

Club Briefs

AKWEKON WILL HAVE its annual PowWow in the PEC on Feb. 17. All NCSSM students are admitted free. This will be a day of Native American singing, dancing, arts, crafts and food. There will be a Native American feast offered to students, singers and dancers in the cafeteria that evening. Also that day, the Admissions Department will be sponsoring the DreamMakers Program in which Native Americans in grades seven through nine from throughout the state will be invited to the campus to learn more about NCSSM.

Reported by Micky Bullard and Elizabeth DuVall

ASIAN CULTURES CLUB will be hosting the annual Asiafest show and dinner on March 17. The dinner will start at 5:30 p.m. in the Woolworth Room, where a variety of Asian cuisine will be provided free to the public. At 7:00 p.m. in the ETC Auditorium, the Asiafest show, featuring both off- and on-campus acts. The show will include NC State's hip-hop dance team, Fusion, Lion Dance from Chinese students in the Triangle Area, violin performances from juniors Lisa Zhang and Sophia Han, the NCSSM Bhangra Dance Team and a skit presented by the club, to name a few of the activities.

Reported by Hattie Chung

THE MULTICULTURAL Peer Counselors present Singled Out in the Lecture Hall at 9:30 on Friday, Feb. 16. Participants will get to know each other based on the choices they make about NCSSM life. Jump outside your bubble and come connect with someone new. E-mail Thomas Perry at perryt@ncsm.edu with questions.

Reported by Mary Kohlmann

HISPANIC CULTURES CLUB will be hosting Latin America Fest on March 10. Student-led dance groups and professional dancers specializing in salsa, break and other Latin styles will perform. Authentic food will be served after the performance. Watch AAG for times and locations. Email jusinoc@ncsm.edu with questions or if you would like to perform.

Reported by Ally Landry

Student focus group discusses alterations to Pledge recitations

Use of internet radio in classrooms suggested

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"I think that the radio idea was a great idea because it's a great way to reach more students and it makes use of the radio station, giving it more exposure," Que said. "And when you go to a classroom, you're usually prepared to sit and pay attention, while the cafeteria, which I think is the next best idea, can be kind of chaotic."

Of course, any Pledge plan must walk the line between opportunity and coercion.

"There lies a problem in that we have to do a daily recitation, and the administration wants to make it look good with lots of participation," Alexander said. "I worry that students will feel pressured one way or the other, depending on what the whole class does."

Another factor affecting classroom-based recitation was the opinion of the faculty.

"Several teachers were concerned about leading it because they were concerned about doing it themselves," Reid said.

The idea of expressing their own opinions on the Pledge while in the dominant role of teacher apparently felt wrong to some faculty members.

"They told us that some teachers didn't want to set an example of saying or not saying the Pledge," Alexander said. "They didn't want to exercise that influence over their students."

The internet radio idea would greatly decrease the role of teachers in the Pledge's actual recitation.

Plans for stricter adherence to the original plan were also mentioned.

"There was a lot of mention of it being implemented at all assemblies, which the administration had noticed had become a little lax," Alexander said.

The focus group itself was selected largely on the basis of interest; each SLI was asked to send one student from his or her hall, but many were unable to do so on short notice.

"The focus group was supposed to be a cross-section,

a slice of student opinion," Que said.

Even among only Alexander, Que, Reid, and senior Courtney Angers, some degree of diversity was achieved.

"We had two juniors and two seniors, and both male and female were definitely represented," Reid said.

Que also felt that the discussion reflected an ideological balance.

"I heard a lot of the opinions that I'd heard students around campus expressing, and even some that I hadn't heard before," he said.

Most of the participants came due to a belief in the importance of a fair and effective Pledge policy.

"I kind of wanted to let the administration know about my opinions on the Pledge and what I'd heard other people say," Que said.

Alexander's interest in the Pledge lay partly in the differences in its treatment by NCSSM and his home school.

"I felt that the student

interest wasn't really up to par," he said. "I remember it being very present at my old school. It was very rote. It had become part of my routine."

Reid said that the recitation of the Pledge was significant in terms of American identity.

"The Pledge of Allegiance is an important thing to us," he said. "It's important that, as Americans, we identify where we're from. I think it's important to acknowledge this school and the nation and the people we represent."

Reid was concerned by what he perceived as the administration's focus on image.

"I was kind of disappointed that it seemed to be more of a fiscal concern than it was about the Pledge and why we should be saying it," he said.

For the most part, the members felt that the group had made progress.

Que said, "I think that just going there and listening to some of the other students and learning more about the people around me was great."



Photo by Luis Zapata

Tom Clayton holds the American flag and recites the pledge in the Bryan Lobby during lunch. He is one of the administrators examining possible changes in the time and place of recitation due to very limited student participation. One suggested plan would move the daily ceremony to the classrooms.