

# THE BANNER

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North Brunswick Township High School  
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## PUSHing For a Safe Lifestyle

Wendy Chen  
Staff Editor

PUSH (Prevention Using Student Help) led by Mr. John Cogan and club members advocate for a safe and drug-free lifestyle.

During the holiday season, students signed a pledge for a drug-free holiday by signing their name on a piece of paper. This was crafted into a decorative chain-banner. Advisor John Cogan explained that, "in order to have fun, you don't need to endanger your life or ruin your health with alcohol or drugs."

PUSH members learned about the risks of drugs and alcohol, and how to react in certain scenarios. This season, PUSH members hoped to find as many students to sign the pledge and lead healthy lifestyles. Member Brenda Ramirez said, "I sold a lot of pledges during the lunch periods, and it makes me really glad that students actually vow to lead a safe life nowadays." For each pledge signed, students had the choice of donating money to a rehab center. "We've received a lot of money from everyone; from twenty five cents to five dollars, it all makes a difference," said treasurer Kinjal Patel.

The chain-banner was hung up around the center of the Commons right before winter vacation.

Moreover, every year PUSH visits the four North Brunswick elementary schools to teach students about the dangers of drugs. This year, New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) broadcasted an episode on TV about PUSH's successful influence on school children. NJEA taped

PUSH members at Livingston Park Elementary School on November 23, 2007, where fourth and fifth graders received presentations and skits that educated the kids about different drugs from various PUSH committees. Learning from high school students may help elementary school students better understand the serious risks of drugs.

A Livingston Park fifth grader exclaimed that, "It was a really cool to see high school kids teaching us about drugs, it can seriously ruin our lives." Ankit Choubey, a member of PUSH for the past two years, presented a skit along with other members about the dangers of alcohol to a class of fifth graders. "I was surprised by how smart the children actually are. They remembered a lot of facts we taught them last year," said Ankit.

NJEA's classroom close-up epi-



KINJAL PATEL LOOPS CHAINS TOGETHER BEFORE SHE HANGS IT ABOVE THE COMMONS.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WENDY CHEN

sode #7 aired on December 3 and January 7 at 6:30 P.M., as well as December 8 and January 12 at 9 a.m.

Club President Meera Patel proudly explained that PUSH has definitely been a great influence to society. "Teaching younger students about drugs and prevention is so important, and it really does

make a difference to the elementary school students when we talk about it," said Meera. The great efforts made by PUSH members have influenced their peers, as well as younger children, to lead a safe and drug-free lifestyle.

PUSH was acknowledged by the Board of Education on December 13, 2007.

## Monopolizing Their Futures

Sampada Nandyala  
Staff Writer

Life is full of twists and turns, good times and bad times. However, it is necessary to know how to deal with these surprises, especially when it comes to money, which is a major issue in any person's life.

Practical Money Skills is a course at NBTHS that focuses on dealing with money. Its main objective is to teach students basic negotiating skills that are crucial to a successful financial life.

To end the semester in a fun and memorable way, the students in the Practical Money Skills course are getting into five groups per class to compete in a Monopoly tournament. It is not all fun and games though, being that they have to apply the methods that they learned in class to try and win the game.

"The Monopoly tournament utilizes all the skills learned for living on your own," says Ms. Moore, who teaches Practi-

cal Money Skills.

While they play the board game, Magic 98.3 is playing songs such as "She will be Loved" by Maroon 5 in the background, providing them a relaxed environment to help them focus on winning.

However, it is not the winning that is important. The fact that crucial techniques are being learned is more valuable.



STUDENTS IN MS. MOORE'S PRACTICAL MONEY SKILLS CLASS PRACTICE NEGOTIATING SKILLS THROUGH MONOPOLY.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BOBBY KOLESAR

Plus, these skills will definitely benefit the students in the future, helping them to lead financially successful lives.

## A Look into Genocide

RAFIA BAIG  
Staff Writer

Students of Ms. Fineburg's Dimension of Prejudice class, a course that provides an in depth study of human discrimination, was given the opportunity of listening to Dr. Jerry Ehrlich's story as a doctor who has seen, first hand, the consequences of war.

Ehrlich, who is a pediatrician in Cherryhill, NJ, became a member of a crisis association, Doctor's Without Borders, in September 1991 and was sent to Sri Lanka. An island nation off the coast of South Asia, Sri Lanka is home to twenty million caught in an on-and-off civil war. Ehrlich was stationed there for about a year providing aid to those who needed it.

In 2004, he was sent to Sudan, the largest country in Africa and also the epicenter of this century's current genocide: Darfur.

Darfur is in the western most region of Sudan. The genocide, which began in 2003, is led by the Janjaweed, a militia group that openly terrorize non-Arab villages in the area. The Sudanese government claims to have no affiliation with the Janjaweed, but have clearly aided them by buying often times the very guns responsible for the nearly 400,000 deaths.

Ehrlich was stationed in the Kalma Camp in Darfur and immediately noticed how crowded the area was, packed with makeshift tents constructed of branches and plastic sheets and a staggering 100,000 refugees.

Everyday, he would shuffle through the packed waiting room of his medical tent, trying to find patients who could not survive the two hours waiting time. Medical supplies were scarce; sani-

tation was close to nonexistent.

Being stationed there, he says, was often emotionally deteriorating. Many of the refugees he treated suffered severe malnutrition and were so thin that they "often resembled AIDS patients, to put it simply."

Additionally, the death tolls in the refugee camp was staggering. When a measles epidemic broke out, 1 out of every 4 kids to have the disease perished. "The hardest thing was holding a child as he was dying," he confessed.

Even when good news was to be told, many mothers, who had faced unaccountable horrors by the Janjaweed, were stoic and unresponsive. Ehrlich called this post-dramatic stress disorder.

Danger to his own life was also present. Despite being warned by the Sudanese government that pictures were strictly forbidden, he frequently snuck out of the medical camp with his translator and took snapshots, many of which he shared in his presentation.

Once, a Sudanese official had even spotted him taking pictures from far away, but quick lying had convinced the soldier that the camera around his neck had actually been a stethoscope. After all, volunteers have been assassinated for far less.

Despite the emotional toil and fear, Ehrlich says he would go back in a blink of an eye. He likes to remember the friends he made and is especially proud of the two nurses he managed to train. He urges everyone to write to their congressman and stop the genocide before more lives are forever altered.

# OF MICE AND MEN

RAFIA BAIG  
Staff Writer

Every year, the AP Biology classes at North Brunswick High School have a yearlong genetics experiment in which they are required to raise mice, breed them, and observe any interesting developments. Students claim that these very mice are the ones currently running amuck around school.

Current mice-fleeing incidents support this accusation. Linda Viscaya of Mr. Trembly's class recently had a batch of baby mice escape. "There was a small hole in the lid of our cage. Four of the babies ended up squeezing out," she says.

Of the four, Linda and her group only found three, one in a corner of Mr. Trembly's classroom and two others in the small closet-like space the cages are stored. The last "fugitive" was found dead in the Yearbook room.

Similarly, Julie Selby, who has Mr. Cokeley for biology, suspects she is also missing a few since her initial litter of nine or so babies has dwindled down to around five. Where they went, or what became of them, no one is sure.

Mice-related events are nothing new. Lisa Mathews recalls once she saw a group of several senior boys last year chasing around two white mice by the school store. "There are always claims of releasing the bio-mice, especially around Senior Prank Day," says Amy Kawal who heard

such rumors last year and witnessed the event as well.

Despite the evidence that supports the theory behind the current mice sightings, Mr. Cokeley believes that they aren't from the experiment. He claims that those that are occasionally spotted in school are from the fields, wild mice that are in search for warmth as the weather gets cooler.

As for those that seemingly disappear, one other theory offered is that they are being eaten. Grisselda Rivera says that almost everyday a mouse dies and is found devoured by its cellmates. In fact, she found out that the babies of one of her tanks had eaten their mother. "There was blood but no body. I only found her tail!"

Mouse kidnappings are also not unheard of. One of Vianca Vargas's pregnant females, which was as round as a baseball at the time, seemingly disappeared one day. "There was no hole she could've possibly fit through," she declares. The only sensible answer is that she had been taken.

It is debatable whether there truly is a correlation between the mice sightings and the mice outbreaks. Whatever story may be the case, however, those currently involved with the mice experiments reassure that the little rodents are completely harmless. Some, in fact, are no bigger than an inch!

# New Changes in P.E.

LANNA KARUPEN  
Staff Writer

For each student that attends North Brunswick High School, Physical Education is a class that is taken daily. For some, this is one of the most dreaded classes of the day, but that is soon to change.

The Phys Ed. Department is bringing in activities that will entertain and get the students moving. These exercises are supposed to get students to participate and be interested all at the same time.

One of these new activities is called

Street Surfing. Ask any freshman about this activity, and they will give a positive response; most freshmen tested it out during their gym period. The freshman found it refreshing and interesting, for it was something new to try.

This new activity supports all the major areas that gym classes are supposed to

cover while helping students become fit. This sport exercises the lower body including the calves, and also helps with balance and student's coordination.

One of the gym teachers at NBTHS, Mr. Tonne, believes that the Street Surfing trial was a success, and that most of the students enjoyed this unique activity. More information on this activity can be seen on the sports website, [www.streetsurfing.com](http://www.streetsurfing.com).

Mr. Tonne is one of the teachers who are trying to bring new programs to NBTHS, hoping that these new ideas will hopefully help make gym class a little more interesting.

These new activities may take only 15 minutes to learn which is a success since a period only has 40 minutes.

The teachers that are fitting in the new activities into the Physical Education curriculum have one main idea in mind,

they want more activities that students will be able to do at home, that do not require big groups of people.

This is one of the few steps that the physical education department is taking to ensure that students will have fit lives in the future. Mr. Tonne believes that students will try to "explore new activities," and will "reach

out and grab things they find interesting."

According to Mr. Tonne, the physical education offices are now waiting to see where the funds to purchase these boards and helmets will come from.

Besides, the incoming freshman and upperclassmen can look forward to these new activities in the future, hopefully making gym class one of the highlights of every students day.

# Snow Day... or Not?

RUCHI PATEL and NIPA PARIKH  
Contributing Writers

"Ughhh! I thought it was supposed to snow last night! I was really looking forward to a snow day!" says your best friend in the hallway before home-room. The weatherman forecasted snow yesterday, but you look out the window, and rain beats the Earth like great, booming drums. Brown, slushy mud lines the streets. So much for a white Christmas this year. That stupid weatherman...who hired him? But your blame may be misdirected. This is not a radical essay. It is a wake up call.

Plainly defined as the heating up of the planet, global warming has been more than a century in the making, and in the past several decades, human impact on the environment has nearly tripled its speed of progress. As new technology and thriving industries change our lives, humans release heat-trapping gases that degenerate our planet rather than advance it. These "heat-trapping gases" are better known as greenhouse gases, and their levels are higher than they have been in the past six hundred fifty thousand years. They produce what is called the "greenhouse effect" on earth, a process in which greenhouse gases are trapped in the Earth's atmosphere. Like the glass walls of a greenhouse, these gases allow light to penetrate the Earth's atmosphere, but not escape it. They create a blanket that traps the sun's heat within the atmosphere, allowing little release back out into space; consequently, as the heat accumulates, the Earth grows warmer by degrees.

While this newfound heat may bring us longer summers and hotter nights, it also foreshadows disaster. According to National Geographic, "Glaciers are melting, sea levels are rising, cloud forests are drying, and wildlife is scrambling to keep pace." Skeptics disagree, but sixty degrees on a late December day is not exactly normal New Jersey weather. The evidence surrounds us plainly.

One of the most obvious effects of global warming is the rise in sea level. "Ice is melting worldwide, especially at the Earth's poles. This includes mountain glaciers, ice sheets covering West Antarctica and Greenland, and Arctic sea ice," says National Geographic. As a result, the average sea level rises one millimeter per year, and although one millimeter may not sound threatening, reality proves differently. Many coastal land areas around the world have already taken the tragic blow. In Africa and Indonesia, thousands of coastal residents have been forced to relocate their families and lives to avoid the engulfing waters. But wait...New Jersey sits on the coast of America. Are we next?

Global warming drastically alters our planet's ecosystems, causing the lives of many species to vary. For example, studies show that many plants bloom earlier than their pollinating insects become active. "Spruce bark beetles have boomed in Alaska thanks to 20 years of warm summers," but unfortunately, "The insects have chewed up 4 million acres of spruce trees." National Geographic researcher Bill Fraser has tracked the decline of the Adélie penguins in Antarctica, where their numbers have fallen from 32,000 breeding pairs to 11,000 in 30 years. While some species may move farther north and thrive, others may not be able to move and may thus become extinct. Wildlife research scientist Martyn Obbard has observed that since the mid-1980s, with less ice upon which to live and fish for food, polar bears have grown considerably skinnier. Polar bear biologist Ian Stirling has also found a similar pattern in Hudson Bay. He fears that if sea ice disappears, the polar bears will as well.

Global weather fluctuations result from global warming as well. While climate change brings New Jersey abnormally warm weather, winds and ocean currents move heat around the globe, cooling some areas, warming others, and changing the amount of rain and snow fall in different parts of the world. "Precipitation (rain and snowfall) has increased across the globe, on average. Floods and droughts will become more common. Rainfall in Ethiopia, where droughts are already common, could decline by 10% over the next fifty years. Less fresh water will be available. If the Quelccaya ice cap in Peru continues to melt at its current rate, it will be gone by 2100, leaving thousands of people who rely on it for drinking water and electricity without a source of either." But perhaps global warming's most significant effect on weather is the increase in the number of major hurricanes. America remembers Hurricane Katrina like the scar on a man's back, but does she know that global warming caused the catastrophe that scarred the American southeast, leaving a mark of sorrow and tragedy that still exists today? When the southeast was destroyed in 2005, millions lost their lives and homes simply because the water is getting hotter, and hurricanes thrive upon warm water. The warmer the water, the more powerful the hurricane grows, and as Katrina demonstrated two years ago, the result is often disastrous.

But neither Mother Nature nor the weatherman is to blame for the deterioration of the planet. Unfortunately the true blame lies with us. Carbon dioxide, one of the most prominent greenhouse gases, contributes significantly to global warming, and humans emit carbon dioxide wastefully and excessively. The burning of fossil fuels, the operation of cars and factories, and the production of electricity produces such excess carbon dioxide. Humans cause the emission of other greenhouse gases as well, including methane, released by landfills and the digestive systems of grazing animals, nitrous oxide, released by fertilizers, and gases used for refrigeration and industrial processes.

Human damage upon the environment is monumental and unforgivable. Scientists say we have fifty years, and the changes around us seem to agree. But every day counts, and it is up to us to decide how to change our future. While global warming cannot be completely thwarted, improvements to energy efficiency and vehicle fuel economy (so less energy has to be produced), and increases in wind and solar power, hydrogen produced from renewable sources, bio-fuels (produced from crops), natural gas, and nuclear power can help stall the planet's decline. Scientists are also researching a potential process that will capture carbon dioxide emitted from fossil fuels and store it underground, called "carbon sequestration." In addition to reducing the gases we emit to the atmosphere, we can also increase the amount of gases we take out of the atmosphere. Plants and trees absorb carbon dioxide as they grow, "sequestering" carbon naturally. Increasing forestlands and making changes to the way we farm can increase the amount of carbon we store; so carpool or plant a tree in your front yard. Recycle and use renewable energy whenever you can, and it is as easy as buying a florescent, energy efficient light bulb from Wal Mart®. Al Gore and Leonardo DeCaprio know what they are talking about. Do something to help the planet you live on, because if it dies, so do you.



STUDENTS IN MR. TONNE'S PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS TRY STREET SURFING, HOLDING ON TO ONE ANOTHER FOR BALANCE. PHOTO COURTESY OF MR. TONNE

## Down Memory Lane: The Thoughts of a Biology Teacher

SAMPADA NANDYALA  
Staff Writer



MRS. LAMAGRA, NBTHS BIOLOGY TEACHER.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BOBBY KOLESAR

The babble of voices in the hallways slowly receded as the day finally came to an end. It was a Friday and everyone, including the teachers, was anticipating the weekend after a long, exhausting week.

It might have been long, but the week was actually a very successful one for Mrs. LaMagra. She completed a biology lesson, managed to give two tests, and finished grading all the lab reports.

Content with herself, she sighed with satisfaction. After cleaning off her desk, and picking up some crumpled papers off the ground, she locked the door to her room and headed for the parking lot.

As she drove home, Mrs. LaMagra thought of how her teaching career had been so successful so far. However her first day at NBTHS started out a little shaky.

It was the September of 2004. Mrs. LaMagra recently moved to North Brunswick because of her new teaching job at the township's high school.

A medley of feelings was swirling inside her, like lava inside an active volcano. She was so nervous about her job that she could explode at any second.

Mrs. LaMagra stepped out of her house, finally, after checking for the millionth time if she had everything she needed. She opened the door of her car, sighed deeply, and began to make her way to the school.

She didn't go too far before she found herself stuck in heavy traffic. The cars were lined up from bumper to bumper, waiting for everything to clear.

Beads of sweat started to form on Mrs. LaMagra's forehead as she panicked about making it to school on time. She left her house at 5:45 in the morning, and she was stuck in traffic for fifteen minutes already.

To make the situation even worse, she was new here, and so she didn't have any knowledge of alternate routes that she could take.

Nervous, she started to call the school, but nobody picked up. She was experiencing her worst nightmare.

After slowly inching her way through the traffic, she finally got to a gas station, and got directions to the high school.

Although she got to the school late, she wasn't responsible for any students during first period. Relieved, she began to prepare herself for the day.

Mrs. LaMagra laughed to herself, remembering this memorable event in retrospect. Since it had been three years from when that happened, she found it quite humor-

ous. As she waited for the road to clear, another pleasant memory popped into her head.

*Mrs. LaMagra woke up early in the morning, ready to teach her students a brand new lesson about sound waves.*

*The aroma of freshly brewed coffee filled the air around her as she made her way to the kitchen.*

*She stopped to greet her husband good morning, but as she opened her mouth, no sound came out.*

*It's probably just some congestion, she thought, and got ready to take a shower, hoping the stuffiness would clear.*

*Surely, a hot, steamy shower did the trick. Her nose cleared up, and now Mrs. LaMagra was confident that the day would be perfect.*

*She got to school, and began to speak about sound waves and how they work. To her horror, no sound came out of her mouth, again.*

*By now it was clear that she had lost her voice.*

*Mrs. LaMagra had no choice but to find a way to teach this lesson. Soon, she had a brilliant idea.*

*She started to tap dance and used the noise that her shoes made to show how sound waves really worked. With different routines, she could demonstrate how sound gets transferred through the air, and the students seemed to really enjoy it. It turned out to be a successful day after all.*

Mrs. LaMagra now realized that all her teaching days turned out to be pleasant, and sometimes comical, in the end.

Yet she had to admit that the most hilarious event of all happened when she was teaching in Pennsylvania.

*Mrs. LaMagra had this amusing little student, who always rushed to be the first one to finish his assignments.*

*One day, he bet his teacher that he would get all the answers on a worksheet correct, even though he rushes through it. If he lost, he promised to do one hundred crunches.*

*Sure enough, he lost the bet, and so he went to the back of the room to do the sit-ups.*

*As he was a little plump, every time he attempted a sit-up, he couldn't quite get his body up all the way. However, at every attempt, the poor guy couldn't help but expel gas. Since he was a good sport, he laughed with everyone else in the classroom, making the day a very memorable one.*

A smile unfurled on Mrs. LaMagra's face as she remembered this hysterical event. She just loved being a science teacher!

## A Klub At The House

ANGIE O'DOWD  
Staff Writer

Imagine that by infancy having to endure living with seizures and high fevers to being put on the waiting list for heart and kidney transplants while in seventh grade. For Brian A. Roberts, this daily routine was no stranger.

As a child Brian was very sickly, his mother being only thirteen, an alcoholic, and a smoker as she carried him. Brian was put up for adoption, and soon found a home with loving parents, Gwyn and Bobby Roberts. Their greatest hopes were that they could provide their newborn son with the life he deserved. The young family's bliss lasted for a mere two months, until Gwyn and Bobby discovered that Brian was in need of a heart transplant.

On February 4th, 1990 Brian's new heart, only recently implanted, became clogged due to his body's rejection to this new organ. Brian got in line for yet another heart transplant, and by spring of 1995 Brian was in the fourth grade and had gotten his second heart transplant. Brian had quickly become a good friend to his doctors and became accustomed to frequent hospital visits for routine checkups.

Having overcome the many obstacles that were thrust upon him, Brian A. Roberts managed to live through not only two heart transplants, but a kidney transplant and dialysis as well.

Unable to live a normal life even if he had wanted to, Brian was too preoccupied with doctors and hospitals to make many friends or join in any regular childhood activities. This, however, did not stop him from becoming a cheerful and driven young man. "I know there will be things that I am not going to be able to do in my life, but I was not given a normal life. I was born with a problem that I faced head strong and I over came it."

Brian A. Roberts passed away

in 2005 at the age of 21. With a weak but valiant heart, Brian managed to touch the hearts of so many people. So, in honor of her late son, Gwyn Roberts started the Brian A. Roberts Foundation.

The sole purpose of this foundation is to raise money for a place where troubled teens and kids in North Brunswick can go. "The Klub At The House" founders believe that they can help the 54,000 homeless children who are living in New Jersey and teens who are at risk of joining gangs, or just need a solid path to follow in life.

"The Klub At The House" will provide numerous after school activities for the children in that will hopefully keep them focused on a sound future and a good life. Certified adult workers will provide tutoring and enrichment programs for the kids. They include improving reading and writing skills, developing math and science skills, and learning other languages and instruments. Along with help in academics, "The Klub At The House" will also provide fun activities like arts and crafts, sports, film making, games, and free movies.

The dream is within reach, but the foundation still needs a helping hand. The Brian A. Roberts foundation sells teddy bears, customized to the request of the children and more recently, on October 28th, held a fundraiser at Giamarese Farms, where children decorated pumpkins and had their faces painted, and donations were welcomed. Also, on December 28th, the foundation is holding a family night concert in North Brunswick Township High School's auditorium from 7 to 8:30 and all proceeds will go towards "The Klub At The House".

This new teen center is a vital part of North Brunswick's future, and molding children and teens, our future leaders, into young adults that will one day be able to change the world.

## Macintosh vs. PC

BRANDEN PANICO  
Staff Writer

"Hello I'm a Mac, and I'm a PC", this famous quote pins Windows (PC) and their rivals Macintosh against one another. This brings up the discussion on which is better, Mac or PC's?

PC has been around for several years and is a well-established company.

Microsoft has developed many different operating systems for PC's as well as Mac. You can get Mac laptops and you can get PC laptops. Both perform the same functions, but differ in appearance and they each have their own programs. So what's the big difference?

Mac's are well known for their great entertainment features.

They all come with iLife, which has anything you can possibly need. It has word processing software as well as powerpoint and many entertainment features. Entertainment wise I would give Mac's the edge. Mac's also claim that they are less likely to get spy ware and are easier to use. This claim has not been 100 percent proven but seems to be true.

PC's are more for the businessman. With their Word processing system and Microsoft works it makes doing business easier. PC however is less compatible with things such as digital cameras, printers and file transfers. On a PC you might have to download software in order to complete

a task. Although Macs have gained much popularity over the last few years, PC's are the most popular computers out there and are used in schools and businesses, which makes networking much easier. But recently, Macs have gained much more popularity.

College students are more fit for Mac's because of their no virus or spy ware claim. Mac's are also better for projects and are easier to use.

Overall Mac's and PC's are designed for every kind of buyer. Musicians, DJ's, college students and children would be more attracted to Mac's. Businessmen and businesses would be more attracted to PC's. PC has the most business right now but Mac's will soon be right up there with them in the market.



MAC AND PC USERS DEBATE OVER THE PRACTICALITY OF BOTH COMPUTER COMPANIES.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KRISTI BERRY

## The Rise of Young America: Is it too Good to be True?

STEPHANIE SOLIS  
Staff Writer

There is a craze that is spreading throughout the nation, and it is bringing a surge of young Americans back to the political scene. Young adult voters have made a huge comeback in regards politics, in hopes of reclaiming their power in the US elections. And with the primary elections in full gear, their votes count more than ever. However, is the interest of the younger population here to stay, or is it just the baby boom of the generation?

Nearly a quarter of the eligible voting population consists of young voters, and yet less than half get up on that November morning to cast their ballot. And it's not just because people are too busy or lazy (as if it required that much work and time), but simply because the younger population underestimates the value of their votes.

Organizations like Rock the Vote, and the Vote or Die campaign have been successful contributors to the increase of youth voters in the 2004 election. Celebrities used mainstream media sources like MTV to revive political interest among young voters, and apparently it worked. The turnout rate among adults between 18 and 24 years of age rose to 47 percent from 36 percent in 2000, and reportedly the largest percentage since 1992. The younger audience seems to be catching up to older voters, but the gap isn't closing yet. In 2004, 73 percent of Americans between 55 and 74 years of age voted, as well as 69 percent of 45 to 54 year olds, 64 percent of voters 35 and 44 years old, and 56% of ages 25-34. Although 11 percent is a large difference, celebrity campaigns can only go so far, even in terms of participation within the campaigns. Vote or Die advocate Paris Hilton did not register to vote, and 50 Cent didn't serve as a helpful example because his status as a convicted felon prevented him from voting.

Just now, young adults are feeling the need to make a difference. Candidates like Barack Obama reach out to young voters, recognizing their power and needs. "I think young voters know that we've got challenges like climate change or national debt, paying for college. None of those challenges will be solved with the same kind of politics. That's what this campaign represents, and I think young people are naturally gravitated towards somebody who wants to transform how politics work in this country," Obama has said. But is he connecting to the future of voting, or is he a short-lived political craze?

With less than a year until the general elections, the pressure's on for each contender, and the vote of young Americans could make all the difference in 2008. But as to whether or not young people will live up to the expectations of the nation, we won't know until November when the votes are in.

## SIDEWALK SURVEY: Which presidential candidate are you supporting?



"Obama because of his electability."  
- Omer Shafi '11



"Obama seems to know what he's doing and he has a set plan."  
- Marcella Springstead '08



"Obama is very fresh with ideas and eager for change. He was always against the war in Iraq."  
- Christina Perapoli '10



"I would support Hillary Clinton because she will be the first woman President."  
- Danielle Ingram '09



"I believe that Giuliani is what we need right now. He's going to do big things!"  
- Miguel Malave '10



"Obama, he focuses on younger people and is open to change"  
- Stephanie Solis '10

## Could one of *these* Independents

MATTHEW CONNOLLY  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

One of the hallmarks of our democracy is that, theoretically, any American can grow up and be President. While most citizens move on to different dreams and career paths as they mature, others keep their dream alive by launching long-shot independent bids.

Of course, in such a free system there are bound to be a few "eccentric" candidates. So, if you aren't particularly pleased by the current crop of Democrats and Republicans, take a look at some of these all-American alternatives:

### Jonathon "The Impaler" Sharkey

<http://www.jonathontheimpalerforpresident2008.us/>



A former pro wrestler and ordained Satanic Vampire, "The Impaler" is clearly running as a tough-on-crime candidate; he lives up to his moniker by promising to publicly impale criminals and terrorists. In fact, his campaign website has a list of people Sharkey will personally impale upon being elected. The list ranges from Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush to O.J. Simpson and Paris Hilton. His "Death Dealers," a personal hit squad of Vampires, would carry out all execution orders. Sharkey (evidently not a history major) also believes that, since they "sided with the British against our Founding Fathers during our Revolutionary War," Native Americans should be regarded as "terrorists/communists." Interestingly enough, "The Impaler" also calls for cheaper medical care, more pro-union legislation, and an end to the war in Iraq.

## WHO THEY ARE AND WHERE THEY STAND

TIFFANY HSUEH  
Staff Editor

As election season draws closer, potential 2008 candidates for the Presidency find themselves amidst a flurry of activity as each candidate vies for his or her nomination from each respective party. With many potential candidates in both the Republican and Democratic parties, narrowing it down may be hard for voters. However, there are eight frontrunners in the race for the Presidency all with various views on how to handle the situation at home and abroad.

The Democratic front boasts three of the eight frontrunners: Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, and John Edwards.

The Republicans boast five hopefuls in the race for a nomination: Rudy Giuliani, Mike Huckabee, John McCain, Mitt Romney, and Fred Thompson.

**Hillary Clinton** initially voted for the war in Iraq, but believes that vote was a mistake based on false information provided by the White House. Based on that, Senator Clinton now calls for a phased withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. In terms of social security, she opposes privatizing, the act of transferring an economic enterprise or public utility that has been under state ownership to private ownership. In 2005, she supported the interests of the Alliance for Retired Americans. In addition, Clinton also voted in favor of the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005, an Act that passed in both the House and Senate, but was vetoed by the President and failed in veto override in the House. She supports gay and domestic partnership benefits but opposes gay marriage, is pro-choice on the abortion issue, and supports the interest of the American Public Health Association. On the issue of immigration, Clinton supported the interest of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and supports amnesty or permanent legalization for illegal aliens and temporary legalization for illegal aliens as guest workers.

**Barack Obama** spoke out against the Iraq war as a state senator and favors a phased withdrawal. Similar to Clinton, Obama supported the interest of the Alliance for Retired Americans in 2005 and supports federally funded stem cell research. He opposes gay marriage, but supports civil unions and gay equality. On the topic of health care, Obama promotes affordable, accessible, and high-quality health care and understands that "too many hard-working Americans cannot afford their medical bills" and that "health-related issues are

the number one cause for personal bankruptcy". In an effort to provide more affordable and accessible health care, Obama has supported efforts to allow American seniors to purchase prescription drugs in Canada to bring them back to the U.S. Environmentally, Obama supported the interests of the American Wilderness Coalition 100 percent in 2005 and the League of Conservation Voters 95 percent in 2005. Comparable to Clinton's views, Obama supported the American Immigration Lawyers Association 88 percent in 2006 and supports amnesty or permanent legalization for illegal aliens and temporary legalization for illegal aliens as guest workers.

**John Edwards**, an ex-senator, and former running mate to John Kerry in the 2004 Presidential elections, voted for Military Force Authorization two days after September 11, but now calls that vote a mistake. Recently, he has voiced his opinion to withdraw American troops who are training the Iraqi army and police as part of his broader plan to remove all troops within a ten-month time span. He supports the expansion of stem cell research and supported the interest of NARAL Pro-Choice America 100 percent in 2003. Similar to Obama, he does not support same sex marriages, but supports civil unions. For health care, Edwards believes that America needs to reform its health care system to provide national coverage that will provide better care at a lower cost and not mere access to health care. In providing better care at lower costs, Edwards voted to pass a bill that would institute procedures for the introduction of generic drugs into the prescription drug market and allow for the importation of prescription drugs from Canada to the United States. Environmentally, Edwards believes that Americans "should act now by investing in clean, renewable energies such as wind, solar, and biofuels to create a new energy economy."

**Rudy Giuliani** has supported Bush's management of the Iraq war from the start. In response to a call to redeploy troops away from Iraq over the next two years, Giuliani said, "Giving your enemy the impression that you're going to run away emboldens them." For social security, Giuliani favors allowing some investment in private accounts. He supports stem cell research and is pro-choice on the. On the Larry King Show, Giuliani is not in favor of gay marriage, but says that "gays

should be protected." He followed through by signing The Domestic Partnership Law in New York while he served as Mayor. He has said that the nation's current health care system is "imperfect" but that it needs to be built "based on private insurance, competition, and markets" and has called for a suspension on prescription drug importation. Giuliani is "supportive of the environmentally ambitious green-development projects." Similar to the Democrat frontrunners, Giuliani supports amnesty or permanent legalization for illegal aliens and temporary legalization for illegal aliens as guest workers.

**Mike Huckabee**, former governor of Arkansas, supports Bush's Iraq War troop surge. He opposes federally funded stem cell research and signed legislation outlawing same-sex marriage in Arkansas in December 2006. He does not support civil unions, but respects gay couples. Huckabee thinks that abortion should be legal when the life of the woman is endangered but believes in eliminating public funding for abortions and public funding of organizations that advocate or perform abortions. For health care, he supports "the concept that the government should ensure that citizens have access to basic health care through managed care, insurance reforms, or state funded care where necessary." On the topic of immigration, Huckabee mostly supports amnesty or permanent legalization for illegal aliens. In an interview with George Stephanopoulos, Huckabee said, "We should have a process where people can pay the penalties, step up, and accept responsibility for not being here legally...] The objective is to make things right. Right for us. Right for them. And what I have objected to in the past is when we are punishing the children for the laws that maybe their parents have broken. I do have a problem with that."

**John McCain**, a United States senator from Arizona, supports Bush's surge of additional troops. He supports stem cell research, but only in existing cell lines. Like some of the other Republican hopefuls, McCain supports civil unions, but not same sex marriage. He did not support Planned Parenthood or NARAL Pro-Choice America in both 2005 and 2006, but supported the interests of the National Right to Life Committee in 2005-2006. He also opposes universal health care, but supports expanding prescription drug coverage under Medicare, the nation's largest

health insurance program. With immigration issues, McCain supports the increase of number of visas issued for agricultural workers and supports relaxing restrictions barring legal immigrants from using social programs such as public houses or food stamps. In addition, he supports amnesty or permanent legalization for illegal aliens and temporary legalization for illegal aliens as guest workers.

**Mitt Romney** supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and backed Bush's troop surge, but has stated that the post-invasion period was "mismanaged." As governor of Massachusetts, he vetoed a stem cell research bill and similar to McCain, does not oppose stem cell research done on existing stem cell lines. Romney opposes civil unions and same sex marriages but has supported gay partnerships recognition. Initially Romney was pro-choice, but has switched to pro-life. He believes that the health care system can be "improved by extending health insurance to all Americans" through market reforms. On the topic of immigration, Romney mostly opposes amnesty or permanent legalization for illegal aliens and fully opposes temporary legalization for illegal aliens and guest workers.

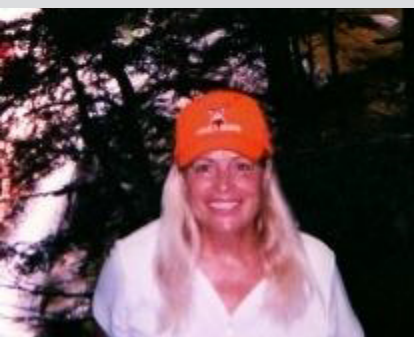
**Fred Thompson**, a former senator from Tennessee, voted "yes" on authorizing use of military forces in Iraq and supports Bush's decision to increase troop levels. He opposes gay marriage but supports allowing individual states to decide on the legality of civil unions. Thompson is pro-life and believes that federal judges should overturn the 1973 Roe v. Wade abortion rights decision. Thompson voted "no" on allowing prescription drugs from Canada to be re-imported, voted "yes" on funding a Republican version of Medicare prescription drug benefit, and voted "no" on including prescription drugs under Medicare. Environmentally, Thompson supported more funding for forest roads and fish habitat. Thompson also supports allowing more foreign workers into the U.S. for farm work and voted "yes" on visas for skilled workers. He mostly opposes amnesty or permanent legalization for illegal aliens and temporary legalization for illegal aliens as guest workers.

With the 2008 elections less than a year away, it will be up to the masses to vote for the future incumbent of the White House. Drawing on experiences, all candidates hope to build a new future with the remnants of the past.

## President Candidates be the next President?

### Cris Ericson

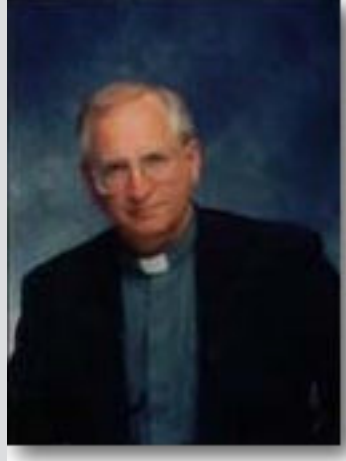
<http://www.crisericson.com/>



Ericson, of the Vermont-based Marijuana Party, is running a one-issue campaign based on the legalization of the party's eponymous drug. Apparently not content to simply campaign for President, Ericson is also running for Governor of Vermont and for a seat in the House of Representatives. Her website is sparse as far as a campaign platform; it features a list of reasons to legalize marijuana as well as a diatribe against the death penalty and a short piece on Vermont tax policy. Unfortunately for such a self-proclaimed progressive campaign, the candidate falls at times into the "stoner" stereotype. At the bottom of her web page, Ericson writes, "I am desperately in need of campaign donations to help pay for gas for my car."

### Gene Amondson

<http://www.geneamondson.com/>



Amondson is a Christian pastor and a candidate running on the Prohibition ticket. Those of you who didn't fall asleep in history class may remember the Prohibition Party's success during the 1920's. Amondson is hoping to recapture these times, an era he calls "America's best years." He has held one-man demonstrations against numerous beer corporations and wine distilleries, and has even appeared on Oprah several times. While his website doesn't offer much in the way of any other issues, it does give supporter's a chance to buy Gene Amondson's Mt. Rainer Pies, an illustrated cookbook the candidate wrote about his favorite types of pie.

### Charles Maxham

<http://home.earthlink.net/%7Emaxhamforpresident/index.html>



New Jersey native Charles Maxham founded a whole new party to back his run, the Give Me Back America Party. While it may seem like an odd name (Why does only Maxham deserve America back, and who had taken it in the first place?), his pragmatic policies are clear. Maxham is apparently against the use of spell check. His website outlines his platform "imbrace" stem cell research and stop "imigration" reform (misspellings his). He is also apparently for sleeveless shirts: the gun control portion of his website says, "Our constitution guarantees our right to bare arms," (again, misspelling his). With all these typos, it might be odd to find out that Maxham writes novels. His newest, Look No More, is described as (I kid you not) "a romantic adventure about an ex-ace jet fighter pilot and a concert pianist who end up fighting terrorists in war-torn Iraq." With a book like that under his belt, it appears that Maxham's Iraq policy experience is unquestionable.

# Are the Malls Our Area Safe?

CHANDNI PATEL  
Staff Writer

We view the mall as a place to shop, hang out, relax, and just have fun. These days, it seems as if people try to avoid the mall. The answer is because of safety reasons.

Lately, in the past six months there have been about two or three incidents at the mall. The first incident, an angry boyfriend shot his girlfriend in a children's store-- Gymboree. After he shot his girlfriend he committed suicide by shooting himself. Luckily, the girl survived with few minor injuries.

As days go on, it seems as if malls become more dangerous to go to. One may never know what would happen next.

One possible solution could be a tighter security system with security officers walking around the mall, to make sure nothing looks suspicious. There should also be a way to determine if a person has any dangerous weapons on them. Metal detectors by all of the entrances of the mall would solve this problem.

Even though there have been shootings/killings at the malls throughout the country, nobody has been doing anything to help prevent it from recovering. Especially since there was a shooting at Menlo Mall, about twenty minutes from here. That's basically saying, "Of course we feel sorry for them, we'll make sure it does not happen again." Overall that statement

shows that we are doing nothing.

For example, the security at airports has become so strong that lately there had been nothing out of place or anything that seemed funny.

As days go on, it seems as if malls become more dangerous to go to. One may never know what will happen next.

One possible solution would be to have tighter security. That would be with some security officers walking around the mall to make sure nothing looks funny. There also has to be a way to determine if a person has any dangerous weapons on them. If needed, there could also be some metal detectors by all of the entrances of the mall.

When people notice that innocent people are getting killed in malls, the mall would become an avoided place.

If the malls increase their security, then the safety of the shoppers inside would increase dramatically. That would result in less worry about a person's safety inside the mall.

Over time, people expect to walk without any hesitation or fear that something will happen to them. To lower that simple kind of stress off people would be very good. Especially if they just decide to go to the mall for some fun.

Simple improvements in mall security would make the biggest difference.

## Religion vs. Physical Education

SAMPADA NANDYALA  
Staff Writer

Autumn arrives, and many students anticipate the opening of school. School is usually thought of as a place to learn, meet and make friends, and possibly have fun.

For some students, the fall also brings special holidays such as Ramadan. However, the students who celebrate Ramadan usually fast for the entire day and eat only after sunset. Those who participate in this ritual strictly, they typically not allowed to drink any type of fluids.

The lack of food and water for such a long time could result in fatigue and lightheadedness. Consequently, physical education becomes a difficult issue to deal with.

Since the students who fast lack energy throughout the day, they had trouble coping with the activities that are required in a physical education class.

Unfortunately, all pleas to be excused from gym, regardless of whether they are religious or not, are being ignored. The only reason that is an exception is if it is medical.

This is very unfair treatment to the many students who celebrate Ramadan with such pomp and devotion. How will they be able to perform physical activities when they have no energy in their body?

Rakheelah Arshad, a freshman this year at NBTHS, was surprised at the gym teacher's rejecting of her request to be excused. Rakheelah celebrates Ramadan very ardently, and she was extremely worried that she wouldn't be able to run the mile, or even do the warm ups without feeling woozy.

According to the school policy, teachers really have no say on religious issues such as this one. However, Ms. Mellage, one of the physical education teachers

here at NBTHS, did say that if a student says that he or she is fasting, they are still encouraged to change their clothes and do however much they can.

She also said that this was the same reply given in the past, so it is not a new decision by the Board of Education, or the school itself.

Nonetheless, the fasting students are bound to become tired in physical

education, and their energy will be extracted. This will make it very hard for them to focus in the rest of their classes, which will soon lead to problems with grades.

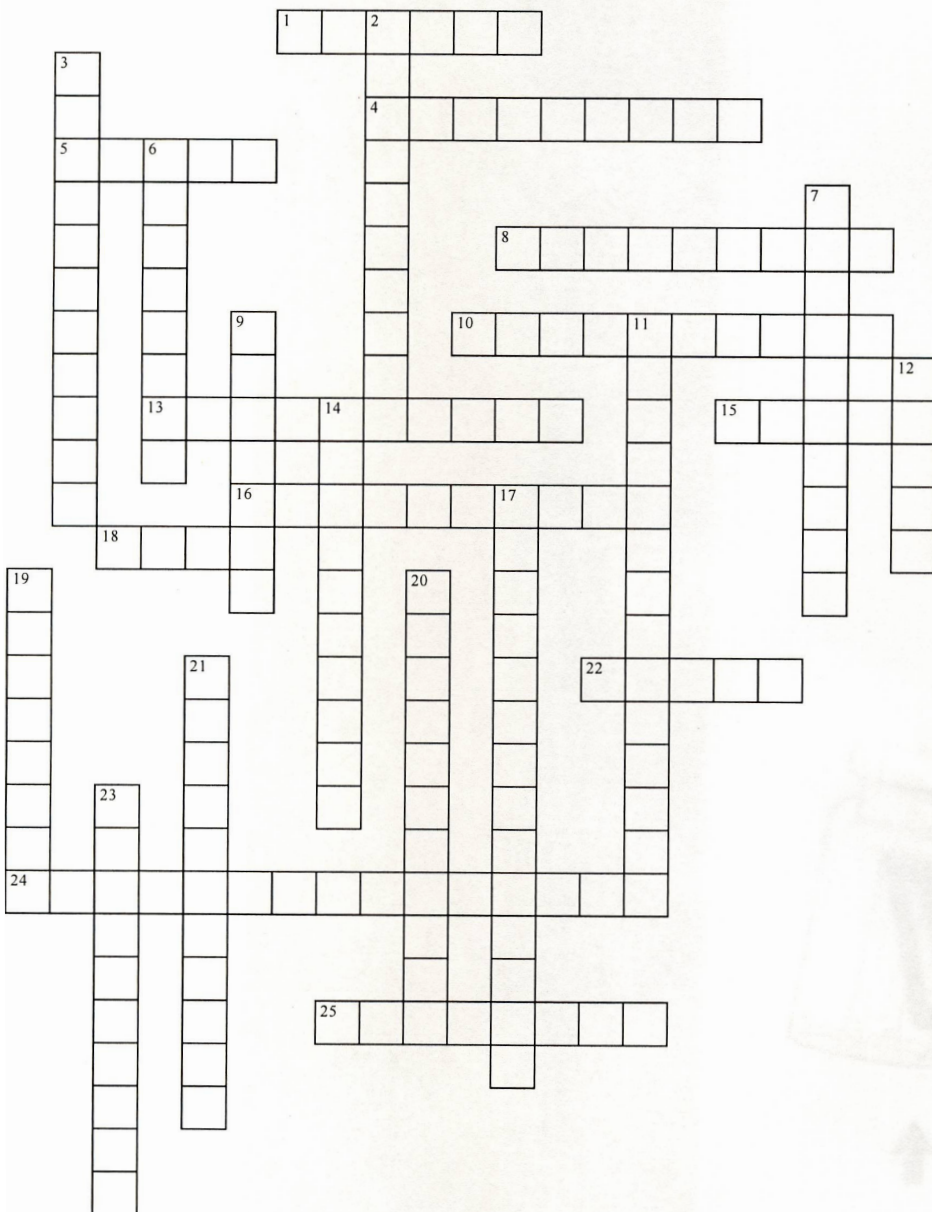
It is horrible that the refusal of religious excuses can cause so much trouble for students who fast for Ramadan. Not only will physical education be problematic, but it will also affect the students' grades, and ruin their holiday.



MANY STUDENTS SIT OUT DURING THEIR PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES, BOTH EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BOBBY KOLESAR

## 2007 Movies



### ACROSS

- 1) This mainly mute, but always klutzy Brit finally took a "holiday" in August
- 4) This title character, the famous titian-haired teenager, was played by Emma Roberts in
- 5) The fourth installment in a series of horror movies was called
- 8) Kevin Costner costars with Demi Moore as the title character, a Jekyll-and-Hyde serial killer, in this movie
- 10) Who played Adam Sandler's costar in the pair of *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry*?
- 13) Johnny Blaze, played by Nicholas Cage, is which action-fantasy character in the movie of the same name?
- 15) The *Harry Potter* movie that came out this year was which number in the book series?
- 16) Marjane Satrapi wrote a graphic novel based on a modern teenage girl growing up in Iran, with her own name, and co-directed the film, called
- 18) *Live Free or Die Hard*, the fourth of a series of high-action movies, came out in which month?
- 22) What is Jason Bourne's real first name?
- 24) Natalie Portman costars with the "X family" in a movie called
- 25) In the November movie *No Country for Old Men*, the main character, who eventually dies, is named \_\_\_\_\_ Moss

### DOWN

- 2) In *The Heartbreak Kid*, which actor plays the unlucky-in-marriage Eddie?
- 3) In *Fantastic Four, Rise of the Silver Surfer*, the only female member of the Fantastic Four is played by
- 6) John Travolta came out in two movies this year, the musical *Hairspray* and the comedy
- 7) This 67-year-old played supporting roles in three movies this year: an action-fantasy, a comedy, and an action Western
- 9) What was the name of the "Spider-pig" in *The Simpsons Movie*?
- 11) Three movies came out from the kitchen this year: *The Waitress*, an animated film, and also the comedy of
- 12) The main characters of the March ice-skating movie *Blades of Glory* were Jimmy and
- 14) Artist Jess and imaginative writer Leslie make up a world of fantasy in *Bridge to \_\_\_\_\_*
- 17) 2007 was a year for thirds: *Spiderman*, *Shrek*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Bourne*, and *Rush Hour* (and 300). What was yet another trilogy movie?
- 19) Robert de Niro plays the character "Captain Shakespeare" in which August movie?
- 20) French dish with fresh stewed zucchini, tomatoes, green and red peppers, onion, and garlic, usually served with rice or in crêpes
- 21) This 21-year-old actor starred as the main character in three movies this year: one thriller, one animated, and the last a live-action based on a comic series
- 23) *Across the Universe*, a movie about six friends in America and England, was set to music by

## WRITERS STRIKE- For Better or Worse?

FARNAZ MANSOURI  
*Co-Editor in Chief*

For the past two months, television as we've known it has been greatly altered due to the writers strike. Our favorite shows, such as *24*, *The Office*, and even *Heros*, have shut down production completely, and are not planning to start filming anytime soon. As for shows that have been airing new episodes, such as *Desperate Housewives* and *Greys Anatomy*, have limited days due to a lack of new material. According to the *Los Angeles Time*, even popular HBO television shows such as *Big Love* and *Entourage*, that air during the summer, will be delayed due to the strike. However, the strike has also been affected live television programs, such as late night television, and more recently, the Golden Globe Awards. For those who did not hear, the Hollywood Foreign Press was forced to cancel the awards ceremony due to lack of writers, and several actors and actresses boycotting the event in support for the writers. The strike has caused an inconvenience for any household who watched television on a daily basis, yet should we really consider their strike to be selfish?

Many are unaware of why the Writers Guild of America hit the picket lines on November 5, 2007. According to *cnn.com*, the writer strike is "necessary" in order to protect members' of the guild's future income as "the shows they write are increasingly distributed over never media, primarily through Internet downloading." The guild has previously demanded for their profit on DVD sales to be doubled, but let this issue go before the strike began. As reported by *The New York Times*, Chris Albers, a writer for "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" states "The majority of writers are barely making a living and the majority of writers' careers are very short-lived. So we feel that if these companies are going to be making a lot of money off of what we create, and we only have a few years to be in the game, then it's fair to compensate us so that we can support our families."

Although I understand that it is annoying not having new shows to watch on a weekly basis, it is crucial for people to support the writers' strike. We've all heard of or even been a victim to a job that does not give employees the benefits they deserve. If we back up the writers and they accomplish their initial goal, it will be a milestone victory for the thousands of people fighting for more benefits at the work place.

## Creating Safety or Inconveniences?

TIFFANY KILMURRAY  
*Staff Writer*

Recently there has been much debate as to whether or not the legal driving age of young Americans should be raised. Although the arguments for this age increase are definitely agreeable, more restrictions should not be added on American drivers, or on how we choose to lead our lives.

In 2001, twenty-four states including New Jersey adopted a "multi-stage driver licensing system". The system introduced driving privileges gradually to first-time drivers and applicants under twenty-one years old. This system also raised the unrestricted basic drivers license from the age of seventeen to eighteen in the state of New Jersey. Currently, New Jersey stands as the only state permitted to grant full licenses to its citizens at eighteen years old.



RAIDER ROAD FILLS WITH OVERFLOW PARKING THROUGHOUT THE DAY.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BOBBY KOLESAR

While American teenagers have lately observed many changes in the driving system, it would be unfair to create more restrictions and increase age limits. In fact, doing so would only make teenagers want to break the rules and rebel even more.

One of the major arguments for raising the driving age includes the accident rate caused by teenagers. Raising age limits will not necessarily save lives. Actually, studies have shown that it is inexperience, not age, that causes accidents. Perhaps if teenagers were given the chance to gain more experience being the wheel, the accident rate may begin to gradually decrease. If permitted to show responsibility and composure on the road, teens should be capable of driving.

If the current issue dealing with the increase in accidents caused by teenagers is such a great concern to Americans, other states should strongly consider modifying their laws. Our country has fourteen year olds beginning to drive in states such as Alaska, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, and South Dakota. Not to mention, at the age of fourteen, children are just barely teenagers. If accidents have been such a problem, why haven't new restrictions been issued in those states? In addition, it seems unreasonable that fourteen year olds in South Dakota are able to obtain a full license while residents of New Jersey must wait until they are eighteen.

Today in the society that we live in, much is assumed of teenagers. They are expected to receive a decent education, become employed, and become responsible individuals. It is unjust that many of these teens are deprived of personal transport to school, work, extra curricular activities, sports, and social events. At this rate if New Jersey raises its legal driving age any higher, kids will be going off to college without the ability to drive, causing awful inconveniences.

In reality, cars are necessary for mobility in America. Taking the privilege of driving away by adding more and more restrictions, limits, rules, and laws is a massive disruption to the lives of not just teens, but the parents and families of the teens as well.

## Tutors for Toddlers

ADITYA RAINYA  
*Co-Editor in Chief*

After the recent *TIME Magazine* article explaining the rising use of "kinder-cramming", the tutoring of children at an unusually early age, one gets the feeling that although knowledge is being procured, is it being acquired for the right reasons, and are we essentially raising what will become a generation of academic robots.

'Kinder-cramming' may or may not give a child that extra push to get into an Ivy League, but it will definitely make public schools obsolete in no time. With the rigorous learning crammed into those tiny brains the decelerated curriculum of public schools will obviously appear uninteresting to those young minds. Consequently, as more of those pushy and over concerned parents put their kids into academic coaching centers such as Kumon, enrollment in public schools will start to drop dramatically because they are not able to cater to the needs of such overachieving students, and that'll open yet another can of worms: the much feared school voucher system!

Being a student myself, I can vouch for the fact that due to the intense academic training some young children receive, they are more inclined to 'burn out' by the time they come to high school. Being academically smart is only one aspect of school life; it is not uncommon to see kids whose parents have ensured their academic brilliance, lack social competence and street smartness. The academic advantage gained by an overachieving child of over ambitious parents, does not guarantee the child's social acceptance. Being a social misfit is the price one pays for taking Calculus in freshman year. In the long run this alienation and lack of social skills is not worth the 'kinder-cramming' a young child is subject to these days.

With the gradual acceptance of this method to begin intensive academic education a question arises in my mind: Is our society breeding a new group of kinder-robots?

## RAIDER RANT MOVING FORWARD



MATTHEW CONNOLLY  
*Co-Editor in Chief*

Less than one month after it occurred, the scandal involving former psychology teacher Matthew Engelson appears to have blown over. Indeed, the wildfire of rumors and speculation that spread through the student body in late December has been doused and replaced with normal conversation.

It is a testament, really, to our short memory, a collective American Attention Deficit Disorder. New Orleans, for instance, is less than 70% as populous as it was two and a half years ago. The labor force there has dropped by over 100,000 people, and only 40% of public schools have re-opened.

The Hurricane Katrina story, unfortunately, ran its course years ago. The public lost interest, and thus the rebuilding process has gone ignored in recent times.

I'm not here to preach, however. This collective ADD can be positive as well, and the Engelson fiasco has shown us how.

The scandal was taken very seriously here at NBTHS. Statements were released by Principal Brotschul and Superintendent Zychowski, and a public meeting was held in which parents voiced their (always) opinionated and (sometimes) rational suggestions and questions.

Outsiders took the situation more lightly. The evening news on television station My9 noted that Engelson was a soccer coach, and simply used the opportunity to use a number of soccer-related puns ("He certainly got a 'kick' when authorities arrested him..."). That sound you just heard was Edward R. Murrow turning over in his grave.

But, I digress. The point is that, thanks to our collective ADD, all is quiet on the Engelson front. Parents stopped calling for policy changes. Students stopped spreading rumors. Teachers stopped having to sidestep awkward conversations with other teachers and students alike.

This is beneficial to the NBTHS community. An inappropriate teacher-student relationship is nearly impossible to prevent by any means, and thus elongated calls for policy changes would have hindered the administration and created pointless, knee-jerk rules. The stoppage of rumors is also a blessing; the hearsay and oft-personal attacks are not conducive to the student population as a whole.

I am well aware of the irony in spending an entire column talking about a situation then asking readers to forget all about it. This scandal belongs in the pantheon of previous news stories (Anna Nicole Smith's death, Lisa Nowak the diapered astronaut, anything at all to do with Britney Spears) that are sensational and omnipresent when they first come out but eventually fade out of the fickle public eye. By looking forward instead of looking back, we prevent rash policy decisions and give all those affected a chance to heal in peace.

The nation's collective ADD is a double-edged sword. Important events that need attention after they occur, like Hurricane Katrina, are quickly forgotten. On the flipside, nothing good can come out of a constant remembrance of the Engelson scandal. It is best for the school to move on from what was a horrific, if unavoidable, affair.

## Stars Scholarship Program Changing

RJ BARKELEW  
Staff Writer

The Stars scholarship program has hit the news big this time. It is making college bound seniors think twice before going to big name schools like Rutgers and Rowan. It gives students guaranteed full ride tuition to their own county college.

It seems like a good deal to most seniors and who wouldn't want to take a shot at this. "Only four decades old, New Jersey's county colleges are the largest and fastest growing provider of higher education in the state, with some 400,000 students." "With their open admissions and open access ethos, the two-year schools long for low income students, immigrants and working adults." This is a great idea for those students who do not really want to go too far outside the state and want to stay close to home.

Scholarships are definitely the way to go to college in style. You can attain as many as you want and definitely save you dearly beloved parents some money. Going to a county college isn't as bad as you think it is. You can go there for two years and then transfer out to a college of your choosing. But the problem here is that big name schools like Rutgers and Rowan are losing money because of this program.

Two years after the Stars program was introduced, Stars II came along and promised free tuition and fees to any New Jersey four year institutions. The Stars II program has apparently wreaked havoc on these big name schools and they want it to stop. "While Stars students must meet the admissions standards of the four-year college they wish to enter, their tuition in effect is partly being covered by the other students there, officials say."

Why are these colleges complaining though? Long before this whole programs started colleges like TCNJ, Kean, Richard Stockton, Ramapo, Rowan, Rutgers, and William Patterson were already making millions of dollars off the students that applied there. For example, Rutgers has 163 students on the Stars II program and it has cost them only \$765,000 dollars. That is pocket change to them. They get millions of dollars every year for every student accepted, so what are they complaining about?

In my opinion, long lives the Stars program. It is programs like these, which help students who apply to college every year to overcome student loans and payments down the line in life. If it weren't for these programs, students would be breaking their own piggy banks to find ways of paying back their colleges every penny that they own them.

## NBTHS Bowling

KRISTI BERRY  
Staff Writer

With a thunderous roll and tremendous clamor, the NBTHS bowling teams have started off a season of success. Coach Lamagra is tremendously proud of his Raiders and their great beginning.

The boys began their season 11-0, and are currently leading their division. Senior and captain of the team, Josh Brooks is currently bowling with an impressive 220 average. Another senior, Jerome Walker, bowled a perfect game (300 points) against Metutchen's St. Josephs. However, the seniors are not the only talented members of the team. Every member has had over 3,000 pins fall down per game at every match.

Junior Matt Raffé explains that "An abnormality about our team, is that although bowling might be considered a quiet sport, but we do the best when we are cheering really loud and getting pumped." With such a perfect record, it's now under way the team is excited!

Girls have started their season at 7-3. Senior Rachel Pearce leads the team, which has greatly improved from last year. This is because of four new freshman members: Amanda Pearce, Amanda McCormick, Amanda Mastropolo, and Kristin Ruffe. Sophomore Frankee Russo also provides a winning contribution to the team. Together both teams are off to an impressive start and hope to end the season in the same way!

## New England Dominance

BRANDEN PANICO  
Staff Writer

Ironically, this year all of the top sport teams come from the same area, New England. The Red Sox, Celtics and Patriots are all in a league of their own in their respected sports.

The Red Sox won the 2007 World Series in historic fashion; they swept the Colorado Rockies in a phenomenal series. They spent a great deal of cash in the off-season to bring in players such as Daisuke Matsuzaka and Brandon Donnelly. The Red Sox were favored from the start of the season, and had a major lead in their division for most of the season. If it weren't for the comeback of the New York Yankees, the Red Sox season would be even greater.

Going into this year's NFL season, the preferred team was the Patriots. The team made key additions to their offense when they signed wide receivers Randy Moss and Dante Stallworth. The Patriots have lived up to their potential and much more by starting off undefeated. The Patriots don't just beat teams, they destroy them. They average the most points per game among all NFL teams this season.

The Celtics have also made moves this season to acquire big name players. The Celtics picked up Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen this off-season, making them one of the top teams in the league. The team has a big lead in their division and are dominating the Eastern conference.

The New England trio has and continue to break records, and raise the standards. Each team has the chance of becoming a dynasty and a legacy; they dazzle their audiences now and hopefully for years to come.

## The Fine Form of Playing Sports

LISA MATHEWS  
Staff Writer

One can hardly doubt for a moment that playing sports, from super-competitive professional teams to the haphazard games of elementary school recess, is a bloodthirsty activity. Players in professional leagues are constantly bombarded with various hits caused by flailing limbs, sports equipment, and other miscellaneous factors such as untied shoelaces.

Injuries are a big problem in more physical contact sports like football. Many measures have been taken to prevent more common injuries, such as the inclusion of helmets in football, and fouls and penalties for unwarranted physical contact in just about every other sport. Unfortunately, it appears that for some, certain injuries are just avoidable.

French soccer player Thierry Henri had a near-fatal incident with a corner flag attempting to take out the decorated striker's eye when he bowled by the sidelines in a May 2000 Premier League game. A 1970s goalkeeper for Manchester United, Alex Stepney was solely famous for his penalty kicks—until he, in an effort to rouse his team, shouted so loudly he dislocated his jaw.

Less adventurous, but certainly no less pained was the English soccer defender Rio Ferdinand, who strained a knee tendon... by watching T.V. with his feet up. Following him was the Norway defender, Svein Grondalen, who was forced to withdraw from a 1970 season after being involved in a hit-and-run... with a moose.

For some, these painful and somewhat embarrassing incidents are beyond their control. For Trevor Franklin, a New Zealand opener, his English tour took on a heavy air after a runaway luggage trolley knocked him over. And who could forget the classic headline of "Fergie Decks Becks," describing the accidental, but no less well-aimed, kick by Sir Alex Ferguson made in rage at the February 2003 loss against the Arsenal, that sent a shoe into player David Beckham's head.

To be fair, soccer is not the only sport in which players go above and beyond their game. For poor Colin Montgomerie, looking up to check the weather in the 2002 golf Open at Royal St George's, a simple misstep sent him tumbling down the stairs, effectively damaging both his wrist and his chances. Richard Neale, a sports writer for

the Times magazine, relates how in an apparently attention-getting ploy, Clarence Blethen, a Boston Red Sox pitcher did not wear his necessary dentures when pitching to intimidate batters. When batting himself, however, in September 1923, he "forgot and left them in his back pocket." He rediscovered them as he "sliding into second base to try and avoid getting out, quite literally bit himself on the behind."

Perhaps no amount of equipment could have saved those players from themselves, but as for Washington Redskins quarterback Gus Frerotte, his joy at making a touchdown in a 1997 game against the New York Giants was too much for one helmet to contain. The ecstatic player displayed his happiness with a headbutt to the remarkably hard stadium wall—a concrete wall covered with a thin layer of foam. He later was revealed to have a concussion, and the game was tied anyway.

With all the simply unavoidable hits these professional players seem to be getting, it's no wonder that the less athletically inclined refuse to play at all.

## Ricky Williams Comeback

VINNY ABBRUSCATO  
Staff Writer

Once again Ricky Williams made an attempt to return to the NFL, and once again it ended in disaster. This time it was from injury so at least you can say he followed the law. Basically it seems that Ricky Williams should just forget about trying to make a comeback and just go on with his life.

Ricky Williams was all ready to make an appearance in the game against Pittsburgh and he did. He had six carries for fifteen yards and then ended up injuring his right pectoral muscle. It almost feels like fate is the reason why Ricky Williams keeps on failing to complete a comeback.

He was the one a couple of years ago who wanted to walk away from football completely while he was still in his prime. It was only when he found out that he owed Miami Dolphins millions of dollars when he said he wanted to comeback. Ricky Williams should just go retire again and pay the money he owes to the Dolphins.

Williams made a decision to leave football for his own personal reasons and he should just stay with that plan. There is a reason he decided to walk away from football and it is probably because he does not have a passion to play the sport. Ricky Williams was once a great NFL running back but now he is just a regular player playing in the National Football League.

## THE BANNER

The Banner of North Brunswick Township High School is obligated to report all newsworthy events to the student body. The paper issues stories based on the interests of the school. Our newspaper will always be sure to report on time with the best coverage. It is our pledge to avoid statements that may offend others. We will strive to produce the best product we can.

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