

The

Reckoner

of Marc Garneau C.I.

Hot or Not: The 2015 Winterfest Review



This 12 February, students engaged in a variety of activities for MGCI’s 2015 Winterfest. Photo courtesy of Teodora Blidaru

by XIN NIU ZHANG and TAKHLIQ AMIR
with assistance from Sheila Balu, Amy Chen, Rebecca Wong, and Julie Xiao

Trampoline

Trampolines are, objectively, a total blast. Students were taken to the Sky Zone in Mississauga and, according to Morris Chen, Grade 11, one of the highlights from this year’s trip was getting to play trampoline volleyball—which turns out to be not that much different from regular volleyball, except, well, you’re on a trampoline, and fouls are probably a lot more common. Did I mention you’re on a trampoline?

Overall Rating: 5/5

Skating

Skating at Harbourfront Centre is a nice go-to option as long as you have friends, know how to skate, and don’t mind the cold.

Anyone who’s been skating before knows that, really, that’s all there is to it—skating in circles for four hours, talking with friends between your chattering teeth, contemplating your place in the universe.

This activity is not recommended for rookie skaters (no lessons were provided), the weak at heart (with wind chill, temperatures dipped below -30°C), and those who despise the directionlessness of “hanging out.”

Overall Rating: 3.5/5



Pottery

Pottery at the Harbourfront Centre is recommended for those lost arts-and-crafts souls who don’t mind getting their hands dirty. Students toured the centre, looked at works of art, saw craftspeople in action, and attended a workshop. They were given the opportunity to craft their own vessel out of clay.

Students had fun letting their creative spirit loose. The only mild complaint was that more time would have been ideal to add more detail to their masterpieces, but overall, students were immensely satisfied with the day.

Word is, one guy even made a rocket.

Overall Rating: 4.5/5

Snow Tubing at The ROC

Simply put, snow tubing at The ROC was fun. For two hours, students tubed down four slopes made only accessible to MGCI students. Though there were many positive comments, many participants would have preferred the event to be longer.

Tubing styles varied - some enjoyed the slopes for larger groups, while others found the individual or pairs slopes more to their taste.

“When we were traveling in pairs, we put our legs on the other person’s tube and then held each other’s boots instead of handles. It was awesome; we kept spinning round and round,” said Rabia Mahmood, Grade 12.

Tubes, helmets, and a pizza lunch were provided, so what more could you ask for? According to one Grade 12 student, “One improvement could be the slopes. The higher, the better.”

Overall Rating: 4.5/5

Skiing at Horseshoe Valley Ski Resort

Pros of the trip: lessons are provided for beginners, students have the run of the resort from their arrival at 9 am to their departure at 3 pm, and skiing is, well, fun. Mostly everyone who attended this activity this year went away extremely satisfied.

If you ignore the freezing winter temperatures (the cold is just part of the experience, right?) there was really only one downside to this trip: the long bus ride. Students had to arrive at the school at the ungodly hour of 6:45 am, and were due to return by 6 pm. However, partway into the drive back, it was discovered that a Grade 11 student had been left at the ski resort, and the bus had to double back to retrieve him.

Final verdict—Horseshoe Valley is a must-go, but be warned that Marc Garneau takes the maxim “Leave no man behind” very seriously.

Overall Rating: 5/5

Toronto Zoo

Though a cold weather alert was in effect, the temperature didn’t deter brave students from wandering the zoo.

“It was an awesome trip and I really liked how they gave us a lot of independence on the trip. It’s not every day you can see the animals without having hundreds of people shoving you aside and trying to take pictures of the animals,” said Sophia Song, Grade 11.

One Grade 12 student, Rida Fatima, even claims to have seen an alligator head emerge from an egg.

See WINTERFEST on P4

The Resurgence of

DECA MGCI

by SUSIE LIU

On 6 and 7 February, the annual DECA Ontario Provincial competition was held at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Toronto. In total, over 6000 students participated in the competition this year, divided into 56 different events. Some travelled from as far away as Kitchener and Waterloo. The majority of competitors were involved in oral events, which involve an oral business roleplay and a written exam.

The provincial competition was a qualifier for the International Career Development Conference (ICDC) held in Orlando this April, with the top 6 competitors or teams in each category advancing. The top 6 were asked whether they would be attending the ICDC immediately after the awards ceremony, and if qualifying competitors turned down the opportunity, the next competitor or team would be offered their spot. As a result, several competitors who ranked 7th, 8th, or 9th qualified to compete in Orlando.

12 out of the 35 competitors that advanced to provincials from MGCI won awards, and they are listed as follows:

- Yiqun Zhang – 5th overall – Retail Merchandising Series (RMS)
- Sherrie Cheng – 7th overall – Apparel and Accessories Marketing (AAM)
- Vanessa Du & Susie Liu – 7th overall - Hospitality Services Team Decision Making (HTDM)
- Meagan Wan – 9th overall – Principles of Marketing (PMK)
- Cindy Zeng & Kaarthic Pulogarajah – 9th overall – Marketing Communications Team Decision Making (MTDM)
- Parnika Godkhindi – Top 10 Overall – Human Resources Management (HRM)
- Richard Wu – Top 15 Written Exam – Financial Services Team Decision Making (FTDM)
- Ryan (Chiung-Ting) Lin – Top 15 Roleplay 1 – Marketing Management Services (MMS)
- Lily Song – Top 15 Roleplay 1 – Human Resources Management (HRM)
- Tianyu Lu – Top 15 Roleplay 2 – Accounting Applications (ACT)

Three members from Marc Garneau CI qualified for ICDC: Yiqun Zhang, Sherrie Cheng, and Meagan Wan. Two teams, Vanessa and Susie, and Cindy and Kaarthic, narrowly missed qualifying for the international competition, placing 7th and 9th

respectively; no HTDM teams turned down their offer, and only two MTDM teams did so.

Marc Garneau CI has improved significantly from the previous year. At the 2014 provincial competition, only one student, Ryan Lin, advanced to ICDC, compared to the three who did so this year. In the 2014 provincial competition, Ryan and Parnika Godkhindi were the only MGCI students to place top 10 in their respective categories. This year, eight students managed to do so.

At the 2012 provincial competition, seven students from MGCI qualified for ICDC. The chapter’s performance is now heading back in the direction of its former success. It may also be noted that the size of MGCI’s chapter doubled this year, with 53 students being accepted in September as compared to approximately 25 in years previous. Most students who won awards this year are returning members whose performance improved, however.

Chapter members and executives attributed this year’s success to a greater amount of preparation. Since September, DECA members have met in the library nearly every week to practise roleplays. DECA MGCI president Vanessa Du estimated that the turnout for these meetings was typically approximately 30 members. Independent preparation for both the oral roleplay and written exam was also emphasized; many members, including those who qualified for ICDC, felt that this made a key difference.

With regard to the future, Vanessa felt optimistic, citing that the Grade 9s and 10s showed a great deal of promise. She credits this year’s chapter members for their hard work. “They’re the real MVPs.” ■



Over 6000 people travelled to the Sheraton Hotel to compete in the DECA competitions. Photo courtesy of Yiqun Zhang

Bidding Farewell to a Familiar Face

by JACKIE HO

Strolling through the cafeteria or halls on any given afternoon, you may have come face to face with a smiling Jason Willoughby. Known by students simply as “Jason”, he had been a caretaker at Marc Garneau CI since October 1991. After twenty-three and a half years, Jason has been promoted to Chief Caretaker at West Preparatory Junior Public School, an elementary school in the Forest Hill neighbourhood. His last day at MGCI was this past Friday 13 February.

Jason first came to the school as a substitute in 1991 for a caretaker on long term disability, and stayed on as the position was vacated. He remembered his first day at the school, back when the second and third floors had no walls, and all he saw was “a sea of faces” (the school had an open concept design until a major renovation in 1998). The school was much smaller then; there were only around fifty teachers. Jason observed that the greatest change over his years at MGCI was the shifting demographic of the Flemington Park and Thorncliffe neighbourhoods. He recalled, “There was always a large demographic of Asian

students, but also many students that were European, mainly Greeks. Today, the students are Afghan, Somalian, or Pakistani. The faces I see have really changed.”

We often forget the work that goes on behind the scenes everyday as messes are mopped up, halls are swept, floors are washed, and garbage cans emptied. It is the dedication of the caretaking staff that makes going to school in a clean and safe environment possible. As a last message to students, Jason said: “Realize that Garneau is a great place. Take pride in the school. A lot goes into maintaining it for you guys. Most of the time, it’s done with a happy face. It’s become more than a job - it’s a part of my life.”

Jason was a familiar face to students, with many describing him fondly. Maria Kashif, President of MGCI’s Student Council, shared: “The best thing [about him was] that you could have a conversation with him while he was working and he never made it feel like you were bothering him.”

When asked to comment on how he felt about his promotion, Jason had this

to say: “If it wasn’t for the promotion with more money and responsibilities, I wouldn’t want to leave. It’s really bittersweet. I’ve spent more than half my life here.”

We wish Jason the very best in his new position! ■



Jason was a friendly and familiar face to many MGCI students. Photo: Jackie Ho

In Reaction to

Charlie Hebdo

by DAVID HAO

The January Charlie Hebdo shootings have stirred up a great deal of controversial discussion surrounding the issues of free speech, Islamophobia, radicalism and censorship. The “reasonable person” may, at a glance, quickly condemn the Islamic radicals. After all, how can one rationally defend murder, censorship and radicalism? Yet, the implications behind the attacks are much deeper. It is easy to quickly assign blame and move on, but this pleads ignorance of the root of the problem. So what should we be taking away from the reaction to these attacks?

During the second week of February, The Reckoner conducted a small-scale survey within MGCI to gauge reaction and response to the attacks.

Most students surveyed were aware of the events and details surrounding the attack. The majority of participants came to the conclusion that the

attacks had a negative impact on the image of Muslims around the world, although their opinions on what this impact was differed. One participant commented that Islam is often portrayed in media as a violent and extremist religion, and these attacks only reinforced that image. Another expressed that the attacks didn’t do much at all to change individual beliefs: “The people who believe Muslims do bad things will still believe so and the people who believe it’s just extremists will also still believe the same. It’s recreated the controversy around Islam but may have not added anything that wasn’t there before.”

One student expressed his concern that the line between free speech and responsible speech is often blurred.

See CHARLIE HEBDO on P3



The Story of Sherbourne
by ANANNA RAFA



I. Flower Market



II. BBQ and Smoke

The Sound of Sound

by CINDY ZENG

“Do you hear that?”

“Hear what?” The man asked. He tilted his head almost imperceptibly, as if that would somehow amplify the echoes in the room, and straightened his collar with a practiced ease. His dark eyes flitted from side to side, watching warily for nothing in particular.

“It’s always there,” his friend continued, a small man who seemed to crumple inwards with every breath he took. “You can’t really hear it, anymore, unless you listen real hard. But it’s still there.” One more slow ragged breath and he paused, his thin frame trembling. “That buzz.”

The man narrowed his eyes. “Well, yes,” he said, hesitating. “I do hear it.”

A low humming sounded in the room, droning softly and hypnotically, incessantly. It came from the whirring of the computers; the shifting of gears, turning and spinning, the clicks of the keys. He’d asked about them - the computers - when he was a kid. What are they? What’s that sound?

His father had called it “progress.” To be sure, that was the general consensus. The computers had appeared only seventy or so years ago, evolving from met-

al bricks to sleek, modernized machines within a mere decade. Their speed improved tenfold every year. Their memory capacity grew exponentially. Eventually, they took over most people’s jobs. Human error was eradicated, mathematicians became three times as efficient, and national security became incredibly secure. After all, with computers, people could be monitored 24/7: video surveillance in every room, robot police watching every square foot in the world. It was revolutionary.

He shook his head, and looked at his friend. “But it’s just the computers. They’re here to protect us.”

“God, I know. Protect, protect, serve, serve. And all the while, that damned buzz still ringing in my ears. How long has it been since you’ve heard silence?” He stopped, looking appraisingly at the ground. “You can’t be more than twenty years old. You’ve probably never heard it, ever.”

The man didn’t know what to say to that. “It’s just silence. There’s nothing special about it...”

“Bah!” his friend grimaced, and spat at the ground. “Silence wasn’t anything

special when we could get it, no problem. But we need it. I need it. I think I’m going crazy. All day, every day - the chattering of voices, the clicking of the computers, car honks, the buzz, the whir, the glass clinking, teeth grinding, scratching, sliding, the sound of sound, and to no end, no pause, just on and on and on and on.” He started shivering, pacing anxiously around the room, eyeing the sleek machines working in the corners. “For God’s sake, I haven’t been calm in three decades!”

He turned around wildly, coat billowing behind him. “You don’t understand. You’re looking at me like I’m a madman. I suppose I am. No one thinks it’s strange, having all these computers around. Not anymore.”

The computers continued to hum. “I get it. You know, it’s progress. But it used to be that you could walk for ten minutes and read a book or something in complete, utter serenity. Total quiet. There’s nothing like it. But there’s no alone time now, not in these days.”

The man tilted his head. “What do you mean? We’re alone right now.”

“No,” his friend said bitterly. “We’re

never alone. The computers are always with us. Watching us, listening to us... can’t do anything without them knowing about it.” He fidgeted, casting nervous glances at the machinery around them, and whispered in a dry, raspy breath, “Sometimes I think they’re actually sentient. Like they’re plotting for total human destruction.”

Again and again, computers were thrown against the wall mercilessly - glass cracked, hardware demolished. He could only watch in horror as the room was completely destroyed.

Crash. Smash. Boom. Crash. Smash. Boom. Crash.

A thin layer of dust and plastic settled over the wreckage. He heard his friend cough once, twice, before croaking out one word that seemed to hold impossible amounts of both suffering and triumph: “Finally.”

And then he realized.

The humming had stopped.

This was the sound of silence.

■

Where’s the whole in my head?

by DHIYA JAGOTA

I think I am leaking. I haven’t told anybody. I mean...what would they think? The first time I felt it, I was in chemistry. The teacher was talking about reactive elements or redox equations, I can’t completely recall. I felt it: little droplets of water on my head. Obviously, my first instinct would be to check the ceiling, but, I couldn’t find any holes. I checked Shania’s head. I checked Jasper’s head. No drops there. *It’s just sweat, it’s just sweat.*

It wasn’t just sweat. The leakage continued and grew worse. Things started... well... coming out. I woke up one day and I found a partial derivative beside me. It was disgusting. It was all covered in goo and the x and y were sprawled out against each other. Oh, what a sight for the eyes. Then, the other day while I was playing basketball, I found a *qui*. A *Qui*! A single word! Just a random, old, single word! I mean, I don’t even pay attention in French class. I hardly ever come across *quis*. That was when I knew something was wrong. I had to fix it.

I tried everything. I ran my fingers through my hair and around my head incessantly. I anticipated the drops. I hoped for the drops. While most kids dreaded lice check, I looked forward to it. *This time they’ll find something. I’ll finally be able to put a stopper through that frustrating hole.* Then came the hat phase: fedoras, beanies, berets, baseball. You name it. I even put globs of tape on my head. Just wishing. Just wishing.

Nothing worked. All that resulted from my brilliant shenanigans was major hat head and early signs of male pattern baldness.

Sometimes I wonder if there are tiny people following me. They could be staging this whole thing. Crazy, isn’t it? The thoughts. I guess people go insane in solitary. I could be walking down the hallway with bits of Columbia leaking out. Scraps fall to the ground just like the actual spacecraft. Nobody notices. They all just walk past, tripping on pieces of Columbia.

I guess it’s me and Columbia. Columbia and me. I like the ring of it. It feels permanent: an idea that could last forever in my brain. Could.

I guess it’s just me and... who was I just talking about? Or was it a *what*? Well, whatever pronoun it was, it doesn’t really matter. It’s invisible now, like black ice on a winter’s day.

I guess it’s just m-, is that an e? What a random l!t!t*r. What a random l!tt...l!t...l!t!t*r.

Oh no.

I n**d to say som*thing b*for* I run out of...? At l*ast it’s not as common as... oh pl*as* don’t l!t that b* an n. At l*ast I still hav* four vow*ls l!ft. I must say who I am...a. ejna. enja. ejan. eajn. eanj. enaj. hne. Then came the hat phase: fedoras, beanies, berets, baseball. You name it. I even put globs of tape on my head. Just wishing. Just wishing.

■

jena.jean. Hmm, sounds familiar.

Have something to say?

Join The Reckoner.

Applications for The Reckoner are open again at thereckoner.ca/join-staff We are looking for enthusiastic and thoughtful writers, artists, and outreach staff. We’ve shortened the form, so now there’s no excuse - what are you waiting for?

The Reckoner	
<i>of Marc Garneau C.I.</i>	
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www.thereckoner.ca

Tree Climbing

by MOUJAN SADERI

Last Sunday I happened upon a pine,
And began to climb the tree.
I climbed until my friends below
Had all forgotten me.

I climbed until I met the birds
Whose silence is a drought,
Oh beauty, hope, and all the things
I could not live without.

I met the wind who roams and runs
Like a captive newly freed,
But who wishes he could take some time
To stop,
To rest,
To breathe.

I climbed until I met the sky,
And the air began to thin,
I heard rain clouds singing softly,
As my head began to spin.

I climbed until I met the stars,
Who whispered gentle prose.
Their light filled me with comfort,
As my eyes began to close.

Last Sunday I happened upon a pine,
And as I climbed the tree,
I met the inky void of death,
And I was truly free.



EDITORIAL

Standing Up to Terror

CHARLIE HEBDO
Continued from P1



ASK THE RECKONER

What is the building featured in The Reckoner picture (Facebook profile picture, and also next to the title in print) - Anonymous

Hey there!

The specific building that is featured in The Reckoner’s logo is not representative of anything physically related to The Reckoner, and is actually meant to look like a boring old apartment building. It is the antithesis of The Reckoner, showing how life can be so dull and void of originality. The goal of The Reckoner is to change this, by empowering the voices of individuals and promoting the diverse interests, culture, and opinions of those within and outside of Marc Garneau CI.

For more information on the history of The Reckoner, take a peek at the Manual of Style and Content (MOSAC) on our site.

Debating whether I should look into dating or focus more on school. Any ideas? - Single but ready to mingle

Focus on school. In fact, you should be fully focused on school already because your future might just depend on these few crucial years. Dating might be fun, but don’t let it distract you from the importance of having strong marks and an amazing application for college or university. And you may feel that you can juggle your bae and school, but take some time to think about what you are really willing to give up for your lover. Whether it be money, sleep, time with your friends, or good marks, you will end up sacrificing something in the long run. That’s not to say that there is anything wrong with liking someone in high school. It happens. But remember that dating isn’t a competition. Don’t date just for the sake of dating, wait until you find the right person. You’ll know when you do.

On a side note, if you are looking into dating, take another step back and look in a mirror. Will someone actually fall for you?

If you seek counsel from The Reckoner like the individuals above, send us a question at www.thereckoner.ca/ask-thereckoner



Illustration: Joy Wang

Numerous students commented that just because free speech is a universal right, it doesn’t give people the right to slander or otherwise intentionally offend others. A student commented, “I don’t think that abusing another religion and calling it free speech is right, but, in no way should this be an excuse to use violence and pick up weapons and kill people because killing doesn’t solve a problem, it creates one.” Another expressed his prediction that Western governments would take this as an opportunity to impose new censorship laws.

The vast majority of students put the responsibility for the attacks on the radicals. However, numerous students commented that Charlie Hebdo was not without fault, as their actions were provocative and unnecessary. A few individuals argued that both sides were equally responsible, with the attacks being retaliation to slander and mockery.

Although participants were promised anonymity, many students were uncomfortable with sharing their personal opinions on a sensitive issue ripe with the possibility of public backlash. Ironically, it is this very form of self-censorship that we are attempting to stand up against. Political responses to the terrorism appear willing to treat free speech as a casualty.

Many governments around the world have pushed legislation that would impede free speech, citing the Charlie Hebdo attacks and past terrorism incidents as support for their

actions. In France, an aggressive anti-terror law was immediately introduced following the Paris incident, granting authorities the power to monitor suspicious citizens through wiretapping or location tagging. Additionally, authorities are allowed to detain suspicious individuals without evidence, keep surveillance over the internet and social media, and censor websites deemed inappropriate without a court order.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper recently proposed Bill C-51. Similar to the anti-terror law in France, this revision of the Anti-Terrorism Act first imposed following 9/11 would give the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) the authority to suppress communications deemed a threat to public security, as well as criminalizing the expression of statements that promote and advocate terrorism. People suspected of being a threat to Canada could be detained without evidence. This induction of censorship would effectively be a direct attack on free speech. Arguably, it bridges on violating the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Moreover, the aim of such legislation is misguided.

While the preservation of free speech is paramount, it is important to realize that the primary goal of the radicals was never to impose censorship. Rather, their goal was to make our society more hostile to those they desire to recruit. They want people to blame the average Muslim for the actions of a few. By breeding this sort of bigotry in the West, it gives radical platforms credibility for recruitment. These effects of anti-religious and xenophobic statements is ultimately what results in controversy over the extent of how far free speech can go.

As a result, it is integral that blame is not extrapolated from the radicals to the Islamic religion. Sadly, there is already evidence of this happening. Following the attacks, a record 25,000 people participated in an anti-Islam rally in the German city of Dresden. Many have called on Muslims to apologize for the attacks, but they are not responsible and should not be held responsible for the actions of a small

group of radicals. What we must remember is that freedom applies to everyone, arguably towards religious freedom and expression than towards the works of a satirical magazine whose work borders on hate speech. Pressuring a group towards a certain response operates with the same underlying intention of restricting free speech as the radicals.

The legislation that governments are pushing to “protect their people” merely propagate this effect. Instead of trying to isolate minorities and encourage the profiling of specific demographics, we should embrace greater cultural diversity and acceptance. Bill C-51 only serves to divide Canada,

which stands as one of the most multicultural nations in the world. Terrorism such as the Charlie Hebdo incident or the Ottawa Parliament Hill shootings should instead serve as a launching point for the discussion of fair and equal treatment of every culture. The feeling of inclusion would have a much greater effect on combating hatred against society than ostracism of those already at risk. If we wish to preserve free speech and everything else freedom stands for, we cannot allow the foundation of equality and fair treatment that these monuments stand upon to be shaken by terror. ■

Welcome to Canada’s Healthcare System

by CATHY ZHANG



Malignant Motivations

OP-ED by VICTOR YU

As high school students mature through their experiences, they realize that the future is coming at them faster than they expected, and it’s not looking pretty. Jobs? Scholarships? Ivy League universities? The competition for such desirables is now higher than ever, and students are racking their brains for new ideas to impress universities and employers. Students are no longer motivated by their own passions, but instead by what they think is publicly admirable. Instead of starting a club dedicated to Sudoku, you may have joined the more respectable charity club because it looks better on your resumé. Though the latter seems nobler on paper, promoting your love of number puzzles is arguably more valuable to the school community. The passion in the past that drove students to pursue their dreams is no longer a reality, replaced by the lukewarm attitudes of students today.

Nowadays, simply performing well in school is no longer enough. Community involvement is more of a necessity now than ever, but the verification of this involvement is often shaky at best. Unlike awards or grades, unique social involvement is not easily quantifiable. How can someone differentiate a student who actively contributes to a club

from a student who only occasionally attends meetings? This motivates students to take a lazy approach to social involvement: why actually participate if you can claim that you did so regardless? All too often, students are taking advantage of the lack of reference checks to embellish their applications with overstated accomplishments.

The honour system just isn’t worked anymore. With some youth being so outstanding, there is now more motivation than ever for students to stretch the truth and be dishonest on applications for scholarships, universities, and special programs. After all, the odds of facing the consequences are as rare as finding a needle in a haystack, with so many students lying and getting away scot-free. It’s a vicious cycle of competition that will get out of hand, and something needs to be done.

Unfortunately, it is not as simple as instructing everyone to be fair on their resumes – that would just allow the remaining cheaters to win, and cheaters aren’t supposed to prosper. The real power to solve this problem is in the hands of those who handle these applications for special opportunities. They need to tear down the sense of security applicants have when they act dishonestly by bringing down the hammer on fraudulent applicants, no matter how insignificant their lies are. Wise application reviewers have already stepped up their game, quizzing applicants about knowledge they claim to possess or asking for details about their involvements at interviews. Applicants must be reminded that applications are meant to be an accurate representation of their achievements and accomplishments,

and strictly that.

Ultimately, it is up to individuals themselves to take the high road. There are more ways to demonstrate creativity and passion than being deceitful to match the achievements of another person. Instead of being an apathetic participant in causes you have no interest in, follow your passions. They will motivate you to work hard to demonstrate your true capabilities in a fair, honourable

way. You will gain respect for who you are, rather than for a superficial image of yourself that was never a reality.

So the next time you go to claim that you’re involved in five school clubs that you can’t even recall the names of, take a step back. Ask yourself what you can and want to do to build your character and contribute to your community, not what you can pretend to do just to sugar-coat your applications. ■



Comic: Boshen Cui

Do you have a response to an article in this issue? Make your voice heard! Contact us at editor@thereckoner.ca.

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NEWS

Winter Fun at Winterfest

WINTERFEST
Continued from P1

It was the perfect day to visit the Toronto Zoo. Humphrey, the zoo’s baby polar bear, was spending one of his last few days in the zoo. CP24, Toronto mayor John Tory, and other news channels arrived for the memorable occasion. Good luck in the future, baby Humphrey!

Overall Rating: 3.5/5
First Aid & CPR Training

In case of emergency, CPR and First Aid are important skills to have.

Students who attended were impressed with the instructor, who was a firefighter. She taught them about life-saving as a profession.

“I had the opportunity to learn firsthand about how to save lives, and the current techniques to employ when someone is choking or not breathing. This could really be a useful skill in the future, in case it is ever needed,” said Justina Ilevbare, Grade 12.

Suggestions for future improvements included having more demonstrations to reinforce ideas taught during the session.

Overall Rating: 4/5

Rinx

Students were given the opportunities to play laser tag, mini golf and a game of bumper carts. However, students felt that the availability of free choice led to long lineups and the inability to try every activity. Though it was fun, students felt that there were better options available.

Overall Rating: 4/5

HoopDome

A faction of ball-loving students was taken to Toronto’s very own HoopDome, described (by its own website) as “Canada’s premier multi-court basketball only facility.” Students on this trip played basketball for about 3 to 4 hours.

It was a fun and fantastic workout—which made the lack of provisions a common source of distress.

“What could have been improved was the snack situation,” says Vasu Dhirar, a Grade 12 student on the trip.

“They should provide free Gatorade,” says Prince Kamanyi, Grade 10.

Dhirar pleads, “Order a pizza or something.”

Overall Rating: 4/5

Rock Climbing

At the Toronto Climbing Academy, students climbed walls, and contemplated the meaning of life. They also learned to tie proper knots and to belay each other in teams of three.

Students praised the excellent guidance and demonstrations provided by the instructors. However, since a lot of time was spent on getting equipment and learning safety procedures, some students wished they were allowed more time on the walls. Regardless, students with all levels of rock climbing ability overcame new challenges and had fun doing it.

Overall Rating: 4/5



Bowling

Bowling in groups of five, students strengthened friendships and formed new bonds while surrounded by the lyrical sounds of falling white pins.

Attendees praised the low cost and the sheer, simple fun of a good old bowling alley, as well as the unique opportunity to observe their teachers having fun and channeling the raw, primal spirit of competition.

“It’s pretty refreshing to see your teachers in their natural state, and how their demeanour can change pretty drastically,” says Aahan Rashid, Grade 12. “There was screaming abound. The enthusiasm from a successful strike was always in the air.”

Overall Rating: 3.5/5

Mini Indy

This popular activity gives students the opportunity to go go-kart racing and play glow-in-the-dark mini golf. Though that is guaranteed fun, not everything was smooth sailing.

According to one unhappy camper, “right from the morning, everything was disorganized and chaotic.” The bus arrived late, no disciplinary action was given to students who hogged the go-kart track, and miscalculations led to the pizza being distributed unevenly.

Grouses the dissatisfied student, who shall remain anonymous, “What could have been better? Everything.”

Other attendees were more forgiving.

“Maybe the organization of the teams could’ve been better,” admits one student. “It’s understandable, though. Forty students is a lot to look after, especially if they’re all so eager to get on the track.”

Overall Rating: 2.5/5

TIFF Bell Lightbox

This event is relatively new to the Winterfest scene—and, this year, was a resounding success. In this unique workshop, students were led through the basic process behind making a film.

Students wrote scripts, voted on their favourite one, and then filmed that script using professional equipment. Each student became comfortable with their role in the film crew, whether they were directing, working with the cameras, acting, or operating professional sound equipment.

Steven Spielberg would be proud.

Overall Rating: 4.5/5

CN Tower

A simple trip ideal for students who—for shame—have never visited the CN Tower.

Students walked around downtown Toronto, checked out the view from the famous CN Tower glass floor, and watched a video about the revolution of Toronto streetcars. New heights of excitement were surely reached.

Overall Rating: 4/5

ROM

Students and teachers went on a guided museum tour that brought them from dinosaurs to Egyptian mummies to the history of armour. Also, rocks!

“My favourite part was going to see all the precious gems that the ROM had,” says Robert Lao. “I especially enjoyed seeing my birthstone.”

Overall Rating: 4.5/5

Food Tour

The food tour was the Winterfest option for true Torontonians—a walking food tour in -30 °C weather, celebrating our metropolis values of gluttony and multiculturalism. Students roamed St. Lawrence market and sampled foods ranging from Toronto’s renowned peameal bacon, to Ukrainian pierogi, to fancy cheeses that no one really knows the names of.

Overall Rating: 4.5/5

Porter Airlines

With only five students attending, the Billy Bishop Airport tour was one of the most exclusive trips Winterfest offers. Students visited the hangars, hung out at the on-site fire station and were given opportunities to try on a full set of firefighter gear. They also checked out the inside of the air traffic control tower, and relaxed for a bit inside a live airplane right before the passengers began to board.

Perhaps most excitingly, students were driven to the airport by Garneau’s own PC Sirbos (in his police van!) and later got to take the fire station’s fire trucks (worth upwards of \$1 million each) for a joyride around the island.

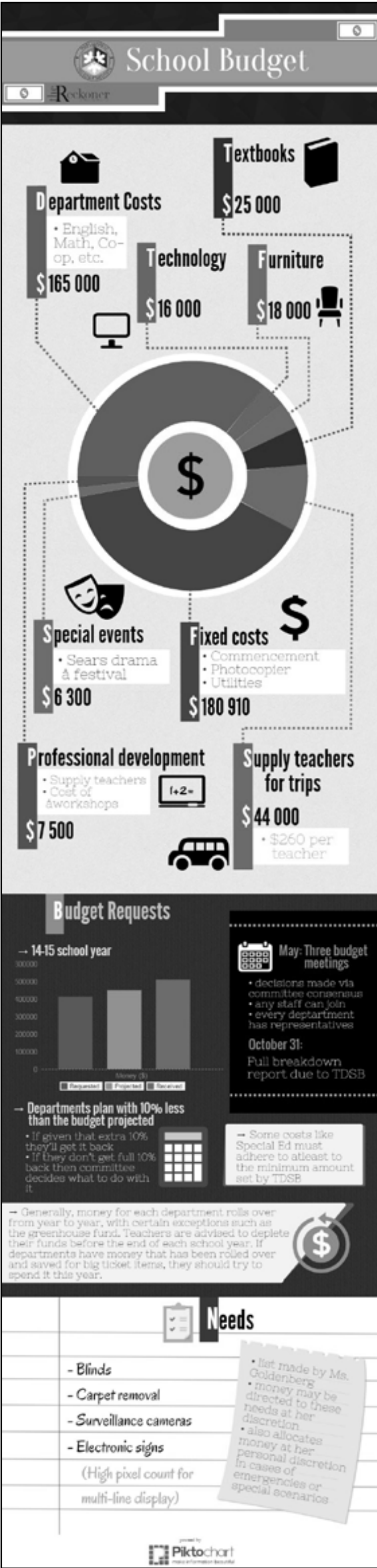
Overall Rating: 4.5/5

Unfortunately, a proper review could not be compiled for select trips. If you attended an event without a review and would like to submit one, please email news@thereckoner.ca.

Photos courtesy of Rebecca Wong and Khadija Jawwad.

School Budget Breakdown

by DAVID HAO and LILA HUANG
with assistance from BOSHEN CUI and DANIEL PEKAR



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“How long have you been playing the guitar?”
“Ten years. It started out with my dad teaching me the simple basics, and then I ventured out for myself.”
“What does music mean to you?”
“It’s my best way of self expression. I’m someone who finds it difficult to express emotions - how I feel - verbally, so I use my guitar to speak instead.”

“What were you just thinking?”
“I’m praying that the printer works.”

Photos by Henry He and Cindy Cui
For more Humans of Garneau, visit www.thereckoner.ca/category/hog/

