

T.i.P.

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT ■ DECEMBER 2005

Recharged: Cellphone policy update

By Phil Donahue
// T.I.P. Senior Editor

The Boston School Committee slammed city students with a new cellphone policy this fall. Three months into the plan, feelings are mixed.

The policy, created by both the Boston School Committee and the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) youth leadership group, allows use of mobile phones before and after school hours. But phones must be off and out of sight for the entire school day. After one violation, students are subject to a stiff penalty: confiscation of their phones. Many Boston Public School (BPS) students believe the new policy is too severe.

[PHONES, PAGE 12]



▲ Photo by: Brenda Leong



Black

NATIVITY

It's a family affair

By Phil Donahue // T.I.P. Senior Editor

Despite the cold weather, December in Boston holds warm, holiday spirit. Boston teens can catch this spirit by watching the gospel play “Black Nativity.” Written by Langston Hughes and performed in Boston by people of all ages, including teens and children, “Black Nativity” explains the birth of Jesus Christ and the origin of Christmas. The show, a Boston tradition in its 36th season, is staged every Saturday and Sunday through December 18 at the Tremont Temple at 88 Tremont Street.

[NATIVITY, PAGE 12]



Local teens rehearse for “Black Nativity.”

▲ Photos by: Shawn McLaughlin



2005: Worst hurricanes in years

By Neelabh Bharti
// T.I.P. Staff Writer

Billions of dollars in damage was done.

Thousands of people were killed, and even more lives were destroyed. Numerous houses were demolished. Entire towns were razed. The hurricane season of 2005 was one of the most disastrous of all time.

As the season winds down, meteorologists are trying to answer these questions. Why did so many people suffer? Why were so many places ravaged? Why was the hurricane season of 2005 worse than any season in years?

Hurricanes form when low pressure air circulates above the water, especially when the water is at a higher temperature. This usually happens within a certain vicinity of the equator, which is why Southern and Gulf states such as Florida and Louisiana are often affected.

A storm becomes a hurricane when it exceeds a wind speed of about 77 miles per hour. These storms have different names in different parts of the world. While they are called hurricanes here, they are called typhoons in the northwest Pacific Ocean, and cyclones around the Indian Ocean.

Storm surges are the initial waves that occur during hurri-

[HURRICANES, PAGE 12]

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

It's feeling more and more like winter. Rain is being replaced by snow, heaters are taking the place of air conditioners, and heavy winter coats are substituting for T-shirts. Other than the change in the atmosphere, not much has been going on, unless you count all the recent disasters the world was hit by. You can read about the 2005 hurricane season on Page 1. If the world does end up tumbling down, at least you have your cellphone to call for some support—unless you're in school because cellphones in Boston are now off limits. (Page 1). If you don't have a cellphone, check to see if it made the T.i.P. Christmas Wish List on Page 8.

Get inspired by "Women Making a Difference" in our center spread feature, and your poetry on Page 13. And don't forget to read all the other great articles in this issue of the award-winning Teens in Print. Oh, you didn't know?! T.i.P. won its first award from the Newspaper Association of America Foundation. We are proudly the best Rookie Paper of the Year for 2005 in their "General Excellence" category.

I would also like to apologize for, and correct, a mistake in the last issue from the article "From big to small: Seven new high schools." The principal of Parkway Academy of Technology and Health is Barbara Ferrer. Susan Friel, the woman quoted in the article, is an administrator.

Here's to, I hope, a mistake-free issue of T.i.P.! Enjoy it, readers.

– Phil Donahue, T.i.P. Senior Editor



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Meet the T.i.P. staff



NEELABH BHARTI

School rule change:

Gum, hat, and tardiness rules

Holiday gift for parent:

The better question—what will they get me?

Believe in Santa?

Does Santa believe in me?

Favorite Christmas movie:

"Lethal Weapon 4"



JACQUELINE FONTES

Holiday gift for parent:

New scarves and mittens

Believe in Santa?:

Yup..always have.

Plans for December vacation:

Sleeping, and spending time with my sister because she'll be back from college.

Favorite Christmas/holiday CD:

"B2K" holiday CD



MANUEL BORIA

School rule change:

cellphone rule

Holiday gift for parent:

My love

Plans for December vacation:

Maybe go to New York.

Favorite Christmas movie:

"The Little Drummer Boy"



CARLA GUALDRON

School rule change:

Let us eat lunch outside!

Plans for December vacation:

Learn how to bake an apple pie.

Favorite Christmas movie:

"The Nightmare Before Christmas"

Favorite Christmas/holiday CD:

"Destiny's Child: 8 Days of Christmas"



ARIANA DIGGS

Holiday gift for parent:

A silk scarf and candles

Best thing about winter:

No school and snow

Plans for December vacation:

Sleep and play in the snow with my sister.

Favorite Christmas/holiday CD:

"Mariah's Christmas Hits"



SAMANTHA MBAWUIKE

School rule change:

Let juniors go off campus for lunch.

Holiday gift for parent:

A new statue of Mary and Jesus

Plans for December vacation:

Going to Houston

Favorite Christmas movie:

"White Christmas"



PHIL DONAHUE

School rule change:

Bathrooms should be open all day.

Best thing about winter:

The view of the first midnight snow

Believe in Santa?

Why would anyone doubt his existence?

Plans for December vacation:

Chillax



STEPHANIE PÉNA

School rule change:

cellphone policy

Holiday gift for parent:

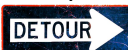
Self-written poem in a hand made picture frame.

Best thing about winter:

Snow

Believe in Santa?

No



IT'S TIME TO JOIN BSAC

Best thing about being a freshman: BSAC needs you!

What do Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) members do?

1. Advise the School Committee as part of its decision making process
2. Keep his/her school informed about relevant citywide issues
3. Work on projects that BSAC develops during the year

How do BSAC members serve?

- Attend meetings two Mondays a month.
- Represent their school at BSAC, School Committee, and other meetings
- Work on important committees such as: school quality, lock-out policy, graduation policy, cellphone policy
- Act as a liaison to their schools and bring back important information
- Survey students and staff at their school when necessary
- Attend at least one School committee meeting a year

What do BSAC members gain?

- Valuable training and experience in: public speaking, political know-how, event planning, and community organization.

Make a difference!

For more information: call Maria Ortiz, High School Renewal, 617-594-5721, or Jenny Sazama, Youth on Board, 617-308-5384.

T.i.P. Mission Statement

Boston Teens in Print unites Boston teens to create an outlet to inform, communicate, and provide positive change through written expression.

How to submit your stuff:

Remember, you can send anything to T.i.P.! Poetry, art, commentaries, ideas, clothes (we'll wear them), news about your school, neighborhood, life, book reviews, TV shows, and music. You can even send food (we'll eat it). Whatever you want heard by 20,000 of your peers, send it to T.i.P. Or, if you want to support our living habits, send food and clothes, but we'd rather have your words. Don't forget to visit the website (www.bostontip.com) and call the T.i.P. Hotline at 617-929-8374 with anything you want to say, BECAUSE YOUR ISSUES CAN BE IN OUR ISSUES.

To learn about submission guidelines, or to submit your writing by e-mail, visit our websites at: www.writeboston.org or www.bostonTip.com.

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Send submissions by mail to:

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PO Box 55819
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Call the T.i.P. voicemail at 617-929-8374
To find out more about Boston Teens in Print, call T.i.P. Manager Kelly Knopf-Goldner at 617-541-2665.



T.i.P.

BOSTON T.i.P.
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MARTINE ROMULUS

School rule change:

The cellphone rule because even if the phone is at your side, it's taken.

Best thing about winter:

School closings

Believe in Santa?

Yes

Favorite Christmas/holiday CD:

"Alvin and the Chipmunks"



STEPHEN SAMPSON

School rule change:

The electronics policy

Best thing about winter:

Sledding and hot chocolate

Believe in Santa?

Yes

Favorite Christmas movie:

"Home Alone: Lost in New York"



STUART SPINA

Holiday gift for parent:

Something hand made

Best thing about winter:

Snow days!

Believe in Santa?

I think of him more as a spirit of Christmas.

Favorite Christmas/holiday CD:

"The Nutcracker Suite in Full Score"



KIANNA WATLER

Holiday gift for parent:

An ornament

Best thing about winter:

Watching the snow

Plans for December vacation:

Sleep and watch movies

Favorite Christmas movie:

"Jack Frost"

OPINIONS
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OPINIONS



IN YOUR FACE

▲ Photo by: Artists for Humanity

OPINIONS
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Is daddy watching?

Handling overprotective parents

By Samantha Mbawuike // T.I.P. Staff Writer

Are your parents overprotective? If you said yes, you're not alone. Many teens face this issue.

There are many reasons parents try to protect their children, such as to keep them safe and to try to make them be responsible. However, teens are not pleased with the distrust that comes from restrictions, curfews, and rules about hanging out with certain friends, dating, and more.

Sheikira Lyons, 17, has a problem with her overprotective parents. "I'll be 18 in January and I still have to ask my parents to do things like go out," she said. Lyons does not understand why her parents are still treating her like a child when she is a young adult. She believes her parents should trust her by this age.

Leon Spencer, 15, feels the same. When it comes to parties, his parents are extreme, he said. "They call the parents of the friend he is visiting to see if the party is legitimate and to make sure he will be OK," Spencer complained. "They call me, like every 10 seconds to see where I am. It is so annoying," Spencer said. He believes his life would be less stressful without the distrust of his parents. He knows they do it because they care; however, he would like his parents to give him some space because he is a growing young man and needs to feel like an adult.

Many parents are overprotective because they care, and I know many teens would rather have their parents care about them than ignore them. But where is the freedom we need to gain independence? Teenagers are growing up to be young adults, so parents need to cut them some slack. There is a time to be strict and a time to be lenient, although many parents cannot see the difference. It's time to strike a balance.

Grace Mbawuike, 39, a registered nurse, has five children, three of whom are female. She is also my mom. When I asked her why she is so overprotective, she said, "because I want my children to be safe. Since this world is a dangerous place, especially for young, naïve teenagers, I have to keep a good eye on them. Safety always comes first, especially for my children."

Mbawuike's children need to tell her where they are at all times after 8 p.m. on weekdays and weekends. She does not let me or my sisters go into any friend's house, especially if she does not know their parents.

Visiting a boy's house is a definite no. So are parties, unless she knows the parents. She has so many rules, I cannot keep up with all of them.

I know my mom is trying to prepare me, as well as my sisters, for the future.

What she wants is to keep us safe from harm. But when adulthood is not far off, when do we get to practice for the future by



▲ Photo by: Jessica Pan and Susan Rowe

making some of our own decisions now?

For parents, it must be hard to tell children they can't do certain things. It's also a parent's nightmare to hear their child has been raped, is missing, or even dead. It is a parent's responsibility to take care of her children and make sure no harm comes to them. Still, parents have to allow teenagers to have some independence and maybe even make their own mistakes. There needs to be a middle ground where teens know parents care and where parents don't worry so much. Parents need to trust their teens, and teens need to earn that trust.

So, teens, if you tell your parents you're going to be home at 11 p.m., make sure you are home at that time! Keep it straightforward with your parents. Parents, make sure there is an understanding. This will make a parent/teen relationship stronger.

Ladies' logos lure lookers

By Stephen Sampson // T.i.P. Staff Writer

I don't know about everyone else, but I'm kind of tired of hearing girls say that guys are "always trying to holla." Girls are yelling out sexual harassment but actions speak louder than words, and their actions are saying, "I'm eye candy."

I don't think that girls notice that the logos on their clothes alone lead to some guys' lust and attract negative attention. Ladies, how do you expect to walk down the street without causing cars to pull over and necks to turn and crack with curiosity when the logos on your body illuminate your curves? You might argue that guys need to control our hormones. Yeah, that's true, but why wear clothes to help feed our fire? My goal is not to be rude, but logos like "bootylicious" don't really help guys look the other way.

Aside from the logos, some girls wear jeans that display their curves, skirts that keep them from bending over, and shirts that show more breast than a bucket of KFC. Ladies, how do you expect a guy to focus on what's on the inside if the outside is the first thing you reveal to them?

Girls, I'm not trying to put you down. You're wonderful! I'm just saying that no man deserves to see underneath your clothes until he's connected to your heart.

Guys, maybe it's time we treat our women less like sex symbols and more like the women they are. Let's try to be gentlemen and approach our amazing women with manners and respect.

Talk back to Stephen Sampson at the TiP telephone line 617-929-8374



▲ Photo by: Haidan Hodgson

Locked out students more likely to drop out

By Yolanda Cervantes // T.i.P. Writer

The Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) started this year with members eager to make a difference in their high schools. The first issue BSAC will tackle is the lockdown policy. For those of you who don't know, in some Boston schools there is a lockdown policy where students are not allowed to enter the building after a certain time. To get into the building, students need to bring a parent with them. If they fail to do so, they get marked absent for the day, even if they are only a few minutes late. Students can be locked out on days when it's raining, freezing cold, or even snowing.

The main goal of BSAC is to create a citywide policy that every school has to follow when dealing with the problem of tardiness. But when students get locked out, it gives them an excuse not to try and succeed in school. Kids are hanging out, roaming the streets when they aren't allowed in the building. Since they have nowhere else to go, this could lead to disruption in the communities surrounding the schools.

The most important problem of the lockdown policy is that students are missing out on valuable class time, even more so than if they were only late to school. This adds to some teens wanting to drop out. By changing the lockdown policy we also hope to improve the attendance rate for each school. To help get these rules changed, BSAC members will be attending and speaking at School Committee meetings about the lockdown policy. If you are concerned about the lockdown policy in your school, contact your BSAC representative so this problem can be addressed by students.

Lockout Policy

By Braulio Soto //T.i.P. Writer

I'm a student who does drugs
I'm a student who no chills with thugs
I have no dreams, no realization
I have no goals, no education
I once was a student with straight A's
I once was a student who in school stayed
Before I basically had a homework streak
I once was someone who was called the mathematics freak
Every day I stayed on task
Every day a question I asked
You may ask "what changed your motivation?"
And I would answer the school policy regulation
The lockdown policy is the reason why
My hopes and dreams have come and died
The lockdown policy keeps students outside schools
It keeps us out as if we were mindless fools
With this policy there is no way of getting together my act
With it in class I can't take notes and study the facts
Don't let the students in this state
Get locked out because they're late
Because of this I have joined the violence
Why?
Because I have no teachers to give me guidance
For you the lockdown policy may seem great
But take it away so other students don't suffer my fate



BU Upward Bound Student Speakers: Eronica Aljoe, Gisele Eng, Gregory Chery, Katherine Patino, Vanessa Valdez, and Erricka Brown.

At the Moakley Public Speaking Institute, high school students learn how to become better public speakers, while picking up little techniques like how to make hand gestures and write and speak persuasively. It's a nine-day course in August at the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum. Participants receive an \$80 stipend for their work. For more information on next summer's program, contact Nina Tisch at nina.tisch@nara.gov.

Enjoy these excerpts from the class of 2005's speeches, which the teens presented during a congratulatory event at the end of the program.

Teens speak **Up** in public

Teens: get a college education

By Antonio Gomes // T.i.P. Writer

What do you teens plan to do for the future? What do your parents expect from you, other than the retirement money you will be expected to provide them? Whatever your plans, a college education should definitely be a part of your future. There are so many more benefits in having a college degree. For example, new doors will open to better jobs that lead to better lives. A college degree is something no one can steal from you. The knowledge gained in college is something that you can always contribute to society.

People, money enters and exits your wallet daily. You can become unemployed, or your electric bill may increase. But your college education is something no one can take away from you. The worst possible things can happen to you economically or professionally, but your education will always help you get hired for a well-paying job, earn money to pay off debts, and help solve other problems. No matter where you travel and apply for a job, the education on your resume alone will grab your potential employer's interest. It represents dedication and obedience. A college degree also expands your way of thinking and your personality.

Dropping out is not the answer

By Pierre Salomon and David Truong // T.i.P. Writers

Do you know more and more students drop out of high school each year? One third of those who enter high school don't graduate. This is a problem for which we need solutions. You might ask yourself, "Why should we take this topic seriously?" Let me remind you that you have children of your own, and it would be a shame for them to fall into that category. Your children carry your name. They can either be part of the elite or part of the forgotten.

Teenagers without a high school education are more likely than others to join gangs and take part in drugs. When a student drops out, they likely have nothing to do so they hang out on the streets. As students, we have seen several classmates go through these phases. Parents don't usually know their child has dropped out until some time passes, and when they do find out they no longer give them any support. Parents tell them to find a job to support themselves. With the loss of their families, these teens are embraced by gangs, new fami-

lies filled with anger, violence, and death. The life of gangsters has nothing bright in it. They are just a misunderstood group of rebels who have failed themselves, their friends, and most importantly, their families. They lose faith in working hard and live a life of crime. Most likely they will end up in jail or in a coffin.

Students should stay in school because there will be better job opportunities for them. They will avoid drugs and gangs. They will be more likely to improve their communities. There are solutions to prevent students from dropping out such as programs like Upward Bound and Urban Scholars. But there should be more programs available to students who stay in school because education is the key to success. There is a saying at the UMass-Boston Upward Bound Program that resonates with our topic about college. "What goes up must come down, not me as I am upward bound."

Wanted: open minds

By Erricka Brown and Giselle Eng // T.i.P. Writers

All over the United States, there are groups of diverse cultures. It's also a fact that interracial dating and marriages are becoming more common. More people are moving to the United States from other countries. Children are being influenced by more cultures at younger ages; therefore, people need to start to be more open-minded. If a person is not open-minded, he/she cannot live his/her life to its full potential. If a person is not open-minded to other cultures, he/she cannot function well in a school, a work environment, or as a parent.

If someone is not open-minded in school, then he/she will be distracted. One example of this is at New York's Stuyvesant High School. "It's a very uncomfortable atmosphere to be in...there is segregation and the school doesn't work to integrate people," says Shira Beery, an 18 year-old who helped plan and run her school's first Diversity Week.

Another example is in our schools. In one of the Boston Public exam schools, the population is diverse, and from personal experience, I know that usually the open-minded students excel. During the school year of 2003-2004, the student population of Boston Latin

Academy was 21.8 percent Asian, 27.9 percent African-American, 11.7 percent Hispanic, and 39.4 percent Caucasian. As a student who attends Boston Latin Academy, I see that since there is not an ethnic majority, people tend to get along with other ethnicities better than at other schools. Those who are narrow-minded at Boston Latin Academy tend not to do as well as open-minded people.

What can you do to be open-minded to other cultures? Try not to stereotype against or label others, and if you know someone who is open-minded to other cultures, talk to them. You might learn something.

Help yourself by helping others

By Kianna Watler // T.i.P. Staff Writer and Anna Le // T.i.P. Writer

There are currently more than 300 million people in America and only 64 million are volunteering. This number, however, has gradually decreased. In 1998, the number of volunteers was up to 109 million. In 2001, the number went down to 84 million. The most recent statistic says that the number of volunteers is down to 64 million. Imagine if this trend were to continue. In a reasonably short amount of time there would be hardly anyone volunteering at all. From our personal experience, we can tell you that the little things make a big difference.

Volunteering makes you feel good about yourself when you're helping out, making a difference. It makes you feel good because you're becoming more mature. It will also show that you can be responsible and reliable. You're experiencing life situations that will help you later on in life.

If you're a student, you can use volunteer work as something to make you look good when applying for college. In some high schools, volunteer hours are needed in order to graduate. When colleges go over your application and see your hours, they will think you are a well-rounded person and altruistic, willing to help out. A college admissions officer at Mt. Holyoke College says that they prefer students who volunteer because it will help you prioritize and learn to manage your time. These are skills every student should carry.

We believe that volunteering is the best way to help yourself and others. Volunteer work makes you feel good and important. You know you're changing someone's life and making a difference in the world. Kids in elementary school are volunteering. Why not you? Please, ladies and gentlemen, we need your help and you need ours. No one ever got anywhere by themselves.

All this talk about youth violence is getting us nowhere. Maybe if schools let teens act out their feelings on 'gurl fights, guns, and violence,' we could make a real difference. Two T.i.P. writers do just that in the monologues they created during a recent internship with Cityworks Theater Company.

Violence through our eyes

By Ariana Diggs and Martine Romulus // T.i.P. Staff Writers

During the summer we interned with Cityworks Theater Company. With us were Greg Allen, director of the company, and the theater teacher at Boston Community Leadership Academy (BCLA), the school we attend. The idea of this program was to combine theater class activities from BCLA with the work that's

done with Cityworks. The goal of the internship was to create two separate monologues that were based on youth violence. Martine Romulus based hers on her monologue, while Ariana Diggs based hers on an actual event witnessed by her cousin. The monologues were created to emphasize the impact of violence and how it takes place in more than one way.

Ariana's drama: "The movie he didn't get to see"

Scene: When the victim, Shawn, gets shot.
Picture this: a group of young teenagers at the bus station waiting for a bus to take them to their destination. (Boys squatted down playing dice.) "Yo, dawg, shortie hit up last night and was like 'I am coming through n stuff.'" (Laughter) "Shheee, shee she gotta friend? Yo, put me on, I am saying."

(Suddenly, a group of older boys approach them. Now you know how these older boys can be. They like to front 'n act like they weren't once a lil' youngin'.)
"A yo, what hood u from?" (Walking towards them.) "Ah, wha they wanna front 'n act like they don't hear or see us talking to em? I am talking to u." (He points.)

"Yo, what's the problem? We just waiting for the bus."
"Just waiting for the bus huh?" (His back is turned because he's talking to his boys.)

Sounds: POW...POW...POW!! (and their lives quickly flash before their eyes)

Comment: Aside from young boys and gangs, we explored young teenage girls and why they turn to violence to help solve their problems. I chose to base my monologue on this killing not just because Shawn was a friend but because it's a crime that is happening way too often--young kids getting punked around just because of the hood they're from.

Martine's drama: "Why girls fight"

"As I was lookin' at the crowd cheering, I noticed my boyfriend in the crowd with his arms around another girl. He had a huge grin on his face. As I was lost in my boyfriend's reaction, I lost my concentration. Before I knew it I was getting banged on. Then the b**** slammed my head on the hard tiled floor and I was getting banged on the face. Then the b**** slapped me.
She looked at me and said: "ya think ya cute huh?"
The next thing I remember she pulled a razor from her tongue, and said:

'I'm gonna slice that pretty face of yours.'
All I heard from the crowd then was 'oooooooooooooooooh...."
Comment: Eventually, we hope to contribute these monologues to a program that utilizes theater as a violence prevention tool. We were eager to get involved with this project because we're fed up with watching the news and hearing about local teens who have been stabbed or shot instead of them reporting about how safe our community is or how teens are doing positive things.



▲ Artwork by: Oliver Guiney



▲ Artwork by: Denna Hillery



▲ Artwork by: Jackie Mello

'tis the season



THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas on a budget

By Manny Boria // T.i.P. Staff Writer

“Kids are very expensive these days,” as my mom likes to say. Around the holidays, I agree with her. Teens ask for a lot of things at Christmas, and as they get older, these “things” get more expensive. Here’s a reality check for all those teens who want so much but will have to settle for less.

In the columns below, we print price estimates for most asked gifts (on the left) compared with the reality of the typical parents' budget (right) for holiday presents.

The Cost of Dream Gifts

Dell computer\$499 and up
T-shirts\$10
Jacob Watch\$9,200
X-box 360\$399
Jordans\$125
i-Pod\$299
CD's\$15
I860 (Nextel)\$250
Fitted Hats\$30

Sample Parent Budget: \$200/ Kid

2 T's\$14
2 CD's\$30
1 Fitted Hat\$30
Pair of Jordans\$125

Christmas Memories

By Wendy Nunez // T.i.P. Staff Writer

Do you have a Christmas memory that stands out? The best present you ever got—or didn’t get? Maybe your brother was laughing so hard that milk came out of his nose? Or the cat climbed the Christmas tree and brought it crashing down? Or your mom tripped and fell while carrying the turkey platter to the table? How about taking it back to when you were 5 years old and you didn’t get anything you asked for—only clothes. Remember how disappointed you were? Here is a collection of holiday memories from the T.i.P. staff.

LAURYS ABREU

“Last Christmas was bad because my mom was in the Dominican Republic and my sister was over at her boyfriend’s house. The tradition was always to open presents together, but half the family was gone.”

MARTINE ROMULUS

“I remember back in 1995, one Christmas morning, I got a Barbie washing machine and some other stuff I didn’t care about. But I always wanted that Barbie washing machine.”

SAMANTHA MBAWUIKE

“Christmas 2003 my cousins from Houston surprised us and we had a lot of fun. We hadn’t seen them in six years.”

STEPHEN SAMPSON

“One time when I was 10 years old, I really wanted a remote control car. I ran downstairs and I opened every present, and I didn’t get it. So I cried a little. Later that day, my dad came with a box and it was the car. It was the happiest Christmas ever.”

MICHAEL SMITH

“When I was 7 years old, it was the perfect Christmas. I woke up and opened my presents an hour before every one else woke up. The whole family came over. It felt good.”

PHIL DONAHUE

“My birthday is right after Christmas, so I got my first ever bike when I was maybe six. I tried to ride it in the winter. It was a nice black bike with training wheels. I was riding over snow when I figured out one of the training wheels was lost. But I was still riding it, and I realized that I could ride a bike without training wheels.”

All artwork from Artists for Humanity



10 TIPS TO SURVIVE A NEW ENGLAND WINTER

By Stuart Spina // T.i.P. Staff Writer

1. Wear two of everything: two pair of pants, two pair of socks, two hats, gloves. When it hits 15 degrees, you'll be glad to have all that stuff on.
2. When traveling by MBTA after a snowstorm, leave an hour earlier than normal. The T's known for practically shutting down after it snows.
3. Wear bright, lively clothes: reds, oranges, and yellows. You'll feel summery and rid you of the "blahs" from looking at nothing but white snow, grey skies, and dark evenings.
4. Have a snowball fight. It may sound childish, but it's lots of fun and gives you something to do.
5. Throw a party. You and your guests can wear summer clothes, whip out the grill and barbecue, just like it was August.
6. Sit by the fireplace and relax with hot cocoa. If you don't have a fireplace, decorate your radiator like a mantelpiece, and pull over some chairs.
7. Play summertime sports like baseball and soccer. It sounds crazy, but the activity will keep you warm.
8. Learn to play a musical instrument. It's fun and you can entertain your family and friends.
9. Be glad you get to see the light of day at all. During Arctic and Antarctic winters, it is pitch black for six months.
10. Sleep. It works for me.



New year's res'

T.i.Pical Conversation

By Phil Donahue // T.i.P. Senior Editor

T.i.P. invaded the South Boston Educational Complex and asked students one question. What's your New Year's resolution? Here's what local teens had to say.

Photos by: Phil Donahue

Name: Perla Rosario
Age: 15, Sophomore
School: Odyssey High School
Resolution: "To get a boyfriend because I don't have one."



Name: Shanee Greenidge
Age: 15, Sophomore
School: Excel High School
Resolution: "Do good in school, and try to make it to the WNBA."



Name: Samantha Lamrre
Age: 17, Senior
School: Odyssey High School
Resolution: "To graduate!"



Name: Laura Simmons
Age: 17, Junior
School: Odyssey High School
Resolution: "To get a job!"



Name: Johan Balerio
Age: 16, Junior
School: Monument High School
Resolution: "I don't know yet... use condoms!"

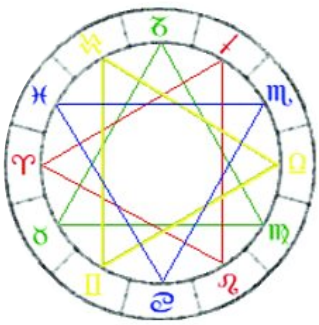


Name: Antonio Jones
Age: 17, Junior
School: Monument High School
Resolution: "To get into all the colleges I want to attend."



Name: Paul Coveny
Age: 16, Junior
School: Excel High School
Resolution: "To do something good in society and do something good in my life."





Horoscopes

By: Carla Gualdron // T.i.P. Staff Writer

ARIES (The Ram)
(March 21 - April 19)
Strengths: Active, daring, spirited
Weakness: Hasty, impulsive
This year will bring you: Energy. It's time to get back to business after the festive holidays. There's plenty of school and personal work that needs to get done. You will have plenty of energy to get all your tasks done...and then some.

TAURUS (The Bull)
(April 20 - May 20)
Strengths: Patient, imaginative, authentic
Weakness: Stubborn, defiant
This year will bring you: Opportunity. It's time to make changes in your life. Doors that lead to new paths will be opening for you this year. Take this opportunity to do something different.

GEMINI (The Twins)
(May 21 - June 20)
Stengths: Curious, open-minded, multi talented
Weakness: Capricious, impatient
This year will bring you: Wealth. You will be rewarded with some extra cash. Treat yourself to something nice! Try not to spend it all in one place!

CANCER (The Crab)
(June 21 - July 22)
Strengths: Generous, perceptive, caring
Weakness: Cranky
This year will bring you: Comfort. You might have felt uncomfortable in your surroundings lately. All that will change. You will now find your inner peace and become comfortable with your surroundings and the people around you. Concentrate on warm, peaceful feelings.

LEO (The Lion)
(July 23 - August 22)
Strengths: Responsible, reliable, devoted
Weakness: Arrogant, crabby, self-indulged
This year will bring you: New experiences. Are you tired of the same routine everyday? This year you will meet new people and travel to different places. Expect the unexpected.

VIRGO (The Maiden)
(August 23 - September 21)
Strengths: Supportive, compassionate, conscientious
Weakness: Unorganized, critical
This year will bring you: A reunion. Long distance friends or family will pay you a visit. Enjoy every minute you have together because who knows when you will see each other again.

LIBRA (The Scales)
(September 22 - October 22)
Strengths: Appealing, smart, sensitive
Weakness: Moody, scheming, hopeless
This year will bring you: Family matters. We hear wedding bells! Someone in your family will be getting married. Another member is expecting a delivery from the stork. All these exciting family matters are something to look forward to.

SCORPIO (The Scorpion)
(October 23 - November 21)
Strengths: Intense, playful, lovely
Weakness: Jealous, possessive
This year will bring you: Commitment. Whether it's committing to be in a relationship, school work, or a sport you play, this year you are fully committed and willing to give it your 100 percent to succeed.

SAGITTARIUS (The Archer)
(November 22 - December 21)
Strengths: Passionate, stimulating, charming
Weakness: Quarrelsome, irresponsible at times
This year will bring you: Attention. Someone you've been thinking about is now paying attention to you. Although you really do enjoy this attention, are you sure you want to get involved?

CAPRICORN (The Goat)
(December 22 - January 19)
Strengths: Meticulous, diligent, achiever
Weakness: Fatalistic, egotistical, inflexible
This year will bring you: Relaxation. All your hard work, time, and effort are paying off. Now it's time to relax and sip on some lemonade. Enjoy your time off. You deserve it.

AQUARIUS (The Water Bearer)
(January 20 - February 18)
Strengths: Rational, coherent, consistent
Weakness: Self-centered
This year will bring you: Love. This year someone very special is going to come into your life. You will realize that someone who you thought was just friend is much more. If you already have someone, let the person know.

PISCES (The Fish)
(February 19 - March 20)
Strengths: Vigorous, daring, bold
Weakness: Impractical, dreamy
This year will bring you: Fame. You might not be the next "American Idol" but your name will be recognized. Whether it's because of a performance you gave in a talent show, a poem you wrote, or something incredible you did, people will respect you for it.

Nothing honorable about honor killings

By Stephanie Peña // T.i.P. Staff Writer

Have you ever wondered what life would be like without civil rights? What if someone did something to harm you, and you were not protected because you didn't really have rights, or because no one enforced them?

Imagine you find your soul mate but somewhere along the way you disrespect him in any way, such as by cheating on him. Imagine that person could do anything to punish you—even if it means killing you—just because he can, and nothing can be done to that person because – remember – there are no civil rights to protect you.

According to a report from Amnesty International, in Pakistan, up to three women a day die in so-called “cooking” accidents caused by their husbands or family. These are, in fact, “honor killings”—murder in the name of saving a family from a “woman’s shame.”

In the United States, if your husband or a family member hurts you, you can have something done, like have them arrested and prosecuted in a court of law. We can do this because we have civil rights to protect us and because the United States gives everyone the opportunity to be well educated enough to make “correct” choices. For example, the United States has awareness programs and counseling designed to address and prevent domestic violence. By contrast, of all the husbands and family members who hurt women in Pakistan, only 5 percent are convicted.

In this story, however, not everything is sour. At Monument High School, there is a program called Girls Learn International (GLI). They are linked with a school in Pakistan that receives help from the group. Monument helps out by sending money to buy anything the school in Pakistan needs to stay in touch with the group, for example a digital camera. One example of Monument’s generosity is that they donated \$800 to the Nasra School in Pakistan. They worked very hard to raise the money, running bake sales and other events that required students to make a donation in order to take part. This year they are trying to form an International Day so people are aware that not everyone around the world has civil rights and not everyone has a chance to become educated. So far they have ordered 500 fortune cookies that contain, instead of fortunes, facts about Pakistan.

What GLI is doing at Monument High School will not solve the problem, but it is a great start. They are aware that Pakistan is on the other side of the world. They believe that all they are doing will raise awareness so one day they will be able to say they not only took part in educating people about this injustice, they took part in putting a stop to these incidents.



▲ Photo by: Artists for Humanity



LONG LIVE THE butterflies

By Carla Gualdron // T.i.P. Staff Writer

This time of year when everyone is preparing for the holidays, it's easy to forget issues like violence against women. Last month, on November 25, many Latin American countries recognized the problem with the International Day Against Violence Towards Women. The day honors the Mirabal sisters, who were brutally murdered in the Dominican Republic while fighting for justice.

From 1930 to 1961, the Dominican Republic was ruled by the ruthless dictator Rafael Trujillo. Trujillo came to his presidency during a revolt against then president Vazquez. Anyone who supported Vazquez was murdered. This cruel method assured Trujillo's victory. Later, Trujillo established a secret police force that tortured anyone who spoke out against him. Thirty thousand people were killed under his merciless regime.

The Mirabal family was a wealthy clan from a town in Salcedo, Dominican Republic called Ojo De Agua. Enrique and Mercedes Mirabal had four daughters: Patria, Dede, Minerva, and Maria Teresa. Minerva, who always wanted to go to school, persuaded her father to let her and her two older sisters attend Colegio Inmaculada Concepcion. Minerva met a girl named Sinita there who told her the truth about Trujillo. Sinita had been personally affected by Trujillo's harshness. He had killed all her uncles, her father, and then her only brother. Minerva was in disbelief. When she and her sisters finished school and were back at home, they were introduced to Virgilio Morales, a professor at the college who was also joined in an underground revolution to throw Trujillo out of office. He called Minerva "Mariposa" (butterfly) because she believed in justice and wanted to join the revolution. Unfortunately, Virgilio was wanted by Trujillo's men, so he fled the country.

In the midst of this, the Mirabal family was invited to the Discovery Day Dance hosted by Trujillo. At the party, Minerva was invited to sit with the dictator. While she danced with Trujillo, they talked about what she wanted to do in the future. She told him she wanted to attend law school. He said women weren't allowed to go to law school, but, if she compromised, he would allow her. Then he began to grope Minerva. She backed away and slapped him.

The next day the police were looking for Enrique Mirabal to "question" him. He had been sent to jail

where he was tortured and beaten, the consequences he had to pay for his daughter's actions. The girls tried to get him out, but the police always had an excuse. Finally, one day Trujillo talked personally to Minerva about the release of her father. They were to roll a die and who ever rolled the higher number would get their wish. Trujillo said if he won he would release her father but have her. If she won, he would release her father and allow her to attend law school. Minerva won. Shortly after, Enrique was released, but he died because his body was so weak.

Later that year, Minerva went to the University of Santo Domingo. There she met Manolo Tavarrez, who was a friend of Virgilio. Manolo asked Minerva how she got Trujillo to let her study law. She replied: "I gambled with the devil and won." Manolo was also in the underground revolution. This time Minerva went to join them. When graduation arrived, Minerva did not receive her diploma. Trujillo told her, "I said I will allow you to attend law school. We never discussed anything about practicing it."

Patria and Maria Teresa joined their sister in the revolution. The government found out what the sisters were doing. Patria, Minerva, Maria Teresa, and their husbands were arrested. They were sent to La Victoria and sentenced to five years. They were often sent to La Cuarenta, an infamous torture prison. The three sisters were released finally and were to finish their sentence under house arrest. They were only allowed out twice a week: to visit their husbands and to go to church on Sundays. During this time, the women had become a symbol of hope for the Dominican Republic. Where ever they went, people would whisper, "Long live the butterflies."

On November 25, 1960, while the sisters were returning home from visiting their husbands, Trujillo's men captured them. Patria broke free and yelled that the Mirabal sisters were going to be murdered. One of the men captured her and dragged the women to a sugar cane field where they were beaten and strangled. Trujillo thought that by doing this he was getting rid of his biggest problem, but six months later he was assassinated.

The day of the murders will forever be remembered in the Dominican Republic, when three heroic sisters died fighting for liberation. Obviously, these sisters serve as models for women fighting injustices of all kind. May all women of the world take a stand and fight for what they believe is right! Long live the butterflies!



▲ Artwork by: Artists For Humanity



▲ Artwork by: Tatiana Ware

Nativity

[FROM PAGE 1]

Sisters Azinga, 13, and Zakiya, 16, Ming, have performed together in “Black Nativity” for eight years. “When I was five my mom heard about it from our dance instructor, and he told us we had good voices, and we came in,” Azinga said. “We sort of stuck around.”

Darius Ware, 16, started to participate in “Black Nativity” before the Ming sisters. “Back in 1989, I was baby Jesus. I would’ve never paid attention if it wasn’t for my mother,” he said. His mother is a soloist in the play.

When it comes to local performers, “Black Nativity” is a family affair. The play holds generations of families on stage. And the young actors wouldn’t have it

any other way. “Can’t do it without my sis!” said Zakiya Ming.

While teens may know “A Dream Deferred” and other poems by Langston Hughes, they’re probably less familiar with this piece of literature. “Black Nativity,” sponsored by the National Center for Afro-American Artists Inc. (NCAAA), is a “song-play” telling the story of the Nativity (the birth of Christ) “in scripture, verse, music, and dance,” according to the NCAAA handbook. It combines the Gospel of St. Luke with the verse of Langston Hughes.

There’s just enough time to watch these teens and their families perform. Tickets can be purchased at www.blacknativity.org, or at the theater, and range between \$17.50 and \$41. Zakiya Ming explains why she still loves being in the show. “It’s an amazing thing. You give a part of your soul to everybody out there.”



▲ Photos by: Shawn McLaughlin

“The Black Nativity” cast includes people of all ages, including children

Do you love to write?
Do you want to be published?
Do you live, go to school in, or
have a relationship with Roxbury?
If the answer is Yes,

...we invite you to submit your poetry, short stories or essays to be in the 2006 Roxbury Literary Annual for Youth (RLA/Y). RLA/Y is open to students in grades 7-12 who live in the Greater Roxbury community or who attend school in Roxbury.

The deadline for submissions is Friday, January 13th, 2006.

For specific information or to get an application please contact **Terri Brown, Programs Manager 617.541.3900 x2323** or email: tbrown@madison-park.org. You can also download the forms from the ACT website: www.actroxbury.org (*click on the Roxbury Literary Annual link*).

As a bonus, there will also be a RLA/Y Creative Writing Workshop for select students published in RLA/Y 2006 during February vacation week.



ACT
ARTS
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Roxbury Centre for Arts
& Technical Education

This competitive project will provide stipends to students whose work is selected and to those students who are accepted into the RLA/Y Creative Writing Workshop.

Don't delay - submit today!

Phones

[FROM PAGE 1]

Students who talked with T.i.P. said the rules should be more lenient. Sixteen-year-old Jennifer Cox, a junior at Odyssey High School in the South Boston Educational Complex, believes students should be allowed to use their cellphones during free time. “They are our cellphones. It’s our free time—going to our lockers, eating lunch—so we should be able to use our cellphones,” she said. She believes students would comply under a less strict policy. “I think the kids would be more likely to succeed and be less aggressive,” toward the current policy, she said.

Some students are defying the new policy because they think it’s too strict. Another junior at Odyssey High, seventeen-year-old Arvell Beckles said, “When the teacher’s not looking at you, just talk. I never get caught.” Beckles may be rebellious and boastful but he has witnessed firsthand the cellphone policy’s enforcement. “Sitting in the lunchroom one day, some girl was talking on the phone, then the administration came up behind her and just took her phone!” he said.

The policy was established this year because BPS faculty and administrators said cellphone use was a class disturbance. “I hear good things about it,”

Hurricanes

[FROM PAGE 1]

canes. They are the most damaging parts of a hurricane. Nine out of ten people who die because of a hurricane die because of storm surge. The waves can be several feet high and vary with the intensity of the hurricane. The highest one recorded in America was during Hurricane Katrina, reaching a maximum height of 30 feet. Wave height also depends on the topography of the land below the water, or bathymetry. Some ocean floors are more favorable to higher storm surges than others. Hurricanes are named each season using the alphabet; thus we have many hurricane names, from A to Z. There have never been so many storms to necessitate returning to the beginning of the alphabet again, but 2005 was different. There are many possible reasons. One is that sometimes there are cycles of particularly bad hurricane seasons. Another is global warming. “A combination of factors seems to have been at play: unusually high sea surface temperatures throughout the tropical Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf of Mexico, plus relatively little wind shear, which is detrimental to hurricane formation,” said Kerry A. Emanuel, professor of meteorology at MIT, in an interview with T.i.P. conducted via e-mail.

A subject on many people’s minds is whether or not residents of New England would be able to cope with a disaster on the same level as Katrina. “A Category 4 hurricane would be extremely rare in New England,” according to Emanuel. “The Great New England Hurricane was Category 3.” In the event such a disaster struck again, Emanuel warned, “We might have to be prepared to evacuate much of Long Island, the Cape, and the Islands in the face of a repeat of the ’38 storm. I am not sure what plans may exist to do that. But I would expect such a storm to cause immense destruction again.”

Emanuel also reasoned that “the steering currents were not particularly favorable to bring storms up the coast, and many of the storms developed too far west to have much chance of affecting New England.”

Bostonians hope it stays that way.

Superintendent Thomas Payzant said of the new policy. “Students, in general...and faculty...are trying to implement it well.” Payzant recognizes the policy may have its faults. “When anything is new you have to be willing to take a look at it after it’s been in place for a while but I wouldn’t tinker with it within this school year,” he said.

Javier Bastos, a ninth-grade science teacher at Boston Arts Academy, is astounded at the policy’s progress. “Ninth-graders may be more impressionable but they are very careful to keep them out of sight. I have only heard a cellular twice this year and both times the students were visibly distressed” when it rang, he said.

Jewel Cash, a junior at Boston Latin Academy, and BSAC representative to the Boston School Committee, doesn’t believe the issue is with the current student policy but lies with a future policy for teachers. Cash said, “I think it’s going all right, and the biggest problem is now the teachers’ cellphones are going off and they’re having conversations in the middle of class.” Cash added: “The next steps are to talk to the teachers’ union about getting them to follow the rule as well.” Bastos and his fellow teachers try to follow the policy along with students and said, “It’s been a little challenging for me but I look at it as a necessary component of enforcing the policy.”

ONE TEEN'S STORY

Diving into his job

By Gerson T. Louis // T.i.P. Writer

I take the white, long-handled brush and start to move it up, down, up, down. I scrub the algae off the man-made coral. Suddenly, a sharp pain cuts deep into my head, like someone is trying to take a piece out of it. I panic, and swim up to the water's surface, quickly removing my mask to examine myself. "Thank God my head is still there," I think. Swimming next to me is the culprit, with a cynical smirk on her face. It's Myrtle, a 500-pound sea turtle, always on the hunt for food. I know she didn't mean to scare me; she was just looking for food. But this was, like, the 18th time it happened. I think she's trying to tell me something.

This is all in the day's work on the amazing job of a New England Aquarium staff diver. I love my job and I think it's the coolest profession anyone could have, next to getting a lot of money to do totally nothing. But for me, the road to becoming an aquarist wasn't a picnic. I had to be "on the grind and pay my dues" before I could become an aquarist.

I've been working at the New England Aquarium for about four years. Two of these years I worked as a visitors' educator, teaching visitors about the aquarium's different animals, and answering their questions. One day my supervisor called me into her office and offered me a volunteering position with the dive team. I was bursting with excitement. She knew it was an interest of mine working behind the scenes with the animals.

I'm a nervous person when meeting new people for the first time, and meeting my new boss I felt nervous, mixed with a lot of happiness. My job title on the dive team was "diver assistant," and the work I did a lot of grunt work like cleaning, surface feedings, food preparation, and more cleaning. Both of my bosses, Holly and Sherrie, encouraged me to advance my diving experience by taking classes.

The diving class was six weeks of lectures and pool sessions. After learning how to dive, I scheduled the weekend when I would take my open water certification dives. The first day was our skill tests where we had to demonstrate the skills we learned in the pool. The first skill was buddy breathing, where you simulate a low air ascent to the surface using your buddy's air tank. The second skill was a regulator retrieval and mask clearing. I did well on both.

The skill I was having trouble with was the free dive, where you had to release all of the air from the bouncy compensator, using your fins' kick to stay afloat. This is what I had to do: take a big breath of air, go down, and come back up in a 360-degree turn while looking up. I repeated that skill four times before I could do it correctly.

Everyone was very happy for me because I had accomplished something that most start and never finish. There were times when I thought about giving up because it was the easy thing to do, but I didn't, and because of that I get to do this exciting work.



WRITE BRAIN STUFF

Fresh voices...

Are you real?

By Enka Birce // T.i.P. Writer

You heal me when I'm broken
'Cau'se every word you've spoken
Has cleared my fears
And dried my tears.

As I go on I think of you
I know this love is true
'Cause all I want to do
Is to get closer to you.

Your face makes mine glow
Your eyes let me know,
Know that you'll always be there
And you'll always care.

Who are you? Are you real?
Well, I'll stay strong
But don't take long.



▲ Artwork by: Elliann Coleman



▲ Artwork by: Szu-Chieh Yun

Fighter in Disguise

By Kiara K. Lattin // T.i.P. Writer

This is a dedication to all female fighters in disguise.
Stay You.
Stay Strong.
Stay Wise.

No one is what they appear to be.
One example is the person I write about;
It is she.

To describe her I would say,
This is not just a line but the truth that only the strong survive.
When the time comes,
It isn't a lie
That she'll ride or die.

Let her be an inspiration to this generation.
Does she fear or have a phobia?
Is she real or as imaginary as utopia?

If you truly are something great,
You never have to show it,
Because the rest of the world can wait.

On the outside she breaks down and cries,
But if they only knew the extra troubles that lurk on the inside
They'd think otherwise.
They keep waiting for the day of her demise;
But it'll never happen because she's a fighter.



▲ Artwork by: Billy Nunez



▲ Artwork by: Luis Anjos

I Wonder Why

By Shane Bass // T.i.P. Writer

I wonder why we talk about
teens getting killed
is it because we as a community
want to rebuild
we as a community want our neighborhoods
to be silent
so we have to start now to quit all
the violence
i wonder is it our fault our community
is down
but with everyone here we could turn
it around
it only takes a little bit of trust we have
to stop the violence and that's
a must
Fifty-eight homicides so far this year, all I'm
saying is I
really do care.

Poetic Justice

By Shawanna Thomas // T.i.P. Writer

My head is spinning
like 24-inch chromed out rims.
and I'm thinkin'
going out on a limb
my friends confuse me
my enemies lose me.
I'm too fast for their eyes to see
or their minds to understand the concept of
me.
Black nubian queen
hard to bring me down
from a smile to a frown
because, I Xena, fast as lightning
smooth as can be,
nobody understands the power coursing
through me.
now they're down on their knees
begging me please
wanting the power coming through me
the power I control
to them is a must have
in reality
it's poetic justice

T.i.P./ BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT / DECEMBER 2005 / 13

Teens and cartoons

By Ariana Diggs // T.i.P. Staff Writer

Do you still watch cartoons? Confess! It's a deep dark secret many teens hide. Truth is, cartoons take you away from the outside world and let your imagination run wild. While you watch, you are put back into your baby days.

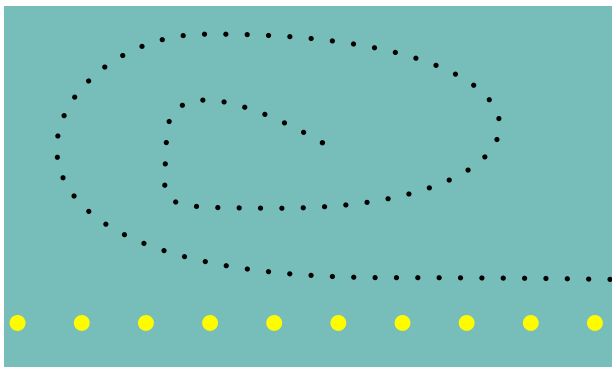
Whether you're watching Dora as she takes her journey to Grandma's house, "Backpack and Map," or "SpongeBob" flipping Crabby Patties, everyone enjoys cartoons. There is no specific age group for viewing, even though a number of cartoons are child-oriented. There is no rule that says just because you're over the age of eight, you're not allowed to tune in to Nick Jr. to watch "Blue's Clues." Teens shouldn't be afraid to admit it if they watch a little animation now and then.

Bianca Lao, 15, a student at BCLA, isn't afraid to admit she watches "Family Guy" because it's "good and interesting to me." When asked if she would pick cartoons over music videos, Lao chose cartoons. "Music videos are played over and over again. I can catch them again if I'd like. Cartoons don't play reruns as much." Audrey Velez, 16, who attends Odyssey High at South Boston, doesn't hesitate when asked about cartoons. "I watch 'Rugrats,' 'The Simpsons,' and 'Dora the Explorer' because they're fun and interesting," Velez said. Jazmine Pendleton, 15, from Wakefield High School, didn't see a problem with teens watching cartoons. "I watch 'The Proud Family,' 'Little Bill,' 'SpongeBob,' 'Rugrats,' and 'Recess.' I watch cartoons because they're funny, and they remind me of my childhood," Pendleton said.

Everyday I watch an episode of "Dora the Explorer" or "Kenny the Shark" and, for 30 minutes, I am the happiest person! You can learn a lot from cartoons. For example, you get to see it's important to have a sense of humor. When you're stressed, cartoons can be the perfect cure because you get drawn in and forget about your troubles.

Cartoons are unique. The characters and the way they react to different situations might appeal to the younger audience while the jokes and content may be directed to the older audience. Lao agrees and says this is why she watches "Family Guy" and "The Simpsons." For instance, "Shrek," "Robots," and "Shark Tale" are all family-oriented movies that both kids and their parents can enjoy.

So, if you're a teen, or even an adult, stand up and shout, "YEAH, I WATCH CARTOONS AND I'M PROUD!"



Boston musicians make national splash

By Ariana Diggs // T.i.P. Staff Writer

Boston musicians are being recognized for their talent, which is pouring out of the area with big time potential. For those of us here in Beantown, it's exciting.

3 4 Da Stripes, a local group from Roxbury, is an example of a group who is really making a name. The group consists of three members: Malik Green, 18 (a.k.a. Young Lik), Marlon Solomon, 18 (a.k.a. Lil Gee), and Victor Cowart, 18 (a.k.a. C-4), who rap about life struggles, as well as how life in the 'hood can play a major role in the things they accomplish.

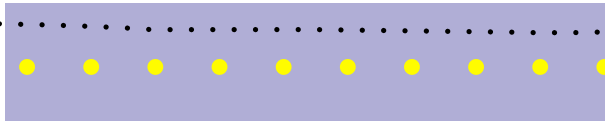
The group's history goes back three years. They are now the CEOs of their own company, 3's Up Entertainment. So far they have appeared on TV on "The 106 and Park Show" and have been profiled in print in True Magazine, The Boston Herald, and South End News, to name a few. They've performed live at the Jorge Hernandez Cultural Center. 3 4 Da Stripes have also produced two mix tapes in less than six months.

When asked where their inspiration came from, C-4 stated, "My family (I don't have friends), 3's Up Entertainment, and especially my two brothers Young Lik and Lil Gee."

To get their mix tapes out there, the group brainstormed on various ideas, (like how the cover of the tape would look), recorded songs, copied them, and then "moved" them. The street demos were called "World War III" and "III Young Hustlers." One song written by Young Lik titled "Charlene" expresses lyrics about the passing of his mom: "Waking up without my moms, this s**t can't be life" appears on the second street demo.

Rapping wasn't always 3 4 Da Stripes' dream. Young Lik and Lil Gee both said they wanted to be basketball stars but weighed their chances and saw it wouldn't work. Young Lik got serious freshman year. C-4 said, "I was always serious about rapping, some people thought I was going to drop out of school. But in the long run it was all worth it!" According to Young Lik, their CDs are so successful because "we take charge by going downtown and promoting them. If you want something done, you gotta do it yourselves. Success comes in threes." Lil Gee says, "We're three moguls in the making." C-4 agrees. "The sky's the limit," he says.

Keep your eyes and ears open. If all goes well, 3 4 Da Stripes could be the next group you see on BET or hear on your favorite radio station. In the meantime, show your support and head down to a Hip Zepi clothing store and purchase the 3 4 Da Stripes T-shirt (yes, they have their very own clothing line).



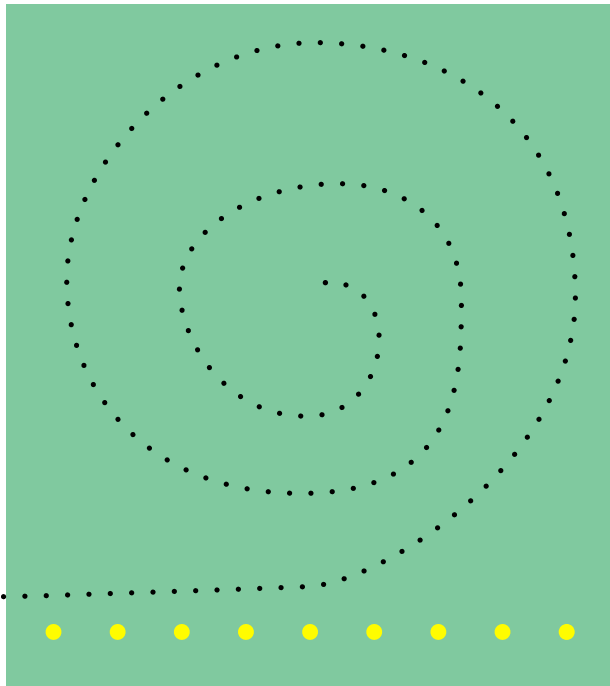
Local artists reviewed

By Michael Smith // T.i.P. Staff Writer

We've all heard of them. A lot of people might disagree and say 3 4 Da Stripes are just a bunch of kids, but these people need to wake up. The music and lyrics come hard but sometimes the content gets repetitive. On the song "Been Bout Money" Lil Gee spits lyrics and it sounds like he's focusing a bit too much on the punch line: "Only time you on TV is when you turn it off and look in it."

Basically, for the first half of the CD the artists rap over banger industry beats, examples ranging from Eminem to Master P. One song that strikes me, however, is Young Lik over the Lloyd Banks instrumental. Young Lik raps about his current status as an emcee and his plans for moving forward. He really comes on strong when he raps, "I came from nothing (nothing) and I still ain't ---/but I refuse to fall and I still ain't quit. . ." I honestly thought this was one of the group's better songs. If they came like this more often it would be crazy. Then on "Ask Why" it gets better. The whole mix tape is a testimonial to their growing skills. Honestly, I believe as time goes on they'll most likely become one of the premier groups in Boston. For now, the mix tape gets a two-and-a-half out of five because it's worth listening to but sometimes it's plain garbage.

A lot of you Boston people sleep on other local artists too. Game boy and the rest of team 3r don't play (which consists of Gutta and Sheek). But if you happen to run across the America's Most Wanted volume one mix tape, do yourself a favor and pick it up. There's only one original beat, the rest are industry beats but that doesn't stop them at all. Ladies, there might be a few songs on here labeled specifically for you, but if you're not really into hard hitting lyrics, then you might slide pass this one.



By Jennifer Sanchez // T.i.P. Staff Writer and
Jacqueline Fontes // T.i.P. Writer

Hungry? Do you ever wonder which fast food restaurant will keep your stomach full and your wallet fat? While chilling with your friends, which fast food restaurants do you prefer? McDonald's, Wendy's, or Burger King? In these reviews you will see which restaurant T.i.P. thought would be the coolest chill spot for high school students. After inspecting each restaurant our results are as follows:

Fast Food

SERVICE: ✓

McDonald's: The person who took our order was nice and pretty quick. We got our meal in under a minute.

Burger King: We got our food in about a minute. The worker wasn't grumpy; he was nice and calm.

Wendy's: The employees were nice and calm. Our meal came in approximately one minute.

FOOD: ✓

McDonald's: The McChicken had only a little mayo, but everything looked fresh, and it wasn't sloppy.

Burger King: The food was good. The burger was well done, and everything tasted fresh. But the fries were so salty you could see the salt on them.

Wendy's: The food was delicious. The burger was well done, the lettuce tasted fresh, and there was just the right amount of ketchup and mayo on it. The fries looked a little oily, but they still tasted good.

PORTIONS: ✓

McDonald's: The burger wasn't big enough to fill you, but big enough to satisfy your stomach.

Burger King: The burger was big enough to keep our stomachs satisfied, but there wasn't much mayo or ketchup on it.

Wendy's: The burger was as big as the burgers for a value meal. It had a lot of lettuce and one huge tomato slice. We thought they put just the right amount of everything on the burger. There were a lot of fries as well.

VALUE: ✓

McDonald's: I ordered from the dollar menu so the price of the burger and fries were both one dollar.

Burger King: The price of my burger and fries were only two dollars from the dollar menu.

Wendy's: The meal was only two dollars for the fries and burger from the dollar menu.

CLEANLINESS: ✓

McDonald's: We saw people wiping the tables as soon as the customers left. As for the restroom, there was only one bathroom stall, but there was no foul smell or any trash overload. There was plenty of soap, paper towel, and toilet paper. The "employees must wash hands" sign was visible. This bathroom was in great shape.

Burger King: We saw the employees cleaning after the customers, but they didn't wear gloves to prepare food. The same person who counted our money, prepared our food. In the bathroom, there was toilet paper scattered all over the floor, the soap was out of the soap dispenser, the mirror was splattered with soap on it, and, I had to wait for a man to get out of the stall I wanted to use because the men and women had to share bathrooms!

Wendy's: We saw some trash on the floor, but only two or three scraps. The tables were clean. The bathroom was okay. It had three stalls. When I was in there, the employees were cleaning the bathroom, but the floors were still wet and there was graffiti on the stalls and doors.

ATMOSPHERE: ✓

McDonald's: The space was really big. It wasn't crowded, but our concern was that they played only soft and slow songs over and over again.

Burger King: The place had no music. There weren't a lot of people there.

Wendy's: The place was really big. When we visited, there were about 40 people dining, mostly teens. It wasn't too crowded, but we had to stay in line for about three minutes. No music.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS: ✓

These are the nutritional facts on the food we ate in all of the three fast food restaurants. Information was researched on each company's website.

McCHICKEN- McDonald's ✓

calories-370
calories from fat-140
total fat-16 g
saturated fat-3.5 g

CHEESEBURGER- Burger King ✓

calories- 350
calories from fat-150
total fat-17 g
saturated fat-8 g

CLASSIC SINGLE BURGER- Wendy's ✓

calories- 410
fat calories- 180
total fat- 19 g
saturated fat- 7 g

OUR TOP PICK:

Considering all factors, we think McDonald's is the best of the three restaurants because even though not a lot of teens were spotted there, the atmosphere was great. It was the only restaurant that played any music, which made the place more enjoyable. We also thought the service was really quick, and the place was big and clean.



▲ Photo by: Ping Zeng

You've got problems?



***Mo will offer solutions. Need guidance?
Mo will point you in a helpful direction.***

By Martine Romulus //T.i.P. Staff Writer

Yo Mo,

I am gay, but no one knows. I am afraid of the reactions I will receive from my parents and peers. At school I'm often trying to fit in with the other guys, but I can't do it anymore. It's just not me. What can I do? Deny my feelings and keep playing along or let everyone know the read deal? I can't keep this life-changing secret to myself for very much longer. I want everyone to know and accept me for who I am. What should I do? PLEASE HELP!!!

Sincerely,
Sitting in a Dark Closet

Dear **Sitting in a Dark Closet**,

It's great that you have the desire to come out to everyone from your dark closet, and Mo supports you! According to the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN), "Many...young people are aware of their sexual orientation/gender identity by the time they are 13," but, at the same time, "coming out is a life-long process."

A lot of people go through the feelings you describe before they come out to friends and family. Your choice may make life seem more difficult at times, but it's all right, honey, just remember you don't have to do it alone. Try to turn on that light and walk out of the closet, keeping in mind these GLSEN suggestions to teens in your situation:

- Coming out can be a wonderful experience but only when you are comfortable with yourself and ready to share your identity with others.

- Turn to a youth group or trusted adult for confidential support. Do you know of a teacher at school who is out, or is there a Gay Straight Alliance (club) on your campus?
- Come out first to people you trust and who will provide encouragement.
- It is usually easiest to come out to one person at time, but remember your best friend may not be the best at keeping secrets.
- Carefully consider coming out to family—they can be a source of great support or great stress.
- If you are thinking about coming out to a school official you may want to check into your school's confidentiality policy first. Some of these professionals may be obligated to share your information.
- Although most people come out face-to-face, some recommend writing a carefully worded letter that captures your feelings and sending it ahead of time to give the recipient time to absorb the news before meeting with you. If you meet face-to-face, some planning may still help the conversation run smoothly.
- Just as it took you time to come to terms with your own identity, be patient while others come around as well.

Sincerely,
Mo

*(With help from BCLA teacher Frank Pantano
and Shannon Barrow, WriteBoston Intern)*

Send your "Yo, Mo" letters to:
P.O. Box 55819
Boston, MA 02205
Or call in your queries to:
617-929-8374

COMING OUT RESOURCES

Peer Listening Line (Fenway Community Health Center)
Helpline: 1-888-340-4528

Boston GLASS (Gay & Lesbian Adolescent Social Services)
(Youth Service Provider)
93 Massachusetts Avenue, Third Floor, Boston, MA 02115
Phone: 1-617-266-3349 Web: <http://www.bostonglass.org>

Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY)
(Youth Service Provider)
PO Box 814, Boston, MA 02103
Phone: 617-227-4313 Web: <http://www.bagly.org>

RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR TEENS COMING OUT:

"GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Queer and Questioning Teens"
By Kelly Huegel
Free Spirit Publishing ©2003

"Growing Up Gay/Growing Up Lesbian: A Literary Anthology"
Edited by Bennet L. Singer
The New Press ©1994

"Out Facts: Just About Everything You Need to Know About
Gay and Lesbian Life"
From Out Magazine, edited by David Groff
Universe Publishing ©1997

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