

THE

ISSUE 4 Nov. 2006

COLLEGIAN

An independent magazine for Sieradz students



Sweeping away the cob-webs...

2Zł

Dear Readers,

Almost two months have passed of a brand new school year and anxiety has been rising over the fate of the popular college magazine launched last autumn. Well, be of good cheer for the Collegian is back along with all your favourites! There'll be more horoscopes, more competitions, more highly amusing articles offered up by the editorial staff and other guest writers.

Several exciting things have happened to the magazine over the summer break. First, we were hugely honoured to be given third prize in the 'best English language publication at an academic institution' category of the Sieradz and Region printed media awards, 2006. It is recognition of this kind that makes all the hours of hard slog seem worthwhile after all. And the ringing endorsement of our efforts from the council's assistant deputy foreign language awareness and international relations officer, delivered, as it was, somewhat incoherently between large sips of something Russian and sparkling, will remain with me forever.

The second important event was our move into specially designed and built offices in the business district of the town. This move was made necessary by the increasing size of our staff. A fitness programme was

tried but, since none of us is getting any younger, more spacious accommodation was considered the better option. Naturally, no expense has been spared: the carpets are deep enough to lose small children in and the afternoon tea is served by hand-maidens specially imported from Laos.

Rest assured, however, that we shall not be resting on our laurels - why would we with such comfortable sofas? My team and I shall continue to strive to bring you the very best reporting, features and comment. Your contributions would be welcome and the Laotians are waiting.

All the best for the new semester,

The Editor
thecollegian@tlen.pl

The Collegian is an independent magazine.

Send all correspondence to the above e-mail address. All ideas and suggestions are welcome. No criticism will be accepted. Copyright to the entire publication is owned by the staff.

Editor-in-Chief,
Martin Hinton M.A.

Assistant Editor,
Anna Hertman

College News College News College News College News

All change in the lavatories

Students returned from their summer holidays to the shock of new lavatorial facilities at the college. Whilst the renovations were undoubtedly long overdue, some more senior students have lamented the passing of the old toilets like the death of an old friend. 'Some of the happiest moments of my life occurred in there,' wailed one bleary-eyed third-year. Another suggested that the money would have been better spent on a large bonus for the hard-working teaching staff. This was a minority view, however, and overall the students declared their great satisfaction with the changes.

The changing of the guard

With the sad retirement of Pani Fela following hot on the heels of Pani Sabina's career change, there's a very fresh look about the College cleaning team. Director Jan Dutka, 37, is apparently happy to put his faith in youth - hopefully avoiding the necessity of having to find anyone new for some time - but some observers have questioned the double change, raising doubts about the lack of experience in his back line leaving him vulnerable to a dip in form, particularly during those difficult winter months. The ladies in question are steadfastly unconcerned, however, and their confidence and serenity serve as a comfort to us all.

December in verse

December, as you can read on page 103, will be a veritable riot of versification at the College. Speculation about likely winners of the dual contests, however, has been surpassed by the excited debate about what the magical Mr. Marciniak might perform by way of inauguration, or, indeed, if he will perform at all. A veteran of last year's Poetry Evening told *The Collegian* it would be impossible to imagine the event without him.

Another of last year's performers went further: 'If he doesn't recite, I don't recite. It's that simple.'

Given this level of demand, it seems unlikely the maestro will refuse - but having set himself such high standards a year ago, he'll need to pull out all the stops to satisfy his many admirers. You will, of course, find a full report of his performance, and critical reaction to it, in the next edition of *The Collegian*.

What's their programme?

With very little fanfare, and even less interest, an entirely new teaching programme has been rolled out for first year students. With the order finally signed by the deeply popular Education Secretary, the cuddly Mr. Giertych, the well-oiled wheels of College bureaucracy squealed into action and a number of subjects were hurriedly renamed to fit the new requirements. Mr. Giertych told us in flawless English and with a winning smile, that he was convinced the new names would massively improve the quality of College graduates at a very reasonable cost to the taxpayer. The addition of German to the evening programme was also welcomed -

'Know your enemy!' said Mr. Giertych wisely.

Starting School

NKJO graduate *Olga Jaworska* describes her first days in the real world, as a real teacher

You must have wondered many times what your life will be like after graduating from the college, am I right? Unless you are not going to finish it, which is not that impossible nor infrequent, and completely beyond your control, of course. There happen to be people, though, who do dare to think that, sooner or later, they will handle the challenge, and some of them succeed. And there they are, brand-new model teachers, fresh, excited, hardworking and patient, in love with teaching after hours of practical methodology classes and individual teaching practice... Yeah, wishful thinking! I am sure that, despite being TTC trainees, which carries some implications for possible future jobs, the majority of students dream of being a translator for an international company and earning as much a week as a teacher does a month. So did I, till one sunny morning in July, 2006.

I had just come back from a lovely trip to London and was unpacking my suitcase when the telephone rang. 'We are looking for a teacher of English, are you interested?' - said the voice. 'No, I'm not' - said my heart but my head answered through my mouth 'Absolutely!', and this was how my plans lay in tatters. However, every cloud has a silver lining, so the story continues. I spent a month considering the appropriateness of my decision, thinking how to curb junior high school students and preparing for my first teachers meeting.

The very thought of the meeting was twice as stressful as the idea of working in a junior high school itself. My

imagination had created pictures of my former teachers greeting me at the meeting with a grin saying 'Kid, what are you doing here?!' Luckily, the situation was not as bad as it may have seemed somewhere deep in my mind. It was probably due to the fact that it was not the kind of teachers meeting which you imagine when you say the phrase. There were no desks, no chairs, no suits, no hours of talking about Mr Giertych's regulations... It was fun, fun, fun! We went to a party in a forest, however strange that may sound.

But first things first, the teachers met by the entrance to OUR ☺ school. Beside me, there were seven 'new' people (some of them I had had the pleasure to meet in the waiting room at the work medicine specialist's) and that we were 'freshers' was easily distinguishable as we formed the biggest group standing together and putting a good face on a bad business as more and more people were approaching the place (by the way, I have never seen a school with so many male teachers) and looking at us suspiciously. There were also some signs of friendliness, of course, but they disappeared in the crowd. And then the bus came and the whole thing started. Travelling in a group of forty-something in a bus built for slightly over twenty can be a wonderful experience, believe me, especially when you do not know where are you going and how long the journey is going to take, but never mind the details.

We arrived at a kind of forester's lodge to take part in a forty-minute long official stage of the meeting, which meant

greeting the newcomers (with enthusiasm and joy, obviously) and getting familiar with the timetable for the coming school year. Forty minutes is really nothing if you compare it to teachers meetings in other schools (not pinpointing any one in particular...) lasting long hours. The time passes quickly, especially when you know what comes after ☺.

So, the official stuff was over and the socializing began: drinking (tea, coffee and some kind of beverage of light brown colour resembling beer, but alcohol-free, of course), eating (healthy food only – lard, sausages and chuck steaks) and dancing (in pairs or in groups, always on the floor, never on the desk). And there came the surprise – teachers are human beings! They have a human face! They like relaxing, laughing (some of them can only smile, but that is something anyway), just having fun in general. What a find! Teachers should be stiff, serious and wearing smart outfits, not tracksuits, should they not? God, did I take the wrong bus or something? No, I just found myself partying with a group of people representing teachers I personally had always dreamt of having as a teenager: normal, able to come to a ten-year younger person and say 'Hi! I am X (sorry, I promised not to give any names). Here's to your new job, welcome to the jungle!' It is probably not much, but when you are a fresher it is a lot. It is much easier to come to work every morning when there are nice people around you. The meeting was a perfect ice-breaker.

The party was over but not the partying. Actually, the partying had just begun, as there were many things to be 'discussed'. They had to do with the timetable and teachers' duties, of course... We, the newcomers, as ambitious and conscientious people wanted to know as much as possible right from the very beginning, and our more experienced friends were kind enough to stay 'overtime' and explain any doubts. The building of our school was closed so, we had no choice

but to visit other places, it was not our fault.

We met again a couple of days later, at the official ceremony opening the 2006/2007 school year and, although we were not in the forest any longer, the atmosphere had not changed. People were smiling, asking about our (the freshers') first impressions and the only problem was with remembering some of our new mates' first names and the subjects they teach. The problem with surnames still exists but we are working on that.

As to teaching itself (since this is what the article was supposed to be about ☺), it was another surprise, probably even a bigger one than the human side of teachers. After the short period of time that I had spent in one of the junior high schools near Sieradz, I was sure that I would be forced to wear a helmet (so as not to provoke any bin into landing on my bare head) and to carry tear-gas in my pocket, in case I was forced to enter the boys toilet. Unfortunately, the situation turned out to be more boring here: the teenagers behave like people rather than like animals, they usually do their homework and seem to be listening to what you say. Moreover, they have some sense of humour and are ready to co-operate with the teacher, plus, which surprised me the most, they like singing, so you can 'invite' R.Kelly to your classroom – no problem! The boys (!) love high tones and are really good at imitating them.

All in all, it seems that there is nothing to worry about if our plans for the future change. It is natural. Various factors and events determine our life and we are not able to foresee them all. The most important thing is not to get depressed too easily, not to expect the worst (although it is better to be surprised in a positive way than in a negative one) and always look on the bright side. Why not be a beloved teacher instead of a poor translator?! And this is the moment when I would like to say a sincere THANK YOU to all the

people who caused that I am who I am and where I am. Respect for ever.

The Olde English Kitchen

In the first of a regular new series, our rural affairs correspondent, *Old Fanny Archbottom*, introduces you to the wonders of traditional English country cooking.

On today's bill of fare:

Sticky Toffee Pudding

This is a very popular English dessert best enjoyed after a long walk and large Sunday lunch. It is also a particular favourite of Prof. Zenon Weigt.

Ingredients:

for pudding:

4 oz. soft butter
6 oz. caster sugar
3 beaten eggs
8 oz. self-raising flour
8 oz. stoned, chopped dates
½ pint boiling water
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 tablespoon strong coffee

for sauce:

3 oz. brown sugar
2 oz. butter
3 tablespoons double cream

Method:

pudding:

Put dates in a bowl with the boiling water. Add vanilla, coffee and baking soda and leave.

Cream butter and sugar together, slowly add eggs. Fold in flour.

Combine both mixtures. Gently turn into an 8 inch cake tin.

Bake approx. 1½ hours at 180 C.

Sauce:

Bring butter, sugar and cream together in a saucepan. Heat until sugar melts. Simmer for a few minutes.

Pour sauce over baked pudding and serve.

Happy eating!

Old Fanny

Emigration

Everyone else is doing it – why shouldn't I?

A personal view from Anna Hertman

Emigration is now a very hot topic, since many educated young people are leaving our country. Recently we have heard a lot of troubling stories about doctors and other qualified specialists who prefer to work, and sometimes live, abroad. Many young Poles simply leave to taste another culture, develop language skills or have new experiences.

One of the good features of emigration is the improvement of the Polish economy, as emigrants send home money earned in foreign countries and their families spend it in our homeland. Sometimes emigrants return and open new companies in Poland thanks to 'foreign' money, which really helps our economy and its development.

Life in richer countries can seem very glamorous and exciting. The idea of living in a more 'advanced' society is very attractive, and there is always the chance that you will make it rich. Even if you're not that lucky, your linguistic ability will certainly improve and the experience of living with a different people in a different country should open your mind to many possibilities and make you a more rounded and better balanced person.

There are a number of pitfalls, however, both for the emigrant and for those he leaves behind. People usually think that they will earn a lot of money by working abroad, which is not always true. Life in the West is expensive and the wages on offer are usually the legal minimum, or less.

Culture shock is another thing that emigrant must be aware of, especially those who decide to go to a particular country, without knowing the language that is used there. It is obvious that they will fail to adjust to the new society, its customs and traditions.

The lack of friends, someone to talk with, for example when you are discriminated against, used or badly treated by the locals, is another negative feature of going abroad and staying there only to work. Job seekers who have families in Poland ought to think carefully about their families, about the fact that it is very hard to be married and live separately and bring up children when you are thousand miles away.

It is not only the individual who may suffer from the ill-effects of emigration. Population decline will soon be one of the major challenges facing our country. The lack of qualified staff in Poland, because of constant emigration to western countries, is already becoming a major concern and could be an acute problem in the future.

Poles wanting to emigrate should consider their choice carefully, since our country is not so bad at all. It has its positive features, and future emigrants should only sit down and think about the fact that the reality of living abroad is not always as great as it seems.



Your Horoscope - with Loony Luna



AQUARIUS

Jan 21st - Feb 18th

Lines of communication across the cosmos have got a little tangled and the moons which should have been governing your fate have accidentally taken a week off in the Azores.

Unpredictability is, therefore, the watchword. Put the kettle on but be careful cutting the lemon.

Lucky Rolling Stone: Bill Wyman.



PISCES

Feb 19th - Mar 20th

The lunatics have taken over the asylum and you've been made Director of the addictions ward. Take advantage of this opportunity to gain access to a variety of exciting medications before the regional authorities send in the riot police. Mars is on your side so be bold and dress loud.

Lucky ex-Welshman: Anthony Hopkins.



ARIES

Mar 21st - Apr 20th

Love is a brutal beast and wears its fangs as sharp as can be. Snow is unlikely but the rain will fall at uncomfortable angles this month - an umbrella might help and rubber boots are a must. The plastic bag on head routine has well-publicised side-effects.

Lucky Waugh Novella: The loved one.



TAURUS

Apr 21st - May 21st

Knowing you're a bull, why do you keep walking into china shops? Even the pull of Jupiter is insufficient to keep you on the pavement when a pretty tea pot winks its cheeky spout at you. A weakness for floral edging and ornate cup handles will, quite literally, be the end of you. Fight it!

Lucky Outdated Technology: Stone sundial.



GEMINI

May 22nd - Jun 21st

Meteors falling between you and yourself wreak havoc with your cholesterol level and have you reaching for volumes of verse in a tragically forlorn attempt to make sense of this senseless world of absurdities and contradictions. And stuff.

Lucky OED definition: Nevermore - adv. at no future time.



CANCER

Jun 22nd - Jul 22nd

The long distance runner is a social magnet compared to you this month. Why can't you make new friends? Is it those curtains? Or the unpleasant stains on the bathroom rug? You decide.

Lucky pseudo-democrat: Vladimir Putin.



LEO

Jul 23rd - Aug 23rd

Everyone likes elevenses but sticky fingers raise suspicions so don't overdo it. Your feminine side makes a rare appearance and you buy pink pyjamas but die them black later in a fit of pique.

Lucky Street: P.O.W.



VIRGO

Aug 24th - Sep 22nd

Your passionate nature lands you in hot water but you take advantage of the situation to wash your hair and come out smelling of roses.

Lucky Foreign Policy: The Monroe Doctrine.



LIBRA

Sep 23rd - Oct 23rd

The unexpected change in the number of planets has put you all out of balance and you might need some serious work in the gym to get back into shape. When Christmas shopping, go for expensive wrapping paper and cheap gifts.

Lucky English Sausage: Lincolnshire.



SCORPIO

Oct 24th - Nov 22nd

You suddenly realise that everything you've believed in for the last decade is actually wrong. Never mind, worse things happen at sea and you're not too old for a complete change of personality.

Lucky Torturers: The CIA.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23rd - Dec 21st

Freedom of speech is in short supply when everything you say upsets either your mother or the Kacziński twins. Remember, Presidents come and go, mothers are for life.

Lucky oddly-named technology: Blue Tooth.



CAPRICORN

Dec 22nd - Jan 20th

The winter means cold weather. Days will be shorter. With a memory like yours, you know that already but be ready to remind others.

Lucky Assassination Method: Polonium Poisoning.

Poetry Bonanza

Now is the time for writing, reciting, and generally delighting us all with the wonders of poesy!

Not one, but two **massively prestigious** poetry competitions will be held in the college over the coming weeks. That means not one, but two **fantastic** chances to win **big prizes** and, more importantly, the acclaim of your fellow students and teachers.

Atmosphere

Who can forget last year's emotionally charged poetry evening: the candles, the air of expectation, the romance and the tragedy. On that occasion, third year student Krystyna Nicpoń took top prize, but this time around **it could be you!** The names of those performing and the works they will recite should be with literature guru Agnieszka Kurzejamska by the end of November. The big night is the 13th of December, and the organisers are guaranteeing a **great atmosphere** once again for this popular event.

Talent

In addition to the high-quality recitation competition, on the same evening you will be able to hear the **winners** of the poetry writing competition reading from their own works. This opportunity to showcase the **creative talents** of the college students is being masterminded by Anna Świerczyńska. Entries are being accepted from all students in any style whatsoever on the theme of 'Joy'. The response has already been impressive and the jury is in danger of being overwhelmed by the quantity and quality of the verse.

Glory

The cause of this massive outbreak of versification is, naturally, the prospect of having one's poem printed in one of Sieradz's leading English language student publications, namely, *The Collegian*. That's right – your work could be featured right here in our next issue! On the opposite page you can see the works of the glorious victors of last year's competition. May they inspire you to greater efforts!

The winning poems, academic year 2005/6:

1st THE MOON by Kamila Kaczmarek

It is.
More and more.
It has appeared. Luminous.
Gives light, inspiration.
We're standing and looking at our shadows.
In the grass. Don't move.
Memories are coming. We are waiting.
Maybe something'll come: love, hope, truth.
Motionless. We are.
And admire its beauty.
Less and less.
Disappeared.
Nothing has come.

2nd THE DOCTOR by Magdalena Gracka

Oh! My poor head
With aching ears.
Oh! my poor eyes
So full of tears.
Oh my poor heart
Pounding so strong!
All that you have done
is really so wrong!
You forgot to mention
Oh! My cruel dentist
That I should've taken
INSENSIBILIZATION

3rd UNTITLED 1 by Magdalena Smolińska

The last rays of the sun
Disappeared in the night's hands.
The sky embroidered by stars
Is exposing its magic might.
Warm wind is cuddling the trees.
I can hear only my thoughts and whisper of leaves.
Subtle breath of sleepy flowers is lifting in the air.
Close your eyes and dream with them.

The Back Page

Fun & Games

The English are notoriously bad linguists – so here are...
Five things English people find difficult in English.

1. The verb ‘to be’ – in the present simple it’s tricky, hence ‘you is’, in the negative it’s hard, ‘I ain’t’, ‘aren’t I?’, but in the past it’s impossible, ‘Oh you was, was you? Well, I weren’t!’
2. Apostrophe’s – the use of an apostrophe with plurals has a special name: ‘the Greengrocer’s apostrophe’. It’s common on signs, like ‘carrot’s 50p’ and ‘aples’ 2.50’(see point 3)
3. Spelling – many English words are specifically designed to be mis-spelt, sorry misspelt, I mean miss-spellt. Errr...Natives get round this problem by pretending they don’t care and calling anyone who corrects there mistakes a fashist.
4. Tenses – English is a vibrant language, open to change. That’s because the English don’t learn grammar at school but make it up as they go along. Here’s a typical example: ‘I could of took it if I wanted.’
5. Fluency – surprisingly few native speakers can speak English fluently. Instead, they fill their sentences with meaningless noise; ‘Yeah, but like, you know, I mean, ‘e is though in’e though, know what I mean?’

All of which should make you feel proud at your own level of ability but, sadly, means you will not understand anything anybody says to you if you go to England.

Competition time!

Yes, I know. You can’t believe it. You’ve been waiting all summer, all autumn and finally here it is – your chance to win incredible prizes in The Collegian’s brand new regular quiz.
Just answer the questions! It really is that easy!

1. Who killed Alexander Litvinenko?
2. When will Tony Blair resign?
3. In how many years will Iran have effective nuclear weapons?
4. Where is Osama bin Laden?
5. Why do you need a biometric passport to enter the U.S. but only a Donald Duck fan club card to purchase a semi-automatic assault rifle and a thousand rounds of ammunition when you get there?

Answer these questions correctly and you will become the next Secretary-General of the UN.
Good luck!

COMING SOON

Christmas!!!