the Stentorian

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Stentorian Interview

The Stentorian has chosen to interview Rena Lindstrom, guidance counselor at NCSSM, as it was felt that her views might add a different perspective to life here.

Stentorian: The college planning process has begun for this year's juniors. Will you do anything differently for them than for this year's seniors?

Lindstrom: Yes, I will let someone else do it for me. Seriously, I think I will give more responsibility to the students this time around. This was the first year that we have done this and I carefully checked all the applications which we processed to make sure that everything we sent out of this office was in top form. Next year, I hope to train the students to do as much as they can and I will act mainly as a resource.

Stentorian: Do you think that starting this early helps people in the process?

Lindstrom: Oh, for sure. This year no one applied to more than six schools. Starting early usually helps people narrow down choices to a reasonable number by the time application time rolls around. Last year, for example, at the first college workshop, thirty-nine people expressed serious interest in MIT. This year, six applied. People change their minds and starting early allows for that.

Stentorian: How would you characterize a successful student at NCSSM?

Lindstrom: I would say that a successful student here has a large amount of self-discipline and also a social facility.

Stentorian: What do you mean by social facility?

Lindstrom: I mean someone who is comfortable with others and not isolationist. I think someone who has difficulty relating to others will have a harder time adjusting here. It's not impossible but it will be harder.

Stentorian: How would you rate the school's performance thus far?

Lindstrom: I think that the school has to deal with an internal conflict that most institutions do not deal with. That is, it has to function and plan for the future simultaneously. Thus, the school has to be very flexible to experiment since one can never know all. I think it has done well considering this.

Stentorian: What do you see as the biggest problem facing the students here?

Lindstrom: It is difficult to live on an isolated campus in a new city and find ways to recreate. Opportunities for this are limited and this is a large problem. Yet, on the other hand, this causes the formation of meaningful friendships and this is important.

Stentorian: Do you think this causes the students themselves to have problems?

Lindstrom: Yes, many people here have problems dealing with stress and anxiety due to this. However, compared to other gifted students I have known, these students do not organize as a unit to seek out desired activities. Many people complain a lot and act very dissatisfied, but there seems to be a lack of group initiative given the energy and brilliance of students here. I think the students would benefit from more group involvement with the NCSSM community as there seems to be such a lack of community spirit.

Did You Know?

by Meg Gatling

You've probably started thinking about what you're going to do over spring vacation, and you've probably dreamed about jumping into your private jet and zipping across the country to the exclusive resort of your choice, such as Atlantic City. But you knew full well that you couldn't, right? Wrong. You could slide out your inflatable pedal plane (almost as good as a private jet) from under your bed and pump your 105-lb. craft at 8 mph all the way, if Fred To has perfected his Phoenix airplane in time. This London engineer has already designed and flown Solar One, an aircraft run by photovoltaic power (the direct conversion of solar radiation into electricity), and has now built a 102-foot wingspan craft which a single pedaler can power, while his friends pilot the plane with a remote-control transmitter on the ground.

But once you get to Atlantic City, you're bound to be thirsty from all that pedaling. Nothing that a few glasses of water can't cure, right? Wrong. You'll be gambling your health as well as your money if your water comes from one of the wells that has been contaminated by chemical wastes seeping from Prince's Pit, a 22-acre dump northwest of Atlantic City into which nine million gallons of chemical wastes have been poured. These poisons have traveled ½ mile over the past decade and have already reached some of the municipal wells.

So if you avoid the water with benzene and arsenic and arm yourself with plenty of interferon, you should live forever, right? Wrong. Interferon isn't what the press cracked it up to be, a miracle drug manufactured by recombinant DNA that could overpower cancer and viruses. The scientists who were studying interferon were happy to find, though, that this drug is effective in treating some types of cancer and other diseases, especially viruses. Researchers suspect that each type of interferon (there are at least 20) is best suited to fight a specific form of cander or disease, including multiple sclerosis, hepatitis B, and chicken pox. Kari Cantell, a pioneer in interferon for twenty years, thinks that this drug is more effective as a preventive agent than as a treatment.

Maybe you're too busy trying to grow up to worry about your health. Well, there's good news for you, too. Thanks again to recombinant DNA, growth homone is now available to children whose pituitary fails to produce this bone-and tissue-developing chemical. Treatment for hypopituitarism used to entail the extraction if growth hormone from one cadaver per week per child for approximately ten years at a cost as great as $100,000, but synthetic growth hormone will soon be available by the vat; a mere three shots a week for five or ten years and you won't be looking up to anyone.

Meanwhile, the organic molecules from which life on earth arose are taking their time about developing on Titan, Saturn's largest moon and the only moon in the solar system with a substantial atmosphere. The results of Voyager I's encounter with Titan in November of 1980 show that Titan is the only body in the solar system besides earth that is known to have a surface partially covered with liquid. On Titan, the liquid is methane. Titan's atmosphere, which contains C, N, and H, is denser than earth's, and has maintained an environment similar to that wich existed on the planets soon after their formation.

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