feels sad, and just plain exciting! What a journey this has been and now we stand at one of the major crossroads of our lives. The on-ramp to adulthood and independence.

Reflect on all the friendships made, the knowledge gained and the experiences that will last a lifetime. Think about the trips abroad, visits to galleries, concerts, performances, games, homecomings, bonfires, assemblies; a rich and colorful tapestry of Pingry experiences that have shaped our characters and defined who we are and what we may become. Will we ever forget these days and will the memories ever fade?

Contemplate the future and the aspirations and dreams that lie ahead. The road in front of us will be both exciting and challenging.

There will be periods of optimism, pessimism, anxiety, exuberance, celebration, joy and occasionally despair. But the Pingry character is steadfast and we have the self-assurance to weather the storms and realize our dreams.

We have learned the core values and ethics that will help us to succeed and make a positive contribution to society. We have ambitions and now are truly ready to make our mark on the unsuspecting world. We are the future.

Cut day is therefore not just a day to skip classes, sleep late, and have fun. It’s a day with real meaning to seniors — a day for celebrating, reflecting and contemplating. A day to be proud that our graduation from Pingry is imminent and that we *will* soon be embarking on the next phase of our lives. It’s a day to feel good and a day to treasure.

For those who have just celebrated cut day — good luck and don’t forget your Pingry values. For those yet to experience cut day — enrich yourselves with the Pingry values. And let all of us be thankful that Pingry has prepared us so well.

— Clare Kelly



HITS & MISSES

- Hit:** “Sound of Music” sounded great
- Hit:** Flip Flops are finally legal
- Hit:** Pingry Flip Flops are here!
- Miss:** We had to wait until May 1
- Hit:** Snow day hits in April
- Miss:** Shovelling snow in April
- Hit:** Arts Wing opens
- Hit:** New Expanded Bookstore/Snack Shack
- Hit:** Spring Sports!
- Miss:** “Our Town” inaugurates Macrae Theater
- Hit:** Dress-down day raises thousands for F.O.P. research
- Hit:** Prom coming up on May 23
- Miss:** Checks are overdue
- Hit:** Seniors are on ISP
- Miss:** Seniors are on ISP
- Miss:** APs & Finals are upon us
- Hit:** School’s almost over

The Pingry Record



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SHORT AND SWEET

BY DENISE LAFORGIA (VI)

*Eulogy to My Jeep*

When I was younger, I couldn't wait to drive the Jeep. Most of you probably remember it. It was a 1986 white Wrangler with a V6 engine. It had a few dents from my older brother's minor accidents. Next to Tomo's bug, it was probably the most senior car in the student parking lot. But it had class.

It was the Jeep and I drove all over the state of NJ-to fencing tournaments, friends' and relatives' houses, and gas stations when I got lost driving to the aforementioned places. In the summer, with the top

down, it took me to countless ultimate Frisbee games, and in the winter, the 4-wheel drive got me through the snowstorms.

My Jeep did have some flaws that got me very frustrated. It stalled at the most inopportune times, like at the top of the Pingry driveway when there was a line of

cars behind me. It didn't like to start when the weather was cold and/or rainy. Electrical problems caused the dashboard lights and taillights to short a couple of times. Both times were when I was driv-

ing at night. The gas gauge wasn't set correctly. The needle stayed at the halfway mark until one morning, usually when I was running late for school, when it would drop to empty.

I was shocked and awed.

This past winter, which I'm convinced caused hell to freeze over, really tried my patience with my car. As the temperature plummeted, I became increasingly aware of the gaps in my car that allowed

frigid air, rain and snow to enter. Every morning I dreaded my commute, for I knew even once I got to school, I'd be only slightly warmer than I was in my car. One night this past winter,

I was driving back from my fencing club along one of Whitehouse Station's many "country roads." The road was icy because it had been flurrying all day. I was driving slowly, but as I braked com-

ing around a turn, the Jeep went off the road, ran over a huge rock, and hit a sapling.

I was "shocked and awed" and luckily unharmed. I actually didn't stop to consider whether I was injured. My beloved Jeep couldn't be resuscitated. It was rushed to the car hospital, and the prognosis was that it only had a few weeks left to live.

I was oppressed with the guilt that I'd killed my car. Yes, my Jeep made me irate every time it wouldn't start, but I loved the car nonetheless and I felt completely respon-

sible for its demise. It was probably best that I wasn't home when Whitey was towed away to car heaven.

I had some resentment toward my current car. Incredibly mature and grateful, I know. As adorable as a blue VW Bug is, it's not the Jeep. But I quickly became a big fan of the efficient heating system, as well as the standard transmission, CD player and trademark flower on the dashboard. It also has yet to pay a visit to the repair shop. I think it turned out to be a good fit. As my astute friend remarked, "Hey Denise, your car's small, just like you."

DARE TO KNOW

BY AARON SUSSMAN (VI)

*Raiding the Hive*

I cursed violently as I swung the towel towards the light bulb on which he stood. His wings beat rhythmically and his stinger stood poised as he darted from the light to the vent. I grabbed a random book from my shelf to accompany the towel, my primary weapon. The book happened to be "The Life and Times of Goethe," which I took out from the Pingry library during my sophomore year for some inexplicable reason.

Now fully armed, I engaged in hand-to-hand combat with The Wasp for roughly ten minutes. My room became a battlefield. A family of Trolls and a teddy bear named Wally served as collateral damage as the towel struck them off of their respective homes on my bureau. My rage blinded me; I paid no attention to my slain comrades and instead pursued that wasp to his grim death.

Each slash of the towel represented a twenty-minute block spent staring at the computer screen waiting for a column to appear. Each launching of Goethe toward the doomed wasp reflected the frustration of having a white space and nothing worth filling it with. Furiously, I attacked that wasp; furiously, I attacked abandoned goals, complacency, and regret. I attacked plans that would never come to fruition and ideas that would fizzle away like trendy philosophy.

That wasp is what was keeping me from creating something new, from writing something I could be proud of. His looming threat prevented me from being honest and, most unfortunately, from taking risks. I hated this wasp because he didn't want to hold me accountable; he didn't want to express himself, engage in healthy discussion, explore the situation intellectually. He didn't want a synthesis of ideas; he didn't want mature and productive discourse. No, he wanted repercussions; he wanted to sting anonymously and escape.

By allowing the wasp to dictate my actions and impede my creative attempts, I turned him into an authority. His authority was attained through my fear, not through any legitimate means that would justify his power. After disabling his flight capabilities, I watched as he crawled desperately around my floor, pondering a last-ditch effort of either victory or escape.

I could have helped him. I could have outstretched my arm, taken him by the wing, and become his merciful savior. Instead I looked into his eyes, lifted Goethe above my

head, and crushed the oppressive beast against the wooden floor. After giving his corpse one more glance, I went downstairs and called my mother to pick him up and flush him, out of fear that he might start buzzing around again when I touched him. That was the end of my valiant embroilment with The Wasp.

The wasp had to die. He was old; he was obsolete. His struggle for power was based on his manipulation through fear and his control through intimidation. We cannot allow ourselves to be stifled by stingers; we cannot allow our-

selves to let power go unchecked. At the beginning of the year, I wrote a letter from the Student Body President that was put into the handbook and the directory. In it, I wrote, "Ideally, an academic institution should foster the free exchange of ideas and encourage discussion and diverging viewpoints. Unfortunately, that goal of true learning is often severely hindered by rigid tradition and narrow perception. . . . Students are the ones who need to call for new ways of thinking and demand that their ideas not be sculpted by a given authority in order

to conform to conventional thought."

In this quote lies a somewhat embarrassing irony. Originally, my letter included some innocuous (read: blandly unfunny) jokes which I had hoped would set a moderately lighthearted tone. While this letter was being read over by several sources for approval, I was told that the jokes were inappropriate. Sorry, that is misleading; the jokes weren't inappropriate, the concept of "humor" in the student government letter was inappropriate. I hadn't realized that some things are just too sacred for

bzzzz.

During the all-day forum on the war that I held the week after the rally was supposed to take place, I had made flyers to alert students about it that gave the information, encouraged attendance, supported the "teach-in" assembly, and asked for people to come outside for the purpose of "being informed and to support the rally that was canceled." I was made to cut off the bottom of the signs that mentioned the rally. Bzzzz, bzzzz.

After the "teach-in" assembly in which I participated, I was told by two students in

lent out of fear of those who disagree or, even worse, will be offended.

Do not be intimidated. When you offend those who are certain they are right, when you make people who don't want to feel uncomfortable feel uncomfortable, when you place intellectual and creative honesty above fear of reaction, you will evoke not just rancor from a certain contingent, but, much more importantly, respect from many. Instead of buzzing around, stingers vibrating with eagerness, when we don't agree with something, why do we never hold the person accountable? Let's make that person defend his position, let's test his intellect, let's challenge him instead of intimidating him.

We should be ashamed that students sometimes feel scared to disagree with a teacher because of that teacher's attempt to have the class conform to the teacher's opinion, as was the case when the aforementioned students wanted to say that they liked my speech. "Students are the ones who need to call for new ways of thinking." This is true when arguing for a student government proposal and this is true when overthrowing an oppressive regime. It has to start with youth, with students. Be skeptical of authority, be aware that things don't always have to be this way, and be ready, when the time is right, to pick up that Goethe book and make a difference.

Students are the ones who need to call for new ways of thinking.

humor. So, I removed the jokes. Bzzzz, bzzzz.

Fast forward to March, when I and other students organized a rally to protest the war in Iraq. After the rally was canceled, it was announced to students that the problem was that I had publicized the rally on a Web site. I thought this matter had been discussed and we had agreed upon that I would alter the message on the site; I wasn't even asked to take it down completely. The decision to cancel the rally occurred after all this had been settled. Yet, the students were told it was my fault. Bzzzz,

two different classes that their respective teachers not only disliked my speech, but decided to "persuade" their students to adopt that same viewpoint. Bzzzz, bzzzz.

Now, I mention these things because they are my own experiences. All of you have these experiences; all of you have felt scared to take risks, scared to be honest, scared to express yourselves in certain ways. All of you have seen authority make decisions you disagreed with and have felt the need to declare those decisions as unjust. All of you have felt the pressure to be si-



Z STANDS FOR POORLY WRITTEN

BY ROBERT ZACHARIAS (V)

Procrastination.....tion

Procrastination is a bad habit and a good habit, a blessing and a curse, but mostly it is fodder for a column that I was supposed to write a while ago. You see, this column you are now reading was "due" something like two or three months ago, but yet I find myself writing it in its entirety starting at 11:34 p.m. on a weeknight.

Why, you may ask, am I so stupid? Well, the answer to that question would take far more space than I have been allotted, but I will attempt to explain my stupidity that is the bane of so many other students' lives: sweet, sweet pro-

crastination.

Procrastination and I first really became acquainted in my Lower School years. I remember a major project due for sixth grade math, and since I am me (some would consider that repetitive, but they're wrong) I was stuck at the last minute with a lot of work to do. After staying up late trying to work on the project, I decided to wake up early and finish it. This was logical, especially since I used to wake up early to do homework. But it is not something I will never do again; for me, waking up early is like not waking up at all, or waking up and being high on morphine (or what I've heard it's like).

Back then, I had no alarm

clock and had to use my watch to wake me up. I set the watch alarm and then taped it to the side of my head to be absolutely sure it would wake me up.

Being rudely awakened at 3:30 a.m. with a terrible beeping in my ear, I began working on the project. I failed miserably and took a day off from school to finish, which I haven't done ever since. (I'm such a good person.)

I finished the project and went to school only to find out that we could have requested extensions if we wanted, and that was pitiful; if I had known it, I could have spent my time more reasonably. Is there a lesson here? Possibly. (Actually, I just enjoy remembering the

time I taped a watch to my head. I think that's pretty funny.)

In high school, I routinely write papers the night before they're due. Well, more than routinely, actually: I probably haven't started a paper early this whole year. Literally.

This is simply a bad habit; it's the way I work. The funny part, though, is that I do it consciously. I say, "Well, I've got free time now that I could use wisely. No, that's a bad idea. I'll surf the web for three hours."

At Pingry we get punished for tardiness, and that's the grand motivation. The school justifies its tardiness policies by saying that they're preparing us for higher-level work

environments. Deadlines are deadlines, they say; if you don't meet deadlines, you will be summarily assassinated.

To those justifiers, I proudly use a friend of mine as an example. He's a post-graduate student who has to write long papers (40, 50, 60 pages routinely), and he often hands them in months late with no penalty! Why doesn't he get penalized for grossly late work?

At the Lower School, late work was severely penalized. At the Upper Campus, it's reasonably penalized, and in graduate school it's apparently no big deal. So, you see, the whole concept of worldly preparation and the sense of responsibility that Pingry is so happy to instill in us may be

falsely placed.

Besides, even if you do get to a place with non-negotiable deadlines, you'll probably have much more free time than we do as high school students. You'll also have the ability to set your own hours. In other words, won't those deadlines be more reasonable?

To conclude, I love making ridiculously garish claims that I falsely support with one flimsy piece of evidence. Procrastination should be rewarded with higher, not lower, grades on assignments, since procrastination is a sign of real worldliness and humanity.

And by the way: never, ever read my column or use it for any other purpose than kindling.

Festival Inspires Student Writers

Dr. Susan Dineen



Relaxing after a long day of poeticizing.

BY KATHRYN LEVINE (V)

On Friday, March 28, students flocked to the auditorium to listen to readings from a number of guest writers.

At the start of the assembly, Dr. Susan Dineen spoke about the Justin Society and its founder, Dr. George Ring, who funds the Society in honor of his son, Pingry graduate Justin Ring.

She mentioned her new nickname, "Dr. Dove," and the nascent war in Iraq. In keeping with this tone, many authors stressed the political undertones in the work they read throughout the day.

Dr. Dineen then introduced Dr. Jeffrey Levine, Pingry's former poet in residence, who is editor-in-chief of Tupelo Press and teaches at the Kingswood-Oxford School. He is largely responsible for gathering many of the poets who attend the annual festival.

First to read her poetry was Ms. Veronica Golos, poet in

residence at the 14th Street Y. Ms. Golos explained that she was going to start with a poem that applied to the current war situation more than the one she had originally chosen. "We all have to break our hearts as artists in the moments in which we live," she said. Playing off the opening line from T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" ("April is the cruelest month"), her poem began, "No, not April."

Ms. Golos read three more poems: "Helen of Troy" and "Warrior," both written in the voices of fictional characters, and "A Bell Buried Deep," which shares the title of her first book.

The next poet, Matthew Zapruder, who teaches in New York City at the New School, immediately engaged the audience with his droll sense of humor. "I've gotta be honest with you," he began. "I'm pretty excited for the fire drill this afternoon. I don't get

things like that anymore in my life."

Mr. Zapruder then invited the audience to close their eyes and imagine "someone they desire" while he read "Sweet Jesus," a love poem. His following poems were "School Street," "Arcadia," and "Gramercy," all from his first book, "American Linden." Coincidentally, "Gramercy" was also based on the same T. S. Eliot quote "April is the cruelest month."

Jennifer Michael Hecht, Professor of the History of Science at Nassau Community College, read two prose poems called "September" and "Swamp Thing" from her book, "The Next Ancient World."

John Brehm read "When My Car Broke Down," and "Race," from his book "The Way Water Moves."

Although fiction writer Patricia Eakins did not read during the assembly, she con-

ducted readings and workshops in the faculty lounge during periods 3, 4, and 6.

In addition to the fiction workshop running, two poetry workshops were held during sixth period and conference period. Some students tuned already written poems.

In Matthew Zapruder's workshop, students were asked to imagine a memory they would like to write about or to respond to a line from poem and then write their own poems from the given line.

In addition to the workshops, students had a chance to share their poetry at an open mic in the library. As promised, there were cookies served.

To celebrate National Poetry Month, the poetry festival is now culminating in the writing contest that is held by the Justin Society each year.

As Mike Stuzynski (IV) says of the Poetry Festival, "It rocked."

TEAM EFFORT

Poet Matthew Zapruder and the participants in his March 28 writing workshop produced the poem below collaboratively. Students were directed to start a poem with the line, "There is a nude siren in the jelly" and write for five minutes. According to Mr. Zapruder, "Then we went around the room and they read their poems, and we picked out the coolest lines together. Then I went home and typed them up, doing not too much sorting, adding none of my own, and changing only one word ("breast" to "breath," because I misheard it that way when the girl who wrote that line originally read it).

"I don't know what to make of this except to think that it's very strange and wise," he adds.

The Mystery of Transmission

Remember the picnic when time was young and free?
Clothes are unimportant.

You feel transparent.

Too much motion but the goal is unclear.

Seeds black and small, but round.

In the dreaded world of nutritionist mothers

and hardly there fathers they cannot be linked.

There are colors and fruits and purple leaves.

Do they just look purple to me?

I think, or maybe not.

There is a bather by the desert.

There are trees, but no wind.

A single leaf falls upon her breath,

they were meant to be together,

they just are.

Everything passes by not knowing

or understanding what goes on around them

reflecting a light

he has only visited in his dreams.

She swims deeper into the unknown.

Light shines in.

A large silver blade

penetrates the surface

almost like a hovering cloud

but not quite as definitively still.

It's calling my name in an unknown language.

The mystery of transmission.

The mystery of the blond possum

Q&A: Queen of the Bookstore

An Interview with Nancy Wojnar

BY ELYSE FELDMAN (IV)

Record: How long have you been working at Pingry?

Nancy: Well, this is my twentieth year here. Yup, I've been here for a loooong time.

Record: What positions have you held here?

Nancy: I worked at the bookstore and then I started getting involved with bus transportation. Then I worked in the office handling accounts. But, now I'm doing transportation and the bookstore.

Record: Wow, so you've been involved with Pingry in several fields. What's the most enjoyable aspect about your job?

Nancy: I love the kids, the faculty, and staff. I find Pingry students to be so friendly and sociable. One thing I pride myself with is that I know almost everyone's name. When the kids walk by, I try to make eye contact and give them all hellos. Everyone always smiles or at least stops by for

a pretzel (laughing)

Record: I know you have been offering pretzels, lollipops, or other snacks outside the bookstore for students. How long have you been doing that?

Nancy: I had a snack bar when the bookstore was in the area, so I've been doing that for a while. I just think it is a nice thing to do. It is great as long as the kids take snacks accordingly (laughing). In the new bookstore, we fortunately have the snack shack again.

Record: The book store you had for the past five years was so small. Was it difficult to adjust to being in such a small room?

Nancy: Truthfully, it was tough. Most people didn't exactly realize how much stuff we had in there; there wasn't too much activity. The smell of the food from the cafeteria and the faint sound of footsteps made it feel like a hospital, but I still got to see the students, which was great.

Record: Are you still excited about the the new store?

Nancy: I love it! It's so much larger with lots of windows.

Record: I also know that you post the Star-Ledger on your bulletin board every day with Pingry students' sports achievements highlighted. When did that tradition start?

Nancy: I think it's nice for students to see other students' accomplishments. I actually had those posted in the old bookstore too.

Record: How long does it take you to highlight all that anyway?

Nancy: (Laughing). It doesn't take me too long. About 10-15 minutes in the mornings.

Record: Are you a big sports fan yourself?

Nancy: I am. I love the Mets—huge Mets fan. I also like the Jets, but I am very disappointed in how their season went. I love golf, whether it involves being a spectator or

player. I also enjoy walking early in the morning for a couple miles. I love watching Pingry swimming and water polo—very difficult sports.

Record: I understand you've been involved in several charities?

Nancy: Yes, I did the walk for breast cancer. I went with a friend whose husband is a survivor. It was three days and 58 miles. I was happy to receive donations ranging from \$5 to \$500. In total, I ended up raising \$7,900. It was very difficult to prepare for, though, because I had to train by walking eleven to twelve miles. It was worth every step though; it was a great experience.

Record: What do you feel is your greatest accomplishment?

Nancy: I would have to say my children and my grandchildren are my greatest accomplishments.

Record: Any last words?
Nancy: I love Pingry- I won't be retiring soon.



ALL ABOUT ROBERT

BY DAVID SPETT (V)

On February 10, we elected bongo player extraordinaire Robert Zacharias the next president of the student body. The Record set out to interview Robert, soon to be the most powerful student in the school, on what he envisions for the year to come.

Record: What is your experience on student government?

Robert: I've been on student council at Pingry ever since sixth grade, when I was president of Señora Carr's illustrious homeroom. I was class president last year and this year, and I've been class treasurer for two years as well.

Record: And what changes did you affect in those years?

Rob: Last year, I proposed a bill to amend the student government Constitution to allow time for questions after the student body presidential candidates' speeches. I organized our advisor recycling program at the beginning of last year, though it wasn't a big deal. I worked early this year to have the Student Network Agreement modified so that it was fairer to the students. What I've spent the most time on, though, is making your student ID's.

Record: What was your campaign platform?

Rob: I didn't want to have an official platform. Overall, I think I had a few main ideas. The first was to institute referenda to establish more contact between students and the administration. I think our administration can be kind of secretive, and I want to change that. I don't mean to be offensive—I think that's the natural tendency of people in power, and I don't blame them for it. But all the same, students and teachers need to resist that tendency and make the administration show their cards. We need better communication to get better

results. I also want to encourage greater coordination between the middle school and upper school student governments to give the middle schoolers a greater voice in the school.

Record: Why do you think you won the election?



Rob: Probably a miscount. I actually don't know, to answer your question. I think I increased my own school-wide visibility in my weirdo campaign. That helped a lot, I think, because it probably kept me on people's minds.

Record: So explain your posters to me.

Rob: Yeah, they were weird. I guess wanted to give the impression of being able to go to stupid lengths to do things. I kind of taunted myself and the whole process with them. Half the point of those posters was to make people

of express my personality more or less.

Record: Everyone seems to have goals for SAC. Do you?

Rob: Of course I'd love to get SAC back to the place it used to be, but there are obviously some major problems with the way it was put "back on track" this year (but not really). I guess more emphasis on all-school meetings could help that, but the key, I think, lies more in advertising SAC to encourage more participation.

Record: What do you think about the role of student government in the community?

Rob: Student government has become sort of a shadow organization. I'd like us to have greater visibility. I wish I could get more people interested in it, because it seems that most people think of us now as a dance organizer—and we are. But we do other things too, and I wish there were more student interest in those other things because that would improve our results as well as students' satisfaction with us. At one of my friend's schools, they call their student government "self-government," which I think is really cool because that is, after all, the purpose of student government—to elect representatives to serve and govern themselves. I would be very happy if we could be seen as an organization for and of the students, rather than one that's sort of a foreign entity, which I think is what we are.

Record: Okay, now tell me this: what's up with the bongos?

Rob: I hope people took them as a joke. I guess I just wanted to stand out. I wanted to play a musical instrument and the bongos were the only thing I could carry and the only thing I'm any good at, not that I'm a great bongo player or anything. But yeah, that was fun. At least for me—maybe not as much fun for the people who had to listen.

DISCOVERY CHANNEL DISCOVERS PINGRY

Susannah Bragg (V)



Students practice throwing paper airplanes at the camera.

nity and the television industry.”

The show will be filmed entirely at Pingry, and the process is expected to take until the end of the year. Tapestry explains that it was looking for a school with “technology, teaching excellence, and a diverse student body. Immediately, Pingry School came to mind.”

Although the administration originally hoped that the filming would take place after school to prevent any disruption, it turned out that more time during the school day would be needed. Ms. Alexander notes, though, that students may not miss classes for the filming. “We are still

treating this as an after-school club,” she explains.

She mentions that the school went ahead with Tapestry’s proposal because it “offered a very advantageous package, including working around our schedule and involving our students and faculty in the production and development of the show.” She adds that Tapestry “will be making a donation to the school.”

After the filming is complete, “Assignment Discovery” is expected to debut on the Discovery Channel from 9-10 a.m. on September 8. It will continue every weekday for the remainder of the school year.

Kristin Kicenuik (VI)



Film crews have been interviewing a number of students around the school.

BY DAVID SPETT (V)

If you’ve kept your eyes open lately, you’ve probably noticed a lot of film crews lurking in the halls during Conference Period and after school. The crews are filming a new television show called “Assignment Discovery” that will air on the Discovery Channel this September.

Students have been invited to take part in a variety of roles on the educational show, and a meeting was held on March 25 for all those interested. Ms. Jill Alexander, director of communications, explains that participation in the filming is entirely voluntary.

Each episode of “Assignment Discovery” will focus on an educational subject. Interested students will explain, on camera, what activities are going on in class, and they will be asked to relate what they learn to everyday life.

The company producing the program, Tapestry International, gives numerous hypothetical examples of episodes. One episode on polymers, it says, might feature middle school students testing physical and chemical properties of various objects. Then the students would be interviewed and asked if they could “put what they learned into action.”

The episodes will focus mainly on world history, geography, and middle school science. According to Ms. Alexander, “Some students will be in a classroom situation, some will be given scripted reactions to the material, and some will be narrating the various segments.”

Tapestry International won an Academy Award in 2000 for a documentary entitled “King Gimp.” The company says its shows feature a “unique blend of marketing savvy and production creativity,” and adds that “Assignment Discovery” will receive “high profile national exposure in both the educational commu-

Tuition on the Rise Again

BY DAVID SPETT (V)

Some parents were probably surprised to see that next year’s tuition is increasing by a larger margin than usual. Upper School tuition is currently \$19,405, but next year it will be \$21,100. Only one year ago, it was \$18,215. “We haven’t had a tuition increase like this since 1991,” Headmaster John Neiswender says.

The Headmaster feels that the increase is necessary because the school’s income is projected to be significantly lower next year. “An economy affects a school just like it affects people’s own pocketbooks,” he explains.

Mr. Neiswender notes that there will also be higher expenses next year for insurance, maintenance, and other fixed items. Some of those costs are due to the opening of the new Academic Arts Center.

“I can’t get into exactly what those are, but any time you add 42,000 square feet of space, there are going to be additional costs,” he says. According to the headmaster, the average tuition increase next year will be about 9.5%. The high school increase is approximately 8.7%, and the kindergarten through second

grade increase is approximately 13.4%.

“Rather than a flat, across-the-board tuition increase, we’re trying to bridge the gaps between the grades,” he says. “We don’t want such a big spread between kindergar-

ten tuition and high school tuition.” Although the school now has five tuition levels, Mr. Neiswender envisions only three levels in future years.

According to the headmaster, the lost revenue and increased expenses

account for about 5% of the tuition increases. The rest of the increase will result from faculty salary increases. “Next year we will finish our initiative to make faculty salaries the highest of any independent day school in New Jersey,” Mr. Neiswender says. “Our salaries will also be competitive with local public schools’.”

The headmaster stresses the importance of high faculty salaries, saying, “A commitment to the faculty is a commitment to our students.” He adds that departmental budgets will be kept flat next year, with a few departments possibly seeing cuts. No additional personnel will be hired, either.

Despite last year’s rather sizeable 6.5% tuition increase, Mr. Neiswender hopes that future increases will be smaller. “We decided to make one big tuition increase and then return to normal rather than have three years of higher than normal increases.”

This year, the headmaster says, our tuition is fifth highest among independent schools in the state. Next year, he predicts it will be the third or fourth highest.

When asked if any students might withdraw from Pingry because of the tuition increases, Mr. Neiswender said, “I hope not!”

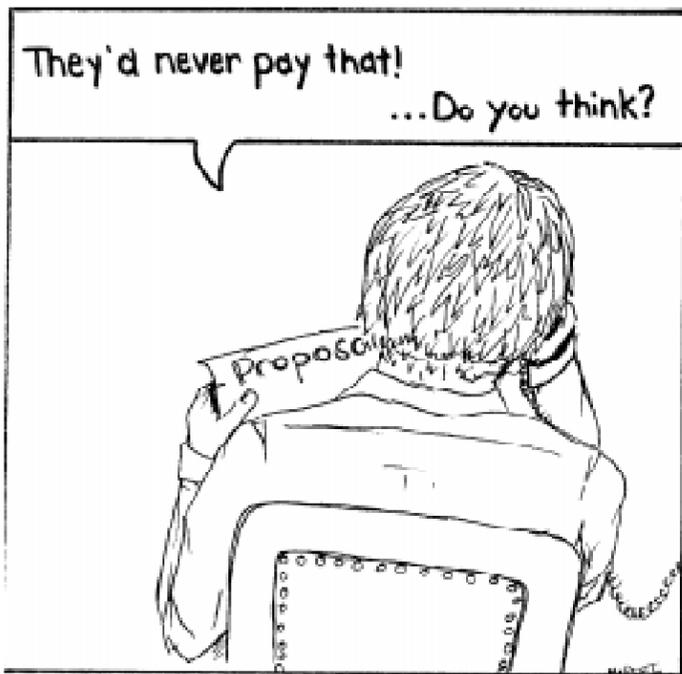
He notes that, as always, financial aid will be available on a “need basis. We want anyone able to benefit from a Pingry education to have one, and we’d like to reach out to people who need help.” He encourages parents in need of financial aid to contact Business Manager John Pratt.

He is confident that despite increased costs there is adequate money put aside for the financial aid program. In fact, he says, “we are very generous but we never completely use up our financial aid money every year.” Although some applications are rejected, rejections only occur because people do not meet the “need basis.”

Mr. Neiswender believes that “the Board will be happy to increase financial aid money should we ever need more. At this stage, we don’t need it.”

On a happier note, the headmaster adds, “It’s been 12 years since we’ve had this big an increase, and I hope it won’t happen again for another 12 years. But don’t hold me to it!”

Melissa Tyson (V)



Seniors Get Career Taster



David Gerner's comments on his job as a literary agent for author John Grisham. Mr. Gerner described how he became involved in the media field after college because of his love of books, music, and movies. When one is successful, he emphasized, "a career is not a job, but a lifestyle."

After the keynote, seniors attended three different 45-minute sessions with alumni in locations around the school. Students had previously chosen which of the 11 available occupational fields they were most interested in and received a schedule detailing the location and time of each meeting.

Choices included sports, engineering, education, fine arts, medicine, advertising, investment banking, law, media, behavioral medicine, and technology. The alumni representing each field determined the activities of their different sessions.

At the marketing discussion, for example, samples of food were passed around, while the technology

meeting featured physical examples of different phone cords.

Mr. Corvino and Ms. Yorke, both Pingry graduates and current Pingry teachers, spoke about their experiences in the field of education.

Overall, the senior class enjoyed Career Day. "It was informative and interesting to learn about various careers that I might explore after college," Ashley Cohen remarked.

Jennifer Wu enjoyed the personal experience the speakers brought to their presentations. One student said she enjoyed the day but suggested, "I wish we knew which sections we were scheduled for in advance so we could have more time to prepare questions for the speakers."

This was the fifth year of Career Day's existence, and the Development office plans to offer the program again next year.

Dave Harris's overall impression of the event was that "it might not have been life-changing, but at least I've got a feel."



Alumni came back to Pingry to share their career wisdom with the senior class.

David Gerner relates his experiences working for John Grisham.

BY JANE SAWYER (VI)

Twenty-four alumni returned to Martinsville on January 24 to speak to the senior class about their career paths since high school.

Organized and sponsored by the Alumni Association and organized by the Development Office, this year's fifth annual Career Day involved speakers from a wide variety of occupations. The day began with the seniors gathering in the auditorium to listen to keynote speaker

GETTING BLOOD FROM A STONE

BY DAVID SPETT (V) & KATIE SUCHOW (V)

This year's annual blood drive was held in the old Multi-Purpose Room on Thursday, March 6. Run and staffed by the Blood Center of New Jersey, the drive began at 8 a.m. but ended less than two hours later because of an early snow dismissal.

In the two hours, only 21 people gave blood. 11 others signed up but were not permitted to donate, either because of a health concern or because they did not eat breakfast. Of the 21 donors, 12 were faculty members and 11 were giving blood for the first time.

School nurse Joanne Childs is disappointed by the low turnout. "We don't have enough donors, and I don't know why," she says. "Giving blood means taking only a small amount of time to help the community."

Last year's turnout was poor, too: there was a full day for donating, but only 39 people gave blood. Six others were turned away. Before last year, Mrs. Childs notes, attendance had been better, and according to the blood center, other schools of our size typically donate more blood.

Upon arrival in the Multi-Purpose Room, prospective donors were asked to fill out a registration form. Next, they underwent a finger prick to briefly test their blood, and then they were asked several questions about their health histories. After all this came the actual blood donation, and after that, the best part of all: free food and a surprise present!

The process usually takes no more than 20-25 minutes and is mostly painless. Students giving blood were excused from any classes they had to miss. Though blood donors should

not play sports or do anything strenuous for 24 hours, most experience no side effects.

Some faculty members take part in an informal blood-donating "race" to see who can lose a pint of blood the fastest. This year, Mr. Rohdie won with a time of five minutes. Dr. Macrae and Ms. Boisvert were very close behind.

Barbra McDonald, Blood Center staff team leader, gave a big thank you to the 21 people who gave blood. "It was good to see an enthusiastic response from young people," she said.

Mrs. Childs notes that New Jersey is always in a blood shortage and that anyone 17 years of age or older can donate without parental consent. She calls giving blood "going above and beyond to save a life" and hopes that more people will donate in future years.



Mr. David Giarrusso is in good spirits after donating blood.

A WEEKEND AWAY

Sophomores and Juniors Take Annual Trips

BY JAMES SOMERS (IV)

With winter setting in, exhausted and overworked sophomores and juniors packed up their books, loaded into buses, and traveled to Williamsburg and Boston from February 28 to March 2.

This was the sophomores' first trip to Williamsburg; in past years, they went to Washington, D.C. Their transit was relatively uneventful, although student Robert Trangucci (IV) complained that "there was really nothing to do, the toilets were clogged, and oh yeah, the VCRs were broken, so we couldn't watch 'Space Balls.'" The trip improved, though, and Robby said, "The seafood was really good."

Another student speaking anonymously raved, "Touring the Naval Academy was a fascinating experience." However, the cold weather made the educational facets of the trip more difficult, and the depth of

the whole experience was limited. Williamsburg did provide a unique atmosphere, though, for students to interact with teachers in a different setting and atmosphere. Even though some students did not appreciate the trip, it did serve as both a bonding experience and a history lesson.

Boston was perhaps a more colorful experience for the juniors. Some claimed that the trip lacked educational value, but that the problem was solved with plenty of free time and enjoyable entertainment.

The juniors enjoyed being let loose on Harvard Square, where they could shop, explore, or just relax and experience the scenery. They spent their nights going out to restaurants and watching plays and performances. On Friday night, "Tubes" by Blue Man Group proved to be more fun than some had expected.

Trip Coordinator Mrs. Joan Hearst reflected on the trip with a smile, re-



Junior boys kick back at the Hard Rock Cafe in Boston.

calling great moments of the weekend. "There was so much energy, there was great humor, and there was good music." She also noted that the atmosphere of the trip allowed the students to "get to know the faculty on a different level."

The fun activities in Boston were not balanced with historically educating experiences, but Mrs. Hearst says she will change this facet of the trip next year. Noting the lackluster trolley tour, she suggested that some other activity might give students a more real sense of what Boston has to offer.

Both trips had unique pros and cons, but the most important aspect of them was that students were given a chance to relax with friends and faculty they might not otherwise interact with. With changes planned, more history and more fun can be expected on these trips next year.

ARTS CENTER AI

Loaded with Technology

BY DAVID SPETT (V)

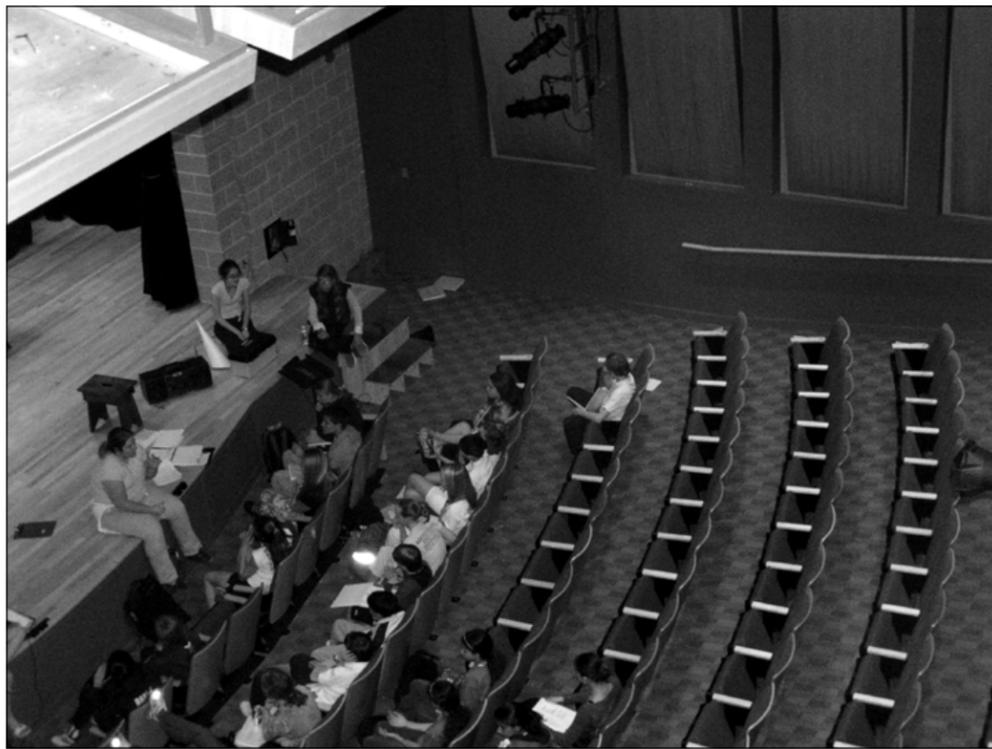
The new, \$12.3 million Academic Arts Center isn't just a nice building—it's chock-full of technology and high-tech gadgets. According to Director of Facilities Mr. Michael Virzi, "It is second to none among our peer schools."

On the bottom floor, there are six sound-isolated practice rooms. There are also three large, "acoustically-correct" music rooms outfitted with recorders, tape decks, microphones, and speakers for playback.

All the recording equipment is wired to a MIDI recorder room. Although the room has no equipment yet, Mr. Virzi explains that "we've allowed for it to be modified and expanded in the future."

The middle floor features a state-of-the-art theater that Mr. Virzi calls "on par with any professional regional theater." It features a modern projection system in the lighting booth with a touch screen control. "It's just like being at a bank," explains the facilities director. "Kids can come and plug in a laptop without having to wheel a projection cart."

The theater also features high quality lighting racks that can be easily expanded and upgraded in the



The cast of the Middle School play rehearses for "Alice in Wonderland" in the Macrae Theater.

coming years.

Also on the middle floor is the all-new board room. Although it is generally closed to students and faculty, Mr. Neiswender will be using it to meet with the Board of Trustees and

the administration.

The room will also be home to alumni meetings and PSPA meetings. According to Mr. Virzi, "There was never a place in the school for these groups to meet without bothering other students and faculty."

The room is equipped with a large wooden table and 22 leather chairs. The table, rumored to cost over \$18,000, features pop-up power outlets and Ethernet plugs. Although its exact cost is confidential, Mr. Virzi says that the table "was actually a bargain" and that the \$18,000 figure is only a rumor.

Besides Ethernet ports, the board room also has wireless Internet access. "We're not sure there's any need for it," explains Mr. Virzi, "but it was relatively inexpensive so we decided to get it." Audio/visual equipment is being considered and may be added soon.

The board room also includes a kitchenette with a sink, numerous

cabinets, and a refrigerator. The cabinets contain a full plate and silverware set, and there is a buffet table in the main room for the board members to get their food. According to Mr. Virzi, "The room is always ready for whatever meeting has to happen."

Next to the kitchenette is a small library that may soon house some of the school's antique books, such as Dr. Pingry's favorite bible.

The middle floor also includes a gallery that will showcase students' art projects. The gallery has a fancy dimming system for Mr. Boyd, the art department head, to control the ambiance in the room.

Also on the middle floor is the critique room, which has a projection system that is similar to, although slightly smaller than, the theater's. The room also has DVD, VCR, satellite, and network hookups.

On the top floor of the building, the art rooms have several new

Macintosh G4 computers as well as printers and scanners. The computers are fully loaded with new software, and each has a flat LCD monitor to save space.

A projection screen in the front of each room is linked to satellite television as well as VCRs and DVD players. The rooms also have dimmable track lighting.

The new dance studio on the top level features a special sprung floor for dancing. The room is outfitted with its own sound system, which includes a CD player, tape player, and speakers in the ceiling.

Mr. Virzi explains that all of the art center's integrated technology eliminates the need for anything mobile. "We were able to put every piece of technology the department heads requested in the rooms," he says.

The facilities director explains that the building's construction total was only \$9 million, but that various other planning, legal, and management costs brought the final price tag to \$12.3 million. "We were pretty good at keeping within the budget," he explains.

In fact, according to Mr. Virzi, great efforts were made to save money and keep costs down. He says that the original estimate for the projection system in the theater was over \$115,000, but the school shopped around and found one at less than a third of that price.

Mr. Virzi adds that most of the building's furniture was purchased from a store called Shanahan's, which offers "very reasonable prices."

The only thing that the \$12.3 million didn't pay for was bathrooms. There are two small, one-person restrooms on the bottom floor, but plans for more, larger ones had to be canceled. According to Mr. Virzi, the school decided to forego the bathrooms to make it clear to the certification board that Pingry's enrollment would not be increasing.



This table was rumored to cost \$18,000.

THE KIDS IN THE HALL SPEAK OUT

BY REBECCA SPEISER (V) AND SUSANNAH BRAGG (V)



Francesca Bacardi (I)

"The new art studios. They're bigger."



Brad Zanoni (II)

"Probably the dance studio, because that's all I've been in."



Adam Goldstein (III)

"The clay room because it's the only room I use regularly."



Ben Rosenthal (IV)

"The sound-proof music rooms."

ARRIVES AT LAST!



All Arts Center Photos by Susannah Bragg (V)

Left to Right: The outside of the new wing is designed to fade to match the green color of the rest of the building; the dance studio features springy floors and full-length mirror; the glee club room can finally fit the entire chorus at once.

Community Adjusts to New Wing

By SUSANNAH BRAGG (V)

On the first day back from spring break, faculty and students gathered to celebrate the opening of the school's brand new and long-anticipated arts wing. Mr. Al Romano, Dr. Andrew Moore, and Mr. Miles Boyd, department heads of drama, music, and fine arts, respectively, joined together to cut the blue ribbon on the outside of the building.

Headmaster Mr. John Neiswender recalls, "What really made the day for me was the wonderful reception the facility received from our students and faculty—I was sure then that all the hard work and the long wait were well worth the effort!"

The arts center, covering 42,000 square feet and sporting a final price tag of \$12.3 million, came nowhere near its projected completion date of August 2002. Still, faculty and students alike are thrilled and impressed with the new facilities.

"The kind of program we offer at Pingry in the arts deserves the kind of space we have built," says Mr. Neiswender. "It serves as a clear

demonstration of the value we place on the arts at Pingry. I think this facility is second to none in the world of independent schools and compares favorably with many college facilities."

Fine Arts teachers are delighted to make use of spacious new rooms filled with windows. Mrs. Jane Edwards, who teaches 7th and 8th grade art as well as two periods of

Art Fundamentals, notes that "the natural light is so usable, we don't even have to turn on the lights." She also loves the "setup and the accessibility of the supplies. There is a much better flow to the whole room."

Sonam Sharma (V), who takes painting, explains that the new art rooms have "a lot more space and a nice breeze. They are less crowded, prettier, and generally more conducive to creativity."

The Music Department is equally excited to have practice rooms large enough to fit groups such as the glee club and orchestra. Mrs. Jennifer Runge says that "just this week we had a combined rehearsal for the entire Women's Glee Club in our chorus room, something we've never been able to do before. It's really nice to be able to put all the pieces together." Glee Club member Caitlin Bergh (V) agrees that the Women's Glee Club room is "really spacious and has great acoustics."

Liz Sebesky (IV) feels that "the new practice rooms are even more state-of-the-art than ones in college-level conservatories. In the new orchestra room, you can hear every individual playing and the sound is much bigger."

According to Mr. Romano, head of the Drama Department, "There are still technical aspects of the theater that are not completed, but when everything is finished and we all learn how to use the new equipment, The new theater space will offer

some exciting staging challenges. We will know more about strengths and weaknesses as we do more performances there."

As soon as he moved some of his drama classes in to practice scenes he realized, "it is a great space for scene study work." Mr. Romano adds that "the dance studio is wonderful. All those students who take dance in the 'outside world' should consider joining a dance class to make use of this 'in school' studio."

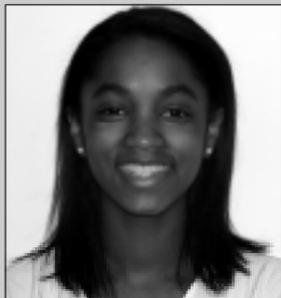
Lauren Miller (V), a cast member in the senior play "Our Town," found it refreshing to "finally be in a real theater" instead of the school's large auditorium. "It was great to be opening the new space, but it's also kind of sad that we won't be able to,

Mr. Neiswender sums up: "It is all quite exciting, from the art classrooms with the wonderful natural light, to the first permanent dance space, the art gallery, the theater, and the massive music rooms. It all excites me—even more so now that I see students taking advantage of everything the new center has to offer!"



Art teachers are excited about the natural light in the new drafting room.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE NEW ARTS CENTER?



Ashley Jackson (V)
"The Men's Glee Club room"



Andy Schlesinger (V)
"The practice rooms. They're quiet and dark."



Elan DiMaio (VI)
"The catwalks. I just love catwalks."



Mikasha Edwards-White (VI)
"Air-conditioning."

THE HALLS ARE ALIVE

BY CAITLIN BERGH (V)

"The Sound of Music," a musical based on a true story, emphasizes the importance of courage, music, and laughter, especially in a time of war. On February 20, 21, and 22, a dedicated cast of Pingry students delighted packed houses with their rendition of the play.

The first scene opens in Salzburg Abbey where several of the nuns are having difficulty with a particular young postulant, Maria, played by junior Alex Holland. After Maria's repeated mistakes, Mother Abbess (Yvette Zimring, VI) decides Maria is unfit for life as a nun and sends her to the home of Captain von Trapp (Ben Grant, VI), where she will be the governess for his seven children until September.

Maria, though reluctant to leave her life at the Abbey, awkwardly takes on her new position as governess. The children, except for the eldest, Liesl (Susannah Bragg, V), take an almost immediate liking to their new governess.

Soon Maria teaches the children to sing, bringing music back into the Von Trapp household for the first time since the Captain's wife died. She and Liesl even become friends.

However, when Maria

finds herself falling in love with the Captain, who is soon to be engaged to the Baroness Schraeder (Anne Kroeger, VI), Maria escapes to the abbey. Mother Abbess soon convinces Maria to return in the Act One Finale "Climb Every

Mountain," and Maria and the Captain are eventually married.

While they are on their honeymoon, family friend Max Detweiler (Steven Horowitz, V) arranges for the children to sing at an upcoming festival. Meanwhile, the threat of Nazi domination of Austria is imminent.

Captain von Trapp, upon his return home, faces orders to serve in the Naval forces of the third Reich.

After a suspenseful and dramatic escape from the singing festival, we are left with the image of the nine Von Trapps climbing the mountains on foot into the distance.

The cast, set and lighting crew, stage manager Jennifer Zoephel (VI), and director Stephanie Romankow, rose to the challenge of bringing such a well-known and well-loved production to the Pingry stage. Junior Zach Schuman said, "If you didn't see it, you missed

were highlights of the show.

The cast also enjoyed working on the musical. Andy Schlesinger, who played the youngest Von Trapp boy, Kurt, said "there are no words to express how much I enjoyed being in the production." Steven Horowitz enthused, "the play was very successful.

Everyone in the play knew how to make the experience good for each other, and we were like a big family."

Susannah Bragg was impressed by the incredible turnout: "Friday night was really amazing because there were absolutely no seats in the auditorium. People were sitting on the balcony and floor. It gave the play a really great energy."

Alex Holland summed up



The Van Trapp family belts out the showstopper "Do-Re-Mi."

Mrs. Stockwell

Mrs. Stockwell



Ain't love grand?



Mrs. Stockwell

"How DO you solve a problem like Maria?"

Dancing the Night Away

BY EDWARD BARSAMIAN (VI) & SUSANNAH BRAGG (V)

This year's Community Service Club-sponsored Inter-generational Prom was as dynamic as ever. The theme,

Passport to Pingry, incorporated elements of foreign culture into the evening from the food to the music and dancing.

The club felt that at this time, the global climate was so

tense, that to create a unity among all cultures and civilizations would be uplifting and beneficial to their guests.

The guests for the evening were from a local retirement community, and although this year's invite list was considerably smaller, it made for a more intimate atmosphere. The guests and their student hosts began the evening by sitting down to eat dinner and getting to know each other. As the night progressed, it was filled with dancing and enjoyment for everyone involved.

Various students provided entertainment that kept with the multicultural theme. The Balladeers started off the night singing two African songs:

"Siyahamba" and "Living in a Holy City." The Buttowndowns then performed "Come Go with Me," "Moondance," and "Up the Ladder to the Roof," during which senior J. T. Burgess briefly serenaded a woman in the audience who was having a birthday.

Next came Suruchi Ahuja (IV) showcasing her talents at traditional Indian dance much like the one she performed at the school's multicultural assembly earlier in the year. Jeff Cox (V) and Jacquie O'Connor (IV) then gave the audience a taste of salsa dancing.

Dana Zolli, one of the student hosts and secretary of the Community Service Club, says that it was "an event that

I looked forward to all spring, and it turned out wonderfully."

The culmination of the evening came in the crowning of the king and queen of the

prom, two of the guests who then share a dance together.

According to Zolli, "the woman chosen as prom queen was so moved that she had tears in her eyes."



Maggie Oberrender (VI)

Student hosts dine with guests from a local retirement home.



Maggie Oberrender (VI)

I said a hip hop the hippie the hippie to the hip hip hop a you don't stop...

We Care Because AmeriCares

By CAROLINE SAVELLO (IV)

Somewhere between the anti-war rallies and the television pundits' complaints, there is common ground in every American's opinion about this war: humanity.

Some people object to war because it could cause a humanitarian disaster, while war proponents defend Operation Iraqi Freedom for its principal humanitarian cause. Both sides, despite their differing opinions, seem to be united by their chief concern for the welfare of the Iraqi people.

However, in the days following the start of war in Iraq, when we watched endless hours of news coverage, my family was disappointed to see no humanitarian action from people on either side of the argument.

While discussing the school's upcoming war forum over dinner one night, my parents suggested to my brother Alex and me that we bring

Pingry's opposing sides together. They suggested we find the common ground that exists everywhere but is rarely acknowledged. After a few web searches and phone calls, Operation AmeriCares began.

We e-mailed and called several international aid organizations, including Mercy Corps, InterAction, Mercy Airlift International, the Red Cross, and AmeriCares, to ask if they could use Pingry's help. Mercy Airlift International and AmeriCares were the only ones that needed more than financial assistance. Both Mercy Airlift and AmeriCares were requesting hygiene kits for refugees, but AmeriCares was already involved in refugee camps outside the border of Iraq. They wanted donations of backpacks containing hygiene and comfort items for Iraqi children.

Because AmeriCares requested only certain items for the backpacks, we decided the project would be perfect for

Pingry. Each grade could participate by bringing in one of the needed items.

After only three weeks, Pingry students amassed 32 balls, 125 toothbrushes, 119 toothpaste tubes, 124 bars of soap, 65 packages of baby wipes, 59 shampoo bottles, and 88 hairbrushes and combs.

After only three weeks, Pingry students amassed 32 balls, 125 toothbrushes, 119 toothpaste tubes, 124 bars of soap, 65 packages of baby wipes, 59 shampoo bottles, and 88 hairbrushes and combs.

There were also nine backpack donations.

The drive at the Short Hills Campus began almost three weeks after it did here in Martinsville. Despite the late start, the Lower Schoolers donated

39 coloring books, 48 packages of markers, 41 bars of soap, 4 hairbrushes, and an amazing 130 stuffed animals and Beanie Babies.

Time and resources were also eagerly donated. Between making posters, designing and copying flyers, stuffing mailboxes, and collecting money

with pizza that Friday — by the end of C lunch, we had to place three extra orders because of the tremendous sales.

Though our biggest worry about the project was the financial aspect, the donations

at the Operation AmeriCares Dress Down Day, dozens of Pingry students from all grades volunteered their time for our cause.

By day two of the project, we had a list of over 40 stu-

dents and faculty who wanted to get involved. Some contacted backpack companies for donations, some worked with local supermarkets for donations, and others helped organize the Dress Down Day and Operation AmeriCares Pizza Day. The middle schoolers outdid themselves

we have received are extraordinary. We have raised more than enough money to buy backpacks, and we even have extra money that will go towards blankets and other items that are still in great need at refugee settlements.

We ordered 75 backpacks from a wholesale distributor. The bags are monogrammed with "PingryCares" — simply a new name for the spirit of concern and compassion that has characterized Pingry for years. Including donated backpacks, we hope to assemble 85 complete backpack kits, many with enough toothbrushes and toothpaste to give to an entire family.

Before we hand the backpacks over to Operation AmeriCares so that they can be distributed to the refugees, the 85 filled backpacks will be displayed in the Upper Commons. They are a true testament to how much Pingry really does care.

Voice Teacher Starts Charity For Heart Surgery in India

Opportunities for Students to Help

By SUSANNAH BRAGG (VI)

Mark Watson, a voice teacher at Pingry since 1999, is currently involved in launching a new organization encouraging young people to raise money for pediatric heart surgeries in India.

The charity, named Hearts Across the Ocean, aims to get American kids and teenagers to help in whatever ways their talents allow. Through various projects, young people can sponsor operations for children with heart defects at the Amrita Institute of Medical Science (AIMS) Hospital in Kerala, India.

The heart pediatric department at AIMS has performed over 2500 procedures in the first three and a half years of its existence. "Several years ago there were only eight pediatric heart surgeons in India—a country of over 900 million people," says Mr. Watson.

"In the state of Kerala there are more than 40,000 children with heart defects. Procedures available in the West were impossible to get in India. The waiting lists were six to seven years long, and many families did not even try because the cost of operations was so high."

Every \$2,500 raised covers



A young child in India recovers from heart surgery.

the cost for an open-heart surgery and all necessary equipment, and as Mr. Watson adds, "it means one more child has a chance to live." Recently, the organization raised enough money for its first operation through a number of small fundraisers and sent out a check on Tuesday, March 18.

Mr. Watson has coached theater groups and taught at the Paper Mill Playhouse. He studied opera at the Julliard School and in Europe, has won prizes in international voice competitions, and has been working for the past five years for the organization "Music for All Seasons,"

which presents interactive concerts for children's hospitals, retirement and medical facilities, juvenile detention facilities, and prisons.

He is now studying music therapy at Montclair State University and working three days a week as an intern at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York Center, where he helps cancer patients and the terminally ill. He feels that music is "ubiquitous, and people are not conscious of the ways the pulse, brain waves, and heartbeat are affected or the ways mood and concentration may be subtly altered."

The idea for Hearts first

came to Mr. Watson when he visited the AIMS Hospital last August and was "overwhelmed by the hospital—the way it was built (both its innovative design and the way the community was involved), the atmosphere there, and the spirit of the workers." He explains that volunteers literally built the hospital, made the bricks, created factories to build furniture, and carved the wood. Locals even dismantled crates containing equipment and imaginatively used the wood to make an impressive meeting room.

Pingry students, possibly on both campuses, are planning a dress down day for May 16. There will be cards available so that students can write letters or draw pictures to send to children receiving operations. Mr. Watson has also asked several talented Pingry instrumentalists to participate in a benefit gala concert entitled "Lasagna and Love Songs" on June 22.

Young people can contribute individually or in groups, and "Hearts Across the Ocean" will keep track of all donors and give them information about the child they helped.

Its founders envision "Hearts Across the Ocean" as

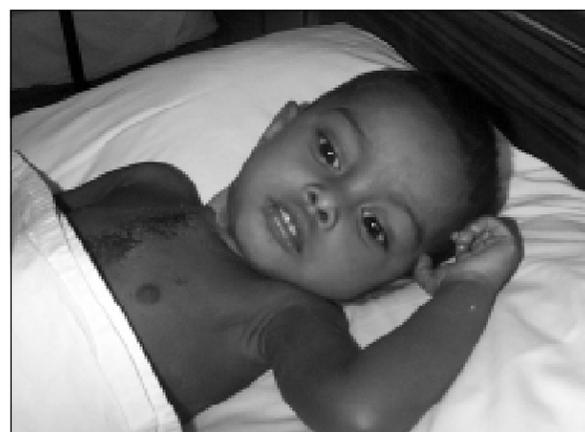
an organization run primarily by young people. According to Mr. Watson, "each of us has different talents, different interests and therefore different ways to offer help."

One of the best ways for students to help is through writing. The charity encourages people to draft proposals and articles for news publications and to send letters to business community for matching donations and sponsorship. For the artistically talented, there is a competition for the design of an original logo. People can also contribute items to sell at street fairs or school fairs, photograph or film events, help create a web page, make donations, or take on more organizational roles.

"The driving philosophy

behind 'Hearts Across the Ocean,'" says Mr. Watson, "is the idea that if each of us does one small thing, we can make a difference in the world. 25 kids raising \$100 each ... 50 kids raising \$50 each ... 100 kids raising \$25 each ... literally can change the life of another human being."

Hearts Across the Ocean can be contacted by calling 908 222-1889 or emailing Heartsacrosstheocean@yahoo.com. Tax-deductible checks should be made out to: St Mark's Church (make sure to include "Hearts" or "Hearts Across the Ocean" in the memo) and can be sent to St Mark's Episcopal Church, 140 South Finley Ave, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920.



Cabaret Night

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH, YEAH!

BY SONIA ALAM (VI)

The much-anticipated Cabaret Night 2003, which took place on March 5, was a sure hit with its lineup of all Beatles songs.

The night is both a Community Service Club and Music

Andy Schlesinger (V)



"Bright are the stars that shine ..."

Department event and has been a tradition at Pingry since 1996. All of the proceeds from the concert are donated to a particular charity that is voted

on during Community Service Club meetings. This year the ticket sales went to The Valarie Children's Cancer Fund.

In preparation for the event, the Pingry Jazz Ensemble, headed by Mr. McAnally, practiced music arranged for the band by both outside composers and Mr. McAnally himself. The band members included Mr. Sluyter, Buzzy Cohen (VI), Mikasha Edwards-White (VI), Sonia Alam (VI), David Salz (VI), Jennifer Wu (VI), David Asch (V), Alex Bregman (V), and Doug Ellwanger (V).

Also in the band were Jason Levinn (V), Zack Schuman (V), Sumeet Shah (V), Jack Zoepfel (V), Adam Freedman (IV), Allison Keeley (IV), Noah Keil (IV), Ben Rosenthal (IV), Mike Stuzynski (IV), Nathan Burgdorff (III), Anthony Feenick (III), Park Smith (III), and Rob Tilson (III).

The vocalists were chosen through a very selective process and although all who auditioned sounded excellent,

Dr. Moore, Mrs. Runge, and Mr. McAnally could only choose nine singers, each of whom chose his own song. The vocalists included seniors Eric Bergh singing "And I Love Her," Stephanie DeVos singing "In My Life," Elan Dimaio singing "Girl," Thor Grant singing "Lady Madonna," Anne Kroeger singing "Can't Buy Me Love," David Page singing "Yesterday," Sonia Alam singing "Here Comes the Sun," and Yvette Zimmering singing "The Long and Winding Road," and junior Susannah Bragg singing "Eleanor Rigby."

Andy Schlesinger (V)



"All the lonely people ..."

It is always a challenge to create the perfect atmosphere for each Cabaret Night at Pingry. Thankfully, the Community Service Club faculty advisor, Mrs. Stephanie Romankov, makes sure that all furniture and accessories are stored properly before the setup for the event. Students from all forms sign up to help with setting up, waiting tables, and cleaning up for the concert.

The singers were given their music to learn on their own or with voice teachers, and the jazz ensemble prepared the musical selections with Mr. McAnally beginning in mid-late February. However, the band and each singer rehearsed together only twice before the actual performance. But, as always, the jazz ensemble managed to give a stellar performance, as did the singers, despite their mere two weeks of practice.

On listening to each vocalist's performance complemented and balanced with the jazz band, Jane Sawyer (VI), Community Service Club member, said, "It was

enjoyable to hear the performers' different interpretations of the familiar Beatles songs. I also enjoyed serving the guests because it was for a

some!" Mrs. Runge called the event "wonderful" and remarked that "the band delivered Mr. McAnally's sophisticated ar-

Andy Schlesinger (V)



"Wonder how you manage to make ends meet ..."

good cause."

Cara Sogliuzzo (VI), a waitress at the event, said, "I loved listening to the vocalists and the jazz band harmonize. The arrangements were awe-

rangements with assured playing and flair. The soloists brought their individual personalities to the beloved Beatles hits and made them their own."

JENNIFER ZOEPHEL WINS STIFEL AWARD

BY JENNA WHITELEY (V)

Sometimes special rewards come to special people. Such was the case April 8, when the school honored Jennifer Zoepfel (VI) with the Stifel Award during morning meeting.

At the start of the assembly, Dr. Macrae explained the origin of the award named after former Pingry student Henry Stifel, who was paralyzed in a serious car accident in 1982 while still attending the school.

Against all odds, Mr. Stifel graduated with the rest of his class. The Stifel family, through the Stifel Paralysis Research Foundation, came up with the idea of giving an annual award to a member of the Pingry community "to acknowledge the honor and commitment made by the Pingry School to the Foundation's goal of curing spinal cord paralysis."

Henry Stifel has returned to Pingry for the past seventeen years to present this award to deserving Pingry students. Students who "best exemplif[y] those characteristics exhibited by Henry Stifel in the aftermath of his accident" are nominated by the faculty to receive the award. "Courage, endurance, optimism, compassion, [and] spirit" are criteria that the final committee (consisting of the school nurse, school psychologists, division heads,

dean of students, and the headmaster) use to choose one recipient out of the rest of the candidates.

Mr. Rohdie explained why Jenn is a perfect choice for the award: She is an amazing and versatile achiever despite suf-



Jennifer Zoepfel (VI) with her family and Henry Stifel.

fering from ulcerative colitis. She is very active in the school community, including participating as Pingry's head stage manager for several years, a member of the water polo and track and field teams, glee club singer, photographer for the Pingry Bluebook, and much more.

Jenn has accomplished all this in spite of the effects of ulcerative colitis. This disease is a debilitating autoimmune disorder affecting the colon.

She has had to deal with multiple flare-ups from the disease, some caused by allergic reactions to the many

medications she has to take. She will have to take immune-suppressant drugs for the rest of her life.

The teachers who nominated her were full of praise. Dr. Dineen described her as an "incredibly bright" student

who makes people notice her intelligence and style more than her condition. Dr. Dineen says that Jenn "reads voraciously, and has a mature sensitivity to nuance and subtlety." Other faculty commented on what a fine addition Jenn is to their classes and the way that Jenn does not make her colitis an issue in everyday participation.

After Jenn thanked the Stifel Foundation, Mr. Stifel, and all her teachers, Henry Stifel addressed the student body. He offered words of commendation to Jenn and encouragement to everyone else in the auditorium.

CURRICULUM CHANGES COMING NEXT YEAR

BY DANIELLE PERETORE (IV) & DAVID SPETT (V)

Several changes have been made to the school curriculum for next year. New classes have been added, and old classes have been modified in several departments. The most changes will occur in the history department.

Two new electives will be offered: World Religions and AP Modern European History. The AP course will follow the standard AP curriculum, and students will be expected to sit for the AP exam at the end of the year.

Students will be required to have completed World History 9 and 10, and preference will be given to seniors who have completed U.S. History. Thus, a general knowledge of European history will be assumed, and the aim of the course will be to deepen previous knowledge.

In contrast, World Religions is an entirely new course, which, as the brainchild of Dr. David Korfhage, will be mainly under his direction. The course will focus on the comparative study of religions of the world.

All major religions will be taught, in addition to several smaller, less widespread ones. The aim will be to address questions that all religions pose, such as the existence of

God. Actual practices of the individual religions will also be studied.

According to history department head Dr. James Murray, "I'm very pleased about the new courses because they fill two significant voids in our curriculum. So far, enrollment has been encouraging."

The foreign language department has also made minor

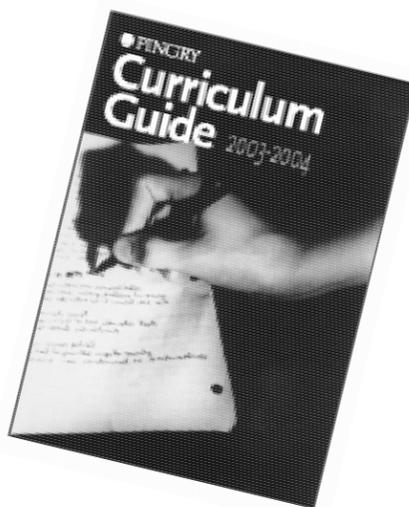
Spanish 5 AP."

Changes have also been made to Spanish 6. Formerly an independent study course, it is now an AP Spanish Literature course. Its structure will be flexible. If many students enroll, it will run as a regular class; if fewer enroll, they will study independently, most likely meeting with the teacher once or twice a week.

"Since there is an AP test offered in Spanish Literature, we felt we should offer a course to prepare students for that test," explains Mr. LaValette.

Health classes, too, have been revamped. Currently, freshmen and juniors take single-semester health courses. Freshmen cover First Aid and CPR, while juniors make individual presentations on pertinent health and societal issues. Next year, the freshman course will follow the current junior course's curriculum.

Possible topics include eating disorders, sexual harassment, stress, drug use, rape, abortion, and sexuality. Juniors will no longer take health; instead, sophomores will study the topics currently studied by freshmen. They will learn First Aid and CPR, and will be trained to use the school's four AED defibrillators.



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Film Festival Wows Crowds

Dana Zolli (VI)



Before each film, the lights came up in the auditorium so that the audience could read synopses in their programs.

BY DANA ZOLLI (VI)

The Art Department presented the first student film festival this year on January 31. The program, coordinated by Mr. Peter Delman, involved short films from several students. The films lasted from two to six minutes each and involved ideas ranging from television to wind. Melissa Tyson (V), Isaac Oransky (V), Dana Zolli (VI), and Joe Della Rosa (VI) were the students responsible for the work showcased in the assembly.

Mr. Delman mentioned at the beginning that Isaac Oransky (V)'s film, "Hobbes," had made it to the final stages of the Myhelan Student Film Competition and would be shown at the Myhelan Student Festival.

When asked to evaluate the festival, Mr. Delman said, "It showed

some of the best work of the filmmakers. They were entertaining but serious. A lot of hard work went into these pieces."

Participant Melissa Tyson felt that "it was a really great experience, and I enjoyed seeing my work on the stage. The film was really fun to make, and it was interesting to see everyone's reactions."

Audience reaction to the assembly was mixed. Eric Bergh (VI) said of the films, "I

thought that some of them were clear, but others were a little harder to follow, although I appreciated everyone's artistic efforts." Tina Christakos (V) could tell that "a lot of hard work had gone into the productions" as well.

Joe Della Rosa (VI), who featured his film "That's Entertainment," was excited about the festival. He explains that his film dealt with "the effects of television on our generation and the role that it plays in our lives—specifically sitcoms." Joe was nervous about the audience's reaction, but was pleased by the experience.

"It went better than I thought it would," he said. "I didn't know if they would understand it. I wanted to leave it open to interpretation, and people sort of liked it."

According to Mr. Delman, there will be another film presentation before the end of the year.

Dana Zolli (VI)



A frame from Dana's film shows a family's inner desires.

QUIZBOWL SCORES!

BY CHRISTINE HSU (V)

If you know the name of the line between the numerator and denominator of a fraction, you belong on the Pingry Quizbowl team. However, you do not have to be a trivia wiz to join; many of the questions involve academic subjects.

Although there is no official record for the Pingry Quizbowl team, it came in second at a competition at Columbia High School and reached the semi-finals in The Bloomfield Academic Tournament of Excellence. Over spring break, the Pingry A team also placed second in overall points in the Millburn tournament out of 50 teams.

When asked why he enjoyed

Millburn High School.

After four rounds of round-robin play, the Pingry A team was in second place out of fifty, the highest finish by a Pingry squad ever. The B and C teams were 15th and 20th respectively. The top eight teams were seeded and put into a single elimination bracket. Pingry A dismantled its first opponents, Seton Hall Prep B, but lost eventually to Governor Livingston High School A in the semi-final round. Tournaments can be competitive or relaxed, depending on the opponents the team is facing.

A future goal of the Quizbowl team includes organizing an intramural Quizbowl tournament that would

Dana Zolli (VI)



The Quizbowl A-team will be headed to nationals this summer.

Quizbowl, Buzzy Cohen (VI), the "Lord Protector" of the Pingry team, replied, "It's like playing Jeopardy a lot, and I like Jeopardy." Buzzy, according to advisor Mr. Wang, eschews the term "president" since he feels that he was not duly elected.

At competitions, there are usually four people per team and up to two alternates. A school can normally bring from one to four teams depending on the competition. Questions range from beetles to the Beatles, eastern philosophy to inverse variations, and biomes to speleology (the study of caves). There are two types of tournaments: buzzer and Jeopardy style. "The strength of the Pingry team lies in the Jeopardy style tournaments," comments Buzzy. However, the team has recently purchased a new buzzer system, and has been honing their skills between meets.

Pingry will have attended five Quizbowl tournaments by the end of this year. Most recently, Pingry sent three teams to the Joseph Bookstaber Memorial Academic Tournament at

take place at Pingry next year. This tournament, with possible names ranging from "February Fever" to "Pingry Brainfest," would be held amongst Pingry students.

Coach Wang comments that another future goal of the team is to attract more people, especially girls. "There are only two girls who come regularly to the meetings," comments Coach Wang, "and we need more people because at one tournament, Buzzy Cohen and Doug Ellwanger by themselves carried a team of two people into the semi-finals."

The Quizbowl team meets every Wednesday during C.P. and no qualifications are necessary to join. When asked what students needed to join the team, Coach Wang replied, "We will take anyone. If you are smart enough to be at Pingry, you can be on the Quizbowl team." Oh, and by the way, the line between the numerator and denominator is called a vinculum. The question was given by August Dupont (III).

Changes

Continued from page 12

"We wanted to add defibrillator training to the freshman curriculum," explains health department head Mrs. Sue Marotto, "but freshmen are too young to be certified to use a defibrillator, so we decided to rotate the curricula."

The science department has also made significant changes. Honors Biology will no longer be offered as a separate course; all students will take regular Biology 1, but those wishing to earn honors credit will be able to apply in September for the honors program.

Prospective participants must have completed eighth grade with a B+ average in science, history, math, and English. New students must receive permission from the department, which will consider students' former grades and admission test scores.

Honors students must attend extra classes, complete five extra projects, pass a test on competency in chemistry and two others on advanced biology concepts, and maintain a B+ average in the course.

Science department head Mr. Chuck Coe explains, "Because of changes in the discipline, the department had noticed that the regular biology and honors biology curricula were becoming very similar. We had several choices, and we made our decision because we believed that it offers the most benefit to the greatest number of students."

Midterms

Continued from page 1

ceMBER. This would require the school year to begin at least one week earlier.

"That's not our culture here," Mr. Neiswender explains. "If we see that the exams don't work, we'll evaluate the problem and consider changes to make them work. But I don't foresee any problems."

The headmaster explains that the decision to institute the exams was made by the administrative council. "Our council felt it was the right thing to do," Mr. Neiswender says, "and after significant discussion, most of the department heads agreed."

According to English Department Head Dr. Jane Ashcom, the English department disagreed because it was "skeptical that adding January exams

would lessen stress for the students. We also mourn the loss of five teaching days."

The headmaster feels that "it's okay to disagree. We talked through it and tried to answer each concern. I think we've worked it out." He added that although most departments were supportive, "every department has its own culture, so universal appeal isn't to be expected."

Mr. Neiswender also notes that Mr. Rohdie and Dr. Macrae informally polled some students on the issue at the beginning of the year. Although most expressed concern about added stress, he said some of their concerns were reduced when told that the material would be split up and not tested twice.

"With the deadline looming to announce the key dates for next year, we decided to call the issue and announce the midterms," Mr. Neiswender explains.

War Forum Stirs Controversy

Continued from page 1

pants had their own spin on what was right and wrong.

One idea everyone was able to agree on was Caroline Savello's (VI) and her brother Alexander Savello's (II) plan to aid the Iraqi refugee children with the help of the Pingry student body, faculty, and the AmeriCares organization.

The debate continued well after the assembly finished, permeating

class discussions throughout the day. Aaron, with approval from the Administration, had benches set up outside the school so that anyone who had free time during the day could stop by and speak or just listen to what other people had to say.

Mrs. Grant's reading was especially memorable. Reading a piece from The Guardian, a British newspaper, Mrs. Grant wanted to dispel the idea that being against the war

means being against the troops and therefore behaving in an unpatriotic fashion. While she is "still opposed to the war and what we may do next, I wanted everyone to realize that people opposed to the war still worry about the troops." She also wanted "the horrors to be realized and people to think about the fact that is isn't unpatriotic to speak out against war. Our country is a democracy; it's patriotic to speak out."

Overall, by most people's standards, the forum was a success. With numerous people and musicians performing, the forum served its purpose of informing everyone about the war. Katie Lawrence (V) thought "the forum was a good idea and a great opportunity for hearing different opinions. The only thing that would have been more beneficial would have been more time for free discussion," she said.

WE'LL MISS YOU, RUBEN

Due to the recent passing of Ruben Cabrera, we decided to re-print an article from the March 2000 issue of The Record. Written by Arjun Iyengar '01, this profile recounts the fascinating and, at times, tumultuous life of the man who became so familiar and beloved to students over the past 17 years. A tribute to Ruben will be printed in our graduation issue.

Ruben: The Pingry Witch Project

BY ARJUN IYENGAR '01

Many people take their legal and economical liberties for granted, such as the ability to vote, to form a peaceable assembly, and to speak freely. Unfortunately, not everyone is granted even these basic elements of freedom and democracy. Every year, thousands of immigrants pour across our nation's borders in hopes of seeking asylum and pursuing opportunity. In May 1960, Ruben Cabrera Martinez, Pingry's favorite janitor, was one of them.

Ruben was born in Havana in 1938, the youngest of ten

brothers and five sisters. Upon graduating high school, he joined the family business, a trucking company. The company transported raw materials like bananas and tobacco across the island to the factories and commercial industries. It was a very competitive yet lucrative business for the Martinez family. However, life changed on the Christmas of 1958 when Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba.

Castro began to regulate the Cuban economy. He arbitrarily raised the tariffs and monitored commerce. He told people involved in the truck-

ing profession what to carry, where to carry, and how much to charge.

Ruben hated the new rules. Nearly one third of the people in the trucking industry went bankrupt, because they were not making any profit. Realizing the situation would soon deteriorate further, Ruben applied for a visa to America in 1959. He felt guilty about leaving two days before Mother's Day, especially since he would never see his mother again.

Before coming to America, the Cuban custom authority

stripped Ruben of almost everything he owned. He was not able to bring any rings,

Ruben arrived in Miami with only 150 dollars in traveler's checks and five dollars in cash. He was only on a fifteen-day visit, but he made plans to stay longer.

watches, jewelry, food, or mail. When he arrived in Miami, he only had 150 dollars in traveler's checks and five dollars in cash. Although he was only on a fifteen-day visit, Ruben made plans to stay longer. He never went back to

Cuba after his visa expired.

Knowing that the Immigration and Naturalization Services would easily catch him in Miami, Ruben moved to New York City in 1960, where he stayed at a friend's house. One morning when Ruben woke up, he was terrified that he could not see anything outside. He asked his friend, "How come America can't afford to clean the streets...there is so much dust outside." The friend then explained to Ruben that outside it was snowing.

While in New York, Ruben worked in the laundry business. Although he could not speak English fluently, he shied away from Hispanic areas and people to avoid getting deported. Ruben had to

plead asylum and ask for Canadian citizenship. He was refused, but the Canadian embassy managed to get him American citizenship.

When asked if he ever experienced any racism, Ruben said he did on a frequent basis. When he was working at the diner, a woman gave him a sizable tip and told him that if he saved up he might be able to buy a car. Although he was angry with the woman, he did not look a gift horse in the mouth and humbly accepted the tip. He never told her that he had four cars in Cuba and that he chose to start from scratch in America.

Ruben then came to Pingry and joined the maintenance staff in 1986. When asked about how Pingry had changed over the years, Ruben said that "there are some good and bad changes." He cited the successful attempts at increasing diversity and how "nice it is to see different types of people." However, he also felt that there are more spoiled students who "act as if they own the place," although he acceded that it was more of a cultural phenomenon rather than an exclusively Pingry oriented problem. He also dislikes the familial role in American culture. "Here the family is all split up," he says. "In Cuba you have closer ties with family."

When asked about what he misses in Cuba, Ruben said he often longs for his family, Havana, and Cuban cigars. Despite leaving his family, Ruben said he was glad that he had the courage and the fortune to come to the U.S.



Arjun Iyengar



Ruben's native country, Cuba, on map (above). An ocean side view of Havana, tropical hometown of the Pingry janitor (left).



'Our Town' Is A Hit!

Continued from page 1

the theater. Using just a sparse set of two tables, a bench, and some ladders, the cast discovered that simplicity was key. According to Mr. Romano, "The play is designed to be done as simply as possible so that the actors create the reality of the town."

Because the stage itself was plain, sound and lighting became crucial. The production staff included sound technicians as well as people making live sound effects. Songs such as "Tis A Gift to Be Simple" provided transition between the three acts.

Seniors were not the only members of the cast. The wedding guests and village members were comprised of juniors as well as faculty members, including Mr. Adam Rohdie, Dr. Jane Ashcom, Ms. Janet Koch,

Mrs. Susan Smith and Mrs. Diana Abreu.

In a time of hectic schedules, "Our Town," set in the 20th century in a small town in New Hampshire called Grover's Corners, reminded the audience of the comfort of simple values.

Kate Coyle, Tomo Gibson, and Abby Buurma, who played the Stage Managers, led the audience through the three acts: "The Daily Life," "Love and Marriage," and "Death." Exploring the lives of two normal, happy families, the Gibbs and the Webbs, Wilder reminds the audience to appreciate each minute of existence.

Mirror images of each other, Mrs. Gibbs and Mrs. Webb (Lauren Miller and Anne Kroeger) work in their gar-

den, Emily Webb (Liz Wight) and George Gibb do homework in their windows, and Dr. Gibb (John Kuchta) and Mr. Webb (Thor Grant) come back from work each day as the sun sets.

The traditional paper boy, Joe Crowell, Jr. (Jeremy Massler), the milk man, Howie Newsome (Louis DiLeo), and an unprofessional but eager women's church chorus all conjure up the Norman Rockwell lifestyle that is lost in everyday chaos.

One of the central scenes of the play was shown at the Friday all-school teaser. In that scene, George Gibbs, at the soda fountain with Emily Webb, decides that he will not go off to agricultural school to learn how to be a farmer. Choosing to stay

in his small town, he chooses happiness and love over success and technology.

Mr. Romano explains, "In Act II, for example, the stage manager breaks in and stops the events on George and Emily's wedding day to show us the moment when George and Emily first expressed their love for each other."

Ending with the melancholy death of Emily, Wilder asks the audience to reflect on the nature of mortality itself. The set in third act was a somber graveyard, dramatically represented by rows of chairs filled with motionless actors. This provided a visual effect for the audience to see the line between the living and the dead.

"Our Town" emphasized the im-

portance of community—our Pingry community. Brian Kelly acknowledged the group effort, saying, "Everyone involved from the largest part to the smallest role is committed to the play. We have all worked really hard as a cast on our accents and physicality. As there is not much of set, we have had to react to each other," he said.

The audience reacted emotionally. Elyse Feldman (IV) commented, "I thought the casting was very appropriate, and the acting was really well done. There was definitely chemistry between John Kissel and Liz Wight." Sonia Alam (VI) remarked, "The seniors' production of 'Our Town' was nothing less than astonishing. I enjoyed it enough to see it all three nights!"

An Unnecessary Lesson On How To Be Good

Nick Hornby's New Novel Reviewed

BY SAMANTHA BAILYE (VI)

"The world is an imperfect place, sir, screws fall out all the time."

— *"The Breakfast Club"*

It is in this "imperfect" universe that the heroine of Nick Hornby's latest novel, "How To Be Good," finds herself turning into the type of "woman who ends marriages in a car park." Coping with middle-aged complacency, Hornby's nameless female protagonist struggles to put back together her rocky marriage and raise her two children.

The author of the best-selling novels "High Fidelity" and "About A Boy," both of which were made into movies, Hornby has a reputation for being a smart, witty, and humorous author. However, he fails to deliver the goods, so to speak, in his latest work,

"How To Be Good." The plot is mundane and lacks a satisfactory climax, resulting in a lingering sense of disillusionment at the novel's conclusion. Hornby's characters are painfully stereotypical and lack any endearing qualities.

GoodNews, the aptly named spiritual guru who takes over the lives of the narrator and her family, is irritatingly self-sacrificial. It would be more beneficial to humanity if he just keeled over and died.

Molly, the narrator's youngest daughter, is a mindless, badgering child who is ridiculously self-righteous for her age and who will no doubt grow up to be a horrible person.

"How To Be Good's" greatest flaw, besides its annoying cast of characters, is that it lacks credibility.

Hornby starts off with realistic characters living in an en-

vironment we can all relate to and has them evolve them into ridiculous, fanatical extremes. The narrator's husband, David, the author of a local newspaper column entitled "The Angriest Man in Holloway," goes from writing scathing "diatribe[s]" about the burden of old people using public transportation to inviting homeless people to move in with him.

While such conversions are plausible, Hornby's description of David's sudden obsession with the ideas of the local homeless healer/guru named GoodNews is poorly described and poorly thought through.

It is a wonder that the narrator manages to put up with David saying, "Nigel's an angry man ... He wouldn't understand," and "We've all been living the wrong life."

The only aspect of "How To Be Good" that has any

merit is the character of the narrator. A family physician, or a GP (general practitioner) as they're called in Great Britain, she is the only one that stops to think and question the sudden presence of GoodNews and the presence

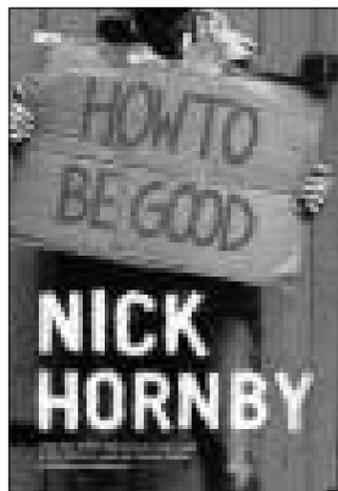
of his ideas in her family's life. Torn between implementing some of GoodNews's more practical "lessons" and living the capitalistic life she's earned, the passages where the narrator struggles to figure out her place on the moral road of

life are the only noteworthy ones. After all, hasn't everyone questioned the morality of indulgence versus charity? Hornby should get credit for his ability to write such a fluid first-person narrative, even though the quality of his content is for the most part highly questionable.

While "How To Be Good" does contain faint traces of Hornby's trademark wit and humor, none of them are amusing enough to mention.

The book is composed mostly of commonplace one-liners that are anything but thought provoking. It's the lack of entertainment value and mediocre plot that make the book a dubious reading selection, despite Hornby's reputation and the positive, over-hyped reviews in certain publications.

If, as Hornby says, "Most people are good people," is there any need for most people to figure out how to be good?



NEW JERSEY'S ULTIMATE ICE CREAM PARLOR!

BY SUMEET SHAH (V)

A note to my readers: *It has come to my attention some readers feel that my restaurant reviews are too generous and lacking criticism.*

I would like to make it clear that I choose to review only the finest restaurants near Pingry. I only write about places that I have visited at least 50 times or so.

Well, well, well. I'm reviewing another ice cream parlor. Now you are probably thinking, Is this guy crazy?

An ice cream parlor review in the winter? Well, my frost-bitten friends, I am not crazy; springtime is almost here, and I think I should give you my thoughts on, in my opinion, the *best* ice cream parlor in New Jersey.

Sure, Gabriel's Fountain is up there, but I have found a parlor that is even better. Thomas' Sweets, located in the center of College Town (near Rutgers University) on Easton Avenue in New Brunswick.

Rutgers students run the parlor, and the ice cream is just *heavenly*. From banana splits to huge sundaes, from 20 wet and 20 dry toppings to 40 flavors, and from cakes to quarts, you can buy many styles of Thomas' Sweets famous dessert.

When my friend Sam and I decided to try out the parlor, it took us about a half-hour from Pingry plus five minutes searching for parking, but the wait was worthwhile.

When we entered, the place was packed. We stared at the long and updated list of flavors, wet toppings, dry toppings, cake orders, and styles of desserts. Sam ordered a simple two-scoop cone (\$2.17) with chocolate chip cookie dough, and I ordered a Huge Sundae (4.09) with cookie dough, Oreos and Creme, marshmallow wet topping, sprinkles, and chocolate chips.

Is your mouth watering yet?

As soon as I tasted my sundae, I felt as if I was in heaven. The rich and delicious flavor of the ice cream circled my mouth, covering my taste buds with joy. I spent about 20 minutes savoring every bite (Sam ate his in about seven). Despite being dessert, it felt like a small meal.

Now, I really cannot explain Thomas' Sweets in words, so I'd recommend you go immediately. It's great for Peer Groups, seniors, and anyone who wants to try the ultimate ice cream.

Thomas Sweet's
Easton Avenue
College Town, Rutgers University
New Brunswick Campus
New Brunswick, NJ

For those who live farther away, there are also two Thomas' Sweets located in Princeton.

Ratings:
Food: *****
Service: ***
Décor: ***
Cost: max. \$7.00



Can you believe it?

Nelson Lee (III)



SNOW IN APRIL!

Class Presidents 2003-2004

Form VI

President: Liam Griff
Vice: Tina Christakos

Form V

President: Nikhil Srivastava
Vice: Caroline Savello

Form IV

President: Brian Combias
Vice: Logan Bartlett

Spring Sports 2002

SMELLS LIKE TEAM SPIRIT!



All Photos by Nelson Lee (III) & Clare Kelly (VI)

2002-2003 WINTER RESULTS

BOYS' ICE HOCKEY

Season Record: 6-12
Mennen League/Haas Division All-Stars: Dave Salerno (1st team), Bryan Zupon (1st team), Chris Collins (2nd team)

GIRLS' ICE HOCKEY

Season Record: 0-10-1
All-State Preps: Melissa Tyson (1st team, defense)

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Season Record: 5-17
Colonial Hills Conference standing: 4-12

GIRLS' SWIMMING

Season Record: 5-8
Star-Ledger Honors: Kelly Peeler (3rd team All-Somerset), Catie Lee (3rd team All-Somerset), 400 free relay team (All-Parochial)

BOYS' SWIMMING

Season Record: 9-3
Colonial Hills conference: 1st place

Star-Ledger Honors: Kenny Brown-Klinger (1st team All-Somerset, 2nd team All-Parochial), Paul Kolb (1st team All-Somerset), Jason Kurz (2nd team All-Somerset), Jack Zoephel (2nd team All-Somerset), Eddie Layng (3rd team All-Somerset), Ian Deeks (3rd team All-Somerset)

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Season Record: 7-15
Colonial Hills Conference standing: 5-11
Colonial Hills All-Conference Team: Allison Keeley (2nd Team), Ellis Kelleher (Honorable Mention), Julie Hamilton (Honorable Mention)

SKIING

No record is available, but Doug Hirsch, Sarah Tarplin, and Max Krein all qualified for states.

GIRLS' FENCING

Season Record: 5-7
Dual Meet Record: 7-6
Santelli Tournament: Lauren Phillips (1st place, A strip), Abby Buurma (Tied for 1st Place, C strip)

Districts: Lauren Phillips (1st place)
Individual State tournament: Lauren Phillips (Sabre, 1st place), Abby Buurma (Sabre, 11th place), Denise LaForgia (Foil, 13th place)
Star-Ledger Honors: Lauren Phillips (Fencer of the Year, 1st Team All-State), Denise LaForgia (3rd Team All-State)

BOYS' FENCING

Dual Meet Record: 12-3
All-State and Other Honors: Matthew Bonelli (NJSIAA, Star-Ledger All-State 2nd Team Sabre), Emil Cappetta (NJSIAA, Star-Ledger All-State 2nd Team Sabre), Max Haines-Stiles (Star-Ledger All-State 3rd Team Sabre), Scott Simon (NJSIAA All-State 3rd Team Epee)

WRESTLING

Season Record: 4-10
Special Honors: Zack Shanaman (5th place, Beast of the East Tournament, Star-Ledger Somerset County Wrestler of the Year), Drew Gatewood (2nd Team All-Conference, Courier News All-Area Honorable Mention)