



## the high LIFE

“If students choose to miss class, that is their problem and their own choice to make, but if they are responsible and complete the missing work, they should be exempt from make-up time.”



Blair Bloomquist  
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## “Brainy Bunch” proves its academic prowess, prepares for upcoming match

BY KATHERINE PHILLIPS  
Editor-in-Chief

Advisors Larry Williamson and Michael Courts hold high expectations of their “Brain Game” team, and seniors Shelby Stoneking and Jonathan Storch, along with junior Alex Clegg, stepped up to the challenge by winning the quarterfinals, thus advancing to the academic competition’s semifinals, which will take place in Raleigh on March 6.

WRAL-TV5 broadcasts “Brain Game” live on Saturday mornings. The trivial game show for high school students involves teams limited to three contestants each. Advisors select participants based upon their performances at Quiz Bowl practices.

Quiz Bowl teams consist of 10 to 12 students, who train by answering trivia questions through a buzzer system. They then compete in various tournaments, such as the Knowledge Master Open, the Tar Heel Cup on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the Quaker Cup hosted by the Early College at Guilford.

Students competing in “Brain Game” answer questions from nine categories: Pop Culture, Headlines, Arts and Crafts,

Math, Science, Name Game, Globetrotting, Across America, and Word Power, a themed crossword. Questions from the Globetrotting and Across America categories center on three specific countries and states, respectively, of which the contestants are informed beforehand for preparation purposes.

Two of the three Brain Game members, Storch and Stoneking, returned from last year when they won the tournament. Storch’s rookie year was his freshman year, while Stoneking joined her junior year. Clegg is in the midst of his first season with the team, replacing Daly Brower who graduated in 2009.

“Replacing Brower isn’t so tough when I don’t think about it!” said Clegg. “When a match first starts, it’s a bit overwhelming, but then I settle down, and the time goes by really fast.”

Scoring 400 points at the Brain Game quarterfinals on January 16, the team defeated Durham Jordan and Leesville High Schools. Durham Jordan scored 160 points, and Leesville scored 120.

“We usually try to run the first couple categories and then let the other teams self-destruct as they fight over the rest of the



Seniors Shelby Stoneking, Jonathan Storch, and Junior Alex Clegg must agree before answering during a Quiz Bowl competition. They won the quarter finals in Raleigh. Clegg photo

points,” said Storch of the team’s approach.

Such a plan will no longer be applicable at the 2010 semifinals since only two teams will compete instead of the usual three.

“This is the first time it’s been done this way, which means we need to rethink our strategy,” said Stoneking.

Even so, academics are not the sole focus of the tournament.

“We’re known as the quirky team,” said Stoneking. “The host in Raleigh, Mark Roberts, told us how impressed he was with our attitudes. We dress in

themes. Last year, we arrived in prom attire.”

Veteran Storch keeps a healthy perspective regarding the competition and enjoys the humor of his passion.

“If we win in March, then we become part of the Final Four, which coincides with March Madness—March Madness for dorks!” he said.

Individuals interested in attending and supporting the Brain Game’s live studio audience should contact Larry Williamson or Michael Courts.

## Security remains major issue in airports

BY LINDSEY STADLER  
Reporter

Nearly nine years after 9/11, many people believe security in the United States is still not up to par. Just this past Christmas Day, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a 23 year-old Nigerian student, was arrested for trying to blow up an American plane on its way to Detroit. He carried bomb materials sewn into his underwear. Either the bomb was faulty or not set off correctly; fortunately, only a small fire occurred about two to three-feet high. Supposedly security on this day at the Amsterdam airport was very weak, and the searches were not nearly as thorough as usual.

In November of 2009, a Virginia couple, Tareq and Michaela Salahi, entered the White House and attended a state dinner without an invitation. According to a report by Byron Wolf on ABCnews.com, Secret Service spokesman Ed Donovan claimed the couple

was no threat to security because they were properly searched. They were just seeking media attention, as she was a cast member on “Real Housewives of Washington, DC,” a television show airing on Bravo.

As a result of their attendance, President Obama called on Homeland security and the Energy Department to develop better screening technology.

“In the never-ending race to protect our country, we have to stay one step ahead of a nimble adversary,” said Obama.

Security experts have offered new ideas including highly sophisticated sensors, more intensive interrogations, and a lifting of the United States prohibitions against profiling. The latter excludes the profiling of passengers based upon their ethnicity, religion, or national origin. Taking away these prohibitions in the US would meet resistance and legal challenges.

Some officials believe we should operate security more like the Israelis do at their air-

ports, which are widely considered the most secure facilities in the world. Their searches are more meticulous with their screeners searching every item in luggage and bags; they unfold socks, squeeze toothpaste, and flip through books. Israelis also admit to profiling.

While the Israeli methods are more scrupulous, there is still some dispute as to whether their searches would work as well here because Israel has six airports, in contrast to approximately 400 in the US. Such intense searches and interrogations would involve major delays that could bring air traffic to a stand-still.

In order to become a more secure nation, experts suggest the US government should update policies regarding disasters, whether natural disasters or terrorism since those presently in effect are old and outdated.

According to Seattlepi.com, recent activities indicate that 57% of Whites and 71% of African Americans support the

ethnic profiling of people who look to be of Middle-Eastern decent. Currently, however, Americans must depend upon US intelligence and surveillance for their protection.

As airport security aims to stop would-be attackers from bringing weapons or bombs into the airport, they rely upon X-rays and metal detectors. The suspect in the attempted Christmas Day bombing on Northwest Airlines flight #253 started in Nigeria and continued to Amsterdam before landing in Detroit. Neither of the two airports noted anything unusual on or about the suspect.

Terrorists seem to know which airports are lax with their security and which are not, thus airports will need to revise their security equipment and standards. Full-body scans are crucial but expensive. Until all airports improve their equipment and security, Americans may continue to fear their lives are at risk.