

Glamorizing teen pregnancy

DETOUR

After high school: Taking a year off

By Nahjah Prescott
Staff Writer

High school students heading into senior year face the question, "What do I want to do after graduation?" While most are deciding to continue their educations, some choose to take a year off, to see where the unbeaten path leads. While many think taking a year off consists of lounging around the house watching the three m's—Maury, music videos, and movies—this is not always so. Some students who take a year off work with City Year or AmeriCorps as youth volunteers. While doing so, they are not only learning how to be independent, but also what it is that they want to get out of life.

Elisenda Cochin, 18, is in Israel this year, volunteering, teaching English, and taking classes through a program called Year Course. She says by e-mail, "It's really important to me not only to have academic and scholastic experience, but also life experience. Taking a break at this time allows me to recharge, embrace different influences, and ready myself for focused schooling."

That is exactly what Melissa Eddison, 18, chose to do last year. Her taking a year off didn't make for an idle mind. With volunteer experience in Israel through MASA (which means journey in Hebrew) and traveling around the world to places like Portugal, Uganda, South Africa, and India, Eddison explored the outer limits of education. [HIGH SCHOOL, PAGE 22]

▲ AF4 photo by Darren Hicks

At Health Careers Academy, students bring home electronic babies to learn the challenges of parenthood.

By Sarah Blanchette // Senior Editor

It started with "Juno," the movie about a high school teenager who gets pregnant by her awkwardly charming boyfriend and ultimately gives up her baby for adoption. From there, the teen pregnancy trend has spiraled out of control.

Last December, Jamie Lynn Spears, the then 16-year-old sister of Britney Spears, shocked the world when she announced her pregnancy on the cover of OK! magazine.

Sure enough, nine months later, she graced the cover of the same publication holding her newborn daughter Maddie in her arms. Since then, her star has been on the rise. For her entire pregnancy, and the months that follow, Spears has remained in the news with headlines that scream, "Inside Jamie Lynn's Baby Shower," and "Jamie Lynn's Wedding Plans."

[TEEN PREGNANCY, PAGE 7]

Dear Readers,

This edition of Boston Teens in Print is being published on the same day the citizens of the United States choose a new president to lead our country for the next four years. The outcome of this election will affect all of us, but especially young people—and we hope that you have followed the issues and taken the time to vote, if you are 18 or older.

One purpose of this citywide newspaper is to encourage Boston's teens to think about the world they live in, and then to write about what they think. And we hope that readers, too, will learn from our young writers, and will also take an interest in the civic and economic life in their city and their country.

A good newspaper educates its readers, makes them think, and then, perhaps, take action. Teen violence, teen pregnancy glamorized, teen depression are all challenging topics that Teens in Print writers are addressing in these pages. See what they have to say.

Sincerely,

Leah P. Bailey

Cathy Downs

Boston Globe Foundation

WRITEBOSTON

The Boston Globe
FOUNDATION

STOP

STAFF

TEENS IN PRINT

MEET THE

SARAH BLANCHETTE

A good president is:

Honest, experienced, aware

Dream internship:

Rolling Stone magazine

Last movie seen:

"Pineapple Express"

Procrastinates on: Laundry

PAIGE CARRUTHERS

Favorite website:

The "old" facebook.com

A good president is:

Smart, diplomatic, Barack Obama

Procrastinates on: Essays**Travel abroad:**

Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Caribbean



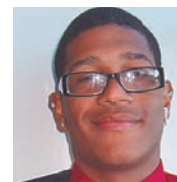
ALEXUS CARTER

Favorite teacher ever:

Ms. Rhone, Charlestown High

Dream internship:

The Boston Globe

Best advice: "Never quit"**Travel abroad:** Mexico

MATT KIMM

Fair legal voting age: 16**Favorite ice cream:**

Oreo with fudge

Last movie seen: "21"**Travel abroad:** Fiji

SANDY LIANG

A good president is:

Hardworking, sticks to their word, a leader

Fair legal voting age: 17**Last movie seen:** "Penelope"**Best advice:** "Just keep swimming"

KATRYNA MAHONEY

Favorite ice cream: Maple walnut**A good president:** Has a nice

smile, is intelligent, is Barack

Last movie seen: "V for Vendetta"**Procrastinates on:** Homework!

CIARA MARTINEZ

Favorite ice cream: Vanilla**Fair legal voting age:** 16**Last movie:**

"In the Land of Women"

Procrastinates on: Everything

DALISA MIRANDA

A good president is:

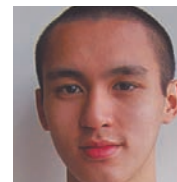
Responsible, honest, trustworthy

Fair legal voting age: 16**Last movie seen:** "Juno"**Procrastinates on:** Reports

ALEX NGUYEN

Favorite website: Youtube.com**Fair legal voting age:** 16**Favorite teacher ever:**

Mr. Keitt, Boston Latin School

Travel abroad: Vietnam

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THANH NGUYEN

Favorite website: Solecollector.com

Favorite ice cream: Coffee

Last movie seen: "The Dark Knight"

Travel abroad: Vietnam and Canada



OLIVE TANG

Favorite ice cream: Oreo

Fair legal voting age: 18

Dream internship: Harvard or China

Travel abroad: China



GABRIEL WARD

Favorite teacher:

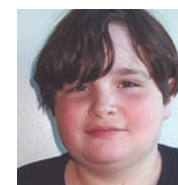
Audrey Ward, home school

Dream internship:

Computer Clubhouse

Last movie seen: "Dark Knight"

Procrastinates on: Schoolwork



TREVOR WARD

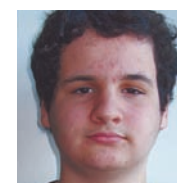
Favorite website: Google.com

Dream internship:

Dunder Mifflin Inc. Paper Company

Best advice: "Try everything once."

Procrastinates on: Math



NATALYN YU

A good president is:

Responsible, dedicated, reliable

Favorite teacher: William Carroll,

Boston Latin School

Last movie seen: "The Dark Knight"

Travel abroad: Malaysia, Singapore,
Thailand, China



EUBELIN RUIZ

Favorite teacher: Ms. Miranda, Urban
Science Academy

Dream internship: Children's Hospital

Last movie seen: "The Family That Preys"

Procrastinates on: Picking out clothes



JENNIFER SÁNCHEZ

Favorite website: Aol.com

Favorite teacher: Mr. Munsey, O'Bryant

Dream internship: NBC

Travel abroad: Puerto Rico



STUART SPINA

Favorite website:

Nofreetransfer.blogspot.com

Favorite ice cream: Peanut butter

Last movie seen: "Dirty Harry"

Best advice:

"Don't do anything for money."



Mission Statement

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

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Write for T.i.P!
That's "Teens in Print."

Whatever you submit has to be YOUR OWN CREATION.
We only print original work. Please write "this is my own creation" next to your name.

You will not get your work back; KEEP A COPY for yourself.

T.i.P. reserves the right to EDIT your work for length, content, or appropriateness.

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SEND your essays, letters, articles, commentaries, poems, stories, pen and ink drawings or cartoons, and photos.

E-MAIL submissions to:
angela.smith.jcs@cityofboston.gov
Send them as MS Word attachments and in the e-mail message. Provide your name, age, grade, and school. We don't print anything anonymously. You must be a BPS student.

FORMAT your writing —Double spaced —Times New Roman, 12 point font.—In the upper left corner, print your name, T.i.P. Writer, and a title or headline.



Mudslinging, finger-pointing highlight '08 election

By Myles McDonough // Contributing Writer

THE ISSUE OF NEGATIVE CAMPAIGNING and its effect on the election has been posed to adults many times; it has not been asked of teenagers. We have not been given a voice in this issue, so I decided to go out and learn just how teens view negative campaigning as it relates to the '08 presidential election.

Teenagers in general seem to be opposed to negative campaigning. Freshman Lauren Prentis, a McCain supporter, said, "I don't think [politicians] should be trashing other politicians," an opinion shared by Jonathan Ondrejko, also a freshman. He said, "There's really no reason for [negative campaigning] to exist."

The feeling was similar for an Obama supporter, Brendan Casey, and an undecided voter, Nick D'Agostino, both freshmen. Casey said candidates "should focus on what they are going to do for us" instead of wasting time bashing their opponents. On negative campaigning, D'Agostino said, "I think it's very malicious...it...shows that you will do anything to get people's vote."

At the time of these interviews, many said they thought such tactics could cause problems for the Democratic Party. Ondrejko worried "it could divide the party," turning Democrats against one another, preventing a Democrat from winning the White House.

Adult opinion seems to be different. Gregory Turpin, a history teacher at Boston Latin School, said negative campaigning is not "a bad thing all by itself because it is more than what is said; it's the response that [comes] from them [that matters]." However, Turpin added that "ultimately it does a disservice to the issues, because we don't get to the issues."

So it would seem that teenagers are opposed to negative campaign tactics. Why, we wonder?

The teens I interviewed had good reasons for their opinions. The common attitude seems to be that such tactics are wrong because they distract the voters from the important campaign issues. When candidates focus on one another's faults, they don't have time to explain where they stand on the issues that face the country. D'Agostino is opposed because he thinks such political finger-pointing is "childish." Putting his opinions bluntly, he said mudslinging is "dumb, very dumb."

So, with adequate reason, teenagers as a group seem to shy away from negative campaigning in political elections. You can see evidence of this for yourself. The next time you're involved in a school election, look at the campaign posters you see on the walls. The posters will most likely be positive in nature. You will not, however, see students "trashing" other candidates the way some of our national leaders have been doing during the long campaign. Maybe teens do know something that adults still need to learn.

AFH photo

To be or not to be popular

By Wiona Desir // Contributing Writer

IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, it was easy for most students. Everyone got along. Even if there was conflict, after a cookie, a juice box, and a nap, everything would be over.

Now, teenagers in high school face issues that seem to revolve around popularity. To be popular, one must be surrounded by popular people, or by those who consider themselves popular. Popular kids seem to wear the latest styles, talk the loudest in the hallways, and host the most talked-about parties. Some of them find pleasure in putting down those they consider below them. They do this because, to them, it restores the power that they think they have over others.

Although I strongly disagree with the ways of some popular people, I understand what those popular people have to go through as well. Sometimes, being popular means having to do certain things that may seem cool now, but may end up causing big regrets later. For example, Dominique Purvis, 15, of Dorchester, who considers himself popular at his school, says he does certain things because he feels he won't be popular if he doesn't. He says he has friends who are "forced into doing things they don't want to." What he deals with is called peer pressure, which happens when someone feels they have to do something in order to be accepted by people around them. Sometimes, being popular isn't easy.

The only advice I can give freshmen is not to change who you are as a person just to fit in with a certain group. Being yourself is what will help you find the friends you belong with. Returning high school students, stay true to yourself. Make sure the people you hang out with are people who aren't pressuring you to do things, or who want you to act a certain way to be friends with them. You may need to make some changes in the type of people you're friends with.



▲ AFH photo by Jane Carper

Popular teens band together against a loner.

Knock, knock: Violence at our door

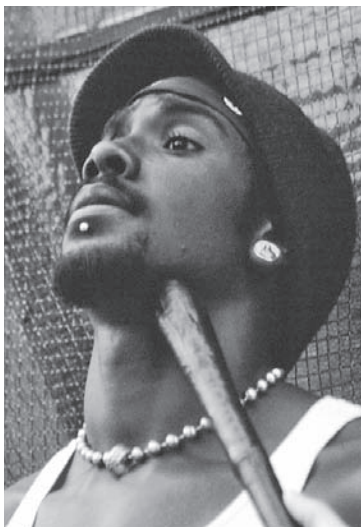
By Jennifer Sánchez // Senior Editor

VIOLENCE HAS ALWAYS BEEN a relevant topic, but more than ever, it's hitting close to home. What is just another homicide in the ghetto streets of Boston to news reporters is our brother, sister, cousin, or friend. Are the Rest in Peace buttons worn by teens not enough to alert the adult audience that our generation is dying? Does the man sitting on the train who reads of murder, then flips to the sports page, really care?

Chances are, these people don't understand that vigilance has become a part of our teenage lives. We are involuntarily drawn into city violence. We see shrines everywhere or a girl in our class crying for her murdered brother. These scenes within our schools and neighborhoods have become too familiar.

Inner city youth are often stereotyped as troublemakers, but no one asks why. Our city's leaders offer advice, but do they understand our frustrations? Today's teens are materialistic and having a job and money is everything. Without money, some teens become frustrated, causing a rash of violence and robberies. A lack of jobs means idle teens are on the streets after school, wanting your new Sidekick, without having to pay for it.

The teens whose siblings are taken away by death or the law have one less role model in their lives. Many drop out of school and get caught up in the streets. Violence has become a result of vengeance, idleness, and dramatic attempts to be heard. Often, when a person is murdered, there are extra measures taken at funerals to find leads. Unfortunately, not every case is solved, and killing causes others



▲ AFH photo by Jonathan Banks

to react by killing. The same follows robberies and fights. This affects teens and our city as a whole. The number of homicides and innocent bloodshed has put fear in all of Boston.

This much is clear. Our generation has seen enough. I lived in Codman Square for about 15 years, and there have been shootings as close as around the corner at the Dorchester YMCA. It's time we own up to our responsibilities to finish school and gain the knowledge needed to acquire jobs and establish ourselves in the world. Teens need adults to take the responsibility of involving themselves in our lives. We never go to them, but that doesn't mean we don't need them.

We need our city leaders to stop talking and to start listening. Our city cries, but this is only captured when someone is dead. If BPS football games are recorded, shouldn't peace walks and similar demonstrations be broadcast, too? We need support groups and adults reaching out to us, including counselors in our community and schools. Teens need to learn to let things go. By continuing this violence, what are we showing an audience who already

believes we are nothing? Are turf and streets that don't shelter or support us really worth fighting for?

Vengeance and street violence will not end unless we each play a bigger role in stopping it. Teen violence makes it easier for government officials to label us all "troublemakers." Let's each take the individual challenge of making this change a reality, and not allow another homicide to be the front page story of the day.

FALL INTO *fashion*

By Alexis Carter // Staff Writer

This fall kicks off a new trend. To teens, the fad can be summed up in two words: Levi's jeans. A simple symbol on the back of your jeans makes the market. Why Levi's? It's not a question of why, it's a question of how many pairs. The wearing of Levi's jeans is at an all time high this year. Maybe it's the symbol, maybe it's the pockets. Maybe it's the variety of styles, from different fades, to denim washes, to the pockets, that make Levi's the hottest affordable jeans. Or is it that Levi's have been around for a while and the brand sticks out?

Levi's: what's old is new

Walk Downtown and here's what you will see. All teens are weaing Levi's. A trendy look that young teens are falling for this fall is the fit look. Young teens, dressed in tight jeans and belt chains, are taking retro to another level. Skinny jeans have been in effect, and teens love them. From shoes, to jeans, to belt, shirt, and a new fresh haircut, fashion is switching up its swag. Let your clothes speak for themselves.

Jordan sneaks for guys and girls

Jeans aside, the latest Jordan sneakers keep teens coming back for more. And not just guys; girls are wearing them too. It seems that everyone loves these shoes, which make other shoe companies a little nervous. It's not just the shoes. It must be the colors. Jordans come in a set of collectable styles teens desire, numbered 1 through 23.

Here's looking at retro

The '80s really set the mark for this fall's fashions, as the '80s have come back to the future. Teenagers like trendy scarves, bright jeans, and colorful shoes with matching belts. This look has really changed some people and where they shop. Hot Topic sells skull shirts of many varieties. Retro brings a flashy, hip look. What's all the hype? What does retro bring to the table? Realistically, the bright colors and belt chains tell people the '80s are back. Skinny jeans really set the tone. Kids want to look good and be seen so they can stand out. Fashion has another name for itself and teens are racking up on these hot trends.



Top 10 places to shop

By Dalisa Miranda // Staff Writer

Everyone has a favorite store, but how do local stores stack up in terms of cost? Which ones are pricey? (\$\$ & \$\$\$) Which ones are a bargain? (\$) Teens in Print made these categories based on the price of a pair of skinny jeans at each store. At the time of writing, Pac Sun had two pair of skinny jeans for \$55 while Urban Outfitters and Abercrombie had some as expensive as \$90 and \$115 (for one pair!). Johnny Cupcakes doesn't sell jeans but the T-shirts are \$30 and up.

\$

Pac Sun
Hot Topic
H&M
Aeropostale

\$ \$

Hollister
American Eagle

\$ \$ \$

Johnny Cupcakes
Abercrombie
Urban Outfitters
Levis

APPLE'S NEWEST PRODUCT:

iPhone 3G

By Sonny Phan // Contributing Writer

Apple recently released the new iPhone 3G. This is the second iPhone that has been released, so improvements are expected. The mobile network is faster than the previous iPhone when you are surfing the Internet. There is also a huge improvement in audio quality. Another difference is design. Although it isn't major, it's still noticeable. Otherwise, the features of the two phones aren't different. Basically, it's a phone and MP3 player combined.

Before you go out and buy an iPhone, there are a few things to keep in mind. You can only use it for AT&T, unless you find a way to unlock the phone, and there are two models. There is a 8GB and a 16 GB model, selling for \$199 and \$299, respectively. The iPhone 3G is cheaper than the original iPhone, but the phone plan costs more. So, although you pay less for the product itself, you will end up paying more for the plan. If you have a tight budget, I wouldn't recommend this phone. Also if you have to switch cell-phone providers to use the iPhone, I wouldn't recommend this either. So I only recommend this phone if your budget allows it and you desperately need a faster network.

FUN FACTS

Pac Sun:

Pac Sun is a great store to shop at if you want to be out of the ordinary, and if you're into the whole punk rock, skater, funky colors thing. They also have really good jeans (hint, hint).

Hot Topic:

Hot Topic is a punk rock or "emo" store. It is for very unique people who decide to stand out in the crowd. They sell graphic T's and different types of belts and pierced jewelry.

H&M:

H&M is low-priced, but good. They have sweaters and variety, from fancy clothes to clothes for just hanging out.

Aeropostale:

Aeropostale is a low-priced store where everyone is starting to shop, but will it go out of style? In schools, many people wear the same sweaters and shirts, and in high school, students want to be unique.

Hollister:

Hollister is a newer store to local malls. Hollister's clothes are like less expensive versions of, but with the same California surfer-style apparel, for teens.

American Eagle:

American Eagle is a laid-back store. They sell the same styles for a while, but they are cute.

Johnny Cupcakes:

Johnny Cupcakes is the new store on the block. Everyone is wearing the shirts because they are unique. They find different ways to put a cupcake on a shirt and mix it to look cool with colors. They are a bit expensive, about \$30 for a shirt.

Abercrombie & Fitch:

Abercrombie is an expensive store, with good styles similar to Hollister. Although teens are not shopping here as much, it is still a top store because of their styles.

Urban Outfitters:

Urban Outfitters is a store that many teen males are starting to shop at because they have graphic T's with personal statements.

Levi's:

Levi's is a store that sells mostly jeans. They're more expensive, but worth it. Mostly males wear these jeans and they are hip.

—Paige Carruthers contributed to this story.

[TEEN PREGNANCY, FROM PAGE 1]

Today, with Alaskan Governor Sarah Palin on the ballot as Republican John McCain's vice presidential running mate—and Palin's unwed, 17-year-old daughter Bristol awaiting the birth of her first child—the question of glamorizing teen pregnancy is impossible to ignore.

A conservative, anti-abortion Republican, Palin is the last person one would expect to have a pregnant teen daughter. But there was Bristol, hand in hand with her boyfriend, Levi Johnston, on stage in Minneapolis as her mother accepted her party's nomination last summer.

What the media has failed to highlight in all the coverage is how lucky Jamie Lynn Spears and Bristol Palin are. Both come from economically stable families, with mothers willing to help, and have supportive boyfriends whom they plan to marry.

Unfortunately this is not the case for the majority of teenage mothers.

According to pregnantteenhelpp.org, teens who have babies are more likely to drop out of high school. In fact, two thirds of them do. Christina Rossi of Planned Parenthood in Boston said, "Pregnancy is the main reason teen girls drop out of high school."

Babies born to teen mothers are also more likely to have low birth weight and a number of other health problems, according to studies. Even so, the United States continues to have the highest rate of teen pregnancies in the industrialized world, according to pregnantteenhelpp.org. The national birth rate for teen mothers rose 3 percent in 2006, the first increase in 15 years, according to a recent story in *The Boston Globe*.

There is only one guaranteed way to avoid pregnancy. Abstinence. Rossi, of Planned Parenthood, said, "Our programs focus on abstinence. But we would like to educate girls about contraceptives and prevention to help them stay healthy and safe." However, as statistics prove, all teens do not remain abstinent. While many believe pregnancy prevention should be taught in Boston's schools, Massachusetts is one of only 13 states in the nation that does not require sex education in the classroom, according to Governor Deval Patrick's website.

Some schools are taking matters into their own hands. For example, Boston's Health Careers Academy offers the "Baby, Think it Over" program, which requires students to care for an electronic baby that cries at all hours and requires being fed and changed. Ciara Martinez, 16, of Mattapan, participated in the program and learned from her experience.

"I learned that I don't want to have a baby because it is too much work," Martinez said. "The last night I had the electronic baby, I had to put a piece of tape over the speaker to stop it from crying. I got marked down for that."

Raquel LaMons, 19, of Dorchester, has a similar story as a teen mother, although her baby does not include batteries. LaMons has an 8-month old son, Raheim, and as she told *Teens in Print* during a recent telephone interview, "It isn't easy!"

An average day for LaMons consists of getting up, feeding, bathing, and dressing Raheim, dropping him off at her boyfriend's mother's house, going to work, picking Raheim up, and dropping him off at her house so her mother can watch him while she is at night school to earn her GED, or graduate equivalency degree.

LaMons explained how her goals have changed since the birth of her son. "When I was in high school, I wanted to go to college and I wanted to go out of state, but now if I decide to go, then I will have to stay in state. I would never be able to live on campus. That is just something that I will never experience."

LaMons loves motherhood but warns teen girls. "It's the mamma's baby and the daddy's maybe! Any guy can leave and go to college, but that is your baby, no one else's. You need to remember that." Of Jamie Lynn Spears, she says, "because she has money, it looks easy, but it isn't."

"There is nothing glamorous about being up at four in the morning," says Kathy Cahill, guidance counselor at South Boston's Odyssey High School, who has worked with teen moms. "Teen moms who do stay in school, and really try, do an amazing job even though it is so much work."

LaMons notes that the baby's father "can still do what he wants. He can still go out with his boys, but you can't just leave like that. Sometimes the hardest part is not being able to leave."

Christy Garvey, a teacher at Odyssey, warns teens, "You have 80-something years on this planet. Spend 25 just doing you." ■

BSAC

BUT 22

By Damien Leach // Contributing Writer

Can you believe how fast the school year has been going? BSAC has already determined the top projects it will be working on this year. On Sept. 22, we decided one of our focuses will be to form a student union that would collaborate with the Boston Teachers Union. The goal of this partnership is to decrease adultism and increase student voice in schools and decision-making.

A second project is increasing student involvement in the hiring process of teachers. We feel it is important for students to have a voice in who is going to be teaching our peers. We probably see our teachers more than our parents, so shouldn't we get to decide who is in charge of our education?

Another major initiative we will push forward is ensuring all students are aware of the homework policy BSAC has produced. Unfortunately, even though we wrote the homework policy (which would provide students with a fair amount of homework to fit into their busy schedules), the process is being held up by BPS and we will continue to work this year on passing the new policy.

The new "Student Rights and Responsibilities" posters are going to be hitting your schools soon. Highlighted on this poster are two policies BSAC has been working hard on over the past few years: military opting out and student government. It is important to note that students and/or their parents have the right to request that schools not send their contact information to military recruiters. Opting out is completely optional, but you only have to opt out once in your entire high school career. Secondly, it is now a requirement for each high school in the Boston Public School system to have in place a functioning and engaging student government. Elections for student government should have been held by Oct. 15 at the latest. More information about this requirement can be found in the superintendent's circular FAM-02. (Available at <http://bostonpublicschools.org/node/190>.)

Finally, we're still looking for people interested in joining BSAC to represent their schools. For more information on the application process or questions about who we are and what we do, contact us at BSAC@boston.k12.ma.us, or call BSAC Coordinator Maria I. Ortiz at 617-594-5721.

Odyssey students endure limited bathroom access

By Sarah Blanchette // Senior Editor

Students at Odyssey High School were greeted with a new bathroom policy at the beginning of the school year. Students now only have three seven-minute designated times during the day in which they can use the facilities: after first and third period, and after lunch. If a student needs to use the bathroom during a class, the teacher must call an escort from the office and wait for them to walk the student to the bathroom and unlock it. Other than that, the bathroom remains locked all day.

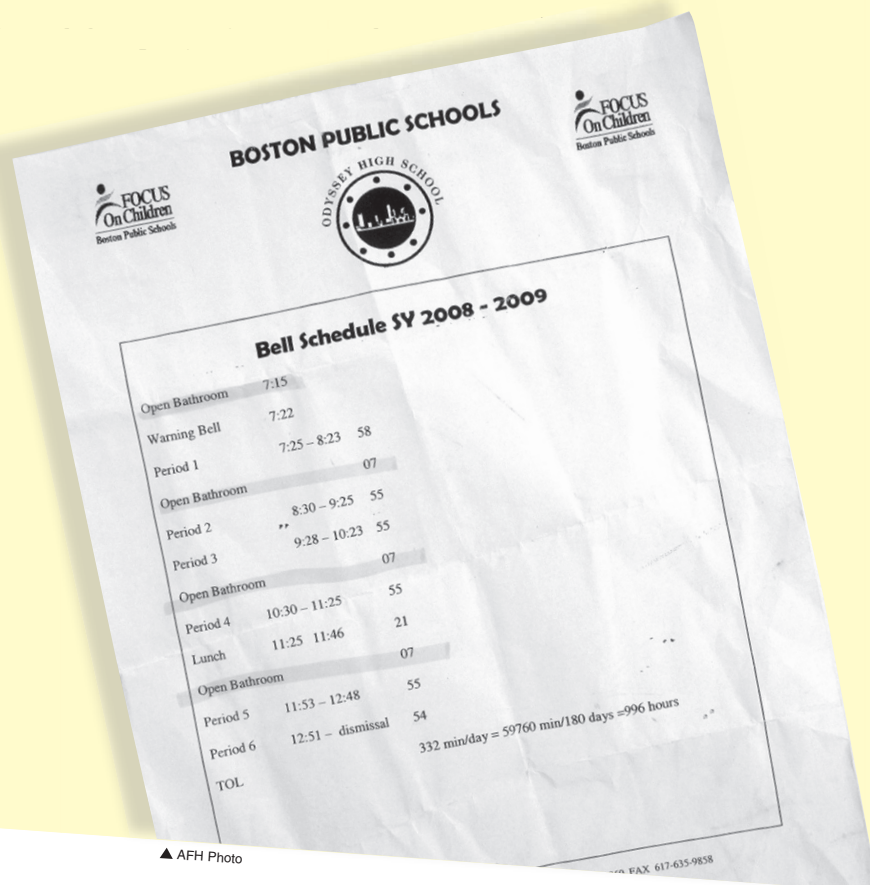
For the last three years, the bathroom policy has been to lock all bathrooms for the first 10 minutes of class. After that, the girls' bathroom is open for 15 minutes, followed by 15 minutes of open time for the boys' bathrooms.

The new rule has outraged many students, who believe their basic human rights are being violated. They are also curious as to what they have done wrong to deserve what seems to be a punishment.

Students and faculty seem to be adapting to the new policy; some are still upset that many questions have gone unanswered.

Policies regarding bathrooms vary throughout Boston Public high schools. The two other schools in the same building as Odyssey—Excel and Monument—have their own policies. At Brighton High School, Jasmine Grant, 17, says, "You never know when the bathrooms will be open. The only bathrooms that are left open are the freshmen bathrooms on the first-floor. The second-floor bathrooms are never open. The third-floor bathrooms are left open only because they don't lock. That's why I just try not to have to go. They're not that clean anyway." Another high

school, Course to College, leaves bathrooms open at all times, as does Boston Community Leadership Academy. At Jeremiah E. Blyden High School, students have a bathroom during every class period.



▲ AFH Photo

FEATURED TEACHER



▲ AFH photo by Darren Hicks

Cate Arnold

BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL

By Paige Carruthers // Staff Writer

To some, school is a most dreaded institution. Two to three hours of homework, math formulas you know you'll never use, teachers with monotone voices who insist on using them for the entire 45 minutes of class, and bad cafeteria food. With six mundane periods of geometry, AP physics, English literature, Latin, and biology, students have come to hate those Monday mornings.

However, this is not the case for a lucky few Boston Latin School students who have an added incentive for not pressing that snooze button Monday morning. She is Cate Arnold, history teacher, environmentalist, and raging liberal.

Not your conventional teacher, Arnold is well known for her hilarious and even outrageous personality, her love for the environment, and resentment for George W. Bush. However, she is most well known for the "Do Something" award-winning environmentalist club she started just two years ago, Youth C.A.N. (Climate Action Network).

When you first walk in her classroom, you are greeted by a comical poster board of the Statue of Liberty wearing sunglasses. Look around Arnold's classroom and various war-propaganda ads, blow-up globes, and Youth C.A.N. fliers occupy the walls. Her desk is covered with word magnets and embarrassing quotes from George Bush, and in the corner of her room stands a tall stack of the craziest hats most students have ever seen. Keep looking and a massive container of candy comes into view. This is the bowl she uses to bribe her students to get higher scores on tests: whichever class has the highest average gets candy. These quirks are the reason why her students love her so much and look forward to her American history class every day.

Arnold's history class, like everything about her, is unorthodox. Unlike most history teachers who preach facts like "in 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue," Arnold is not afraid to digress from the seemingly holy textbook. She challenges her students to think about what the textbook doesn't say and to find out what "herstory," among others, is. With projects ranging from mock trials to essays titled "Columbus: Hero or a Villain?" her students are always challenged to think.

FUN FACTS ABOUT Cate Arnold She...

Is amazing at limericks:

"I challenge anyone to a rhyme-off."

Went to Henderson High:

"They called me Pig Arnold after the television character."

Is very artistic:

She almost went to school for art.

Won:

the Crystal Apple Award in 2006.

and

The Mayor's Green Award.

Swing dances on the side:

"I might break my hip now, but yeah-jitterbug!"

Has donated:

A kidney.

Loves really expensive food, but can't cook:

"I'm kind of like the Cate who burns things."

Has tons of decorations:

"You should see my basement; I could honestly start a business."

Loves:

To kayak.

Wanted:

To be a therapist before she started teaching.

Is an: Arachnophobe

[a person with an abnormal fear of spiders].

—Compiled by
Paige Carruthers

New technology connects students, parents, teachers

By Katryna Mahoney // Staff Writer

How would you feel about your parents having direct access to your grades? This is one service provided by Edline. You might have read or watched about it in The New York Times or on "NBC Nightly News." Recognized as a force in technology-enabled education, Edline "provides the world's leading technology solutions that help schools improve student performance by harnessing the power of parental involvement, supporting teachers, and engaging the learning community," according to Edline.net. It is used worldwide to connect parents to teachers and teachers to students.

Schools with password-protected Edline accounts offer grades, along with assignments, school activities, a calendar, student opportunities, lists of classes, sports, and a contact us page. Edline is a full-service resource, meaning it is designed for teachers, parents, and students, as well as administrators.

Arielle Saavedra, a teacher at Boston Community Leadership Academy, one BPS school using the system, says, "It's an efficient way to communicate and not only academically."

Headmaster at BCLA, Nicole Bahnam, hopes parents will use Edline to keep track of their children's academic performance and ask if they completed their homework, even if parents cannot help them on it.

On the other hand, Edline, affiliated with the online grade book GradeQuick, costs \$2 to \$2.50 per student for the entire school year, which not all schools can afford. If schools do subscribe, another reality is that not all BPS parents and students have computers at home, which would limit their access to Edline's services. Josiah Quincy Upper School and Tech Boston High are two other BPS schools using Edline.

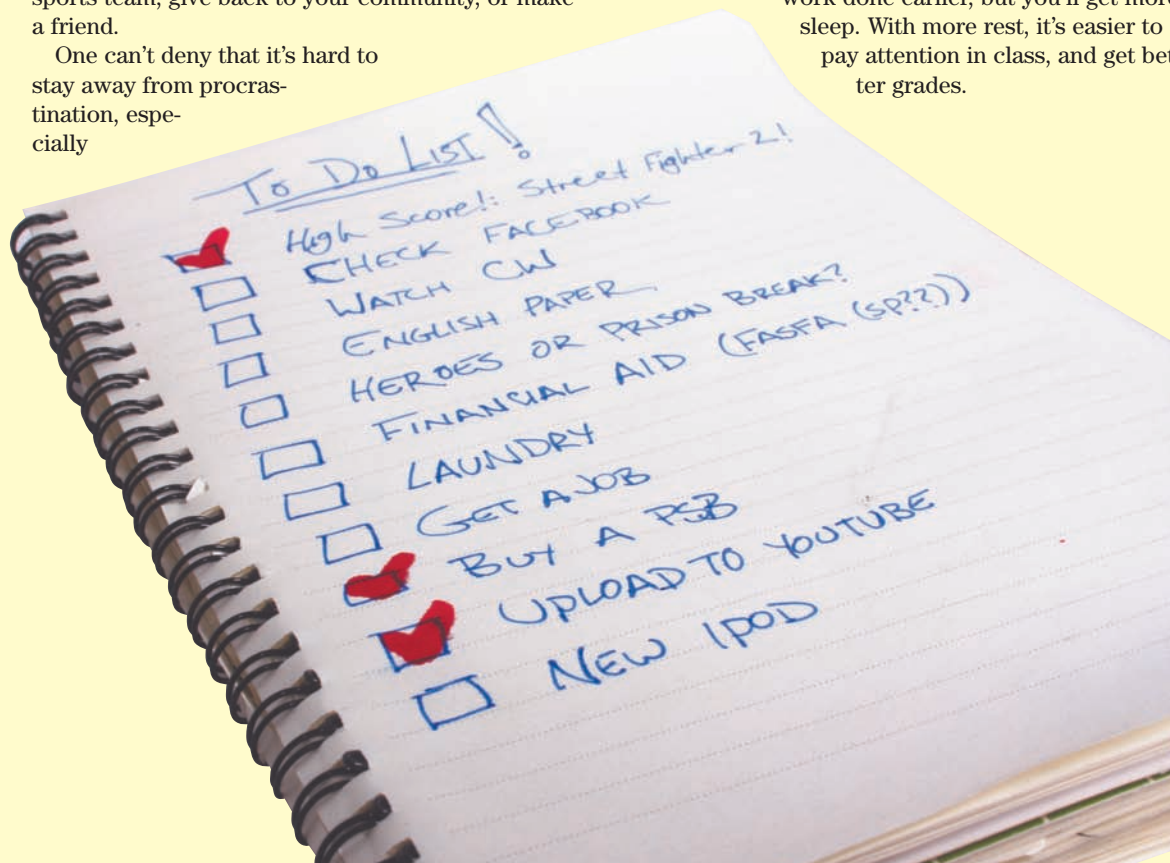
Does it pay to procrastinate?

By Natalyn Yu // Staff Writer

It's hard to think about the benefits of avoiding procrastination when you're lying on the couch eating a bag of Doritos and watching "CSI: Miami." But think about the things you actually could be doing. You could finish your homework or even get that English Lit paper done, the one that's due next week. How exactly is going on Facebook and YouTube going to help you in the future? Of course it isn't a good idea to never stop to sniff the roses, but it's important to find a balance. If you really have a lot of time on your hands, it would be better to use your time wisely. You can learn an instrument, join a sports team, give back to your community, or make a friend.

One can't deny that it's hard to stay away from procrastination, especially

when you're sitting in front of a computer with an iPod in one hand and your cellphone in the other. And wasn't there supposed to be a new episode of "One Tree Hill" tonight? What about trying to beat your brother's high score in "Guitar Hero"? So many distractions, so little time! Let's face it. There's no benefit to procrastinating. It just leaves you exhausted and lowers your grade point average. If you have the discipline to restrain yourself from procrastinating and make it a habit to get your work done, you are going to have a lot more time to do the things you love. Not only will you get your homework done earlier, but you'll get more sleep. With more rest, it's easier to pay attention in class, and get better grades.



TIPS TO AVOID PROCRASTINATION:

"When I study I go to a quiet place so that no one and nothing can distract me."

—Cindy Wong, 15

"I try to work ahead on weekends, get some homework done in study halls, and do a little reading on the bus to reduce the amount of homework I have."

—Nicole Estevez, 17

"Don't wait to do your homework. Once you get home and settle down, you should start your homework."

—Jennifer Yu, 16

"Just don't use [electronics]. Turn off your cell and sign off of AIM, and you're fine."

—William Goldstick, 18

"When I do my homework at home, I wear an elastic around my wrist, and whenever I catch my eyes wandering to a distraction, I flick the elastic. It hurts, but it keeps the distractions away."

—Jesenia Aracely, 15



CAN BPS go green?

By Akshat Pandey // Contributing Writer

Have you ever felt like the air in your school is too stuffy? Ever get headaches sitting under your school's lights for hours? Well, the Nexus Green Building Resource Center in Downtown Crossing, an office dedicated to making every building in Boston green, may be able to help you out. This is good news for most Bostonians. "We spend almost 90 percent of our lives indoors," says Andrea Atkinson, who works at the Nexus resource office.

For most BPS students, a majority of the day is spent indoors in a classroom and leaving class when they don't like the atmosphere is not an option.

While it may sound unbelievable, there are simple things schools can do, not only to improve their overall environments, but also to simultaneously cut costs and help the earth. Having more windows and less electric lighting is the easiest way any school can help make itself greener. Not only does this save energy, money, and improve the environment, but according to an article in the Washington Post by reporter Kenneth J. Cooper, students who have more light in their classrooms score up to 25 percent better on standardized tests than students who don't.

According to the US Green Building Council (USGBC), not only would greener schools increase student performance in class, but they would also improve



▲ AFH photo by Jane Carper

air quality, reduce spread of colds and the flu, help teachers teach better, and save money. One way to make greener schools is to build them according to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards (see sidebar). Even though it would be impossible to instantly rebuild every city school according to these standards, changes can be made that would make a difference.

In 2006, BPS won the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Environmental Purchasing and Sustainability Award for their transition to green cleaning products in all schools throughout the district, their anti-idling policy for school buses, their use of natural gas for heat and cooking, and the installation of solar panels in three schools. Earlier this year, a proposal was submitted to put wind turbines in six of BPS's windiest schools to reduce CO2 emissions as well as teach students about alternative energy.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for students to see up close on a daily basis the power of new technology in creating a cleaner, greener environment," Carol Johnson, BPS superintendent, said in a press release. "These turbines will serve as outdoor classrooms for students and help prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow in the fast-growing field of renewable energy."

While using natural light, wind energy and other green fixes alone won't save the world, the little pieces add up, and eventually BPS could make a big differ-

ence. Considering the positives, going green has many educational and health-related advantages for both the students and staff of Boston Public Schools. So while building new schools along LEED standards and making schools greener can't make school any less boring, it can make school more bearable, and this makes it worth pursuing.

—Monika Derrien contributed to this story.

Buildings that meet LEED standards...

- Are built with materials that are sustainable (made from recycled materials, for example, or renewable resources like bamboo).
- Send less garbage to landfills.
- Conserve energy and water.
- Use lots of natural lighting.
- Have windows that open for good ventilation.
- Are healthy and safe for everyone inside them.
- Don't put out greenhouse gases.
- Demonstrate concern for the environment and social responsibility.

Go to the US Green Building Council website for more information at www.usgbc.org



Stopping a silent killer: teen depression

By Géna Farène Badin and Christelle Pierre-Louis // Contributing Writers

Sadness, helplessness, loneliness, and despair are different stages of the same condition: depression. Teenage depression is not just bad moods and occasional sadness; it is a serious problem that impacts every aspect of a teen's life. How many parents know about their teen's feelings? How many teachers think about their students being depressed? How many teens know that depression is what is causing them to feel sad, bad, and sometimes mad?

Depression is common among teens, but it's often not spoken about. Depression is a silent killer that many teens fight and hide from. Left untreated, teen depression can lead to problems at home and school, drug abuse, self-loathing, even homicidal violence or suicide.

Teen suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people ages 15-24, according to teendepression.org. Studies and statistics show that approximately one in eight adolescents may be suffering from depression. Even more frightening is that only about 30 percent of them are receiving treatment, according to the website.

Depression affects people of every color, race, and economic status; however, it does seem to affect more girls than guys. According to the Kelty Foundation, about 5 to 10 percent of women and 2 to 5 percent of men will experience at least one major depressive episode during their adult lives.

It can be hard for adults to remember how it felt to be a teen, caught between childhood and adulthood. It can be a period of great confusion and anxiety. There is pressure to fit in socially, to perform

academically, and to act responsibly. So, teenagers need some kind of support at home from parents to help them get through rough times.

Parents are working harder than ever to make sure their children have everything they need. But in the meantime, teens' feelings may be suffering. The Kelty Foundation revealed that nine out of ten suicides take place in the home.

The signs of depression are not always known just by looking at a teen; that's why parents need to watch and listen. Parents need to keep communication open and express concern, support, and love.

Another thing parents can do is ask questions. After they've watched and listened to the teen, they might want to have some questions answered. It's a good idea to ask, even though doing so can be difficult. If a teen doesn't feel comfortable talking with his or her parents, parents need to suggest a more neutral person, such as another relative, clergy member, coach, counselor, or the child's doctor. If a teen confides in a parent, mom or dad must show she or he takes those concerns seriously.

Teachers must be watchful for depression in their students as well. They should let students know they care, without getting too personal. Teachers can create a comfortable, safe classroom where the

student doesn't feel he or she has a time limit to suddenly cheer up. They can help students catch up on any missing assignments, or set up extra study time. Whether they accept these efforts or not depends upon the severity of the depression. The fact that a teacher has proven they care can make a difference. Also, teachers should not give up on the student regardless of how long they haven't wanted to put forth any effort in the class. Students can tell when a teacher no longer believes in them and expects them to fail, and it only ends up making the situation worse.

If teens have good relationships with their teachers, they will go to them for advice. They will talk to them not only as a teacher, but also as an adult friend they can count on when they are facing difficulties adapting to adulthood. Often, teens don't like to share their emotions and many don't trust adults. They often choose to talk to a friend instead of their parents. But that doesn't mean they don't need and want their help. Teens need to be willing to trust and open up more to their parents. Teens need adults to be there for them. If adults take the time to understand and listen to them, teen depression may cease to be a killer.

TELLTALE SIGNS

Fortunately, teen depression can be treated, and there are many things concerned parents, teachers, and friends can do. Suicide among teens often occurs following a stressful event that parents may not even know about. So it's important for them to know the warning signs, so kids who might be suicidal can get the help they need. A depressed teen might:

- Talk about "going away"
- Talk about feeling hopeless or guilty
- Pull away from friends or family
- Lose the desire to take part in favorite activities
- Have trouble concentrating or thinking clearly
- Experience changes in eating



▲ AFH photo by Jesse Pacusen

STD testing should be offered to teens

By Jameel Woody // Staff Writer

A lot of teens in Boston are sexually active, and different STDs (sexually transmitted diseases), such as chlamydia and HPV, are common in Dorchester. African-American teens are the most commonly infected by these diseases. Due to the rates of sexual intercourse between male and female teens, these diseases are more likely to be spread than other diseases, such as HIV/AIDS.

To bring teens together in a community and decrease the spread of STDs, community health centers should have mandatory monthly STD testing for patients between the ages of 13-20. This will decrease the spread of STDs and increase good health in young people.

Luckily, many centers do offer STD testing, as listed below.

I am a teen in Dorchester, and I don't want to be scared of falling in love or being affectionate. That is why I am promoting safe sex and healthy sex. Many teens hear about celibacy, abstinence, condoms, and waiting until marriage, or even telling their partner to get tested. However, how many teens really do so? Being in a community where sexually active teens have to take mandatory STD tests will keep teens safer and less afraid of experiencing this part of life.

Local health centers that provide STD testing:

Bowdoin Street Health Center 617-754-0100

Boston Medical Center 617-638-8000

Boston Medical Center Health Connection: Roxbury

Comprehensive 617-442-7400

Codman Square Health Center 617-825-9660

Dimock Community Health Center: Administration 617-442-8800

Dorchester House Multi-service Center 617-288-3230

Neponset Health Center 617-282-3200

Tufts-New England Medical Center 617-636-5000.

South End Community Health Center 617-425-2000

Uphams Corner Health Center 617-287-8000

FEELINGS

By Eubelin Ruiz // Staff Writer

Her self esteem is way lower than others

she sees all the beauty around her and throws herself in the dumps

she's weak and crashes

no one can help her with the deep feelings inside

It's hard for her to show her pain to anyone at all

she smiles and hides her inner self but deeply she's filled with hate

and just wants to break down

Days locked in her room wishing for life to change.

What can she do? Where is the sanity in life?

▲ AFH photo by Darren Hicks





Residents celebrate last month's opening of the Greenway.

Make way for the GREENWAY

By Alex Nguyen // Staff Writer

"It is our goal to engage multi cultural and multi generational audiences with a range of activities." These words fueled the intense inaugural celebration on Oct. 4 that marked the momentous official opening of the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway.

To those gathered, there was no better way to celebrate than with a Ferris Wheel, ReadBoston storymobiles, carousels, rock-climbing activities, multicultural musical and dance performances, and more. In a promising attempt to unite the diverse and extensive cultures that make up Boston, the Greenway hosted an extravaganza, stretching for 1 mile from Chinatown to the North End, that brought families, friends, and Bostonians closer together.

Mayor Thomas Menino made a guest appearance at

the Wharf District Parks section of the Greenway and, later in the day, everyone's favorite monkey, Curious George, arrived along with special guests from the New England Aquarium.

Within the Wharf District Park lies the Mother's Walk, where Bostonians can reserve a special paver for a close loved one (they don't necessarily need to be a mother) and have it placed there to be remembered and recognized forever. Student winners of the "Write to Honor Program" also won an engraved paver to be placed in the walkway.

Before the Greenway was established, the space was a jam-packed, frustrating highway known as the Central Artery. The Central Artery was sluggish for drivers and almost always clogged, keeping people in

traffic for hours. The artery also presented a substantial safety problem as the accident rates skyrocketed to four times the national average on urban interstates, according to masspike.com.

As a solution, the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority constructed an underground 8-10 lane highway (replacing the former 6 lane highway) and also extended the I-90 turnpike, creating the Ted Williams Tunnel in December 1995. Now a park replaces the automotive jungle that used to occupy Downtown.

The opening of the Greenway presents an opportunity for Boston neighborhoods that were once separated by the Central Artery to unite again for the first time in almost 50 years.



▲ All AFH photos by Haidan Hodgson



▲ AFH photo by Julia Morgan

Bikes Not Bombs is tucked away in a Jamaica Plain corner.

Tucked away in a corner of the Brewery Complex in Jamaica Plain, the world headquarters of Bikes Not Bombs is easy to miss. As you turn the corner you are met by a ginormous pile of twisted metal, rubber, and chains. As you get closer you realize that this is a pit of hundreds of bikes. Inside is not much different with all of the available space covered with bikes and bike parts. What do they do with all of these bikes, you ask?

Bikes Not Bombs (BNB) is a non profit organization in JP that uses bikes in a way most people would not think of using them. BNB uses bikes in a variety of programs, such as Earn-A-Bike and a program where you can learn about becoming a bike shop mechanic. Another BNB activity is to donate bikes to parts of the world where they do not have the many advantages Americans have. They have sent more than 33,000 bikes to countries like Ghana, Tanzania, South Africa, Nevis, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua during the past 24 years.

The bikes BNB sends to other countries are all donated. The staff takes the donated bikes and puts as many as can fit into the shop. The rest are piled up in an

Saving the world WITH BIKES NOT BOMBS

By Aadhar Mahajan // Contributing Writer

area known as “The Pit” out front. From there they work on as many of the bikes as possible that are in the shop, so the bikes are in the best condition when they are sent to their final destinations. If the staff is not able to fix the entire bike, parts of it are taken and used on other bikes. At this point they slowly start working on “The Pit.” The fixed bikes are stored in the shop where they wait to be placed in huge crates with 450-500 other bikes to be sent away to exotic places.

best way anyone can help us because there is a lot to do,” said Rodriguez. Bikes have to be flattened and stripped of their parts and other office jobs need to be done.

The mission of Bikes Not Bombs is to be a part of a worldwide movement for peace and responsible stewardship of the earth. Readers are invited to join them. For more information, contact BNB at: 617-522-0111 (main office) or 617-522-0226 (bike shop and youth job training), or log on to: www.bikesnotbombs.org.



Teens in action ask adults:

By Jennifer Sánchez // Senior Editor

The time has come to elect a new president. Unfortunately, not many high school students are old enough to do so. Have no worries; local Youth Community Organizers (YCOs) of the Hyde Square Task Force (HSTF) in Jamaica Plain have launched a campaign that may solve this dilemma. They ask adults to vote for them.

HSTF has been working since the start of the 2008 summer vacation to register eligible voters to take part in what could be history if Barack Obama is elected president. Their mission was to set out to educate the Jamaica Plain community on the importance of voting, as well as to register new voters. By taking the initiative to knock on doors, the youth leaders ask everyone to vote in the election to voice teen opinion. Through the “Vote for Me” effort, “We want all youth who are not yet 18 not



▲ AFH Artwork

only to register to vote, but to actually vote in the presidential election,” said Sacha Ruiz, 17, of the Hyde Square Task Force. Because most high school students are not of legal age to register to vote, the ‘Vote for Me’ initiative falls perfectly into place. “If you know someone who is unable to vote or doesn’t want to vote,” said Ruiz, “have them vote for the candidate you want.”

HSTF teens managed to knock on more than 1,500 doors. In a letter to the Jamaica Plain Gazette, YCO’s Melissa Aybar wrote, “As youth leaders of the ‘Vote for Me’ campaign, we...have taken the initiative to increase the voter turnout in our community by registering new voters, mobilizing community members who rarely come out to vote, and educating others who fail to see the importance of voting.”

My walk through time

By Sandy Liang // Staff Writer

Omaha Beach in France was the site of D-Day.



▲ Photo by Sandy Liang

You have two options. You can travel through time in a textbook, or go to a country and see it with your own eyes. The world is a vast place with a long, intense history. This summer, I traveled to England, France, and Italy as a student ambassador of the People to People program to learn about other cultures and customs, and to promote peace through understanding. Over the course of three weeks, I was overwhelmed with the sights, sounds, tastes, and feeling of actually being in Europe, seeing places so marvelous and breathtaking.

My most important experience was going to Omaha Beach in France, where a battle between the Allied Forces and German troops occurred on June 6, 1944, otherwise known as D-Day. The Allied Forces lost more than 9,000 soldiers in the battle. As I walked through Le Mémorial de Caen, I heard the endless list of names read clearly through the loudspeaker. I looked carefully at the faces of those brave women and men and read about their accomplishments and bravery. I looked at and appreciated the life I have, a life that those soldiers could never have returned to. This experience inspires a person to accomplish great things in memory of these soldiers, who sacrificed their lives for a better future.

A formal ceremony of raising the flags of the Allied Forces was held especially for the People to People Student Ambassadors as it rained soft, gentle tears in mourning for those killed that dreadful day. After the ceremony, the soft sunlight streaked the stormy sky as the ocean gently lapped at our feet. Everything was so calm it was hard to believe

a war had occurred here. I stood on the little island of sand, turning toward the sea imagining myself as a German soldier hiding and waiting for the signal for attack. Turning around, I imagined myself as a soldier from the Allied Forces looking at the distant hills and watching my fellow comrades fall and soldiers stepping over bodies to continue advancing. I felt the pride and courage that the soldiers must have felt as they reached the shore, and then their horror and sorrow as the battle began.

On that beach, I met a WWII veteran. She spoke French and showed us two pictures. In one, she was young and beautiful as she stood by her house. In the next picture, she showed the ruins of her house after the war. My friend translated the words the woman spoke to us while showing the pictures. "This is the price we pay for war," she said.

My journey through the past, contrasted with the bustling present, was life changing. The price of war is shown again and again, but the world still does not understand. President Eisenhower founded People to People so that student ambassadors could see many cultures in the world, and that each culture has their own unique customs. If we come together and learn about each other, there would be less room for misunderstandings, and no room for war.

When an opportunity to travel arises, take it. Don't be afraid to ask for financial help because traveling will open your eyes in a way that nothing else will. I would like to thank the Globe Foundation for making my opportunity to travel to Europe possible.

Teen Travel Programs

Check out these websites:

Student Youth Travel Foundation
www.sytayouthfoundation.org

Summer Search
www.summersearch.org

People to People
www.studentambassadors.org

Youth for Understanding
www.yfu.org

Youth at the United Nations
www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin

Habitat for Humanity
www3.habitat.org/youthprograms

Lions Clubs International
www.Lionsclubs.org/EN/content/youth_index.shtml

Escape from Afghanistan

By Mawloda Dahi Khudaynazer // Contributing Writer

Their hearts were strong as rocks but their souls were delicate. I would see them in pain, but they would hide it with little smiles. My mother's tear drops would run down her beautiful cheeks, but she would wipe them away with her fingers and keep on going up those high mountains holding our hands so we wouldn't fall behind. My father would feed us and my mother would eat the little left over pieces so the baby in her belly would get some nourishment. My parents made me who I am, a strong, young, intelligent woman.

Our life changed from glamorous to dust. We lived a good life. My mother had four children at that time, a loving husband, and two jobs, her career job as a teacher and her house job as a mother. She would wake up early in the morning, pray, feed the family and the relatives around her house, and go to her job with her husband. My father's job was working with the government so he rarely came home early. In their additional time, my father would play with us while my mother wrote poems, one of her favorite things to do.

That life changed when the Taliban war started. Women were forced to leave jobs as doctors, teachers, poets, and hairdressers to become housewives. But the men still had most of their freedoms because the Taliban believed that men should have all the power over women because "God had said it." If a woman wanted to go shopping, a man had to be next to her so she could be "protected" from others. When she went outside, she had to be covered up from head to toe because the Taliban believed it was dirty to show skin for women.

My parents decided to leave Afghanistan and flee to Pakistan so their children could be safe and have a good education. But traveling to Pakistan wasn't easy: a trip that should have taken six hours took three nights and four days. The bus we were on was filled with sick people, mothers who were pregnant, and children crying from the depth of their lungs because of the heat and hunger. When we were heading to the top of the mountain, our bus was stopped.

That moment still enters my mind. When the Taliban man came to search our bus, his eyes caught my dad's eyes. I remember looking at him. He didn't show any emotion; his eyes were black and he stood straight holding a gun in his hand as he asked my dad, "Where is your beard, have you forgotten the law? And why is your hat worn like that? I believe you work for the government?" My dad's response was a laugh; that made the man angry to the point where he hit my dad's hand with the end of his gun and told my father to get off the bus. Our driver talked the Taliban out of it by giving him money. The Taliban man walked away and I remember peeking through the window seeing him smiling to himself like he had won the price of his life.

When we came to Pakistan to our aunt's house, it was a bright sunny day and a new beginning. My baby sister was born the next day; that was the day where I saw the joy of tears in my mother's face after a long time. I could tell all her prayers were answered and all her sad tears were gone. We lived in Pakistan for five months and went to Turkmenistan to find a better education. We lived there for two years but my parents couldn't find jobs so we came to America through a program that helps families in need of a better life.

My parents are my heroes, especially my mother. She is my inspiration in everything I do. She sacrificed so much in her life so we could have a better future and she showed me how to be a strong woman and stand up for what I believe. My mother and I are alike. We both love writing poems and helping people; we both have the same smile.

My father taught me to be smart, and he showed me that life is all about helping each other; that's how we ended up having the life we're living. He taught me not to be afraid and to take risks because that's one of the ways you can find the real you.



▲ AFH photo by Chris Rogers

Mawloda Dahi Khudaynazer escaped from Afghanistan with her family

My Motherland

By Kadiatou Sarr // Contributing Writer

My heart is beeping like a horn,
Trying to find my place in this mess.
I can't help but think of how my life used to be.
I come from where people don't have worried minds.
I come from where change is made from time to time.
I come from where it's never too late to change something.
My heart is as red as lava coming from my bones,
Trying to cool the heat inside me.
I can't help but see the truth of my story.
I come from where the sun shines so bright
you can't help but say "cheese."
I come from where my name means a lot.
I come from green, yellow, and red.
My heart is powerful with all my loved ones racing,
Trying to wish that I had my best friend with me in this earth.
I come from where I don't hear gun shots
Bloom! Bloom!
I come from where god is taking me up with my angels
And reading me the story of my life.
I come from pure honey and sugar.
I come from wind blowing red roses into my hair.
I'm Senegalese baby, from head to toe.
My heart belongs to my motherland.

your horoscope

By Ciara Martinez/Staff Writer



IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY, SCORPIO

(October 23-November 21)

MORE ABOUT SCORPIO:

You are a water sign who tends to be shy but passionate as well as stubborn, imaginative, determined, and loyal. Pisces and Cancer are your best mates. You are destined for a career involving deep analysis such as a detective, psychologist, researcher, or surgeon. Your likes include secrets, mysteries, activity, and recognition. You dislike people who flatter you too much or ask too many questions! You don't trust strangers.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Symbol: The ram

Strengths: Active, daring, spirited

Weaknesses: Hasty, impulsive

Ideal City: New York City

Friends: You and your posse have let your grades drop. Now it's time for a study session. Grab all your books and get some work done!

Riches: You need to get a job. Your parents are tired of giving you money for school. This will give you a chance to gain some independence.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Symbol: The bull

Strengths: Patient, imaginative, authentic

Weaknesses: Stubborn, defiant

Ideal City: Paris

Family: Make big plans for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Gather up some recipes and get the pots moving in the kitchen.

Friends: One of your friends is going through a lot. Let her know you have her back, no matter what. Guide her in the right direction toward what she should do.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Symbol: The twins

Strengths: Curious, open-minded, multitalked

Weaknesses: Capricious, impatient

Ideal City: Tokyo

Lillovin': You are living the single life, but make sure to keep an open mind. Your true love could be right around the corner!

Riches: Everyone wonders why you save so much money. It doesn't hurt to treat yourself to a new pair of sneakers or a fresh new outfit.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Symbol: The crab

Strengths: Generous, perceptive, caring

Weaknesses: Cranky, temperamental, grumpy

Ideal City: London

Riches: You are way too nice about letting people borrow money from you. Start telling people you aren't letting them borrow money if they're not sure how to pay you back.

Family: You haven't been spending enough time with your family. School has been keeping you extra busy. Don't let that keep you from spending time together.

LEO (July 23-August 22)

Symbol: The lion

Strengths: Responsible, reliable, devoted

Weaknesses: Arrogant, crabby, self-indulgent

Ideal City: Washington D.C.

Friends: Your friends have been clashing with each other for a while. Lighten up the mood and squash whatever is bothering your clique.

Lillovin': You deserve a pat on the back. Your new fling is eventually going to become official..

VIRGO (August 23-September 21)

Symbol: The Maiden

Strengths: Supportive, compassionate, conscientious

Weaknesses: Unorganized, critical, picky

Ideal City: Hollywood

Riches: You spend too much money on random things you do not need. Think twice about spending that cash and see how much you can save.

Family: A younger family member needs your attention. Save some time to play a childhood game.

LIBRA (September 22-October 22)

Symbol: The scales

Strengths: Appealing, smart, sensitive

Weaknesses: Scheming, hopeless, coy

Ideal City: Las Vegas

Riches: A new way to make money is right under your nose. Take the chance!

Family: This summer, you didn't really spend time with your loved ones. You were too busy working and hanging out with friends. Take time this weekend and watch a funny movie with your family.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)

Symbol: The archer

Strengths: Fervent, stimulating, charming

Weaknesses: Quarrelsome, irresponsible at times

Ideal City: Atlanta

Friends: One of your friends has started off the school year on a bad note. Step in and show him you care. Let him know you are there to talk whenever he needs to.

Lillovin': Try not to be so moody. Lately, the apple of your eye has been thinking about a break-up.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)

Symbol: The goat

Strengths: Meticulous, diligent, achiever

Weaknesses: Fatalistic, egotistical, inflexible

Ideal City: Berlin

Riches: You have spent too much money on school supplies and now, your pockets are empty. Practice spending your money in places where it is needed most.

Family: Your rocky relationship with your parents is going to get worse if you don't learn to listen. Take a second to hear what they say. It will be better for the future.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18)

Symbol: The water bearer

Strengths: Rational, coherent, consistent

Weaknesses: Offensive, self-centered, immodest

Ideal City: Rome

Friends: Over the summer, you didn't really do much. Don't be lazy this school year. Join a team or club so you can meet new friends.

Riches: It's time to spend the money you made working this summer. You have saved it all this time and the gadget you want has come down in price.

PISCES (February 19-March 20)

Symbol: The fish

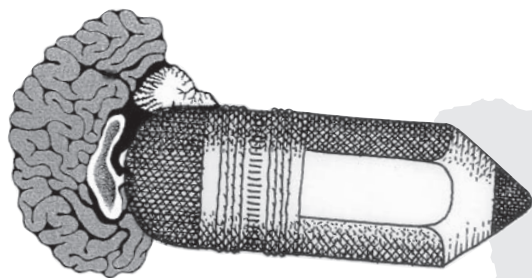
Strengths: Vigorous, daring, bold

Weaknesses: Impractical, dreamy

Ideal City: Miami

Lillovin': Working so much has led you to leave your honey bun in the cold. Plan a night at the movies and talk about what can make your relationship grow.

Family: You have been spending a lot of time with family. It has only brought out good things, but you need a break. Try to do something for yourself this weekend.



Life is too short

By Keisha Lorna Dauphin // Contributing Writer

Life is too short
To be dwelling on the bad
And not accepting the good that comes within and to you.
Life is too short not to push yourself
To the highest limit of your ability.
Life is too short not to realize that you can hold the key
To the world's future and become the world's greatest.
Life is too short to allow yourself to get upset
About the small things in life.
Life is too short not to say your prayers at night.
Life is too short not to feel blessed
To know you are able to wake up every day
To see another light of day and your loved ones.
Life is too short not to tell your loved ones
the three little words I l-o-v-e you
because tomorrow may not promise you.
So accept the good, push yourself,
Realize that you are the world's future,
Don't let the small things get to you,
Talk to God in your prayers,
Know that you are blessed and that people love you.
Life is too short; it's like a clock, tic-toc.
It's ticking and ticking,
But one day the battery will stop and die.
The new life will be the beginning of a beginning.

Quo Status

By Matt Kimm // Staff Writer

Matt is: Escapin' this whackness where people consider blackness to be a form of religious practice, but the fact is, we lack it: that resilient ability to bounce back, and still walk some moral path. It's ridiculous the way we've cracked reality and still lasted, by forsakin' our principles for insecurity, then attemptin' to mask it, but I'm askin' while we essentially are killin' each other, placin' one another in caskets, will our action count as a unanticipated reaction? In essence, can we lessen ourselves and say we're countin' blessings, when all you're really countin' is the dead children that weren't you, so you say you learned your lesson? Can we expect to, because we're adolescents, be excused from our pretensions of being little slices of heaven, when we're directin' all positive force the opposite way, with all possible deflections and complainin' when we go to assemblies about premeditated crime prevention? And we claim misun-

Tsunami

By Pablo Silva // Contributing Writer

Blazing hot sweat rolled down my back
A cloudless sky was at reach from my palm's view
My eyes centered on the sun as it stood above my head
Summer's end sneaked around the corner
But its endless heat
Fooled me to think it would never cease.
Milky sand grains covered my toes
Beach balls rolled back n' forth
Children's castles were made and later destroyed
Clear waters waved in my thoughts
It was supposed to be a beautiful day
And until that moment, indeed it was.
The moment the earth shook
Loud voices suddenly began to rise
And footsteps tumbled the ground
I looked around
Right, left, up, down
Where had the commotion come from?
The sun blinded me from the truth
When the photons in my eyes reassembled the image
A shock traveled to my heart
Making it pump furiously in my chest.
A desert ahead of me laid
Content faces ran from my presence
The air dragged my body forward
The ocean rapidly seemed to disappear
I looked upon the never ending horizon
And its line had ascended greatly.
At that moment
I refused to run like all the others
I refused to avoid its magnificent moves
The winds pushed me backwards with a tremendous force
Sprinkles of icy water splashed against my skin
A great calamity I was bound to face.
Shadows covered the surface of my dread
An enormous wall of wetness surrounded me
And with a blink, I was no longer visible to the eyes of men
Even God could not spot me from the heavens above.
I gasped for air in the salty waters of the ocean
But there was none to be found
And with that last thought in mind
I drowned myself in its eternal beauty.

derstandings when blame is pointed in our direction, sayin' "well, I didn't do it," as if that places you above the rest, then. And tensions between races fuel the locomotive of peace's recession, but all we're really mad at is the muddled color of our own reflection. And I don't claim this to be my profession, I'm just carryin' this message of declension to the assembly on knowledge that not all youth are attendin'. So, even though we're black, it doesn't mean we have to blend in with the dark, but stand in stark realization that we are the light descendin'. We ought to be commended, and mentioned in positive ways, besides the "statistics claim that we might not get a pension." I'm just sayin' that this is an issue that Matt is feelin', but I gotta add this, aim for more than what's expected, 'cuz you weren't called to be "quo-status."

Art in action: Former X-Bomber

By Emmanuel Santana // Contributing Writer

Most people thought that toys were fun when they were young. However, Jason Talbot thought they were boring. When he was a kid, colorful, plastic toys were not as engaging as the stories and emotions that comic book pictures revealed.

As an adult, visual artist, and Dorchester native, Talbot, 31, tells his story today. He is a project director at Artists for Humanity (AFH), a non profit organization in Boston whose mission is to bridge economic, racial, and social divisions by providing underserved youth self-sufficiency through paid employment in the arts.

Like a lot of the teens he now employs, he used to be a graffiti artist who would mark his territory around Boston. He was arrested once when he was tagging SWAT, and ended up with 1,000 hours of community service. That was fine by Talbot because community service is his passion.

He had to change his behavior after getting caught. His high test scores and experiences at AFH led him

to pursue a higher education and a career as an artist. He studied at the Art Institute of Boston to master his skills. Throughout a his time at art school, he continued to help out at Artists for Humanity.

In 1999, he moved to Atlanta to work in the field of graphic design. After a stint doing corporate art and Web design, Talbot realized that his heart and passion were with Artists For Humanity. He wanted to give opportunities in the arts to youth. "I'm an explorer, searching for the truth, when I find it, I share it with my people," he says.

Talbot's mentor, Susan Rogerson, executive director of Artists for Humanity, says, "Jason is a kind, generous, thoughtful, and intelligent contributor to the world." Damon Butler, cofounder of Artists for Humanity, called him "charismatic, unforgettable, slightly hard-headed." Maliek Tuitt, 17, describes working with Talbot as "boot camp, because he's like that genius drill sergeant that throws you in the pit and lets

you figure it out. He does not forget to come back and help. There are no words to describe the techniques [he uses]; he gives you suggestions on how to improve your skills as an artist.

"I am a product of my environment with a story to tell about how Jason Talbot made me wiser. Four years ago I met him. He taught me that an artist has to be open to criticism and has to acknowledge other people's skills. He taught me that I couldn't just say 'No, it's me' about my art without further explanation. When I was going through a lot, I'd sit there painting long after studio time had ended, and he and I would start talking about life. He taught me that the way someone looks or talks doesn't mean they don't have something to offer. He also taught me, 'You have nothing to lose but knowledge; knowledge is priceless.' The bond that we have is stronger than him just being my mentor. He has helped me make many decisions that have made me who I am today," Tuitt says.

THE RATINGS DEBATE

Are film ratings fair?

By Matt Clancy // Contributing Writer

Are movie ratings fair? That is a question often asked of the Motion Picture Association of America, or the MPAA, which is responsible for the film rating system, usually found at the beginning of a movie or trailer. But are all movies rated for the same reasons?

There are five ratings the MPAA gives to its movies. The first is G, which states that a movie has no adult or inappropriate content, and is viewable by people of all ages. The second rating is PG, which means there might be some content that some parents might not want their children to see, but is otherwise OK. The next three ratings are PG-13, R, and NC-17; this is where the criticism of the MPAA is directed.

PG-13 is a rating that means the content of the movie might not be for children under the age of 13. It is a rating for films that are more violent or inappropriate than a PG film, but not meeting the requirements for an R film, where the content isn't suited for people under 17. However, people under those ages can still see a PG-13 or R-rated movie, provided they see it with someone over this age. On the other hand, NC-17, the least common movie rating, states that no one who is 17 years of age or under is allowed to watch it. This is where the controversy begins.

NC-17 is basically a death sentence for a movie. Most filmmakers would rather release their movie unrated than under the label of NC-17. Because of the severity of the rating, a common reaction among moviegoers is that it was rated that way because it



contains blatant sexual content. It's not helped by the fact that the NC-17 rating formerly went by the distinction of "X," and was only changed because of the image it created. However, changing the name has not changed the stigma it creates.

Part of the reason for this belief about NC-17 movies comes from another one of the ratings system's criticisms. Many movies are given higher ratings for sexual content than violence or profanity. A violent action film could probably get away with a PG-13 rating, as long as sex stays out of the picture. Also, one could use profane language a few times in a movie without getting an R rating, just as long as it's not used in a sexually explicit way, which will get the movie bumped up to a higher rating.

Another criticism given is that the MPAA is tougher on independent films than on movies involving big name actors or directors. Film critics, such as Roger Ebert, say that violent movies such as "Passion of the Christ" and "Saving Private Ryan" often receive R ratings because of the involvement of famous directors and that, without their participation, the films would have earned an NC-17 rating.

The MPAA ratings system has a number of problems with it. They need to follow their guidelines a little more strictly, instead of letting bias get in the way of their job.

Top 10 video games of 2008

By Gabriel Ward // Staff Writer

10. Guitar Hero: On Tour, for Nintendo DS

OK, it's not the same Guitar Hero we all know and love, the one with the fancy guitar controller. But it is portable and it does have all the same controls. So I give it number 10.

9. Boom Blox, for Wii Game

I think if you're going to play a Jenga-like game, it should follow real-life physics. Boom Blox does just that, and in a fun way.

8. Strong Bad's Cool Game for Attractive People (SBCG4AP), for Wiiware

You don't have to be a big Homestar Runner fan to appreciate this game. It's just like an extended, interactive, point-and-click, Homestar Runner episode, and just as funny, too.

7. Mario Kart Wii, for Wii

The Mario Kart series continues to impress me; it's fun and competitive. It's no surprise that Mario Kart Wii is even better than the rest. They have added better graphics, controls, and easier, better online play.

6. Trauma Center: Under the Knife 2, for DS.

OK, it's no Wii version where you point and click to perform the operation, but it's still awesome. You have to tap and drag on your touch screen to save lives.

VIDEO GAME CROSSWORD

By Trevor Ward // Staff Writer

5. Wii Fit, for Wii
This game is not only fun with games you can play on your Wii Fi Balance Board, but it's also like your own personal trainer. Just play every day to set goal weight and reach it.

4. Madden NFL '09, for Xbox360, PS3 and Wii.
Now I'm not usually into sports games, but I just couldn't let down those stunning graphics. This game is like you're watching your favorite team, except you're playing it.

3. Spore, for PC
This game is about evolution. You start off creating a single cell organism, working your way through evolution, facing others' creations online, and reaching the advanced stage of alien super-being. This game is not only interesting, but when you reach the final stage, you feel triumphant.

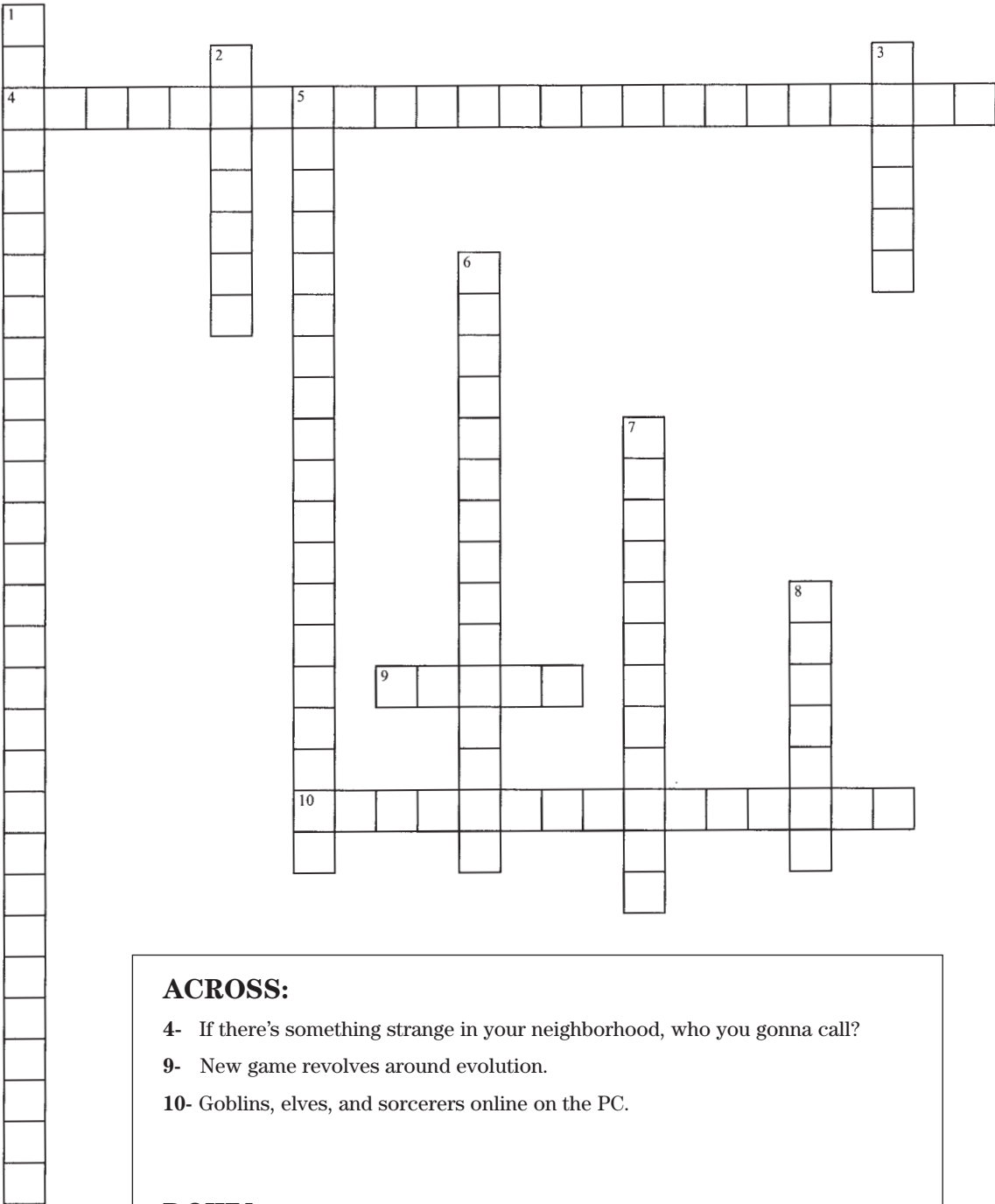
2. Army of Two, for PS3 and Xbox360
This game is fun and interactive. You will have to work with your friend or teammate to create diversions and take down terrorists. It's action packed and has a great story. Unfortunately, this game is rated "M." So although people my age are most likely unable to get one, I still recommend it.

1. Super Smash Bros. Brawl, for Wii
Ah, Super Smash Bros. Brawl! Not only was this the most anticipated game of '08, but in my opinion, it met everyone's expectations. The "Super Smash Bros." games were always top selling, but Brawl met their peak. This game not only has stunning graphics, but is topped off with a killer story-filled play-through, mixed with Nintendo's best characters. Super Smash Bros. Brawl seems to be Nintendo of America's fastest selling game, ever!

Sudoku

Fill the grid so every row, column, and box contains 1-9 without repeating a number in any row, column, or box!

				5			1	
3		7						2
	6		3		4		9	
		3	1		5		4	9
6	1			4		3	7	
4		2	7		8		5	
	3	1		8		9	2	
2		6	4		1	7		5
	4				3		8	1



ACROSS:

- 4- If there's something strange in your neighborhood, who you gonna call?
- 9- New game revolves around evolution.
- 10- Goblins, elves, and sorcerers online on the PC.

DOWN:

- 1- First appearance of evil phantom, Bellum.
- 2- Released before all other 3rd Gen Systems for malfunctions in its predecessor
- 3- Football series
- 5- Was delayed twice before last March release
- 6- Our great hero is an old man?!
- 7- New game to feature Pokemon Glameow exclusively
- 8- Strong Bad's new game has many initials.

Answers on page 24

SIDETRACK

By Stuart Spina // Staff Writer

Youth way on the MBTA!

Have you ever been on your way home from football practice, an after-school program, or job, and been left stranded? How, you ask? Well, your student T Pass expires at 8 p.m. and surprise, it is now 8:03 p.m. Realizing the dilemma, many BPS students are in the Boston-Area Youth Organizing Project, a coalition with the Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project, which has launched a campaign to extend the hours of the student passes.

Charlie for Christmas

Christmas is only six weeks away, you know. Have you finished your shopping yet? Well, the T may be able to help you save some green this holiday season! Pick up the 2008 CharlieCard Discount Book, available at most MBTA stations. You can also download a copy of the brochure from www.mbta.com. Inside, find out all the ways you can save some money just by showing your CharlieCard. From museums to stores, to restaurants and spas, get great deals all over the city. Take 10 percent off purchases at places like Ben & Jerry's, Jamaicaaway Books and Gifts, and NIKETOWN. This is good information to know for your last minute holiday shopping.

Where's my bus?

Effective December 27, the MBTA will change its bus and subway schedules for winter 2009. Keep an eye out for new green schedules, and be sure to pick up some from a T station or your driver, unless you want to be left out in the freezing cold wondering, "where's my bus?" For more information, including which routes are changing, check out the T website: www.mbta.com.



▲ Photo by: Alana Andonian



▲ Photo by: Stuart Spina

[HIGH SCHOOL, FROM PAGE 1]

tion. Through MASA, she gained not only volunteer and cultural experience, but also said she achieved discipline, knowledge, and independence. Eddison said she was able to establish who she wants to be and what she wants to do in the future. She says her year off has helped her "grow into an admirable person." Heading for George Washington University in Washington, D.C. this fall, Eddison said she wouldn't be "a little fish in a big pond." She recommends taking a year off to every high school senior who has the slightest doubt, or no clue at all, what they want to do. For her, the experience of taking a year off "cannot be taught in a classroom," she said, adding that she has no regrets.

Ariel Champagnie, 19, a graduate of Tech Boston, knows what it's like to be a senior and feel utterly confused. When asked why she chose to take a year off, she said she needed a break from the daily hustle and bustle of school. Her parents supported her decision because ultimately, it was productive. While participating in the local program Year Up, Champagnie gained information technology, or IT, training and an apprenticeship at Bank of America. She is now focused on

continuing her education and is sending away her college applications so she can continue her journey.

A gap year is not always planned. A 2008 graduate of Madison Park, Catherine Rodriguez, 18, decided last minute not to go to college. "I wanted to go to Bunker Hill, but I wasn't ready, and I didn't want to waste the money if I wasn't ready," she said. "I worked at Dorchester House for the summer and I asked them if I could keep working there." She liked her job, where she filed papers, sent faxes, answered the phones, and typed, but her supervisors were unable to keep her.

Today, Rodriguez is figuring out her next steps on her own. Her current plans? "Right now, I have nothing. I want to go to school next September so I can be better prepared, and get a better job."

The reason most local students don't opt to take a gap year is distraction. Some can barely remember what they learned when they get back from winter vacation, never mind taking a year off and then trying to study again in a new environment. Let's not forget adding the three m's to the equation. Most students, asked about taking a year off, scrunch up their faces, and the Nike slogan comes to mind. "Just do it."

Keshelle Dolly, 17, a senior at the Engineering School, connects more to the Nike slogan than she does to the explore-yourself route. When asked why she is not considering taking a year off, she said, "Honestly, I want to get in, get out, and be finished. I can have time off after school. All taking a year off would do is cause me to be lazy and become off point when I do go back to school."

Guidance counselor Marc Abelard, of the Engineering School, said "the rigor of life gets [students] off track" if they don't stay on the school path. But he thinks programs like Year Up and AmeriCorps are great "because they are beneficial academically and work wise." Ultimately, taking a year off "really depends on the mind set of the student." Abelard said that motivation is the test. If the high school graduate is going to lay around the house for the majority of the day, then she need not take a year off. But if she feels there is more to life than sitting behind a desk, there are options like these to explore.

Kelly Knopf-Goldner contributed to this story.

The benefits of b-ball for Asian boys

By Thanh Nguyen // Contributing Writer

As a member of the Massachusetts Asian Society Athletic Establishment (MASAE), I have traveled across the country and participated in many activities, such as camping, hiking, skiing, canoeing, and basketball. The MASAE was created by Vinh Bui and Michael Nazareno to give an athletic outlet to Asian youth in Boston neighborhoods. "Our objective was to give the largely untouched Asian population in our neighborhoods previously unavailable opportunities to travel all around North America and compete," said Bui, founder and the coach of my basketball team.

The MASAE boys' basketball team was formed after we were picked on while playing basketball with adults, so Bui decided to train us to make us better basketball players. He created this team of teens so we could have the opportunity to think wisely and to play a more organized game. "There weren't many basketball programs in my neighborhood emphasizing the teaching of the fundamentals of the game. The youth in my neighborhood were all learning the game through pick-up play, which creates bad habits and lack of structure," according to Bui. "Dorchester youth, particularly Asians, were not being taught how to play organized basketball. Most of the kids from our neighborhood will never receive the opportunity to practice with set plays, or a structured condi-

tioning regiment."

Our teammates met through friends and youth from other programs, including Dorchester Youth Collaborative, an after-school program in Fields Corner where young adults can meet new people. "I feel that MASAE is a great organization that helps us stay away from gang violence," said Minh Troung, 14, of Dorchester.

MASAE also changed my life because playing on a basketball team, I was not affiliated with Dorchester gangs, which helped me live above the influence.

As years have passed, we have improved our basketball skills and worked hard as a team, practicing almost every day at Dorchester House Multi-Service Center. I've learned that being committed to a team is a big decision to make in life, because being successful takes responsibility and dedication. Although we realize many people have made negative comments and judged us by the color of our skin, that does not bring us down because it shows us that we have to work harder to prove that we can play well.

Our biggest accomplishment was when we won a championship game in New Jersey in early 2008. That's when we realized: hard work pays off.

"Transforming youths who had no experience playing organized basketball into a team that can



The MASEA basketball team.

run complex set motion plays feels very satisfying," said Bui. "A couple of kids couldn't even finish a lay-up. Now, they're playing junior varsity basketball for their high schools. That's a very gratifying feeling."

This year, we are fund-raising so we can travel and play in more tournaments. We held a Halloween party at Dorchester House and we're planning a video game tournament this month.

The lesser-known games

By Olive Tang // Staff Writer

Athletes work harder, overcoming hurdles, and fighting all odds to compete. There are 148 countries, 20 events, 19 venues, 12 days, 53 shattered world records, and "one world, one dream."

Where can you find this and more? In the International Paralympic Games, which take place approximately two weeks after the closing of the Summer Olympic Games. The Paralympic Games are held in the same host country as the Olympics. The Paralympics are an international convening of disabled athletes who compete at the same prestigious level as Olympic athletes. Events include wheelchair basketball, archery, and judo.

The Paralympics are less widely advertised than the Summer Olympics. Just take a look at NBC's coverage of the Olympics. Daily coverage of the

2008 Beijing Olympics brought an average of 27.7 million viewers nightly to NBC, more than any other Summer Olympics, according to msnbc.com. And how many viewers will be drawn nightly to the NBC prime time coverage of the 2008 Beijing Paralympics? Zero! Why? There is no television coverage of the Paralympics available in the United States.

According to the The New York Times, Americans had to stream videos on www.universalsports.com in order to view the Paralympics. Why? NBC Olympic president, Gary Zenkel, is quoted in a New York Times story saying, "We are a commercial enterprise... We are not public television. We have to get advertising revenue that exceeds its cost. It is not inexpensive to cover two weeks of athletic events in China."

TEENS SPEAK OUT

What do teens have to say about this compromised media coverage?

One hundred and thirty teens, ages 13 to 16, were asked if they had heard of the Paralympics, if they would be interested in watching any part of the Paralympics, and whether they would like to have more media coverage of the Paralympics. Below, see our results.

Have you ever heard of the Paralympics?

60.77% Yes 39.23 % No

Would you be interested in watching any part of the Paralympics?

58.14% Yes 19.38% Maybe 22.48% No

Would you like to have more media coverage of the Paralympics?

74.8% Yes 9.45 % Maybe 15.74% NO

Of those who said they had heard of the Paralympics, 83.54 percent said they would be interested in watching some part of the Paralympics and in having more media coverage. Others who had not heard of the Paralympics may be unaware of this amazing event because of the lack of media coverage. With such high level of interest, doesn't it make sense for the media to cover the Paralympic games and give the respect to those athletes who deserve it most?

HEY YOU! (An advice column parody)

By Stuart Spina // Staff Writer

Hey You!

I have been trapped in the wilds of Burundi for 15 days, having been separated from my exploratory expedition. The natives are holding me hostage and I'm not sure what their next move is. They have taken my passport and other belongings and sacrificed them to their god, Orang-Haqatut Chapo'e G'uln. I call him "Chippy" for short. It's good to see animistic beliefs alive and well these days.

Anyway, I think the chieftain's daughter has taken a shine to me. Whenever she walks past the post I'm tied to, she'll stop and chat. It turns out we have so much in common! For example, we both like fusion jazz, Italian food, and not contracting malaria. So what should I do to sweep her off her feet and win her heart?

*Sincerely,
Looking For Love in Faraway Places*

Dear LFLIFP,

I know this might sound obvious, but take her out to a nice restaurant to start things off. Seeing as you two like Italian fare, I recommend you take her to Anthony's. The place offers great views of Lake Tanganyika, quick and polite service, and would not be too hard on you wallet. I've been there millions of times. I love it!

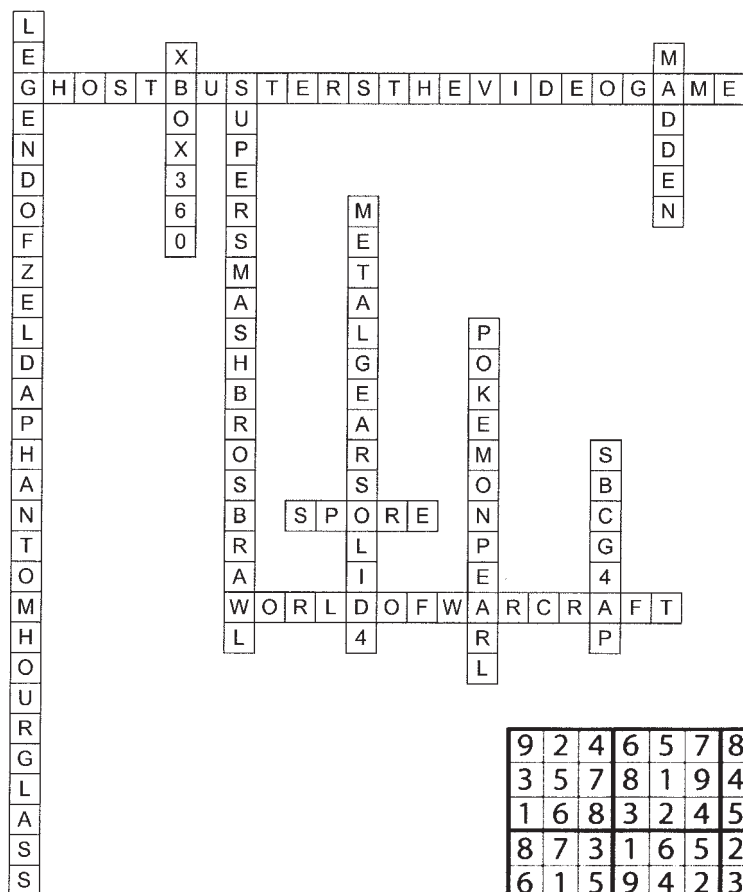
Before you do that, find out if her tribe practices cannibalism. The sure way to ruin a beautiful evening at a nice restaurant is to find out you're the main course.

As for dinner conversation, allow for flexibility on both sides. You do not want things to stagnate because only one of you knows what's going on. Don't come on too strong. She may interpret this as anything from "he's trying too hard" to "my goodness! He has been possessed by the evil spirit of Azathoth!" And we all know what an unnecessary exorcism can do to a relationship.

Your biggest challenge is appeasing her father, the chief. Basically, my friend, take your time. Go slow, and keep her best interests in mind.

*Sincerely,
Hey You!*

ANSWERS:



9	2	4	6	5	7	8	1	3
3	5	7	8	1	9	4	6	2
1	6	8	3	2	4	5	9	7
8	7	3	1	6	5	2	4	9
6	1	5	9	4	2	3	7	8
4	9	2	7	3	8	1	5	6
7	3	1	5	8	6	9	2	4
2	8	6	4	9	1	7	3	5
5	4	9	2	7	3	6	8	1

What's it like to be a girl in urban America today?



Show Us! ENTER the 2008-2009 Camille Cosby "Walk A Mile In My Shoes" Cover Art Contest.

You could win \$50!

* You must be a girl between the ages of 11-14 and a resident of Boston, Somerville, or Cambridge to participate. *

Deadline is Friday, December 12, 2008

For Contest Details

Call: 617.278.4265

or

Email: ccgp@jbcc.harvard.edu

This Art Contest is Presented by the Camille Cosby Girls Program of the Judge Baker Children's Center



What's it Like to Walk A Mile in YOUR Shoes?



If you are a girl between the ages of 11-14 and a resident of Boston, Somerville, or Cambridge we want to hear from you!

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Awards

1st place-\$100

2nd place-\$50

3rd place-\$25

Deadline is Friday, December 12, 2008

For Contest Details

Call: 617.278.4265

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This Essay Contest is Presented by the Camille Cosby Girls Program of the Judge Baker Children's Center