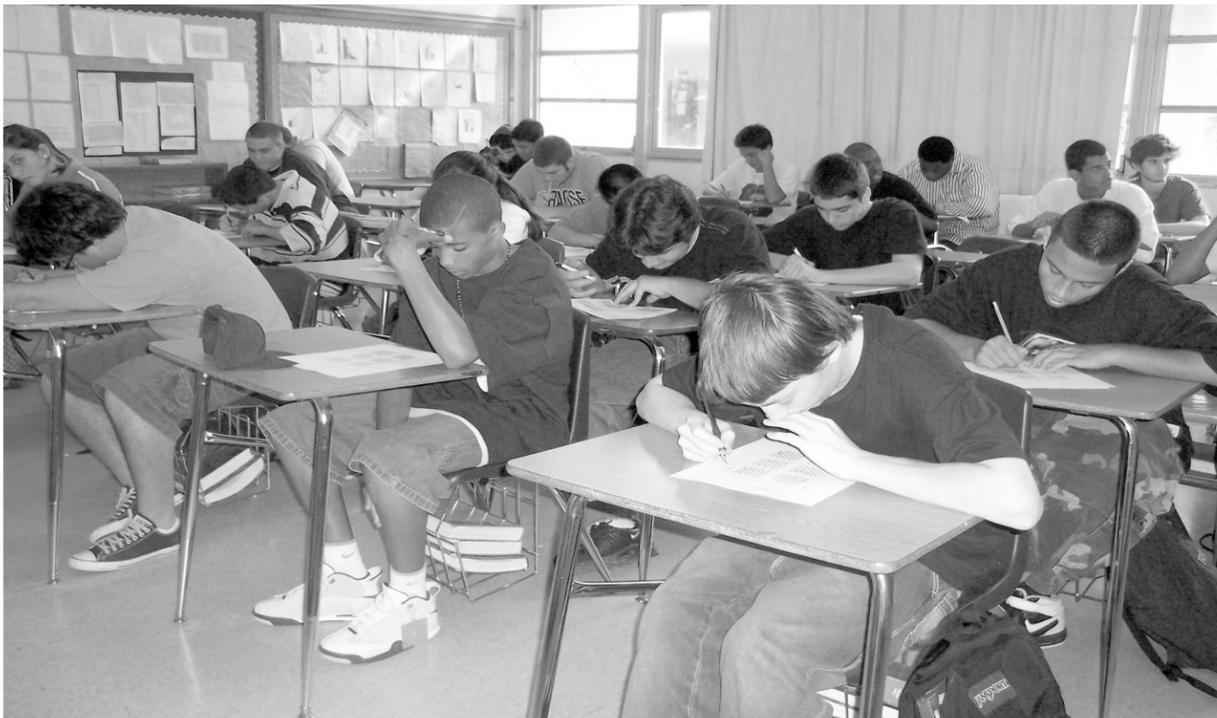


Miami Beach Senior High

The Beachcomber

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As midterm and SAT testing seasons approach, students are feeling more and more anxious about their test scores and grades. Here, Mr. Ben Silva's students concentrate on a difficult test. For stories, see page 4. Photo by Laura Torres

Teachers Record Grades With New Electronic System

By Jaime Hoffman

The Miami-Dade County School Board has implemented a new grading system for all public schools grades K-12. Rather than a numeric system based 0-100, students are now receiving solid letters grades on a scale of 0-4.

The new grading scale, where A's are worth four points, B's are worth three, and so on, is the result of new technology entering the public school system this quarter. Online grade books that can be accessed by both faculty and parents through the Internet are the cause of such a change. The present system cannot handle the 0-100 grade scale, causing teachers to use only letter grades to represent a student's performance.

The reaction from both students and teachers is mixed. Many students were unaware that a change had occurred at all. Once informed, many showed disapproval of the new system, including senior Jaclyn Graff. "If I have a high C, I don't want it to be calculated as 70, I want it to be calculated

as 79, considering as a senior I need all the high-numbered grades I can get." The new system has the tendency to overlook student performance, as high and low valued grades within the same grade bracket result in the same letter being entered in the grade book.

As the system seems to benefit low-performing students who commit to the bare minimum to achieve a certain letter grade, Alex Daoud, a grade-conscious senior in the Scholars Academy taking six Advanced Placement classes, likes the new system over the old. "It cuts down on competition. I can see the stress amongst my peers and see how worried they are. Many teachers won't mind giving the 4 [points] if you got an 89 anyway."

Such procedures combined with the elimination of valedictorian and salutatorian may be the school board's way of minimizing student stress. "It levels out the playing ground," said Daoud.

Electronic grade books affect

teachers too. Some teachers unfamiliar with the workings of computers and technology are reluctant to change from a handwritten system. Noting some of the bad sentiment among both teachers and students, English teacher Mr. David Shanoskie highlights the strong points of the new program. "It has clear advantages when it comes to attendance, progress reports, and nine week grades," said Mr. Shanoskie. He related that the electronic and Internet based nature of the new grade books makes the distribution of such things simpler than ever before.

Whether the new grade book change will have a great affect on students' actual report cards has yet to be determined. As a result of the new electronic grade books, students received computer-printed progress reports for the first time on November 22, and will soon receive electronic grade book report cards.

New Teacher Salary Approved

By Julia Wolloch

On November 29th, Miami-Dade teachers, security guards, paraprofessionals, and office staff voted in their own schools to approve their new three-year contract, which passed with a 75% affirmative vote, raising the starting teacher salary from \$34,200 to \$36,250; which has already come into effect

In their most recent paycheck, teachers have received an additional raise which has increased their yearly salary to \$37,000 for starting teachers and \$65,225 for veteran teachers. In the second year of the contract, the starting salary will increase to \$38,000 per year for new teachers and then to \$40,000 in the third year. Most teachers are happy with the decision, but many are just the opposite.

Dr. Michelle Ivy is the United Teachers of Dade Steward at Miami Beach High. She believes that the salaries should be higher and that they should compensate living costs. She says that the problem is that Miami-Dade county is one of the most expensive places to live for a teacher. Another problem is that teachers who are in between starting teacher and veteran teacher are paid only a few thousand dollars more than the base salary.

"It's kind of like a slap in the face for a teacher who's been teaching for ten years, that they only get paid \$4,000 more than a starting teacher," commented Dr. Ivy. She also added that Miami-Dade County cannot get enough teachers to come here, which has left them traveling all the way to India and the Philippines in search of educators willing to teach with these terms.

Marijuana Use Increases on Campus

By Brianna Hernandez

According to Dr. Friedman and other administrators, increased marijuana use has become a greater problem at Beach High in recent years. "It's not as bad as people think it is. School really is that boring that we would rather smoke. At least we're coming to school," says one student marijuana smoker. According to the 2003 National Survey on Drug Abuse and Health, in 2002 alone there were an estimated 2.6 million new users. Of that 2.6 million, approximately 67% were under the age of 18.

"There's been an increase over the years. There are actually kids selling it in school," commented Principal Jeanne Freidman on the popularity of marijuana use on campus.

Reports such as the University of Michigan's 2005 "Monitoring the Future" study state that even though teen use of the drug is declining, marijuana is still the most widely-used illicit drug among teens.

The marijuana smoked today is much stronger than that smoked in the 1960s and 1970s, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse's 2005 Research Report. Much of the marijuana currently available has been laced with heavier, more dangerous drugs.

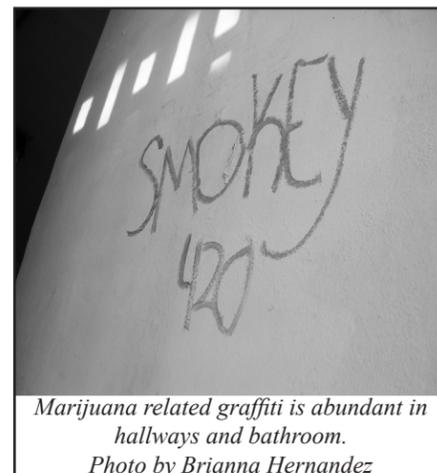
The main chemical in marijuana is called delta 9 tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC. The amount of THC varies for different types

of marijuana but the overall percentage found in the drug has increased over the years. In 1974 the average THC levels used were one percent, and by 1994 the average had risen to four percent. Marijuana contains over 400 toxins as well as cancer-causing chemicals; THC damages the immune system and stays in the body's fat for months.

Marijuana smoke contains 50 to 70 percent more cancer-causing hydrocarbons than cigarettes do: one "joint" is equivalent to five tobacco cigarettes. Long term effects of the drug include loss of memory, reduction of sperm cells, rapid damage to lung fibers, difficulties studying, reduced ability to learn and retain information, mood changes, laziness, and the inability to understand things clearly.

A student caught using marijuana on campus will get arrested, and possibly get expelled. Yet with so much to loose, kids still smoke in school. "I don't skip school to smoke. I skip because of boring classes, but if I have weed I'll smoke it. I smoke because it's fun; it's a way of life," said a student marijuana user.

Not all students who smoke use marijuana on campus. "I learned my lesson. I don't smoke in school; I smoked in school when I went to Miami Springs and I got caught and arrested. I did one week in juvi. I smoke but not in any situation where I'll



Marijuana related graffiti is abundant in hallways and bathroom.
Photo by Brianna Hernandez

get caught. People who smoke in school are dumb. They're just begging to get caught," stated senior Renzo Hildebre.

Marijuana is referred to as the "gateway drug". Tolerance of the drug builds with time, which sometimes leads users to go on to stronger and more dangerous drugs such as LSD, cocaine, and nonprescription pills to get the same high.

According to a study done by the National Center on Addiction and Substance, 60 percent of kids who smoke marijuana before age 15 move on to use cocaine. "Some people are addicted; they don't have inner strength," Dr. Freidman had to say of teens that use marijuana in school.

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News

Construction Projects Move Forward

By Andrew King

Mr. Pollock recently provided information about the construction, including the locations of the new gym, auditorium, and the size of the new building going up in front of the school. The existing 200 and 300 wings will be demolished to make way for the new gymnasium, which will accommodate

year, but the structure was not completed until September of this school year. Construction of the inside of the building is still underway, and there hasn't been a decision by the administration about what purpose the new building will serve. They are considering using the new building for extra classrooms, to help accommodate the constantly growing student body, but will probably use it as storage, holding spare parts for the air conditioning units and spare light fixtures.

The large structure in front of the school will stretch from Dade Boulevard to Prairie Avenue. The English Department and ESOL will be among the departments moving into the new 100 wing currently being built.

The scheduled demolition projects are the 200 and 300 wings along with the 100 wing, the current band room, and the cafeteria.

According to Mr. Pollock, the new cafeteria will be larger and will be set up like the food courts at the mall. The only buildings that will remain of our current setup will be the 0 wing, 400 wing, 900 wing, and the main office. The 0 wing, along with the main office and the 400 wing, will be renovated, and damages to the 900 wing will be repaired.



By next November, the first newly constructed building should be ready for classes.
Photo by Laura Torres

about 2500 students, and have bleachers and a working air conditioning system. The new auditorium, Mr. Pollock said, will feel like a performing arts theater, with state-of-the-art facilities including a new band room.

Over the summer vacation only a fraction of the new Beach High was completed. The project behind the 400 wing began prior to the end of the previous school

Arslanian and Spiegelman Win Teacher and Rookie Teacher of the Year

By Kristine Delsol

The Beach High faculty has voted Mrs. Anete Arslanian as Teacher of the Year for the 2006-2007 school year, and Mr. Ken Spiegelman as Rookie Teacher of the Year. The other nominees for Teacher of the Year were Dr. Elizabeth Rubin, who had not taught the minimum number of years to qualify, and Dr. Michelle Ivy.

Mrs. Arslanian has been teaching for eleven years, and is very involved in extracurricular activities such as the Brazilian Club, Brazilian Carnival, and a newly launched Brazilian newspaper. "I was alone in my planning period when Mr. Patrice announced 'Archi' as the Teacher of the Year! I cried and went crazy!" exclaimed Mrs. Arslanian. "It was unexpected because we have about 170 staff members and many good teachers," she said.

Mrs. Arslanian was a pioneer in the Dade County School System. She started the Portuguese class at Beach High and helped get textbooks for the course; at the time, it was the only Portuguese class in all of Miami-Dade County. Mrs. Arslanian was nominated as Rookie Teacher of the Year in her first year of teaching, but did not win.

"My goals for this year are to improve with technology. I was intimidated

to use computers until I got involved in a computer class offered by Dr. Friedman to all teachers from Beach High," she said.

Rookie Teacher of the Year Mr. Spiegelman said he was very surprised and honored to have won. "I was nominated along with two other very qualified teachers," he stated. Besides Spiegelman, the nominees for Rookie Teacher of the Year were Ms. Eva Reguiera and Mr. Noah Bellamy.

Mr. Spiegelman teaches World History, Speech and Debate, and Government and Economics. This is his first time for being both nominated and winning Rookie Teacher of the Year. He started teaching in January 2006. "I love my job!" he exclaimed. Mr. Spiegelman was a lawyer for 15 years. He said he likes the students at Miami Beach Senior High very much.

Mr. Spiegelman is also a Football coach, Debate coach, and recently the new Softball coach. He graduated from Miami Palmetto Senior High and is writing a novel entitled *Ukrainian Culture*. "Improving the Debate team would be an accomplishment I would like to set for this year," Spiegelman stated. He also added, "I would like to see as many of my AP students pass my Economics classes."

Web Program Allows Parents to See Grades

By Julia Carfagno

A student's grades, absences, and behavior problems are no longer a secret. With the new Parent Portal program available to our school community in January 2007, parents will be able to check academic, conduct and effort grades from the comfort of their own home. Of course, there is a catch. Since grades are private, each parent interested in this program must come to school and meet with their child's counselor before gaining access to the program.

Parents wanting to use the Parent Portal program must first make an appointment with their child's counselor. The parent must bring a picture ID to this appointment for verification. The counselor must then verify their parental rights or guardianship. Once parental credentials are verified, parents must fill out and sign the Parent Portal Identification form. In the end, the parent receives a six digit Parent PIN number, which gives them access into the on-line grade book.

Now comes the easy part. All parents need to do is log on to www.dade-schools.net, click on Parents, then Parent Portal. They must type in their username and password, and all access to their child's academic world is granted.

It is questionable how many parents will actually come in to register for the Parent Portal. Do parents not trust their children enough to have to invade their schoolwork? These and other questions alike are raised in the Beach High halls. "Well, I don't need to worry; I'm honest with my parents. I tell them everything about my grades", says sophomore Annie Rusten.

Students are voicing different opinions about this program. For instance junior Manuel Castillo says that, "My parents aren't going to take time out from work to schedule a meeting and all with my counselor. That's whack."

Parent Portal is making students brainstorm new excuses to explain to parents their absences and grades. Since the proof is in print, some students may see themselves in a quandary. "I'm going to get my ass whooped" worries junior Ashlie Handy.

Interesting enough, a glance at the Beach High web sites invites parents' to schedule an appointment with their child's counselor to begin this program. However, when questioned, our counselors do not seem to know anything about the procedures. The Beach High Parent Portal may not really take off until the beginning of the New Year.

Drop Out Prevention and GED Programs Help Students

By Anny Rodriguez

A former Beach High student dropped out mid-way into his junior year, and therefore was not able to be part of the graduating class of 2007. He was not able to keep up with his school work, and felt that the only option he had was to leave. After dropping out, he decided to get his GED (General Education Development) diploma. To him, "dropping out was not a decision made from one day to the other...it built up, and so I took it, as simple as that."

"The amount of homework that I get, and the lack of time I have, leaves me thinking that dropping out might just be easier for me. But, life with out school would just seem empty, without purpose," says senior Nathaly Ossa.

"I wake up tired, and then I have to go to school, and then to work. Sure, dropping out might seem a way out it, but I still think of how it would be once I do drop out; that too doesn't work out for me," commented senior Josue Rizzo.

Students similar to Ossa and Rizzo

often reach out to programs such as The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network for help. The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network aims to help "reshape school community environments to meet the needs of youth in at-risk situations so these students receive the quality education and services necessary to succeed academically and graduate from high school." The organization works by proposing strategies such as safe learning environment programs to increase attendance rates.

Attendance is an important factor in the performance of students in school. "The primary reason why students do poorly in school is because of attendance. Students fall behind in their classes and many simply drop out because they fell behind...26% of the freshmen [are predicted] to drop out before they graduate," stated Mr. Ed Cobin, head of attendance.

Those students who do drop out and decide to get their GED have countless resources to be able to get it. Websites such as GEDpractice.com or PassGED.com offer quick courses and practice tests to help students prepare for the GED test. GEDpractice.com offers practice tests on subjects such as sentence structure, algebra, physical science, and world history.

The purpose of the GED test is to prove what a student knows. As stated on the American council of Education website, "the GED test allows people to prove what they know, and demand achievement. By the taking the test, The GED offers the opportunity to grow". The test consists of multiple choice questions in several subjects that range in difficulty and a writing skills test that requires an essay.

There is always help available when it comes to dropping out. Senior Gleider Dominguez commented "I know sometimes [school] can be stressful, but that's a part of life. My education is precious to me, but I like the idea that if I do drop out, I have someone or something to help me go

Corrections from Last Issue

In the article titled "New Math Teacher Joins Staff", Ms. Frolick's first name was spelled incorrectly. It is Lorelai, not Lorelei.

In the article titled "Cigarette Smokers Face Damaging Trials" by Stephanie Caceres, the end of the last sentence was omitted. It fully states, "At the end of the day though, none of this matters, for it all comes down to the fact that smoking becomes a part of life and only the strength of will power can overcome the entrapment of the white smoke."

In the article titled "Mr. Maine Always Ready for Adventure", the incident of the Burger King burglar involved Mr. Simon, not Mr. Maine.

Chess Class Introduced to Curriculum

By Matthew Tomlinson

With the added space in the eight-period schedule, chess is now a seventh period curriculum class taught by Mr. Ben Silva in room 228. "There's just one class, and it's the first here. It's an experimental class", said Mr. Silva, "but the chess club here has been around for about a year and a half." The class is mostly made up of students who were in the chess club at Nautilus, and with the new schedule there was rising demand for a class.

During class, students are put into pairs, with chessboards in between partners; much like a regular history or mathematics class, students are given lectures, grades and notes to take. Throughout class sessions, the students are shown ways to play the game, focusing on the game as played in the center of the "playing field" and at either king's side. Students are educated on the basics of

things you should and shouldn't do, (such as not send your king over at the beginning of the game). One method used to teach the students is to give them a set of preset spots for the pieces to be put and certain scenarios. Students are given the opportunity to play through the games using the techniques they have learned, and they record the moves they make on worksheets for Mr. Silva to look at afterwards.

"I used to play chess in the fourth grade, but I stopped", commented Sophomore David Martin, "Mr. Silva's taught us a lot of tactics that have proved very valuable during play, and I get to practice here." When asked about his feelings to the class continuing next year and his thoughts about the class, Mr. Silva said, "I love it a lot, but more classes really depend on how much the students want it."

News

Report Cards Indicate Credit Mix-Ups

By Alicia Sanchez

Along with many of the other changes this year, students have been provided with a more detailed report card. It shows the credits each student has earned and the student's weighted Grade Point Average (GPA). It also includes their FCAT scores.

Although this new and revised report card is informative, it has been a bit confusing to students due to its unfamiliarity. Many have complained that the report cards have incorrect information about the number of credits that they have earned throughout their high school years.

Much of the credit mix-up deals with students who enrolled into Miami Beach Senior High from out-of-state schools. Each state has different curricula.

The name of a certain class in Florida, for example, may not be the same as that of a class in another state. Unfortunately, certain classes from other states do not count as a class credit in Florida.

It is very important for students to get a hold of Miami Beach High's curriculum bulletin. This bulletin will tell them all the credits that must be earned in high school in order to graduate in the state of Florida. Remember that each class should be equivalent to its title.

For those students who come from out of state, some things just don't match, and therefore certain classes have to be retaken in Florida in order to prove that those teens have earned that specific credit.

Teacher Catches Rare Bacteria

By Silvie Fojon



Mrs. Tucci recently had the Bardport machine taken out of her chest.
Photo by Laura Torres

Italian and Spanish teacher Mrs. Rosanna Tucci developed an ear infection that progressed to a horrible problem infecting her mastoid, a major bone of in the ear. Neither her nor her physician know where the bacteria came from.

Two years ago, Mrs. Tucci started feeling pain in her left ear that was at times unbearable. "I went to my family physician and he informed me that it was indeed an ear infection," explained Mrs. Tucci. He decided to refer her to a specialist. The specialist prescribed oral antibiotics, which Mrs. Tucci says eased her pain for two

weeks. She added that the doctor made a very big mistake by not giving her a CAT scan to look further into this strange ear infection.

After two years of this distressing condition and countless visits to every specialist recommended, she went back to the family physician, who finally gave her a CAT scan and inserted a Q-tip in her ear for a swab sample to send to the lab for the diagnosis. It turned out to be an infection caused by a bacterium called *Pseudomonas Aeruginosa*.

This bacterium is commonly found in soil and water, and can cause bone, joint, urinary tract, respiratory and systemic infections. She told him that she had been to the beach but that she had not submerged her head into the water. He thought this might have been a cause, but the infection could also have come from moss.

Mrs. Tucci's physician decided to prescribe Bardport, a machine that constantly feeds antibiotics into a person's vascular system. A plastic tube, which was surgically inserted into her chest, released antibiotics from the machine into her body. Mrs. Tucci carried this machine around all day long, even at school. This type of medication required a nurse to come to her home and replace the medicine every day. The nurse also went weekly to change the needle that released the antibiotics into her chest.

"This has been an uncomfortable and expensive experience for me," explains Mrs. Tucci. "I suggest students wash their hands with water and soap as many times a day as they can. I wouldn't want this experience to happen to anyone!"

Administration Responsible for Library Closings

By Rachel Stein

Although the librarians are often blamed for the library being closed, school administrators are in charge of closing the library.

"Students believe that what their friends tell them is true. They don't bother to ask," states Ms. Patricia Felts, one of Miami Beach Senior High's librarians. Freshman Erica Graff says, "I have never really tried going in the library. The few times I have gone, it's either closed or a friend tells me it is".

Like Graff, many other students do not take into consideration that since the school is under construction, events, meetings, and classes are being held in the library.

"Students should keep in mind that the library has become the auditorium/all purpose room because of construction,"

stated Ms Felts. The library is often closed for purposes of that matter.

Due to construction, the library's hours are very limited. This affects teachers as well as students. For example, since the gym has no air conditioning, meetings usually take place in the library. Many class rooms also do not have computers; they must use the library's computers to do research projects. The morning announcements are even held in the library.

The librarians, as well as many students, are looking forward to the new library being built. When it is opened, it will serve the purpose of a library and that only. The hours will be much better for students and teachers. Therefore, everyone at Miami Beach Senior High will be able to enjoy our new library when it is built.

New Grade Book Draws Mixed Reviews From Teachers

By Andrew Baldizon

This year the Miami-Dade County School Board unanimously voted to approve the implementation of Excelsior software's Pinnacle grade book into all 360 Miami-Dade County Public Schools. The new grade book is able to keep tabs of every grade, absence, and tardy a student receives, all of which are available for parents to view.

"The new grade book is very fast," said Mr. Kevin Simon, a history teacher at Beach High. "It's convenient for teachers, parents, and students. It's very progressive," he added.

"Its easier numbers-wise; you don't have to average out the grades by hand anymore," explained Mr. David Guthrie, a science teacher.

There are some problems with that system that have yet to be worked out. "Its downside is that there is no way to back it

up. We're totally dependent on the school board for security. Sometimes the system is even down," explained Mr. Simon.

Others, like Spanish teacher Mrs. Maria Sahwell, have expressed concern over the system's complications. "I'm really perplexed with it. Particularly dividing the assignments and categories, and dividing them correctly. There are still some definite bugs to be worked out."

English teacher Ms Irene Kalogeras expressed that "It doesn't have the flexibility, the human element that teachers have. It lacks compassion and it has no heart."

Teachers have voiced many opinions on the installation of the new grade book, and will need to adjust to this new system as it reflects the changes in secondary education taking place.

Rain Causes Increase in Tardies

By Melody Ponzio

For several weeks in October, it rained before and after school. This caused problems for students because the school does not have a covered walkway into school or in the area where the buses drop students off.

When getting off their buses in the morning students have to walk up to two blocks to get to school. "They should put a roof where we get off the bus. Last time it rained my notebook got wet and my cell phone too. When I got to school I was completely wet and all my classes were really cold. I could not concentrate," stated Gina Bruni, a junior at Miami Beach Senior High.

From this student's perspective, the school does not appear to be doing anything about it. Teachers complained that they also get wet walking to their cars in the afternoon. They have to walk as

much or more than students.

"When it rains I go late to school; I don't want to get wet. Then they complain because we are late to school," explained junior Prema Roman.

Some students are absent the days it rains and this is affecting our school attendance. Many students walk up to four blocks to their bus stops in the morning. "When it rains in the morning I don't know what to do. I have to walk up to three blocks to wait for the bus" says senior Orly Daniarov.

Students expressed that it is important for the school administration to understand how hard it can be for students to get to school in the morning when it rains. "This late policy is killing me," expressed junior Nordy Perez. "But what can I do? I don't want to get sick."



Students complain that on rainy days, the bus shelter does not provide enough shelter and they show up late to class.
Photo by Laura Torres

Unpaid Library Fines Trouble Students

By Alexa Vazconez

At least once in their high school career, a student will receive a little piece of paper attached to a schedule, which says to pay up for a book that they do not remember checking out, let alone reading. Office aids say that they receive at least 200 overdue materials & unpaid fine notices a period, which means 800 fine notices a day.

"I owe ten cents for an overdue book that was from, like, ninth grade!" laughed Senior Anahi Castaneda. What students probably don't know is that librarians Mrs. Patricia Felts and Mrs. Francis Sciorba keep track of the dues and fines. Students cannot graduate unless all fines are paid.

"I owe forty cents for a book that I

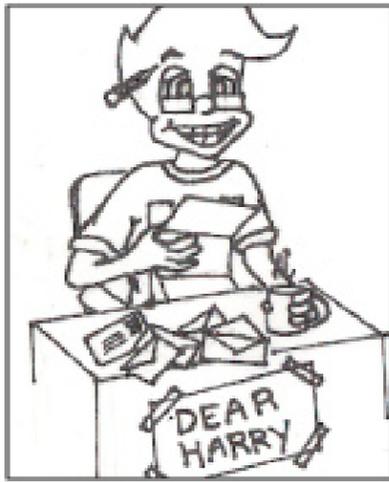
didn't return in tenth grade and still haven't paid for it. I'll pay for everything before I graduate," said Senior Enrique Bossa.

Unpaid fine notices are different colors for each class. They are blue for the seniors, green for the juniors, tan for the sophomores, and white for the freshmen.

"I got my notice about three weeks ago about a book that I read my sophomore year that I returned about a month overdue and now I have to pay like five something!" exclaimed Senior Amanda Topiol.

There have been dozens of books never returned, but does this mean that there are fewer books in the library? "Students don't return books all the time," explains librarian Mrs. Felts, "so when we have the funds, we buy more books"

Features



1. Why is it so hard to park in the school parking lot? Many of us drive to school, and when we have to look for parking in the streets...we're most likely going to be late. What can we do to make this situation better?

The only reason, as a student, you should be parking anywhere other than the school parking lot, is if you have not purchased a parking pass from Mr. Pollack at the beginning of the year. Unfortunately for the underclassmen, seniors get first dibs, but as you can see from the looks of the lot on Dade Boulevard, there are still many spaces to spare. In order to purchase a parking pass, you must go to Mr. Pollack in the main office and fill out an application including at least 10 hours of community service, proof of insurance matching a valid driver's license, and a modest \$5.00. However beware: parking in the school's parking lot without an 06-07 pass could result in Mr. Pollack "towin' your cah".

2. Why are our guidance counselors encouraging us to drop out or attend Ombudsman when we don't do well, even if we are trying? How is that being a good guidance counselor?

Despite what you may think, the guidance counselors always have the student's best interests at heart. Sending students to Ombudsman could be the result of many things. Guidance counselor Mrs. Lourdes Nuñez elaborates: "Absences, behind on credits, need to raise your GPA, or more individualized instruction," are among the reasons people go there.

3. Why is it that every time someone gets into a fight, the person that hit the other girl first gets in trouble? Why doesn't the other girl get suspended or something, when she is the one that started and provoked the whole thing?

I think the better question is why all of you girls are fighting in the first place! We try to keep Beach High a peaceful place, and would appreciate it if you could do the same. Regardless, if you are caught fighting, it is likely that whoever threw the first punch is the person who "started it." You should probably both get in trouble, and learn a lesson for fighting in the first place. Please, leave your violent troubles behind at Nautilus.

4. I've heard that smoking marijuana makes you sterile, and I'm a little worried. Is that true?

Being sterile means that upon having sexual intercourse a person is infertile or unable to reproduce. Being sterile may be the result of many different factors. Some men, for example, are born naturally unable to reproduce. THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana has the potential to reduce hormones in a male's genitals. On the flip side, this inability to reproduce lasts only for 4-5 hours, and regular users quickly become immune. Smoking marijuana may not make you sterile, but it is proven that it increases your appetite (resulting in weight gain), and can dilate your lungs (making your breathing much more difficult). Weight gain and lung problems may take a huge toll on your sex life as a whole. Who wants a wheezing man with a pot belly in a romantic moment? Even worse than sterility is the onset of erectile dysfunction as a result of high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels, which may be caused by extensive use of marijuana. Erectile dysfunction is defined by UrologyHealth.org as "the inability to achieve and or maintain an erect penis adequate for sexual function." Erectile dysfunction, especially as a young man can be quite traumatizing, and hopefully will influence a wise decision to stop smoking weed!

Students Stress Over National Testing

By Javiera Hernandez

Extremely thick books with eight million practice questions and tests that review elements of vocabulary, grammar and math are cracking their spines and students' nerves too. It is college entrance testing time for juniors and seniors, a time that makes the students even more nervous than during regular testing. All college-bound high school students must take either the SAT (Scholastic Achievement Test) or the ACT (American College Test), in order to be accepted into most colleges and universities.

The pressures put on students to do well on these tests grow depending on the career choice and college the student wants to attend. Stress builds up when students know of the financial help they can receive by getting the extra one-hundred points on the SAT. In order to receive a 100% scholarship from the Florida

test to three and a half hours with a few short breaks in between. When students come out of the room, they are extremely exhausted. Nathaly Ossa, a Beach High senior who will take the test for a second time this month confesses, "The test was really long and I was really tired when I finished it, even if I did get a good night of sleep the night before."

The typical students who tend to do well on the SAT and ACT prepare themselves extensively. They take courses online, like the one offered free to our students by the College Board. By simply logging on to www.collegeboard.com, clicking the SAT Preparation Center link, and then on the Official SAT Online Course typing in the school's code (101140), one receives four months of free access. Other students take courses offered at local colleges like Miami Dade College and Florida International University. Beach High now has its own yearlong course taught by Mr. David Reese and Mrs. Patricia Gregory.

Students attempt to deal with the anxiety by preparing by themselves with the numerous help guides offered at bookstores and consulting teachers who will always give a helping hand by tutoring. For example, Mr. Ben Silva has been helping students after school for math.

Some students find it hard to keep up a rigorous study schedule for the college entrance exams because of the amount of homework they have. John Tan, a junior, says, "I never have time to study for the SAT because I always have homework."

There are times when a student will wait until the last possible minute to study for the tests; a few weeks before the test, they are seen cramming all the studying they can fit in without dying from stress. More than being an ultimately useless effort, cramming not only creates vast amounts of nervous tension, but the student becomes unfocused in other aspects of their lives.

Mr. Kenneth Spiegleman, a Government and history teacher, agrees that the performance in class slips because of the SAT and ACT testing. He adds, "It's pretty much a necessary evil. There has to be some form of standardized test for colleges. I don't think it should be the only standard that they look at but there has to be something that everyone across the country take." However, he adds, "I don't think it should be weighted more heavily than your academic record or your extra curricular



Bright Futures Fund, a student must score at least a 1270 on the SAT or a 28 on the ACT.

However, many schools have decided to make the SAT and ACT optional in their admissions process, so students should always check the application for signs of optional testing. Schools like the ITT Technical Institute in Florida have a record of having the SAT and ACT optional. The National Center for Fair & Open Testing, also known as the "FairTest" site, names 391 other colleges which do not require the SAT or ACT for admittance. The site, www.fairtest.com, adds that the schools base their admittance on grade point average and class rank instead.

The new SAT, introduced at the beginning of this year, eliminated the analogy section and added an essay, extending the

Test Anxiety Harmful, but Avoidable

By Nathalia Ramos

In a recent Beachcomber study on test anxiety, 400 Miami Beach Senior High students were surveyed: 100 from each grade. Of these students, 56% of freshman, 66% of sophomores, 55% of juniors, and 64% of seniors said that they suffer from test anxiety at times.

Anxiety is a reaction to anticipating something stressful. Like other anxiety reactions, test-related anxiety affects the body and the mind. When a person is under stress the body releases the hormone adrenaline, which prepares it for danger. Some physical symptoms might include sweating, a pounding heart, and rapid breathing. There are also mental symptoms, such as loss of memory, which affect the students the most when it comes to test time.

"I sometimes get panic attacks be-

fore a test," says junior Carlos Morales.

"My palms get sweaty and my jaw starts to tremble" adds sophomore Kyle Rego.

Counselor Mrs. Sevillanos explained that people who are perfectionists are more likely to experience some form of test anxiety, as are those who are not prepared for a test but still care about the grade they will receive. Test anxiety can also be brought on by pressure from parents. Mrs. Sevillanos recommends students "practice a lot to release that stress," and calm worries by studying.

Beach High Health Teacher, Coach Judd Hayes, has some tips for students. "Take deep breaths, remain confident, and think positive thoughts," he says.

Senior Julie Ryan adds, "Stay calm, it's not the end of the world."

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Dates to Remember

SAT Test Dates	Deadlines	Mid-Term Schedule
January 27	December 26	Friday, December 15: Periods 1, 5
March 10	February 2	Monday, December 18: Periods 4, 8
May 5	April 3	Tuesday, December 19: Periods 3, 7
June 2	April 27	Wednesday, December 20: Periods 2, 6
ACT Test Dates	Deadlines	FCAT Testing Days 2006-2007
February 10	January 5	February 26-28
April 14	March 9	March 5-8
June 9	May 4	

Military Commissions Act of 2006 Alarms Rights Activists

By Roberta O. Roberts

It was English philosopher John Locke who said, "All men are all born with certain unalienable rights". The rights he was referring to are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Thomas Jefferson found John Locke's philosophy to be so relevant that he used unalienable rights as a basis for the Constitution of the United States of America, written two hundred and nineteen years ago.

Therefore, when news of the House of Representatives and the Senate passing the Military Commissions Act on September 29, 2006, and of President Bush signing it into law on October 17, 2006 was heard, many people were appalled, and found it both a direct violation of our natural human rights and unconstitutional. "This was the moment for Congress to pass legislation that reflects the fundamental values of this country. Instead, it rushed to adopt an ill-considered law which history will judge harshly," said Elisa Massimino, Washington Director of Human Rights First, an organization of international human rights lawyers and activists. "The many flaws in this law raise fundamental constitutional issues. It will result in prolonged legal challenges, instead of fair trials that ensure justice."

The Military Commissions Act allows the President and the Secretary of Defense to label anyone, even a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, an "unlawful enemy combatant" and detain them without charge, trial or access to the courts. The bill means there could be

no recourse to stop abuses, nor expose them in court. It also permits evidence obtained through trickery and permits the introduction of classified evidence against the accused even if the accused has not had the opportunity to review and challenge the "sources, methods, or activities" by which the government acquired the evidence. This is the revised version of the Act.

When the Military Commissions Act of 2006 was originally proposed, Bush administration officials wanted to

The Military Commissions Act is widely seen as a direct violation of Amendment Four in the Bill of Rights.

alter Common Article three of the Geneva Conventions, international treaties signed by every country in the world. Common Article three places an absolute prohibition on inhumane treatment of detainees during an armed conflict. The President wanted Congress to replace the absolute prohibition on inhumane treatment of Common Article three with a "flexible" standard, which would assess on a case-by-case basis whether particular conduct would amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Human Rights First, according to their website, criticized the Bush administration's proposal for "adding ambiguity to an otherwise clear standard of Common Article three, and opening the door to more Abu Ghraib-style abuses."

In response to the administration's proposal, more than 45 retired senior military leaders wrote to the members of the U.S. Senate expressing their opposition to redefining Common Article three on the grounds that it would compromise the safety of United States armed service men and women. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell and Former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Vessey, Hugh Shelton, and William Crowe, also sent letters expressing their opposition to redefining Common Article three. A compromise was reached on September 21 that preserved the meaning and requirements of Common Article three.

Even so, the Military Commissions Act is widely seen as a direct violation of Amendment Four in the Bill of Rights, which protects the people from unreasonable searches and seizures, and Amendment Six, which states that the people have the right to a speedy and public trial.

The saying "history repeats itself" is relevant here. The passage of this act is quite similar to when John Adams, the nation's second president, established the Alien and Sedition Acts, which were similar to the Military Commissions Act. Even then a major outcry aroused: both Thomas Jefferson and James Madison spoke out and wrote against the Alien and Sedition Acts, saying that they undermined the Constitution. Quite frankly, if anything undermines the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, then it almost certainly undermines our human rights.

Death Penalty Morality Questioned

By Juliana Crump

The ethical debate over capital punishment can be categorized into two main philosophical contexts: deontological and consequentialist. The deontological objection consists of those who believe it is morally wrong to take human life, due to the removal of their right to life, which they believe to be universal. The consequentialist objection, however, suggests that the death penalty is morally right because retribution against the violator of another life or liberty is just.

Choosing a "right" or "wrong" might be harder than you think. People either cheer or cringe at the idea of punishing someone for an unthinkable crime by making them pay the ultimate price. But then again, this leaves room for debate. It is important to realize that although a vast majority of people sentenced really did commit the crime, wrongful convictions happen.

Economist Michael Coles states, "The death penalty is both irreversible and more severe than lesser punishments." Since 1977, there have been over half a million murders committed in the United States. Yet because only a mere 786 executions of sentenced men and women have occurred, it is believed that the death penalty is only reserved for the worst murderers in the United States. This is not so if you recognize that we have still allowed for mentally disabled prisoners to be sentenced to life in prison or even death penalties.

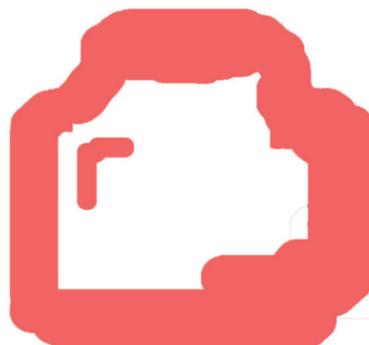
In 2000, a case in Texas dealt with John Penry, a mentally disabled prisoner, with an IQ between 50 and 63, and the mentality of a seven year old. Penry was sentenced to death in 1990. While it was

proven that he had, in fact, killed a woman in 1978, questions arose on whether or not he should still accept the same consequences as someone without a mental disability. In fact, many argued that even if he were sane, his actions did not exceed the need for the death penalty. Since 1990, 13 states have made laws prohibiting the execution of the mentally impaired. However, President George W. Bush, the governor of Texas at the time, made no effort to stop the executions. John Penry became the 150th prisoner executed since Bush had taken office in Texas.

Currently, there are only 12 states and the District of Columbia that have abolished capital punishment for all offenses.

Critics of the death penalty commonly argue that it is a violation of the right to life. The death penalty debate is one that will never cease to exist, and now with the upcoming 2008 Presidential elections, it is time to make a stand and be heard. Now is the time to become politically aware of human rights issues. Teenagers can visit government websites for the e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of all local, state, and national representatives. They can also join organizations like the Junior State of America. This club brings together students from across the nation and encourages them to political process. Take it from Jessica Brow, program director of JSA's Pacific Northwest branch: "You may not be able to vote," she says, "But you can learn about the issues, and you can make a difference."

The death penalty is both irreversible and more severe than lesser punishments.



Darfur Crisis an Unthinkable Human Rights Violation

By Sam Levine

Beginning in 1933, the rise of Nazi Germany led to the destruction of millions of lives. The Nazi Party “ethnically cleansed” Germany of “inferior” races which included Gypsies, Blacks, and Jews. In the end, over six million people died and people across the world promised that they would “never again” let something like this happen. Unfortunately, it has happened again except this time, the terms are different. Today’s holocaust is happening in Darfur, Sudan.

There have been over four hundred thousand deaths in Darfur, and that number increases every day. Two million innocent civilians have been forced to relocate and move to Displaced Persons Camps in Sudan or Refugee Placement Camps in Sudan’s neighboring country, Chad. Three and a half million people are forced to rely on national aid because their own country can no longer support their needs. It is estimated that over two hundred people die due to starvation, rape, and mass slaughter every day.

The “Darfur Conflict” exists between the Janjaweed and two rebel groups: the Sudanese Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/SLM) and the Justice and

Equality Movement (JEM). The Janjaweed are an armed militia supported by the Sudanese government. The Sudanese government provides arms and assistance and has participated in joint attacks with the group, methodically targeting the Fur, Zaghawa, and Massaleit ethnic groups in Darfur. The declared political intent of the rebels has been to persuade the government. It is estimated that over two hundred people die due to starvation, rape, and mass slaughter every day.

of Sudan to acknowledge and help underdevelopment and strengthen politics and diplomacy in the region. In response, the Sudanese government’s regular armed forces and the Janjaweed have targeted civilian populations and ethnic groups from which the rebels mainly draw their support.

President Bush and the United States have recognized this conflict involving

mass slaughter, rape, and starvation in Darfur as a genocide - the deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular ethnic group or nation. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees Agency describes this ongoing conflict as “the largest and most complex humanitarian problem on the globe”.

United Nations Humanitarian Aid official Jan Egeland has described this conflict’s progress as “going from real bad to catastrophic”. If so many nations are aware that a mass slaughter of millions upon millions of innocent people is occurring then why haven’t any nations done anything to stop it? The solution to such a hard problem seems so easy but there is only so much that one nation can do.

Attempts have been made to secure peace and safety in Darfur. On July 30, 2004 the UN Security Council demanded that the Sudanese Government disarm the Janjaweed. A Peace Agreement

was established last May between the government of Sudan and the Sudanese rebels. This peace attempt didn’t solve any problems; in fact, the problems continued to escalate after the establishment of the treaty. Last August, the United Nations authorized a strong UN peacekeeping force for the security and well being of Darfur that would make an attempt to bring some sense of order to small areas in the country. Despite these resolutions and treaties, the Janjaweed continue to slaughter, rape, pillage, and burn towns.

Average people can and have been attempting to make a difference. Websites advocating peace in Darfur have been established in an effort to educate common folk on this issue. Groups such as “STAND” (Students Taking Action Now Darfur) and “Save Darfur” have been established globally to come together as one and voice their opinions regarding the genocide. Several rallies held in Washington D.C. and around the world have asked the government to aid in this effort to restore peace and its people back to Darfur.

It is estimated that over two hundred people die due to starvation, rape, and mass slaughter every day.

Minimum Wage Earners at Disadvantage

By Claire Austin

Individuals and families living on a federal or state minimum wage income, which is currently \$5.15 an hour, find it harder to rise above the poverty line and secure the human rights that the United States guarantees, including proper healthcare, education, and security. These individuals also have greater difficulty attaining property ownership and debt solvency, according to the Economic Policy Institute, an organization seeking to “broaden public debate about strategies to achieve a fair and prosperous economy.”

According to the United States Department of Labor, employees are entitled to the higher wage in a discrepancy between the state and federal minimum wages. Florida’s minimum wage is \$6.40 an hour, greater than the federal \$5.15. Last year’s strike by the University of Miami’s janitorial staff illustrated that less than \$7.00 can be insufficient to pay for the cost of living, especially with no healthcare; in her *Miami Herald* column, Ana Menendez related the struggle of custodian Zoila Garcia to make ends meet. Yet 25 states pay the same minimum wages as the federal standard (Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee have no minimum wage laws).

The Economic Policy Institute’s website states, “Wage inequality has been increasing, in part, because of the declining real value of the minimum wage. Today, the minimum wage is 31% of the average hourly wage of American workers, the lowest level since the end of World War II.” Most minimum-wage earners do not receive health insurance, and as a result of rising medical costs may be at a loss if the minimum wage is not increased.

In the November mid-term election, Arizona, Colorado, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, and Nevada voted to raise their minimum wages and index the wages to meet inflation. Several other state legislatures have recognized that the federal minimum wage can prevent individuals who earn this wage

from being able to provide for themselves or for dependents, and have set in motion plans to increase their state’s minimum wage. Some cities also pay more than other areas of the state, as in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

On November 18th at a Miami Book Fair International presentation to promote his new book *The Audacity of Hope*, Senator Barack Obama, a democrat from Illinois, addressed this issue. He said that the newly elected democratic majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate is likely to approve a bill that singularly addresses a minimum wage increase. There has not been an increase in the federal minimum wage since 1997. On August 3rd, 2006, a bill to gradually increase the current \$5.15 federal minimum wage by \$2.10 by June 1, 2009 died in the Senate. A primarily democratic opposition to the bill was based on its being tied to the end of a proposal to increase the federal estate tax exemption to five million dollars, and because it would allow some states to count employee tips against minimum wage increases.

David Leonhardt, an economist at the *New York Times*, wrote in an October 25th column that opposition to increases in the minimum wage usually references a threat of “killing jobs” because the cost of hiring more employees would discourage companies from doing so. However, he wrote, “the American economy has done so well at creating jobs in recent decades that almost anybody who wants work can find it. The problem is that too many jobs still don’t pay a decent living. So even if a minimum wage increase does eliminate a small number of jobs this may be an acceptable price for improving the lot of millions of low-wage workers”.

The Economic Policy Institute has found that “as welfare reform forces more poor families to rely on their earnings from low-paying jobs, a minimum wage increase is likely to have a greater impact on reducing poverty”.

Today, the minimum wage is 31% of the average hourly wage of American workers, the lowest level since the end of World War II.

Man Imprisoned for Sending Email

By Mary Johnson

Chinese poet and journalist Shi Tao was arrested in November 2004 for sending an email to a US-based pro-democratic website regarding media organizations in China. The Chinese government charged him with “illegally providing state secrets to foreign entities” (www.amnestyusa.org) and sentenced him to ten years in prison.

The vaguely-worded legal definition included the in Chinese constitution of what constitutes a “state secret” gives authorities broad discretion to detain people who peacefully exercise their right to free expression. According to Amnesty International, in a similar case authorities arrested government worker Li Zhi in August 2003 for allegedly using email to make contact with a banned political party. Jailed on charges of subversion, Li Zhi is currently serving an eight-year sentence at Chuandong Prison in Chengdu, Sichuan Province.

China has constructed an extensive system of Internet censorship to silence activists and journalists like Shi Tao. All Internet communications pass through government-controlled routers, and authorities are able to block access to many sites, to filter content, and to delete links or web pages considered “dangerous” or “subversive.” No list identifying what information is filtered or blocked is publicly

available, but a study done by Harvard Law School in 2002 found that more than 50,000 of 204,000 websites tested were inaccessible from at least one location in China. Websites using banned words such as “democracy,” “freedom,” and “human rights” are regularly blocked, as are the websites of international human rights groups and several foreign news services.

Shi Tao, a 38-year-old published poet and essayist, is held at Chishan Prison in Yuanjiang, Hunan Province, where he is reportedly forced to labor under harsh conditions. His family has been harassed by authorities. His wife underwent daily questioning by security officials and was persistently pressured to divorce Shi Tao, which she eventually did. His uncle and brother have been under surveillance and harassed both at work and at home, and his mother is reportedly monitored and harassed as she petitions for his release.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, established in 1948 by the United Nations, calls upon every organ of society, which includes companies, to respect human rights. Prisoners of conscience – or people imprisoned for peacefully exercising his or her right to freedom of expression and opinion, are prosecuted daily around the globe. The case of Shi Tao is just one example of the many injustices practiced in foreign countries against people who speak contrarily to their government. Fortunately, institutions like Amnesty International and other human rights associations are organizing protests and letter-writing campaigns to help free this innocent man.

Prisoners of conscience - or people imprisoned for peacefully exercising his or her right to freedom of expression and opinion are prosecuted daily around the globe.

Sports

Sport Superstitions Still Strong

By Aaron Groff

Many people perform some sort of ritual before playing or watching a sport in hopes that it will bring them or their team good luck. Some superstitions are stranger than others. Someone may have a lucky pair of socks, or never wash his or her Under Armor. People follow superstitions for a reason, but do they really work?

Fans and professional athletes alike have superstitions. Michael Jordan wore his University of North Carolina basketball shorts during every single game he played in the NBA. Dontrelle Willis of the Florida Marlins used to watch the movie Troy before every game he pitched.

Beach High student athletes also have sports superstitions and rituals. A few football players, including seniors Andrew King and Julio Lima, never wash their Under Armor. Quarterback Luis Alcala says, "I pray before the game, and I always wear my cross necklace." Samuel Parker, a freshman, carries around his mouthpiece everywhere he goes before a game and kisses his jersey 51 times before every game because that is his jersey number.

Freshman swimmer Erica Graff states, "I listen to the FSU fight song and war chant before a swim meet."

Some teachers and coaches have

superstitions as well, especially while watching games. Business technology teacher Mrs. Alvarez likes to call out each play before it happens. She believes not doing so will hurt the team. Chemistry teacher Mr. Carlos Rodriguez says, "I have a lucky pair of socks. I wear them before every big game." Coach Granberry wears his team's colors. "I know it doesn't help, but it makes me feel better," he says. Other superstitions some people have include almost everything from crossing their fingers during important plays to not going to the bathroom during the game because they feel it will harm their team.

Spectators, athletes, and even announcers all across the nation are taking these rituals to a new level. Does talking to a pitcher while he is throwing a no-hitter or even speaking about the no-hitter really jinx his hot streak? Does the person who makes the last shot in practice really have a great game? The world will never know for sure. For superstitious sports fans, these traditions bring a new level of excitement to games. So sports fans, put on your lucky socks and your unwashed Under Armor, because there is a lifetime of sports ahead of us.

Football Team Sets School Record

By Julio Tenorio

The Miami Beach Hi-Tides finished their season with a record of 0-10 after losing 38-25 to Palmetto in the final game of the football season. Even though the team was disappointed, it will leave its mark on school history: this is the first time that the Beach High football team has gone winless. "Obviously that is a record we did not want," sighed Greg Jones, starting wide receiver on the team and one of the few bright spots in an otherwise disappointing season.

The long, frustrating season was painful for the seniors on the team. "It sucks," stated Greg Jones, "we worked really hard, but just could not come up with any victories. We will always be remembered as the first team to go winless in school history."

However, the team believes there is still hope for the future. This team was able to score points against many teams, and established a solid passing game with Junior Quarterback Jorge Aguirre. Linebackers Rashard King and Hairol Rosa were solid

playmakers as well; they will return as the starters next season. The team also came very close to defeating Miami High, along with many other close games. In many games, Beach High was beaten on a fumble, or a turnover.

Mario Frau, a senior, went to all the home games, enthusiastic about seeing some of his close friends starting on the team. "Talent wise, I think we're okay because we had the lead in many of the games, and suddenly one little screw up would change the game. There were few blowouts this year," he noted. The team also lost its head coach when Coach Rick Divita decided to go coach at Dr. Michael Krop Senior High; he took his playbook with him and the players had to adjust to a new coaching style.

Mr. Ken Spiegelman coached for the first time, and Judd Hayes became the new head coach. Furthermore, the team had plenty of younger students, which will be a positive next season when they play with more experience.



Jorge Moline helps David Martin during a game. The Hi-Tides won no games this football season. Photo courtesy Coach Schmidt

Sports Depression Affects Fans and Players

By Julio Tenorio

Sports are largely used as a getaway from the real world. Whether it is a job, school, or personal problems, plenty of people look forward to sporting events with the intent of forgetting their problems. Fans look forward to the idea of seeing Dwyane Wade go for one of his amazing dunks over an opposing player; in South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, soccer rules people's lives.

However, team losses bring great disappointment to fans and followers. Since there can only be one champion, this means that almost all the fans will find some type of disappointment. Sometimes, this disappointment can lead to depression.

Albert Chester, a senior at Beach High, recalls last Labor Day when the Florida State University Seminoles and the University of Miami Hurricanes football game took place with much regret. Chester, a devoted 'Canes fan, was extremely saddened by the tough loss his team endured at the hands of the Seminoles. "Leaving the stadium after the game was just so depressing," he said. "I came to school the next day, but couldn't concentrate on my work; I was just so miserable because I thought the Hurricanes really had a good shot to win the game."

This is the typical kind of sadness sports fans feel when their favorite teams endure a loss. The following day is always tough for them, but usually they get over it after one or two days and look forward to the next game.

This let down also affects the players. After playing hard but unfortunately coming up with a loss, players often find themselves feeling empty on the inside. The hardest part for the players is to leave the loss behind them and move on. "When you lose, man it really hurts," states Greg Jones, receiver of the Beach High football team, "you don't want to do anything and it's really tough to get motivated for the next game."

Furthermore, players also often have to deal with the wrath of the fans. One can witness the craziness and anger of fans if one listens to sports radio. The Dolphins, for example, are constantly under pressure because many say they have underachieved this season, leading to angry callers who either want the coach fired or players released.

Unfortunately, sports depression can hit some fans hard. In extreme cases,

fans become obsessed with the sports team of their choice and take it personally when the team loses. A perfect example of this is the fans of the Boston Red Sox. Before 2004, the Boston Red Sox had not won a championship since 1918; the fans started to believe that they were in fact cursed. Whenever the team made the playoffs, the fans simply waited for something to go wrong, and when it did, the entire city of Boston would become quiet as the fans mourned.

Dr. Marsha Rose, a psychologist who is also a sports fan, describes the process of sports depression. "Usually what occurs is that the people involved with the sport become obsessed with it," she explained. As an example, Dr. Rose compares it to football. "The players, coaches, and more importantly the fans, see football as more than a game; for them, the sport is almost like a religion. That is why whenever a game is lost, these people feel like in a way they have done wrong, almost sinned." In other words, Dr. Rose explains that, "the sport becomes an obsession, seen as the only thing that matters in life."

The coaches and players work tirelessly throughout the week planning and practicing plays and give a hard effort; that is why they take a loss so hard, believing that they have disappointed and let down the fans. According to Dr. Rose, the fans also take it hard because they are left with a feeling that life is "pointless" and it takes them a while to bring up their emotions.

Sports depression hits high school students as well. Student athletes take losses hard and dealing with them becomes difficult. Some coaches at Beach High are aware of sports depression but fortunately have not witnessed a player become extremely depressed. Usually players will become saddened by losses, but will quickly regain their focus for the next game.

Family members and friends should make sure that their sports fan friends do not become overly fanatic about a sport and make sure they do not let the sport dictate their lives. It is normal for a fan to get sad or become temporarily depressed when their favorite sports team loses a game, especially if it was a close loss. Sports fanatics that become depressed periodically need help because they have taken fanaticism to an extreme.

Boys' Team Hopes for Playoffs as Basketball Season Begins

By Marko Pantovic

The new basketball season is here. Many players are returning from last season, and Head Coach Diego Garcia and some of the players feel that the team is going to do well this year. Head Coach Garcia says, "We should be competitive this year with many of our key players returning from last year. Alberto Bazan, Diego Gutierrez, and Michael Louimeus are some of those players."

"I expect 100% from each player every practice and every game," says Coach Garcia. "They will play their toughest opponents, Miami High and Northwestern, two times each for very important district games. This should be an exciting and thrilling season; let's see what happens!"

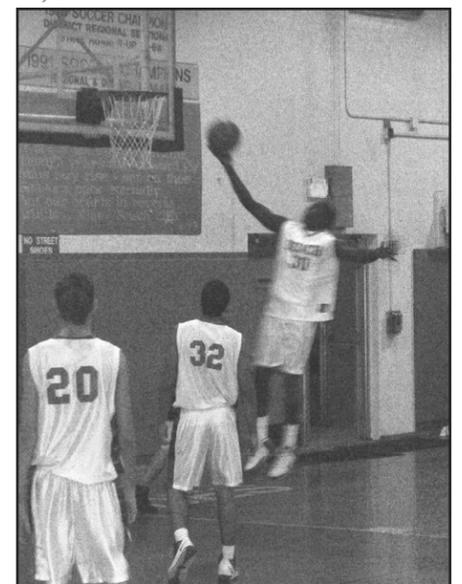
The starters in the first game were Alberto Bazan, Diego Gutierrez, Cedric Bellamy, Michael Louimeus, and Danilo Alvarenga. The leading scorer was Danilo Alvarenga who scored 15 points. The rest of the offense came from Michael Louimeus with 12 points, Chris Jimenez with 8 points and Ricardo Alvarez added with 8 more.

Even though the team did well, with 46 seconds left in the second quarter, Donnie Gaitor dislocated his knee, and had to be taken away on a stretcher by paramedics. He left the game having scored eight points and managing to get five blocks. "It does not help the game if you lose a player but it is not an excuse for [the team] losing" stated Alvarenga after the incident.

The team is currently 1-4 in the season. They lost away games to Miami Northwestern, Dr. Michael Krop, and

Miami Lakes. They also lost one at home to Hialeah. On December 7, 2006 they lost to Miami Springs, the number one team in the district so far.

"It is still too early to tell if we can or cannot make the playoffs; we just have to start playing better," said Alvarenga. Point Guard Cedric Bellamy says, "I think we will go further than last year and we are going to make it to the playoffs." Senior Chris Jimenez says, "I think we have a good team and a pretty good chance of making the playoffs." The season ends on January 26, 2007.



Number 30, Michael Louimeus, goes for a shot while teammates look on. Photo by Marko Pantovic

Sports

Fall Sports Wrap-Up

By Jorge Aranda

This fall there were five different sports played at Beach High: boys' and girls' cross-country, football, boys and girls swimming, girls volleyball and golf. According to Athletic Director Mr. Edgar



*The swim team poses before GMAC championships.
Photo courtesy Guilherme Cordovil*

Botto, most of these teams did poorly this year. "It was rough", said Mr. Botto, "but they showed a lot of heart and a lot of effort, and hopefully that effort will lead to a successful winning season next year." Although it was not the most successful season, the final overview shows that numerous students still shone through.

The football team did not win any of their games this year, but came close in several of the games. They lost to Miami High 21-17, and lead in the first two quarters of the last game of the season against Palmetto Senior High. "Obviously the record hasn't come out the way we wanted it to be," said Head Football Coach Judd Hayes, "but we got better as the season progressed each week, which was encouraging to the staff." Many

of the core players are returning for next year, including linebackers Hairo Rosa and Rashard King and running back Germaine Daniels. "Hopefully more coaches will also come next year so we can improve," Coach Hayes further commented.

The final record of the swimming team for both boys and girls was six wins and two losses, with the girls finishing third in district finals and the boys finishing fourth. "We had a lot of kids that made district finals," said Swimming Coach Charles Pilamunga. "There was much more improvement from last year; the girls moved up one spot in districts and the boys two." Seniors Alex Sergov and Guilherme Cordovil had the fastest speed for the boys, with 53 seconds on the 100 meter freestyle. Kristy Marques, a freshman, was the best for the girls, getting second in districts in the 50 meter freestyle and 100 meter breaststroke. Most of the team will be back next year.

The final volleyball record was seven wins and eight losses. "Next year we will be rebuilding", said Head Volleyball Coach Lynn Tenniswood. Five seniors and their top bench player will be graduating this year. Bernice Silvera was the best passer, Erika Muñoz-Vargas was the best hitter, Alexandra Serra was the best server and setter, and Amayra Diaz was the best middle blocker. "Outstanding team work, great cooperation, huge improvement from last year," said Coach Tenniswood. "Amayra really came though as a team leader".

The final record of the boys' cross-country team was two wins and five losses. The best runner was Diego Gutierrez, a junior, who ran a 19:25 in districts. "All of

the students are coming back except for one so we are expecting to do better," said Cross Country Coach Juan Camarotti. "They must come back in shape." For the girls' cross country team, the final record was four wins and four losses and the best runner was junior



*The football team huddles before the final game kickoff.
Photo courtesy Coach Schmidt*

Judith Aradela.

The golf team won no games this year. There were nine players on the team. Junior Patrick Brennan was the only person who qualified for districts and regionals. Coach Perez is looking forward to a big improvement as all but two students, currently seniors, will return next year and hopefully compete.

Overall, this fall sports season did not have many successes, but team members along with their coaches are trying to make improvements. Along with recruiting new members and trying to improve their playing techniques, coaches are looking forward to the next season hoping for big wins and successes.

Superbowl Winner Unpredictable

By Albert Chester

Unlike other pro leagues, which are predictable when it comes to the post season, the NFL is loaded with contending teams. In the past 10 years, 8 different teams have won the Super bowl. This is an astonishing statistic compared to the only 6 different champions in Major League Baseball and a surprisingly low total of only 5 different franchise championships in the National Basketball Association over the past 10 years.

In the NFL, it is extremely hard to predict which team will emerge victorious. As of week 12, all 32 teams were technically in the playoff hunt. Even the once "shoved under the dirt" Miami Dolphins still have light at the end of the tunnel if they can continue their winning streak.

The National Football League has had such a diversified race to the Super Bowl that most teachers and students here at Beach High cannot agree on one Super Bowl pick. They selected a variety of different teams who still have a chance to reach "glory road." Science teacher Mr. Carlos Rodriguez predicted a match-up between the Bears and the Steelers, Government teacher Mr. Kenneth Spiegelman, went with the Colts and the Seahawks, while Math teacher Mr. Ben Silva chose the Dolphins and the Buccaneers.

As one can see, the National Football League proves to be unpredictable. There is never one heavy favorite team as in other leagues like the Yankees are in baseball. Throughout our entire school, there is an abundant amount of distinctive Super Bowl predictions.

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Art Classes Offered for Teens

By Miriam Kolker

Teenagers in Miami can take advantage of art events and programs in the community. One such program is only a block away from Beach High. At the Bass Museum of Art, *Art 2 Work*, a program designed specifically for teens, is held every other Saturday from 12 p.m. – 5 p.m. It is free and lunch is provided.

At *Art 2 Work*, local artists Michelle Weinberg and Dinorah de Jesus Rodriguez teach students digital imaging and video techniques. They use laptops, scanners, and cameras for both still and video imagery. Rodriguez also provides her 1960's

video camera and vintage film strips for students to work with. Her work involves altering these film strips by drawing directly on them.

"I thought it was fun, and you could learn a lot of things there," junior Melody Ponzio recalls about her experience in the class. "It could also help you for a career in the future," she adds.

During lunch the class views experimental films or documentaries that display unique techniques or have historic

importance. The class occasionally goes on field trips to exhibitions in other art museums such as Miami Art Central, or to galleries in the Design District. This fall, the class worked on a collaborative short film that was shown during Art Basel. "We are always happy to welcome new students," exclaims Weinberg.

Another place near Beach High that offers art programs is ArtCenter/South Florida on Lincoln Road. A photography class for teenagers is held every Wednesday from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

The course is designed to introduce students to black and white film, from the camera to the final prints. The center also offers a painting class for teens every Saturday from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. Both of these courses cost \$165 for ArtCenter members and \$180 for non-members.

Ashley Moline, a junior, attended a silkscreen class and a painting class over the summer. "Silkscreen was really fun, but expensive. There was more action than the painting class," she states.



Artist Dinorah de Jesus Rodriguez organizing film strips. Photo by Miriam Kolker

Jazz Ensemble Kicks Off Year With Guest Artist

By Corina Grazutis

On the evening of October 20th, the Beach High Jazz Ensemble held its first concert conducted by the new band director, Mr. Noah Bellamy, along with some help from a guest trumpet player, Scott Belck. Belck, who now resides and teaches at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, was in school the day of the performance giving private lessons and conducting a master class.

Mr. Bellamy, Belck, and participating students began their day early on Friday, starting off with private lessons for each instrumentalist in the Jazz Ensemble. Later, Belck held a master class where he talked to students about the life of a musician. During the day, students also rehearsed with Belck for the evening concert.

The show began with the song "Salt Peanuts" by John "Dizzy" Gillespie and Kenny Clarke. Mr. Bellamy took time to speak to the audience about the Jazz Ensemble, before Belck joined the band to play "One Note Samba" by Antonio Carlos Jobin, and "Caravan" by Duke Ellington, Irving Mills, and Juan Tizol.

As the night progressed, Mr. Bellamy joined the Jazz Ensemble on trombone and Belck and Bellamy performed an impressive rendition of "Rapture" by Harold Lande. Another guest trumpeter, Renoir Rodriguez, performed a song with the Beach High Jazz Combo called "My Funny Valentine." They ended the night with the songs "Never No Lament (Don't Get Around Much Anymore)" by Duke Ellington and "Spain" by Chick Corea.

"I thought it was fantastic. I was very impressed with the level of professionalism and how the new band director tied it all together in such a short amount of time," explained Kathy Imberman, parent of Max Imberman who is a member of the Jazz Ensemble.

Rock Ensemble Director Mr. Doug

Burris stated, "It was a great show. I am very proud of the jazz band students; they are accomplished students in the level that they're playing at so early in the year, and I'm sure that has to do with their awesome director."

Mrs. Nina Duval, the lead teacher of the Arts Academy, added "I thought the atmosphere was great and it was very relaxing. The music was of the highest quality."

Mr. Bellamy acknowledged that the students had put in a tremendous amount of work to pull it all together. "Many light bulbs flashed on from the kids' perspectives when Scott Belck came", he said.

Belck has been playing the trumpet professionally for the past twenty years. He has served as the artistic director of the Dayton Jazz Orchestra as well as the Cincinnati Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, and has served on the faculty of many different universities, middle schools, and high schools. He has been a guest soloist for many universities and colleges and has been teaching privately for twenty years.



Scott Belck has been the lead trumpet player at performances with Aretha Franklin, Donna Summer, Manhattan Transfer, and many other artists and orchestras. Photo by Corina Grazutis



Graphic by Kevin Espeche

BANG! Music Festival Delivers

By Ashley Moline

On Saturday, November 11, 2006, the very anticipated BANG! Music Festival took place at Bicentennial Park in Downtown Miami. This festival consisted of many of the world's greatest lights, musicians and disc jockeys, things "very much expected from the city of Miami" says Jorge Reyes, a junior. The party initially cost \$45, began at noon, and ended at midnight.

The festival featured over 600 DJs playing some of the world's finest dance music. Artists such as DAFT punk, Thievery Corporation, Yerba Buena, Los Amigos Invisibles, Oh No! Oh My, Keven, Kinky, Gnarl Barkely, Common, Modest Mouse, Duran Duran, DJ Tiesto, and Damian Marley performed throughout this twelve-hour party.

People traveled great distances to participate in the event; some even purchased

\$120 scalper tickets to attend. Lights were flashing, speakers were pounding, people were dancing, and thousands were satisfied, especially by DAFT Punk's unbelievable final performance of 2006.

The party-going masses now await an even bigger music festival, Ultra, which will take place on March 24, 2007. BANG! was a "downscaled version of Ultra Music Festival," says junior Carlos Morales. Ultra will have much more lights than BANG! and an even more jam-packed line up, consisting of The Cure, DAFT Punk, DJ Tiesto, Paul Oakenfold, Paul Van Dyk, Benny Benassi, and many others.

Thousands immensely anticipated this event and were satisfied with their experiences. Mariano Lopez, a junior, adds that overall this event was one of the most "\$@%&ing awesome" events of the year.

Arts Academy Holds Beautiful Winter Celebration Concert

By Stephanie Caceres

"Public performances are how our Academy lives and breathes", explains the simple white program. The manifestation of the Visual and Performing Arts Academy's (VPAA) Winter Celebration shows that breathing in every word, every note, every lilting tune of the flute, and soft melody of the guitar. We have witnessed the Academy breathe its graceful breath.

On December 6 at 7 p.m., St. John's First United Methodist Church was not filled with its usual quiet prayers but with laughter and anxious jitters from both the performers and their loved ones waiting for the show to begin.

Mrs. Nina Duval, VPAA Lead Teacher, as well as English and Journalism teacher, pointed out "It's the first event by the Visual and Performing Arts Academy, and it was put together for family and friends." She adds, "I felt it was important to see the students perform publicly, in spite of the limited site facilities at our school."

The night started with a digital documentary by Ms. Gina Cunningham's students Juan Gonzalez, Joshua Becker, and Edgar Ruiz, which showed audience members what the Visual and Performing Arts Academy is. Then the show moved on to a very interesting play called "The Ugly Duckling" by the Beach High Drama Club. The play itself was highly entertaining and well acted out, stirring more than one laugh from the audience. Afterward, Richard Almonte played "Solfegietto" by J.S. Bach on the piano from memory creating a beautiful melody of sounds to soften out

the flurry of the play.

The Beach High Chorus' rendition of "Still In My Heart", led by Dr. Richard Stuart, flowed through the church as student voices rose in unison. Pablo Paniagua, another solo pianist, followed, playing "Prelude in E Minor" also by J.S. Bach. The Intermediate Guitar Quartet performed next; they played "Concerto in D Major" followed by the Advanced Guitar Quartet, which played a crisp "Sevilla".

Gleaming with pride Mr. Noah Bellamy introduced his very "reliable" student James Quinlan who played "Sonata in G minor" on his towering bass. Quinlan's performance was followed by a performance from the Wind Ensemble. They played "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" and "Sleigh Ride". As the night began to come to an end, flute trio Javiera Hernandez, Juliana Lemes and Natacha Diaz played a selection from "The Nutcracker Suite". A sweeping performance from the orchestra ended the night.

Mr. Bellamy, director of the band and orchestra, says proudly "I thought the concert was an absolute success. It was not only a great introduction of the Visual and Performing Arts Academy to the public, but it was also a great way to bring in the holiday season."

It was a night of wonders. Shy students beamed with unpolished pride, while tender moments of elating hopes intertwined with the applause of thrilled parents.

Opinions & Editorials

Educational Improvement Should be Congressional Goal

The hot-button issues to be debated in Congress now that Democrats are in the majority—such as abortion, the minimum wage, and the war in Iraq—may directly affect teenage life, and all issues will at some point make an impact on our generation. Education issues especially affect high school students and are likely to undergo some much-needed positive changes.

Among the most well known of President Bush's policies is secondary school reform and the No Child Left Behind Act, which influences decisions at Beach High. The current debate over educational policy includes whether to educate young students in both English and their native languages, whether to promote them along with their peers regardless of performance, and the question of school choice. Districts implementing the proposed school choice would provide parents with vouchers to send their children to private, parochial, or home schools, and is controversial because it would be funded by taxpayers and arguably violates the first amendment.

Recently elected Florida Senator Democrat Bill Nelson voted yes to approve standardized testing, but also to fund smaller class sizes over private tutoring against

parental choice proponents. Republican Governor-elect Charlie Christ served as Florida education commissioner, and supported Governor Bush's education reform plan. He is an advocate for parental choice in education, which tends to include taxpayer funding of private, parochial, and home schooling.

Regardless of party affiliation, public officials need to pay more attention to education, particularly in public schools, nationwide: 90 percent of students from kindergarten to twelfth grade in the United States attend public school.

We should support smaller class sizes and focus on improving public schools. We should oppose school vouchers, which can aggravate existing problems in 'failing' public schools. We should work towards equal financial chances for higher education, because 19 percent of the poorest quarter of the country enrolls in college while 70 percent of the wealthiest quarter does. Instead of rewarding schools that perform well on standards-based education assessments like the FCAT, we should focus on those that are not doing well and address possible problems like teacher pay, learning environment, or curricula.

New Grading System Unfair to Students

The new electronic grade book, introduced at the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, has had students worrying about the way teachers will record their grades. Instead of typing or writing in grades as a percentage of 100, teachers type in only a letter, ostensibly making point differences within a letter grade useless. At the beginning of the year, the administration decided pluses and minuses would take care of this problem. However, some parents complained and the system was eliminated in favor of uniformity, giving a letter grade to a student regardless of whether he or she earned points in the lower or higher section of a grade.

Before second-quarter progress reports were issued, the grade book was locked and the most recent grades could not be entered into the system, resulting in some incorrect grades that lacked updating on the progress reports. While the grade book will not be locked for as long as they were prior to progress reports being issued in the future, the general format of the progress report and report card will remain the same as the new documents distributed this year. This format does not include room for teacher comments or last minute re-evaluation of late assignments.

Since the electronic grade book

does not take percentage grades into account, it allows for grade inflation. Students who earn an 89 on an exam or assignment will increasingly be given an A, for it will seem as though this is the only way to reward someone who worked hard in exchange for their grade. Giving a student with a final 3.45 or higher an A on the report card will be more likely than giving a student with an 88 an A because of how much closer a 3.45 seems to an A. The way teachers now type grades into their grade books does not distinguish between someone who just missed an A or just managed a B. A student putting forth exemplary work may now receive the same grade as someone who has exerted the minimum effort necessary for a certain grade.

The grade book's system kinks should have been worked out before it was implemented. As it stands, the method in which grades are entered into the electronic grade book is unfair to students. The method does not differentiate between an 80 or 89 on a given assignment or test, which could ultimately mean a letter grade difference on a student's report card. Until the new grade book can incorporate numerical grades and work to a student's benefit, teachers should record and submit grades as they did before the electronic grade book.

Student Smokers

Dear Editor,

The article "Cigarette Smokers Face Damaging Trials" by Stephanie Caceres was a very good read. She is right; smoking is bad and a lot of kids in this school do it. If only more people started to think like her we would not have a lot of smoking in this school. Some people don't know why they smoke but they do, and they need to know what they are putting in there bodies. I just want to thank her for the information.

Michael Rodriguez

Defending our Pastelitos

Dear Editor,

I'm writing about the story about the school board banning pastelitos. Why would they? I think that they should not ban pastelitos because some students don't eat before coming to school. So when they don't eat breakfast and they are hungry, they buy a pastelito. In Arielle Vicaria's article, it says that when people buy pastelitos the money goes to teams like football, soccer, track, basketball, volleyball, cheerleading and many more. If they stop selling them, there isn't going to be enough money to support the teams.

Catherine Lisbey

Dear Editor,

I chose the article, "School Board Places Bans on Pastelitos" because health concerns me. I think it's important to be healthy and I agree with the banning. My opinion isn't because I don't enjoy pastelitos, it's because I believe that the school doesn't really need them. Sure they are used for funds, especially sports, but can't they find other ways to bring their funds up? There are many options, like a car wash or selling other acceptable healthy food or drinks. There are many other ways to raise the funds, ways that won't cost the health of our students.

Giovanna Machado

Responsibility at age 18

Dear Editor,

Being accountable and involved in responsibilities is definitely what the gift of turning 18 is really about. I agree with Ms. Lucia Baez that teenagers who turn 18 don't realize the capacity of moral decisions they could make, and the effect they could have in changing the country. Eighteen years olds should realize that once they reach that age people are more reliable and/or dependable on them. I believe it is important that young adults (especially at the age of 18) remember that they have a grant of special rights and they should take well advantage of it.

M. Celeste Rabino

Remembering Mr. Mehlman

Dear Editor,

I think it's great that you are trying to help the school remember Mr. Mehlman. I had him last year for world history and it's true that his classroom was a fun class. It was never boring and was a really cool course. I'm pretty sure that after reading this article the students will never forget him. Mr. Mehlman did impact us a lot; he was probably the best history teacher that I've had.

Vanessa Fernandez

Reactions to Eight Period Schedule

Dear Editor,

When I received the Beachcomber newspaper, I was looking through it and stumbled into an interesting article called "Beach High Begins Eight-Period Schedule". I have to agree with this article, even though others have different opinions towards the eight period schedule. People have to look at the good side.

The writer mentions that the eight period schedule was an opportunity to help students get a chance for more electives, especially those that have FCAT classes and failed the FCAT. Before they didn't have electives; now they have the opportunity to take an elective.

I agree with this opinion. I am one of those that have failed the FCAT and I haven't had a chance to focus on an elective I wanted to take before. Now that there are eight periods, I have an opportunity of having guitar class and art class, and other classes that are important for my credits.

The article also mentions that now we have much more time in working on homework and extra assignments, which is also true. Now I'm able to turn in my homework on time.

I can't agree to everything. This article mentions students get tired and end up not paying attention; I disagree. Students are the ones to decide this, it's their actions towards school. I don't think the eight period block schedule is to blame.

Lastly, an absence counting for two instead of one is something that is affecting many students in the school. I think its one of the things that everyone disagrees with for the eight period schedule. What if a student is in the hospital for a complete week? And just because you got terribly sick or had an accident that wasn't your fault, can be affected your grades.

In the end this was a good article that many students can agree with.

Camila Inostroza

Dear Editor,

At first, hearing about the new eight period schedule was extremely disappointing. My first thoughts were more classes, more hours in school; every student's horror. Students are now relieved that there is a block schedule crunched into seven class hours. These eight periods bring more work and stress to students and teachers but in return they allow students and teachers to have more electives that they can enjoy.

The eight periods also helps students in danger of not fulfilling their course credit requirements, for instance, a student who needs to make up core-classes in night school can trade in one of their electives for a required class that they needed to make up. Thankfully, students have learned to appreciate this change.

Angela Cruz

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Competition for The Beachcomber

By Hailey Negron

Mrs. Anete Arslanian does not simply teach students Portuguese, but also produces a newspaper for Portuguese-speaking students.

The 'O Brasileirinho' contains editorials, a calendar of school and community events, scholarship tips, sports, interviews, song lyrics, jokes, comics and a picture gallery. In the next edition there will be recipes for typical Brazilian dishes and shout-outs. Students in Mrs. Arslanian's classes are able to write little notes to pass to their friends in the paper. This activity is known as shout-outs.

Mrs. Arslanians' Portuguese honors class is in charge of writing and editing the paper. "Every month Mrs. Arslanian picks two random students to be the editors," explained former editor Evandro Gomes. "When editors were not good at computers I was the one to help

them. Students are supposed to be picked once a year and I was picked like every month."

The first 'O Brasileirinho' was issued in 2000. The paper is printed on normal printer paper. "We only have two computers", explained Arslanian. "We need more. The library is always busy. If we want more computers we will have to help in the boat show."

The paper is distributed for fun, to promote the Brazilian community, and to add popularity to the Brazilian club. "It's a great experience, like a creative writing class", smiled Mrs. Arslanian. "It informs teens about events and is easy to read because of the sophistication level," she exclaimed. The paper can be picked up by Portuguese-speaking students and others interested in room 014.

School Spirit Raises United Way Funds

By Julia Carfagno

During the month of October, the United Way charity program seemed to take over Beach High. Everyday in homeroom, a manila envelope was passed around begging for any donation it could get. If that was not enough, penny wars, senior auctions and being able to finally get Mr. Cobin back with a pie in the face, were all activities conducted in the name of a good cause. This year's United Way goal of raising \$2,150 came close to being met. Approximately \$1,800 was raised, and Principal Dr. Friedman was happy with Beach High for the demonstration of spirit and cooperation.

Senior auctions took place on October 25th during lunch, in front of the cafeteria. Seniors waited in line for their chance to stand on a picnic table and be auctioned off as an underclassman's or another senior's slave for the next day. The senior winning with the highest bid was Michael David, who was bought by a sophomore girl for \$30.00.

"She told me she paid so much because she thought I was hot", said David. "I know I'm a sexy beast; just playing" he laughed. With the second-highest bidding price being \$8, it was a big deal to be auctioned off for \$30. What was it like to carry her books throughout the day? "I met her in the morning and said hi—that was about it", explained David, "she really didn't want me to do anything".

Standing in front of half of Beach High while being auctioned off and having kids wail your name probably can't be too inviting. "When I was up there some

random girl grabbed my ass - I felt violated, but other than that, it was chunky and for a good cause", laughed senior Victor Ramos.

One dollar to finally get revenge on Mr. Cobin or Mr. Pollack for giving you 10 days outdoor suspension? Sounds good to me. On October 26th kids of each grade surrounded Mr. Cobin and Mr. Pollack to take their shots. "Apple, Peaches, Pumpkin pie; I got hit right in the eye" commented Mr. Pollack about the Pie-an-Administrator fund raiser.

"It was crazy, we raised about \$77," stated senior Alexandra Band. "It was as easy as pie to be involved", she joked. Band had the opportunity to refill each empty plate with whipped cream and could really see the excitement and eagerness in everyone's face.

How did the pie victims enjoy it? "I enjoyed. It's my sixth year doing it", said Mr. Pollack. "The best part is, Mr. Cobin and I made \$81.00 alone". With Mr. Cobin teasing kids with names like "little girl", kids just couldn't wait to smother him with a plate full of whipped cream. Junior Carlos Morales claimed "hitting Mr. Cobin in the face with a pie was a sense of creamy satisfaction." Senior Jorge Reyes stated, "I would pay \$20 to hit Cobin 20 times in the face; it's the greatest thing ever!"

"We're really happy with the outcome of the fund raisers this year, and were planning more for other clubs" says senior and Student Government officer Lauren Azicri. "Not only does it raise money, it also raises the spirit in Beach High."

Look out for the next issue of The Beachcomber, featuring:
**Body Image,
Science,
School Safety,
and much more!**

Please submit letters to the editor and Dear Harry questions to room 130 or by e-mail to comberpap@aol.com

Mr. Burris and some students practicing guitar on a pleasant day

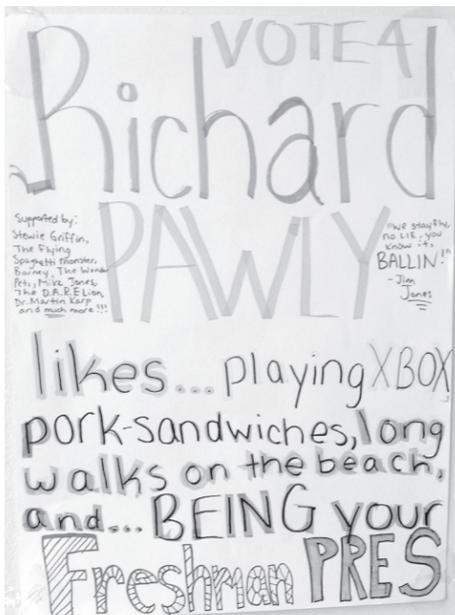


Halloween brought in homeless people and strange creatures



Back Page Pics

Photos by Laura Torres



A creative campaign poster



Mrs. Gregory and Mrs. Diaz admire a bird from Parrot Jungle Island at the AOHT breakfast



Ms. Valdes and the Drama Club creating the Black Box Theater in room 112. Photo by Jan Vlee