



DRAGON TALES

Issue XI, April 2009

The Expansion into Baskerville

By: Adrian Anderson

HS MSE plans to move many classes from the NAC to Baskerville next school year. This relocation brings up many questions and concerns, along with mixed expressions of melancholy and delight. This also raises the question, is HS MSE ready to part with the North Academic Center?

This new school year has brought many drastic changes to both the appearance and spirit of HS MSE. In the transition to the current school year our school lost four revered teachers, Ms. Doucette, Mr. Carey, Mr. Wang, and Ms. Dipalo. Next year promises to follow the current trend of rapid change, with the acquisition of most of the 2nd floor of Baskerville being, for now, the most significant.

According to Mr. Dugan, students can expect to have all of their major classes in Baskerville. Two new laboratories and two offices will be added to HS MSE by the fall 2009 semester.

The expansion into Baskerville has many positive upshots. For one, students will no longer have to make the long voyage from Baskerville to the North Academic Center to get to class. For most students this will eliminate the time it takes to get to class, correlating in somewhat higher class participation. The centralization of classes and students will also hopefully increase the close knit, family-like relationship in our school.

The expansion also leaves many students concerned. One junior, Andrew Chung, commented on the possible overcrowding of the Baskerville hallways: "It's going to be a new experience because I won't have to walk back from Baskerville and NAC and vice versa...it will definitely cause problems next year when people have to walk from class to class..." When asked if he will miss the college experience the NAC brought us, Andrew Chung responded, "Besides the escalators that everybody used instead of the elevators, I won't miss much since the rooms aren't that different from Baskerville."

Syed Mahtab opposed this view. He stated, "I think that being in the college environment is one of the best things about the school. The NAC is one of the few places where students can just relax and have fun...I think that by moving all the classes to Baskerville, the school is losing the image that inspired me to come here... Incoming students see our

school as an upcoming school that does well academically and is a good introduction to college because of the college campus and our college courses." Syed also stated, "Staying in Baskerville for seven hours is way too much."

According to Mr. Dugan, the renovation of the 2nd floor is still in progress. Mr. Dugan stated that it is still unclear whether or not the 2nd floor will be ready by September. The renovation of the 2nd floor is still in planning stages, but the video camera system planning is complete. In response to some of the concerns of students, Mr. Dugan stated that he doesn't think overcrowding in Baskerville will be a major issue. He does, however, believe that some adjustments will have to be made to accommo-

date a larger student body in a smaller space. Mr. Dugan also responded to Syed Mahtab's comment, saying that students will still be using CCNY and will be in the same relative setting, and therefore will keep the appeal of being in a college environment. Students will also have the benefit of staying out of precipitation and bad weather.

No one will be affected more by these changes than the students who walk from building to building and the teachers who teach in the NAC. Dr. Biester, Mr. Trimarco, and Mrs. Hershinson will have to leave their rooms in the NAC to teach in Baskerville next school year. When questioned how he feels about the migration to the 2nd floor, Dr. Biester expressed contentment. He said he believes that having the school

united in one building is essential to helping to solve administrative problems.

The migration to the 2nd floor of Baskerville will also benefit ill students. Having a majority of classes contained in one building will make traveling from class to class much easier for students who are sick, injured, or are under the weather.

Hopefully the migration from the NAC is the last in the string of drastic changes. Drastic changes such as the departure of our favorite teachers have changed the appearance of the school, and have tapered HS MSE school spirit. However, all hope is not lost. The unification into one building promises to boost school spirit and unite the HS MSE family.



A snapshot of the upstairs expansion in Baskerville

PTA: Parents Tightening Attendance

By: Schuyler Myjer

Throughout the short history of MSE, the PTA has been a strong backbone for the success of the school. In order to help maintain the stable growth of HS MSE, students and parents need to attend PTA meetings.

Assuming that each parent attending a PTA meeting represents one student in the school, out of approximately 450 students that come to our school only about 25 know about current issues that are going on in the PTA. This means that only about 5% of students know about what is going on at PTA meetings from their parents, if their parents even tell them what is going on. Although this is a just a rough estimate of how many parents attend each meeting, certain meetings attract more parents and some-

times students. For example, Mr. Klein's college meeting for the juniors attracts a crowd of around 40 or 50 parents and students. However, Mr. Dugan stated, "As the year goes by fewer parents attend PTA meetings." Even with a large show of parents in the beginning of the year, it can dwindle down to around 10 people by the end of the year. Upcoming events such as re-elections are opportunities for parents that are not involved in the PTA to get involved, display their opinions about the school and help the school thrive.

PTA meetings are held in B1 once every month after school. Parents who attend these meetings can indulge in various free refresh-

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YOUNG Adults or Young ADULTS?

By: Max Ansbro

Ever since I started fifth grade I have been told I am a young adult and it's time to start acting like one. From then to the time I turned 18, I have gradually been treated more as the young adult the real adults insist that I am.

First to welcome me to adulthood was the man who sells me my movie tickets. Strangely, just about every advancement into adulthood has followed the same general theme as paying the adult ticket price and wishing I was old enough to see the rated R movie without an adult. When it comes to doing work or handling difficult classes I am as much an adult as my parents. Yet I am seldom considered to be an adult when it comes to my maturity or personal freedom. Personally, I wouldn't mind a little consistency.

As a senior, I am currently taking such classes as calculus 3 and advanced physics. Many of the classes we have taken in high school cover topics my parents were only exposed to late in college. The school also requires 200 hours of community service, mandated, because as adults, we have a responsibility to give back to the community. Also, seniors have gone through the college admissions process, which not only requires hundreds of hours of work but also determines how we are educated and how people will look at us for the rest of our lives. Over the course of this, all of us are asked many times what we plan on doing for a major and a career. At this age, we are not only supposed to know what we want to learn about, but also know what we want to spend the rest of our lives doing five days a week from 9 to 5.

For all this responsibility, one would think we would be treated just the same as adults. We are not. The DOE, for example, seems to think everyone attending high school is a mentally deficient kleptomaniac. Just before getting into this newspaper class, we had to wait outside the room for the 30 seconds between when Mr. Troesch left and Mrs. Lombardi arrived. Why? We simply can't be trusted to maintain order without an adult to hold our hands.

In my gym class, the teacher demands respect. He refuses to give instructions until everyone is sitting, with balls out of our hands, and eyes fixed on him. Given that we are intelligent enough to take college level classes and know what we want to do in college, the assumption that we are not mature enough to handle simple gym instructions unless spoon fed them is rather insulting.

Many of these constraints are placed upon us because a select few

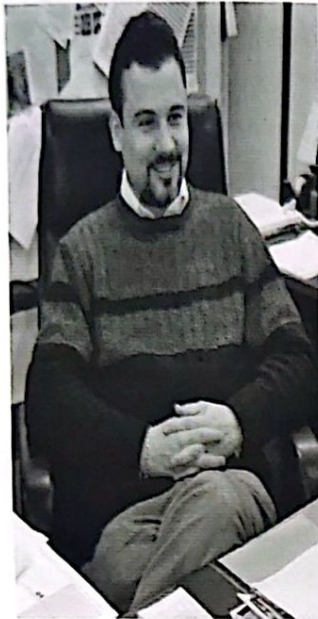
members of the class are not mature. But does it really make sense to punish every member of the whole for these few? I don't think so. If this were the case, the United States would be justified in systematically nuking the entire Middle East in response to the actions of a few Middle Easterners on September 11th. This raises many moral issues and is obviously not true. Something to think about next time your teacher supports class punishments.

We are deemed smart enough to take college courses and vote, yet not smart enough to handle the responsibility of alcohol. In the end it's more a question of which side of the mixed message we are supposed to see. YOUNG adults or young ADULTS? Just looking for a little consistency.



PTA: Parents Tightening Attendance

Continued from page 1



ments and learn more about their child and his/her learning at school. It is important that parents attend because these meetings affect not only the student, but could also affect the student's family. The PTA also holds special events like an introduction to Mnt. Sinai, fundraisers, or, for example, the upcoming Spring Festival. There are also sometimes PTA guest speakers. In past years there was a speaker who talked about drug abuse, and sometimes even our own teachers give presentations about programs going on in school.

Although it is understandable that not all parents can attend these meetings, people like April Feffer (PTA President) and many others make it for almost every meeting of the year. If you cannot attend these meetings, you can receive information on past meetings by going to the MSE website, www.hsmse.org. On the tab bar you can tab down on "Resources" and go to the PTA website. Information can also be found by tabbing from "Parents" and clicking on PTA, where you can find the PTA minutes. Minutes are a breakdown of what was talked about at each meeting. The dates for the PTA meetings can easily be found online by downloading the calendar that covers the whole year.

To find out more information about what is being talked about at PTA meetings, you can also join the HS MSE PTA online Yahoo group, where you can ask questions or take part in discussions. Attending PTA meetings is important for all students and parents because important subjects are discussed, such as the CCNY college credit controversy that affects students and their futures.

Left, Mr. Dugan being interviewed about PTA

By: Schuyler Myjer

"Out of approximately 450 students that come to our school, only about 25 know about current issues that are going on in the PTA."

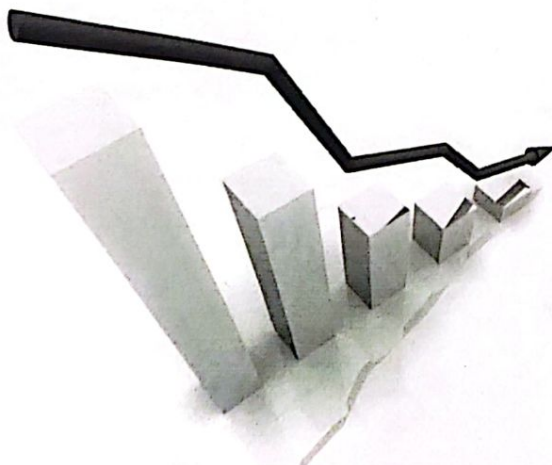
A Grim Future for HS MSE?

By: Taraquul Khan

Due to the current economic peril in the country, the economic status of HS MSE is not the same as it was a couple of years ago, or last year for that matter. Currently New York City schools are facing budget cuts and HS MSE is no exception.

According to CNN, Mayor Bloomberg announced (in early February) his plans to cut an additional \$1 billion from the city budget and lay off as many as 23,000 city employees. Senator Charles E. Schumer said President Barack Obama's stimulus plan is supposed to inject \$4.7 billion into New York's education system. Despite the promises, the state of New York has only received \$65 million so far. This does not do much for the public school problems, which are much, much larger. Receiving all \$4.7 billion can take up to two years and the plan might not even work out in the end. If the federal government does not pay the \$4.7 billion for education, more than 14,000 teachers may lose their jobs or be excessed. HS MSE has already lost a couple of staff members because of the budget cuts.

If this continues, the budget cuts will leave the school with fewer teachers, and HS MSE cannot afford to lose any more valuable staff members. The school has teachers from very diverse backgrounds and if the budget cuts persist, that flow of diversity may be lost. This is a negative impact on the school because everyone comes from different boroughs throughout the city. If that were to change, the school may become less exciting and this school can benefit from all the excitement it can get.



The expected budget cuts will only lower and lower funds available to teachers.

budget cuts by getting into the habit of having larger classes, both teachers and students, and also less activities and clubs."

The potential loss of many well-respected teachers will impact class sizes, school hours, school clubs, activities, and many other things that happen in this school. Currently this school is a top rated school with very high standards. Furthermore, HS MSE is small and with that it has had small class sizes. With fewer teachers, the school will have to increase the size of the classes and decrease the standard of learning. HS MSE has always had class sizes ranging from 15-25 students, and those are very different from the class sizes within the rest of the city which can go up to 35 students per class. One HS MSE senior, Eric Gutierrez, said, "Increased class sizes would make the students feel less comfortable interacting with the teachers," and that is something that should be feared in the school.

The students will not be the only ones burdened by larger class sizes; the teachers will be too. With larger class sizes, the teachers will have to deal with more students and have to change their way of teaching. Mr. Coulombe's response to the budget cut was, "It's unfortunate but necessary considering the city's finances."

The budget cuts may also lead to shorter school days in order to cover the wages of all the teachers and still keep the after-school activities. Shorter school days may make students happy but it may also cause them to miss out on valuable classes and information that will help them in the future. The clubs that are currently available may not be for long. If there are budget cuts then clubs may have to be cancelled because the school cannot afford to pay the teachers to supervise or because there aren't any teachers available to do so.

We must all prepare for the upcoming events if the budget cuts persist and the school takes a hit. One HS MSE senior said, "We should all prepare for the

NEWS

College for Dummies

By: Stephen Barnard

"It makes life feel so competitive. We're always stacked against each other and we never get time to be who we really are," said Jeleine Toussaint, a junior at HS MSE who expressed her anxiety about the admission process. And she isn't alone. Every year, upperclassmen face the daunting prospect of college applications. We try to manage our grades, improve our SAT scores, and make ourselves look desirable. At the same time, we prepare to live away from home for the first time, possibly relocating away from all the people we've grown to know and love. Personally, I've had a hard time believing any of it is actually happening. Once I can get my mind around the flood of problems ahead of me, I'm sure I'll experience the typical reaction: stress. Stress that I might not get in, that I might get into all kinds of debt, and that amid millions of applicants nationwide, I'm anywhere near as smart as I think I am.

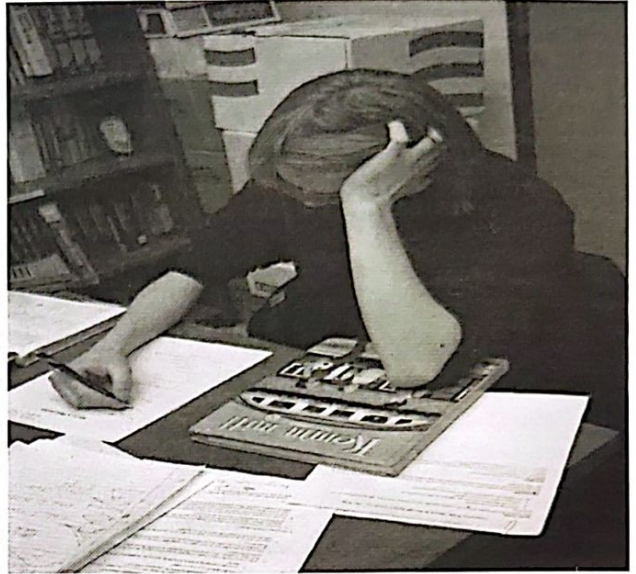
And why not? The message is clear and singular. It's in our agenda books; it's on posters in the halls. Teachers are always reinforcing it. Kids, go to college. No one ever says it explicitly, but it's as if 'success' is paired with college, and anything else is marked with failure.

Sometimes, that message is wrong. Pursuing further education is the safe choice and certainly the obvious one, but it may not always be the right one. Should people who spent the last decade enduring school, and not enjoying it, choose to continue it? When asked, many students replied that they were doing it for a high paying job.

But college is not necessarily the smart economic choice anymore. According to the Chicago Tribune, the average college graduate makes \$59,365 per year, nearly twice that of people who graduated high school alone. However, graduates often leave college with enormous amounts of debt. The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) found that the average college student leaves with \$20,000 of debt from student loans. The study also found that a rising number of students are leaving with over \$100,000 of debt. Account for interest and some kids may spend decades paying off their student loans.

Contrary to popular belief, there are productive ways to spend time after high school besides attending college. Personally, I don't enjoy school, and I want to spend some time working before I try to enroll in more academia. A full-time job may provide some scope with which to appreciate an academic setting. Of course, there are other options as well. Spending a year volunteering or acquiring a skill can be valuable when applying for jobs. Deferring doesn't mean that you'll never go to college. And if you plan to go, this could be a good time to figure out what exactly it is that you plan to major in.

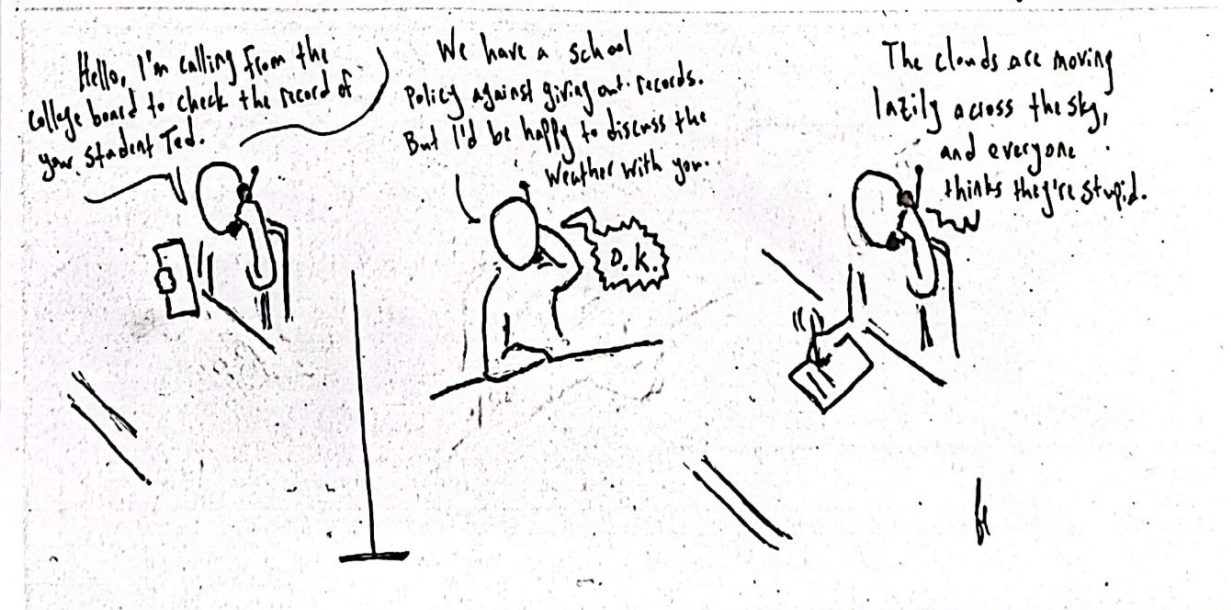
In the end, the whole process is more flexible than it seems. If you're not sure what you want to study, or even if you want to go to college, consider deferring for a year and think about it. Find work. Acquire a tangible skill, because when you have trouble landing a job with that philosophy degree, at least you can get work as a painter.



Above, a student worries about his school work... is he suited for college?

Weather Report

By: Farren Esman



Credit Where It's Due

By: Willie Diaz

Upon first coming into this school, many of us were told at the open house that through the school's partnership with CCNY and CUNY, we would have the opportunity to earn college credits that would transfer to CUNY schools upon graduation. It is obvious that we deserve college credits for the courses we take at HS MSE, due to their rigor and the fact we earn them on a college campus. Previous HS MSE alumni have graduated and continued taking classes in CUNY schools, but their extra credits have transferred with mixed results.

According to Principal Dugan, HS MSE's partnership with CCNY, concerning the transfer of earned credits, has been vague from the start. At the birth of our school there was a very vague, three-sentence written statement essentially saying, "High school students can transfer their credits." Various improvements over the next couple of years did not do much to actually make the issue clearer. Mr. Dugan stated that he is currently busy working with CCNY to try to lay down a concrete plan for the transfer of credits earned here at HS MSE, and he's working to get it done as soon as possible. However, there is a chance that these plans might not even come to fruition, due to a possible break in the partnership with CCNY.

When asked about the possible new direction for the school, should the CUNY ties be cut, Principal Dugan said the school is working on possible partnerships with Rochester Institute of Technology and St. John's University. The plans essentially involve allowing juniors and seniors to earn college credits, but they would come at a price of about \$250 a course. Another potential outlook for the school that was discussed with Mr. Dugan was the inclusion of AP class systems like other NYC high schools, but that would prove to be difficult because of the way AP classes actually work.

A private company puts the AP classes together, so they essentially make courses based on what they want to see and what they will test you on. According to Mr. Dugan, AP classes usually force you to learn more than is necessary and some colleges don't even give you credit for them due to the difference in teaching curricula. He cited an example from his own experience as a high school student taking AP biology, in which he was forced to memorize the entire Krebs cycle in order to pass the AP test, yet when he got to college he learned that it was completely unnecessary to do so.

The AP class system is set up to essentially leave some time at the end for seniors to slack and allow senioritis to set in. Mr. Dugan stated this is what HS MSE is working toward eradicating, which is why we (seniors) have just as much work as any other semester. Mr. Dugan stated that because many high schools in the country run on a different yearly schedule than NYC high schools (classes start in August and end in May as opposed to classes starting in September and finishing in June), the other schools would have had an extra month of work and we would have a month with nothing to do since the AP tests themselves are given in May. Mr. Dugan concluded this statement by saying, "We don't want to allow the senioritis mentality to set in and have our students start slacking and shrugging everything off, because we don't want you to start college with that kind of mentality."

For college-bound seniors here at HS MSE, those headed to CUNY schools definitely can join me in saying that we want our hard-earned credits to benefit us in college, since we students always need all the help we can get.

Editorials



Above, Mr. Klein, our school's college counselor

Seniors

Pinegrove Ranch: Bring Your Own Fun (and Food!) By: J Brill

Class Groups

I'm not gonna lie-I had an awesome time on the senior trip. I roomed with a bunch of people I like and loved being able to do whatever I wanted. However, the overall quality of Pinegrove Dude Ranch can only be described using expletives that have already been edited out of this article. I don't even know where to begin. The place sounds really great on paper: laser tag, ice skating, and skiing are all advertised not only as available, but free and on demand as well. The reality was quite different. For laser tag, we were led down stairs into the closest thing to a back alley available in the country, and then into a dark room. If there was one place I could be sexually taken advantage of on this trip, it was here. Fortunately, this did not occur, but as I was walking down those stairs, my fate was uncertain. The ice skating rink was literally a depression they filled with water in a field. Skiing? Pinegrove's website markets its skiing as comparable to that of a high-class ski resort, but this is simply not the case. There is one small, icy hill, and while there was a snow cat, no one seemed capable of operating it. The hill had many patches not covered by snow, which was not supposed to be a problem since "we (Pinegrove) make our own [snow]." (Actual quote from Pinegrove's site!) There seems to be a sort of aura around the ranch that causes everything to suck. Even though we got fresh snowfall the final night, by the morning it had formed a hard crust on top, making it absolutely useless for any sort of fun snow activity. You couldn't even make a snowball out of this snow. Bringing my snowboard was a huge waste of energy.

The rooms. These were remarkably comfortable, that is, if you find being smuggled into the country stuffed in the back of a van with a dozen illegal immigrants comfortable. Each room was about the size of two and a half standard prison cells, and housed six students/prisoners for the duration of our trip. The tap water tasted funny and the toilets had very weak flushes. Now, I had originally lucked out in terms of rooms. My five roommates and I were actually given two rooms linked together, one normal room and one smaller. Additionally, we were located on the opposite side of the building of the chaperones. What I'm trying to say is that we had the party room. This was ruined, however, by the fact that Pinegrove sucks. On the first night, Ms. Hershinson discovered that her bed was infested by bed bugs. Unfortunately for us, she did not let them bite, and moved into one of our rooms with her two roommates. We went from having the hands-down best room out of everyone in the whole school, to having a cramped room with nothing but a door between us and the person in charge of making sure nothing happened on the trip. Not cool.

Now for the most obvious offense: the food (or lack thereof). We were "served" six meals. Now, I use quotation marks because the service was truly terrible. My table's server, Alex, straight up ignored us. You couldn't even give him the benefit of the doubt that "maybe he didn't hear us" because we actually started yelling for him after the first few tries to get his attention and he just walked right past us without even turning around. Breakfast took place in the dining room, and, unfortunately, was mandatory. We had a choice (that's pretty much the best part about it) between nasty scrambled eggs, dry pancakes, home fries (since when are home fries a main course?) or surprisingly decent French toast. I really must commend them on their chocolate milk, for they managed to not mess that up. Thankfully, we did not have to deal with Alex for lunch. At Pinegrove, lunch works like this: they open up the two stands next to the Chuck Wagon (the snack bar) so that you have a choice between (I can't write this without laughing) authentic Italian cuisine from De-Angelo's, deli sandwiches from Submart, and the usual undercooked hotdogs and overcooked burgers from the Chuck Wagon. I'm still a little in awe that I ate some chili without any monetary incentive, although I wouldn't be surprised in the slightest if there turned out to be rat meat in it. I didn't really look for any, so thankfully we won't know for sure. Dinner was back in the dining room, waiting on Alex to bring us (or not bring us, we decided to leave early) roast beef, hamburgers, or other stuff I forgot. Jimmy Lee claimed that "the food was worse than the food of the CCNY cafeteria." Yeah, the food was pretty bad. I guess they do it so you use the many vending machines scattered through the building instead.

Putting all of that aside, the trip itself was still pretty fun. There was the Battle Royale, in which many brave warriors were lost. Karaoke was a big hit both nights and a few of our seniors even participated. I owned Mr. Scheiman at EXTREME BINGO, earning myself a pack of Lifesavers,

but then Jennifer Portelli starting cheating and won three times in a row. Everyone played a game of manhunt the last night and we all had a jolly good time running around and hiding in the woods. A lot of people went sledding, both down the sledding slope and the aforementioned icy hill.

So, what was it that made this trip such a success? I think it was everyone's willingness to make the best of a bad situation. Even though the facilities were less than optimal, we were all excited to spend a weekend with people we usually only see in class. Being able to go wherever we wanted until 1:00 in the morning was pretty cool, too.

So, in conclusion: senior trip good, Pinegrove Ranch bad. Still, I definitely recommend it to the juniors for next year!

Want to plan a trip to Pinegrove Dude Ranch? Check out www.PineGroveRanch.com to find out how!



Everyone is happy to finally leave!

Juniors

Junior Year on the Road to Somewhere

By: Theodore Dresdner

Today, the stress pressed upon teenagers can seem overwhelming. With high school grades, tests, colleges, and employment pressures, most teenagers can sometimes forget and ignore what they actually want to do with their lives. The Class of 2010 is at a crossroads of life between adolescence and adulthood. HS MSE is known for its strong curriculum, but one thing that it fails to provide is help with deciding what students actually want to do with their lives. Instead our school chooses to simply focus on homework and traditional education.

There is nothing wrong with getting good grades-it shows that a person is hard working and determined. But realistically, most students only get high marks for colleges to view and read, not for their own esteem and reward. Most of the time, students are deeply asked what they want to do with themselves, and at most this inquiry is a simple, "What do you want to be?" as dinner party small talk or some other meaningless interaction.

Therefore, I felt it necessary to survey a large portion of the juniors about what they plan on doing with themselves after high school, for my own curiosity as well as theirs. The survey asked a few questions. (Do you want to seek a higher education? Where do you plan on living in the future? What specific field do you want to work in? etc.) All but five students said that they wish to go to college, though only a few said which specific institution.

Three students were also personally interviewed in order to find out some specific ideas about how students attending HS MSE in the Class of 2010 plan on living their lives. There were some exotic choices for the future, such as Ioannis Morales, who said that he wants to go to a college in Prague, Czech Republic. When I asked him why he wanted to go away to such a far away-from-home place, he simply responded with a smirk, "I would be trippin' if I didn't consider goin' overseas. Prague is a great place." Some others want to live in the city, such as Victor Tatis, who said, "This is a wonderful city, and I could never dream of living anywhere else." Another student, Stephen "Leevy" Barnard of Columbia Heights, did not 'feel for the way' students who do not go to college are somehow branded for life and outcasts of society. "I think college is more flexible than people make it out to be; go or not go; you can take time off or not go at all; you will still be a valuable person," he said.

So where did all this disenchantment of the simple life come from? When we were asked as children what we wanted to do with our lives, we said idealistic things like astronaut or fireman. Now the ideal has shifted toward getting good grades, getting into an Ivy League university and making a lot of money. In truth, money and an education can help a person, and monetary success for many is a virtue, but I'm getting tired of people in my grade crying over the "waning of their life" because they think that going to one school over another is the difference between living happily or sadly. My advice for happiness: move to a place with an abundance of jet skis-you can't go wrong. On a serious note, it doesn't matter what happens in high school. The best thing I think the juniors can learn is that right now, we should be meeting our own expectations and not that of a \$40,000-dollar-a-year institution. I wrote this article because I wanted to know how people in my grade see themselves in 10 years. Out of all the students who came forth and told me their views on the subject, I found that if you are going to do something-go to college, go to graduate school, be homeless on Lenox Avenue-do it because that is what will make you happy. Own up to your choice and life.

CLASS GROUPS



Burgan Bucks

By: Mr. Burgan

The Economics course that I teach introduces students to professional development skills as well as microeconomic theory - money management principles and practices of individuals, businesses, and governments. To motivate students to enjoy the classroom experience as well as desire to learn everyday life lessons, I require students to participate in a token economy community, where we apply real-life skills to mock situations.

The Burgan-Bucks Token Economy begins with one fundamental principle: Every student's primary responsibility is to succeed in school. Therefore, in a sense, a student's first job is to achieve academically. Consequently, I expect students to work and earn just as their future employers will desire diligent, hard-working employees. In Burganomics class, I view student attendance in school as a business transaction - a social contract among the students, parent/guardian(s), and school staff. So, Beginning on the very first and on each day thereafter, I treat every class session as an interaction among employer and employees and clearly define the employer's obligations to employees as well as employees' obligations to the employer, which creates a perfect setting for the implementation of a token economy as a "real-world" of work simulation. The Burgan-Bucks Token Economy is a reinforcement system, where appropriate student behavior and avoidance of negative student behaviors produce secondary reinforcement in the form of Burgan-Bucks that students exchange periodically for various items of value such as the ultimate student desire of extra-credit on his or her final report card grade and transcript.

One of the earliest precursors to the token economy was published in 1859 and addressed the topic of classroom discipline, stating that "among the rewards that can be delivered in schools, the tickets (vales) are in the first place because by nature they are applicable to all students. So, the token economy is not a new idea; the basic components have existed in the classroom discipline system of the 19th century. All I have done is to add my own unique perspective and ideas to this approach to classroom management. My primary goal for implementing the Burgan-Bucks Token Economy is to establish a tangible measure of student achievement and create connections for students between concept-based learning and its practical, "real-world" application.

The Burgan-Bucks Token Economy is an educational methodology that increases students' intrinsic motivations through the use of external rewards and is successful most especially in schools in urban settings that all too often lack necessary educational resources and have fewer opportunities for teachers to motivate student interest through the use of expensive technology and/or innovative pedagogy. The Burgan-Bucks Token Economy, on the other hand, is a low cost method to provide all students with increased opportunities to demonstrate socio-cultural and academic competence.

One common criticism by educators of the use of extrinsic rewards is that they decrease students' intrinsic motivation to achieve because students focus solely on the reward and not on appreciation of the content knowledge and learning. In fact, some researchers have found that once instructors induce students with extrinsic rewards for extended periods of time and then withhold them later, the practice resulted in lowering student motivation to learn. Therefore, the Burgan-Bucks Token Economy has at its foundation quite clear criteria for how, when, where, and why the instructor distributes rewards as well as full inclusion of students in the decision-making process, curriculum development, and distribution of rewards. For example, students have the right to

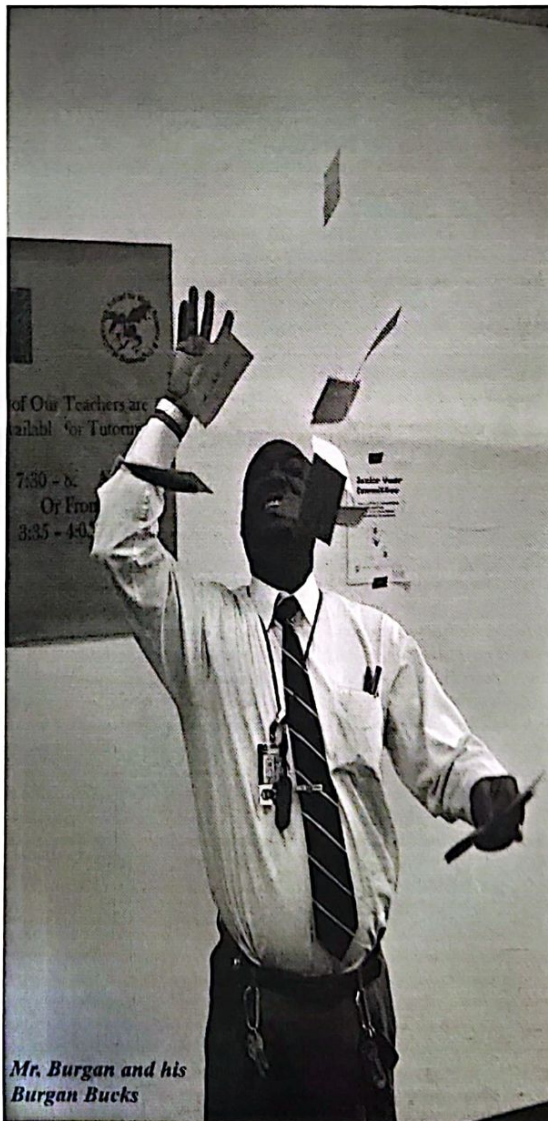
file a public appeal of all decisions, regarding the distribution of Burgan-Bucks. This student empowerment teaches them how to advocate for themselves and others as well as encourages them to exercise public speaking and persuasive argument skills. Students play a vital role in deciding what, when, and how much to reward and these student activities force them to make value judgment choices as well as consider the opportunity costs of decisions. Consequently, and most importantly, students as well as the instructor value Burgan-Bucks, which is of paramount importance for the Burgan-Bucks Token Economy to succeed as a source of student motivation to learn.

Also, researchers have found that the success of a token economy is primarily a result of its ability to bridge the content knowledge that instructors teach and the necessary skills students can use in the future in the real world of work. The Burgan-Bucks Token Economy has succeeded primarily because they are a physical representation of the social recognition of students' competencies and abilities - competencies not tied exclusively and only to test performance but multi-faceted constructions of knowledge and

accomplishment that reflect student participation, preparedness, behavior, effort, and practical performance; all values that society applauds not only in school but especially in the real world of work. This multiple perspective view of competence affords opportunities and encourages all students to enrich their views of their own abilities and ultimately see themselves as academically and socially competent with great potential to make feasible, economically sound decision to yield achievement of real-world future goals.

The Burgan-Bucks Token Economy is the compilation of my many years of careful planning and constant revisions to improve my classroom management and instruction, most of which are recommendations from the students' perspectives and constructive criticisms of their educational experiences in my classes. Undoubtedly, my personal commitment to student achievement demands much time and patience on my part that I give happily to encourage my students to excel. To encourage students to succeed in the Burgan-Bucks Token Economy, I explain the Burgan-Bucks Token Economy procedures and substance to them repeatedly; post rules, regulations, and consequences publicly; advertise bonus and earnings opportunities often; provide students with multiple examples and models of appropriate activities and behaviors for them to earn; and demand outstanding student behavior always, even when they do not expect to receive Burgan-Bucks for it. But another beneficial outcome of the Burgan-Bucks Token Economy is that it helps me to implement cooperative learning, build a learning community, promote mutual respect for all, and divide labor in the classroom most equitably.

In conclusion, at a very minimum, Burgan-Bucks are fun, so my student and I enjoy the time we spend learning together, which reduces conflict, supports instruction, and therefore benefits both students and instructor simultaneously. And as soon as students internalize behaviors that yield success and demonstrate academic excellence, I introduce inflation into the Burgan-Bucks Token Economy system to peak their interests further and challenge them to achieve even more.



Mr. Burgan and his Burgan Bucks

Sophomore

Sophomores in Action!

By: Victor Tatis

HS MSE has many promising clubs and after-school programs that some students may be unaware of. On December 9th 2008, a successful assembly was held to inform freshmen and sophomores of these extracurricular activities. Since that date, our school has seen a significant rise in student enrollment in various clubs and organizations. Twelve after-school programs and an elective, newspaper, were represented and advocated for at the assembly. Saturday and summer programs were also introduced. Representatives of the clubs and enrichments were each given a short time to speak on behalf of their group. Hearing about the clubs from students made it more engaging and provided a new environment in which students were able to approach each other about their interests.

Most sophomores agree that the assembly was very insightful and that HS MSE has a lot more organizations than they knew of. "WOW! I would have never guessed HS MSE provided so many cool activities," said one sophomore after learning about these organizations. The representatives (many of whom were sophomores) were very inviting and encouraged others to join. Two sophomores even hold high positions in their organizations. For instance, Key Club and JSA are both run (or were formerly run) by sophomores Nadyli Nuñez and Arhea Marshall.

Interview: Key Club member Nadyli Nuñez

1. How did you become interested in Key Club?

I heard a lot about it my freshmen year. Despite hearing a lot about it, I didn't want to join. I believed that starting as a freshman wasn't needed since I still had a lot of time to complete my hours. Eventually I was convinced to participate by my friends. After a small while I really began to enjoy it.

2. What motivates you to have a leadership role?

I always enjoy being a leader. I knew I wanted to be on the executive board because I was determined to help Key Club succeed and grow. Running for a position in the executive board was difficult because I didn't know what I wanted to be. It was between president or vice-president. I considered the fact that I was a freshman (lower-class in upperclassmen eyes). Despite being new, I signed myself up for vice-president with being president in the future in mind. It was like three minutes before the Election when I convinced myself for president. "What do I have to lose?" I thought. I gave my speech and to my surprise I won. There isn't one second I regret signing myself up for the president position. I believe I have the skills to be a leader and help everyone succeed.

3. Do you wish to continue in your position?

It would be difficult for me to step down. I love being president. There are tons of people to meet, new experiences to encounter, and a lot of character to build. A handful of peo-

ple ask me if being president is overwhelming, considering all the paperwork, planning, and most importantly, the decision making. There's a simple response. As long as you love what you do, you don't find the work a large burden.

I'm actually thinking about running for a higher position (lieutenant governor). A lieutenant governor is basically in charge of 6-7 Key Clubs. They assure that the clubs are completing all their paperwork and meeting expectations. But again, it isn't a definite decision.

4. How do you keep people interested in your organization?

A way of keeping people interested in my organization is by being interested myself. If members don't see you interested they won't feel the same way. I try to find fun service projects for them to participate in. After projects, it always makes me happy to hear that they never thought community service could be so much fun. This year we have a great group of 132 members who are always willing to participate. Key club is going great, and I thank my executive board for always helping me.

The assembly provided a very positive outlook on many of these organizations. Not only did the assembly inform sophomores on these clubs and extracurricular activities but it also increased the sophomore enrollment rate to many of these organizations.

What's Happening, Freshmen?

By: Sam White

Every year, HS MSE welcomes a new freshmen class with students who come from different places and don't know everything that the school has to offer. This year, some freshmen got used to the school from the start, while others still seem very nervous and continue to run to class (to be on time). Now that one semester has passed, it seems like more and more freshmen are developing their own opinion of HS MSE and are starting to get acquainted with the way the school works.

Freshmen have many items and issues to deal with in their first semester. They have to make new friends, meet their teachers, and figure out if HS MSE is right for them. To get an idea of what freshmen are thinking, I interviewed a few freshmen including Onaje Felix and Jeff Lin.

Interviewee: Onaje Felix

Question: How do you feel about the school so far?

Answer: The school is interesting and challenging. The students who

attend the school alongside me are friendly and the teachers are very helpful.

Q: Who is your favorite teacher?

A: Adam Kerzner. No questions asked.

Q: Did the first semester meet your expectations of the school?

A: Yes it did. I expected the classes to be challenging, but with the help from most of my teachers and peers, I managed to pass.

Q: What would you say to future freshmen about coming to HS MSE?

A: I would tell them to study hard, and make sure you do your homework. Also I would tell them to get as much sleep as possible.

Q: Do you run to class? Why?

A: No, I don't run to class. Some of my teachers let me out early and most of my classes are in Baskerville. Also I think the people who do run to class are a little weird.

Interviewee: Jeff Lin

Question: How do you like the school so far?

Answer: Everything about this school is pretty good except for the fact that we get out at 3:35, which is too late in my opinion. Many people live far away, and take an hour to two hour train ride.

Q: Who is your favorite teacher?

A: Mr. Kerzner and Mrs. Hershinson. They are the friendliest and help out a lot.

Q: Did the first semester meet your expectations of the school?

A: Not really, I expected there would be a lot more girls. Also I was hoping there would be a lot less homework, being that we get out so late.

Q: What would you say to future freshmen about coming to HS MSE?

A: I would tell them to think about other choices, and not just to go to the school that your parents want you to.

Q: Do you run to class? Why?

A: Yes, because I am almost always late.

Most of the freshmen have strong opinions about our school.

FRESHMEN

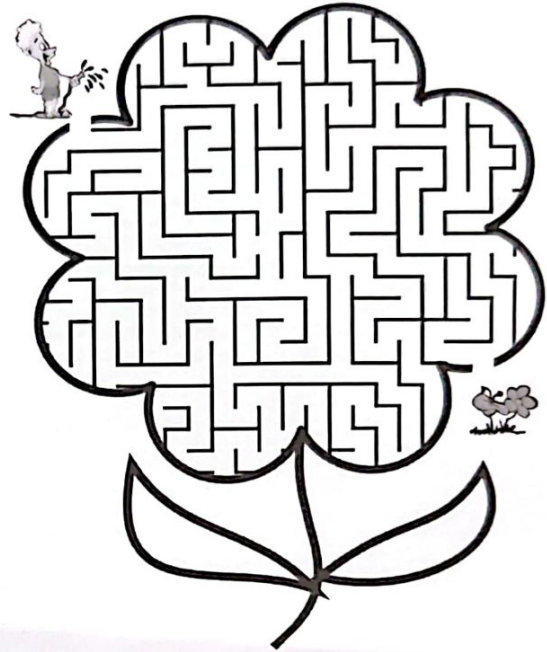
Sudoku

By: Harry Winick and Leo Chen

Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

9		
1	2	

April Showers Bring May Flowers...



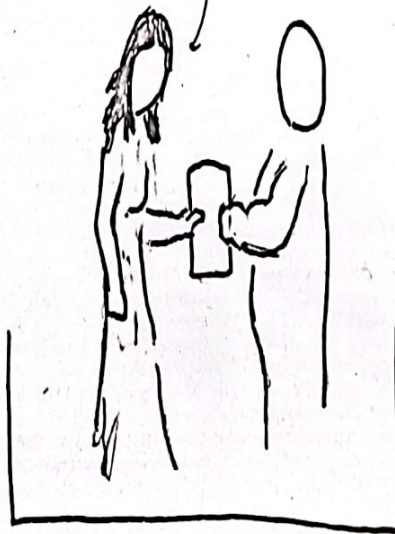
The Award

This month's honour roll student is Tina, for all of the um... Various work that she does.

You have stripped this award of its meaning by showing that you don't even know what I do.

Its as if you've never listened to anything I've ever said.

You're Welcome.



Talking With Thompson

By: Harry Winick and Leo Chen

Dear Mr. Thompson,

For a while now a certain teacher has been bullying me. I have tried to stop him but he still does it. Sometimes it's a public insult and sometimes it's privately failing me. What do I do?

- Academically Abused

Dear Abused,

I think you first need to sit down and evaluate what approaches you have tried so far that have failed. Maybe this teacher did not take you seriously the first or second time when you tried expressing your feelings. Once you have an action plan that you think will work, try talking to the teacher again one-on-one and lay out the cards and let him know this is how you feel and why, assuming you feel comfortable enough to do so.

If you feel that just won't work, try talking to another adult, maybe your advisor or guidance counselor, and see if he/she can help you or guide you in the right direction. If you find you are not getting the response you want, your best bet is to take it to the next higher level and speak with Mr. Dugan. Trust your gut instinct and let the teacher know what you have been feeling during this period of humiliation and what you can do to rectify the situation so that you can ease the tension between the two of you. Don't keep it bottled up inside! Good luck on regaining your dignity!

-PWT

Dear Mr. Thompson,

I'm having a lot of stress right now. I have gotten a lot of pressure from my family to excel in school but academic excellence just isn't my bowl of rice. Any advice is appreciated.

- Slackey

Dear Slackey,

We all get stressed now and then, but I think you need to deal with one stressor at a time, otherwise your grades will suffer even more, and then your family will really be dismayed. What have you done so far to excel or do well in school? Are you working to the best of your ability and trying as hard as you can to do well? These are some of the questions you should ask yourself. If you know the answer is no and you are spending too much time playing Guitar Hero and texting your friends on your Sidekick 24/7, then you need to get a new hobby. If you think you are working to the best of

your ability, then let your family know, so they know you are trying. Academic excellence isn't the only key to success in school. It's a venue to engage yourself in opportunities, expand your social circle, and prepare you for college and life. Your parents just want the best for you and hope you are taking full advantage of what school life has to offer, including getting good grades!

You have four years to discover hidden talents you have, and if math, science, or engineering just are not your thing, then maybe you'll find something that you really excel at, but take advantage of what MSE can offer you. At that point, I would suggest you go to your family and

ize I actually like him more than a friend without saying it?

- Fool in Love

Dear April Fool,

Seems to me that you have been hit by cupid's arrow again! It is time to exude some confidence and just be who you are. If you don't, you may find yourself feeling more torn in this unrequited love, and your friends will start calling you 'Meg Griffin' from Family Guy. Were you like this with your last boyfriend? Reflect back to see what worked with your last boyfriend when you first met him.

It's important to know that, like women, men like attention, so

laugh," or, "I hope I don't have anything in my teeth!" It is tough when you are young and don't have a one-for-all handbook for love - darn Milton-Bradley for making the game of LIFE and not LOVE!

Best tactic for now is to break the ice, find out what his hobbies are or what peaks his intellectual (or social) curiosity, and build off that. Remember, be yourself and let the chemistry explode, figuratively speaking. Let him know why you're the best fish in the pond, and if he doesn't show interest, then know there's more bait to munch on. Good luck with adolescent love!

-PWT

Dear Mr. Thompson,

I think I'm homophobic; I hate it when all the guys are joking around and expressing love to each other. I don't want to be a kill-joy but it feels wrong. What should I do?

- Super Disgusted

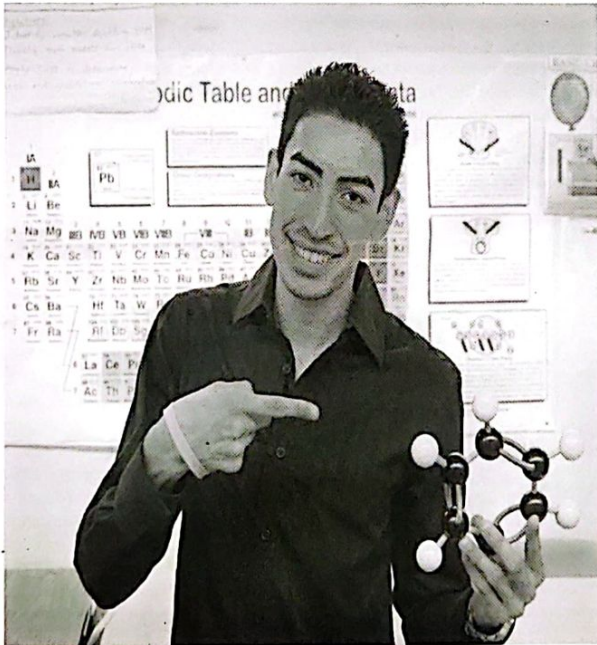
Dear Kill Joy,

Honey, it's 2009! Love is a natural thing whether it is between a man and woman, a man and a man, or a woman and another woman. I think you have to search within yourself why it bothers you that you see guys expressing puppy love to each other. Maybe the reason you are uncomfortable with it is because it's not something that is part of your culture. Have no fear, young pad-awon, HS MSE is a great place to deal with your phobia. And the best way to get over a phobia is to face it head-on!

If you know talking to your friends is not going to result in any resolution, then maybe you need to learn more about gay culture (which includes more than watching Will and Grace and Bravo) and what gay people are like, you know, fabulous, debonair, sophisticated, worldly - need I continue?

To be honest, I'm not so sure you are homophobic, maybe just not used to seeing two guys expressing affection toward each other. You, like your friends, are going through puberty/adolescence which means figuring out who you are and what you like, and let me tell you, it's a slippery slope, my friend. Just because your friends are being extra chummy with each other doesn't mean you have to get riled up and get your girldle in a knot. Maybe it has to do with something that is bothering you in another relation-

Continued on page 13



saying, "Hey, I really like this stuff and I'm doing well in it." The more you open communication between you and your family, the more appreciative they will be, and hopefully the less they'll be stressing you out. Then, maybe, you can not feel so bad spending hours (on the weekends) playing Guitar Hero. Good luck on attaining excellence!

-PWT

Dear Mr. Thompson,

Every time I see this guy I want to talk to him but I get so nervous and either I do something stupid or I run away. I haven't felt this towards a guy since my last boyfriend back in middle school. What should I do to get him to real-

ly simply talking to him casually, especially if you have a class with him, or making him feel that he has the spotlight will be appreciated by him. However, if you keep making embarrassing blunders, then he may lose interest quickly, so do a quick check-up from the neck up before falling head over heels, literally.

If you two have friends in common, try talking to one of them to set up a time where all of you can hang out at the movies, or get a latte at Starbucks to help break the ice between you two. I know how daunting it can be to try and go up to someone who you have crush on and start a conversation without crazily thinking, "Please don't let me ramble on about nothing, or snort when I

JUST FOR FUN

Open Mind, Insert Culture

By: Ian Gamble

What's the point of living in a city that never sleeps, like New York, if you don't soak up some sleep deprived culture? I know what you're thinking - with all this staying awake, soaking in culture, when will you ever find the time to research some top-notch attractions? Never fear, I'll do it for you. I know it's what you always wanted. You don't have to thank me now.

First up to the plate is the Bodies Exhibition, which has set up shop at 11 Fulton Street, in the South Street Seaport area. The exhibition is comprised of the bodies of people from China who died of natural causes. The bodies have their muscle and organ systems exposed so that visitors can learn about how those systems work. Why don't I give you my opinion: I'm pretty interested. I mean, there's something intriguing and mildly disturbing about skinned Chinese nationals. I must admit before I say anything more that I have not seen the exhibit yet but it has captured my interest. The preserving process is pretty cool; they use ammonia to remove all water from the bodies and then they submerge the bodies in silicon. When the bodies are taken out they are permanently preserved and really rubbery. The exhibition features full body exhibits and various organs and organ systems in order to illustrate the functions of the organ and muscular-skeletal systems. This exhibit is a must-see for anyone with a passion for science. Now for all those facts that you're just dying to hear: It can be reached on the 2, 3, 4, 5, J, or Z trains to Fulton Street, or alternately the A or C trains to Broadway Nassau and then a short walk east on Fulton to Water Street. If you prefer the bus you can take the M15 down 2nd Ave. to Fulton. Now I could tell you how to get there by car, but that's what Mapquest is for. If you'd like to take a look at the exhibit it'll run you \$26.50.

The Museum of Modern Art has always been a fan favorite, but for those of you who don't know it, it is situated on the west side of Central Park, on 53rd street between 5th and 6th avenues to be exact. And now for the main event: I never liked the MoMA because its "art exhibits" are always things you could see somewhere else and then they'll tell you it's supposed to represent something. One time I was at the MoMA and I saw a piece that was just a brick wall with a window in it. If I wanted to see a brick wall with a window in it, I could have walked down any street in New York.

Then there's the one with the mangled cars and bicycles. It takes no talent whatsoever, I could do something just like that. It's like going to a concert where the musicians are as good as you, what's the point when you can do it yourself? But then again, probably none of us are going to weld mangled cars and bicycles together, so I bet it would be kind of interesting to see. Brace yourselves guys; here come some of those facts again. The place closes everyday at half past 5 except on Fridays when it shuts down at eight. The E or the V train will take you if you want to get off on 5th / 53rd, but if you want to get off at Rockefeller Center you'll have to ride the B, D, or F trains or the M1 through 5 buses could take you to 53rd. Just like all exhibits, including the Bodies Exhibit, there are no cell phones, food, drinks, or smoking allowed. If you want to take a look around it'll cost you 20 bucks but with your student ID only about \$12.

One of the most fun attractions in NYC is the Wax Museum. I love Madame Tussaud's, and they've got some special events going on right now. Barack Obama is now a wax statue, and the state-of-the-art sports zone is about to open, not to mention their amazing 4D Theater. Yeah, I know, 4D, it's a real mind bender. It had me wondering when I read it, but it turns out that it's just like 3D except it rains, snows, and has wind, indoors. The museum isn't too bad to get to either, since it is located in Times Square on 42nd street between 7th and 8th Avenues. The 1, 2, 3, N, R, B, D, and F trains stop on 42nd, or you could take the A, C, E, or S trains to the nearby Port Authority. If you want to take the bus, the M57, M16, M11, M27, M42, and M104 all stop pretty close by. The Wax Museum is open from 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. every day except Friday and Saturday when they close at 10 p.m. Tickets are 32 bucks a pop unless you get the special online deal, and then you'll pay only \$28.

Now that you've read about some fun attractions in New York, all that's left for you to do is go and see them. Doing the research to write this article has even gotten me kind of interested, so I think I'll be checking these out myself.

Monopoly on Media: The Rise of the Computer

By: Brian Durant

The latest movie? It's there. Missed that show that you really wanted to see? It doesn't matter. You can see it later. How, you ask? On your computer, of course! These days, anything and everything that airs on television can be seen on the internet (with a certain delay due to uploading time). Torrents, streaming websites; you name it, they've got it. These videos make this question necessary: What's the point in having a television or even going to the movies if everything can be seen on the computer?

Later this year, in June, all televisions will be going digital. What's the significance of this? Well, that means that you, as a consumer, will now have to purchase cable or some other form of satellite television. As a result, more money will be dispensed from your pocket. However, is this change really necessary? I mean, if you're following a show, why not see it on your own time? Why not see it for free? And why not see it for the same price as your internet instead of paying an extra \$90 for it? (Would you like to pay \$90 for cable when you could pay nothing extra for the internet?) With websites such as youtube.com, megavideo.com, movie6.net, veoh.com, and hulu.com, you can see almost any show or movie you want to see. (I should know, I do it all the time)

The same goes for another form of entertainment that many of the youth of today enjoy. Watching movies is one of the most enjoyable pastimes of today. This is done in the form of watching DVDs or going to the movies. However, there are more "financially friendly" ways out there. Wouldn't you like to have the chance to watch that movie that you've been dying to go see? Just go to the streaming sites mentioned earlier. On the internet, you can even find the latest releases. (I should know, I just watched "Push" on movie6.net.)

Consider these two scenarios:

One person goes to the movies, pays \$12 and gets good quality.
Another person goes to their computer, saves \$12 and gets medium quality.

Who would you rather be? At the end of the day, both individuals know the exact same thing: What happened in the movie. However, at the end of the day, only one person can say that they saved \$12. (I know I would like to be that person.)

Right now, you may be thinking there may be risks for watching movies online. Right? However, unless you own the website that is hosting the movie, you cannot be subject to any legal punishment. Even in the case that you own a streaming website, you are not liable if you are linking to other websites. Personally, this is how I see it: If the movie wasn't taken offline by someone in a position of "internet power," it is not deemed a violation of any laws (copyright infringement, etc.). Even if it was, if the website hosting the "copywritten DVD" wasn't subject to some sort of legal punishment, then obviously they aren't doing anything wrong. (In fact, hulu.com is owned by NBC.) I, as the innocent bystander of a random pop-up that just happened to be advertising a website, shouldn't be punished because the "internet cops" were too lazy to check a website for material they may deem illegal. Let's just say that I'm comfortable knowing that I am given the opportunity to watch movies via the internet. To the bystander, the most that could happen is that you would be out of a streaming website to view movies/shows from.

The benefits of using the internet instead of common everyday media are numerous. When comparing internet to television, the internet no doubt takes the cake. Almost anything you would want to watch on television can be seen on the internet for less money and less effort. With this new digital bill coming out, the internet is a true money saver.



RIAA Strategizes to Cut Music Piracy

By: Peter Chan



Music piracy has hurt the music community, and songwriters and new artists are having a harder time getting signed. One credible analysis by the Institute for Policy Innovations concludes that global music piracy causes \$12.5 billion of economic losses every year, including 71,060 U.S. jobs lost and a loss of \$2.7 billion in workers earnings. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) pledges to stop music piracy. In the past, the RIAA has attempted to sue those individuals who share music. Despite all time and money spent, the RIAA has never successfully sued a single alleged file sharer whose case went to trial.

After suing more than 35,000 people for illegally sharing music since 2003, the RIAA has reached agreements with several Internet Service Providers (ISP) to cut off subscribers' internet connections if they ignore warnings to stop.

RIAA agents will seek out those sharing music without permission and will e-mail the music sharer's ISP alerting them. The ISP will then either forward the RIAA's e-mail or send the subscriber a warning e-mail telling them that music sharing is not permitted. If they continue to share, the subscriber will receive one or two additional warnings, after which the ISP will slow their connection. If the infringing activity persists, the subscriber might find their connection to stop working all together.

Although music fans may feel some relief that sharing music will no longer put them at risk of a lawsuit, the one who benefits most from this bill is the RIAA, which has been suffering losses in court while paying extensive attorney fees. Although the RIAA will stop suing individuals who file share, the RIAA still plans to continue pursuing currently ongoing file-sharing lawsuits.

"If the infringing activity persists, the subscriber might find their connection to stop working all together."

More Talking With Thompson...

Continued from page 11

ship, such as with another friend or family member. If it truly feels wrong to you, you have to find a way to express your opinion about the way you feel, yet at the same time be open and accepting of the way others feel and act. You don't want to be a kill-joy, as you've said, but you also need to learn to be more accepting while at the same time being able to accept and discuss (that's the important word) your own feelings.

One great way to discuss how you feel in a small and intimate setting is at HS MSE's Gay-Straight Alliance. You are fortunate enough to go to a school that not only has openly gay students, but teachers as well. Take advantage of talking to these students (or teachers) and discuss how you feel and why you feel that way. You live in one of the greatest cities in the world, where people from all walks of life are among you. Better to gain an understanding of what is really bothering you now with people who will be open to talk to you, then when you step out in the streets of NYC where any and everything can (and sometimes is) thrown in your face. If you give yourself a chance to discuss how you feel with another student or adult, you may find yourself more sympathetic and supporting of playful (or real) affection that is socially taboo. Good luck on finding solace!

-PWT

Dear Mr. Thompson,

I am constantly feeling embarrassed about my body and I can hardly blame the people who make fun of me. I want to get in shape but I don't have enough time because of my schoolwork and my commute everyday. What do I do?

-The Pillsbury Doughboy

Dear Pastry Boy,

Obviously you are facing the same problem that lots of us face...wanting to be Abercrombie material. In today's chaotic society, especially NYC, very few people have spare time. I have lessons to plan, papers (and labs) to grade, plus meetings and club activities to support (no different than most people). If you really want to make a difference in your appearance (and more importantly, your health), you need to find an aerobic activity that is fun for you and then make it a prescription for yourself to do it three to four times a week. The only way you will change is if you want to change. It's a mental game more than anything.

I suggest start waking up a little earlier and do some push-ups and sit-ups before leaving your house in the morning. In addition, get off the train a stop earlier or two and walk the rest of the way. Not having enough time is just an excuse, but one that we all use. You need to make time and tell yourself, "Okay, from 4-5 I am doing this specific activity," or, "Today, I am going to only eat fruits and a salad." Or do schoolwork for an hour, take an hour break to exercise and have a healthy snack, and then hit the books again...it is a true test of time management. You just have to decide for yourself that it can't be an excuse anymore and that you want to make a change.

If you are unsure as to what regimen to be on, I suggest talking to one of the Physical Education teachers who can give you advice on what muscles to work out or what types of food to eat based on your needs. You and I both know you can do this and once you get a routine started, it will become less of a hassle and you will start feeling better and better. Start off slow, get a steady pace, and before you know it, Abercrombie will be hittin' up your cell. Good luck Gladiator!

-PWT

Entertainment

Diversidad en Escuelas Especializadas de Nueva York

Por: Noelia Jiménez y Mariany Polanco



La diversidad en HS MSE

La diversidad racial y cultural es muy importante en nuestra comunidad, a través de ella aprendemos sobre diferentes culturas. En HS MSE la diversidad, similarmente a la de Nueva York, es distribuida igualmente entre estudiantes latinos, americanos, afro americanos, y asiáticos. Esto significa que cada grupo étnico es veinticinco por ciento de la población estudiantil de la escuela. Esto hace que nuestra escuela sea en realidad única, ya que no discrimina y trata a todos por igual. Aunque HS MSE es diversa, otras escuelas no lo son.

Entre las escuelas secundarias especializadas de la ciudad de Nueva York, la admisión de minorías es notablemente más que la de estudiantes de origen asiático y la de americanos. Por ejemplo, el año pasado, sólo el seis por ciento de los estudiantes afro-americanos y el siete por ciento de los estudiantes hispanos fueron aceptados a escuelas secundarias especializadas en comparación con el treinta y cinco por ciento de los estudiantes de origen asiático y el treinta y un por ciento de los estudiantes americanos. Esto es un grave problema porque significa que nuestras culturas no están recibiendo el mismo trato que el resto de la población. Aunque éste es un gran problema se están tomando medidas para remediar la situación.

El estado de Nueva York tiene un programa dedicado a la integración de las razas en las escuelas especializadas. Este programa se ha propuesto aumentar el número de hispanos y afro-americanos en nuestras escuelas. A consecuencia de esto, hay escuelas (como la nuestra) que tienen un nivel de diversidad alto.

Comparada con otras escuelas secundarias especializadas, HS MSE se destaca por su labor. En la escuela Stuyvesant, una de las más reconocidas entre las escuelas especializadas, la falta de diversidad es aterradora. Sólo el dos por ciento es afro americano, el tres por ciento hispano, el veinticuatro por ciento americano, y el setenta y dos asiático. Similarmente, Brooklyn Technical High School tiene el ocho por ciento de hispanos. En Bronx High School of Science solo ciento catorce alumnos de los dos mil

ochocientos nueve son afro-americanos (o sea el cuatro por ciento). Estas cifras son algo alarmantes.

En un día típico en HS MSE, se pueden ver cómo socializan alumnos de diferentes nacionalidades. La mayoría de nuestros alumnos estarían de acuerdo en que HS MSE crea un ambiente sereno y tranquilo para ellos. También dirían que se sienten a gusto ya que no se sienten acorralados por ser un grupo pequeño en comparación con el resto del cuerpo estudiantil. En nuestras clases los estudiantes hablan con sus compañeros que vienen de otras culturas e intercambian ideas. De esta manera, cada alumno en nuestra escuela tiene la oportunidad de aprender sobre diferentes lugares en el mundo y sus culturas. Por eso, nuestra escuela debería de ser reconocida por su labor.

Según nuestro director, la meta de HS MSE es el educar a futuros líderes. Si cada alumno recibe igual trato, todos tienen la misma oportunidad de hacer algo con sus vidas y llegar a ser alguien en el futuro. Por esto, nuestra escuela es ideal para cualquier estudiante ya que todas las razas son representadas por igual.

La diversidad es un tema muy dominante en nuestra escuela, ya que aunque uno no se da cuenta de el gran número de culturas que hay es muy evidente, sólo en la clase de periodismo hubo una encuesta en la cual la misma pregunta fue hecha a diferentes estudiantes todos de diferentes nacionalidades y culturas y estas fueron sus respuestas.

Pregunta: ¿Como te sientes sobre la diversidad en nuestra escuela?

Derek: Creo que la escuela es muy diversa y eso ayuda el proceso de aprendizaje. Estudiante Afro-Americano.

Bryant: Creo que hace un ambiente más interesante en el cual todos queremos integrarnos. Estudiante Hispano.

Santijan: Yo personalmente no creo que hay mucha diversidad en esta escuela, siento que más que cualquier otra raza hay muchos hispanos. Estudiante Americano.

Peter: Nuestra escuela es muy diversa, hay muchos hispanos y muchos asiáticos, nuestra escuela es muy diversa comparada a otras escuelas, por ejemplo en la que estaba antes no era diversa en absoluto. Todos éramos iguales, no habian culturas diferentes e interesantes. Estudiante Asiático.

Rabab: La diversidad para mí no es un tema muy importante. No es algo ha lo que le pongo mucha atención porque siento que no interfiere con mi vida. Estudiante de Bangladesh.

Es obvio que la mayoría de nuestros estudiantes están consientes de que hay mucha diversidad; les agrada y se sienten más cómodos en un ambiente de tantas personas diferentes y reconocen que hay muchas cosas que pueden aprender de estas culturas. Para otros, la diversidad es un tema que no importa y no es significativo. A pesar de las diferentes opiniones es evidente que la diversidad está presente en nuestra escuela y debemos de aprovechar y tratar de aprender de todos lo que están aquí.

Sprachen in Deutschland außer Deutsch

Von: Will Galmot

Viele Amerikaner denken, dass jemand in Deutschland entweder Deutsch oder Englisch (als eine Zweitsprache) spricht. Aber wie viele Länder in westlichem Europa gibt es eine bedeutsame Einwandererbevölkerung im Land. Viele dieser Einwanderer kommen aus verschiedenen Ländern besonders in südlichem und östlichem Europa, und auch dem Nahen Osten und Asien. Natürlich spricht die Mehrheit dieser Einwanderer eine Sprache außer Deutsch oder Englisch, und sie sprechen ihre Muttersprachen in vielen Lagen um mit Freunden und Verwandten zu kommunizieren. Auch gibt es ein paar Sprachminderheiten, die in Deutschland existieren, zum Beispiel, Sorbisch und Plattdeutsch.

Viele Einwanderer, die in Deutschland wohnen, kommen aus der Türkei. Bedeutsame Mengen Türken begannen nach Westdeutschland während des Wirtschaftswunders in den 1960 und 70er Jahren als Gastarbeiter einzuwandern. Heute gibt es fast 2,4 Millionen Leuten von türkischer Abstammung, die im Land wohnen. Also sind die Türken die größte ethnische Minderheit in Deutschland, und deswegen sprechen etwa 2 Millionen Leute in Deutschland Türkisch. Es gibt viele andere Einwanderersprachen, einschließlich Arabisch, Griechisch, Italienisch, Serbokroatisch, und Spanisch, aber ist Türkisch die prominenteste.

Es gibt auch viele Sprachen in Deutschland, die von den Einheimischen gesprochen werden. Ein Beispiel ist Sorbisch, eine Westslawische Sprache, und ist mit Polnisch und Tschechisch verwandt. Es wird in Lausitz, ein historisches Gebiet in Nordostdeutschland (zwischen den Ländern Brandenburg und Sachsen), gesprochen. Vor große Mengen deutsche Siedler während des 11. Jahrhunderts nach der Gegend einzuwandern begannen, war Sorbisch die vorherrschende Sprache in nordöstlichem Deutschland. Obgleich die sorbische Sprache von Deutsch ersetzt wurde, ist sie heute noch von 54.000 Leuten innerhalb der deutschen Grenzen gesprochen.

In nordwestlichem Deutschland gibt es auch viele andere einheimische Sprachminderheiten, die alle Germanisch sind (und also näher verwandt mit Deutsch als Sorbisch oder Türkisch ist). Ein bemerkenswertes Beispiel ist Friesisch, das um die nordwestliche Küste Deutschlands gesprochen ist, und es hat 12.000 Sprecher in Deutschland. Genug interessant ist es vielleicht die nächste verwandte Sprache mit Englisch, die in kontinentalem Europa

Continued on page 15

Sprachen in Deutschland...

Continued from page 14

Von: Will Galmot

gesprochen ist, da beide Sprache sich vielen ähnlichen Lautverschiebungen erfreuen. Eine andere germanische Sprache, die in demselben allgemeinen Gebiet gesprochen wird, ist Plattdeutsch, das trotz seines Namens, ist naher verwandt mit Niederländisch als Deutsch, weil es sich der Lautverschiebungen, der Deutsch sich erfreut, nicht erfreut. Es hat eine Bevölkerung von ein oder drei Millionen Sprecher. Dänisch und Niederländisch werden auch beziehungsweise im nördlichen Teil von Schleswig-Holstein und nordwestlichem Teil von Nordrhein-Westfalen, in der Nähe der dänischen und niederländischen Grenzen gesprochen. Es gibt eine Romani-sprechende Minderheit mit 85.000 Sprechern (Romani ist die Sprache der Zigeuner, und ist mit Hindu und Urdu verwandt).

Da es viele Minderheitssprachen in Deutschland gibt, die von sowohl Einwanderern als auch Einheimischen gesprochen werden, ist Deutschland eigentlich eine linguistische verschiedene Gemeinschaft als viele Fremden dran denken.

Länder in der Welt, woher viele Einwanderer in Deutschland kommen.

Sprachgebiete einheimischer Minderheitssprachen in Deutschland einschließlich Friesisch, Plattdeutsch, Niederländisch, und Sorbisch.



Learning Chinese with Wenyi!

抄答案



By: Wenyi Wang

抄答案

student 3.

student 2.

student 1

考试的时候有人抄答案, 本来是 $|x|$, 结果第一个人抄成了 1×1 , 第二个人又等了一步, 最后得 $1!$

还有一个答案是 b/q , 第一个抄成 $6/q$, 下面是 $6/9$, 最后一位还给化简了, 成了 $2/3!$

Cheating during test

During the test some students tried to copy answers from others, the original answer from student 1 was $|x|$, finally student 2 got an answer 1×1 , student 3 waited a second and got 1 at the end.

Another answer was b/q written by student 1. This time student 2 copied to $6/q$, then student 3 got $6/9$ and further simplified that answer, got $2/3!$

抄答案 (Copying answers)

考试的时候 (during the test) 有人抄答案 (copy other people's answers), 本来是 (it should be) $|x|$, 结果第一个人 (the first person) 抄成了 (gets) 1×1 , 第二个人又等了一步 (wait a second), 最后得 $1!$

还有一个答案 (another answer) 是 b/q , 第一个抄成 $6/q$, 下面是 (next one) $6/9$, 最后一位 (the last one) 还给化简了 (simplify the answer), 成了 $2/3!$

Deutsch / 中文

Democracy is Not a Spectator Sport

By: Rob Reuter

Welcome to the Junior Statesmen of America, also known as JSA, at HS MSE. JSA is our school's informal debate club. Now, just because our club is not as formal as some other debate clubs in the nation, that doesn't mean that we don't cover some hardcore issues. We've debated everything from gun control to the legalization of prostitution to White Castle vs. McDonald's. Not one question goes unanswered (unless time has elapsed) and no eager debater is overlooked. It is the core belief of JSA that democracy is not a spectator sport, and this belief comes across in chapter meetings.

The JSA chapter of HS MSE meets every Tuesday in C2 where President Arhea Marshall, Vice President Schuyler Myjer and club advisors Mr. and Mrs. Hershinson get right down to business promptly at 3:45. The standard debate lasts around 30-45 minutes. Each debate consists of several small speeches made by different people. For both the pro and the con sides (affirmative and negative to the topic of the debate) there are main speeches and subsequent speeches. The speakers for the main speeches get to speak for a total of six minutes. If the main speaker does not use up all of his or her time speaking, whatever time that remains can be yielded to questions. After both the affirmative and negative main speakers have completed their six-minute speeches, the debate moves on to the subsequent rounds.

As with the main speeches, participants in the club volunteer to give impromptu speeches on the debate topic. The only difference is that these speeches last for three minutes. The same rule as with the main speeches applies for questioning. There are two rounds of subsequent speeches per debate. After all these speeches comes the closing round. The original main speakers get the opportunity to wrap up any final ideas they have. The negative speaker speaks first for 3 minutes. There are no questions permitted on this round. After the closing speeches comes the voting. The topic is restated and the spectators are asked if they vote for the affirmative side, the negative side, or, they may choose to vote for neither and abstain.

In addition to meeting every Tuesday, JSA of HS MSE attends three overnight conferences a year where members get to debate with other schools from the North East State, a region including several different schools from New York, Massachusetts and Connecticut. These trips are to Boston in the fall, Washington D.C. in the winter and Stamford in the spring. While these trips cost money, they provide an outstanding experience for members to grow as debaters and learn how to structure a strong argument. If you cannot pay for a trip, JSA also offers several free, one-day conventions at different high schools in the North East State, usually in New York.

At all the conventions, there is a session at the end where awards are given out to JSA members who spoke in some of the different debates at the event. These awards are known as the "Best Speaker Gavels." These very high honors don't just get awarded to anybody. For each debate, the spectators decide upon one speaker from that debate who they believe did the best job. The votes are then tallied and the best speaker is declared. Last year, HS MSE JSA members only won four best speaker awards collectively, the entire year. All of these awards went to upperclassmen. This year, the members of the HS MSE JSA are making a change in this streak already. So far this debate season, HS MSE JSA has picked up eight Best Speaker Gavels, all of which went to underclassmen. The lucky few were Claudia Lobenthal, Dionis Jahjaga, Samantha Brown, Jeremy Weinberg, the chapter's president, Arhea Marshall, the newspaper staff's very own Zadaai Gonzalez (who won twice) and me. With one more debate competition coming up in April, HS MSE JSA's winning debate season is coming to a close. Will they pick up more gavels?



Above, Zadaai Gonzalez

Extra-curricular



Some of HS MSE's Best Speaker Award-winning JSA Members

GREEN GLAM

By: Zadaai Gonzalez

It is 2009, a new year, a fresh start, time for a new fashion. So what is the "it" trend for this year? It's not black; it's not skinny jeans; and it's not metallic. This year, we are going green! Not just the color green but eco-green clothes, from t-shirts and jeans made of organic cottons that haven't been doused with harmful chemicals, to the new and cute wooden lingerie from France!

At the moment there is a green movement, from building greener to living greener, making it the "it" thing for everyone, even fashion designers. Using materials such as organic cotton and trying to rethink the ways clothes are produced gives a green outlook to fashion designers' clothes. Though there are some people who like this fashion trend, others dislike the idea, either because they believe eco clothes are not the same quality or think they are too expensive, or simply because they think the clothing articles would not look good.

Overall, anywhere you go this year and in the years to come, you will be seeing eco-friendly clothes at an affordable price. There will be times where the clothes may seem expensive. Even if some items seem expensive, there are two things you should think about: one is the impact you are having on the environment, and two, normal clothes tend to cost you a lot more after you buy them than eco-friendly clothes. Most clothes use up money when it comes to washing them and maintaining them due to the different materials and all the chemicals needed to wash them. On the other hand, organic clothes need little care because they use less water to be washed and less detergent and they last a lot longer. In the long run you would be following an eco-friendly thought: expensive in the short run but cheap in the long run. Another thing to keep in mind is that the more people buy eco-friendly clothes, the cheaper they will get in the future.

The idea that eco-friendly clothes are ugly and uncomfortable is completely not true. The clothes can be extremely stylish and affordable. Just because people decide to be eco-friendly doesn't mean they have to dress like a hippie or be frumpy; it is possible to look stylish and eco-glam instead! The clothes look just like any other clothes and many designers are still making the same quality work as in other clothes.

Many stores and brand names have decided to invest in organic clothing and bags. One great example is H&M; this company is planning on having an organic cotton collection this spring of dresses, pants and shirts. Levi's, along with H&M, will have a collection of organic cotton denims; they will have light washed, low-rise jeans to keep up with the stylish look for the spring.

Aside from the clothes, there are cute backpacks for students who want to be eco-forward as well. If your backpack is getting worn out from carrying all those textbooks, make your replacement one that gets the lugging job done with a little style. Abundant Earth is a company that makes bags out of recycled rubber and hemp stuff-slingers. Hemp is an ultra-strong fabric; it also needs little water and no pesticides to grow. This backpack's hemp fiber is reinforced with vulcanized, recycled rubber, so you'll get years of wear out of it. Along with this backpack there is a hiking bag for a more alt stylish option. Mountainsmith's recycled fiber bags are both practical and affordable. Though these are some examples of how to go green, there are others, such as making your own things. For more details stay tuned to next issue's style section.

Earlier, the words "wooden lingerie" were mentioned. When interviewed, some of HS MSE's students gave me a weird look. Rija Baig, a sophomore, said, "They sound weird and uncomfortable to wear." Monica Chojnowska, a freshman, said, "They would probably hurt." To set the record straight, wooden lingerie is not actually wooden. It is made out of pine wood but it isn't as if they carve the wood in order to make the lingerie. French designer Sophie Young started this by using white pine tree wood to make knickers and bras back in France. It is the simplest way one can go green.

Even though there are many other options to going green, a good place to start with is what they use the most, clothes. Just having at least one shirt or one bag helps the entire green movement. Maybe eco-friendly clothes are not what you like, but at least look through some of the items mentioned or research some other stores that sell or specialize in green clothing. In the long run you might actually like eco-friendly clothes and products.



Mako goes green

STYLE

The Rolly Book Bag Invasion! By: Nadyli Nunez



Freshman Jack McKeane rolling down the hall

Surely you have seen the rolling book bags in the halls of HS MSE. Lately, it seems as though they have become a trend. From the teachers to the students (mostly freshmen), the rolling book bags have reproduced. Should we call the fashion police?

Rolling book bags were initially created to help people who have a lot to carry. Students don't have to worry if they have heavy books to carry to school, because with the rolling book bags, they can take as many as can fit. Freshman Jack McKeane has been using the contraption for about a year. He enjoys the benefits of his rolling book bag: "It doesn't hurt my back and it's quite a racket when I am going down the stairs." Many students would disagree with the great melody Jack creates going down the stairs. Jack also finds the compartment where the handle retracts a convenient garbage disposal. What a deal! It's a book compartment and an on-the-go garbage, no more asking the teacher to throw away your trash.

Teachers often have a lot of paperwork to carry around with them and some look to these bags on wheels to help them out. Mr. Trimarco has been using his rolling book bag for about two years. He believes that there are two ways to attract "crowds of admirers: one is buying a puppy, and the other is using a rolling book bag." It is evident that Mr. Trimarco has chosen option number two.

People who use rolling book bags are often bugged by the commentary. What do they say? Jack M's reaction, for example, is that of long-term revenge. He says that once the non-users develop some sort of condition or injury due to their heavy book bags, they will wish they used the roly bags.

Despite the great benefits rolling book bags give to their users, they can be very annoying to students trying to get to class. Once the bell rings, students rush out of the classroom to their next classes but they are then interrupted by a student struggling to move their rolling book bag through the crowd. People outside the roly bag circle see the invention as unneeded. Senior Andrew Camarda commented, "Students shouldn't be carrying so many books that they need something like a rolling book bag." Some other HS MSE students, like sophomore Harry Winick, just think that the invention is simply noisy and annoying to encounter while trying to get to a destination.

Truth be told, the use of rolling book bags is not fashionable. Over time, with the obstacles they go through in the halls and weather conditions; they become torn, dirty, and in some cases, just plain gross. School should not be, and probably is not, asking students to bring so many books that they need a rolling book bag. Take those unnecessary books out of your roly bag and get a regular one! One thing is for sure, no one will change Mr. Trimarco's mind. He believes that everyone is just behind the times, "I consider myself to be on the cutting edge of cool, so I'm going to keep on rollin'!"

Despite the Depleted Economy MLB's Checkbooks Remain Open

By: Noah Brecker-Redd

The country is in the midst of a devastating economic recession not seen since the 1930s. Americans are losing jobs and their economic stability. Even the lifestyle of millionaires has taken a significant hit, and yet Major League Baseball teams have continued to dish out major cash, but it didn't come without strings attached. Although the marquee free agents received record-setting deals, the middle-tier free agents took significant pay cuts. It seems even the deep-pocketed enterprise that is Major League Baseball couldn't escape the economic crisis unscathed. Nevertheless, the 2008 offseason has significantly changed the landscape of Major League Baseball.

If there was one team that seemed to be unaffected by the economic crisis it was the evil empire that is the New York Yankees. The Yankees are renowned for overpaying players and hiring mercenaries (essentially buying the majority of their players) rather than building the team from the ground up. Last year, the Yankees attempted to use a different system; instead of purchasing high-priced free agents they put the season in the hands of two rookie pitchers. The result: the Yankees missed the playoffs for the first time in 14 years.

This year the Yankees reverted back to their old ways. This offseason the Yankees signed not one, not two, but all three of the most sought after free agents on the market. By signing CC Sabathia, A.J. Burnett and Mark Teixeira the Yankees are committed to spending \$441 million. The Dodgers, who spent \$88 million, are a far second to the Yankees in offseason spending. Just how much more than other teams are the Yankees shelling out this offseason? Consider this: the Yankees have \$441 million in commitments; the other 13 AL teams combined have \$176.2 million.

Backlash Against the Yankees

The Yankees' spending spree this offseason sparked talks of a salary cap among the owners. A salary cap in baseball seems unrealistic and would not be instituted without a lengthy strike from the Players Union. The rumblings of a salary cap were not realistic, however; they were just irrational reactions to the Yankees improving their team. Truth is, players would not agree to the introduction of a salary cap.

There is an insurmountable number of complaints about the

Yankees spending, but these complaints lack logic. The Yankees are doing the right thing by attempting to improve their team. The majority of other owners assume that they don't have a chance to win the World Series so they pocket the money the team has earned. The Yankees ownership puts the profits back into the product. Although the Yankees spent a lot of coin this offseason, the additions will prove to be worthwhile.

In early December it was reported that the Yankees offered CC Sabathia a 6-year, \$140-million deal. Although the contract would make Sabathia the highest paid pitcher in the history of baseball, speculative reports said he was hesitant to accept the deal because of his reluctance to play in New York. Sabathia wanted to play on a team with a united clubhouse; his fear was that the Yankees' clubhouse had grown far apart. Sabathia left the deal on the table for a grueling month and many Yankees fans pleaded that the Yankees go after other free-agent prospects before teams cleared the market. But the rest of the league didn't clear the market.

In the end, it was a meeting with Brian Cashman (aka Brian "Cashmoney"), the Yankees general manager, at Sabathia's home in Southern California, that brought him to the Yankees. Cashman's gesture (flying all the way to Sabathia's home) and his pitch to Sabathia and his wife, Amber, about the pros of playing and living in New York, convinced Sabathia to choose the Yankees as his baseball family. The Yankees didn't escape unscathed though; they had to throw another year and \$21 million on to Sabathia's deal. The contract also includes an option to opt out of the contract after three years. But the extra money is well worth landing the best left-handed pitcher in baseball. Many are still unsure whether Sabathia's hesitance was as a result of his dislike of New York or a well-played game of poker, but all that matters to Yankees fans is that Sabathia is the Yankees' new ace.

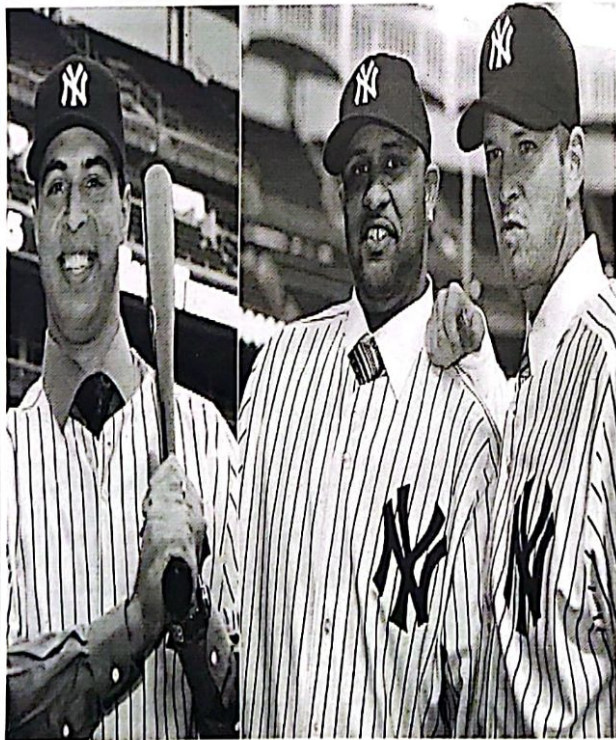
The Yankees didn't stop after signing Sabathia. They also went out and signed A.J. Burnett to a five-year \$82 million deal. A.J. Burnett is a power pitcher with nasty stuff that terrorized not only the Yankees, but also the Boston Red Sox, as he went 9-2 against the AL East last year. Not only is A.J. Burnett a great pitcher, but he is also an interesting guy who brings a quirky personality to a Yankees clubhouse that has struggled with chemistry. Burnett is an example of the type of pitcher the Yankees have not had since the likes of Roger Clemens, a pitcher who prides his pitching on striking out opposing batters at an extremely high rate.

Some are worried that a five-year deal is a bit lengthy for a pitcher who has proven to be injury-prone, but Yankees fans aren't complaining about getting the two best available pitchers on the market. Even if Burnett has to suffer a stint on the DL this year, the Yankees are well-equipped; they have stocked up on pitching depth and would have no problem replacing Burnett for a short period of time.

The Yankees didn't stop their spending spree after signing two top-tier free agents for a combined \$243 million. They delivered an early Christmas present for Yankees fans by signing Mark Teixeira to an eight-year \$180 million deal. By signing Teixeira, the Yankees are potentially equipped with the best all-around 1st baseman in the league. Teixeira is a patient hitter who matches the Yankees philosophy and he is a great clubhouse personality. Many believe that adding Teixeira to the Yankees roster it will mark the return of the Yankees to the top of the AL East.

The Mets Additions

The Yankees aren't the only team in the city that drastically improved over the offseason. The Mets filled their biggest void from the 2008 season by signing Francisco Rodriguez as their closer to a three-year \$37 million deal. Coming off a 62-save season, "K-Rod" was renowned as the best bullpen pitcher on the market. Rodriguez provides the Mets with a lights-out closer with the ability to pump up the crowd. Since losing Wagner last year the Mets have been without a true closer. The Mets did not stop there, trading for J.J. Putz, one of the best closers in the MLB two years ago, to be the setup man for K-Rod. Putz has dominating stuff and as a former closer, does not shy away from pressure situations. By improving their bullpen the Mets have become a drastically better team with the potential to compete with the Phillies for an NL East title. Although the Mets still have an offensive void to fill, Omar Minaya did an excellent job fixing the Mets' biggest problem, the bullpen, turning it into one of the best in the MLB.



From left to right, Mark Teixeira, A.J. Burnett and C.C. Sabathia

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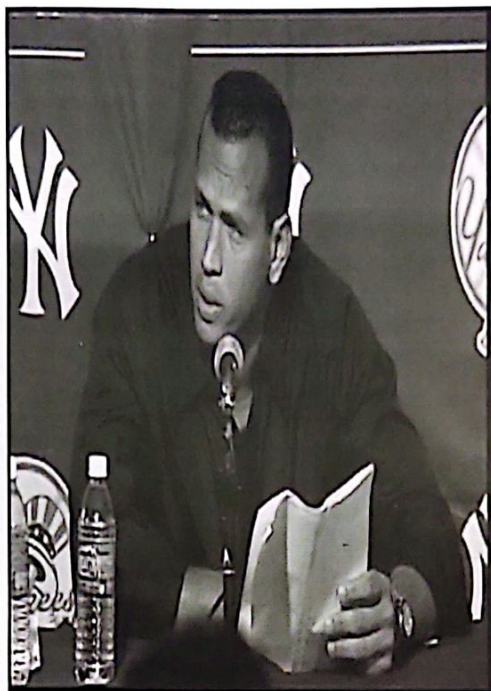
Young and Stupid

A-Rod trudges through the off-season **By: Noah Brecker-Redd**

It started with a simple answer "no" in response to Katie Couric's question in 2007. "Have you ever used steroids or any other performance-enhancing drugs?" It was followed by another, more deliberate, "no" spoken when A-Rod turned his head at a 45-degree angle, stared into the lens of the side-camera and said "no" in a louder and more confident tone. His second "no" in response to Couric's question about whether he had ever been tempted to use steroids as a means to living up to his name went further in damaging A-Rod's credibility. The interview was considered to be nothing out of the ordinary for almost two years; no one had any reason to believe A-Rod had been involved with steroids (except Jose Canseco, of course). With no evidence to suggest otherwise, the interview went unnoticed until February 2nd when Sports Illustrated's Selena Roberts reported that Alex Rodriguez had used performance-enhancing drugs during the 2003 season.

After that Saturday, A-Rod's life changed forever. For two days after Selena Roberts' report there was no comment from the A-Rod camp, but the sports radio airwaves were rampant with accusations, complaints and questions about A-Rod's credibility. On the third day after the report surfaced, A-Rod agreed to take part in an interview with baseball Hall of Famer, Peter Gammons. The interview was filled with an outpouring of honest emotion as A-Rod claimed he had used steroids not just in 2003, but also during the two previous years. However, after only two days the majority of A-Rod's answers proved to be false.

A-Rod got together with his P.R. team and scheduled a press conference with strict rules that protected him from the wrath of reporters, the most notable rule being no follow-up questions. This meant that reporters could not press A-Rod if he gave an answer that didn't match the facts. The press conference began with A-Rod reading a statement from a series of crinkled pieces of paper. As A-Rod read his statement he held up each page as if to show everyone that he was reading from a script prepared by his



always been one thing for him to fall back on when facing immense pressure and personal issues, baseball. A-Rod may or may not be a selfish and arrogant individual, but there is one thing that no one can debate, A-Rod is one of the best players to ever play the game of baseball. A-Rod has always used baseball as a distraction from personal issues, but recently the last straw was pulled out from under A-Rod when he was diagnosed with a torn labrum requiring surgery and rehab that will sideline him for 10 weeks. A-Rod has lost a lot in the past year, including his wife, his fans, his credibility and perhaps even his team. The only thing he had left was his ability to play the game and with that in jeopardy the question is, how much can a human being take?

overpaid P.R. firm.

The statement addressed some glaring holes in A-Rod's story as he explained that he had received the steroids from his cousin, rather than GMC (which he had previously claimed) and that the drug he used was called "Bole." He claimed that he and his cousin had acquired "Bole" from pharmacies in the Dominican Republic. The drug he referred to is primobolan, an anabolic steroid which, when used in combination with testosterone, is considered very effective. A-Rod described his actions as "stupid" and his excuse was his age. He repeatedly stated, "I was young and stupid." Although the press conference seemed to be a success for A-Rod, it was short lived as the majority of his story was proven false within a week.

Soon after A-Rod's press conference, reports surfaced on ESPN Deportes that primobolan was not available at pharmacies in the Dominican Republic. In fact, it was reported that primobolan was illegal in the Dominican Republic. ESPN Deportes also released reports stating that A-Rod had worked with Angel Presinal, during his years with the Rangers and in 2007 with the Yankees. A-Rod's connection to Angel Presinal removed the one defense that still remained in his corner, his ignorance.

A-Rod's sensitivity has been well-documented throughout his career. But there has

Checkbooks Remain Open...

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By: Noah Brecker-Redd

Around the League

The most notable signing outside the city is none other than Manny Ramirez, possibly the best right-handed hitter of this era. Throughout the MLB there is no surplus of offense, so when it was reported that no team was interested in signing Man-Ram it proved just how damaging his act in Boston was to his reputation. Ramirez forced his way out of Bean-Town by 'doggin' it, pushing 67-year old travel secretaries to the ground and worst of all, quitting on his team. Ramirez fell so far in the clubhouse that Ortiz (previously known as his best friend) marched into Terry Francona's office and pleaded that the Red Sox trade him. Ramirez' antics were an attempt to force the Red Sox not to pick up their team-option. Not only did Ramirez want to be released so that he could receive a larger contract, but rumor has it that Ramirez's agent, Scott Boras, convinced Manny to push his hand because Boras wasn't receiving commission on his contract. Ramirez was traded to the Dodgers on the day of the trade deadline where he went on to bat .400 and bang in 53 runs in 53 games. His remarkable performance was evidence that he wasn't pushing himself in Boston; it showed that he truly had quit on his team.

The city of Los Angeles embraced Manny and his number 99 jersey as his merchandise grossed over \$2 million. The match was perfect for Manny, in a city that doesn't take anything too seriously but embraced him all the same. When this offseason arrived it seemed that the most likely destination for Manny Ramirez would be to return to L.A., but it was expected that the Dodgers would have steady competition to sign Manny. Instead, the Dodgers ended up bidding against themselves; the lack of interest demonstrated how seriously teams felt about a player who quit on his team.

In the end, Manny signed a two-year \$45 million deal, with a player-option for the second year. The contract was significantly different than Scott Boras' proclaimed six-year \$160 million deal. Only time will tell whether Manny will play hard for the Dodgers. With a possibility that Manny will be angered over his contract, skeptics have claimed that Manny will once again quit on his team. In the end, Manny Ramirez will only receive \$2 million more than he did with the Red Sox. The question is: was it worth it?

The landscape of the MLB has been transformed by some recent offseason signings. Some notable acquisitions are Matt Holiday and Jason Giambi going to the Oakland Athletics, Orlando Hudson joining Man-Ram in L.A., Pat Burrell going to the Rays, Bobby Abreu heading to Anaheim, and Raul Ibanez filling Burrell's spot in left field for the Phillies. Only time will tell how these and other additions will affect the playoff picture, but there is one thing that can't be denied: there will be many new faces in new places.

Sports

Congratulations to HS MSE's Class of 2009

The following is a list of senior college acceptances:

Bard College	Duke University	New York University	Syracuse University
Boston College	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Univ., FL	New York University-Poly Tech	Tufts University
Boston University	Fairleigh Dickinson University	Northeastern University	Union College
Brandeis University	Florida Institute of Technology	Northwestern University	U.C.: Berkeley
Brown University	Fordham University	Pace University	University of Colorado, Boulder
Cooper Union	George Washington University	Parsons New School for Design	University of Hartford
Carnegie Mellon University	Georgia Institute of Technology	Penn State University Park	University of Maryland
Case Western Reserve University	Goucher College	Pratt Institute	Univ. of Michigan- Ann Arbor
Clarkson University	Hampshire College	Reed College	University of Nevada- Las Vegas
Cornell University	Hartwick College	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of the Pacific
CUNY/Brooklyn College	Haverford College	Rhode Island School of Design	University of Pennsylvania
CUNY/College of Staten Island	Harvey Mudd College	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Pittsburgh
CUNY/Baruch College	Hobart & William Smith Colleges	Roger Williams College	University of Puget Sound
CUNY/Brooklyn College	Hofstra University	Saint Peter's University	University of Rochester
CUNY/City College	Illinois Institute of Technology	St. Johns University	University of Vermont
CUNY/Hunter College	Lehigh University	St. Peter's College	University of Waterloo, Canada
CUNY/John Jay	Manhattan College	SUNY/Binghamton University	Ursinus College
CUNY/Lehman College	Massachusetts Inst. of Tech. (MIT)	SUNY/Geneseo	Washington University in St. Louis
CUNY Macaulay Honors College	McGill University, Montreal, Canada	SUNY/Maritime	Wellesley College
CUNY/Queens College	McMaster University, Canada	SUNY/Old Westbury	Wentworth Institute of Technology.
CUNY/Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education	Morehouse College	SUNY/Stonybrook University	Wesleyan University
CUNY/York College	Neumont University	SUNY/University at Albany	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Drexel University	New Jersey Institute of Technology	SUNY/University at Buffalo	

Season Over But Dragons Hope

By: Santiljan Vukaj

The HS MSE Dragons were hoping to make the 2008-09 PSAL (Public School Athletics League) basketball season a winning one; however, they were far from it. The Dragons finished the season third to last with a 4 and 12 record in the Manhattan B-3 division. The Dragons did, however, show great improvement from the beginning of the season to the end. Although the team was ultimately disappointed with the overall outcome, the team learned a lot about its strengths, and even weaknesses that its needs to improve, for next year.

With their returning coach, Richard Epstein, the brains of the team, the Dragons gained a lot. Besides the fact that they actually won a game as opposed to the previous season, the Dragons finally learned to play as a team. With seniors such as Kenneth Lewis, Nathaniel Sinckler, and Lovel James leading the way, the Dragons had plenty of heart behind them. In addition to Kenny dominating the post, averaging nearly a double-double (points and rebounds), the team was also a perimeter

threat with junior guards Richard Fenton and Santiljan Vukaj. With this combination of an inside-outside game, the Dragons were competition to some of the best teams in the league.

The team did, however, have many weaknesses that counteracted the positive. For one, the team averaged somewhere around 25 turnovers per game. This proved to be a major key as to why the Dragons lost. Many times the team would be close or even ahead of the other team, but then second-half turnovers ruined the game for the Dragons. Consistency was also a huge problem for the Dragons. Players who were often "hot" one game and would then all of a sudden "cool off" for the next two or three games. Another key weakness of the team was missed lay-ups. As junior and former team member Simon Boyce stated, "The Dragons would be 16 and 0 if they could make lay-ups." With sneaky plays designed by Coach Epstein, players oftentimes found themselves open under the basket and simply failed to take advantage.

With three key juniors returning next season, the Dragons hope to finally get a feel for the game. For guards Richard Fenton, Santiljan Vukaj, and hopefully Joseph Brito, along with center big-man Stephen "Leevy" Barnard, there are high hopes that the team will prove to be competitive. But these soon-to-be seniors cannot do it alone! The team needs new players who can possibly help out for next year and possibly resume the winning tradition for the HS MSE Dragons.



The 2008-09 HSMSE Dragons