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# COMMON SENSE

HIGH SCHOOL OF AMERICAN STUDIES AT LEHMAN COLLEGE



FREE

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LATE SPRING 2008

## FEELING SAFE TWELVE TIMES A YEAR By Louis Ramirez('08)

A shrill "Ree-eee-eee! Ree-eee-eee!" along with, as Kashife Smith('08) put it, "high-beam lights," sound the call to evacuate the HSAS building immediately. As both students and faculty proceed out the doors into the open, one word is on everyone's mind: **fire drill**.

There is no doubt that fire drills are an important part of emergency preparation. Common Senses examines where exactly HSAS stands in regard to efficiently getting everybody out just in case the unthinkable should happen. This reporter asks if our fire drills do more harm than good?

According to Principal Weiss, during the year we must have a total of twelve fire drills, "eight before December 1<sup>st</sup> (which is why it seems we have one every 8 minutes) and four after December 1<sup>st</sup>."

As for the relative lack of drills after December, Mr. Rodriguez had this to say: "I miss them. We haven't had one in a while. It's an opportunity to breathe refreshing Bronx air. (It's) like a field trip."

As for fire drills' effectiveness, Mr. Weiss commented, "in the



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sense that people practice, it's not not effective." He adds that, "you can't really judge readiness until it's time to evacuate."

Overall, both Mr. Weiss and Mr. Rodriguez believe HSAS executes the fire drills fairly well when compared to their previous schools, which were often overcrowded with a lack of readily accessible emergency exits.

Sam Allison('11), however, stated that the fire drills are, "not

especially" effective. He was not asked why he felt this way as this reporter did not follow up.

This leads to the topic of fire drill timing. Even though Mr. Rodriguez states that "most teachers know when they happen and plan ahead," Christina Joubert('08) disagrees. She states that, "not every teacher reads the announcements, even if the drills are mentioned."

There are a few drill admirers like  
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## TRESPASS AT YOUR OWN RISK

*By Aleeza Halen('08)*

The bell rings, it is 2:48pm; as students pour into the hallways, they are ushered out of the school as quickly as they appear- but where will they go?

This year, it is considered trespassing if they are found in places on Lehman College other than the high school building and the library. This reporter wants to know why students expected to leave the school if they do not have any teacher supervised programs.

"If I wasn't eating and hanging out in the cafeteria after school, I could be doing something much more dangerous and be forced to eat out," says John Zeigler('08).

"When we were freshman, the lower cafeteria was the ideal hang out spot after school and its one of the reasons I came to this school," says Cole Hawkins('09). He went on to add "it was 4:30pm! The safety guards took our IDs away but they never told us we couldn't be here."

So, why was there an  
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## THE BOY'S CLUB

*By Michael Hamlett('08)*

The boys' bathroom has been somewhat of a mystery to some students. Especially our HSAS girls are curious about the possible wonders of this sanctuary.

When asked what they thought went on in the boys' bathroom, HSAS girls had lots to say.

Elise Taverna('10) told *Common Sense*, "I don't know anything about it."

Angie Marines('11) shared her belief that, "weird things that guys refuse to tell the girls about," occur in there.

Cecily Ginel('08) commented that, "you can hear through the vents, and from what I hear there's a lot of joking around and I hear inappropriate touching, but other than that I don't know what goes on."

This reporter failed to ask how an inappropriate touch sounds different from an appropriate touch when listening at a vent.

There are major differences between the girls' restroom and the boys' restroom, sometimes referred to as the "office."

First, there are two urinals, a low positioned small urinal and a  
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## A MAGICAL TIME

*By Mirza Alam('08)*

*Magic: The Gathering*, the back of every card is recognized by nerds, losers and loners the world round.

Whether they are balding and middle aged, without a girlfriend, or pimply and teenaged without a girlfriend, as well as the author of this article, *Magic: The Gathering* stands as a testament to who they are as people.

It is played with mild curiosity by 10 year olds as Al Niculescu('09) admits "I used to play it back when I was 7. I thought it was *Pokemon* but it was a lot more complicated."

*Magic: The Gathering* is a collectible card game, the first of its kind, setting off the industries of *Yu-Gi-Oh* and *Pokemon* card games. It was created by Richard Garfield who was creating a new type of board game which could be played by collectible cards. The game, introduced in 1993, incorporated large amounts of role playing and fantasy. It quickly gained popularity and the game uses strategy, the value of the individual cards, and lots of luck.

Individual cards printed by *Magic: The Gathering* (MTG's) parent company, Wizards of the Coast, vary in rarity from common to uncommon. Most cards that are



sold today range in price from \$10 to \$25. Most of these cards are bought by fans and professionals of *MTG* who collect cards to use either for fun or to play in tournaments.

Then there are the fanatics who are willing to pay hundreds of dollars for a single card. Some might even be willing to venture into the thousands to pay for these pieces of paper with pictures on them that have no use outside of the game. This reporter failed to find sources to support the accuracy of these claims.

The rarer cards have better strategic effects to be used in the

game. Thus, they are in high demand. Their limited supply causes these cards to have high value. The current value record was set by a copy of a "Black Lotus" card sold to Darren Adams for \$20,000 dollars.

Jake Walkup('08) said "I don't know anything about *MTG*."

There is however some use to this game as someone who is a talented deck builder and *Magic* player could compete in the Pro-Tour tournaments for thousands of dollars in grand prizes.

*Magic: The Gathering World Championship: Pro Tour*, which is set in major cities around the world,  
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