QCC Mock Trial Team Returns from Yale with Pride

BY OLUWADAMISI K. ATANDA and Dr. J. FALK

It was a brisk day on the 11th of February. The college was closed to all except a team of seventeen students and four staff members who made up the 2011 Queensborough Mock Trial Team representing the college in the 2011 New Haven Regional American Mock Trial Association Tournament (AMTA) at Yale University in Connecticut.

The college team was one of 27 teams in the tournament, including teams from Yale, Brown, Dartmouth, Princeton, Cornell, Boston College, Tufts, Yeshiva University, and Roger Williams University. The case being tried was a strict liability/negligence per se case brought against a toy manufacturer by the parent of a two-year-old child who died after ingesting beads from his older sister’s make-your-own jewelry set manufactured by the toy company. Team members presented opening and closing statements, introduced evidence, conducted direct and cross examinations, and role-played as witnesses in mock trials in which panels of three volunteer lawyers presided as mock jurors and judges.

Our school was the only community college team in the regional tournament at Yale and is believed to be one of four community colleges in the national tournament in which approximately 500 colleges and universities compete by trying the same case from both the plaintiff’s and defendant’s side.

The team received strong support from the team’s faculty advisors, Prof. Ted Rosen, Prof. Stephen Hammel, Prof. Kelly Ford, Prof. Edward Hannsen and Ms. Bonnie Cook, the QCC family, the President of the College, Dr. D. Call, and the Chairman of the Business Department. Dr. J. Falik paid the team an unprecedented visit at New Haven, Connecticut.

The team’s many months of practice, scrimmages, sacrificed weekends, and after school hours and efforts weren’t wasted. Team members Oluwadamisi K. Atanda, Ilia Barabadze, Andrea Barnes, Mario Del Mural, Mani Dhir, Reynaldo Diaz, Randy Farcier, Andrew Kim, Helen Kwok, Elizabeth Lara, Shrikant Sam Mishra, SafaQuereshi, Marilyn Rodriguez, Jenny Saul, Jeremy St. Clair, Jorge Vasquez, and Owen Yun won the “Spirit of AMTA” award which is given to one of the 27 teams in the regional tournament that best exemplifies AMTA’s ideals of honesty, civility and fair play. The selection of the winner of the award is determined by ratings submitted for each team by their “opposing counsel” during the first round of AMTA. The college team was one of 27 teams in the national tournament that best exemplifies AMTA’s ideals of honesty, civility and fair play.

The college team was one of 27 teams in the national tournament that best exemplifies AMTA’s ideals of honesty, civility and fair play.
CUNY Says NO to Smoking!

By OLUWADAMISI K. ATANDA

Queensborough Communiqué, March 2011

It started with visible signs posted on buildings and entrances on campus. The warnings, “No Smoking 25 inches from Building” or “Smoke Free Campus,” were loud and clear, though many ignored the signs and continued to smoke.

CUNY, however, has taken its ban on smoking one step further. Through its website, CUNY announced the total smoking ban in all CUNY facilities, including Queensborough Community College. The announcement gained heavy media attention and many have described the decision as a bold move. CUNY is the nation’s largest urban university system.

The board Chairperson Benno Schmidt and Chancellor Matthew Goldstein said, “As the nation’s largest urban public university, as a source of thousands of health-profession graduates and as the home of the new CUNY School of Public Health, CUNY has an opportunity — and a responsibility — to set appropriate standards as an example for universities seeking to protect the health of their students and employees.”

Catherine Rampell’s New York Times article mentioned “About one in five American adults smokes.” The article, “The United States of Smokers,” chronicled the close relationship with education and tobacco tax policies. But when CUNY’s policy is enforced in September 2012, what will be the effects of the total ban on smoking? How receptive will the QCC community be to the policy?

Ms. Bonnie Cook of the Learning Center spoke about the recent decision to ban smoking in all CUNY schools. She said, “It’s a difficult issue for a lot of people. I feel very badly for people that smoke. I used to smoke. It’s very addictive, and even though I no longer smoke, I remember the wonderful feeling I would get when I did. So, I feel badly, but I also understand, of course, like the majority of people, that we have to think not just about what gives us pleasure but the health of everyone.”

As the world becomes bigger in population and more dense, I believe we all have to give up some rights that we used to think we used to have in order for us to become healthier and all move along.”

Bruce Naples, the Director of the Academic Computing Center at QCC also commented on the recent ban. “From the health perspective, it is necessary, but I certainly understand that there are strong feelings on both sides of the issue. Having been a smoker in the past myself, I can understand the concept of an addiction and how difficult a smoking ban would be on people’s lives. It’s a serious health issue and certainly the main reason why I stopped smoking, and others need to stop smoking for their health. I think that [the health of everyone] is a very, very important consideration.” He also said, “I think everyone’s rights have to be taken into account—on both sides.” Unlike some students and staff members, he doesn’t believe that an area should be designated for smokers. “The concentration of smoke in such an area would make it very lethal for those who inhabit that area.”

The opinion of students, however, varies. Selena Roberto, a freshman, said, “I think it [the ban on smoking] is good. I’m tired of the smell of smoke, and I don’t want to die from second hand smoke.” Kim Hunter, a part-time student activities coordinator, agreed. “I hope it [the ban] goes forth. It’s for a good cause. Smoking leads to a lot of diseases. It would kind of force people to break the habit. The long term intentions surpass the short term concerns. Another student, who chose to remain anonymous, said, “I think everyone’s rights have to be taken into account—on both sides.”

Vice President of Student Activities, Ms. Ellen F. Hartigan, said that she truly does understand smokers and non-smokers. She stressed the importance of the greater good and how the intentions are all for a purposeful and general benefit. She compared smoking to drinking, saying, “Drinking is not illegal, but you can’t go into an automobile and drive if you’re under the influence of alcohol. Why? Because you can either harm yourself or others. Drinking isn’t illegal, getting drunk is not illegal. If I choose to sit home and drink two gallons of vodka, this is not illegal, but what is illegal is when it’s harmful to others.”

VP Hartigan pointed out that similar campaigns, such as the concern over salt and sugar intakes, aren’t restrictive or harmful, that they are for the people’s benefit. But she also reaffirmed that she and her office will fully ensure our liberty as individuals and will support any decision that is for our improvement and is beneficial to all QCC students.
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LOCAL NEWS

No More Smoking?

By Salma Shirzad

Mayor Bloomberg addressed people after the vote, saying “This summer, New Yorkers who go to our parks and beaches for some fresh air and fun will be able to breathe even cleaner air and sit on a beach not littered with cigarette butts,” according to The Huffington Post. The majority of 36-12 voted for the ban as reported by the New York Times. Those who support the ban are excited to say that they can work and play in an environment where second hand smoke won’t risk their health.

Council Speaker Christine Quinn expressed her view, saying “The statistics don’t lie: second hand smoke kills. With this bill, all New Yorkers can now breathe easier and breathe cleaner air.” She also added that she will look for other ways in which the city can be free of second hand smoke.

Even some smokers are supporting the law. They say that they will just have to smoke in other areas because they do understand the risks of second hand smoke. At the same time, though, many protesters want their voices heard. They claim that the ban is a violation of their individual rights and freedoms. Some protesters, such as Councilman Daniel J. Halloran of Queens, believe the ban sets the precedence for further government interference in the private lives of smokers. In the New York Times, he stated, “Once we pass this, will next be banning smoking on sidewalks, and then in the cars of people who are driving minors and then in the homes.”

A New York Times editorial expressed the strong opposition to the law and its violations. “No smoking at the crossroads of the world? The vortex of tourism that brings smokers and nonsmokers in great numbers? The site of the world’s most famous New Year’s Eve party, where who knows what, goes on? All of this takes the mayor’s nannying too far, even for those of us who want to avoid the hazards of second hand smoke.”

The Department of Parks and recreation will be in charge of enforcing the law, having the power to give fines of 50 dollars. So, from this point on, smoking on sidewalks in New York City will be allowed, but when New Yorkers and tourists alike enter a park, beach, or a pedestrian plaza, such as the one in Times Square, smoking will be off limits.

The Chinese New Year Celebration

By Luisa Rodriguez

The Chinese New Year, also known as the Lunar New Year, is the most important of the traditional Chinese holidays. The year of the Rabbit signifies that the people born in this year are full of luck; they have loving personalities yet have a strong sense of justice. The rabbit is a symbol of mercy and elegance. “It is a year of passion,” said Natalie Chiem, a half Chinese, half European bystander. “This parade was bigger than the one in Chinatown, maybe because the streets were wider,” she added. This was the first time she saw Flushing’s parade. Traditionally, two parades are given, one in Chinatown, Manhattan and the second on Main St. in Flushing.

Bands of women and men with drums and gongs played the traditional Chinese music. Some of the songs were relaxing, and some were very energetic. The energy from the music made the performances and dancing entertaining. Besides the parade’s amusing quality, it was enjoyed more comfortably because of the weather. “The weather is great,” Cy Lee said, a Chinese onlooker who missed the Chinatown parade. “Two years ago, it was twenty degrees out.” The families were all lucky because as the parade finished early at 12:20 PM, the weather completely changed; it started to snow.

On Saturday, February 11th, many Chinese and Korean families were happily celebrating the Year of the Rabbit! By ten o’clock in the morning, Flushing was packed From Union Street all the way around Main Street to College Point Blvd. for the Lunar New Year Parade beginning at 11 AM to 1 PM.
We are constantly bombarded by talks and suggestions of eating healthier by our parents and the media, but it seems some of us might have an appropriate (or unavoidable) excuse now.

Mexico as well as some parts of the U.S., including Florida and Texas, were hit with freezing temperatures earlier this year that damaged a large portion of the vegetables we consume on a daily basis. The freeze has led restaurants and markets to inflate prices while searching for other sources. The "vegetable drought," as The New York Times calls it, has even reported that salad bars are, well, without salads.

The Times reported, “For instance, a Sweet Tomatoes restaurant… posted a sign Saturday saying, ‘Mother Nature Strikes Again,’ and listed the veggies that are currently not being offered at the salad bar.” You might also want to double-check your next hamburger at Wendy’s, since the chain now temporarily requires customers to make a separate request for tomatoes.

The alarming varieties of vegetables affected include tomatoes, green beans, and asparagus, with cucumbers and bell peppers being the most expensive, according to The Dispatch and The Independent.

Sysco Corp., a food-service distributor, stated through The Dispatch, “These growing regions haven’t had a cold like this in over a half-century… Immediate volatile prices, expected limited availability, and mediocre quality at best. This will not only have an immediate impact on supplies, but because of very strong blossom drops, this will also impact supplies 30 to 60 days from now.”

With the drought expected to last until April, another interesting movement just might catch more attention as the U.S. deals with the shortages. Called the “food movement” by environmentalists, the movement aims to change the way Americans eat by developing a healthier diet through the promotion of urban gardening.

Although it is an unrealistic response to the current shortage, the long-term benefits it lists, such as healthier food and fighting green-house gas emissions and water pollution, might sway others to the organic, “home-grown” side of food and, thus, ease the dependency on foreign sources.

According to the Mother Nature Network, vegetable gardens can begin as early as March to ensure a supply of fresh vegetables by April. If gardening really is not your thing, you might want to try the network’s other recommendations, such as stocking up on frozen vegetables before prices rise higher and/or hitting up the bargains by asking for ripe produce in the manager’s specials bins.
Plants and Your Health

Imagine living a more comfortable, manageable life. Much of this can be achieved in a natural, cheap way. The effects of plants go unnoticed by most of the public. Plants offer many uses. They have been used in medicine for thousands of years and in different cultures. They continue to be an effective treatment for ailments.

The lavender plant, used in many soaps and perfumes, has antibacterial properties. It can be used to treat muscle sores, relieve stress and provide a nice mild aroma. Not only does the scent of lavender relax one’s body, but it also triggers a stronger relaxation and can be used to treat anxiety. It is also a myth that when worn by women, the scent has the ability to seduce men.

Another plant, sandalwood, is also very useful. It is very popular in Asia and not without reason. Sandalwood has an earthy scent and contains regenerative properties similar to that of vitamin E. It can be used to moisturize and heal skin.

A plant which almost all people are familiar with is mint. It is very useful for maintaining oral health. A healthy vegetarian’s diet lacks fast-food and meats such as beef, pork, chicken, and fish, but it is full of fruits like berries, avocados, apples, strawberries, bananas, and raspberries. But vegetarians also indulge in meals with eggs, honey and other animal products as well as whole wheat and whole grains. Pescetarians are similar to vegetarians, but their only meat intake comes from seafood. Vegans, vegetarians and pescetarians consume a large amount of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and grains. A vegan does not eat any products produced from animals. Vegans do not eat processed foods, red meat, poultry, dairy products, eggs, and even honey. Their meals are filled with vegetables, such as broccoli, spinach, peas, lettuce, and cucumbers. A healthy vegetarian’s diet lacks fast-food and meats such as beef, pork, chicken, and fish, but is full of fruits like berries, avocados, apples, strawberries, bananas, and raspberries. But vegetarians also indulge in meals with eggs, honey and other animal products as well as whole wheat and whole grains. Pescetarians are similar to vegetarians, but their only meat intake comes from seafood.

It will be tough to completely stop eating turkey, chicken, pork, and beef, but with these small steps, becoming a vegetarian can be easy and life changing:

1. Establish good reasons why you want to become a vegetarian.
2. Read and research as much as possible about vegetarianism.
3. Do not completely give up all meat choices at once. First, try substituting sea food, chicken and turkey meat for red meat.
4. Instead of purchasing junk food, buy products filled with fiber, grains, walnuts, almonds, and fruits.
5. Fill your dinner plate with more vegetables rather than carbohydrates.
6. Make your associates (family and friends) aware of this change so you aren’t tempted to cheat.
7. Plan each meal, and give yourself time to cook your meals.
8. Keep this commitment fun and desirable.

There are several benefits of becoming a vegetarian. One very important benefit is the lowered risk of getting diseases such as heart disease, kidney disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and obesity. Also, vegetarians consume less calories and more protein, which results in weight loss. Another benefit is higher energy levels, especially in the morning and throughout the day on a daily basis. As you remain committed to the eight steps, you will feel more vibrant because you will not be eating unhealthy foods that will tire you out. And because vegetarians eat more fruits and vegetables, beans, whole wheat, whole grains and less meat, their skin is healthier, and the high fiber diet will improve their digestive system.

Becoming a vegetarian can seem impossible, and even if you’ve tried it once or twice in the past, following these simple guidelines will steer you in the right direction. So, here is the challenge: For the next seven days, follow these eight simple steps to a healthy lifestyle.

Eight Great Steps to Become a Vegetarian

By GERALIE M. MIDDLETON

With all the influences from magazines, such as NYLON, and reality shows like Running Russell Simmons on the Oxygen Network, many people are hopping on the healthy train and re-shaping their lives by becoming vegetarians. But in order to change what and how we eat, we must take a few steps patiently and slowly.

There are many different types of vegetarians. Vegans, vegetarians and pescetarians consume a large amount of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and grains. A vegan does not eat any products produced from animals. Vegans do not eat processed foods, red meat, poultry, dairy products, eggs, and even honey. Their meals are filled with vegetables, such as broccoli, spinach, peas, lettuce, and cucumbers. A healthy vegetarian’s diet lacks fast-food and meats such as beef, pork, chicken, and fish, but is full of fruits like berries, avocados, apples, strawberries, bananas, and raspberries. Vegetarians also indulge in meals with eggs, honey, and other animal products as well as whole wheat and whole grains. Pescetarians are similar to vegetarians, but their only meat intake comes from seafood.

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Health Benefits of Dark Chocolate

By Fiona Ng

If someone tells you that eating dark chocolate is beneficial for your health, would you believe that person? As a matter of fact, dark chocolate is beneficial for people of all ages and may contribute to the improvement of cardiovascular health. According to About.com, studies have shown that consuming a small bar of dark chocolate everyday can reduce high blood pressure and also lower up to 10% of the bad cholesterol.

Dark chocolate contains the highest source of antioxidants, almost twice the amount of antioxidants in red wine and over ten times more than those in blueberries. Antioxidants are beneficial because they help protect the body from harmful molecules, thus slowing down the aging process and protecting the body against heart problems. Dark chocolate also stimulates endorphin production, which gives a feeling of pleasure and stimulates serotonin that acts as an anti-depressant.

Although these benefits might be good reasons to start eating dark chocolate, it doesn’t mean we should gorge on it daily, nor does it mean anything that has chocolate in it or on it is healthy. According to WebMD, dark chocolate still contains lots of fats, sugars, and calories, especially chocolate with added fillings or toppings. Only about one to two ounces of dark chocolate should be eaten once in a while and definitely NOT with a glass of milk; according to About.com, drinking milk can wash down the antioxidants being absorbed or used by the body.

Jacksonville.com recommends that chocolate with at least 70% of cocoa should be eaten instead of milk or white chocolate. Milk and white chocolate contain fewer antioxidants and have even more sugar, making both types of chocolate unhealthy. In fact, according to Topendexports.com, milk chocolate is either made with milk powder or has condensed milk added in. As for white chocolate, it does not contain cocoa solids and is confection based on cocoa butter, which means it’s not really chocolate at all! So, the next time you feel the need to indulge yourself with chocolate, don’t feel guilty about it. Just go for dark.
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Body Image and Eating Disorders

By Yaheida Tait

In February, QCC hosted a lecture directed by Kaitlin Doyle, a health educator at Long Island Jewish hospital. She spoke about body image and eating disorders, NES (night eating), binge eating, and Pica, a pattern of eating non-food materials such as animal feces, clay, paint, dirt, hair balls and sand, and some common disorders such as Bulimia and Anorexia. She also spoke about maintaining a cycle of positive thoughts; according to Doyle, if more young girls practiced loving themselves and accepting themselves, body image issues and eating disorders wouldn’t be at an all-time high.

75% of college women at a normal body rate think about their weight constantly. Body image is a perception of how we look at our bodies and how we feel about physical appearance in general. Half of the United States suffers with body image related issues or knows of someone who is suffering.

Also, 70% of girls say that magazines affect the way they perceive their bodies; they do not realize that the images we see in magazines do not reflect reality. For instance, the photos of celebrities and models undergo air brushing and waist cinching with the help of a computer. Young girls, however, only see what seems to be a perfect instance, the photos of celebrities and models undergo air images we see in magazines do not reflect reality. For example, the photos of celebrities and models undergo air brushing and waist cinching with the help of a computer. 

Anorexia and bulimia are common eating disorders. Anorexia is Greek for loss of appetite; the disorder involves a constant fear of gaining weight, and the sufferers of this illness take drastic measures to keep from gaining weight, including starvation and forced vomiting, to attain these unrealistic beauty standards.

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There are many advantages to eating healthier and exercising. Students need to notice that fast food seems to make them more lethargic and unfocused. Processed foods high in fat and sugar are not the types of food college students need in their daily diets. If a student replaces those large fries with a nutritional snack, such as fruit, he or she will feel more energized and focused than he or she would after gulping down a Big Mac at McDonald’s. In addition to changing eating habits, students should also try cardiovascular activities, such as aerobics, Zumba classes, kickboxing or dance classes. QCC offers many physical education courses, such as aerobics, multiple dance classes, swimming, tennis, tai-chi, and yoga. The key to keeping an exercise routine new and fresh is to find an interesting activity that is enjoyable. So, no more excuses; take a step toward that healthier lifestyle the body deserves!
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Life During and After Prison

By Christina Ksiez

On Wednesday February 16, QCC’s Criminal Justice program brought a formerly incarcerated man to speak about his life before, during and after his imprisonment for 26 years.

Charles Penson was arrested for felony murder during his involvement in a robbery; originally he was expected to be sentenced for 15 years, but he felt that he should take his chances with the court, since he was not the shooter. But he was given 26 years, instead. Penson, however, does not regret his decision to take his case to court.

During his time in prison, he was involved in fights that resulted in punishment; he was sent to the “box” for 16 months. While placed in the box, one of the officers asked him about his future, what he planned to do when he was eventually released. Penson began thinking of his future.

When 20 years of his sentence were completed, he went to the parole board but was told that he needed to prove himself in order to be released. For six years, he was placed in projects including a program that expected Penson to speak in groups about the crime he had committed. Finally, the board approved his parole. Some of the conditions for parole were drug tests every month, curfews at 9 pm, and checking in with his parole officer on a daily basis.

Since his release, Penson has been struggling in his search for jobs. However, his friend, who owns a business, gives him temporary job positions. Also, he is involved in programs to help people with HIV.

Despite his incarceration, in many ways, Penson believes that prison helped him at the time because if he stayed on the street, he would have committed other crimes, risking his life. “I might have died,” he said.

Because of his time away from mainstream society, he has noticed a change in the ways people interact with each other. Penson believes that people have become disrespectful of the elderly, and the ever-changing computer technology surprises him. “I am still getting used to using a cell phone,” he said. But, as a free man, Penson is enjoying life and being part of a community; he is also avoiding criminal activities, fully changing his life for good.

If you want further information about the Criminal Justice Program or about other events sponsored by the department, go to room M-129 or to the QCC home page under the Department link, and click on Social Sciences.

Invasion of Privacy

By Josie Cabrera

The victim is an 18-year-old QCC student of Brooklyn, and the suspect, 33-year-old Jonathan Martinez of Queens. Jonathan Martinez was the QCC student’s boss at the job she worked for in West Harlem, Manhattan. Jonathan Martinez was arrested instantly at his place of work in the city. He was charged with violation of privacy.

The victim and her co-workers found the evidence of his crime in his back pack in the girl’s locker room. One of the girls noticed a light flashing from inside the suspect’s back pack. To her amazement, she discovered a hidden video camera taping the girls while they were undressing. One of the girls then notified security who contacted the police immediately. Shortly after the discovery, Jonathan Martinez was arrested and taken off the premises.

Even though the crime happened months ago, the QCC student and her co-workers are still very much disgusted with what happened. She said that Jonathan Martinez took away their pride and dignity. Wherever these girls go, they feel unsafe.

But this invasion of privacy won’t stop her and the others from living their lives. They count on the law to give them peace of mind. “We will get the justice we all deserve. Jonathan Martinez will be punished, and we will get justice!” she said.

Don’t become another statistic. Be aware of your surroundings, especially when you’re in a locker room, restroom, or any other place that may leave you vulnerable to a “Peeping Tom.” If you suspect that someone is invading your privacy on campus, contact a Security Guard immediately. The problem can be solved only when it’s brought out into the light.
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Most students in high school and college rarely find the time to read a good novel or a biography of their favorite person. It is usually because they are occupied with daily activities, or they are too caught up with the technology of today that keeps evolving in our society. Many times, technology takes our minds away from the importance of personal knowledge and growth and a student, such as myself, can sometimes get carried away with the excitement of today’s world.

Technology can affect reading development in young people. According to the article “Critical Issue: Using Technology to Enhance Literary Instruction,” “Reading from a screen is slower, more fatiguing, less accurate, and more subject to information overload than standard reading.” The article also shows that the percentage of students recalling information from a book is higher than those students using a computer. Reading consists of various benefits. It helps you expand your mind by filling you with knowledge about people, places, and things. It develops your use of vocabulary by making you use a dictionary to find out the meaning of new words. In other words, reading helps you in your day to day activities; whether you are at a desk or at a social event, you still have to interact with people and be able to communicate with them in a certain manner. It doesn’t matter what you plan to do with your life; reading is essential in every area of study.

Studies also show that reading helps with the contraction of your eye muscles. According to the article “The Importance of Reading” from the Squidoo website, “Your brain is also a muscle that must be worked on a regular basis, and this will keep your mental faculties constantly engaged, and thus keep you sharper and smarter.”

With the greater use of technology among the younger generation, teachers and the community as a whole are looking for ways to make computers and other devices productive learning tools, using books online and taking grammar direction from certain websites. There are also old-fashioned books written to encourage people to read, especially those who don’t have enough time to enjoy a good book; Peter Klump’s Breakthrough Rapid Reading states the positive effects of reading fast if you are time limited. So, there’s no excuse for not reading! Grab that book; expand your mind, and grow in knowledge.
College Blues: A Heart to Heart for a College Freshman

By Suany Frontan

As the weeks pass by, more and more assignments will pile up. And you may feel the heavy load on you: the weariness from lack of sleep, the heavy books crushing your back, homework that seems to last for days, or even stiff joints from having to sit in classes that are two to four hours long! Let’s be honest, some of the people in your classes won’t make it, and you may wonder if you’ll be the next student to disappear from class, overwhelmed by the work. You may even wonder if college is the right place for you. Thoughts of dropping the class may start popping into your head. I know this because I struggled with these thoughts; I felt that I didn’t belong in college.

At one point in my college career, I did miss high school. As a matter of fact, during my first semester of college, at times, I was very upset because I hated staying up late writing papers to keep up with the classes. I had to stop hanging out with my friends to do projects and homework. But college is rewarding if you are willing to do the work and hang in there like I did.

This is my third year of college, and the fact is that I still miss school when it gets tough. I haven’t given up yet, though I want to sometimes, especially when things become difficult. It’s hard coming to terms with yourself and choosing between a life of work, of school work and working to pay for college if you don’t receive Financial Aid, and a social life. But if you look in the right places, such as your Tigermail, you will be surprised by all of the information regarding opportunities like scholarships and internships that you can apply for to make some extra cash as well as meet new people. Tigermail also provides daily day-by-day updates of our school’s activities, such as workshops, discussions groups, discounts, tax preparation services, club events, and even healthcare services. And most of these events and amenities are free.

As you progress and move up in college, life gets harder but not impossible. And being involved in school will automatically make a difference in your life. For example, going to the Writing Center will help you become a better writer. But the bottom line is that you’re not alone in college; tons of people are willing to make your experience better and help you stay afloat. So, go to www.qcc.cuny.edu and log on to your Tigermail account.

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Most people in the world today drive cars using harmful carbon emitting gas that now costs almost up to four dollars a gallon in America. For those who want to not only save money but also, want to save the environment, the new frontier is electric powered cars. These cars are noiseless, gasless, ecofriendly cars that will not only benefit the environment but will also benefit those interested in owning one.

The cost of fully charging an electric car, according to the website planet.green.discovery.com, ranges from 2-4 dollars a day. That’s 28 dollars a week to fully charge your EV. Also some EVs, like the Nissan Leaf, have a solar panel placed on the back of the car to help charge the battery over time. The EV’s battery also lasts longer than a battery from an average car. After the battery life of an EV is over, some companies like Tesla will recycle over 60% of the battery, and when EVs are sold regularly, Tesla will recycle as much as 90% of the battery, thus helping the environment. Other features of an electric car include the option to limit certain functions, such as speaker volume on the radio to save energy and even the speed limit on some EVs. There is even a function to warn a driver if he or she is starting to run low on energy as well as to locate a nearby charging station.

Since the electric car is completely battery powered, the question is how do you recharge it? You’ll use a charger made for EVs that can be found in some locations but, mostly, in your own home. The Nissan and Tesla website explain the process of installing the home charger and charging your car. When you purchase an EV, not only do you get a rebate (usually around six or seven thousand dollars), you also have someone install a home charger that will be your main source of recharging your car. Charge time usually takes around eight hours for an average EV and leaving it to charge overnight is recommended. If this is too slow for you, there is a charging station that charges a battery of an EV in four and a half hours instead of eight. There is also the quick charge option that quickly charges your EV if you are in a rush and takes about 45 minutes. Some EVs even come with a portable charger, so if you are running out of power or want to charge while you are away from the car, you can plug the portable wire from any outlet nearby to your EV.

If you are worried that extreme temperatures will affect the charging time of the EV, companies like Tesla will put your mind at ease. The Tesla website mentions that one of the features of the Roadster is a heater to warm up your battery, so charging time is unaffected in up to -20 degree Celsius weather. As electric cars become more popular, the charging time will eventually get shorter, and there will be more charging stations instead of gas stations.

In addition to all of these benefits, the EV is better to maintain than the average gas powered car. There are fewer parts used to run an EV than an average car. For example, there is no fuel tank that takes up space. And EVs cost less to fix on average than the average gas car because of this reason. Altogether, there are many advantages in owning an EV. You save money charging your car, you spend less time and money fixing your EV at the mechanics, and you can charge your car anywhere there is a plug.

For the everyday commuter, the Nissan Leaf sells around 30 thousand dollars and gets a rebate of about 7, 500 dollars, so the price is around 25 thousand dollars. If you cannot buy the car, you can lease the Leaf for 379 dollars a month. If you want to have a top class car, on the other hand, for those who feel that they can afford it, the Tesla Roadster costs around 100 thousand dollars or a lease of 1,658 dollars a month. If you are worried that extreme temperatures will affect the charging time of the EV, companies like Tesla will put your mind at ease. The Tesla website mentions that one of the features of the Roadster is a heater to warm up your battery, so charging time is unaffected in up to -20 degree Celsius weather. As electric cars become more popular, the charging time will eventually get shorter, and there will be more charging stations instead of gas stations.

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Plan Ahead for Your Next Vacation

BY TONI GONZALEZ

Think twice before booking your next trip for spring break. On August 13, 2010, a Worldwide Caution was updated on the site Travel.State.Gov, warning U.S. citizens of the dangers that are not mentioned in the vacation packages they view. As long as Americans read “beach front”, “indoor/outdoor pool”, a long list of amenities, and the magic words “all-inclusive,” they are sold.

A place of interest for vacationers is Cancun, Mexico.

The Bureau of Consular Affairs warns that “U.S. citizen visitors are encouraged to stay in the well-known tourist areas” and to “check with their cellular provider prior to departure to confirm that their cell phone is capable of roaming on GSM or 3G international networks. Cell phone coverage in isolated parts of Mexico, for example, the Copper Canyon, is spotty or non-existent.”

While vacationing, travelers are warned to not “wear flashy jewelry [or] carry large amounts of money or other valuable objects,” according to Travel. State.Gov. Planning ahead is also recommended to create the ultimate, safer vacation. Visit travel sites such as Travel.State.Gov, and do a little research before jumping on the next plane to your vacation destination. This does not mean that you should be a paranoid wreck during spring break, but be informed about your new surroundings and recognize the realities of traveling abroad.

The Remake

BY MANUEL VALDEZ

In this age of remakes and “reboots,” one can’t help but wonder, are remakes a legitimate genre in the entertainment business or glorified rip-off’s of other filmmakers’ work?

For years, both film and television have produced remakes with varying degrees of success. The variable that decides how good a remake can be is the story. Essentially, remakes take the story of a previously made movie or television show and re-use it. But the trick is not to copy too much of the original story. Gus Van Sant made this mistake with his 1998 take on Alfred Hitchcock’s classic Psycho. Van Sant’s version was a shot-for-shot replica of Hitchcock’s 1960 film. The general public as well as critics were largely unimpressed with his film. Nobody wants to see the exact same movie twice. The biggest difference between the older, classic movie and the Van Sant’s newer version is that the newer version is made in color.

One of the most recent television remakes is the SyFy series Being Human, which follows a ghost, vampire, and werewolf sharing a house in Boston. The show is based on a U.K series of the same name, but the American version has so far managed to stand out on its own. It follows the plot of the original show while, at the same time, adding changes to the story. For example, the vampires in the American show are portrayed as having super-speed. The ghost in the series is unable to be touched and is invisible to most people. However, the U.K series portrayed the lead ghost character as being solid and, at times, visible to everyone, creating the illusion that she was alive. These changes in the story accommodate the new American audience while the similar plot lines enable the original audience to transition into the new series.

In film, remakes are most common in horror movies. Over the years, audiences have come to expect a great deal of violence from this genre. The biggest difference in horror remakes is the amount of violence depicted in the newer versions of old films. Horror films of the 70’s and 80’s boasted little violence compared to their 21st century counterparts. John Carpenter’s Halloween boasted little blood and violence compared to the 2007 remake by Rob Zombie that featured over a dozen violent murders. But violent visuals can’t make up for the lack of a plausible storyline. In other words, violence can’t distract viewers from a ludicrous plot. One example of this includes Black Christmas, a 2006 remake of a 1974 slasher film following sorority girls being stalked over Christmas break. The 2006 movie featured several violent murders, more than the original contained, but the film’s story was jumbled, flashing between different points in time and leaving little room for character or plot development.

Remakes are inevitable. The film industry is a business, and remakes can guarantee a profit. They target a new generation of viewers while providing a fresh take on an old film for those who saw the original first. But a remake is a financial gamble. Film companies roll the dice and hope they make a successful film, one that will lure both a new fan base and an older generation of fans with a fresh spin on the original story. The remakes that do succeed can become classics, just as the originals did when they were first released. As for the failures, they’ll lure all filmgoers back to the original versions, introducing the new generation to the classic stories that made these remakes possible.
A Night That Changed Indie Music Forever

BY ERICK FERNANDEZ

On February 13th, the indie underdogs stole the night at the 53rd Annual Grammys.

In a matter of minutes, the controversy leaked out, the backlash was tweeted, the forums were written, and the fans of their distinctive idols were heard. Eminem did not take the Album of the Year. Lady Gaga did not take Album of the Year. Katy Perry did not take Album of the Year. Not even Lady Antebellum took the award. An indie rock band called Arcade Fire stole the coveted title of Album of the Year. While the night saw many snubs, this perhaps had to be the biggest for the fans of Perry, whose singles “California Gurls” and “Teenage Dream” are still hits today. For the legions of Gaga fans, who were hoping that their idol would take home the prize, the night brought disappointment.

One of the fan favorites, Eminem, had the year’s biggest sales in records. According to Billboard Charts, his album *Recovery* sold 741,000 in its first week. It was the second best-selling album of the year and sold 5.7 million copies worldwide. Eminem was thought to have been the artist to take the coveted prize; he led nominations by 10, but the night only brought two awards for him, Best Rap Solo Performance and Best Rap Album, awards that he has won before for his mediocre album *Relapse*. So, when the envelope was opened to announce the Album of The Year, people already had believed that Eminem was the clear winner. But Arcade Fire’s win made hundreds of independent rock fans and so-called hipsters jump for joy.

The night started off on a bad note for Arcade Fire. They lost Best Alternative Album to The Black Keys, and the first award slipped from their hands. A dark cloud floated above the band’s heads and then came the second loss in the category of Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals, another category that the band was expected to win; instead, The Black Keys won again. With two awards down, and one to go, doubt was floating around, and if they had lost two awards already, the chances of winning Album of the Year was clearly far from their reach.

Although Arcade Fire’s album sales can’t compare to Lady Gaga’s record sales around the world nor Eminem’s or Katy Perry’s, their third album, *The Suburbs*, was critically acclaimed, hitting number 1 in various music charts, including the US Billboard chart. It did not stay number 1 for long, though, since Eminem came back to claim the throne. The album quickly fell off the top 10, while new albums came out week by week. Despite falling from the top spot in the charts, the band’s popularity soared and left a mark in the indie scene while critics began to take notice. Their first album, *Funeral*, was a classic gem, exploring the theme of death and the suburbs; it was nominated for Best Alternative Album in 2006, but the album lost that year to The White Stripes. Their second album *Neon Bible*, their religious magnum opus, was also nominated for Best Alternative Album in 2008 and once again lost that year to The White Stripes. So, it was no surprise that when *The Suburbs* came out, the album would be critically acclaimed success. With a string of shows around the world, performances on *Saturday Night Live* and the use of one of their songs for trailers to films such as *Where the Wild Things Are*, the band compelled forums to ask “Who sings that song?”

On the night of the 53rd Annual Grammys, Arcade Fire took their award; and Twitter exploded in anger. This win pumped up the volume of questions surrounding the Academy’s approach. In the past, quantity reigned over quality, and popular artists with record numbers in sales won the awards. This year, the Academy might have decided that a few surprises would work best and that quality should be considered more important than sales. And the viewing audience was surprised; cheers and gasps could be heard when Arcade Fire won, beating artists who were signed to major labels, artists who sold millions, artists who won Grammys before, artists who top the charts all the time. It was not their night; it was a night for the underdogs, a night for the artists who were not well known. Who is Esperanza Spalding and how did she beat Justin Bieber? Well, after Grammy night, the curiosity surely hit, and people will go to iTunes to search for Esperanza Spalding. Indie music finally got its recognition, and Arcade Fire imprinted its name in history. Despite being the only award the band won, it was the biggest and the one that changed indie music forever.

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A Starbucks Gift Card will be given to all students admitted to the job fair.

This free event is open only to Queensborough Community College students and alumni.
Johnston: I think it is. I think it’s one of those things that I don’t like to examine too much. I wouldn’t want to… I’d be scared to take away the magic. Without wanting to sound too self-important, if you’ll say magic does [happen]. It’s our life, it’s really important to us and always has been. I couldn’t put my finger on why that it is; it’s just when you love something it’s hard to explain why, you know? I think we always put a lot of effort in because we care about it. It does feel like every show could be our last. You’ve got to make the most of it.

Pisciotta: It seems like in a lot of songs, you guys sort of jump genres. How did that style come about?

Johnston: I think we’ve always had a little bit of that with our band, right from the start, right from before the first record even. We’ve always kind of experimented in that manner. I guess it’s an example of us liking lots of different types of music and the way that different types of music can influence you. But, also, I think just wanting to be kind of slightly awkward and to be a bit different. You always want to be sort of different in some way, and I think that’s kind of our way of doing it. You’ve got somebody with you, and you just want to take a left turn and go somewhere else. I think that keeps music interesting if you’re able to do that.

Pisciotta: Do you think that college had an effect on your music?

Johnston: Not really. You know, when you’re at school, everybody around the world has the same pressures. If you’re fortunate enough to think about maybe going to college or university then it’s like ‘[…] what’re we gonna do? ’ There weren’t really any academic subjects that we really were particularly interested in; it was always about music. Studying music in college was just an extension of that. We don’t have any huge desire to be record producers or anything like that. It was really to facilitate the band moving forward and to learn a few things that might help us. I think for all three of us it was very much, like, keep our parents happy, do something, and then do what we really wanted to do, which was the band.

Pisciotta: How do you guys feel about the way the music industry has changed over the course of your career?

Johnston: I don’t know, I mean, everything’s changing; everything changes. One thing that doesn’t change is that good music is still good music. If you’re a good band, you’re willing to go out. You know the live world hasn’t really changed. Good bands still drawing crowds. People always said that people don’t have money to go to shows. I haven’t really seen any evidence of that. Maybe people have got less money, but if they want to go to a show, if they want to go to the cinema, they tend to just allocate their money differently. Essentially, we’re talking about, a lot of it’s about money, sadly, which is something that none of us want to put in bed with music. One’s something your passionate about, the other thing’s just a way to live. I mean it has changed. It’s been changing since we started with the internet, but, like I said, I think good bands still get a chance.

Pisciotta: Is there anything about your music that you think creates such a strong reaction from your fans?

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SPORTS NEWS

Queensborough Tigers Baseball Season Preview

BY DAVID RUSSELL

Queensborough Communiqué, March 2011

Queensborough Tigers Baseball Season Preview

By David Russell

Last season, the Queensborough Tigers won the CUNY baseball championship before losing in the regionals. With stellar sophomore leadership, big bats and a new homefield, the Tigers are looking to win another CUNY title and more.

“One hundred percent I expect to win another CUNY championship,” first year head coach Roger Mischel said. “And I won’t settle for anything less than first place in the regionals.” Last year’s team MVP Destin Ortiz added, “We can’t expect anything less than a national championship.” There is no question on what the primary factor will be. “The biggest strength is definitely going to be our hitting,” Mischel said. Hitting coach Tom Leonick added, “It’s the best and biggest part of our game. I expect the team average to be over .400.”

Another advantage the Tigers have will be playing their home games at Padavan Preller Field, as opposed to sharing a field with Cardozo High School. The new homefield should give the Tigers an edge. “It’s going to be very different,” Mischel said. “I think it’ll shock the opponents when they step on the field and see the 2011 Tigers on their homefield, with their pinstripes. We started calling our homefield ‘The Jungle’.”

The Queensborough Tigers also has a lot of veterans. According to coach Mischel, “We’re going to be primarily a sophomore team this year.” Sophomore Destin Ortiz is looking for the title that alluded the Tigers last year. “It’ll be a huge role in the season because we have a lot of unfinished business from last year. It’s like the revenge of what we feel we deserve.”

The Tigers have a number of other factors benefiting them. “We have a lot of sophomore leadership, great teaching from our coaches and our freshmen are very talented,” infielder Stefan Sahaguan said. “It should be a great year.” Anthony Brnjac agreed. “We came together as a team. We bonded really quickly. I think that comes from the coaches and the attitude they have instilled. We have a lot of talent, and hopefully the season ends in Texas.”

Tyler, Texas is home of the 2011 NCJAA Division III Baseball National Championship. It is a goal every Tiger has in mind at the beginning of the year. “With this team, a lot of games are going to be won, and Texas here we come,” catcher Miguel Valera said. “This is our season,” added Hector Leon. “We’re going to be the team to beat, and we’re gonna go to Texas.” Amoni Harris expects not only to win the championship but to run the table. “The season’s going to go perfect. We’re gonna have no losses, nada.” Athletic Director Pete Marchitello is confident as well. “I have faith in Roger Mischel and all of the guys.” Catcher Jesse Friedman summed it all up. “It’s going to be a year to remember.”

Coach Mischel with Stefan Sahaguan on third base

Coach Mischel waving Miguel Valera

Coach Mischel working on hitting with one of his players
SPORTS NEWS

A Weak Pitch
BY KERRY GARVEY

It is customary for a Yankee fan to expect the Yankees to make the playoffs and contend for a World Series ring every year. This year, pride for the Yankees remains high, but the talent is questioned, which makes Yankee fans uncomfortable. As the players move through spring training, the obvious question arises: Will the Yankees starting pitching take them to the playoffs this season?

Andy Pettitte’s relatively early retirement has left a big gap in the starting pitching rotation for the Yankees. Phil Hughes is unreliable; although he owned an 18-8 record and a 4.19 ERA last year, his second half of the season was rocky, since his arm appeared to wear down. The post-season supported this, since he went 1-2 with a 6.32 ERA. A.J. Burnett still seems to be his usual self, erratic and inconsistent. Rookie Ivan Nova, the probable fourth pitcher in the rotation, started only seven games last season, leading to a 1-2 record, leaving people uncertain of his potential.

If the unreliable third & fourth pitching spots worry Yankee fans, the big question mark for the fifth pitching spot will definitely cause some anxiety. The acquisitions of Bartolo, Colon, Mark Prior, and Freddy Garcia stirred up some competition for that spot, but Freddy Garcia is the only one of the three to have a winning season in the last five years. If this isn’t disheartening enough for Yankee fans, both Colon and Prior have had less than twenty starts in a single season since 2005.

The San Francisco Giants World Series win last season, along with the league moving towards a post-steroids era, resulted in a high concern for championship contenders to obtain great pitching this upcoming season. The defeat of the powerhouse hitting teams like the Yankees, Phillies, Reds, and Rangers in the playoffs last season supports the idea of how good pitching can overshadow and overpower good hitting.

While the bottom of the rotation seems shaky, the number one pitcher, C.C. Sabathia, is as consistent as they come, and he is fresh off a twenty-five pound weight loss. Sabathia could opt out of his contract at the end of the year and either test the free agency market or ask for more money from the Yankees. This means that he will also work harder this season, since his stats this year will predominantly affect the money he will be offered next year.

The Yankees bullpen has also improved from last season. Newly acquired Rafael Soriano, former closer for the AL wins leader, Tampa Bay Rays, will provide some support for the Yankees to setup Rivera, as well as giving some rest and pressure off Rivera’s aging arm. Mariano Rivera will still be the most dominant closer in the league, and the Yankees pitching staff decided to move Joba Chamberlain to the bullpen for good, hoping some stability in Joba’s pitching role will result in productivity in his pitching. Pedro Feliciano is a lefthanded specialist who will provide quality pitching against lefty hitters, and Boone Logan and Sergio Mitre are young talents who can pitch long outings and even start barring injuries.

New York Yankees pitching coach, Larry Rothschild, commented on A.J. Burnett’s status, saying, “His arm is healthy, and his head is in a good spot.” When Hank Steinbrenner was questioned about the future of his team at the start of spring training, Steinbrenner replied, “We’re gonna be in it every year,” giving reassurance to players and fans alike.

With the Phillies acquiring Cliff Lee and the Red Sox gaining Adrian Gonzalez and Carl Crawford, polishing their already powerful lineup, strong starting pitching remains necessary to compete against the top teams. The confidence of the organization will hopefully translate into a winning season and championship 28, but, as it appears, confidence may not be enough.

“Ordinary People, Extraordinary Circumstances
Continued from page 17

Johnston: I mean, hopefully it’s a combination of things. I think maybe one of the key things might be the fact that we’re really passionate about our music, and we really care about what we’re doing. I hope that comes across to people listening and watching a show, that we love doing what we’re doing. Hopefully, that draws people in. It just makes it a lot easier, you know one of those things, you know? You put up with it.

Pisciotta: Is there any particular thing that you think has been a major challenge for you guys as a band?

Johnston: I’m sure there has been, definitely. I guess in our life as a band, as I’m sure in your life, when you cross a challenge you figure out how to fix it or bypass it or not worry about it, and you know one of the difficult things is being in New York, it’s easy to say being away from home is difficult, but the three of us are in it together, and I think we support each other through that. We all know how each other feels.

Pisciotta: I think Simon said, in the Voices and Electrical Noises DVD, that you guys have known each other since you were seven or eight. That’s quite a bond.

Johnston: Well, that’s it, and if the other guys are feeling bad about being away from home, we all know how each other feels. It just makes it a lot easier, you can support each other. But that’s one of the small challenges of being in a band is being away so much, but if you love doing what you’re doing, as we do, it’s just one of those things, you know? You put up with it.

Thank you to Biffy Clyro for a fantastic performance, James for taking the time to sit down with me, to Melissa Levine at Warner Brothers for setting up the interview, Warren Entner, for putting me in touch with Warner Brothers, and to Neil Anderson for being incredibly helpful in so many facets, to not only myself, but to Biffy Clyro fans all over the world. For more information, you can visit the band’s website at http://www.BiffyClyro.com or purchase their music through Amazon.com or iTunes.
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