



Basement Legend Discovered P. 3



Breaking a Sweat With Kickboxing P. 6

Student Director Takes his Film to the Ropes P. 3



The Tower

www.kean.edu/~thetower

KEAN UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER

Volume 10 • Issue 5 Mar. 10-Apr. 6, 2010



Kean University Student Joe Rutch attends Olympic Games in Vancouver. (See page 16)

Student Org Campaigning Underway

BY JOSEPH TINGLE

Some Kean students might be surprised to know that the deadline to apply for candidacy in this year's Student Government elections has already passed, and accepted candidates have already begun preparing for a month of campaigning.

While reporters at *The Tower* learned that as many as two separate "tickets" planned to run for Student Org positions, this could not be confirmed by the time the March issue went to print.

For students to be eligible to run for Student Org, they must meet certain GPA and disciplinary requirements set by the university, and not everyone who says that they are running for office will be permitted to. Others who've been at Kean for two or three years may find themselves to be under or over the necessary credits, and unable to run for specific classes. And nothing is final until the first candidates' meeting; until then, prospective candidates may decide to join or combine tickets, drop out, or start new tickets.

Over the past three years, Student Org and Student Trustee elections at Kean have had varying degrees of student involvement. In the spring of 2008, the "All Stars" ticket ran almost uncontested for the second year in a row. However, last spring, three nearly-full tickets, the "All Stars," "Team Change" and "X-Pect Change," competed for positions on Student Org in what was by far the most competitive Student Org campaign season that even most seniors can remember. It was so competitive that, according to the April 28 issue of last year's , election results were delayed due to complaints lodged during the election process.

Still, many students who aren't running feel as if they've been left out of the process.

Ruth, a Kean student who is a junior Business Management major and lives in the residence halls, said she had "no idea" that the applications to run for Student Org was already due.

"I never know elections are happening until someone comes up to me with a laptop and asks me to vote for them," Ruth said.

And Shena, a sophomore and commuter student, says she had no idea that Student Org and Student Trustee elections were being held, but would have liked to know.

"They didn't make an effort to tell us, and that makes me think they don't really care if we're part of it or not," Shena said. "The less opponents you have, the more chances you have to elect someone you personally endorse."

"STUDENT ORG AND STUDENT TRUSTEE ELECTIONS AT KEAN HAVE HAD VARYING DEGREES OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT."

However, Carminda Bandeira, the current president of Student Org, says that Student Org has advertised just as often—if not more—than in years past and has already received a number of applications from not only students already involved on council, but other students as well. Bandeira noted that advertising for both elections began in early February 8, when a banner announcing the election was posted on Stu- (Continued on page 3)

Roads to Kean to Become Toll Roads?

BY MEGAN MULLER

It's bad enough that Kean students have to fight for parking on campus. Now, some of the roads commuter students take everyday to get to school may become toll roads.

"EAST-WEST INTERSTATES I-78, I-80 AND I-95 WOULD BE THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATES."

Governor Chris Christie raised the possibility of toll roads, suggesting tolls on NJ highways such as Interstate 78, 80, 195, 287 and 295 to raise funds in the face of a budget crisis.

Over the next ten years, New Jersey will

face an estimated funding shortfall of \$35 billion. The Transportation Trust Fund, an agency that finances the cost of maintaining the state's transportation system, released a report on Jan. 22 that stated it will run out of money in 2011. Currently, the system can barely cover the cost of its \$895 million debt.

The lack of funds to improve roadways would also halt much maintenance and expansion.

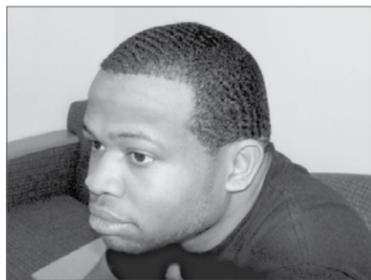
Nearly half of the major roads in New Jersey are rated deficient and provide motorists with a bumpy ride. Deficient roads often have potholes or other visible signs of deterioration and need to be resurfaced or reconstructed. Driving on New Jersey's roads cost motorists an average \$596 annually in vehicle maintenance.

The report has (Continued on page 2)

ALWAYS A BRIDESMAID, NEVER A BRIDE (see page 11)

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER: Have you ever had a stroke of luck?

BY BRETT WILLIAMS



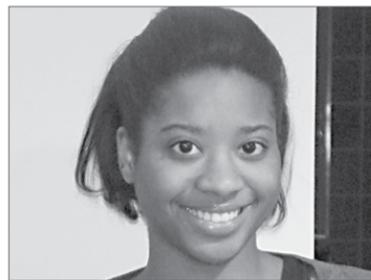
Joseph Favors
Senior, Management

"One time on the train to New York my friend called to me. I turned around and found \$20 on the floor."



Athena LaPenna
Junior, Speech Language Science

"Once I lived in a separate dorm from my sister. One day, I received a call from Kean and they asked if we wanted to live in the new upperclassmen dorm together."



Tierney Young
Senior, Interior Design

"One time my car broke down in Newark. I managed to flag down a cop and he took me to a tow place where they fixed my car, free of charge."



Douglas Jackson
Senior, Business Economics

"I was once in a car accident and that was very serious, but luckily I had my seat belt on."

Discovering a Local Basement Legend	3	Arts & Entertainment	8-9	Sports	13-15
Spring Break	4	Editorial & View	10	One Student's Visit to the Olympics	16
Word to the Wise	5	Health & Fitness	12	Celebs and Crime: John & Junior	16

Human Rights Club Launches at Kean

BY JUNIOR JEAN-BAPTISTE

It all started when a few student workers from the University Center decided it was time to talk about human rights. And now, with an enthusiastic executive board and a blessing from Student Trustee Scott Herman, the Kean Human Rights Club is here.

"We want to work together as a group to help students be aware of human rights issues," says Janine Rivera, president of the club. "We also want to get involved with the issues that are going on today."

The new Human Rights Club at Kean conducted its first meeting on February 16, 2010 at the CAS building and discussed future plans to help build awareness at Kean University about Human Rights issues.

With a newly constructed Human Rights Center, and the recent passing of

the third annual Human Rights Convention at Kean, the Human Rights club could not have had better timing.

The idea of forming a group centered around human rights formed when Scott Herman, the current Student Trustee and

"THERE ARE MANY HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES"

a Kean graduate student, introduced to Rivera the idea of a group where attention could be brought to students regarding human rights issues.

"I believe she will make a huge impact because she already has, and I don't see her stopping anytime soon," said Herman.

Each of the members say they have set out to work toward one common goal: to empower students and inspire awareness about current issues around the campus.



(Left to right) Janine Rivera, president, Samir Abdul, treasurer, and Katie Pagan, vice president.

"There are many human rights issues around and we're open to attack these certain issues," says Anthony Kershaw, a member of the group. Issues of the environment and human rights, and also children's rights to education and healthcare are among the issues they hope to address, he said.

Most of the original members work in the University Center, assisting students on a daily basis. Since the group's inception others have joined.

"I felt the need to get up and do something about the issues that are going on right now," says Derick Felix, a member of the group who does not work in the University Center.

So what does the group have planned?

It's still early, but the group already has at least one event planned for this semester. On April 8, 2010, the group will promote the Invisible Children Screening project, which will help children in Uganda learn about this project. The group is expected to explain more about the project in the next meeting and are asking students to come and participate in event. Times will be posted around campus to inform students of the event.

Nu Sigma Phi Fraternity Demonstrates Commitment and Progress

BY JILLIAN JOHNSON

Two years after pulling their fraternity back to life, the Nu Sigma Phi brothers have been steady in their brotherhood commitment.

"...we became bigger and better," said Steve Sedano, Treasurer of Nu Sigma Phi.

In 1993 the fraternity was suspended for one semester for violating the pledging rules. At that time, many of the active members were seniors soon to graduate, which also led to the fraternity disbanding.

In May of 2007, alumnus Michael Delicio came to Kean and raised questions about how his old fraternity could be brought back to life. After speaking to Valeria Winslow of the Student Life office, a table of interest with flyers and brochures

was set up at a Meet the Greeks event. Some 24 students signed up and a month later, on Oct. 27, 2008, Nu Sigma Phi presented themselves to the Greek Senate, and were accepted.



Members of the Nu Sigma Phi fraternity.

"We were never really apart," said alumner Dan Deweaver.

Today, the alumni and active members

keep their brotherhood bond strong and the alumni showed much pride in the progress of their active brothers.

"We are proud parents," said Delicio.

The fraternity recognizes individuals for their strengths and uniqueness, in which students are brought in from across the spectrum.

The alumni said that the active members did as expected to keeping a fraternity together and alive.

"There are certain unique skills to governing a [fraternity]," said Deweaver.

Actives carry the skill of self-governing and creating ideas to keep their fraternity alive and recognized.

"We are going to keep the progress going," said Paul Medeiros, President of Nu Sigma Phi.

The active members have contributed

greatly to charity through events raised such as Toys for Tots. The fraternity has also sponsored dance offs and interacted with underprivileged children this past winter. On Tuesday, March 2 the fraternity hosted their 'Dine to Donate' charity event at Applebee's on Morris Ave. Their goal was to raise money for breast cancer, the fraternity's philanthropy. Those interested were given flyers from the fraternity's website, <http://nusigmaphi.com/> to bring to Applebee's. The fraternity received 10% of the final bill to be donated to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

The fraternity also has demonstrated a commitment to the press by distributing *The Tower* student newspaper to students on campus. In return, the students receive community service credit.

Bandeira Serving as New Student Org President

BY MEGAN MULLER

Student Organization, the elected governing body representing Kean's estimated 10,000-plus full time students, has a new president following a shake-up, but details about the process were not announced.

Student Carminda Bandeira has assumed the position of President of Student Organization, which according to its website maintains an operating budget of just under \$1 million dollars and employs a professional staff of four.

Bandeira assumed the post after Kean permanently removed elected president Carmello Scott Ramos. Kean suspended Ramos from his post last fall on an inter-

im basis pending the outcome of a Student Conduct investigation related to criminal charges of misconduct that were dropped by the prosecutor's Office.

According to Kean University spokesman Paul Dinero, the Office of Student Conduct has concluded its investigation, but its ruling is private.

"All Office of Student Conduct proceedings are kept confidential pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act," DiNero said.

Bandeira assumed the position of President of Student Organization in January, but refused to comment to *The Tower* because she said she needed to get permission to speak to the press. However, in an

article in the Cougar's Byte, which is run by a university department, the Office of Student Life, Bandeira is a senior elementary education and earth science major. Known as "Mindy," she was formerly vice president of funded groups.

The article stated that Bandeira never intended to be president, but has embraced it with confidence. She also is quoted as saying: "My expectation for our executive board and council is that we jump right back onto our feet and move forward. We must stay true to our mission statement and be the leaders that we have come this far to be, regardless of any bump on the road."

TOLL ROADS

(Continued from page 1)

made six general recommendations to raise revenue, including the one to turn some roads into toll roads. One recommendation is to raise the tax on gasoline. However, doing so would raise only enough money to cover the debt payment this coming July.

Another recommendation explores tolls on various interstate highways in order to pay for the improvements on those highways. According to transportation experts, East-West Interstates I-78, I-80 and I-95 would be the most likely candidates. Other high volume highways such as I-287 and I-295 would be considered as well. However, considering that these highways are federal roads, state officials would be required to demonstrate why toll money is needed to fix the problems on each specific highway.

According to Jonathan D. Peters, associate professor of finance at The College of Staten Island who studies toll road finance, a road with a high traffic volume that is steadily growing and has few tolling (entrance or exit) points would test well in regards to this project.

It is unclear what direction Governor Christie will take the state of New Jersey in raising funds for transportation projects. As Christie researches all possibilities in this matter, motorists need to be aware of the probable changes.

Right now, it looks like you could be paying a toll to get to class.

PICK UP THE TOWER AT THESE LOCATIONS

- Administration Building, First floor lobby
- Bruce Hall, First Floor Lounge
- Center for Academic Success, Lobby
- Communications Department Office, CAS 402
- ESL Office, Willis Hall 301
- Harwood Arena, by the basketball courts
- Hutchinson Hall, First Floor Lobby
- Hennings Hall, First Floor Lobby
- Science Building, First Floor in hallway between Rooms 121 and 122
- Technology Building, hallway inside front door
- Tower Newsroom, CAS 413
- University Center, across from the cafeteria entrance
- Townsend Hall, First Floor reception area
- Vaughn-Eames Hall, First Floor Lobby
- Willis Hall, First Floor, across from the elevator

OP-ED

YOU Are Too Big to Fail

BY JOSEPH TINGLE

Initially, I had intended to write this column about my frustration with the Tea Party protesters.

A few weeks ago, I had read the feature article in the New York Times about the Tea Party, and I was outraged to see such ill-informed and unconstructive “protesting” going on about the current administration. Then, I realized that writing an editorial about the Tea Party would be giving them exactly what they’re begging for: attention. What is the point of complaining about the complainers? What is constructive about that?

Then, it hit me. The problem isn’t the Democrats or Republicans; it’s that political discourse itself is no longer about problems and solutions as much as it is about ideological ranting.

Right now, our nation is at a critical stage in its history. The United States—the most incredible experiment in democracy and free enterprise history has to offer—is coming to a stall. Our politicians have become unwilling to work together. Our bail-out of the nation’s financial industry has once again failed to do anything other than plant the seeds of its future destruction, both from its inability to create jobs and unwillingness to solve the problem of

the Federal Reserve. Our publically funded programs—whether they be focused on health, education, or transportation—often times cost more and accomplish less than those of the world’s other prosperous nations.

Our businesses—big and small—are failing. Our politicians are failing. Our citizenry is unable to see beyond the rhetoric of the right and left.

George Orwell was right. Rhetoric is destroying our nation.

Rather than focus on solving problems, our politicians and their constituents would rather hang out in an ideological fantasy realm: a realm of extremes where on the left, any kind of war is evidence of “insidious U.S. imperialism” and on the right, giving lower income people a chance to afford healthcare is “the government taking over your life and stealing your money.”

In this fantasy world, President Bush was a “dangerous fascist” and President Obama is a “scary Communist” who “pals around with terrorists.”

Unfortunately, the rhetoric we wallow in now wasn’t what convinced strong men like the Founding Fathers to draft the Constitution when the Articles of Confederation were no longer working.

It wasn’t rhetoric that convinced strong

leaders like President Dwight D. Eisenhower to push for the Interstate Highway System.

It wasn’t rhetoric that inspired Theodore Roosevelt to turn against his own Republican party when they became ineffective and lazy.

“POLITICAL DISCOURSE ITSELF IS NO LONGER ABOUT PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS AS MUCH AS IT IS ABOUT IDEOLOGICAL RANTING.”

It wasn’t rhetoric that inspired the all-too-often demonized Jimmy Carter to provide an absolutely essential role in getting the Egypt-Israel peace treaty signed.

It wasn’t rhetoric that inspired the all-too-often demonized Richard Nixon to open the door for relations with China.

And it isn’t rhetoric like the kind we hear all around us now—the kind that is espoused by pundits and politicians in order to keep the nation divided and the kind that keeps me from getting a good night’s sleep—that is going to fix the world’s problems.

This is a message to my fellow college students. Do you know how many people

in the world have a college education? Not many. We—those with a college education—are supposed to be the intellectual elite on the world scale. How can we still be so narrow-minded and misguided when it comes to thinking of ways to fix our nation’s problems?

After talking to a friend, I realized that our family and forefathers who served in the armed forces didn’t fight so we could find our opinions on The Glenn Beck Show or on the Keith Obermann Show; on the editorial pages of the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal, or in books and on websites set up with the sole intent to persuade viewers with unethically presented information. We don’t belong at tea parties—or at Starbucks parties. Homebrew coffee is better, anyway.

Our job, then, is to block out these opinions and become the problem solvers. This is not an option. The sacrifice of our forefathers and our incredible status on the world scale demand it.

Don’t form opinions—gain understandings, and then form solutions.

The world needs the help of intelligent people who can turn away from ideology and apply their mental energies to creating policy that works.

We, the free and the educated, are too big to fail.

Always a Bridesmaid, Never a Bride

BY MEGAN MULLER

Many girls dream of the day that they will be married from the time they are little girls. But not me, my dreams are more practical. Now I know I’m going to be stepping on toes when I give you my rant and rave, so if you’re a sensitive soul please do not read any further. I love “LOVE,” but I don’t see the point in spending money on a wedding.

The cake, the food, the colors, the flowers, the clothing, the jewelry, the venue, the bridal party... my brain hurts just thinking of what goes into a wedding and an engagement is not even in my near future! It’s no wonder that the wedding planning process takes, on average, 12-18 months! Not to mention the thousands of dollars you dish out to recruit a wedding planner when the going gets too tough.

The average wedding costs \$20,398 (not



including the engagement ring and honeymoon). It lasts approximately 30 minutes to an hour for the ceremony, and five

to six hours for the reception. Let’s break it down even further. We’re talking about \$20,398 for a maximum of seven hours to enjoy. That brings us to \$2,914 an hour. Yikes!

“THE AVERAGE WEDDING COSTS \$20, 398! THAT’S \$2,914 AN HOUR!”

I’ve been in a few weddings myself, attended numerous ones as a guest and am currently in the middle of dropping my “I didn’t have a baby, yet I still have 30 pounds to lose” weight for my best friend’s wedding in September. Yes, the pictures last a lifetime and remind you of the great time you had with people only your parents know, but why do you need to pay \$1,200 for a photographer to come

and snap all of those pictures when just about every person in the United States owns a digital camera? Am I depressing you yet?

I love attending weddings. I promise to everyone who reads this that if you invite me to yours, I will have one too many drinks and make a fool of myself for your enjoyment, but will hand over one amazing gift. I will indulge in the fabulous food you have chosen for me and taste the cake you just adorably cut into. However, you will not be invited to mine, sorry.

I understand that the point of a wedding is to show everyone else how much you’re in love. Isn’t that the point of PDA (public displays of affection)? Or are the couples that sit next to me waiting to be seated at TGIFridays just doing that for a little mouth exercise? I’m sorry folks, I’m just not buying the whole “wedding” thing.

Dr. Rich Hosts Faith-Inspired Revival for Emily Dickinson

BY JOSEPH TINGLE

Nineteenth century New England hymns sound through the halls of the CAS building. English department professor Dr. Susanna Rich, donning a powdered wig and tricorne hat, has taken on the identity of the fire and brimstone evangelical Jonathan Edwards, and is asking—no, demanding—that students who hope for salvation throw down their worldly possessions (i.e., cell-phones) so that they might be saved.

Many students are all-to-willing to conform. Still, some students resist. These “no-hopers,” armed with the poetry of Emily Dickinson, reject the authoritarian demand for conformity coming from Dr.

Rich’s re-enactment of nineteenth century evangelicalism.

“I stage The Revival of Emily Dickinson so that students can get a more visceral appreciation for the challenges Emily Dickinson faced in maintaining her integrity in the face of religious pressures,” said Dr. Rich, who is now transformed back to her normal self. “We enact a nineteenth century New England religious revival, which, scholars say, were more like those in the eighteenth century when Jonathan Edwards was delivering his fire and brimstone sermons.”

The Revival, according to Dr. Rich, is a special event that she holds whenever she teaches an Emily Dickinson class. The special event is meant to parallel Emily Dick-



Dr. Rich's Emily Dickinson Class.

inson’s private doubts about salvation with the fear-pandering and guilt-driven tactics employed by the overwhelming majority of religious figures in the nineteenth century.

After the drama is completed, students universally remark how they felt fear and

pressure to conform, notes Dr. Rich. Dr. Rich also says her revival gives students a much deeper appreciation of Emily Dickinson’s achievement in maintaining her traditional Puritan practices of entertaining doubts.

“In [Emily Dickinson’s] case, reason and art prevailed over dogma.”

So far, Dr. Rich seems to have been successful in helping students recognize an appreciation for Dickinson’s poetry, with several students both in her class and elsewhere committed to spending the semester reading every one of Emily Dickinson’s many poems.

Dr. Rich hopes that her students will be able to further their appreciation for Emily Dickinson this semester.