



THE ND EXCALIBUR

The Christmas Issue

On behalf of the Notre Dame Excalibur, we would like to wish all staff and students a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! May God bless you and your families over the holidays. Have a safe and happy Christmas!



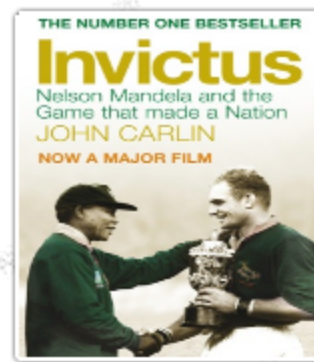
Excellent Novels To Read Over The Holidays!

See the back page for details

By: Vanesa Robledo

As the holiday season approaches, stores start to get flooded with people looking for the perfect presents for their loved ones. Unfortunately, many people cannot afford to buy presents and struggle to find a gift for their precious children. This year, students of Notre Dame considered buying an extra gift for a child in need. The World Issues Group organized the Toys for Tots campaign at Notre Dame.

Toys for Tots is a non-profit charity aimed to help support struggling families by providing toys for children who won't be getting any presents this year. From December 5th to 16th, you were able to donate toys and other necessities for certain children in your homeroom class. Many homeroom classes gave generously. Great job, ND!



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Welcome To The Movement

A look at the movement that is reshaping global economic thinking

By: Kate Reid

Thousands of Toronto citizens have occupied their own city streets, following in the footsteps of Occupy Wall Street. Following the slogan of "We Are the 99%", the Occupy movement has made it their mission to "expose how the richest 1% of people are writing the rules of an unfair global economy that is foreclosing on our future".

It began in North America on September 17th in New York, though Occupy Dataran in Kuala Lumpur began on July, 30th, and has since spread to over 1,500 cities around the world. They are a leaderless movement, opting instead to govern by consensus.

Although several prominent people oppose the movement, others are behind it wholeheartedly. "To me, the Occupy movement is about putting decisions and democracy back into the hands of the people. We need democracy for people, not corporations," says David Suzuki, in an article for the Huffington Post. Naomi Klein, a well-known political writer, has also expressed her support, "Let's treat this beautiful movement as if it is the most important thing in the world. Because it is. It really is."

Even Canada's Minister of Finance, Jim Flaherty has said, "There's growing worry about a lack of opportunities for the younger generation — particularly in the United States — and it's up to governments to ensure youth are able to capitalize on their education and find good jobs. I can understand some legitimate frustration arising out of that."



More locally, Occupy Toronto began on October 15th in Bay Street - which is Toronto's own Financial District. The initial protests are said to have had approximately 2-3,000 participants; however, that number has shrunk to 500 recently. Though their campsite is St. James Park, some tried to move into Queen's Park. This relocation was abandoned when they were told that it would be against the law.

This protest has been declared a peaceful movement and therefore, they have had little trouble with the police. "They've been lawful, they've been peaceful, they told us where they were going to go... they were more than willing to work with us and facilitate what we were asking," said Inspector Howie Page to CityNews.

Rob Ford, Mayor of Toronto has said, "I have no problem with citizens expressing themselves through the public rally and I don't expect the event to turn violent. If people want to protest peacefully, that is fine. And I am sure it is going to be a peaceful protest." However, due to possible damages, he has recently stated that the Occupiers need to "move on". This has come to be true as the Occupiers were told to leave the park or face police action on Monday, November 21, 2011.

With no clear end in sight, the Occupy movement as a whole may end up radically changing and transforming world views and systems. It has already had a large impact on the United States and encouraged labour unions to defend the rights of workers more forcefully. Though it's long term outcome is unclear, there is no doubt that this unique movement will bring awareness to society and shape many things to come.



Stop The Online Piracy Act

The Possible Problems With The Act That Could Censor The Internet

By: Kate Reid

The Internet is a very diverse and unique place. It is one of the only media that is not strictly governed by rules or laws and it is the only place where one can be almost completely anonymous. These characteristics make the Internet a very different place than the real world. So, can laws be placed on such a medium? The US government is attempting to do just that with the SOPA – Stop Online Piracy Act.

Such an act sounds extremely beneficial in theory. Preventing users from obtaining software and files that would normally be purchased through download sites for free would be a huge step in ending the thriving piracy network. Such a network has flourished on the Internet. In particular, it would ensure that companies get proper funds from the production of products, rather than it being illegally downloaded from websites such as “The Pirate Bay” or “BitTorrent”.

However, as many were quick to point out, the actual wording and parameters of the act may “break” the Internet. As said by technology magazine eWeek, “The language of SOPA is so broad, the rules so unconnected to the reality of Internet technology and the penalties so disconnected from the alleged crimes that this bill could effectively kill e-commerce or even normal Internet use. The bill also has grave implications for existing U.S., foreign and international laws and is sure to spend decades in court challenges.”

This analysis bring up two important points. The first is that the exact wording of the SOPA is much too broad. Many believe that its application would stop streaming of content and large sites such as Youtube and Twitter from hosting content that is not strictly that of the uploader. “Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the bill is that the conduct it would criminalize is so poorly defined. While on its face the bill seems to attempt to distinguish between commercial and non-commercial conduct...in actuality the bill...fails to accomplish this, but, because of its lack of concrete definitions, it potentially criminalizes conduct that is currently permitted under the law,” said Lateef Mtima, Director of Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice at Howard University School of Law.

The second point is that the implications of the act will likely face challenges in court. This means that the bill will take longer to put into effect and that the benefits of the bill will not manifest until later. Therefore, even if the act was only a beneficial thing for all those involved, it could not produce these benefits for quite a while.

In protest to the SOPA, American Censorship Day occurred on November 16th. Many websites placed black censorship bars across their logos in support of the Day and several individuals created videos about the implications of SOPA. The website for American Censorship Day states three facts as their argument. Website blocking, which

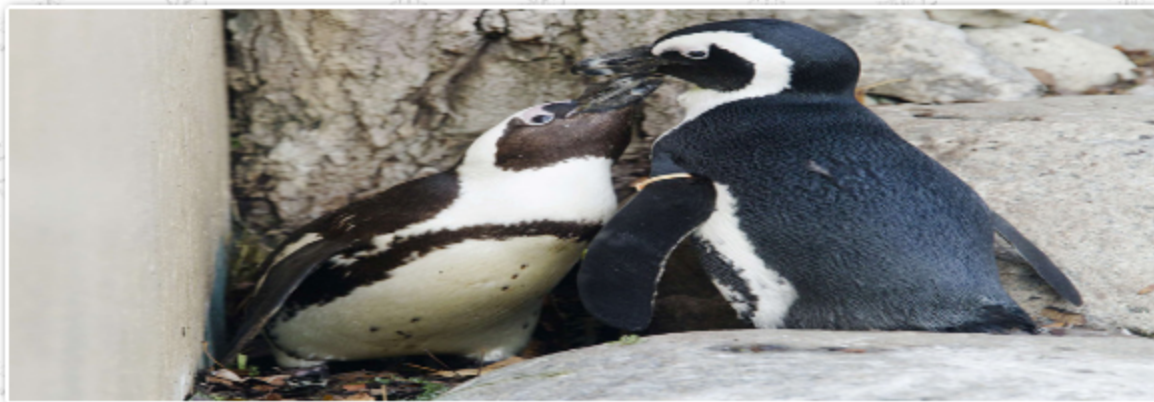
would allow the government to block any site for its content; risk of jail time for ordinary users, citing that covering an existing song could become a felony; and the possible circumventing of safeguards already in place for internet service providers outlined by the DMCA, meaning that completely legal sites may face problems.

The DMCA was an act passed in 1998 that prevents copyright liability on the Internet. It basically prevents website owners from being incriminated by their users linking or using copyrighted material. However, this is only as long as they block access to or remove such content from their site if notified by the copyright holders.

The move to enact the SOPA is happening in the USA, but the final results of the bill will have effects all over the world. Many sites used worldwide are based in the United States and could be negatively effected by the SOPA. If the bill is passed, many other countries may follow suit and eventually similar laws could be in force all over the world. No matter which side of the SOPA you are on, many people all over the world will be watching its progress with baited breath.



Pair-Bonded Penguins



By: Kate Reid

The Toronto Zoo is planning to separate two pair bonded penguins. The two penguins, Buddy and Pedro, are African penguins who were intended for a breeding program. The program's objective is to strengthen the numbers of African penguins, which are an endangered species. However, the two seem to have bonded with each other. "Pair bonded" is the zoo jargon for a homosexual pairing of two animals.

This sort of relationship among animals is more common than one might think. Many animals such as pigeons, dolphins, bison, and bonobos have shown cases of homosexual or bisexual behaviour. For example, an estimate has been made that approximately one quarter of black swan relationships are homosexual.

However, Zoo keepers and officials have said that they must split the two up. According to the zoo staff, Pedro and Buddy have extremely important genes that would be immensely beneficial to any offspring they may produce. "If [Pedro and Buddy] weren't genetically important, then we'd let them do their thing," said Tom Mason, avian curator at the Toronto Zoo.

Though their separation may seem to have anti-homosexual undertones, the two penguins will only be kept apart until they mate with a female penguin. After the breeding season they will most likely rejoin each other.

The Most Epic Wish

By: Samantha Caldeira-Slavec

To many, Friday November 11th 2011 was considered a very lucky day. Every day, hundreds, possibly thousands of people wish at 11:11. On this day in particular, there were 5 elevens present while each person wished; 11/11/11 at 11:11; which won't happen for another 100 years! Whether they asked for a pony or wish for an aspect in their lives to be better, a lot of people believe that on this day in particular, there will be a greater chance their wishes will come true. Even if you don't believe in wishing. It was the perfect time to think about the soldiers and the veterans who gave up their lives for our safety. They were brave and determined and in this quiet, eventful moment; they truly deserved to be in our thoughts and prayers.





People No Longer Understand the Definition of "Move"

By: Brittany Wilson

This has happened to every single last one of us, and to those who us that it hasn't, you must be the root of our problems. The issue at hand is this: people are allergic to moving. We get stuck in the hallways because of these inconsiderate, foolish people, and it's finally time to take a stand! (even though we're trying to stop people from standing...)

In our school community, there are two types of people: Person A, the clumper; person B, the intelligent human being. If you are on team A, you are now my mortal enemy. If you are on team B, we must unite to obliterate team A.

One thing that people need to learn is that hallways are meant for walking. I understand that some people skip. It's just a fact of life. Folks, if you skip class, at least try to keep the traffic flowing.

There is no need for you to form a barricade to prevent the rest of us from getting to class.

Walk. It's good for you every now and then.

The worst part is when people decide to join a clump or form a new clump. For some strange reason, I always seem to be the person that karma picks on every time this happens. Running into people from behind is not something that you want other people to witness. Do you know how many people walk down these halls? A lot. Do you know how many people have seen me fall flat on my butt as a result of these clumpers? Let's just say that the number is larger than the number of days that Kim Kardashian's marriage lasted for.

Over the past year and a half, I have developed various techniques to tackle this issue.

1. Attempt to join the clump with discussion of flamingoes.



3. Return to the clump everyday, and blow into a different person's ear every day like it's the most normal thing in the world.



2. Sing "I Know a Song That Gets on Everybody's Nerves" really, really loudly. After a couple of days, they'll realize that this area is no longer a possible meeting spot.



4. Stand in the middle of the group. Don't talk, don't smile, don't blink. Just stand there.



Obviously, these methods won't get rid of the issue entirely, but they provide hope that the impossible may become possible. I have a dream that one day clumpers will no longer exist.



Phrases That Irk Me

By: Vanesa Robledo

Like memes, Twitter trending topics, and overplayed songs on the radio, things can become popular to the point where even *complaining* about them can be annoying. Look at Justin Bieber and Twilight. Chances are you that just sighed when you read that. I know I certainly did.

Phrases today can be just as irritating. At the risk of sounding just as bad by ranting about them, here are my two cents on popular phrases today.

"You're so extra."

Nobody likes a showoff. However, most of the time I hear this, the person is just doing some extra work. There's nothing wrong with that. All I hear is someone jealous that somebody did better than them.

"You're weird."

People say this whenever they enc someone doing something differer they think is normal. Some use it : I don't see anything wrong with being different. Would you like it everyone was the same and exactly like you? That's boring. Hey, just because you don't like something doesn't mean no one gets enjoyment out of it.

"I love my haters."

Do you mean you love the attention you get? Also, you don't have people dedicating their time to hate you. If you really do, then ignore them. Why acknowledge someone wasting their time on something so negative? Don't you think loving them will just keep them?

"I didn't even try."

I see this as cowardly. If you claim you didn't try and you failed, you can blame it on not trying. If you succeed, however, you look like you can achieve better. It takes a lot bravery to try your best and admit you failed.

"Facebook/Twitter/YouTube changed!"

Yes, because websites can't ever change and they should stay exactly the same, regardless of the need of improvement in usability, design, and aesthetics. You're just too lazy to take the minute to figure out how to do things.

"You have time on your hands."

In the wise words of my friend, Kate: "I'd like a lot of time on my hands!" People say this when others spend more time on something that they wouldn't. Again, just because *you* wouldn't get enjoyment out of it doesn't mean *absolutely everyone else* won't. They're happy. Just leave them alone.



Opinion

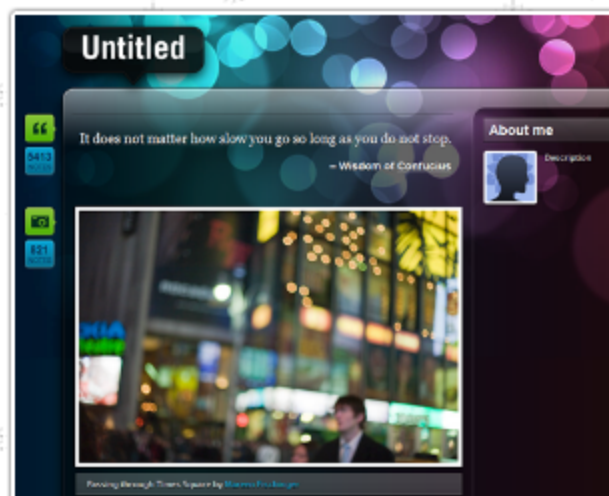
The Christmas Issue

tumblr. VS. twitter

By: Ashima Sharma

To retweet or reblog. Twitter and Tumblr are both very popular in the sense that they both teach you words of wisdom. You can follow people and update a post easily. However, we're all on the same page here when I say Tumblr is better. Way better!

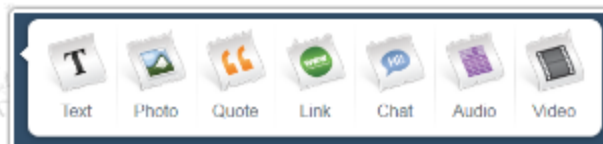
On Twitter, you have a limited amount of ways to customize your theme, but on Tumblr, you can make the layout of your blog the way you want it to look. There are so many different types, colour options, and themes to choose from on Tumblr.



An example of a theme on Tumblr

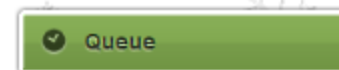
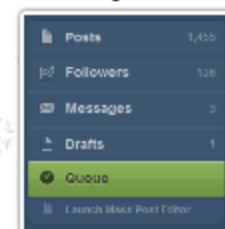
Sometimes on Twitter, when you are updating everyone about your day, the cursed "140 character limit" pops up. From my knowledge, that never happens on Tumblr. You are free to vent, and there is no such thing as "too many words".

Also, Tumblr lets you classify photos under media types such as text, photos, links, chat, audio, and video. Tumblr keeps all of these types of media separate. On the other hand, Twitter doesn't let you set a category.



It's also nice that Tumblr makes it easy for users to post without having to visit the Tumblr website. You can post from your mobile phone or device, or even post directly from your email. When you sign up with Tumblr, they send you an email address where you can send text, photos, quotes, or MP3s that will appear on your blog. Tools are provided to make it simple to post from your smartphone, your browser, and email. Furthermore, you can do audio posts by phone.

When I was first new to blogging, I wanted a quick and easy introduction to it. I found Tumblr a simple but entertaining tool. There are a large variety of attractive themes and HTML customization available. I particularly like the ability to queue posts and have them automatically posted. Tumblr makes it very easy to set that up.



Overall, it is a great way to start blogging, and the results are excellent! After making a Tumblr account, there's no turning back! It's the best place to express yourself. You post your creativity and feelings with text, a photo, quote, audio, video, or much more! Last time I checked, Twitter didn't have these amazing options. When you can reblog on Tumblr, why retweet? There are so many unique things you can find, and there's a variety of stuff to do. Why go on Twitter when you can go on Tumblr? It's way more interesting than you think. Experience it for yourself!



High School Vending Machines

By: Michelle Brar

Are vending machines worth having in high school? Vending machines are a brilliant invention used to make beverages and snacks easily accessible to children. However, there are some advantages and disadvantages with them.

The first advantage is that vending machines are very convenient. When cafeterias and other restaurants are not open to students but students can always buy a snack from the vending machine as it is affordable and convenient. Vending machines also provide cheaper food than many stores. All food in vending machines are usually \$2 or less so that they provide children with food at affordable prices. Also, vending machines can give back any change. For example, if a \$5 bill is put in a vending machine for a \$2 food item, the vending machine will return the remaining \$3. Additionally, a school can also benefit from these vending machines because it can get revenue from these machines. Furthermore, many healthy food items can be found inside vending machines, like yogurt, pita, fries, soy nuts, string cheese, carrots with dips, dried fruits, and flavoured milk.

The disadvantages of vending machines include the fact that vending machines do not always contain fresh food. If the vending machines are not being maintained and the food inside them is being stored for long periods of time, then teens that use vending machines could be eating expired food, which is not good for their health. Also, some vending machines can contain junk food, which can cause childhood obesity. Another major disadvantage of vending machines is that they can break down. This can cause a situation in which the customer loses his or her money inside the machine and the machine does not give the customer the food item.

According to the pros and cons of vending machines written above, I would suggest having more vending machines in high school because they are more convenient. Moreover, they provided cheaper food than the cafeteria and are profitable to the school. In conclusion, high schools should definitely have vending machines as they are surely worth it.

Vending Machine Prices Gone Up? Get Real

By: Lamar Edwards

OK. There are some schools who have problems about raising prices on vending machines. Like, come on! Some schools think we're rich. Some drinks are like \$2.00. You can go to Popular Pizza and buy a pizza and a drink for around a *dollar*. I can go to Mac's and buy a slushie for \$1.75. Besides, the vending machines sometimes eat your money. Overall, vending machines are unreliable.





Advice

The Christmas Issue

Q: How do you tell someone you don't want to be friends?

A: I would slowly stop hanging out with them, or slowly distance myself from their life until eventually we don't talk anymore.

A: If you want to tell someone you don't want to be friends, the best thing to do is to tell them straight up. If you want to take a more insensitive route in the sense that you do not want to see their reaction, call them or tell them via text message. Either way, it will bring the message across. But don't ignore them and think it will make them go away. Chances are, it won't.

Q: Is it possible to have a photography club introduced to Notre Dame?

A: I don't see why not. If you want a club, start it. Ask a teacher who you think would be interested in coordinating it, and once you do, run with it.

A: If you're interested in a photography club, go and start one. Contact the Principal and set up a meeting. Surely he will accept.

Q: This girl and I have been going out for a month or so. I've already told her that I love her, but the thing is, I haven't technically asked her to be my girlfriend... As much as I want to, I want to make it awesome but I have no idea how to do it. Any ideas?

A: That's tough. Do something meaningful to her, and something you know she'd like. I honestly don't know what to tell you. It's kind of difficult when you don't know the full situation, but you can't go wrong with flowers, candy, and/or a stuffed toy.

A: If you've been dating this girl over a month and she's aware you love her, then perhaps she already thinks she's your girlfriend? If not, simply ask her straight up to be your girlfriend. Or, you want to get creative/romantic, just be sweet about it by taking her on a date.

Q: How do you improve your swag?

A: Don't prove it at all. LOL! Swag is like English. You can always make it better. Be yourself. Like me, I'm myself and people like and know me. People I don't know, know my name, people want to meet me, and they want to be my friends.

Q: I like this guy and I don't know if he likes me back. How do I find out?

A: Easy. If he smiles and looks at you a lot. He can't keep his eyes off of you. Trust me. How do I know? Because this is from a guy's point of view. A lot of times, he will try to hang out and talk with you because he wants to know you more. That's how you know.

Q: My friend knew a girl that liked him but he still went out with her best friend. I'm mad at both of them, but I'm more mad at the guy because I thought he would know better. Do you think I should be friends with him?

A: I think you should. I mean, you can't really help who you like; you know what I mean? I'm sure the girl who liked this guy is sad or hurt because he went out with her best friend, but that's life. It sucks sometimes and you have to roll with the punches. Did it hurt? Yes, but it's in the past. Does it still hurt? Probably. But you can either run from the past or learn from it.

A: If you should be friends with him after all that's happened, you should. You can't help who you like. He may have hurt your friend, but surely it wasn't intentional. Perhaps sit them both down and talk?

Q: Video games are controlling my life. What should I do?

A: Schedule your time and go by that schedule. If it doesn't work, then look at the more important things in life.



Advice

The Christmas Issue

Q: I like this guy, but I don't think he even notices me. What should I do?

Brianna: Aww., I know how it is, but it will be okay. You should do something to get him to notice you. Maybe change your hairstyle or put on a new type of makeup. Also, you should try to talk to him about things you have in common. The fact that you're trying at all will really impress him. Lastly, don't try too hard. Try just enough. You don't want him to get sick of you, and especially you don't want to get hurt. GOOD LUCK. :)

Matthew: Well, coming from a guy's perspective, you have to make yourself known. If he doesn't even have an idea or clue about who you are, how is he going to be interested in you, right? Talk to him, find things in common, and even help him with homework! Guys are totally into girls who make the first move.



Q: What should I do? Modern Warfare 3 is so addicting and it's affecting my grades.

Brianna: Well, letting anything get in between you and your schoolwork is a very bad idea. Will Modern Warfare 3 get you through high school, university, and support your family when/if you have one?! No, it won't. School should be your first priority. Keep playing Modern Warfare 3 *after* you finish your homework. Keep a good work habit and you will be fine. GOOD LUCK. :)

Matthew: First off bro, WHAT ARE YOU DOING PLAYING MODERN WARFARE 3? BATTLEFIELD ALL THE WAY! Nah, just kidding! I understand your situation; I had the same problem when Halo Reach came out. What you want to do is put aside time for your homework. Personally, every day after school, I did my homework *right away*. Yes, it was hard since all of my buddies were online. However, you have to have the self-discipline. When it comes down to it, you have to crunch down.

Q: What elective courses look good on your resume?

Brianna: Not a lot of employers will look at your electives. From what I've experienced, I think you should just do something that interests you. Something that captures your interest, and makes you excited about going to school. You should also consider a course that has a relation to a career field you would be interested in. GOOD LUCK. :)



Q: If you are in IB, do you have to take a summer school course?

Matthew: Yes, you definitely have to take them if you are in Pre-IB. To make room for the additional courses in Grade 10 (Grade 11 University Math), you must get a course done and over with. After grade 9, you have to take Civics & Careers, and after grade 10, Physics. During the summer, you can take the class in school or online, in the case with Civics & Careers. If you have any other questions, you can make a guidance appointment with Ms. Dawson, the IB coordinator. Hope this helps! PS: I am in IB myself





Advice

The Christmas Issue

Q: My friends don't like my boyfriend, and keep complaining about him, but I love him... should I break up with him?

Molly says: Well, your friends should always support you, but if they are telling you something, it must be for a reason. I suggest you weigh out the pros and cons for dating this boy, and if you think he's the one for you and that he makes you happy, you should stay with him. Tell your friends that they should just be happy for you and to not try to ruin something that might make your life really great.

Rick says: Are your friends dating him? No. I think that sums up my answer this pretty well. We're no strangers to love. You know the rules, and so do I. If you love this guy like you say you love this guy, then you must be seeing something that your friends aren't. If they aren't going to support you, then ask them to mind their own business. Hey friends! If you have a legit reason why these two shouldn't be together, speak honestly now or forever hold your peace.

Q: What things can I do to prevent procrastination?

Molly says: Use your agenda! This is why you have it. Schedule your time wisely and give every subject a good amount of time. For instance, when you get home, give yourself an hour to chill, and then get started on your work. If you have a test or assignment due, give that subject more time than others. This will definitely help you complete your homework and I'm pretty sure you'd end up getting better grades, too.

Q: I might be pregnant, what do I do?

Molly says: Girl, first of all you should make sure of something before making assumptions. In situations like these, "might" won't work. Go to a doctor and find out what's going on with you. Then if you find out that you are pregnant go to someone you can trust and count on, someone that will always stay by your side, like your family, and they will help you out and tell you what to do next. They will always know what's best for you.

Rick says: Truth be told, I don't know much about this. However, I've heard rumours of the poster in the girl's bathroom that has information on these things. Go buy a pregnancy test. Talk to the person who got you pregnant; hopefully he'll be supportive of this. A full commitment is what I'm thinking of. You can call 905 791-5905 which is a clinic in Brampton you can call for some help on this. Despite popular opinion, you do have a choice. Good luck!

Rick says: Sometimes when you've got a lot of work to do, it seems all your academic mind wants to do is run around and desert you. Despite this, you need to try and focus. For example, try putting away your computer, leave your phone in another room, and try a quiet spot. If you got to a place where no distractions are provided, you'll be forced to just get done what you need to do. Power through it. It feels so much better to have it done than to be the awkward kid in class who has no idea what's going on.

Q: I've been bullied all my life. How do I tell them to stop?

Molly says: Well, I suggest that you tell an adult, like a teacher or principal. Chances are [that] you're not the only victim of these bullies. Adults will help you. However, if you want to handle this on your own, you should talk to the bullies and stand up to them. I don't mean to fight them. You should talk to them like a smart grown-up and ask them to leave you alone.

Rick says: Listen up, because I'm going to give you advice that you wouldn't get from any other guy. I just want to tell you how I'm feeling about this. You know to try and make you understand. Talk to someone. Seriously. There are many people in and out of school who are there to help you in these situations. You have every right to live as you do without having people bothering you. 1-800-668-6868. Children's Help Phone is there when you need it. They're never going to give you up, or let you down. Be strong!



Interviews

The Christmas Issue

Sammut Speaks High School

By: Samantha Caldeira-Slavec

Mr. Sammut is in the Social Sciences department. He currently teaches World Issues and Geography. As a former Notre Dame Student, we decided to hear what he had to say about his high school experience.

Q: What did you want to be in high school?

A: I wanted to work for the Ministry of Resources or Environment.

Q: What was your favourite subject? Your least favourite?

A: Favourite was Geography, least favourite was Math.

Q: What is your favourite high school memory?

A: Graduation would be one. Lunches in general were awesome because we had 72-minute lunches and played NHL 93 and Sega Genesis at my house, since I lived so close to the school.

Q: Were you involved in any sports or clubs? What are they?

A: Yes, the World Issues.

Q: Did you have a high school nickname?

A: No.

Q: Did you have a favourite teacher? Why was he/she your favourite?

A: It was honestly Mr. Hamilton. I admired his passion for he taught and social justice issues. His room hasn't changed one bit.

Q: Do you have any advice to students at Notre Dame?

A: Make the best out of your high school years, because it could be some of the best years of your life if you choose to make it that way.

Interview With Mr. Gomes

By: Janani

Mr. Gomes, as we all know him, has a lot more behind his wrinkles than you would think.

Birthdate:
March 12th

Sign:
Pisces

Native Country:
Trinidad

School Experience:
He spent his high school years in Trinidad at an all-boys school. He described his experience there as an 'educational' one. He didn't really enjoy school at first though. His favourite subject was and continues to be math. He played no sports during high school but he did play soccer in university. His position was right midfield.

Likes: food, travelling

iPhone or Blackberry:
iPhone

Dogs or Cats:
Dogs

Sunny or Rainy:
Sunny

Favourite Actor:
Sean Connery

Favourite Animal:
Dog

Favourite Artist:
Diana Krall

Favourite Cheese:
Edam cheese

Favourite Colour:
Violet

Favourite Country:
China

Favourite Food
Roti with dal poori and palori

Favourite Holiday:
Christmas

Favourite Season:
Autumn ("because of the beautiful change of colours in the scenery")

Favourite Students:
All of us, as hard as it may be to believe

Favourite TV Show:
Murphy Brown



The Christmas Mural

By: Aafreen Bhandhoal

On November 10th 2011, a masterpiece was born by a group of grade nine students in Brampton. These students were chaperoned by Ms. Chapman and Ms. Cordiero in order to envision a mural depicting Notre Dame's version of the true meaning of Christmas. Michelle Brar was one of the enthusiastic students that participated in the event.

The Mural's name is entitled "The Winter Wonderland"! The grade nines are chosen by their teachers in order to make this wonderful mural. It turned out to be a great success! After this process they made a rough draft of what the mural could potentially look like. However, instead of just choosing one person's design they incorporated everybody's design. The mural had been done previously at Notre Dame, but believe or not, it had only been done once before. Therefore, making this mural the Winter Wonderland, the very second mural to be completed here at Notre Dame. "I guess the expression the third times a charm, is true because this mural transformed into a beautiful work of art," comments Michelle. "The mural was also created in order to get the seasonal cheer flowing" Michelle added. Also, it was a great way indeed, as it "wowed" the minds of the viewers at the display!

The mural was displayed at Chinguacousy Park on Thursday December 1st 2011, from 6-9pm along with other murals from nearby schools. The idea of the mural was to depict different understandings of Christmas from near by school communities. The mural was made for the entertainment of the Brampton society in order to attract the viewers of what the holiday maker means to us students", says Michelle. The mural had beautiful mountains in the background, and a few Christmas trees. Other items included are: people skiing, people making snow angles, people tobogganing, and a few people having a snow fight; as described by Michelle. The idea of the mural was to illustrate the activeness of this festive season and the recreation that takes place. The mural means a lot to the grade 9s; they put their heart and soul into their work and the outcome was favorable. "I believe I would rate the mural a 5 out of 5 stars; I felt I put in a lot of effort into this mural and it also gave me the opportunity to feel as if I were an enthusiastic artist. I found that making this mural was also a great and creative way for me to complete my community hours. I also got a chance to learn about art", says Michelle.

The mural will remain on display till mid January in order to get the holiday joy and spirit flowing throughout our Brampton community. When it comes to Christmas it's only Brampton that knows how to celebrate it right! Merry Christmas Notre Dame!



Culture

The Christmas Issue

ND Students Bring Christmas Cheer

On December 8th 2011, the ND Christmas Concert was held by the Music Department at Notre Dame.

Various choirs and bands performed in the school cafeteria as a way to spread Christmas spirit. Groups such as the grade 9 band, the stage band, chamber choir and Ms Nadal's period four class, launched an excellent musical production in order to celebrate Christmas. Instruments that were played included: the tuba, flute, bass, which made the music come alive.

Ms. Nadal's period four vocal class, who also sing in mass, did a formidable job implementing choreography into their performance.

The groups performed Christmas songs such as: "Happy Birthday Baby Jesus", "Oh Holy Night" and much more. Mr. Hill and Ms. Nadal performed an excellent job directing each group; it took a lot of patience, but all that work paid off. Great job, Notre Dame Students!



Free Food In The Comfort Of Your Own School

By: Lamar Edwards

Notre Dame provides free breakfast between 7:30am - 8:00am at the Breakfast Club. We give away cereal, granola bars, chocolate milk, and more. And the best part is that it's *free!* However, feel free to donate so that can contribute more stuff. It's open every day (unless nobody shows up) in room 102. The Breakfast Club also needs new members. They need people who can show up at school by 7:20am. You can get hours for volunteering. For more information, see Mr. Santarossa.

Nicuargua Warms Up Notre Dame

By: Samantha Caldeira-Slavec

Do you need something delicious and comforting in the morning to start your day or a warm beverage on your lunch? You're in luck! The Nicaragua Social Justice Team is selling hot chocolate for 50 cents (75 cents with marshmallows), in the foyer every Tuesday and Thursday in the morning and on all three lunches. This hot chocolate campaign will support those who have decided to dedicate eleven days living in the Nicaraguan community during March. It will also help fund supplies needed for building projects that students will work on in Nicaragua. Therefore, when you buy hot chocolate, you will be supporting the Nicaragua Social Justice Team, as well as keeping warm with tasty hot cocoa.





The Notre Dame Eco Fair

By: Aafreen Bhandool

On Monday November 21st, 2011, at Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School's cafeteria, an eco-fair took place. This eco-fair takes place annually, and this year, it was run by two environmental club members. One of the participants was Aian Binlayo.



This eco-fair was a fun way to raise awareness amongst our fellow peers and teachers in order to teach us the major effects we have on the environment, and the great impact the environment has on us. This year's fair was also a blasting success for one of the two organizers, Aian Binlayo. Aian is part of the Environmental Club. "The eco-fair was a wonderful success. Almost everyone in the school showed up, and I'm sure we've had an impact on their train of thought on the environment," says Aian. The eco-fair consisted of a variety of informative brochures, games, and videos. The eco-fair supports many causes such as endangered species, saving energy, and saving the flora and fauna of our Mother Earth. A few of the many games that were in the fair were: toss-the-ball, aquarium money, and a quiz. One of the sweet prizes was a Notre Dame water bottle.

If you would like to have a positive influence on the environment, go onto Google and search for causes that you could support. Some examples are Green Peace and Earth Rangers.

"The reason we did this eco-fair was because I knew that Notre Dame was a very passionate school, meaning we did this because we knew that everyone would help out in the environment if they knew what kind of opportunities are out there." This year's fair had the help of the environmental crew and a few causes outside school. The idea was to teach students more about the environment in a fun and educative manner. The whole theme of the fair revolved around making students such as yourself more aware of nature and how you harm it during your day-to-day practices.

The environmental club will continue to raise awareness about the environment, but the question is: are you willing to listen and help? Take the time and try to understand how badly the environment is treated by modern society. Be the one to make a difference. Stand up for the environment and save it from disaster. Because in reality, if the environment goes down, we go down with it.





Fashion

By: Aafreen Bhandaal

The new read and green of 2011 is gold and black. This holiday season, it's all the shimmer, glamour, and pizzazz. Mess up your look a bit! Try something new in order to spice up your closet. Stop wearing your skinny jeans and cute top for every dress down day. Mix and match. Wear something like a long, shimmery golden sweater with net black leggings and a cute scarf. Try adding a hat and a pretty necklace of yours that never gets to be worn because it is too shimmery and "inappropriate" for your outfit. Don't be afraid to experiment. You'll learn what suits you best and what suits you the least. Better to find out now than never. Although winter is the best time to show your fashion sense in that cute jacket of yours, make sure it keeps you warm.

Although it is the best time to update your closet, it also the best time for the flu to get the best of you, so keep warm and continually wash your hands. For all the girls out there, you'd probably want to keep a lip gloss, Vaseline, or lip balm in your pocket. This year is supposed to be colder than last year, so it is mandatory that you do so if you don't want your lips to shrivel up, crack, and probably bleed. The hairstyle of the season is natural hair, as stated in my last issue. Some kids in high school stress themselves out too much. Students are continuously staying up late to get their work done, and as a result, they get dark circles under their eyes. Well, thankfully, I have a trick up my sleeve. A home remedy I use to get rid of those nasty circles is to mix lemon juice and tomato juice and apply it around my eyes.

Trust me, it works instantly, and is better than any eye cream or make-up.

The longer you stay away from make-up, the better it is for your face. In fact, those prestigious make-up name brands which cost a fortune are just a scam. For example, lipstick from an overrated name brand costs about ten to thirty-five dollars. Don't they? Well, in real life, they only cost seventy-five cents to make! Believe it or not, it is a tip-off! Stay away from it! You can wear light make-up like mascara and blush. Heavy makeup should only be worn on special occasions. Remember, the natural look is what's best for your complexion.



Sports

The Christmas Issue

ND Senior Football Knights Take the ROPSSAA Championship

By: Daniel Perez

ND Quarterback Chris Strong passed for three touchdowns with a lacerated finger to lead the Knights to a 28:21 victory over Our Lady of Mount Carmel. This event occurred during the ROPSSAA championship game at Centennial Park on Wednesday, November 16th.

The undefeated champions delivered in front of a very large and boisterous crowd, in an intensely thrilling fashion. The Knights played from behind for most of the game as Mount Carmel jumped to an early 7-0 lead. However, with touchdowns from Chad Manchulenko, Rodney Clark, and Shaq Johnson, as well as three extra points (four in total) from Adrian Whittingam, the stage was set at 21-21 for Tomide Olaniyi to catch the game-winning touchdown for Chris Strong. This occurred with only 1:25 left in the game. When questioned about the victory, team captain Ben Antigyan said that he felt "great" about bringing the trophy back to Notre Dame, and that he was proud of his teammates, especially how they overcame the adversity of this game to grind out the win.



"I would say the defense as a whole deserves the most praise because before the half, we stopped them on the goal line, which was huge," Ben comments when asked about the teammates he believes deserves special honors for their performance. The captain also believes that Rodney (Clark) and Tomide (Olaniyi) "came out to play" with their touchdown receptions, and that Chris and Shaq have been consistently great throughout the season.

This victory marks Notre Dame's first football championship since 2007; as chanted by the screaming fans ambushing the team bus in celebration after the game, "black is back". Both teams have earned the right to participate in the OFSAA Golden Horseshoe Bowl semifinals, which will also be at the Etobicoke Centennial Park on the 24th and the 25th of November. There, the Knights will seek to add even more success to this year's campaign, but this time with the designation of the 2011 ROPSSAA champs.





Dead End Efforts

By: Naomi Farrukh

They tried their best to make it work, but in the end the rumors and the couple's insecurities eventually got the best of their relationship.

Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore were married for six years; they were the perfect example of the expression, "age is just a number," couple, sadly their 15 year age difference may have made an impact on their relationship. About two weeks ago after her 49th birthday, Moore declared a divorce against her husband Ashton Kutcher 33.



This all started when Kutcher was allegedly accused of having an affair with 22 year old Sara Leal. As this rumor was released, problems began to arise between the couple, which is why they ended up going to council. This wasn't of much help.

As the press continuously ragged on Kutcher's unfaithfulness towards Demi, she began to become insecure over the fact that she was much older than him. The couple ultimately grew further and further apart, to the point that they spent their sixth wedding anniversary apart. This finally led to the use of social media sites such as twitter where the couple would indirectly indicate to each other about how they felt about the turmoil in their relationship. To specify, the "two and a half men" star would tweet, "Don't believe the hype," while Moore would reply, "I see right through you".



Tweets like these made headlines and confirmed it to the pair and the world that none of their efforts could bring back the lost love and trust into their marriage. They knew that in the end the fights and gossip would deteriorate and make their marriage completely miserable. This at last drove Demi to file for a divorce against Kutcher, so that they both could live their lives peacefully. It truly is a very sad ending to what could have been a beautiful marriage.



Tina Talks Twitter Trending Topics: #ButYouGotThemJaysTho

Last week, this hashtag spread like wildfire all over the "twitterverse." If you are not accustomed to this phrase, it means that you have enough money to buy expensive shoes called Jays, yet you cannot afford _____ in said tweet. Here are my top ten tweets, in no particular order.

1. **Your baby needs diapers
#ButYouGotThemJaysTho**



2. **You can't afford your pay phone
bill #ButYouGotThemJaysTho**



3. **You're sitting in the dark with no
lights #ButYouGotThemJaysTho**



4. **You say you're trying to save
money #ButYouGotThemJaysTho**



5. **You hold up your pants with a
shoelace #ButYouGotThemJaysTho**

6. **You didn't get your girl a
valentine's day gift
#ButYouGotThemJaysTho**

7. **You make a PB&J sandwich out
of hot dog buns
#ButYouGotThemJaysTho**

8. **You live with your Mom
#ButYouGotThemJaysTho**



9. **You still have a VCR
#ButYouGotThemJaysTho**



10. **You're unemployed
#ButYouGotThemJaysTho**



Short Story: "If Only"

By: *Anonymous*

No words could properly convey the pain I see on her face right now. I can see her struggle within and the tears starting to form in her eyes squeezed shut. She trembles, trying to pretend she isn't engulfed by pain. I want to capture this moment and show it to those that hurt her. It was so much easier to insult the cocky smirk and eyes that were cast heavenward at her impatience. They would never harm the vulnerable soul tucked away in favour of pride.

If only my arms were strong.

I want to reach out to her and give her the hand she desperately needs. I would hold her as she let out her emotions. I would give her a reassuring hug. I would catch her in her world where everything was simply falling apart.

If only my words could console her.

She is quick to defeat anyone in a battle of wits. Only the best-constructed insults cracked at her bitter mask, and they only earned a, "Whatever." She's a master of words. A double-edge sword - I may never be able to convince her of her beauty.

If only I could make her smile.

Anything to see her smile. Her real smile, not the one she plasters on in order to tell her mom she's fine. The grin she gave to the people who pretended to be her friends is always superficial. It doesn't even have to be a big smile. The small, genuine one that radiated among the condescending smirks.

If only I was good enough.



The Back Page

The Christmas Issue

Excellent Novels To Read Over The Holidays!

Check out the library for some great new releases!

1. **The Help!** Everyone loves the movie! Check out the book, it's even better!
2. **Invictus**
3. **Shaq Uncut**
4. **Inheritance**, the 4th novel in the Eragon Series has just arrived!
5. **Biography about Steve Jobs!**

Countless other new titles in non-fiction!

Check it out! It's a great way to relax during the holidays!

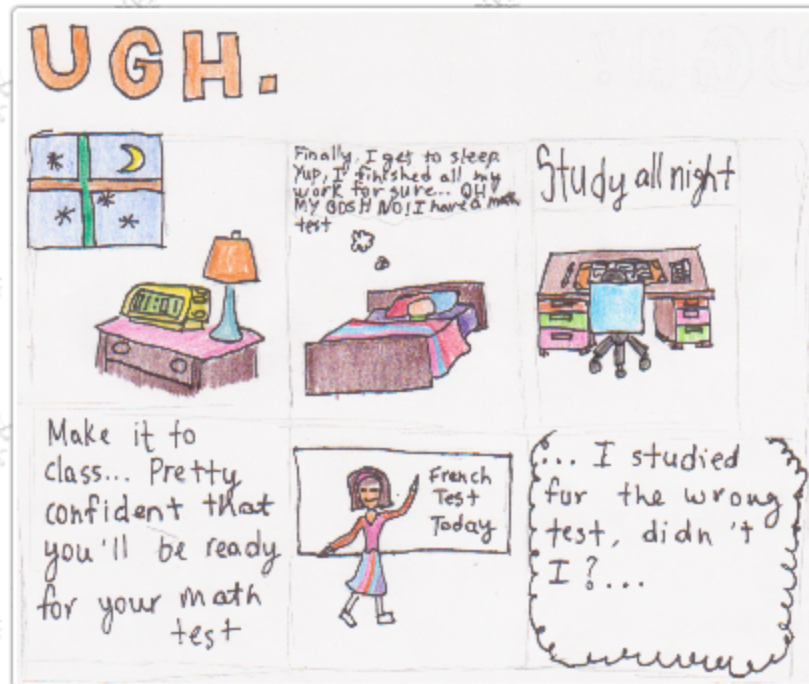


Interesting Facts About Sesame Street

1. Big Bird is not a canary. He's a Golden Condor.
2. All of the Sesame Street Muppets have four fingers - except Cookie Monster, who has five
3. Cookie Monster used to have pointy teeth
4. There have been over 440 celebrity visitors to *Sesame Street*
5. The show title, "Sesame Street", was almost rejected because producers thought it was too hard to pronounce
6. Oscar the Grouch originally had orange fur
7. The end of the first season reached to 7 million views of kids each day
8. Sesame Street has been PBS since 1970
9. A study done in 2001 showed Sesame's Street's effects on reading throughout high school

Comic

By: Shubneet Bharwani



Transcript:

1st Panel: Clock on bedside table says 01:01

2nd Panel: "Finally I get to sleep. Yup, I finished all my work for sure... OH MY GOSH NO! I have a math test"

3rd Panel: Study all night

4th Panel: Make it to class... pretty confident you'll be ready for your math test.

5th Panel: Board says "French Test Today"

6th Panel: "I studied for the wrong test, didn't I?..."