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bard free press

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STATE OF THE FREE PRESS

It's a new year, and we, the members of the Free Press staff, are stuck once more in a lonely room as we put together the paper for you to read. Outside, the sun is shining, and other students are out doing their homework or having fun being normal people.

But we're not bitter. This year, the Free Press staff will be expanding the paper's reach in both scope and operation. We're eagerly meeting both new and old writers and photographers, and we're excited that their hard work is finally becoming print. Be sure to subscribe to the Free Press so you get their work straight to your mailbox.

Soon, you'll be able to find their work on the web, too. The Free Press now has a functioning website. In addition to our in-depth monthly news pieces, we'll also be putting up news briefs as they occur throughout the month. These online briefs will offer updates on campus news, campus events, bands and humor.

In addition, we hope the website fosters a two-way dialogue between our readers and our news. Come to the website to put in your comments and feedback, share articles that piqued your interest, subscribe to our mail service or join our staff. In the future, we hope to have a link where clubs will be able to send us news updates for us to cover and a venue for you to pitch your own story ideas to the Free Press.

We're also reaching out to our peers at Bard's affiliated schools all across the world to bring a global perspective to our national issues. This month, we asked for opinions on the US presidential election from students from Russia, Germany, South Africa and Hispanic activists in the Hudson Valley. Next month, we hope to have international correspondents from our affiliated schools to offer their thoughts.

Meanwhile, members of our staff here in Annandale will be traveling to Chicago this October to participate in the Annual Associated Collegiate Press' National College Media Convention. We will be attending workshops, receiving on-site critiques on our website and paper from qualified professionals, and meeting other student journalists from all over the nation.

We hope that this experience, one that Bard publications haven't taken advantage of in the past, will help us build and improve our newspaper and coverage for our readers. A big thank you to Ken Cooper, Micki Strawinski, James Ottaway, Jr., and Jonathan Becker on behalf of Civic Engagement—without your generous donations, there's no way we would have been able to pursue this opportunity.

We'll be in our new office in the basement of Tewks every Monday for people who want to chat, so that's an invite for anyone who's interested. You'll also notice our newspaper racks around campus. In addition to finding the Free Press on these racks every month when we publish, we invite all Bard student publications to use them to distribute their wares. We will also have newspaper dispensers at the shuttle stops at Kline, and in Red Hook and Tivoli, as we want to do everything we can to encourage print publications around Bard.

With luck, the paper you read in the bathroom or at Kline or in the library will be the best it can be. That's our goal, and we hope to create a paper as fun to read as it was to make.

BETWEEN TIVOLI AND ANNANDALE, SHUTTLE SHUFFLE CAUSES CONTROVERSY

BY REBECCA SWANBERG

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JP LAWRENCE
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photo by dylan gilbert

A girl took the microphone from the makeshift stage in the Ludlow lawn. It's time to go, she said, party's over. But you couldn't hear her over the feedback through the speakers and the yells from the crowd. The mass of students had been thinning for an hour, but at least 50 people were still dancing, swaying, drinking, stumbling. One more song, they screamed. The girl gave the microphone back to Dr. Skinnybones and shrugged her shoulders. One more song, I guess.

The Budget Forum party was supposed to end at midnight, and it only lasted 10 minutes longer—but that 10 minutes was enough time for the last shuttle off-campus to come and go.

"You missed the shuttle—we can give you a ride, but you'll have to sit on someone's lap," a girl in the crowd said to her friend.

Students came back to Bard to a modified shuttle schedule this fall. The decision, made without significant student input or notification, has led to complaints, emails, forums and solutions. But after a month of controversy and conversation—a new system is in place. There will be a late-night shuttle, but not for everyone.

What it was, and what it was supposed to be

Bard's shuttle system was put into place in the early 90's to get students to and from class, said Jim Brudvig, Vice President for Administration, as more and more of the student body moved off campus. But over the past few years, as off-campus population increased, the shuttle's purpose changed. It turned into a bus to cart inebriated students into town, drop them off, and bring them back to campus later.

A few years ago, agitated Tivoli residents started raising complaints about the masses of students dropped off downtown. By last year, the situation reached a point where something had to be done, according to Tivoli Mayor Bryan Cranna.

Last fall, Susan Rogers, Visiting Associate Professor of Writing, voiced her own view on the issue in an interview with the Free Press. As a resident of Tivoli living on Feroe Ave, she put her house up for sale because of the excessive noise.

"Students walking home down Feroe at three a.m., screaming and yelling, has completely changed the texture of [Tivoli]," Rogers said last fall. "I'm in a weird position because I love the town and I love the college, but you have 500 acres to party on [at Bard]. It's just really unfortunate that it's happening down the street from me."

So, one thing was for sure, as far as Tivoli was concerned—the late-night shuttle had to stop. In an interview with the Free Press last spring, Cranna explained that he, the Tivoli board and residents of Tivoli demanded a midnight end to the shuttle.

Administrators dismissed the problem until after finals, and addressed it over summer break. Although administrators had refused to end the shuttles when complaints from Tivoli first surfaced, they were forced to face the developing problems that the late-night shuttle introduced to the Bard community—not only a dissonance between the villages and the college, but abuse to shuttle drivers and threats to student safety.

"When I first came on in the fall [of 2010], I

remember the shuttle driver coming to me after the first weekend and saying 'I really don't want to drive on the weekends anymore, it's just too scary,'" said Jeffrey Smith, Director of Transportation. "And by scary he meant that he was scared that students were going to get hurt because of their behavior...crazy drunkenness, kids piling on the bus, too many kids on the bus, that sort of thing."

In response, the college started a shadow shuttle, a smaller 14-person shuttle that followed the bigger 32-person shuttle. In time, Bard Transportation added another bus—a yellow school bus that seated 45-50 people and only went to Tivoli and back. Fewer students were left waiting for a shuttle, banging on the shuttle doors or running after it to try to squeeze on. But according to Smith, it didn't solve the problem.

"What happened was we added more people to the mix. My numbers show that we had 400-500 going to Tivoli some nights. There was a mob scene that developed," Smith said.

With increased numbers, student behavior became too much for the shuttle driver to manage alone. Security got involved, and they agreed upon yet another new system—Transportation monitors. But the monitors were put in uncomfortable situations attempting to manage student behavior, too.

"The students weren't able to police themselves when we gave them what they asked for," Smith said. "The Tivoli residents weren't happy, the Tivoli government wasn't happy, our bus drivers weren't happy. It was a very unsafe situation."

Making the final cut

Dean of Students Bethany Nohlgren notified students of the administration's decision to officially end late-night shuttles on Aug. 22 in an email. She wrote that the shift was done "out of concern for the safety of students and in response to an overwhelming increase in violations of village, state and federal laws, which put an undue strain on local resources and residents." As the messenger of bad news, Nohlgren had to bear the brunt of the student complaints.

"I was involved in some of the initial conversations about shifting the time and I've known for years about the behavior issues," Nohlgren said. "My active role began [last] spring in conversations with various staff members and students about concerns and how we were going to move forward."

Students gathered to voice their grievances and solutions for the shuttle schedule changes at a Shuttle Transportation Forum held on Sept. 10. The most charged topic at the Transportation Forum was the fact that student voices were excluded from the decision-making process. Senior Matt Constantino spoke at the podium and took issue with policy being made over the summer, with the students not being informed of the impending changes.

"They emphasized these horror stories to take it away," Evan Dunn, a junior and Red Hook resident, wrote in a message to the Free Press. "And yes, they happened, but I think if such a giant drunk mass was broken up, they wouldn't happen in the first place."

According to Smith, the Transportation Department did extensive research to find out how other schools handled similar problems in

hope for a better solution than ceasing the shuttles completely. Most schools have similar problems, he said, and most of them reached the same solution: stop the shuttle at midnight and let students create their own system afterwards. But according to some students who spoke at the forum, stopping the shuttle just defers the actual root of the issue.

"Taking away the mode of transport," junior Hans Kern said at the forum, "is not going to take away the problem."

According to President of the Student Association Government Cara Black, the Pocket Beer Policy—a rule that allowed students over 21 to have one alcoholic beverage with them on campus—was thrown out. This change in policy was at the core of the shuttle problems.

"What was wrong with the Tivoli shuttles was that since the Pocket Beer Policy was banished, people were just having a ton of alcohol in their rooms and jumping on the shuttle because all the campus activities weren't interesting," Black said.

Smart students, smart decisions

Nohlgren's biggest concern in the shuttle controversy has been students' lack of respect for each other, drivers, equipment and their own safety.

"It's embarrassing, this behavior, and why people aren't more embarrassed, I don't understand," Nohlgren said. "I would be utterly ashamed if I had behaved that way. It's time for people to really examine their behavior and habits and what they want to do with their lives. The college is not interested in supporting that culture."

Many students brought up their concern that peers would drive under the influence without a shuttle to take them home. Both Nohlgren and Cooper spoke vehemently against this statement, explaining that bright students can make their own decisions—and intelligent ones.

"It goes back to the idea that really smart people should be able to make really smart decisions," Nohlgren said. "The argument that [stopping late-night shuttles] will lead to drunk driving underestimates the intelligence of our student body."

Nohlgren added that the attitude that Tivoli needed to "buck up" because of its location near a college was flawed reasoning. Tivoli residents, she said, don't need to tolerate the kind of behavior that was happening in their yards, against their houses, on the streets. And that assumption, Nohlgren said, is "elitist, classist, and false."

"It's absolutely [students'] right to live in the villages and be a part of the community, but it's nobody's right in any college town or otherwise to engage in the disrespectful drunken debauchery that students have been," Nohlgren said. "That's not an inherent right. Nobody has the right to do that on this campus. So to somehow suggest that this is an afforded right—there's a logic problem there. That's a misnomer and a misunderstanding of how one behaves in a civilized society."

"It's time for people to really examine their behavior and habits and what they want to do with their lives. The college is not interested in supporting that culture."

Bringing the shuttle back, for some

Cooper had originally stated that though there would be further discussion, the decision had been made. For him, that new shuttle policy changing "would be like climbing Mt. Everest." But over the two weeks following the Transportation Forum, Black met with Brudvig and made significant steps in bringing the late-night shuttle back, in a new form.

At the forum, senior Marie Flowers brought up the unaddressed issue that Red Hook residents were also being affected, even though Red Hook government had made no complaints about student behavior. After one meeting with Brudvig, Black was able to restore service to Red Hook at night.

The majority of students pointed solely to the administration for the halt in the late-night shuttle, especially after Brudvig came forth in accepting full responsibility for the final decision. The resentment came mostly from their lack of commitment to bringing students into the dialogue. But fighting against the administration wasn't going to help improve the situation, Black said, who felt all of the concerns raised that night were legitimate, but that the anger may have been misdirected.

"There has been too much focus on 'Hey, we deserve to party!' and not on 'Why did they take it away in the first place?'" Black said. "Maybe we deserved it."

The Red Hook shuttle was just one step in the right direction, but there was still a Tivoli problem, and after a second meeting with Brudvig, the only news Black had to announce was that Brudvig would "think about [bringing back the Tivoli late-night shuttle]."

At the Transportation Forum, Black had proposed her idea for a "Shuttle Club," suggesting that students pull money from the convocation fund to have a student-driven shuttle. The shuttle would only accept Tivoli residents after midnight, taking them to on-campus events and providing transportation back home.

She received some criticism at the forum from students suggesting that money shouldn't be pulled from student clubs for a service that was originally provided by the college. Taking these comments into consideration, Black asked Brudvig if the money saved from cutting the late-night shuttle could go towards the new student-run Shuttle Club.

"The administration has approved the proposal that will give the Shuttle Club \$3,000, so any money given to the club from the convocation fund has been returned," Black said.

Students who live in Tivoli will get a special identification card with the new system and there will be a contract that they must sign in order to get the pass. The contract will say that they understand that their privilege to take the late-night shuttle may be retracted if they abuse the shuttle. It will also explicitly state that it is only for the use of Tivoli residents. The Shuttle Club has been met with support from administrators, but Black, Brudvig, and representatives from Tivoli are scheduling a meeting to discuss the proposal. Because the original late-night shuttle cut was a written agreement, Tivoli needs to approve this new development.

"To me, it feels very different to have a shuttle in place to make sure 15-25 students who watched a late movie or went to a concert or studied late can get home safely," Nohlgren said.

The new shuttle will not provide service to students living on-campus, so students who leave campus to party still don't have a Bard-provided method of transportation back to campus. But according to Black, this was the best they could do.

"I know that a lot of people might be disappointed but the bottom line is that the administration is cracking down on the Tivoli problems," Black said.

Black says that if students treat the shuttle and the student drivers with respect, then they will be able to extend the shuttle hours to weekdays and will increase funding. Extending hours for at least midterms and finals seems feasible. Convincing the administration to consider the Shuttle Club wasn't hard, Black said, because they agreed with her on the important points.

"The motivation [for administrators] behind doing the shuttle change was because the college has a moral obligation to provide transportation to students who live in Tivoli," Black said. "We all pay the \$85 student activities fee, and this [shuttle problem] was creating a disconnect between campus and Tivoli—there were two Bards."

Drivers have already been hired and Black is in the process of organizing the IDs and contracts. She says that the system will be put into action as soon as the details are worked out.

"At one point we were discussing if the

drivers should be students or paid staff, and we chose student drivers," Black said. "We thought they might be respected—since you have to see this person in class and in hallways, you're not going to take advantage of the fact that they are paid minimum wage and are sacrificing their weekend night to drive you home."

Black is optimistic, but added that she hopes students don't abuse the shuttle. Because it took so much effort to reach a common ground with administration, she thinks that the first break of trust could result in the shuttle being taken away for good.

"I'm hopeful that if it's a student-led initiative, there might be some semblance of greater respect and responsibility, but it's a shame that students have more respect for colleagues than staff," Nohlgren said. "It's been really disappointing to hear how mean students have been to drivers whose sole responsibility is to keep [students] safe. It's ugly. For a campus that has such vibrant, smart and engaged thinkers it seems like such a dichotomy and I don't totally understand it."

NEW POLICY EXPLAINED:

Under the new policy, the 32-person shuttle, driven by hired transportation staff, will provide late-night transportation from campus to Red Hook. During this timeframe, midnight until 3 a.m., an additional 14-person turtle-top will transport Tivoli residents to and from campus. This shuttle will be driven by paid students out of a \$3,000 fund allocated by administration. Students who live in Tivoli will need to sign a contract agreeing to the terms, including treating the drivers, passengers and equipment respectfully. Upon signing the contract, they will be issued a special Tivoli resident identification card. Only students with this valid identification will be allowed onto the turtle-top that goes to Tivoli. If a student exhibits unseemly behavior on the shuttle or breaks the contract in any way, they will lose their privilege to ride the late-night Tivoli shuttle. The Red Hook shuttle exits as part of the routine shuttle system, and will function as late-night shuttles have in the past. Anyone can ride the Red Hook shuttle to and from campus and the no open containers rule still applies.

NEWS-BRIEFS

/ BARDFREEPRESS.COM

PSYCH IS NOW SCIENCE

BY ALEXANDRA BATZDORF

This past summer, the Psychology department moved from the Division of Social Sciences to the Division of Science, Mathematics, and Computing (SM&C). The move has its roots in an external review from 2003 and reflects a gradual transition in the field of Psychology, as well as within the Bard faculty, toward research.

Assistant Professor in Psychology Sarah Dunphey-Lelii believes that the shift was inevitable. "[The] move absolutely reflects modern thinking about Psychology at the national level. More than half of the peer institutions we investigated had already made the move, and others are in progress... The time was ripe for a move."

Still, this is the first time in Bard's history that an entire program has changed divisions. Some psychology majors were concerned about the implications this would have on their studies, but Assistant Professor in Psychology Kristin Lane assures us that the changes will be largely "transparent." The shift applies only to first-year students; sophomores and above will still receive a degree in the Division of Social Studies.

As for incoming first-years, this change does not necessitate a degree in the Division of SM&C. Director of the Psychology Program Frank Scalzo explains that students can choose whether they receive their degree from the Division of Social Studies or the Division of SM&C, a decision that will be formally acknowledged during Moderation. However, Dunphey-Lelii warns that students should keep their distribution requirements in mind as 40 credits must now come from a division outside of SM&C, as opposed to Social Studies. That said, "most Psychology courses will still fulfill the Social Science distribution."

Some changes to the psychology curriculum, affecting only first-years, have taken place independently of the division move. Dunphey-Lelii explained that students must now take wider-ranging 200-level psychology courses, as well as one SM&C course outside the department. However, Lane believes the new requirements will not be difficult for students to complete. They are more of "a codification of what people were already doing," she said.

The psychology program has become increasingly research-oriented over the years. Chair of the Division of Social Studies Robert Culp said that Bard's psychology program has been shifting for some time toward research science.

Faculty members are largely optimistic about the changes. Culp admits that there are potential long-term effects concerning relationship linkages to the social sciences, but, at the moment, this is not an issue. In fact, Culp said, linkages between psychology and the research sciences "are

BARD INSURANCE UPGRADED

BY KURT SCHMIDLEIN

Bard College has a new health care provider for students, according to Vice President for Administration Jim Brudvig.

"[It's] both more comprehensive and more expensive," Brudvig said, "and one leads to another. This is a real health insurance plan, not a supplemental kind of plan that students had before for a few hundred dollars."

The new carrier is US Fire, according to Director of Institutional Research Joe Ahern. The plan is administered by Allen J. Flood Companies, Inc., which is located in Larchmont, NY. The previous administrator, Markel, "dropped out of the student health insurance business," Ahern said. Flood created the current plan in anticipation of new requirements mandated by the Affordable Care Act.

"The changeover process began in early spring 2012 and was completed by the time the students returned for the fall semester," Ahern said.

The new policy and its changes were outlined by Brudvig in a letter sent to parents last May.

According to Ahern, the new plan features several positive changes for students; most important, he said, was a mandated change. The Accident & Sickness Medical Expense benefit has been increased from \$6,000 to \$100,000.

"[The new] plan pays 100 percent of qualifying expenses up to \$1,000," Ahern said, meaning that students do not pay for anything that the plan covers so as long as the costs do not exceed \$1,000. After \$1,000 the plan covers 80% of expenses, according

to the brochure on the plan's website, www.ajfusa.com/students. However the costs of any collegiate sports-related injury are covered in full with no cap.

The plan has no deductibles and covers students for the entirety of the year rather than just the nine months of the academic year. It also has a greater range of prescription drug benefits and has increased preventative care.

The premium for the new plan is \$1,402 annually per student. The previous plan cost \$335 per year. "It's a 12-month plan and it's got a major medical aspect to it," Brudvig said. "Yes, it does cost a lot, but it's because it's got real coverage in it."

According to Brudvig's May letter to parents, the insurance fee is charged directly to student accounts. The new policy works on a mandatory/waiver basis.

"For many years, Bard's student health plan has been required of all students," Ahern said. "Looking at the price increase due to the new coverage requirements, the college judged that it could no longer make its student health plan a required purchase."

Instead, students can receive a waiver from the new plan if they can prove they are covered by a different insurance policy. However, the alternative plan has to cover the student in the state of New York.

"[The] intent is that [the] student is covered while at school," Ahern said.

Students can see a summary of their benefits and download their student insurance identification card and the claim form at www.ajfusa.com/students.

SOTTERY HALL NEW HOME TO DOSA

BY DAVID GIZA

Even a casual observer would be able to tell that the building is still being settled into. Perhaps it is the fact that the utilities room is acting as an impromptu storage closet. Maybe it is the blue painter's tape that is still clearly visible on the walls of the office. Or it could be something as simple as the pizza boxes resting on a chair rather than an actual table. Any way one chooses to look at it, the message is clear: the Dean of Student Affairs Office is still settling into its old home.

Freeing itself from the cozy, lived-in, albeit limited, space it once called home in the basement of Ludlow Hall, the Student Affairs Office now resides in Sottery Hall. The Student Affairs Office, along with the Dean of Students Office and International Student Services office, forms the all new, all amazing Bard College Center for Student Life & Advising.

So why the move to the new space in Sottery from the old one in Ludlow? Bethany Nohlgren, Dean of Students, explains it all: "We grew in size. Because of my change in position, we hired a new first year dean. Gretchen Perry, who is Dean of Campus Life, was over in Annadale House, and we needed to make sure that she was part of this world as well. And we hired David Gruber as a new Advising Associate, and David Shein needed room for him. So we were expanding."

Several departments have changed locations over the last few months, but the one that opened Sottery Hall to the Dean of Student Affairs Office and company was, of course, related to pizza: "Alumni & Development has offices in Ludlow and [Sottery], and when the new alumni center opened at Two Boots [across 9G], everyone in that office moved there, and this building open up," explained Nohlgren.

So what does the department think of their new office? According to Nohlgren, "we're still settling in, but it's nice and cozy."

SOLAR FARM TO HARVEST ENERGY

BY JP LAWRENCE

Bard College will soon have a 300-kilowatt solar farm located near the soccer and paintball fields. The solar panels, as planned, will generate the amount of electricity equivalent to running a building the size of CCS, according to Vice President for Administration, Jim Brudvig.

The college is working with Solartech, a Kingston energy company, and said the construction will be completed within six weeks, after an archeological

site survey has been completed. The College will only have to finance the initial construction and then the solar farm will be cost- and fee-free for eight years following initial construction. After the eight years, the college can decide whether to continue using the solar farm.

"We're hopeful to get this thing up and going soon while we can still combat global warming," Brudvig said.

HOUSEKEEPER FIRINGS SPARK QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

BY HANS KERN

When, on June 11, 2012, Jody Cerasano got a phone call requesting her presence in Ludlow, she did not expect that she was about to be fired. After all, she had been cleaning Bard campus for over nine years and had been offered no hint of any concerns as to the effectiveness of her work as the Tewksbury Hall housekeeper. Nevertheless, at 3 p.m. that Monday, on a student-less campus, she was escorted to the Office of Human Resources and informed that her employment with the college had been terminated. The reasons given—that she had too much idle time and was unable to work well in teams—baffled her, but she was too shaken up to respond adequately. Having been handed her evaluation and a formal letter wishing her all the best in her future endeavours, she received her pay up to the last day and was then asked to leave. Thus did Jody become the fifth housekeeper in a three-day period at the beginning of this summer to be unceremoniously fired by the school. What remains are questions.

Readers may remember last winter's campaign to oust the subcontracting firm Aramark and have campus cleaners taken into direct employment by the college. Efforts by housekeepers, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 200, and the Student Labour Dialogue (SLD) to establish a fruitful dialogue with administrators arguably catalyzed their eventual decision to get rid of Aramark. Now relieved of their old employer, the housekeepers remained in limbo from mid-November until a contract was negotiated last February that allowed for in-house employment. The terms of the contract proved favourable to the employees, promising affordable healthcare, retirement plans, educational benefits, and a raise. Also articulated was an initial 90-day probationary period during which Bard reserved the right to evaluate workers and, when deemed necessary, fire them. The contract took effect on March 1, the day after the Aramark contract had

expired. When, by the 91st day, May 30, no one had been fired, a total of 46 housekeepers were under the impression that they had successfully made the transition from Aramark to Bard. This, however, was not the case.

11 days passed without any indication from Environmental Services about the impending firings. In that time, housekeepers around campus were busy cleaning up after commencement, end-of-the-year parties, clearing out dorms and preparing the campus for its summer occupants. Not until after all this work was done, on June 9, did the severances begin: Donnie Rhodes, a housekeeper of several buildings, was first; then came Cathy More, the cleaner of the Reem and Kayden Center for Science and Computation (RKC); Grace Clark, the library cleaner, and Jim Rushmore, of Olin and Village J and K. On the third day, they fired Jody Cerasano and finally Melissa Stickle, a cleaner in the Performing Arts Center (PAC).

The lapse between the end of the evaluation period and the firings raised concerns with the union about their contractual legitimacy. Vice President for Administration Jim Brudvig made the administration's stance on this clear, stating that "the fact that it happened a week after the 90-day period is a straw man. It's irrelevant. There was no expectation or no promise that the minute after the 90 days were up, you'd have a decision whether you're employed or not." Not satisfied with this, the union has scheduled to take this case before an arbitration hearing.

Grievances were filed that addressed not only concerns with the timing of the

terminations, but also the performance evaluations that were used to justify them. In Cerasano's case, one of the stated reasons for letting her go was that she "demonstrated reluctance to work with many co-workers." Housekeepers who have worked with her seem to disagree with that claim and she was working in a team even on the day leading up to her termination.

Alleged shortcomings in her ability to clean effectively also seemed out of character with the Jody known to the workers and the wider community. Area Coordinator for South Campus and east-wing resident of Tewksbury Ashley Boltrushek gave the following account: "I've known Jody for two

Following the lay-offs, the college hired "temps" for as little as \$13.20 an hour, who received no benefits, no education and no holidays

years, and while she was working at Bard College, I saw her every [week-day] in Tewksbury. We spoke for a few minutes each morning as I was heading out to the office. Topics of conversation would range from what our weekends or evenings had been

like to maintenance issues or concerns that she was observing in the building. When I heard Jody was no longer employed at Bard, I just found myself wanting more details regarding her termination because I had heard it very third-hand. Residents really seemed to enjoy her company, and they had pretty open and regular communication with her. She was always really thoughtful and would leave cards for residents before they went home for winter break."

At a recent SLD meeting, it was suggested that the decision to get rid of some workers was a foregone conclusion, made before the evaluation period had even begun and therefore having nothing to do with their performances. Cerasano believes it

was, "probably because of my involvement in the union." Having been instrumental in the activism that got Aramark fired and brought housekeepers in-house, she suspected that her bosses might have feared she would initiate further changes. Brudvig expressed his confidence in the soundness of the evaluations written by Director of Environmental Services Michael Bemis and manager Brian Kiel, stating that union activities "had nothing to do with their evaluations," and that having seen their evaluations, "there isn't a box on there that says 'union employee.'"

The notion of union-busting is not as far fetched as Brudvig might have it seem. Following the lay-offs, temporary workers, or "temps" have been hired by the school to keep up with the necessary workload. These "temps" can be hired for as little as \$13.20 an hour, receiving no benefits, no education or holidays and can be let go after 90 days.

Many questions are being raised about what transpired on campus after the summer began. The manner in which the firings were done and the perceived discrepancy between stated reason and actual motives have called into question the procedural integrity of the decision makers and cast doubt upon the school's ability to responsibly fulfil its new role as employer of housekeepers. As a result, there is a pressure from various parts of the community, workers, teachers, and students alike for answers and action. Zeke Perkins, student and organizer for the SLD, thinks the school should take steps to initiate a "re-evaluation of every worker fired and [get] those unjustly fired rehired." Regardless of what the administration chooses to do and what the outcome of the arbitration hearing will be, the sentiment of Robert Stickle, former co-worker of Jody Cerasano who has now taken her place as Chief Steward, is one shared by many: "My personal feeling is that it was unjust."

STUDENTS LADLE OUT MONEY, NEED MORE MONEY

BY CHARLES MCFARLANE, JP LAWRENCE

A motley crew of students, clad in lab coats, tuxedos, raccoon skin hats, and bike helmets, reveled in the carnival vibe of the Fall Budget Forum. On a nearby screen, by the bouncy castle and a fire breather with kelly green underwear, loomed a poorly photoshopped image of the head of an Ancient Greek statue, with dollar signs over his eyes on the background of a Greek public forum. This image would set the tone for the rest of the evening: comedy, democracy and money.

The joke was that there was not enough money. Due to a massive increase in student club activity in the last few years, the convocation fund has been stretched to the limit. As a result, club after club this found their requested budgets hacked and slashed. "We got peanuts for our budget," lamented first-year Brian Strigel, head of the Bard Quiz Bowl club.

"We had to make some really tough decisions, really deep cuts, and it really hurt us to do that," Head of the Planning Committee Jon Greenberg told the crowd. "We have seen a real step up... [resulting in clubs] looking for larger slices of pie."

Each of the more than 100 student clubs receive their semesterly budget from the Convocation Fund, which is financed by an \$85 fee that each student pays at the beginning of every semester. The amount available to clubs has been dropping as more clubs have been spending more money from the fund. This is a good sign, Greenberg said, as it means students are more active and running more activities.

Greenberg and his peers in the Planning

Committee then went line by line through the ledgers to ensure each club got funding. Even after creating an ideal budget, free of what the committee termed as unnecessary expenditures, they were still tens of thousands of dollars short.

In the past, clubs did not use all the money allotted to them, so excess money was carried over from year to year to be redistributed. The Planning Committee's budget relied on this excess, but now that there are more clubs being more active, this money no longer exists.

"We have all felt for years [that] there has not been enough money in the Convocation [Fund] and this proves it," said Greenberg. "We have been operating under this assumption that we're always going to have this rollover, even though it's way over what the actual convocation fund is, which is just bad policy."

Many students believed that it was the new charter club system that led to smaller budgets for the other clubs. Charter clubs--groups that receive special status to ensure their continued existence for the services they provide or the identities they support, such as Bard EMS, the Bard Free Press, and the Dimestore--negotiate for money before other clubs and can roll over money from year to year. According to Greenberg, students tried to explain the gap by faulting charter clubs, saying, "Wait, we have these new charter clubs— Obviously they took more money than they used to and that's why [we don't have enough money in the convocation]."

Greenberg said this is not true although, at one

point, he suspected it. The real problem, he said, is a lack of input. Greenberg suggested that the convocation fee for students be raised from \$85 to \$105. This argument was not to take more money from students, but to recognize the efforts that could take place with a small increase in club donations.

"Our convocation fund is tiny, not because of the size of school, but because of the size of the input. If you look at similar schools, Vassar's student activity fee is \$300 per person," Greenberg said. "How much do we want to invest in ourselves?"

This explanation was received well from the students, and the forum shifted toward amendments. Senior Ian Busher proposed an amendment that would redefine the Charter Review Committee as simply Planning Committee. The amendment passed almost unanimously.

Now the real draw of the evening came: friendly amendments. The Fall Budget Forum allows clubs to plead their case for more money by asking for donations from other club members. Soon, in the cold night air, students hard-pressed for money begged for funds the hard way: by stripping.

Reaching the podium a lanky student of the Creative Music Committee announced in level tone, "I'll strip." While others on the committee gave their spiel for funds, he stripped naked and took to licking a large knife. "Circus will give \$10 for his clothes to go back on," one student said.

They were able to gather \$195 in this fashion.

CHARTER POLICY AMENDED

BY KURT SCHMIDLEIN

The Budget Forum held on Thursday, September 20, was a typical Bardian affair. There were 30-second campaigns and snap elections for student government positions, several counts of unsolicited stripping, and a slew of amendments. One of these amendments sought to change oversight of charter clubs and was approved almost unanimously by those present.

Ian Busher, a senior, proposed an amendment to redefine the Charter Review Committee (CRC) as a planning committee, which would effectively eliminate the faculty positions on the committee.

"I wanted to keep budget decisions about student funds in the hands of students and to keep the decision making process directly democratic," Busher said.

Busher's amendment dealt primarily with outdated and contradictory information in the Constitution and the Bylaws. He proposed eliminating the CRC and having Planning Committee assume its responsibilities, which are evaluating charter applications and awarding budgets. He also proposed putting the allocation of charter funds to a vote in the spring.

Director and Associate Director of Student Activities, Julie Silverstein and Brian Mateo, currently sit on the Charter Club Review Committee and can vote along with the three student members. Busher said his amendment aimed to address the fact that funding for charter clubs now comes exclusively from the Convocation Fund.

Silverstein is largely supportive of the proposed

amendment, though she has concerns about transition and consistency.

"Serving on the Charter Club Review Committee... helped me to be able to explain the context and realities of the charter club budgets to the new leadership within Student Government," she said.

Busher shares that concern. "I think it would be great if we elected some people at the spring

Budget Forum to serve for that semester and the next so that we had some continuity over the budgeting process," he said, "but I hope that can be done without making a whole new committee."

Silverstein said that she hopes to continue working with Busher and Jon Greenberg, Chair of the Planning Committee, on the amendment so that it could be presented at a future student forum.

WORK-STUDY FUNDING DECREASES BARD ADJUSTS EMPLOYMENT POLICY

BY CHARLES MCFARLANE

The amount of hours that students who qualified for work study will be able to work has decreased since last year, according to Micki Strawinski, the Student Employment Manager. Students will now only be able to work 24 hours per two-week pay cycle and only one job on work study. This comes as Bard's enrollment has increased and its federal funding has decreased. The decrease in federal aid has been a growing trend in the past decade, resulting in overspending on work study by the college.

"When we first received information about the decrease in federal funding that we were getting from the government for work study allocation, and combine that with having overspent in that budget line last year," said Strawinski, "we had to really kind of make some decision to make sure that didn't happen again and that we didn't overspend."

Payment for work study usually comes from both federal funding and the individual department's budget. With less federal aid the department budgets have been picking up more of the tab.

"When a work study student's personal allocation runs out, instead of the student just losing the job, it gets switched over to another budget line. Because we're getting less money in allocation once we reach a collective expenditure of that, work study is going to be shut off," Strawinski said. "What this means to the department who did not plan on all these work study students needing to be paid through their student labor line

is that they're going to have the same amount of money—but it's going to be spread out over more students."

There will be exceptions to the new 24-hour cap. Non first-year students can look for a waiver to allow them to work more hours. Student can apply for these waivers through Bethany Nohlgren, Dean of Students, and David Shein, Dean of Studies. There will also be exceptions for students who work irregular shifts or services such as Safe Ride. These students will be able to work more than one work study job.

"I have students who come up to my office literally teary-eyed that [they] didn't qualify for work study, but [their] parent's circumstances are such that [they] really need to work or [they] can't stay at Bard," Strawinski said.

For them, Strawinski suggested that they look in Red Hook or Tivoli for work, some of which is posted on collegecentral.com. Students can also go back to the Student Employment office once the initial influx of students has been sorted out, but the prospect of every work study student finding work is slim.

"[With the] decrease in federal money and an increase in enrollment and an increase in need because of the economy, we have more students looking for on campus employment," Strawinski said, urging students to write their Congress people to voice their discontent. Until then, there will be too few jobs for students on campus.

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State Bureaucracy and Student Safety Collide on 9G

BY NAOMI LACHANCE

On Friday, Aug. 24, a police car pulled up outside of the new Two Boots Bard, lights flashing. Its presence, thankfully, was only preventative. Concerned about the danger that reckless driving on Route 9G presents, the Bard administration and security have been active in lowering the chances of an accident. The police car was one of multiple measures to keep the approximate 350 students, according to Two Boots manager Melissa Germano, that visited the restaurant that night, safe from harm.

Director of Security Ken Cooper, along with six Bard security guards, were on the premises that night. "That's what I'm here for, to think through these things," Cooper said, who has sent multiple cautionary emails to the Bard community about crossing the street to Two Boots. Yet the challenge in keeping the area safe is that the road is owned by the state, and therefore "must follow federal policies and procedures," according to New York State Department of Transportation Region 8 Spokesperson Sue Stepp.

Though other restaurants have been in the current Two Boots location, this is the first with a "Bardian" vibe—stained glass portraits of Chevy Chase '67 and Leon Botstein flank the bar, a Bard student painted the mural by the outdoor patio, and the restaurant employs many Bard students. "I'm really excited that Two Boots is here," said junior Emily Harris. The restaurant has 14 other locations, seven of which are in New York City, and is known for its Cajun-Italian cuisine. On Wednesday, Friday,

and Saturday nights, the venue is open to student performances. For these busier nights, security guards wait at the road and help students cross. 9G has long been a road known for its reckless driving, and the restaurant's location has brought the issue to light. "It's something we need to safeguard because we have responsibility for the students," said Dean of Campus Life Gretchen Perry.

In an effort to address the issue, Vice President of Student Affairs Jim Brudvig, along with Assistant Vice President for Administration Coleen Murphy Alexander, has been working with local officials. Brudvig met with the New York Department of Transportation as well as officials from Red Hook, and he wrote a letter about 9G to New York State Senator Stephen Saland. The Department of Transportation (DOT) has rented the college two variable-message signs that read, "Caution: Students Crossing," but the DOT's processes has impeded much of what Brudvig wishes to accomplish. For example, Stepp said that traffic lights are unlikely because "the intersection doesn't develop enough vehicular traffic." She said that there is, however, a possibility of having pedestrian crossing lights.

Brudvig is campaigning to lower the speed limit from 55 MPH to 45, and officials from the DOT are currently observing the area from the stoplight at Kelly Road to Tivoli. They will make a recommendation in 1 to 2 months, according to Brudvig. "We need proper approval," Brudvig said, which can

take a long time—too long when addressing an issue of student lives. "They always knew it would be an issue," said Dylan Hanback, a security guard at the college who works as a crossing guard at Two Boots.

Two Boots co-founder and owner Phil Hartman said, "We've been really concerned about the road crossing since way before we opened, and discussed a variety of solutions with the Bard administration."

As a preventative measure, Cooper has enlisted the state police, Red Hook police, and the sheriff's office to patrol for speeding and drunk driving. "They only can help when I ask them to," Cooper said. Police presence still evokes concern for some students. "Police make it a bit more of a big deal than it should be," Harris said. Perry, though, said that "the college has a responsibility to the students to provide as safe an environment as they possibly can," which, in this case, includes monitoring the road.

Despite setbacks, community members—students, security, administrators, restaurateurs—are working together to promote safety. "Two Boots," said Cooper, "has been very cooperative, and they've been helping to fund some of the stuff." Germano voiced gratitude at the presence of the security guards on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday nights. Yet the onus is not only on the authority. "Students and security need to work as a team," said Cooper. "Seriously, respect the road."

Restoration
Workshop/
Montgomery

photo via google

BOOK EXCHANGE REVIVED HOPES TO RECOVER AFTER HURRICANE

BY ZAPPA GRAHAM

The Book Exchange will soon return to Bard, but the specific date of return is not yet known. The Book Exchange is a give-and-take lending library, soon to be located in the basement of Tewksbury Hall. Students may take books they need as well as donate books for their peers to use.

Suyog Shrestha, a junior, who is leading the effort to revive the exchange, said, "What we did [last year] was put boxes in all the dorms to collect books, then collect them at the end [of the semester]."

In the past, the Book Exchange was an invaluable resource for first-year students in need of First-Year Seminar books, "because the syllabus doesn't change that often," said Abishek Dev, a junior. However, according to Wancong Zhang, a senior, "People didn't really use it for textbooks. Upperclassmen will give their books to other students or sell the books."

Last fall, heavy rains from hurricane Irene damaged offices in the basement of Albee Hall, including those of the Free Press and the Book Exchange. Mold began to accumulate, and the offices needed to be reconstructed. Fortunately, the Exchange's books received little damage, said Shrestha.

Both organizations were relocated to the weight room in the basement of the Robbins Addition. However, the Book Exchange was unable to operate in this shared space because access to the building was limited to only those who lived in the dorm. New Robbins then served as a place of storage for the books until the repairs to the Albee basement were completed.

"We were told that we would move back there..." said Shrestha, "but by the middle of second semester we realized that it wasn't going to happen. So I talked to [Director

of Student Activities] Julie Silverstein and this semester they moved us to Tewksbury." The basement of Albee will be converted into an office for Director of Multicultural Affairs Annie Seaton.

As a residence hall, Tewksbury will present the same access problem as Robbins Addition. Shrestha said that students who do not live in the dorm and wish to access the exchange will need to call an advertised phone number in order to be let in.

Additionally, said Shrestha, "the only thing we can do now is arrange the books and then at the end of the semester [collect more]." Since students have likely already purchased their books for the semester, "there will be very little use for the Book Exchange while the semester is running." The service will resume at the beginning of the spring semester.

'EXPERIMENTAL HUMANITIES' EXPANDS DEFINITION OF HUMANITIES

CECIRE SPEARHEADS NEW CONCENTRATION

BY MEL MIGNUCCI

Over the weekend, I went home for the first time after L&T to visit my family and do laundry. The entire weekend, my dad could not stop voicing his frustration over the situation in Tunisia. He was incensed that people could react so strongly as to riot and kill over a YouTube video mocking the Prophet Mohammad. How could decent human beings, with families and jobs and "stakes in the real world" use a YouTube video as justification for terror? What does that say about our new humanity? That men are capable of violence over a four-minute clip made by a man half a world away?

This is exactly the sort of question that the new academic concentration Experimental Humanities seeks to answer. The program, brainchild of Professor of Literature Maria Sechiko Cecire, began accepting applications for moderation this semester after a year of deliberation by the curriculum committee. In the words of sophomore Eric Arroyo, the concentration asks "the L&T question—what does it mean to be human?—with respect to things like Twitter, YouTube," and, he pauses, "World Star Hip-Hop." In other words, how are the humanities adapting to the ever evolving media?

I talked with Professor of Classics Benjamin Stevens, who teaches classes cross-listed in several different programs such as, "Post-Humanism," about the significance of such a program. Stevens suggested that it promotes a type of "open inquiry" that applies the study of the humanities to our evolving cultural landscape.

"As long as there's been humanities," Stevens said, there has been "the idea that there could be a human mode of inquiry that is different from obedience to the di-

vine or different even from accepting that certain things are mysterious and beyond human comprehension."

Cecire suggested that a program like Experimental Humanities was necessary to further that "human mode of inquiry" as technology, media, and cultural self-reflection change.

Experimental Humanities was catalyzed in Cecire's background through the analysis of children's literature. Throughout her research, Cecire "kept noticing the way children's literature refused to stay within the bounds of a book."

"Like so many other narratives, they spill across all types of media," Cecire said. The question that arose was how these narratives are affected by the technology through which they are conveyed.

"The great media theorist Marshall McLuhan says we're condemned to live in prisons without walls. We are guided by the media that we use, and the way we interact with the world, but we don't necessarily know it, unless we have an awareness of what we use, and what's out there is kind of running our world," Cecire said of the importance of the study Experimental Humanities.

Erwin Perez, a senior and the first student to moderate into the program, said he was interested in the way that media is seen as "a reflection of our culture."

"If you think about [traditional] media as books and literature," Perez said, "you read a book and see it within the context of the culture it was created in... What I'm interested in is doing that same thing, but for media. Music videos, movies, video games, social networking sites."

Arroyo suggested an application of that close reading: "On a kid's [TV] show in the 1990s, they talk about violence, guns, family problems with candor. Now, TV shows are clean, family-oriented, censored. How will that change our society as kids who grew up [watching] the latter come of age?"

Stevens discussed the impact of questions such as this on our changing definition of the humanities. "It reminds us that all humanities should be experimental," Stevens said. "If we have humanities in a different medium, a digital medium, does that mean the humanities are different? Does that mean the human is different?" He paused. "It's a troubling question."

And it should be. For much of history, the notion of humanities was defined by the legacy of classical antiquity—we answered the question of what it means to be human through close readings of Plato's "Republic," "The Iliad" and "Genesis." How is the human different if, suddenly, we analyze Seinfeld as a reincarnation of Nietzsche, the Twitter feed @KimKierkegaard as analysis of pop culture, or the rise of reality TV as proof of the entertainment industry's indolence?

However, in the contrast between classical texts and modern culture, there may be found a thread of continuity, an innate humanity somewhere within us. And perhaps it isn't humanity that has changed but the way humans communicate. Through this new concentration, Experimental Humanities, we can attempt to become fluent in this new language and better interpret the elements of our culture.

BARDIVERSE



photo by will anderson

MY NEW FRIENDS SMOLNY STUDENTS AT BARD COLLEGE

BY LEELA KHANNA

In an effort to promote a greater understanding between students in St. Petersburg, Russia and Bard, several Russian students from Smolny University spent three-weeks at Bard this summer participating in intensive English language classes. The Bard English as a Second Language Intensive (BESLI) Program has been offering Russian students interested in becoming fluent in English the opportunity to study English and learn about American culture while at Bard for the past two years.

"Bard is trying to expand its international reach, it's spreading its wings in other developing countries, and Russia was one of the first ones it established a relationship with," said Denise Minin, ESL professor for BESLI. "The main goal [of BESLI] is to really get Russian students immersed in American culture and to study English in the classrooms."

Alongside with studying English, the students also spend much of their time going on field trips to prominent American landmarks in the Hudson Valley. This year, the students went to tourist attractions like Franklin D. Roosevelt's home and the Dutchess County Fair.

"They were all really highly motivated students, really enthusiastic and excited," said Minin. "They wanted to know everything they could about American culture, wanted to be as involved as they could, and we tried to get them to mix with Americans as much as possible."

Some of the students took the initiative to become involved in on-campus activities, including joining organizations like the Gay Straight Alliance.

"I wasn't shy and I tried to find some friends," said Smolny student Sasha Solodova.

The majority of the students are pursuing Literature or Journalism in Smolny, and those that excel in the language courses are offered the chance to stay at Bard for an additional semester to continue taking courses the college offers. The Program in Interna-

tional Education (PIE), supports students particularly gifted in English to study at Bard with a full scholarship. PIE was originally founded in 1990 in response to the end of the Cold War, and Bard's effort to promote democratic thinking among "transition nations" like Russia.

"PIE is almost like a reward for the students who are really good at English or studied hard at Smolny and then to sort of see if they're interested in coming back for this other program," said Minin. "It's all covered by scholarship for the most part, so it's really good opportunity for the Russian students."

Throughout their time at Bard, the Russian students had a chance to be involved with campus life, including Language and Thinking courses. The Smolny students spent a class with Ben Stevens L&T class analyzing Russian and American poetry in group activities.

"Everybody was nervous, I think the Americans were nervous too, and they analyzed these Russian and American poems in groups, and it was awesome and it turned out so well," said Minin. "There was all this analysis in English and there was this real interest by the Americans to know the Russians point of view and how they were describing this Russian poem and telling them about the cultural background. Everybody thought that it was fantastic and we want to do that again maybe next year."

BESLI also aims to get rid of common stereotypes that exist between the two cultures through communication and dialogue between the Smolny and Bard students.

"All of the students said that they had a positive experience and they gained confidence in the language and the understanding of the culture," said Minin. "And a lot of them had, when they first came, a lot of fears, they thought we had a lot of rules. But after they got to be here for the three weeks, they said that they were so impressed and that Americans were so different than what they thought."

BARD GOES BACK TO MIDDLE SCHOOL

BY CATHERINE WEENING

Bard is taking its science initiative off campus and into the local communities through a Trustee Leader-Scholar Project called Bard Science Outreach, a project dedicated to spreading enthusiasm and exposure to the sciences by reaching out to local middle schools.

According to junior Leila Duman, the project director, roughly 40 Bardians have been combining their passion in science and education by offering monthly tutoring and advising to middle school students. The Bard students spend time with the students engaging in conversation about their research and experiences. Just last February, eighth grade classes from the school districts of Germantown, Kingston, Pine Plains, Red Hook, and Rhinebeck graced Bard's campus to conduct experiments with Citizen Science students.

"It's [Bard's] responsibility to do this," explained Duman. "We have a huge science building, we have the funding, and we have the students. Science isn't going to be a love affair with everyone, but there are also a lot of misconceptions attached with it."

Duman has high hopes for the new project, which was started by last year's graduate Madison Fletcher.

"I want to get more people involved. I would love to see this program become a dedicated group of people who are just so organized that they can accomplish anything they want."

Not only will middle school students get involved with science, they will, Duman says, get more involved with their own education by seeing the value in learning and in college.

"Talking with college students will be an affirmation that college is cool and that real people are into science, not just guys in lab coats."

Bardians are also benefiting by the outreach, especially those who will be experiencing winter's Citizen Science which will be enhanced by BSO's work by engaging first year students in their own outreach.

"[Citizen Science] is a 'fantastic opportunity for first years to get reoriented with Bard and the local communities,'" said Erin Cannan, Associate Director of the Center for Civic Engagement and the Dean of Student Affairs.

According to both Duman and Cannan, both sides of the outreach will be benefitting by the exposure to the sciences.

"Kids are falling behind (in the sciences)," said Duman. "If no one is going into these fields then there will be no innovation or growth. These are important for our growth as a society."

"Science education in America is in crisis," said Cannan and then added that even non science majors will still have to work with science in the future—whether it is by knowing about immunizations or about political policies on the environment. Not only do the local students get a unique introduction to an important subject, but Bard students also get to give back to Bard's surrounding communities—another component to keeping America on the right track.

"Civic engagement," said Cannan, "is how you make (a democracy) work."

The Bard Science Outreach is planning on holding a "Science Saturday" on October 27th in the Campus Center's Multipurpose Room. Anyone interested in getting involved with BSO can contact Duman at dm9783@bard.edu.

"This is a time," Duman added, "to get people involved."

BARD PRISON INITIATIVE WINS A CLASSY AWARD

BY ROSE TANTRANON-SATO

Bard Prison Initiative (BPI) was recently recognized for its nonprofit work by becoming one of 64 Regional Winners in the 2012 CLASSY Awards. The CLASSY Awards recognize nonprofit charities and for-profit organizations that positively affect the community. BPI was chosen as a Regional Winner out of 2,400 nominees.

On Sept. 22, the Leadership Council will choose 16 National CLASSY Award Winners from the regional finalists based on the merit and impact of their charity's achievements.

"[Winning the Classy Award] is an opportunity to give attention and maybe a little bit of money to organizations like ours," said Max Kenner, founder of BPI. "There will be people there to meet and network with, and it will hopefully bring some attention to [BPI]."

The CLASSY Awards do not give out cash prizes, but the winners receive a large amount of media attention. This media attention draws sponsors and donors to the charities' respective causes and significantly raises revenue

needed to expand programs. The CLASSY Awards also give out a one-month business consultation to the National Winners, as well as a free subscription to StayClassy's social fundraising software. Regional Winners receive plane tickets to San Diego and invitations to the awards ceremony.

BPI has been gaining more attention over the past year with help from news broadcasters like PBS who did extensive profiling of the program. Kenner is hopeful that the CLASSY Awards will further promote BPI and bring in more funding for the program.

"We'll see what happens in San Diego," said Kenner. "Whether or not we win, the positive effects of media attention will boost our publicity. It's mostly attention from media and respectability that we're after."

Founded in 1999 by Kenner, BPI gives men and women in prison the unique opportunity to earn a college degree from Bard while serving their sentences. BPI is pitted against three other charities in the Human Rights category and anxiously awaiting the result.

BARD PROGRAM DEVELOPS IN BURMA

BY HANNAH DURHAM

Within the past year, Bard has decided to expand its unique international studies program even further, and is now developing plans to establish a satellite campus in Burma. The nation has recently begun to gradually liberalize, presenting Bard with a long-awaited opportunity to start this project.

U Ba Win, Vice President of Early College Policies and Programs at Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) and Bard College at Simon's Rock, is the chief liaison for the project. Ba Win has worked at Bard for over thirty years, and has been very active in Burmese affairs. He is friendly with Aung San Suu Kyi, Burmese politician and chairperson of the National League for Democracy in Burma, and can be given credit for her speech via video transmission at Bard's 2002 graduation ceremony. It was while visiting Suu Kyi that discussion of Bard establishing a presence in Burma came about.

"Aung San Suu Kyi asked Ba Win whether Bard would be willing to help [repair the educational system], if and when Burma opened up," said Leon Botstein, President of Bard. "In the interim, Bard has established a track record in developing liberal arts programs of higher education in emerging democracies and developing countries. As a result of that experience and that track record, when Burma began to open up last year, Ba Win thought it was the right time to establish a school in Burma."

Ba Win is currently in Burma, developing plans for the school, scheduled to be situated in Rangoon, the former capital of Burma. Although the project is still in the planning stages due to a lack of secure funding, which is being sought from foundational and governmental sources, such as the European Union, the Center for Civic Engage-

ment is exploring various locations throughout Rangoon.

"There was thought of a site outside of Mandalay, although we originally thought we'd be in Rangoon," said President Botstein. "There's been some back and forth about the location, the Burmese government seemed to wish us to be in Rangoon."

Jonathan Becker, Vice President and Dean of International Affairs and Civic Engagement, says that potential university space is becoming occupied as the city liberalizes, thus making the process of securing land a competitive endeavor.

Despite these obstacles, acquiring space in Rangoon is ideal due to it being the center of legal and educational reform. Becker stated that Rangoon is a place in which students can truly make an impact, as well as experience the effects of the transition from a closed society to one in which laws, particularly those regarding education, are changing quickly.

"One of the things that was systematically neglected in the years when Burma was closed by military rule, is the educational system," says Botstein. The fact that Burma, particularly Rangoon, is undergoing political changes makes it an optimal location for being an active part of the shift towards modernity.

The campus in Burma will provide opportunities for student and faculty exchange, as is the chief purpose of study abroad programs. However, what makes Bard's study abroad programs notable is the fact that this is not the sole purpose.

"Since the [19]80's and 90's, we've focused on emerging democracies, places in transition, places that need help and want that help," said Botstein. "In that sense, Burma fits into that pattern."

Bard provides students the opportunity to study in parts of the world which are undergoing transformation, with the objective of reinforcing one of the college's key principles: being an active global citizen. In participating in these programs, students embody the notion that one should not only be well-informed about the world, but should be unafraid to act and make changes to it as well. Burma is seen as a place which will provide students with ample opportunities to be active in civic engagement.

"I hope students take pride in the fact that we go to difficult places," Becker said.

It is too early in the planning stage to confirm anything about the school's prospective curriculum, however, Becker presumes it will essentially be a smaller version of that of Bard's, comparable in size to Simon's Rock. Bard's mantra, which emphasizes developing and applying critical thinking, will be a principle aspect of the academic atmosphere of the campus in Rangoon. Becker disclosed that they plan to start out by offering an Associate in Arts degree, and eventually a bachelor's.

Despite the inevitable challenges the Center for Civic Engagement faces in organizing the project—the tentativeness of financial arrangements, location, and therefore a target "opening" time frame, there is a prevailing sense of optimism among those on the planning committee.

"You have to reconcile and negotiate a lot of both internal and external matters as [Burma] makes the transition from a closed to a more open society. But there seems to be a coalition of enlightened leaders, both within the government and the opposition, that wish to work together to bring a non-violent transformation to Burma," Botstein said.

PHOTOS BY JOANN LEE



/// EVERYDAY HOLIDAY ///

Students from the Surrealist Circus Club perform as part of Everyday Holidays Sept. 15 at the Center for Curatorial Studies and Art in Contemporary Culture. The CCS is an exhibition and research center dedicated to the study of art and exhibition practices from the 1960s to the present day. Since its inception, the program has awarded the M.A. degree to more than 100 students.



SEARCHING FOR NEW VOICES:

THE FREE PRESS SEARCHES THE BARDIVERSE FOR THOUGHTS ON THE NATIONAL ELECTION

At the Bard Free Press, we believe that "reporting both sides" isn't enough. We believe that political discourse in America can be improved with more voices. So we partnered with the Hannah Arendt Center, the Center for Civic Engagement, and La Voz, and we asked for opinions on the US presidential election from students from Russia, Germany, South Africa and Hispanic activists in the Hudson Valley.

A ROUNDTABLE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS EXCHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

BY BEN POWERS

Ben Powers: The first question I want to start off this dialogue with is about the politically charged nature of South Africa and the SA population. There were over 12,000 political protests in SA in the 2011 calendar year, and I think that is something fairly unique to this country. Do you think that, bringing this around to an American perspective, that America could benefit from some of the things like political protests or the number of those? Do you think certain things could be changed through that, and do you think that's a desirable goal for the population of America, or at least for the political population?

Sally Crompton: In terms of the States, I feel like they have such a strong focus on negotiation, and the fact that your freedom of speech is so well intact, and the influence of the media is so huge, that even if you did have protest, I don't think it's necessary for you to have as many protests as we do.

Nathanael van Blydenstein: I think a big thing to be gained from movements like Occupy and autonomous anarchist-inspired movements is it begins to allow a "one no,

many yes" philosophy, which can lead to, if anything, incorporation in decision making. That's real democracy, when people are consulted about the decisions that get made. But then again, our protests are very different from theirs, because we are dealing with bread and butter issues here, largely, so when people are protesting out of desperation that's quite different to protesting against trying to save the environment and stuff.

BP: Moving away a little bit from the SA perspective, and moving to the international stage—how do you view America's foreign policy in the world?

Lubabala Stasha: I think making foreign policy now has moved in a direction of co-operation and a direction of peace, which is very important to Africa, and other areas of the world also. Previously, when you looked at American foreign policy and at George Bush, it was one of, a realist would say, it was one of warfare. "You know how we solve a problem is to go in there and bring our soldiers in." So I see American foreign policy now having changed in a direc-

tion that is extremely good, but it has not achieved its objectives.

NB: I really struggle with American foreign policy because I think it is based on fear. And that fear stems from endless consumption. And you can't have endless consumption without a cost to others.

SC: I feel like America, like most countries, only intervenes in sort of human rights issues or other states when they feel like they can get something from them, so if you look at Namibia and things like that, they only intervene when they think they can get some sort of resources or economic interests. And that's understandable when you're as big a state in such a sort of economic depression, but I feel like, sometimes they aren't willing to help when there are proper human rights abuses going on when they won't get anything in return for it.

BP: With an eye towards the upcoming elections of the American president in November, I want to ask if y'all think that who is president dramatically affects the nature of the USA's interaction with other countries

and the world in general or does the USA's foreign policy and domestic policy and the direction of the country stay more or less static regardless of who is leading it?

NB: Well I think if you look at issues that are always in contestation it reflects the larger nature of the mission, and I don't mean this in any disrespectful way, but when gay rights and the environment, and pollution, are at the top of your agenda, and I'm not saying these issues aren't important, but when they are at the top of the agenda when corporations exploit the third world, there seems to be no political vision to change those major aspects of how the world is structured. Rather it focuses on the things that only affect the population here and then. That's not to say gay rights should not be an issue, that's not to say the environment shouldn't be an issue, but in terms of the structure of society, changing those things is not going to change the structure.

For more from Sally, Nathanael, and Lubabala, go to bardfreepress.com to read the full transcript.

ECLA:

This roundtable was held at the European College of Liberal Arts in Berlin, Germany on September 5th. It was moderated by Roger Berkowitz, Academic Director of the Hannah Arendt Center and Associate Professor of Political Studies at Bard College. We weren't able to get their names, but we have their thoughts here. See the full video of this roundtable at bardfreepress.com.

Roger Berkowitz: Do you think that America represents freedom in the world? Or is that a myth?

England: I don't know how America can represent an idea or an ideological influence in the world when they are sweating on such huge issues as whether we believe abortion is morally right or wrong, and to such extremes. The fact that in a developed nation in the 21st century there still aren't equal rights for homosexual couples seems to be a big blemish on their moral standing.

Romania: I think the U.S. compared to other past superpowers has proven to be a pretty nice one.... [just] compare it to the former U.S.S.R. and the British Empire.

England: But [one] would point out that America's possible selective blindness towards some countries where it wants

to go in and install democracy and others where it doesn't feel the inclination to go in.

Austria: The Americans often have a very subtle way of intervening... The CIA has a long history of supporting revolutions in Latin America. Some might call it imperialism, but there are tendencies to intervene.

RB: What issues are important to you during this U.S. election cycle?

Romania: Human rights and the Patriot Act. [The Patriot Act] makes me think that these ideological differences [are] kind of a sham... It's just 'Let's... pretend to fight between ourselves but when push comes to shove and we want to expand our power, we'll get together and vote in the Patriot Act.' I was a really big America fan when I was younger, but now I don't think

America should be regarded as an example for the world because there's the Patriot Act, there's Guantanamo Bay, and it's ignored by the public. How can they say "We're the Land of the Free, Home of the Brave" when they just don't care about this stuff?

RB: Is America a moral leader in the world?

Britain: I think they'd like to think they are.

Romania: [Obama] has ignored certain human rights issues. The idea of freedom makes America important, and when you ignore this stuff you can't claim you're a moral leader.

RB: Is it important to have a country that is the 'greatest country,' that leads, that takes responsibility?

Bosnia and Herzegovina: The U.N. should be the universal organ that everyone should be comfortable going through.

Romania: But I don't think the U.S. will ever integrate with the United Nations because they have to be the greatest country, the most powerful country, the most fearless country. They can't accept being 'just another nation.'

RB: What will your reactions be to the outcome if Obama wins? Romney?

Bosnia and Herzegovina: I would be worried if Romney won... both for the U.S. and the world. If Obama wins, I will have some hope again because he will have a second chance to go through with his plans.

LA VOZ:

The Free Press partnered with La Voz, a Spanish-written newspaper, to speak with Hispanic activists across the Hudson Valley on whether Latin perspectives are being ignored by American politics and media. Mariel Fiori, La Voz managing editor and Antonio Flores-Lobos, editor of Las Noticias, moderated the talk for a radio show on WXGC. Joining the debate was Julieth Nunez, a junior at Bard, Ruben Estrada, a Latino Republican, and Gabriela Owen and Monica Arias Miranda, both Democrats.

Antonio: I want to give some numbers. In the the United States of America, there are 50 million Hispanics, and it is estimated that for 2050 we will be 132 million Hispanics. Now that we represent around the 20% of the United States' population, we have the 3% of representation in the US Senate, and the 5% in the Congress. Another number is that only 4% of the Hispanic population vote. What is the problem with the Hispanic population?

Gabriela: I think the main problem is that people do not get informed and educate themselves about what is going on around us.

Monica: I totally agree. The fact that they are not listening to us should be one more reason to speak out because we do have the numbers. We need to participate, I think there is not good communication between the community members as well.

Julieth: Well I think one of the main reasons why Latinos do not participate in the elections could be that many people are not aware. There is not enough information. A single mom who never leaves the house does not have that information they need in order to vote. For example, they do not know

if they are eligible to vote or not, and that is what is preventing them from voting.

Antonio: If elections were to happen right now, [Obama] would win the Latin vote. Why do you think Romney is not getting the interest and support from the Latinb population?

Reuben: What Obama does have a positive effect, although I think that the Republican party should take that as a base and do it even better. A plan that would be effective for the immigrant population as well as for the US citizens.

Mariel: Usually it is said that Latinos are Democrats, although here we have an example with you of a Republican Latino. Why?

Reuben: I started my first business when I was 17, and went to high school at the same time. I was curious about how Republicans thought development should be handled and what were their ways of doing it. I realized that Republicans represent more of my people than Democrats do.

Antonio: After the Democratic and the Republican conventions we could see that there was some emphasis on the Hispanic people. What can you say about that?

Monica: There is a type of marketing for Hispanics in politics, because Latin people have decided many elections. When have we ever seen a [Latin] keynote speaker in a Democrat convention? This year, there was a Latin democrat [Julian Castro]. However, to me that is an insult, because it is not like we have just arrived to this country.

Mariel: Another question that I would like to address and get your help to answer: Many people say, "Why do we have to participate if this country does not give anything?"

Gabriela: You have opened a very delicate point right there. Well, first of all, if this country wouldn't give you anything, none of us would be here, right? Two, this country has given us a lot, and I say it as an immigrant and as an illegal alien as I once was, from down below, without even knowing the language. Although we love our native countries, we have to be thankful and appreciative of where we are.

Monica: Additionally, one cannot wait to receive, one has to get it and work hard for whatever you want. In this country you need to work hard to get what you get.

Gabriela: As you said, "They haven't given it to us." The question, then, is what have you given? I don't only mean that you have come to work, but what have you really done for this country in order to ask? That is why politics is so important for us Latinos now, to speak up and say that you deserve it. Have you gone to school, have you learned the language, opened a business, paid your taxes? You need to give in order to be able to receive. That's my opinion.

Antonio: In terms of what the government has done about deportations, we know that Obama was in power with a Democratic congress. However, he could not pass a democratic reform. Although, when he wanted to make the reform pass for the "dreamers," he did it without caring about what Republicans had to say. Therefore, could Obama be blamed for Latinos being hesitant about his ways of dealing with the immigration problem?

To hear the full conversation, go to wgxc's website at <http://wgxc.org/archives/5098> and <http://wgxc.org/archives/5147>.



AMERICA IS A SYMBOL: THOUGHTS FROM SMOLNY

Free Press: Would you like to introduce yourself a little bit?

Aliia Muslimova: My name is Aliia Muslimova, and I'm from Russia. I'm going into [international] relations because I'm interested in political relations in different countries, mainly between India and Russia. It is my purpose to talk with people to understand what is going on in the 21st century.

FP: Is this the first time you've been to America?

AM: It's my first time. But I've already read about America, and I can say that, in Russia, people are really concerned about the presidential election in America. Elections in Russia—people are not so concerned. They don't think about it. Your election starts in November, but you're concerned about it in August. It's really unexpected for me and everyone who comes from Russia...In the last 10 years, maybe 12 years, in Russia, we have two people in charge and you know who...And that's why we don't go to vote, because I really want to change something in [Russia], but I know that nothing will be changed.

And people in America really trust their government. So they know they can really rely on their government, because they're concerned about unemployed people, disabled people—about people. But in Russia we just talk about how to make our country more rich.

FP: So do you mean people in America trust their government more? Do you mean they trust their government to be able to change things?

AM: They know their government, their president, is concerned about people. For example, when Barack Obama is going to school, or to universities, he did it to be close to people—usual people, not people who are rich or wealthy. But in Russia we can't, because in my point of view, our president is a tyrant. But it would be really cool if he, for example, visited a school to make a speech.

[In Russia] they make the law and say, "well, we make the law and you will follow it." They make the changes, and the president knows that there will be changes. But we do not know what will be the changes.

FP: So, you're kind of feeling uninformed of what the government decides?

AM: Yes, I think the usual people don't feel they have a vote. They don't have a voice. They don't get to decide anything. We don't even have the possibility to make some suggestions, what we have wanted to change. It's extremely depressing, and we feel tension about it.

After the president election, we have lots of mad people out on the streets. They march the streets full of people who disagree with the elections.

After three or four weeks, everything has stopped. Even my parents who live near St. Petersburg, who did not know anything about it. No news, but gossiping. I told my ma I know there are a lot of people who disagree with the presidential election, and she said "What? Nothing's happened."

FP: Are you saying that in Russia and in other countries, the American president is a symbol of the country's political voice? Is that still seen as a favorable model? Yes, well, I think that the democratic system is the one that every person has a voice. I see the system in America, and I think it's

like the President of America and his democratic system is a symbol, like the dove of peace.

AM: As for me, I don't want to have a job in my country. Of course I know it, but I'm afraid that I have no possibility to improve myself. To be sure that when I will have family, that I can be sure that they will have all, that they will have help from the government—I can't be sure of it. But I want to be sure that our government can help us. In this place I can't stand in my country and walk here. I believe that our country will change. I believe that it will happen while I'm studying in the university. I really want to stay in our country. I love my country. But I can't be sure that I can be here and make my future life in this country; that's what really disappoints me. I can think that everyone must vote, and everyone must have his own personal opinion about the president election and not be afraid to show his own voice and his own opinion. Because if you show it, you will be sure that somebody will hear you, and will meet your preferences, and your suggestions about your country, and every person in your country around you.

CULTURE

photo by will anderson

THE SIX TIME CANDIDATE

A CONVERSATION WITH RALPH NADER

The Free Press spoke with six-time presidential candidate Ralph Nader in advance of his speech at Bard College on Saturday, Sept. 22. Below are his thoughts on the upcoming election, the level of activism in today's youth, and the role of government in peoples' lives.

photo via google

read the full interview at bardfreepress.com

A little preview, what will you be talking about this weekend?

Yes. I'll be talking about what presidents don't do, that they should do as a result of the authority of their office and its bully pulpit reach as well as what presidents are doing that is contrary to the constitution, violating our federal statutes and treaties that our country belongs to that involves military and foreign policy, civil liberties and other issues.

Will you be drawing from any examples in particular?

Yes, the wars of aggression, such as the invasion of Iraq that was unconstitutional, unauthorized by federal treaties and federal statute, international treaties and international statute.

The election this year, will you be discussing those topics? And if so, what will you bring to the discourse?

Well of course. We will be talking about the lack of competitions in the two parties, because the third parties are excluded in a whole variety of ways, from ballot access barriers to the presidential debates. And how a two-party duopoly is a contradiction to any concept of democratic elections. Then we will talk about what is not being talked about.

Do you have any thoughts on whether the national media is part of maintaining this two-party election season?

The mainstream, commercial media behaves more like a dittohead, a massive daily dittohead...they had 15,000 journalists in Tampa and Charlotte, and they just tripped all over each other imitating each other's stories. So they didn't really cover what the police did to demonstrators in any detail...And of course they didn't independently and critically analyze the speeches.

So what outlets do you use? How does one keep abreast of what's going on in the election?

I usually listen to "Pacifica." You read "The Nation Magazine," "Progressive Magazine," "In These Times," and you learn to

read between the lines. You can read the mainstream press and see what they are avoiding.

Go back to that Votenader.org place, for example. It is like nothing changes. That is the same list I put up in 2004 and 2000. Politics in this country is paralyzed. Paralyzed and corporatized.

Are there any 3rd party candidates that you feel should get more press this season?

Yeah. At least three. Jill Stein, Green Party. Rocky Anderson, Justice Party, two-time mayor of Salt Lake City—he's not on all that many states—and Gary Johnson, Libertarian party, former governor of New Mexico.

Now, if voters didn't have a two-party system, how do you think they would vote in the absence of a two-party system? What would be the alternative?

They'd have more choices! And it's up to them. But the choices would be visible to them, because a press worthy of a democracy would give them some time and space. And they'd open up the debates. Why do we have three debates owned by a corporation called the Commission on Presidential Debates, which is run by the Republican and Democratic party as their pet cat?

They decide who gets on, who doesn't, what reporters ask questions, how frequent should the debates be. We should have 21, 30 debates. Campaigns should run debates all over the country. Regionally, nationally. Instead the country's seeing the same old spiel...You can't reach tens of millions of people—unless you're a multi-billionaire candidate—without getting on the debates.

Something that is of great interest to a lot of students, especially at Bard College, is Occupy Wall Street. What are your thoughts on that movement, especially now that it's reached its one-year anniversary?

Well, there should be more occupiers, all around the coun-

try. There are not enough students involved. It's got the right policies. It's got the right focus, but it doesn't have enough people.

Why do you think it hasn't had enough people?

Because there's no draft. You bring back the draft, you'll see a lot more students become active.

So would you say a lot of students are divorced from the implications of the national politics?

Completely. Other than student loans. And they don't pay them right away when they're in college, so that's remote too. They're also indifferent to the job-creating effects of corporate globalization under NAFTA and WTO. This generation spends far more time looking down at their little iPhone than it does looking ahead at the horizons that they have to build.

So you would say that there's a gap in the amount of activism and involvement of this generation and past generations?

Yeah. Because years ago, previous generations of young people—the only virtual reality they had was television. Now they have television, internet, computer, iPhone, videogames; non-stop, 24/7. So they're living more in virtual reality than they are in reality. That's not very healthy for democracy.

But on one hand, wouldn't all this information theoretically lead to a more informed populace where they would be able to access more information?

That's—you put your finger on it. It's theoretical. Cognition does not lead to ignition. You have to have fire in your belly, and you don't get fire in your belly by looking at screens. You get fire in your belly by looking at the people who are repressed, injured, sickened, uninsured, disrespected, underpaid, excluded, marginalized—that's when the ignition starts, otherwise known as fire in your belly. Cognition does not produce ignition. It's important—it's good to know what you're talking about, but that doesn't move you to break your routine and engage in the civic mobilization that's needed.

Do you have anything you'd like to add?

Yeah, and the main thing is—the main thing. How many students are there at Bard?

Two-thousand and then another couple thousand overseas.

Okay. Two-thousand at Bard, right?

Yes.

You think one out of four will show up on Saturday?

Hmm—I believe that—

Or [will they be] too busy watching football games?

I don't know if that's what they'll be doing...

Well you see, half of democracy, Mr. Lawrence, is showing up. Showing up at rallies and meetings, at marches, in courtrooms, city council gatherings, and the election booths. And if we're gonna go 500 miles one way, and come back 500 miles, we expect to see a good turnout that makes your President proud.

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TOP DINING HALL PRODUCE:

- 1) Winter Squash - 900 lbs
- 2) Tomatoes - 681 lbs
- 3) Summer Squash - 628 lbs
- 4) Watermelons - 310 lbs
- 5) Eggplant - 318 lbs
- 6) Green Bell Peppers - 297 lbs
- 7) Onions - 165 lbs
- 8) Romaine Lettuce - 115 lbs
- 9) Green Beans - 106 lbs
- 10) Cherry Tomatoes - 101 lbs

where it's going
↓

KLINE

#1

MANOR

#2

DTR

#3

300 lbs per week

40 lbs per week

46 lbs

26 lbs

chartwells

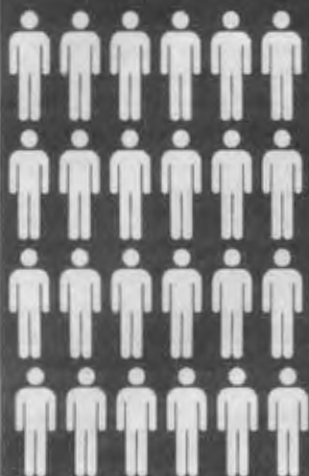
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two boots*

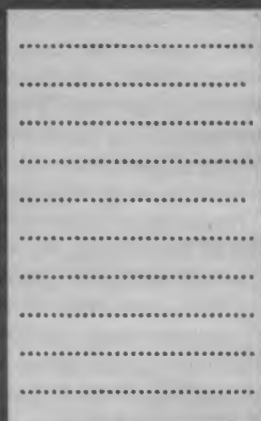
mercato*

* single transaction

24 students are employed by the Bard Farm



Bard Farm is home to the largest cranberry bog in the Hudson Valley



The Bard Farm has sold \$3,256 worth of produce to Chartwells since July 2012

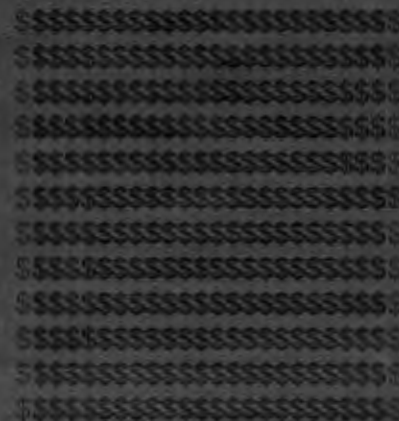




photo by anda damaszewski

ROCK N' ROLL IS EVIL:

AMANDA PALMER
COMES TO BARD

BY LUCAS OPGENORTH

Amanda Palmer (a.k.a. Amanda Fucking Palmer) is well known for her flair for the dramatic. Her tattooed-on eyebrows, theatrical stage show and involvement in the "punk rock cabaret" band The Dresden Dolls point to her background as an actor. But for Palmer, the theatrics are only add-ons to a successful rock and roll tour.

"I know that if the songs are good and the musicians are good, then nothing else truly matters," she said. "Which is not to say you don't want great lights and great extra stuff and cool things to look at and awesome costumes, etcetera, etcetera. All of that stuff is wonderful but it's not essential."

When I spoke to Palmer, we were sitting in front of her dressing room mirror, deep in the bowels of the Fisher Center, a few hours before her third and final performance at Bard. A few days later, on Sept. 11, she would release her third full-length solo album, "Theater Is Evil," and embark on a nationwide tour with her band, The Grand Theft Orchestra.

"I think rock and roll is theater, and actually, mathematically, that means that rock and roll is evil," she said with a laugh. "I grew up doing a lot of both: making theater, making music, doing musical theater... and I never really separated music and theater... at least from where I was standing, all music was inherently theatrical."

The scope of Palmer's definition of theater brings under the same umbrella the elaborate stage show of the pyrotechnically inclined Iron Maiden and four dudes from Queens banging out three-chord, minute-long songs on a stage at a dive bar. "The Ramones are one of the most theatrical bands in history! They had such specific

costumes and personas," she exclaimed. "You know costumes are theater or make up is theater... but then the question really is: well is it really? Or is theater happening every time someone gets up on stage, picks up a guitar and sings at you?"

In late August, Palmer arrived at Bard for a three-week residence that signaled the beginning of the "Live Arts Bard" program, which is currently in its inaugural year. The program will bring artists, such as Palmer, actor Jack Ferver and filmmaker Annie Dorsen to Bard for collaborations with the college's faculty and students.

"I've done nothing fucking remotely like this before," Palmer said about the residency. She first conceived of the idea of embarking on such a project after being contacted by her alma mater, Wesleyan University, for some sort of collaboration. Although that collaboration never came to fruition, Palmer and newly-hired Director of Theater Programs Gideon Lester had previously worked as collaborators.

"He and I knew each other from the American Repertory Theater in Boston because he used to be the dramaturge there. And we met during a kind-of show I created called 'The Onion Cellar' back in 2006," Palmer explained. "We dug each other, we've stayed in touch all these years, and when he came in here and was looking for good resident artists, I was simultaneously looking for a place to rehearse this tour."

When Palmer and company pulled into Annandale, she and her crew spent three days filming a music video for "The Bed Song," a track on "Theater Is Evil." Immediately following the completion of the video, they started to set up for the rehearsals of

the "Theater Is Evil" tour. Palmer and her team had already formulated the show before getting to Bard, meaning that once they arrived at the college, they and a group of Bard students and staff were left with the task of rehearsing and preparing for the upcoming tour.

"I think we're very, very lucky and grateful that we got some incubating time at Bard," Palmer said. "Because if this was just night two of tour, and we were dealing with the kinds of problems we're dealing with, we would be crying. Because we would be dealing with these flaws in real-time instead of, kind of, in the bubble."

In the world outside of Bard, Palmer has been making music headlines in the last few months for her method of funding her album and tour. She raised \$1.2 million in June on the fundraising website Kickstarter, making her the most successful musical project ever attempted on the increasingly popular site. Donors received signed copies of the album, limited edition artwork, and for those who threw in the big bucks, a private performance. However, her method of "crowdsourcing" came under heavy criticism from musicians' unions and DIY icon Steve Albini when the New York Times reported that Palmer was asking her more musically capable fans to perform in her horn section in return for beer, hugs, high-fives and merch. After she and Albini traded blows in the boxing ring of the internet, Palmer announced that she had decided to monetarily compensate all of the performers on her tour.

But connection with her fans extends beyond funding. As concert-goers walked into her performance in the Fisher Center's Theater 2, they were offered a card and asked

to anonymously write something bad or sad that happened in their room. Palmer then read the cards during her performance before playing a cover of Yaz's "In My Room." Death, rape and betrayal were clear recurring themes in the submissions.

"I think there's something magical that happens, first of all when people share and reveal things in public... This is not going to be happening tomorrow in Chicago and it's not what happened yesterday in Atlanta. This is you, now, here, us," she said.

Palmer's engagement with such subjects stems not from a desire to shock, she explained, but to push her own boundaries as a songwriter and a performer.

"If you're challenging yourself and you're making that choice between saying something uncomfortable or revealing something about yourself that irks you, you're taking a step outside of your narcissistic comfort zone," Palmer said. "It's almost a bolder move than saying, 'I'm going to take a crucifix and shove it up my ass and then lick it.'"

When she is appearing naked in a Flaming Lips video or writing an upbeat rock song about an Oasis fan whose love for the Brit-pop stars keeps her spirits high despite being a victim of a drunken rape, Palmer is interested in simply making art rather defending or intellectualizing it.

"Art can mean anything you want and it also doesn't have to mean anything," Palmer said. "Everyone's always gonna stick and hang their own agenda and aesthetic or whatever choice of meaning on every and anything. The older I get, the less critical I become and the more appreciative I become of people simply making art and making things, period."

Long lines of Bard students gathered to hear celebrated storyteller Neil Gaiman read the first draft of his latest story, a new take on Sleeping Beauty, at the Fisher Center Sept. 5. Gaiman, the author of the comic book series "The Sandman," the novel "Stardust," and the children's book "Coraline," said he wanted to hear how his latest short story read before beginning a second draft. Theater personnel estimate that 780 people attended the reading, which included a poem reading at beginning, a read-through of Gaiman's draft, and then a ukulele performance by Amanda Palmer, Gaiman's wife. And to his "enormous relief," Gaiman got through the reading to a gathered crowd that gave him a standing ovation. The Free Press spoke with a nervous Gaiman before his talk.

NEIL GAIMAN ON ART, PUBLISHING AND AMANDA

BY JP LAWRENCE

What brings you here to Bard today?

Amanda, actually. I'm generally in the area because my wife is using Bard's space and facilities to put together a tour, and I finished a short story last week and I thought, 'I'm not sure about this. I don't know where the beats are.' I want to do that thing that I sometimes do before I go onto the second draft, which is reading it aloud. And I asked Gideon [Lester] here if there was any chance to just read it to some students. The theory was that we'd get an empty classroom, 40 people. And it embiggened.

So you have like a live sounding board now?

And that's honestly what I mostly want. It's very, very weird because I haven't read it aloud yet. This isn't something that I've practiced in my bedroom. Normally I will have at least read something to Amanda before I'll read it to a live audience, but in this case...

Virgin ears?

Virgin ears, virgin mouth! I actually brought my notebook, along with the iPad, in case I hit something in the story and go, 'I need to fix that!' I can just take out my pen and make a note to myself.

Like a spoken rough draft.

Exactly. It really is.

It almost crosses into spoken art, which is something I've noticed. You've done comics, screenplays, prose. Going cross-disciplinary – what's the motive there? Why specialize?

As far as I'm concerned, writers, we ought to be doing all this stuff. Writers who just write one kind of short story, and that's what they do, and they have this one kind of short story set in a specific location, I guess I admire those people, but I admire them in the same manner I admire the sort of craftsman who just paints the same thing over and over again or perhaps studies the same place for 30 years.

I have no interest in doing that. I want to be able to paint everything, if I'm painting, and I want to be able to write about everything, and I don't see any reason why, if I want to write a song or a poem, I shouldn't write a song or a poem.

So as far as today's reading, what aspects of other genres have helped you create this story?

The story that I'm going to read tonight is a fairy story.

I don't know about, what 14 years ago, maybe a bit longer, I did a version of Snow White called "Snow Glass Apples," which was basically me telling the story of Snow White but changing everything around slightly. And this is me telling the story of Sleeping Beauty, but turning it around a little bit. And Snow White is the hero. I did her a bad turn once, so I did her a better turn here.

I was reading about an interview you did once about the difference between comic books and novels, about how in comics, it's more of a wide-open space and how in novels you're walking in the footsteps of men with large feet. As far as that goes, how do you really try to create something original?

You don't. I don't think I've ever created anything original.

Because perfect originally would presuppose you'd get up to a completely blank environment with no life experience of any kind and begin to create art. And that's not what happens.

What happens is that you grow up surrounded by stories, surrounded by images and songs and poems and performances and films and all of this stuff. And it all goes in. And at some age, it all kind of melts down in your head. It composts. Like rotting fruit on a compost heap. And then you take that compost, and you plant your own seeds in it, and they grow new flowers. And the flowers that grow are being fed on everything that's gone before.

Now tell me, have you experimented at all in the musical genre? Has your wife influenced you at all in that respect?

No, not really. I wrote songs before I met and married Amanda, and I still write songs from time to time. One of the very first things Amanda and I did together was almost accidental. I sang her a song called "I Googled You" that I had written. And she went off and put chords to it and three days later was performing it in San Francisco. So I love doing things with music, and I wish I had a real voice. "The New York Times" described me: I sing like a novelist. And I thought, fair enough.

Well, if you want go across disciplines, you can't be afraid to fail, right?

I think you have to not be afraid to fail in any medium – whether you're crossing disciplines or sticking to the one you're in. Because fear of failure is paralyzing. What was that lovely Ted Hughes line? All the advances that an artist makes are made when the artist outwits his or her inner police force. And the idea that there are these tiny cops in your head that say you can't do this or that – you have to outwit them.

I really admire that. You're going to be putting your first draft, your mistakes, in front of people.

Yeah. Absolutely. But how am I going to know what works and what doesn't if I don't?

I don't want to sound brilliant and blasé. I did this once about a year ago in Edinburgh. I hadn't even typed a story; I had finished handwriting it about five minutes before the taxi arrived to take us to the gig. And I got onstage and read it in handwriting. And I was so absolutely terrified that shortly before I got on stage, I stuck my head out the window and threw up. Just from terror.

You can be terrified, but do the art anyway. If you're afraid to fail and don't do the art, that's where you fuck up.

So these young kids coming in, these potential storytellers, what would you have as advice for them?

You know, when you're a college student, at that period of your life, my main advice would be to absorb everything you can. Read everything you can. Read outside of your comfort zone. Don't obsess about writing. Don't obsess about finishing stuff. Just absorb all your influences. And then start writing. And then start telling your stories. And sooner or later you'll be telling the stories that only you can tell.

Photo by Wang Bert

DRAG, ANIME, FIRE-BREATHING AND MORE

THE ECCENTRIC LIFESTYLE OF VILLAGE J

BY SUSIE YUGLER

When you ask an average Bard student if they've heard of the "Unlikely-Realist" neighborhood at Bard, you are prone to get quite a few strange looks. I was surprised to learn that one of the most out-there groups at Bard was relatively unknown by the general community. It wasn't until I got the colloquial name right, or became familiar with their location on campus, that people started to recognize what I was looking for. "The Residence you are referring to is located in Village J," was the first solid information I received in an email from ResLife. Though the general population of Bard is not familiar with the term "Unlikely Realist," Village J has a certain notoriety around campus for its offbeat ventures. One first-year referred to it as the "strangest weekend of [her] life" when she stayed in Village J last spring for accepted students weekend. I decided I needed to make my own conclusions about this mysterious and eclectic group of people, and ventured over to Village Walk to find out for myself.

I walked up the driveway unsure of what to expect. I knocked on the door and was instantly greeted by friendly residents who showed me around the dorm. Even as an outsider to their group, I was welcomed warmly into their unconventional home. Downstairs, where we met for interviews, there was a particularly active living room. Numerous hula hoops lay in a corner next to an art easel. Dr. Who and Lord of The Rings posters covered the walls and

large windows let light into the tidy and well-equipped kitchen area. It was a paradise for the kids who never quite fit into any normal high-school cliques. The artist, the fan-kid, the otaku, the drag queen—all of these unlikely characters make up the rich and vibrant community that is Village J.

I sat down with senior Sarah Longstreth, the original designer/co-founder of the neighborhood and senior Matthew Hughes, the club-head of URF. That was the first I've heard of the title URF (pronounced *urf*). Hughes explains that the official name stands for Unlikely Realist Forum.

"It's an evolving acronym, it never really means anything," Longstreth said. "The original name came from an April Fools joke about manatees...but what URF is described as on paper is 21st century art and new media."

At its creation, URF was a neighborhood dorm that initially was meant for those interested in "new media" which includes events such as tabletop role-playing games (RPG), interactive art, anime films, video games, drag shows

and anything else imaginable by the Unlikely Realists.

"We have a lot of really geeky and geek-culture interests," explained Longstreth. "A lot of it came from Rocky Horror, where we kind of all met each other, like stuff with fan culture and pop culture."

Not only is URF known for its elaborate undertakings, it is also the most successful residence in the neighborhood program. Since the establishment of the neighborhood program at Bard, URF is the longest-running and most consistently expanding dorm in the program.

"Residence Life has asked us to, kind of, step up as the only successful neighborhood to come out of the program that's still going," said Longstreth.

URF has served as an image of the mission of the neighborhood program, because it doesn't only create a network for the students that live there, but the students are creating something for the greater Bard community.

"The neighborhood program may be geared towards creating something that

gives back to the community, but it's also about creating communities themselves and we find that that's something that we put a lot of focus on," Hughes said.

One wonders what it is that makes this group so tight-knit. Longstreth attributes this to how "open and accepting and kind of weird" the place has been.

"It still blows my mind that it's been three years," Longstreth said. "Some of us are family at this point. We've been through a lot of shit together...there are people here that I consider on that freaky-family sex-cult level."—Longstreth laughed—"It's small," she said, "but it's not nothing."

Indeed it is small: this group of people have some of the most intimate friendships I've seen on campus. They have built a community for themselves that allows them to accept one another and embrace their quirks. As I said my goodbyes, one resident, Atticus, offered me fresh-baked cookies, possibly the best I've had on campus. Leaving Village J felt like saying goodbye to old friends, though it had only been a few hours. I suppose it's due to the affectionate atmosphere in the house or the overall receptiveness they had for anyone who was curious about their community. In a small school of unique and interesting individuals, I think it's safe to say that Village J is one community that will be thriving at Bard for a long time to come, eccentricity and all.

The artist, the fan-kid, the otaku, the drag queen—all of these unlikely characters make up the rich and vibrant community that is Village J.

WE LIVE IN THE RIGHT TIME, EVEN THOUGH IT DOES NOT ALWAYS SEEM LIKE IT

BY THATCHER SNYDER

"If you trip or slip, there is a moment, before your hand shoots out to break your fall, when you feel the earth rushing up at you and you cannot help yourself — a passing, fraction-of-a-second horror. I felt like [that] hour after hour." (Andrew Solomon, Anatomy of Melancholy)

As the students and faculty laughed, I began to understand Andrew Solomon's view on depression. Solomon was explaining the Ndeup (pronounced *oondop*) — a Senegalese exorcising ceremony during which one is placed in a large barrel with a ram, made to wear a loincloth and covered in animal blood.

"Depression," he stated, "is ridiculous. It happens almost without distinct cause. A major fallacy in the understanding of depression is that a 'right to depression' is required, that one must have something to be sad about."

Solomon built his career by examining the many facets of this 'something to be sad about.' His book, *The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression*, won the National Book Award in 2001 and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize the following year. Last Wednesday, he gave a talk in Olin Hall on 'The Creative Mind and Depression' — a topic which he has explored for the better part of a decade.

His speech ranged from the silly (the Ndeup), to the technical (different modalities of psychoanalytic practice), to the downright upsetting ("Depression is just a slower way of being dead," Solomon said).

Solomon maintained a serious tone, inserting jokes, which, while often pensive in nature, kept the talk from becoming too overbearing and sad. Solomon himself has battled with depression for years and over time found "a mixture of five medicines which keep [it] under control."

He regards depression as an intimate acquaintance, acknowledging its horrible symptoms but also its positive qualities. "Depression can, without a doubt, lend insight to your life," Solomon said. "It can create a resilience in a person, something which cannot be taken away or removed by anyone or anything else."

In his speech, Solomon did not directly focus on depression and the creative mind. Instead, he recalled stories

he felt best represented these times, such as the relationship between a writer and her schizophrenic brother. Solomon recounted a discussion with the writer about her brother's institutionalization: "The only difference between me and him [the writer and her brother]," Solomon read, "is that while we both create worlds, I know that what I create does not exist, and so I write it down." Through such stories, Solomon illustrated the difficulties for a creative depressive who finds the world to be "deadly poisonous."

Whether Solomon has been cured of his depression is up to speculation, but it can be said that he analyzes depression in hopes of understanding it. In naming and grappling with the darkness, he can persevere. "We live in the right time, even though it does not always feel like it," Solomon said. If there is one thing that Solomon made clear, it is this: We live in the right time, and there is always a way out of the darkness. Remember that.

BARD PROFESSOR RECEIVES \$169K GRANT GENDER GAP RESEARCH REWARDED

BY DAVID DEWEY

Approximately 17 percent of tenured or tenure-track science and math professors in American colleges are women. Of humans, approximately 50 percent are females.

Researching that gap won Kristin Lane, Assistant Professor of Psychology since 2006, a \$169,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The grant is designed to be inclusive to undergraduates, and interested students will be able to work with Lane on the project.

This research was conducted at Bard using studies of students from Intro to Psychology classes as well as bringing students in to assist and help with the research. Leila Duman, a junior, expressed her support for the cooperative nature of the project. "Any opportunity for students to get involved in research is really invaluable," Duman said. "You learn more about the practical application of your science in a week in lab than you can in a year in the classroom."

"It was always hard not to notice the disparity in my math classes between men and women," Lane said regarding her personal experience with gender disparity in education. The topic was recently brought into focus in 2005

when then-President of Harvard Lawrence Summers made controversial remarks claiming that "issues of intrinsic aptitude" caused the science/math gender gap—in essence saying that men are simply better at science and math than women.

Professor Lane's project, "The Lonely Scientist: How Implicit Science Construals, Stereotypes, and Attitudes Contribute to the Gender Gap in Science Participation," blames the disparity on stereotype alone. It counters the idea that men are natively better at science and math than women. Her article in the psychology journal "Sex Roles" concludes not only that stereotypes affect students' choices in classes but that "even among people who disavow such stereotypes, implicit stereotypes are learned early and reinforced often."

Because it is cultural "common knowledge" that men are better than women in math and science, Lane argues parents subconsciously push humanities courses on girls and math/science on boys. On top of this, women, especially those with strong attachments to self-perceptions of femi-

ninity, tend to enforce these stereotypes on themselves by working less confidently in their science courses. Consciously rejecting stereotypes can have a variety of effects. For some, it diminishes the proclivity to follow the culture's expectations; for others it can implicitly enforce the effects of some stereotypes.

As was noted in Lane's article, as the number of careers in this country involving technology and science increases, there may be a correlation between the gender disparity in salary and in math and science classes.

This grant has been in the works for a long time. Lane submitted her application for the NIH grant in late 2010; she was approved last July. "I was extremely happy and grateful," she said. "It's been a long process."

She wants to add that this grant is a resource, and that Bard students should take advantage of it. "I've been really fortunate to support a terrific lab of undergraduate students," she said.

SPORTS

BASEBALL FIELD UPDATE

BY TOM MCQUEENY

Baseball field construction hasn't begun, but that doesn't mean it's not fast approaching. "The idea for the field is set. We've got approvals from the town," Brudvig said, "so it's a project that's ready to go."

Kristen Hall, Director of Athletics, said she hopes to have the field completed by late spring to early summer of 2013. Varsity baseball should be able to begin playing next fall.

Currently, the President's office is in talks with the donor about funding - namely, more of it. "We'll see what happens," Brudvig said. "The project won't move forward without full donor support."

The project in the past has had several hiccups. Earlier, Red

Hook's planning board required more validity in the provided archaeological and scientific information.

Due to some archaeological findings, the intended site was deemed unfit and the state required that the field location be shifted about 30 feet. The new plan had to go back to Red Hook where more documentation had to be provided for environmentalists, engineers, and a whole host of specialists.

The final approval was finally achieved mid-June. The President's office is reviewing the final information which now includes state approval, town approval, budget submission, and multipurpose use in the outfield, including intramural soccer and lacrosse.

AN INFLUX OF NEW FACES

BY MATILDA TUCKER AND KURT SCHMIDLEIN

Bard Athletics saw big changes over the summer. The aesthetic of the Stevenson Gymnasium has changed significantly thanks to the recent renovations. The new wing offers spacious squash courts and an expansive new multi-purpose room. But it's not just the space that has changed—the athletics programs have as well.

At the end of last semester, Director of Athletics Kristen Hall and her associates set to work finding new coaches to fill empty positions and a few newly created ones. Hall said four of the varsity programs have new head coaches: Men's Baseball, Lacrosse, and Soccer, and Women's Lacrosse.

"Every one of our top candidates has accepted the position offered to them," Hall said. "We're currently batting 1000."

The search for Men's Baseball and Lacrosse coaches began last semester. After sorting through 120 applicants and meeting with four finalists in person, it was clear that Tucker Keir, a former Division I Men's Lacrosse player, and Ed Kahovec, a former assistant coach and recruiter at the University of Rochester, would be perfect fits for the Men's Lacrosse and Men's Baseball coaching positions, respectively. Hannah Taylor was hired last week as the Head Women's Lacrosse Coach. Taylor was an assistant coach last year at Converse College, a Division II school.

Devon Tomson, the new Head Men's Soccer coach, returns to Bard after working as an assistant coach for the men's soccer team at UC-Santa Cruz in California. Tomson used to be the Assistant Men's Soccer coach at Bard under former Head Coach Scott Swere. Swere resigned from his coaching position

in August of this year, and the post was immediately offered to Tomson. Tomson, who was born and raised in Red Hook and whose father preceded Hall as the Athletic Director, accepted the position and moved back east, arriving a day before the team's first game. Swere's job was restructured to focus on administrative duties.

The department has also hired Chris Jones as the Assistant Athletic Trainer. Jones has worked at Bard in the past per diem, and has also taught and coached at various high schools and recently worked as an intern for the Boston Red Sox organization.

Brian Berg, who has worked at Bard as the Aquatic Facility Director in the past, has joined his wife Christine as the Associate Head Coach of the swim team. Dunja Drmac, Andy Salvatore, Yonah Greenstein '12, Kristie Worell, Deven Connelly '12, Caitlyn Botti, and Antonia Sweet were all hired for various assistant coaching positions. The athletic department is still looking for assistant coaches for several varsity programs.

In the administrative branch of the Athletics Department, Bill Kelly was promoted to the position of Director of Athletic Recruiting.

"We're offering a different type of experience, which is a challenging one," Hall said. She said that it's not just about the varsity sports anymore and that this increased focus on the sports teams and the gym itself will not only benefit the teams, but also tighten community bonds and allow a greater percentage of the student body to improve its state of health and wellness. "We want our students healthy," Hall said.



GYM RENOVATIONS

BY TOM MCQUEENY

Renovations on Stevenson Athletic Center, formerly the Stevenson Gymnasium, are now completed. The entire renovation process, which cost \$2.1 million and was made possible by three separate donors, has led to "more square footage for people to do more things," said Kristen Hall, Director of Athletics.

One walk through shows how the fitness center has been expanded beyond the small corner it had last year. It stands as a bright and open centerpiece for the athletic center. The number of cardio machines has climbed from 16 to 35. Even the squash courts now have their own section and four functional courts. Two new classrooms have been added to allow for a greater offering of instructional classes.

The weight circuit has been moved downstairs, including free weights. The area upstairs is now designated for strength training and conditioning. Everything, from the entryway to the bathrooms, shows noticeable improvement. The new name reflects the all-encompassing nature of these improvements.

"We have been interested for a number of years in expanding opportunities for students, not just athletes but all students.," Hall said. "I believe there's a greater sense of pride when people care about the space."

PHOTOS BY SAM YOUKILIS



OPINION

THE SHUTTLE PROVIDER

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

At the heart of the recent shuttle proceedings there is a sentiment that I find particularly troubling, annoying, and false.

While expressed by many, it was stated most quotably by Mayor Cranna of Tivoli to the Free Press last April: "We know for a fact that people aren't coming into the Village at twelve or one [in the morning] for any other reason than to drink." Aside from its implications for my rights as a Tivoli resident, here is the main problem with that statement: I have never gone anywhere just to drink. While I may often drink or smoke at my destination, that is never the end goal of my nighttime recreation.

I came to a liberal arts school in search of interesting, lively conversations and experiences that would penetrate as deep into my life as they would into my night. Fulfillment and camaraderie are what I search for in my social life. So naturally, I wanted a place where academic life and social life did not have a strictly defined boundary, where academic pursuits were made more fulfilling by their appearance in my social life, and where social life inspired and provided a

context for my academic pursuits.

There is no question that the mobs of reveling students converging on the shuttle at ten to two may be problematic, but the institution of hanging out with friends and meeting others at night, after studying—when more Dionysian humors are about us—is not only a symptom of our being college-aged but also a really awesome aspect of it.

As a Bard grad told me once, college is the only window in your life where strangers want to be friendly and open—regardless of who you are—and where your completely pointless and self-indulgent opinions matter to others.

Nighttime gathering is a critical venue for this kind of dialogue, and given the geographic conditions of this college, the late-night shuttle is a critical aspect of that.

As the shuttle schedule stands, my friends who live in Red Hook have to leave Tivoli at 11:30. Since nobody had prior warning to stock up on cars or couches, that is their only option.

Now, what my friends and I do between 11:30 and 2:30 on weekends is our busi-

ness. True, there will be several games of beer pong whose victors will never be decided, but there will also be several semirigorous debates that will never reach impasse, crack-pot ideas that will never be realized, loves never fallen into, and potential friends and partnerships never made.

None of this is criminal, irresponsible, or antisocial, but all of it feels unique to college life. The school ought to recognize and encourage these enriching and fulfilling aspects of college culture—defend them even—rather than focus on preventing and blindly condemning the drinking aspect of them.

The things that go on behind the stigmatized part of evening recreation are at the heart of why this college exists. There are many valuable alternatives to going to Bard, but the unique service of a rural liberal arts college in the modern world is to host a colony of like-minded, similar-aged individuals who inspire each other and grow into adults before each other's eyes. By studying the things that interest us and exposing ourselves to others with different interests and

backgrounds, hopefully we come to find out who we are and pursue what we love and are passionate about.

But in the same way that studying love does not make one feel it, no course of study is fulfilling if it does not become itself. I am no expert in becoming anyone else, but I think a self is something you become rather than create, and that a balance of study and experience facilitates this process, starting on Day 1 of freshman year.

The urgency of reinstating some form of late-night transportation between the social hubs of Bard may be hard to understand for an older, wiser person who sees diplomas and pupils rather than living, loving, learning human beings. But as a senior with one more year at this wonderful place where I have made deep friendships and fallen in love with people and ideas, this shuttle thing seems like a sleight against the realization of an ideal.

HOW I LEARNED TO STOP HATING AND LOVE THE SHUTTLE

BY JEREMY GARDNER

On one particular evening last spring, I, believe it or not, went to a great party on campus. What did I shout as I danced with two beauties on top of some rumbling speakers?

"I feel like I'm at college!"

Amazingly, this sentiment has become a regular occurrence this year... even in total sobriety. What, you may ask, possibly could have transmogrified Bard social life from a nihilist's wet dream to the wanton wonderland of "college" depicted in popular culture?

The Great Shuttle Trouble.
Really.

It goes without saying that the cancellation of the late-night shuttle service was executed tactlessly (at best). It was a drunken tragedy just waiting to happen. But thanks to a sustained effort by Student Government, particularly President Cara Black, the Red Hook shuttle has been fully restored and Tivoli residents now have a safe way home on the weekend. All that's left is to return the nightly "library" shuttle and this will turn out to be the greatest administrative blunder since I was left with a dingle in my dorm last semester.

These are the reasons the shuttle fiasco

went from wack to #winning:

There are no more Tivolian grown-ups complaining about front lawn-fornication, projectile-vomit paint jobs, and drunken cacophony. Sloshed students don't swarm my house next to the Black Swan, which has historically been a debauched, pseudo-frat house. Oh, and somewhat notably, because it's finally bringing community back to Bard.

In the time I have attended this school, social life, particularly on campus, has sucked. So much so that I nearly transferred last year. With boring activities and virtually no late-night student spaces, kids who didn't get off campus would just meander around, break stuff, and steal or torch cars (and then blame "townies.") Fun events at Bard were an anomaly.

This is no longer the case.

Many returning students, myself included, have been shocked by the sight of massive hordes smiling, dancing, and actually having fun at events such as the Ludlow Funki Parti, the first-year rager at SMOG, and even a show at Manor! Students haven't partied this hard since that sheriff was punched at the Booty Banger last fall.

As students collectively come to terms with the fact that they're not going to be able to

piss on every house in Tivoli on the weekend, a bit of soul-searching is going to lead them back to pissing on every building on campus. And this is good.

The fact is, partying in Tivoli was never much fun. A handful of socially unequipped students, in a small house, with a pint-sized pong table (no one knows the rules), and the music (90's pop) turned down, as not to disturb the neighbors, was never particularly conducive to a good time (unless semi-intelligible drunken debates on Nietzsche's sexuality truly piques your interest).

Now, the shuttle forces students to bring the fun to campus. Anyone can throw a massive banger at SMOG, the MPR, or even (keg-friendly) Kline and Manor. Without the worry of a trashed house or police showing up, the only concern that remains is whether the person you're swapping spit with is still in high school. Is that *really* so bad?

And, almost paradoxically, the increase in on-campus parties will most likely lead to a decrease in on-campus emergencies. The reason why Booty Bangers were banned and SMOG was almost demolished for a sport that only a small group of students cared about was because enjoyable events on campus had become so rare that stu-

dents felt obliged to maximize their rarely guaranteed funtime in the only manner they knew how (mixing antibiotics, Adderall, and tequila...obviously). But with a regular slew of exciting events now on campus, nobody will want a nasty hangover on Friday morning if they know there will be a great concert that night and a wild dance party on Saturday.

The reality is that with the Iron Curtain lifted from Red Hook and Tivoli, this is all students could really ask for (and much more). So while the administration is mostly responsible for this Great Shuttle Trouble, only We, the Students, are, and have been, responsible for making something great of it. Now that everyone can get home at night, let's take this opportunity to unite the Red Hook, Tivoli, and campus communities and make Bard a great place to be on the weekend. And maybe even feel like college.

And just a reminder: partying isn't getting drunk, it's getting drunk. So go wild and dance your ass off, but if you choose to drink, do it responsibly.

IT'S OUR DECISION, TOO

BY ZEKE PERKINS

On Wednesday, September 12 there was a forum held to discuss the recent changes to the shuttle schedule during which students brought many issues to the attention of Bard College administrators. The biggest issue I saw at the forum was not the shuttle schedule itself but a more troubling and deeper issue of decision-making at Bard by a small numbers of administrations who fail to take the input of the broader Bard community into account -- particularly from its most financially disadvantaged members.

At face value, issues such as the decrease in work-study hours, raise in tuition, stagnation of financial aid, and firing of six housekeepers after the college broke its contractual agreement by extending their probationary period by twenty days, are not connected to the change in the shuttle schedule. However, if we look a little deeper, I think we will find it's all part of an incredibly troublesome trend.

Let's start with the shuttle. The decision to end the late stops was made with little to no student input. This led to an utterly arbitrary decision to discontinue the late night Red Hook shuttle despite a lack of complaints from the Red Hook community. The college was completely unaware of its mistake and has since returned late night Red Hook shuttles.

Moreover, the discontinuation of the late night shuttle will have damaging affects for the academic and social life of Bard's most economically disadvantaged students. Bard charges approximately \$6,000 more for room and board than can be bought living in Red Hook or Tivoli. For a student who cannot afford a car and has chosen to live off campus for to save money, studying at the library, using the art studio, or attending Bard campus events past 12 at night is impossible.

Without Bard community input during decision-making, the rising tuition cost and stagnation of financial aid, the change in shuttle schedule, and the fact that the most financially-limited students are now hindered further in the amount of work-study hours they can receive, appear to me as a clear message that Bard's most financially-disadvantaged students and their concerns are not considered by the college.

A similar message was sent to the housekeepers this past summer when their contractual 90-day probationary period for evaluation was extended 20 days without consultation or warning. This arbitrary decision led to the termination of the union's chief shop steward and widely loved Tewksbury housekeeper, Jody Cerasano.

So what does the late night shuttle schedule have to do with Jody, work-study hours, and rising tuition costs? Well, I believe that the process of decision-making that fails to consider input of students and ignores the contractual rights of workers at Bard shows the same general disregard of the most financially-precarious members of the Bard community.

I believe it is time we see the connections in the decisions of our college and take action accordingly. We should not be made voiceless and powerless. Bard is our college. We pay the bills through our tuition, we shape its image, and we will be the base of alumnae who eventually donate to the college.

Without a shift in the structure of decision-making at Bard, hard-working housekeepers like Jody, who have shaped the lives of students for the better, will continue to be fired for dubious reasons, and many more students will be forced to leave their studies because the price is just too high. The same classist and arbitrary decisions of the college will continue to affect both groups day-to-day. As consumers of the Bard College product, we have the power to heavily influence these decisions, and it is time that we used this influence for the betterment of our community, especially those students and workers facing debt, poor health care, and the inability to continue their educations at Bard.

CHRIS GIBSON, OUR CONGRESSMAN, YOUR CONGRESSMAN?

BY LENNY SIMON

You might not realize it in the serene bubble that is Bard, but while you're judging the next person over for a shirt that is just a little "too much," or making fun of a classmate for not being quite post-modern enough, there is a battle raging around us. The only evidence you might encounter is some strange, bad art in the form of what those in the real world call "campaign signs."

Aside from informing us of people's names, these campaign signs point to a critical question: who will represent us, the Bard community, in Congress?

That question is far from settled. Incumbent Republican Chris Gibson is fighting for his seat in a race that is already considered one of the most competitive in the country. His challenger, Democrat Julian Shreibman, grew up in the district and is attacking Gibson's voting record on the economy and health care. This race is red-hot with boatloads of cash being poured in from both sides. It is a critical race for the Democrats, who desperately want to take back the House, and for the Republicans, who want to keep it.

Washington election experts, who track congressional races around the country like Bard students track a kegger around the campus, have deemed this race a "pure toss-up." No one knows who is going to show up at the biggest party of the year: Congress.

Our district has an almost identical number of Democrats and Republicans, making it one of the most hotly-contested congressional districts in the country. In 2008, Obama won the new district with 52 percent of votes compared to McCain's 45. In 2010, Gibson won in the Tea Party wave with 55 percent of the vote. He handily beat incumbent Democrat Scott Murphy.

So, who to vote for? For me, the choice is an easy one.

Since entering Congress, Gibson's voting record has not been pretty, not one bit. According to the non-partisan website, votesmart.org, Gibson voted to prohibit federal funds for contraceptives and in favor of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) -- this prohibits federal law from recognizing same-sex marriages regardless of state law. What happened to states' rights or personal liberty?


Gibson also voted numerous times to repeal the Affordable Care Act, a.k.a. Obamacare, which would leave tens of millions uninsured, including this writer. But that's not all, folks! Gibson voted to cut 49 percent of health care for children, low-income families and disabled individuals by 2050.

While gutting essential federal funds to people who need it most, Gibson also voted to extend the Bush tax cuts, thereby extending one of the largest tax cuts in modern history to the richest portion of our population. On Gibson's website, it says, "Everything must be on the table." I couldn't find it in the fine print, but, in this writer's opinion, it should read, "Everything must be on the table; that is, everything except increasing taxes on the rich and the military."

Gibson's opponent, Schreibman, supports investing in infrastructure, supporting local business and agriculture, and protecting a woman's right to choose. Schreibman is very explicit about his fracking concerns, saying that he would fight to "restore federal oversight to the gas and oil industries."

This election could come down to just a few hundred votes. At this rate, when all is said and done, millions of dollars will be spent in this race. Don't let money steal your vote. Get to the polls.

I understand that you are an anarchist, but unless your vote kills the revolution you are planning, let's talk about that after Election Day.



In Memory of Ambassador Stevens

As the son of two American diplomats, I can say that the loss of Ambassador Stevens hits this small community of devoted public servants deeply. Despite the dangers and difficulties of his work, Ambassador Stevens persevered with the unwavering optimism and trust in people that is so identifiably American. While the international face of the United States today is too often obscured by our military adventures, our Foreign Service and Ambassador Stevens in particular, embody the courage and generosity that I have always associated with my American citizenship.

We will honor his memory by continuing his work in the spirit in which it was given.

- Dan Gettinger, '13

RE: BARD TWEETS

Il siira II @siiraSIIRAsiira

But now we're all just wondering what Neil Gaiman and Amanda Palmer's sex life is like

Cypress Marrs @CypressCymbals

The muffled sound of MGMT.
#TheFreshmanHaveArrived

Andrea SM @Andrea_SzM

Tell one person you're going to red hook and you're suddenly buying 15 people cigarettes #bardproblems

Michaela @Baking3_14

Bard stop badly bleaching your hair

Jordan Guarisco @Jordan_Shines

I feel like such an O.G. when I go to the cool, rave-ish parties (O.G. means 'older guy'). #TrueLife
#iPhone5 #WhyNotJustBuyTheFour

Madeline Porsella @inePor

New School Year Resolution #1: If I have to say something offensive while reading aloud in class I'm gonna do it with conviction.

Will Anderson @willanderson

Dear @BARDCollege, there were noisy kids outside my dorm room last night Can you please shut down the college?

allydavis @allydavis

"that's a super gay thing to put on a play about"- me thinking about various plays