POSTSCRIPT

The Park School Brooklandville, MD **December 19, 2003** Volume LXIV Issue No. 4

Park's vocal stars shine at Winter Concert

by Ben Hyman '06

Park's holiday choral season debuted as the Park School Winter Concert took place in the Meyerhoff Theater on Wednesday, December 10th.

At the concert, the Lower School Chorus and the Sound Waves, a more dedicated group of Lower School students, performed many seasonal favorites. The Lower School Chorus performed four songs, among them "Hanukah, Hanukah", "Festival of Lights", and "Jingle Bell Swing". "Jingle Bell Swing" included percussion by eight Lower Schoolers on new African Drums. The Sound Waves performed "Hanerot Halalu", "No Well, No Well!", and "Cool Yule". Bruce Bryant, music teacher and choral director for both groups, made an effort to extract the most out of his groups. During "Hanerot Halalu", Bryant used solfege symbols to keep his group on key. Bryant was pleased with the result of the concert: "It was amazing. There was one of the parts in one of the songs that didn't go quite right. But overall, the audience's reaction to the students was great. The joy was there, and that's what it's all about."

Bryant also leads the Upper School Madrigal group, a group of Upper School students who sing challenging songs that were written before 1550 AD. They sang three songs at the concert: "Sing We Now Merrily", a ten-part round, "Weep O Mine Eyes", and "All Ye Who Music Love". Of the group of twenty-four singers, Bryant points out a few singers who shine, "I have many strong singers, and music readers. They are self-motivated. One week, I didn't have a chance to meet with them, so they assembled the group on their own and went through music. There are some definitive leaders in the group. Lena-Kate Ahern, Lisa Boscov-Ellen, Kate Sachs, Kate Ewald, they are exceptional musicians. They know how to read music, how to rehearse, and can pluck notes on piano. And Ben Starr can do almost anything I ask him to do."

Samira Phillips, Middle School Technology Coordinator, led the Middle School String Ensemble. The group is composed of two students, Vicki Myers and Paul Dennis. They performed "Vivace, from Canonic Sonata No. 3 in A minor." The Middle School Chorus also performed at the concert, a group led by Middle School music teacher Paul Hulleberg. The chorus meets once a week for thirty minutes, an amount of time Hulleberg is appalled with: "How little time Middle School chorus is given is a joke and a travesty." The Middle School Chorus performed two songs: "How Sweet It Is To Be Loved By You" and "I Will Arise and Go Now", a musical version of the Ogden Nash poem.

photo by Sarah Raifman '05

Bruce Bryant directs the US madrigal group.

Hulleberg also leads the Upper School Vocal Chords, a small group of Upper School male singers. The Vocal Chords sang "In The Still of the Night" at the concert, and also sang it in an Upper School assembly earlier that day. The Vocal Chords pulled off the song flawlessly, with Vitaly Briskin '04, Dan Boscov-Ellen '04, Noah Carver '05, and Daniel Gorham '04 singing backup to Benjamin Rowland. Rowland sang emotionally, once getting on his knees with his hands clasped. He drew laughs from the audience when he strutted in the middle of the song.

Another Upper School group, the Eightnotes, sang "Lean On Me" and "Boy from New York City", among others. Dinerstein leads the Eightnotes, an all-female group. They also sang on the WBAL morning radio show on Monday, December 8th. The girls were given two five-minute performance slots. During this time, they sang the holiday classics "Carol of the Bells" and "Hanerot Halalu" and introduced themselves to the listeners. The station gave them complementary bagels and juice while they were waiting to go on the air to make the visit comfortable. After they sang, the ladies received a tour of the radio and television studio, where they were allowed to watch the shooting of the WBAL morning show. Samantha Mehlman '05 remarked, "This was definitely the most exciting Eightnotes experience I have had so far." The concert ended with an informal rendition of "Here We Come A-Wassailing" that was sung by all of the groups that performed as well as by the audience.

The Parksingers, the Upper School chorus, and the Vocal Chords also performed during the Upper School assembly, as did Abel Fillion and the Metrosexuals, a jazz ensemble. The Metrosexuals performed "Equinox" by John Coltrane. The Parksingers performed "Sing with Joy", "Kyrie Eleison", and the "Overture from the Barber of Seville". Overall, Dinerstein was pleased with the assembly: "I thought the Parksingers did a really good job."

Park constructs new kindergarten extension

by Eric Gottlieb '06

For many of Park's four and five year olds, the construction of a kindergarten extension on the other side of their classroom window is a dream come true. For their teachers, it's the final product that provides the excitement.

When Park originally built the building that contains the Lower, Middle and Upper Schools, they planned to include the preschool in that building. However, due to a change in the size of the Lower School, the preschool was pushed into a separate building across the road, where it has resided since.

Since that building was built in 1959, the preschool has never had a conference room or a real lobby. As part of Phase III-b on Park's construction wish list, along with the Wyman Arts center, the kindergarten is receiving a 500-square-foot addition with elements that were not previously available.

photo by Sarah Raifman '05

Construction progresses on kindergarten building.

Second year kindergarten teacher, JoAnne Yamaka called it "much-needed teacher space." The addition will provide a lobby, conference rooms for teachers, an extended day bathroom, space for parent conferences and tutoring sessions, and a home for the currently displaced Lucille Liberles Library, which is especially for kindergartners.

The decision to build this wing came in the last few years. Although, according to Jim Howard, Director of Academic Support Services, the construction began "way late," in October, it will be completed soon after the beginning of 2004. As part of the construction, a new, more impermeable "membrane roof," said Howard, is being installed over the entire preschool. "We are all extremely excited," said second year kindergarten teacher, Posey Valis.

Happy Holidays and Enjoy the Break!

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Parents meet to discuss drug and alcohol issues

by Laura Gordon '05

Fifteen parents of ninth-grade students met with Upper School Guidance Counselor Krista Dhruv on Thursday, December 4th, to share ideas on the topic of drugs and alcohol. This meeting, which occurs four times a year, coinciding with the quarterly Drug and Alcohol course, covers student values about drugs and alcohol and how to help parents navigate new territory.

The parents discussed several key ideas about drug and alcohol use at the meeting. They agreed to call one another to communicate about potential parties or events where there might not be parental supervision, and also agreed to get together more often as a group to talk about issues related to their children. Dhruv concluded that the main questions asked by parents were, "What should we be doing about our children's relationship to harmful substances?" and "How should we talk to our kids about drugs and alcohol without closing off conversation?"

In addition, Dr. David Jackson, Head of School, started a program where fifth and seventh grade parents meet to discuss and get ready for approaching issues. Middle School Life Skills classes are taught about drug and alcohol-related issues, but according to Dhruv, "they don't have real access to these situations until Upper School," and "students see things more readily now. Their social life is growing, and they have to make more decisions for themselves." There is also a tenth grade meeting every year where class advisors and parents discuss the current issues.

Dhruv hopes that her class will leave being able to make good decisions based on factual information. "I want the students to recognize their own relationships with substances, and be able to manage the relationships."

Solstice tradition broadens focus

by Everett Rosenfeld '09

Each winter, the fifth grade celebrates the winter solstice with a grand performance. The solstice is the shortest day and the longest night of the year. It was a time of great celebration amongst people in the middle ages. They believed that by honoring the sun with celebrations, it would return after the longest night. After the solstice, the days grow longer again. Bonfires, music, and feasts were held in honor of the sun. The fifth grade did a reenactment of this celebration.

This year the fifth grade started learning about the solstice at the beginning of the year, opposed to the month that fifth graders have had in the past. The fifth grade students learned more about the solstice in other cultures instead of mainly focusing on Europe. They learned about solstice in Africa, Taiwan, Japan, and the Americas during the middle ages.

The individual performances were more oriented towards dance and mime. Although there were some word plays, the focus remained on movement and music. "Some skits can't be done without a combination of music and words." Fifth grade student Brandon Keiser said, "There are other skits that just have hand motions; no words."

photo by Sarah Raifman '05

5th grade students perform solstice ritual.

The fifth grade tradition was highlighted by the sword dance. It is a very intricate dance that the fifth grade students have practice a lot. "It is based on an old Scottish dance done with real swords as an ancient tradition," said fifth grade students Alex Conn, Jamie Waxter and Brandon Keiser.

The fifth graders that weren't performing sat in the background as a staged audience. The staged audience interacted a lot with the performers. There were exaggerated intakes of breath, clapping, cheering, and laughing. The real audience took part as well. There were musicians in the audience; there were times when the performers ran into the crowd, whooping and screaming.

Music was an almost constant part of the performance. There was music in between every transition of skits. Also a significant number of skits included music. There were drums, tambourines, and recorders. There was a harp, a flute and a few violins.

Everyone wore black cloths, sometimes underneath their costumes. There were aprons, Chinese dresses, and hats. There were many masks that were worn, from the sun to various kinds of birds.

News Briefs

NBA player tries out for position

by Ben Hyman '06

Former professional basketball player and Maryland graduate Keith Booth interviewed this week for a Middle School gym teacher position and coached a seventh grade basketball class Wednesday.

Booth was a standout at the University of Maryland in the mid 1990s after being recruited from Dunbar High School in Baltimore. He was drafted 28th overall in the first round of the NBA Draft by the Chicago Bulls in 1997. He played minimally for two years for the Bulls, playing in 45 games and averaging 2.9 points per game.

Booth would replace former Park teacher Courtney Hobbs, who returned to her native Australia. She started working at Park in September. Robin Cardin-Lowe '84 and Robin Willard met with Booth on Monday and again on Wednesday. Booth is competing against Zachary Steeg, but Lowe thinks Booth is more likely to get the job. If Booth gets the job, he will teach six and seventh grade physical education. He will also coach Middle School sports teams.

Partners celebrate holiday season

by Sarah Dunn '06

The Partners at Park program celebrated a festive holiday party today. This party is one of the favorites of the partners each year, because everyone can enjoy the excitement of the long winter break ahead. At 11:00 a.m., Upper School partners picked up their Lower School partners after assembly and made their way down to the gym for snacks and other activities. This was the last Partners event before the winter break, and so all winter holidays were celebrated.

Hadassah films Park students

by Nicole Cameron '05

On December 17th representatives from Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, taped a segment for their national video for girls entitled "Hadassah Check It Out Video". The mission of Hadassah's "CHECK IT OUT" program is to teach teenagers to know their bodies so that they will be able to be strong advocates for their own good health. Hadassah travels to high schools and informs girls about breast cancer and self-examination, and teaches boys about testicular cancer. Park is one of the three national sites selected to participate in the video. The video consists of two groups of Upper School girls discussing "body image" along with health issues. The video will contribute in the future education of high school students to maintain a healthy lifestyle. During free blocks, the two groups will meet to contribute their honest responses on health issues in taped discussion sessions.

Drumming it up in LS music class

by Emma Gross '11

Walking down the new Lower School hallway recently, it is impossible to miss hearing the beat and rhythm of drums. A large collection of percussion instruments is the latest addition to the Lower School Music Department. They belong to music teacher Bruce Bryant.

Bryant learned about these drums through a workshop he attended over the summer, where the participants studied world drumming. Bryant's interest in drums had originally been sparked three years before when he went to The Maryland Music Educators' Conference with Carolyn Sutton, Director of Arts. He participated in an hour-long drum circle and thought, "Wow, wouldn't my kids love this!" This was the beginning of Bruce Bryant's interest in purchasing a drum collection to use in his classes at Park.

Bryant shared this idea with Dr. David Jackson, Head of School, and Carolyn Sutton, who then found enough money to purchase the group of instruments. "I think that it's really fun to have the drums because they can be used in so many ways, whether they're an accompaniment to a song or just as an activity," said Sutton.

The instruments consist of drums, bells and shakers. The drums are mainly tubanos (too-bon-oze), which sit on the floor and are played while seated. There are also djembes (jem-bays), which are drums that rest on the player's lap. There is one very tall drum, which is the lead drum called the ngoma (en-gwam-u). There are also bongos and hand drums. The shakers are called shakares. Cowbells and bells called gamogui, which are from Ghana, are also part of the collection.

The drums are meant to look like African drums, but are made in the United States. A company from Iowa, Remo from West Music, manufactured them. The drums have African patterns on their bases and the tops are made of "nuskyn", a very durable kind of plastic, which sounds similar to the leather tops of the original African drums.

Bryant explained, "There are high, medium and low sounding drums." When the player strikes the edge of the drum one hears a high pitch and when the center is struck a low pitch is heard. When all of the instruments and sounds are played together you get an ensemble. Bryant uses the drums with his fourth and fifth grade classes and occasionally with the kindergarteners. In January he is planning on starting a drum circle with the entire Park School faculty and staff.

"I think that these drums could be a great opportunity, and lots of people could learn music together," says Dr. Jackson. "The reason I like drumming is that it builds community spirit, and when you hear that drum, it motivates you and what you do motivates somebody else. There's a real communication with drumming back and forth between students and players of drums. That's what makes it such an exciting, musical activity."

photo by Sarah Raifman '05

(From Left) Henry Villacorta, Justin Long, Noah Sakim, Anna Fried, Josie Verchomin, and Dan Sangiamo, students in Jan Kenny's fourth grade class, practice call and response drumming.

PRO ----- Eighth Grade Reapplication ----- CON

Should Park's eighth graders be required to apply for admission to the Upper School?

by Anders Hulleberg '07

After completion of their eighth grade year, students at Park's Middle School should be put through a reapplication process, the results of which would help determine whether or not the given student would be admitted into Park's Upper School.

Eighth grade reapplication is currently part of a much more existent, influential, and relevant problem than ever before. What is the problem, you ask? One word, my friend: Reality. You only have to read the first sentence of Park's philosophy to see that we have declared war on reality: *"The Park School embodies both in its tradition and in its daily practice two assumptions: first, that human beings are capable and desirous of rational self-discipline and of acting towards others with respect, kindness, concern, and moral conviction; and second, that the activity of learning is an expression of positive energies, fulfills natural impulse, and enriches life."*

Do *all* eighth-graders act with good educational decisions? Of course not. Are they capable of acting in such a manner? Hopefully. But, are they, as 11, 12 and 13 year old boys and girls, capable of acting in such a manner, independently? With a few exceptions, I would say the answer to this question is a resounding "No." The amount of autonomy it takes to, by default, act towards others with "respect, kindness, and concern" is absent in even some adults, so why should we expect it of middle school students? To expect sixth, seventh, and eighth graders to act like anything other than sixth, seventh, and eighth graders is frighteningly illogical. It's fighting reality. However, Park does just this. What is the solution to this problem? Well, simply put, Park needs to start having realistic expectations for its Middle School students. More importantly still, after those expectations are made, Park needs to act upon them accordingly.

Now, the question becomes, what exactly are realistic expectations of Middle School students? As I said before, there is only one realistic expectation: that they will act in a manner that is congruent with their current level for maturity. From my experiences, I've found that most Middle School students posses a level of maturity and autonomy that is, at best, minimal. Do people with low levels of maturity act –independently– with "moral conviction, respect, kindness, or concern?" No. Why not? Because they are incapable of doing so. No one can act in a mature way if they are not mature.

Now, it may seem like any hope for a productive and worthwhile Middle School experience has been lost at Park. Thankfully, this isn't true. There are things Park can do to enhance the quality of the Middle School experience it offers. Simply put, since Middle School students aren't capable of acting in a mature manner on their own, Park needs to help them do so. Park needs to provide its Middle School students with a tangible reason that will motivate them to act in the mature manner that Park wishes them to.

A reapplication process is the perfect tangible reason, and, unlike grades, it would be congruent with the rules set by Park's philosophy. A reapplication process wouldn't cause work to become "alienating or painful," nor would it be an "arbitrary authority" or "prescriptive code," as it would involve, at the most, an essay; something that eighth graders write frequently throughout the year. The process I suggest would not be the only thing that would determine whether a given eighth grader got accepted in to Upper School. The variables that currently help decide acceptance into Upper School –quality of work, contribution to the community, etc– would remain as influential as they are today. If a valuable member of the community, for example, did not pass the process, it would not necessarily mean that he would not be accepted into Upper School.

More than just an acceptance test, the reapplication process would serve as a tangible motivation for students in need of exactly that –motivation. The purpose of the reapplication process wouldn't be to decrease the number of competent and content students in the Upper School, rather, it would be to *increase* that amount.

by Ben Weinstein '06

Reapplication is the process of every eighth grade student applying for entrance to ninth grade. The proposed benefit is that the administration could reevaluate students who have been enrolled at Park since Lower School and Kindergarten. The evaluation would determine whether these students still uphold the academic standards of Park.

The idea of eighth grade reapplication is contrary to Park's philosophy. By forcing all eighth graders to compete against their classmates and prospective students, we degrade our community. Our philosophy states, "It is the objective of the school that students develop sensitivity to the needs of others, within the school and in the larger community, and that they find personal satisfaction in helping others." If students are forced to reapply, they are fighting their peers for the opportunity to enter the Upper School. The much-anticipated change from Middle School to Upper School is daunting, without the added possibility of losing classmates. If suddenly your friends have not been readmitted to Park, this puts further strain on the social change into Upper School.

In addition, reapplication is impractical. If the students are tested in the same manner as applicants are, we devalue any community or extracurricular activities that they participate in. If the administration includes activities for applicants, and, in extreme scenarios, recommendations from faculty, the applicants who aren't from Park are at a disadvantage. Extra-curricular activities are key at Park, as stated in the Philosophy, " It [our] objective...that students become deeply involved in intellectual endeavors and significant extra-curricular activities." Also, it is too difficult to determine what impact a student has on the Park Community.

The ISEE (Independent School Entrance Examination) is a mandatory test for all Upper School applicants. If the administration tests every student, it undermines Park's belief that, as stated in the philosophy, "success need not be measured by comparison to others."

Reapplication cannot act as external motivation. It is Park's intention that "The conviction that the child contains inner strength, talents, and powers which can be liberated and nurtured allows a variety of educational techniques." Learning will be impeded by concern for reapplying. Reapplication is an inappropriate motivation for learning. Park should follow the Philosophy and nurture internal motivation and love for learning.

If Park is concerned with a student's ability to participate, the problem should be addressed individually. It is more effective to prune limbs from a tree, than to chop the whole tree down. Reapplication puts every spot in the Upper School in contention. Park should simply ask specific students not to return rather than mass reapplication.

The Library: Always a Bridesmaid

by Susan Weintraub, US Librarian

The Library needs to be renovated so that it doesn't look like yesterday's news. With the opening of the spectacular Arts Center, regrouping and expansion of Lower School classrooms based on vegetable housings, and the clean-cut Athletic Center, the Library remains the largest school facility that is now closest to the geographical and academic heart of the school. It is still an intellectual gem, but tarnished in appearance. It deserves better adjectives than dusty, dowdy, frumpy, broken-down, deteriorating, and junky: good descriptions of some of the elderly librarians who inhabit it, but not worthy of a monument to reading, curiosity, and robust conversation— values which the Park School holds dear.

Admission officers must be kinder than we are in this critical assessment, but really, is there anything nice to say except that the windows are large? Why do our gallant and resourceful tour guides head immediately to the back to catch that great view of the pond? Families still want to see "The Library"—it's one of those standard ways that prospective parents and students rate a school.

Prospective families are secondary. Current Park School inhabitants, especially of the pre-teen and teen variety, might prefer reading, studying, and arguing in an environment aesthetically pleasing rather than seated at or on broken, peeling tables and carrels amongst shelving more drab than those in the warehouse of the nearest hardware megastore.

Before this year, some attention was paid to library spaces—the kind of attention as welcome as that given a young driver as he speeds past an unmarked police car at 80 mph: the perfect quarry. The library, too, with its vast spaces, is the kind of quarry a pressed-for-space school loves. A temporary science office built in the back of the LS library effectively blocked light and discombobulated the 900s for about six years. Is there anything worse than that? A poorly built Middle School classroom sprang up at the back of the MS/US Library. Another small space in the LS Library was made into an arts, and now tutoring, room. Not to mention that the entire US history department was temporarily located for a year in the US Library, necessitating shifting some 10,000 books and their shelves. Years before that, the building of the current MS and US Commons sent both administrative offices into the library. Ah, yes, a grand space, an academic space dedicated to books, learning, intellectual enlightenment—the life of many schools, the heart of the curriculum, expendable.

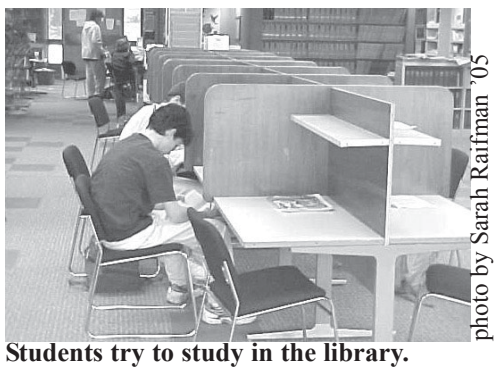

photo by Sarah Raffman '05

Students try to study in the library.

This year, life looks better for librarians as they prowl through stacks of books, leaving fingerprints in the dust which flourishes even as nightly cleaning crews dedicate themselves heart and soul to keeping whiteboards clean and bright. Our long-hoped for renovation is something we will go on hoping for a little while longer, but the library's role as space provider for the various and sundry has changed for now because other long-promised spaces have actually been built. True to its word, the school has restored most of what it borrowed. The Lower School Science room was built, and thus the light-blocking-900s-interfering wall has come down. The Middle School has stopped using the temporary classroom in the MS/US Library, and that room is now reserved as a MS Library reading room.. Most amazingly, the very-long-promised gift of the large room between the two libraries, has been transferred to the library and is no longer a writing lab or history office or arts office. It's a library office, and it has helped us remove some of the clutter formerly relegated to the main library and the AV Room. (By the way, it is not a class discussion room, or movie-viewing area for any classes.)

True renovation hasn't happened yet; money doesn't grow on trees, fall from the pages of books, or spring fully-formed from the pixels which make up a Botticellian sea of computer technology. But restoration of library spaces which already belonged to the library will allow us to make other welcome changes in this potentially glorious facility. Having that space in the library will be a good thing, won't it?

Take Back Park!

In an assembly several weeks ago, Howard Berkowitz made a plea to students to take charge of assembly time and use it for issues that are relevant to the student body. He harkened back to when he was a teacher new to Park, when students led and controlled assemblies. Now, he said, assembly time is so rigidly set out that students have difficulty reserving a slot for an assembly. Teachers dominate assembly time, and talk about issues that sometimes do not interest students. Howard asked students to recapture their assemblies. Since assemblies are one of the only times when all students in the Upper School are together, it is important that we use this time to discuss issues affecting the student body.

The lack of student involvement in assemblies is representative of a general, gradual degradation of the progressive ideals that Park claims to uphold. As the number of students at Park has grown, the atmosphere at the school has become impersonal. Class sizes are approaching 85 students. In the Upper School this year, there are about 20 more students than there were last year. As a result, many students don't even know the names of numerous of their fellow students, sometimes people in their own grade. Teachers have never even talked to many of the students in the Upper School. Students should be able to develop strong relationships with other students and teachers. As the school expands, however, this is becoming less and less possible.

Since many students don't know each other anymore, the community that Park is based upon is disappearing. Students no longer feel strong ties between themselves and other students. As the community at Park fades away, some students feel alienated from the rest of the school. They don't see any particular reason to invest themselves in what goes on at school. In short, Park is becoming a place to study, nothing more.

It is important that we bring back the community cohesiveness that we have begun to lose. Students must participate in activities in school, involve themselves in the student government, and, as Howard Berkowitz said, in assemblies.

Rather than just sit in the audience as teachers discuss problems that we don't necessarily care about, we should use assembly time for things that are important to us. We must realize that in order to get the most out of our time at Park we have to actively participate in our school. By doing this, we will help to regain the sense of community that defines Park School.

-ASH

Postscript

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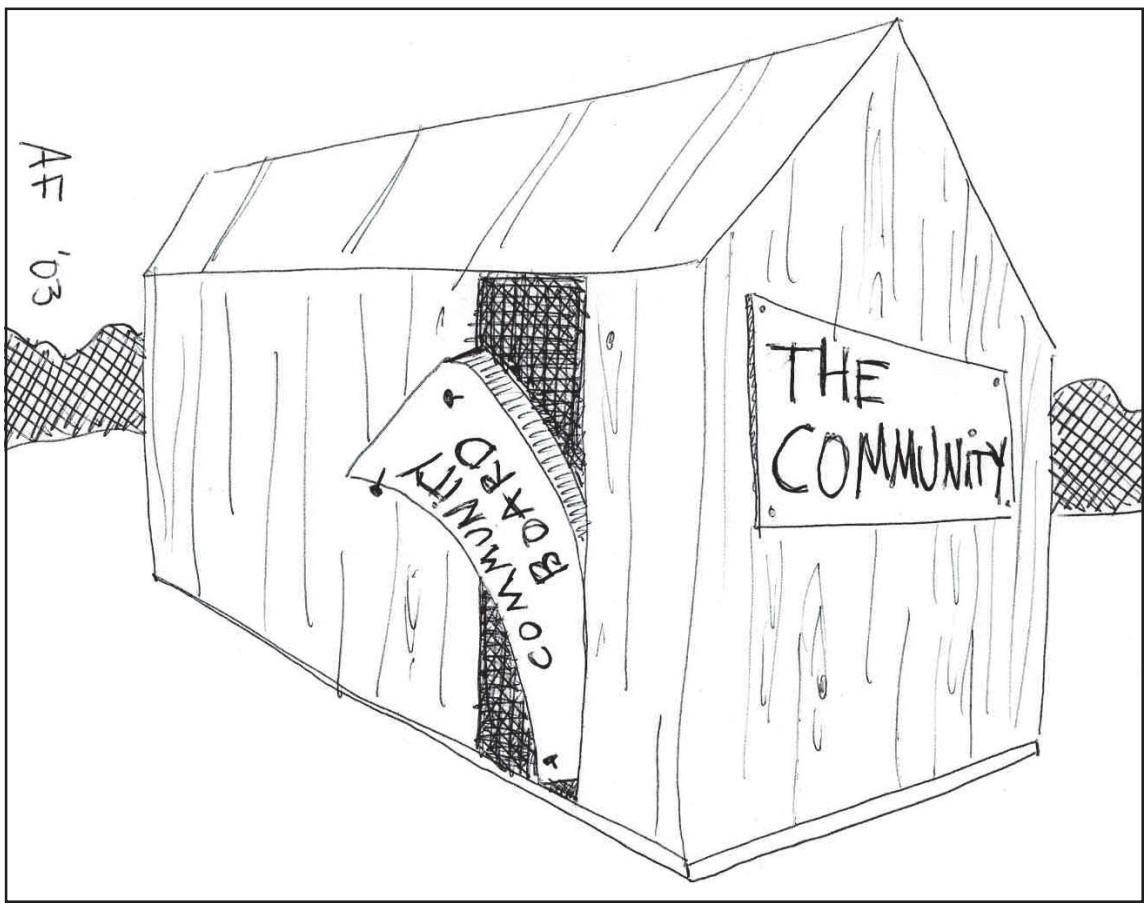


Left Behind by Senior Projects

Well I'm into college - go figure. Ahead on my application path is the upcoming senior project proposal. Here is an excerpt we received from Mr. Trout about the program: "The senior project is a culmination of students' intellectual, academic, and community activities, is an opportunity for seniors to plan and execute an individual program of study and to experience some of the expectations and rigors of work and/or college. Each participating senior may undertake a six-week work project in the community at the end of the second term."

I love the idea of a senior project because it allows us an opportunity to learn outside the bounds of Park's environment. I'm glad Park offers this because, let's remember, senior projects aren't required for school. It actually seems strange to have a fourth of our Upper School leave for six weeks in the spring.

This begs the question why do we have senior projects? I'm convinced that Park wants us to broaden our experience by working in an area of interest. There are an infinite number of choices for work experience, but in the past, I've seen some Park students misuse this freedom by counting the hours to summer at Starbucks. This isn't to say the program is a waste. David Weiss'03 did impressive work where he created a computer program that showed how skin reacts when cut. The most successful projects are often when a student does something he or she loves to do rather than be a paper pusher in a possible future career.

My other reasoning for senior projects is a bit more cynical (thanks Dr. Lou). I fear that Park may believe that since we will be into college, we'll have little motivation to study in school. Once the teachers lose the grip of grades, the students will not be motivated to learn and we get shipped off campus. No one actually believes the administration has such little faith in our intrinsic will to learn.

So, how do you want to spend your last weeks as a Park School student? Consider this: Stay here. Park offers brilliant teachers and a range of disciplines, and I haven't taken full advantage of it yet. I plan on not leaving for senior project to… well…learn. I want to enjoy my last months at Park, at Park.

What will I be doing here? I'll be doing independent projects and study assuming I get the clear from my teachers. I look forward to working one on one, on my own, and with the rest of the students to study my interests.

Teachers have responded with excitement and support. They understand that I take the idea of senior projects seriously and that I want to use this time in a productive way. I can't think of a better way to learn than when all the external distractions like grades and college are lifted from me. I think it's a tribute to the school's pursuit of knowledge and philosophy that I'll be able to do this.

There are many great project. I've heard people talk about some exciting senior project ideas and it is a great choice for some. But, I'm certainly not being left behind staying here. You don't have to follow me, but know that you have the option.

-JWW

Letter to the editors:

A Refreshing View of Park

Dear *Postscript*,

I have just finished reading the November 23 *Postscript* and I am writing to congratulate you on producing such a well written paper. As a Park School parent, I consider it my duty to read everything the school sends to us. I must admit, however, that in the past I have cringed when I spotted *Postscript* in my mailbox.

While the writing is usually quite good, it's the anti-establishment, anti-administration and overall negative tone that I've found off-putting. To some degree, this is probably to be expected of a student newspaper, but I've often found it to be excessive in *Postscript*.

Park is a great school and its students should feel fortunate to be educated there. The November 23 issue of *Postscript* conveys an appreciation and enthusiasm for all the goings-on within the school community that almost sounds like school pride. I, for one, find that refreshing.

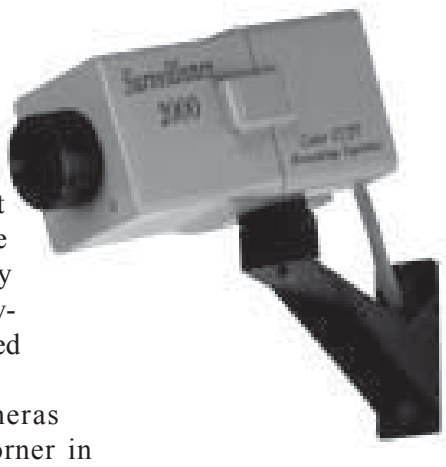
-Roseann Glick

Boscov's Brainwaves: Watch Out

by Daniel Boscov-Ellen '04

The last week or so here in the Upper School has been exceptionally full of rumors, and though I myself found most of the gossiping distasteful, there was one thing which was particularly shocking to me. I heard that certain acts that people were gossiping about had been caught on one of Park's security cameras. I was then stuck with the image of some creepy old man rewinding surveillance tapes over and over again, and it made me sick. I can imagine few things more damaging for a student than being videotaped doing something so private.

But whether or not any students have been caught on tape is not really important. The possibility alone made me realize that *I* don't know where the cameras in our school are, either. And it made me wonder exactly why that is. The cameras are ostensibly there to deter crime and bad behavior, but I don't see how they can do this if they are hidden. It may be true that having cameras installed in the school helps to prevent crime or to catch criminals in the act, but, at least for me, this must be balanced against my misgivings about giving up my last shred of privacy.



Putting cameras on every street corner in America would surely help to fight crime, but most people do not feel that it is worth the loss it would mean for our freedom and privacy. In England, a person is on camera an average of three hundred times a day. Is that really what we want? I am *extremely* uncomfortable with the thought that some stranger may be watching me go about my everyday business without my knowledge.

I'm made uneasy enough by the fact that Park's version of Big Brother is watching me, but it' s even worse and particularly Orwellian because I don't even know where the cameras are. If they were in plain sight, at least I could direct rude gestures at their operator. I wouldn't feel quite so violated.

But hidden or not, having cameras in the school still poses a problem for me. The cameras are supposedly here for our protection (from terrorists or armed robbers or those evil people who park in the admissions spaces), but there is a not-so-subtle underlying message behind putting the school under constant video surveillance, and that message is this: *we don't trust you farther than we can throw you.* In a school that speaks of positive expectations, this is beyond hypocritical. It's downright ironic, and insulting.

The problem is that we're being treated more like inmates and criminals than earnest students capable of exercising our own moral judgments, and we're being told it's for our own good. Well I for one say, "Thanks, but no thanks, Big Brother."

The World According to Me: Senior Projects

by Jonathan Weese '04

It may only be December, but that doesn't mean it's too early for seniors to start thinking about senior projects. In just over a month, we seniors will have to get our proposals together in order to take advantage of our glorious six-week "break." Here are some senior project ideas you might not have heard about:

For those of you not interested in going off campus, you might consider giving the administration a hand. Rumor has it the higher-ups are looking for someone to take on the role of Free Block Consultant. Your duties would entail staying at Park from 8:30 until 3:00, simulating a day full of free blocks. The administration hopes to learn things about how to keep people occupied during long stretches of free time. Applicant must have a strong interest in lying on couches. See Mike McGill.

If you feel the need to get away, perhaps you'd like political work: the Howard Dean campaign (slogan: "Hey, Al Gore likes us") is looking for an artistically-minded student to work closely with Doonesbury writer Garry Trudeau. The student would be in charge of finding ways to cram even more pro-Dean slogans into the comics pages of newspapers nationwide.

But maybe you're of a more conservative stripe. Do you like math? The new regulations those bleeding-heart liberals are forcing through Congress threaten our corporations' very way of life. However, the rules don't say anything about contracting the book-cooking out to a high school student! Learn to disregard your conscience and experiment with new rationalization techniques as you inflate profits, prop up executive salaries, and generally give the shaft to Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Investor of Tulsa.

If you really want a project that requires a minimum of effort, the National Institutes of Health is looking for someone to fill the prestigious role of Test Subject. Naturally, this would be a non-paying position, but you get all the glory of being part of the cure for many life-threatening diseases. Applicant is advised to have high thresholds for heat, cold, pain and oxygen deprivation.

Don't forget: don't leave your project for the last minute. These dream jobs are bound to go soon. Talk to John Trout today!

The Rowland Reality: Sex, Drugs, and… Disney?

by Ben Rowland '04

Abercrombie & Fitch recalled the remaining copies of its infamous seasonal magazine *Quarterly* from all stores. This catalog has been under attack during the past few years by various consumer groups for containing –what they believe are– overtly sexual images and content. However, the most recent holiday issue did a little more than display naked men's behinds; it included pictures with naked men and women together and showed some of the female models' (Caution: The next word may not be suitable for children under the age of 18. Parental discretion is advised.) breasts. When the catalog was published, protests and boycotts against the retailer immediately followed, and the press was all over the story. I find it unbelievably fascinating that a store can sell an 18-year-old a semi-automatic assault riffle without a problem, but when a store is trying to sell its clothing catalog (god forbid), the whole country goes nuts. I'm sorry, but *something* just isn't right in American culture.

The American Decency Association, lead by President Bill Johnson, was one of the leading organizations that contributed to the collapse of the most recent issue of *Quarterly*. In addition to Abercrombie & Fitch, the Christian-affiliated group is boycotting Victoria's Secret and one other company: Disney. Why are they boycotting Disney? According to their official website, "The world's largest family entertainment company has extended company insurance benefits to the live-in partners of homosexual employees but not unmarried partners of heterosexual employees, allowed homosexual celebrations in its theme parks, produced highly objectionable films, allowed a convicted child molester to direct a Disney movie, published a book aimed at homosexuals, and promoted numerous other anti-family policies and activities." Abercrombie pulled their catalog off shelves because of the homophobic views of these boors? Come on.

In Europe, nudity in fashion is everywhere. If you pick up a *Vogue* or *Maxim* outside the US, you'll see lots of breasts. There are always the famous page 3 centerfolds in British newspapers. Breasts just aren't a big deal in Europe.

If it were up to me, those catalogs wouldn't have been taken off the shelves in the first place. If it were up to me, rather than capitulate, I would defend the catalog. These right-wing Christian activists most likely are the same people that are interested in banning the teaching of evolution in schools. If they believe that God created the world, then they obviously believe that God created both the man and the woman. If they follow the Old Testament correctly, they also believe that both the man and the woman were created in the image of God. Now, if I can recall, Adam and Eve were naked when they were created. So isn't going against nudity, in a way, going against God? Now who's the anti-Christ?

I don't understand what these adults were doing when they were my age. Parents are so worried about sex, drugs, and rock & roll, and it's all just a big joke. The Park School recently sent home a letter on how it's working with the other independent schools to help prevent underage drinking. I have a better solution. Why don't we allow underage drinking, so that when kids actually do start drinking in college, they know their limits? The older generation fought for their independence, and now all they want to do is take it away from us. I'm not saying that underage drinking isn't wrong. I just think the older generation has gotten their priorities and their morals mixed up. Their tactics have become DISALLOW! FORBID! PROHIBIT! And they think that's going to make these things less desirable.

I see billboards on the road that talk about how it's best not to have sex and about how smoking marijuana will wreck your life. For most people, drugs and sex become *more* desirable, not less, because of them. We want what we can't have. It's as simple as that.

The Park School for Catholic Girls

by Ben Warren '05

I'd like to remind the students of this High School that I write regularly for *Postscript*. You might have picked up on this while reading this very article. Granted, my articles have been described as "Not funny," "Poorly written," and "Incoherent." And therefore I understand that my fan base is, perhaps, limited. Nevertheless, I do still write for *Postscript.* It is essential that I be exposed to all the breaking Upper School news as soon as possible. I understand that the gossip circulation might be a little rusty with its priorities. However, in the past few weeks, Park has had enough raunchy, clichéd, tongue-in-cheek gossip to fill a John Hughes movie. The problem is that I found out about all of these juicy little gems well after the rest of the school.

Well, fellow students, you think you got some good gossip this month? You think Ben wasn't exactly important enough to hear about it? Open your eyes and your minds ladies and gentleman, because I've got the hot-off-the-press gossip for next month. Maybe this will remind you who's on top of the food chain of information the next time you mistakenly come across Jim Howard's secret strip mall blue prints.

Keep an eye on Student Faculty Forum in the next weeks; when this one gets out it's sure to be debated heavily: Mr. McGill is constructing a proposal for some type of community board, where students found guilty of wrong doings in the Park community have their punishments debated by a team of students. Hey Mr. McGill! Isn't that your job, you crazy progressive little scamp?

Hey alumni, noticed a few extra donation request letters lately? Believe me, Park could use the money. Word on the street is Park is gathering funds to build a top-of-the-line arts center. That's right, following the success of the new Athletic Center, Park has decided to construct a new addition complete with a music room and an art studio. It's a good plan, but Asher is still going to play guitar in the hallway.

Having trouble staying awake in class? You wont like this one: In order to slow down the pace of the day, faculty has been discussing a schedule change, in which students only have three ninety-minute classes a day. Better double those meds, little Johnny.

You liked that one, did ya? Well, nothing beats teacher gossip, so here's one last one, on the house. Out of all of the foreign math teachers, no one can argue that Oliver Reid is by far the most British. Or is he? Inside sources indicate that Oliver Reid is actually Jamaican. You heard it here first. In 1978, attempting to pull himself out of the poor financial situation he inherited from his parents, Oliver Reid moved to the States, and practiced a British accent in order to scam rich elderly intellectuals out of their fortunes. Winding up jailed for six years, Mr. Reid discovered his passion for mathematics, and earned good time by teaching it to the inmates. Hey *Bezoar*, where's your earth-shaking gossip? Or is that kind of stuff to mainstream for you? HA!

photo by Sarah Raifman '05

The amount of sleuthing I had to do to uncover this information to present to you, perhaps weeks before it would have come out on its own is unacceptable. I hope we all have learned that when working with the printed word, avoiding gossip is a futile task. However, it is up to you, the people, to let me in on the good stuff as soon as you hear it, because when it comes to gossip, I'm the man, baby.

Gossip Folks

by Milan Jordan '04

Everybody's teenage years, which apparently date as far back as the pre-teen stage, seem full of an overabundance of torment and idiotic acts. But at Park School, no teen needs to soak in self-ridicule; no, here, you're never alone in your misery. It appears that for every personal secret you tell a few close friends (via mouth, or the Internet...) there will always be that one close friend that will betray you, and then the whole student body will inevitably appear, ready to spread your pain, with the help of a few skillfully twisted Outkast lyrics (informing you 'what's cooler than being cool'...) that *will* be thrown in your face.

At the Park School, gossip seems to spread faster than, well... mono. But proudly, unlike their habits with mono, Park students do not just resort to spreading rumors verbally; we resort to much faster and more high-tech methods on information that is not, and never was, any of our business. Away messages and profiles are now an efficiently obnoxious, and significantly quicker, way of spreading the love. Gratifyingly, Park students' English skills and ability to make witty comparisons are put into use with clever parodies of MasterCard slogans that travel quickly around the school.

Even classroom conversations help gossip spread. Classes are quite often started with a brief exchange of updated "facts" when the gossip is important enough for our speculation.

This exchange probably lasts for a few minutes, just long enough to spark the knowledge in a few uninformed people's minds, before the teacher suddenly upholds his/her duty to stop the conversation.

And then, most classically, there's walking down the hall. One can never quite feel the caliber of blatant disregard for other's emotions as strongly as when walking down the hall. In the event of two major stories settling in at the same time, you can hear everyone's pick on which to slander and skew alternating down the hallway.

I hope that, in the event that you do something moronic, it is with someone in your grade, seeing as trans-grade gossip is so much more potent here at Park, and seems to transcend all intermediate grades... and I hope for all of you that you will never feel the embarrassment and mockery of your peers who magically transform into cold, heartless, and hateful people at the first sign of someone else's pain, or a good story –whichever comes first.

So, good luck, but rest assured you can always feel safe. A Park student will never *kick* you when you're down… that's just not our style.

The Travesty of Driver's Ed

by Eric Gottlieb '06

As high school students, we are the next generation of Americans. We've heard time and time again about how we are the future of this country, and we are also the current drivers.

Trying to make us safer drivers, our state has embedded a new level of pain into the licensing system. The Graduated Licensing System, in which new drivers must have a learner's permit and a provisional license for a combined 22 months before they can get their full license, is an intelligent idea. But its one flaw is the requirement that all new drivers under age 18 take 30 hours of Driver's Education. Thankfully, Park has softened the pain by providing a convenient and relatively comfortable location for Driver's Ed. But it's about time that we pressure our state to face the fact that Driver's Ed is useless.

Firstly, the pain of Driver's Ed is almost unbearable. The class requires us to wake up early on Saturday mornings, invading our sacred sanctuary of sleep. We come to school for the sixth morning of the week, where the class, which is supposed start at 9:00, gradually gets going around 9:15, 9:20, or even 9:30.

But even worse, Maryland requires each driver to have at least 30 hours of Driver's Ed. Missed classes must be made up at the driving school's night sessions. When I tried to make up one of the two classes I missed, I was told to come on a certain Wednesday night.

I went to the address I had been given, which was a church, but seeing no hint of a driving school, I called the school from my cell phone. I was then directed to the church entrance in the rear parking lot, where I also found absolutely no sign of a driving school. Ten minutes and three phone calls later, the person with whom I was speaking realized that, in fact, there was no class that night. I was told to come back in a month. I did come back a month later, where, the night before a French test, we were quizzed on John F. Kennedy Jr. and Judy Garland's involvement with drugs and alcohol.

Secondly, Driver's Ed is worthless. In every class, we are given questions from the learner's permit test, one that can be passed with a simple15 minute scan of the MVA driver's booklet. Then we watch hours of movies, most of which tell us that drunk driving is bad, something which is obvious to those of us who have enough common sense to drive in the first place.

Sometimes, after about 10 minutes of a movie, the instructor realizes that we've seen it before and then gives us a 30 or 40 minute break. For the next hour (or two), we answer more questions and take a test. But interestingly, they never seem to teach us the material before we answer the questions. It all comes from common sense, which is not taught in Driver's Ed.

Talking with friends in other Driver's Ed programs, I have found that our problem is not unique. At one school, each three-hour session includes an hour break for ice cream. There have also been several instances of abominable behavior on the part of Driver's Ed instructors.

To the joy of many Park students, another session of Driver's Ed, a fall's worth of wasted Saturday mornings, will soon come to a close. But we must make sure that our state knows about the pain of this course, which is in no way countered by an acquisition of a satisfactory Driver's Education because, in the end, it is our parents who will teach us to drive safely. Maryland needs to raise Driver's Education standards, or, better yet, eliminate the requirement.

Driver's Ed Test:

What do you do when you see:
1. Go
2. Stop
3. Where's Armando!?!

Community Board

PRO: The community board is consistent with the philosophy

by Tina Forbush, US Faculty

The proposed Community Board can only benefit the students of Park School. In essence, it differs from our current system in only one regard: choice. Nothing is being taken away by the Board; rather, an opportunity is being added. Instead of relegating students to a single disciplinary system – the Principal — the Board gives the students the option of choosing between two.

Our own national justice system recognizes the wisdom of having such a choice: every criminal defendant must decide whether to have his or her case heard by a jury or by a judge. This decision is considered a fundamental right. Similarly, students at Park should be given a choice about who will determine their fates.

Our society has long recognized the advantages of having a community of one's peers to determine punishments. This concept is at the heart of our notion of justice. Having multiple decision makers allows for more opinions and, therefore, a fairer verdict. A Community Board of six or eight people has the potential of reaching more balanced conclusions than a single individual may be able to.

Furthermore, the Board has the potential of making the process of discipline at Park more transparent. Many more students will have the chance to see how and why certain punishments are – or are not – meted out. It is valuable to have processes that are clear and visible to the entire community.

The Community Board has the potential of building and enhancing the Park School community. Students will become increasingly responsible for taking care of each other. The students and faculty members on the Board will see what it means to wrestle together with difficult questions. This will lead to shared understandings and purpose.

An institution like Park School will be fully successful only if all of its members take responsibility for themselves and each other. Through the Community Board process, the students involved will gain an awareness of what is needed to preserve this sort of a school. The students will recognize that, in order to make this kind of a community work, everyone needs to take on his or her own share of responsibility. This is a fundamentally progressive notion: as John Dewey wrote, "the primary source of social control resides in the very nature of the work done as a social enterprise in which all individuals have an opportunity to contribute and to which all feel responsibility."

Will the Board issue different punishments for different students, even for students in apparently similar situations? Certainly, as it ought. A disciplinary process should always look at the totality of the circumstances. Two students who are charged with violating the same rule may have radically different histories, motives, and intent. The Board should issue punishments on an individual basis, just as the Principal does under our current system. There is nothing unfair about punishments that may, on their surface, appear inconsistent.

Much has been made of the question of whether the students on the Board can be trusted to be fair and to keep confidences. The Park School Philosophy assumes that "human beings are capable and desirous of rational self-discipline and of acting towards others with respect, kindness, concern, and moral conviction." If we hold true to these words, we must be willing to trust the students on the Board. Indeed, the Philosophy charges us to "trust in these good prospects." If we are to follow the Philosophy that guides us, we must trust the Community Board.

CON: The community board is inconsistent with the philosophy

by Peter Warren, US Faculty

The Community Board is a system that potentially violates the liberal and progressive ideas that produced it.

The primary argument for the Community Board, as I understand it, is that, by involving students in important decisions and discussions regarding behavior in the community, they can be more fully integrated in and understanding of issues of community. This is indeed an idea completely consistent with the school's progressive philosophy. The *means* – students sitting in review of the transgressions of their peers – is in support of the end – a greater involvement and understanding of community. The end is progressive and liberal. The means are not.

Academic and intellectual freedom are at the core of this debate. A certain amount of nurturing is part of the process of education, helping students to get to a place where they can advocate for themselves, speak for themselves, think for themselves. We recognize that people need room, a safe place, to make mistakes and to develop and refine their ability to make decisions that will be good for them.

By "safe place," I mean one in which students feel at home among equals, who, although they make up a community of people diverse in many ways, are alike in their status as students. I mean a place that nurtures intellectual freedom. The moment you have students in positions of judgment over other students, you violate that place of safety.

There is no question in my mind about the wisdom and good intentions of my colleagues on the faculty, but I would never wish to appear before a group of them considering something I'd done to get myself in trouble. They are wise, but they are my colleagues, and it is important that we are free to agree, and disagree, often passionately, about a range of issues, as equals.

Mike McGill and David Jackson are wise and wonderful people but it would be nonsensical to pretend that we occupy the same rung on the ladder. They can be friends, confidantes, and fantasy baseball comrades. But they have different jobs, a different set of responsibilities, and this different set of responsibilities places them in unique positions. If I get into trouble, I want the matter to be discussed between them and me. An important part of Mike McGill's job is to protect and preserve the intellectual freedom that is integral to the collegiality of the faculty. One way he does this is by exercising his authority. Faculty members sit on a wide range of boards and committees, but not in any one of them does any faculty member discuss personal details of their colleagues' lives.

Another way of putting it is that my working relationship with my colleagues is far too important to academic freedom to be mucked up by some of us reviewing the transgressions of others of us. Why on earth would we construct a relationship among students that we do not construct for ourselves?

It is important to separate the issues. This is not about the ability of students to be fair and wise. Will a student make a wise and reasoned judgment about the behavior of other students? Of course, and they do all the time. That is not the issue. The issue is, how will life with a community board change the community of students? By impinging on this academic and intellectual freedom, the means, a small group of students elected to sit in judgment of other students, inherently violates the integrity of the intended end – a strengthening of community spirit.

Will students learn anything through the process of being involved in a community board? Of course. Our students learn from every situation they're in, or at least the ones who are willing to do. But I believe that the harm done to the community of students outweighs the benefit.

From the Oval Office:

Board passes Senate; faces student body vote

This is the fourth time I have written on behalf of the community board.

This time, I speak with the backing of the Senate. On Wednesday, December 3rd, the Senate voted 21-6 in favor of the Community Board proposal. The Senate, representatives of the students, have supported this measure for a number of reasons. Philosophically, the Community Board is completely in keeping with our school. It provides a forum to establish general community standards, and puts students in a position of using rational self-discipline.

I can't stress enough that everything about the community board is optional. It would be cruel to force someone to judge another student, or to have their personal indiscretions shared with the whole community. However, there are times when talking to other students would be more helpful. Last year, for example, two students were suspended for setting off a firecracker at school. They were suspended for four days. I don't think suspension sent the right message at all, and neither did many other students. However, this was the decision of Mike McGill, and no one thought to challenge it. If there had been a Community Board, and the involved students had gone before it, perhaps they would have received a more sensible punishment. However, I can imagine that if a student was accused of doing something extremely embarrassing, they may not want anyone to hear abut it. In this case, they would be free to decide not to go to the Community Board. The question here is, above all, choice. That is what the Community Board stands for above all.

Some have tried to shoot down this Board. However, I ask them to consider the Board as an experiment. Since it's optional, it's just an alternative in a system that lacks one. It is unfair of us to deny others of an alternative.

- Caleb Karpay '04

Life Drawing

Carly Ries '05

The human figure is explored in this intense two and a half hour drawing class twice weekly. The curves and bends of the figure are appreciated in the lines and smudges students transfer from eye to paper. Students progress as they begin to accentuate and exaggerate the forms of the live models' bodies according to what catches their eyes or what could intensify a drawing. Using a variety of drawing media, including pencil, charcoal, pen and wash, pastel, watercolor and tempera, students explore gesture, proportion, mass, foreshortening, portraiture, and composition.

Lisa Boscov-Ellen '06

Charlie Hankin '06

Josie Hendler '04

TV Review:

Wednesday Nights in *The O.C.*

by Rebecca Martin '06

The O.C., a teen oriented show that premiered this summer on Fox, is trash. But it's such lighthearted trash that I'm forced to love it. The show follows the life of Ryan Atwood (Benjamin McKenzie), a teen from the slums of Chino, CA, who was nearly sent to juvie for stealing a car. (Of course, he's basically a good kid, just misguided). After his irresponsible mother disappears, the lawyer working on Ryan's case, Sandy Cohen (played by Peter Gallagher), takes Ryan in, to the delight of his dorky son, Seth (Adam Brody), and the annoyance of his wife, Kirsten (Kelly Rowan). After a lot of bonding and a bit of turmoil, the Cohen's decide to become Ryan's legal guardians. This means that Ryan must adjust to a new life in Orange County (hence *The O.C*) among rich socialites, as far from his ghetto life in Chino as can be.

The O.C. doesn't pretend to explore in any depth the anxieties this change would cause in both Ryan and the Cohen family. Instead, it has a light, soap opera-ish air. It features none of the over-the-top twists that are the hallmark of many soap operas, but it does dish out plenty of romance and several hot affairs. Ryan has fallen instantly in love with the girl next door, Marissa (Mischa Barton), who returns his feelings, but is plagued with depression, drinking problems, and a shallow mother. Seth, the archetype of the high school comic book geek and the best part of the show, is desperately in love with the popular girl, Summer (Rachel Bilson), and oblivious to the fact that his best friend, Anna (Samaire Armstrong), has feelings for him. But guess what? It turns out he has feelings for her too! This led to a humorous Thanksgiving episode in which Seth ends up torn between Summer in the pool house and Anna in his bedroom, running from one to the other in confusion (he's never had one girl, let alone two at once!). It was hilarious, even if it sounds silly. *I Love Lucy* meets teen *Dallas*.

The O.C. takes on every imaginable teen trouble, from the cruelty of cliques to problems of drinking, drugs, and broken homes. But in the end, the heroes always come out okay. The show's secondary plots also feature adults and their problems, but the target audience is we, the teenagers. And that's the show: great, even though it relies on clichés. The O.C. is not something to watch when you want be moved, to connect with characters, or to sink your teeth into a complex situation. But on Wednesday nights at nine, its cheesy, sugary fun is just the thing for an overworked, stressed teen mind that wants to escape from the annoyances of life for an hour.

Movie Review:

Gothika: A Screamer

by Yohance Allette '05

Gothika: the latest in the horror sub-genre of the year that features ghosts, dead people, the mentally challenged, and murder. A lot ends up happening in the movie, which may be its downfall.

In this case, the main character is Miranda Grey (Halle Berry), a beautiful criminal psychologist who works with her husband in the psychiatric ward at Woodward Penitentiary for Women, a place that, with its turrets, tiles, flickering lights, and art-deco windows practically qualifies as the film's title character. After a weird encounter with a drenched, badly beaten teenage girl on a lonely road, Miranda wakes up three days later to find herself an inmate of Woodward, accused of chopping her loving husband into firewood.

With little memory of the past three days beyond terrifying flashbacks of blood and mayhem, she must struggle to piece together what really happened while contending not only with skeptical former colleagues but also the phantom of the same teenage girl, who is still wet and seems pretty angry about whatever happened to her

Charles S. Dutton plays Grey's doomed husband, and Penelope Cruz (*Woman on Top*, *Blow*) is a fellow inmate. Robert Downey Jr. plays a psychologist who goes from being Miranda's co-worker to her doctor. Director Mathieu Kassovitz and screenwriter Sebastian Gutierrez both know how to make an audience jump and scream, but they also ascribe to the mistaken notion that horror requires no real verisimilitude beyond special effects.

Altogether, *Gothika* is a good movie to see. It is one of the few scary movies that I have seen that actually has a plot, which is sometimes very hard to find. Also, having the movie set in a mental institution can have its laughs, although they may be politically incorrect. However, the movie's downfall is that it follows the horror movie paint-by-number too closely.

If you are a fan of horror movies, you will have most likely figured out what's going to happen halfway through. This isn't to say it is a bad movie. It's just that I didn't see anything innovative with the movie at all.

Yet, I have to recommend *Gothika* for the sheer fact that it's one of the best horror movies to come out this year.

Music Review:

Beg for Mercy dies trying

by Zack Leacock '05

After one of the most successful debuts in music history, 50 Cent is back with his crew, G-Unit, with their first official group effort, *Beg for Mercy*. After much hype from unofficial bootleg albums and mixtapes, G-Unit soldiers 50 Cent, Lloyd Banks, Young Buc, and the incarcerated Tony Yayo can expect millions of fans to drop $15 to hear them spit their grimy gangsta raps over gritty beats. It's too bad most of those fans will be a little disappointed.

It's not that *Beg For Mercy* is really a bad CD, but it lacks the same fire as the aforementioned G-unit bootlegs. Maybe it's because they got softer due to 50's success or maybe it's because Tony Yayo is locked up and is only on two songs, but I found myself skipping many of the songs. "G-Unit (Intro)" and "Poppin' Them Thangs", the first two tracks, are hard for me to listen to. On the intro, DJ Hi-Tek's beat isn't one of his best and the G-Unit members don't spit their best verses. "Poppin Them Thangs" sounds like a generic gangsta song, with nothing to really set it apart from the majority of the songs on the CD.

The problem with "Poppin Them Thangs" is one that plagues the whole album. Just about every song sticks to the same formula. G-Unit members spit predictable verses about their material possessions and how gangsta they are while 50 Cent sings on just about *every* chorus on the whole disc, including Lloyd Banks' and Young Buc's solo songs. Listening to this formula for 18 tracks quickly becomes boring. Also, the fact that the production was a few steps below 50's *Get Rich or Die Trying* doesn't help.

The times when they do switch up their subject matter, however, are the few highlights of the album. "Wanna Get to Know You" is very different from their usual pimped out approach to women and the fact that 50 isn't singing on this chorus makes this song a step above the rest. Another standout song is "My Buddy", which is a more creative approach to rapping about guns where they treat their gun as a best friend and the various activities they do.

If there were more moments like "Wanna Get to Know You" and "My Buddy" on *Beg for Mercy*, it would have been a much better album. Unfortunately, there aren't, and *Beg for Mercy* has me begging for something else.

The 665 Review

by Charlie Hankin '06

After three years of updates, Jeff S. Power has finally finished SixSixFive, a collection of thoughts and cartoons posted on the Internet. For those of you who are not familiar with www.sixsixfive.com, here's an overview:

Jeff Power is a 25-year-old technical support worker for an Internet Service Provider. A couple times of a week, he would put a new poem or joke or picture on his website. There was no plan, no structure, no storyline to be followed; the website was merely a project to consume time.

Nothing to write home about, it would seem. Except the subject matter on which JSP focuses is pretty unusual. Entire weeks on the site would be devoted to making fun of fat Goths. He would re-publish frightening personal ads he found on the web. He made up his own series of public service announcements, and while not all of his entries are genius, or hilarious, or thought-provoking, there are a few genuine gems in there.

I personally started reading SixSixFive at entry number 102 of 665: "A Double Shot of Bad Poetry," in which he wrote "This is my poem/It's not very good/It doesn't even rhyme/ and I f***ed up the meter a lot." He also included a haiku, "This is a haiku/I'm not working hard on it/one two three four five." From that entry on, I just kept reading every day. I read through the chat pranks and the plugs for his favorite local bands (he works out of Boston) and all the true-life stories, and even though I had to sometimes wait for weeks at a stretch for that one beautiful update, I was always glad I stuck with it. And perhaps that's what makes SixSixFive so great: It's a testament to determination, a monument to follow-through.

I liked SixSixFive's run, and you might too. Check out items 543, 466, 408, 296, 165, and 64. Senses of humor differ, so scroll at your own discretion.

"Please write an essay (250-500 words) on a topic of your choice or on one of the options listed below.

1. Evaluation a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you.
2. Discuss some issue of personal, local, national or international concern and its importance to you.
3. Indicate a person who has had significant influence on you, and describe that influence.
4. Describe a character in fiction, an historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, science, etc.) that has had in influence on you, and explain that influence.
5. Topic of your choice.

Tutoring

"Can you look over an essay?" a friend asked me during freshman year. I stood in a busy hall with my arms swaying at my side racing through excuses. She shifted her body to and fro while staring down at the floor as I selfishly contemplated a way out: "I'm going to an activity meeting. Sorry." I didn't realize how hard it was for her to confess a need for help to a close friend.

It was only later that I discovered the impact I could have on another as a tutor during *Writing Practicum*, defined as "we learn—through reading, discussion, role-playing, and lots of practice—the techniques of effective peer tutoring." My first experience was working with second grade students. They were writing about a family picture. We sat on a soft communal rug while the teacher announced the partnerships. My tutee, Andrew, and I moved outside to a quiet place. Silently nervous, we walked to the wooden bench at the end of the hall. To break the stillness, I introduced myself and asked what he liked to do in his spare time. He seemed preoccupied by something outside the window as I attempted to engage him in conversation. I jumped into the assignment: "May I see your picture?"

He fumbled through his binder until he found the photo and hurriedly handed it to me as if being quizzed on his retrieval skills. After taking thirty long seconds to thoroughly look over the lake scene, I asked, "What's happening at the dock?" and "What did it feel like in the water?" As he sensed my interest, he stopped staring out the window and slid closer to me. He eagerly swiped the photo from my grasp and began explaining his family reunion at Lake Michigan. I sat in awe as Andrew unleashed vivid detail: "the wind felt like ice as I climbed into the boat," and "my orange life jacket was like a floating doughnut around me because it was way too big." By the end of our session, we made a list of descriptions for his upcoming essay.

Recently, a classmate handed me her college essay asking, "Can you read this?" Agreeing enthusiastically, we sat at an open table with two chairs next to each other. She waited for me to read the essay but instead I placed it face down: "What is this essay about?" Disappointed I wasn't reading her essay, she discouragingly rolled her eyes. After a few seconds, I felt an incredible pressure to fill the silence but waited until she replied, "It's about how community service is important and also how the world is inherently good." "That sounds great because you enjoy community service work, but can you tell me more about how the world is inherently good?" I asked. She slouched back in her chair, rested her chin in her palms, and began to debate the idea aloud as I jotted notes: "There are many good people that help the less fortunate." Leaning forward as she talked, her confidence grew. She quickened her pace and raised the tone of her voice as she became increasingly delighted with her argument. After finishing her explanation, I handed her the essay along with the notes of what she had told me. While reading through them she said, "Wow, I can't believe how much I talked about," and smiled as she walked away.

Jeffrey Weinstein

The Perfect Run

Gliding down the icy mountain, with knees bent and poles extended, I leave a wake of perfect S-Curves behind me. As I crouch lower in my stance and pick up speed, the howling wind rips away at the exposed parts of my face. I follow the fall line into a field of moguls and shorten my giant slalom to smaller, more concentrated turns. Forcing my skis quickly through the patch, turning at every mound, gliding through every gully, I feel the muscles in my legs screaming and exit the field back onto the smooth slope. As I continue down the hill, I approach an inviting forest of evergreens with no tracks; I cross the slope and stop just inside the trees. I scope out my intended path, point my skis downhill, and plow through the fresh snow, making my own trail. As I pick my way through the trees, avoiding boulder, branch, and brook, I spot a snow-covered boulder ten yards down the hill and head for it. I lean down the mountain, gathering speed, bend my knees, and glide up the slanted boulder. As my skis leave the ground, and my heart skips a beat, I do a quick three-sixty turn before landing back on the packed surface of the frosty mountain slope below. I continue to the bottom and stop just before the chairlift. With a smile, I look up at the slope and think: *Wow, the perfect run*.

The first time I went down a mountain, I was seven and terrified of taking the first leap. Today, ten winters later, being afraid is the least of my concerns. Today it is about *finesse*, *control*, *timing*; it is about doing all of these things, doing them well, doing them instinctively. Skiing is not just a family pastime; it is not just a sport. For me, skiing is a way of life.

I compete and study with *finesse*, and I would rather swoosh a basketball, slide into home base, or silently wait for the perfect moment in class to speak than throw myself into a heap of rebounders, hurl myself at a catcher to knock the ball away, or overzealously argue my ideas in a discussion. When I help Habitat for Humanity fundraiser, I am not a forceful advocate; it seems more productive, and less intimidating, to speak for something in a *controlled* manner, to make it sound worthwhile, and not to scare someone into compliance. As a writing tutor, I tend to be more passive than collaborative: it seems more important to listen, concentrate on *timing*, and then add carefully articulated feedback to provoke the writer's own thoughts.

I live my life the same way I ski down the mountain: I concentrate on what is ahead of me and always move towards my goal. I try to approach everything in my life like it is *the perfect run*.

Liz Webber

Welcome to the Real World

Our elbows occasionally bumped as we stood at the crowded counter, folding napkins in the hot, narrow corridor adjacent to the kitchen in McCafferty's Restaurant. Andrew, a college sophomore, told me that he took the job at McCafferty's because he ran out of money to pay for room and board. Dave, the busboy who was training both of us that night, said that he dropped out of school and took his job at McCafferty's when his girlfriend gave birth to twins.

Until then, I had always viewed it from afar, like a tourist who only gets close enough to take a picture without actually having to step off his tour bus. In Brazil I saw boys my age who wandered the crowded city streets, shining shoes and begging in order to gather enough money for a meager meal. In Bolivia I saw children whose futures were probably just as arid as the dust around their hovels. I even saw it when I looked into the forlorn faces of people sleeping on the sidewalks of Baltimore. But then, I walked through those doors saying "personnel only" for the first time.

Certainly the workers at McCafferty's were not desperate, but they were part of a different world from the one I had known. The parents of my friends were doctors or lawyers, and none of them struggled just to support themselves. Now I was working alongside people who were literally working for a living.

At the time, I suspected there was something wrong with adults who performed the same duties I did, because I felt they should have had better jobs if they worked hard. I soon found out, however, that Darryl worked in his spare time as a shoe salesman; Dave was a cook on his days off; Liz worked as a bartender in the evenings; and Andrew had taken on jobs as a valet and a pizza delivery boy. When Andrew asked me why I was working at McCafferty's, I stammered, unable to come up with a suitable response. I do not remember exactly what I said, but I remember that my answer was no more than a pathetic attempt to defend myself. The truth was that I wanted a little money to pay for gas, or to buy some CDs, or maybe to occasionally go out for sushi with my friends, but compared to these people, my reasons for working meant nothing.

I felt increasingly uncomfortable as I collected a stack of clean napkins and tablecloths and listened to Darryl complain about his high electric bill. Over the metallic clamor in the kitchen, he explained that he was getting assigned fewer shifts at the restaurant, which was making it difficult to pay the bills. I interpreted Darryl's financial problems as being a result of my working at McCafferty's. Instead of trying to defend myself, I looked down at the floor to avoid eye contact with Darryl. I realized how much more the people I was working with needed money than I did, and I was consumed by guilt. As I carried all the linens, I walked right into the door, sending napkins flying like penalty flags into the dining room. Tammy and Darryl immediately came out of the kitchen and helped me pick everything up. Later that night, as I mopped the kitchen floor, Darryl said that his inspiration to work hard that night had been watching me do all of my jobs so energetically. Sarah was performing in *Hair*, and she asked if I would come see her that coming weekend. As Laura was leaving, she told me that I had done a good job that night. I grinned, and said "Thanks."

Alex Harding

Girls' JV faces tough season

by Sara Welinsky '05

Going into the season, this year's Girls' Junior Varsity Basketball team has a lot of potential. The team's pre-season efforts have proved very effective toward the preparing for the competitive season ahead. The girls have endured tough practices each day. Then they move to warm-up drills, which consists of lay up lines and weaves. They work on old drills and new ones, too. The girls incorporate a lot of scrimmaging into practices to become comfortable in game situations. The team ends practice with tough conditioning, which will prepare them for their challenging games throughout the season.

There is a lot of talent and history on the team with two returning juniors and six returning sophomores. "These players bring leadership roles and knowledge from previous seasons to the court," says Julie Hoffman '06. Emily Azrael '06 comments that "we have a much more skilled team than last year, especially the freshmen."

The Junior Varsity has added five talented freshmen, all of whom are significant contributors to the team. Although the team has begun strong, "each member, individually, and the team as a whole, are always looking to improve their game," says Adria Johnson.

Head Coach Brian Yaniger has coached the Girls' Park Junior Varsity team for the last 5 years. Julie Hoffman states: "he is really dedicated and passionate about the game." As an experienced coach he is always integrating old drills and tactics into new ones.

The JV team has just come out of three competitive games against Chapelgate, Palotti, and Maryvale, some of the most aggressive teams in the conference. Confronted with the challenge of being in the B-Conference, they must face other teams such as St. Paul's, Friends, Loch Raven, and Severn. Tahira Taylor '05 states confidently: "We have a tough season ahead, but I feel our team is up for the competition." The girls remain confident in themselves and the season, and now that they have played games and experienced their weaknesses, "we will learn how to improve and face our challenging season ahead," says Julie Hoffman.

With the new and elevated sense of confidence, skill, and determination, the JV team will soon be able to confront any team and continue on to victory.

Boys' JV shoots for perfection

by Brad Rifkin '05

As the JV Boys' basketball team stood outside the locker room, one could see a team with determination and excitement. After greeting the Varsity team, which had just dissolved a 17-point deficit to rival Beth T'filoh to come out on top, the JV team was hungry for more opportunity. In a hard-fought game, in which standouts such as guards Zach White '06 and Jake Wiggins '06, along with center Alex Brooks '06 stepped up and confidently hit clutch shot after shot and ripped down big rebounds, the Bruins prevailed by eight points to top conference rival Beth T'filoh.

In a conference that figures to be competitive, this win will act as a yard stick for the JV squad; at the same time, it will provide a confidence boost as the team gets ready to hit the meat of the conference schedule in January. With only one conference game left before break, it will be essential for the team not to lose their focus. Captain Kyle Tarver '06 knows that this team is "strong;" however, the one fly in the ointment is the team's lack of focus at the beginning of games. This notion is maintained by fellow captain Brad Mendelson '06, who points out that in the beginning of the games the team, "needs to focus on settling down and running the offense."

A team without a single returning player from last year, the youthful Junior Varsity squad has both the emotional and court leaders that one would not expect from such an inexperienced team. It was only last year that this core group of players went all the way and won the Fresh-Soph championship. Captain's Brad Mendelson '06 and Kyle Tarver '06 provide the leadership needed to guide this team to the "promised land." The team, which consists of all sophomores, has played together for multiple years. The players have wonderful chemistry together, and it will only get better throughout the year. Newcomer Jon Gill '06 has also provided a spark to the team, and has earned himself a starter's role with his athleticism and big man capabilities. Coach Tracy is excited about the mismatch he can create at the guard position, noting that by putting Eric Baylin '06 in he can "penetrate and kick it out." Also, guard Zach White is an "exceptional outside shooter." Yet, the force to be reckoned with is Center Alex Brooks '06. As coach Dave Tracy puts it, Alex "has wonderful soft hands and a sweet kiss off the backboard. If he can develop sounder foot work and toughen up he will be outstanding."

photo by Oliver Reid

Jon Gill '06 scores a lay up.

A key component to this team, however, isn't the head coach or any single player; it is assistant coach Josh Ackerman. Coach Ackerman, who is in his second season as the assistant, coached over the summer and developed new schemes he is incorporating into the JV regime. Coach Tracy calls Ackerman "the players' coach, "noting that Ackerman always does whatever he can to help.

Looking forward to the middle of the season, Coach Tracey hopes his team doesn't take anything for granted and maintains its focus. "We will leave behind what happened with the JV team last year and take each game one at a time. This must be done in order for the JV Team to repeat as Champions in the MIAA C Conference.The team has beaten Greater Grace, CHEN, Key, and AACS to go along with their victory over Beth T'filoh, making them 5-0.With this great start to the season, lets hope that they can maintain their energy and keep their momentum going all the way to the "promised land."

FS Basketball may surprise

by Wes Jamison '05

After three weeks of practice, the Fresh-Soph basketball team has had few practices with a full squad. These absences, along with the fact that Park Fresh-Soph basketball gained a lot of respect last season because of their championship win, could be seen as problematic. This season Park is the top dog, the team to beat, every team in the conference will be gunning for the Bruins.

The Fresh-Soph squad consists of nine freshmen and three sophomores, only captain Ben Weinstein '06 returns from last year's glorious season. When asked about having to deal the turn-over of so many players from last season, Coach Seidenman '85 responded by quoting the immortal words of James Brown, "Ain't no drag, Papa's got a brand new bag."

The team gained some confidence in a game against A Conference opponent, Gilman in which they lost by only nine, and another competitive loss to A-Conference Gibbons by only four points. They will face many more difficult match-ups in the esteemed B conference against St. Paul's, McDonogh, John Carroll, Archbishop Curley, and Boys' Latin.

A superstitious man, Seidenman refuses to make predictions for the upcoming season, but he did say that his team "has been improving with every outing and will be able to give a solid effort to defend the crown." Led by captains Ben Weinstein and Anders Hulleberg, the team derailed Beth T'filoh 48-16. "The team must learn better court-sense, and come together as a team," says Seidenman, but he is quick to add that this team has a great deal of upside potential and could really surprise some folks.

Girls' V Basketball strives to hold it together

by Liz Webber '04

The Girls' Varsity Basketball team has been struggling in the IAAM B Conference for the last few seasons, but with new coaches, new players, and a new attitude, this could be the season that they turn it all around. With a talented group of starters, deep bench, and number of returning varsity players, they have everything they need to be successful this season.

When I asked Head Coach Kevin Coll what his team was concentrating on this year, he said, "We need to play good defense, pressure the ball, and rebound. But more than any of that, we need to witness the alchemical transformation that happens when a new team becomes a team." This is the type of attitude that the entire team shares, and perhaps over the past month or so you've heard one of the Varsity members say, "We want to play like *piranha*!" This newly adopted mascot is the focal point for the Lady Bruins more aggressive mentality. Coach Coll explained exactly what that means: "Picture a cow bathing in a river, and then picture a swarm of piranha heading to it. Picture the devastation, the violence, the aggressiveness. Imagine that in thirty seconds or fewer, all that is left are bones and blood. That's how we want to play basketball."

Despite this new attitude, the Lady Bruins have struggled to win games early on in the season, and this can be attributed to not having enough "endurance." In their first conference game against Chapelgate, Park dominated the first half, leading 14-11, but then lost it in the end 37-57: returning Junior Sarah Dewey commented, "We really played like *piranha* the first half. We just had to step it up in the second." The coaches seem to agree that the level of play was excellent the first half, with less turnovers and more aggressive defense.

photo by Oliver Reid

Nicole Love '04 dodges Sarah Gold.

The team had a similar misfortune against its next two opponents; Palotti, Maryvale, and Severn beat them after tough fights and close fourth quarters. The Lady Bruins just couldn't keep it together the entire game. Despite this, the team seems ready for its next challenge and determined to, "protect [their] house," as veteran starter Caryn Washington '04 asserted, in their upcoming home games. Washington also added, "We're determined to control our fouls and protect the ball against our upcoming opponents." Once veteran player Jenny Cooper '04 returns from the injured list, the team should get comfortable with the level of play, and the Lady Bruins will become an force to be reckoned with in the IAAM B-Conference.

Bruins make All-Metro

Senior field-hockey goalie Jenny Cooper and sweeper Katie Frankel made the All-Baltimore City/County first team. In their special fall sports edition, *The Sun* announced that in unprecedented consensus decision, Cooper was named as first team All-Metro goalie. Frankel was voted onto the second team All-Metro. With Frankel as sweeper and Cooper in goal, they created a formidable defensive unit which stopped some of the best offensive players in the IAAM A-Conference.

Boys' Varsity Basketball dominates C-division in early play

by Brad Mendelson '06

Boy's Varsity looks to be on the road to another championship season. The team did win their first game of the season against Greater Grace with a commanding 59-43 victory, but were knocked off by Christian Home Education Network (CHEN) 62-47. Although the loss was tough to swallow, it was apparent from the players' reactions that the loss might end up doing the team some good. The players on this year's Varsity squad had a consecutive winning streak of 25 games, which includes a 24-0 record en route to a JV championship last year. Several players feel that the loss to CHEN served as a wakeup call; this year the competition is harder, and, therefore, the team's performance needs to be raised.

A problem early on in the season appears to be lack of leadership on the team, for there are no returning Varsity players. But with the elections of Phil Porter '05 and Dan Gorham '04 as co-captains, the team seems to have solved this problem. When Gorham was asked about how he felt the team was doing, he responded that, "It seems that this team is not quite used to the pace of play on the Varsity level. However, I'm confident after our first few games we can reach that level of play."

Despite the inexperience of this year's team they do show signs of being a talented team. As Coach Josh Wolf puts it, "We're a work in progress. That's for sure." With the return of shooting guard Brad Rifkin '05, who sat out the first two games with an ankle injury, the team appears to have five solid starters: Brad Rifkin, Paul Weitz, Phil Porter, Andre Brasser and David Berman. This team has the very important ability to go to the bench and still maintain a high level of play on the court. Another encouraging sign for the Varsity team is its incredible work ethic. Every afternoon the boys put in at least an hour and a half, usually two hours, of hard practice. Yet it seems every evening, at least one member of the team stays after to work on their jump shot from assistant coach Will Wharton. Furthermore, players can be found in coach Wolf's room discussing the team and specific qualities that need to be perfected.

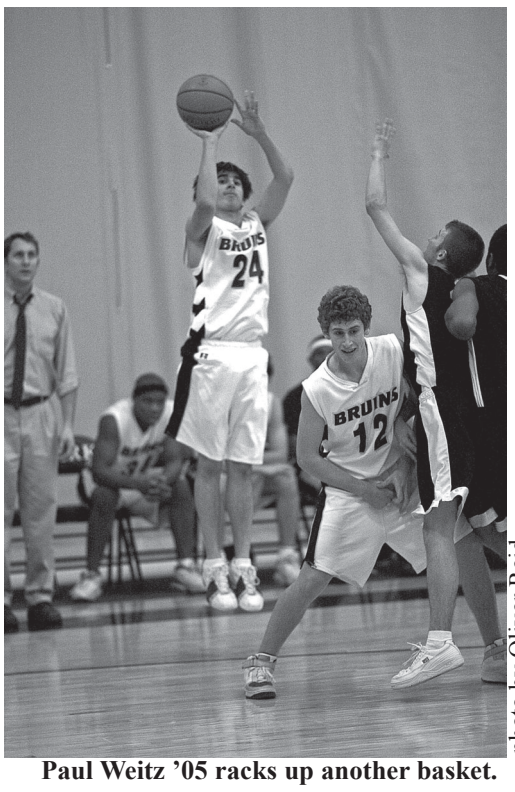


photo by Oliver Reid

Paul Weitz '05 racks up another basket.

Another challenge for this year's team will be playing in the MIAA C-conference, which is notorious for being as competitive as in any conference in the state. "This year in the conference all the best teams graduated there experienced players, and the lower-down teams returned their experienced players," says Coach Wolf, adding, "Nine out of ten teams can win on any night." It does appear that the team has got an early jump on the conference with a huge win against rival Beth T'filoh 50-30. Park erased a fifteen point first half deficit to beat the visiting Warriors 50-35 in the first rematch between these two teams since last season's C Conference Championship. Brad Rifkin totaled 12 points and Paul Weitz chipped in ten. The real story, however, was Park's defense. The Warriors buckled under the swarming full-court pressure of Bruins Clark, Porter, Brasser, Berman, Gorham, Slatkin and Weitz. "Bring on Key School," said senior Ben Rosen. "It's gonna be a dog fight."

After their dominant win over Beth T'filoh, the Bruins won two more conference games, crushing Key School 64-32. The Bruins delivered a knockout punch in the first quarter, taking a 27-2 lead with three quarters still left to play. All thirteen Bruins scored in the rout, pushing the squad's conference record to 2-0. In the team's most recent game the Bruins beat Annapolis Area Christian School 72-65. Paul Weitz led the Bruin barrage with 26 points and Brad Rifkin ripped down 15 boards against the visiting Eagles. AACS tied the score and took the lead with five minutes left to play but Park remained resilient, battling back to take the lead for good. The team has gotten its groove back, and despite an early loss, is showing the conference what the Park School Bruins are made of.

The team's hard work should continue to pay off with big conference games rapidly approaching. The team will take on an always-talented Chapelgate team, who was seeded number two last year, and a school that Park beat in the first round of the playoffs just a year ago. With all teams capable of winning, it is an understatement to say that the conference is wide open, and with a team that has as much potential as Park's Varsity squad, the season should have good things in store.

Girls' Varsity Soccer sharpens skills for indoor game

by Ben Gamse '05

The Girls' Varsity indoor soccer team goes into the season knowing they have a tough road ahead. A strong returning core of senior players leads the team including captains, Nicole Oidick, Julie Scherr, Katie Frankel, and Drew Fidler. The team is made up of many talented players, but having lost their first two games, they have a lot of work to do and many changes to make. The girls know they have a long way to go to meet their full potential.

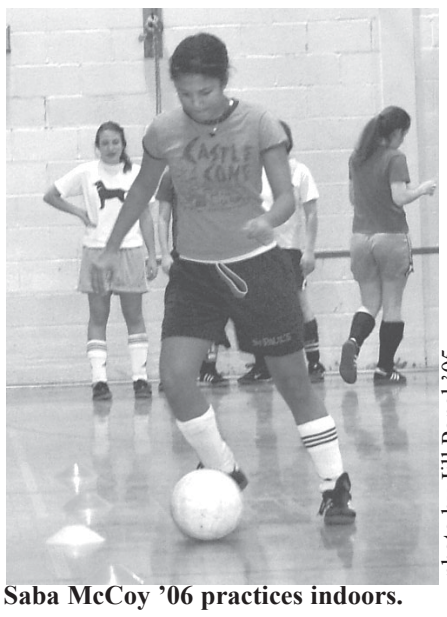


photo by Jill Papel '05

Saba McCoy '06 practices indoors.

The Girls Indoor team is in the A Conference and the competition level of opposing teams has been heightened. "We have many goals for the tough season ahead, and we plan on making many adjustments to our game," says Sara Welinsky '05. Also, as captain Nicole Oidick pointed out, "it is a completely different sport on turf." The game is a lot faster. The ball moves more quickly, so precision in passing, ball handling, and tactical runs are more important. In indoor soccer the walls are in bounds and are one of the greatest assets to the game, so the team must learn how to use them to their advantage. It is a game that through practice, the team believes they will be able to excel in.

The team has tied one game, lost two games, and won one game. Their first game was against Roland Park. The Bruins let up five goals in a very short period of time to open the game, but they battled back to within two. The next game was against St. Johns. The team played hard, but it was obvious they needed to make some changes. The team knows what they are capable of; it's just a question of "changing the team's mentality toward training, team unity, and game strategy," said Julie Scherr.

Practices were quickly shifted to become more focused, and include many more conditioning and skill drills. The team became more unified and learned to work as a team instead of as individuals. As coach Geoff Hoffman said, "the ladies have too much pride and determination to lay down for any team, and their best soccer has yet to be played." At their next game against Bryn Mawr, the girls came out strong, taking the lead with four goals from Junior Allison Zerhusen, and eventually ending with a well-earned tie. The following day they played Notre Dame and refused to give up the win they deserved. The girls started the game with focus and determination, played hard the entire game, and ended with a shutout of 2-0 with goals by Nicole Oidick and Allison Zerhusen. The team has changed their game; it has paid off and the girls will continue to show success throughout the rest of the indoor season.

Coming off a C Conference championship in the fall outdoor season, there was hope that the indoor girls soccer team would find immediate success.

Boys' V Basketball

12/29	6:30 PM	@ Joppatowne High School
12/30	11:00 AM	@ Tournament
01/02	11:00 AM	vs. Greater Grace Christian Academy
01/03	11:00 AM	Tournament
01/06	6:30 PM	@ Arlington Baptist School
01/07	5:45 PM	@ Friends School
01/09	5:30 PM	@ Sts. Peter and Paul High School
01/12	5:15 PM	@ Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
01/16	7:30 PM	vs. Glenelg Country School

Girls' V Basketball

01/26	5:30 PM	vs. Friends School
01/28	5:15 PM	@ Severn School
02/02	5:15 PM	@ Maryvale Preparatory School
02/04	5:30 PM	@ Towson Catholic
02/06	4:00 PM	@ St. Paul's School for Girls
02/09	5:30 PM	vs. Catholic High School of Baltimore
02/11	5:15 PM	@ Friends School

Girls' V Indoor Soccer

01/06	4:45 PM	@ Roland Park Country School
01/12	3:45 PM	@ Bryn Mawr School
01/13	3:45 PM	@ Notre Dame Preparatory School
01/15	4:45 PM	@ Key School
01/22	4:45 PM	@ St. John's
01/23	4:45 PM	@ Institute of Notre Dame

Holiday Basketball Tournament benefit for Habitat for Humanity - January 2-3, 2004

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