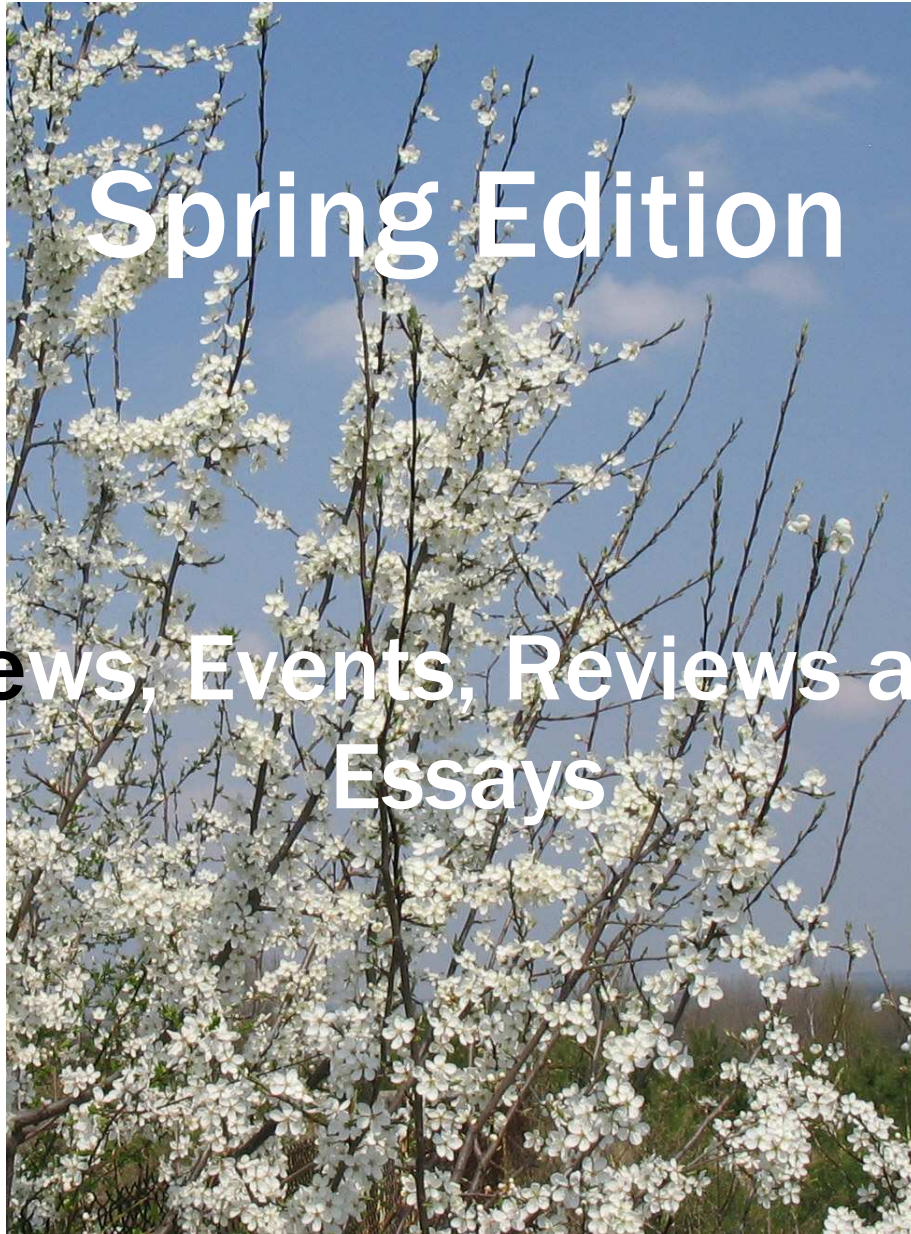


**THE**

**ISSUE 3 April 2006**

# *COLLEGIAN*

**An independent magazine for Sieradz students**



**Spring Edition**

**News, Events, Reviews and  
Essays**

**Only 2Zł!**

# Dear Readers,

Once again I can honestly admit that I have been quite shocked by the level of response to and comment upon the last issue. The number of e-mails received has caused all manner of eyebrows to be raised to heights hitherto unheard of. One really gets a feeling of just how much the College's students want to be involved in life outside the classroom.

The College has, of course, been through a difficult time since the release of our Christmas issue. The transition from first to second semester was not quite as smooth as it might have been but the atmosphere is somewhat more becalmed now as we enter the balmy Spring. The complications of the snowbound months have been a valuable learning process for both staff and students: some students have grasped the fact that tests are easier when you study for them and the teachers have realised that, no matter how little their charges know, there are only so many one can fail before the classrooms begin to look embarrassingly large.

The rest of the year, however, looks set fair to wear a smile on its face as one festival follows another tumbling into the always joyous final exam season. Inside this issue you'll

find details of some of these events. You'll also find book reviews, readers' essays and some other stuff that doesn't interest you much as well as the ever-popular horoscopes - though it looks like Luna has finally flipped...

A happy Easter to you all - and please, don't forget to vote!!

**The Editor**  
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Cover photo by Wioletta Hinton



## Drama Tour Scrapped

The good people of Bydgoszcz have heaved a huge sigh of relief as the plug has been pulled on the proposed visit to their city by the second year drama group. Some of the College's finest thespians were to have performed last weekend but their trip was suddenly cancelled by writer-director Mr. Hinton. Rumour and accusation have followed his decision. Some have cited 'artistic differences' and others 'contractual disputes'. Suggestions have even been made that Hinton was unhappy with financial aspects of the tour. 'With him, it's always about the money,' claimed one disgruntled theatre-goer. Those close to the College's drama guru, however, have issued strong denials and talked rather of 'insufficient preparation time' and a need to 'maintain the highest standards.' The exceptionally poor health of the second years, leading to unprecedented levels of absenteeism, is also thought to have been a factor.

## Teachers Tripping

After an entire decade in which the College staff have not managed so much as a quiet drink together, it will come as a shock to dedicated staff-room watchers to learn that the Social Section, under the firm leadership of Marek Marciniak, has cajoled them into signing up for a seats at a musical in Warsaw. Few can doubt that the overworked educators deserve a chance to relax and its hard to think of a better way to spend public money than sending them and their spouses on an all-expenses paid luxury trip, with food, alcohol and, apparently, lap-dancers included, in order to boost

morale in the final push for the end of the year. We wish them a wonderful time and hope to carry a full report of their activities in a later issue.

## 'Studies' Tops Survey

Research published this week has found that the simple phrase 'British Studies' has replaced the perennially popular classics 'I lost it', 'The other group had the book', and 'What essay?' as the most used excuse for the non-appearance of homework by College students. The Director of the College, however, questioned the methods of the researchers claiming never to have heard that excuse himself and finding it hard to square the students' apparent interest in his subject with their performance in class.

## Method in the Madness

Students and staff at College have both pronounced themselves happy with the College's decision to drastically reduce class sizes for the second semester. For many years educationalists have argued the value of teaching students in smaller numbers and near-universal delight greeted the administration's move to bring about this methodological revolution. Results have been encouraging; not surprisingly, most noticeably in the English third year evening group which has been trimmed to just six members in order that every class should have the atmosphere of an Oxbridge tutorial. If the progress this group has made so far is reflected in their exam performance it is believed more groups may be similarly reduced in time for the first semester next year.

# Events – The Inaugural Poetry Evening

with Anna Hertman

The evening of 14<sup>th</sup> December was no ordinary one- not for the people who attended the Poetry Evening, and especially for those who performed! It was quite a special 'Poetry Evening', since it was being organized for the first time in our college, and it was a good chance to slow down, and think about a few important things before Christmas. Great names and masterpieces of poetry helped us to do so. And the atmosphere of the event was very encouraging - candles, dimmed light and the smell of mandarins everywhere. Each performance had a soul of its own. People dressing in a formal way made the evening more serious and dignified..

The Poetry evening was not only an event where people could recite poems, but their main role was to perform and we should respect them for the fact that they were very brave. In some performances we could see how participants sometimes even acted, and tried to identify themselves with the poems.

Although the competition was not the main focus of the evening, there were Empik gift vouchers for prizes. The jury had a very big problem choosing the best declamation, but the first prize went to *Krystyna Nicpoń*, the two runners-up were *Emilia Olczak*, and *Maria Wardega*, and the special 'Marek Marciniak' prize went to *Magdalena Samek*.

We want to thank the organizers- *Mrs Kurzejamska*, *Mr Kurzejamski*, *Mr Marciniak*, and *Mr Hinton*- for giving us a chance to perform, and all the people who took part in the event for their efforts to entertain..

The winning poem was:

## DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT by Dylan Thomas

Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,  
Because their words had forked no lightning they  
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright  
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,  
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,  
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight  
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,  
Curse, bless me now with your fierce tears, I pray.  
Do not go gentle into that good night.  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

# THE LITERATURE REVIEW

by Olga Jaworska

## Paulo Coelho's *Veronica decides to die*

Paulo Coelho – a shy modest man from a middle-class family, born in Brazil in 1947. Why is he so special? Why do some people call him ‘an alchemist of words’? His books have been translated into 56 languages and admired by readers from over 150 countries. The vast majority of his works have topped the bestseller lists.

Coelho's success is surprising if we take into consideration the fact that his novels are not easy. Their plots are probably not the most complex you can think of, and the author claims the events and characters are fictional ones (yet really probable), but the philosophical background accompanying every piece of Coelho's writing causes everybody to start thinking about matters they have never wondered about. Every book is a lesson. A lesson about the world and about ourselves. The lessons are complicated and the reader, if he wants to benefit from experiencing them, must involve himself in this act of teaching. He should look deep into his soul and listen to his inner voice to respond properly to the lessons.

What is really amazing in this author is his attitude to the position in the world he has achieved. There is nothing of celebrity in him. I would even say he is a bit overwhelmed by the interest that his person has aroused and distances himself from the hype. Probably this is the reason why his works have not declined in value.

I would like to focus your attention on one of Coelho's most famous novels and the one that appeals to me most. *Veronica decides to die* is a moving story about a young girl who feels lonely and lost in this big world and does not know what to do with her life to make it more exciting and bright. She cannot understand the rules that the world follows and she is unable to find her own place in the contemporary reality. Veronica decides to commit suicide. She takes some pills and hopes to wake up in a better place. Unfortunately for her, when she opens her eyes again, she is still alive but what is worse, she finds herself in a hospital for mentally ill people. To her amazement, this is the place where her new life begins...

Paulo Coelho's style of narration makes you feel that you cannot wrench yourself away from the book. Fantastic descriptions of the different states of Veronica's mind create the impression that Coelho is a genuine psychologist. It is unbelievable that a man is able to present a woman's inner voice so precisely and so accurately. He must have been a woman in his previous incarnation...

The author's real flair for endearing accounts of emotional changes in the main character's attitude is revealed when Coelho describes Veronica's relationship with Edward, a mentally disabled guy whom she meets in the hospital. He plays piano for her and, unexpectedly, shows her the true value of life. They fall in love with each other and thus ‘cure’ themselves. It is a real pleasure to read the dialogues between them – every line brings some new thoughts and ideas, probably not very sophisticated but true and appealing.

If you happen to have some free time and do not want to waste it, you should read this book. You may find it a bit melancholic in some places, but I can assure you that you will benefit from having a look at it. If the worst comes to the worst, you will at least realize that mentally ill people are much more sensitive than you think they are, and that they deserve more respect from us, ‘normal’ ones. But who is normal nowadays?!

# Shiny, Happy Students?

by Ola Skowron & Ilona Paluch

We often think that it is boring just to sit at the college and learn. Have you ever wondered what it would be like to wake up one day and go to school with a smile on your face, knowing that you will spend a wonderful day there? You probably think it is impossible and that is the best reason for us to answer these questions : How can we revive student life at the college? How can we make it more interesting? Students have a lot of ideas, we just have to put them into practice.

Firstly, we could organize trips to foreign countries, even student exchanges. In this way we would be able to practice and improve our speaking skills and get to know the other cultures, which is very useful in understanding the language we learn.

Secondly, we could introduce sport, drama and poetry competitions with valuable prizes. People would come to the college not because they were told to do so but because of their strong will to win. This kind of "competition skill" is also useful in our everyday life. We could also organize a Student Rag, which would probably interest a lot of students.

Another problem is the atmosphere at school, which is very important, so we could do our best to try to equip the students' room, so that the time spent there would be more enjoyable. We could also let the students paint the walls there according to their wishes. Consequently, students would rest

in more comfortable conditions and would have time to gather their energy before continuing their stressful day. Also, the classrooms should be places which we enter, more or less, with pleasure. This is why we should take care of them, too. Some plants on the windowsills, pictures on the walls...they all could help. These are little items, but they would make us feel more at home, so – more relaxed.

One final suggestion would be to introduce voluntary physical education lessons with a variety of activities to choose from. As a result, future teachers would be in better physical condition, and good general fitness means higher intellectual efficiency. We might also organize some meetings of the students or trips to the cinema, where we could project foreign films on the screen, without subtitles of course. In this way we could check our knowledge of the language, whether we understand the meaning in context or not.

We think it would be a very good idea, both for the students and the teachers, to revive student life at the college. The former would come to classes more relaxed and with genuine pleasure, whereas the latter would have an easier task to teach students that are happy in their school. We are sure that our suggestions would have a positive influence not only on the days spent at school but also on our future life and career.

# Cricket – a foreigner’s guide

After England's fabulous success of last summer, no doubt many of you will want to follow the drama of the new cricket season closely. In order to help you, legendary fast bowler *Sydney B. Sidebottom* has put together a brief guide for continentals.

‘ Oh, to be in England / Now that April’s there,’ as Robert Browning wrote (Home-thoughts from abroad). And what would he have found if he had made it home? Rain and cricket. April is well-known for its showers and also marks the start of the season for devotees of that most English of sports.

Cricket, for those of you who don’t know, is a game played outside which requires good, or at least dry, weather. It is the first of the game’s little perversities that it should have been invented in a country with summers as wet as England’s and the second is that April should be chosen for the start of the year’s competitions. Cricketers spend much of their time out on the field standing around waiting for the ball to come to them, a player may wait for ten or twenty minutes, even more, for this to happen. It is no surprise, then, that those playing in the first encounters of the season refer to ‘three-jumper days’ when the wearing of three jumpers is essential to survival in the outfield. Frostbite is, thankfully, rare in England, but it is hard to catch a rock hard ball when one’s fingers refuse to bend.

Few other countries have a sport which so well reflects their national character as the English have in cricket. From a distance the game looks slow, unexciting and difficult to get to know and, of course, the players appear to treat each other and the umpire, with great respect and good manners. Close up, however, deep passions simmer, subtle traps are laid and unkind words are muttered. This darker side of the game is not a modern phenomenon, though cricket has had plenty of scandals in recent times. The most famous Victorian cricketer in England, W.G.Grace, was well-known for refusing to accept the decisions of the umpire when they went against him. Such was his fame, his reputation and his size (he was not built like a modern day athlete) that umpires often changed their decision so as not to upset the great man.

England, of course, is not the only country where cricket is played. Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the West Indies, Pakistan and India, amongst others, all play too. Indeed, the West Indies, a collection of independent Caribbean islands, exists only as a cricket team. The one thing that links all the cricket playing nations is the English language. One reason why non-English speakers are discouraged might be the difficulty in translating the various terms used to describe the positions of the fielders and the techniques of the game. Try converting some of these into Polish, - ‘fine leg’, ‘silly point’, ‘deep square-leg’, or ‘googly’\*. There is a ‘third man’ but no first or second one, players get into trouble ‘fishing outside the off-stump’, a googly from a left-handed player is called a ‘chinaman’ which you could at least translate, but would it help?

The terminology of cricket is famously confusing, but nothing compared to the rules. Although some cricket takes place in Holland, it seems that most continental Europeans are born with an inability to understand what is actually going on during a game. In fact, it’s no more complicated than many other sports, it’s just that spectators who are new to the game

can't see anything of its subtleties. A fairly large field is needed, so those watching are some way from the action which takes place in the middle of the field and much of that action involves tiny finger movements and a small ball travelling at more than 100 Km an hour.

Fortunately, an understanding of the details is not essential. The most enjoyable thing about cricket is not, in fact, connected to the game or even the players, it is the cricket 'tea', which is traditionally prepared by the wives and girlfriends of the players. The tea consists of large numbers of sandwiches and an assortment of home-made cakes and, obviously, enormous quantities of tea. Even a short match played for fun at the weekend lasts at least five hours so some refreshment is necessary, and it is a fact, whether you believe me or not, that all over England, thousands of women, who have no interest in the game itself, give up their Saturdays and Sundays, not only to prepare these meals, but also to serve them to the players. This may be because it's the only chance they get to meet their husbands during the summer. Dedicated players play both days during the weekend from mid-April until mid-September which can make family life difficult.

International matches last five days each, which means five teas, of course, and often nobody wins anyway. That doesn't matter, however, as the teams usually meet five times in one series of matches and somebody is bound to win one of them.

And so what about the rules? Well, it's quite simple. Two teams, one is 'in' and the other tries to get them out. The team which is 'in' is batting and tries to score 'runs' before they are all out. They do this by hitting the ball and running backwards and forwards. The other team gets them out by catching the ball when they've hit it, hitting their 'wicket', which is a wooden structure the batsman stands in front of, or making them break the rules to stop this happening. When the first team are all out, the other team come out and go 'in' and try to score more runs than the first team. The team with more runs is the winner, usually, except when it's a draw, even though one team has more runs than the other. But that's just another of the game's little eccentricities and it's not the winning that matters, it's the taking part, the tea-time cake and the fresh-air – so long as the rain holds off.

\* A googly is a delivery from a leg-spin bowler which spins, not from leg to off, but from the off-side towards leg. The off-side is in no way similar to offside in football.

To find out more see:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/cricket/default.stm>

<http://www.cricinfo.com/>

<http://www.lords.org/latest-news/top-stories/>

<http://www.icc-cricket.com/>

<http://www.ecb.co.uk/>



# Easter Horoscopes - with Loony Luna



**AQUARIUS**

Jan 21<sup>st</sup> - Feb 18<sup>th</sup>

The Easter bunny has plenty of surprises in store for you this year. The chocolate will do you no harm but beware of subliminal messages in the greetings cards. Spring is a time of thaws and downpours - so don't pitch your tent by a river.

Lucky Bald Man: Jan Rokita



**PISCES**

Feb 19<sup>th</sup> - Mar 20<sup>th</sup>

A knock on the door in the dead of night can mean only three things and two are too awful to mention. Pray it's just your drunken neighbour looking for his flat again. Think bright colours and open spaces - give peace a chance.

Lucky Trainers: Puma.



**ARIES**

Mar 21<sup>st</sup> - Apr 20<sup>th</sup>

You give of your soul, your efforts are spurned. You throw open your heart and in rush the thistles. Turn off your phone and keep the lawn short. Hold matches at the cold end.

Lucky Climate: Polar



**TAURUS**

Apr 21<sup>st</sup> - May 21<sup>st</sup>

The stars have stopped moving, the wind has stopped blowing. This is inconvenient since it leaves you fateless. Toss a coin and a bird will steal it, roll a die and it'll go under the sofa. Is no luck better than bad luck? Only you can decide.

Lucky Sunday: 31<sup>st</sup> April



**GEMINI**

May 22<sup>nd</sup> - Jun 21<sup>st</sup>

Try as you might, you won't master yoga this month. Stick with the green tea but leave the lotus position to those who drive Lotus. It's time to prepare for the beach but be careful of Solaria. The sun is a long way away for a reason.

Lucky Tax: Capital Gains.



**CANCER**

Jun 22<sup>nd</sup> - Jul 22<sup>nd</sup>

The cool wet grass beneath your feet, vermilion sky above. And every hillside lamb doth bleat the syllables of love.

Lucky Feeling: Melancholy tinged with regret.



## LEO

Jul 23<sup>rd</sup> - Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>

I know, I know, you've heard it all before. Mars, moons, meteors and microwaves. Relax. It might never happen, and if it does, remember to smile for the cameras.

Lucky Pub Game: Strip-Darts.



## VIRGO

Aug 24<sup>th</sup> - Sep 22<sup>nd</sup>

Well now, look at you with your great new haircut, ironed underwear and steel rimmed glasses. There's no stopping you tonight or any time before Corpus Christi!

Lucky Railway Station: Sieradz Męka.



## LIBRA

Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> - Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>

Planetary procrastination muddies the waters at this festive season - either you're going to fall in love and get rich or fail an exam - it's hard to see which. Steer clear of spicy sauces and try holding your breath for a minute at a time.

Lucky Hand: Left.



## SCORPIO

Oct 24<sup>th</sup> - Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>

And though the clouds of trial do bruise the sky, we need no pause to wonder why, the Gods exclaim while entering your heart, 'No mortal! One of us thou art!'

Lucky Playing Card: 6 of Clubs.



## SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> - Dec 21<sup>st</sup>

It might be better not to know. Read the small-print and turn off the gas. On the other hand, let it ride, who cares. Wasn't it Hamlet who said, 'Frankly my dear, I don't give a damn.'

Lucky Spaghetti Western: A Fistful of Dollars.



## CAPRICORN

Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> - Jan 20<sup>th</sup>

Your thoughts run all opaque. The numbers won't add up and Saturn's shadow looms so large and round. You dream of blood red tulips singing 'Tamzyn, Tamzyn Tangerine,' and weeping in the twilight eve.

Lucky religious figure: The Archbishop of York.

Loony Luna accepts no responsibility for the foolish actions readers undertake as a result of reading her advice. The publishers accept no responsibility for the actions of Loony Luna since she can not legally be held responsible for them herself.