

## Students Celebrate Diversity in Annual Multicultural Assembly

By LAKSHMI DAVEY (V)

For the past eight years, the annual Multicultural Assembly has featured students from different backgrounds performing for their classmates. This year, the event took place on Friday, March 13. Nahema Carty (VI) emceed the event, which showcased a variety of different cultures and talents.

Myles Bristow (VI) began the assembly by reading a poem. He was followed by Luke Pounder (VI), Jon Brenner (VI), and Glenn Friedman (VI), who performed a dance to a mix fea-

turing Jay Sean's "Down." Next up was Mai-Lee Picard (IV), who danced a variation from the ballet "Paquita." Then, Keri Forness (V) and Alysia Tsui (VI) sang "Once upon a December" in several different languages. Forness said, "Alysia and I knew from the beginning of the school year that we wanted to perform in this Multicultural Assembly because we both had enjoyed participating in last year. We wanted to do something special since it was Alysia's last year."

Afterwards, Tori Martin (V) performed a lyrical

dance to Ne-Yo's "Waiting." Lakshmi Davey (V), Vinita Davey (III), Malvi Hemani (V) and Michaela Scudato (III) followed with an Indian dance performed to a mix of popular Bollywood songs.

The next number was the song "The Butterfly Lovers," which was executed on the piano and violin by Ashley Zhou (III) and Vicky Wei (V). This song is based on an ancient Chinese legend about a pair of star-crossed lovers. Jo LaCosta (VI), accompanied by Misha Fatkhiyev, an adjunct in the music department, then sang a Spanish song entitled "Solamente Una Vez."

Tanvi Gupta (VI) and Anjana Ganti (V) finished the assembly with another energetic Indian dance. Yvonne Jeng (IV) said, "The Indian dances were entertaining and original, and it was fun to watch everyone's talent."

Susan Contess (V) said, "This year there was ballet and classical music and modern dance ... it was nice to see more variety."

Forness agreed, adding, "Personally, I have loved my experiences performing in the Multicultural Assembly both this year and last, and I am really proud of how many cultures are being represented now."

"As far as I can recall, we represented seven different cultures!"



Courtesy of Communications Office

Mai-Lee Picard (IV) performs a classical ballet piece.

## Ashley Feng Wins Robert H. LeBow Oratorical Competition



Courtesy of Communications Office

Ashley Feng (V) spoke about the importance of reading.

By DANIELLE WESTERMAN (V)

On Friday, February 19, three sophomores and three juniors participated in the final round of the Robert H. LeBow '58 Memorial Oratorical Competition. With Upper School students and faculty as their audience, Ashley Feng (V), Sam Gelman (IV), Victor Hsue (V), Albert Magnell (V), Maggie Morash (IV), and Dylan Sun (V) presented five to six-minute speeches on a variety of topics.

In 2005, William Hetfield '58 and the Class of 1958 started the competition to honor their classmate, Robert H.

LeBow. Dr. LeBow was an extremely accomplished public speaker who traveled the world to speak about the need for healthcare reform.

Any Pingry sophomore or junior is eligible to participate in the LeBow Competition. In the preliminary round, all participants delivered their speeches to a panel of selected teachers, alumni, and qualified judges from outside of Pingry. From this round, the six finalists were chosen to deliver their speeches in front of their peers in Hauser Auditorium.

Sun spoke about how new advances in technology have affected communication and stressed the importance of

face-to-face interactions. Sun argued that written word, especially the written word of Internet communication, is just a hollow replacement for personally talking to someone. According to Sun, the more we use email and text messaging to communicate, the more we lose important face-to-face connections with our friends.

Morash compared the current economic crisis to a football coach's strategy. Morash said that lending huge amounts of money and giving unqualified buyers mortgages are comparable to throwing showy 50-yard passes. Chipping away

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## Sweeney Todd Cast Puts on Cutting-Edge Performance Despite Heavy Snows

By KATE DREYFUSS (VI)

On February 24, 27, 28, and March 1, the Drama and Music Departments put on the annual winter musical. This year's show was "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street," book by Hugh Wheeler and music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim.

"Sweeney Todd" tells the story of Benjamin Barker, otherwise known as Sweeney Todd, a barber who returns to his hometown of London after spending 15 years in exile in Australia due to false charges. After finding out that his wife has killed herself after being raped by the judge who sentenced him, Todd decides to seek revenge on the people of London.

Sean Salamon (VI), who played Todd in the show, explained that his character "gets revenge both on the people who raped his wife and on society as a whole, which he sees as based in greed and cruelty. According to Salamon, "Todd really serves as a warning to us about how a good man can be ultimately consumed by revenge."

Kaela O'Connor (V) participated in the musical because she is passionate about musical theater. "This is what I love to do, and this is what I want to do with my life," she said. O'Connor played Mrs. Nellie Lovett, Todd's confidante and business partner who makes meat pies out of the people he kills. Her favorite part of the musical was being able to work with people she truly enjoys being around. Though she admit-

ted, "There were certainly some rough patches throughout the process," she added, "When we all stood on stage opening night, I knew we truly had something magical."

Salamon decided to participate in the musical because he enjoys singing and acting. He added, "The annual Winter Musical is probably the most rewarding thing that I have done in my years at Pingry."

Audience reaction to the show was overwhelmingly positive. Caroline Dreyfuss (IV) said, "I loved it." Phil Ryan (VI) agreed, adding, "The cast and crew did justice to my favorite musical."

In addition to the four public performances, the cast and crew of "Sweeney Todd" also performed for students and teachers of ECLC, the Newmark School, and the Banyon School on Febru-

ary 23, the day of their final dress rehearsal. Technology teacher and Director of Community Service Ms. Shelley Hartz organized this special performance for special needs programs in our area, continuing what has become a tradition for the past six or seven years. Ms. Hartz had the idea to bring these schools to Pingry to see the musical because her oldest son used to be a student at ECLC. "I thought it would be great for the ECLC students to see a show and for our actors to have an audience during their final dress rehearsal," she said.

O'Connor especially enjoyed the performance for ECLC, saying, "I think it is so fantastic that the kids really enjoy the performance, and it boosts our energy, too. If you have a great audience (and they always are), the show is just better. The kids love to come

and see us and our show and we love to have them here."

After the performance, the actors remained in costume and ate lunch with the guests from ECLC, Newmark, and Banyon. O'Connor said of this meet-and-greet opportunity, "I am always so proud when I watch my fellow cast-mates interact with the kids. It truly makes me happy to see a cast member speaking with an ECLC student. The smile on that student's face is unforgettable." Salamon agreed and added, "That performance is great also because it allows us to go into opening night having already played for a full audience."

Ms. Hartz hopes to extend this tradition by inviting middle school students from ECLC, Newmark, and Banyon to see "Bye Bye Birdie," this year's Middle School production.



Courtesy of Pingry Bluebook

Nicky Haik (VI) and Sarah Muirhead (V) serenade each other as Ben Hamm Conard (V) and Thomas Schermerhorn (V) discuss the local barber.

### Inside The Record



Courtesy of Sofi Barrionuevo (VI)

Sofi Barrionuevo (VI) and Luke Pounder (VI) model for the PSPA Spring Benefit.

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#### One of a Kind

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## EDITORIAL

## Hey Jude, You Ain't Nothin' But a Hound Dog

As a second semester senior, I often find myself relishing my pockets of free time. Several weeks ago, I was in this exact state, just sitting on my couch and scrolling through numerous channels to find something eye-catching. Hoping to settle for something more than just a mindless MTV reality show or an old sitcom rerun, I was delighted to come across one of my favorite movies, "Pulp Fiction."

It was already fifty minutes into the film, and the first thing I saw was Uma Thurman with her seductive 1920's bob haircut and white blouse. She was talking to John Travolta, her dinner date, for the very first time. With a camera in one hand and Dusty Springfield's "Son of a Preacher Man" playing in the background, Uma very articulately says, "My theory is that when it comes to important subjects, there's only two ways a person can answer. For instance, there's two kinds of people in this world, Elvis people and Beatles people. Now Beatles people can like Elvis. And Elvis people can like the Beatles. But nobody likes them both equally. Somewhere you have to make a choice. And that choice tells me who you are."

Although "Pulp Fiction" is a treasure box of quotes, this particular monologue has always stood out to me. Oftentimes, life is full of dichotomies. For Uma, it's either the Beatles or Elvis. For 21st century American teens, it's Mac or PC, FOX News or CNN, Facebook or MySpace, Blair or Serena... you get the picture.

So all of this either/or categorization got me thinking about the seemingly black and white choices that Pingry kids have to make on a daily basis. For example, can you only be a sports or a drama kid? A prep or a hipster? Do you have to choose between being an obsessive overachiever and someone who's too-cool-for-school?

The clear and obvious answer is no.

It's true that some people find comfort in confining themselves to one of these specific social groups, but from personal experience, I can testify that breaking the barriers of high school can be extremely rewarding. In fact, many of the people I couldn't live without at Pingry are individuals who bridge the gap between different social, academic, and extra-curricular groups. These are the people who are beloved not only by their friends, but also by the entire class.

Branching out is also the purpose of programs such as Peer Group and events such as all-grade trips to Philadelphia or New York. In fact, one of the reasons that I love my English classes is because of the wide variety of people I meet due to these electives being open to all juniors and seniors.

So, here's my proposition. What if we stopped seeing the world as one big OR statement? By embracing the different aspects of our community, we can push our own limits as individuals and look at the world with fresh perspectives.

Specifically, for those of us who are seniors, college signifies a plethora of new opportunities to re-examine who we want to be. Perhaps, as we consider our own identities next year, we should remember that the only thing better than being an Elvis fan or a Beatles fan is learning to embrace the best of both worlds.

—Jennifer Soong

## Bridges: More than Just a Mere Ten Hours

By MAI-LEE PICARD (IV)

At Pingry, community service is a big part of students' lives. With a mandatory ten hours per year and constant reminders of community service opportunities, it's hard to avoid. However, most people find the required hours annoying, and admittedly, up until last year, I did too. It's not that I was against helping people; it was just hard to find the time. What changed my outlook, however, was my experience going on a Bridges run into New York City in order to initially fulfill my required hours.

Geoff and Ginger Worden founded Bridges in September 1988. The couple decided to go into New York City one

night to hand out sandwiches, soup, and coffee to the poor and homeless. They traveled block-by-block, bringing sustenance to people throughout the city. Since then, Bridges has returned to New York many times and has even expanded into Newark and Irvington.

I didn't know what to expect from my first Bridges run. After all, I had only signed up because I needed community service hours. However, the whole evening surprised me. Bridges is completely hands-on; I handed out food and clothing to homeless individuals, and each and every one was kind

and appreciative of the help.

Since my first run, I have gone on as many Bridges runs as possible and have found each of them just as rewarding as the first. The people we meet are so appreciative of our help; they always smile and thank us very warmly.

*After each run, I feel as though I have helped make someone's night a little bit better.*

I feel as though I have helped make someone's night a little bit better. I find myself recognizing people that show up at the runs, and I completely understand why volunteers keep going back. Bridges is unlike any other organization I have volunteered for.

I used to hate the community service requirement because I often found myself doing some sort of office work, which can be extraordinarily boring. Bridges, on the other hand, is highly interactive and extremely moving. It has both allowed me to help people and appreciate everything that I have.

Most people I talk to about Bridges don't really understand what it's all about, but I would recommend everyone go on at least one run before graduating from Pingry. Before going on my first Bridges run, community service was just something I had to do, but now, after seeing the people I am reaching out to, I have come to truly enjoy the work.

## Harking Back to the Transcendentalists

By ANISHA MOHIN (V)

Spring brings with it beautiful, sunny weather, chirping birds, and blooming flowers. This spring has been particularly gorgeous, and I've seen tons of kids playing outside, enjoying it to its fullest. When I was younger, just like those kids, I spent about 90% of my time outdoors with my friends. Those are some of my best childhood memories. I wish I could do the same now, but I feel that with all of my academic and extra-curricular responsibilities, I don't really get a chance to appreciate nature.

Don't worry. This isn't another stress op-ed. I'm just saying, I'd like to enjoy the beautiful spring we've been having, and not just by looking at it through my window. In my American Literature class with Dr. Ann Dickerson, as part of our unit on the Transcendentalists, we spent a whole period outside, just enjoying and reflecting upon nature. I left that period feeling extremely relaxed, and I promised myself that I would do that more often.

But I didn't. I've been spending most of my time indoors lately, working on the Record or volunteering at the library or studying for my various tests and quizzes. Today, I finally got sick of it, and instead of struggling with

sunlight and the view of flowers in full bloom. Calculus is extremely difficult and headache inducing (for me, at least), but I found that when I worked in a more open, pleasant atmosphere, it was much less frustrating.



my take-home calculus test in my cramped room, I decided to take it outside on my deck. Even though studying outside does have its disadvantages – like the bee sting I got within the first ten minutes of being outside – it was extremely refreshing to work with the warm

When I visited college campuses over spring break, I noticed tons of students sitting outside doing work on their laptops. Maybe during free periods, instead of holing up in the library, we can take our AP flashcards and textbooks to the benches outside. Or perhaps

we can encourage our teachers to hold some of our classes in the gazebo. And I know that I, for one, plan on using my study breaks to go for a bike ride or a walk through the neighborhood, instead of watching TV.

Like I said, this isn't another stress op-ed, but there's no denying that, with APs, SATIIs, and final exams, stress is rampant during this time at Pingry. To quote Transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience." Emerson is right; we could all learn a thing or two from nature's leisurely pace. I can now say from personal experience that it's almost impossible to be stressed after truly appreciating the beauty of nature.

I'm not suggesting that we all become like Thoreau, who abandoned his family's comfortable home to live in a cabin in the woods, but I do believe we could all benefit from taking a little time out to appreciate nature. It's a small change, but it can make a big difference.

## Examining Pingry's Qualities Through the Eyes of the Faculty

By ROXANNE OGHASZ (V)

Time and time again, the students' concerns regarding the Pingry community have been voiced. Better cafeteria food, a revised finals schedule, and more interesting assemblies are causes that are repeatedly brought to the administration's attention. But what do faculty members think, and what changes would they like to see? Although what I discovered was not representative of the entire faculty, the teachers I encountered did have their share of concerns.

English teacher Mr. Thomas Keating believes that most importantly, the integrity and rigor of the academic program must be maintained. He worries that life in the Pingry community is becoming too busy and overscheduled almost to the point that the "fundamental commitment to scholarship might fall by the wayside." While he doesn't advocate cutting programs or limiting trips, Mr. Keating would like to see academics be the major priority in students' lives.

He also stated that in the long run, the school should wean itself off AP courses and offer more

electives so students can pursue their interests. He and many other teachers view AP courses as restrictive, both to teachers who must teach certain material and to students who feel pressured to take them. Mr. Keating also added tactfully, "I envision a day when I have to talk less about the dress code."

Chemistry teacher Mr. Tim Grant, on the other hand, is concerned mainly with the relationships between students and faculty. He stresses the importance of mutual respect but fears that it has begun to fade. According to him, this leads to "frustration

seen in both directions," students toward teachers and vice versa. As students show less respect, teachers lose their patience and are thus perceived by the students as mean and irritable. He cites the situation in the hallways as a particular problem: some students do not pay attention to where they are going and often bump into teachers or block the way, while others congregate near classrooms and disrupt teachers who cannot teach their lessons over the noise. Mr. Grant would like to see the environment become more civilized.

Spanish teacher Señor Gerardo Vasquez believes that there should be more opportunities for students to enhance their education and learn outside of Pingry. To encourage this, he advocates the acceptance of credits from outside courses by the school. In his opinion, "the curriculum needs to focus more on global education."

Señor Vasquez would also like to revive Pingry's field day, stating that it is an important opportunity for the Middle School and Upper School to connect. As of now, except for the occasional assembly, there is very little interaction between the younger and older students. In addition, to further improve the Pingry community,

he would like to see more service done locally, such as the planting of trees.

Latin teacher Mr. Thomas Varnes wants the technology available to teachers in their classrooms to upgrade faster. Though he has finally received his much-awaited projector, the screen is still too narrow. He is grateful for the projector, but he wishes he had gotten it sooner because it has already proved to be a very beneficial and effective teaching tool.

In addition, he believes it is vital for AP classes to meet five times a week. While sciences and US History already do because of the extra lab period, the AP classes in other departments meet only four times a week, which does not leave ample time to prepare for the exams in May. Finally, Mr. Varnes would like to see some sort of compromise so that students will not have to choose between sports and art. This affects theatre in particular, because students who are interested in both a sport and the seasonal plays must make the difficult choice between the two.

Having discussed these various issues with the school's faculty, I can truly conclude that many of the teachers' suggestions overlap with students' concerns. Many of us do feel overscheduled and

impossibly busy, but there is really no feasible solution to this problem. College admissions are becoming increasingly competitive, and students feel they need to stretch themselves out over many activities in addition to their academic responsibilities. Furthermore, many students dislike AP classes and would not object to their removal; however, this may ultimately hurt students in the college admissions process because AP scores do provide an edge. Bringing back field day is a popular cause among both students and faculty, and no one seems to know why they got rid of it. Clearly this issue should be revisited.

Other teacher concerns, such as renewed respect, accepting outside courses, upgrading technology faster, and having AP classes meet five times a week, however, are not causes consistently championed by me or the student body. Nevertheless, they do have merit and deserve to be heard. More respect would ease the adversarial tensions between students and faculty and ultimately help our voice be heard. Moreover, accepted credits, better technology, and more time in AP classes would certainly enhance our academic experience.

Perhaps better communication between the students and faculty could lead to solutions to all of these problems. If we work together, we can certainly make the Pingry community a better place.



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# Concerns With Branding Pingry and Living Up to Our Reputation

By SHAAN GURNANI (V)

"I'm lovin' it." "Diamonds are forever." "Is it in you?" "Just do it." "Excellence and Honor." All of these statements have an important characteristic in common: they are, of course, slogans used to attract people to a certain product or institution. The difference between them, however, is stark. The first three slogans come from multi-billion dollar corporations with multi-million dollar advertising campaigns. The fourth is Pingry's recent effort to brand itself.

In October 2007, Pingry announced the launch of "an ambitious new Strategic Plan." In order to attract exceptional students, the plan outlined the enhancement of "marketing and branding to ensure that Pingry's reputation is exceptional." While some may overlook such a phrase, I believe that the issue of branding a school raises some personal concerns.

In the first place, branding and brand management are typically corporate actions taken to increase profit by making a comparison with competing products more favorable. Although Pingry is technically a corporation, we are not a business bent on making money. We are a school—a warm, safe, and hopeful place—and branding, because of its association with corporations, is intrinsically the opposite: cold and heartless.

Second, the new slogan seems to imply a state of being rather than a goal. We are *unique* because we are excellent and honorable; however, this thinking is inherently flawed. We are suggesting

that we are *more* excellent and *more* honorable than other schools. Perhaps our students, our graduates, and our faculty *are* better. However, how can we make a comparison if there is no uniform scale to measure these qualities? We can't.

Most importantly, we must



focus on making our school actually definitive of these qualities rather than on making people think that we are. If we continue to build our name simply through quality of results, people will come to us. We should follow the Latin phrase "Esse quam videri," meaning "To be, rather than to seem to be," by earning and building our reputation. I agree with Daniel J. Boorstin, the twelfth Librarian of the U.S. Congress, who said: "An image is not simply a trademark, a design, a slogan or an easily remembered picture. It is a studiously crafted personality profile of an individual, institution, corporation, product or service."

Pingry is already an amazing institution, with great students and faculty, surely at least somewhat representative of excellence and honor-

However, as I stated previously, it is nearly impossible to find a uniform scale with which to measure these two qualities. Rankings are an important measurement tool, but they are certainly not everything. In terms of rankings, our students perform well academically, receiving high SAT

and Vital Signs. We should stimulate students to do community service out of a desire to help rather than simply to complete their required hours. We should position our school to be more globally oriented, as junior Albert Magnell suggested in his recent op-ed for The Record.

For example, we could share artwork, music, and athletic highlights with students around the world. And, while we have impressive resources, we should urge students to make greater use of these resources. For example, teachers are usually available, and students should take advantage of this by interacting with them and gaining whatever they can, even if they don't have an essay due or need help on a math problem.

With respect to honor, although we do have an Honor Code, it does apply and should be taken

C.Laud (VI) more seriously outside of the classroom. For example, we should look to the Honor Code in the arts and on the playing fields. Senior Kate Dreyfuss quoted the Honor Code in a fall op-ed for The Record as she urged students to observe proper concert etiquette.

Moreover, we are all too familiar with the smack talk between Pingry and Watchung Hills preceding, during, and following the first ice hockey game; we must continue to focus not only on athletic excellence, but also on maintaining our sportsmanship. In order to "actively engage the student body in its commitment to the Honor Code," we recently added the signing and presenting of the Honor Code to Convocation proceedings. In years past, the school voted on whether to keep the Honor

scores and gaining admission to top colleges. Athletically, we win state championships and individual accolades. Artistically, we showcase students' impressive talent in music, visual arts, and performing arts. Moreover, our teachers are all highly qualified and our resources and facilities are superb. Finally, the qualities of students are impressive: many of us serve the community extensively and care about world issues.

Even so, I would argue that there is, and always will be, room for improvement. For example, we should encourage students to embrace learning outside of the classroom, by increasing participation in clubs, including the Debate Team, Model UN, and language clubs, and publications, including The Pingry Record

## EDITORIAL

### Promarama

My mother went to two proms. She likes to brag about her dates, both of whom were attractive, as you can make out from the grainy photographs she keeps in a dilapidated album in her closet. My father didn't go to any. He chose to skip them instead. He was one of *those* kids. And me, as of April 15, I've gone to three.

It's funny to think where I was at those dances compared to where I am now. Even just looking at the pictures, I can tell that I was in a different place. For the first Prom, I was a 16-year-old sophomore who had managed to secure an older date and, accordingly, a highly sought after invitation. It had been my mission to go to Prom with my best friend, who had luckily managed to find a date as well. We thought we were unbelievably cool. Once we actually got to the ballroom, we were obnoxious, abandoning our dates and pretty much over-running the dance floor. We had a blast, but I look back at the pictures and realize that I'm standing almost a foot away from my date, who was more than a full foot taller than me, and am clearly not as comfortable or confident as I felt.

Preparing for Prom junior year was pretty much a microcosm of junior year itself. In the midst of all of the SAT prepping, AP exam studying, and college visiting, it was stressful finding a date, and even my dress was difficult to deal with. I could barely breathe, sit down, or walk in it for that matter. Still, because of the people I was with, I had a good time, and my smile in the pictures isn't nearly as forced or awkward as it was the year before.

And this year, well, it was the best one yet. Our table, designated by an eight of spades playing card protruding from the centerpiece, was one of the few of twelve people. The group loitering around it changed throughout the night: everyone at the beginning to stare at their salads while discussing television shows, to a gaggle of girls with aching feet, to Matt Zubrow (VI) who abandoned his own table to eat my dessert. Still, regardless of who was there, everyone had the same thing to say about how much fun they were having. Really, the entire night — from chatting with Mr. Keating for a ridiculously long time to all of the attendees rushing to dance at the first sound of Lil Jon's voice at the beginning of "Shots" — felt simple and carefree.

I'd like to interject by saying that I didn't set out to write about Prom. It is the cliché to end all clichés. However, last week, while I was sitting at the couches, I was contemplating what to write about for my editorial. A friend asked whether I had anything to complain about. I asked her what she meant, and she replied, "I think people are driven to write when they have a complaint. That's probably why you're having trouble."

It's true: I really don't have anything to complain about regarding Prom or anything else. I think these past weeks are some of the best that I've ever had. I've finally been able to concentrate on the classes that interest me the most, have had time to do things for fun, and have adopted a regular sleep schedule for the first time in three years. And of course, it's beautiful outside: it's hard not to feel happy when you're driving with your windows down.

So, I guess that brings me to my point in an appropriately lackadaisical way. Prom is a tradition that takes place every year. While the customs associated with it don't change (dates will always have to buy each other a boutonniere or corsage, attend some form of a pre-party where their parents can take an insane amount of pictures, and cram themselves into a limo with a group of similarly dolled up teenagers), our state of mind does. I've come such a long way since I was a freshman giddily imagining what I would wear at my own Senior Prom while stalking pictures that the upperclassmen had posted on Facebook. And getting here, to this content place senior year, kind of like that ride in the limo full of anticipation of the night to come, has been well worth the troubles along the way.

—Jenny Gorelick

## A New Junior's Discovery of What It Means to Join a Distinctive High School Culture

By JASMINE OGHAN (V)

As a new junior entering Pingry in September, I had no idea what to expect. The stories that I had heard about the private school environment were not very encouraging, and I consequently began the school year with a feeling of apprehension. However, as the weeks began to pass, my feeling of uneasiness faded as I gradually adjusted to the new atmosphere. It did not feel like a drastic change from life at Voorhees High School, the public school that I had previously attended, but it was a change nevertheless, and I eventually became accustomed to all that is Pingry.

Until a couple of weeks ago, however, I had failed to realize how truly distinctive our school's culture was. As I sat in front of my television at home, idly flipping through channels to see if there was anything worth watching, I happened to land on a local news station that was doing a story on Voorhees. Two students had apparently been arrested for involvement in two separate bomb threats as well as the possession of M-80 firecrackers that had spurred three days of school-wide evacuations. As I listened to the description of the circumstances under which these events took place, I could not help but think to myself that the likelihood of a parallel situa-



B. Hamm Conard (V)

**What makes Pingry so unique? No, it's not the monstrous clock tower or the pretty yet completely strange middle school.**

tion happening at Pingry was very small.

Although I do not think Voorhees to be inferior to Pingry because of one unfortunate incident, the occurrence prompted me to reflect upon the reasons that had led me to such a conclusion. Essentially, I asked myself, "What makes Pingry unique?"

The first thing that comes to mind is the Honor Code. This constant reminder of the importance of honorable conduct is a major factor when considering the overall identity of Pingry. Such emphasis on moral behavior

and the consideration of others has shaped the student body into a community that exhibits tolerance, understanding, and respect. One thing that especially surprised me at the beginning of the year was the fact that students could leave their bags in the hallways without

fear that their personal belongings would be stolen. I attribute this illustration of trust to the presence of an Honor Code, an equivalent of which I did not have at my previous school.

While the Honor Code may be the school's major defining feature, Pingry also has other traditions that contribute to the formation of a unique student environment. One such custom is the establishment and enforcement of

a dress code, generally seen by the student body as a negative aspect of Pingry life. I can specifically remember one student proclaiming that the dress code represents an impediment to the freedom of self-expression. Although I agree with this statement to a certain extent, I also feel that rules regarding the impropriety of particular items of clothing are understandable and justified in any

educational institution. Furthermore, the absence of a dress code can tarnish the image of a school if it is taken advantage of. I don't mean to say that skirt length is directly proportional to the caliber of a specific institution, but I concede that appropriate attire does contribute to a reputation of respectability and professionalism.

Lastly, class size and the student-teacher relationship are also qualities that set Pingry apart. The relatively small number of students per class creates a more one-on-one interaction between teachers and their pupils. Moreover, the productivity of a class greatly increases when there are fewer students, especially in the sciences where lab materials sometimes need to be shared. In addition, teachers' willingness to help students during Conference Period further enhances the student-teacher relationship and contributes to Pingry's unique identity as a school.

Essentially, I asked myself, "What makes Pingry unique?"

# Date Rape Speaker Receives Mixed Reviews from Student Body

By YVONNE JENG (IV)

For the Second Annual Lecture sponsored by the Gilbert Harry Carver '79 Memorial Fund, speaker Ms. Katie Koestner gave two presentations, one to freshmen and sophomores and the other to juniors and seniors. With the former, she talked about Internet safety, the creation of healthy relationships in a world of technology, the importance of respect for self and others, and the methods of managing pressures that can come with those relationships. She talked to the older students about how she was date raped when she was in college and how the aftermath of that event affected her.

The presentation Koestner gave to the freshman and sophomores warned them about the dangers of the Internet and social networks such as Facebook and Myspace. She proved to her audience how their decisions on the Internet could ruin their dreams and future.

Koestner gave many anecdotes about what happened to individuals who were not careful with what they did online. For example, one of her stories was about a girl who sent a dirty picture to her boyfriend, which his friends in turn sent to all of his contacts. The girl lost a scholarship for four years in college and internships full of opportunities each summer. Koestner also told us that disrespecting someone could have unforeseen consequences. She related a story about a person who

had edited a video a boy had made of himself relating to Star Wars, which was subsequently put on YouTube. As a result, the boy tried to kill himself.

Koestner also reminded both forms that their actions and decisions can have heavy consequences. While talking about social networks, she pulled up the terms and conditions for Facebook and Myspace: there were pages and pages. Students soon found out that colleges can pay Facebook to see their accounts, and the only way to protect oneself is through the privacy settings. She also emphasized that everyone has dirt, and if you want to get into college, then you should clean up your page.

Many students took her presentation seriously but had mixed reactions to the message. For example, Maggie Morash (IV) said, "It made me realize how careful you have to be with the stuff you put on the internet." Others like Kendall Mazara (III) were not so thrilled with Koestner's attitude and exclaimed, "I didn't like her because she spoke so fast, and I didn't think the stories she told us about happened as often as she made it sound." Nick Canavan (IV) also felt that way, saying, "She was sarcastic, condescending, and long-winded."

Koestner also spoke to the juniors and seniors about the topic of date rape. When she had undergone this traumatic experience, many of the people at her college who were in positions of authority, such as the school's headmaster, treated the



Ms. Katie Koestner was sponsored by the Carver family. Courtesy of Communications Office

event lightly and ignored it. The rapist got away with the crime without consequences

and graduated on the same day as the victim. Since her experience in

college, Koestner has felt a duty to raise awareness about the issue of date rape.

As a result of her efforts, she was featured on the cover of Time Magazine and has appeared on several TV shows. Again, students' reactions were mixed. Sean Salamon (VI) said, "I thought her presentation was very irrelevant and very theatrical. I felt isolated from her message that it could happen to anybody." Lashimi Davey (V), however, thought Koestner "was very straightforward, laid out her story, and it had some good messages; her story definitely had a more personal impact."

# Seniors Strut Their Stuff for Annual PSPA Spring Benefit Fashion Show

By TANVI GUPTA (VI)

The Class of 2010 rocked the runway at the recent PSPA Spring Benefit. Included in the benefit were the Senior Fashion Show, a banquet, a display of student artwork, and an auction. Pingry families, teachers, and alumni all joined in the festivities.

In previous years, the benefit has been held at hotels. However, in an effort to conserve financial resources, this year's benefit was at Pingry. Coordinators and participating students were nervous about how the decorations and atmosphere would turn out at this "new" site. However, everyone was astonished when they stepped into the transformed Hyde and Watson Gym.

The room had the ambiance of a contemporary upscale restaurant, complete with white lounge chairs, a bar, and a full course meal. Following a cocktail hour was the highly anticipated senior fashion show, DJed by David Martin (VI). At the end of the show, to the surprise of most guests, Martin and Myles Bristow (VI) performed an outstanding break dancing routine on the runway. After the show, the guests enjoyed a delicious meal, which was donated by

the catering company. In addition, the PSPA held an auction at which items such as paintings and spa trip

show was everything the students hoped for. The boys were fitted for their suits at Brooks Brothers, while

artists from Lord & Taylor came to groom students for the runway. The girls even had the opportunity to model designer jewelry.

Additionally, professional photographer Peter Chollick took photos of the models with their friends and families. Phil Ryan (VI) said, "I remember hearing about the fashion show in years past and thinking that seniors were overly enthusiastic about it. But after participating in it, I now understand why they had such a great time."

The show also featured tips from a professional model; second runner up in cycle 12 of the hit TV show "America's Next Top Model," Aminat Ayinde of Union, New Jersey chatted with the seniors and advised them to act natural on the runway. For some students, meeting Ayinde was the best part of night. Sofi Barrionuevo (VI) shared, "I love 'America's Next Top Model' so it was really cool to meet Aminat... she even said she would try to model for my photo ISP!"

Ryan summed up the opinion of the students by saying, "The benefit was a really great way to have fun and raise money for our school at the same time. I wish I could do it again."



Courtesy of Maddie Garcia (VI)

Randall Jordan (VI) escorts Kara Marciscano (VI) down the runway.

tickets were sold.

Organized by Pingry parents Kelly Sandulli and Leslie Patrizio, the fashion

the girls chose their dresses from Lord & Taylor. Hairdressers from local salons and professional make-up

## Class of 2010 Cum Laude Spring Inductees

Alexandra Cheng  
Jonathan Ciriello  
Maxwell DeChiara  
Beth Garcia  
Maddie Garcia  
Amy Gopinathan  
Tanvi Gupta  
Erika Lampert  
Louisa Lee  
Victoria Lee  
Jasmin Neal  
Anthony Parisi  
Sean Salamon  
Emily Xia

Congratulations!

# From Thinking Small to Risky Plays

Continued From Page 1

with handoffs, on the other hand, is analogous to saving and safely investing money, which could have prevented the rapid economic collapse. Morash urged her listeners to take informed risks instead of setting risky plays that will either pay a large dividend or cause a huge failure.

Magnell stressed the importance of "thinking small," despite the huge scale of the world around us. Magnell asserted his belief that the future lies in "small" things: nanotechnology, molecular biology, and so on. However, while thinking about these smaller things, Magnell warned that we should not just limit ourselves to small ideas or lose sight of the world as a whole.

Hsue took a stance on Internet piracy of music, claiming that it could actually help artists gain popularity and expand their fan base. With the stunning speed that file sharing

websites like "Pirate Bay" and programs like "LimeWire" gain popularity, Hsue believed that musicians should embrace the free transfer of music to attract new fans. He pointed out that the more listener-friendly and accessible bands are, the more willing fans would be to buy merchandise or concert tickets.

Gelman took note of the double standard of derogatory and obscene terms. Gelman pointed out that it's considered "okay" for a Jewish person to make an offensive joke about being Jewish or a black person to use derogatory terms for African Americans. If someone who isn't Jewish, or black, makes a joke like this, it's considered disgusting and inappropriate. Gelman's speech raised interesting questions about the ethics of such a double standard.

Feng encouraged her listeners to read more and be well informed about the world around us. While it's always entertaining to watch students struggle



Courtesy of Communications Office

The contestants wait their turn to speak.

with basic questions like "How many countries are in North America" on SAC videos, that sort of blatant ignorance could easily be corrected by picking up a magazine or a newspaper. Feng pointed out that reading simply for pleasure's sake has all but disappeared, and reading any sort of material can open up horizons to different ideas, points of view, and topics. Feng raised the bar by memorizing her entire five-minute speech. Instead of standing at the podium with notes like the other

five finalists, Feng held the microphone and walked around the stage.

Allie Logerfo (V) was impressed by Feng's speech. "You could tell how much practice went into Ashley's speech, and her preparation definitely paid off," she said. These impeccable speaking skills helped Feng win first place in the 2010 Robert H. Lebow '58 Memorial Oratorical Competition. Second place went to Magnell, and Hsue and Gelman tied for third place.

# Mrs. Landau Leads Her Final Holocaust Remembrance Assembly

By REBECCA SPICEHANDLER (V) and SHAAN GURNANI (V)

On Friday, April 9, The Holocaust Remembrance Program was held in Hauser Auditorium in an effort to remember and learn from "man's inhumanity to man." This year was longtime coordinator Mrs. Madeline Landau's final assembly.

For this assembly, Jacqueline Murekatete, a survivor of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, and

David Gewirtzman, a Holocaust survivor, shared their experiences in order to urge others to take action against hatred and prejudice.

As a nine-year-old Tutsi child, Murekatete witnessed the slaughter of her parents and six siblings by the majority Hutu tribe during the Rwandan Genocide. After escaping with her grandmother to an orphanage, she was adopted by her uncle in Queens and began to assimilate to American culture.

Now a first year law student at Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in Manhattan, Murekatete travels the country to spread her message of hope, resilience, and faith. Murekatete is working with the nonprofit organization Miracle Corners of the World to build a community center in Rwanda for genocide survivors.

Gewirtzman experienced a similar situation at age 11 when the Germans invaded his small Polish town during World War II. After being consigned to a ghetto, where he was forced to wear the Star of David and abide by other restrictions imposed by the Nazis, Gewirtzman hid with his family under a local farmer's pigsty for two years.

A truly fortunate man, he was one of the sixteen out of 8,000 Jews that survived from his town. After spending some time in Italy, where he attended the University of Rome, Gewirtzman immigrated with his family to the United States in 1948. He was later drafted into the United

States Army and ironically was stationed in Germany.

The two speakers connected five years ago when Gewirtzman visited Murekatete's high school in Queens where she immediately recognized someone whose experience felt intimately similar and binding. In a note to Gewirtzman, Murekatete wrote, "At one time I, too, like you, had a feeling of guilt for being alive. 'Why was I left?' I asked myself. I never really got an answer to that, but now...maybe I can do my part in making sure that no other human beings go through the same experience as I did."

At the assembly, Murekatete and Gewirtzman told their stories to the audience of faculty and students from both the Middle and the Upper School. Gewirtzman's talk was accompanied by a slideshow presentation with pictures from his lifetime.

The speeches were followed by a brief question-and-answer session and the traditional Candle-Lighting Ceremony led by seniors Erika Lampert and Will Pinke in which Murekatete, Gewirtzman, and a few students

continuously share their stories with a hope of inspiring youth to learn from the past and stop such tragedies from happening again. As Gewirtzman stated in

his speech, "No infant is ever born with hatred." Rather, prejudices are acquired; therefore, it is the power of today's youth to promote acceptance rather than hatred. Gewirtzman's powerful wish is, "Holocausts and genocides will only be found in the pages of history."

John Varvaro (V) said, "It was really a different and extraordinary experience to hear from people actually involved with these horrific events." He continued, "Genocide is clearly a problem which must be dealt with, and I think the speakers' message that the world must learn from the past is vital." Julia Dowling (V) agreed, saying, "I think that the assembly was especially powerful and stimulating this year."



Courtesy of Communications Office  
David Gewirtzman and Jacqueline Murekatete share their stories.

# SAC Surprises Student Body With Witty Spring Assembly

By SARAH PARK (IV)

The SAC's Spring Assembly was held on Wednesday, March 10 during morning meeting. The assembly was a well-kept secret; other than the members, no one knew what the assembly was about or when it was going to occur. As always, SAC proved that they could make everyone laugh amidst the academic pressure that students face the week before spring break.

The assembly began with Will Pinke (VI) playing his version of Beethoven on the piano, accompanied by a slideshow of pictures and captions as a means of mocking his lack of musical expertise. He varied his banging on the keys according to the captions on the slideshow.

Pinke's performance was fol-

lowed by some witty and amusing remarks about the new roofing construction and then a list of the Top 10 Faculty Afterschool Activities, which included comparing biceps with Mr. Norman LaValette, money bathing with Mr. Bradford Poprik, and email reading with Mr. Quoc Vo.

Next up was a video about the often-discussed issue of cafeteria cleanliness. The video featured Charlie Laud (VI) and a brigade of other students as the cause of all of the messes that are left in the cafeteria. The short film showed the students amusing themselves by spilling drinks, throwing food on the tables, and taking dishes out of the conveyor belt and placing them on the tables. Kate Leib (V) liked the video because "it relieved some

of the tension surrounding the issue of cafeteria cleanliness, while reminding us to clean up after we eat."

This film was followed by a series of short clips: a movie trailer featuring Adam Armstrong (V) as a heroic fireman, a mock up of a fake psychology survey, and jokes about the beard sketches displayed in the hallways.

Since waterless urinals have been installed in the boys' bathrooms to conserve water, SAC also devised some ironic slogans and pictures to express their feelings about the change.

The assembly's last big video narrated the story of Jenny Gorelick (VI), one of the only females in SAC. The video highlights the awkwardness that occurs between Gorelick and the SAC boys whenever she tries to contribute to the meetings.

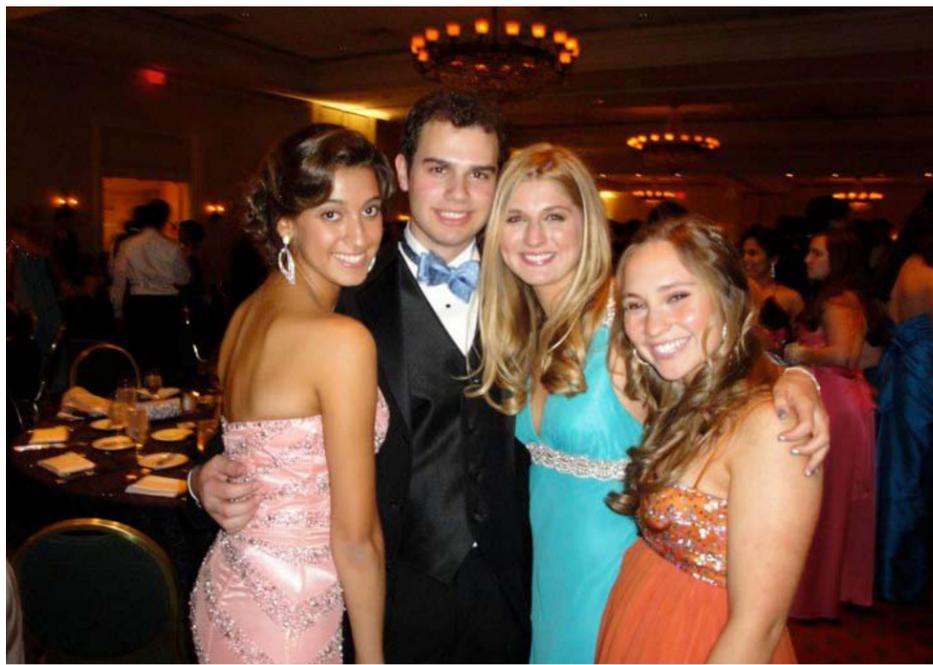
The final part of the assembly was X-treme Sports, a segment introduced earlier in the school year. SAC photoshopped students' sports images to make them more "extreme." One of the photos featured a boy being eaten by a shark.

Maisie Laud (IV), another of the few girls on SAC, "thought the whole assembly went really well. We worked really hard on everything, and from what we heard, everyone was having a good time." KC Eboh (IV), agreed, adding that he hopes "SAC will have more assemblies like this before the end of the year. They're so funny!"



A. Mohin (V)  
Charlie Laud (VI) wreaks havoc on the cafeteria in a short film.

# Casino Royale Prom Hits the Jackpot for Juniors and Seniors



J. Dowling (V)

Juniors Rebecca Gluck, Chloe Sorvino, and Sam Neibart pose with Aaron Davis (VI).

By NOININ GILBERT (V)

On Thursday, April 15, the annual Pingry Prom was held at the Marriott Hotel in Bridgewater. The school was filled with prom chatter for the weeks leading up to the event. Science and substitute teachers Mr. Andrew Alfano and Ms. Jill Kehoe spearheaded the prom committee this year, and "Casino Royale," the year's theme, came to life on the big night. According to Danielle Westerman (V), "Their planning, dedication, and commitment really made for a great Prom."

As everyone gathered in the hall outside of the ballroom, students mingled and received their seating arrangements. Westerman said,

"One of my favorite decorations of the night were the seating tickets! When I saw everyone's names on the back of the card I could not get over how creative it was." The front of the playing cards corresponded with the cards in the center of the tables.

Continuing the "Casino Royale" theme, the tables were decorated with palm leaves and poker chips. After dinner, students made their way to the dance floor. "The DJ was great. I thought he really kept the energy of the night going. I had so much fun dancing with my friends and seeing everyone dance in their Prom attire," said Anjana Ganti (V). In fact, there were even a few "dance-offs."

Allie Logerfo (V) said, "The whole night was a complete success and you could just feel the excitement in the air." Ganti agreed, saying, "Whether you were sitting at your table having nice conversation with friends or on the dance floor, everyone can agree that it was a picture perfect prom that could have been straight out of a movie." Logerfo summed the night up nicely: "I think everyone really enjoyed themselves, and it was a great opportunity to hang out with kids from different grades and schools. Everyone looked great too!"

Westerman said, "Prom was a complete success thanks to the wonderful Prom Committee. It was a night that no one there will soon forget!"

# What do you think of the construction Pingry is currently undertaking?



JASON LEVINE (IV)

"It's an inconvenience but well needed."



LIZ JOLLEY (IV)

"We should get air conditioning instead of a roof."



ALEX PARKER-MAGYAR (VI) AND BRIAN WEINIGER (VI)

"Highly obtrusive and, quite frankly, condescending."



JASMIN NEAL (VI)

"I hope it's done by graduation."



SEÑOR VASQUEZ

"I think it's necessary."

# Gorillaz's "Plastic Beach" Falls Into Its Own Musical Category



Courtesy of Google Images

By DAN ABEND (IV)

The English virtual band Gorillaz is back, this time with their third studio album, "Plastic Beach." Although different from their previous albums "Gorillaz" and "Demon Days," it is clear that Damon Albarn and his two-dimensional group created something even more special with this album.

Released in March, "Plastic Beach" has earned solid reviews

and commercial success. With progressive musical techniques, unique lyricism, and fantastic guest appearances from artists like Mos Def, Lou Reed, Snoop Dogg, and Mick Jones, "Plastic Beach," which is often considered a "pop" album, is really in a category all its own.

The album starts off with an "Orchestral Intro," but then delves into the core of the tracks with the aptly named "Welcome to the World of the Plastic

Beach," which features Snoop Dogg. The great symmetry between his usual laidback style and the electric background music is instantly intriguing.

From there, the album keeps the listener satisfied with its hypnotic, eclectic musical style and extraordinary lyrics. This is most notably demonstrated in "Stylo," which features Mos Def and Bobby Womack. The synthesized musical interludes and soulful lyricism create a musical experience that explains why the song reached such success as a pre-released single.

The group still keeps the musical styles diverse throughout the album with some upbeat tracks, like "Superfast Jellyfish" featuring Gruff Rhys and De La Soul, some slower, deeper ones like "Broken," and tracks that fall in between these descriptions like "Some Kind of Nature" featuring Lou Reed.

All of these tracks come together to provide a unique, fantastic listening experience. If the listener keeps an open mind when listening to "Plastic Beach," it's easy to see why such an astounding number of people thoroughly enjoy this album.

# Mediocre Performances to a Lousy Script in "The Bounty Hunter"

By CHRISTINE KUMAR (IV)

The 2006 film "The Break-Up" grossed around \$200 million worldwide. Although the acting and direction of the film were sub-par, it achieved such box-office success because of rumors that lead actors Jennifer Aniston and Vince Vaughn were dating.

Unfortunately, it's the same situation with Aniston's new romantic comedy "The Bounty Hunter." Despite the critics' scathing reviews, it made about \$20 million in its opening weekend purely because of speculation that Aniston and co-star Gerard Butler are dating.

"The Bounty Hunter" narrates the story of Milo, a tough yet sweet bounty hunter, and Nicole, an ambitious metro journalist. The divorcees are reconnected when Milo has to bring Nicole to jail because she skipped a court appearance so that she could follow up on a newspaper article. However, Nicole, who is hot on the trail of a big story, tries everything she can to wriggle out of his clutches.

When Nicole's amateur detective work lands her in trouble and Milo becomes the target of thugs, the two begin to rely on each other for survival. The two rekindle their love while solving a drug scandal, leading to the typical

happily-ever-after ending.

When it comes to acting, Aniston, America's sweetheart, definitely disappoints. In addition, Butler's caveman-like qualities are a turn-off for the audience.

However, the worst part about this movie is the screenplay: it is predictable and full of clichés. The love between Milo and Nicole is poorly portrayed: they simply fight with each other throughout the movie and seem to have absolutely nothing in common. The

subplot was focused on a drug and suicide scandal that was neither interesting nor funny.

The only enjoyable scenes of the movie came from "SNL" actor Jason Sudeikis' character Stewart, who plays an awkward man willing to do absolutely anything – even endure torture – for Nicole.

Overall, "The Bounty Hunter" isn't a terrible movie, but if you enjoy romantic comedies, just wait for it to come out on DVD.

# Pingry Alum Curates Provocative Exhibit



A. Mohin (V)

An abstract sculpture featured in the exhibit.

By MOLLY SCHULMAN (IV)

Currently on display in the Pingry art gallery is an exciting exhibition put together by Pingry alum Jon DeCola '01. This is the first time ever at Pingry that someone was asked to come in and select the artists and works to be featured in the gallery. Art teacher Mr. Miles Boyd said that the show features "up-and-coming young important artists from New York who are early in their careers and have been shown before at the International Art Fair."

The work in the gallery features bright photography by DeCola himself, words such as "stink" and "creep" painted on a light background, and a variety of sculptures. Painting teacher Mr. Peter Delman commented, "The work in the show is subtle, understated and demands that the viewer think. It is representative of much of the work of younger contemporary artists."

When one walks around the new exhibition, the abstract pieces of art require a little extra thought to decipher their meanings. Mr. Boyd commented that "there's some similarity between the ways people probe, one of the reasons why abstract art is so interesting. Since all the pieces of art assembled in the gallery have been put together for a reason, it makes one question what the similarities are between a ladder with an opaque neon yellow piece of plastic balancing on it and of a man crouching in a ditch.

The wonderful thing about this exhibition is that the meaning is all relative."

Students who have been to the gallery find it unique and interesting. The content makes it hard to understand the exhibit without spending time to think about each work. Jonathan Freinberg (IV) said, "The intentional shadows created by the sculptures were very interesting." Other students agree that this show was very "thought-provoking" and noteworthy.

DeCola, the 26-year-old curator, is currently living in New York City and pursuing a career as a photographer. The show he put together consists of works made by fellow contemporary artists in New York. According to Mr. Boyd, he "did some of the most important 9-11 images ever done." After being a part of the art program all four years at Pingry, he spent his freshman year of college at Parsons in New York and then transferred to the International School of Photography.

DeCola's work, which Mr. Boyd calls "tremendous quality," includes commercial work, fine art, and photography. Some of his works in the exhibition include the double TV image with dialogue on the bottom of the left-hand wall, an abstract photograph with bright colors, and another small photograph that is quite hard to decipher. Mr. Boyd asserted, "He's someone you'll know someday. I guarantee it." Judging from this art show, he's definitely a force to be reckoned with.

# Seniors Charlie Laud and Luke Pounder Interview Screenwriter Geoff LaTulippe



Courtesy of IMDB

Drew Barrymore and Justin Long star in "Going the Distance."

Courtesy of Charlie Laud (VI) and Luke Pounder (VI)

Geoff LaTulippe is the screenwriter of "Going The Distance," a romantic comedy slated for release late this summer. Centered on a couple trying to maintain a long-distance relationship, the movie stars Drew Barrymore, Justin Long, Christina Applegate, "Saturday Night Live's" Jason Sudekis, and "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia's" Charlie Day. On top of writing screenplays, Geoff has also written comedic pieces for geekweek.com and ESPN.com. Originally from Pennsylvania, he graduated from James Madison University and is a huge fan of Phil Collins.

1. What is your writing background?

As far as writing professionally, "Going The Distance" is my background. Pre-professionally, I've written in some form or another for as long as I can remember. I just always liked stories...and I always loved movies. I took a couple of writing classes in college (fiction, short fiction, playwriting, scriptwriting, etc.), but it just made sense to get into the writing that allowed me to tell stories in movie form. All that said, I worked as a script reader for New Line Cinema for 4+ years, so most of my writing

written two - one in college (a feature-length version of a short I'd written) and one a couple of years ago out here. Both sucked badly. BADLY. I sent them out to one or two people each and quickly realized that not only was neither a story I really wanted to write, but I wasn't good enough to tackle them. So I read more, learned more, and when I was ready, I wrote "Going the Distance." And that got a good reaction, which is fantastic, but I still have a hell of a lot more to learn.

5. Personally, I can't wait to see "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia's" Charlie Day in a big film role. Are you happy with the casting? Are the actors they cast older than the ones you had in mind?

You have no idea how excited I am about Charlie. No idea. "Sunny" is my favorite show on TV right now, and he was the one guy I wanted badly for that role from the first moment, so if I said it was anything less than awesome, I'd be lying to you.

As far as everyone else, we got the types we wanted, the kind of people that could play the characters in the script for literally every role. It was like some kind of magic trick. I have no idea how it all came together, but it did. Originally we were looking at actors in their early 20's to play Erin, but when Drew became an option there was not a second's hesitation in making the character just two or three years older.

6. Your script got 14 votes on the "blacklist." What are your thoughts on the "blacklist?" Did you know about it before your script was on it?

I was well aware of the blacklist before I ended up on it, and it was a HUGE honor. If you're a new writer, you want to be on it, plain and simple. No matter what,

when your peers, the people who represent them and the people who buy scripts like your work enough to mention it...well, it was a big deal to me.

7. Along with the dialogue, the scene description in your script is very funny. Do you believe having funny scene description is important?

I don't know if it's important. A lot of times scene description is just scene description. Sometimes it helps if it's minimal and just guides the reader through the script quickly. Other times it's better as almost prose, descriptive enough that it helps draw the reader more into the story. With comedy, I think you have a little leeway with the scene description, so if you drop a funny line or two in there, you help keep the tone you're going for within the reader's grasp and hopefully keep them entertained even when the characters aren't speaking or performing much of an action.

8. Do you have any advice for aspiring screenwriters?

I could give screenwriters enough advice to fill a book (hmmm...maybe that's an idea...), but I think there are a couple of things that are paramount: read scripts. Read as many scripts as you can, both good and bad, produced and never having a chance to be produced. The good ones will show you the kinds of things you should be doing - and the bad ones will show you what you shouldn't be doing, which might be even more helpful. Learn three-act structure, at least in theory, so you know how to break the rules the right way later. And pay attention to the way people talk and interact. Stories and concepts are great, but if you aren't accurately able to capture humanity and emotion, you'll never be telling a full narrative.

background comes from having read and dissected over 3,000 scripts. Once you know what to do - and more importantly, what NOT to do - you sort of guide yourself into the process.

2. What's your creative process?

Honestly, I'm not sure I have a creative process. I sit down and I write. If I'm not feeling what I'm writing, I stop. If it's flowing well, I don't stop. I can write five pages in a day or I can write 50. If I think something I wrote is crap (which happens a lot), I'll rework it until I think it's right or that it at least won't wreck my career. And once I hand something in, I get prepared to rewrite because writing is rewriting, as the old saying goes.

3. Who are your influences?

Influences: John Hughes, Cameron Crowe, James L. Brooks, Judd Apatow, Richard Curtis. I'm also a big fan of anyone who has the freedom to do and say whatever they want whenever they want...and yet they choose not to abuse that power.

4. Do you remember how many features you had written before "Going the Distance?"

Hmmmm. Technically, I had

# Girls' and Boys' Varsity Swimming End Seasons On Top

By NICOLE BLUM (III)

On February 27, both the boys' and the girls' Varsity Swimming teams won the Non-Public B state championship. The girls captured the title for the first time in twelve years, while this is the third straight state championship that the boys have won.

The boys won against Holy Spirit by a landslide, with a final score of 109-61. The team was led by junior standout Nic Fink, who was named the Star Ledger's Swimmer of the Year. Fink, who is ranked first in the state for the 100-yard breaststroke and second in the state for the 200-yard Individual Medley, broke out of his comfort zone at the championship meet. He swam the 100-yard butterfly (56.73) and the 100-yard backstroke (56.66), winning second and third places, respectively.

Other key contributors to the win were James Ross (IV) and Brandon Moy (VI). Ross placed first in the 200-yard Individual Medley, while Moy placed first in the 50-yard freestyle. Moy was also essential to securing first place in both the 200-yard medley relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay. In fact, Holy Spirit won only one event, the 100-yard

backstroke.

Captain Calvin Jones (VI) and assistant captain Nick Gilligan (VI) were very proud of the team's performance, which allowed them to advance to the Meet of Champions. "The Meet of Champions was our final meet, for which we had been training all year," Gilligan said. There, the boys delivered another amazing performance, "sweeping all of the relays."

"Very few teams in the history of the Meet of Champions have ever done that," Gilligan added. Overall, the boys' team showed an unbelievable season: they were undefeated during the regular season in the competitive Skyland Conference and were named the best boys' team in the state by the Star Ledger.

The girls' team faced a tough challenge against Bishop Eustace, who was favored to win the meet. In the 200-yard medley relay, Cailee Cassidy (IV), Kathryn Kolb (V), Regan Fink (VI), and Morgan Burke (III) established a new school record with a time of 1:52.42. Alysia Tsui (VI) broke another record with 59.55 in the 100-yard butterfly. Tsui pushed Pingry to the lead once again with her first place 100-yard backstroke swim (59.82).

Captains Meghan Hager

(VI) and Gabby Scrudato (VI) were "thrilled with the way the girls swam." "Thirty-five personal best times were achieved at the meet," Hager said. Mrs.

Lee, the girls' head coach, agreed, saying, "All of the performances were impressive. Seeing the culmination of everyone's best efforts and

watching everyone rising to the occasion was outstanding." Despite some tense moments, the girls eventually triumphed with a score of 90-80.

The double wins were celebrated by pushing coaches Bill Reichle, Judy Lee, and Steve Droste into the College of New Jersey's pool.



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## Girls' Basketball Achieves #2 Rank

By HAYLEY ADVOKAT (III)

This season, the girls' Varsity Basketball team had their best record ever. By the semi-final round of the State Tournament, the varsity squad's record was 21-3.

The team was named Conference Champions when they began the North Jersey Non-Public "A" State Tournament, and their unbelievable season gave them a "bye" for the first round.

The team faced Immaculata High School in the second round. Pingry Head Coach David White called the Immaculata team "a tenacious and dogged team that will not roll over for anybody." Forward Kelly Kurylak (VI) had a total of ten points and 11 rebounds, and Pingry was victorious with a score of

44-27.

The quarterfinal was against The Oak Knoll School's powerhouse team. Emily Dammstrom (IV) and Stephanie Hanchuck (V) scored ten points each and had a total of 17 rebounds. Pingry's victory led #2 ranked Pingry to play #3 ranked Paramus Catholic in the Semi-Final round.

As expected, it was a close game with multiple lead changes in every quarter. Despite extraordinary efforts from Victoria Morgan (VI), who scored eight points, and the dedication of the entire team, Pingry lost in the final seconds.

Lexi Van Beisen (III) thought that the best part of being a member of the team was "meeting all the girls and having fun while working hard."

## Boys' Varsity Ice Hockey Finishes Their Successful Run With Stellar 20-4-1 Record

By KASIA AXTELL (III)

With a final record of 20-4-1, the boys' Varsity Ice Hockey season was the best one in school history. Despite a disappointing 3-1 loss to Montgomery in the Skyland Conference Championship Finals, the rest of the season was hugely successful with key wins against schools such as Ridge, Hillsborough, Randolph, Kinneelon, St. Peter's Prep, and, the team's longtime rival, Chatham High School.

Led by senior captains Peter Martin and Ryan Kiska, senior assistant captains Brian Weiniger and Andrew LaFontaine, and head coach John Magadini, the team pulled off incredible wins in the new, more competitive conference. Particularly notable for the team was beating Montgomery twice during the regular season with final scores of 3-2 and 3-0.

One of the most disappointing losses occurred in the Prep B finals when Pingry lost 5-2 to Morristown-Beard. However, the team is still enthusiastic about their season. "We can't complain. We had a great run," Martin said.

Next year's team looks to be just as good, despite the loss of 7 key players: Martin, LaFontaine, Weiniger, Russoniello, Brandon Brier (VI), Pierce Fowler (VI), and Kiska who was recently named Star Ledger's Central Jersey Player of the Year. However, top scorer Matt Beattie (V) will lead the team next year, hopefully powering them to

many more victories.

"This team will be considered the best Pingry Hockey team ever because we are the

first to win twenty games and the first to finish in the top twenty overall," said Martin. And, after finishing the sea-

son with a ranking of ninth in the state, the team definitely has reason to be proud of its success.



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## Preseason Florida Trip Prepares Boys' and Girls' Varsity Lacrosse

By AMANDA HULSE (III)

Both the boys' and girls' Varsity Lacrosse teams are off to a great start this year. Each

team began their preseason with a training trip to Florida; the girls traveled to Disney World, and the boys stayed near Orlando.

Senior captains Ali Rotatori, Katie Bennett, and Katlyn Casey were very happy about the trip and are all excited about the upcoming season.

"The Training trip was beneficial for all of us, lacrosse-wise and in just bringing the team together," explained Bennett. She thought that the

"fun times playing on the field and in the parks and hotel gave the team members the opportunity to get to know those who they didn't know very well and reconnect with those they hadn't talked to in a while."

The team was also very successful on their trip, winning seven out of the eight scrimmages they played.

Head Coach Michelle Poole and Assistant Coach Meredith Finkelstein led the team to their first victory against Montgomery. The game ended with a score of ten to seven. The team also beat Jefferson Township High School 17-6 on April 3rd.

Rotatori is very happy about the team this year because as she said, "Although we lost some really good players last year, we have really strong underclassmen who are rising to the challenge to complete the team."

The boys' Varsity team is led this year by senior captains Tyler Zoidis and Dylan Westerhold, and by Coach Mike Webster.

The team had a great trip to World Class Lacrosse in Kissimmee, Florida. They won scrimmages against The Middlesex School and Deerfield Academy and lost to the Woodberry Forest Academy. When they weren't playing lacrosse, the team visited Universal Studios and went to see a movie.

In the regular season, they lost their first two games to Montgomery and Hunterdon Central but are still looking forward to a successful season. As Parker Butler (III) said, "I've been waiting for lax season since the summer." David Soled (III) attested, "It will be a good lax season." He's hoping "to get a couple wins to break his losing streak in Pingry sports."



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## Boys' Varsity Tennis Joins New Skyland Conference With High Hopes

By KATE LEIB (IV)

This spring, boys' Varsity Tennis faces bigger and more challenging schools in the Skyland Conference. The new conference includes seven schools named to the Star Ledger Top

20 last year, but the boys, who return with five varsity starters, believe they will be strong competitors.

Although matches against larger schools will be tough, senior captains Brian Weiniger, Nic Meiring, and David Kerr

believe that the matches will benefit the team. Weiniger said, "Tougher competition will ultimately lead to a stronger and deeper tennis team."

Victor Hsue (V) and James Chin (VI), two new additions to the Varsity squad, have moved

up from last year's JV team and are starting at second doubles. Meiring also has high hopes for another new Varsity player, Henry Gadsden (V). Meiring said, "Gadsden, who is new to Pingry tennis, has the budding potential to boost this year's team to being a top contender for the county and state titles."

Weiniger added, "I think it is vital to note that due to freshman Mike O'Reilly, team spirits have never been higher. Thanks to his quirky sense of humor and both his naïveté and jejune outlook on life, he has brought stress levels down and playing levels up."

The Star Ledger named Pingry, among schools including CBA, St. Augustine, and Delbarton, as top contenders for the Prep A state championship. According to Meiring, "The past three years, Delbarton has beaten us in the Section Finals of the State tournament." He added, "We have been working hard in the offseason and the preseason to make this year different." Kerr and Meiring hope to make it deep into the State tournament as doubles partners this year.

So far, the team has beaten Ridge High School and Watchung Hills with scores of 3-2 and 4-1. However, losses to Blair Academy, Hillsborough, and Montgomery prove that there is still room for improvement.

Two main goals for the team this year are winning the Somerset County Tournament and beating Delbarton in the Sectional Finals of the State championship. Weiniger concluded, "Nearly every match is going to be tough, and fan support is greatly appreciated!"



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## Varsity Baseball Strives to Improve

By YVYVONE JENG (IV)

The Varsity Baseball team is starting their season with significant improvements from last year. With high expectations for the players, the coaches hope to rebound from tough losses to Bernards and North Warren and improve their current record of 3-5.

Varsity players are sophomores Dan Keller, Lee Barker, Rob Kiska, Nick Branchina, Ben Ballintyn, Anders Velischek; juniors Ethan Kenny, Tim Lee, Randy Falk; and seniors Robby Allen, Simon Greene, David Hamilton, Andrew Logerfo, Freddy Porges, Ryan Kiska, and captain Ram Sinha. There are a lot of young pitchers, which, according to Allen "will be good to maintain the team's standing for the next few years." However, the

seniors are still the backbone of the team. Allen continued, "Hamilton has been solid at third base, and Logerfo's extra batting practice has paid off." Lee added, "Branchina has proved to be an impressive catcher, Keller and Sinha are spectacular pitchers, and Kiska has been an awesome hitter." Allen also commented on the strength of the Junior Varsity players, saying, "JV has excelled under the star pitching and leadership of sophomore Nik Oza. Keller said, "The team has potential to win some games in the county tournament." Lee concluded, "Coach Corvino runs a great program, and he pushes us to do the best we can. Although sometimes our record might not show it, we work really hard and are a tight team."



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### Upcoming Games

11:00 AM, Saturday, April 24th - Boys' Varsity Lacrosse vs. Ridge

2:00 PM, Saturday, April 24th - Boys' Varsity Baseball SCIAA 1st Round

4:00 PM, Tuesday, April 27th - Boys' Varsity Track vs. Warren Hills

3:30 PM, Wednesday, April 28th - Girls' Varsity Golf vs. Bridgewater Raritan

4:00 PM, Thursday, April 29th - Girls' Varsity Lacrosse vs. Phillipsburg

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