

FOCUS

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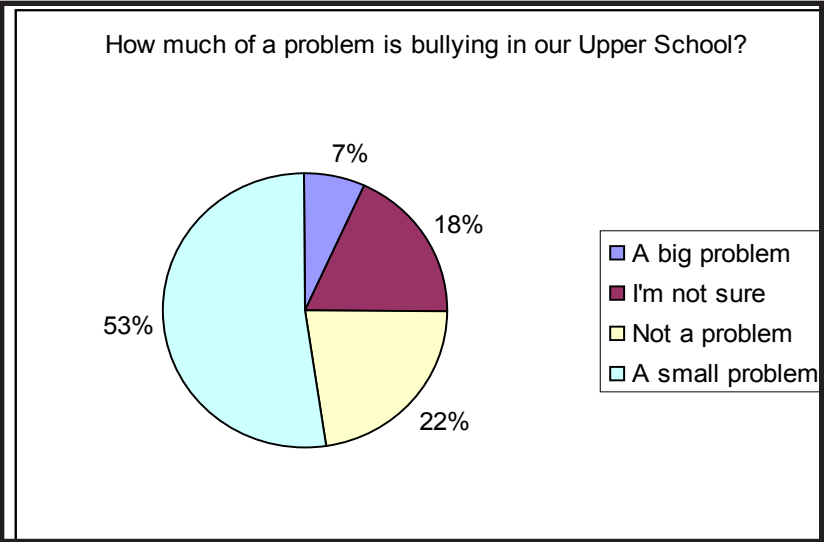
FCS Confronts Bullying

By OLIVER GOODMAN ‘13
and STEFAN SULTAN ‘15

From the graph to the right it is reassuring to know that of the 332 (85% of the Upper School) of Friends’ Central students who took the bullying survey last April, only 7% of them thought bullying to be a major problem in our community. In comparison a national bullying survey found that 68% of students saw bullying as a major problem in their schools. Additionally, 53% of students at FC reported bullying to be a small problem. But what exactly counts as bullying?

Dr. Sternberg, the school psychologist, defines bullying as “behavior that is intended to harm or hurt others. It is when one individual or a group of individuals purposely mistreats another. It can be done directly (to a person), or indirectly (about a person).”

Shockingly enough, many people who took the survey reported that the majority of the bullying they had encountered was happening in the classroom. To see what teachers thought of this, the perspective of grade dean Mr. Buck, as he explained it, is, “I see very little [bullying]. I hear about it often but rarely witness it.” From the perspective of new teacher Ms. Kelleher, “[Friends’ Central] is a pretty respectful school. I’ve been in schools where students were a lot less tolerant.” After journeying through the FC Middle School, Stefan Sultan ‘15 commented, “There was a small amount of bullying in Middle School and it only affected a few students. From what I have seen so far, bullying in high school is almost the same as in Middle School.”



At Friends’ Central we are lucky to be well ahead of the national average in students who say bullying is not a big problem, but how exactly can we bring that 59% of Friends’ Central students who say bullying is a problem (7% big problem, 52% small problem) down to 0%?

- Stefan and I sat down with Dr. Juliet Sternberg and she shared these tips:
- Condemn the bullying behavior/make it “uncool”.
 - Stand up for the person being bullied.
 - If you can’t help the situation, tell an adult.
 - Comfort or reassure the target.

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Students Push Politics

By BEN FOGEL ‘13

While the Mayans predicted that the Earth would end this year, we know for sure that political rhetoric and the material for the likes of Steven Colbert and John Stewart will not be ending any time soon. The recent Republican primaries have drawn a lot of attention, as the Republicans prepare to choose their candidate to face-off against Obama in the 2012 election. Recently, I sent a political survey to the entire Upper School and while the survey had a few surprises, it was fairly consistent with the voting record one might expect from a suburban high school like Friends’ Central.

It might be best to start off talking about demographics. This survey was taken by a total of 139 Upper School students. A little more than half of the people who took the survey were male and with the exception of slightly more responses to the survey from the 11th grade (33%), responses were fairly spread out between the grades (9-12). Students remained neutral on how closely they follow politics. Most students admitted that they only occasionally follow American Politics (27%) while the rest were split with 37% saying they follow politics a good amount or on a regular basis and 36% saying they follow it a little or not at all. Students reported using CNN, NBC and the New York Times for their main source of news (both

television and Internet) while a surprising 19% admitted relying on someone else (whether parents, friends, or other) for their source of news. Not surprisingly, 68% of respondents identified with the Democratic Party, while 19% identifying as Independents, 6% as Republicans and 6% as other (responses ranged from Constitutionist, Libertarian Socialist, Centrist, Neither/None, “i don’t know, haha” and “upset with the American 2 party system”). It is clear that the majority of Friends’ Central has identified as either a Democrat or Liberal. When referring to the 2008 election, an overwhelming 85% of respondents reported supporting Barack Obama, while only 4% supported McCain and the other 11% supported neither or other. This is interesting in contrast to who students say they will support in the upcoming 2012 election. While there is still a little less than 11 months to the election, 70% of students reported already having made up their decision for the election. Three years later, the number of supporters of Barack Obama has decreased by 21%, with only 64% of students reporting support of our current president (with 64% still remaining a majority, the amount is much slimmer). Already in January, 6% of students have decided to support one of the Republican candidates (the same amount of support John

McCain received last year). The remaining 30% of students said they were undecided or supporting another candidate for the 2012 election. Of all these students only 40 (29%) will be eligible to vote, with most of them saying they will vote. Students were then asked to rate Barack Obama’s performance as president on a scale from 1-10 (with 1 being extreme disappointment and 10 being exceeded expectations). For this question, the most common rating was a 7, with 31% choosing 7. The median of this data set was a 6 rating, but 30% of respondents gave Barack Obama a 5 rating or worse. Out of the Republican candidates, 33% of students said they would support Mitt Romney, 19% for Ron Paul, 12% for Jon Huntsman, with Newt Gingrich, Rick Santorum and Rick Perry, Michelle Bachman, Buddy Roemer and Gary Johnson, rounding out the pack in that order. There are still 11 months until the election, and the Republican parties have seen their fair share of diverse candidates. From Herman Cain to Michelle Bachmann, to the Anybody-But-Romney vote (literally, everybody but Romney), the Republican voters are still split on which candidate they support. With Romney winning Iowa and New Hampshire, he aspires for winning the nomination, but who knows, there’s still time left and Vermin Supreme and Stephen Colbert have just announced their candidacy for this race.❖

Model UNderstood

By CHIARA NEILSON ‘14

Are you hungry for history? For heated debates? For meeting new people? Then Model UN packs in just the right amount of flavor for you. Model UN is a “simulation of what the United Nations does....Clubs, colleges, and high schools run them all over the world,” Mr. Nicolai told me with excitement pouring out of every word. He is the head of the program here at FCS. In fact, he said that when “I came to this school in 1984, I brought Model UN with me.” Mr. Nic did Model UN at his own high school and even in college. His love and passion for it has not changed; it might have even grown. “I feel that it is very important for kids to learn the goals and aims of the United Nations. People have to work together, not tear each other apart.” Mr. Nic really pinpointed an important part of students’ education: learning how to work together. “You have to be able to talk; its not just knowing history,... it’s about how you relate to people,” he told me simply.

There are over 2500 high school students from around the world who participate in the particular Model UN conference our school attends. It is held by the University of Pennsylvania and took place just this past weekend in Philadelphia. This year our team, comprised of 19 dele-

gates, argued points from the position of South Korea. The team’s job was to study the country’s viewpoints on certain issues and eventually present them to the conference for three days and three nights. The goal is to try and compromise with other “countries” or schools. Mr. Nic mentioned that the meetings can go late into the night; and so for three full days the Model UN team was completely engulfed in the conference. One of the seniors on the team, Bill Fedullo, remarked, “I don’t like winning itself. I won this past year, but I was actually really surprised by that...I like the adrenaline. A conference is seriously incredibly exciting.”

The tension and excitement builds as delegates begin the long process of compromising with other countries on issues that they have spent a lot of time researching in order to accurately represent their nation’s viewpoint. Does Mr. Nic think that this years’ team was successful? “Some schools are into it for the winning...the recognition. It is very competitive. This is hard for me because I want them to learn and care about other people and their ideas (not focus on the awards). And to learn the goals of the United Nations, brotherhood and peace, and what the United

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From **Bullying** on Page 1

- Distract from the bullying behavior.
- Be sure not to participate.

Another potential solution would be a school-wide honor code. A Friends’ Central honor code would act as a blue print on how students should deal with delicate situations such as: bullying, cheating, stealing, and other disruptions throughout our community. There is a new club devoted to the honor code called, The Honor Code Committee. Their job is explore other schools’ honor codes and to eventually draft our own. The honor code is planned to go into effect next school year. We look forward to what Friends’ Central’s Honor Code has to offer and encourage you all to do the same.

FC is leading the way for lack of extreme bullying, but there is still some of it going on in our community. Please do your part to ensure that the next time the Friends’ Central Census rolls around, the bullying survey reports 0%. ❖

Enriched by Ms. Richman

By ANNA SORENSEN ‘15

Sally Richman, the newly appointed interim Upper School office secretary, will be occupying the office until March 2012. Although this is her first time in the Upper School office, she has been a substitute at the Lower, Middle and Upper schools for years. When her daughter Emma Richman ‘10 started at Friends’ Central in first grade, Ms. Richman fell in love with the community and as she explains, “the wonderful atmosphere.” She likes working here because she can see all the teachers and people again since Emma is now in college. Ms. Richman loves being in the office, and can’t think of anything better than helping people all day, every day. “It’s great! I love it!” ❖



Hot Fashions in Cold Weather

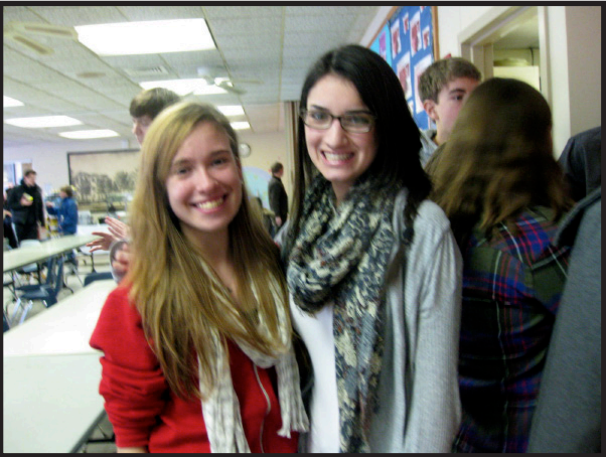
By ARYANNA POLLACK ‘15
and HANNAH KAMINSKY ‘15

“It’s a new era in fashion - there are no rules. It’s all about the individual and personal style.” - Alexander McQueen.

At Friends’ Central there is no shortage of people expressing themselves through fashion. We have seen many different trends, being interpreted in many different ways, throughout the Friends’ Central community, and we love the way that anyone can add his/her own touch to any outfit. We have noticed several trends racing through our community, and we have broken them down for you.

1) Scarves

This season scarfs have been really popular. There are many different types of scarves, but the newest and the most popular this winter is the infinity scarf, or the circle scarf. Basically, the scarf is a circle that you loop over twice to create a very comfortable yet stylish look. Person-



ally, we love this trend and have seen a lot of people around Friends’ Central wearing the infinity scarf.

2) Boots

There are many different types of boots that are in this season, such as Combat boots, Riding boots and the classic Ugg boot. Recently, we have noticed people at FCS peaking a little bit of their leg warmers or high socks out of their boots. This adds a very cute touch to the outfit and make you look more put together. On those cold winter days when you want to be cozy and cute at the same time, Uggs are perfect! They are lined with soft sheep skin to keep your feet warm, but still compliment your outfit.



3) Trench Coats

Trench coats have become very popular this season, because they give a very classic and polished look. We have seen many girls as well

as boys wearing this jacket at Friends’ Central. A great thing about trench coats is that you have the ability to either dress it down, by wearing jeans and boots, or dress it up by throwing it over a dress. As well as looking cute, the jacket keeps you very warm for the winter or the cooler days in the fall or spring.

4) Feather Earrings

Feather earrings are basically colorful thin or thick feathers that are put on an earring for a care-free and bohemian vibe to your look. If you don’t feel like having a feather hair extension sewn or clipped into your hair, instead you can just wear these earrings to create the illusion that you have one in. It is a great way to spice up any outfit, and personally we love this look.



5) Sweaters

Loose wool sweaters are in! The hot garment goes along with the crop-top trend, and looks really cute with a comfy pair of boots. There are many different types of sweaters with different details, such as having rips down the back. Sweaters are perfect for those snowy winter days when you want to look cute, comfortable, and warm all at the same time. We both love this trend, not only because its functional but also is very trendy. ❖

Part Time Jobs for Full Time Students

By SAOIRSE HAHN ‘15

Though it may come as a shock, many FCS students are bringing home the bacon with part time jobs during the year. Often, working teenagers go unrecognized for the copious amounts of time they put in to both of their jobs, as an employee and as a student. Throughout the entire Upper School, there are interesting kids with even more interesting jobs. *Focus* has taken the liberty to talk to a few of them about life as a working student.

Emilia Weinberg (‘14) currently works part time at Styche, a women’s boutique in Ardmore. She has had the job for over a year and a half, and does everything from helping customers, to working the register, to restocking racks. Emilia really enjoys working at a clothing store because she has “always been interested in clothes”, and now she gets to work first hand with them every Sunday. One of the drawbacks of the job, she says, is that since it is a store for older women, Emilia explained “working with adults as a teenager can be intimidating and difficult.” As a working student, Emilia says that her five hour work days every Sunday does not seem to take too much of a toll on her life as a student, although “getting all of my work done in time can be a struggle.”



Another student, Meghan Cartafalsa (‘12) works three days a week for the Philadelphia Union soccer team as sales associate in the apparel shop. It was no surprise that this soccer playing senior would want to score a job working for one of her favorite teams. Meghan has had the job for around 3 years, working mostly in the fall and spring when the stadiums are packed. When asked about the perks of the job (besides the cash, of course), Meghan said that she “gets to meet the players and goes to the games for free,” no doubt a dream for a soccer fan. *Focus*



was interested to know if the long, eight-hour workdays affect her academic or social life to any extent. Meghan replied that “getting my work done is never too much of a problem, and I only really miss out with my friends on Saturdays, but I work with a lot of people with whom I’ve become very close.”

Of all of the jobs you see kids having these days, working at a veterinary clinic is not one you hear about very often. Sarah Katznelson (‘14) has recently started experiencing what it’s like to be a vet at the Aston Veterinary Hospital. Though many of us (when we were seven, at least) claimed to want to be a vet, Sarah the few kids actually meant ing Saturdays, pm, Sarah gets to learn firsthand what comes with being a veterinarian. She does everything from cleaning the kennels, feeding the dogs, and sitting in on appointments with patients. Sarah says that the job “gives me an inside view of how a vet clinic works, so I can see if this is a career I may want to pursue.”



Finishing off our line up, Jesse Cooperman (‘12) has been working as a food runner at Gullifty’s Restaurant for roughly two years. Jesse explains that the biggest reason behind him getting a job is the “sense of independence; I didn’t want to have to rely on my parents for money.” However, it is no coincidence that he ended up in a restaurant. Jesse says that he has “always been very interested in food and the restaurant business” and what better way to experience it than a behind the scenes look. Working roughly seven hour weekends, although the timing can be tricky, Jesse explains that “it doesn’t affect my school work at all, I have plenty of time to get all of my work done while working at Gullifty’s.” Unlike many students at FCS, Jesse also volunteers as an EMT observer for Radnor Township. He explains the job as “scary at times, but it’s a great and gratifying way to gain experience.”



Jonathan Adler Heads to the Mountains

By NOAH SILVESTRY ‘15

You may know him for his astounding musical talent, or you may have simply heard of his nickname, “Sharkey.” What you may not know about Jonathan Adler is that he will be leaving Friends’ Central for the rest of the school year to pursue an interesting opportunity. Jon is going to The Mountain School, and not for the reasons you might expect. The Mountain School is a one semester program for high school juniors only. It is an outdoors-oriented program with rigorous academics as well. Jon will be living on a working farm that is the source of all his meals. In addition, students at The Mountain School will be going on weekly hikes, taking a 3-day solo camping trip, and doing some maple sugaring in March. Academically, Jon will be taking a unique environmental sciences course, which is the main difference from FCS in terms of his classes. Jon, a talented member of our instrumental ensembles, won’t be focusing as intensely on music during his time at The Mountain School, although there is a piano on the campus that students are free to play. It is common for students there to give performances during coffee houses on the

weekends, so Jon won’t be completely deprived of music while he’s gone. The student body at The Mountain School is quite small, consisting of around 45 students, so there is a very tight-knit community. Jon is excited to enjoy the smaller, more intimate community at the Mountain School. It was Jon’s uncle who originally informed him of The Mountain School, as he runs the maple sugaring program there. Jon had visited the school a few years ago, was struck by his surroundings, and began to consider applying for the program. “The Mountain School seemed like a very unique opportunity for me to experience this in a place where everyone is new and mostly everyone is trying things they’ve never done before.”



Pranks on a Plane

By OLIVER GOODMAN ‘13

Every year from December 26 to December 31, Friends’ Central Aquatics trains with Germantown Academy in Orlando, Florida. This was my first year on FCA’s training trip and from what I heard of the brutal 3 hour 6am practice followed by an impossible 2 hour practice, I knew I would have to bring along some pranks if I wanted to make it home alive. After 28 hours of swimming and somehow surviving what I have now declared to be the hardest days of my life, I was amazed that I even made it back on the airplane and in a mere two hours I would be home, safe, in my cozy townhouse on the outskirts of Central-Philadelphia. Best of all, I would not have to wake-up to a swim practice every couple hours. Of course while in Florida I had pulled some small pranks. I had Jell-Oed Marielle’s goggles, I had dropped water balloons in Germantown Academy’s lanes (so strange shapes and colors appeared to be floating around the pool), and I had even hidden rubber snakes and frogs in the carry-on compartments on the plane ride down. However, none of these would compare to my final masterpiece. I summoned my remaining strength, reached up, and pressed the flight attendant button. A woman with short, dirty blond hair came over to me and smiled, “Good evening, what can I help you with?” I glanced at Allegra Armstrong and smiled back at the flight attendant, “We’re traveling with our swim team and today is our coach’s birthday.”



Alumni Athletes

By DANIEL YAHALOMI ‘14

Friends’ Central has always taken pride in building strong student-athletes. FCS alumni Olivia Gillison ‘10 and Daniel Segall ‘11 are two great examples of student-athletes who after graduating from Friends’ Central continue to work hard at dual passions - academics and sports. I had the opportunity to speak to both of them and ask them about their experience of being a college athlete, the differences between college and high school sports, and how FCS prepared them for college athletics.

Olivia Gillison, a sophomore at Ohio Wesleyan University, swims for their varsity Division 3 program. Olivia, who is the Friends’ League record holder in the 200 medley relay, 100 freestyle, 200 freestyle relay, and 400 freestyle relay, is continuing to make a big impact in the pool at the collegiate level. She has swam the fastest 50 freestyle on her team so far this year.*



Olivia told me, “Being a division three college athlete is a lot like playing sports at FCS, in that you still have time to succeed academically and join other clubs/organizations. I have found that most of the coaches want to push you to do well in your sport but they also understand that you choose division three because you want to put academics first. In my time here, the biggest difference is being responsible for your own success. No one is going to insist that you come to practice on time or try 100% at practice, but you’ll also find that you may not get put on the A line if you don’t. While I do

believe that FCS is a nurturing place, sometimes it can be too nurturing for what the semi-real world, college, is about. But the better side to that is that college prepares you for the actual real world. Overall though, FCS does a great job at preparing you for making the decision on whether or not you want to continue your athletic career in any division of sports for college. Personally, my first year was rough due to an injury but this year has been much more enjoyable and positive after having surgery. I don’t think I can say that I would want to change any of the decisions that I’ve made.”

Daniel Segall was a star runner at Friends’ Central. He graduated with 12 varsity letters and a host of accomplishments including 7 Time All Friends’ League 1st Team, 2 Time Honorable Mention, 2nd Team All State Cross Country, School Record Holder in various relays (4x800, DMR, 4x1600). Daniel is now a freshman at Wake Forest University.

In speaking about what it means to be a college athlete, Daniel told me, “My brief experience with college sports has given me a new found respect for the term “student athlete”. Sports, at the D1 level, in college can be all-consuming, turning sometimes into a daily grind of waking up, practicing, eating, going to class, practicing again, doing homework, then sleeping; leaving very little time for socialization except amongst one’s own teammates. To me though, the most important distinguishing aspect between college and high school sports is the sense of family that permeates the team atmosphere. Even in my one semester I’ve seen teammates come and go, either from the team, or from the school entirely, all for various reasons. Regardless of where one is currently or where one ends up, however, the fact remains that if you were once on the team, you will always be on the team, and you are as much a part of the family as anyone else. Though I think Friends’ Central prepared me well to handle the physical and mental challenges associated with college athletics, that does not mean that the transition between both levels is an easy one, regardless of one’s level of athletic achievement in high

school. That’s because college is a fresh start to a new chapter in your life, and sports is no exception. No one in college cares what you did in high school; indeed, many a high school athlete who were once big fishes in small ponds, so to speak, typically find themselves overwhelmed in a much larger ocean at the start of their college career. Many can buckle under this pressure, and it takes commitment and passion beyond anything you’ve likely ever done in high school to not only stay on the team, but to excel. At the end of the day though, being a collegiate athlete, regardless of whether it’s at DI, DII or DIII level, is a source of pride. For most it is the last vestige of organized sports in one’s life before reaching adulthood, as very few collegiate athletes do in fact go on to become professional ones. As such, one displays one’s team issued gear proudly whenever they wear it, and when they’re on the field/court/track, they give it their absolute best because they know every single one of their teammates are doing the exact same thing, not only because they have to, but because they want to, because they need to.”



Olivia and Daniel are representing Friends’ Central well in the class, in the pool, and on the the track. We wish them continued success.

**<http://www.collegeswimming.com/team/409/mod/teamtimes> ♦*

Phoenix in the Fast Lane

By ISABEL NARDI ‘14



Maria Conyers-Jordan

If you walk into a Varsity Girls’ basketball game at Friends’ Central, your eyes will immediately be drawn to the bright blue shoes of Maria Conyers-Jordan. However, that is not the only thing that will grab your attention about her. Maria’s ball skills are just as noticeable as her shoes. “Her ability to handle the ball, pull up for the jump shot, attack the basket, defend, and rebound are quite impressive.” FCS Varsity Girls’ Basketball Coach, Phil Annas compliments Maria. He also added, “I have never seen a player improve more within two years then I have with Maria.” Maria’s hard work in the summer

and off-season has paid off tremendously making her one of the team’s captains for the 2011-2012 basketball season. “Maria is a great leader and brings so much energy to practice everyday. She also has a knack for creating her own shot”, says fellow captain Meghan Cartafalsa. So far the girls are playing well and are currently undefeated in the league. This is in large part because of the great play of Maria. Maria has been a huge asset to the team this season and thankfully we will have her as part of the team next year too. ♦

Meet McConnell

By EMMA XU '14

As everyone should know, Ms.McConnell is the Women’s Athletic Director for our school. I had the opportunity to interview her and get to know the woman outside of our beloved sports teams.

Focus: What is your favorite kind of music?

Ms McConnell: I like to listen to VOXPN or 88.5 on the radio. They often introduce singers and songs that are more obscure. I like to listen to new groups and people. I used to be a big fan of country music, but right now I like a lot of different kinds of music. I sing in my church choir. I love doing that. I also enjoy the school concerts every year. The different vocal groups in school are really fun, too.

FC: What kind of books do you like?

M: I like to read historical novels. I am now read-

ing *Unbroken* by Hillenbrand. It’s about a pilot who was captured in WWII and stayed in a Japanese POW camp. He was a former athlete in the Olympics.

FC: Have you read any books like *Harry Potter* or *Twilight*?

M: I never liked them. I tried to read *Harry Potter* once, and I wasn’t surprised that I didn’t like it.

FC: What kind of movies do you like best?

M: I like a mixture of movies. I don’t like stand up comedies such as *Mr. Bean*. I like to laugh more spontaneously. I don’t like Sci-fi movies at all. I am looking forward to the new movie called *Iron Lady*, which is about Margaret Thatcher, the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Yep, I like historical movies. ❖



From **Pranks** on Page 3

She lit up, and handed me a napkin.

“Oh!” She exclaimed, “I know just what to do! Will you write down your coach’s name on this napkin?”

Holding in my giggles, I scribbled down, “Happy birthday, Coach Anderson, Love, Friends’ Central Aquatics.” I handed the flight attendant the napkin, faced towards the window and cranked up Hoodie Allen on my iPod.

After about half an hour we began to experience some turbulence, and I was sure we were going down. I seriously feared I would not live to see my prank through. I watched as the flight attendant crept up to the front of the plane and suddenly the lights in the cabin shut off. Her warm voice cracked

over the loudspeaker, “Good evening folks it seems we have a...”

and she paused. I waited to hear “problem,” but instead she screamed, “a birthday! Coach Anderson? Where is Coach Anderson?”

Two-hundred heads turned towards the back of the plane to see a very confused man raising his hand. The flight attendant had the entire plane sing a very monotone *Happy Birthday Coach Anderson* as each passenger flicked his or her cabin lights as to simulate birthday candles, all the while Allegra, Jerry, and I were laughing uncontrollably.

Coach’s birthday isn’t until February.



From **Model UN** on Page 2

Nations strives to do for our world.” This hardworking Model UN team did in fact make an impact at this years conference. It was Maya Rosenberg’s first year at the conference and she came back very excited: “Model UN was an extremely unique experience and one of the coolest experiences of my life. I will always remember my first conference, and I can’t wait to participate again next year.” ❖

SPIRIT WEEK
GO FCS!!!

HAVE FUN SOLVING THIS WORD SEARCH!!!

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 - quake
 - friendscentral
 - shimada
 - wood
 - blackburn
 - FCC
 - focus
 - yearbook
 - cityave

Bakers in the Kitchen

By EMILIA WEINBERG ‘14

Jake Bessen



For those of us who have gotten the opportunity to eat at Chef Marc Vetri’s Osteria we ate a fantastic meal and then went home, never once, unless we were lucky, getting the chance to talk to the chef himself. This was not the case for Jake Bessen ‘13. “I began talking to Chef Vetri about food, and he offered me an internship or as it’s known in the food world, “stage” (pronounced sta-juh).” Jake has secured his spot in the restaurant by working hard. “The way hiring in a restaurant works you give the person increasingly more re-

sponsibility until they either fail or prove themselves to be a successful member. Chef expected for me, like any other new employee, to fail. So I worked hard every night, for 11 hours at a time, never sitting down, getting yelled at.” It is hard not to be impressed by Jake’s passion for what he does. Luckily his dedication does not go unnoticed. He was lucky enough to have a salad of his own creation featured on Osteria’s menu for a day. If you ever have the chance to eat some of Jake’s food, I would definitely take it! ❖

Tara Wolfson

I always believe in the saying “go hard or go home” when it comes to baking.” This is certainly the case for Tara Wolfson ‘13, whose baking is well-known throughout the Friends’ Central community. Tara started baking at age 4 and returned to the hobby during her freshman year. “[I] noticed no one really had lockers to decorate for birthdays, so I figured I would bake for them... I could never settle to give brownies from a mix for a friend’s birthday.” Now, along with starting the Baking Club this year, her baked goods are also sold during fundraisers around campus. Though Tara considers baking to be a hobby, she also finds it to be a good stress reliever and source of fun. “I can’t quite say I have a favor-

ite thing to bake but one of my biggest ‘crowd pleasers’ seems to be my famous ‘s’mores bars’. Next time you are at a bake-sale, keep an eye out for Tara’s work! ❖



Rushin’

By NOAH SNYDER ‘15

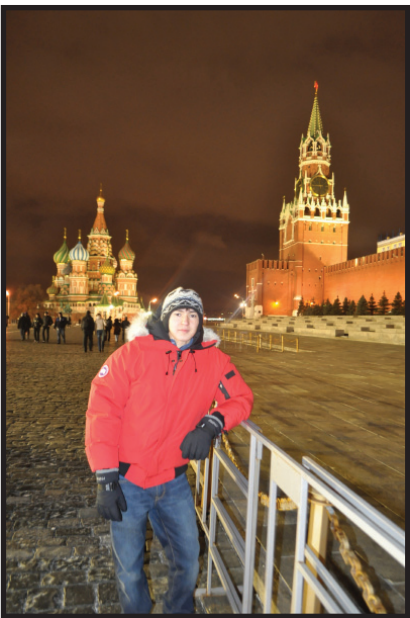
Eleventh grade student Bobir Atakhanov is living in Philadelphia with his uncle Sharaf who graduated from Friends’ Central in 1999. Bobir lives in Russia and went back to visit over the winter holidays. The following are his observations, reported by Noah Snyder, about the current political scene there.

Things are really heating up in Russia. The Russian presidential elections are coming up this spring, and the announcement of Vladimir Putin running for a third, non-consecutive presidency has sent the Russian public into turmoil. Many people in Russia are frustrated by Putin’s announcement, but Bobir Atakhanov’13 is excited about it. Bobir thinks that Putin is the only man for the job, and wonders why anyone wouldn’t want him as president. When we asked Bobir about the public’s apparent dislike of Putin, Bobir responded, “No no, People like Putin”.

Despite Putin’s very strict past presidency, he was able to see the Russian economy through the global recession and he was able to even invigorate the economy. Even when Putin was forced to step down from his presidency in the 2008 elections, he was still elected as the Prime Minister. Although Putin’s party still holds the majority vote, they hold it at only a slight margin. The current president, Dmitry Medvedev, is closely linked to Putin, and although he is more lenient, he does not have the same charisma as Putin. Many people in Russia

speculate that although Dmitry is president, it still feels as though Putin is in charge.

The protests against Putin build up every day, with tens of thousands gathering in Moscow to protest. Other political parties in Russia, such as the Communist Party, have been gaining support,



diminishing the power of the United Russia Party, and thus, the power of Putin. Although Putin has upset many people with his choice, the question is, does the majority of Russia still like Putin? ❖

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