

COLUMBIA SPECTATOR

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INSIDE



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Blood and music take to a whole new stage

The Columbia Musical Theatre Society presents its production of *Little Shop of Horrors*, and new challenges for the group make it an exciting experience.

A&E, page 6

Dancing with the Zamana stars

Club Zamana will present its annual cultural showcase, Tamasha, this weekend. It will include numerous performances from the best South Asian dance groups.

Opinion, page 4

Negative action

Columbian Chris Morris-Lent challenges conventional conceptions of diversity in the first installment of his two-part series on affirmative action.



Sports, page 8

CU alum DiCrescenzo heads to Jordan

Delilah DiCrescenzo, CC '05, will head to Amman, Jordan to compete in an international cross country competition as a part of the US national team.



Sports, page 8

Princeton looks to repeat as Ivy champs

As last year's Ivy League softball champion, Princeton will have to fend off tough rivals Cornell and Harvard during conference play, which begins this weekend.

ONLINE

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Lila Neiswanger / Senior Staff Photographer

CRAWLING ALONG | The M96 bus, which runs between the Upper East and Upper West Sides along 96th street, was given the "Pokey" award for being the slowest bus in the city.

M96 voted slowest bus in city

BY AARON KIERSH
Spectator Staff Writer

New Yorkers looking for a quick ride to 96th Street on the Upper East Side might consider crossing Central Park by foot.

The M96 bus, which runs between the Upper East and Upper West Sides along 96th Street, recently received its second "Pokey" award since 2002, designating it New York City's slowest bus. It runs an average of 3.7 miles per hour—barely

faster than the 3-mile-per-hour pace of the average pedestrian.

Two transit advocacy groups, the Straphangers Campaign and Transportation Alternatives, gave the award jointly in November. Since then, local residents and politicians have put pressure on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the city's Department of Transportation to speed up the route. But commuters are frustrated as the pace of reviewing proposed

SEE BUS, page 3

MTA approves fare hike, service cuts

BY MAGGIE ASTOR
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Columbians and New Yorkers across the city who rely on public transportation will soon feel their pockets pinched due to what has been termed a "doomsday" combination of a fare hike and service cuts.



Photo illustration by Angela Radulescu

On Wednesday morning, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's proposal to raise subway and bus fares cleared its final hurdle when the executive board approved the plan by a vote of 12-1. Starting May 31, the base fare will increase to \$2.50 from \$2, though it will maintain a 15 percent bonus structure. The cost of monthly unlimited-ride MetroCards will increase to \$103 from \$81, biweeklies to \$59 from \$47, and weeklies to \$31 from \$25. The hikes range from 24 to 27 percent.

Additionally, a series of service cuts—including the elimination of several subway and bus lines and the reduction of service on others—will likely be implemented, and more than 1000 transit workers may be laid off.

Local riders reacted with a mix of outrage and reluctant acceptance. "They have to get money from somewhere, but I'm obviously not happy about it," commuter Susan Cergol said while waiting for the downtown 1-train at the 110th Street station.

SEE FARE HIKES, page 2

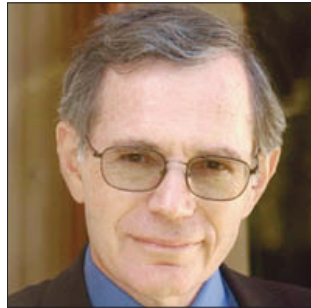
ROOMING WITH THE STARS



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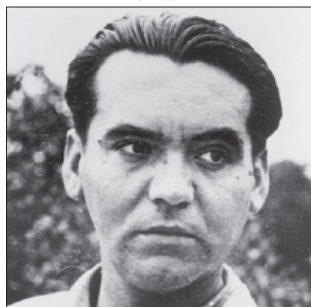
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HOUSING WITH THE STARS | At day's end, students retreat to their dorms, seldom giving a thought to who may have lived there in years past. Dozens of dignitaries—Olympians, musicians, comedians, and Hollywood celebrities alike—once roamed the halls of Columbia dormitories when they were students. From pundit George Stephanopoulos, to musician Art Garfunkel, to actress Julia Stiles, many residence halls on campus have housed Columbia legends. Many of these alumni have reflected on their experiences in their respective residential halls, boasting of the magnificent views of New York City. In *Poeta in New York*, Spanish writer and civil war figure Federico Garcia Lorca, wrote, "My room in John Jay is wonderful. It is on the twelfth floor of the dormitory, and I can see all the university buildings, the Hudson River, and a distant vista of white and pink skyscrapers." Maybe you sleep in his bed.

Larger CC small part of money-saving plans

Enrollment increase coupled with faculty wage freeze, 10 percent Ph.D. cut

BY JOY RESMOVITS
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Increased enrollment in Columbia College is just a drop in the bucket of money-saving initiatives, which also include a 10-percent decrease in the number of Ph.D. students and a faculty wage freeze.

"A couple million here, a couple million there, pretty soon we're talking about real money," Vice President for Arts and Sciences Nicholas Dirks said, referring to the University's budget-constraining measures across the board. He described the recently announced increase of 50 students to the College's class of 2013 as "just a blip" with few drastic effects. For Core classes, he said, sections won't need to be added, since at the moment, many aren't filled to their caps.

The overall strategy for cuts seems to be boosting the money making opportunities—such as potentially expanding the Post-Baccalaureate program and filling the dormitories for summer classes—while pulling back on more expensive initiatives.

Dirks added that funds are limited to begin with. In late January, when University President

Lee Bollinger announced portfolio losses of 15 percent over the six-month period ending Dec. 31, 2008, he called for an eight percent decrease in endowment payout across all budget units. Bollinger referred to "hard choices in the months ahead," and Provost Alan Brinkley said in an interview that he hoped to save money without causing "irrevocable damage."

Until now, known measures have been a hiring review board, a delay in the implementing of CourseWork's successor Sakai, and the postponing of faculty hiring searches. On Monday evening, Student Affairs Dean and Vice President for Student Life Kevin Shollenberger e-mailed students about the enrollment increase and the availability of Harmony Hall in General Selection for College and Engineering students.

Dirks revealed on Wednesday that the number of Ph.D. students, who are enrolled in the costly, fully-funded programs, would be cut down by 10 percent. Further, since American universities are reeling from the financial crisis, it would be tougher for Ph.D. students to find jobs. The reduction of graduate students will free up the space in Harmony

SEE ENROLLMENT, page 2

Top lottery recipient may not dorm in Morningside

BY KIM KIRSCHENBAUM
Spectator Staff Writer

To most students, receiving the coveted top number in Columbia's housing lottery would be a dream come true. To Flannery Gallagher, CC '11 and this year's lucky recipient, it's trivial. She most likely won't need to participate in room selection for Columbia's dormitories—her room next fall will probably be thousands of miles away in Cape Town, South Africa.

"The fact that I got one and I'm studying abroad is so absurd that it's almost funny," Gallagher said. When lottery numbers for Columbia's housing selection were posted yesterday afternoon, Gallagher said she was "idly looking at the housing page and not really focusing on it." She noticed her lottery number was one, and she mentioned it casually to her mom during a phone conversation, assuming it was a mistake. It wasn't until she took a better look after getting off the phone that she realized she was in fact the student with the first lottery number.

But Gallagher will likely not be relishing in the glory of making Columbia's first housing pick, provided that she is accepted to a



Courtesy of Facebook

KEATING MCKEAN

study abroad program. If she hears about her acceptance before her room selection appointment, she can cancel her time, but if she does not hear until after the selection process, she will have to choose a room and can later relinquish it.

Gallagher was required to register for housing, as Columbia Housing protocol requires that students planning to study abroad during the fall semester still register, stating their intent to study abroad.

As a study abroad student,

SEE HOUSING, page 3

Candidate for DA speaks on criminal justice

BY SCOTT LEVI
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

When law school graduate Leslie Crocker Snyder walked into the New York branch of the United States Attorney's Office—a place dominated in the 1960s by white men in suits—recruiters informed her that for employment in the criminal division, she would need her husband's permission.

While Snyder managed to acquire male consent—and the post—she found this discrimination would be a motif throughout her career in the public sector, influencing her tenure as assistant district attorney in Manhattan, a criminal court judge, and a justice of the state Court of Claims.

"A lot of amusing things have happened in my career, but also a lot of serious things," Snyder told a room of about 30 students at an event Wednesday evening organized by the Columbia

College Democrats. Snyder, the first woman to try homicide and other felony cases in Manhattan, made a stop on her campaign to be the borough's district attorney to discuss her trailblazing career and her plans for reshaping the DA's office.

In the ongoing economic downturn, she offered a grim image of the city's criminal landscape. "Anecdotally, walking the streets, taking the subways, things are worse now than they have been in the past few years," she said.

Snyder was drawn to the position of district attorney when she began thinking up remedies to what she saw as inefficiencies in Manhattan's chief legal authority. Her first bid for DA in 2005 resulted in defeat by incumbent Robert Morgenthau, who has presided over the office since 1975. She again competes with men in the 2009 election,

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Enrollment increase long in the making

ENROLLMENT from front page

Hall, currently occupied by law and statistics students.

Dirks estimated that the enrollment increase will bring in about \$1 million after costs, including Harmony renovations, are adjusted. He stressed that the admissions of the additional students will be need-blind, adding that there is no news yet on a tuition increase. In order to support increasing aid needs, Barnard has raised tuition for next year by three percent.

Since Shollenberger sent his message, several points have been clarified. The enrollment increase will also require the creation of two Resident Advisor positions and one Graduate Assistant position in Harmony Hall. Twenty-five sophomore Furnald beds will be turned over to first-years. The number of additional transfers is still unknown.

Although Shollenberger mentioned in his e-mail that one goal of the growth is to “address our budgetary concerns,” planning for increases has been in the works for years, Dirks said. The Task Force on Undergraduate Education has been modeling potential increases of ten, 15, and 20 percent.

According to Dirks, Bollinger has wanted the College, historically known as a small Ivy, to be on a trajectory towards gradual increases. One plan saw a larger increase over five years, pending the construction of a new dormitory. Dirks said the University found a site, but was unable to raise the gifts for the dormitory. “It’s a long-term possibility is all I would say at this point,” he said. “Given the historical size of the College it would be within line in trying to get there within 15 years.”

So why 50, why now? “We just

had to project where and how we would bring in a certain number of students that would impact on the academic quality,” Dirks said.

The planning effort was recalibrated as the economic downturn took hold. After consulting several bodies, including the Faculty Budget Group and department chairs, it was agreed that an increase between 25-75 students would be in order for next fall. “I thought we could push up the numbers a little bit and it would be less agonizing to the admissions office, and it would bring in more smart undergraduates,” Dirks said.

As to the question of making any policy decisions for purely financial reasons, “admissions has a seal around it,” Dirks said. “They don’t let me in there. Anybody with dollar signs in their eyes is kept out.”

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MTA changes to take effect May 31

FARE HIKE from front page

Cergol noted the substantial impact the fare hike may have on lower-income riders. “I’ll keep riding. I’ll pay whatever I have to pay, but for some people it will be a big strain on their finances,” she said. “If you rely on the subway, you can’t just stop taking it.”

Jeff Dobbs, another rider at the 110th Street stop, voiced concern that the MTA has “two sets of books,” and he questioned the size of the MTA’s deficit, which the Associated Press reported as \$1.2 billion. “I’m a little non-trusting of the MTA,” he said.

Columbia’s commuter students will inevitably be among those feeling the crunch. Mercedes Mulford, BC ’11 and treasurer of Skip Stop, Barnard’s commuter students organization, said, “Particularly in these economic times, the only solution can’t be to pass it on to people who are already strapped for cash.”

Annie Lee, BC ’09 and president of Skip Stop, expressed concern that the reduction in off-peak service hours could discourage commuter students from getting involved in extra-

curricular activities that meet in the evening or on weekends, or from attending evening lectures or other special events.

“It definitely affects how much commuters can commit to stay on campus for activities that are an important part of college life,” Lee said.

Lee commutes to Barnard from her home on the Lower East Side via the F and 1 subway lines. The F will offer less frequent overnight and weekend service, and 1-line service will be reduced overnight and on weekdays between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Mulford commutes via the M11 and M104 bus lines. Service on the M11 will begin two hours later each morning, and overnight service on the M104 will be reduced.

“There’s really nothing I can do other than take those routes,” Mulford said, adding, “I’m sure I’ll be walking or carpooling more.”

In a statement released shortly after the vote, MTA chairman H. Dale Hemmerdinger emphasized the importance of protecting “riders’ best long term interests even in the face of knowing that the

right course may be painful in the short term.”

Hemmerdinger called the MTA’s financial situation “a true crisis that we cannot solve by ourselves without causing great pain to the riding public.”

Last December, a commission led by former MTA chairman Richard Ravitch released a series of recommendations, including increased state funding to the MTA, to alleviate the need for the drastic measures the board approved. Wednesday’s vote came after the failure of negotiations with New York Governor David Paterson and other state officials, although MTA officials said a deal was still theoretically possible.

“We will react to any action that the [state] legislature may take from here on out, but we are on a course to begin implementing the service reductions and fare increases that were approved today,” MTA spokesperson Aaron Donovan said. “In absence of action from Albany, we have today approved a way forward.”

The MTA is legally required to pass a balanced budget each year.

Maggie Astor can be reached at maggie.astor@columbiaspectator.com.

DiCrescenzo’s coach Isaya Okiwaya provided spark for career revival

DICRESCENZO from page 8

with four of the best female distance runners in the country. It’s all part of her preparation for the coming outdoor season, when DiCrescenzo will turn her attention back to steeplechase. She’s waiting for her next big opportunity after the disappointment that was the final Olympic qualifier, in which an injured right knee led to a 14th-place finish. It was an especially frustrating result given DiCrescenzo’s rank as the fifth-fastest steeplechaser in the country.

“A big part of running is just getting to the line and being healthy and in the right state of mind, and unfortunately I wasn’t at that time,” DiCrescenzo said. “But there’re going to be other chances and big opportunities like the one before me to represent the U.S., and I’m really happy about that.”

“You give a lot to the sport and sometimes you don’t see it reaped,” she added. “I felt like one year of solid training was down the drain because I had bad luck on one day and ran into a hurdle and banged my knee

pretty good and didn’t have full range of it for the rest of the season.”

But the professional running life goes on for DiCrescenzo. After the championship in Jordan, DiCrescenzo will run in smaller events in preparation for U.S. Outdoor National Championships in Eugene, Oregon, where she’ll return to steeplechase once more. And when she has time, she’ll try to help out as an assistant coach at Columbia.

Of course, the place DiCrescenzo wanted to be the most was Beijing. But for now she’ll keep training and running, looking for her next shot, perhaps London in 2012. At only 25 years old, DiCrescenzo has a lot of chances left to make her mark on the international level, despite the disappointing results at the Olympic trials.

“As disappointed as I was,” DiCrescenzo said, and then paused for a moment, “there are other chances to do good things in the sport.”

Even if she never expected to have those chances in the first place.

Harvard, Cornell firing on all cylinders heading into league play

SOFTBALL from page 8

tomorrow. Earlier this season, the Light Blue fell to the Knights by a score of 5-4.

Dartmouth (6-10) played in the Capital City Classic this past weekend, dropping all four games to University of Nevada- Las Vegas, Colorado State, Brigham Young, and Sacramento State. However, the Big Green was able to come back and win the second game of its double header against St. Mary’s on Tuesday by a score of 3-1.

Dartmouth will travel to Penn and Columbia this weekend.

Penn (4-13) only played in two games this past weekend, dropping both games of its double-header against Monmouth by the same score, 0-1.

Penn will face Dartmouth and Harvard at home this weekend.

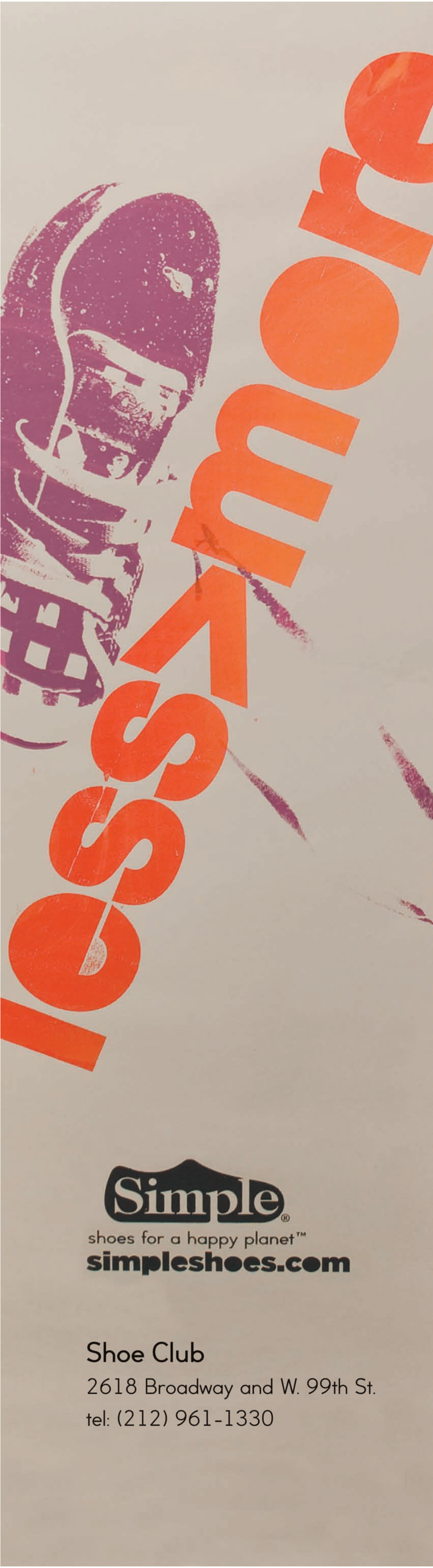
Yale (7-11) split a double-header with Marist this past Sunday. The Bulldogs lost the first game 3-2, but won the second 4-1. However, they lost both games against Providence on Sunday.

Yale will travel to Princeton and Cornell this weekend.

Brown (4-8) also participated in the Rebel Spring Games. On Friday, the Bears beat Army 5-1, but lost to Iona 1-0. The next day they also split their games, beating FDU 2-1, but falling to Wagner 5-4.

Brown also fell to Stetson and dropped a double-header against Jacksonville.

The Bears will play at Cornell and Princeton this weekend.



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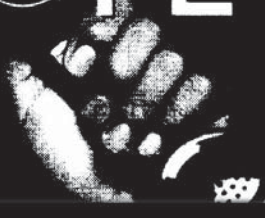
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Students’ Research for Earth Institute
Check out students’ roles in aiding the research done at the Earth Institute. Current and former student interns, research assistants, and travel grant recipients will present at the Earth Institute Student Research Conference.
555 Lerner, 3 p.m.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“We were really surprised there were no zeros attached to to it.”

—Hannah Biddle, CC ’10, on her lottery number

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Students find silver lining to last pick in housing lottery

HOUSING from front page

Gallagher will be participating in a separate selection process. She will receive a room assignment early January of next year, probably in the room of a student going abroad for the spring semester.

“I’m not regretful because I’m really excited to be studying abroad and the prospect of a huge room isn’t enough to change my decision,” Gallagher said. “The only thing I’m regretful about is there are plenty of people out there who could have put number one to good use.”

But others, who are sure they will be residing in Morningside next year, did not fare quite as well as Gallagher, finding themselves at the opposite end of the lottery list. Keating McKeon, CC ’12, has the lowest and last lottery pick.

“I did get 3000 so it was kind of disappointing,” McKeon said. “I feel like I kind of expected it at the same time knowing my stellar luck.” But, remaining optimistic,

he added, “I’m apparently number one on the sophomore waitlist.”

For McKeon and those who share his plight, the personal stories of upperclassmen can offer a glimmer of hope. Perhaps the housing deities have shown themselves to be fair arbiters of residential justice—Hannah Biddle, CC ’10, and Kerry O’Donnell, CC ’10, had the sixth-to-last lottery number as rising sophomores. This year, the tables have turned, as they are eighth in the lottery.

“We had very low expectations,” Biddle said. “We were really surprised there were no zeros attached to it.”

They consider the dramatic turn of their housing fate to be a cause for celebration, as they hope that their experience will offer solace to those less-fortuitous sophomore souls.

“After class [the day the lottery numbers were posted], we met on the Low Steps, just receiving hundreds of text messages and basking in our glory,” O’Donnell said.

news@columbiaspectator.com

Locals aim to improve slow M96 bus service

BUS from front page

changes—such as eliminating a series of turns on West End Avenue—seem to be moving as slowly as their bus rides.

“We have been thwarted,” said Cyrus Adler, director of Friends of the M96, an organization he helped found two years ago. “We’ve gotten nothing. The DOT said they did a study, a thorough analysis, but they have not showed us anything.”

Adler said that the M96 could save considerable time and fuel if “unnecessary” maneuvers were eliminated. Friends of the M96 calculated that it costs \$100 an hour to run a bus, so the city would save \$100,000 a year if three to five minutes were knocked off each run.

Local politicians echo their constituents’ concerns. City Council member Gale Brewer, who represents the Upper West Side, said she has met with the MTA several times since the M96 received its first “Pokey” in 2002, but little came of these discussions.

In a 38-page report released in

September 2007 titled “Our End of the Bargain,” Brewer outlined strategies to speed up the M96, including a “Smart Card” system that would enable passengers to pay their fares before boarding the bus, stricter enforcement of parking violations in bus lanes, and better coordination between stoplights and bus timing.

“Sometimes it just boggles your mind,” Brewer said. “The MTA should have installed new technology a long time ago.”

Some of Brewer’s recommendations were also included in a December 2008 report from a committee led by former MTA chairman Richard Ravitch. But the Council member conceded that implementing these recommendations is more difficult than recognizing them.

The MTA’s Wednesday vote on new service cuts has now amplified local concerns. “Rather than improving the unparalleled slow speed of the M96, the MTA is taking a wrong-headed approach by eliminating [some] night time service,” Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer wrote in an e-mail. “This proposal will be particularly problematic

for disabled riders who can’t use the inaccessible local subway stations on 96th Street. Making bad service worse is not a smart way to promote bus ridership in Manhattan.”

“The MTA is a big 800-pound gorilla,” Brewer said.

But the same organization that awarded the M96 its latest “Pokey” sees a brighter future for the route. Citing the injection of federal stimulus money and a pilot signal-priority program that has helped buses on Fordham Road in the Bronx avoid prolonged red lights, Transportation Alternatives spokesperson Wiley Norvell praised the MTA’s willingness to address current challenges.

“Buses may finally get the attention that they deserve,” Norvell said. “The planets may be aligning for change. ... We’re going to be hitting the pavement with this in the near future.”

New York City Transit, the agency within the MTA that oversees subway and bus service within the city, did not return calls for comment.

news@columbiaspectator.com

Snyder recalls workplace discrimination

SNYDER from front page

except this time Morgenthau will not be seeking re-election.

Snyder used the event to not only raise awareness about her candidacy but to address a number of issues affecting the American criminal justice system. A self-proclaimed “pragmatic progressive,” she was blunt about her stance on “violent criminals,” saying that child rapists and murderers deserve imprisonment, and emphasized her opposition toward the death penalty on the grounds that law enforcement is excessively prone to error.

The DA’s office represents the state in prosecuting all crimes that originate as arrests in Manhattan. Though it currently houses a community affairs unit, Snyder said she believes the program must be expanded to encompass a wider network of crime prevention.

Snyder also proposed improvements to police training. “In a line-up,” she said, police officers often target a specific suspect rather than remaining objective, “and that psychology transmits to the victim.” Additionally, she said that racial profiling could be decreased if police more deeply

understood the environments that they patrol.

College Democrat secretary Nancy Huemer, BC ’10, said this event provided an opportunity to learn about an elected post “not usually in the mainstream spotlight. ... We need to support more of them [such posts] in the College Dems,” she said.

“It’s great to meet people not on the broad level of politics, who are on the ground making a difference,” said College Democrats president Chris Daniels, CC ’09.

Scott Levi can be reached at scott.levi@columbiaspectator.com.

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© Puzzles by Pappocom

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Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS

1 Alp top
5 Sounding shocked
10 Looking shocked
14 A8 manufacturer
15 Decisive refusal
16 Double-click, maybe
17 In need of irrigation
18 Lacking skepticism
19 dixit
20 Ocean delicacy
21 Operational headquarters
23 She played Ulla in "The Producers"
25 Estrangement
26 Classy office door adornment
33 Lends a hand
34 "It's so _" f
35 Make up (for)
37 Clavell's " _" Pan"
38 Ma, for one
41 Rx writers
42 1943 penny metal
44 "Proud Mary" band, for short
45 Pond problem
46 2006 political best-seller, with "The"
50 school
51 Corp. that once owned Hertz and Hilton
52 Beside one another
58 E-mail cackle
61 Masseur's stock
62 Stag
63 Irish Free State successor
64 Prefix with tasse
65 Andes herd animal
66 Pesky biter
67 Part of WNBA: Abbr.
68 "Roots" Emmy winner
69 Capital south of Lillehammer

DOWN

1 "I Kid You Not" author
2 100 cents
3 Part of "The Sound of Music" farewell song
4 Little butter?
5 Author Rice
6 Transmission component
7 Tel _ _Yalo
8 Harsh
9 Pain, briefly
10 Indicate
11 PDA entry
12 _majesty
13 Fed. power dept.
21 "Ilmatic" rapper
22 Key of Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1
24 Submissions to eds.
26 Upside-down sleepers
27 It's twirled in a rodeo
28 PBS's science guy
29 IM offerer
30 Punish with a fine
31 Gin cocktail
32 Become, finally
36 Salinger dedicatee
38 Louisiana Territory explorer
39 Needing salt, perhaps
40 Sellout initials
43 Enters stealthily
45 '50s oldies syllable
47 Secret doctrine
48 Tennyson works
49 Eye or ear ending
52 Musical conclusion
53 Hurries
54 Street liners
55 Rocker Jett
56 "My treat"
57 Deterioration
59 Like the Sabin vaccine
60 Jared of "American Psycho"
63 It sometimes needs a boost

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:
EYED CUBE SPOTS
RENO ONYX TABOO
GAGMEWITHTASPOON
ORRIN TEAM EELY
NEL LIAR
HOMESWEETHOME
BBA YADA MANOR
LATH FILET TEAR
ORLON DEAF ABS
GROUND CONTROL
NEAR IAN
AVID REAP NEHRU
GOLDENDELICIOUS
ELIOT IRAS DOLE
STAGE TONE APER
xwordeditor@aol.com 03/26/09

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By Bonnie L. Gentry
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

ART

Art exhibit shows off cardboard kicks



LORRAINE WHITE

GALLEREASE

Most contemporary critiques of consumerism in the art world take themselves much too seriously, demonizing big corporations and herd-mentality label consciousness without contributing much insight aside from “the Man is bad, man.” Too often, the output of these socially “engaged” artists lacks the wry amusement that makes someone like Warhol so captivating.

Mike Leavitt, using the crunchy, freethinking fashion I’ve come to expect from Seattleites, restores faith in contemporary art’s ability to interrogate pop culture without participating in the same preachy tirade. The highlight of his latest show, “Don’t Stop Object Shopping,” is a series of impressively accurate cardboard shoe replicas ranging from Air Jordan IVs to something that resembles a Blahnik stiletto.

Why to-scale editions of cultural ephemera? Why cardboard?

Leavitt seized upon footwear as the inspiration for his new show because he found shoes to encompass a “great balance between pure function and profound identity symbol ... intimately linked to our visual culture.”

In an interview with Suite101.com’s D. Yvette Wohn, the artist explained, “The simple image of the cardboard shoe speaks humorously and clearly on consumerism,” citing that in the shoe industry “cheap, disposable material makes an expensive product”—thus calling attention to how his project is “oddly resembling the manufacturing of boutique footwear.”

It is somewhat difficult to describe Leavitt’s overall artistic enterprise. A professed extreme boredom for “normal” art has resulted in his having churned out a number of nonpareil projects that rather resist categorization.

In his latest show, a number of his previous projects are on display alongside the cardboard kicks—his famous “Art Army” (a series of action figures depicting a range of historical subjects from Van Gogh to Tupac), “ArtCards” (hand-drawn trading cards of other artists sold in wrapped packs with a stale stick of gum), and sundry Obama-ganda.

Though it may not be immediately apparent, the shoe series fits in rather seamlessly with the rest of these projects. Leavitt has grown increasingly concerned with examining consumerism and the current state of the economy. For example, the “Art Army” figures were originally conceived as a satire on the commodification of art, while the “ArtCard” trading cards germinated from his interest in public fascination with so-called collectibles.

Leavitt, like so many artists today, grapples with the challenge of making a living with his art in a struggling economy (as a side note, the latest *L Magazine*—not that I’m the sort to habitually read the magazine—had an interesting feature on the current situation of struggling city artists and the inventive means they’ve taken to stay afloat). The theme of commercial viability runs through much of his recent work.

All told, this most recent exhibition is stimulating enough that its unapologetic gimmickyness doesn’t annoy in the least.

Lorraine White is a Columbia College junior majoring in French and economics. Gallerease runs alternate Thursdays.

WHERE IT’S AT

Time: Wenesdays through Saturdays, 3pm-8pm
Place: 93 Second Ave.
Cost: Free

THEATER

CMTS brings its Shop of Horrors to Lerner

BY JESSICA BLANK
Columbia Daily Spectator

Though tales of a blood-guzzling plant may sound disturbing, the combination of music, dance, and Columbia talent makes the story more comic than creepy.

This weekend will see the Columbia Musical Theatre Society’s version of the cult classic *Little Shop of Horrors* in Lerner’s Black Box Theater. Any lover of musicals is probably no stranger to the Alan Menken and Howard Ashman award-winning show, but the CMTS performance is sure to offer something new to *Little Shop* connoisseurs, as well as an introduction for the uninitiated.

It was mutual love for the musical that originally brought together producer Erin Byrne, BC ’09, and director Emily Kaplan, BC ’11, last fall. “We were total strangers,” Byrne admitted, “but we both had a desire to see *Little Shop of Horrors* at Columbia and from there the production just fell into place.”

It is easy to see how much enthusiasm the cast and crew have for the show, especially from the many hurdles they have overcome during the creative process. CMTS’ minimal budget for the show is seen as a blessing in disguise by everyone involved.

For starters, the use of Lerner Black Box instead of the usual Roone Arledge Auditorium offered a complicated challenge. Because of fireproofing issues, the design team had to create its own puppet for the finale’s larger-than-life plant.

But instead of complaining about the obstacle, the production team fondly reminisced over what they saw as a bonding opportunity: “I remember sitting in a meeting talking about how the plant should look—we were all so supportive of each other. We had complete faith it would come together,” Kaplan said. “It was never ‘we can’t do this,’ but rather ‘how are we going to do this?’” Byrne added.

Little Shop of Horrors is truly a group effort, showcasing various talents in everything from choreography to musical execution to puppetry and lighting. Co-choreographer Alex Shaw, CC ’11, described the collaboration: “It’s about presenting a real world versus a surrealist world. The dancing, the lights, the acting, everything works towards that end.”

DANCE

Tamasha brings more than dance and giant posters to event

BY KIM BENCIVENGA
Columbia Daily Spectator

You may have seen the three-story banner hanging in Lerner, or passed by one of the many study breaks or hype-events across campus held by Club Zamana, Columbia’s South Asian organization. But those do not compare to the enormous event taking place in Roone Arledge this Friday night. Tamasha, Club Zamana’s annual culture show, will bring together some of Columbia’s most popular dance troupe and performance acts across campus.

Tamasha is Columbia’s largest cultural showcase, inviting hundreds of attendees to watch the performances and experience South Asian culture. With its first installment over two decades ago, Tamasha is one of the oldest culture shows at Columbia,



Mary Ye / Staff Photographer

DEATHLY FUN | A smaller budget for the Columbia Musical Theatre Society has not stopped the imaginative creativity in its production of *Little Shop of Horrors*. The biggest change will be the smaller location at the Black Box Theater.

“This is an all-star team,” exclaimed Justin Grace, CC ’09, in costume as Mr. Mushnik, with a smile on his face. Co-musical director Melanie Michel, BC ’09, emphasized the unity of the ensemble. “It’s fun music that will get stuck in your head, mixed with talented individual voices and great musicians that carry the show,” she said.

The excitement of the cast of *Little Shop of Horrors* reverberates throughout the small space of the Black Box. Their punch and vitality is refreshing amidst Columbia University productions which sometimes seem to take themselves a little too seriously. One can’t help but notice

that this group is more of a family than anything else, full of appreciation for every member’s contribution.

“The real star is Michael the puppeteer—he’s got such a sucky job but he somehow manages to bring himself to the plant in an incredible way,” joked Benjamin Velez, CC ’10, who plays the role of Seymour. Everyone nodded in agreement as actors, puppeteer and crew ran off to the middle of the room to practice some dance moves.

Although the Black Box, with only 100 seats, is much smaller than Roone Arledge, the cast expressed characteristic unflappability in light of the modest

venue. “We’re so close to the audience that we’re going to be singing directly in their faces,” laughed Tobin Mitnick, CC ’10, who plays Orin. Indeed, the CMTS production of *Little Shop of Horrors* will offer the unique opportunity to see what is normally a huge show up close and personal.

WHERE IT’S AT

Place: Lerner Black Box
When: Thursday March 26 at 8 p.m., Friday March, 27 at 8 p.m., Saturday March 28 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Cost: \$5 with CUID, \$10 without

BOOKS

New book shows comic side of not catching terrorists

BY JOSEPH CROSS
Spectator Staff Writer

It is pretty easy to mock the Department of Homeland Security.

The color-coded “Advisory System” is laughable, none of us has bombs in our shoes, and former deputy chief-information officer Laura Callahan got her degree at a diploma mill. The late-night comedians have been making these jokes for years, but now a more literary voice joins in—Brooklyn author Jeffrey Rotter. His debut novel, *The Unknown Knowns*, is a wonderfully crafted satire of American paranoia in the wake of Sept. 11, 2001.

The novel tells the story of Jim Rath, an unemployed museum curator who is obsessed with comic books, feminist dioramas, and the Aquatic Ape Theory of Human Evolution. He conducts “research” about the

ancient aquatic race of the Nautikons by snorkeling in the local Hilton pool for hours on end.

According to Rath, the Nautikons looked like humans but lived in the ocean, and he plans on designing a museum in their honor. It becomes apparent quickly that the guy is a total kook.

The plot takes off when Rath sees a member of the Nautikon race in the flesh at the hotel bar. Of course, this is a ridiculous delusion. The alleged Nautikon is actually Agent Diaz, a low-ranking officer in the Department of Homeland Security.

Diaz is in charge of inspecting pools and other recreational water facilities (read: water parks). Rath is fascinated with the officer, while the officer thinks Rath is a pool-terrorist, leading them to pursue each other in a truly idiotic fashion for the remainder of the novel.

The beauty of Rotter’s satire is that the whole set-up, despite its absurdity, is plausible. His characters are believable, and their silly delusions are believable too. The reader half expects Agent Diaz to sprout fins and confirm Rath’s suspicions.

Rotter also perfectly renders the speaking style of self-important bureaucrats when he lets Diaz talk, which are easily the funniest and tightest moments of the novel. With a straight face, Diaz constantly spews nonsense, such as “We’re dealing with percentages and micropercentages of probabilities. Somebody so much as reads the Quran in a hot tub, we’ve got clearance to act.”

But there are too few scenes that focus on Diaz, and too many lengthy fantastical passages about the history of the Nautikons. These sections of pseudo-mythology have their place, because they demonstrate the depth of Rath’s odd imagination, but they drag. Rotter would do better in future efforts to spend more time with the explicit satire, because he’s dynamite there.

That slight imbalance aside, *The Unknown Knowns* is still hilarious. It feels like a Coen-brothers film, where stupid people take themselves too seriously and disaster ensues. Fans of the film *Burn After Reading*, or any of Kurt Vonnegut’s wackier moments, will enjoy this quick read.



Courtesy of Scribner

CIA BLUES | *The Unknown Knowns* pokes fun at the failures of homeland security.



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The Columbia baseball team will compete in two double-headers this weekend against Harvard and Dartmouth.

TOMORROW



SPORTS

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2009 • PAGE 8



The Columbia lacrosse team will look to improve its conference record this Friday against rival Penn.

TOMORROW

Columbia prepares for rematch against FDU

BY SARA SALZBANK
Spectator Staff Writer

Coming off two disappointing games, the Columbia softball team will compete against Fairleigh Dickinson this weekend for the second time this season. The Knights left last week's Rebel Spring Games with a 2-10 record, defeating Columbia and Manhattan College by one-run margins. The Lions left the Games with a 7-5 record.

Fairleigh Dickinson's final day of competition, and most recent activity on the field, ended in consecutive losses to Brown and Manhattan.



Kirsten Shreve performed well for the Knights on the mound, striking out nine and allowing only three hits. But the team was unable to capitalize on her efforts, as Fairleigh Dickinson dropped to Brown, 2-1. Following the close battle with the Bears, FDU was unable to rally against the Jaspers. Manhattan struck first, building a two-run advantage in the second inning. Manhattan would add two more runs in the third for a 4-0 lead. The Knights attempted a comeback in the seventh when Meghan Doherty, who reached base on an error, and Shreve, who reached on a single to left center, crossed the plate, narrowing the Jasper lead to two. In the loss, Trina Fields pitched for FDU and tallied 11 strikeouts with four hits and three earned runs. Last time Columbia met the Knights on the field, the Lions went up early in the game with a

4-1 lead, but a solo home run in the fourth gave the Knights the momentum and energy they needed to recover. "When you let a team hang around, hang around, hang around, it takes one or two hits on their part to really change the momentum of the game," head coach Kayla Noonan said of the late FDU comeback. Fields struck out four in the first four innings before Shreve came to the mound to finish off the Lions, pitching three hitless innings. Noonan feels that the Lions just need to capitalize on their opportunities in their rematch against FDU. "When we played them in Florida, we left 14 runners on base. So one or two more big hits and we can figure out how to put a team away," she said. The doubleheader against Fairleigh Dickinson will begin at 3 p.m. today.



File photo

PLAY BALL | The Lions left last week's Rebel Spring Games with a 7-5 record, which they will try to improve against the Knights.

A singing lesson from English football fans



JONATHAN
AUGUST
FULL-COURT
PRESS

I didn't get it. I thought I did, but I was wrong. I watched the games on television and on my computer, heard stories from friends, and even knew some of the songs. I even went to a Cup final two summers ago between my hometown team and a Mexican team that went to 12 penalties with fans screaming constantly, but I still had no idea what I was getting into.

Going to an English football (soccer) match is really an experience unlike any other. I was lucky enough to spend my final spring break of college going to two of them. Even better yet was that the matches were staged at the home ground for the club I support, Arsenal.

As a little background, I had always been interested in soccer, playing it for years at home and following World Cups casually when they occurred. One of my fondest sports memories as a kid was watching the controversial United States-Germany World Cup match on a large TV in Heathrow in 2002 with my attention fixed on the entire airport totally engrossed in following grown men kick a ball on grass. It was three years ago, however, that a former sports editor introduced me to the club game and since then I have been completely hooked.

My experience in North London was something that I could not have predicted, no matter how much I was told or knew prior to going. The area directly surrounding Emirates Stadium was an Arsenal paradise, with everyone in the vicinity wearing red and white, drinking pints of beer, and singing—loudly. In addition, the fans were from all around the world, a signal that soccer truly is the world's game and that Americans are the ones who are on the outside. Go to an NFL game and find me a thousand international fans. I doubt you would be able to do so.

What also makes soccer different than other sports is that the fans are not only better versed in the players and teams, but that every team has unique chants, sung to more well-known tunes. Sitting inside the stadium on a Saturday afternoon, hearing a chorus of 60,000 sing, "Who's that team they call the Arsenal?" makes fans singing in unison at large-venue concerts look like child's play, let alone the tame chants every American team reuses universally.

Soccer is nothing short of a religion for some, and each team represents a different sect. Opposing fans typically receive a few thousand seats for away games, but they are cornered off in their own section of the ground, away from the home supporters and surrounded by police. As an extreme example, Arsenal fans that travel a few miles north to Tottenham Hotspur for the North London derby are required to stay in the stadium two and a half hours after the match ends for fear of physical retribution from the home supporters. Even for normal Premiership games, home fans have no problem attacking the opposing supporters directly through song—and as I would come to realize a few days later, the 2,000 opposing supporters can make a lot of noise too if they have a lead.

This sense of mass camaraderie still astounds me nearly two weeks after my first match, and I trace my astonishment to the singing of the fans. Nearly every home player has a song created by the fans attributed to them—some positive, some negative—and it is here where I think American fans have fallen short of their duty as supporters. I think that this is especially true at Columbia, as the college game is specifically suited to these kinds of songs.

Columbia has its alma mater and a fight song or two, but many fans don't know all the words and the impact of the songs fall dreadfully short of their intention. We're a rather intellectual lot and I see no reason why we can't take the time to create catchy lyrics to popular songs that sing the praises of our more prominent players. Think what Leven could sound like with even a few hundred students belting out homemade songs for the full two hours of games. The effect would be tons of confidence for our players and a systematic drowning out of the opposition, creating a truly lethal home atmosphere.

Whether or not you like the sport, it is nearly impossible to say that soccer fans don't get the atmosphere of matches exactly right. What's to stop us from adopting the system that creates that environment here?

Jonathan August is a Columbia College senior majoring in economics-philosophy. sports@columbiaspectator.com

DiCrescenzo to compete in Jordan



CU Athletics

FAST PACE | Delilah DiCrescenzo will look to make a big impact on the international stage during the 2009 World Cross Country Championships in Amman, Jordan.

DELILAH DICRESCENZO

Columbia College '05

COLLEGIATE ACHIEVEMENTS:

3-time Ivy League Heptagonals steeplechase champion
9th in the steeplechase at the 2005 NCAA Championships
Holds school and stadium record in the 3000m steeplechase
2005 All-American in the 3000m steeplechase

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS:

Finished fourth at the 2009 USA Cross Country Championships
Qualified for US Olympic Trials in 2008 and advanced to finals
One of only two sponsored Puma athletes in the United States



Lions alum runs for US at World Cross Country Championships

BY JON TAYLER
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

It's a Sunday night, and Delilah DiCrescenzo is waiting for her 10:30 flight out of John F. Kennedy International Airport. Her destination is Amman, the capital of Jordan, a place she has never been to. If you had asked her four years earlier if she had ever planned on visiting the city, she probably would have said no. And if you had asked her if she had any plans to visit Amman to take part in an international cross-country competition, she likely would have dismissed that idea outright.

Yet here she is, DiCrescenzo, now three years into a career that she never thought would happen, wondering whether she's packed enough Clif Bars and powdered milk to last her the week she'll be overseas for the 2009 World Cross Country Championships. Four years ago, DiCrescenzo thought that she had competed in her last race, a disappointing appearance at the NCAA Championships in which the three-time Ivy League steeplechase champion had come in ninth. That was it, she thought. That would be the end of her career.

"I never expected to be still running," DiCrescenzo said while waiting for her flight to board. "I thought I would turn into a recreational jogger for fitness. I didn't expect to keep it up at the competitive level."

Few track runners compete in the steeplechase. Fewer still excel in it. The top three spots on the world-record list for women belong to one runner, Russia's Gulnara Samitova-Galkina, who became the first woman to break nine minutes with her time of 8:58.81 at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. The NCAA record belongs to Colorado's Jenny Barringer, who broke her own mark back in June 2008 with a time of 9:29.20. Her next closest competitor in that event was at 9:55.54.

In her time at Columbia, DiCrescenzo outclassed her rivals in the odd combination of distance running and hurdling. She set the Ivy League record in the event her sophomore year at Outdoor Heptagonals. She set it again her junior year. And to cap her Ivy career on a high note, she reset it her senior year, running 10:28.10, 16 seconds ahead of her closest competitor, to win the event for a third straight year.

But her finish at NCAA Championships—after winning first place at NCAA East Regionals earlier that year—left her high and dry. She hung up her racing spikes, only to be convinced by a coach out of the blue that she still had a chance left.

"A lot of it has to do with my current coach, a gentleman by the name of Isaya Okiwaya," DiCrescenzo said. "He contacted me the November after I graduated in 2005, and at that point I was running on and off and not really serious about it, and he kind of recruited me and said, 'Why don't you give it another try.'"

And so the Chicago native gave it another try. Now she's a veteran of international competition, going so far as to qualify for the steeplechase finals for the U.S. Olympic team. DiCrescenzo is one of two runners to be sponsored by Puma. The other is three-time Olympic gold medalist and world-record holder in the 100-meter and 200-meter dash, Usain Bolt.

So now DiCrescenzo waits for Jordan, where she'll compete in an eight-kilometer cross-country race for Team USA along

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Cornell, Harvard look to knock off Ivy champ Princeton

BY MICHELE CLEARY
Spectator Staff Writer

The Princeton Tigers will begin their quest to repeat as Ivy League softball champions when conference play begins this weekend. This will not be an easy task, though, as many teams, including Harvard, last season's runner-up, looked competitive during the nonconference portion of their season.

Princeton (5-9) took part in the Stanford tournament this weekend, winning only one of five games. The Tigers defeated Winthrop 8-7 on Friday thanks to excellent offensive play by freshman Kelsey VandeBergh, who went 2-for-3 with two RBI and one run scored, and senior Kathryn Welch, who went 3-for-4 with four RBI and one run scored. The Tigers would not be as successful the rest of the weekend. They fell to Stanford 1-0 later on Friday and dropped both of their games on Saturday, losing to Santa Clara 7-6 and Pacific 6-5. They closed out their weekend by falling to Winthrop 9-6 on Sunday. Princeton will open its Ivy season at home this weekend with a double-header

against Yale on Saturday and another one against Brown on Sunday.

Cornell is the most likely team to challenge Princeton for first in the Southern division. The Big Red is currently 19-5 and has had an excellent nonconference season.

Cornell played in the Rebel Spring Games this past weekend, winning all four contests. On Friday, the Big Red beat Fairleigh Dickinson 2-0 and Hartford University 9-5. They were victorious the next day as well, defeating Rider 8-0 and Wisconsin-Green Bay 10-1.

Cornell was led by junior third baseman and Ivy League Player of the Week Elise Menaker. Menaker hit .436 last week and went 3-for-3 in the game against Green Bay.

Ivy League Pitcher of the Week sophomore Elizabeth Dalrymple was also a major asset for the Big Red. Dalrymple went 4-0 during Cornell's spring break trip and recorded an ERA of 0.94.

Cornell is scheduled to play a pair of double-headers against Brown and Yale at home this weekend.

Harvard (9-5) will also pose a threat to the Tigers' hopes of repeating, as the

Crimson finished first in the Northern division last year. Over the weekend, Harvard competed in the Highlander Classic, competing against Eastern Michigan, Radford, and Toledo. After dropping its first game against EMU 5-1 on Friday, the Crimson was able to bounce back and defeat the Eagles 10-6 on Sunday. Harvard also split with Radford, falling 8-0 on Saturday, but winning 3-2 on Sunday. The Crimson won its only game against Toledo 7-2.

Freshman pitcher and Ivy League Rookie of the Week Rachel Brown was named tournament MVP and received all-tournament honors. Brown posted a 1.62 ERA, 24 strikeouts, 13 hits, and three walks in 17 and a third innings of work.

This past Tuesday, Harvard split a double-header with UNC-Greensboro, losing the first game 3-0, but winning the second game by a score of 10-5.

The Crimson will travel to Columbia and Penn for a pair of double-headers this weekend.

After a successful spring break trip, the Lions (7-14) have had a tough time in their games near home. They dropped

their home-opening double-header to Boston University, losing the first game 2-0 and the second by a score of 11-7. The Light Blue also lost both games to Monmouth on Sunday.

However, Columbia will get one more chance to tune-up before it faces Harvard and Dartmouth this weekend. The Lions are scheduled to play Fairleigh Dickinson

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2009 IVY LEAGUE SOFTBALL STANDINGS	
	OVERALL RECORD
CORNELL	19-5
HARVARD	9-5
YALE	7-11
DARTMOUTH	6-10
PRINCETON	5-9
COLUMBIA	7-14
BROWN	4-8
PENN	4-13