

# The Stanner

Vol. 52, No. 4

Archbishop Molloy High School

December 2008

## All I want for Christmas is...

By Natalie Kurzyna '11 and Julianne Broderick '11

Dashing through the packed Molloy hallways on their way to class, Stanners often find themselves anticipating the coming of Christmas Day and what will be waiting for them under the tree.

It's Christmastime again, and instead of doing their homework, some Stanners are writing letters to Santa Claus instead.

What made it on to their wish lists this year?

Electronics, as usual, were the most popular choice, as Stanners are looking forward to receiving new cell phones, video games, and iPods.

Junior Karen Demarco and senior Victoria Barrett agreed that the new Apple products were desirable gifts.

"The new iPhone [3G] is a very popular gift this year," Demarco said.

Barrett believes the new iPod nano will be flying off the store shelves.

Sophomore Priscilla Lee said, "the Blackberry Storm from Verizon is a hot gift."

The hottest gift of all?

Many Stanners agreed that it was Rockband 2.

Sophomore Daniel Woods said, "I want a new TV for my room."

Sophomore Priscilla Miranda would like to see a laptop computer under her Christmas tree.

Demarco said, half-jokingly, "I want Law And Order: SVU on DVD."

Senior Rob Mastronardi wants, "a sound system for my car."

Barrett already knows what she's getting.

"My trip to Greece [on a Molloy school trip] is like my Christmas, birthday, and graduation gifts combined!" she said.

Senior Eddie Nasser had a similar outlook to Barrett.

"I don't want anything big for Christmas so that my parents will let me go on a trip later on," he said.

The recent "Twilight" book and movie craze had sophomore Brianna Ngui wanting "Edward Cullen" for Christmas.

Freshman Rebecca Albergo, also a fan, said, "I want the rest of the 'Twilight' [four book] series."

If money was no object, frosh Chris Gilligan would want, "a Lamborghini!" and Mastronardi would want, "a big cruise ship, because you can take all your family and friends on it."

Lee wants "Chace Crawford and Chad Michael Murray!"

Not all Christmas wishes were for material things.

Barrett wished "that my grandma would get better," while Demarco said, "I would want my grandma to overcome her breast cancer."

Let's hope Stanners will find everything they want underneath their Christmas trees next week.

Merry Christmas to all!



An electric snowman decorates the Library. (Photo by Benedict Josen)

## 65 gift boxes for Op Christmas Child

By Karolina Dzieniszewski '11 and Melissa Beale '11

Campus Ministry this year collected a total of 65 gift boxes for Operation Christmas Child which will be donated to poor children all over the world.

Although Campus Ministry Director Mr. Mike Germano was pleased with the effort of so many Stanners who did step forward to help children in need, he was a little disappointed in the final tally.

"We handed out a total of 210

brochures and only got 65 gift boxes back," Mr. Germano said. "After the people see how much involvement is required [to donate a gift box], it throws some students off. I think this might have been an effect of the [bad] economy as well."

Mr. Germano said that the operation was publicized enough this year but in the end it was all up to the students.

But he added that even though the number of the boxes donated this year wasn't great, the quality of all the gifts

definitely was great.

Mr. Germano, as he does every year, dropped the gift boxes off at Crystal Church in Queens where Operation Christmas Child is run by Samaritan's Purse.

Senior Melissa Hurtado, who donated to Operation Christmas Child for the first time this year, said donating gave her a very personal feeling of joy because she was surprising a poor, little child this Christmas with a gift.

The types of gifts she filled her gift

box with were coloring books, crayons, markers, and little toy cars.

Buying the gifts was a lot of fun, Hurtado said, especially because she went to buy them with a friend and they both were both imagining the expressions on a child's face when she saw the gifts.

"It would be nice to see more Stanners get involved," Hurtado said. "It's nice to give a gift and make a difference in someone's life through such a small gesture."

# Merry Christmas

# 'Bees' film lacks real emotion

A Movie Review by Alex Lamburini '11

A girl grows up on peach farm owned by an abusive father.

Girl accidentally shoots mother with gun at an early age.

Black servant is hired as a stand-in mother for girl.

Girl's father reveals untold truths about her mother.

Girl runs away with black servant from verbally abusive father.

Girl arrives at the doorstep of the Boatwright sisters, who allow them to stay and treat them like family.

Girl learns about her mother's past.

Girl learns to forgive both herself and mother.

Writer/director Gina Prince-Bythewood's stoic retelling of Sue Monk Kidd's best-selling novel, "The Secret Life of Bees" is a movie lacking emotion.

The rote plot summary above is essentially all you'll get from Prince-Bythewood's film adaptation.

This bland re-telling of events proves itself to be a safe attempt at a film, leaving bits and pieces of themes, concepts and characters from the novel all over the place on the screen.

Prince-Bythewood abandoned character development in her cinematic adaptation in order to focus more on sentimental events within the novel.

Kidd's book is crammed full of themes that readers can latch on to emotionally while reading the book.

However, Prince-Bythewood's inability to target and develop one specific theme in her adaptation has ultimately rendered this film a mediocrity compared to the critically acclaimed novel.

Prince-Bythewood fails to thoroughly develop any of Kidd's themes, leaving audiences without an emotional hook to pull them in.

However, with every failure comes some amount of success. Prince-

Bythewood's direction of her cast is her only positive achievement.

While Prince-Bythewood chose to focus her attention away from character development, her direction of her actors proves to be near flawless.

Dakota Fanning delivers a stunning performance in the film with her portrayal of Lily Owens, an emotionally distraught southern farm girl dealing with issues beyond her years.

Fanning is backed by an all star cast of Queen Latifah, Alicia Keys and Jennifer Hudson.

However, the film's casting is just an attempt to attract audiences accustomed to large budget Hollywood productions rather than smaller, dramatic films such as this one.

Regardless of the problems in Hollywood's rendition of "The Secret Life of Bees," the novel will continue to be assigned to students by Molloy's English Department.

Mr. Dennis Vellucci said that the novel's general theme of journey and coming of age coincide with the frosh curriculum.

However, on a deeper level, Mr. Vellucci mentioned that his reason for selecting the novel lies in its religious themes, historical context and character complexity.

"As literature," Mr. Vellucci said, "I like the fact that most of the characters are complex rather than simply 'good' or 'bad.' T-Ray, for instance, is a villain, but there are moments when the author makes his behavior understandable and makes him at least a little sympathetic."

He has not seen the film due to his belief that the director over simplified the characters in order to emphasize more sentimental aspects of the story.

"The narrative voice of the book is really special and a large part of its success," Mr. Vellucci said

"It allows the character Lily to create a relationship with the reader. There are many things film can do well, but the relationship between narrator and reader isn't one of them," he said.

Overall, the Prince-Bythewood's poor choices in making the film prove Hollywood needed to keep the bees in the book.

## Christmas reflections by The Stanner's 4 Editors

Eight years ago, Stanner editors would run down the stairs as the sun came up on Christmas morning, hoping to catch a glimpse of Santa Claus.

The tree sparkling with bright lights, the dazzling array of presents, the half eaten cookies and leftover milk, and the missing Christmas letters filled us with the belief that Santa had been there.

There we would stand, dressed in our Power Ranger footie pajamas, in complete awe.

This, of course, lasted only a few minutes until our childhood desires got the better of us and we ran to rip off the green and red wrapping paper from our presents.

Toy cars, Legos, Light Bright, Tamagotchis, Twinkie Winkie Teletubbies, Malibu Barbies, Sims, Monopoly and Life board games,

Cabbage Patch dolls, Razor scooters, Easy Bake ovens, and Disney videos filled our living rooms and brought smiles to our faces.

Now, as teenagers, we sleep in on Christmas morning until our younger brothers and sisters wake us up.

We now count the days until Christmas break instead of counting the days 'til Christmas morning.

How do the gifts we ask for now — iPods, digital cameras, laptops, touch cellphones, Rock Band 2, gift cards, Ugg boots, the newest Coach bag — compare to those gifts we got as kids?

When we were little kids, we looked forward to being teenagers. We didn't realize that part of growing up is losing our joyful attitude about the coming of Christmas. Plus, we don't get as many presents now as we once did.

## Corrections

The Stanner aims for the highest level of accuracy in its stories. If you noticed an error or have a concern about a story, please send an email to Moderator Mr. Charley McKenna at: [thestanner@molloyhs.org](mailto:thestanner@molloyhs.org).

Please note the following correction to an error made in The Stanner Vol. 52, No. 3:

The opponent in the photograph of the Boys Varsity Soccer Team was misidentified. It was Fordham Prep.

## Wanted: Letters to the Editor from students

The Stanner welcomes all letters to the editor from students, faculty, alumni and staff that respond to any of the articles published in previous issues.

Send your letters to The Stanner via email at: [thestanner@molloyhs.org](mailto:thestanner@molloyhs.org).

The Stanner reserves the right to edit all letters to conform to its space capacity and newspaper policy.

Thank you for your involvement in Molloy activities and we look forward to your input.

## Manuel Cordero illustrates Christmas at Stanner High



Illustration by Manuel Cordero '09

## The Stanner

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# Short set for Band at Xmas Concert

By Karen Zhou '11

Despite the loss of its director to illness, the Molloy Band still performed at the annual Christmas Concert on

Dec. 16 in the Jack Curran Gym, albeit with a shortened set of just four songs.

In November, Molloy Band Director and music teacher, Mr. Greg Leonardo,

became seriously ill and was hospitalized. He is now recuperating at home.

Consequently, the Band missed about a dozen rehearsals leading up to the Christmas Concert.

Junior flutist Rosie Garlan said, "the Band has probably been hurt by missing rehearsal time since we missed out on the time to work on the little details."

After it became clear that Mr. Leonardo would not be able to return in time to direct the Band himself, the Band first started to rehearse again at the beginning of this month under the leadership of senior Travis Kessel.

Then Mr. Stephen Kimmons, the Executive Director of Advancement in the Molloy Alumni Office, took Mr. Leonardo's place at the podium to prepare for the Christmas Assemblies on Dec. 15 and the concert itself.

Mr. Kimmons ran the Eighth Air Force Band for 15 years, the Strategic Air Command Band for two years, and was Director of Bands at Parkdale High School in Maryland before coming to Molloy.

After hearing the Band for the first time in an intense rehearsal, Mr. Kimmons said, "I picked four pieces that the Band will be able to perform well, given the unfortunate and challenging circumstances, and this will allow us to put our best foot forward."

The four pieces that the Band played at the concert were: "Ukrainian Bell Carol," "White Christmas," "American Christmas Rhapsody," and "I've Heard the Bells Ringing on Christmas Day."

Garlan said with a smile before the concert, "We all hope to perform well for Mr. Leonardo, and we hope that he gets better soon."



Mr. Greg Leonardo, seen here at last year's Christmas Concert, missed this year's show due to illness. (Photo by Blue & White Staff)

## *Chorus fills void at Christmas show*

By Amanda Demenescu '10 and Melissa Gazal '10

The Junior-Senior Chorus had to provide most of the night's entertainment at Molloy's annual Christmas Concert in the Jack Curran Gym at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 16 due to the fact that the Frosh-Sophomore Chorus did not perform due to the illness of its director, Mr. Greg Leonardo.

The 68-member Junior-Senior Chorus practiced for weeks under the direction of Mr. Jim Sheehan in preparation for the show in which it performed 23 Christmas songs.

Many of the Christmas carols were also sung at last year's show but there were also a few new ones, ranging from

the religious-themed "O, Holy Night" to the comic carol, "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer."

Thirty singers were given an opportunity to perform a solo during the concert.

"Everyone [in the Chorus] has an excellent voice but the feature singers really stand out," said Mr. Sheehan.

Mr. Sheehan said rehearsals for the concert went very well despite two keyboards breaking during the weeks leading up to the show.

Junior Louis Lamia said rehearsals went "wonderfully" and fellow junior Jacqueline Cosse said they were "awesome."

Before the concert, the Chorus gave a taste of its performance to frosh and

sophomores at the Christmas Assemblies during school on Monday December 15.

"It's so much fun to sing Christmas songs," said senior Jackie Ehrhardt. "It puts me in a great mood for the rest of the day."

The favorite song of Chorus members Grace Lisandreli, Frank Gentile, Lamia, and Ehrhardt was "Rejoice," which ended the show.

Lamia said the Chorus sounded best singing this song because, "everyone gets into it."

"It is a very catchy song," said Lisandreli, a junior.

Here is the list of the 30 solists who performed at the show:

Jade Johnson on "Christmas Time is

Here;" Julia Karsten, Nikki Vairo, Nicole Ramirez on "The First Noel;" Lisandreli, Gentile, Cosse on "Go, Tell It on the Mountain;" Sandra Zawadka, Lauren Kim on "O Little Town of Bethlehem;" Jennifer Caceres, Kristine Garcia, Andrea Marie Ilagan, Catherine Esmilla on "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer;" Kim Bernard on "I'll Be Home for Christmas;"

Louis Lamia on "Sleigh Ride;" Claudia Goncalves on "Ave Maria;" Everard Lopez on "The Christmas Song;" Yohan Kim and Jonathan Mangar on "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear;" Kim Falco on "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas;" Katherine Mendez, Kerin Daly on "Night of Silence/Silent Night;" Cailin Chang, Melanie Duran, Ben Josen, Katrinne Mariano on "Good King Wenceslas;" Angela Dumlao on "Christmas Lullaby;" Gabrielle Plaia on "O, Holy Night;" Connor Hubbard on "Ode to Joy."

## Giving thanks for being a part of AM

By Carolina Ortiz '11 and Stacey Nieves '11

Over 1,000 students, alumni, faculty and staff attended the annual Thanksgiving Liturgy on Nov. 26 in the Jack Curran Gym where they experienced the spiritual fulfillment of being part of the Molloy community.

Over 400 alumni followed an annual Molloy tradition by returning for the mass and then visited teachers throughout the school.

The theme of the Thanksgiving Liturgy was one of true humanitarian value: "Every act of kindness brings us closer together as a family in Christ."

The true meaning of this theme, said Campus Ministry Director Mr. Mike Germano, "was showing how we can all do single acts that can have either a subtle or profound effect on people, and this should make us realize how we are all important to each other, especially in the Molloy community."

Mr. Germano said the Liturgy would not have been possible without the hard work of senior Shannon McLoughlin,

all the members of the Liturgy Committee, and Father Frank Shannon, who said the mass.

The Liturgy Committee members seemed pleased with how the Thanksgiving Liturgy turned out.

The students who had speaking parts in the mass were seniors Liz Hardy, Katrinne Mariano, Kisha Laurent, and Regine Marquez.

Faculty, alumni, and students who had roles in the skit were: Mr. Chris Dougherty (Class of 1991), Mr. Brian Klimas (Class of 1998), Aaron Woods and Cristina Penin (both Class of 2008), juniors Kimberly Kiernan and Priscilla Velazquez, and seniors Lais Santos and McLoughlin.

Sophomore Valerie Proano said she liked the Liturgy because, "it was very organized."

Santos said that what she liked best about the Liturgy was the "Six Degrees of Separation" skit because, "it successfully demonstrated how all people are connected, and we should be grateful for that connection."

The Liturgy Committee encourages students to attend the Christmas Liturgy on Friday Dec. 19.

Santos said it would be a "great time to reflect on God," and that "since Christmas is a time of giving, it would be a great chance for students to give

themselves to God."

The Christmas Liturgy, which was still in the planning stage in early December, promises to be just as creative as the Thanksgiving Liturgy.

Father Pat Flanagan is scheduled to say the Christmas mass.



Katrinne Mariano lights candles representing each of Molloy's four grade levels before the Thanksgiving Liturgy. (Photo by Ben Josen)

# New Theater Club grabs attention

By Emily Tansey '09

Molloy's new Theater Arts and Improv Club met for the first time in November to provide a fun, new way for prospective student-actors to get comfortable on stage, said moderator Ms. Mary Ann Safrey.

The club provides students with an opportunity to work on poise, confidence, self-esteem, and body language, she said.

After working with the club, members will be better prepared to audition for roles in one of The Stanner Players' two stage productions each year.

Unlike The Stanner Players, there are no try-outs to become a club member and meetings involve students doing exercises in voice projection, movement, dialogue, monologue, and other fundamentals of stage acting.

The first meeting drew over 50 students from all grade levels and even more students have shown an interest in coming to future meetings.

As a result, Ms. Safrey said meeting days may be separated according to the grade levels of the students involved to accommodate the large number of interested Stanners.

Ms. Safrey said the idea for the club had been floating around Molloy's English Department for a while, but senior Joann Syrek really pushed the issue this year to make it happen.

The seniors that are taking Ms. Safrey's elective Drama course are the first class to dedicate the time and interest that is necessary to get the club started, so it will remain as their legacy, said Ms. Safrey.



Joann Syrek, president of the new Theater Arts and Improv Club, gets laughs during last year's production of "Rumors" by The Stanner Players. (Photo by Emily Balkan)

Junior Erin Brady, who like Syrek is a member of The Stanner Players, said she joined the club with hopes of gaining more experience in improv and acting in general.

What a student learns at Theater Arts and Improv Club can make her calmer

on stage and more interested in participating in future plays, said Brady.

Club President Syrek said the club helps students broaden their theater knowledge and hopes it will continue after the senior class graduates.

Syrek has been a member of The

Stanner Players since she was a sophomore and is glad to have helped Molloy finally add an acting club to its list of extracurricular activities.

"Drama is like being on the track team for me," Syrek said. "It takes up most of my time."

# No Christmas Dance Show

By Tara Gildea '09

The Dance Club, which has sponsored a Christmas Dance Show in the Jack Curran Gym since 2004 featuring performances by the Dance Club, Dance Team, Step Squad, French Club, and Spanish Club, is on sabbatical this year, so the fifth annual Dance Show will have to wait until 2009.

"I am not doing the Christmas Show this year," said Ms. Liz Murdocca, "because I am taking two graduate school classes and, as a result, I do not have time to moderate the Dance Club."

Ms. Murdocca, who is still running the Dance Team this year, was sad to have to give up doing the show this month due to time constraints and promises its return next year.

The previous four Christmas Dance Shows were produced and choreographed through the Dance Club, which is open to all students, unlike the Dance Team which holds tryouts.

The large number of Dance Club participants in the past made it possible to have enough performers to do an

annual Christmas show.

"I do feel bad that the dancers and the other clubs, who have done a tremendous job [in past shows], will not have the opportunity to perform in the show this year," Ms. Murdocca said.

The Step Squad Moderator, Mrs. Anne Lonergan, while also disappointed that there will be no show this year, said that both the Boys and Girls Step Squads would not be adversely affected by the cancellation of the 2008 Christmas Show.

"Both the girls and boys step teams performed last weekend in competitions," she said, referring to the qualifying round of the radio station Hot 97's contest on Dec. 6 when both teams advanced to the finals.

Dance Team member Julie O'Lansen, a senior, is happy the Christmas show will return next year.

"It's an opportunity to showcase the school's variety of talent and the different styles of dance," she said.

Step Squad member Kris Wilson, a junior, agreed with Hanson, adding that he loved to perform for the large audiences the Christmas Show has drawn every year of its existence.



Santa, seen here last year, must wait until next year to again be part of the Dance Club's Christmas Show. (Photo by Blue & White staff)

# Weighted grades proposal is debated

By David Kane '10 and Dan Cosgrove '10

Last month, Stanners learned that the sensational rumor that the Molloy Administration was listening to a student's proposal to change the way Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) grades were weighted was true.

The system, a familiar staple of Molloy academic life, gives Stanners in Honors and AP classes a 1.05% and 1.07% weight, respectively, to their grades in those subjects.

The weight is factored into the report card grades of these students only when it comes to the final average.

On a student's report card, the unweighted grade is shown for each class, regardless of whether the class is Honors, AP, or regular.

Grades for each class are added together and any Honors and AP classes have a 1.05 or 1.07 weight factored in when calculating the overall average.

Senior Andre Amorim presented a plan to change the way grades are weighted to the Advisory Board in November.

The Advisory Board is comprised of the academic department chairs, Assistant Principals Sister Elizabeth Bickar, Mr. Ed Jennings.

The plan, as presented by Student Council Vice President Amorim, would result in lowering the AP weight and eliminating the Honors weight entirely.

Among Amorim's arguments against the weighted grades system were:

\* The Honor Roll, Principal's List and National Honor Society membership are unrealistically large due to the inflated averages Stanners have earned because of their weighted grades.

\* Colleges now ask a high school if it weights its grades and if so, the college calculates a new average from the true grades the student received.

\* Many Stanners now register for Honors classes just to get the weighted grade and not to experience a higher level of learning.

Sister Elizabeth said Amorim's presentation was very well organized, and he had "held his own" when the Advisory Board members asked him many questions throughout the presentation.

However, Sister Elizabeth herself is against the implementation of any changes whatsoever in the way grades are weighted.

Ultimately, the decision rests with Principal Bro. Roy George, Sister Elizabeth said.

"It would be hard to tell students and parents that we would be taking away something that they currently have," she said.

Sister Elizabeth said the weighted grade system has been in existence for 15 to 20 years and was implemented after Mr. Hughes said that when students apply to college, the top schools favored students who took AP and Honors courses.

So the weight was put in place to

compensate students who might get lower grades from taking more difficult classes, as opposed to students who may earn a higher average from taking potentially easier regular classes.

Sister Elizabeth said the goal is for Honors and AP classes to be more challenging for students to justify the weight.

She said it behooves a student to enroll in more difficult classes.

"The tuition is the same either way, so why not get more for your money?" she said.

When students apply for Honors or AP courses for the following school year, their un-weighted academic averages are what is used as a criterion for admission, regardless of the weighted average the student may have.

That way, all the students are competing on an even playing field.

Some students not currently in an AP or Honors course may think that students already in the higher-level courses will get in again next year by virtue of their inflated average but Sister Elizabeth said that is not so.

But Sister admitted that Molloy's weighted grading system is, "a complicated system on the whole. It took me several years to completely understand it myself. Even though it's complex, I feel that it is just, and it rewards hard work."

Ms. Madelyn Dupre, the Foreign Language Department Chairperson and an Advisory Board member, said she is undecided on the matter and that she can see the pros and cons of both sides.

She also commented that Amorim made a good presentation with a well thought out argument.

Ms. Dupre said that the Administration is still discussing the matter and no decision has been made.

Amorim, meanwhile, politely refused to be interviewed for this article.

However, other students were willing to weigh in on his proposal.

Junior Nicholas Scala said, "Absolutely there should be a curve. If students put in more of an effort, then that effort should be rewarded. If the curve is either eliminated or reduced, there is less ambition in students to work harder to get into honors classes."

Junior Nervana Singh agreed with Scala, which supports one of Amorim's reasons to abolish the weight for Honors classes.

She said eliminating weighted grades would remove many Stanners' interest in taking Honors or AP courses.

Why settle for an 80 in an Honors class, she said, when you can get a 90 in regular class?

Singh said that since colleges want students to take Honors and AP classes, Molloy should motivate students to take those classes by maintaining the weighted grade system.

Junior Louis Lamia said that removing the weight would be like, "punishing us for our initiative. It is just silly."

Junior Natalie Paret said, "Having



Stanners check out the many names that fill the Molloy Honor Roll and Principal's List due in part to the weighted grades given to students enrolled in Honors and AP classes. (Photo by Benedict Joson)

different levels of classes can spur regular students to work harder so that in the following year they may be bumped up to an Honors or AP class so they may reap the rewards they deserve!"

Junior Dominique Kalpakidou admitted that perhaps the weight should be lowered a little, but feels that there still should be a distinction among regular, Honors, and AP courses by maintaining the weighted grading system.

Junior Pat Finneran, meanwhile, said

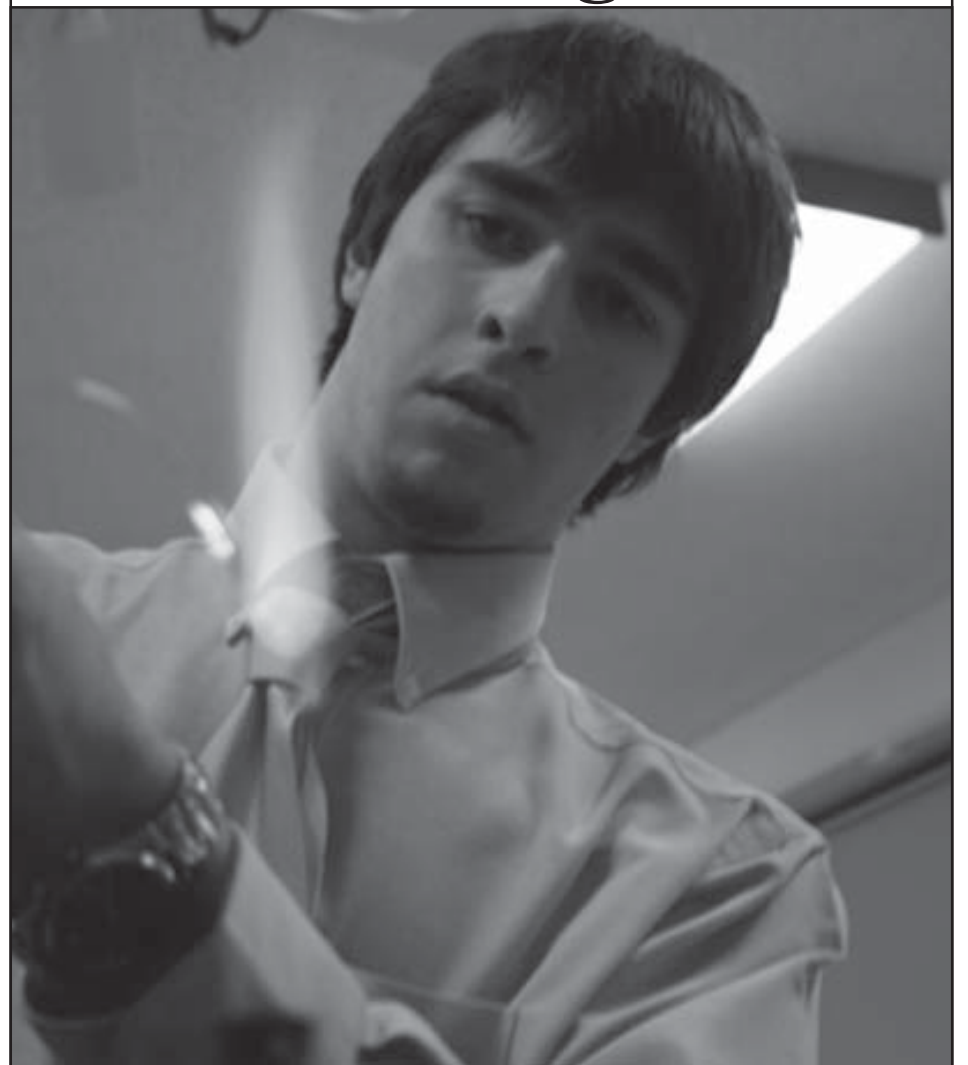
that most Honors and regular courses at Molloy are not that different in content, class work and tests, and so he agreed that this system may be slightly unfair.

But he added that taking away the weight does not fix the problem.

Finneran said the Administration should make sure that teachers are teaching different material according to the level of class that they teach.

"Why punish the students," he said, "when the teachers are at fault?"

## Glass Bending 2008



Senior Kyle Hounsell participates in the Integrated Science Association's annual glass bending experiment in the new Chem Lab on Dec. 2. (Photo by Ben Joson).

# Molloy in ‘Twilight’ zone

By **Jacqueline Cosse '10 and Sarah Conlon '10**

Forty-seven crazed fans, including 12 boys, crowded into Room 318 on Nov. 13 to take part in a discussion about Stephanie Meyer’s hit literary series, “The Twilight Saga,” sponsored by Molloy’s Book Club.

The meeting allowed Molloy’s “Twilighters” to share their opinions on the world renowned series, as well as to compare the four books of the saga.

This year, it’s impossible to walk down the halls of Molloy without seeing someone holding one of the “Twilight” books or hearing the constant chatter about the ever-famous vampire Edward Cullen.

So what’s all the hype about?

The series, which has increased in popularity since the release of the movie version of “Twilight,” tells the riveting story of Bella Swan, an ordinary human girl whose life is forever changed when she falls in love with a captivating and inhumanly beautiful vampire named

Edward Cullen.

Although Edward and his family are not your typical vampire coven, hunting animals instead of humans, there are other vampires that do hunt humans, some of whom target Bella in particular.

Soon Bella is swept up into a surreal world where dreams and reality blend, where the myths and legends she’s always known about come to life, and where nothing is impossible.

“Twilight,” “New Moon,” “Eclipse,” and “Breaking Dawn” follow the ups and downs of Edward and Bella’s relationship as they defy the odds against them in order to stay together.

“It’s like Romeo and Juliet for the 21st Century!” said junior Grace Lisandrelli, who attended the Book Club’s discussion on the “Twilight” series. “The books are wonderfully written and I love the story of unrequited love.”

Book Club Moderator Ms. Mary Pat Gannon, who has read all four of the “Twilight” books, said that she believes the books are so popular

because, “they are well-crafted, and the characters are multi-dimensional.”

She also mentioned that, contrary to the belief that these books have no literary value, the series does in fact have merit to it and that the books are very well written.

During the discussion, students viewed a scene from the movie “Twilight,” and shared what they liked most about the book series.

Topics ranged from expectations for the movie to a debate over Edward Cullen and Jacob Black, the two characters vying for Bella’s affection throughout the novels.

As enjoyable as it was, some Twilighters wished that the discussion could have been more in depth.

“I wish we would’ve talked more about the book itself” said Lisandrelli.

However, sophomore Shailee Shah was happy that the club also discussed the movie at the meeting.

“We discussed the casting of Edward and Bella [in the movie], which I found

to be an interesting discussion because I was actually happy with the people that they’d chosen for the movie,” she said.

The highly anticipated movie version of “Twilight,” which grossed \$70.6 million in its opening weekend alone, met with mixed reactions from fans and critics.

“No movie can capture your own personal view [of a book],” said Ms. Gannon, who also noted that the special effects, which should have carried the movie, were not executed as well as she would have liked.

Shah said she enjoyed the film.

“I have seen the movie twice already,” she said. “I never expected the movie to do that well because the book set up way too high standards. They did the best they could do.”

The Book Club held another meeting to discuss the movie version of “Twilight,” on Dec. 11 so Stanners could further discuss their love of the series.

# Coat Drive not equal to 2007

By **Kaitlin Karcher '12 and Alyssa Dolan '12**

Campus Ministry collected a total of 497 coats, which was 123 shy of the 620 collected last year, in its 2008 Coat Drive last month.

The coats collected during the annual drive go to the Briarwood Shelter with any extra coats sent to its sister shelters around the city.

“Whenever you collect close to 500 coats, it is truly a blessing,” said Campus Ministry Director Mr. Mike Germano. “It is far more than the maximum of 80 coats we used to collect in past years.”

Campus Ministry raised \$2,685 in its homeroom mission collection last month, only \$87 short of last year’s collection of \$2,722.

Fewer coats were donated this year because, Mr. Germano said, “The coats this year were slightly more expensive [for Campus Ministry to buy]. Therefore, there were fewer coats donated.”

Homeroom 2F, with \$248, raised the most money of any homeroom this year, followed by 2K, which raised \$200.

Members of those two homerooms will receive free movie tickets at the end of the year for their generosity.

Five homerooms were able to raise over \$100: 2F, 2K, 1G, 1D, and 2D. 1G raised \$183.20, 1D \$132.79, and 2D \$105.96.

Junior and senior homerooms didn’t raise as much as the ninth and tenth grade homerooms did.

Homeroom 3H was the top junior homeroom, raising \$73.92 and 4L was the top senior homeroom with \$79.76.

Many students helped make the Coat Drive a success with most of the work being done by the seniors who are Campus Ministry leaders.

Senior Regine Marquez said, “My job in the Coat Drive was to use the donated money to buy the coats for the women and children who live in the shelter.”

Marquez said it felt good to help the less fortunate.

“Definitely!” she said. “It feels good to know that these women and children will be warm for the winter for years to come.”

## Ponce wins IM free throw contest

Senior Brian Ponce took home the first place trophy as the winner of the annual Intramural Free Throw Shooting Contest in November in the Jack Curran Gym.

Sophomore Andrew Holman finished

second overall in the competition.

Two members of Homeroom 1E, Geahna London and Messay Kassi, also earned trophies; London as the best girl free throw shooter and Kassi as the top frosh foul shooter.

‘It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas . . .’



Ornaments decorate the cafeteria ceiling. (Photo by Ben Joson)

## Christmas cartoon



By **Victoria Lane**

# New sweaters available for Stanners



Senior Valerie Villanueva, junior Jeanette Ortega, and junior Andrea Marie Ilagan pose with the new Molloy school uniform sweaters in the cafeteria. (Photo by Ben Joson).

**By Kristen Himmelberg '09**

Molloy is offering a more casual addition to the school uniform this winter, a new sweater made of fleece which will be available to students in January, said Mr. Ken Auer, the Assistant Principal for Students.

The new sweater comes in four different styles: pullover; zip-up; vest and pullover with a zip-up neck.

The prices range from \$23.50 to

\$39.50 depending on size and style.

Stanners are very happy about the change in official Molloy outerwear.

"The old sweater is very uncomfortable," senior Jenna Goldbach said. "It is stiff and itchy. I just wear it because I'm cold in the winter and can't wear my sweatshirt to class."

The new, fleece sweaters seem to be much more comfortable than the old sweaters so the old itchiness and

discomfort will no longer be a problem.

Samples of the four new sweater styles have been on display in room 123 since early November.

"There were 500 copies of the order forms with the samples and now there are only a few forms left," said Mr. Auer. "I sent out a couple hundred orders on November 24. Overall, the sweaters seem to be very popular so far."

When the new sweaters finally come in after Christmas break in early January and students start wearing them, it will probably stir even more interest, Mr. Auer said.

The process to get new sweaters was spurred by two seniors who asked about it last year, Mr. Auer said.

The Student Council also had been pushing the Administration to make changes in the school uniform for many years.

"We looked through many different companies' options and didn't really find anything better than the sweater we had already," Mr. Auer said. "Then we got the fleece sample and decided on it because it is a little more casual but still very professional looking."

Now that Molloy had found sweaters that students like, perhaps another complaint could be addressed.

"I really don't like the shirts we have now," said Goldbach. "I wish we could have polo shirts instead. They look a lot better."

The Administration has been looking into getting new shirts just but finding new shirts has turned out to be harder than it was finding new sweaters.

"We don't want to make a change just to make a change," said Mr. Auer. "We want to make a change for the better and so far we haven't found any shirts that seem to be better."

## *Why few seniors on Principal's List?*

**By Staceyann Ramlochan '09**

Despite being one of the largest senior classes in recent years, Molloy's Class of 2009 managed to put only seven students on the Principal's List for the first marking period, an all time low.

The previous low was 11 in the third marking period in 2006 and 2008.

Frosh put the most students on the first marking period's Principal's List with 28, followed by sophomores (19) and juniors (17).

Last year, the Class of 2009 set a school record by placing 54 students on the Principal's List in the third marking period.

So what happened to all those outstanding students this fall?

Aside from the lucky seven, is this a case of early senioritis?

Both Sister Elizabeth Bickar, assistant principal for academics, and Jonathan Mangar, one of the seven seniors who qualified for the List this fall, hope that senioritis is not the predominant factor for this record low.

"I hope the enemy of teachers, senioritis, has not yet started since it usually sets in around prom time," said Sister Elizabeth.

Mangar agreed saying, "I wouldn't call the occasional carefree or relaxed attitude 'senioritis' just yet. But I agree our class is stressed and we all need time to unwind."

Sister Elizabeth said, "a smaller List

[of seniors] is not evidence of senioritis. [Seniors taking] rigorous electives as well as the different teacher requirements and the way they grade," may have contributed to why the elite students in the senior class struggled to match their previous academic achievements.

Mangar, who is proud of his achievement this fall, said he tries to balance course work, which includes two AP classes, with his extracurricular activities.

As for why few of his fellow seniors were able to match his performance, Mangar said, "I think it's because everyone was caught up in the college application process and S.A.T. prep and had less time for regular schoolwork. I heard much more talk about colleges and scholarships than I did about day-to-day work."

"Of course, every year's senior class deals with college applications, but not every class handles them the same way," Mangar said. "Added to that, there are many students in courses like AP Biology, AP Psych, and AP Calculus, which, from what I've heard, are extremely hard and fast-paced."

"I've seen more full schedules this term," he continued. "I think more students have five or six classes now, so the work may be more than it would be next semester, when the majority of students are more likely to have about

four classes a day. Also, there are many unweighted required classes [that seniors take]."

Sister Elizabeth said she is satisfied overall with the academic performance of the senior class, with the exception of the students who failed a class in the first marking period.

"Although it is nice to be on the List, since everyone at Molloy gets into college, not making the List will not keep students out of college," said Sister Elizabeth.

But Mangar reminds seniors that "grades in this semester still count toward college admissions."

Sister Elizabeth hopes that, "students will continue to challenge themselves. After all, the best work of an individual can only be measured against what that individual knows is his or her best."

Mangar said, "more students will be on the List when they have more free time to work with, that is, after college applications are done and the second semester comes with one or two more free periods. Of course, when we're all busy finding prom dates near the end of the third quarter, who knows where the grades will go!"

To earn a place on the Principal's List, a student must attain a 99 or better overall average for the marking period.

Here are the students who qualified for a place on the Principal's List for the first marking period:

**Frosh:** Maverick Alzate; Andreea Arama; Stephanie Cruz; Kristina D'Angelo; Katelyn Dial; Jackelyne Diaz; Alyssa Dolan; Claudia Fernandes; Victoria Goldbach; Thalia Guzman; Thomas Hackimer; Myrna Hanna; Melissa Jo Hernandez; Jennifer Hwu; Christina John; James Kasakyan; Lauren Kelly; Kaitlin Lauria; Kathleen Loftus; Nicole Marino; Maria Palmeri; Edward Pizzo; Margaret Rooney; Thomas Seubert; Niles Uy; Alexandra Woods; Samson Zachariah; Adrienne Zhou.

**Sophomores:** Arleen Aguasvivas; Noel Bello; Amanda Dhaneshwar; Melissa Evelyn; Kanad Ghosh; Juan Gomez; Lance Hipolito; Christina Jarosch; Carolyn Jativa; Navdep Kaur; Sundeep Kaur; Judy Li; Carolina Ortiz; Steven Paciga; Dhandevi Persand; Michal Skowronski; Nancy Strbik; Nader Yamout; Karen Zhou.

**Juniors:** Paul Bakoyiannis; Michael Carraher; Katrina Colletti; Frank Gentile; Sabina Grech; Scott Hounsell; Christopher Hwu; Diana Jaramillo; Augustin Joseph; Louis Lamia; Grace Lisandrelli; Carla Marian; Jeffy Mathew; Brent McDonnell; Andy Singh; Suresh Yhap; Javed Yunus.

**Seniors:** Nicolas Chan; Christopher Kosiewski; Kristen Lasak; Christina Loccisano; Jonathan Mangar; Mary Napolitano; Peter Plaza.

# Stanners win No. 900 for their coach

By Patrick Fava '09

With junior guard Ernest Rouse leading the way with 21 points and senior guard Ryan Dillon and senior forward LeBrandon Smith both adding 17, Molloy's Boys Varsity Basketball Team defeated Msgr. Scanlon 93-53 on Dec. 5 to give Coach Jack Curran his 900th career victory.

Coach Curran was modest about achieving yet another milestone in his Basketball Hall of Fame career, saying, "It's just another victory. When you play enough games and if the teams are good enough, you win some."

Athletic Director Mr. Mike McCleary, who is also a Varsity assistant coach, did Coach Curran's bragging for him.

"This shows he is the best coach in the country and that win No. 900 is just an example of how great a coach he is," Mr. McCleary said.

Molloy opened the season Nov. 29

with a 81-70 victory over Holy Trinity as senior guard Russell Smith led all scorers with 35 points while LaBrandon Smith contributed 22.

Then came the season's second game and the chance for the Stanners to give their coach his 900th victory.

"There wasn't a lot of pressure to win the game versus Scanlon," said Dillon. "Coach did a great job preparing the team for the game."

Dillon said the key to victory was teamwork.

"Russ [Smith] did an excellent job hitting open players to score," Dillon said.

Coach Curran is pleased with the team's performance so far this year and said the key to a successful season will be the team's ability to stay healthy.

He has high expectations and said the play set of starters Russell Smith, LaBrandon Smith, Dillon, Rouse, and senior forward Jin Hong will be vital.

Coach Curran also complimented the play of junior forward Thomas Hoffman and junior guard Duke Stanojevic off the bench.

Dillon is optimistic that the team will be able to achieve its goal, "to make it to the city championship [game] and bring home the title."



Russ Smith leads Molloy this season. (Photo by Blue & White Staff)

# JV Softball's offseason good works



JV softball players like Alanna Gallagher and Marissa Puzino are dedicated to helping others in the offseason. (Photo by Blue & White Staff)

By Melanie Dostis '11

While Molloy's JV Softball Team, coached by Mr. Luis Santos, is preparing itself for a stellar spring season, it is also taking an active role in the community.

Frosh Julianne Tracy, who plays second base, said the decision to get involved in community service activities, "keeps the team together and better

meshed for the season."

Sophomore co-captain Alanna Gallagher, who plays centerfield, added, "plus we get to help people."

Campus Ministry Director Mr. Mike Germano came to the team with ideas on how its members could contribute to the community this year.

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, the team baked

cookies and cupcakes for a bake sale which raised \$1,000 for the cause.

During the November Coat Drive, the team collected over 20 coats to donate to the Briarwood Shelter.

The team put together Operation Christmas Child gift boxes with basic toiletries and toys to donate to underprivileged children throughout the world.

The team's next bit of community service will be to take part in the Challenger Program.

The idea, presented by Mr. Santos, is to have the team teach the basic fundamentals of softball to autistic children.

"We care about people around us and we like to help," said sophomore co-captain Jackie Perillo.

Perillo, a pitcher who also plays first base and centerfield, said that being a member of the JV Softball Team is not just about sports.

"It's based on being a well rounded person," she said.

The frosh and sophomore girls on the 2008-09 JV Softball Team are the first to take such an interest in lending a hand to the community.

As the girls help those in need, they

also formed much stronger bonds with their teammates.

"We were pretty close except for a couple of girls," said Perillo. "But after we baked together and just hung out, we got closer as we talked about the same interests."

Perillo said when teammates are more comfortable with each other, they play better.

But the offseason is not just for helping others, as these Stanners also are spending time with their coach this winter to make themselves better players in the spring.

Every week Mr. Santos goes over a specific area of the game. The following week the team participates in a quiz to demonstrate that it has understood.

"They always make me proud," said Mr. Santos. "They do the right thing for themselves, as well as the right thing for others."

The team, which lost in the city championship finals last year, hopes that its offseason activities will make the team stronger on the field and more together off the field.

"We trust each other more now," said Tracy.

# Collins, Catera lead Varsity Boys at Ram Relays

Juniors Sean Collins and Matt Catera were winners at Molloy's first indoor track and field meet of the season, the Ram Relays hosted by Fordham Prep on Dec. 6.

Collins won the varsity boys 55-meter hurdles in a time of 7.9 seconds while Catera won the varsity boys high jump with a leap of 5-foot-8.

Frosh Casey Collins was a double winner for the Molloy girls team, winning the frosh 55-meter hurdles in 10.8 seconds and frosh 400-meter run in 66.2 seconds.

Other frosh girls winners were

Marissa Sblendorio (shot put) and the 800-meter relay team of Nicole Kelly, Lauren Kelly, Cathryn Brown, and Ashley Brown.

The lone sophomore girls winner was shot putter Stefania Vendome.

Here are Molloy's results:

## Girls

**Frosh 55-meter hurdles:** 1. Casey Collins, 10.8; 2. Cathryn Brown, 10.9.

**Varsity 55-meter hurdles:** 2. Stephanie Halvax, 9.7; 4. Lauren Ciuffo, 10.6; 5. Melissa Alke, 10.7.

**Frosh 400-meters:** 1. Casey Collins, 66.2.

**Frosh Distance Medley Relay:** 3. Molloy

(Pauline Stefanowski, Tiana Salas-Ali, Kathleen Loftus, Kathleen Woods), 14:30.2.

**Frosh 800-meter relay:** 1. Molloy (Nicole Kelly, Lauren Kelly, Cathryn Brown, Ashley Brown), 2:04.6.

**Frosh high jump:** 2. Ashley Mayer, 4-4; 3. Marilena Orfanos 3-9.

**Frosh shot put:** 1. Marissa Sblendorio, 23-11; 5. Kaitlin McGrory, 20-5.

**Soph shot put:** 1. Stefania Vendome, 25-7; 2. Catherine Terranova, 25-1.

**Varsity shot put:** 2. Andrea Martinez, 30-4; 3. Adara Simonelli, 30-2.

## Boys

**Soph 55-meters hurdles:** 2. Connor Davan, 10.1; 5. Mark Liubicich, 10.8.

**Varsity 55-meters hurdles:** 1. Sean Collins, 7.9.

**Frosh 800-meter relay:** 4. Molloy (Andres Lezcano, John Varsam, Pawel Sawicki, Robert Rossi), 1:54.7.

**Soph 800-meter relay:** 3. Molloy (Connor Davan, Matthew Lambert, Kernet Dugue, Daniel Acosta), 1:46.8.

**Soph distance medley relay:** 4. Molloy (Brian Woods, Kernet Dugue, Patrick Cooney, Daniel Acosta), 12:27.0.

**Varsity distance medley relay:** 5. Molloy (Sean Collins, Angelo Lees, Joseph Mayer, Devin Chowski), 11:31.0.

**Frosh shot put:** 3. Patrick McGibbon, 35-8.

**Varsity shot put:** 2. Stephen Lewis, 43-11.

**Frosh high jump:** 2. Marc Ochs, 5-2.

**Varsity high jump:** 1. Matt Catera, 5-8; 2. Dan Waters, 5-6.