

# Miami Beach Senior High

# The Beachcomber

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Outgoing Principal Dr. Jeanne Friedman and incoming Principal Dr. Roseann Sidener discuss plans during the underclassmen awards ceremony. Photo by Laura Torres

## New Principal Ready to Lead Beach High

By Jamie Hoffman

On April 18, 2007, Dr. Roseann Sidener was officially appointed as Miami Beach Senior High's new principal. Colleagues have affirmed not only Dr. Sidener's professionalism, but her understanding of students' wants and needs. She will make appearances at Beach High through the rest of this year as she wraps up her current role of principal at Booker T. Washington High School.

Older Hi-Tides may recall her status as Assistant Principal at Nautilus Middle School until 2002. Her familiarity with Beach will be a helpful addition to her position as principal. Criminal justice teacher Mr. Michael Tamburrino, who worked under Sidener as assistant principal at Nautilus Middle School, attests to Dr. Sidener's capabilities.

"She's fair, she's professional, very stable, and consistent. I think the rules already on the books will be enforced. You will see improved student behavior, and increased student pride," says Tamburrino. He adds, "She cares about students and puts them first."

Dr. Sidener says she is genuinely excited about tackling Miami Beach High's challenges. "We should focus on what we can

do to improve the parts of the environment that we can control. Let's make the inside of every classroom inviting," says Sidener. Her four years at Booker T. Washington High School have seen improvements in his field: classrooms were refurbished and painted at no cost as a result of a partnership with a local business.

Dr. Sidener earned her Bachelors and Masters degrees from the University of Miami in music-related majors, and continued her studies at Columbia University in New York City. With this background in music, Dr. Sidener's interest in the arts at Beach High is sure to be a strong point in her agenda upon taking full reigns of the school next fall. The academies have Dr. Sidener's full approval as well. The establishment of small learning communities or academies is a school reform movement that allows students to more deeply explore their individual interests in the hope of one day making them a career.

"Too many kids are bored or just going through the motions of high school because it is required. We have to provide the structure and the changes needed to make sure that every student feels as though they belong to the school and that

the adults in the school care about them as a person," said Dr. Sidener. She seeks to engage students in a way they never have been engaged before. Dr. Sidener cites the educational buzzwords, "the new 3R's: Rigor, Relevance, Relationships."

"I also plan to meet with groups of students to find out what ideas they have for next year. I want to 'shadow' a few students to see what the school day is like from the student's perspective." Dr. Sidener says she has the students' best interests in mind, and is willing to hear what these interests are from the students themselves.

Her goals for the school are "to prepare every student for success, to be the best high school in Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida; which includes an "A" rating. It is very doable – the potential is here."

Dr. Sidener's approach involves starting small. In the small signs of encouragement found in her e-mails, or her desire to beautify the building, Dr. Sidener is a leader who hopes to greatly benefit the Miami Beach community one step at a time. Although many of her plans are long term, Dr. Sidener wants to make an impact as soon as possible.

## Administration Removes Ombudsman Program

By Corina Grazutis

Beach High's Ombudsman program, a school for students at risk of not graduating, has been eliminated.

The decision to remove the Ombudsman program from Miami Beach Senior High School was a joint decision made by outgoing Principal Dr. Jeanne Friedman and incoming Principal Dr. Roseanne Sidener. They both felt that the curriculum at Ombudsman was not challenging enough and that the students were starting to take advantage of the program.

"There are students who really do see the light once they start attending Ombudsman, but there were many who only wanted to go to school for three hours. Some kids are kicked out of Ombudsman, and when they come back to Beach High, they have bad attitudes," explains Dr. Friedman.

In the past, if students were doing

poorly academically due to attendance issues, they were given the option of attending the Ombudsman program. It has been part of Beach High for the past seven years but at the end of the year, the program will be permanently removed.

Students at Ombudsman are still enrolled at Miami Beach Senior High but attend classes off campus. The program has a five hour school day, or three hour school day if a student has a job during school hours. When attending Ombudsman, a student is placed in a small classroom setting. They do not switch classes and have three teachers teaching the content areas of Science, Math, English, and Social Studies.

Upon entering Ombudsman, students take an exam to evaluate their academic level, and are given work in accordance to their test results. There are certain requirements to be able to attend

Ombudsman. Students must have adequate reasoning to attend the school such as a low grade point average. "Ombudsman is a strict school. If you misbehave, they will send you back here to our campus," says head of attendance Mr. Ed Cobin.

After spring break, Dr. Friedman felt that the program was losing its status and success rate. At this point, she was very disappointed about the new values of students and parents towards the Ombudsman program. The turning point was when a parent came to Dr. Friedman and said she could not bring her child to Beach High on time and insisted that he go to Ombudsman. Dr. Friedman thought that this devalued the intent of the Ombudsman program. Ombudsman was designed to provide students with an atmosphere in which they could focus solely on academics.

See *Ombudsman*, page 2

## Class of 2008 to Choose Grad Speaker

By Aaron Groff

Every year during the graduation ceremony, the Valedictorian, Salutatorian, Class President, and SGA President make a speech, but future graduating classes starting next year will have no designated Valedictorian to fill this speaking role. Next year, all schools in Miami Dade County will not have a Valedictorian and Salutatorian. Instead, the schools will have three tiers of achieving students: summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude. In addition, the tradition of having the Senior Class and SGA Presidents speak is likely to change.

The school administrators do not yet know how a student speaker will be selected to speak at next year's commencement ceremony. Dr. Friedman states, "This year's school student government body along with the faculty need to decide the selection process concerning student speakers".

One school that already has this three-tier grouping is Miami Sunset Senior High. Their activities director, Ms. Sylvia Coto-Gonzalez, states, "We have been using this system for several years." Miami Sunset has a way of handling graduation speakers that the school's administrators say has been very effective. One week before graduation, anyone in the senior class who wants to speak at graduation can turn in a copy of his or her speech to Ms. Coto-Gonzalez. She then approves the speeches she feels are exceptional and invites these students to come back for an audition.

Here they perform their speech just as they would at graduation in front of a committee of five people. This committee consists of an assistant principal, a guidance counselor, two senior English teachers, and the Junior Class President. The committee then votes on which speech is the most outstanding. This way of choosing a speaker gives everyone a chance, so even if a student is not one of the most involved students in school, he or she can still represent the senior class.

Beach High is still trying to find a way of choosing the graduation speaker. The Miami Sunset Senior High method is one of many that the student government is considering.

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# News

## AOHT Seniors Embark on Once in a Lifetime Adventure

By Javiera Hernandez

On April 19<sup>th</sup>, the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism Seniors had the opportunity to travel on a five day adventure to a place many cannot even imagine: Alaska.

The destination for this year's field study was voted on by the seniors themselves. Every year the seniors choose which location with an existing academy, they would like to attend at the end of the year. Dr. Lupe Diaz says, "This year's seniors are more exotic than the past years."

The group, consisting of 13 seniors and two chaperones, Dr. Jeanne Friedman and Dr. Diaz, were involved in a variety of activities in the cold state. These activities

The seniors had the option to go on a hospitality tour or land on a glacier by means of a helicopter with the chance to see beluga whales.

included seeing the Iditarod race dogs, Mt McKinley and an in depth behind the scenes tour of an airline company office.

Throughout the trip, the students were "ambassadors of peace with the intent to get a better appreciation of culture," according to Dr. Diaz. They were also able to see the first Athabaskan Church built in Alaska in the 1700's. The seniors even had the option to either go on

another hospitality tour or land on a glacier by means of a helicopter with the chance to see beluga whales, a sight rare this time of year.

When asked what he looked forward to most, Oliver Layfield, a senior, jokingly said, "My goal is to drink a Coke with a polar bear." Layfield commented, "The people were really nice and cultural," when asked about how he was treated in Alaska. He added, "The best part of the trip was definitely being able to see the beluga whales when they normally don't appear until later in the year."

The cost for the trip for each student was a whopping \$1,600. However throughout the year, the students were able to raise enough money to lower their payment to a still large but grateful, \$1000.

Together, the students raised about \$1,400 through the auctions held early this school year. Also, the Academy was graciously donated to, which eased the payments as well.

After the hard work fundraising, the seniors had an amazing time in the exotic state of Alaska. Next years' AOHT seniors will have a hard time trying to top a trip as exotic as the one that this year's seniors had the opportunity to experience. Layfield adds, "We all decided to reunite in Alaska in five years to see how we are all holding up after our adventure."

## Silver Knight Nominees Recognized

By Albert Chester

The Silver Knight Awards are some of the country's most highly regarded student achievement honors. The purpose of these awards are to identify exceptional students who not only uphold great grades, but who also generously apply their special talents and knowledge to supply significant service to their school and community.

In order to become a Silver Knight, a student must be nominated by faculty committees in their respective schools and display a great amount of service. There are 15 categories in which students can win Silver Knight Awards: Art, Athletics, Business, Drama, English and Literature, Foreign Language, General Scholarship, Journalism, Mathematics, Music, New Media, Science, Social Science, Speech, and Vocational-Technical.

There are several Silver Knight nominees in the Beach High class of 2007. Nikhil Mehta is a nominee in the Business category. "Being a Silver Knight nominee gives me great honor and the strength to know that I can master a subject. Receiving an award with your name on it really makes all the years of dedication and hard work pay off," he says.

Alexandra Band, a nominee in Social Science, believes that "the Silver Knight Award is one I will remember forever. It gives me

a great sense of joy and pride in knowing I accomplished something of this magnitude."

Miami Beach Senior High School has a rich history of Silver Knight nominees and winners and plans on keeping it that way. Each year the schools' nominees are recognized in a special section of the yearbook. Veronica Gordon, Silver Knight Nominee in the Speech category, states, "the prestige of the award is really what makes me strive for it. It feels good to know that your name is added to a list of other great students."

Recognition as a Silver Knight Award is such a high honor that the prizes it comes with are rarely mentioned. When one wins a Silver Knight Award, one receives a \$1,500 scholarship and a round-trip ticket from American Airlines to anywhere in the continental United States.

Silver Knight nominees attend a ceremony on May, 15, 2007 at the Carnival Center's James L. Knight Concert Hall, where the winners are announced. "The ceremony is a wonderful opportunity to recognize students for their achievements and provides them a stage on which to shine," says college advisor Dr. Jon Page.

Highway to Success program. We hope that the new program will set students that are at risk of not graduating, on the track of a successful future.

Further information about the Highway to Success program will be reported in our first issue of next year. Inquiries of the program should be sent to Ms. Charmaine Williams.

## Senior Passes Away in Car Accident

By Stephanie Caceres

Beach High was saddened by the news that Senior Diana Centeno tragically passed away before school resumed after spring break. During eighth period on April 9<sup>th</sup> Dr. Friedman announced Centeno's death over the PA system, which seemed to devastate the young woman's classmates and friends.

On the night of April 8, Gretel Lopez was driving home from Club Space in downtown Miami on the Julia Tuttle Causeway with her sister Diana Centeno and cousin Ena Centeno in the car. As they reached the "Welcome to Miami Beach" sign, an oblivious driver cut them off. Lopez jerked the wheel out of fright to try and avoid a collision. The turn was too sudden, and it forced the Honda Accord to roll over four times and hit a nearby palm tree.

Diana had not been wearing a seatbelt, and she died instantly at the scene.

From the impact of the accident, Gretel Lopez received a large wound on her right cheek. Ena Centeno had to go to the hospital: when Lopez hit the brakes, the seatbelt had tightened over Ena Centeno's stomach and caused her to suffer from internal bleeding. She was released from the hospital on April 10 after intense observation.

Diana's wake took place at Funeral Memorial Plan on April 12. Her requiem was on the following day, and her burial took place that Saturday.

Once Diana's friends were made aware of the accident, they were devastated and soon organized a quiet fundraiser to pay for her funeral, due to problematic financial issues with her family. Some students went around Beach High to raise enough money to help Diana's family with the funeral; in the end they were able to raise \$3,000.

Although not close with Diana,

Andrew King was touched by her sincerity and her smile and was one of the many students who stopped their tasks to listen to her story. He sadly shared, "You expect to see the people you grow up with, to graduate together. It's weird," says King, "She was always nice, and she always bought a smile to my face."

Mr. Samuel Brown, one of Diana's teachers, still has not fought the shock of the



Diana Centeno's senior yearbook picture.

quiet girl's departure, his soft words spoke sorrow, "She was one of the pillars of her group in class projects. She was someone you could depend on." He held a sentimental look in his eyes, "It's one thing to read about the theme of death in poems by Dickinson or Thomas Gray, but it's quite another thing to experience the death of someone in one's community."

## Chess Team on Winning Streak

By Julia Wolloch

First place in six local tournaments, third place at regionals, and fourth place at states: these achievements can be awarded to the first chess team in many years at Miami Beach Senior High. "I feel really excited about all our wins, I'm proud of myself and the team," states, sophomore Felix Lena. Previously there was a chess team, but the newly established team has beaten the odds and is now considered one of the best teams in the state. The team members practice every morning and during lunch, in the classroom of team sponsor, Mr. Ben Silva. "Considering the fact that it was our first year, I think we did a really good job. Besides the competition, it's also like a social game club, and everyone learns, even myself. The team really took responsibility and initiative," states the Mr. Silva. "Mr. Silva made us

practice everyday," adds sophomore Jonathan Torres, who won three out of his six games at states. "Practice makes perfect," comments sophomore Stevens Bernardez, who also won three out of his six games.

Students passing by Mr. Silva's room will notice the exhibition window filled with trophies won individually and by the team. Inside Mr. Silva's classroom, the top of the whiteboard is lined with trophies, all of them in first place. The newly created team has competed this year against many long time teams. There is also an elective class of chess during 7<sup>th</sup> period, where students can see most of the members of the team practice. The team is now practicing during the off season and hoping to bring the gold in the future for Miami Beach Senior High.



Rodrigo Aldorino and his opponent face off during chess class. Photo by Laura Torres

## Ombudsman continued from Front Page

As of next year, Dade County Public School will be starting a new program called the "Highway to Success."

This program is run locally by the night school-adult education and day school. It is also designed for students who are in danger of not graduating.

As the Ombudsman program is dropped, Beach High as high hopes for the

# News

## Priceless Bass Stolen from Rock Ensemble

By Anny Rodriguez

Security problems at Beach High have been mostly recognized to be a bit shady. Many students skip class, skip school, leave school grounds during class, or simply walk into the school campus with out being stopped or questioned about their tardiness. But there's a new concern with security at school nowadays. Priceless items have been taken, such as the one taken on Friday, April 25, from the Rock Ensemble room.

A 1972 Fender Precision Bass was stolen from the room during sixth period on Friday, during which, Rock Ensemble director, Mr. Doug Burris, had not been present. It has not been identified who took it and why it was taken. "It is a valuable possession, at least to me it is. It was irresponsible of me for leaving it out and letting others play it" stated Mr. Burris. "I want it back badly; if it is left at the door, cool, but if I find out who took it, I will

have them arrested".

For those who know of the Rock Ensemble room or the Band room, they would know that both doors are open on those that want to go in, for the productive purpose of talking to the directors or practicing if they need to. But, is it the responsibility of the directors to keep an open eye of their priceless possessions? With cameras placed at every end of the hallways, and active security guards walking around, how could this senseless act be committed?

Assistant Principal Raymond Patrice informs that the bass is worth \$3000, but to Mr. Burris, and to the students in Rock Ensemble, it is worth much more than that. "We are reviewing the security tapes to try to find out who it is that took it." stated Patrice. "The person that is responsible will be charged with grand theft because [the bass] was worth \$3000, and will be therefore, be subject to arrest."

## Teacher Shadows Student for a Day

By Alicia Sanchez

Government teacher Mr. Peter Lash has had the chance to experience life as a student first hand by shadowing Julieta Molina, a freshman. Molina was selected at random by small learning communities coordinator, Dr. Marla Murray, trying to get a student's point of view. The objective of shadowing a student is to get the perspective, as a teacher, of what a regular day consists of for a high school student in order to recommend possible changes to the teachers and school administration.

In order to understand the many challenges a high school student experiences every day, Mr. Lash sat in on Molina's classes and interacted with the other students. As a teacher, Mr. Lash knows how long, uninteresting, or challenging a class could be. From observing his own students, he is aware that one hour and forty-five minutes can be too long for one class. Attending World History, Reading, and English, Mr. Lash remembered his old high school days. Molina, who had never met Mr. Lash before, commented that the experience was interesting but nerve-racking at the same time. "I felt good. I just felt kind of nervous because I had never met him before and it was kind of cool that I was shadowed by a teacher. It was different because he teaches Gifted Honors classes and I have all regular classes," she comments.

An important part of life as a Beach High student that Mr. Lash noticed throughout the day was the diversity of this school. Different teachers, students, and activities

made him realize just how culturally diverse this school is. This made such an impression on him that he summed up his day with the word "diverse." Keeping up with the classes was not difficult as a teacher, but overall he describes the classes he attended as challenging. He felt he had an inside scoop on exactly how students act in classes, though he realized that there was tension in the beginning because students knew he was a teacher. "We didn't speak that much because I was in class and he was writing down notes," Julieta comments.

As time went on, students relaxed and made him a part of the class. Mr. Lash said he now understands the point of view a student has when they become bored in class. Taking into consideration that he is a teacher, he knows that students can't pay full attention throughout the whole class period without short breaks in the block.

"The whole purpose of school isn't to have a child sitting in class entertained. There is a way to get the material across to keep the students interested and keep them inspired to do the work, and that's different from sitting there doing cartwheels all day," adds Mr. Lash.

Mr. Lash expressed that shadowing a student for a day was an enlightening experience. He encourages other teachers to take the opportunity to gain a student's perspective of high school. As for Julieta Molino, she will always have this memory to share about her high school day with a teacher.

## Final Exam Schedule

Essays and objectives will be given in the same block.

Friday, May 18		Monday, May 21	
7:30-9:30	Period 2 Exam	7:30-9:30	Period 1 Exam
9:45-10:45	Period 1	9:45-10:45	Period 3
10:50-11:50	Period 7	10:50-11:50	Period 5
11:51-12:25	Lunch	11:51-12:25	Lunch
12:30-2:30	Period 8 Exam	12:30-2:30	Period 7 Exam
Tuesday, May 22		Wednesday, May 23	
7:30-9:30	Period 3 Exam	7:30-9:30	Period 4 Exam
9:45-10:45	Period 4	9:45-10:45	Period 2
10:50-11:50	Period 6	10:50-11:50	Period 8
11:51-12:25	Lunch	11:51-12:25	Lunch
12:30-2:30	Period 5 Exam	12:30-2:30	Period 6 Exam

## Administration Requires Attendance Contracts

By Brianna Hernandez

Recently, students have been put on attendance contracts as a consequence for excessive unexcused tardies and absences. When students reach more than 10 unexcused absences, they are called into Mr. Ed Cobin's office and given a paper for their parents to sign and bring back. The paper explains to parents what the consequences are for further absences and states that the student must come to school every day.

If the student begins to attend class and avoids tardiness nothing will happen. However, if the student continues to be absent, his or her parents will be called in for a parent teacher conference where they must sign the contract again.

Luciana Amato, a sophomore, was put on an attendance contract after having a collective 19 absences, of which 11 were unexcused. As for her tardies, "Wow, I don't even remember," Amato said.

The terms of the contract are as follows: Students must be at school on time every day and must sign in to



Cartoon by Karla Colon

school with Mr. Hanlin and go to class. If they are late, they must spend the remainder of the day in CSI. "It makes me miss out on my classes", says Amato.

Attendance contracts are part of the new attendance policy. However, despite rumors, students do not get expelled or sent to alternatives for a low grade point average or poor attendance. Students only are expelled if they break the attendance contract; in this case, they must attend night school or get their GED to graduate.

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# Features



## Why don't we have an hour long lunch?

Miami Beach Senior High is in session from 7:30 in the morning until 2:30 in the afternoon, a whopping seven hours of hardcore education. The four courses being taken each day in addition to the four-minute traveling time between classes accounts for six and a half hours of the seven hour day, leaving only thirty five minutes for our lunch period.

The state mandates that students have a minimum number of hours dedicated to learning each year, and a one hour lunch would keep us away from meeting this requirement. And then we wouldn't be able to graduate! So in the end, a thirty four minute lunch period with all of your friends at once is a good sacrifice. The administration has talked of splitting the lunch period, but Miami Beach High remains one of the few high schools in the county to have one solid lunch period.

## Why is the field so uneven? When I run for track there are holes, and I am scared I am going to twist my ankle.

A lot of people have complained about the condition of our field, which despite renovations at the beginning of this year is still the source of debate among athletes and administrators. It is obvious that the holes in the field and the unevenness of the grass can be a problem for those practicing sports at our school. Many travel to Flamingo Park and use that field, but much of the reason for the field's condition is all of those cars you see parking there during the Boat Show! The Boat Show brings in record amounts of funds each year for Miami Beach High clubs and organizations, so although it is harmful to our field and our athletes, it is a necessity. Approach your student government or the athletic coordinators to learn about how the field can be improved.

## When will they be done constructing the new school?

The projected date of the completion of the new school changes every day, but it is without a doubt that many men and women are working very hard so you can learn in a brand new atmosphere! The first phase, which includes the already completed bus lane, parking lots, parent drop off lane, and auditorium is said to be completed in October. The new school will include three new buildings, a new dining facility and outdoor dining area with food court style service, a new gym and auditorium, a black box theater, media center, new classrooms and labs, and the new parking area and bus lane (which have already been completed). Visit the school website at [miamibeachhigh.schoolwires.com](http://miamibeachhigh.schoolwires.com) to see detailed visual plans of what the new school is expected to look like.

## I donated blood the other day, and I'm scared there might be something wrong with it. Are they going to tell me?

When the Community Blood Center of South Florida visits Beach High for seventeen and eighteen year old students to donate blood, up to three lives are saved for every student who gives. The center even provides a free service in which they provide donors with their iron, cholesterol levels and blood type on line a few days after their donation date. If there is a problem with your blood, no worries, not only will they notify you of any serious complications, but if your blood is contaminated by drugs, it will most likely not be used. If you are aware of any medical problems with your blood, or you are an active drug user, which you shouldn't be, you may want to save your time and not donate.

## Beach High Tech Expert Shares Insight

By Ashley Moline

Mr. Jose Mendoza is Beach High's computer specialist. He has been working with technology since 1981, when the Internet was only just coming into use. His experience with both obsolete and cutting edge programs has made him an expert on tech issues.

### To Serve and Connect

**How are we affected by technology?**  
Well, we are to the degree we are capable of it, if you will. For example, we have a tool of technology which is the computer, which can be a great tool if you know how to use it and you take your time to figure out how to use it. If you don't take your time to learn how to use it or you use it to just minimal abilities, it becomes a hindrance. It's like driving a car without knowing how to do it; you would get in a lot of accidents.

### What is technology and what is knowledge?

Technology is the ability to bring. Knowledge is the understanding of a concept. I understand how the body works. I understand the essence of a chair: that is knowledge. Technology is the ability to put that knowledge in front of me when I need it without having to search through a lot of books that someone else may have written. Technology is putting that knowledge in front of you at a moments notice without actually having to have absorbed or understand that concept before. Technology will bring knowledge to you at a fast speed.

### How dependent are teenagers on their cellular phones and computers?

They are very dependent on everything. We are allowing them to become more dependant than they should. It is making our new generation lazy in one area that I believe is very important for innovation and creation. You have teenagers that

are very good at operating computers, cell phones, iPods, and they are learning how to interface all of these things together. But there are parts of the brain that need to be exercised in mathematics, and in actual language creation, that teenagers are no longer using because technology now does this for them.

### What if an electro-magnetic bomb set off and shut down all electronic equipment and devices?

We would be in trouble because I say at at this point in time a lot of our finances and communications depend on technology. If electricity was to totally disappear, where we would have no means of bringing back electricity, we would be in big trouble. You have the example here when we have the hurricanes, gas pumps go out, lights go out. Now Florida is becoming too hot to live in with dehydration, you know. Without technology, we'd have to find very radical means of changing our lives.

### What advantages would we lose with the loss of technology?

Well, the question is what advantages do we have with technology? Do we really have an advantage with technology? We move faster, we solve problems faster, and that is literally an advantage. We are going very fast, but do we know where we are going?

### What do you think about artificial intelligence?

I think it can happen. I think we are on our way there. I think artificial intelligence and cloning are in a race to get somewhere that may be the dawn of the new era in understanding ourselves. For one thing, the ability to learn and to create new connections is learning. Our computer chips can already do that to make a relation or crossover to a moral database. The technology for that to happen is still coming along. We already know how to make artificial intelligence.

## The Last Valedictorian and Salutatorian

By Rachel Stein

On June 1, Veronica Gordon and Nikhil Mehta will be graduating at the top of the class of 2007, the last in which students will have individual class ranks.

Next year, the class ranking system will be replaced by a new system honoring students who graduate Summa Cum Laude, Magnum Claude Laude and Cum Laude. Gordon says that she feels "weird" being the last Valedictorian: "It's the end of a tradition that has been at Beach since the school started. However, Gordon also feels that the change will eliminate much of the competition between future graduates. Mehta says, "it is an honor to be Salutatorian. This tradition is a great one and it should not be broken."

Both Gordon and Mehta worked very hard to earn their spot as top of the class. "It was very intense," Veronica claims. She is extremely self-motivated, and claims her parents are not strict about grades. "They have never asked to see my report card," she says.

As the Valedictorian, Gordon has the highest grade point average in the senior class. Veronica said she managed to keep up a social life by being able to separate time to study and time for friends. She also makes time to play tennis, paint and draw, and be an active member of FBLA and several Honors Societies. She is the president of the National Honor Society and

Student Government Association.

Gordon takes her SGA position very seriously and works hard to better the school; because she has been involved with student government since 5<sup>th</sup> grade, her experience works to her advantage. "A lot of what I do as President is behind the scenes, so many people do not see how hard I really work," Gordon states.

Mehta was able to balance the pressure and work with all of his extracurricular activities as well. Just this year he has been President of Future Business Leaders of America, Vice President of Scholars Academy Club, President of the Inter-Club Council, President of Italian Honors Society, and District Treasurer of Future Business Leaders of America.

Veronica has recently been accepted into Yale, and is more than pleased with this accomplishment. "I am so happy to be accepted into Yale. I feel honored that I will be attending

one of the best colleges in the country", she says. When she starts in the fall, she plans to major in government and political science and minor in environmental studies and public policy. Nikhil will attend Emory University in the fall, where he will study either finance or management. Like Veronica, he is interested in becoming involved in politics.



Valedictorian Veronica Gordon is heading off to Yale this fall, while Salutatorian Nikhil Mehta is on his way to Emory.

Photo by Laura Torres

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# Features

## Student Littering Causes Major Problems

By Ashley Moline

Miami Beach Senior High School scored lowest in hygiene than in any other area on the Southern Association of College Schools, or SACS, evaluation on Monday, March 26. The school may appear to be a bit disheveled, but is this due to time, construction, or just careless students? Built in 1926, Miami Beach Senior High School is one of the oldest schools in Miami Beach. Classes started at the old Ira Fischer building in 1924 and then moved to its current location in 1958; students have roamed these halls for forty-nine years.

In 2007, again, forty-nine years after the current location's opening, the place seems more diminished than it used to be. Many students and faculty members notice lunch trays which are left all over outdoor campus grounds as well as in our hallway wings. Plastic wrap once containing chicken wings is trashed on the ground, with the chicken bones also scattered far from plastic wrap the wings came in.

Garbage has even been found disgustingly lying around the bases of numerous trash cans. It is important to clarify that our school may be old; however, it is not a giant trash receptacle or landfill. "The other day I was walking up the stairs, and someone had left a can on the stairs. I didn't kick it, but I kicked it out of the way

because it isn't safe, it's obnoxious," reports Arielle Vicaria, a senior at Miami Beach High.

Miami Beach High is currently experiencing a rat problem in the proximity



*Trash clutters the stairwell after lunch.*

of the three-hundred wing. When asked about the issue, Mr. Frank O'Hare announced that, "...he [the rat] has perfect attendance, and he migrates between the art [313] and photography [315] rooms." Mr. Pollack attempted to exterminate the rats in the beginning of the year. The rats returned, so Mr. Pollack placed sticky-traps as another attempt to get rid of them, but these traps were only covered in paper by students.

The administration has done what

they can by closing the 200, 300, 400, and the nine-hundred wings during lunch. Trash cans are visibly placed all over the school, and custodians are hired to constantly clean the deranged areas. Philosophy, Environmental Science, and Biology teacher Mr. Guthrie thinks, "a lot of kids raised in urban environments lose ties with nature. They do not appreciate it as much."

Ms. K. Ware, a security guard at Miami Beach High, secures the school's field and basketball courts. Flocks of seagulls have begun to occupy the courts, and she says that the, "...seagulls come because they're hungry. Students are feeding them their breakfast. I think it's nice; they're beautiful. The only problem is they poop on you."

The school is being rebuilt; however this is no excuse to litter on its current grounds. If school attendees continue to clutter the premises, building a brand new school loses its purpose. "This is our home away from home," says Mr. Raymond Patrice, one Assistant Principal of Miami Beach High. "I pick up stuff at lunch time. We need to all do our part to keep it clean." School grounds should be respected in order to offer a sort of learning domain for students. If the grounds are respected, this becomes possible.

## Club Profile: FBLA

By Rebecca Budhoo

Future Business Leaders of America, or FBLA, is a club that has been at Beach High for many years. This year, though, the club has plenty to be proud of. Fifty students made it to the statewide competition and twenty-four of them qualified for the national competition. Now, of the twenty-four, twenty are guaranteed to compete in Nationals. Next year, the club's members would like to continue with these accomplishments and would like to see more members involved in this organization.

For any student, the cost of becoming a member in FBLA is twelve dollars. This money covers the cost for Local, State, National, and Districts. FBLA's club sponsor, Mrs. Tonya Alvarez, said "This club is for students who are interested in business." All students need to do is fill out a form and pay the required due.

One of the requirements for becoming a member is a "C" average in academics. Any students with a "D" or "F" in conduct are not allowed to travel to the competitions.

Towards the end of the school year, members will be able to run for a position in FBLA. Possible positions available are President, Vice-President, Secretary, Reporter, and Parliamentary Procedure Team, among others.

## Students Campaign Against Drugs with Movie and Concert

By Javiera Hernandez

On Thursday April 26, a group of students from Beach High's Leo Club premiered their 28 minute video entitled "Consequences" at The Wolfsonian Museum on 10th Street.

The place was filled at 7 p.m. with students and parents, as well as Miami Beach commissioner Matti Herrera Bower and Beach High art teacher Mr. Frank O'Hare.

Sponsored by the Center of Emerging Arts and led by Mrs. Ava Rado, the students directed, produced, wrote, acted in and sold \$5 and \$10 tickets for the movie.

Federico Parrado, a senior and Vice President of Leo Club, was the director and editor of the film. "I wanted to spread the message of the effects of drugs, and it's something I have a passion for. Directing movies is something I plan to pursue."

Along with him, seniors Nathaly Ossa and Anny Rodriguez wrote the scripts for the movie. "As a student, I was able to input many first person experiences from the stress that one as a student can face while at high school. Drugs are something that many try to encounter because they believe it will make it better, and that is what the movie is trying to show, that it doesn't," stated Ossa.

The movie is meant to encourage high school teenagers to take a stand against drugs, by showing the consequences

of taking drugs such as marijuana, methamphetamine, and alcohol.

The movie consisted of clips that parodied several popular shows like "Cops" and "24." The clips dealt with the consequences that each character faced because of their involvement with drugs. The bigger picture was centered on the character, "Adrian" and what occurred to him when he decided to use methamphetamine as an escape from the harsh life of being a teenager.

The film was a spin off project from a play that was performed last year by most of the cast. "It was as much of a success this year as it was last year", stated Parrado.

The 28-minute film's creators hope to raise awareness among teenagers in the community, and influence others to use the arts as to prevent drug usage.

In fact, on May 25<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm the students hope to further their anti-drug message by holding a benefit concert featuring Colt .45 and Seed, as well as by screening their film at school. The film will be shown in Mr. Kevin Simon's class, room 111, and the concert will be held at the courtyard.

The Leo clubbers hope the movie and concert will inspire high school teenagers not to abuse drugs and to promote an anti-drug message through the arts.

## Teacher Takes on New Career in Japan

By Corina Grazutis

Reading teacher Ms. Emily Joffrion will take on a new teaching career in Japan next year. She is participating in the program through a Japanese company called the Nova Group. Ms. Joffrion explains that a friend had participated in the program and came back to America with a broader world view and knowledge of culture. She had always wanted to travel, so she thought that this was a chance she had to take.

Ms. Joffrion was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. As a college student at the University of Miami, Ms. Joffrion had always wanted to study abroad, so she knew there was always a possibility of traveling.

She has lived in many exotic locations such as Amsterdam, the Netherlands. When she lived there she took extended trips throughout Europe to Germany, Switzerland, Greece, France, Spain, Italy, Belgium and England. She has also lived in Kona, Hawaii. Since she loves to travel, she plans on traveling to Louisiana and New York and then spending two months in Italy, Greece and Turkey before her move to Japan.

To prepare for the road ahead of her, she has been taking weekly Japanese lessons along with Miami Beach Senior School ESOL teacher Mr. Dennis Hill. She also has tapes on her iPod, and has been studying a book and flashcards that show her how to pronounce and write the different letters of the Japanese alphabet. "It's hard because I have to learn a whole new alphabet, and Japan has three different dialects," explains Ms. Joffrion.

In Japan, she will be teaching Japanese students aged fifteen and up how to hold a conversation in English. They will learn different phrases, which will help them in English-speaking nations.

Ms. Joffrion is looking forward to learning a new language and culture in Japan, as well as to the adventure and meeting new people. She has never taught anywhere other than Miami, so she is definitely looking forward to the experience ahead of her. Ms. Joffrion loves to travel and

dreams of teaching around the world. She thinks that teaching English is an excellent way to fulfill that dream.

"I think the thing I will miss most about America is the openness and warmth of people here," she says. Ms. Joffrion has been told that in Japan, it is hard to be accepted into the intimate part of peoples' lives.

She says that she will also miss Beach High and its students. "I'm going to miss the carnivals in Beach High, and I'm going to miss the love of life and personalities of the students in the school. I love all of my students and they are all really, really special to me," she states.

Joffrion has no plans to return to Miami Beach after she leave. She desires to live in many places and thinks that she has completed her time here in Florida. "I've had a really good run. I am not leaving with any anger or angst," states Joffrion. "I wish everyone at Beach well. To all my beloved students and faculty, you have taught me so much and for that I am most grateful. I built memories at this school that will remain with me forever. I appreciate the honor of being your teacher, colleague and friend."



*Ms. Joffrion will teach conversational English to Japanese students.*

*Photo by Laura Torres*

## Absolutely Fabulous but Useless Facts

Collected by Miriam Kolker

- If you sleep in a cold room, you are more likely to have a bad dream
- 40,000 Americans are injured by toilets each year
- There are three golf balls sitting on the moon
- Cleopatra wasn't Egyptian; she was Greek
- Babies have no kneecaps when they are born

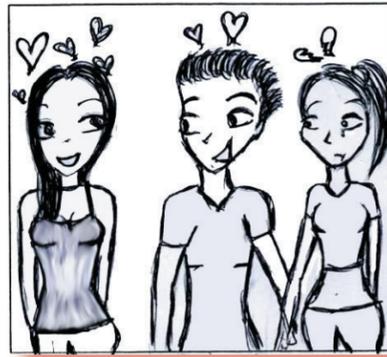
## Your First Love is Art

By Claire Austin

w i t h  
their creations a  
la Pygmalion, Beach High's  
musicians and performers, visual  
artists, and writers often spend hours a day  
honing their crafts. "Great art takes extreme  
dedication," says art teacher Mr. Frank O'Hare,  
who has seen students work on single projects for  
weeks. Bass player James Quinlan, a senior, says that  
music is a "total commitment" and compares his dedication  
to music to the commitment involved in having a girlfriend.  
"After a long day, I want nothing more than to come home  
and spend time with music".

Junior Matthew Llarena, poetry editor of the  
literary art magazine *Embryo*, says he began writing poetry  
in the fourth grade. "That was the first time I felt the need  
to express an abstraction," he explains. Mr. O'Hare believes  
that there is a sort of prototype for artists, who he says are  
more passionate, sensitive, and communicative than non-  
artists. He has noticed, "they love to reach a state of mind  
for their creative mode, when it all comes together". He  
often tells his students to throw themselves into art to  
control situations when others are not controllable.

The value of a creative outlet, explain  
students involved in art, is not only the result  
of their work but also the satisfaction  
derived from the act of creating.  
"More than loving art, I have  
come to love the struggle  
that it represents: the  
struggle to define  
our experience  
of being,"  
enthuses  
Llarena.



Cartoon by Silvie Fojon

## The Game of Love

By Mary Johnson

The  
backstabbing, face-  
slapping, smack-talking soap  
opera world of "Days of our Lives" is  
nothing compared to the drama that goes  
on in a high school student's relationship. It  
is impossible to avoid the tumultuous soap opera  
that some like to call being a teenager. Let's face it;  
most teenagers have a tendency to be a bit selfish, so  
how can they be mature and altruistic enough to be in a  
"committed relationship"?

It has become quite obvious that high school  
relationships are like one big poker game: the players  
keep their cards hidden, and they only allow the other  
players to know what they want them to know. Of course  
the occasional lie, or bluff, is told in order to get what  
is desired. So in short, no one actually admits to what  
is really going on. Dating in general is very much  
the same thing. Those who are in the relationship  
often avoid saying what it is that they truly want to  
say. People often make themselves appear to be  
something that they are not, but if the basis of  
a good relationship is supposed to be honesty  
and trust, then how can a relationship be  
successful if neither partner knows  
what they are really getting into?

This time of year is  
the time that teens seem  
to be looking for  
companionship  
the most.  
Because  
of prom,

students  
are running  
around like chickens trying to  
find a date. But once again, instead  
of just asking the person that they want  
to ask, so many people are going through  
many complicated methods of getting a date.  
Not to be a traitor to my gender, but most of the  
time, it does seem to be the girls who are playing  
most of these games. Normally, the girl sends out an  
informant who can either be her best friend or his. The  
job of the informant is to cleverly find out whether  
or not he is going, if he has a date, and if not, whom  
he wants to take to coronation. All of this must be  
accomplished without giving any indication as to who  
is interested. Many forget that this is just a dance, not  
a CIA mission.

Guys are not exactly innocent in this whole  
situation either. They go into full "player mode,"  
trying to be sweet and sensitive and funny so that  
girls will go out with them. The only sad thing  
is that some girls are actually falling for this  
little game. It is like one big Shakespearian  
comedy.

If teenagers know what  
they want, then they should  
do whatever makes them  
happy, but they should  
also remember to  
think about what  
they are  
getting  
into.

## Friends with Benefits Help and Hurt

By Javiera Hernandez

Serious commitment  
in a romantic relationship at  
a young age is sometimes  
too much to handle. Those  
who deem having a boyfriend  
or girlfriend too time consuming or  
stressful have considered other options  
which are not based on commitment and  
responsibility. To have a "friend with  
benefits" is to have an intimately involved  
relationship physically, but not lovingly.  
Free of commitment and obligation, this  
relationship is said to eliminate jealousy  
because there are no strings attached.

Alanis Morissette writes in her  
song "Out is Through" about the troubles  
with having friends with benefits. She  
sings, "Every time we're in a funk I picture  
a different choice," which illustrates other  
partners a person can have in an open  
relationship. The idea of "friends with  
benefits" may seem like a good one to  
an irresponsible, young, fun-searching  
teenager. Yet, once looked at with a broader  
sense of reality, it can be seen that open  
relationships like these seldom work out.

The premise of the idea is to  
eradicate jealousy while having several "sex  
buddies." However, jealousy surmounts  
more frequently because these friends are  
"shared". The idea that one can involve

himself in acts like this without ever having  
any emotions toward the person is not only  
irresponsible but immature. Josue Rizzo, a  
Beach High senior, and one who has had  
friends with benefits explains, "It's not a  
wise thing to do. One person always has  
more feelings toward the other and then the  
person gets jealous. It ruins friendships."

The idea of these relationships,  
although seemingly new, has been  
around even in the times of the Ancient  
Greeks. It was almost a code of behavior  
between males to partake in shared  
partnerships similar to "friends  
with benefits". In the Grecian  
military, soldiers inspired by the  
Iliad felt that homosexual love  
within their troop would boost  
their morale and make them braver  
warriors. There was even a Sacred  
Band of Thebes; these soldiers were  
picked to be lovers. They truly believed  
that with these accommodations they  
would triumph in the battlefield as fiercer  
warriors. For them, these homosexual  
beneficial friendships within troops were  
something of honor and tradition.

In the late 1960's the free love  
movement supported crossing the fine  
line between sex and friendship. The free  
love movement was against marriage; it

promoted the idea that people were free  
to love whom ever they wanted without  
restrictions. Having several sex partners is  
a norm in the "free love" movement, as it is  
to teenagers who believe in having friends  
with benefits.

To many, this type of open  
relation with a friend seems like a cop out  
from responsibility and from themselves.  
"You either have the guts to be with  
somebody, or you don't. Having a friend  
with benefits seems like an alternative to  
something meaningful," comments  
Rodrigo Pardo, a senior. Still,  
when the people involved in  
this kind of bond are mature,  
it can have positive effects.  
Beneficial friendships still have  
a small possibility of flourishing  
into relationships in the long run.  
Gleider Dominguez, another Beach High  
senior adds, "It all depends on the people  
involved. If they are mature enough then  
they can go ahead."

Having this kind of friendship to  
fall back on when things are rough may be  
an escape for some; friends with benefits  
know they have the comforts of sexual  
activity ready pretty much whenever  
they want it. Having that in the back of  
their minds relieves stress from everyday

situations. These people do not see the  
benefit of real loving relationships; taking  
the easy way out with these flings, however,  
only puts a band aid on a bullet wound.  
Diego Herrada, a Beach High senior who  
has known the benefits of a long lasting  
loving relationship with his girlfriend of  
more than four years believes, "having  
friends with benefits is just milking the  
good things from what a hard working  
relationship is all about."

A real relationship can sometimes  
be scary. It is a situation in which a person  
puts a considerable amount of trust in  
another; the person becomes vulnerable  
to heartache and betrayal. Still, that is  
why real relationships are special, if real  
relationships were as open as beneficial  
friendships, then when two people find  
each other and connect in such a loving  
way the risks would not be as magical.

# Love and Relationships

A Presentation by the Quill and Scroll Honor Society

When Yo

## Revenge is Bittersweet

By Anny Rodriguez

The wonderful feeling of being together with someone can at times be overshadowed by the overwhelming sensation of anger and sadness after being dumped. Soon after the tears have rolled, the anger starts to fill up inside. On some occasions, this anger and sadness leads to action. The end of a relationship is always sad, but keeping control over emotions and feelings is the harder part of the half.

An infamous example involves former astronaut Lisa Nowak, who attempted to kidnap and kill her boyfriend's lover and was fired by NASA and charged with attempting to kidnap. Extreme measures of revenge can have severe consequences, and can always "bite one in the butt" afterwards.

Revenge is sweet, but it is also demented. All acts of revenge have consequences, turning the sweet relief to regret. Cases as such as Nowak's are driven by revenge. One cannot always know what one is doing until one is fully conscious of it. More amateur acts of revenge such as spreading lies and damaging the name of the other person or people can in fact be as damaging as kidnapping someone and hurting them. Yet, sources such as Revengelady.com, a website where people can search ways to get revenge on the other person, influence and feed the need to get back at someone, whether it is healthy or not.

Senseless acts of revenge such as those committed by Mrs. Nina Duval, head of the Fine Arts Academy, can almost be considered a crime: in her early twenties, she saran-wrapped her ex-boyfriend's car as a "retaliation act". Knowing that it would cause damage to his car, she made sure it was done right, and her

ex-boyfriend was unable to enter his car. "I don't remember why I did it, if it was because of a fight or that he dumped me, but my emotions caught up to me and I did it" confessed Mrs. Duval.

Yet, for students who don't have as creative and destructive a mind as dear Mrs. Duval, one way they do get back at one another is through the "telephone game", spreading rumors and making up lies like saying that they were a "bad lover".

A more popular place to get revenge has been the multi use website MySpace. Comments or pictures have been the weapons of choice for these students, and have cause to be very damaging to their target. Changing their sexual preferences on MySpace can be as damaging as wrecking their car.

A Beach High senior, in which to keep her identity anonymous asked us to call her "Naty", confessed to having had many thoughts of revenge, but through reasoning, did not act upon them. "I was once a push from a button away to completely destroy the reputation of an ex-boyfriend. He broke up with me through text, and I got upset. I got pictures of him and [fixed] them to look as if he was kissing another boy. I was planning to email them to my friends, and post them up on MySpace, but in the end, my anger wore off by the time I had made the pictures."

The evolution of the use of revenge has gotten extreme. Whether it is cursing at an ex with a sharpie on a bathroom stall, or planning to kidnap the "other person", or even damaging someone's property, it is bitter sweet revenge that *will* hunt one down.

The atmosphere in the art room is relaxed, but charged with a tangible buzz of creativity. Scattered around the large tables in the center of the room and hidden in the spaces behind equipment and supplies, students immerse themselves in their work with little thought towards the impending dismissal. Among these students is junior Leah Abusiewiez who is helping to put the finishing brush strokes on a poster for the Brazilian Carnival. "I put my art on everything else", says Abusiewiez. "If my thoughts are in two places I will favor the one that leads to an artistic product."

Examples of love as a subject of a creative work range from allegorical and intricately symbolic Renaissance paintings to simple and direct works like Robert Indiana's LOVE sculpture. More often, a loved one has a perceptible impact on the subject or message of a work, regardless of the medium. Senior Emiliano Gioffre, President of the Art Club, puts it more simply: "whoever I love, my thoughts will influence my art".

However, the students interviewed agree that the creative process also inspired devotion to an artistic medium, often opposed to a substance. While the students interviewed do not

## Teen Dating: How Young is Too Young?

By Roberta O. Roberts

High school and adolescence are filled with many firsts: first kiss, first date, first girlfriend or boyfriend. But when is the right time to starting dating and getting serious with another person? Or rather, what is the right age? Some parents would say that teens should not be allowed to date until they are 18. Others don't put any boundaries on the age of their children having relationships at all. There is no right or wrong answer, which is why this makes teen dating such a debatable topic – there are lots of sides to look at.

On one side, many believe that teens are not fully ready for the responsibility of having a meaningful relationship with another person because teen brains are still forming, hormones are surging and dating will distract teens from their school work, or even cause them to become depressed. Some would say that teens are so confused at this time because of all of these new feelings and emotions that they may make the wrong choices or not know how to properly deal with their feelings. It is also known that the female brain doesn't complete development until age 18, and for males the completion of brain development is age 21! So of course there is much adult speculation as to how a 14-year-old girl or boy can actually be in "love" or even "know what love is".

It is also a well-known fact that teens get distracted very easily. A teen might doodle his or her love interests' name in their notebook instead of paying attention in math class, or daydream about the two of them together instead of doing assigned homework. This could lead to

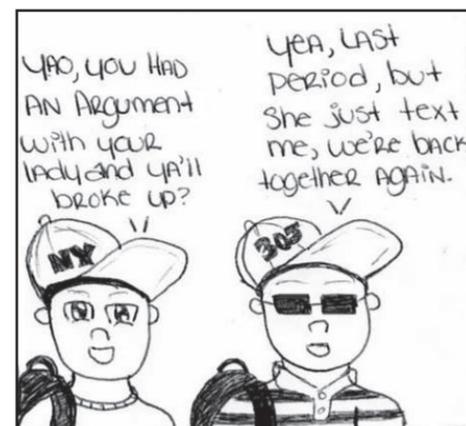
a decline in the quality of a teen's schoolwork or badly hurt their GPA if they can't snap out of it.

Some teens may become depressed after having a bad relationship or getting hurt badly, whether physically or emotionally. This kind of hurt can cause teens to become distrustful adults, never opening their hearts again in fear of being hurt. Sometimes they become abusive adults who, because they were hurt in past relationships, seek to hurt others in new relationships or even promote promiscuity- if they sleep around with many people instead of giving their all to one person, then maybe they won't get hurt or used again. Teen dating could very well cause dysfunctional adults to roam the Earth!

But of course, that's an extreme.

Teen dating can also lead to some of the happiest memories of a person's life. During this time of rapid change and self-doubt, it's nice to know that someone likes you and wants to be with you. Successful dating can lead to happiness, higher self esteem, relationship experience that can aid marriage in the future and the satisfaction in having a companion, someone to talk to and connect with. In fact, some teen relationships lead to healthy, successful marriages. Teen dating allows young people to learn about compromise and compassion and how to make things work.

So as you can see there are many different aspects of teen dating, which means that parents have a lot to think about when the time comes that their child has more than just a "crush". But parents – and teens – should keep in mind that the right time to date depends on the maturity level of a person, not on his or her age.



Cartoon by Karla Colon

# Sports

## Water Polo Teams Survive Season Without Home Pool

By Valeria Palma

The water polo teams were able to have a successful season this year despite difficulties with their training. In the beginning of the third week of March, the pool where their training took place at the FIU Biscayne Bay Campus was closed due to severe structural problems. Both teams had to be moved to the Campus' main pool, which is shallower.

During the third week of March, Coach Charles D. Pilamunga, received a phone call from the aquatics coordinator and was told that the pool was



"Beach on three!" The Boys' Water Polo team gets ready for a game.

Photo by Laura Torres

going to be shut down. Apparently, there was a leak that had been there for a few months and until then, it had been kept under control. Unfortunately, the pool lost 3 feet of water in only one day; if the pool had continued operating, there would have been a daily fine of about \$700.

The coach and teammates then tried to find a pool where they could practice at. "At the moment, we are looking for a facility to train at and we have been

provided with pools from parents that are trying to help," says Coach Pilamunga. The athletes sometimes went to Scott Rakow Youth Center but were required to leave by 4:00. This caused a problem because the students would leave school at 2:30, giving them only one hour and a half to practice

as opposed to the usual two to three hours of training. The boys went to Broward and the girls went to Miami Country Day. With the help of parents and the city of Miami Beach, they were provided with transportation. Principal Dr. Jeanne Friedman even

allowed some of the students to leave school early or during electives to go to the Youth Center and practice. They alternated every other period to leave school and go practice.

According to Alexander Sergov, the water polo team captain, they always came together as a team and figured out how to get a ride. Sometimes after school they went to the club team in West Minister, Fort Lauderdale. They also went to Miami Country Day School on some weekends.

## Senior Football Star Mentors Underclassmen Players

By Julio Tenorio

The high school football playing days are over for Miami Beach senior John "Greg" Jones. He finished playing his last season with the High Tides, with a regrettable record of 0-10, this fall. Despite the season's tough outcome, Jones' love for football was still as strong as ever. He wanted to have some form of impact on the football team before he left, so he decided to help out by mentoring some of the current underclassmen football players who will play his position of wide receiver.

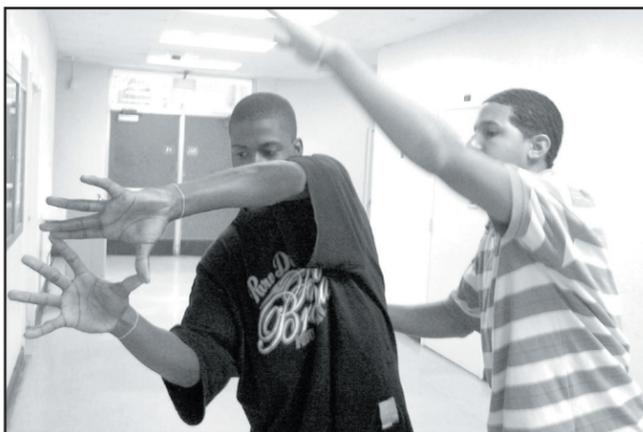
Jones knew that he could teach many valuable things to the underclassmen about playing wide receiver. He started by simply talking to the players and encouraging them to keep working out in order to get better.

He also offered many tips on playing the position, such as what type of gloves to wear, and how to position one's body to better catch the ball. Jones

also took the players to the park and did some heavy conditioning and skill position workouts. "He's been a great influence on the younger kids," states Coach Judd Hayes.

The improvements for the players have been very noticeable. Their work ethics are much improved and this has paid off tremendous dividends. "The passing game figures to be a very important part of our game this year," mentions Coach Hayes, "so it's great that these kids have stepped it up."

Yessid Sanchez, one of the players being mentored, is glad that Greg Jones offered to help out. "This is going to be an important year for me because I want to start and play well," he says, "and Greg has really helped me out by offering his advice." Jones appreciates that the players "suck up the knowledge like sponges." "They're always willing to listen and learn...they're hungry."



Jones demonstrates technique with a younger player.

Photo by Laura Torres

## Tennis Team Swings Into Second

By Jouberte Milfort



Photo courtesy of Yearbook

This year the Lady Hi-Tide tennis team managed to swing their way to a second place finish at districts, an improvement to last year's spot at sixth. "That number two spot is great," says head coach Jonathan Nelson, "but next year we won't be happy with anything less than first."

Coach Nelson says the secret to Beach High's amazing performance lies with its players. "All of the girls have excellent attitudes, making them easier to coach," Nelson explained. "Even though Beach is at an economic disadvantage, the girls work hard."

Unlike a few Miami Dade schools, the Hi-Tides don't have their own tennis courts, putting them in the inconvenient position of having to share the four courts at Nautilus. "We also have a few very dedicated players like Gabriella," says Nelson. Freshman Gabriella Palacios placed second in districts with an amazing record of 7-1.

Although some girls have played since their early years and others take private lessons on a regular basis, they all share a common thread: the love and commitment they have for tennis. "I have played tennis

since I was five," tennis captain Claudia Llanes says, "and I have loved it since the first day." Llanes attributes their success to hard work. "This year, we just worked harder, and we still work on off season."

To improve their tennis skills, the girls practice diligently. "We had mandatory practice every day as well as outside practices," Llanes relays. The girls have also had the opportunity to work with tennis pro Howard Coffman. Coffman works with the players free of charge when he has free time. The girls will also take tennis clinics at the University of Miami over the summer. There, they can learn new skills and sharpen their present ones.

"Next year I expect all the ladies to come back and be stronger," says Head Coach Nelson. The team is expecting an additional "three fabulous freshmen". They will also lose their strong utility player Senior Vanessa Castro. Otherwise, the team is not expecting any changes. With infectious enthusiasm and confidence, Llanes assures, "Next year, we'll be number one!"

## Cheerleading Gets X-treme

By Miriam Kolker

The City of Miami Beach has become a little more extreme with the help of the X-treme Cheerleaders. These girls don't just dance around saying "go team", but work hard to pull off choreography and dangerous stunts.

For the past four years, the X-treme Cheerleaders have developed into a large group of thirty girls dedicated to their sport. "We're very disciplined and work really hard," comments captain Daniella Fernandez, senior at Beach High. "We're not just friends anymore, we're family."

Last year, the team made it to the All Star Division, the national level of competition. In Texas at their first match, they unfortunately didn't make it too far, placing fifth out of five. The team is looking forward to this year's All Star Division in Hershey Park, Pennsylvania. They are attempting to raise \$19,000 to get everyone there.

Besides that one loss, the X-treme has achieved first place at every other game. They have traveled throughout Florida, winning many state championships, and to New York. Fortunately, not a single girl has ever been seriously injured performing a risky stunt or tumbling maneuver.

"Nobody thinks it's a sport - we run, we lift people and throw them in the air; it's a lot of exercise," sophomore Joselyn Martinez explains. The X-treme team meets three times a week at the Scott Rakow Youth Center to train and learn new routines. This

includes mandatory Saturday "crunch time" meets. One of the most difficult stunts that the squad regularly practices is the Basket Toss. Four cheerleaders entwine their hands together to form a box, while a fifth, the flyer, stands on top of the boxed hands. Within a few seconds, the flyer is tossed into the air, performs a toe-touch, and is safely caught.

The Miami Beach Parks and Recreation's Cheerleading Program has been headed by Tracy Austen and Theresa Buigas since its start in 2000. Aspiring cheerleaders

start as early as first grade in the Thunder Tots division. Older children can participate in the the Bolts and Lightning Cheerleading teams. Last December, the Lightning won the first place trophy in the Florida Police Athletic League State Cheerleading

Competition. Students in tenth grade and above can participate in the X-treme team.

It took a while before dance and gymnastics incorporated itself into cheerleading routines. In the 1880s, it began as a way of getting spirit out of the crowd at college football games. Originally, a small group of males would yell out chants. Women became more involved because of a small number of sports they could do. Cheerleading gave women a role on the playing field, and slowly introduced more challenging routines. It was not until the 1970s that cheerleading became a competitive athletic sport.

First recorded cheer chant at Princeton University in the 1880's: "Rah rah rah, tiger tiger tiger, sis sis sis, boom boom boom ahhhhhhh, Princeton Princeton Princeton!!"

# Sports

## Spring Sports Wrap-Up

By Jorge Aranda

This spring, there were five different sports played at Beach High: baseball, softball, boys' and girls' tennis, boys' and girls' track, and boys' and girls' water polo. "Spring did all right," says Coach Edgar Botto, the Athletic Director. "Again they placed a lot of effort in their sports, and hopefully that will lead them to a more successful season next year." Among the highlights this spring was the girls' tennis team finishing second in districts while several track players reached the state final in Winter Park. Here is the final overview for the spring.

The baseball team had an even record this season, with eight wins and losses. "We were young and had to struggle," remarks Lewis Mart, the baseball coach. But a lot of the kids surprised me, like junior Steven Byrnes' pitching, and juniors Camilo Felipe and Sergio Mendez' hitting." The best players this season were senior shortstop Juan Collado, junior outfielder Martin Iglesia and freshman outfielder Marcell Machado. Commenting on next year, "We will have most players coming back so it will be a much more experienced team so we should be able to make the playoffs."

The softball team had a poor record this season with a three win and twelve-loss season. "It was poor, but we improved while the year progressed; the future looks good; I enjoyed it," says Coach Kenneth Speigelman. The best players were senior Michelle Millz, junior Kristine DelSol, sophomore Elia Carranza, and ninth graders Rebecca Scheonas and Sofie Delgado.

The boys' tennis team had an even record this with four wins and losses. "We had a good season, not as strong as we would have liked though," says Coach Aaron Tucker. They still had one boy on the single final and one for the boys' doubles final. The best player was sophomore Thibault Villeneuve who finished second in districts.

The girls' tennis team finished with a seven win and one lost season, losing only to Hialeah High, and second in districts last season. "We had a good crop of freshman from Nautilus this year," notes Coach Jonathon Nelson. Their number one player, freshman Gabriela Palacios, finished second in districts, losing only to a nationally ranked senior from Miami High. Their number four player, freshman Lucia Rojas, and their number five player, freshman Amanda Wright both went undefeated this year. "We will only get better next year,

with the whole team coming back," says Coach Nelson. "Hopefully we can become district champions next year."

The Boys' Water Polo team finished with five wins and six losses this season. "We had a much more united team than last year," says Coach Charles Pilamunga. "We had a good team. Even though the record didn't reflect it, we played a lot of hard teams" The season was almost ruined towards the end of the year, as their main pool in the

did fight hard this season, losing many of their games by two goals or less, including district games against Miami Country Day and MAST Academy. The best players this season were senior Fernanda Conceicao, sophomore twins Melissa and Maeva Mansana, and freshman Erica Graff. As for next year, "We will be competitive, losing only three seniors, so hopefully the girls will gain more experience, so that would lead to a winning record." In the summer, both water polo teams are planning a trip to MIT for training purposes to improve their skills.

The Boys Track and Field team finished thirteenth out of twenty-one teams in district this year. Two of the players, senior pole vaulter Adam Oxios, and junior pole vaulter Andy Bass made it to the state finals in Winter Park. Several other athletes did well this year including senior Michael Louimeus in the long jump and triple jump, and senior Julio Lima for the triple jump and 400 meter run. "Overall, I was somewhat satisfied," says Coach Ronald Hunter, "but

FIU complex had to shut down because of a leak. "We tried to go to the Youth Center but we went from fifteen hours of practice a week to five". Their best players this season were senior Guilherme Cordovil, who was All-Dade First Team as a junior last year, senior Alex Sergov, and junior Jose Mora. As for next year, Pilamunga said that the team is rebuilding. "We are rebuilding, we are losing three seniors, including our two best shooters, so the freshman and sophomores have to carry the load for next year".

when we played against stronger schools, it felt like most of the players lost their competitive spirit. As for next year, Coach Hunter predicts, "I think we will do good next year; there were a lot of freshman who learned from their mistakes."

The Girls Track and Field team finished sixteenth out of twenty-one teams this season. Senior Aymara Diaz reached the state finals this year while sophomore Stephanie D'Angelo, junior Patricia Rodriguez, and freshmen Hali Rodriguez, Rachael Grosz, and Myriam Valdez all reached districts. "Our team was inexperienced this year but was willing to provide maximum effort against opponents," says Coach Sims. "Unfortunately we had equipment for only two events, Pole Vault and High Jump; thus, we seem to excel in this area."

This year was an average year for sports here in Beach High; we excelled in some sports while faired poorly in others. But almost all the athletes put force maximum effort, and hopefully Beach High will have more success on the field next year when our new principal arrives.



The Girls' Water Polo team finished with the same record as the boys with a five win and six loss season. They had the same problem as the boys by losing their pool, so that affected their season, as well. "A lot of struggle, pretty much a young team, we lost our starting goalie [senior Laura Torres] because of an injury, but we still fought hard." said Coach Charles Pilamunga, who was a co-coach with Ms. Sunday Lewandowski. They

## Athletes Make States in Track and Field

By Kyla Zehtab

This weekend MBSH students Aymara Diaz, Adam Oxios, and Andy Bass will compete against other students from all over the state of Florida in track and field.

Aymara Diaz, a senior, will be competing in the high jump under the wing of Coach Dale Sims and excitedly yelled out "Yes!" when asked if she was ready. "I practice every day and really hard," she continued. "Coach really pushes me to do better every day at practice." She added, "The first place winner this year will for sure be this girl who can jump five feet and six inches. I can jump five feet, so we'll see."

Andrew Bass, a junior, is going to States for pole vaulting. "I'm sure if we bring our A-game, we'll win," he laughed. Bass hopes to teach what he learns to incoming pole vaulters.

Adam Oxios, a senior also competing in the pole vault, explains a few different types of events for a track and field meet. They include a 400 meter race, high jump and shot put. Oxios said he was "excited for the meet" and hoping to win.

Apart from staying in shape and eating properly, practicing is what takes that "A-game" to States. Track Coach Sims and pole vaulting coach Mr. David Shanoskie, hope to see their team members come back with medals.

*Want to Join the Beachcomber Staff? Stop by Room 130 During Lunch!*

### Corrections from Last Issue

On the front page of the March issue of the *Beachcomber*, Dr. Friedman's name was misspelled in the caption beneath her picture.

In the article, "Controversial HPV Vaccine May Help Eliminate the Disease," by Nicole Zacroisky, the last sentence was cut off. Senior Natacha Diaz' quote fully said, "Gardasil is an excellent advancement in science; as a woman, I now have a choice to protect myself from HPV."



Have a great summer!

*Photos courtesy of the yearbook.*

## Band Teacher to Hold Anniversary Concert

By Ashlie Handy

This May marks the 35th year since Mr. Clark "Doug" Burris started the Miami Beach High Rock Ensemble. Around this time of year, the Rock Ensemble would usually be putting on its annual Spring Concert; this year, Mr. Burris is going bigger and better for the Rock Ensemble's May 18<sup>th</sup> Commemorative Concert. Each May as the year comes to an



The first instrument Mr. Burris played was a trumpet.

end, Mr. Burris, Rock Ensemble sponsor as well as sound engineering and guitar teacher, is acknowledged for his endless dedication and hard work.

The main changes being made this year from the typical Spring Concert include a change of location

from our school's campus to the Lincoln Theater and a special merge with the school's orchestra and jazz band. "We're going to be playing rock styled songs. I'm excited to be playing a genre of music that I don't usually play," remarks senior Mary Johnson, a violinist with the orchestra.

Along with Mr. Burris, Beach High's new band director Mr. Noah Bellamy is also preparing for the event by working with the jazz band and orchestra for the performance. Guests can expect to see renditions of classics: The Rock Ensemble will play "My Girl," "Sergeant Pepper" and "AJA", among other songs.

Mr. Burris formed the Miami Beach Rock Ensemble in 1972 and has been "rocking the beach" ever since. "Mr. Burris rocks the planet!" exclaimed senior Arielle Vicaria, who is excited about the event.

For anyone interested in attending the concert, tickets are on sale now for \$2 in Room 130 and in the Rock Ensemble room. This event will be held at the Lincoln Road Theater, 541 Lincoln Road.

## Third Annual Film Festival Big Success

By Miriam Kolker

Miami Beach Senior High's Third Annual Film Festival was a pleasurable and successful event. Screened at the intimate Cinematheque on Espanola Way on April 26, the festival exemplified the talent of our student filmmakers. An improvement from eight films being shown last year, twenty-three selections made the cutting board. "We actually could have entered thirty films in the festival but I decided one hour and fifteen minutes of student films was enough," says Ms. Gina Cunningham, Film teacher, who sponsored the night. "The time went by really fast and I consider short events to be the sweetest."

There were a variety of advertisements, public service announcements (PSAs), documentaries, and fiction films. As well as the range of quality, each film captured diverse feelings from the audience.

The PSAs revolved around an international contest for Discovery Kids en Espanol Earth Day PSA Campaign. Senior Juan Gonzalez, junior Joshua Becker, and freshman Jonathan Castro collaborated to create the ultimate winning PSA. Their film illustrated a young boy (Edgar Ruiz) walking through the park, when out of nowhere paper balls are pelted at him. He keeps walking, but finds there is paper in his hat, in his bag, and all around him. Not being able to take it much longer, he collapses in a pile of garbage, and a voice-over pronounces, "The earth doesn't

throw stuff at you, so don't throw stuff at it." This PSA was broadcast internationally throughout the month of April.

At the end of the night, the audience was given a ballot to vote on their favorite film from each category. The tallied scores revealed the winners to be senior Emiliano Gioffre for his fiction film "Confusing Times". "My film was about the confusion teenagers go through," says Gioffre. "I wanted it to impact the audience." Juan Gonzalez, Josh Becker, and Jonathan Castro again for their touching documentary "Being Homeless", and another joint Gonzalez and Becker production for their advertisement in which three boys are on a full-on chase around school until they come upon a giant *Embryo* poster. Gonzalez, Becker, and Castro were the winners yet again for the same PSA that won the Discovery Kids contest. As well as them, Christina Weik was chosen for her sweet film entitled "Help Earth", and third place went to Francisco Fonta, Diego Dominguez, Carlo Fassi, and Ethan Kadosh for their PSA "Take Care of the Earth".

Throughout the evening, mouth watering popcorn and chocolate was available to all for free. "The venue was wonderful, the perfect size, and people really enjoyed themselves," states Ms. Cunningham. "Next year the festival will be much more unified," she predicts, "but this was one of the best student film festivals I've ever seen."

## Freshman Shoots for Screenwriting Fame

By Erin Albert

At the young age of fourteen, freshman Eric Jaffe has already begun writing a screenplay for a movie. The comedy, *A Weinstein Christmas*, is about a young man who has just broken up with his long-time girlfriend. His best friend finally convinces him to get back in the dating world and falls for a girl with whom his friend gets him to dance with. Plenty of things go wrong in their relationship, including the fact that the girl's parents do not want their daughter to date a Jewish boy.

For six months, Jaffe had been working on a Sci-fi novel, but decided to put it on hold until he is finished with the screenplay. "I kept changing it," explains Jaffe. "Eventually, it got so confusing, I had no idea what was happening. I started writing the screenplay as a side project, but it turns out I'm having much more fun writing a screen comedy than the book. So for now, the book's on hold."

Though the movie is not necessarily dedicated to anybody so far, all of the characters in the movie are based on the names and personalities of friends and significant people in his life. "A lot of things inspire me," he comments. "My friends mostly; the movie's based on my real-life experiences, and my friends are obviously a part of that." Later he adds, "And a special thanks to Uto (Bianca Cassouto)."

Additionally, Jaffe has begun using friends as guinea pigs. He has shown parts of the script to some of his close friends to get feedback. Also, on the rare occasion he gets writer's block, he turns to his friends for help. "Usually it's the girl lines that I need help with, so I talk to my girl friends for perspective."

Jaffe has always been a movie-goer and is a very good judge of them as well. "I've been a huge fan of movies for as long as I can remember and I've always wanted to write one," Jaffe remarks about why he decided to write a screenplay. When asked why he did not want to produce or direct movies, he responded, "Writers are the ones who create everything. I'm not really sure what the other guys do."

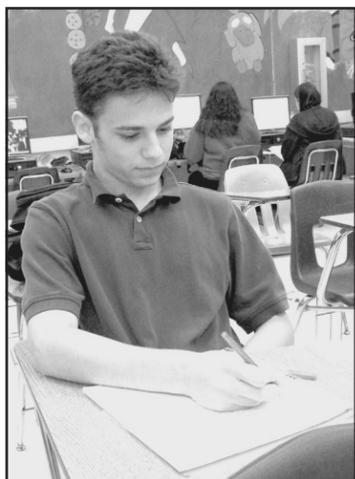
Despite the fact that school and rowing take up most of Jaffe's time, he still finds time to write. "I write at night before I go on AIM and after homework. Sometimes

I write during homework too." In the past month of working on the screenplay, Jaffe has already written about 50 pages. "Most screenplays are about roughly 120 pages, so I'm pacing myself pretty well." Jaffe hopes to be done with the screenplay sometime between the end of the summer and the end of the year.

Getting a movie produced is not an easy thing to do. Jaffe, however, is not worried. "Once I'm done with the manuscript, I'll send it out to different production companies. I think it will do well."

Though he will not have much control if and after the screenplay is produced, Jaffe already has ideas of who he would like to cast. "I think it would be great to have Sacha Baron Cohen play me in the movie and to have Isla Fisher, the girl from *Wedding Crashers*, play my girlfriend and to have Ludacris as one of my friends. I love him; that would be amazing. I would also really like to cast my friend Alicia to help her out with her aspiring acting career," he says.

Based on how successful his script turns out, Jaffe also hopes to write a sequel—after finishing his sci-fi novel, of course.



Eric Jaffe has been working hard to achieve his goal of writing a complete movie script, as well as a sci-fi novel.

Photo by Laura Torres

## Seniors Perform in Heat Marching Band

By Lindsey Gale

Seniors Andres Pineda, Cyrus Ghodsi, and Patrick Devine, are dedicated members of the MBSH marching band and are also the youngest members of the Miami Heat's official marching band. Pineda, Ghodsi and Devine all have a passion for music and do everything they can to follow it.

Band members have practice on Tuesday through Thursday, from 6:30pm-8:30pm. They perform during games and other events related to the Heat, such as parades, carnivals and festivals. As members of the Miami Heat Band, the students get paid \$50 for performing at a game and \$100 to \$200 for performances at big events. Pineda, Ghodsi, and Devine play at only home games and do not travel with the basketball team to away games. "The farthest I have gone was Busch Gardens," stated Devine. So far, the three seniors have performed at over 500 games and other events.

As the youngest members in the band, they look up to the other members and try to learn from them. According to Ghodsi, the older members on the band are like mentors. The students all joined the marching band for similar reasons: Pineda joined because "Beach High did not have a marching band and it seemed like a great opportunity," Ghodsi joined because "It was a once in a lifetime opportunity and it sounded really fun," and Devine had joined because "I knew that it would be a learning experience."

The musicians say that compared to the school's band, the Miami Heat Band is more rigorous. "The school band is not as much work and the Heat Band is very professional, and you are always being watched," states Pineda. Pineda and



Cyrus and Andres are active members of the marching band here and hope to incorporate their love of music into their futures.

Photo by Laura Torres

Ghodsi were both inspired by the same man, former band director Juan Ramos. Devine was inspired by Mr. Kevin Simon, world history teacher and drum corps leader. Pineda and Ghodsi have other hobbies along with the marching band, like "swimming, basketball, working out, and girls," as Ghodsi says. Some of Devine's other hobbies are making beats with his friends.

Pineda, Ghodsi, and Devine all plan to pursue music-related careers. Ghodsi and Devine would like to pursue music production and Pineda would like to perform music. Currently Ghodsi and Devine are making beats, and say "whoever wants just holla at us." After graduating from high school, Devine plans on going to "Miami Dade for two years and then transferring to Florida A&M University with a full scholarship to be in their Marching Band." Pineda's greatest accomplishments in the band have been showing up to rehearsal and games and Ghodsi's have been playing the National Anthem. So what is it like to play in front of thousands of people? "It is nerve-wrecking, but you get used to it," states Pineda.

# Opinions & Editorials

## Dear Students and Staff Members:

On March 16, 2000, I was informed by the Region Superintendent that I had been appointed principal of Miami Beach Senior High School. It was one of the proudest moments of my life. From the start, I found myself falling in love with my new assignment. Beach High has been a part of my life now for almost eight years. It will always remain so.

The school is, indeed, a unique public high school...a place of excellence and a place where diversity is accepted and youth become civic-minded adults. I truly believe that the school's programs are strong – with a sound faculty and staff in place. I also believe that there are many outstanding opportunities available for all students, and the school's PTA serves as the heart beat to ensure we stay afloat.

I have been privileged to work with you and other members of the school community. Hopefully, my involvement has helped shape the high school into the institution it is today.

In essence, I have tried to live up to the school's traditions during my tenure. Now it is time for another administrator to take the helm, Dr. Rosann Sidener. With you standing port, starboard and in the watch tower, Beach High will continue to go full speed ahead toward the future.

I wish each of you what you have given me, success and happiness.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Friedman

## End of Year a Time for Reflection

The end of the school year is often a time for reflection as well as well-earned celebration for Beach High students, especially those graduating. As the student body looks back, it may consider decisions hastily made and the unintended consequences of those decisions. We may have ignored a gut feeling that something was wrong, trusted someone we felt unsure about, or had a few drinks and decided we were lucid enough to drive.

It is always tragic when a young person passes away, but Diana's death was not the first of Beach High's losses in road collisions, nor will it be the last. Just two years ago, two students died drag racing on Pine Tree Drive.

Last issue, a school safety article cited the gunmen at the now-infamous West Nickel Mines School and Columbine High as examples of individuals committing terrible wrongs in what should be safe environments. The Virginia Tech shootings in many ways seemed to follow a disturbing formula: sick, angry loner goes on shooting rampage, innocent young people die, and in the end a nation is left shocked.

In their coverage of the shooting's aftermath, the national media often suggested that the scariest thing about the event was that it didn't feel as shocking as they felt it should have. The cause of this is not just the large-scale mass murders in schools; think of the hundreds

of young people lost to gang violence and car accidents every day. All of these senseless, sorrowful deaths bring about calls for reform and community action, but millions of people unprepared to get behind the wheel of a car or the trigger of a gun still do so.

How many shootings will it take for the nation to enact better gun control? How many intoxicated car crashes will it take for better monitoring of liquor and driver's licenses, or for teens to get the message that they really are capable of dying?

Much like the perpetrators of the graffiti and littering that the SACS committee found harmful to the educational environment at MBSH, only one person has to succeed at making something life threatening to make things like drunk driving or gun glamorization morally acceptable, or—even more dangerous—cool.

Because of our self-conscious social interactions and impressionable dispositions, anything one of us does is subject to either criticism or emulation. Have respect for other teenagers by refusing to encourage imitation as the one who survives making a dangerous and ill-advised decision, and have respect for yourself by not risking the chance of being among the thousands who do not.

Have a fun summer, have a fascinating and enjoyable rest of your life, keep safe, and above all think.

## Miami Beach Senior High School

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*The Beachcomber is a student-run publication of Miami Beach Senior High School. The Editorial perspective reflects the opinion of the Editorial Board. Opinion columns and letters represent the views of the writers and are not necessarily the opinion of the Editorial Board, its faculty advisors, or Miami Beach Senior High School. The main objective of the staff is to inform, stimulate, and entertain the student body and faculty. While achieving these goals, the staff strives to provide fair, accurate and timely articles of relevance to Miami Beach Senior High School. Advertisements do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Editorial Board, its faculty, or Miami Beach Senior High School. The Beachcomber accepts letters to the editor, sent to room 130 or by e-mail to comberpap@aol.com.*

Principal - Dr. Jeanne Friedman  
Journalism Advisor - Mrs. Nina Duval

## Letters to the Editor

### P.E. Credit Should be Earned the Right Way

Dear Editor,

I'm writing in response to the article from your sports section in the March issue about student athletes who want a P.E. credit. I can see two different opinions and I can relate and argue both of them. First of all, we all acknowledge the obesity problem in America. But even after school replaced soda cans with juice bottles it wasn't enough for students to start leading healthy lifestyles. So P.E. courses should be required for all the students to ensure at least minimal physical education and to spark further interest in sports and to encourage every student to lead a healthy lifestyle.

But on the other hand, we have plenty of student athletes who don't need the course and would rather take required academic courses. Student athletes devote a lot of their time, either in school or after it, to practice their sport and they should be given some credit for it.

In my opinion, to reach a consensus, the idea of giving tests for P.E. before putting students in that class is the fairest thing to do. Most of student athletes would pass those tests and wouldn't have to worry about a P.E. course, gaining credit for what they already practice. And if they fail the test, oh well, I think it's just fair enough that they should earn that credit. In either case, students should *deserve* their P.E. credit.

Anna Bulusheva

### Cum Laude System Disappointing

Dear Editor,

I was shocked and horrified when I read in the Beachcomber's last issue that numerical class rank had been dropped. I must admit that in the past, when I (and many others like me) looked to my "glorified idea" of senior year, I pictured myself in a high rank as a sign of the hard work that I had accomplished in high school in comparison to the rest of the class. The fact the Cum Laude system will be instituted next year is (and this is an understatement) a tad disappointing.

Many claim that without ranking, competition will die down amongst the students, but in reality the competition for rank has just been shifted now to who has the best SAT scores. Great; one day of testing will now mainly determine what schools you're accepted to versus four years' worth of work.

Lucy Porras

### Winter Drumline Misunderstood

Dear Editor,

In the article "Drum Line Students Get Chance to Compete" by Javiera Hernandez, there are several items I would like to critique. To start off, drumline is one word. Every time it was used in the article it was spelled "drum line" and once correctly as "drumline." "Winter drum line is much like a marching band," is false information. Winter Drumline is nothing like a marching band. A marching band is simply a band of musicians that march along with a drum line on a field. Winter Drumline is a group of drummers marching on a tarp in a gym with a pit of musicians on the sidelines. But, those are about the only bones I have to pick with the article. The remainder of the article is well written and I enjoyed reading about something that I was part of. It makes me feel proud as I remember all of our hard work as a group of musicians that never knew something like winter drumline existed.

Sonya Brown

### Upset Over Loss of Student

*Diana Centeno seems to be loved by all. Although I am probably one of the worst reporters to be writing about such a serious incident, I can't help but be touched. Everywhere I go, all I seem to find is compliments and sad looks of the classmates that surrounded her. There were no scorned looks, no bottled anger, no hidden looks against me asking some questions.*

*I myself, although no relation to her, can't help but feel deep sadness for her death. She was one of many that rode my bus to school and back home. I was a sort of onlooker, for I couldn't help but wonder her resemblance to my older sister. There was quietness, an ease, a look to her that had me wondering. She had the quick smile to her face, gentle features, and straight brownish hair and every time I looked at her I still couldn't shake the feeling that she looked like my sister.*

*So when I heard of her death, it was like the death of someone close. A cold flush flooded my face and I stood shocked still as I stared at one of my classmate's phone where a picture of her was taken. I couldn't believe it; it's unreal how quick life and death can linger so close. Some can argue that Diana's death was predestined, that she was meant to die, and in her memory life can be truly cherished. My condolences to all of Diana's closest friends, and to her family.*

Stephanie Caceres

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The Beachcomber Staff would like to thank Mr. Brown for his proof-reading assistance throughout the year.  
**THANK YOU!!!**

## VISIT US ONLINE!

To reach the Beachcomber on Beach High's website go to:

1. <http://miamibeachhigh.dadeschools.net>
2. Click on "Students" on the top of the site that is in red and white.
3. Click on Beachcomber (newspaper) that is on the left hand side in the red column.

Goodbye and  
Good Luck  
**Class of 2007!**

## Prom Has Finally Arrived

By Rebecca Budhoo

Students are eagerly awaiting the arrival of prom this weekend at the Deauville Hotel on 6701 Collins Avenue in Miami Beach. All of the exciting action takes place in the Napoleon ballroom from 7:00 p.m. to midnight. Tickets were on sale for seventy dollars a piece until Monday.

Seniors chose this year's theme, "All That Jazz", by voting with a ballot during government and economics classes. Students will receive a keepsake at the prom: a champagne glass engraved with "Class of 07" in black.

Some difficulties in planning and getting every thing set up occurred. Mr. Eduardo Devarona, Student Activities Director, states, "The most difficult part of the prom was planning the menu." Mr. Devarona had a week and a half to choose one full meal, and could not get the students to vote for one since time was running short.

Luckily, former Activities Director Ms. Lavinia Gangwani made the reservations at the hotel before she

went on a leave of absence. Student Government had three meetings to decide all the preparations needed for this year's prom.

Another major concern involves having enough security at the event. School security along with the Miami Beach police will be in attendance from the beginning of the prom to the end, to make sure that everything is under control and that no fights occur.

Mr. Devarona has been planning the proms at Beach High for twenty years. This particular prom is different from others he has helped organize in that he is in charge for the first time. Three weeks before the prom, Mr. Devarona said, "We are far behind in selling tickets; we should have been able to sell at least half by now"; five hundred needed to be sold.

However, the tickets have been sold and prom will hopefully run smoothly. With the decorations ready, meals ordered, and the hotel booked for the event, everyone can just relax and have a great time at the 2007 prom.



National Honor Society recruits lucky sophomores for next year.  
Photo by Laura Torres

Here's what to do when you're done reading the newspaper...

*The Simple Swan* By Alba DaRocha

1. First, fold the paper in half and unfold. Second, fold left and right to center crease.

2. Step 1 completed.

3. Fold left and right corners to center.

4. Fold bottom tip up to top tip.

5. Fold tip down.

6. Fold in half to back.

7. Lift up head and neck.

The completed swan!

## Back Page Pics



Joselyn Martinez can sure kick balls, like this sculpture on the Memphis, Tennessee trip.  
Photo by Silvie Fojom



Adam Oxios and Andy Bass defy gravity as Mr. Shanoskie coaches.  
Photos by Valeria Palma



↑ Winners of the Mr. GQ and Ms. Vogue contest strike a pose.  
← Fellow contestants grease up the competition.  
Photos by Valeria Palma