Club collects donations for Annual Fund

by Jeremy Cohen ’12

On a recent Thursday X-Block, three Upper School girls gathered around a table in the development office, cell phones in hand. Freshman Lauren Ginsburg, a member of Park’s new Philanthropy Club, glanced at a sheet of paper and dialed a number.

“Hi, may I please speak to Mr. Witten?” No luck. Edward Witten ’68, Park alumnus and world-famous theoretical physicist, was apparently out of his Princeton office.

This was the Philanthropy Club’s third attempt in several weeks at reaching him.

Armed with thorough fact sheets about each potential donor—including phone number, employer, family members, and date and amount of last donation—the members of the Philanthropy Club cold-call alumni each week, asking for contributions to the Annual Fund.

Sometimes the club gets lucky. One woman seemed irritated at being interrupted in the middle of her workday, but donated $300 anyway.

Philanthropy continued p. 5

O’Keefe racks up cyclocross accolades

by Josie Olschansky ’14

S am O’Keefe ’12 spends hours before each race preparing and focusing. He pre-rides each course a few times to get a feel for the terrain. “The races are at 11:00,” O’Keefe said, “so I get up at seven and start eating at seven-thirty. Breakfast consists of massive amounts of complex carbohydrates such as oatmeal, or bread with Nutella—usually no sugar, and lots of water with electrolytes.”

During the summer, while many are gearing up for a grueling preseaon in either soccer or field hockey, O’Keefe is preparing for the beginning of the season in his sport: cyclocross, a combination of road racing and mountain biking. O’Keefe has been competing in cyclocross races all around the States since he was 11 years old.

“When I was younger, I needed to fill my summer with something, so my mom found a mountain biking camp that I did for a week,” O’Keefe said. That one-week of biking was enough for him to know that he wanted to pursue this sport.

Now, seven years later, O’Keefe has amassed a number of notable cycling accomplishments. He won the first round in a series of the US Grand Prix of Cyclocross. The race took place in Madison, WI, September 4 and 5, and, as it is for all competitions, O’Keefe’s preparation was grueling. In Madison, the preparation paid off.

“It was great to win,” O’Keefe said. “It gave me great confidence for the beginning of the season, but things change during the year.”

When he’s not winning races, O’Keefe is training, staying in shape. “I train every day, for at least an hour, on roads or inside—lots of intervals and sprint riding.” September is when the tough hours of training start: “[After September], there are races on most Saturdays and Sundays throughout the season,” O’Keefe said.

O’Keefe continued p. 11

Students fret over long lunch lines

by Sarah Cohen ’14

In response to a sudden influx of student complaints, the Student Senate is considering forming a committee aimed at reducing traffic in the cafeteria. Recently, many students, like Connor Moore ’17, have begun to notice dramatic growth in the lengths of the lunch lines, which “seem to get longer and longer everyday.”

Rumors have attributed the cause of this change to a recent scheduling alteration in the Middle School. Despite this widespread belief, Interim MS Principal Josh Wolf insists that the school “hasn’t been doing anything differently.”

Dawn Ramsey, manager of the cafeteria, hasn’t noticed any drastic changes either. “This isn’t a new problem,” she said. “This is an ongoing, consistent problem.”

Regardless, a number of people find the current arrangement challenging. “I don’t think the school realizes the amount of kids who participate in the lunch program,” said Ramsey. For her, lunchtime means managing hordes of hungry children, and dealing with the pressures of a fast-paced operation. But this lunchtime stress is, by no means, limited to the kitchen staff.

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One bad apple...

November 9, just before Anders Hulleberg ’07 and Yani Newton ’04 delivered their addresses to the Upper School, Principal Daniel Bergman spoke briefly about our tendency, as a student body, to self-segregate by affinity group. He said that there are a number of major components that comprise each person’s identity, and that, generally, we hang out with the people who share those qualities. We can all agree with Bergman’s conclusion: whether it’s through a commonality in race, religion, age, interest, or something else, we do all tend to form friendships with “people like us.” It’s true at Park, and it’s true everywhere else. And it’s fine.

Bergman’s next step, though, was to request that we all take a look at our own ability to feel comfortable around people with whom we don’t have fundamental commonalities. He asked us to consider branching out; he put the onus on us, as individual students, to socialize, interact, and feel at home with groups of people we deem “unlike us.” He’s right. It’s necessary that, as a community, we make efforts to expand our social circles, to experience people beyond those with whom we most frequently associate, to explore new places and perspectives.

“[Nasty behavior] is a huge problem in my grade,” said one sophomore female who wished to remain anonymous. “It’s more and more because of popularity, and it’s disappointing to me.”

“I feel like people in other groups, who have big egos, will judge me [if I try to approach them],” Jordan Williams ’12 said, “and it’s intimidating.”

We can all appreciate Bergman’s fundamental point: each of us should make efforts to expand our social circles, to experience people beyond those with whom we most frequently associate, to explore new places and perspectives. But it’s not, as Bergman suggested, our own naive discomfort that prevents such exploration. Rather, it’s the mean-spirited behavior of some individuals who carry themselves when they’re around me, to how open they are about my ideas.”

If you didn’t catch A Single Man in theaters back in 2009, your life is subpar, and we highly suggest you go rent out a local cinema or install a home theater, and then watch. At first, it was shocking to hear that Tom Ford, fashion icon and creative director of Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent, was going to make a movie. We don’t even want to tell you what we expected—but after watching, we realized it couldn’t have come from anyone else. The film is driven by the cinematography; the images of a frozen body in the snow, Julianne Moore’s black and white eye makeup, and a sleek gun in the drawer of a mid-century modern California rancher were visually stunning and are sure to stick with you—not to mention the period fashion consisting of pencil skirts, architect glasses, and perfect hair.

However, the art house film did not just impress with its aesthetics; the performance of a pre-King George VI Colin Firth was Oscar-deserving, to say the least. His telephone scene will give you a knot in your throat within the first three minutes of watching, the friendship between Firth as George and Moore as Charley is one of the most real feeling relationships in modern film, and the scenes featuring Skins star Nicholas Hoult as Firth’s student are poignant and beautiful.

Ford’s work will move you. We highly encourage you to add this film to your queue this Thanksgiving.

Editor’s pick: A Single Man
A radical proposal: the manifesto of a new Student Government

Group of Student Senators devises novel plan for reorganization of weekly X-block meetings

Student Government at Park is confused. We are confused because we have two separate purposes: to organize events like Homecoming, and to discuss (ultimately decide) issues that are important to the student body.

This confusion breeds apathy and distrust of student government, and it caused last year’s “Student Revolution.” How is the average student supposed to know what student government does when student government doesn’t know what student government does?

If student government is to have any legitimacy and efficiency, our two functions must be clearly articulated and separated.

We propose here a new student govern- ment with a radically different structure. It would consist of two groups: one to organize events, and one to deliberate on issues.

The first group—small, with eight members—would organize fun student events. It does not take 24 senators to select a DJ for Homecoming. A group so large cannot organize anything, because no member feels that they bear the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that things get done.

As it is, the four officers of Student Council are the only members of student government who help organize events in any meaningful way. They can harangue the 24 senators to round up Homecoming teacher chaperones all they want, but at the end of the day, it’s those four who come around the Fishbowl with a sign-up sheet. Reducing the number of people who “officially” organize such events would serve to acknowledge the reality of the situation.

We therefore propose that this “Student Council” consist of eight elected members: a President, a Vice President, two other at-large members (possibly called “Treasurer” and “Secretary”), and four grade representatives. Some have suggested that this body be alternatively named the “Student Activities Committee.” The Student Council’s mandate would be to organize fun events, such as dances, Blammo, and Faculty Death Match. It could accomplish this more efficiently than the current bloated Student Senate.

Student government’s other purpose— to serve as a forum for the discussion of important issues—would be fulfilled by a second group, the “Student Assembly.”

controversial plans to create another all- girls math class? Any student could come and discuss the subject in the Assembly. Disturbing new policies in the Middle School? The Assembly could hold a referendum condemning them.

The difference between the proposed Assembly and the current Senate is that all interested students—and only interested students—would come to Assembly meetings. This would make its discussions and votes more legitimate in the eyes of both the student body and the Administration.

The one problem with the Assembly proposal is getting interested students to show up to meetings. The sad truth is that many students only join Senate to add an impressive line to their college resumes. There is simply not enough student interest in these affairs for the Assembly to be totally optional and open.

Some have argued that we should therefore do away with the Student Assembly, and that informal hallway debates would better serve its purpose. But we feel that there is intrinsic value at a progressive school like Park in having an official structure through which issues important to the student body.

In addition, the student body must express its opinion with one unified and coherent voice if it wants the Administration to listen.

Separating student government into two different bodies with clearly defined purposes and mandates would restore its legitimacy and effectiveness. The Student Senate must act now.

Fast raises money and awareness for starving Somalis

by Sophie Neiman ’13

It was five o’clock. I had one hour to go. I looked at the smiling yet hungry faces around me, and reviewed the past 23 hours.

It all began at six o’clock sharp. Thursday night, as I’d shoved the last bite of spaghetti into my mouth.

Friday started without breakfast and, coinciden- tally, with a class on animal feeding behavior. G-Block lacked its usual trip to the school store.

By lunch, my stomach ached; by last period, my head hurt. And now, sitting in a circle with other fast par- ticipants, I was ready to reflect on my experience.

Yet, it’s hard to talk about a fast, and to de- scribe your own hunger, when the goal is to help those who are truly starv- ing.

I always knew that my fast would come to an end. I checked the clock at least a hun- dred times on Friday, waiting for it to strike six. People in Somalia, even many people here in Baltimore, don’t fast on a timetable.

That said, my experiences fasting were valu- able. One thing I noticed on Friday was simply the excess in which our com- community eats.

There’s candy on Web’s and Elliott’s desks. Daniel Bergman has cookie- es in his office. The Math department orders pizza every Friday. There always seems to be a bake sale go- ing on, and it’s not uncom- mon for a teacher to bring food to class.

“You don’t realize how much food there is at Park, or in our lives, until you’re unable to eat it,” said Victoria Brown ’14.

It’s not so much that there is anything wrong with this—shared food creates shared experiences and fosters communality. But it’s wonderful to think that all grades could join together for cause. Further, it’s empowering to know what a dedicated group can do: we raised over $800 for the International Rescue Committee.

Yet the work is by no means done, and the fast remains a baby step in the right direction.

Currently, in Somalia, and throughout the Horn of Africa, 13 million peo- ple are in desperate need of aid. The starving pour into over-crowded refugee camps.

In fact, 13,000 Somali go to Daabab camp in Kenya each day. People can die on their way and many come to the camp with nothing. Forty percent of the children who arrive there are malnourished.

The situation is so hor- rific that it’s almost im- mobilizing. It’s not unrea- sonable to ask, “What can actually be done?”

Still, moving forward from my experience, I’d encourage Park students, myself among them, to be grateful for all they have. Know how lucky we are to be able to thought- lessly grab those cookies or that slice of pizza. Don’t feel guilty; act.
Students lobby for lunch line changes

Cafeteria cont’d. from cover

Forced to wait in long lines, many students feel the tension acutely, as well. “I think it’s ridiculous that we all have lunch at the same time,” said Rebecca Shapiro ’14. “I have to end up either skipping lunch, or getting something from the school store, which isn’t healthy.”

And Shapiro isn’t alone in her complaints. “By the time I get there, all the food is gone,” said Micah Saltzberg ’15.

Not only do the long lines detain time-pressed Upper School students, but they also create stress for Middle School students trying to navigate the cafeteria. “Kids feel intimidated,” said Ramsey. “They feel like it’s just too much chaos.”

Noah Blau ’18 agreed, adding that “with everyone bunched up into one spot, pushing and showing one another, it feels like you’re playing football or something.”

The administration is not unmindful of the students’ difficulties. “There are just too many kids for that cafeteria,” said Wolf.

In Wolf’s opinion, the best solution involves a scheduling compromise between the different divisions, with the hope that staggering the schedule would help regulate the flow of traffic. “Someone’s just going to have to eat at eleven, and someone’s going to have to eat at one,” Wolf said.

The Student Senate has similar views, and hopes to move ahead with the negotiations soon, according to Vice President Ben Miller ’13. “We’re trying to suggest alternative schedules,” he said. “Or find a way to expedite the cafeteria process so that we can all get lunch.”

Cafeteria manager Dawn Ramsey says that congestion at lunch time is stressful and chaotic.

Jennings picks up biology class in latest science dept. shuffle

by Melanie Weiskopf ’15

There were several changes made in the Science Department this year. After former Upper School science teacher Dr. Hadiya Woodham left, the department had to replace first semester Cellular and Molecular Biology and second semester Genetics, both Woodham-taught electives, with courses that similarly met students’ interests.

Replacement options for Woodham’s electives were Animal Behavior and Biomedical Research Seminar.

To choose which class to offer in the second semester, the department “took data on whether or not [most tenth through twelfth grade students] planned to take an elective in science in the second semester, and, if so, their top choices of elective,” according to Huntsman.

After reviewing the surveys, the department decided to run the Animal Behavior course during second semester to replace Cell Biology, as it had in the first semester to replace Genetics.

“I think everybody really likes it,” said Maia Draper-Reich ’12, a current Animal Behavior student. “I love Animal Behavior, but it wasn’t the course I signed up to be in,” said Lauren Leffer ’12, who was registered for Cellular and Molecular Biology. “But since that couldn’t happen, I couldn’t have asked for a better substitute course.”

Although the Biomedical Research Seminar was ultimately not offered as an option for second semester, “we liked the idea a lot and I think we’re hoping to offer it soon,” Huntsman said.

When Woodham left, Lindsey Hendricks was hired prior to the school year.

Even with the addition of Hendricks, though, the Science Department needed another teacher for one section of Accelerated Biology with Chemistry. Head of Appalachian Challenge and Director of Park Camps Matt Trump, who has his Master’s Degree in Biology, was asked to teach, and he accepted the offer.

Trump taught the class until the middle of October, when he resigned from teaching.

“On top of teaching the course this fall, I was still doing my other two jobs. It was basically too much for me to handle,” said Trump.

“Overall all it was a difficult decision, but I think it’s going to be best for the school in general. Handing over the class to Jeff Jennings was the best thing to do,” he said.

“Handing over the class to Jeff Jennings was the best thing to do.”

-Matt Trump

Group joins Pipeline protests

by Julia Gross ’14

Park encourages students to advocate for causes in which they believe. Naomi Roswell ’14 did just that. On November 6, Roswell and four classmates were among 12,000 who participated in a protest against the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The Pipeline, if created, would carry oil from the tar sands in Alberta, Canada through the Midwest to Texas. In Texas, the oil would be refined and then shipped to the rest of the country.

Roswell believes the consequences of the Pipeline would outweigh any positive results. “The Midwest is home to several of America’s largest aquifers, or underground water supplies,” she said. “The Pipeline is expected to spill once every seven years. Regardless of the amount spilled, the oil will poison everything through the water,” she said.

In an Upper School assembly, Roswell shared her experience of an August 24 civil disobedience protest in Washington D.C. She and four other students, Emma Krasnopol ’15, Margot Kahn ’15, Megan Philippi ’14, and Victoria Brown ’14, attended a November 6 protest, also in D.C.

Protestors linked arms and made three circles, one inside the other. Protestors surrounded the White House. Over 12,000 people attended, three times the expected number.

“One main goal through-out the entire process is media coverage,” said Roswell. “The more people we have against the Pipeline, the more likely it is that the Pipeline doesn’t go through.”

“I wanted to go because it sounded cool and I believe in the cause,” said Kahn. “After going, I definitely believe more in stopping the Pipeline and the environmental effect.”

“It was a really great experience to know that you are a part of a movement that was much bigger than yourself and to see so many people from all over who are united by this common objective to make a change,” said Brown.

On November 10, four days after the protest, President Obama announced that the deadline for the Pipeline construction decision would be postponed until after the 2012 presidential election.

“Knowing our actions made him reconsider the Pipeline and what it means for the people is one of the best feelings, it’s great to know that we made a difference,” Brown said.

But not all students are opposed to the Pipeline. “Building this Pipeline won’t reduce our consumption of oil, but it will reduce our consumption of Middle Eastern oil,” said Tyler Lerner ’13. “I think this is a more important immediate goal. I can’t really see the disadvantage to it. We get jobs, we get oil from politically stable countries, and I don’t see why we shouldn’t build it,” he said.

As for potential environmental problems, Lerner said that the Pipeline would cause less damage than a spill from a ship crossing the ocean. “The Exxon Valdez did more damage than that Pipeline ever could. The areas that were affected still haven’t recovered from that and that was a much larger area than this Pipeline could ever effect,” said Lerner.

Thousands of protestors encircled the White House in Washington, D.C., Sunday, November 6, 2011, to demonstrate against the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline.

‘Handing over the class to Jeff Jennings was the best thing to do.’

-The Postscript News November 23, 2011

Jennings was the best thing to do.

-Matt Trump

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“It was a difficult situation for all involved, but in the end we think it has worked out well,” said Huntsman. “While it has changed the layout of how we have deployed ourselves, we think it is ultimately a good decision.”

Students have said that the transition from Trump to Jennings was an easy one.

“It’s not ideal to have to switch teachers in the middle of the year. Given that, it’s been going pretty smoothly,” said Ryan Lessing ’13. “I don’t think anyone’s really been struggling with the transition.”

“I know that the Science Department’s had a tough time this year organizing everything and I think they’re doing the best job they could possibly be doing,” said Leffer.

“We’re still offering kids a really good science education from everyone who’s teaching,” said Huntsman. “Things are actually turning out quite well given our challenges.”
A man reclines on a neon orange life jacket, propped up against the inside of a six-meter aluminum boat that floats a gentle tangent to the riverbank. His face, now loose and relaxed in the dappled shade of a cambara tree, has been hardened by three decades of the Mato Grosso sun into a permanent frown and squint. Overhead, the tree's yellow, finger-like blossoms wag lazily in the breeze like the taunting pointer-finger of an older sibling. His name is Serginho, and his face, as he sleeps, is a map of the Pantanal—the Cuiaba River runs, an as he sleeps, is a map of the Pantanal. He was a local fisherman working as a piloteira for the camp; to navigate little boats full of photographers, researchers, and eco-tourists at breakneck speeds through a complicated network of rivers, channels, and oxbow lakes, shouting in his broken Portuguese over the roar of a four-stroke outboard motor. Serginho and I ate together and slept in adjacent cots in houseboats, or under the same canvas tent. We spent all day on the river searching for jaguars, and cracked jokes in Portuguese at each other’s expense, deep into the night. We developed a sort of intimacy with each other that involved a profound understanding of our moods and feelings and a powerful knowledge of the smell of rice and beans as processed by our respective digestive systems. We learned to communicate using only eyebrow angles, flared nostrils, and thumbs-up or down.

I somehow found myself privy to the details of his private life; stories of attempted passion not quite whispered over a late night barbecue by highly intoxicated fishermen; elaborations on an already rococo account of rejection that made Serginho first call out in protest, and then redden in silence. Serginho and I would occasionally stop by the fishing village of Porto Jofre on boat rides back to the camp, so he could make a call to a mysterious menina. He would disappear under the turquoise dome of the town’s only phone booth for 15 minutes as I stood and watched him from across the primitively groomed lawn of the local sport-fishing hotel. He was around 30. He sort of had a girlfriend—it was complicated.

The last time I saw him, as I was tossing my bags into the back of a van in Porto Jofre, he just smiled and gave me a thumbs-up. (I shot him two interestingly angled pair of eyebrows back.) We had spent an entire summer in constant contact and had something unique and powerful going on—but Serginho doesn’t have a cell phone, let alone e-mail, or even access to a computer, and I don’t have his address. I’ll probably never see him again. And yet, I’m not sad—Serginho and I were sort of like that Longfellow poem. We were two, six-meter aluminum motor boats with 20 horsepower, four stroke motors, passing each other in the thick Pantanal night—“Only a look and a voice; then darkness again and silence.”

Club philanthropy alumni for cash

Philanthropy cont’d. from p.1

Often, though, the alumni don’t answer their phones. Ginsburg estimates that only five out of the 15 graduates she has called have picked up.

Still, the club members are dogged. When an alumnus fails to respond to three or four phone calls, they send a handwritten note.

“It’s a commendable effort, what they’re doing,” said Becky Bridger, the club’s faculty adviser.

Junior Mollie Selmanoff has been making calls on behalf of the development office for several years, ever since she responded to an announcement asking for volunteers. Shira Cohen ‘13 soon joined her.

Last year, they approached Bridger, the Director of the Annual Fund, with the idea of starting Philanthropy Club.

The club’s goal this year is to get donations from 1,000 alumni. Last year, 882 Park graduates gave money.

Alumni donations, the single largest constituent of the Annual Fund, go exclusively towards financial aid and faculty salaries. Most alumni agree to give between $50 and several hundred dollars.

Though calling alumni, the Philanthropy Club also ensures that the school’s computerized records are accurate; the Alumni Office keeps data monitoring alumni contact information.

Cohen dialed another number.

“Hi, can I please be connected to Ms. Starber, please? STARBER? Plastic and hand department? She’s a physician assistant? All right, thank you. I guess she doesn’t work for plastic and hand anymore.”

Fake cameras installed as social critique

by Tara Wendell ’13

“I thought it was an interesting idea because they made people think about how you would feel if people were watching you during every class,” said Isabella Montoya ’15.

This was a common response to new security cameras that had been installed in various classrooms around the Upper School. Upon closer inspection, students and faculty realized that the cameras contained no batteries and were mounted with either tape or a nail.

The cameras appeared October 26, the tenth anniversary of the passing of the Patriot Act, a law that increased the government’s ability to monitor telephone and e-mail communications, and medical, financial, and other records. The Patriot Act is still in effect, and it continues to play a role in domestic policy law enforcement.

Although the group refuses to discuss the identity of Upper School math teacher Anand Thakker’s advisory is generally thought to be the group responsible.

Both students and teachers have reacted positively to the cameras and their message. “I thought it was both ominous and hilarious,” said Upper School math teacher Tony Asdourian. “They made you think.”

“As soon as I saw them, and figured out they weren’t real, I laughed out loud in delight and glee,” said Kevin Coll, Upper School English Teacher. “I read it as a commentary on Park School and the society we live in. It’s art that matters—a satiric art.”
In second year, Popov settles into new school, new culture

Teacher takes risk in coming to America, but it all pays off

by Rebecca Schwartz '13

Joining the Park School community can be a daunting, difficult task. In her second year teaching history, Jelena Popov is just now settling in.

“You have to live it to really understand what the kids are used to,” she said. “But this year is going really well! I am adjusting to the culture. I feel much more prepared for class than I was last year.”

While last year it was with dress pants and high heels, this year, Jelena greets the class room like an old friend, with light wash jeans, and casual tees.

Though she stands pretty short, her knee-length scarves, relaxedly snaked around her shoulders, give her small frame the illusion of having two or three more inches. Her blonde hair is always neatly styled in a box-like ‘do with her eyebrows always raised, eyes open in an expression of sudden realization.

A colorful watch graces her wrist, as her motions accompany her verbal lessons, demonstrating abstract thoughts, and sharp chops, used as emphases for facts.

Her motions accompany her verbal lessons, which are dictated in a thick, Serbian accent, which sometimes pauses as it tries to find the right English word.

Jelena grew up in Communist Serbia, which was, she said, “a great country to live in.” Originally interested in languages and becoming a translator, she decided to study history when she realized that she didn’t want to study grammar.

“History was always fascinating, because there is just so much that you don’t know—what you can see from another point of view.”

Archeology was another of her interests, “History was always fascinating, because it was a country where everyone lived comfortably to a place where the majority of the population was extremely poor. “It fell apart with the war,” she said. “It just went down the hill.”

Being a college student in this messy economy created many challenges. “Basically, [the college staff] enrolls more people than they have jobs for, so they are trying to eliminate as many as they can, as you are going through the college.”

Jelena had the organization and time management skills needed to receive her BA in 6 years. Her program, though, took many of her peers 10 years to complete.

After graduating from Serbia’s Belgrade University, she moved to Nevada where her future husband—then boyfriend—was already living, and she applied to the University of Nevada.

“It was very hard. I think that first generation immigrants have very, very hard time. It’s really hard to figure out the system, how to best survive in the system. I’m coming from family, I lived with my parents all my life ‘cause that’s the only way, there [in Serbia], and so I’m going from that kind of family unit to being completely independent. Living, you know, in a different country with a boyfriend who is working, but then, you know, it’s just,

“You have to be a risk-taker in life. And you have to show that to the students. I think, on some levels, that you know, it’s good to take risks and, if you fail, you fail.”

-Jelena

During Jelena’s college years, in the 90’s, Serbia changed from a country where everyone lived comfortably to a place where the majority of the population was extremely poor. “It fell apart with the war,” she said. “It just went down the hill.”

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After graduating from Serbia’s Belgrade University, she moved to Nevada where her future husband—then boyfriend—was already living, and she applied to the University of Nevada.

“It was very hard. I think that first generation immigrants have very, very hard time. It’s really hard to figure out the system, how to best survive in the system. I’m coming from family, I lived with my parents all my life ‘cause that’s the only way, there [in Serbia], and so I’m going from that kind of family unit to being completely independent. Living, you know, in a different country with a boyfriend who is working, but then, you know, it’s just,

“You have to be a risk-taker in life. And you have to show that to the students. I think, on some levels, that you know, it’s good to take risks and, if you fail, you fail.”

-Jelena

“The students don’t have to worry about it. I took a risk that was worth taking,” she said. “If it didn’t work out, I would have gone back probably.”

But Jelena didn’t go back. Instead, she was able to stay in the United States, which, she says, “is the best place to immigrate to, because you don’t feel like a foreigner.”

Even so, Jelena quickly noticed the many differences between Serbian and American life.

“We take things for granted here—like just taking a shower. I was thinking about that the other day. When you take a shower in Serbia, you put in the water, so you get wet, and you turn off the water. So the water doesn’t constantly go. And then in the United States, that basically why you take a shower, because you can enjoy having the water constantly going. That’s the way that things are done here. You don’t think about taking a shower at all. How you take a shower. So, I mean, little things that, like, just make life, everyday life as it is, different.”

Now a veteran history teacher at Park, Jelena’s classes flow easily, and they’re very well organized. She carefully lays out stacks of papers, handouts, and notes over a little desk, and she places her handy orange pencil case on top.

She uses a careful balance of current events and history to keep her students interested.

“You have to be a risk-taker in life. And you have to show that to the students. I think, on some levels, that you know, it’s good to take risks and, if you fail, you fail.”

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School in the United States presented many new challenges that most American college students don’t have to worry about.

“I didn’t know what it meant to register for classes; I didn’t know any of that.”

It was also a very financially difficult transition, going from a free school in Serbia to an expensive American college. “I didn’t have money to pay for it. If you’re an international student, you have to have money to pay for your studies.”

However, luck was with her, because she was scrambling to borrow money from her friends and family to pay for school, she was accepted into a teacher’s assistant position which paid for her education.

“So that was crazy,” she said, looking up at the ceiling. She is still in disbelief at her good fortune. “I took a risk that was worth taking,” she said. “If it didn’t work out, I would have gone back probably.”

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“Well, you can’t have current events. I mean, people need to understand what’s going on. You don’t have one without the other.”

During class, she turns her students, who are dutifully assembled in small groups, and asks them questions, challenging them to answer in the blank space at the top of the board marker instead of on the white board. With her mixture of upper and lower case letters, she firmly rules off the contrast between her numbers and random side notes, her thoughts choreographed as she goes along, flowing organically.

When she snaps the cap back on her marker, she holds it in her cheek, subconsciously double-checking the seemingly empty space on the board.

“You have to be a risk-taker in life. And you have to show that to the students. I think, on some levels, that’s true too. If you fail, you fail. I mean, it’s times we don’t make it, sometimes we know what will happen. Some of the better.”

Jelena steps back, cocks her head to the left, and brushes a strand of her hair away from her eyes to examine the board. She purses her lips and smiles proudly. Everything, somehow, quite nicely.
Malick Mbengue is, oddly enough, the type of person who tends to go unnoticed in a busy room. He always manages under the radar quite nicely. It’s not necessarily that he’s uncomfortable or shy in more open situations; he just likes to keep to himself. It’s on the soccer field that Malick feels he’s where he belongs. You can tell he’s comfortable and has been doing this for a long time. On the field, he lets loose a bit, and, although he towers over everyone else on the field, he still bears a somewhat graceful aura. In the classroom, you can tell he’s in the zone; you can tell he’s doing something he loves.

He brings a positive energy to his class and, unlike in the hallways, it’s his job to step out from under the radar and to speak up and make everyone else comfortable.

Malick’s soccer career started when he was a young boy, growing up in a small village in Senegal where he could often be found playing around with his family. “That was all we did. We just played soccer all the time,” he explained in his deep, yet somewhat soothing voice. “I mean I didn’t have a choice, really, and most kids in Africa don’t have that choice, and it’s something that I think is too bad because there’s so much stuff they can discover but they don’t get a chance to.”

Life at home with his family was “very crazy, very hectic. My dad has three wives, so we live in a big, gigantic house with a lot—a lot of people. It was just people on top of people,” he chuckled to himself. “I have many, many, many siblings; I don’t know the number because I’ve never counted. It’s kind of part of the tradition of the culture that you don’t count how many siblings you have. It’s a kind of superstition, ‘cause apparently if you count them they die, so nobody ever did!” Regardless of the fact that he never knew the exact number of children, one thing was for sure: he had so many brothers that they were able to help support the family.

Aside from his love of soccer, one of, if not the most influential aspect of Malick’s life is his religious aspect. “I always say if it wasn’t for religion I… I don’t know. It’s made me who I am now: my personality, the way I treat people, the way I interact with people. The way I conceive religion, it’s not just how you practice it or how you talk about it; it’s just how you live it. It’s not something I wear on my clothes, it’s just how I act and how I live.”

Malick stayed in Senegal with his family through college, where he was given the opportunity to continue his studies elsewhere on a scholarship. “Everybody was going to France, and I was just like, ‘I really don’t wanna go to France, you know, it’s French… there’s nothing challenging to it.’”

So I decided to come to the U.S., because, growing up in Africa, the U.S. is like kind of the dream.” And, so, his professor gave him a catalog of all of his options. “I sat there for probably a half-hour just flipping through the names of the universities. There are so many of them!” Ultimately he chose to go to University of Louisville in Kentucky, for the sole purpose that “[the word Louisville] sounded French.”

Moving from Senegal to America was like “two different ends of the spectrum,” he explained. “I went from very, very, very traditional and extremely modern societies and cultures. Because I grew up in a village, I got used to traditional life in Senegal and traditional Africa. Everything is so collectively oriented; there’s no individualism in family and you do everything with somebody.”

Needless to say, coming to America was a “big, big shock” for him, and he claims it’s even harder to go home sometimes just because he’s gotten so used to U.S. life. “I go home and it’s just like ‘Wow. I don’t know how I did this when I was a kid.’”

Upon his initial arrival, Malick flew to New York then slowly made his way via bus to the University. “I didn’t speak English, so I didn’t understand anything, so every time we stopped I had to go to the driver and ask him if this is Louisville. I just had a paper and I wrote Louisville on it so I would show it to him and he’d be like ‘No, you have a lot of ways to go!’”

After about six years in Louisville, he decided to go back to his university home, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, against the board as a counselor at a summer language program for high-schoolers at Middlebury College in Vermont.

“It was one of my best experiences I had in the U.S.,” he said. And thus began his search for a private school teaching position. “I came to Park and was just like, ‘Yeah, this is it.’ It was the kind of relationships that I already experienced in the summer camp, the fact that the doors of faculty were open so you find kids running around the offices and asking questions, being goofy.”

“I came to Park and was just like, ‘Yeah, this is it.’”

-Malick

Upon coming to Park he also took on the role of coaching soccer. “I always dreamed of playing professional soccer so after I realized that I couldn’t do it anymore, I didn’t want to just play and stop there, so I felt like I could teach it to some kids and make a difference in their lives.”

Whether he’s on the soccer field, in a classroom, or walking down the hallways, Malick will always be a unique and captivating man, a man who has largely been shaped by the life he’s lived and the experiences he’s had.

Since coming to America “I don’t think I’ve changed at all,” he stated. “The way I live, it’s different, so probably I have to adapt a little bit, but my friends would say I’m the same person that I was, and that person is someone who stays true to his passions, values, and beliefs even when he’s living at opposite ends of the spectrum.”
Occupy WALL STREET

Is the Occupy movement an ill-informed catastrophe or a well-conceptualized revolution? Bahl and Lerner debate.

Disparity in wealth distribution justifies protesters’ radical goals

by Andrew Bahl ’14

Whether or not you agree with the tent camps and rallies, which have sprouted up in the past couple of months, you would have to be ignorant not to see the validity in the Occupy Wall Street movement. They are holding big businesses accountable at a time when our government (and many citizens) seems unwilling to do so.

For the uninitiated, the Occupy movement “is fighting back against the corrosive power of major banks and multinational corporations over the democratic process, and the role of Wall Street in creating an economic collapse that has caused the greatest recession in generations,” according to the movement’s website.

Recently, author Mackay Jenkins came to Park to speak about the chemical industry and how it is unregulated and dangerous. He acknowledged, however, that meaningful federal reform will never come. Why?

“We have become a nation of self-interested people who are unwilling to demand change...”

Corporations are holding our government hostage and the chemical industry is one of the biggest culprits. According to corporatewatch.org, DuPont, “has stubbornly delayed or obstructed progressive legislation...the company has exerted substantial influence over key pieces of environmental legislation.” It is also one of the five most polluting companies in the US.

Why aren’t all of us outraged that the privileged few in big money corporations are preventing the rest of us from living healthier, safer, and better lives? Why aren’t we upset that CEOs such as Citibank’s Vikram Pandit received millions of dollars in compensation while shareholders, employees, and taxpayers were left holding the bag when the bank’s stock plummeted and had to be bailed out by the government? Inequality was commonplace during the economic downturn.

“Corporations are holding our government hostage...”

“We are the 99%!” is the slogan that the Occupy protesters have been using to represent this. Whether you choose to vilify them or not, the fact remains that the wealthiest people are controlling the vast majority of the nation’s wealth. I don’t think anyone among the 99% can argue that this is healthy. That is, unless you have a self-interest in the status quo being maintained, which many of those against Occupy Wall Street have.

And that’s the problem.

We have become a nation of self-interested people who are unwilling to demand change, which we know needs to occur, just because it would have no effect on our own lives. If you have some sort of vested interest in the way our nation’s companies do business, you probably are pretty well off. To me, it is nothing more than greed that prevents those same people from demanding change in the way that corporations function.

I applaud the protesters who have gotten fed up with the people in the economic and political world which put the interests of the few in front of interests of the many. I am happy to see that the rage which has built up for so long has finally been acted on, rather than just put aside.

It is the actions like those of the people who are on the streets in New York, Oakland, and Atlanta that have provided the foundation for the success of our country, rather than those who are sitting in executive suites across America.

Protesters rely on baseless plans, economically irrational proposals

by Tyler Lerner ’13

Occupy Wall Street is like a chicken with its head cut off. When I think about how ill-conceived most of their ideas are, the only thing that gives me solace is that the protesters are so disorganized that they are unlikely to accomplish any of them.

They claim to have drawn inspiration from the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring overthrew oppressive regimes. Unfortunately, we lack the oppressive regime that is a prerequisite for the leaderless coup that worked in the Middle East.

Without a common enemy, the Occupy Wall Street protesters have no common goal, with protesters wanting anything from debt forgiveness to decreased levels of Mercury in tuna fish. Because they have no official statements, the few good ideas that they come up with are rarely noticed amidst the chaotic din surrounding the movement.

Their demands are outrageous and would cause the entire global economy to grind to a halt, leaving most of them unemployed and homeless. According to a survey performed by Forbes Magazine, 93 percent of them advocate the forgiveness of all student loans. What they fail to recognize is the impact this would have on the economy.

If these loans, amounting to over $500 billion, were forgiven, the national debt would increase by more than three percent overnight. Advocating for this demonstrates a lack of understanding about the basic workings of the financial system, and their other demands are no better thought out.

Eighty-four percent of the protesters believe that a bank should not be legally allowed to charge a debit card fee. What they fail to understand is that if their bank begins to charge them that fee, they can leave. Capitalism is based on the free market setting values, and if the convenience of using a debit card isn’t worth five dollars, either pay cash, or switch banks, but don’t ask Uncle Sam to step in every time a company tries to charge the customers for a service they provide.

Further demonstrating a lack of understanding of free market capitalism, 88% believe that CEO pay should be capped at an unspecified value. Minimum wages serve a clear purpose; they ensure that people who are employed with full time jobs have enough money to avoid starvation. A maximum wage, however, would be detrimental to the economy. The ‘Capitalism, like any complex system, is incredibly sensitive.’

CEO of a company can make a tremendous difference, which is why they are so highly compensated.

Steve Jobs demanded 10 million shares of Apple in 2003, then worth $70 million, an enormous one-year salary by any measure. However, in the past eight years, he increased the value of the company by more than $350 billion, a figure so large that his salary pales in comparison. These people are being paid what they are worth to the company. If you limit CEO salaries, the quality of CEOs will decrease. Let the shareholders limit the salaries, not the government. Capitalism, like any complex system, is incredibly sensitive, and a poorly thought out manipulation can send it into a tailspin.

I believe that the Occupy Wall Street movement does have several good ideas, but I deplore their methodology, and I find the majority of their opinions ignorant at best. If they really want to change something, instead of standing in a park holding up signs, they should call their congressmen, and elect candidates sympathetic to their cause. Maybe if they get their act together, organize, and come up with a list of intelligent demands and a clear way to execute them, I’ll join their cause, but I’m not going to hold my breath.
Making the transition from Schechter

by Daniel Moskowitz '15

Over the past few years, there has been a huge increase in the number of students that come to Park from Krieger Schechter. Last year, we received a whopping nine kids, and this year, the ninth and tenth grade classes received five and two students, respectively. So what is it that attracts so many Schechter graduates to Park?

“It liked the environment,” Jonathan Green ’15 said.

“At Park, I think that because of it isn’t a Jewish day school, there are so many different types of people, which makes for such a diverse and wonderful community,” Stephanie Summerfield ’15 said.

Yet many people in the Upper School have never experienced another school and, therefore, don’t know what it’s like to go from a traditional school, like Schechter, to Park. Much to my surprise, although the transition seemed like it would be hard, it was an easy adjustment.

My English teacher, last year, taught similarly to the way that Park teachers teach: her class was discussion and writing based. She also told our class that she promised to prepare us for high school English no matter where we went. Originally, I was pretty skeptical, but now that the first quarter is over, I can definitely say that my teacher has earned the right to say, “I told you so.”

Although English is taught in similar ways at both schools, math at Schechter is very traditional and was the hardest adjustment. At Schechter, math was mostly about solving equations, and usually the answer was either right or wrong.

Park is just the opposite, I have yet to encounter anything as simple as just finding the solution to an equation such as $4y+2$. In addition, here, the answer is only worth one point on a test.

“The biggest adjustment I felt was with math, but I like the thinking behind it here more than at Schechter,” said Summerfield.

Also, going from nine 40-minute classes at Schechter, to three hour-and-a-half classes each day was different. Here, class periods are more productive.

This year, not only students came from Schechter, but also a teacher; Señora Sor- gen joined the Upper and Middle School Modern Language departments. Sorgen said that, when she came here, she was greeted with a “whole army working with me to help me with the transition.”

Although she thinks the general atmosphere of the two schools is very similar, she said she thinks that “Schechter is a smaller family, and behaves like that; you have the feeling of a family with everyone in the school. Park is more a community.”

Just like my Park math experiences, Sorgen worried about her own aspect of the transition—not having bells. However, she has grown to like the absence of bells between class periods.

I, too, have painlessly adjusted to the less traditional environment here. Not long ago, a teacher asked us to put our desks into rows. I could only wonder why there was a need for such traditionalism. It felt like Gilman, in many ways—like Schechter.

I return to visit Schechter, fairly frequently. The desks are in rows. The students call teachers by last name, always using “Mr.” and “Mrs.”

I think about how hard it will be to go back to such an atmosphere in college, as I witness my sister, Lindsay Moskowitz ’11, trying to make the same transition back to a format that she once knew.

Making the transition from Schechter

by Samantha Max ’14

Loyalty is one of the most admirable human characteristics. It is also one of the most difficult to attain. Last month, Israel’s sense of loyalty was put to the test when a deal was proposed to trade 1,027 Palestinian prisoners in return for a single Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit.

Hamas, the Palestinian government, captured Shalit during a raid at the Gaza border in 2006, over five years ago. At the time, he was 19 years old, only a year older than many Park seniors.

Such a horrific fate is unimaginable to me, and probably the vast majority of our community. The idea of being required to enter the army at age 18 is alien enough. Being trapped in your enemy’s prison and then of out reach from all society is unjust to say the very least. It’s not difficult to understand why Israel wanted to free Shalit.

However, there is a big difference between wanting something and actually making it happen. This is where Israel’s boundless loyalty came into play. The Israeli government proved to Hamas, and the rest of the world, that it was willing to go to any length to protect one of its citizens.

Israel traded 1,027 people for one. And it was not for a military general, nor the prime minister; they were only asking for a regular soldier.

Why was Israel so anxious to get back one ordinary person? In turn, they released over 1,000 Palestinian terrorists, 315 of whom had committed crimes that had earned them the death penalty. These former prisoners most likely will cause future danger for Israel. Several Israeli cities, such as Ashkelon and Ashdod, are only a few miles from Gaza, which makes them easy targets for attacks.

Hundred of people may be killed or wounded as a result of Shalit’s release. Regardless, many Israeli citizens support this decision 100 percent. In a New York Times article, entitled “Israel and Hamas Agree to Swap Prisoners for Soldier,” Ethan Bromer wrote, “For years, Israelis have embraced the Shalit family, with many viewing the abducted soldier as, in effect, their own son.”

There is a sense of community among Israeli citizens that seems unbreakable. A limitless loyalty holds the country together. Of course arguments can be made that in certain situations, a line must be drawn between when to be loyal and when to let go. Plenty of people would say that this is one of those situations. I disagree. This sacrifice provides a lesson for everyone. Loyalty comes with a price. If you care about something, you’ll find the strength to pay it.

Israel proves loyalty with Shalit deal

by Samantha Max ’14

Newly released Palestinian prisoners returned to Gaza City October 28, 2011. They were released along with hundreds of other Palestinian prisoners in an exchange for captured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit.

Hassan Eesen/AA/Abaca Press/MCT

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by Mai Asmerom '13

Last week, the first play of the year opened to a packed Meyerhoff auditorium. Oliver!, written by Lionel Bart and based on the time-honored novel Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens, is a musical theater classic, re-imagined by director Peter King, musical director Adele Dinerstein, and a large, talented cast of actors.

The story is time-worn: Oliver is a young orphan boy, played by Anna Rose Schenerman '12, who has the gall to say, after eating his measly portion of gruel for dinner at the workhouse, “Please sir, I want some more.” Immediately, the plot springs into a whirlwind of action, with Oliver hurtling left and right, first to a funeral home, then to a lair of thieves, then to a kind woman’s house and back again.

Supported by an extended cast of characters, the play builds on the thickening plot and surprising revelations during the second act, to create an atmosphere ripe with intrigue and suspense.

The play opens with the number ‘Food, Glorious Food,’ choreographed with military precision. The actors stand somberly before the audience, dressed in dirty, poorly-cut clothing. Their voices blend together to create a dirge-like harmony and the effect is startlingly bleak—the backdrop to what will be an excellent opening act.

At the forefront of the pack is Schenerman’s Oliver, who’s small, scrappy, and scared, just one of the many boys gathered in the workhouse under miserable conditions. She lends him a strong sense of defiance - in fact, one of the most visually arresting moments of the play comes in the very beginning, right before Oliver is sold to the couple who runs the funeral home. Arms gripped by Mr. Bumble and Widow Corney, played by Chris Faux ’13 and Elana Leibow-Feurer ’14, she glares out at the audience, her mouth flattened into a line of anger, eyes shining with indignity. Throughout, Schenerman’s voice is nothing less than exquisite; not only does she sing in all-mighty notes, but her solo, “Where is Love?” is one of the more poignant moments of play.

Other stand-out performances include Nancy and Bill Sykes, played by Leah Shapiro ’12 and Ben Levitsky ’13, the tragic couple of Oliver! Shapiro brings raucous life to Fagin’s lair, making group scenes crackle with energy. She commands her time alone on stage like a seasoned pro and her solo, “As Long As He Needs Me” is haunting.

The show is graced with his beard; Sykes was so gruff, grim, and frightening. Menacing and mean, Levitsky as Sykes brought real tension to the story.

Other excellent performances included Eli Block ’12 as the animated and cunning Fagin, Melissa Miller ’14 as the greedy Mrs. Sowerberry, Sarah Cohen ’14 as the compassionate Mrs. Brownlow.

A chorus of talented Middle School students, led by Middle School Music Director Bruce Bryant, sang and danced beautifully in their roles as the Workhouse Boys and Fagin’s Gang.

Finally, no one can watch Oliver! without praising the set, created by Josie Verchomin ’12. Thin, slanted paper strips hang down behind the stage’s main action, which allow images and words to be projected to the front. The lighting and sound were perfectly timed and flawlessly executed.

Oliver! lived up to its high expectations.

by Peter Califano ’14

This summer, seventh graders Daniel Neiman and Mike Fishman wrote and recorded an album of original music, and are donating all proceeds to Oceana, an international non-profit that promotes ocean conservation and protection. Colors Weep was released October 12, 2011 on iTunes, Amazon, and other online sales sites.

The boys, like other students in years past, spent free time playing music in the hallways. “We first started playing Jack Johnson songs outside of Paul Hulleberg’s room,” said Fishman.

With Bar Mitzvahs on the horizon and a charitable project required, they came up with the idea to record an album and donate its proceeds. “The music wasn’t at first linked to mitzvah projects. We just said ‘Hey’ this would be a cool way to do it,” said Neiman.

Neiman wrote the lyrics and most of the guitar parts, but both boys worked on the instruments as a whole. “Mike would come over and we would work out the parts,” Neiman said.

After a year of writing songs, Neiman and Fishman began recording the album with producer Jerry Key, whom they contacted through a camp counselor. Knowing that they both wanted to donate to an environmental group, Neiman researched charities and found that Oceana was one of the best organizations dedicated to environmental protection. The album itself is reflective of the charity; the title track, “Colors Weep,” is about how society ignores the small things that harm the environment.

“Under Our Feet, Over Our Heads, written in April, after the Japanese tsunami, speaks about natural disasters and the inability to stop them.”

Oceana has a direct connection to the school. Its CEO, Andy Sharpless, is the son of former head of school F. Parvin Sharpless (1976-1995), and spoke at an Upper School assembly September 30, 2009.

Neither Fishman nor Neiman knew about the Park connection, and would not have been present at the assembly since they were in fifth grade at the time.

The most difficult part of the process in creating the album was registering the songs for copyright. “It was excruciating; it takes an unbelievably long time and while you are doing it you are just full of anxiety,” said Neiman. Despite the stress, both Neiman and Fishman plan to continue writing music. “I don’t think this will be it at all,” Neiman said.

Once the checks begin arriving from online distributor CD Baby, 100 percent of the profits from sales of Colors Weep will go to Oceana.

Have any sold? “Oh yeah, but now we’ve probably sold about 100 albums,” said Neiman. For his part, and on “on behalf of all the fish in the sea,” Andy Sharpless hopes that Colors Weep “goes platinum. We’re totally pleased that Oceana’s going to get a boost thanks to two very musical Park School students.”
Basketball teams under new leadership

by Seth Danels '13

As the basketball season warms up, both the Girls’ and Boys’ Varsity teams find themselves adjusting to new coaches.

Justin McKnight, who has coached at Park for the past six years, was elevated to Boys’ Varsity head coach. “I feel great and humbled to have the opportunity to lead the boys’ basketball program,” he said.

He feels confident in the team and anticipates success.

“I expect to see us playing in the championship game and winning it. You don’t start something unless you plan for the best. I plan to win,” he said.

This year, Josh Ackerman, who has coached for several years at Middle and Upper School levels, and Will Wharton, who has served as an assistant for Boys’ Varsity, will support McKnight.

McKnight replaces interim Middle School Principal Josh (“Lobo”) Wolf, who had coached Boys’ Varsity for 16 years.

“I'll miss everything about coaching basketball,” said Wolf, “especially the Friday night games, the time on the court with the kids, the late nights with my coaching staff, figuring out half-time adjustments, and especially the practices, which are two hours of Zen—time to be completely present. Yes, I’ll miss pretty much everything about the game,” he said.

There will definitely be a void on the sidelines this basketball season without Wolf, but he will continue coaching—off the court.

“There is nothing like basketball,” he said. “But the coach in me is being satisfied emotionally and intellectually through my job as Middle School Principal. This new job is a lot like coaching, often feeling like we’re down by one in the fourth quarter, and there’s a need to analyze the situation, be on your toes and make good quick decisions. That feels a lot like what I do every day,” he said.

“It’s sad to see such a great coach leave the game,” said Mark Rothleitner ’12. “But I am optimistic about Justin and what he brings to the table.”

US English teacher Kevin Colin steps down as Head Coach of Girls’ Varsity after having brought the team to many victories.

“When you coach you go into battle with people,” said Coll. “You laugh and cry and work so hard, and you bond with the players in a really intense way. That’s what I’ll miss: the bond of a team.”

Junior Akira Townes, who started on Varsity last year, said she will miss playing for Coll, and that all of the players loved being on his team.

She went on to say that Robin Willard and Larry Gilbert, the new coaches coming up from the Middle School basketball program, have a strong desire to win a championship.

Willard and Gilbert have coached together for the past 27 years, and have led many successful teams. They appreciate the opportunity and look forward to co-coaching this young team.

With only two seniors and three juniors, Willard and Gilbert will have to rely heavily on the underclassmen. To help them with these challenges, the coaches are pleased to welcome back Amy Millin to assist them.

Club lacrosse fosters competition

by Teddy Levine ’14

As the days get shorter and the air becomes bitterly cold, lacrosse would seem to be an afterthought. But, for a select few, the season is just starting. Those with aspirations to be major contributors on Boys’ and Girls’ Varsity this spring have taken advantage of club lacrosse programs.

“Club lacrosse makes me smarter and tougher as a player,” said Alex Kouwenhoven ’13. “It gives me the opportunity to play against Division I quality athletes, and everyone on my team knows how to play a high level of lacrosse.”

Kouwenhoven’s team, LaxWorld Lacrosse Club, competes against all-star teams from across the nation, and plays year round. Despite the competitive nature, club lacrosse provides an opportunity for out-of-school friendships and camaraderie among teammates.

“It’s just a ton of fun over the summer playing with different people and bonding during the down time,” said Francesco Porcarelli ’14.

Porcarelli, who plays for The Greene Turtle Lacrosse Club, also recognizes the impact club lacrosse can have on college recruiting. “Playing for a B-Conference school can be a real challenge to get noticed by college scouts. But when I’m playing during the summer with my club, most of the tournaments we go to are loaded with scouts,” he said.

Club lacrosse offers a chance to expand skills, to get attention from college scouts, and to build strong out-of-school friendships. It’s an opportunity that many Park players have fully utilized, and should show up on the field in March.

O’Keefe balances biking, schoolwork

cont’d from p. 1

So how does an 18-year-old win one of the biggest races in a series? One answer is a great coach. O’Keefe’s coach of five years, Kris Auer, not only prepares Sam for the big races, but also keeps him calm and focused on what’s important. “[Kris] identifies what races I want to be really focused on, and then I’ll train and get myself to a peak of fitness for certain races that are further down the line,” O’Keefe said.

O’Keefe certainly has a busy schedule. After additional races since Madison, he is still in the top three in the US Grand Prix rankings, and will continue training and racing until the Worlds competition in Belgium this January. And even though these goals are very high on his list, O’Keefe makes his point that his primary focus right now is getting into college. His search criteria are unsurprising: “I definitely want to go to school that has lots of biking.”
LS students permitted to “play up”

by Daniel Stern ‘12

Editor’s Note:
It is a policy of The Postscript never to publish anonymous letters, so, when our editorial staff received an anonymous letter—which opposed recent decisions to allow Lower School basketball players the opportunity to compete on the Middle School “C” team—we decided to investigate the concerns.

On a recent Wednesday afternoon, David Renbaum ’19 received advice from his basketball coach, Jimmy Rosenfield. Renbaum had been practicing and steadily improving, but, according to his coach, he still needed to be “taking a harder step towards the basket.” Listening carefully while unlacing his shoes, Renbaum nodded, and said that, next practice, he’d keep working on the skill. Renbaum is in fifth grade, but he plays on the Middle School “C” Boys’ Basketball team, he is one of the team’s six Lower School students.

According to the authors of the aforementioned letter, the wealth of Lower School talent that existed. In that sense, the Lower School on the eligibility of certain students for an increased sixth grade participation. “Because we didn’t have a ‘C’ team, nobody was displaced,” Diven said. “It just created the opportunity to give another 10-12 kids the chance to play.”

Additionally, the Middle School intramural basketball program is still in place. The creators of the letter wondered if that fact might have played into the decision.

According to Diven, the answer is no: “[Rosenfield] volunteered to coach the team, but only after we’d already created it. We knew that there were a few lower schoolers that we wanted to get involved, and we saw this as an opportunity,” he said. And, because most other local schools don’t field Lower School Boys’ Basketball teams, creating a Lower School team was, Diven said, “really not an option for us.”

In past years, Josh Wolf, former Boys’ Varsity Basketball coach and current Middle School Principal, has run Lower School basketball clinics. “The clinics have been effective,” Wolf said, “but it was good to let [the six Lower School students] play up. It shows them that we’re serious about the program.”

The creation of the “C” team was, in Diven’s mind, a valuable chance to expand the program: “Parents’ concerns, to me, seemed to be a little misinformed,” he said. “We weren’t reducing the opportunity for Middle School students; we were really expanding it. It wasn’t some masterplan, just a good opportunity to take a step forward in basketball.”

And, as of now, the decision seems to be working out. The Lower School athletes, many of whom have played travel basketball with Middle School students in the past, claim to feel “comfortable” and “part of the team.”

“I think they’re all adjusting just fine,” Rosenfield said. “They’re working hard, and everything has been going well.”

Kyle Tribble ‘13 wins all-MIAA honors

by Reid Daniels ‘13

Kyle Tribble ‘13, the number one Boys’ Varsity Cross Country runner, placed fourth in the MIAA B conference championship race. Tribble finished the three-mile race with an astounding time of 17:46. “I just had a really good day,” he said. He also won all-MIAA honors with his stellar performance throughout the season.

“It was a very enjoyable season,” Tribble said. “Everyone on the team did what they needed to do.”

Though proud of how he and his team performed during the season, Tribble still has higher expectations for next fall. This year, injury held him back during the summer and early on in the season.

At the beginning of last summer, Tribble joined the Howard County Striders, a group that runs six miles every day. There he trained for the upcoming Cross Country season, but unfortunately began to feel pain in his leg. He was unable to train very hard throughout the summer, and an MRI revealed a stress fracture. Tribble had to sit out the first two weeks of the fall season.

After slowly working his way back, he quickly regained his speed and endurance. “I tried to walk for an hour a day and train on the elliptical everyday in order to get back in shape,” Tribble said. He certainly accomplished his goal at championships, but he is, by no means, done. “My hope is to bring my time from a 17:46 to a 17:20 next year,” he said.

Tribble trains for championships by running neighborhood loops.