

The Lyon

ANNIVERSARY



I'M FREEZING *by Cathy Tran*

I'M FAILING *by Laura Nyman*

I FEAR THE PLAGUE *by Masha Gorelik*

Alexandra Leggat's *Animal*,

Owen Pallett's *Heartland*,

William Lyon Mackenzie's ghost

AND MORE

FROM THE LYON'S DEN

MAC'S BACK

BY WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE



Lyons, I am writing this on the eve of my 215th birthday. (Please send all gifts to The Lyon's offices. Thank you.) It is a time of reflection as well as celebration for me. In fact, I couldn't help but be flooded with memories of my 1837 rebellion yesterday, when something exploded during the Science Olympics. (Check out our dispatch from Vancouver's Winter Olympics on page three.) Look at the similarities: a loud noise, a lot of smoke, Canadians fleeing in all directions, and no one hurt.

Of course, I ended up exiled to the United States for more than a decade, and two of my supporters, Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews, were hanged. I suspect a little more mercy will be shown to Mackenzie's science department. Lount's last words were "Be of good courage boys, I am not ashamed of anything I've done, I trust in God, and I'm going to die like a man." (Do Lyons trust in a god? See page nine.)

What did the Olympic evacuation remind you of? What do you think of Mackenzie's CCTV system? (See page ten.) What would you like to find in future editions of The Lyon? Please tell us at lyon.mac@gmail.com.

Be of good courage, Lyons.

OUR BAD

- We neglected to note that last month's issue was Volume , Issue of The Lyon. Now you know.
The inimitable Anamika Ohri wrote the biographies of last month's Featured Lyons. Even though we forgot to credit her, she still wrote this month's biographies, too. She's the best.
There was a misplaced "Tuvalu" in "Sleepless in Denmark". Do you think Misplaced Tuvalu is a good name for a band?

FEATURED LYONS



Andrew Koo "Course Selection Guide"

In previous issues Andrew, who also goes by the name Drew, wrote about the Mackenzie-Yorkdale partnership. For this issue he is guiding students through course selections. Some of the electives that he took include Writer's Craft, AP computer science class, SAP, calculus, all three sciences, and Data Management. In addition to storing random and useless information relating to sports, television and pop culture, he is addicted to twitter and despises Facebook. In the future, he wishes to pursue a career as a sports analyst or writer.



Ellen Asiedu "Tis The Season"

So far Ellen has been trying to inform students of world news. For this article, Ellen wrote about standardized tests. Ellen herself has been a student under pressure during test season, and she has formed an opinion of her own as to why we (students) go through all this pressure. She loves baking and cooking as anyone who listened to her speech last year knows. In the future, she would like to live in a nice apartment in Chicago, near the lake.



Cathy Tran "Baby It's Cold Inside"

For previous issues, Cathy has designed the games page, but for this issue, she wrote about how cold Mackenzie was for the past few months. In addition to her love for books, Cathy loves sports. She describes herself as "...a hardcore nerd who's an intense athlete at heart." She is very competitive, whether it is in sports or a laughing competition. In the future, she wishes to understand who she really is, and to make the world a better place.



THE MACKENZIE SHUFFLE

What are you listening to right now?

"All the Right Moves" by One Republic -- Robynn Jennings

"Bedrock" by Lil Wayne -- Karifa Bangura

"Don't Talk to Strangers" by Hedley -- Samantha Martin

"Face Down" by Red Jumpsuit Apparatus -- Mon Santacruz

"Hard" by Young Jeezy and Rihanna -- Gutana Guysa

"I Want It That Way" by The Backstreet Boys -- Robyn Paulwell

"In My Head" by Jason Derulo -- Kelsey Drummond

"Lisztomania" by Phoenix -- Ashton Taylor

"Save Me" by Shinedown -- Matt Brooks

"I'll Be the Shooter" by 50 Cent -- Dillon Nestoruk-Rodney

"Skylines and Turnstiles" by My Chemical Romance -- Suhaib Saquib

"Summertime" by Janis Joplin -- Ben Cohen

"The Army" by Ben Folds Five -- Simone Mintcheva

Virgin Radio 99.9 -- Kirill Avrutin



COURSE SELECTION GUIDE FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS

BY ANDREW KOO AND LAURA NYMAN

Course selection week, beginning this year on the 22nd, can be a time to rejoice at newfound control over our own educations, or a time of intense self-doubt. Despite the surplus of course pamphlets, brochures, presentations and handbooks, in those last few moments the choice is left entirely up to us. Choice is a freeing thing, until we've had too much of it.

The first thing to remember when selecting your courses is to do what you love. While it's important to study-up on prerequisites (especially for university and college bound students), high school is the beginning of exploration. Everyone should take at least one course they love, and one they have no experience in. For your general enjoyment, we've written a sort of anti-course guide to help you out along the way.

SAP (Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology) (HSP3U)

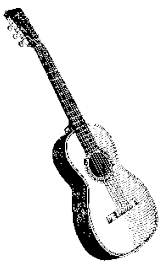
SAP is always a popular elective among grade elevens at Mac, with as many as four separate classes running every year. The textbook is generally boring and outdated, but the pictures of 90s youth culture (street gangs and basketball) are entertaining, and the exam is only an hour and a half. Class discussions are pretty much daily.

Financial Accounting Fundamentals (BAF3M) and Fundamental Accounting Principles (BAT3M)

The grade 11 and 12 accounting courses are arguably the most useful for life outside of school, as they teach basic, practical skills. As anticipated, classes can be boring and slow at times, but in-class work periods offer great opportunities to listen to music. A workbook is provided for each course, including a study guide and working papers, and much of each course is completed independently. An ideal course for anyone interested in enrolling in a university or college business program.

Guitar Music (AMG2O or AMG3O)

Mackenzie's guitar course is aimed at reinforcing basic skills and teaching new techniques. While the class is ideal for students with an interest in music, it isn't the best place for slackers looking for an easy credit. "At first I wasn't great, but I practiced really hard and in the end I could fluently play many chords," says one student.



Computer Science (ICS2O, ICS3U, and finally ICS4U)

For those enthusiasts into computer programming, this string of courses emphasizes plenty of thinking and teamwork. Though it requires a lot of patience and hard work, the effort can pay off with writing the advanced placement exam, and possibly earning a university credit. "It's a great environment to work in every day. I had a lot of fun, but I also had to put a lot of time into it," says once grade 12 student.

Studies in Literature (ETS4U1) or The Writer's Craft (EWC4U1)

The English department offers two courses separating the compulsory course into specialized disciplines: literature and writing. Generally, the former consists of examining and interpreting literature (course texts include Findley's *The Wars*, Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, Ibsen's *A Doll House*, and Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"), while the latter allows one to explore the skills necessary in writing. This past year, the Writer's Craft course included an online component, in which students were asked to publish a specific piece of writing on a class blog every week.

"Everyone should take at least one course they love, and one they have no experience in."

Media Studies (EMS3O and ASM4E)

The grade eleven media studies and grade 12 new media courses offer a unique look into the different aspects of media, including the deeper meanings behind advertising campaigns. "You get a rare perspective of the nuts and bolts behind media production, and what makes them tick", one student says. Much of each course is oral and presentation based. Last semester, the Media Studies class took a class trip to MuchMusic's MOD!

Canadian and International Law (CLU3M and CLN4U)

These two courses stress developed thinking and a critical approach to current legal issues. Students also got to examine historical beginnings and the evolution of law. The grade 11 course is significantly lighter, and is not required for the senior course. "Even though law is a good class to pick up on legal jargon and learn about famous Canadian cases, none of these things are actually put to use in the course until the exam," according to one student.

Turn the page for an in-depth look at IDC4U.

NEW COURSE, NEW TECHNOLOGIES MACKENZIE BEGINS TO PLUG IN

BY ROBBY MUFF

It's not often that new courses are introduced to a school. This year at Mac, a Communication Technology and Innovative Learning course (IDC4U) was offered for grade 12s. Mackenzie was one of six schools in the TDSB who piloted the new project.

During the course, students studied different learning styles, the importance of technology in the classroom, discussed issues with technology in schools and learning, and were taught some skills including: website design, movie editing, podcasting, concept mapping software, flash, SMART technologies and Photoshop.

Ms. Extavour taught the new course. She believes that technology is an important asset to a student's learning. "So many of their great ideas are expressed through modern technology and using the technology has become second nature to them."

The course's goal was to investigate how technology affects teens today. The students completed many assignments that would benefit Mac by bringing more technology into classrooms, such as the on-line Macover survey. This tech course was a whole new experience from the 'sit in a chair and listen to your teacher' routine.

For one of their big projects, students were paired up with teachers for four weeks and introduced new ways of bringing technology into their classrooms. Ashton Taylor, for example, helped Mr. Cade create a website for his class. Other students taught their assigned classes how to use Photoshop, designing and implementing SMART board and Clicker activities, teaching workshops on movie maker, and making a movie for the special education department.

Lily Meshadiyeva enjoyed her experience in the new course. "I would recommend it to anyone who dislikes being graded purely on test or exam results, who likes interacting with others, and who is ready to experience something new. This course was so much fun and I looked forward to coming to class every day. I learned so much and can't think of a better course that I could have

taken instead."

Not only was this exciting course new at Mackenzie- it made a huge impact on the school. The class submitted a video to Best Buy's "Best in Class Fund" contest that won \$20,000 worth of new technology. More than 80 submissions were received nationwide and Mackenzie was one of the top three. (See the winning video yourself: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zljPxO8eNU>)

"This tech course was a whole new experience from the 'sit in a chair and listen to your teacher' routine."



"I would recommend it to anyone who dislikes being graded purely on test or exam results."

Principal Ms. Green was thrilled with the win. "We're proud of our students and staff. This recognition is a demonstration of the kind of creativity and dedication that makes our school so special."

Mackenzie also won \$10,000 earlier this year in Best Buy's Tech it Away initiative, in which students and community dropped off unwanted household electronics at schools for the purpose of eliminating recyclable material from land fill dump sites.

So what will it take to get more technology into Mackenzie classrooms? According to Ms Extavour, "The best way to get more tech at Mac is for the students to ask for it, for the school to budget and fundraise for it, and for the teachers to be more comfortable with it. Once you have seen what the tech can do- you're sold."

Ashton Taylor highly recommends this new tech course. "It's a great 'family' experience, plus you get to learn so much about technology and you get to make all these new, amazing friends."

David Vinnikov agrees that this is a course worth taking. "IDC was an awesome course. I really had a lot of fun learning about technology and applying it to Mackenzie. We won \$20,000 for the

school. What else can I say? I definitely recommend this class to everyone."

Future students should consider choosing this one of a kind new technology 4U course next year. It gives Mackenzie students a chance to really show-off their skills and creativity. It's a course unlike any other that is packed with excitement, diversity, and learning.

'TIS THE SEASON FOR STANDARDIZED TESTS

BY ELLEN ASIEDU

The end of the holiday season brings the beginning of a new season in high school. It's standardized test season. Stress is palpable and the tension can be cut with a knife.

This evaluation season, though, things are different. Low success rates in mathematics is a problem that's facing schools across the TDSB, and at Mackenzie the issue seems to be magnified because of the success that our MaCS and Gifted students usually demonstrate.

EQAO math scores are "...not where we want them to be." says Mr. Dallin, one of the vice-principals. With this in mind, teachers sprang into action and created a Numeracy Committee to address the issue. Ms. Karegeorgiou, head of the math department, revealed a strategy being implemented in hopes of raising EQAO scores. "We're

holding testing in the cafeteria rather than in the classrooms." As well, the 911 Club has been created in hopes of restoring the standard.

"What club?" you ask. Clearly, getting the word out is another issue at Mac. Moreover, peer tutors for math are few and far between in comparison with student need.

But perhaps the reason why grade nines aren't doing as well lies within the test itself. In grade nine, students are coming from a variety of mathematic backgrounds. Everyone is at a different level and in a semestered system, teachers scramble to bring everybody up to the same stage to

be able to write the EQAO within five months. This endeavour is made harder when it's considered that some grade eight students haven't been promoted to grade nine, but transferred.

"There's a lot of pressure on us," said one grade nine student. "...because it counts towards our report card mark". Perhaps it would help if the math and Literacy Tests were both done in grade ten.

In grade ten students are in their second year of high school and are a little more acclimatized to learning expectations. They know what to anticipate in terms of high school writing, therefore making them more prepared to take the Literacy Test. At Mackenzie, the Literacy Test average is 90%. No problem there.

This leads to the conclusion that students in semestered institutions like Mackenzie are not given sufficient time to develop strategies and digest material enough to spit it back on a test.

Alas, EQAO tests have been written and students have to wait until next September to see how well they made the adjustment. But some of them can be consoled with the fact that standardized mathematic tests are done with.

If you're reading this and you're scheduled to take EQAO this semester, I highly recommend that you join the math club or get a friend to help you. Be prepared.

The 911 Club is offered in room 213 at lunch on Thursdays.

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test Section B: Writing

Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

1 Choose the sentence that uses capitalization correctly.

A My cousin from alberta, whose name is paul, earns money by delivering the *calgary herald*.

B My cousin from Alberta, whose name is Paul, earns money by delivering the *calgary herald*.

C My cousin from alberta, whose name is Paul, earns money by delivering the *Calgary Herald*.

D My cousin from Alberta, whose name is Paul, earns money by delivering the *Calgary Herald*.

2 Choose the sentence that has correct punctuation.

F My friend asked me, have you ever been to Quebec City?

G My friend asked me? Have you ever been to Quebec City?"

H My friend asked me, "Have you ever been to Quebec City?"

J My friend asked me, "Have you ever been to Quebec City"?

3 Choose the correct option to fill in the blank.
Like his father, the artist George Berthon _____

A painted portraits to support his family.

B his paintings of portraits supported his family.

C and also painted portraits to support his family.

D whose famous portraits were painted to support his family.

4 Which is the best way to combine all the information in the following sentences?
Anna's assignment is due tomorrow. She has to work tonight. She is feeling rushed.

F Anna's assignment is due tomorrow because she is rushing to work tonight.

G Anna is feeling rushed because she has to work tonight and her assignment is due tomorrow.

H Since Anna's assignment is due tomorrow and she has to work tonight and she is feeling rushed.

J Although Anna has to work tonight and her assignment is due tomorrow because she is feeling rushed.

5 Choose the best closing sentence for the paragraph.
When the Canadian government decided in 1878 to connect Montreal and Vancouver with a railway, it faced a difficult task. A railway would cost a great deal of money to build. Workers had to push through the rocks and swamps of northern Ontario. Tracks had to cross vast stretches of the prairie. It was uncertain whether suitable passes through British Columbia's mountain ranges could be found.

A The loans weren't repaid for many years.

B Many wondered if these obstacles could be overcome.

C British Columbia became a popular tourist destination.

D The United States had built many railways by this time.

End of Section B. Continue to Section C. →

Sample Test Booklet: Session 1 5

A page from the literacy test — try it!

HOW TO FAIL

FEEL GOOD BEING BAD

BY LAURA NYMAN

A week or so ago, I found myself writing a test for my grade eleven Functions class—describing in inordinate detail the principal that as probability of success decreases, probability of failure increases. I definitely felt my probability of success decreasing as I faked my way through twenty questions on sine curves, and turned in my eraser-marked, crumpled and torn test. I was surprised to find, however, that my pending failure wasn't accompanied by any kind of regret or guilt. Rather, I skipped down the hallway towards a well-earned lunch period. I was nearly giddy.

It's not as if I've ever been an "average" student. Far from it. I remember the first, and only, failing grade I've ever received on an assignment: an angry red "R" carved into an essay on the ordinary contractions of the diaphragm causing hiccups. I was in grade three, and I was scandalized.

Lately, however, I've been experiencing a strange kind of trend after writing—and bombing—particularly difficult tests. I have learned to take pleasure in my failure. My recent tests have been dismally grouped into two separate categories: exam practise (as in, learning to cope with failing is good practise for coping with exam results) and fridge-door decoration. In some perverse way, the former group brings me just as much pleasure as the latter, and for one simple reason: it feels good to be bad.

It's liberating, the momentary rebellion against expectations, and against the system. The space of a week in which the failure isn't yet confirmed on paper, and thus isn't yet a reality. There is a certain amount of pride, not in failing, but in *not caring*. High school is not always my first or foremost priority, no matter what my teachers and parents may believe, and failing a test (or two, or three) is evident proof of this. Even if my only aim is proving to myself that I have a life outside of William Lyon Mackenzie Collegiate Institute.

Despite our teachers' unwillingness to let the education system take the blame for our failing grades, success is completely dependant on the environment we learn in. At a school as especially academically superior as Mackenzie, it is the successful students who receive academic luxuries. Those of us with wide-eyed fear of the very real prospect of summer school are often forgotten by our teachers.

And, like so many things, failure becomes cyclical. Students are unwilling to be pushed towards better study habits and better grades, and teachers, frankly, are unwilling to push them. Failed tests certainly aren't spread out across the school; it is a select group of students who can claim responsibility for lowered standards and averages at Mac. But without encouragement, these students remain on their fast track, not to success, but to gifty-fiftys and perhaps, in a few years, gifty-diplomas.

Next time you get a bombed test back, I encourage you to accept your failing grade with a smile. Because, after all, it's not the mark, but the way you feel about the mark, which matters. A failed test does not equate to a failed semester. Besides, there are still four months, well, three...two and a half...two weeks...four days...until the exam. Let's call this one practise.

MACKENZIE MAKES THE HONOUR ROLL

BY SIVANI VIJAYAKUMAR

Once again Mackenzie has proved its academic record by placing third out of all the high schools in the TDSB for level 4 achievement in all subjects. While this is a drop from the previous year, this is still good news for Mackenzie.

One of my teachers mentioned the fact that as Mackenzie's academic record is becoming well known, more parents want to send their children to this school, which is probably why we have so many students.

Talking to the students, many admit that Mackenzie's academic record is why they're here, but when asked what they think of Mackenzie placing third in the TDSB most replies were similar to, "...that's great!" Students felt this was a great achievement but it didn't hold their attention for long. After all, at a school like Mac, the honour roll isn't something we're not used to.

EPIC FAIL

What's the worst mark you ever got?

I failed grade 10 math. I had to take it in summer school. I went in thinking I couldn't do it. I put the least effort into the course I needed to put the most effort into. — Ms. Gourley

I got a 49 in Calculus. I was bad!
— Ms. Lee

A 50 on my first physics exam in university. I didn't know what was going on. It almost killed me.
— Mr. Tebbutt

A 13 out of, like, 50 in a German course. I was focused on other subjects that were more important to me.
— Mr. McIntyre

I dropped out of my first year of university. Poor study habits. Is my name going to be attached to this? — Mr. Carpenter

BABY IT'S COLD INSIDE

CHILLY CLASSROOMS, SHIVERING STUDENTS

BY CATHY TRAN

Perhaps complaining resides in teenage nature, but almost every Mackenzie student has been complaining about how cold the school's been for the past three months. I can't help but agree. As I walk out of each class, I find myself shivering and trying to warm up just from being inside.

Students admit that the cold distracts them in class and some wish they could wear jackets in school. One anonymous grade 9 student said that she "find[s] [herself] shivering, and looking at the clock every five minutes, anxious to get out of the cold class." A grade 11 student even protested, "We pay an activity fee that's \$20 more than my friends' schools! Shouldn't we at least get enough heating?"

Unlike us students, the teachers don't feel as cold. Dr. Burt from the science department and Mr. Tebbutt from the English department said that though they've noticed the cold in different classrooms, standing to teach all day keeps them warm.

Despite all differences, many agree that the classes downstairs are coldest. The coldest of the cold is the presentation suite, while the computer rooms are the warmest. One Mackenzie student said that "the window seats are always the coldest."

Our principal, Ms. Green, admitted that even the office is sometimes cold and empathizes with the students who have to learn in the cold environment. "I advise everyone to wear extra layers," she said.

The guidelines for all TDSB classrooms and offices is 20°C, while the gyms, stairs and corridors average 18°C, which isn't bad at all because according to the Oxford dictionary, room temperature is "generally taken as about 20°C." So what accounts for our chilly school?

Ms. Green replied that the building is old and doesn't have much insulation anymore. But, she assures us that more windows will be replaced in the coming months, which should help solve this frosty problem. Students, on the other hand, suggest replacing our heating system.

The head caretaker, Mr. King, said that the board decided to make schools more environmentally friendly by lowering average temperatures to save energy. But, the gas bill for December alone was still \$631!

Part of why the school's so cold may be because no one tells the caretakers their complaints. The caretakers are always moving around so they don't freeze up as we do. "If people find it cold, they need to come tell me. I won't know if they don't," commented Mr. King.



IT'S GETTING COLD IN HERRE

SO PUT ON ALL YOUR CLOTHES

BY NIKKI KHRANOVSKAYA

The weather is really strange, but one thing we all can agree with is that it's cold. Here are a few tips to help you stay warm at Mackenzie.

Check the forecast – even if it seems warm in the morning, it may be very cold in the afternoon on your way home, or the other way around.

Keep an extra pair of shoes in your locker – that way if your feet get cold and wet outside, you can always change into comfy dry shoes. Dry feet are the secret to staying warm!

Don't open the doors for no reason! If you are leaving the school, make sure the door closes behind you, especially the door leading to the parking from the caf. No one likes to feel a cold gust of wind while trying to eat.

If your class is in a portable, make sure the teacher is already there before you head out, so you won't get stuck in the cold, or ask the teacher to put some sticker on the door when he or she arrives.

Don't start playing snowballs for "exercise" to get warm – you might get wet and cold. Plus there doesn't seem to be much snow. But other than all this, enjoy your winter!

A FARMER, SOME MAGIC, AND A MEAN VIOLIN



Heartland, by
Owen Pallett,
Domino Records

BY MIKE VICHNITCHKINE

Owen Pallett's latest album, *Heartland*, is "very interesting", in the words of one student. Upon hearing about the basic idea, another student could only say, "what the . . . ?" The plot of *Heartland*, a concept album is as follows: A farmer named Lewis travels the fantasy land of Spectrum, battling evil creatures with magic as he tries to come to terms with his love for his creator, Owen Pallett. If that isn't worthy of a "WTF", I don't know what is. And yet, Pallett manages to make it work. With intense orchestral hooks and gripping melodies, the man who once just co-wrote string arrangements for other bands carves out his own musical persona. He's weird. He's kind of a nerd. And he plays a mean violin.

Pallett's first two album were both excellent. Without *Heartland's* electronic influences, Pallett's talent shone clearly. Both were deceptively rich in sound, despite being solo endeavours. Nevertheless, *Heartland* will be a lot of peoples' first taste of his eclectic musical style. Despite being undeniably strange in presentation, it is much more accessible than his previous works. Its electronic elements are bound to catch the interests of many people who just aren't that into orchestral music. It is, however, much less personal than his two older albums. Whereas *Has a Good Home* and *He Poos Clouds* dealt mostly with regular people and their issues, *Heartland's* Lewis is difficult to relate to, being about a farmer in a make-believe world. Regardless, I think everybody should give it a listen. To say the least, it's entertaining.

BATTLE OF THE BANDS IS BACK IT'S A PARTY IN THE W.L.M.

BY MASHA GORELIK

At January's Battle of the Bands — the first Mackenzie Battle of the Bands in about half a decade — the rock-star attitude was realistic and the feeling of a real rock concert was definitely present.

Blue Forest Way opened with a bang. More specifically, they opened with a rock version of Richard Strauss' "Also Sprach Zarathustra". It was epic, in every sense of the word. Lead singer Jonathan Leong-Sem's stage presence was impressive throughout the rest of their set, and the whole band was obviously psyched to be on stage.

Ace of Spades' set also had a memorable beginning. As the band launched into "You Give Love A Bad Name", lead singer Ashby Kissoondoyal tossed a stack of playing cards into the crowd: aces of spades, obviously. The band's assigned cover of Madonna's "Vogue" didn't quite come together, but the original track they played sounded great. Hopefully they'll keep working on new material.

Perfect Plaid Shirts offered a refreshing break from hard/classic rock. Their set was loose, poppy, and a little bit goofy. Their cover of Weezer's "Undone (The Sweater Song)" was great, and even included some spoken word, and they did a really funny parody of Miley Cyrus's "Party in the USA". Now *that* was a really unique way to work a really annoying song.

Even though I'm not, to be honest, a fan of loud rock music, I really started enjoying myself when I Fear the Plague came on stage. Aidan Schiff-Kearn and Victor Mayboroda did an outstanding job on guitar, Steven Iarusci was great on vocals, and so was Daphne Feng when she joined the band to sing the female part of a song by Evanesence. The beat that Jonathan Ramotour set to the song was catchy, and needless to say, the crowd went wild. I Fear the Plague's music had a metal tinge to it, which made the songs intense.

The crowd's optimism and enthusiasm in supporting each and every performance is strongly commended. When Responsible Government, a teacher band, appeared on stage, a funny and sort of surreal feeling came over the room. It was as if their professional attire disappeared, and we were able to witness their real personalities, without the pressure of the usual strict student-teacher relationship. Their performance had everyone smiling.

While the judges were deliberating for a good half-hour about the winner of the Battle, the bands decided to distract the crowd by improvising songs like "I Wanna Be Sedated". Finally, the deserving winner was announced: I Fear the Plague.

GRAND THEFT BANDNAME

Before releasing "Heartland", Owen Pallett recorded under the name Final Fantasy, which he obviously stole from the popular videogame. Very few band names come out of nowhere — most are stolen from somewhere.

Most people assume Ace of Spades took their name from the Motorhead song. "Everyone thinks that", says lead singer Ashby Kissoondoyal. "But it was just something that came to us when we were in a rush to name the band".

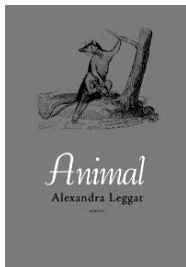
Blue Forest Way took their name from a street a number of blocks north of Mackenzie. "It's Blue Forest Drive, actually", says bassist Josh Amar. "But a friend said she didn't like how the 'Drive' sounded, so we changed it to 'Way'".

I Fear the Plague is a lyric from a Blue Oyster Cult song. "We were going to go with the line before it, Rats in the Hold", says guitarist Victor Mayboroda. "But we liked all the connotations of I Fear the Plague".

In a display of school spirit (I think), Mackenzie's teacher band took their name straight from our school's namesake: Responsible Government is what William Lyon Mackenzie fought for, and what we would call democracy.

STORIES BEFORE THE STORM

ANIMAL IS HARD TO FORGET



Animal, by
Alexandra
Leggat, Anvil
Press, 160 pages

BY KSENIA GUELETINA

This month's book is a new collection of short stories by Alexandra Leggat. Leggat is a freelance writer and editor, as well as a creative writing teacher at the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies. She has published two other short story collections as well as a volume of poetry. The collection in question is entitled *Animal* and for once, the blurb at the back summarizes the book's appeal succinctly and accurately. The phrase that struck me most was "palpable tension", as this perfectly describes the thread weaving together all these stories. We meet a woman reconciling the loss of a lover and her own aging. We hear a seemingly innocuous conversation over dinner. We watch a re-

tired actress re-learning what's important. Leggat paints extraordinarily vivid pictures of these characters, snapshots in time. Her descriptions are always just enough, never cloying the reader with too many details.

The characters in her stories don't necessarily get easy answers and some of them don't get answers at all. Whether it's an office worker looking for the courage to change, or a life coach who dreams of playing football, the most important thing is that these are stories about people who are standing on a precipice and Leggat doesn't always reveal whether or not they win their fight with gravity.

As a reader, I enjoyed this book immensely. It is starkly and incredibly well-written. It is effortless afterward to close your eyes and see the scenes that she lays out, to feel the tension like the quiet, ominous feeling in the air right before a thunderstorm washes it clean. It's an easy book to become immersed in and it is a difficult book to stop thinking about.

The stories are about a wealth of subjects, and though the question of children and of growing old is a recurrent theme, Leggat mostly writes about the changes that come with those situations; the physical changes and the changes that you sustain as a person. These are not easy subjects and the way she handles them is admirable. She doesn't preach, which is something that crops up distressingly often when reading about these topics. She is writing about people and about the choices that they are faced with, and she is definitely worth reading.

REACTIONS TO *THE LYON'S ROAR*

BY ALICE YI

Ksenia Gueletina's previous book reviews, along with all articles from this year's *Lyon*, are online at www.maclyon.wordpress.com. That's where Don LePan found it. LePan's novel, *Animals*, was the subject of Ksenia's December review. It's a highly exaggerated metaphor of today's meat-farm practices, and portrays humans in a future where cannibalism is the norm. In her review, Ksenia takes a confrontational stance toward the novel, pointing out its vividly "disturbing imagery" and content that would probably be more appropriate in a pamphlet promoting animal rights than on a bookstore shelf. Not only did LePan leave a thorough comment regarding the review, he also proceeded to post an afterword regarding his stance on animal rights to his blog.

Earlier in the year, Ksenia's review of David Nickle's short-story collection *Monstrous Affections* caught the attention of, you guessed it, David Nickle. On his blog, Mr. Nickle reviewed Ksenia's review, and reflected on "how much more intelligent and insightful today's teens are".

So what has Ksenia proven? Put your work out there for the world to see. You never know what might happen, who might notice, and what you may inspire. Also, that the *Lyon's* website is essential reading!

ARE HUMANS ANIMALS?

BY CAROLINE WANG

Two months ago, the *Lyon* reviewed *Animals* by Don LePan. When asked to comment on his title, LePan said, "The main thing it suggests, to me at least, is a commonality between human animals and non-human ones. But of course it's often used in ways that emphasize a presumed contrast between humans and non-human animals."

This brings up an interesting question: what does "animal" mean? Writers use the word "animal" to signify "not human" and "a wild human" at the same time. So, when one says, "that person is like an animal" or "an animal-like sound came out of his mouth", it makes sense and yet is still ironic (humans are technically animals, so isn't it natural for us to emit "animal sounds" or to "act like an animal"?).

Maybe the use of the word "animal" should be restricted in certain contexts. For example, "that person is like an animal" should become "that person is like a wild, untamed animal" or "that person is like a cute little furry animal". Otherwise, "animal" can mean anything from human to uncontrollable wild cobra.

As for Alexandra Leggat's interpretation of this word and why she chose it for the title of her book, she writes, "[*Animal*] sums up everything that this book stands for in one word - the fight for survival; instinct, wisdom, innocence, beauty and ugliness, the hunter and the hunted. It's about the complexity of relationships, grappling to exist with the bevy of earth's creatures - even one's self."

WHO YOU CALL-
ING AN ANIMAL?



SLEEPLESS IN DENMARK

A FIRST-PERSON REPORT FROM COPENHAGEN

BY ZACK BERNHOLTZ

This past December, I attended the Conference of The Parties 15 in Copenhagen. Many of the participating countries have not done enough, in my opinion, to slow the environmental degradation of our world, and continued to fail the cause at the negotiations. However, some countries did succeed in standing up for their beliefs, livelihoods, and land. During my time in Copenhagen I attended United Nations delegations, organized and participated in protests, helped create the youth policy on adaptation, questioned world leaders, met youth from all over the world, and got very little sleep.

At the end of the conference a Copenhagen Accord was reached. The accord states that the need to limit the increase in global temperatures is simply “recognized” as a “scientific view”, and therefore does not necessarily have to be adopted as a target. The text includes no targets for emissions reduction. Overall the document is a complete failure and was pushed upon developing countries—many of whom did not end up bowing to pressure and signing.

Canada’s environmental policy, trends and ecological focus rank 59th out of the top 60 global emitters, in a study published by the Climate Change Performance Index. Only one country, Saudi Arabia, ranked lower. Canada plans to expand the Alberta tar sands to three times their current size by 2020 by developing more of the area that can be exploited for the creation of this “dirty” oil. Plans to convert synthetic crude oil produced from tar sands into gasoline could cause the emissions of a Toyota Prius to equal those of a Hummer 2. This is a result of the increased amount of energy and water required to produce tar sands oil.

American President Barack Obama went behind the backs of the UN and the majority of the UN member states, assembling an accord that outraged the rest of the world. This was then presented to poorer nations without negotiation: either they signed it, or they lost the adaptation funds that may help them to survive the first few decades of climate breakdown. Adaptation funds are funds allocated by developed nations to lesser-developed nations, or those nations who are most affected by climate change. These funds are just beginning to be established, however one hundred billion dollars per year will be required, according to many estimates. A donation of only twenty-

five cents a day from each citizen of the developed world would reach this estimate.

In the backroom negotiations at the Copenhagen Accord, China opposed legislation calling for an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Chinese government was not interested in improving the global climate at these talks, only in hindering negotiation and progress. Though the United Nations agreements on climate change are meant to be unilateral and international, China has decided to go about this on its own terms, hindering potential global progress.

Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Sweden have already met their targets for reducing emissions below required levels, as specified under the Kyoto Protocol, negotiated in 1997 and put into practice in 2005. Across the European Union, Kyoto targets are well on track to be met by 2012. However, these countries must take a stand on factors that will affect other nations of the world, like increased temperature causing desertification of sub-Saharan Africa, and rising global sea levels. France has risen to the challenge, pledging money to an adaptation fund for those most affected by climate change such as small island nations, sub-Saharan Africa, and low-lying nations. Tuvalu

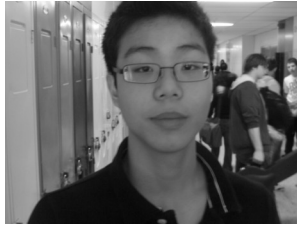
Tuvalu is the fourth smallest country in the world (in terms of physical size), and has a population of only 12,000. This remote island nation’s highest point is 5m above sea level. According to current environmental trends, a temperature increase of only 2 degrees Celsius (as predicted by 2100) could submerge Tuvalu, as well as others with similar geographical landscapes. The leaders of a few of these countries told personal stories, and stood up against other nations who are seemingly comfortable with the destruction of their land and way of life.

Overall, the conference brought together 110 heads of state from the 192 countries represented in the United Nations. Even though these leaders have heard the scientific evidence, and possess the knowledge and technology to create a sustainable future, they didn’t. The leaders of our world didn’t stand together, and as a result have decided to maintain a lifestyle that could shatter our future, kill millions, and displace hundreds of millions by 2100.

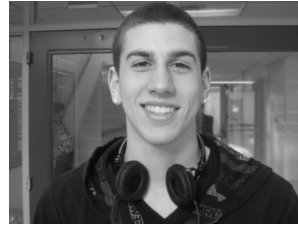
DO YOU FIND IT COLD IN HERE?



“Yes! It’s freezing! It doesn’t help my flu at all. They should put some heating on before someone freezes to death.”
-- Paulenia Ramlingum



“Not particularly. Different areas of the school have different temperatures. Overall it’s kind of cool, I guess. It’s comfortable.” — Dan Nguyen



“It’s freezing! It’s very difficult to study Shakespeare in these cold conditions.”
-- Billy Sawyer

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:



“No, it’s pretty warm. I’m warm because I’m cool.”
-- Kryzel Pagcaliwagan



“Yeah! Our teacher was just complaining about how cold it is. He was walking around the classroom to make himself warmer.”
-- Val Grishyn



“No, but don’t ask me. I’m never cold, even if I go outside in a t-shirt.”
-- Chris Horvath



“In math class I was shivering. Then my friend Bruno gave me his sweater. (Thanks Bruno!) Then I felt a little warmer, but my feet were still cold.”
-- Jennifer Nguyen



WE ONLY GOT FORTY HOURS TO SAVE THE WORLD HOW ARE YOU ACCUMULATING FORTY HOURS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT?

I volunteer at CARD (Community Association for Riding for the Disabled) once a week for about four hours. We pick a horse and get them ready — we groom them, we tack them — then we bring them out and get the riders on. We lead the horse during the lesson, or we hold on to the rider and help them stay on the horse. The riders might have a physical disability or a mental disability or both. They’re really diverse. I really love horses but my parents don’t send me to camp because it’s too expensive, so it’s a good way to spend time with horses for free. All of the horses are really sweet. It feels nice to help people and to do what you love to do.
— Yeng-Ching Lee



EYE OF THE LYON



BY MS. MA



BY MARIELA LIBEDINSKY



BY MARIELA LIBEDINSKY

LYONS:

WE WANT YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS. WHAT DOES YOUR SCHOOL LOOK LIKE TO YOU? SEND YOUR PHOTOS OF MACKENZIE PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS TO lyon.mac@gmail.com.