

Green Dining Hall System Implemented

By JULIA NOSOFSKY (VI)

Every year students return to Pingry, anxious to see what has changed around the school over the long summer months. This year, Pingry introduced a new food disposal system in the cafeteria. The goal of this new system is to reduce Pingry's carbon footprint by composting food waste.

Movie-theater-style ropes have been set up to guide students to a waste bin before they leave their dishes and silverware after finishing lunch. "Yes" and "No" signs, which indicate what should and should not be composted, are located above the waste bin. Finally, Pingry calculates the total waste collected weekly and posts the weight on a sign next to the bin.

According to Mr. Michael Virzi, Director of Facilities, there are two main reasons why Pingry has decided to impose this new system: because it's the right thing to do, and because it saves the school money by "diverting [food] out of the waste stream to keep it from going to landfills so it can be con-

verted to organic fertilizer." The company that converts the waste into fertilizer sells it to Pingry at a reduced rate. The prospect of this recycling system is that there will be less overall food waste.

In October, Pingry will introduce yet another change regarding the cafeteria: trays will no longer be available for use. Besides the fact that many people don't use trays, Mr. Virzi believes that students and faculty will be "likely to take less food to begin with." After trays have been removed for some time, he explained, it will be possible to gauge exactly how much waste was reduced by weighing the compost.

Student reaction to the new food disposal system has been mixed. "I think the new cafeteria system definitely solves the problem of the congested garbage area, and I think the new composting system is a great help to the environment," Grace Putnam (IV) said. Others, such as Chris O'Connell (VI), find the new system to be "inconvenient" because "you don't need ropes to tell you where to put your food."



S. Tayler (III)

Mrs. Grant New English Department Head

By SHAAN GURNANI (V)

This year, Mrs. Victoria Grant stepped up as the head of the English department. She said that her new role as department head is "to help all of the teachers in the department be the best teachers they can be and to make their lives easier. Also, to be a facilitator of discussions about pedagogy—the art of teaching."

Mrs. Grant attended Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts as an undergraduate where she majored in English literature and minored in French, Spanish, and German.

After graduating from Gordon College, Mrs. Grant taught with her husband, Mr. Timothy Grant, at West Nottingham Academy in Rising Sun, Maryland for one year. Soon after, they came to Pingry, where they have taught for 25 years.

Mrs. Grant loves Pingry because of "the extent of engagement." In reflecting upon her years at Pingry, she said, "during a free period, students, both former and current, are always up for a discussion about literature, politics, or anything else." She is impressed that "my students are as excited as I am about learning." Mrs. Grant feels that this engagement encourages "intellectual growth."

Mrs. Grant also appreciates

the "many experiences she has with students beyond just the classroom: we go on trips together, work together, play together, and learn together."

She decided to apply for the department head position because the twenty-first century is "such an exciting time, with so many ways [for us] to communicate with one another."

Additionally, it was the perfect opportunity because of the timing; the previous department head Mr. Chris Shiels had recently chosen to pursue his life-long dream of becoming the Varsity Football head coach.

"I felt ready to accept a new challenge here at Pingry after experiencing 25 successful years. It just felt right," she said.

Finally, she described Pingry as her family, mentioning that her sons both grew up here ("lifers" Thor Grant '03 and Josh Grant '06). With regards to her decision, Mrs. Grant said, "my colleagues are very special people; they enrich my life. I really just wanted to give back to them and the students."

Mrs. Grant hopes that the English department will continue to grow. She also wishes to "fine tune the curriculum in order to best meet our students' needs."

This year, Mrs. Grant is teaching Sophomore English, European/British Literature,

and Creative Writing. However, over the years, she has taught a number of courses, including American Literature, English 9, and New Voices. She created the World Literature course with English teachers Dr. Susan Dineen and Mr. Ted Li and has also taught German, French, and Spanish.

Mrs. Grant loves many aspects of her job, especially "when a discussion gets going and the kids forget I am in the room." She also loves "watching films with [her] students and using art and music in [her] classroom." She is also fascinated by the connections between English and History, and tries to incorporate them into her teaching.

She describes her teaching

style as "Romantic" because she believes in the individual, in the class making decisions together, and in creating independent thinkers. Mrs. Grant also likes having a lot of plants around and thinks that it would be a good experience to teach a class while riding on horseback.

In her spare time, Mrs. Grant, a self-proclaimed "English geek," loves reading books. She also enjoys nature and being outdoors, watching films, going to the theater, and spending time with her family.

After spending time relaxing this summer in Acadia National Park in Maine, working on her house, and doing a lot of reading, Mrs. Grant is looking forward to a fabulous new year as the English department head.



S. Gurnani (V)

Committee Approves "3-4-3" Grading Scale

By KATE DREYFUSS (VI)

At the start of this school year, Pingry implemented a new grading scale. The new scale distributes grades in a 3-4-3 pattern, therefore making the new cutoff for earning grades such as an A or a B a 93 or an 83 instead of a 94 or an 84.

According to Mr. Jon Leef, Assistant Headmaster, the idea for the new 100-point scale came up at the end of last year when the faculty was calculating final grades. He said, "Pingry had just installed a new computer system which would more readily calculate grades using a 100-point scale rather than our traditional 14-point scale."

While last year's final

grades were calculated with the familiar 14-point scale, the Academic Committee, which is comprised of department chairs and administrators, began weighing the pros and cons of switching Pingry to a 100-point scale. The Committee recently approved the change.

According to Mr. Leef, the most attractive trait of the new scale is that it "maintains consistency in grading" between sections of classes that are taught by different teachers. He also added that the new scale does not rescind teachers' right to determine how to grade their assessments, saying, "As a math teacher, I'm not a perfect test designer. There are times when I go back and curve a test if the

grade distribution is not what I had expected it to be, and I am still permitted to do that as I see fit."

While the faculty was generally on board with revising the grading scale, there was some concern about grade inflation, since a student now needs to earn only an 83 to get a B or a 93 for an A. Mr. Leef said, however, that this concern was ameliorated when it became clear that "students still need to work hard to earn their grades."

So far, student reaction to the new grading scale has been mixed. Brandon Brier (VI) believes, "Although providing students with additional breathing room, the new grading scale should not be a priority for an inde-

pendent school in the midst of the greatest economic recession in nearly eighty years."

Alex Daifotis (VI) agreed, adding, "I won't really benefit from the change because many of the classes I am taking this year, such as Math 6, AP Chemistry, and AP Physics, use their own scales as determined by the teachers." Sam Baron (VI) believes that "this artificial grade inflation is okay so long as the school notifies colleges about the change in policy."

Whatever the opinion may be, the new 3-4-3 grade distribution makes Pingry's grading consistent with the grading in many public and other independent schools in the area.

Inside The Record



Courtesy of Roxanne Oghaz (V)

The Oghaz twins took in the view of Santorini during their trip to Greece this past summer.

The Downside of Protocol

Inspired by Kanye West, Sam Baron (VI) explores societal norms and the value of breaking protocol P4.

New Faculty Members

Five new teachers add their academic and athletic skills to Pingry's repertoire P5.

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EDITORIAL

A Year of Self Expression

This is my twelfth and last year at Pingry. It hasn't quite hit me yet, but the truth is that in eight months, I'll be graduating and consequently ending a significant chapter of my life. Perhaps it is this very knowledge that my time here is limited which has inspired me to start reflecting on what I want this new and final year to be.

As I embrace the fresh start of my final year at high school, I continue to see a recurring theme in my peers' opinion editorials: the importance of having a voice. I realize that it is easy to go through high school with people constantly telling you what to think. In fact, Pingry is brilliant at teaching facts and cultivating knowledge in each of its students. But while this is a positive attribute, students need to be aware that there is a fine line between being taught *how* to think and *what* to think.

When I read certain controversial pieces, such as Luke Pounder's op-ed on this year's school trips or Neha Srivastava's critique of the student body relationship with the administration, I smile because I recognize a healthy forum for discussion, *not* an antagonistic medley of complaints. Well-intentioned, each of the commentary writers finds a way to challenge the existing system. This should be applauded and not discouraged for a very simple reason. Without pushing the school in new directions, there will never be improvement or change. And while it is too late to change some things this year, we should consider the future.

Don't get me wrong. I am in no way saying that all of us should become laissez-faire advocates or reject the very concept of protocol. But what the student body should do is to stand up for what they believe in. Meaningless grumbles without solutions and thoughtless rants are often unnecessary, but well-supported opinions and various forms of self-expression are. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "You must be the change you want to see in the world." So I encourage you to make a new school year resolution and think outside the box while questioning the ideas around you—maybe even the ones that are presented in this very Record issue.

Throughout the years, I have seen the same students making arguments in my various classes. The same debaters raise their hands and dominate class discussions. Most of these individuals are established by the end of the first week of school, and no one interrupts this trend for the rest of the year. Admittedly, I, myself, have often fallen into the category of mere bystanders. Yet, in the final chapter of my Pingry experience, I hope to seize more opportunities and take more risks in and outside the classroom.

Self-expression is not only a privilege, but also a necessity. It has provided the foundation for not only this newspaper, but for this entire school. Remember the days when Pingry students composed, edited, and voted on the Honor Code? Furthermore, self-expression is a vital component of citizenship in this country. Too often I see students scared to voice opinions because they fear disagreement from an already outspoken peer or authority figure. But the truth is, respect and conflicting stances *can* co-exist. The fact that anyone can write an op-ed for the Record and have his or her views expressed is a testimony to this idea.

So as you move forward in this new school year, remember to take advantage of all the outlets for self-expression at Pingry and make your beliefs known. Be bold and be

—Jennifer Soong

Going Green: Why Pingry Needs to Push the Envelope and Adapt a Progressive Attitude

By ALEX SCAVONE (VI)

As we walk through the hallways this fall, we see obvious signs of growing environmental awareness. Waste receptacles remind us to recycle, the cafeteria now promotes diverting food waste from landfills to compost, and as we photocopy we are encouraged to use both sides of the page.

In some classrooms, automatic light control has been installed. The turf field is a "green turf," which is composed of no chemicals. The relatively new trash compacting system is highly efficient and requires far fewer truck pickups. We meter our energy use through more efficient heating and use of gas.

Green items also have begun to pop up around the school; new cleaning products, paper, and electronic equipment are all softer on the environment. We will soon embark on tray-less dining to even further reduce our cafeteria's impact (aided by our new composting system).

While these efforts are admirable, they are not nearly enough. The green mentality is obviously not pervasive throughout the student body. Green Group membership is low. Besides trendy Nalgene bottles and recycled notebooks, students put forth very little effort to be environmentally conscious. Most students—known for being engaging and intelligent—are apathetic on this issue.

Last spring, art teacher Mr. Peter Delman, Cassie Osterman '09, and I journeyed to Lawrenceville to meet with Sam Kosoff, Director of Sustainability, and Gary Giberson, the founder of Sustainable Fare (Lawrenceville's food supplier). What impressed me most was not the local fruit or the cool composting system (food waste was being turned into mulch *on campus*); I was struck more by how involved the entire community was with Lawrenceville's green incentive. The spirit of eco-friendliness was everywhere.

With a successful Green Group that was partnered with a thriving Outdoors Club, the Lawrenceville students willingly and enthusiastically participated in reducing Lawrenceville's footprint, bettering the planet, and were open to the idea of change and challenging themselves to become greener. And by

students, I don't mean the small percentage of students that are actual members of the Green Group or Outdoors Club (and this "small percentage" is significantly larger than Pingry's "small percentage"). At Lawrenceville, it's hard for students to *not* get involved.

The thread of sustainability is woven into almost every aspect of Lawrenceville life. Each grade has a Sustainability Representative, and "Director of Sustainability" is an official, paying post at the school. Sustainable Faire, the company that provides food, seeks to create local, seasonal, and healthy meals.

Furthermore, Lawrenceville is a member of the Green Schools Alliance and participates annually in the National Green Cup Challenge. The GCC is described on its website as "The 1st and only national student-driven interschool energy challenge" that "supports student greening efforts, raises awareness and helps all schools reduce their carbon footprint" (green-schoolsalliance.org). Other local schools that participated in the GCC this past year include The Peddie School, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton Day School, and The Pennington School. All the students pitch in, some more than others, but regardless, the community becomes stronger by protecting the

environment.

Talking with Kosoff, the Director of Sustainability, validated all that I had observed. He said that the student participation at Lawrenceville really was amazing, and that student involvement is crucial to accomplishing some of the school's most challenging green incentives.

What still echoes most clearly in my head is Kosoff's declaration that it is necessary to get the "cool" kids involved in Green Group; the problem, he said, is that most kids are

All the students pitch in, some more than others, but regardless, the community becomes stronger by protecting the environment.

just too afraid to show their concern for the environment.

One of the most challenging aspects of recruiting students is making the concept of helping the environment seem "cool." "What

encourages students to get involved?" has long been a question in my mind. What pushes those people who aren't naturally drawn or even interested in organizations like Green Group to get past the dorky "tree-hugger" stereotypes and join in the movement?

The answer: awareness and education. Environmental Literacy is the goal of many communities and may single-handedly be the most important factor involved in "greening" a community. Pingry is far behind other schools on this. Lawrenceville has an astounding six sections of AP Environmental Science, while Pingry has no environmental

education courses during the school year.

Pingry has been nominated for the Energy Educator of the Year. About 55% of this award is determined by efficiency on matters such as composting, energy use, and the like; Pingry's scores on these topics are outstanding. However, the determining factor in receiving this award will be education; in this section, Pingry ranks very low. Environmental Literacy is obviously no small matter.

Since the school is not yet actively implementing environmental literacy through the curriculum—changes that may be forthcoming as the faculty reviews the school's curriculum this year—the responsibility falls on the students to take the initiative and become educated. The most prestigious universities have majors and departments dedicated to a field in which we so far lack a single course.

Yale University, along with its cutting-edge urban garden and incredible environmental engineering program, has an entire graduate school—the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies—dedicated to furthering environmental literacy. It's time for high schools to care about preparing future environmentalists.

Therefore, I send out this urgent plea: students, demand your right to education and raise *hell!* A school that fails to modernize with the ever-changing world cannot be considered a progressive institution. Rather, it sinks far below the level acceptable for academia and acts as a force against the purpose of



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Join The Blue Army: Support Your Friends and Get Involved

By WILL PINKE (VI)

As a senior, I find the end of my Pingry career approaching faster than ever. When I look back at my time here, one of the things I wish had been more prominent in school life is school spirit. Luckily, there is still time for me, as Student Body President—and you—as Pingry students—to fix this.

Pingry is an amazing place, and since everyone is doing so many different things, it is sometimes hard to slow down and appreciate where we are. To our credit, we have a very closely-knit community, but while we may be great friends, we don't openly show our support and pride for our friends as much as we should.

Whether it is a sporting event, music performance,

drama production, or any other school event, there should be Pingry students there to support their peers. I hope that in my final year at Pingry, with the help of the student government and most importantly, you, we can raise the level of Pingry Pride to new heights.

The last time I felt the kind of school spirit that I long for now was when I was in eighth grade. I wasn't

even in high school yet, but I remember going to our high school sporting events all the time and looking up to the upperclassmen in awe. They were some of the craziest fans I have ever seen. At one county basketball game I went to, many of the seniors, who I was always incredibly intimidated by, showed up with their bodies and faces covered in paint. I was terrified. However, the important thing was that those painted seniors scared the opposing team too and created a sense of Pingry unity.

Our basketball team lost, but for the entire game, the atmosphere was electric. Although they were up against what was probably a better team, our players picked up their level of play and had enough energy to keep the game very close all the way through to the end.

Already this year I have seen improvement in school spirit and even some glimpses of the spirit of those years so long ago. At Pingry football's first game this year, for example, a cheering section of about 30 Pingry

students made the drive out to Manville to support the team in the pouring rain. We were cheering against about 20 cheerleaders, a marching band, and a large home crowd, but if you closed your eyes and guessed which team was the home team just by listening, most people would have probably picked us.

We were loud and crazy, and it paid off. Pingry won their first game and garnered their first winning record in years. While the credit is of course due to the players for the win, they did notice the cheering section and after the game some even came over to the fans and thanked us for the support. The win was almost as gratifying for us as it was for them. That is what community is all about. A win by one Pingry team is a win for all of Pingry.

So far this year, we have already established a new

name for Pingry fans: the "Blue Army." Student Government planned a fantastic spirit week and homecoming dance, and the participation was outstanding. The participation in cross-dressing day was particularly impressive. We had the fall pep rally and are thinking of planning another one for the winter and spring seasons to build up excitement later in the year. We are even trying to plan a bonfire so that the whole school can come together to solidify our sense of community in yet another year.

I have very high expectations for our school spirit in the upcoming year. I expect everyone to enlist in the Blue Army and to show support for their friends, even students that they may not be great friends with. If we believe in each other, it will make it easier for us to believe in ourselves. With the knowledge that our peers support us, we will be extra-motivated as well. If we have pride in our school, I believe Pingry will become a much more enjoyable place to be.

Will Pinke
WANTS YOU TO
SUPPORT THE:
BLUE ARMY!



PHOTO & EDITORIAL BY STUDENTS FOR BLUE ARMY

M3

Senior Trip Lets Down Expectations

By LUKE POUNDER (VI)

At the beginning of every year, each form in the high school gets assigned a field trip to give students a break from school and to motivate student bonding. Usually, freshmen go on a peer retreat, sophomores and juniors do a fun weekend trip, and seniors do something random. Some years it's been a retreat, last year it was a full day spa visit.

This year, it was an in-school field trip followed by a couple hours at a secret destination, which was revealed to be Funplex. Yeah, Funplex. When the news broke, it sounded to many seniors like a joke. The school wouldn't really take a bunch of 17 and 18 year olds to a

jungle gym/arcade, would they? Those who attended Pingry's lower campus might know that the 6th graders go to Funplex at the end of the year. Now don't get me wrong, Funplex (or Sports 'N Games as it used to be called) is a great place... for kids 10 and under. The fact that the main attraction is off limits to anyone older than 12 should probably serve as a red flag.

For seniors, though, it felt especially bad when stacked up against the day at the spa. Which would you prefer to get your mind off college stress, a spa or a foam frenzy? And we definitely weren't distracted from the college stress when we roleplayed as college admission officers. That's right. The

in-school part of the field trip consisted of more college stuff.

Then there was the permission slip, which had to be completely filled out in order for a student to go to on the trip. The slip included emergency contact and medical insurance information. Those foam frenzy balls can sting, but I doubt they'll cause any injury emergencies. The same goes for laser tag and bumper cars. Worst case scenario, someone might suffer a nasty skee ball wrist injury. I understand it's just standard procedure, but is the date of my last tetanus shot really that important?

I checked with Ms. Livak, one of our school nurses, who pointed out that, we have these policies "just so we can

handle the emergency when it arises."

OK. I understand.

I guess it could have been worse, but it could also have been a whole lot better. While the majority of the grade found a way to have fun, almost everyone I spoke with agreed that we got jipped. Some students proposed a trip to the movies or a day at the beach. Others would've preferred to just not have any school that day so they could stay home to get work done — including college essays.

As for the sophomores and juniors, they attended a Blue Man Group show and went bowling during a day trip to New York. The best is supposed to be saved for last, but for the class of 2010, that wasn't the case this year.

The True Nature of Dance: What Ballet Means to Sophomore Mai-Lee Picard

By MAI-LEE PICARD (IV)

Being a ballet dancer at Pingry hasn't been easy. I have, in effect, submitted myself to a life outside of the social norm. Because of my commitment to dance I have been unable to participate in any sports, a key part of the Pingry experience. By now, you might now be wondering why I chose to participate in something that would only distance me from the community.

Ballet requires the endurance needed for sports such as soccer or track but also combines that athleticism with artistry that cannot be found elsewhere. Being on stage creates a unique sensation. How would you feel walking into a stadium

and hearing every person in the audience screaming your name? That is how I feel every time I get on stage.

Ballet frees my mind from the outside world. Being on stage gives a thrill unlike any other, and in that moment, nothing else matters. Ballet has the ability to transport someone in the audience to a whole different world.

Ballets, such as "Swan Lake", "The Nutcracker", and "Le Corsaire", manage to tell a story without using any words. Whether it is the five-year-old girl marveling at the dancers gliding across the stage on their toes or an older woman remembering

what it was like to dance like that, a ballet can touch every and anyone.

However, dance is not always about standing in the spotlight. It is also a team sport much like any other.

Dance is not always about standing in the spotlight. It is also a team sport much like any other.

The corps de ballet is made of many girls who usually look alike and must dance alike. A dancer in the corps ceases to be an individual, instead becoming part of the bigger picture. Every head, every arm, every step must be identical to the other girls'; every mistake is seen like a flashing light in the middle of a blackout.

I have often been a member of a corps de ballet, and

it is probably the hardest dancing I have ever done. While soloists are stars, corps dancers are the back-light that makes the star shine. As on a sports team, one person can be the star and score the game-winning point, but it takes the entire team to help that person succeed.

I know that ballet is not a popular topic. It is very much a misunderstood art form, and I hope that you understand it better now. When I tell people I'm a ballet dancer, they usually simply nod their head and smile a lot because they don't understand everything that goes into it. Ballet might look beautiful, but it takes just as much effort to get onstage as it does to get on the field.

EDITORIAL

New School Year, New Attitude

Every September, students pass under the clock tower on the first day of school, unsure of what to expect from the coming year. Heavy backpacks in tow, both new freshmen and returning seniors experience the same sense of uncertainty. Not only must they contend with new teachers, classes, and the new responsibilities and privileges that come with moving up a grade, but they also must adjust to the new changes to the school.

This year, in particular, change is pervading Pingry. In addition to the tangible changes, such as the system of food waste disposal, the fresh faces on the faculty, and the addition of Chinese to the curriculum, there are also alterations to the structures at the very core of our school: the dress code and grading system.

With all of this novelty, it's hard not to feel overwhelmed. But instead of letting it overpower us, I suggest that we let it inspire us. Each new school year is a chance to start over. Why not use our clean slate to fix our bad habits from last year, take more risks in class, or sign up for the clubs that always interested us, but we were too nervous to join? Or as Student Body President Will Pinke (VI) urges in his op-ed, why not support our classmates and the school by simply attending games, concerts, and performances? Even little adjustments to our study habits, school spirit, and attitude can make a huge difference.

Already, I have noticed a multitude of changes for the better. Throughout the school, there seems to be a surge of student involvement. Even at the first Record meeting, I was surprised to walk in to Dr. Dineen's room and find it overflowing with prospective writers, editors, and cartoonists. Never before in my Pingry career had I ever seen so many enthusiastic people cramped into one room.

In the same way, before Wednesday, September 23rd, I had never heard so many exclamations of "stop looking up my skirt" coming from my male classmates. Arriving each morning to the senior couches during spirit week and being greeted by my peers clad in ridiculous costumes was just another illustration of the abundant student energy.

While it may be because I'm a senior or because I'm suddenly feeling sentimental, I feel as though, more than any other year, we are really making an effort to be active members of the community. If you don't believe me, you need only summon up the image of the sea of unobstructed pink, green, red, and black that engulfed the bleachers during the pep rally for proof. Or if you're a senior, remember the period before 8:15 on Blue Army day, when the senior couches were overrun with students coating each other's faces with thick stripes of blue body paint.

I think that as a community we should all endeavor to sustain this positive energy and participation throughout the coming months, even as we get into the full swing of things. I know that I am resolving to make this school year — my last one — my best one yet.

—Jenny Gorelick

The Necessity of Returning to a More Laissez-Faire Environment

By NEHA SRIVASTAVA (VI)

The assumption of ra-

tional self-interest is an essential part of laissez-faire economics. In this

approach, the government assumes that people want to maximize their own gains

and therefore will buy and sell the best products at the best prices. Adam Smith's

"The Wealth of Nations" argued that this pursuance of individual interests, compounded by every person, would stimulate innovation and progress and provide for the common good.

Because of this inherent "invisible hand" providing for public welfare, Smith maintained, there is little need for regulation. In fact, laissez-faire, literally translated to mean "let it be," advocates minimal governmental involvement in the economy.

If someone from outside Pingry asked me to describe the school in one word, I'd say laissez-faire. Why? Because this school assumes we are rational.

In order to enter Pingry, we had to pass through an admissions process. Naturally, Pingry wants students who are intent on succeeding in whatever endeavors they choose, whether they be sports, music, arts, drama, academic, or other extra curricular activities. Let this be the definition of the rational Pingry student: a desire to succeed.

Because students are rational, Pingry can assume that students are responsible for their own educational experiences. And the school generally operates accordingly, giving students the liberty to choose courses so they can freely challenge themselves.

Therefore, Pingry students choose rigorous schedules, combining sports with music and a tough course load. Further, it is their responsibility to do well. Thus, we might conclude that students are rational in the way they see teachers out of their own initiative to better understand a subject.

How exactly does this provide for the common good? Well, just look at the school. When every student strives for excellence in some field, it betters the field itself.

Naturally, as in an economy, this pursuit of excellence increases motivation and competition, an environment that improves the learning experiences for all students. Active and enthusiastic students generate better class discussions, dedicated athletes make a better team and inspire other athletes to push harder, and passionate musicians produce better music. Here we can see Pingry's invisible hand at work.

Yet, why, if our competitive students inherently provide for the public good, has there been an increase in school regulations this year? While Smith conceded that there must be governmental limits on certain economic activities, like fraud, in a free market capitalist system, we too concede that some limits are appropriate. But we already have adequate limits like the Honor Code, a fair and lim-

ited restriction on behavior created by students. If we abide by it, we can function freely in this laissez-faire school system where we still have considerable freedoms inspired by the assumption that we are rational.

In line with these freedoms, we have no bells at Pingry, because students are presumed to know how to get to class on time. We also have a relaxed at-

mosphere between students and teachers. Students may be late to class if they have an interesting discussion with a professor in

*Let's face it;
Pingry students
function better with
fewer restrictions.*

the hallway.

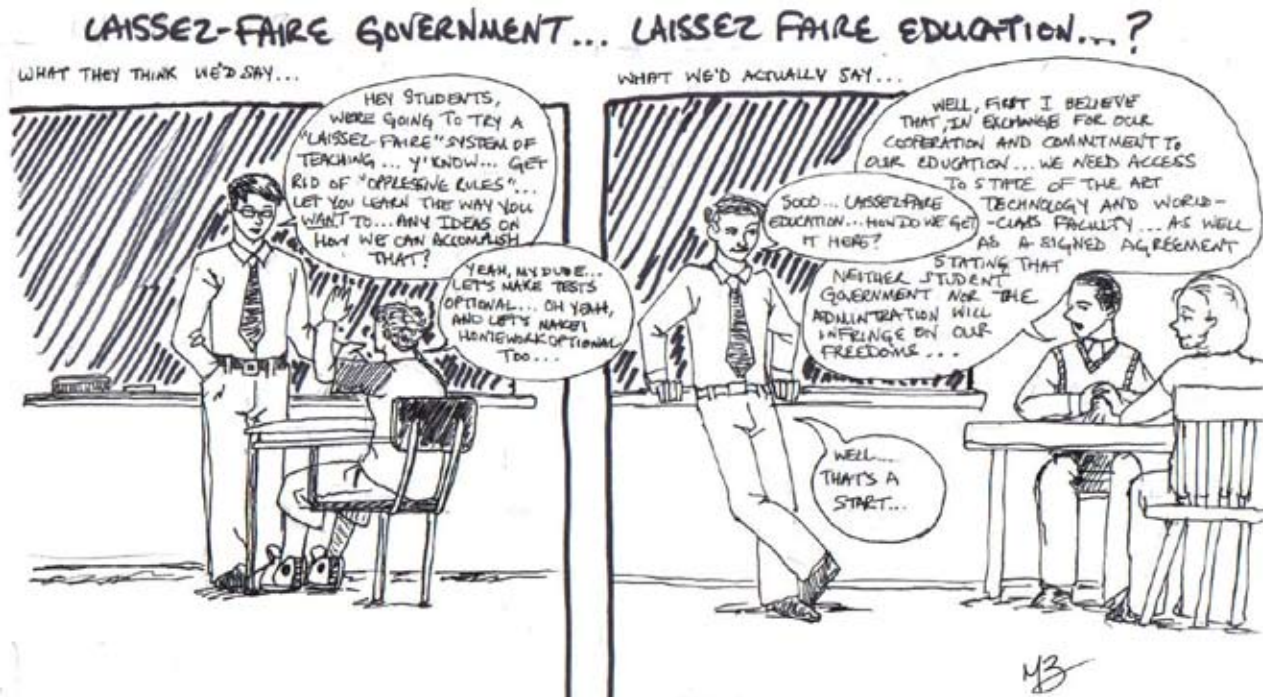
However, there is still too much of what Smith would have termed government regulation. First we have the dress code. Being able to wear simple, comfortable clothing without having to worry about looking great would be one less worry for students who are already stressed out. The rational students won't wear promiscuous or outlandish clothing, because they want the respect of their community.

Second, we experience the delay of senior privileges. Seniors have anticipated these for years. Responsible students won't go off campus until they have handed in their forms, so there is no need to wait until everyone has.

Third, there is a new quasi-detention system afoot. Apparently, students on Academic Warning or Probation can be assigned to a Conference Period Study Hall for a term determined by the Dean of Student Life. Basically, this is an ongoing detention program for kids getting below a C minus. While Upper School Director Dr. Denise Brown-Allen argues that this is a way for the school to fulfill its responsibility of teaching kids to be better students, some students believe this program is an unfair imposition on their time. Since Pingry presumes students are rational, no further incentives should be provided to get better grades.

I can probably list several other unnecessary rules. The point is that the Honor Code is sufficient regulation on behavior at Pingry. Like a free market system, less student regulation maximizes individual choice and is essential for people aspiring for the greatest academic, athletic, artistic endeavors.

I love Pingry. It encourages us to better the community; it stresses teamwork and global awareness. Dr. Brown-Allen says, "Pingry not only allows us to reach for the highest goals but also facilitates their attainment with extensive resources and faculty and administrative support," and this is absolutely true. But ultimately, I see Pingry as its best, as laissez-faire system. Pingry, please just remember we are rational.



An Angst-Ridden Protocol to End Protocol: Why We Can All Learn from Kanye West

By SAM BARON (VI)

Kanye West is unabashedly my hero. Rest assured, his now infamous interruption at this year's MTV Video Music Awards has been beaten to death by our high paced information bonanza. The votes are in, and most people agree: he is still a "jackass."

And to this, I agree, but there is a bigger picture here.

We are looking at a man who will – without regarding protocol or respect – speak his mind and unleash his true emotions, which is a rarity today. He is not afraid to tell the world that former President George Bush "doesn't care about black people." He is not afraid to flaunt his wealth. He is not afraid to act or dress like he is immortal. Hell, he thinks he is immortal.

Where does this fit in, though, with some greater themes? Some greater meta-narrative?

Another hero of mine is Representative Joe Wilson of South Carolina. Hopefully you remember his now much overplayed outburst: "You lie!" Here is someone who lets his emotions loose,

regardless of congressional protocol.

My case: that unleashing yourself, whether it is to feed on controversy or to release true emotion, is infinitely truer to human nature than following societal pressures, protocols, and rules.

Regardless of Kanye West's ego or his apparently compulsive quest for attention, and notwithstanding Joe Wilson's politics, these are two examples of a dying breed of protocol-breaking humans.

This brings us to Pingry.

School by definition is a system that enforces protocol. I would like to suggest that this enforcement is certainly not coincidental, rather, necessary for the maintenance of civilization as a system.

That's not all bad, I suppose. It is presumably a moral prerogative to uphold the system that sustains us. The danger exists when we lose sight of protocol as a means of maintenance and begin to see protocol as a concrete code of ethics – something that is permanent.

We live in an educational system that says you need to fit into a flow: elementary school, middle school, high

school, college, job, death. This is how you succeed.

Somehow if you don't fit into this Bataan Death March, then you are a criminal, a radical, or just insane. Success in life is so intangible that it is dangerous to measure it, but that is precisely what modern education and society has done. We measure success in grades and dollar signs and family and popularity.

I say there is no such thing as success; it's a man-made concept. The true danger of branding success – of quantifying it – is its manmade nadir: failure. We naturally alienate and effectively destroy failures.

Branding failures is an absolute plague, a pandemic.

And it all starts at school. You don't fit in? You don't get good grades? Okay. Become a grunt. Become a mere moth, forever flying towards an unattainable light, unattainable success, unattainable truth.

Which brings us back to Mr. West and Representative Wilson.

If we lose our primal instincts – the ones that tell us to be a jackass, to scream out manically, to break things – if we lose them to civilized

temperaments, then we have destroyed human nature.

This isn't to say that ethics and respect shouldn't exist.

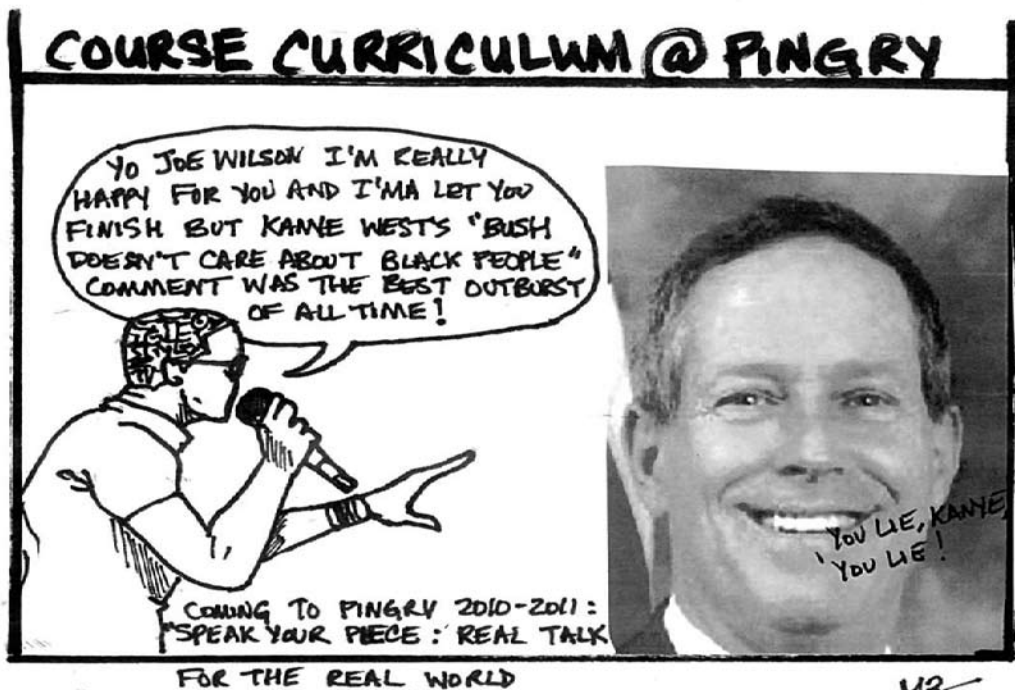
Ethics should be used, and common sense should be applied, but when a body of government or society defines ethics through protocol (law or penal code or school), we are subscribing to moral superiority, a concept that gave rise to Nazism and Maoism.

As soon as we realize that rules and protocols are mere abstractions that serve to solidify and objectify an infinitely liquid and subjective world, then maybe we will see more passion in politics, more honesty in pop culture. These abstractions force us to believe that civilization dictates that authority exists.

It doesn't. One man or government or school may dictate protocol, but that protocol just isn't real. It's only an idea.

And we've lost so many great ideas to that.

So, Kanye, look, I'm really happy for you and I'm gonna' let you finish, but your actions gave me hope that protocol is still a theory and that we still have the will to break it. So break it.



Mr. Andrew Alfano Joins Staff as New Permanent Substitute

By CAROLINE DREYFUSS (IV)

Mr. Andrew Alfano has joined the Upper School faculty as a permanent substitute; he will also help out with classes in the science department.

Mr. Alfano comes to Pingry from Maryville College in Tennessee, where he earned a B.A. in Biology. While at college, he taught students at the local high school through a student-teacher program. Mr. Alfano was drawn to teaching because "I like being able to make a visible difference with what I do."

"Education is what allows students to become free, autonomous individuals, and I can observe the change in my students over the time they are in school. That makes it very rewarding," he said.

Mr. Alfano thinks that being a permanent substitute is an "interesting job. It gives me an opportunity meet lots of students and see how different teachers run their classes," he said. "It's also fun to get out of science sometimes," he added. However, science has always been a favorite subject of his. "I majored in biology, and I took a lot of science in high school and found it to be very interesting," he said.

When he's not teaching, Mr. Alfano enjoys music and the arts. His favorite performance style is opera; he was once a fundraiser for the Knoxville Opera. "I enjoy opera and the arts because it is something completely different from what I study," Mr. Alfano said. "It is a lot of fun to learn about something new that gets you

to think in a different way than you are used to."

Mr. Alfano's favorite thing about Pingry is "the students." "They are bright, dedicated, and they make teaching fun," he said. Many students also hold Mr. Alfano in high regard. "He's very positive in the classroom," Susan Contess (V) said. "I think he's a good addition to the staff."

Mr. Alfano has also made an impression on students he has not had in class. "I talked to him randomly in the hall once. He seems really nice. And really excited to be here," Vicky Morgan (VI) said.

Along with teaching, Mr. Alfano is currently coaching JV Tennis and will coach Middle School Swimming in the winter. He will also serve on the Honor Board this year.



S. Barrionuevo (VI)

Mr. Stephen Spezio Replaces Mr. William Frye as Trainer

By GRACE PUTMAN (IV)

Mr. Stephen Spezio, who has joined the Martinsville Campus this year as the new Athletic Trainer, comes from JAG Physical Therapy in West Orange. In addition to his Pingry duties, he will continue to work in their office in Warren.

Mr. Spezio first developed an interest in Athletic Training as a high school student who had a few injuries himself.

"My time with my Athletic Trainer in high school sparked my interest," he said. "I've always loved sports and knew I wanted to go into science or medicine, so I figured I would put it all together."

Those interests led to a B.S. in Biology and an M.S. in Athletic Training, both from Seton Hall University in South Orange.

After college, Mr. Spezio started his job with JAG Physical Therapy and became involved in the Athletic Training outreach service. As part of his work, he was the athletic trainer for high schools, colleges, youth teams, professional teams, and charity organizations. Some of the teams he worked with include the NJ Rock Hoppers, a professional hockey team; the NJ Ironmen, a professional indoor soccer team; and the Newark Bears, the professional baseball team. He also became involved with international wrestling and summer lacrosse tournaments and worked with the College of St. Elizabeth, Felician College, and Fairleigh Dickinson.

In commenting on his decision to work at Pingry, he



N. Gilbert (V)

said, "I heard about Pingry and decided, 'Why not?'" Mr. Spezio said, "I wanted to work more permanently in a school at some point. I was really impressed with the school, the faculty, and especially the students. I was really able to see working here and knew it would be a good fit."

One of the things Mr. Spezio enjoys most about teaching is the "opportunity to see a different side of the student-athlete that I'm not used to seeing." Mr. Spezio teaches a health class to the sophomores and admits that teaching the class "has been the biggest adjustment, but so far I really enjoy it."

Being able to be at the school for preseason enabled

Mr. Spezio to "get to know my way around and get to know some of the students and faculty."

In Mr. Spezio's opinion, some of the positives of this community are the "fast-paced, high-energy atmosphere" and the accepting and helpful community of students as well as teachers.

When he is not teaching or being the athletic trainer, he spends time with his friends, family, and girlfriend "doing whatever sounds like fun at the time...sports, movies, etc." Above all, though Mr. Spezio loves his work. "I make a living being around sports... it doesn't get any better than that," he said.

Mr. Igor Jasinski Teaches German

By SARAH MEYERS (IV)

Mr. Igor Jasinski, who has joined the community as a part-time member of the Upper School German faculty, is originally from Düsseldorf, Germany. Mr. Jasinski came to the United States in 1989, where he got his Masters in Philosophy from Stony Brook University. He then moved back to Frankfurt, Germany for one year in 1992.

In 1993, he moved back to New York and in 2003, started teaching in New Jersey. Mr. Jasinski was inspired to start teaching by one of his German-Philosophy teachers. He can speak German, English, French, Spanish, Italian, and Latin.

Mr. Jasinski recommends that German students should read Thomas Mann's "Magic Mountain," Franz Kafka's "Metamorphosis," and Rainer Maria Rilke's "Letters to a Young Poet." "These books –

especially the last two – will appeal and relate to teenagers," he said.

In addition, Mr. Jasinski encourages people to learn a new language because the process offers "insight into a new way of thinking and a different culture." He recommends German, specifically, because of German contributions in philosophy, literature and science.

Being a high school teacher at Pingry, Mr. Jasinski said, "reminds him of the mature students back in Germany." Students here, in his view, are "interested in learning and are poised."

He also appreciates how the faculty is intellectually stimulated and enjoys teaching. The entire school expresses "interest in each individual person," he said.

In his spare time, Mr. Jasinski runs, does yoga, and dances salsa.



S. Gurnani (V)

Mrs. Diane Carroll Adds to Library Staff

By MOLLY SCHULMAN (IV)

Mrs. Diane Carroll, who has joined the library staff this year, is originally from Long Island and currently lives in Martinsville.

Mrs. Carroll got her B.A. in English from the State University of New York. For the next twelve years, she worked in an insurance business, a job that she considered interesting.

The new librarian has two daughters, a junior and a senior in high school. When her eldest daughter was in kindergarten, she spent a lot of time at libraries and consequently became a part-time librarian.

Mrs. Carroll later decided to go back to school to get a masters degree in library science at Rutgers University.

"Being a librarian is like mastering a science," she said, as it involves knowing how to research a topic thoroughly with the resources you have.

Mrs. Carroll decided to apply for the opening at Pingry

because, as her children are older, she is ready for a more time-consuming commitment. She had heard many positives about the school, including its academic challenges.

She really looks forward to meeting and getting to know the kids this year. She has never worked at a school before, and so far, she feels as though she has been inducted into a very welcoming community.

Some of Mrs. Carroll's favorite hobbies include skiing, knitting, reading, playing with her two dogs, and gardening—activities that she considers stereotypical for librarians. This summer, she even planted her first vegetable garden. Her favorite types of books are mystery novels, though she also loves "A Prayer for Owen Meany" by John Irving. Another one of her favorite authors is Michael Connelly.

Mrs. Carroll enjoys being a librarian because it allows her to work with and be around her "first-love, books."



A. King (V)

Ms. Weiwei Yu Kicks Off Chinese Program



A. Logerfo (V)

By REBECCA CURRAN (IV)

Ms. Weiwei Yu, who is helping kick off the school's new Chinese language program, has been teaching Chinese in the U.S. since 2002.

Ms. Yu attended Nan Kai University in China where she majored in Chinese Language and Literature. After graduating, she was a TV station editor for three years before moving to the United States. Although she has taught Mandarin in Connecticut for the past three years, she is currently working on her second masters in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language at Middlebury College.

Ms. Yu became interested in teaching Chinese in college, where she worked as a tutor and a volunteer teacher and "felt obligated to spread the Chinese language and culture to the people who wanted to learn." She taught the language to adopted Chinese children as well.

Ms. Yu has helped establish new Chinese programs before. In 2006, she initiated a program for students in kindergarten through

eighth grade at the Whitby School in Greenwich, CT. Ms. Yu also implemented a new curriculum for eighth grade students at the Milwaukee Modern Chinese School in Wisconsin.

Ms. Yu believes that compared to the other languages at Pingry, Chinese is not much harder. She said that "the languages are all equally" difficult and that "Americans may think French and Spanish are easy to learn, but they are quite difficult for native Chinese speakers in terms of conjugation." "If you knew Tibetan, you would think Chinese was very easy to learn," she elaborated.

Ms. Yu said that "the tones in Chinese are the hardest part for Western learners since it is so new to most of American learners, and it takes time to get used to them." Yet, she added, "Since there are not too many different sounds in Mandarin Chinese compared to other languages, students will master the tones eventually."

The most rewarding part of teaching Chinese is when "a student spontaneously speaks in Chinese," she said.

Chloe Sorvino Reflects on Berkeley Conference Experience

By CHLOE SORVINO (V)

In Mr. Dean Sluyter's American Literature class, we've been talking about how, in the summer, we are the people we want to be. And how during each summer, we tell ourselves, "I'm going to be like this even when I go back to Pingry." But somehow, our true selves, our summer selves, get lost in the shuffle of the fall.

There are sports, there's the play, there's all of the new academics you have to force yourself to get back into. Hey, I couldn't even form remotely intellectual sentences until the second week of school.

But what if we could bring just that one part of the summer back to school with us? Would you want to? Do you think your school friends would still accept you?

Have you ever imagined what living in a utopia would be like? A place where everyone truly supports and loves each other unconditionally? If one existed, it would be the true paragon of learning environments.

Well, this summer, I lived in one for six days. I've never felt so connected with myself and those around me. It was like the environment I envisioned above: one where you learned about yourself.

But I think I'm trying to run before I can walk. I'll start from the beginning. I

didn't know a soul when I first arrived at the University of California Berkeley drop site, long past the point of check-in because my family and I didn't think it was necessary to bring along the exact address of my future home for the next six days. How big is Berkeley, right?

When I got to my room, I found out that I had packed all wrong. My extremely put-together roommate had a printed out list of each day's events with her corresponding outfits – khaki capris and a white collared shirt for the casual days, and a blazer and black dress for the business attire days.

I, on the other hand, came dressed for Berkeley, California with Western business attire. Let's just say the abundance of fringe, flannel, long dip-dye skirts, and maxi dresses that I was unpacking made me nauseated.

In fact, I burst into tears, sobbing louder and louder as the heap on the floor of my closet piled bigger and bigger with bright and cheery colors that exuded images of peace and love, contrasting with my roommate's closet of nudes and naturals. As I held up another moccasin boot, I asked my mom, mid-tear, "Please, don't make me go!"

But she did. And they left me, and I kept crying.

However, once I got past that, the conference was actually touching. I resisted

for a while, I will admit. But I quickly found that all my judgments were wrong.

We were all experiencing the same self-discovery that the conference was trying to invoke in us. We all wanted each other to succeed. For six days, we were all in the same boat: no friends from home, insecurity, and while everyone was better dressed than I was, we all wanted each other to succeed.

It was a truly odd environment. The conference taught us that before we become leaders in our own communities, before we enroll in a movement bigger than ourselves, we must know who we are. We would constantly ask each other: "Do you support me?" And – I would bet my life on it – we would always be answered back with a loud crowd of cheers, clapping, and an astounding chorus of: "I support you!"

We sincerely formed life-lasting bonds. But something else I took away from my experience at leadership conference was a personal mission statement. It's something I came up with on my own, and I will stick to forever.

And, now, I want to try to bring that mission statement here, to Pingry, to the community where, in the winter, I get to when the sun still hasn't come up, and I leave when the sun's already set.

If we could recreate that

environment of unconditional love and support, what would happen? Could you imagine the change? A possible outcome you never

dreamed of before?

Please, help me lengthen my summer. We all need this. We're all in the same boat. Just a little extra sup-

port for each other would change Pingry greatly.

So, now I'm going to ask you, Pingry: Do you support me?



Chloe Sorvino (V) at dinner with friends in California.

Courtesy of Chloe Sorvino (V)

Roxanne Oghaz Embraces Greek Culture and History

By ROXANNE OGHAZ (V)

Greece, once the center of science, art, and philosophy, is a nation of immense historical prominence. From the birth of democracy to Aristotle's scientific method, it has undoubtedly influenced world civilization in a profound way. This summer, I had the privilege of visiting ruins from that ancient time of intellectual and architectural advancement and exploring the vibrant, modern country.

I spent the first half of my trip in Athens. Upon entering the populous capital city, I immediately took notice of the striking contrast between new and old. At the center of Athens stands the Acropolis, which was built in the sixth century B.C. The imposing limestone edifice towers at 490 feet above sea level, and although the climb is somewhat tiring, the view at the top is remarkable, as is the ability to see the architecture up close.

The Temple of Zeus, another site of ancient ruins, is also located in Athens. Little remains except a few columns, some standing and others broken into segments

on the floor. What is most impressive is the size of these structures.

An additional point of interest in Athens is The Acropolis Museum, which opened its doors on June 21, 2009. The new museum houses the numerous artifacts uncovered at the site of the Acropolis. The location of the building caused controversy during its construction, because it lies directly above the archaeological site of Makyrgianni. In certain areas of the museum and at the entrance, the floor is made of thick, clear glass so that the ancient town may be seen underfoot. Apart from historical sites, Athens has beautiful beaches and a busy shopping district.

I spent the remainder of my trip on the Greek Isles. Comprised of over 6,000 small islands formed by volcanic eruptions, they are a popular tourist attraction. Perhaps the most famous of these islands is Santorini, or Thera as the natives call it. The simple white buildings situated atop a cliff overlooking the Aegean Sea are an incredible sight. Shops line the winding streets, and English, among

many other languages, is widely spoken.

While most people reach town by means of vehicle transport, those who are more adventurous have the option of riding donkeys. It is a bumpy, uncomfortable ride, but nevertheless a fascinating experience. The island is also well known for being the most active volcanic center in the South Aegean; in fact, the Santorini volcano was the site of one of the largest known eruptions.

Apart from the rich history to be observed in Greece, the modern culture is equally as alluring. Exploring an unfamiliar way of life is an unparalleled experience that can be gained by traveling to this country. Although the Greek language is difficult to pick up, the people are friendly and eager to help, and many do speak English. Furthermore, directions are not hard to obtain, so getting lost is not a major concern. Another commendable feature of this country is its delicious cuisine.

The variety of activities offered by Greece, coupled with its temperate climate, make it the ideal vacationing spot.

Amanda Haltmaier Learns About New Orleans Traditions



Amanda Haltmaier (V) repairs a devastated home.

Courtesy of Amanda Haltmaier (V)

By AMANDA HALTMAIER (V)

This summer, I traveled to New Orleans for two and a half weeks to participate in a Hurricane Katrina Relief program. When I was trying to decide how to spend a portion of my summer vacation, I scanned advertisements presenting international community service opportunities. It then occurred to me that it would be more valuable and realistic to better a part of the world closer to home.

The New Orleans program particularly interested me because it was the only domestic program offered. When the informative paragraph explained that the program's objective was providing rebuilding tools for victims of Hurricane Katrina, I was somewhat confused because I had not realized New Orleans still needed repairing, as Hurricane Katrina hit almost four years ago. I researched more about what

had happened and was shocked to discover that the rate of restoration was so slow. It was anticipated that it would take at least ten more years for New Orleans to be fully recovered. I became even more interested in the program and soon decided that I wanted to help.

When I was on the airplane on the trip there, I wondered what type of people would go to New Orleans if not partaking in a program like mine. I did not fully understand what I was in for until I told the woman sitting next to me, who was going there on business, what I was about to accomplish. She handed me twenty dollars and told me to give it to the organization with which I would be working, the St. Bernard Project. I then realized that I was about to embark on a very special journey.

The first week I worked with five other volunteers on a house for the daughter of a man who lived on his roof for four days with minimal supplies when

Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. I then worked in a charter school, sorting books to restore into their library. Finally, I worked on a house for a seventy-year-old woman named Ms. Pat. Her poignant story was one that deeply impacted me. She had lost her whole house in Hurricane Katrina, and spent the last four years being cheated by criminal contractors who did not finish repairing her house and took all of her savings.

While I was there, I also took in the lively culture that still exists in New Orleans despite the immense devastation from the storm. The townspeople continue to celebrate Mardi Gras and enjoy jazz music even after Hurricane Katrina. The hurricane may have destroyed New Orleans physically, but the people living there did not allow the hurricane to ruin their culture, lifestyle, and unity. New Orleans' strong and distinct traditions truly make it a special place worth visiting.



Roxanne Oghaz (IV) and Jasmine Oghaz (IV) site seeing.

Courtesy of Roxanne Oghaz (V)

Teaching English as School Volunteer Moves Diana Dzerovych

By DIANA DZEROVYCH (V)

On a typical summer day, you would probably find me sitting on a beach, catching up on summer reading or trying to get a tan. During the month of July, however, I decided to be a little more proactive and get a jump-start on my community service hours.

My mom had told me about helping out at a local elementary school in its summer school program. To be honest, at first I wasn't sure if this was the right job for me. Even though the students in the class I'd be assisting were only entering first or second grade, I was afraid I wouldn't be able to explain something to them or they would ask me a question I wouldn't know how to answer. Despite my worries, I decided to take on this new challenge.

On the first day of my

community service project, the teacher introduced me to each of the students. Afterwards, they began drawing pictures and writing one or two sentences about a story the teacher had just read to them. As I walked around the room trying to help the students with spelling, I realized that being an elementary school teacher was harder than I thought. And not because the material is difficult, but rather because it is hard to teach the basics, especially to kids who are young.

It felt odd explaining how to spell simple words and sometimes aggravating that it took so long for the students to understand. On top of that, it was sometimes difficult to get the children to cooperate and do their work. Although I was only helping out the teacher, I really got a sense of how difficult it was to teach basic English.

After a few activities, it was time for snack and recess. Recess consisted of playing outside on the jungle gym and then going to the picnic tables for snack. What surprised me during recess was how quickly I was accepted into all the kids' games. I had known them for maybe an hour and a half, and yet I was already wanted in a game of tag. So I started running all around the playground, surprisingly really getting into the game, just as much as the kids were. I could only imagine what some of the teachers were thinking as they watched a soon-to-be high school junior running around in woodchips and going down slides.

Soon, everyone was called in for snack, which made me glad because I was actually exhausted from playing tag for half an hour. Snack consisted of lunch boxes, juice

boxes, and a variety of chips and sandwiches, bringing me back momentarily to my lunches in elementary school. When snack time ended, everyone retreated back into their classrooms for the second half of class.

As I was leaving that day, I received a good-bye hug from almost half the class. It still amazes me that kids are able to open up to people so much more easily than teenagers and adults and just be who they are from the start.

I went back to volunteer at the elementary school about ten more times in the month of July. Each time, I experienced the kids' enthusiastic behavior and the teachers' patience and enjoyed every moment of it.



The school at which Diana Dzerovych (V) volunteered.

Courtesy of Diana Dzerovych (V)

Vinita Davey Tours Various Italian Cities with Family

By VINITA DAVEY (III)

I spent one of the best summers of my life this year with my family in Italy. The journey began a week after school ended as my family and I boarded a flight to Brussels, Belgium. From there, we took another flight to the beautiful city of Milan. Milan is undoubtedly my favorite city in Italy because it has a natural beauty that is difficult to find anywhere else in the country.

In Milan, we stayed in Le Meridien Gallia, a gorgeous hotel right across from the train station. My favorite site in all of Milan was definitely Il Moro's palace, but a close second was the imposing but lovely Duomo. Unfortunately, since we missed our first flight to Milan, we had to leave after only spending two days there. From Milan, we took a train to Venice.

Upon first glance, Venice looks like a scene from a fairy tale, with its domes, spires, and towers rising up from the many chiesas and palazzos. Since Venice is surrounded by water, we had to take a waterbus to our hotel. The bus was filled with tourists from all around the world. I heard so many languages around me on the bus that I lost track of them all!

We spent our time in Venice relaxing by the water, watching tour groups of students from Spain and France, and listening to Italian and American pop music playing out of the stores in the Piazza di San Marco. We enjoyed seeing the Sunday mass in the Basilica and visiting a museum in which my sisters and I got hopelessly lost in one of the dungeons. From our hotel, we had a beautiful view of all the canals and Santa Maria della Grazie. However, I felt like Venice had a commercial feel to it – similar to a Disneyland for adults.

After spending two days in Venice, we headed to Florence, my least favorite city in Italy. Whereas Milan had a natural beauty, and Venice was a kaleidoscope of color



Courtesy of Vinita Davey (III)

Vinita (III) and Lakshmi Davey (V) at the Trevi Fountain.

and activity, Florence seemed a little austere. The prime attractions of Florence were its art museums, but after touring so many of those all in a day and a half, I didn't want to see another picture of the "Madonna and Child" for the rest of the trip. Later on in the day, we took a train to Rome.

Rome is like a combination of all three cities: it has the serenity of Milan, the color and magic of Venice, and the asceticism of Florence. We stayed in a hotel that was apparently voted the "most romantic" in Rome because many celebrities had gotten engaged there. We hit all of the major sites there: the Trevi Fountain, the steps, the Coliseum, the Pantheon, and the Sistine Chapel. On our third-to-last day, we went to Vatican City and visited Saint Peter's Ba-

silica. When we went into the catacombs to see the tombs of previous popes, we were nearly trampled by hordes of elderly women weeping over the tomb of Pope John Paul II. I was dumbfounded by Rome's diversity. People from all corners of the earth were there.

We spent our last nights in Italy eating gelato by the Trevi fountain, shopping for souvenirs, and enjoying the smell of pizza emanating from the cafes.

I plan on returning to Italy many times. Well, at least four, considering that's how many coins I tossed into the Trevi Fountain. Between the fantastic pizza and ice cream and the amazing language that I am currently trying to teach myself, it was hard to say ciao to Italy, but I look forward to many visits in the future.

Taylor Shepard Repairs and Builds Houses on Mission Trip to Iowa

By TAYLOR SHEPARD (V)

Iowa. For many people, that word invokes images of endless open farm space and blue skies. Trust me, they are not mistaken, but at the same time, there is a whole other world behind the image of crops.

This summer, along with 112 other high school and adult volunteers from the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, I traveled to Burlington, Iowa for our annual high school mission trip. This town, along with many other towns in the Midwest, suffered from a horrendous flood about two years ago.

Believe it or not, our group of volunteers was the first to reply to a desperate plea for help. Once we arrived, we could sense the appreciation of the entire community. In fact, even before we lifted a finger to help, the

mayor himself threw us a banquet to show his gratitude. For the next week, we worked diligently to clear out damaged houses, build new walls, install insulation, scrub off dirt, put in electrical wires, and learn more about the community's people.

I worked on a site for a family of four, including a set of twin sophomore girls. The townspeople were incredibly thankful and actually rather excited to meet all of us, but what surprised most of the people on our site was the twins' incredible work ethic. They dedicated their entire summer to repair their house and the houses of those around them. Yet neither one of them ever hinted at exhaustion, boredom, or life being unfair the entire time we were there. We admired this sense of maturity, and it truly inspired me to work as hard as I could for

such deserving people.

I will never forget some things, like learning how to use power tools and being completely humbled by nature's capability of unbelievable wrath. In one single flood, hundreds of people were rendered homeless. Being placed in the aftermath of such an event, I felt really small; however, it is always important to remember even a small role can have a big impact. If our group hadn't helped out the people in Burlington, their desperate need would have just grown more and more, and a solution would be harder and harder to execute.

Sometimes, it definitely seems difficult to act out and do something for someone you don't know, but I can speak from experience when I say that it is entirely worth it. A friend of mine on the trip re-



Taylor Shepard (V) and volunteers on a mission trip in Iowa.

Courtesy of Taylor Shepard (V)

Homecoming Dance Transports Students to the Year 3009

By **MARISA WERNER (IV)**

This year's homecoming dance was held on Saturday, September 26 with the theme of Pingry 3009. The event took place in the Bristol Gym from seven to ten o'clock. With the help, creativity, and dedication

of the members of Student Government, who volunteered their time to help set up before the dance and clean up afterward, the dance was a blast.

As students approached the gym entrance, they were transported into the future. Many people were shocked by all of

the decorations. Necklaces with glow and the dark sticks were only the beginning.

The frame of the gym door also had silver tinsel hanging down from it, and the entrance was transformed into a black G, misty, and neon tunnel. It was adorned with glow in the dark

stars all over the walls, a strobe light, and a smoke machine. Once attendees walked out of the tunnel, they were inside a tent, surrounded by black lights, glow in the dark sticks, and flying saucers. Furthermore, to make everyone feel more futuristic, a projector offered a scene of the sky. It looked and felt as if you were falling into space. As one junior said, "Oh my gosh, I actually felt like I was in the year 3009. It was unbelievable."

The DJ for the night was Rakesh Bhisham (VI). People

loved how he mixed the songs and changed some of the words so that the songs fit with the futuristic theme. The music he chose made people want to dance and have a good time.

The dance was well attended this year, even though the weather was a little cool. However, that didn't stop students from coming in theme. The students really got into it this year and went all out. There were a lot of metallic and bright colors. The color of the night was easily silver.

Everyone looked like they were having a lot of fun and really enjoyed themselves. One freshman said, "I like the theme because it was really easy to find clothing to wear. It was fun shopping for it." Many of the students said that they got their outfits from either American Apparel or Forever 21. One student said, "I was shopping for my outfit on Friday and I saw like 10 people from each grade from Pingry at Forever 21 and American Apparel. It was really funny."



Courtesy of Maddie Garcia (VI)

Chinese I is New Addition to Modern Language Curriculum

By **ANISHA MOHIN (V)**

This year, Pingry has added Chinese I to its modern language curriculum. There are currently four Chinese I classes at Pingry: two in the upper school and two in the middle school, all of which are taught by new faculty member Ms. Wei-Wei Yu.

As Mr. Norman LaValette, head of the Foreign Languages Department, explained, "We wanted to include Chinese in our curriculum for three main reasons: The first was China's prominence, both in terms of its population and its economy. Every other product you see these days is Chinese. Next was the fact that many Pingry parents who are native speakers wanted to see the language offered. And, of course, Pingry always tries to be on the cutting edge, so to speak."

Adding the course to the curriculum was a lengthy process, which took the faculty about two years. First, faculty members researched other

schools that offered Chinese. Then, the Pingry Middle School decided to offer a Chinese class after school to gauge interest and reaction to the language. When the department decided the course would benefit the school, Headmaster Mr. Nathaniel Conard, Middle School Head Mr. Philip Cox, and Upper School Director Dr. Denise Brown-Allen were instrumental in transforming the idea into reality. Mr. Conard and Mr. Cox both offered their full support to the language department and were "willing to help whenever necessary," Mr. LaValette said. Dr. Brown-Allen, meanwhile, worked out the logistics of adding a new course to Pingry's schedule.

So far, the program is off to a promising start. 36 students are enrolled in the course: 18 from the Middle School and 18 from the Upper School. Mr. LaValette asserted, "Everything is going as best as it possibly can. Wei-Wei Yu is an excellent teacher."

The class has also elicited a

positive response from students. Maggie Morash (IV) explained, "The class is good. It's definitely very challenging, but it's interesting and very rewarding when you are finally about to understand something." Vinita Davey (III) agreed, "Learning the characters is tough, but it's a fascinating system of writing." Ricardo Vollbrechthausen (IV) commented, "Yu Laoshi is a great teacher."

"Mandarin is the language of the future," Davey added, "and I'm glad I get to take advantage of this opportunity."

As of now, the language department is mainly concerned with short-term goals for the program. If students advance enough, the department will hire more teachers and offer higher-level courses. But for now, the main focus is retaining current students and attracting new ones. Mr. LaValette feels that "adding a new course is very rewarding. It's great to hear that a student is being challenged and is willing to step up to the plate."

Pingry Community Welcomes AFS Student Matteo Valente

By **BRANDON BRIER (VI)**

Joining the junior class as this year's AFS student is Matteo Valente (V) from Italy, hosted by Morgan Foster (VI) and her family. Although Valente admitted that "their first meeting was a little awkward," a one-week trip to Boston made him feel welcome in his new environment as he began the school year.

Valente has enjoyed the past few weeks, noting the "huge quantity of opportunities" offered both academically and socially at Pingry. Because Italian students spend their entire day in one classroom while the teachers rotate, he found his schedule "very confusing" at first, but certainly manageable with Morgan's help.

His classmates' welcome has made his transition relatively seamless. The students "were all very kind to me," on the first day as they warmly "invited me to sit at their table and talk about my day, classes and teachers," he said. He also ate lunch with Mr. Keith Vassall, Assistant Director of College Counseling, who also made him feel "very comfortable and welcomed" and "a lot less nervous for the beginning of the school year."

A devoted athlete, Valente has enjoyed playing on the soccer team over the past month and may join the basketball team this winter. Additionally, he was fascinated by the football game he attended during the first week of school, although "he didn't understand the rules very well."

Valente is also excited for the social opportunities of this year. While he "doesn't really know what to expect, he is 'looking forward to everything'" that his fellow students and faculty have to offer.

Valente also liked the cultural aspect of his first weeks in America, although "getting used to the earlier mealtimes" took several days. He noted, "Everything here looks bigger," whether it is "the roads, the cars, the hallways or the houses." The "grocery stores are amazing!" he remarked.

Foster explained that her family has tried to make Matteo feel more at home by "eating a lot more pasta" and treating Matteo "as part of the family and not just a guest." The most American thing he has done, she believes, "is eat Spaghetti-O's," though "he was horrified when he saw that American grocery stores

sell spaghetti in a can." Foster believes the greatest cultural immersion will be "celebrating Thanksgiving" this November.

Foster reflected on her experiences thus far as "so exciting and fulfilling" and "wholeheartedly recommends hosting an AFS student." Both she and Matteo can attest that "their first meeting was a little awkward" yet the experience "is still really rewarding" as a whole.

Both Foster and Valente would like to express their gratitude to Mrs. Kelly Jordan for guiding them throughout the process. She has been an "absolutely fantastic" mentor, explained Foster. "Her constant support for us at Pingry and outside of school has made the transition much more fluid and successful," she remarked.

Valente agreed completely and noted that Mrs. Jordan had described the experience perfectly when they first met. "She explained to us that family relationships are not always easy," Valente said, but they are certainly ones from which both he and Foster have already benefited. Valente anticipates even greater days ahead and is sure that "it will be a fantastic year."



N. Rice (VI)

Word in the Hall: What are you looking forward to this year?



JUSTIN SANDULLI (IV)

"The Buttontowns being better than the Balladeers again!"



DR. ARTIS

"Getting to know the students new to Pingry."



TED MACIOCE (V)

"Not being terrorized by junior year."



MORGAN FOSTER (VI)

"Second semester."



MICHAELA SCRUDATO (III)

"Tennis."

Sculpture Exhibit Provokes Thought

By JASMINE OGHASZ (V)

This fall's art gallery features the works of accomplished modern sculptors Elizabeth Demaray, Crista Grauer, Karla Cott, and Matthew Janson.

Demaray, who studied psychology and neuroscience, is interested by the relationship between what we perceive the world to be and what it actually is. She strives to portray this relationship through her art, which includes knitting sweaters for plants and creating innovative accommodations for hermit crabs. Demaray has also recently created "listening stations" for birds on which they can perch at their leisure and listen to human music.

Demaray stated, "As an artist, I create work that is not rationally based, but may instead be understood in the light of basic psychological needs." Demaray began experimenting with the juxtaposition of harsh and gentle elements and has become fascinated with the question of whether the world can be made any softer.

This interest has led Demaray to develop the idea of upholstering rocks, and her cushioned creations can be seen on display in the art wing.

Also on display are Grauer's handmade motorized boxes, which have appeared in countless shows and collections in New York, Canada, and Sweden. Her wooden boxes feature a peephole through which a radiant, magical world of snakes, devils, and historical figures can be seen.

Cott's pieces "Touch me, Birdie" and "Albertine's Mole" include video, sounds, and projected images that induce feelings of pain, yearning, and danger. A graduate of Maryland Institute College of Art, Cott's work has been seen in major exhibitions throughout the country.

Lastly, Janson, also a graduate of Maryland Institute College of Art, is curious about the relationship between humans and animals. "I'm interested in looking at animals and people to describe sculpturally the animals I find in people," Janson explained.



N. Rice (VI)

Jay-Z's "The Blueprint 3" Garneres Mixed Reviews from Critics and Listeners

By DAN ABEND (IV)

Jay-Z returned this year with "The Blueprint 3," the third installment of the Blueprint series that began eight years ago. The original "Blueprint" album came out around the time of the September 11th attacks and, fittingly, "The Blueprint 3" was released on September 11 of this year at 9:11 AM in tribute to the attacks.

Jay-Z, a native New Yorker, puts his hometown pride into this album, not only through the meaning of the release date but also in the hit song "Empire State of Mind." Featuring Alicia Keys, it pays homage to the city.

The album itself has received mixed reviews from critics, some saying that Jay-Z reaches out to different genres of Hip-Hop, making "The Blueprint 3" a versatile album with some memorable songs.

Others disagree, saying that there are too many collaborations, that Jay-Z has lost the creativity expressed in the original "Blueprint" which made it memorable.

I, personally, have mixed emotions about this album. There are some songs where the lyrics fit well with the tone of the beats. The collaborations add some extra spark to the tracks like the already popular "Run This Town," featuring Rihanna and Kanye West.

There are a few tracks on the album, however, (such as "D.O.A." which is not only repetitive, but unoriginal and an-

noying with its background beat) that come up very short of the usual expectations of Jay-Z.

Although "D.O.A." may lash out against auto-tune, Jay-Z himself utilizes auto-tune in a few of the songs on this album. The Timbaland produced songs "Reminder," "Venus vs. Mars," and "Off That" are out of place compared to the rest of the tracks. They have more of a pop radio feel, unlike other Jay-Z songs.

On the other hand, the songs

produced by Kanye West are of poor quality; the lyrics are stale and the collaborations overshadow Jay-Z's verses.

There are a couple of good Kanye-aided songs, though, including "What We Talkin' About," as well as the already mentioned "Run This Town." There are some other solid tracks too, including "So Ambitious," where Jay-Z goes back to some creative lyrical skills that are reminiscent of the original "The Blueprint."

Altogether, "The Blueprint 3" is certainly not Jay-Z's best work and does not parallel the excellence of the original "The Blueprint." And although there are enough solid tracks to make it a pretty decent album—it spans a range of hip-hop wide enough to satisfy different listeners and for it to be a commercial success—I do not suggest buying the entire album. Generally, while the songs are not worth buying, but a few are, so pick and choose.



Courtesy of Wikipedia

Gossip Girl Goes to College in Exciting Season Three Premiere

By SARAH PARK (IV)

"Gossip Girl," fall's hottest TV show, has returned for a third season to follow the lives of our favorite characters at college. For the past two seasons, the show has focused on the "scandalous lives of Manhattan's elite" as reported by Gossip Girl, a mysterious and anonymous blogger. The season premiere on September 14th was eagerly anticipated by most teenage girls (and some boys) and was met with mixed reviews.

While some insisted it was a great start to a new season, others disagreed, stating that it was "confusing and weird." When asked for the opinion of the show, Hannah Kirmsler (IV) said, "the season premiere was really good. Chuck and Blair are my favorite [couple], and I hope they stay together. This season is going to be amazing, just like all the other ones." Some viewers, on the other hand, feel Chuck and Blair won't last because they were simply so perfect when they weren't together, and now they're weird and not themselves.

This season, guest stars Michelle Trachtenberg and Sebastian Stan will return as Georgina Sparks and Carter Baizen. Nate Archibald's new love interest and family rival, Bree Buckley, performed by JoAnna Garcia, will also appear in four episodes, and Hilary Duff will be making a brief appearance. In a TV Guide spoiler interview, the "Gossip Girl" cast reveals that Chuck and Blair will in fact remain a couple this season, and



Courtesy of Google

romance may be in the air for Georgina and Dan, as well as Carter and Serena.

Although there are a lot of rumors for this season, one thing is for sure: things will definitely be getting crazy. Between Serena van der Woodsen desperately seeking attention from her estranged father, Blair, Dan, Vanessa, and Georgina all attending the same college, and Blair and Georgina being roommates, there will be a lot to talk about. Not to mention, Vanessa is dating Dan's half brother Scott (played by Chris Riggi). And for fans of Dorota, don't worry. Just because she wasn't in the season premiere doesn't mean that she won't be accompanying Blair to college.

As you may have seen in the promotional clips for the second episode of "Gossip Girl," titled "The Freshmen," everyone is off to their first week of college. Blair is determined to install herself as the "Queen B" at NYU but discovers that it is easier said than done and ends up taking a few tips from Dan Humphrey. Nate and Bree's romance blossoms, despite their family's unfriendly history, and Chuck and Serena have a last minute squabble before heading their separate ways.

In case you missed last week's season premiere, or have never watched Gossip Girl period, you can see full episodes, interviews, photos, and more at www.cwtv.com.

Boots, Bright Colors, and Biker Accessories Make Fall Trends

By GABBY SCRUDATO (VI)

The fall fashion trends of 2009, sadly, are hardly fit for the Pingry dress code, but there are a few items that are worthy of your closet. To start off, bright, vibrant colors heavily centered on pinks and yellows are in. Mix and match, layer, or even wear a headband, but bring in some color to your fall wardrobe. If bright colors really aren't your thing, try a traditional purple; classy and always in style, purple is another color dominating the stores.

Next, for special occasions, replace your strapless dress with an off-the-shoulder dress. The off-the-shoulder dress can be either flirty or sophisticated and

is easily accessorized. Another popular trend hitting the runway is the "origami" dress – AKA folded fabric. The origami trend is more conservative, but looks just as cute with a pair of heels.

For an ordinary fall day, plaids, vintage lace, and (once again) layers are the way to go. Look for a button down flannel shirt dress to wear with a pair of leggings or tights or a feminine lacey top layered with a tank, for simple yet cute ways to spice up your everyday outfits.

For those chilly late-autumn days, leather motorcycle jackets are a must. Try to stick with the more traditional leather jackets, which will last you many seasons – a definite plus when convincing your parents to buy one for you.

To complete the "biker" influence on this season, accessories with metal studs and chains are another simple way to give your favorite outfit an edge. Both edgy and conservative dressers can pull the look off.

For those days you aren't in school, mini-dresses and miniskirts go great with over-the-knee boots, which are the must-have shoe of the season. If you purchase nothing else during the fall season, a pair of over-the-knee boots is essential.

Overall, though, the best fall fashion trends are the ones that fit in with your own personal style or add to it. If you are uncomfortable, the outfit won't work; so be yourself, and happy shopping!



Courtesy of Lookbook.nu

"I Can Do Bad All By Myself" is a Number One Box Office Hit

By CHRISTINE KUMAR (IV)

Tyler Perry's new movie "I Can Do Bad All By Myself" is at the top of the box office for the second weekend in a row. The movie stars Oscar-nominated actress Taraji P. Henson who plays April, a selfish alcoholic who dates a shady, married man and sings in a nightclub for a living. Living apart from her family for a year, April is caught by

surprise when her sister's delinquent children come to her for help. With the aid of a handsome immigrant named Sandino who works in her house, April realizes that her life needs to change and that her niece, nephew, and Sandino are the only ones who can help her find happiness.

Along with Henson, Mary J. Blige makes an appearance in the film as Tanya, a bartender and April's best friend. One day, Tanya sings

"I Can Do Bad" which leads April to realize that she needs to change her selfish ways. Additionally, the famous singer Gladys Knight plays Wilma, an elder of the Church who offers spiritual guidance to April. Hope Olaide Wilson plays the young and feisty Jennifer, April's niece, who must take care of her diabetic and disabled brother.

Tyler Perry is hilarious playing two characters, Madea and April's brother Joe. Both sassy and rude to each other, they provide comic relief for the harsh topics.

Although there wasn't enough of Madea, it was a fantastic film. It touched upon some heavy material, such as drug addiction, death, and child molestation, but still managed to have an uplifting end. The best scene in the movie was Madea's skewed version of a Bible story. Full of laughs and drama, "I Can Do Bad All By Myself" is the best Tyler Perry film to date, and I suggest that you go watch it, even if you're not a Tyler Perry fan.



Courtesy of Google

The Used Introduces New Sounds with Album "Artwork"

By STEPHANIE SUN (IV)

The long anticipated album by The Used called "Artwork" was released on August 28 and attracted a massive stream of listeners. "Artwork" is slightly different from the band's other releases, featuring more synthesized effects, a change in lyrical topics, and a more energized sound than previous albums. It is their first album not to be produced by John Feldmann but instead by Matt Squire, who also produced albums by All Time Low and 3OH!3.

Through "Artwork," the members of The Used have tried to create a new genre they refer to as "gross pop." In "Alternative Press" magazine, Bert McCracken explained: "In the past, we've always kind of brought pop sensibility into heavy rock, but this is going to be all that much more tantalizing and brutal. Our songs

are ten times messier and noisier than they've ever been."

Aside from these differences, the music style of "Artwork" is quite similar to The Used's other releases, so it is worth listening for those who love consistency.

My favorites in this album are "Mosh N' Church," "Men Are All the Same," and "Born to Quit." "Men Are All the Same" is a unique track because it skillfully incorporates a clip of another song in the album, "Kissing You Goodbye." "Mosh N' Church" and "Born to Quit" are also appealing because they feature the band's original sound that captured the interest of fans they have today.

For those who are looking for lighter pop, "Kissing You Goodbye" is a good listen because it is relatively calmer and slower than the other songs in the album. If you are hoping to hear the original post-hardcore side of The Used,

the opener "Blood on My Hands" is perfect, conveying McCracken's unmistakable vocals and aggressive guitar playing.

"Artwork" has brought on mixed reviews; some say that it is disappointing and too repetitive while others praise it for its creative lyrics and peculiar melodies. Some hardcore fans have problems dealing with the slower songs in the album, although others have found them powerful and touching.

I personally love the lyrics to the songs in this album because they contain a layer of complexity under the strong choruses that draw the listener in. The Used has taken the best elements of their previous releases and refined them, creating an album that requires more than a single listen to fully grasp. So sit back, relax, and enjoy the engrossing sound of "Artwork."

Seniors Charlie Laud and Luke Pounder Interview Jon Hurwitz

Courtesy of LUKE POUNDER and CHARLIE LAUD (VI)

This summer, Luke Pounder (VI) and Charlie Laud (VI) thought it would be "cool" to interview several "big" people in the movie industry. Even though, they didn't expect to get many responses, their Twitter and Facebook connections produced results. For their first of eight interviews, they contacted Jon Hurwitz, one half of the duo that wrote "Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle."

1. You wrote the first "Harold and Kumar" with Hayden Schlossberg and wrote and directed its sequel with him. Do you ever see yourself trying to write or direct solo, or do you guys enjoy working with each other too much?

Hayden and I love working together. We basically hang out and joke around every day like we did in high school, but now we figured out a way to get paid for the nonsense we come up with. I expect us to work together till the end, with possible solo projects here and there if one of us is so inclined.

2. I know you must really love the "Harold and Kumar" characters, but are you looking forward to writing and directing different projects, such as "Til Beth Do Us Part," along with the third "Harold and Kumar" installment?

Nobody loves "Harold and Kumar" more than Hayden and I, but we are definitely looking forward to putting out some non-"Harold and Kumar" comedies. We have a lot of stuff in the pipeline right now. I'm not sure what will get made next because that's not entirely in our control, but you can expect lots of funny non-"Harold and Kumar" stuff over the next few years.

3. Were you and Hayden nervous at all going into the second "Harold and Kumar" film without any directorial experience? How much did being on the set for the first film help you get a feel for directing?

Oddly, we weren't nervous about directing at all. That had everything to do with our experience on the first film. What we learned from being on set was that the most important element of a director's job is having a specific vision and knowing how to articulate that vision in an inspiring way to everyone working with you. Hayden and I have a clear vision for every project we work on and we happen to play well with others, so directing is a perfect fit for us.

4. Do you think you'll ever get to the point when you'll want to only direct? Or go back to only writing?

I absolutely love directing. I will never just go back to



Courtesy of Google Images

Jon Hurwitz (right) with "Harold and Kumar" Cast

writing. I expect to do both for the rest of my career. But I may write some things that somebody else directs, and I may direct some things that somebody else wrote. There are lots of other writers and directors that I'd love to collaborate with in some way.

5. You and Hayden hit success pretty young by Hollywood standards. Usually when I look at writers or directors who have broken in like you did, they have a bunch of short film credits or television credits. It seems like you kind of just dove into it with the first "Harold and Kumar." I'm sure it wasn't as easy as it seems, so can you talk a little about your experience from the end of college to when you sold "Harold and Kumar?"

When Hayden and I were in high school we always dreamed of being the next Zucker Brothers or the next Farrelly Brothers. But we didn't think running off to Hollywood or even going to film school was "practical," so we both pursued other things initially in college. I studied to be an Investment Banker and Hayden was pre-law. But midway through college, when we saw "the real world" looming, we decided to write a screenplay with hopes of selling it before graduation to prove to our parents (and ourselves) that the film business was practical for us. Instead of partying in our spare time, we spent a year writing and rewriting our first script. By senior year, we found a way to get it into the hands of some people in Hollywood. That script was called "Filthy" and it was a post-college comedy along the lines of a "Harold and Kumar." It found some fans in Hollywood and soon the agents started calling. We sold that first script to MGM 3 months before college graduation. It never got made, but it got Hayden and me to Hollywood and funded our ability to pursue our dream. After two years of selling a few projects that didn't get made, we ended up selling "Harold and Kumar Go To White Castle." It got made soon after and the rest is history...

8. And finally, a question I'm sure you've answered many times: Do you have any advice for aspiring screenwriters?

Write what you know. Put in the work. And realize that it is far from easy. Once you finish the first draft of your first screenplay, you should be proud. But you should also know that it's likely a severely flawed piece of crap that needs to be completely rewritten. But that's okay. You learn the most from your mistakes. And finally, you only have one chance to make a first impression. You should wait until you've written something truly great and entirely professional before putting it into the hands of anyone with power in Hollywood. If they hate your first script, they won't want to read your second.

6. Are you surprised by the newfound fame of Neil Patrick Harris ever since he appeared in the first "Harold and Kumar?" 5 years ago, could you ever have guessed that he'd be hosting the Emmy's?

Haha. Nothing with Neil surprises me. After his take

on the first "Harold and Kumar," it was obvious what an immense comedic talent he is. Neil is absolutely up for anything and a complete pleasure to work with. I knew he'd blow up because of his role in our movie. While we were promoting the sequel "Harold and Kumar," I predicted that he would eventually host the Emmys. The way he worked the crowd during our premiere at SXSW, combined with his occasional co-hosting of "Regis and Kelly" had me convinced. But I certainly didn't think he'd be hosting the Emmy's this year. My new prediction: He'll be hosting the Oscars within the next five years...maybe three...hopefully one.

7. Even though the ending of the first "Harold and Kumar" movie leaves open the possibility for a sequel, did you ever imagine it could be so successful that a sequel would be made?

The final line of our first draft of "Harold and Kumar Go To White Castle" was "To be continued in 'Harold and Kumar Go To Amsterdam.'" We always envisioned "Harold and Kumar" as a franchise. After seeing the crowd reaction at our very first test screening, I was convinced that a sequel was in our future. It just took a little longer to get the green light than I had hoped.

8. And finally, a question I'm sure you've answered many times: Do you have any advice for aspiring screenwriters?

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Again, thank you so much for agreeing to do this. Everyone at Pingry will be psyched to read what you have to say. And please keep up the tweets. You are by far the funniest celebrity tweeter that I follow.

Thanks man. My pleasure.

Fall TV

5 new TV shows to watch this fall:



1. "The Cleveland Show" is an animated comedy that is a spin-off from the hit TV show "Family Guy." The character Cleveland Brown moves to a small town in Virginia with his family. A group of new characters will be introduced. "The Cleveland Show" airs on Sundays on FOX at 8:30 PM.

2. "Flash-Forward" is a mind-bending drama based off an award-winning novel by Robert J. Sawyer. Starring Joseph Fiennes and John Cho, the show is about a mysterious global event causes everyone to experience an event six months into the future and results in many people wondering if what they saw will actually occur. "Flash-Forward" airs on Thursdays on ABC at 8:00 PM.

3. "Trauma" is an upcoming television series about a medical group from San Francisco, California. Unlike most medical TV shows, "Trauma" is described as "high octane" by NBC, and has many action scenes as well. "Trauma" airs on Mondays on NBC at 9:00 PM.

4. "Secret Girlfriend" features a young man and his best friends as they attempt to keep their many relationships a secret from their girlfriends. "Secret Girlfriend" airs on Wednesdays on Comedy Central at 10:30 PM.

5. "Brothers" is a television sitcom about two estranged brothers who are pressured to get along with each other by their parents. Former NFL star Michael Strahan plays the lead role. "Brothers" airs on Fridays on FOX at 8:00 PM.

Varsity Cross Country Seeks to Continue Last Year's Success

By KATE LEIB (IV)

The Pingry girls' Cross-Country team started the year off with a bang, winning first place at the Newark Academy Invitational. After a disappointing one-point loss to Blair Academy in 2008, Pingry placed their top four runners in the top five overall this year. This won the girls a solid first place finish and a promising start to the season. Having lost no seniors last year and having added three new girls to the roster, the team has high hopes for this season. "The team is probably the

strongest it's ever been," said captain Louisa Lee (VI), "especially since our entire varsity team is returning from last year. We have the advantage of a team that knows how to run together and hasn't graduated anyone." After spending years in the Non-Public B division, the girls face tougher competition at the Non-Public A state championship this year but hope to place in the top three and thus qualify for the Meet of Champions. Coach Tim Grant said, "This team has the potential to be the greatest girls cross country team ever."

Having lost six runners from last year's senior class, the boys' Cross Country team did respectably well at the Newark Academy Invitational, taking home third place. With six new freshmen and a few new sophomore additions, captain Adam Armstrong (V) said the team will "try to continue their 49-0 dual meet record and we expect big things from our freshman Cameron Gensch." He added that the team "hopes to make another appearance this year at the Meet of Champions. We have a lot of new runners

who will help add depth." After switching into the more competitive Skylands

Conference, both the boys and girls will have to face some very strong teams.

Regardless, both teams have high expectations for the 2009 season.



Courtesy of B. Morrison '64

Boys' Waterpolo Hopes to Add More Wins to Their Record



Courtesy of B. Morrison '64

By ARVIND IYENGAR (IV)

Although the Varsity Waterpolo team has lost key senior players Charles Fraites '09, Zach Ring '09, and sophomore goalie Douglas Ober, the team is poised to do well throughout the season. Returning senior John Kwon says, "While losing valuable members of the team hurts, we feel we can compete with anybody in the league."

Although their current record is 1-3, the team is

optimistic about the rest of the season, for they believe that the games against Germantown Academy and the Hill School were the toughest games of the year. They were also proud to defeat St. Benedicts in overtime with a final score of 12-11.

With a current roster of 15 boys and 9 girls, captains Nick Gilligan (VI) and Calvin Jones (VI) have established some goals for the season, including victories over The Horace Mann School and the tough team of

the Lawrenceville School.

Gilligan says he "wants the young members of the team to step up and play as hard as they can." In addition, the team will be looking for key contributions by players Jon Ciriello (VI) and Jason Ring (IV).

As the season wears on, the waterpolo team urges fans to come out and support them. They will have some key home matchups against some strong teams, including Lawrenceville and Pennington.

Football Looks to Improve Reputation From Past Years

By SAM GELMAN (IV)

The clock ticked off the seconds, bringing an end to a close game. The final score was 35-21. But this time, it was Pingry that came out victorious.

The football team's recent win over Bound Brook created a buzz around the school. The team, which had been treated by many students as a joke last year, was suddenly being taken seriously.

"Our reputation will change," and Pingry football will begin to command respect around the school, insisted Mr. Christopher

Shilts, the Varsity Football coach. "We're playing better and we're in a better state of mind," he commented. "It is confidence that helps bring the players together for the better."

The football team has two main strategic approaches this year: a positive turnover ratio and improved rushing yards. According to Mr. Shilts, if the team manages to focus all their concentration on rushing yards and moving the ball down the field, it will see its scores increase.

Another important factor is turnover ratio: each

turnover adds +1 for the team. Last year the team held -8, whereas this year it currently holds +3.

Some worried that the team would suffer after graduating several star players. However, Mr. Shilts denies this. He says his new team is playing better than ever and even has one freshman, Jordan Flannery (III), on the Varsity squad.

Mr. Shilts said this year the team has a good chance of making it to the playoffs. He concluded that the team "has great desire and intensity" as they prepare for the upcoming weeks.



Courtesy of B. Morrison '64

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR BLUE ARMY T-SHIRTS SOLD BY MS. LESLIE WOLFSON'S PERIOD 7 ECONOMICS CLASS!



Courtesy of B. Morrison '64

Field Hockey Starts Exciting and Challenging Season with New Players

By ROXANNE FEITEL (IV)

The field hockey team will look to repeat last year's success this fall during its first season in the new, more competitive Skylands Conference. This season's schedule matches Pingry against competitive schools such as Bridgewater-Raritan, West Essex, and North Hunterdon Central.

A challenging, regular season schedule is only one of the many obstacles that the team will face. With just three returning starters and four seniors, this year's group features a lot of new faces. Head Coach and mathematics teacher Mrs. Judy Lee said that the team is "experimenting with different players [and] try-

ing to find the combination that will work the best." This summer, preparation began early so players could get in shape for September. Nearly all of the girls attended World Camp USA in August, and preseason began a short while later. Starting August 19, the team endured double sessions for a week, followed by practices and scrimmages leading up to the first day of school. Captain Charlotte Small (VI) admitted that the intense schedule was difficult, but that it "really did help us prepare for the season."

Because last year's squad finished as Colonial Hills Conference champions with an impressive record of 15-5-1, everyone this year has high expectations. Both coaches and players are looking to prove that a new division won't stop their success. Ashley Hough (IV), a second year starter, said that the girls "really want to come into this new conference strong and meet our competition head on" to get off to a solid start.

With Small directing the midfield, Assistant Captain Danielle Cosentino (VI)

leading the forward line, and goalie Alli Dadouris (VI) guarding the cage, the girls are looking to avenge a disappointing finish in the County Tournament last season.

Mrs. Lee said that the team "always has our goal to qualify for the State Tournament and go as far as we can. This year, we want to make it to the semis and then the finals."

Dadouris said she is proud of "how well the girls work together" and adds that she thinks they "can go out and hold [their] own against any

Varsity Boys' Soccer Looks to Live up to Last Season's Glory

By ANDREW YOUNG (V)

This season, the boys' Varsity Soccer team has big shoes to fill. Last year, the team reached several milestones that seem difficult, if not impossible, to match. It not only wrapped up the season as the only undefeated team in the state, with an impressive 19-0-1 record, but also earned memorable distinctions along the way. The boys won the Somerset Country Tournament, the NJSIAA Non-Public A State Cup, The State-Ledger Top 20 Trophy, and various other awards. Additionally, Coach Miller Bugliari achieved his 700th victory on September 28th last year with a 5-1 win over Newark Academy. These feats will be especially

hard to follow because the team has lost 16 seniors, including many All-State and All-County players.

Nonetheless, this year's team looks well prepared to once again contend for the county and state titles. The team has three captains, all of whom are four year varsity players. Senior captains Scott Keogh (VI), Andrew LaFontaine (VI), and Tyler Smith (VI) look forward to leading the talented Pingry team to another distinguished season. Nonetheless, a challenging schedule in the new Skyland Conference includes opponents much tougher than those from last year.

In a positive but calm tone, Coach Bugliari said, "If things come together, we should be competitive in the

league, county, and state." He added, however, "There are many shoes to fill from 2008."

The soccer team has already demonstrated its prowess in its preseason games. During their summer tour through Scotland and England, the boys played three top club teams and finished with the record of 2-0-1. This was no small feat, as the schedule included Manchester United U-16, Tynecastle, and Barker Abby—all nationally recognized powerhouses. Upon returning to New Jersey, the team has gone undefeated during its preseason, showing that Coach Bugliari has once again returned with a team that is ready make a run for the title.



Courtesy of B. Morrison '64



Senior fans show support at a Homecoming game.

Courtesy of Jenny Gorelick (VI)

Upcoming Varsity Games at Pingry

- October 20th:**
Girls' Varsity Field Hockey v. Watchung Hills.....T.B.A.
- October 24th:**
Girls' Varsity Soccer SCIAA Semi-finals.....T.B.A.
Boys' Varsity Soccer SCIAA Semi-finals.....T.B.A.
- October 30th:**
Friday Night Lights Football Game.....T.B.A.

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