

FOCUS

A Blind Brook High School Student Publication

October 2006

Construction Moving Along Slowly but Surely

By Eric Taitz

When the 2006-2007 school year began on September 6th, Blind Brook students walked into a significantly larger, refurbished building surrounded by mounds of dirt and the precursors to two new school fields. Changes to the exterior of the Blind Brook campus were accompanied by the addition of a series of new classrooms and locker areas to the middle and high schools as well as a fitness center and an additional cafeteria. While the construction project, which was first approved in January of 2005, is not entirely complete, students now have access to a variety of resources that they were unable to utilize prior to its initiation.

The construction crew has been able to adhere to a strict schedule with as few disturbances as possible. Blind Brook School District superintendent Dr. Ronald D. Valenti is proud of the quality of the

work, stating, “We made and maintained three commitments to our students, faculty members, and the citizens of Rye Brook

the original cafeteria has been replaced by a large food service station adjacent to a spacious, newly constructed cafeteria.

“We made and maintained three commitments to our students, faculty members, and the citizens of Rye Brook regarding the project: that it would be done on-time, within budget, and in a quality fashion.”

— Dr. Ronald D. Valenti, superintendent

regarding the project: that it would be done on-time [with respect to the classrooms], within budget, and in a quality fashion.”

As of now, many aspects of the construction project have been completed, including a science wing and a freshman locker area in the high school and an add-on to the middle school building. In addition,

A fitness center and a language lab have also been added to the high school, and the Special Education and middle school faculty rooms are now complete.

Perhaps the most notable feature of the construction endeavor is the sleek AstroTurf football/soccer and baseball field owned by the Village of Rye Brook. Though

Blind Brook does not formally own these fields, the Varsity football and soccer teams have had the privilege of utilizing the facilities for practice and home games until the Blind Brook fields are complete. The village fields are composed of layers of rubber and sand that quickly absorb moisture, and, as a result, teams have not been forced to cancel home games due to inclement weather.

Despite the various advancements made by the construction crew, certain drawbacks have delayed progress, particularly with regard to the completion of certain classrooms and two athletic fields. The original construction timeline projected the completion of all three fields by spring of 2006, but, as of now, only the village field has been finished in its entirety. A rainy July and a dysfunctional fence pushed the expected date of completion back even

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Meet the Faculty

By Adam Potter

A gifted group of teachers trained in a variety of different subjects have been added to the Blind Brook faculty for the 2006-2007 school year.



Photo/Jenna Kaplowitz

Mr. Thomas helps senior Dana Berman with her economics homework.

Alan Potts and Jennifer Shallo are the newest members of the high school Science Department (teaching Chemistry and Biology, respectively), and Jean Follansbee has been appointed director of the Instructional Media Center.

Potts has been teaching for over fifteen years and has joined the Blind Brook faculty to teach Regents Chemistry and eighth-grade Earth Science. After spending less than two months at Blind Brook, he already feels extremely comfortable with the Blind Brook dynamic. “I love this job,” he

declared as he expressed how welcome he feels in this community.

Before coming to Blind Brook, Potts taught in New York City for eleven years, in two regions of Africa with the Peace Corps for five years, and at Harrison High School. He attended Teacher’s College at Columbia University for his graduate degree after graduating from Mary Washington College in Virginia, during which time he studied earth science, chemistry, biology, physics, and forensics (all of which he is qualified to teach).

Potts has harbored a passion for teaching since his adolescence. In high school, while considering a career as an auto-mechanic or a carpenter, his biology teacher, Mrs. Duncan, fostered his love for the sciences and convinced him to seek a college education. Though he enjoys teaching, Potts does not plan to be a science teacher for the rest of his life. Somewhere down the road, he hopes to pursue a career as a physician.

Jennifer Shallo, also a new member of the Blind Brook Science Department, teaches ninth-grade Living Environment (Regents Biology), and she has spent the last four years teaching seventh-grade

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Electives and Advanced Curriculum Progressing Smoothly

By Sonia Taneja and Corinne Segal

As the Blind Brook student body continues to grow in size, the number of advanced and elective courses has experienced a corresponding increase. The beginning of the 2006-2007 school year marked the initiation of a variety of new courses, including Advanced Chemistry, Spanish 4 Honors, Research and Design Laboratory, Fitness Club, and Food Science, all of which are running smoothly and attaining their respective objectives.

The Advanced Chemistry course, taught by John Latino, is designed to challenge students who wish to explore chemistry in greater depth. Latino considers his class the “stepping-stone” between the standard Regents-level Chemistry and AP Chemistry. The course was implemented for “students who wanted to go beyond the Regents curriculum in order to prepare them for the AP course load.” He considers the recent course expansions positive for the Blind Brook student body and faculty, which will benefit from exposure to the new opportunities offered by different classes. “I hope the students are enjoying [the class] as much as I am,” he added.

Like Latino, Honors Spanish teacher Maggie Brennan-Juana believes her class to be the middle ground between a Regents-level and AP-level course. In Spanish 4 Honors, “there’s more focus on literature and grammar – we expect a little bit more.” She also indicated the increasing student enrollment in Spanish classes contributed largely to the creation of the Honors Spanish course. “When we see the need for it, with a certain number of students available, it becomes possible to create a new class,” she noted.

Blind Brook has also added various

electives to its curriculum. Widespread interest in a less intense physical fitness program prompted the formation of Fitness Club, taught by Karen Flaherty, who has been working towards the creation

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All the Lonely People

By Benjamin Engle

It was a beautiful summer night in the Georgetown area of our nation's capital, Washington, D.C. I strolled leisurely down Pennsylvania Avenue, a street lined with exclusive stores and stylish eateries. From Coach to Abercrombie & Fitch to Steve Madden, I felt as if I was in one of the classiest places in Washington—that is, until I passed a man who, in his silent sleep, stopped me in my tracks.

This man was asleep in the doorway of a Georgetown building, clutching a blanket in one hand. The other held nothing, and a shopping cart filled to capacity stood to his left. It seemed as if his whole life was crammed into that shopping cart, his home on wheels. The man's untidy, mangy beard and the fact that he was lying in the middle of the sidewalk indicated that he was homeless. But this was no ordinary homeless man, a man unlike any I have ever seen in New York City. The steps on which he slept did not lead to a posh store or a snobby café, but rather to the entrance of the Salvation Army National Capital Offices.

The fact that this homeless man was sleeping on the steps of one of America's longtime symbols of aid and hope struck me as a sad commentary on the state of our nation, for this poor man clearly did not expect assistance or hope. It opened my eyes to the true problems of poverty and homelessness in the United States and how we, as Americans, are not doing enough to give less fortunate people the opportunities and assistance to live better lives.

During my visit to D.C., I made my way to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. While walking through this outdoor monument dedicated to one of the best presidents in U.S. history, I noticed that various quotes issued by Roosevelt during his four terms in office were engraved in the stone. One quote seemed to speak of both the homeless man and how our country looks today.

"I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, and ill-nourished. The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little," Roosevelt said in his second inaugural address. This quote raised the question in my mind, "Can't we do more?"

We live in an affluent community in nice, spacious homes; we eat three meals a day (yes, Blind Brook cafeteria food counts); and we receive our education in one of the country's finest high schools. We buy new clothes, we go out on weekends, and we spend hours on our computers. It seems as if the rich only get richer and the poor

only get poorer. Roosevelt recognized the pathetic look of the nation during his time in office, and it is time for us in the Blind Brook, Rye Brook, and American communities to make a difference in helping to stop one of America's biggest problems: poverty.

If numbers will help paint the picture of American poverty, consider these: in 2005, 37 million people lived in poverty. Of those 37 million people, 12.9 million were under the age of 18 and 20.5 million were between the ages of 18 and 64. (U.S. Census 2005.)

It's clear that poverty affects not only adults, but entire families as well.

As I watched in awe at the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, a ceremony honoring and remembering unidentified soldiers who gave their lives for our country, my mind wandered back to the homeless man at the Salvation Army who, when he is entombed in an unmarked grave in Potter's Field, will forever remain as he lived—unknown and forgotten.

In a song entitled "Eleanor Rigby," The Beatles asked, "All the lonely people. Where do they all come from? All the lonely people. Where do they all belong?" And there's only one way to find an answer: get involved.

We must not let these lonely and forlorn people vanish before our eyes and remain unknown. Our country has a problem when it comes to ignoring the needy, and it's definitely time for a change. Roosevelt believed that the development of the United States should be assessed by the situations in which its citizens live, not by materialistic and political advancements.

We as members of the American and Blind Brook communities must not let impoverished people remain unknown, uncared for, and forgotten. These people live hopeless and difficult lives; live one meal at a time, often not knowing where the next meal will come from; they have no support and nobody to put them on the right track. It is our responsibility to improve our country and its people in a time where the world can, at times, feel like an uncaring place.

Fortunately, we as a community can help. Blind Brook has numerous clubs whose missions are to help others, improve other people's lives, and make the community better as whole. By serving hot meals at the Blind Brook Soup Kitchen or even carrying some rocks at a Habitat for Humanity build site, we will bring hope and promise to people less fortunate than us.

We should feel lucky that our addresses are not on the stoop of the Salvation Army. I know we can help end loneliness and hopelessness one person at a time.



Cartoon/Nate Cohn

New Parking Lot Planned to Accommodate Senior Parking

By Ben Lubkin

The continuance of construction at Blind Brook past its original deadline as well as consistently increasing class sizes have culminated in a dilemma with regard to senior parking privileges. Up until October 10th, sandbags and other construction paraphernalia were blocking student access to various parking spaces, limiting the number of seniors who were able to drive to school. Even though construction has slowly dissipated, there is still not enough parking spaces for every member of the senior class, thereby indicating the need for a more expansive senior parking lot.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ronald D. Valenti indicated that plans are being made for the construction of a new senior lot, which is expected to be completed by the 2007-2008 school year. This new lot, which will be situated adjacent to the village athletic fields, will contain between 35 and 40 additional parking spaces. Early estimates project the cost to be between \$125,000 and \$175,000.

"We believe that we could do this with the capital construction money, putting no additional strain on taxpayers," Valenti commented. "Graduating classes will be as large as 125, from 75, with 75 percent of students driving. If a 75 percent driving rate remains consistent, an additional 40 spots would accommodate even the largest grades."

The new lot will most likely be constructed in the spring of 2007, though no official architectural plans have been drawn up. "The specifics need to be developed. I think we need to move on that in the near

future," Valenti said.

As of now, steadily increasing grade sizes have strained the senior parking situation immensely, as there are simply not enough parking spaces to fulfill seniors' needs. "The number of parking spaces remains the same each year, yet the student and faculty populations are increasing," explained high school principal Anthony Baxter. Assistant principal Jane Wermuth echoed, "Ninety students have cars, and there are only sixty-one spaces."

In hopes of acquiring additional spaces for the current school year, Wermuth has conversed with the Village of Rye Brook and Snapple, Inc. about allowing seniors to temporarily park in alternative areas. She also stressed the importance of cooperation between seniors and administrators in reaching a solution. Wermuth met with the senior class on Wednesday, September 20th, to discuss the parking situation and encourage seniors to be as patient as possible. "I told the students that I needed them to be patient. I called on them to share spots and carpool, and help us out because we are in a tight situation," she noted.

The administration is sympathetic to the seniors' parking concerns, as Blind Brook High School has had a longstanding tradition of student parking and off-campus privileges. "Senior parking was always about reaching that stage in your life, and that's a right of passage almost. The biggest thrill for kids is driving themselves to school," Baxter expressed.

Wermuth agreed, stating that, "We love our kids and want them to enjoy school and have a good time while they learn and grow."

Electives and Advanced Curriculum

Progressing Smoothly Continued from page 1

of an alternative physical education class for years. "It's my baby," she exclaimed proudly. She hopes that by exposing members of her classes to different exercises, including yoga, Pilates, and aerobics, they may feel encouraged to pursue them later in life. Judith Mella, a tenth-grade Global History teacher and a frequent Fitness Club participant, is glad that Flaherty is "introducing us to a lot of new ideas about fitness and wellbeing."

The new Food Science class, which teacher Jane Romm describes as a "work in progress," is also improving the health of students by helping them to maintain a nutritious diet. "Unfortunately, there are a lot of obese individuals in America today. The answer is to educate the youth so that they understand how to have a healthy diet," Romm stated.

"[Food Science] gives people the op-

portunity to try healthier options," echoed freshman Diksha Nagia, a student in Romm's class.

Students also have the option of taking Research and Design Laboratory (RAD Lab), an introduction into the fundamentals of engineering. Each individual is able to research a topic which interests him and to design experiments based on his findings to further expand his knowledge. The course is unique in that it is the first introductory engineering class offered at Blind Brook. "The idea is to get the students to take their ideas to a finished project," commented course instructor Steven Giglio.

Most students feel that these five classes will prove extremely useful in years to come. Sophomore Samantha Park, a member of Fitness Club, remarked, "I think all these new classes are definitely a positive addition to Blind Brook."

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News Editor: Marissa Barbaro

News Section

Construction Changes Blind Brook:**The Students' Outlook**

By Amy DeLynn

Everyone at Blind Brook is already aware of the construction that has been going on for months, and everyone has an opinion about it, whether it is positive or negative. Walking around the school, especially on the first day, one can constantly hear people talking not necessarily about the construction itself, but about the changes that the construction has brought about with respect to Blind Brook culture, which leads Blind Brook community members to ask: "Has construction changed our school for better or for worse?"

Just a few years ago, Blind Brook consisted solely of two floors with open classrooms, and middle and high school students shared a building. Now, however, the open classrooms are long gone, the small circular hallways that were impossible to get lost in are no longer small or circular, and the high school and middle school students have been separated into two different buildings.

Instead, Blind Brook now consists of several wings branching off from one another, and students have to go through the gym or take a roundabout route to get from one class to the other between the old and new parts of the school. Many members of the Blind Brook community, both students and teachers, have voiced their opinions about the changes to the school and the effects that they have had on longstanding Blind Brook traditions.

Many people have reported and discussed both the positive and negative aspects of the construction and the subsequent changes to Blind Brook culture. On a positive note, construction endeavors have provided for the existence of more classrooms and fields for athletic events. "The student body is getting bigger; therefore, we do need more classroom space," commented business teacher Charlene Decker. "Two years ago you could never find an empty classroom because there was a lot of sharing. Now that there are new classrooms, it makes each classroom have its own identity. Social studies classes can have an environment fitting to the curriculum as well as English and so on." Decker added, "[English 11 teacher] Jon Ambrosio's classroom is a great example. He has so much paraphernalia hanging on his walls that really adds to the enrichment



Photo/Taylor Fuller

The senior rock, usually painted as a tradition by the senior class, is now covered in rubble because of construction.

of his curriculum. So, I think the construction is a good thing."

Spanish teacher Maggie Brennan-Juana agrees, as her substantially larger room now comfortably accommodates large classes. She thoroughly enjoys having her own room because it provides a quiet, private environment in which she can do her work without be disrupted or distracted by others.

Numerous students are also pleased with the effects that construction is having on the Blind Brook dynamic. "The new additions to the building are really important for the future of Blind Brook. The new Fitness Center is something that Blind Brook has never seen before, and it is very helpful to making our school healthier overall," noted junior Benjamin Engle. "The new science labs are also beneficial, as they are state-of-the-art. The opportunities are endless in those labs."

However, many complaints have been made regarding the effects of construction on the Blind Brook atmosphere. Numerous students find it bothersome that there is no convenient path from the old building to the new wing and that they are forced to walk through the gym in order to get to some of their classes. "The architectural design of the new wing should have been reviewed

more thoroughly before the project was approved. The limited access to the new classrooms is quite a nuisance," asserted senior Ethan Klapper.

In addition, seniors have done quite a lot of complaining about the unfavorable parking situation. Every senior originally expected to be able to drive to school this year, but, much to their displeasure, many seniors discovered sand bags in their parking spaces and realized that there were simply not enough spaces for everyone. "It's a little irritating because I have looked forward to senior parking since I was a freshman," replied senior Akshay Nagia.

Decker, the senior class advisor, responded to this inconvenience by stating, "If we can just get a grip and understand the long-term needs and put up with the short-term inconveniences, we should be okay. We need to work together, not against one another."

Construction has also spelled an end to a variety of beloved Blind Brook traditions and attitudes. While some may feel that the loss of open classrooms, Wednesday activity periods, and a joint middle-high school are merely minutia, others believe that these facets made Blind Brook unique and gave its students a unified voice. "The school has become more focused on expanding its

educational profile, and with that expansion has come the loss of tradition," commented senior Matt Held.

Klapper agreed, stating, "The construction has made Blind Brook feel way too big. What used to be a small cozy school has now literally grown out of proportion."

It is clear that the school's atmosphere has changed considerably due to construction.

However, some believe that these changes have primarily resulted from a change in the times, not merely a shift in the physical appearance of the school. "Honestly, I think the 'Blind Brook tradition' is a thing of the past, and we are all hanging onto it as a way of criticizing the present," Juana affirmed. "Think of it the other way around. What if Blind Brook never changed in the last ten years? How would everyone feel about the place then? I think we would be feeling like we are backwards and not up to date."

Juana added, "With all the new traditions (which many people think are 'bad') have come the good as well: bigger and better classrooms to handle all the students we have, much more technology, additional class offerings, new gym and fields, and a larger cafeteria."

Despite the few inconveniences that the construction has caused students and teachers, the majority of Blind Brook constituents are pleased with the outcome of construction. "I'm okay with it because I believe our school is addressing needs that the district has," Decker asserted. "Growing enrollment, new athletic fields to accommodate our larger population playing sports, and new equipment are addressing today's educational needs."

Juana echoed, "I think the changes are necessary, and I think the school has done a great job in getting it all done with minimal class interruption. I think it is much easier to criticize and complain than it is to be in charge of the changes and make it a better place. People tend to like to find what is wrong, rather than find all that is right. It may not be perfect, but I think the administration has been faced with an enormous amount of changes they had to deal with (ie. increased student population, many requests for new classes, AP pressures, etc.) and they have dealt with them as best they can. It may not be perfect, but I think it's been darn good!"

Construction Moving Along Slowly but Surely *Continued from page 1*

further, and, while the contractor took full blame for the structural flaw in the fence and rebuilt it, much work is left to be done.

In addition, though the Blind Brook football team appreciates its right of access to the village field, its constituents would have preferred to utilize a true home field for games to boost fan support and school spirit.

After the spring deadline passed, several new dates were set at an August 30th meeting with the Administration, including the completion of the new classrooms, science labs, locker areas, and fitness center by September 6. While students were able to use these facilities on the first day of school, they are not entirely complete. Many of the new classrooms lack Smart Board access, functional clocks, some tiling, and Internet access, particularly in the science labs. As of now, the architect, contractor, and construction workers are at the "punch-list" phase in which every

nook and cranny of each room is examined thoroughly. The entirety of Blind Brook's classrooms should be fully finished within a very short period of time.

In addition, student dining and food preparation areas were supposed to be completed by September 6th; however, this aspect of the construction also fell behind schedule. While the tables and chairs for both the middle and high school students were situated properly on the first day of school, the food preparation areas and cafeteria were not ready until almost two weeks into the school year. Instead of traditional school food, students were served cold sandwiches and pizza from Glenville Pizzeria.

Additionally, the baseball field was arranged on August 30th to be finished by the first day of school; however, this project is still ongoing and should be ready by October or November. The completion of the baseball field is, as of now, of minimal concern considering that

both the Girls' softball teams and Boys' baseball teams will not start their seasons until the spring.

Finally, the six-lane community track open to the citizens of Rye Brook has yet to be completed. As the final portion of the construction endeavor, the track is expected to be finished by spring 2007.

In addition to schedule setbacks, construction has also led to substantial parking problems for seniors (*see: New Parking Lot Planned as Increasing Grade Sizes Exhaust Senior Parking*). Various parking spaces have been blocked by sand bags and dirt piles, and, as a result, numerous seniors have been unable to obtain parking spaces, thereby increasing students' desire for an end to construction.

At the outset of the project, Valenti and the Board of Education envisioned a revamped Blind Brook with new electives, increased athletic participation, and expanded facilities in general as a result of the construction efforts. Now, after the

passage of an approximately seventeen-million dollar bond with millions more devoted to the construction, these goals are, slowly but surely, coming to fruition.

According to demographic projections, Blind Brook High School's enrollment is expected to surpass 500 students by the year 2010, and the middle school is expected to hold over 400 students. The new and improved Blind Brook should be able to handle the future student population adequately. When asked how long he expected the new changes to last, Valenti replied, "Into the next decade would be a conservative estimate."

Blind Brook assistant principal Jane Wermuth summarized the project, stating, "I feel frustration because I have had to deny my seniors full parking privileges due to the delays. However, overall, this project represents a huge facilities upgrade. I am pleased with the increased space including the language lab, fitness center, and the incoming AstroTurf."



Photo/Halley Feldman

National Merit Scholars strike a pose from left, Marissa Barbaro, Eric Taitz, Jacob Mikva, Nate Cohn, and Sarah Rosenberg (Not pictured: Akshay Nagia).

Six Students Recognized for PSAT Excellence

By Joey Goldstein

Each year, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation hosts an academic competition to "identify and honor exceptionally able United States high school students" based on their scores on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT). This year, fifty thousand students nationwide were acknowledged as merit scholars. Of that fifty thousand, only sixteen thousand were named semifinalists, and the remaining thirty-four thousand were commended.

At Blind Brook, six seniors were honored as merit scholars because their scores on the PSAT were higher than the New York State cutoff. Seniors Marissa Barbaro, Jacob Mikva, Akshay Nagia, Sarah Rosenberg, and Eric Taitz were commended, and senior Nathan Cohn was deemed a semifinalist.

"It's a very cool thing," said Cohn. "I am very happy to be recognized." Cohn is currently in the process of applying for a scholarship through the competition, just one of the perks of being a semifinalist. With regard to his future, Cohn wishes to study film at the University of Southern California School of Cinematography.

Students are selected as merit scholars based on their PSAT scores. Each state

has a different index in which the top scores are chosen to assure that all fifty states are represented fairly. This year, students from New York State were required to score at least 203 out of a possible 240 points on the PSAT. The cutoff for semifinalist status was 221.

Though being commended is a prestigious distinction, only semifinalists are able to apply for and receive one of the many scholarships available through the program and its countless sponsors. Christopher Griffin, director of the Blind Brook guidance department, stated that, "Only two other states, New Jersey and Massachusetts, had a higher qualifying index. Therefore, for students in New York, achieving semifinalist status is truly a distinction."

According to the Scholarship Corporation, the purpose of the competition is to "stimulate increased support for the education of scholastically able students, and to encourage the pursuit of academic excellence at all levels of education." The contest is also meant to "encourage [students] to pursue rigorous college studies."

Finalists will be selected in February of 2007, and the winners of the competition will be chosen soon after.

Harvard Leads Movement to End Early Admission

By Matt Goldwater

On September 12th, 2006, Harvard University announced its decision to end its Early Action program, an admissions option that allows students to receive their admissions decisions in mid-December. The termination of the Early Action option has had profound repercussions on numerous students who feel that it is a necessary component of the admissions process. In addition, Harvard's decision has caused a virtual chain reaction among other highly ranked universities, as Princeton University announced an end to its early admissions program on September 18th, and, on September 25th, the University of Virginia followed suit.

In announcing these changes, all three universities cited disadvantages in the admissions process for low-income students and a resulting slump in senior year academic performance for those accepted early as the main stimuli for ending Early Action. Harvard interim president Derek Bok also stated that the college admissions process is currently too complex, and he feels that ending Early Action will make the process more simple and fair.

Harvard's interim dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences also supported the change, stating that it forces both students and colleges to prematurely commit to each other based only upon what is known at the end of the student's junior year.

Christopher Griffin, Director of the Blind Brook guidance department, supports the

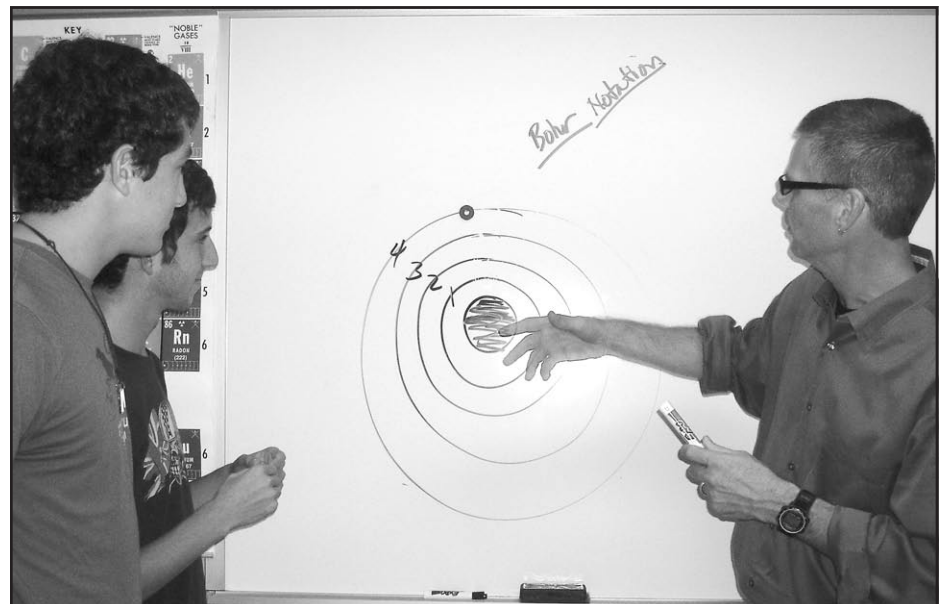
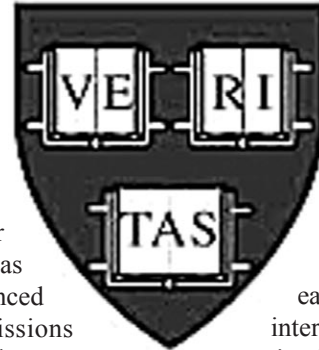
movement towards ending early admission. "The college admissions process has become overly complex and difficult for students to navigate," he remarked. "There should not be an expectation for students to be able to select colleges and submit applications early in their senior year." He added, "Any step by any college to reduce student stress or to provide ample time to make a prudent decision is a move that I consider to be a positive one."

Many Blind Brooks students also feel that terminating early admission is in the best interest of college-bound students.

Junior Andrew Solarz stated, "I think it's a good idea because it doesn't give the wealthy an advantage." Senior Eric Taitz added, "Seniors will now have to work harder [at the end of senior year]."

However, certain advantages to early admission will no longer be available to students. For example, Early Action and other early admission plans have been known to improve the odds for a student applying to a particular college. Critics of the three universities' decision to end early admission argue that it is unfair to students who do not need financial aid to have to wait for their admissions decisions if they are willing to commit to a certain university.

Junior Marshall Rifkin agreed, stating, "I don't think it is a good idea because the people who really want to go to Harvard or another school that also ends Early Action will not have an advantage."



Photo/Taylor Fuller

Mr. Potts gives some extra help on the atom to juniors Harris Brett and Ben Schultz.

Meet the Faculty Continued from page 1

science in Yonkers and ninth-and-tenth-grade Honors Biology at Harrison High School. Shallo attributes her decision to become a science teacher to the nun who taught her biology in college, though she had been interested in the subject long beforehand.

So far, Shallo has enjoyed teaching at Blind Brook, referring to her students as "very driven and respectful," adding that her colleagues have been "warm, inviting, and helpful."

Jean Follansbee has replaced Steven Jones (who retired in June) as the middle and high school librarian. She has been the librarian at Bedford High School and Tuckahoe High School for the past three years and previously worked at Barnard College. During her time at Barnard, she

held a position as the physical education chairperson and the director of quantitative reasoning and technology. She chose to become a librarian in an effort to "integrate [her] technological skills with [her] interest in reading into one career." She added that her decision was further influenced by her general curiosity in almost all academic disciplines.

Additionally, Nicole Simmons of the Math Department teaches Algebra II, General Computer Applications, and Geometry; Peter Thomas, also of the Social Studies Department, teaches AP Government and Politics, AP Macroeconomics, and Economics; and Meghan Petras of the Art Department teaches AP Studio Art, Film and Video, Drawing and Painting, and Crafts.



It's Work Out Time!

Blind Brook's new and improved weight room rivals the facilities of Balley's!

Sports

Sports Editor: Aaron Wirshba

Trojans Football Finishes Best Season Ever

By Jonny Sonkin and Greg Millar

Football fever has taken the Trojan nation by storm.

The Blind Brook football program has undergone a massive transformation since last year's disappointing season. Yes, the Trojans did add a new field, new jerseys, and new lockers to its program. However, the most important change has been Blind Brook's new winning attitude. The team currently boasts an overall record of 3-3.

Last year, Blind Brook's lackluster football team needed eight games to muster two meaningless victories. Last year, the entire team combined for fewer than 400 rushing yards. Last year, the Trojans only scored 52 points all season. Last year, losing was frequent and painfully inevitable in every game. This year is different. This year, the Blind Brook Trojans are a force to be reckoned with.

After a strong preseason training camp, the team felt confident heading into its first game against Haldane. Senior quarterback David Yawitz commented, "Practicing everyday and sometimes twice a day from August 21st until the Haldane game, on September 9th, gave us the time we needed to play together and learn the offense and defense. We went to Haldane knowing it would be a tough game, but one we could win." The Trojans dominated the first half, going into halftime with a 14-12 lead. Late in the second quarter however, senior co-captain Mike Tramontelli suffered a devastating injury: a broken leg. Without Tramontelli controlling both the defensive and offensive line, the team struggled. "Mike's injury was detrimental. The line opened up tons of holes in the first half



The football team celebrates after a victorious homecoming game under the lights.

for our backs to run through, but in the second half we were forced to bring in a less experienced player," added Yawitz. In the end, the Trojans fell to Haldane with a final score of 20-14. However, one bright spot for the Trojans was the performance of junior running back Joe Denti, who finished the game with an astonishing 198 yards and 2 touchdowns.

The Trojans knew they needed a tough week of practice before the next game to prepare for state ranked Tuckahoe. Without Tramontelli, senior co-captain Greg Goldstein knew he would have to step up his leadership role in the upcoming

game. "Once Mike went down, I knew that everyone on our line would have to pick up our game," Goldstein said. Blind Brook had never scored against Tuckahoe in the program's history, but this year's team was determined to change that. The Trojans came out to a strong start as senior Steven Thomsen recovered a fumble in the end zone. Later, Denti rushed for a touchdown bringing the Trojans to a 12-0 lead. However, the Trojans had no time to let up their guard. In the second half, the Trojans fell to a 27-24 deficit. The Trojans made one final run towards the end zone as Yawitz sneaked on fourth down to keep

the offensive drive going. Two completed passes to senior receiver Andrew Mack and a 40-yard completion to Thomsen put the Trojans within grasps of scoring. However, Tuckahoe intercepted a half-back pass to end the game with a final score of Tuckahoe 27, Blind Brook 24. Denti finished another remarkable game with 222 rushing yards and 3 touchdowns breaking the Blind Brook single-game rushing record and maintaining his post as the number one rushing leader in Section 1.

The Trojans were devastated after such a close loss, but the team was pleased with its performance. The next week brought Blind Brook's home opener against Valhalla. Blind Brook again came out strong, dominating Valhalla from the opening minutes of the game. The Trojans sent a message immediately; they would not lose on their home field. In the first quarter, both Denti and Goldstein rushed for a touchdown each. Senior Sean Fuller kicked two perfect field goals to score the extra points (and would later kick two more).

Before the second half was over, the Trojans lead 21-0. A halftime lead was not unfamiliar to the Trojans; they knew they had plenty of time to play and, after blowing the game to Tuckahoe, were determined to hold their ground. Blind Brook's defense crushed Valhalla's hopes of gaining any significant rushing yardage, shutting down attempt after attempt. Valhalla converted on a 30-yard touchdown pass, but that was all the Trojan defense would allow for the rest of the game. The Trojans came away with a 28-7 victory. Denti rushed for 148 yards, again proving

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New Fields Means New Chance for Spirit

By Lisa Ganz

With the completion of a new, multi-sports field at the King Street Campus, the town of Rye Brook's new facility looks to benefit the community in a multitude of ways.

The new field, constructed from artificial turf, not only hosts physical education classes, practices for sports teams, and home games, but has also augmented the amount of dedicated fans in the stands. Simply put, the new fields have greatly impacted both Blind Brook's athletic program and its fan base.

In addition to the King Street campus fields, Blind Brook has been working hard to finish new fields of its own. Though there are still tasks that need to be completed High School Principal Anthony Baxter insists, "Much of it has already been done." Though the baseball field is progressing rapidly, the football field and track will not be completed until the spring.

According to Baxter, the new sports facilities, including a first level multi-purpose field (soccer, football, lacrosse, softball) owned by the town, a second-level track field, and a third-level turf baseball field, plus a new work out room, will help make



Blind Brook's facilities "second to none in the tri-state area."

The benefits of the new fields are believed to be tri-fold. First, the use of artificial grass surface, which doesn't require the maintenance of a grass field, enables all sports teams to practice and play on one field.

Secondly, when the multi-purpose field with the track is completed, Blind Brook will finally be able to host its own track meets.

The multi-purpose field includes different color lines sewn into the field to differentiate the boundaries for the variety of sports that can participate on the fields. The fields have lines for lacrosse, a sport Blind Brook is hoping to institute for girls in the spring.

Lastly, the addition of more fields has led to Blind Brook's ability to finally host home games for the football team and meets for the track team. The increased amount of space for fan seating has served as a function of school spirit and pride.

"We are very fortunate to be able to provide this unique facility. If you look at not only Westchester, but Connecticut and New Jersey, you will not find the combination of academics and athletic facilities Blind Brook now has," Baxter said.

Photo/Blythe Duckett

Rye Brook's emblem adorns the new field.



Photo/Ashley Woychowski

Rachel Silverman maneuvers around an opponent towards the goal.

Girls' Soccer Comes Up Short in First Fall Season

By Marissa Barbaro

Despite their best efforts, the Blind Brook girls' Varsity soccer team has been unable to snag a win in its last nine games. The Trojans recently suffered losses to Croton-Harmon (7-0), North Salem (3-0), Pawling (3-1), Bronxville (1-0), Rye Neck (4-0), Westlake (5-3), and Valhalla (5-1), with ties against Dobbs Ferry (1-1) and Keio (1-1).

The Trojans' September 15th tie against the Dobbs Ferry Eagles proved to be an

exciting match. Torrential rain forced the team to play 30-minute halves rather than the two standard 40-minute periods, but both teams remained resilient despite the downpour. Freshman Chelsey Louis, assisted by junior Amanda Louis, drilled a reeling goal into Dobbs' net to put the Trojans ahead midway through the game. However, in the last few minutes of play, the Eagles were able to sneak a goal past

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Stop Dropping the A-Bombs on A-ROD

By Eric Taitz

Alex Rodriguez, the Yankees' star third baseman, has been repeatedly booed by his home fans at Yankee Stadium throughout the 2006 season. Recently, the cover article of *Sports Illustrated* was entitled, "The Lonely Yankee," with an accompanying picture of Rodriguez.

One might wonder why New Yorkers would heckle last year's American League Most Valuable Player. Not only is Rodriguez capable of crushing home runs, but his life-time batting average is over .300. Some experts even predict that Rodriguez will be among the two or three greatest to ever play baseball when he retires. So once again, why all the negative attention?

The primary argument Rodriguez naysayers make is that he is not a "true" Yankee. They explain that he has not won a World Series title in his three-year tenure as a member of the New York Yankees. They also contend that he made his name outside of New York. For the first 10 years of his career, Rodriguez played in Seattle and Texas. Finally, all Yankee fans unfairly compare Rodriguez to their hometown hero, Derek Jeter.

These arguments are flawed. The last time the Yankees won the World Series was in 2000. Only four current Yankees were on that championship team. So if Yankees fans choose to give Rodriguez a "Bronx Cheer" for lack of a World Series victory, then twenty of his teammates should be booed as well. Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield are both cheered for and admired by Yankee fans even though they put up their best numbers on other teams and have failed to win championships in pinstripes as well. In addition, both of these men are admitted cheaters; they illegally took performance enhancing drugs to give themselves an unfair advantage! How can they be cheered for while Rodriguez is booed?

A-Rod is often compared to Derek Jeter, the Yankee captain and fan-favorite. Rodriguez has always posted better numbers than Jeter, but ironically, last year was the only year this was not the case. Rodriguez won the American League MVP award in 2005, as a Yankee. In addition, fans also tend to ignore the fact that when he came to New York, Rodriguez switched to third base to accommodate Jeter. Rodriguez won two Gold Gloves at shortstop for his excellent fielding. Jeter was eligible to receive the award, but could not match Rodriguez's defensive prowess. Essentially, Rodriguez is a better fielder playing out of position for the good of the team. Doesn't that prove him to be a "true" Yankee?

People also criticize Rodriguez for not being as "clutch" as Jeter or other Yankees. Rodriguez performed abysmally in Games 2, 3, and 4 of the ALDS this year, but so did his teammates. After starting the round 5 for

5 in Game 1, even Jeter's production fell off dramatically as the Yankees proceeded to lose three straight.

Finally, many Yankees fans boo

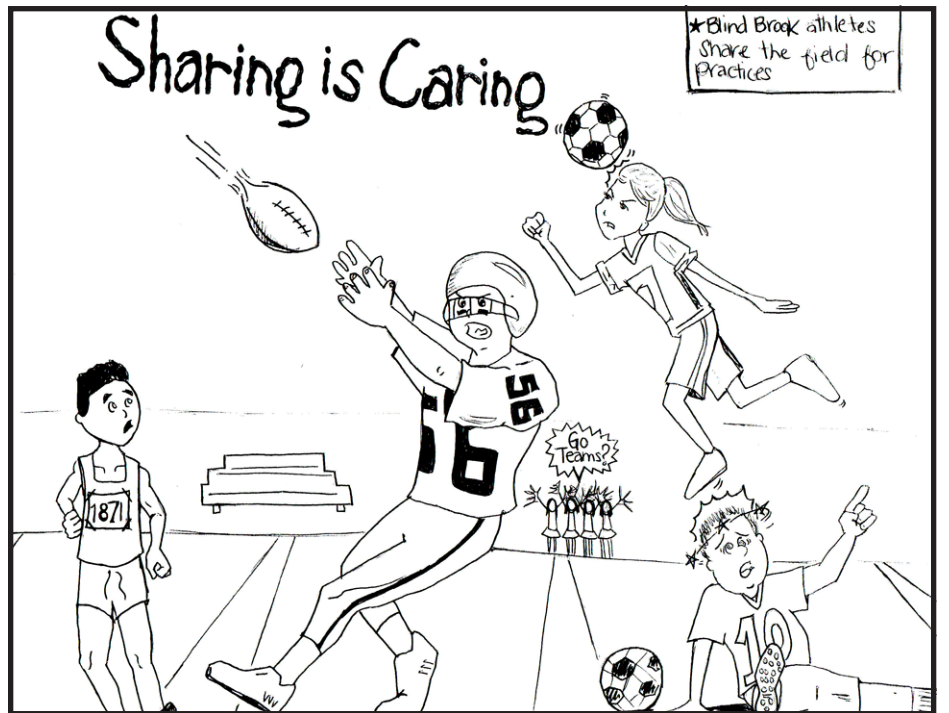
Rodriguez because he is the highest paid player in baseball. They reason that with the highest salary in the league, he should be the best player in baseball every year. Particularly, many fans consider him to be greedy and selfish. This year, Rodriguez posted stellar numbers that all

major leaguers would be proud to claim. However, these numbers fall short of his career averages. Rodriguez has been "good" this year, but not "great." These boos expect only the best; thus, they denounce Rodriguez when he strikes out or misplay a ball in the field.

Those who deride Rodriguez because of his wealth are foolish and jealous. I despise hearing about how players should be loyal to their respective teams and take less money. We live in a capitalist society, so why shouldn't Rodriguez try to make as much money as he can? It's not his fault that the owner of the Texas Rangers offered him an obscene contract with \$252 million guaranteed. I would be lying if I said that I would turn down that kind of money and you would be too. Out of the \$25.2 million per year average that Rodriguez is paid, the Yankees only have to come up with \$15 million as a result of the trade that brought him to New York. With this in mind, those who argue that play should be proportionate with pay must focus their attention to all the Yankees that earn more than \$15 million annually. These Yankees include Jeter, Giambi, and pitchers Mike Mussina and Randy Johnson. None of them are playing like the best player in baseball. How can Rodriguez be booed for not living up to his contract when his teammates are receiving more money (from the Yankees) and performing at an inferior level?

People have unrealistic expectations for Rodriguez. Nobody, even baseball immortals like Babe Ruth, Willie Mays, and Mickey Mantle, could be the best of the best year in and year out. Rodriguez deserves some breathing room because even if none of the aforementioned arguments convince fans to stop booing Rodriguez, they should stop because it is the "right" thing to do. Now, one might argue "I pay for my ticket and I can do what I want!" Well, that may be true, but by booing Rodriguez you are only hurting his morale, thereby lessening your team's chances of winning.

Rodriguez is often referred to as "A-ROD" by fans and members of the media. Whenever Rodriguez hits a home run, Yankees' radio broadcaster John Sterling screams, "It's an A-Bomb for A-ROD!" So, I ask you, whether you are a Yankee fan, baseball fan, or just interested in the affairs of an infamous 31-year-old man, take it easy on Alex.



Cartoon/Mori Einsidler

Trojans Football Finishes Best Season Ever

Continued from page 5
his offensive prowess.

Now, with a win under its belt, the Trojan football team turned to Rye Neck. In a thrilling game, the Trojans defeated Rye Neck by a final score of 7-6. Rye Neck came out early, scoring a touchdown in the first quarter. Blind Brook answered with a 72-yard touchdown run by Denti in the second quarter. Fuller then kicked the extra-point through the uprights. Neither team scored in the second half, but Denti finished with another excellent game, racking up 185 yards rushing.

The team's next opponent was Pawling, who the Trojans played under the lights for their homecoming game. The Trojans dominated the entire game with Denti and Yawitz leading the team; Denti rushed 29 times gaining 190 yards and one touchdown. Yawitz had his best game of the season in front of the home fans throwing

touchdown passes to both Greg Goldstein and Andrew Mack. The final score of the game was 26-12, improving the Trojans' record to 3-2.

The most recent game was not as successful for the Trojans. The Dobbs Ferry Eagles shut Blind Brook out while scoring 34 points of their own, making the Trojans' overall record 3-3. Denti led the Trojans with 87 yards of total offense.

The Trojans hope to continue their success and are formidable competitors in this year's sectional tournament. Their 3-1 league record is good enough to place them in third in the league standings, but that is not enough for the Trojans.

The team will not be content with anything short of a sectional championship.

"Everything's finally coming together," explained Goldstein. "Our offense is clicking, our defense is clicking, but we really want that sectional championship."

Cross Country Team

By Amanda Gottlieb

"Our new young runners are doing extremely well this year," said head coach Judith Mella on the Varsity Cross Country team. "At the last meet, everyone finished their races and everyone improved their time. Some of our key runners are senior captain Ethan Klapper, junior captain Adam Potter and Freshman Justin Cohn; I think both will do great things this season."

"We don't know what to expect for the season but we hope to improve with each meet," Potter explained. "I don't know how good or bad most schools are this year, however, Keio usually has a good team so that should be a good meet. We have an extremely strong team this year. However, we had more runners on the team last year, including numerous seniors who all graduated. We also lost our best runners, John Tenenzapf and Andrea Green."

The team has three dual meets in October and will be competing in the league meet later in the season. Mella

stated, "Although cross country is scored as a team sport, it is up to the individual runner to excel in his or her race and Blind Brook has a hard time beating other schools because most teams practice all year round making them stronger teams. Bronxville is always an excellent team and we did pretty well compared to past years. I think in a few years Blind Brook will be a formidable team once some of the young runners become upper classmen."

The cross country team's goal for the rest of the season is to build speed and endurance, taking meets one at a time. This year, the Varsity cross country team only has two female runners, Maddy Sims and Jamie Florindi. They hope to attract more female runners for next season.

Blind Brook expanded its Cross Country program this year include a Junior Varsity team coached by middle school teacher John Dakers. The team hopes to continue its success and hard work as the season goes on.

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Sports Editor: Aaron Wirshba

Sports Section

Varsity Soccer Has a Sizzling Season

By Spencer Bernstein
and Max Linder

With a potent offense, tight defense, and excellent senior leadership, the Blind Brook Trojans Boys' Varsity soccer team, as of October 17th, boasts an impressive 9-3-1 record. Six seniors have returned from last year's squad, including Nate Cohn, Ross Burack, Jesse Sedler, Greg Millar, and senior co-captains Steven Berman and Jonny Sonkin, who has scored a team-high 9 goals. The team also benefits greatly from the consistent high performance from juniors David Levinson, Ale Godoy, Ben Schultz, Aaron Wirshba, Andrew Becker, Dan Fuchs, Jordan Silverman, Miles Fisher, Aaron Glazer, Brett Paterno, Jason Hymowitz, Brett Novick, Andrew Benowich, as well as sophomores Scott Kaufman and Max Linder. In addition, Blind Brook is blessed with a brick wall in goal, junior Harris Brett.

They rebounded from their loss to Rye with victories against worthy adversaries in Croton-Harmon, Hamilton, Tuckahoe, Pawling, Solomon Schechter, North Salem, and Dobbs Ferry; they even tied a class-AA team, Clarkstown-North.

According to co-captain Berman, the toughest game on this year's schedule will be Westlake. "Westlake should be really tough," he said. "Probably even tougher than Rye." While co-captain Sonkin agreed with Berman's assessment of Westlake, he added that the team should be up to the challenge. "We have a quick passing game, and our defense is great. If we play our game, we should be able to



Photo/Ashley Woychowski

Ale Godoy puts his whole body into trapping the ball during a game.

beat anyone," explained Sonkin.

This year, as in past years, the team is led by the vision of Coach Joe Pomoryn, who is in his tenth season as Boys' Varsity soccer coach. According to Pomoryn, the team's passing game still needs improvement. "Sometimes we still rush unnecessarily with the ball," remarks Pomoryn. "But, practicing on such a big field has helped us a lot."

On Friday, September 29th, the team defeated Dobbs Ferry, getting revenge on the team that knocked Blind Brook out of last year's sectional tournament in a thrilling overtime shootout. The

final score was 6-1 thanks to hat tricks by Schultz and Novick.

"It felt so good to score those goals," said Schultz, "especially because they beat us last year." All three of Schultz's goals came in the first half.

"We were up four at half-time, but there was no way we were going to let up. We wanted to let them know what to expect from us this year in sectionals," said a triumphant Novick, whose hat-trick gave him his first three goals of the season.

Godoy added, "The win against Dobbs

might have been the most important all year. Everyone on the team last year wanted revenge and we all had something to prove."

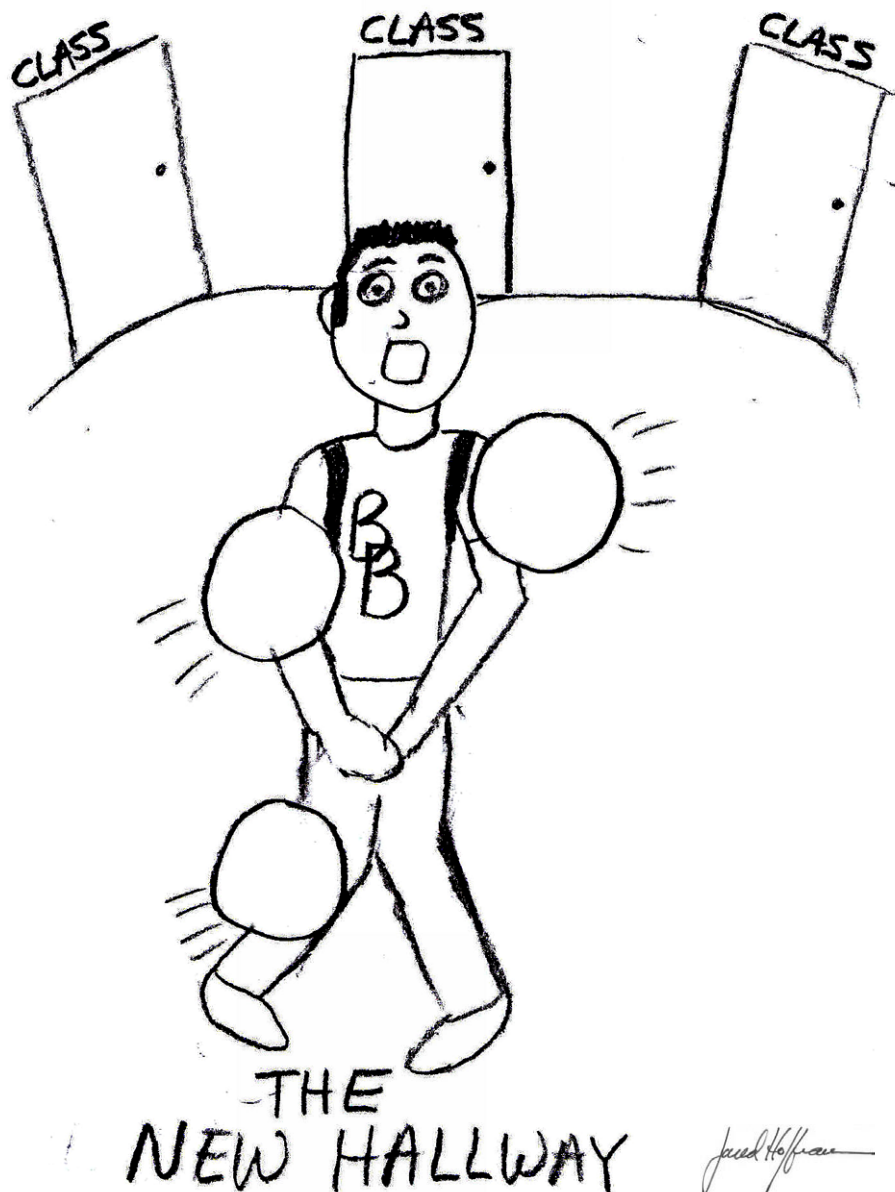
After the Dobbs Ferry game, the Trojans played Clarkstown North, a class AA school. "We knew that they were a much bigger school than we are, but we made sure that we weren't intimidated. We approached this game just as we did for every other game of the season," said Brett Novick. The mentality apparently worked for the team, because the final score was a 2-2 tie. The Trojans took the momentum from the tie and their previous winning streak into the following game and dealt a blow to Rye Neck, defeating the Panthers 2-0.

Blind Brook slipped, however, losing games to both Valhalla and suffering a heartbreaking overtime loss to Bronxville. "Nobody likes to lose, especially when the team was doing so well," said Levinson. "We were so hot before; I just hope we can get back on track by sectionals."

Unfortunately, injuries have plagued the Trojans so far. Senior midfielder Millar was recently told that he will be out for the remainder of the season due to a back injury. Novick and Levinson have both missed time this season because of injuries as well. Earlier in the season, doctors told the prolific goal scorer Kaufman that he had a broken bone in his foot and would not be permitted to

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BLIND BROOK'S HIGH SCHOOL GYM:



THE
NEW HALLWAY

SPORTECH ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Joe Denti

By Jonathan Gold

The Blind Brook football program has a brand new field, brand new uniforms, and a brand new swagger about them. As all of the Trojan players can tell you, this change in attitude can largely be attributed to junior running back Joe Denti.

Through six games, Denti has made headlines all across Westchester County. He currently leads the county with 1006 rushing yards, is ninth in the county in scoring with 56 points on the season, and is seventh in the county in total offense with an average of 167.7 yards per game.

Even though these impressive numbers clearly showcase Denti's tremendous contribution to the team, he also provides the intangibles. Senior captain Mike Tramontelli explains, "He's a sure

thing whenever he touches the ball." This sense of dependability that Denti brings to the field is something that Blind Brook will need to continue to see if it wants

to achieve its goal of winning the sectional tournament.

Denti remains modest on his accomplishment by crediting his success to the team's beloved "O-Line," or offensive line. Junior Jordan Zazlav, a member of this line, gives the credit right back. "Sure the 'O-Line' makes some good holes, but that won't

make a team run the ball well. Denti has a knack for finding his own holes and breaking tackles to create running room."

According to senior quarterback David Yawitz, "Joe is the prolific player for us, something Blind Brook hasn't had in the past."

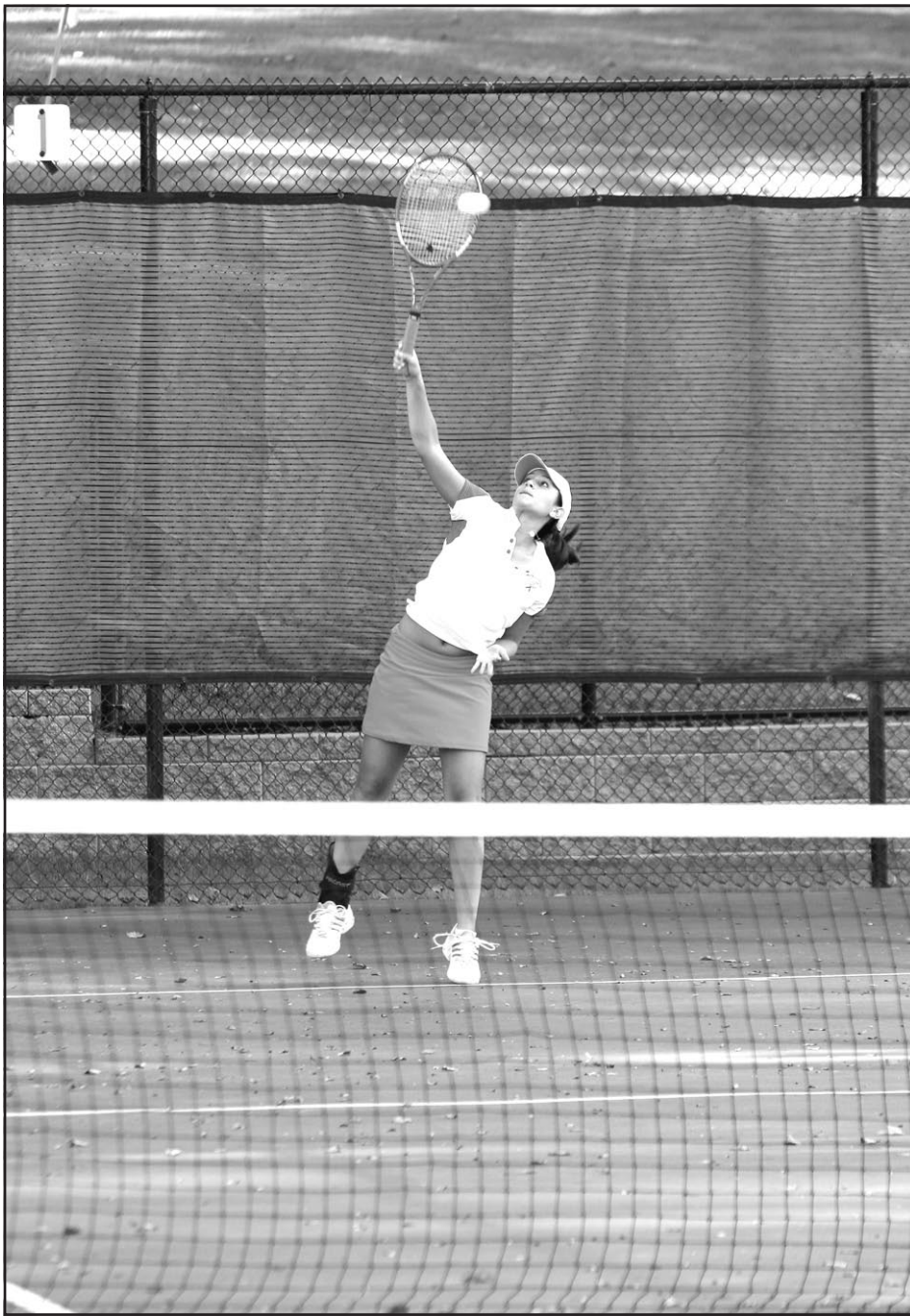


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Sports Section



Dana Silverstein delivers a fast serve.

Photo/Matt Michelli

Girls' Tennis Almost Perfect

By Marissa Barbaro

As the defending league champions, the Blind Brook Girls' Varsity tennis team hoped to start its season off with a bang—and they did just that. The Trojans have accumulated a 7-1 record, with their last game of the season on October 17th.

The Trojans have managed to perpetuate their winning ways despite the loss of seven graduates from their 2005 season. Immense leadership capabilities displayed by senior captain Abby Citrin and junior captain Dana Silverstein have kept the team together and maintained its confidence, thereby allowing its players to translate hard work into consecutive wins.

Coach Trudi David praised the captains' abilities as both stellar tennis players and competent leaders. "Everybody respects and listens to them," she remarked. "They are great leaders, and, since they've each been with the team for four years, they really have a handle on the team dynamic."

The team has also seen outstanding play from its first and second doubles teams, comprised of juniors Sam Levine and Michelle Caley and sophomores Mori Ein-

sidler and Melissa Kaliner, respectively.

The Trojans added eight new players to their roster this season, but the substantial shift in the upperclassmen-to-underclassmen ratio has not prevented the team from winning. "We have a lot of young players, and we're trying to build them up for years to come," Davis commented. "We're basically reconstructing the team, but the girls are definitely doing a great job."

Davis primarily attributed the team's success to solid teamwork and superb compatibility. "All the girls work together and are wonderful tennis players. They work hard, listen to advice, and are, overall, a very cohesive group." She also credited the squad with superb court sense, stating, "They always know there to put the ball on the court."

The Trojans have high expectations for the rest of the season and hope to attain their third consecutive league title. "Last season we were the undefeated league champions, and we hope to maintain that level of play," Citrin said. "We're off to a great start, and we hope that our teamwork and guts will carry us through another amazing season."

Varsity Soccer Has a Sizzling Season

Continued from page 7

play for the rest of the season. However, after seeing a second doctor, Kaufman was cleared to play and is thrilled to be re-joining the team.

The most impressive player on the field this year has been goalkeeper Brett. "Without Harris we wouldn't be where we are. You could say that for most people

on the team, but it is especially true for Harris. He's easily the best goalie I've ever played with," said Fisher.

With a solid 8-2 league record, Blind Brook hopes to continue its success for the rest of the season and into the playoffs. With the skill and determination the team has this year, it is a definite possibility.

Girls' Soccer Comes Up Short

Continued from page 5

senior goalie Candace Carlucci, ending the match in a tie.

Blind Brook squared off against Croton Harmon at home four days later in what turned out to be a devastating blowout. The Trojans were forced to stay on the defensive from the moment the starting whistle blew, and, despite attempts by the Blind Brook defense to keep their adversaries at bay, Croton's superior ball movement allowed the team to score in the fourth minute of play. The Trojans were simply unable to push the ball up the field, and as a result of diminished energy and largely non-aggres-

sive play, Croton scored at six additional junctures throughout the game.

"We're just not getting the ball when we're supposed to. We're not getting bodies in front of the ball on punts or goal kicks, so naturally the other team keeps pushing past our defense. We have to work harder on getting the ball away from them and up the field."

-- Marcello Marcoccia, Head Coach

sive play, Croton scored at six additional junctures throughout the game. The game as goalie, and, in an attempt to utilize her offensive prowess to the team's advantage, Marcoccia allowed her to exit the goal, leaving it untended for a brief period on time, to try to capitalize on a one-player advantage. However, his objective did not come to fruition, though Silverman effectively employed her stellar ball handling skills to shift the center of play to the Salem side of the field.

Midway through the first half, freshman Jenna Paterno tapped the ball into the Pawling net for the Trojans' second goal of the season. Soon after, freshman Melanie Urban replaced Silverman as goaltender in the second half, during which time she held Pawling to one goal. Still, the Pawling offense proved too strong for the Trojans to stop, and the match ended in a 3-1 loss.

The Trojans played their best game to date on October 3rd against the Bronxville Broncos, a notorious team that Blind Brook has not fared well against in the past few years. The Blind Brook girls played an energized first half characterized by aggressive defense and efficient offensive advancements. Though they were unable to capitalize on opportunities to score, they held the Broncos scoreless throughout the entire first half. The Trojans' defensive success was aided in large part by Silverman's goaltending, as she accumulated over seven saves in the first half alone.

During the second half, Amanda Louis made a break up the sideline that almost culminated in a Trojan goal; however, the Bronxville goalie was able to snatch the ball from the ground before the Trojans could take the final shot. Though the Trojans curtailed Bronxville's offense for the majority of the second half, the Broncos were able to knock a hail-Mary shot off in the sixty-eighth minute of play, resulting in a heartbreaking 1-0 loss.

"Those girls played with a lot of heart during that game," Marcoccia affirmed. "Our passing was better, our defense was better, and we're definitely starting to improve." He added, "Hopefully, we'll have better luck in our league games. With the improvements we've been making, we should start to get some wins."



Jillian Forbes goes in for the strike. Photo/Ashley Woychowski

Features

Features Editor: Adam Fischer

Seniors Survive a Slow Start To Annual Traditions

By Rachel Lumish and Tal Ackerman

Throughout Blind Brook's history, tradition has provided that seniors kick off their final year of high school with several activities: painting "the rock," participating in a scavenger hunt, painting a senior banner, and chalking the walkway by the entrance to the school (as well as their respective parking spaces). Unfortunately, this year these activities were delayed for various reasons.

The painting of the rock is an old Blind Brook tradition during which seniors paint their names and their senior slogan on the rock. This year, seniors looked forward to adorning the rock with their catchphrase *Seniors 07" Above Average* the day before school started. However, only days before, the senior class learned that the rock was covered in dirt as a result of construction delays.

Anthony Baxter, Principal of Blind Brook, told the senior class that they would have to wait to paint the rock until October. "It [was] a little upsetting, because as Blind Brook High School students we have always looked forward to painting the rock," stated senior Akshay Nagia.

"At first I was disappointed, but knowing that we would be able to [paint the rock]



Photo/Taylor Fuller

Parking spots that usually host seniors' cars are now filled with sand.

eventually was all that mattered," commented senior class officer Sami Christal.

Not all senior festivities were delayed. The scavenger hunt, directed by the senior class officers, was enjoyed as planned.

The hunt consisted of completing several tasks including walking through a fast food drive-through and taking a picture with a senior citizen. Collecting certain items to

bring back to the school in a given amount of time, seniors filled their cars with groups of four the day before school started.

"It was really disappointing finding out that we couldn't paint the rock this summer because that's the biggest tradition that constitutes being a senior at Blind Brook," said senior Jenna Kaplowitz. "But it was really great that we were still able

to have fun and that we could go on with our senior scavenger hunt the day before school started."

The painting of the banner is another anticipated senior festivity. The seniors traditionally design and sign their names on a banner that hangs in the Commons for the first few days of school. Although this activity was not delayed, seniors were forced to paint the banner under an awning at Crawford Park due to rain.

The rain affected more than simply the painting of the banner. In past years, the chalking of the entrance to school and the senior parking lot has usually displayed "senior spirit" as well as the senior class slogan; however, this activity could not be held due to the inclement weather and the power-washing of the entrance walkway.

"I am just as disappointed as [the seniors are] that they have had to wait to do their senior traditions," said Assistant Principal Jane Wermuth.

Every Blind Brook High School student looks forward to being a senior and participating in the established traditions which come with being the oldest students in the school. For this reason, the seniors have remained optimistic that they will eventually get to experience their senior year in its entirety, rock and all.

New College Admissions Book Provides Guidance for LGBT Students

By Adam Harris and Rachel Polonsky

Scores and percentages are not all that matter when choosing a college. Within the past few years, the way one chooses a college has drastically changed. New factors, in this case pertaining to LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) students, have begun to affect prospective students' decisions pertaining to where they would like to attend college.

A new college admissions guidebook has sparked a flurry of discussion and has already gained the attention of families across the country. Although the college search generally does not begin until the end of junior year, the new guide raises issues which relate to students of all ages.

Published by Alyson Books in August 2006, *The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students*, by Shane L. Windmeyer, M.S. Ed, has become known as the first college guide of its kind. The book categorizes national colleges and universities based on information other than standardized test scores and academics. Rather, it details the 100 "best campuses" for LGBT students.

The new college admissions book is the offshoot of advice from campus officials as well as LGBT college students from 680 American universities. It is one of the few guides on the market that specifically addresses the struggles which LGBT teens deal with when searching for a college. Since a greater amount of LGBT students have been coming out prior to entering college, their opinions have accordingly become more vocal on campuses.

Not simply ranking the campuses, the new guide scores them on a Gay Point Average Official Campus Checklist. Scores are based on criteria including the presence of a school's nondiscrimination statement, gay-affirmative policies, campus events, gay studies, and so

open-minded universities new ways to diversify their study bodies and learn from each others' beneficial practices.

In the September 14th issue of *The New York Times*, an article was published assessing the "The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students" and the is-

"The guide serves an excellent purpose: to increase awareness around the issues facing LGBT students. However, a guide is only a place to start; a guide can't capture the essence of a school – a student must visit."

—Terry Frank, Blind Brook's Social Worker

on. Only two colleges, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Southern California, have earned full scores on this scale.

The guide also features a section titled "Fun Queer Stuff to Know," which provides information on gay friendly activities at each of the profiled colleges.

As the importance of combating homophobia on college campuses becomes more apparent, the guide aims to increase awareness of college-bound LGBT students' plight on a national level. LGBT students will have an abundance of criteria to evaluate when choosing a college to attend. Straight students, too, will have the added advantage of learning which schools are more tolerant and open to diversity.

It is also the guide's intention to persuade colleges that are not in the top 100 schools to become more welcoming towards LGBT students. It will teach

issues which lead to its creation. Written by Stephanie Rosenbloom, the article, titled "Is This Campus Gay-Friendly?" addressed issues such as the growing presence of LGBT students on college campuses and both the pros and cons of the new book.

The Advocate has been noted for several significant shortcomings. For instance, certain colleges which have become known for their gay populations were not present in the guide. Smith College, a women's liberal arts college in Northampton, MA, was left out of the guide despite its reputation for having a prominent lesbian presence on campus.

The guide may also be misleading due to the subjectivity of each LGBT student's campus experience. While some schools might have terrific gay-friendly programs, the attitudes of the straight population may still be severely

close-minded.

Terry Frank, Blind Brook's Social Worker, remains ambivalent regarding the book's advice. "The guide serves an excellent purpose: to increase awareness around the issues facing LGBT students. However, a guide is only a place to start; a guide can't capture the essence of a school – a student must visit."

Blind Brook students and faculty have expressed mixed reactions concerning the guide. Senior Matthew Sadownick, president of the Straight and Gay Alliance (SAGA) at Blind Brook, states, "I definitely think that this guide is an excellent idea." He continues, "[the guide] gives students an opportunity to get an alternate perspective from most college guides out there. With this book, [LGBT] students have more choices and ways to compare different schools' fits." Senior Marisa Del Peschio agrees, stating, "It is good that LGBT students now have a chance to compare schools that meet their needs, and to help them decide which [college] is the best for them."

On the other hand, junior Nicole Kelly questions the benefits of the guide's rankings. "I don't think any sort of ranking is good. [Rankings] are often biased and cannot fully compare the numerous qualities of a school that go beyond just numbers."

The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students stands as evidence of the growing awareness of and respect for LGBT students. As the presence of LGBT teens in colleges rises, the guide will continue to serve as a mechanism for bettering these teens' college experiences.

Peer Leadership Program Off to a Promising Start

By David Fries

After last year's highly successful inaugural program, this year's seniors eagerly anticipated their participation in the Peer Leadership Program. Peer leaders have already engaged in two activities which have become elements in the program: a weekend retreat and an activity day at Crawford Park with the freshmen.

The Peer Leadership Program was initiated by the Community Coalition of Rye Brook to help facilitate smooth transitions for the freshmen into the high school. "We want to help create a better relationship between freshmen and seniors, to make the freshmen more comfortable. The program will give freshmen someone to go to if they have questions," advisor Thomas Glickman stated.

Students apply for peer leadership positions at the end of their junior year; this year, thirteen students were chosen. The group includes seniors Juliana Argentino, Daria Contegiacomo, Ross Burack, Steve Berman, Candace Carlucci, Sean Fuller, Amanda Park, Jonathan Gold, Anna Sabia, Matthew Sadowick, Danielle Fortino, Shira Novack, and Marisa del Peschio.

Peer Leaders must accept and agree to several commitments: a three-day retreat in August, enrollment in leadership classes, and participation in freshmen Outreach Sessions. The seniors also commit themselves to modeling responsible behavior, agreeing to avoid cursing, bullying, and using alcohol and drugs. "I think the contract is a good idea because it insures that seniors will be

responsible and respectable role models for the freshmen," said peer leader Juliana Argentino.

The leadership class is scheduled as a regular course and meets every day. Weekly Outreach Sessions are attended by both the senior peer leaders and the freshmen, who break off into small groups. Peer leaders initiate activities and lead discussions in which they offer guidance to the freshmen concerning academic and social issues. One of the two program advisors, Rita Gianfrancesco or Glickman, is always present at the sessions, observing the seniors in order to provide feedback on their communication and leadership skills. Peer leaders are also assessed through their reflections in personal journals. These journals are reviewed in an effort to fine-tune and improve the program.

This year, peer leaders once again attended the overnight retreat to form bonds and formulate plans for the coming year. The retreat was held in August at a YMCA camp in the Delaware Water Gap in New Jersey. "It was training for the seniors because they knew very little about the program. It also helped the seniors to bond. And it was an introduction to the things they will do all year long with the freshmen," Glickman explained.

Some of the activities involved role-playing so that the seniors could better understand and practice leadership techniques and strategies. Senior Jon Gold explained, "During the retreat we acted as the freshman. Our advisors, Mr. Glickman and Ms. Gianfrancesco, acted as the peer leaders and they led us in all of the activities we would do with the freshman."

Senior Ross Burack acknowledged that the retreat was demanding, but equally rewarding. "We did activities day and night to get prepared for the year. We learned skills and also got to know each other better," Burack said. "The retreat was geared for the peer leaders to meet one another, get to know each other better, and learn something new about everyone. And all of that was accomplished," Gold added.

On September 26, the peer leaders conducted an all-day activity program for the freshmen at Crawford Park. The seniors prepared activities in advance and utilized the skills they learned during the retreat to better acquaint themselves with the freshmen. "Basically, we took all of our favorite activities from the retreat and packed them into a one-day program for the freshmen," said Burack.

The beautiful weather and Crawford Park's informal environment provided a relaxed social atmosphere. "Activity day was outdoors in a park, so it was different from being in school. It was a more comfortable atmosphere which was perfect because it was the first time we got to bond with our freshmen," Burack noted.

The day at the park consisted of a variety of activities, such as name games and teamwork exercises. The freshmen were instructed to bring an item to share with their group—something that would give their peer leaders and classmates more information about their personalities and interests. "Everyone brought something to share, and everyone explained their item to the rest of the group," said Gold. "It helped everyone learn something interesting about each student that they might not have already known. It gave freshmen an easy way to talk about themselves."

The program has had a positive impact on the seniors as well, because as mentors, they must behave responsibly. "It will help the seniors to become better role models and leaders within the school," Glickman said. He also noted another goal for both peer leaders and freshmen—"to have fun!"

In addition to being a role model, Burack looks forward to forming healthy relationships with members of the freshmen class and to changing popular misperceptions. "When I was a freshman, I was deathly afraid of the seniors," Burack admitted. "I want this year's freshmen to be able to look up to me and think of me as a friend."

The End of an Era

By Sarah Rosenberg

It was seventh grade, and as I returned from Christmas break I entered a new school. No, I had not moved from another town; rather, I was moving into the new middle school, a Blind Brook first. I had grown accustomed to seeing my brother (who was a freshman in the high school) passing in the hallways throughout the day. For that reason, it was a complete shock to me when I saw him in the parking lot waiting for our mother to pick us up; I realized that this was the first time I had seen him all day.

I remember trying to sit in the cafeteria area last year with a few friends for lunch, only to be told that the area was strictly for freshmen and that we would have to find a table in the Commons. Five minutes before the end of the period, my friends and I practically jumped out of our seats when a whistle was blown. We wondered why a gym class had invaded our eating area.

It was then that we realized that this signal was put in place to shepherd the middle school students back to their lockers. If one of them so much as strayed one foot out of line, the order came through, via the commander, that they should immediately get back in formation.

Upon returning to school this year, high school students were informed that we were strictly forbidden from entering certain areas of the building. Initially, high school students were delighted by the sight of the new middle school cafeteria, which seemed to serve as a great shortcut to the new wing of classrooms. It was not after long, however, that they learned that this ideal route was "off-limits" to high school students.

Instead, students have had to maneuver their ways through the high school gym (dodgeballs and all) to get to the new wing. On top of that, we have come to terms with the fact that we face imminent tardiness when making the trek from the new classrooms to the old ones. On several different occasions, I have found myself several minutes late to class; almost every day I am forced to make the mad dash through the crowds to my Physics classroom, which seems to be set in the middle of Siberia.

At first glance, upperclassmen might

look at freshmen with envy; after all, shouldn't the oldest students in the school be recipients of such spacious new lockers? But upon rethinking the new lockers, anyone would be quick to



recognize that freshmen are basically roped off into their own locker area, isolated from the pleasant commotion of the Commons and the rest of the high school populace.

I will be the first to admit that construction was inevitable; the school that I entered six years

ago would never have been able to accommodate the number of students that now attend Blind Brook. However, with every new wall put in place (or knocked down), it seems as though a barrier is being erected within the student body.

Our school used to pride itself on the closeness of its students; everyone knew everyone, and if anything, a little too well. However, each day I find that I cannot put a name to half of the faces that I pass. And no, that is not because I am too focused on finding the most strategic route to get from class to class. It is simply because the interactions between the upperclassmen and younger students have significantly dissolved, if not completely ceased to exist.

Although school bonding experiences (through clubs, sports teams, and the annual Human Relations weekend) somewhat serve to ameliorate the problems of a growing high school, there is no denying the fact that our student body is no longer the close-knit group it once was. It was not so long ago that the whole school would regularly come together for communitywide events, such as band and chorus assemblies, so that students could see the hard work and efforts that their fellow classmates had put into activities that they loved.

In essence, Blind Brook High School and Middle School no longer exists; instead, it has been replaced by two schools that only share an address and an entranceway. These parallel worlds serve only to diminish the community and camaraderie upon which Blind Brook had prided itself for such a long time.

I used to feel as though I was a part of a special Blind Brook community, but lately, I feel more and more like a number in the Blind Brook School District.

Eat Up! Breakfast Builds Healthy Mind, Healthy Body

By Christina Tempesta

As school begins once again, it is time to get back into the swing of things. Do you find yourself waking up ten minutes before you have to catch the bus and then later finding it hard to concentrate in class? If so, it is probably safe to say that you're missing a very vital meal: breakfast.

We always hear that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. But do you *really* know why? Eating breakfast helps keep us focused and energized throughout the day. A recent study shows that people who eat breakfast are far less likely to become overweight than those who ignore the imperative meal; the increased energy which breakfast-eaters receive allows for more active participation in daily activities, consequently providing extra opportunities for exercise and maintenance of one's weight.

Students who take the time to eat a healthy breakfast should know that the nutritional value of this extremely important meal enhances both body and mind.

However, certain clarifications must be made regarding what should be found in a proper breakfast. A healthy breakfast should include one essential more than any other meal: protein. Protein is digested more slowly than other materials and helps maintain steady blood sugar levels. This slower digestion also keeps you satisfied longer (and keeps your stomach from rumbling during your morning classes).

It is always best for your breakfast to include fiber, which can usually be found in whole grain breads and cereals. Research has shown that a breakfast rich in fiber results in better mental focus in the morning.

Fruit is always an added plus to any morning meal. Like fruit, protein helps keep you feeling full since it takes longer to digest. Whether grabbing an apple or some grapes, any consumption of fruit in your daily diet will help keep you feeling balanced and fit.

Above anything else, it is always best to consider avoiding carbohydrates at all costs! For those people addressing high cholesterol issues, both fruit and grains will aid in reducing cholesterol levels.

Breakfast is also an excellent means of obtaining vitamins and minerals, which can be found in almost any nutritious morning snack. But for those who find difficulty in choosing the right nutritional sources, here are some suggestions to satisfy your taste buds. Instead of that glazed doughnut, try a piece of nutty whole-grain bread. If your hectic schedule gets in the way of making good decisions, keep a lot of whole foods in your backpack or in your locker. Such foods could include fruits, whole grain breads, cereals, oatmeal, or any low fat dairy products rich in calcium. The options are endless!

Consider breakfast a priceless investment—benefits include a healthy mind and an even healthier body.

Blind Brook Speaks Out

Quotes compiled by Molly McBride

What are your feelings on the new additions to the high school?



"It is nice to be in a new wing, but it secludes [the freshmen] from the rest of the high school."

—Freshman Jillian Forbes



"I love it. The new science labs have a lot of open space, including better electrical circuits which weren't present in the old ones. Also, I like the fact that I had a large part in the designing of the classroom, even though it's too bad it's remote from the rest of the high school."

—Physics teacher
Thomas Glickman



"I'm really glad about the success of the construction; we really needed the additional classroom space."

—Assistant Principal
Jane Wermuth



"I think it is ridiculous that there are no new bathrooms near the new classrooms and that you have to go through the gym to get to the new section."

—Senior Ross Burack



"I like the new additions to the high school. They give us a lot more space and, considering we are in separate locker areas, give the sophomores and freshmen privacy."

—Sophomore
Becca Sweetbaum

Debate and Women's Issues Join the B.B. Club Roster

By Sarah Sgro and Katie Ehrmann

At the first town meeting of the new school year, Blind Brook students were introduced to two new and exciting clubs: the Debate Club and Raising Awareness for Women's Issues. The addition of these new organizations has created a great deal of excitement and discussion within the halls of B.B.

The Debate Club is a long-awaited organization here at Blind Brook, scheduled to meet weekly during Tuesday activity periods. Spearheaded by juniors Miles Fisher and Andrew Becker, the Debate Club was established in order to give students an opportunity to express their opinions on various subjects in a structured manner.

Amongst his goals for the new club, Fisher plans to organize a team which will compete with other schools. "The Debate Club's ultimate goal is to find young debaters who have an interest in taking their debating skills outside of Blind Brook and competing against other schools," notes Fisher. The club hopes to raise issues ranging from athletics to politics to educational events. Both Becker and Fisher are encouraging members to explore the positives, negatives, and counterpoints of every discussed subject.

The Debate Club is a "wonderful addition," said Blind Brook High School Principal Anthony Baxter. "It will be a great complement to Mock Trial." High school Spanish teacher Christine Blyler agreed, stating, "The Debate Club is a great alternative for students who want to express their opinions without making a large commitment."

Discussion has already arisen amongst Blind Brook students concerning the new Debate Club. Freshman Diksha Nagia, who plans on becoming a club member, said, "It seems like a lot of fun. I am looking forward to expressing my strong views in a comfortable environment." In addition, the Debate Club is a great way for students to get an outlook on subjects with which they normally would not be familiar. Physics teacher Thomas Glickman noted the importance of the Debate Club in light of future experiences, claiming, "Debate clubs often have large presences once students enter college."

Seniors Taryn Klein, Juliana Argentino, Sabrina Stockel, Emily Brackman, Danni Kaufman, and Jessie Komitor have also recently taken the initiative of adding an anticipated club to Blind Brook. The close group of friends decided to establish a new organization, Raising Awareness for Women's Issues, which would celebrate women and their role in the community. In addition, it would shed light on the many issues, such as rape defense.

The organization, which meets Thursday activity periods, was created in response to constant societal gibes which are still directed towards women in this day and age. This unfairness has become so prevalent that many women barely even realize that verbal remarks are indeed abuse. The leaders of the club plan on discussing the issues of rape defense and sexual harassment, stressing the idea that women should never feel inferior to men.

The phrase "Raising Awareness for Women's Issues," which describes the club's goal, is simply an interim name until the creators devise a more permanent title.

"Sexism is still a really serious issue and everyone just tries to ignore it, especially in high school," explains Argentino. While sitting alongside Brackman, a cluster of their male peers walked by and directed jeers at the thought of the Raising Awareness for Women's Issues. Brackman later conveyed that this exact behavior was a perfect example of the kind of sexism that women of all ages face everyday, even here at Blind Brook. The club fervently hopes to eliminate such sexism.

School social worker Terry Frank believes that Raising Awareness for Women's Issues is an outstanding club which will certainly show members how different life is for women. "It can only be positive," stated Frank whole-heartedly on the club's creation.

Raising Awareness for Women's Issues is open to students of all genders and grades. "The club is open to everyone – boys and girls," comments Klein. "It is not just about women for women; it is a club to promote respect and appreciation for and from everyone."



Contributed photo/Amanda Park

Amanda poses with one of the many young girls she taught in Africa this summer.

Student Spotlight:

Amanda Park

By Melissa Prusky and Jenna Haber

While many teens spend their summer vacations sitting by the pool, traveling on teen tours, or relaxing at camp, senior Amanda Park chose to dedicate her time to a more selfless cause. She spent this past summer in Uganda, helping children and families less fortunate than herself.

Uganda, located in eastern Africa, varies in its terrain. "Many places were very underdeveloped, but the land was very scenic," said Amanda. "The villages are very primitive, but if you go into the main cities, like Entebbe or Kampala, the land is very similar to White Plains. These cities had tall buildings, banks, hotels, paved roads, and so on. There were also many open markets which sold fresh fruit for less than one dollar."

Amanda traveled to and spent four weeks in the African nation. The main focus of her trip was to help run a newly built primary school, as well as to spend time with the local children and their families. Amanda also helped

the Ugandan families learn the English language.

"Teaching English was hard," Amanda expressed. "The natives spoke well but their accents were not good at all, so it was very hard for them to understand me. Teaching became very difficult, so the headmaster at the school asked me to turn an empty room into a library for the children." After Amanda's work, the library now holds about 4,000 books (an enormous amount for a primary school in Uganda).

During her four week stint in Uganda, Amanda lived in a small house in a tiny community. The house only had electricity every other day, and the village surrounding it lacked the technologies to which we in America have become accustomed to. At the local elementary school, Amanda taught English grammar on a daily basis and helped teach the English accent to her students. She also spent time working in and organizing a library, as well as spending her free time socializing with the community families.

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The Featured Photo

By Ashley Woychowski



Photo/Chloe Greenbaum

Getting to Know:

Jean Follansbee

By Kristina Creadore
and Leigh Engle

One of this year's additions to the Blind Brook faculty is Jean Follansbee, the new librarian and IMC director. Follansbee, who comes to Blind Brook filling the position previously held by Steve Jones, has worked as a librarian for three years. Her previous jobs include teaching computer and physical education, coaching volleyball, and serving as a technology director. Follansbee has previously worked at high schools in Tuckahoe and Bedford as well as at Barnard College.

So far, Follansbee has enjoyed working at Blind Brook. She loves the kind students and faculty, as well as the welcoming environment. Her goal for this year's IMC is to provide a warm and hospitable place to do research and work.

Bridget Gorman, IMC assistant,

adds, "Jean Follansbee is going to take the library media center to the next level. She has creative and innovative ideas that will make learning fun and interesting." Follansbee is looking forward to getting to know students and helping them find the information they need.

She currently lives in Rye Brook, but is originally from New York City. She is eager to attend Blind Brook sports events, having already watched the Girls' Varsity tennis team. In addition, Follansbee loves animals, reading, and being outdoors. Some of her hobbies include hiking, canoeing, and kayaking.

Freshman Rick Vavolizza said, "The new IMC director is really friendly and is always very helpful." Above anything else, Follansbee would like students to know that she would love to help them and that she is very approachable.

Student Spotlight: Amanda Park

Continued from page 11

Amanda went into this new experience with the expectation that most of the families and children would be unhappy due the tragic conditions which they face on a daily basis; she knew that the families would have very little. "It is sad because a lot of kids do not have the opportunity to go to school," said Park. As the days passed, Amanda realized that these people were able to find happiness in things other than material goods.

One of Amanda's fondest memories took place one day when she walked into a chapel filled with nothing but plain wood benches. Despite the basic simplicity of the scene, she was uplifted by the sight of children singing and dancing with smiles

upon their faces. It was at this moment that Amanda realized that "money, jewelry, and iPods [are not necessary] to be happy."

Upon looking back on her four weeks in Uganda, Amanda recognized that although the families she worked with looked like they had nothing, they truly had everything for which a person could ask. "It was really eye opening and so different than anything that I have ever experienced," said Park. "It was refreshing, because we often do not realize how good we have it. On the other hand, the people in Uganda do not mind how unfortunate their living conditions may be; they are truly content with what they have. The families were really amazing, unlike anything I have ever seen before."

COME TO THE HALLOWEEN DANCE!

October 27th
in the
High School
gym



Arts & Entertainment

A & E Editor: Madeline Sims

The New Face of Facebook

By Samantha Levine
and Rachel Weiner

Facebook, the online networking website first launched in February 2004, has continuously made news since its inception. Its latest announcement caused controversy within the massive world of Facebook users. Recently, Facebook has opened up its site to anyone with a valid e-mail address, rather than just those students attending colleges or high schools.

Facebook.com is an online networking website that allows users to create their own profiles as well as link to and view the profiles of others. Developed by then Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg as the online version of Harvard's annually produced student directory book, Facebook was unique in that members were required to have an e-mail address with an .edu. The idea was to allow college students to keep in touch with friends, some of whom they might not be able to see every day. After unexpected mammoth success, Facebook opened its membership to high school students due to popular request.

As a social network, Facebook is always looking to expand relationships among its constituency. A while ago, Zuckerberg began to think that people on Facebook wanted to be more in touch so he developed "news feed"; this lists the latest stories about people's friends on their own Facebook home page. A single wall post, a change in status, a new "friend," or even a new picture upload that someone makes is broadcasted on every single one of his or her "friends" homepages.

Students viewed News feed as an infringement on their privacy and were outraged by the new feature. Soon, groups emerged right and left with names such as "What's with the new Facebook," "I want my privacy on Facebook back," and "Bring back the old Facebook!"

When Zuckerberg realized the blatant outrage of students in response to the change, he decided to create better privacy controls. From the My Privacy page, one can establish the settings for each of one's networks separately. This enables members to easily control who can see their profiles, contact information, groups, wall, courses, and photos.

Facebook also created the opportunity to join a work network instead of a high school or college one. Instead of registering under a school name, a person will now be able to register under a specific region. These decisions were set by the Facebook group's chief executive, Zuckerberg.

Now that the general public will have access to Facebook, the company seems to be aiming to expand the network even further. Facebook must deal with extreme competition from other social networks, such as MySpace. Because of Facebook's limited membership, its number of registered users is significantly lower than other sites with open membership policies. As of July of this year, there were less than fifteen million monthly visitors to Facebook compared to nearly fifty-five million monthly visitors to its chief competitor, MySpace, according to comScore Media Metrix in the *New York Times*. This competition among sites may have also contributed to the decision to expand Facebook's membership.

Students and parents, however, have



been voicing their concerns for users' safety. Before Facebook changed its policy and accepted high school students onto the network, MySpace was the social network that many high school students belonged to. However, MySpace soon became "sketchy" and unsafe because of strangers' accessibility to members' profiles. When Facebook changed its policy and allowed high school students to join, many students jumped at the opportunity and deleted their MySpace profiles.

"It's not right-- the change will make it like MySpace," said junior Andrew Becker. "I felt confident that there were no crazy stalkers on Facebook, and I basically could say what I wanted to and not worry."

One of the main advantages that Facebook has always provided is its exclusiveness. Only those members that go to one's school or are "friends" from other schools are able to see one's profile. However, the new change in policy will take away this privacy. Many Blind Brook students are worried, since they currently post very personal information such as screen names and phone numbers on Facebook.

"Considering Facebook is now opening up to the general public, I believe that it will become more hazardous," said sophomore Kimi Parker. "This is because we all have heard about dangerous happenings dealing with MySpace."

"I think the more open it becomes, the more it will be like MySpace, and the more sexual predators there will be; but for now it's still safe," said Junior Ale Godoy.

Although most people might be wondering what good could come out of this new situation, there are a few possibilities. Students would be able to keep in touch with older friends or family members who do not have access to a school name.

College students, or even high school students, who are planning on applying for jobs may want to limit what they say to their "friends" on Facebook and the pictures that their profiles include. There has recently been considerable attention in the media pertaining to instances of employers rejecting candidates or firing employees based on information obtained from social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook.

Employers are presently able to search Facebook for future employees' profiles to help them decide if they should hire the person or not. This might become a more widespread issue in the near future.

Formerly, it was not that simple for employers to attain Facebook accounts, but now that Facebook has broadened its requirements for members, prospective employers will easily be able to join. Some students find this snooping to be unethical and perhaps illegal. Student newspaper editors at Stanford have been adamantly urging site users to protect themselves by utilizing the privacy settings.

Although many members are upset by the new broadened access to the website, which could lead to an invasion of their privacy, most students, including Blind Brook's, are not planning on revoking their Facebook memberships any time soon.

"Students may just not provide that much information about themselves anymore," said junior Brett Paterno.

"Facebook gives us the option of limiting what other people can see on our profiles," said Junior Alessandra DeCicco. "I don't think that many Blind Brook students are going to stop using Facebook because of the new changes."

Time will tell whether or not Zuckerberg's changes on Facebook are for the best.



(From L) Taryn Klein, Jessie Komitor, Emily Brackman, and Steph Mauro smile at the *Degrassi* season premiere.

Blind Brook Seniors Make the Scene with *Degrassi*

By Dana Silverstein

Part of the appeal of the TV show *Degrassi: The Next Generation* has been the sense that teens are watching people they could imagine being able to meet. On September 15th, 2006, four Blind Brook senior girls attended the highly anticipated *Degrassi* premiere party at the Hard Rock Café in New York City.

The invites came via senior Stephanie Mauro, who has been working as a promoter for the Noggin channel, home of *Degrassi*, since this past summer. Mauro brought along fellow seniors Taryn Klein, Jessie Komitor, and Emily Brackman, all of whom were thrilled by this chance to meet the stars.

"There were paparazzi taking pictures. We were actually mistaken for the cast on one of the shows, which was so funny," Mauro said. The girls were able to meet not only the cast of *Degrassi*, but the stars of other popular Noggin Channel shows as well, including *South of Nowhere* and *Beyond the Break*. "It

was so much fun," Klein said. "I really enjoyed going and seeing all the actors on the show," added Komitor.

Mauro felt that the event was definitely a success. As for future Noggin events in the metropolitan area, she explained, "I am hosting a party in the city over Halloween weekend, and it's a great way to meet other teenagers from Long Island and New Jersey. I will be selling tickets soon. It should definitely be a lot of fun!" Her fun-filled job, nevertheless, is certainly a huge commitment. She has to be at almost every Noggin event, selling tickets, taking pictures, and representing the channel properly. "If we do not do our jobs properly, mass chaos occurs," she said. When asked how she attained this position, she said, "[Blind Brook graduate of 2006] Amanda Turkell did this last year and passed the job on to me."

Degrassi has always been a favorite amongst Blind Brook students. Labeled

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Movie Review:

The Guardian

By Justin Cohn

Viewers will need to get comfy to stick with *The Guardian*, which opened at local movie theatres on September 29th.

This new film tells the story of Ben Randall (Kevin Costner), a legendary U.S. Coast Guard rescue swimmer who experiences the brutal loss of his entire crew during a save mission. He later decides to return to the Guard to teach up-and-coming rescue swimmers. While teaching, Ben crosses paths with Jake Fischer (Ashton Kutcher), an aspiring rescue swimmer who becomes the top student without realizing the key component of his job: sacrifice.

Ben and Jake slowly form a father-son relationship that, frankly, is not all that believable due to the flawed chemistry between Kutcher and Costner. Meanwhile, both student and teacher develop intricate and unrealistic love interests that seem to be thrown in carelessly to pack some more emotional meat into the movie.

From beginning to end, *The Guardian* is riddled with terrible clichés and superhero one-liners. Rather than deeply developing the characters in order to create a personal connection with the viewers, director Andrew Davis focuses too much of the film on the U.S. Coast

Guard. In what seems to be a feeble attempt to redeem the Guard's latest efforts, the line, "One of the reasons we were so successful during Katrina was our arrival time..." is even thrown in, despite the fact that it has seemingly nothing to do with the scene at hand. The result is a sub-par version of *The Perfect Storm* meets *Top Gun*. Kutcher proves that he is simply not good at being serious, and Costner does nothing to escape the fact that *Waterworld* may in fact be his best movie to date.

In all fairness though, *The Guardian* is entertaining for half of the time, which amounts to a good hour or so. One redeeming quality of the picture is its special effects, which are indeed top-notch and exciting. The seascapes portrayed during the rescue missions are particularly breathtaking. At times, they even manage to distract the viewer from the mostly mundane plot, but sadly, they do not save the movie.

Nonetheless, if one is looking to see a little bit of action, or if seeing Ashton Kutcher half-naked sounds appealing, this might be a worthwhile film to go check out.

Other than that, however, *The Guardian* receives a thumbs-down from this critic.



A First for the Fall Play

By Andrew Creadore

Blind Brook is about to experience a theatrical first for this community -- a completely student written and directed fall play. This year's fall production, entitled *Lockdown*, is an original work by Blind Brook senior Sami Christal. She describes her play as "a lighthearted look at what happens when a group of students who are forced to be together have no other form of entertainment but each other."

Seniors Dana Berman and Jenna Kaplowitz are assisting Christal as co-director and assistant director, respectively. In addition, English teacher Jon Ambrosio advising the production, but Christal, Berman, and Kaplowitz are manning the helm.

The audition process was unquestionably a difficult part of this production for Christal. "Auditions this year went very well. There were a lot of talented people who auditioned which made the selection process very difficult. In the end, we could not choose everyone. Roughly twenty to twenty-five people auditioned and about twelve people were selected to be members of the cast," explained Christal.

Lockdown stars juniors Kyle Maclean and Sean McKinney, sophomores Stephanie Sherry, Kelsey Crandall, Ian Priven, Steve Fisher, Ally Oberrotman, Christine Joyce, and Stacey Lurie, as well as freshman Blythe Duckett.

The cast couldn't be any more enthusiastic and excited about this production.

They are all working long hours most nights of the week to make sure this play is perfected before the first performance. "The entire cast is truly more dedicated than I could have ever imagined they would be," McKinney emphasized. "The hard work and commitment will definitely make for an unbelievable show."

What motivated Christal to write *Lockdown*? "After having worked on various BBHS productions over the past few years, I couldn't help but think what an awesome thing it would be to write something that could be produced on the Blind Brook stage. I guess what inspired me was how much I enjoy theater. As for the story, I couldn't even say what inspired me, it just kind of happened, and now I couldn't be happier with it," commented Christal.

As one can imagine, writing one's own full-length play is no easy task. "The hardest part was definitely giving all the characters their own distinctive personalities. Writing a play is much different than writing an essay in English class; a bridge must be made between effectively conveying a message and maintaining each character's integrity," remarked Christal.

When asked if she herself had any interest in acting, Christal said, "I have always been more of a backstage person. Acting has always been something that intrigued me, but I have yet to try it."

Lockdown will be performed November 17th and 18th at 7:30. Tickets will go on sale later this month for \$10.



The cast of *Degrassi* smiles as an eager crowd bombards them with questions.

Blind Brook Seniors

Make the Scene with *Degrassi* Continued from page 13

a "soap opera for teenagers," *Degrassi* began as a Canadian drama. The show has been following the same general group of students, with a couple of additions and a handful of characters leaving, since they were in seventh grade. The show deals with the typical teenage drama, but also addresses very serious, mature issues ranging from pregnancy to gay relationships to suicide. Most of these problems are not solved within single episodes, but instead continue through multiple shows. It continues to grow in popularity in the states, largely due to its realistic and gritty portrayal of teenage life. This is a credit to the fact that the young actors and actresses are able to help change a script after it is written in order to make it more telling of how a group of high school students would realistically interact with one another.

When asked about *Degrassi*, Blind Brook students typically respond with a two-word answer: "It's amazing!" Junior Kelsey Halpern remarked, "Some of the is-

sues are blown out of proportion; but, that's what draws viewers to the show." Many students also commented that one reason they watch is that they love the characters' Canadian accents, particularly the way they say, "about" and "sorry."

Degrassi first aired in Canada in 1987 as *Degrassi Junior High*. As the kids got older, a spin-off series was created, *Degrassi High*. Nearly ten full years later, the series was revived as the current show. One rule that has remained in place since the start is that no adult can appear in a scene without at least one kid present as well. This is to ensure that the show never strays from its core purpose, which is to keep teens in the spotlight. Because of this goal, many episodes do not have happy endings, but instead are sometimes loaded with tragedy and disappointment.

Nonetheless, as the four Blind Brook senior girls can tell you, *Degrassi* certainly has become quite the phenomenon amongst teens.

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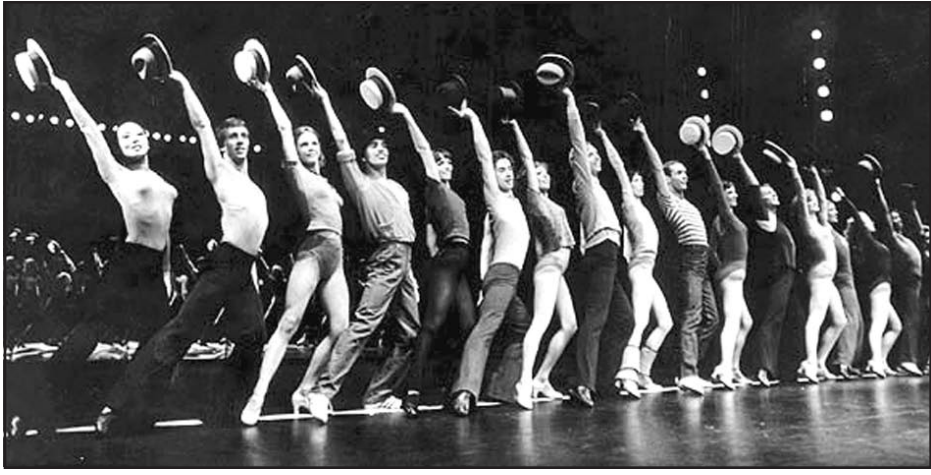
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A & E Editor: Madeline Sims

Arts & Entertainment



A Chorus Line.

The Hottest Thing in Theater:**The Musical Revival**

By Scott Winston

What does a production do when it is one of the longest running shows in musical history? Return to continue the streak, of course.

A Chorus Line and *Les Miserables* are back on Broadway, while *The Fantasticks* is returning to Off-Broadway. This is certain to drum up excitement amongst theatergoers who were avid fans of these shows the first time around, as well as those who missed them or weren't old enough to see them when they ran originally. *A Chorus Line* recently opened September 21st at the Gerald Schoenfeld Theater while *Les Miserables* is set to open November 9th at the Broadhurst; *The Fantasticks* opened August 23rd at the Snapple Theater Center.

The return of *A Chorus Line* has received the most amount of hype in the realm of fall theater. The show has not been on Broadway since it ended its run at the Shubert Theater in 1990 after 6,137 shows, the longest run of any Broadway musical up to that date.

A Chorus Line tells the stories of seventeen dancers desperately trying to land a role in the chorus of a Broadway show. After opening in 1975, the show was a monster critical and commercial success. It was also the recipient of nine Tony Awards, including best musical, best actress, best featured actor and actress, best director, and best score. In addition, in 1984, *A Chorus Line* received a Gold Tony Award in honor of becoming Broadway's longest running musical.

With *A Chorus Line* back on Broadway, Blind Brook students will finally be able to see the true version of the production as opposed to watching the critically panned 1985 movie. The film, which starred Michael Douglas, grossed only fourteen million dollars at the box office.

Sophomore Stacey Lurie is extremely eager to attend the show on Broadway, stating, "I'm so excited to see *A Chorus Line* in November."

A Chorus Line hopes to bring back the

spirit of the original production. "Overall it is definitely just an energetic and exciting musical," remarked chorus teacher Gabe DeAngelo, who saw the show on Broadway its first time around. "For me, it was especially thought-provoking since it deals with what happens behind the scenes in the business I am involved in."

Opening for a six-month limited engagement, *Les Miserables* is returning to Broadway as well. This show closed in 2003 after 6,680 shows, making it the third longest running Broadway musical, behind *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. The show originally opened in London in 1985 and is still performed there. When *Les Miserables* first came to Broadway in 1987, it was nominated for twelve Tony Awards awards, best home eight, including best musical, best director, and best featured actor and actress.

Junior Rachel Aspis is one of the many students elated to learn that *Les Miserables* will be back. "I'm really excited to see *Les Miserables* because I've seen it in other venues," she said, "but nothing compares to Broadway." Junior Michelle Caley remarked, "With *Les Miserables* finally back where it belongs on Broadway, I no longer have to force my mother to reenact scenes in my room."

The musical with the longest run, however, is *The Fantasticks*. The show played for a record 17,162 performances after its opening in 1960, and returned to its Off-Broadway home on August 23rd. It ran for twenty-two years before closing. Numerous celebrities have performed in this show, including the late *Law and Order* star, Jerry Orbach, who was a member of the original cast.

Simply put, the revival trend is exciting for those interested in theater. Senior Sarah Rish said, "I'll probably still see *A Chorus Line*. It's a classic and I've only seen the movie. *Les Miserables* is amazing as well, but if you really want to see what's happening in theater, go to Off-Broadway."

7th Heaven Returns for 11th Season

By Allison Engle

After a successful ten-year run beginning in August 1996, there was a tremendous amount of hype surrounding the termination of the perennially popular television show *7th Heaven* last May. Merely a week after the finale, though, speculations as to the rebirth of the show

began to surface. After some uncertainty as to whether the show was worth reviving, the new CW Network (see: *The New CW11*) announced that the hit show would indeed start up again the following fall. On Monday, September 26th, *7th Heaven* began its 11th season. The show has deservedly surpassed *The Waltons* and *Little*

House on the Prairie as the most successful and longest-running family drama in television history.

Initially, the primary reason for the show's cancellation was that its former network, the WB, was losing money; however, a deal with CW worked out. Many have speculated that the channel is willing to lose a marginal amount money by airing the show, with the hope that it will hook long-time *7th Heaven* diehards and then clear the way to change up the programming schedule later on in the season.

What can one expect in this new season? All the usual sermons, emotions, and family-friendly drama will definitely carry over. However, Lorenzo Brino (Sam Camden) and Nikolas Brino (David Camden), known by most as the twins, are the only two children left living at home. The

series is expected to take a more realistic, serious direction as Stephen Collins (Eric Camden) deals with his health. The three eldest Camden siblings are each expecting twins, which should make for some interesting plot twists.

While many Blind Brook students still watch old episodes that are re-running,

most have become fed up with the recent couple of seasons. Freshman Danielle Treacy, former *7th Heaven* enthusiast said, "I wish they just got rid of *7th Heaven* already. It's been running for too long!"

Popular opinion seems to be that the writers have simply run out of storylines

and many of the new minor characters are just not as talented as old favorites such as Adam LaVorgna (Robbie Palmer).

Fresh faces, such as Jewel, Larry Drake (Mr. Reilly), James Callahan (Father Mulligan), and Haylie Duff will each temporarily guest star on the show. Cast members Stephen Collins, Lorenzo Brino, and Nikolas Brino, Catherine Hicks (Annie Camden), Beverly Mitchell (Lucy Camden- Kinkirk), and George Stults (Kevin Kinkirk) will all return as full-time characters. Dawn Ostroff, head of entertainment at the CW, recently announced that Mackenzie Rosman (Ruthie Camden) has only agreed to participate in seven episodes while David Gallagher (Simon Camden) will probably not return at all. The popularity of the new characters' success will serve as a function of *7th Heaven's* success this upcoming season.

The cast of 7th Heaven.

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A scene from Les Miserables.

Reality Check!

By Chloe Greenbaum

In the past few years the number of reality TV shows has skyrocketed, along with the statistics of eating disorders and teen drinking. Coincidence? I think not.

Of course, reality shows were not always so malignant and toxic to the developing minds of young America. The early shows such as *Fear Factor* and *The Bachelor* were novel and captivating. However, as TV networks began to introduce more reality series to the public, they were instantly made aware of America's insatiable hunger for watching other people live their lives. Capitalizing on the demographic of teenagers, networks started introducing shows that showcased celebrities' and celebrity wannabes' wealth, beauty, or exciting social lives. *Gastineau Girls*, *My Super Sweet Sixteen*, and of course the infamous *Laguna Beach* are popular members of this category.

When *Laguna Beach* first aired in 2004, teens across the nation were perplexed by the show's style. Used to the crude language and haphazard camerawork of *The Real World*, teens could not fathom how scenes from *Laguna Beach* lacked language-censoring bleeps and were taped like a movie. While producers went to great lengths to emphasize that the drama, the locations, and the people were all real, I was convinced that this histrionic melodrama was staged and scripted. While the show's stars' conversations are far from eloquent or articulate, it seems quite odd that cameramen happen to be stationed at a café at the exact time that two characters sit down for a drama-filled dialogue.

In fact, *Laguna* executives have admitted in interviews to staging some situations to relive the drama that cameras may have missed. Now, I don't know if I stand alone when I wonder this, but how can MTV call this staged drama "reality"? However, despite the shortcomings of this show, teens continue to tune in on a weekly basis for their fix of fake-tanned, bleached-blond bombshells and their "breath-takingly" dramatic lives. While some teens admit to allowing themselves to watch *Laguna* once in a while as their guilty pleasure, others shamelessly profess their undying love and unhealthy addiction to this spectacle of materialism and stupidity. Teens are mesmerized by these Californian beauties blessed with chiseled bodies, beachfront mansions, and shiny new Range Rovers. However, after each episode, what do viewers gain? A better image of their bodies? A feeling of satisfaction? Sadly, but not

surprisingly, no. Teens are left feeling jealous, wistful, and insecure.

Watching these thin and toned beach bums lounge around in bikinis gives teen viewers the impression that they must be super skinny in order to be attractive. Viewers are led to believe that the 5'10", 120-pound teen, so ubiquitously found on the beaches of Laguna, is "normal." Am I the only one who finds this quite abnormal?! In reality, these Laguna teenagers spend months working out with trainers and eating minimally in order to prepare for taping. Average teenagers

trying to achieve these results often resort to extreme measures that can literally endanger their lives.

Not only does *Laguna Beach* promote an unrealistic standard for beauty, but it also promotes teen drinking and partying. When the characters drink mysterious liquids from opaque red plastic cups and then begin slurring their words (more than they usually do) and tripping down stairs, it is not exactly a secret that they are drinking alcohol! This image of teen partying also has a negative impact on teen viewers. When teens see these icons of beauty and popularity drinking alcohol, they make an association between this illegal behavior and popularity, and are therefore more likely to engage in drinking.

Besides the fact that this show has a damaging effect on teenagers' self-esteem and decision-making, I personally do not see the appeal of this show. With the same drama repeating itself from season to season just with different versions of the generic blond, backstabbing main character, I wonder, what is the attraction that seduces so many viewers? Do viewers yearn for the reality starlets' good looks, fancy cars, and sharp wits? (Umm, maybe only the first two things.) The people who subject themselves to endless hours of voyeurism are simply living vicariously through the characters on reality shows. A Rye Brookian myself, I can sympathize with the people who lament the lack of excitement in our town, so I can somewhat understand why they look elsewhere for entertainment or excitement. However, I think it's extremely unhealthy and ultimately unsatisfying to look to mindless TV personalities for fulfillment.

So, before you settle in to watch your weekly or daily (hopefully not) dose of "reality TV," rethink the meaning of "reality." If you believe that this contrived and pathetic look into the lives of a few spoiled, idiotic, and insular Californian teenagers is reality, then I say to you, "GET A LIFE!"



Munching with Matt: That Little Italian Restaurant

By Michelle Caley
and Chloe Greenbaum

To celebrate the recommencement of our epicurean endeavor, we set out to find a restaurant to which we have not yet ventured. But before we go any further, let us first introduce ourselves to you. You may know us as "Chloe and Michelle" but in reality, we secretly lead double lives as closet food connoisseurs. We first discovered our ridiculously good tastes for food, and talents for critiquing it, last year when Blind Brook's own Harrison Foster deigned to grace

us with his presence on a monthly basis. These monthly outings served as the basis for our masterful *FOCUS* column, aptly named, "Feasting With Foster." After prepping and primping for hours on end, we would eagerly await Harry's graceful arrival in his '72 Cadillac; we would then proceed to one of Westchester's latest food hotspots where Harry would wine and dine us (or in our case, he would Diet Coke and dine us). We documented our experiences in a scintillating column featuring Harry's astonishing wit and our wondrous knowledge of the ins and outs of the restaurant industry.

As you can imagine, after Harrison graduated we were in a state of horror and disbelief. For the ensuing months, we would lie corpse-like by the window, faces pressed against the glass in the hope that Harry would take us out for just one more night on the town. Was that too much to ask? Eventually, in response to innumerable phone messages from *FOCUS* editors, we were forced to emerge into the sunlight, skin pale and hair matted, to embark on a quest to find Harrison's competent successor.

After a long and hair-splitting period of interviews with our Blind Brook peers, we found that an overwhelming number of students nominated senior Matt Held for this prestigious position. You may know him as the Oz-like voice reverberating through our homeroom classes at 8:30 in the morning, but after spending just one night with him, we have already learned that he is so much more than that.

As we filed into Matt's car, we were shocked to find that this year our fellow food critic had air conditioning and dare we say it... a radio! When Matt questioned our destination we responded by saying, "That Little Italian Restaurant." Intrigued but perplexed, Matt asked, "Which little Italian restaurant?" Frustrated, we said, "THAT Little Italian Restaurant." To clear up this little mix-up, we established that the name of the restaurant is indeed "That Little Italian Restaurant."

Upon entering the restaurant, conveniently located in the heart of Byram, we were awe-struck by the uber-Italian

atmosphere. Although the dim lighting and crisply dressed Italian waiters were aesthetically pleasing, we found the garlic cloves and grape vines gaudily attached to the walls to be a bit over-the-top. Following our waiter through the virtually empty restaurant, we noticed that Christmas lights illuminated the shiny plastic leaves on the potted "plant" in the middle of the restaurant. We also noticed a naked baby sculpture on the wall which was a bit unappetizing, to be honest.

Pushing our doubts aside, we sat down and were immediately



served hot bread and ice water. Mouth full of bread, Matt managed to say, "You know what sucks? Hard butter. But not this time. Yes, this butter is perfectly medium." We proceeded to flip through the menu and decided on a few standard Italian entrees. Matt ordered the gnocchi in tomato sauce, although he pronounced it "No-chee" and the waiter had a bit of a hard time understanding Matt's pseudo-Italian accent. Attracted by the description of a "velvety pink sauce," we also ordered penne a la vodka and chicken Parmesan. While waiting for our food to arrive, we figured it was a perfect opportunity to corner Matt and pose some questions as to why he feels he is fit for this strenuous job. Not folding under pressure, he coolly responded by saying, "I have traveled to the depths of the earth in search of the perfect meal; hopefully, if we work together we can accomplish this mission."

Just as we deemed this answer to be sufficient, the waiter arrived with our food. We voraciously consumed our Italian feast, and although we were generally pleased with the quality of our food, we found it to be somewhat ordinary Italian restaurant fare. Halfway through our meal, a waiter delicately placed a two-inch-tall candle on our table, adding to the romantic ambiance of the restaurant.

Hoping that the desserts would distinguish this meal from others, we ordered a warm chocolate mousse, an apple crisp, and a platter of cannoli and biscotti. Within five minutes our plethora of sweets arrived. As Matt reached across the table to snag a biscotti, he accidentally extinguished the flame of our mini candle. Crestfallen, Matt was determined to get a new one so he proceeded to surreptitiously creep across the dining room to steal a fellow diner's candle.

All in all, the food met our standards but did not exceed them. However, this intimate setting was perfect for our first outing of the year because it let us get to know Matt's outgoing and hilarious personality. While Foster certainly left big shoes to fill, Held seems to be more than capable of stepping into them.

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A & E Editor: Madeline Sims

Arts & Entertainment

Five New Fall TV Shows

By Amy Biegelman
and Sharon Friedlander

As the new school year begins, television networks are busily promoting a host of new programs sure to captivate audiences. No matter one's age, gender, or interests, there is a show for everyone to enjoy. The new fall lineup will certainly breathe some fresh air into the world of television. Without looking very hard, a show can be found up anyone's alley -- comedies, dramas, action-adventures -- or just about any other type of program. Five highly anticipated shows premiering this season include *Friday Night Lights*, *Heroes*, *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, *Ugly Betty*, and *Justice*.



Friday Night Lights

This new drama, directed by Peter Berg, is based on the movie *Friday Night Lights*, though it was a book before it was a movie. The story takes place in the rural town of Dillon, Texas, where football is much more than a game -- it is a way of life. This year the head coach, Eric Taylor, thinks his team has a solid chance of making it to the very top. Although this show is centered on the football team and its season, it also delves deeply into the players' personal lives. This new series deals with issues ranging from dreams to relationships and friendships to hardships and obstacles. The show is worth checking out even for those who are not die-hard football fans since they will probably be pleasantly surprised by the diversity of the topics that are interestingly addressed. Some key actors include Kyle Chandler (*King Kong*), Adrienne Palicki (*South Beach*), and Taylor Kitsch (*John Tucker Must Die*). The series premiered Tuesday,

October 3rd, on NBC. Freshman Paul Nadasi was among the many Blind Brook students who are eagerly anticipating the television show's debut. "I want to see it because I really liked the movie," he said.



Heroes

Heroes, an eclectic amalgam of drama, action-adventure, and science-fiction, is a new series about people all over the world who are suddenly given superpowers that tremendously affect their everyday lives. Milo Ventimiglia's character (*Gilmore Girls*) has the power to fly, Hayden Panettiere (*Ally McBeal*) is able to escape death, Greg Grunberg (*Alias*) can hear people's thoughts, and Leonard Roberts (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) can transport himself through walls. Other powers include being able to paint images of the future and the ability to make time stand still. "It doesn't seem very unique since there are already a lot of shows out there about superheroes. I guess we'll just have to wait and see if this show has any new, distinctive twists," remarked junior Luis Blanco. This show premiered Monday, September 25th, on NBC. The show is sure to provide viewers with mystery, amazement, scares and surprises at every twist and turn.

Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip

NBC has created a third new show entitled *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*. This highly anticipated drama revolves around a late-night comedy sketch show and what



goes on behind the scenes when the cameras stop rolling. When the show begins to crash and burn, the new president of the network (Amanda Peet, *A Lot Like Love*), calls in Matt Albie and Danny Tripp to try to save it. Wonderfully portrayed by *Friends* star Matthew Perry, and *West Wing* alum Bradley Whitford, Albie and Tripp add hysterical laughs to *Studio 60*, and make the show worth watching. The show is created, written, and directed by *West Wing* alumni. "It looks like a really good show. The cast sounds great since it is featuring Matthew Perry and Amanda Peet who are both talented actors," commented freshman Danielle Treacy. "I think it will appeal to a lot of people because it is about Hollywood and that is always interesting." *Studio 60*, which premiered September 18th, airs every Monday night at 10 PM on NBC.



Ugly Betty

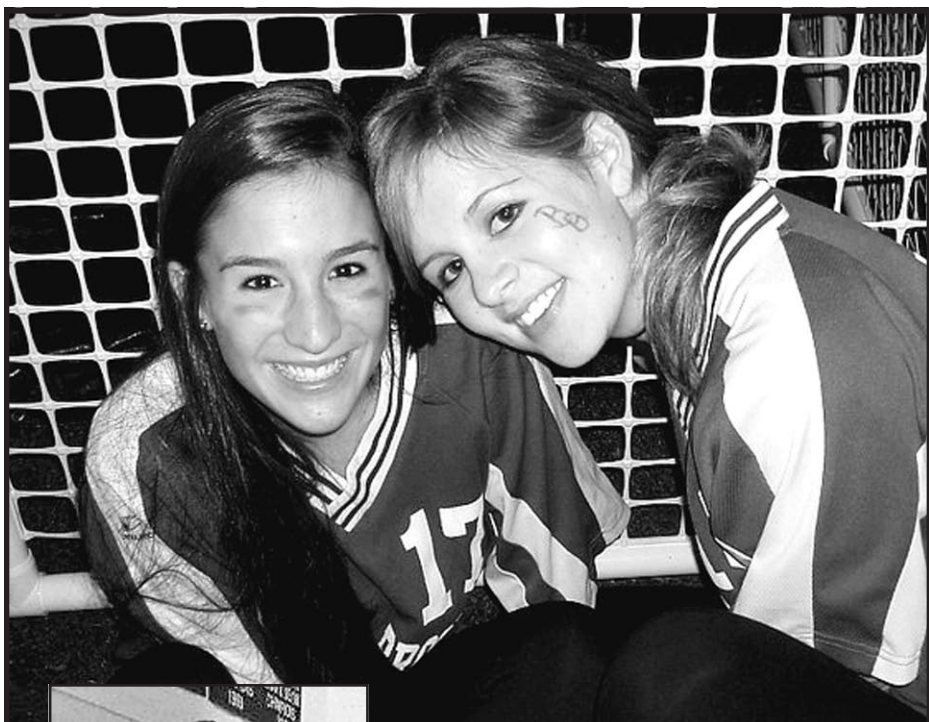
Ugly Betty, raved about in major publications, recently joined ABC's new fall line-up. Starring *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*' America Ferrera, *Ugly Betty* takes

a look at the life of Betty Suarez, an unattractive woman working at a high profile, high-pressured fashion magazine. She is ditzy and unpopular with her co-workers, but she has a lot of drive and determination to succeed in a world unfamiliar to her. "It was a really cute show and enjoyable to watch," mentioned freshman Kristina Creadore. The program also stars former *OC* celebrities Alan Dale and Eric Mabius. It debuted September 28th and runs each Thursday night at 8 PM on ABC.



Justice

Justice, starring Victor Garber (*Alias*), Kerr Smith (*E-Ring*), Rebecca Mader (*Devil Wears Prada*), and Eamonn Walker, focuses on the lives of four prestigious lawyers working in Los Angeles. They defend high-profile clients who are involved in intense, controversial legal battles. The lawyers working at the law firm Trott, Nicholson, Tuller & Graves (TNT&G) are ruthless in their conduct and are willing to do anything to come through for their wealthy clients. Interestingly and uniquely, after the jury has delivered its verdict at the end of each episode, the true story of what really happened is shown to viewers. This legal drama seems to be more suitable for adults, but teenagers who are interested in law will certainly enjoy it as well. Freshman Alex Visoky emphatically stated, "After seeing a commercial [for *Justice*], it definitely seems really entertaining and intense." It first aired August 30th, and can be seen Wednesdays at 9 PM on FOX.



Homecoming's a Hit!

Above, junior Ali Matthews and senior Juliana Argentino show off their school spirit at the Boys' homecoming soccer game

At left, senior Ashley Forbes tries dribbling the ball blindfolded during the Pep Rally



The New CW11

By Jamie Florindi

When news of the new CW11 channel began to circulate last January, avid TV watchers quickly pondered the following: Would *One Tree Hill*, *7th Heaven*, *Gilmore Girls*, and *America's Next Top Model* all return for another season?

The September 20th launch of the CW, which combined Warner Brothers and UPN networks, went fairly smoothly. "The mantra for the network is innovation, participation, connection, and community," Dawn Ostroff, the CW president of entertainment, explained in the *Christian Science Monitor*. All but two of its fourteen prime-time series are returnees from the two former stations. This means many Blind Brook favorites, such as the aforementioned as well as *Everyone Hates Chris*, *Smallville*, *Supernatural*, and *Veronica Mars* were renewed. Two new programs, *Runaway* and *The Game*, premiered September 25th and October 1st, respectively, and have attracted positive media attention. Along with cartoons and sitcoms, the station is still showing news, weather—who can forget Mr. G?—and Mets' games.

As of now, however, ratings for the CW have been disappointing. Fewer viewers watched its premiere weeks than the opening weeks of the WB and UPN last fall. Network executives had been hopeful that

this new station would increase their ratings overall, but they are still optimistic about the future. "The strategy all along was to depend on the established franchises to help bring in new viewers," said Ostroff. She emphasized that as of now, this remains the network's game plan.

The station is targeting viewers age eighteen to thirty-four, a slightly younger audience than the Big Four broadcasters (ABC, CBS, NBC, and FOX). The hope is that a single network will be more successful than two separate ones in building up that younger audience. "It definitely seems like a really good channel for high schoolers," senior Danielle Willig commented.

Indeed, network executives might be surprised that a large number of the people watching many of their shows are high school students under the age of eighteen. One positive sign for the CW is that the number of viewers ages twelve to seventeen actually increased compared with the numbers for the two individual stations last year.

The name "CW" stands for CBS and Warner Brothers, but many critics originally found it confusing. Now that people have gotten used to the name, will the station succeed? With this all-star lineup of shows and a little more publicity, the outlook appears bright.

A & E Editor: Madeline Sims

Arts & Entertainment

Dear Blabby,

It is no secret to anyone that an additional wing was added to the high school this past summer. Don't get me wrong, I think it is great that our school is expanding. However, I find myself unable to get to many of my classes that are in the new side of the building on time.

Just the other day, as I scurried through the cafeteria, I was trampled by eighth grade girls running to get a certain table. One of them tripped me as she showed off her new cowboy boots to everyone around her. I ended up taking a nosedive directly into her plate of spaghetti, getting bright red tomato sauce all over my sweater. The girl didn't even apologize!

It was at this point that I found a shortcut through the cafeteria, but as I went to open the door, I remembered that this door has been locked since the first day of school for some unknown reason.

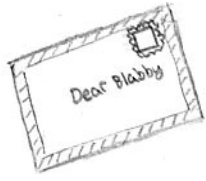
While attempting to wipe off the huge, embarrassing spaghetti stain, I looked around for the hallway that would bring me to my next class but it was nowhere to be found. Instead, I had to walk through the gym, intruding on a gym class. Not only did the gym teacher reprimand me for interrupting, but I also got struck in the head by a stray volleyball!

After finally making it to my second-period class, I breathed a loud sigh of relief. However, I quickly remembered that I have to make that journey three times each day. Frankly, I am more than a little fed up. Any suggestions for me?

Sincerely,

Annoyed Annie

Dear Annoyed Annie,

Advice for the Unsound**Dear Blabby**

By Rachel Aspis and Celine McBride

I completely agree that now that our school is growing, three minutes is simply not enough time to get from class to class. I am sorry to hear about your unpleasant experiences, but I assure you that most days will not be nearly as bad. I, too, have noticed that the cafeteria door is almost always locked. To be honest, I do not see any possible reason for this.

I also do not understand why there are no direct pathways, coming from certain directions, to the new wing of the building. It puts students in a sticky situation. Should they walk around to the other side of the school and be late to class or cut across the gym and risk getting hurt like you did? If I were you I would try talking to your teacher and see if he/she is willing to allow you to come thirty seconds or so late for class.

As for the younger students, they really need to be more conscious of their surroundings. If an incident similar to what happened with the girl and her cowboy boots occurs again, don't be afraid to say something to the middle school student (in a polite way of course). Lastly, if nothing else, maybe bring an extra sweatshirt to leave in your locker so you will have a change of clothes in case something like this happens again. Good luck!

Sincerely,

Blabby

Dear Blabby,

This being my senior year of high school, I was expecting to enjoy all my senior privileges starting in September. However, due to the construction going on everywhere, our rock, one of the few traditions in our school that has lasted all these years, is covered by a heap of dirt that appears big enough to be used as a mountain biking course. We are unable to paint it until an unknown time later in the year, which takes all the fun out of this event. By the time we paint it, it will be freezing outside and the pictures will feature us in paint-covered coats and gloves instead of tee shirts and shorts.

The construction has also created huge dunes of sand, which have conveniently been dumped on student parking spots. This has angered a lot of seniors. I've even heard that some students who originally had parking spots are forced to park on the grass due to their schedules.

My fellow seniors and I constantly joke around about the fact that all of our traditions have been completely messed up. Many fear the next thing to be eliminated will be the prom. Considering my usual luck, this fear actually doesn't seem too farfetched. What should I do Blabby?

Sincerely,

Exasperated Esmeralda

Dear Esmeralda,

I would like you to know that I am a senior as well, so I sympathize with your problems up to a point. However, all these empty complaints do absolutely nothing but annoy the administration, which certainly will not help our chances of getting them to listen to us.

Instead, we should think of ways of getting around the above mentioned issues.

I know that this idea tends not to be overly popular with students, but carpooling is both economically efficient and saves spots in the parking lot. While parking on the grass is less glamorous than in the actual parking lots, it is still a place to put your car close to the school and at the end of the day, isn't that all anyone really needs?

All in all, the Administration was correct when they told us that parking is a privilege, not a right. We are lucky to have the spots that exist now, even if the lot does not fit every single gas-guzzling vehicle owned by the graduating class. Furthermore, some previously sand-covered spots are actually starting to be opened for parking, so everyone should be thankful for that.

In terms of the issue with the rock, it is unfortunate but there is not a whole lot anyone can do but be patient. There's really nothing wrong with a little snow in the background of the picture of the seniors painting the rock anyways.

I hope this advice helps. In the meantime, try to appreciate the many superior aspects of Blind Brook and not let these problems ruin your senior year.

Sincerely,

Blabby



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Editorial



Cartoon/Matt Sadownick

The Way We Roll

By Marissa Barbaro

We all know what it's like to be a freshman at club signup—all those club presidents urging you to join, all those upperclassmen pushing ahead of you on the signup lines, all those different choices for extracurricular activities that could shape a substantial part of your next four years at Blind Brook. Choosing the right clubs is certainly a daunting task that is often confusing the first time around. But when I was a freshman, I knew exactly which signup booth I was hitting first.

Alter[ed] Ego has been a truly fulfilling part of my career as a student since my very first meeting. I remember feeling so proud of myself when my first short story was published back in December of 2003. Seeing the fruit of my labor printed right next to fantastic sketches and vivid poems crafted by some of the best senior artists in school molded my little freshman mouth into an ear-to-ear smile, and I was unbelievably happy to be a part of something so genuine. The creativity that went into producing that magazine amazed me.

But over the years, it seems as though the Alter[ed] Ego spirit has dwindled. We get fewer and fewer submissions every issue, half the students who sign up at club signup don't even bother to come to meetings, and, when it comes time to put together the magazine, very few staff members actually show up. I've been looking forward to my senior year as Editor in Chief since ninth grade, and it pains me to see that the creative enthusiasm that once allowed this magazine to thrive is now almost nonexistent, which prompted me to pose the question: What the (insert explicit word) is going on?

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out that students are sacrificing creativity in favor of more "college-friendly" endeavors. Unless I'm imagining things, the number of electives offered at Blind Brook, not to mention enrollment in clubs that don't "look as good" on college transcripts, have decreased as a function of the number of AP courses added to the curriculum. Coincidence? I think not.

The sad truth is that we're so consumed with doing exactly what colleges want that we've become puppets of the new-age college process. It seems as though very few students take classes or perform activities because they're passionate about the subject matter. Years ago, Blind Brook offered a plethora of elective courses ranging from in-depth studies of masterpiece poetry to the works of Kurt Vonnegut. However, as the years progressed, more and more students lost interest in these electives

and opted for AP courses, furthering our adherence to the "I have to do this to get into college" mantra.

As a junior, I took a course in creative writing and journalism that consisted solely of five students; meanwhile, nearly half my grade was enrolled in AP U.S. History, and I can pretty much guarantee that more people took the class to put "AP American" on their transcript than to foster a love for American history. In fact, I'd bet money on the fact that more students would take a class titled "AP Basket Weaving" than an elective focused on poetry simply because it has the letters "AP" in front of it. But I guess that's just the way we roll today.

In all fairness to us, the whole AP/good-for-your-transcript craze is only partially our fault. Getting into a highly ranked university these days has become so ultra-competitive that everyone is scrambling to jam their transcripts with so-called "impressive" activities. Why join your school's literary magazine when being on Model UN looks so much better? Why take a course in creative writing if it won't bolster your transcript as much as a fifth AP? The answers seem obvious. We're all pressured by our parents, our peers, and ourselves to do everything we can to build an impressive résumé; if we don't, we can kiss that first-rate college education goodbye.

And you know what? It sucks (for lack of a better word). We shouldn't be pressured into taking classes we're not interested in; we shouldn't feel obligated to join certain clubs because our college dreams will be crushed if we do otherwise; and we shouldn't have to follow a strict set of guidelines if we have any hope of competing with thousands of other students for a select few slots in a top university. There is clearly nothing wrong with striving for academic excellence or making extracurricular commitments, but we should do so for the right reasons. If we don't, what value do these goals embody?

Don't get me wrong. I'm all for getting into a great college, and I'll do absolutely anything I can to help get myself there. My point is that we don't necessarily have to sacrifice our passions and our creativity to do so. Ten years from now, what's going to matter more, taking that fifth AP course or spending a year in an elective that you truly love? The same attitude applies to extracurricular activities. Many students join clubs or perform activities for the sole purpose of beefing up their transcripts, and everyone knows it. In fact, some people go so far as to build houses in a third-world nation just to be able to write a college essay about

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Segregation Leaves No Survivors

By Madeline Sims

As the hit television show *Survivor* begins its thirteenth season, I can safely say that I have lost any morsel of respect I previously had for the show and that I will not be a viewer this time around.

When I heard that producers had decided to segregate the teams into different races—Asian-American, Hispanic, African-American, and Caucasian—in order to "create an interesting social experiment" (or possibly simply to augment ratings), I was completely appalled. By pitting different races up against each other in competition, *Survivor*'s producers are changing the meaning of victory for the worse; clearly, no winner can possibly emerge from this competition because the contest itself has opened a door the United States has worked so hard to close—the door of racial superiority.

Simply put, not enough time has elapsed since the days of segregation to casually reinstate it into our society in the name of entertainment.

In an attempt to defend the structure of the upcoming season of *Survivor*, series producer Mark Burnett claimed in a telephone interview with a *New York Times* reporter, "In America today, I really don't believe there are many people who hate each other because of their race." When someone is as ignorant about race relations in America as revealed by Burnett's logic, it is not difficult to understand the reasoning behind segregating the teams on his show. Maybe within the entertainment circles that this man is used to working in, racism is not at all prevalent. However, to suggest that racism is an obsolete notion in the United States is simply naïve and shows that he has lost sight of the real world.

The present format immediately makes me think of the idea of "separate but equal." For all those who have taken American history, some of you may remember the monumental case *Plessy v. Ferguson*. After Louisiana created a law separating accommodations in railway cars by race (via the Jim Crow Laws), a man by the name of Homer Plessy refused to go to his proper seat and was arrested. After the case reached the Supreme Court, the court ruled in favor of the state of Louisiana, helping to ensure the foundation of the principle "separate but equal." It seems that *Survivor* is trying to endorse this very doctrine—while the teams are certainly separate, competition will only cause one team to rise above another, thereby losing sight of "but equal." The implications of winning the show now mean so much more than simply winning a huge prize and gaining public fame. It directly suggests the idea that the race that wins is somehow superior to all the rest.

It was just in 1954 that the Supreme Court case *Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka* struck down the idea of "separate but equal" in educational facilities. The effects of this decision were far-reaching and led to the desegregation of many aspects of our society including restaurants, hotels, bathrooms, and housing. It has *only* been fifty-two years since segregation was legal and common in many states. It is inappropriate to attempt to use a sensitive issue such as racism in order to bolster ratings and make money, when it was the everyday reality for many Americans a little more than half a century ago, and still exists in a modified sense today.

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If you would like to react or respond to an article in FOCUS, please write to us at focus@blindbrook.org. We welcome all of your comments, critiques, and opinions. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

Editorial

Things Could Be Worse...Much Worse

Only a little over a month has passed since the new school year started and already the familiar signs of autumn have begun to transcend the long-forgotten days of summer. Physically speaking, yes, one can feel the gentle breezes of summer transform into crisp winds. Visually speaking, yes, the lush greenery of summer has made way for the aesthetic array of red, orange, and yellow. Disappointingly, and, well, bluntly speaking, yes, my beloved Yankees blew it again.

These general themes of autumn are not indicative of the true Blind Brook autumn, however. With over a month of school completed, the Blind Brook student body is back in true form – we have begun complaining, whining, and kvetching all over again.

Simply put – enough is enough.

Complaints pertaining to lost traditions – no more Commons, no more close student-teacher relationships, no school spirit – have evolved into complaints pertaining to the inconveniences of the construction

project currently taking place at Blind Brook. I would be lying if I told you this construction hasn't induced a variety of inconveniences in the day-to-day life of a Blind Brook student. If you look throughout

It is important for Blind Brook to acknowledge the horrors and tragedies faced in other schools in order to appreciate how great we truly have it here at Blind Brook.

this issue of FOCUS, all four cartoons and several articles showcase the difficulties that Blind Brook students have had to face as a result of the construction.

Where to begin? The seniors have not yet been able to paint the rock due to the pile of dirt currently surrounding it. Some seniors still don't have parking spaces even after the mounds of sand and dirt have been removed from the parking lot. It is not a physical possibility to make it to a class in the new wing on time, even if you factor out

the sea of freshmen and travel at Marcoccian speeds. The cafeteria is no longer allowed to make fried food. Our high school gym was not intended for dual use as a gym and hallway. And finally, trying to get into the

new cafeteria is about as hard as trying to prove that the derivative of a trigonometric function exists.

However, truth be told, the problems we face at Blind Brook are petty, pathetic, and (not all that) problematic. You want to hear a real problem? While Blind Brook has been wrapped in its own world of security and numbness to the events going on outside of it, there have been twenty-five school shootings since the start of the school year.

Take this one for example: Wednesday September 13th. Kimveer Gill, the 25-year-old shooter, wore a trenchcoat, dark clothing, and a Mohawk haircut, to Dawson College, fully armed. He opened fire, killing eighteen-year-old Anastasia de Sousa, and wounded nineteen other students.

How about this one: Friday, September 29th. Fifteen-year-old Eric Hainstock shot and killed Headmaster John Klang because Klang had given Hainstock a disciplinary notice the day before for bringing tobacco to school, and the student faced a likely in-school suspension.

In another example, one Amish community chose to raze its school building where five students were gunned down inside

rather than have its remaining students face their fallen students' deaths every day.

It is important for Blind Brook to acknowledge the horrors and tragedies faced in other schools in order to appreciate how great we truly have it here at Blind Brook. Perhaps we should be celebrating the building of this new edifice and not having to worry about what it is like having to raze a building to rid it of a nightmare.

While the construction has stimulated a multitude of issues for students, the truth remains that life at Blind Brook has only been altered physically. Not a single problem has induced a major downward shift in the quality life of the students. Sure, Blind Brook students may be annoyed at times, they might even get angry. Hell, I'm just as excited as the next senior to flaunt my almighty seniority on a rock too. But the problems we face at Blind Brook are of no comparison to the problems many schools are facing nationwide and can hardly be considered lamentable.

Am I upset that I wasn't allowed to drive to school for the first three weeks? Yes. Am I upset that my lips will never again experience the succulent palatability of a chicken patty because it's fried? Of course. Do I know what a derivative function is? Sort of.

You know what? That's life. It's time to get over it.



Jared Hoffman
Editor in Chief

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it. Is that what we really want? To devote hours upon hours of time to an activity to pad a résumé? It's not only disgraceful to us, but insulting to the people affected by our sour intentions.

I'm positive that I'll be told at least ten times how full of it I am after this editorial is published. But whether I'm full of it or not, the fact remains: we're giving up our passions and our creativity to strengthen our transcripts, and, at some point, we're

all going to have to take a step back and reexamine our priorities. What better time is there than now? I am by no means trying to scold my peers, as doing so would be highly hypocritical and uncalled for, but I do encourage everyone to follow their passions. Take classes because you love the material, and take part in extracurricular activities because you want to, not because you have to. It's sincere, it's genuine, and it's the way we should roll.

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Segregation Leaves No Survivors

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While executives of the show claim that the program could "foster a grand new era of interracial understanding," this is simply an instance of complete mendacity. The strength of our country has always been built, and continues to grow, based on its diversity, not on pitting one race against another and seeing which one can scratch out a victory.

The whole arrangement of the cast members is un-American and goes against the melting pot America has strived to establish. Some supporters of the show have tried to defend the segregating of teams by asking why this is any different than dividing the teams along gender or age lines. Well, given events of the distant and recent past, I wish to reinforce that racial division is clearly not an issue that should be made a spectacle of. Dividing the teams by gender and age would not have any of the negative implications that the current structuring holds.

Even though *Survivor* executives continued to adamantly defend the show's setup, after only two episodes, the tribes were "integrated." While claims were made that it had nothing to do with the controversy and criticism hovering around the program, it certainly appears that condemnation must have been the major cause of this decision. It seems that the executives may have realized the error of their ways and desperately tried to correct it as quickly as possible.

Though my argument may appear almost moot, considering the teams are no longer segregated, the reality is that

Survivor is in fact still raising the idea that people are better off divided. The show cast more Asians and Latinos for this "social experiment" than it did in its previous twelve seasons combined. The producers are implying that segregation, rather than integration, somehow creates a preferable situation for everyone.

However, for the past 140 years, Americans have been fighting not only for equality, but also for integration and unity; people have risked and lost their lives for it. We have been fighting to establish an American identity, no matter what the color of one's skin may be. This show, one of the most popular shows on television, is telling its millions of viewers that segregation does not have to be as ignominious as popularly portrayed.

Our nation has been trying to expunge this racial rivalry for years. It baffles me why a television show would try to flaunt the issue. It is a major problem that the people in charge of controlling media content are so insensitive towards the issue of race, because this leads to the question of what other historical antagonisms they are willing to exploit in the future. Can we expect a show pitting the rich against the poor or Christians against Muslims? The danger here is, given the persuasive powers of the television medium, programs have the ability to corrode society's values over time. While this is not a new phenomenon, stations seem to be sinking to new lows, as epitomized in this new season of *Survivor*.

The drawbacks of a program such as this greatly outweigh any entertainment value the show could possibly possess.