

Vasant Valley

November, 2013

T O D A Y

A Tale of Two Countries

"Now that you're here, we're going to hold you hostage until they give us Kashmir."

When we heard this statement for the first time last year, we didn't know how to respond. Then we looked at the amused faces around us and realized, it was a joke. Of course it was a joke. So we laughed, and carried on. Last year when we went to Lahore for the Sondhi Debates, we didn't quite know how to behave, what to say, what not to say. Crossing the Wagah border on foot was a novel experience, and as we stopped in our tracks, thrilled, to look up at the pictures of Gandhi and Jinnah facing each other from opposite ends of no man's land, we were struck by the solemnity of it all. After all, for the first time ever, we were going to Pakistan.

"The students we met described Partition as another liberation, as a valid sacrifice for the greater good."

This year was different. Having been there before, we were no longer excited because we were going to a new place; now, we were excited to be going back. We were excited at the prospect of debating in the Pakistani circuit again, meeting our old friends, and of course we were excited to eat kebabs. This time we crossed Wagah Border quickly, with less ceremony, because we were eager to get to the other side. We were greeted once again by Chaudhary Sahab and Major Abid, who had been in charge of our activities the last time we were in Lahore. They welcomed us back, asked us how we had been, and then accompanied us from the border to Lahore.



For all the debaters who went to Pakistan last year, the trip had been a turning point. The level of debate in the Pakistani circuit is incredibly high and until that trip we'd never been exposed to the World School Style of debate. Speaking for 8 minutes, answering POI's during speeches, building a principle argument, all proved harder for us than we had anticipated. So it wasn't a shock when we were defeated in the Preliminary Round itself.

This year however we went to Lahore with one mission in mind and that was to break to the quarters. This is not to say that we were convinced of our ability; more than once we met teams that made our goal seem out of reach. Our first debate itself was against a University team, on a topic centric to Pakistan, but we won. Then we won again, and again, and before we knew what had happened, we had managed to qualify for the quarter finals as the fourth highest ranked team out of 29. Though Aditya, Anjani, Sanjna and I have won countless best speakers and broken at many debates, that moment was unique. To be able to reach the quarter finals in a debate of that calibre, surrounded by debaters that had only last year crushed us without thinking twice, was a fantastic feeling.

Apart from helping me grow as a debater, my two trips to Pakistan have also challenged my perception of things that I used to take for granted. Earlier when I opened the Times of India and read about



unprovoked Pakistani firing at the border, I might not have dwelled on it, but I never doubted its validity. After going to Lahore and reading their newspapers, I know that every newspaper in Pakistan reports unprovoked Indian firing, which makes you question how much your country isn't telling you. When we talked to Lahori people about Partition, we realized that it wasn't taught to Pakistani students as it is to us. We've always been told that Partition was a tragedy, a pointless division of hearts. But the students we met at the Lahore College of Arts and Sciences described Partition as another liberation, as a valid sacrifice for the greater good.

But then when you're walking down Food Street in Lahore, humming the old Bollywood songs that are playing loudly on inexpensive speakers, it feels so familiar, as though the last 67 years didn't happen. It feels as though the two countries were never divided. Everyone around us would speak in Urdu and we'd be speaking in Hindi, but in the end both languages are so similar that we couldn't tell the difference. In the end, though we belong to two countries torn apart by violence and mistrust, we are the same people.

As for Kashmir? You'll have to take it up with the Kashmiris.

Namrata Narula, 12

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School Watch

Vasant Valley School won the Best International Delegation and Ranked an overall 2nd at the Arts Festival in Aitchison College, Lahore. Sanskrit Laghu Katha Lekhan Pratiyogita

Class 6 - 1st Shaurya Bharadwaj, Naira Kothari, Shubham Kalantri and Devaki Diwan, 2nd Anya Malhotra, Aadil Anand, Adya Jatia, Ayaan Gulyani, Bhavya Mitra, Ilisha Chauhan, Karamvir Chopra, Nandika Saihgale, Sehry Malhotra and Shivam Sharma

Class 7 - 1st Veeraj Jindal, 2nd Suyash Bhatia, Amay Gupta, Reet Chatwal and Suryadip Bandopadhyay

My Big Brother

Tall and lanky, handsome and smart
 I've loved my brother right from the start.
 He wants always to be hugged and kissed;
 He has Autism and is still a baby at heart.
 He covers himself with a blanket at night,
 And goes into a cocoon, completely out of sight.
 My brother studies with interest;
 He enjoys going to school; it brings out his best.
 Birthday parties make him have a blast,
 His cycling and yoga skills impress me by far;
 He says to himself "I am a big star"
 I'm proud of him and agree,
 My brother surely is a ROCKSTAR!

Diya Sharan, 7

World Cup Troubles



The decision to award the 2022 football World Cup to the tiny Gulf state of Qatar has caused controversy from the moment it was announced in December 2010. Since the decision, FIFA has had its credibility questioned and has been dogged by allegations of corruption, problems with the venue, the construction and the ethics followed.

Qatar has had to build everything it needs for the tournament, from stadiums to hotels, from scratch and is spending \$100 billion on the project. However the international community has uncovered evidence of forced labor by Nepalese immigrants who work on the World Cup infrastructure project in conditions amounting to modern day slavery. The poor working conditions and the extreme exploitation that they faced killed many of these people, a lot of them young men.

"The shocking violation of rights that we take for granted everyday paints a picture of exploitation and dominance"

Furthermore, not only are the working conditions poor and unsafe, but the Qatari government withheld pay from the workers to prevent them from running away and confiscated their passports to disallow them from leaving the country. Basic amenities like drinking water were not provided on hot days. The shocking violation of rights that we take for granted everyday paints a picture of exploitation and dominance; of a richer country extorting all it can from a poorer one.

Adding to this, soon after Qatar was awarded the honor of hosting the World Cup, questions were raised about the apparent clash between its conservative attitudes and the expectation of many football fans. Qatar has strict laws against homosexuality, and alcohol is not freely available. News revealed that the athletes would undergo a "gay test" and were they determined to be gay, they would not be allowed to compete. In our rational and modern society where we have gone beyond sexual preferences determining our careers, this is not a fair and acceptable procedure.

With Qatar being put in the spotlight with such serious allegations, it is a serious question whether the honor of hosting the prestigious should be revoked or not. Judging by the incriminating evidence available, unless Qatar amends its homophobic rules and starts looking after the humanitarian aspect of the World Cup, it should be a unanimous decision to take back the honor of being the host nation.

Aakanksha Jadhav, 11

Not Just November

It's not just November, it's that time of the year. The time of year when the cold has just started to set in and the school hosts a mass of students wearing not just dull khakhi but also a bright maroon. It's also the time of year when each one of us sits in our groups on the center stage steps, catching up on each others lives and staring intently at the stage trying to spot our favorite juniors and seniors dancing. For Vasant Valley Students, November is the most awaited month, not because of Diwali or the numerous holidays but because of Founders Day. All academic activity falls by the wayside. The atmosphere is buzzing with excitement, and there is a euphoria that spreads as run-throughs begin, which continues to intensify as we see the black screens, artwork and wings being set up. In some ways all of us wait eagerly for the day to come when we get to wear our costumes, no matter what they look like or how they fit and wait in line as the teacher in charge tries her hand at makeup. At the same time, not one person wants this bit to end. The practice, the loitering and gossiping backstage. The feeling that one gets when he comes to school not to study but to be part of Founders Day preparations, is simply indescribable.

"The atmosphere is buzzing with excitement, and there is a euphoria that spreads as run-throughs begin."

As a student of class 11, I have mixed feelings. Not only is it time for us to perform the last act that we've been envying for the last 2 years, its also time for us to say goodbye to our much loved seniors and the euphoria that surrounds Founders Day. As kicked as we are to perform on the 'best song and best choreography' none of us can escape the realization that next year it'll be us walking down the steps. That next year, November will just be November, another month of the year that we'll spend studying in our classrooms. We will not be dancing and practicing and groaning and moaning about how fatigued we are after going over the routine merely 2 times. These days you will find all the class elevens trying their hardest to perfect that one step that they always miss the count for, but you'll also find them spending time with their seniors who will soon be gone. But, since it is their last Founders Day, they will give it their best, and as always, it'll be the most memorable performance of the night.

Ananya Jain, 11



PLAYLIST

The Spark - Afrojack ft Spree Wilson
 Blitz - Clockwork
 Blow Up The Speakers - Tony Junior & DJ Ghost
 Blueprint - Danni & Sick Individuals
 Born To Rage - Dada Life
 Where We Belong - Fedde Le Grand & Di-rec
 Flute - New World Sound & Thomas News
 Go Down - Dyro
 Hero On A Dream - FT Tampa vs Empire Of The Sun (Hardwell Mashup)
 Invasion - W&W (ASOT 550 Anthem)
 Out Of Control - Alvaro & TST
 Saints Of Valory - Neon Eyes (Matisse & Sadko Remix)
 The New Kings - Vicetone
 Wizard - Martin Garrix & Jay Hardway

Arjun Srivastava, Revant Soni, Abhiraj Arjun, Armaan Grewal, Manav Kohli and Jairaj Singh Gadh, 11

The Universe Asks – Matter or Anti-matter?



Scientists to this day are still speculating one of the biggest physical mysteries of the universe: if annihilating matter and antimatter were created in equal amounts during the Big Bang, then why then why do we live in a matter-dominated universe?

The Big Bang is a colossal explosion which now forms the basis for the explanation of the existence of the universe as we know it. It was in the intense heat of the Big Bang that matter was formed. But for every particle of matter created, a 'twin' was also born - an antiparticle identical in mass but with opposite electric charge. At that point the universe was balanced, but just a billionth of a second after the Big Bang, antimatter had all but disappeared, leaving only a minute amount of matter to form everything that we see around us. The universe, for reasons scientists still do not know, chose matter over antimatter.

It is often remarked that "History repeats itself". Even today, the universe is partial to matter, and has not stopped indicating that matter will dominate over antimatter for some time to come. Almost all objects observable from earth are made up of matter and not antimatter. Why? This is because antiparticles can only exist after a high-energy collision takes place between other particles. If antimatter dominated regions did exist in space then the energy produced due to the annihilation of matter and antimatter would be detectable. Since no such regions of energy have been found, it goes to show the legitimacy of the theory of matter dominance.

Then the question of artificial creation arises. If all antimatter needs is high energy collisions, why can't these be created? Well, the fact of the matter is that no container can facilitate the continued existence of antimatter dominated regions in our free surroundings. The very small amounts of antimatter manufactured will always be outnumbered massively by matter and will therefore be annihilated effortlessly. So the question is, matter or antimatter? It seems as though the universe has already answered, but that isn't all. Antimatter is not a very safe entity to work with. Being extremely reactive with the matter present around it, antimatter is considered to be a trigger mechanism for nuclear weapons. Further, antimatter poses a danger of radioactivity and radiation due to annihilation with matter. The existence of antimatter therefore impedes development and leads us to concur with the universe's bias towards matter.

But is it completely erroneous to assume that things may change in the future? An imbalance cropped up before all life existed. For all we know, an imbalance could arise in the universe again - this time in favour of antimatter. All we are waiting for is for that unknown entity to intervene, and alter the rate at which matter and antimatter decay. Since the beginning of time, matter has succeeded in surviving over antimatter; yet it is possible that the universe could decide to change its course. So though the Universe's answer is clear at the moment, it may eventually change, and accept antimatter as the dominating entity in our lives.

Jaahnavee Venkatraman, 12

"For all we know, an imbalance could arise in the universe again - this time in favour of antimatter."

Breakdown

Butterfly stomach
Stained glass eyes
My coloured irises
The silence of a church
Funeral black, on me
Wedding white on the others
Being the silent one
Hiding behind draperies
Lit candles reflect
And I stare,
Those pinpricks of sound
Blind Man's Bluff
My only home
Faces far, faces near
Forgotten, disappear
My mind
Rots, under crucifixes
Of scars and sound
And you
A mere skeleton of your past glory
Die, set free.
I, a silent ghost
Pass by.
Nothing but
A mere rustle
A tear in the fabric
Of still wind.

Zahra Choudhury, 11

पूरी दुनिया मनाती है दीवाली



रोशनी ज्ञान का प्रतीक होता है और रोशनी का त्योहार अज्ञानता की हार का। प्रकाश पर्व मनाते की परंपरा भारत में ही नहीं पर पूरी दुनिया में है।

**जलाओ दीये पर रहे ध्यान इतना
अंधेरा घरा पर कहीं रह न जाए।**

कविता की इन पंक्तियों में रचनाकार के कहने का यही भाव रहा होगा कि जब प्रकाश फैलाने का प्रण कर लिया जाए तो जल्दा यही हो कि अंधकार का पजूद ही नहीं रह पाए। दीवाली का यही भाव है कि हम प्रकाश को ही माध्यम बनाए क्योंकि प्रकाश हमें वह ऊर्जा देता है जिसकी खोज हम अपने लक्ष्य की ओर बढ़ सकते हैं। दीवाली का त्योहार या प्रकाश का यह पर्व जहाँ राम जी अयोध्या से लौटे थे हर परिवार के लिए खास होता है। हर तरफ दीये और बजे हुए घर बंधके चहरे पर मुस्कान ले आते हैं। अब दुनिया भर में प्रकाश पर्व की समृद्ध परंपरा पर एक नजर :

बेरीडन - लूशिया दिवस

यूरोप के अल्पन्न देशों में एक-बेरीडन में प्रकाश पर्व 'सेंट लूशिया दिवस' के तौर पर मनाया जाता है। सेंट लूशिया यहां के लोगों में इसलिए पूजनीय है क्योंकि उन्होंने कड़कड़ाती ठंड की रात में एक जबरनतमंद को रोशनी दिखाई थी। इसलिए पूरे देश में लूशिया ज्ञान का प्रतीक भी हैं। उनके स्मरण से यहां के लोगों में प्रकाश और आशा का अंचार होता है।

मेक्सिको - कैंडल लाइट

मेक्सिको में भी क्रिसमस के मौके पर विशेष प्रकाश पर्व का आयोजन होता है लेकिन इसका अंदाज कुछ अलग होता है। 9 दिनों तक चलने वाले इस प्रकाश पर्व के दौरान लोग अपने घरों को सजाते हैं व मोमधत्ती जलाकर निकलते हैं। यही नहीं पूरे मेक्सिको के चर्चों और घरों में आधी रात को विशेष प्रार्थना का आयोजन होता है। गौरवतल है कि मेक्सिको में क्रिसमस की चहल पहल 16 दिवस से शुरू हो जाती है और 9 दिन तक रात में कैंडल लाइट में प्रार्थना की जाती है।

नूर दीगरा 10

The God-Man Debacle



Our desire to follow religious leaders blindly continues to fail us and shakes the very faith these 'god men' are supposed to build in us. More and more cases are being revealed each day where these so called 'God men' are committing heinous crimes such as paedophilia and rape, and reminding us that they are not as pure and saintly as they often act, and that maybe we as a society should be wiser and less naive and trusting. With each such case, the general credibility of religious institutions as a whole is reduced, as well as the name and reputation of those accused. A lot of this happens because we are afraid to question religion and those who preach it, and inspite of all the progress we have made over the last 100 years, technologically and otherwise, it is still considered 'out of bounds' today to question religion, and those who do are either treated as 'outcasts', or have to deal with death threats from various clerics and religious leaders. Even writing about religious books and questioning their teachings, as authors such as Salman Rushdie did a few years ago, can trigger a global outpour of hatred, leading to the authors having to go into hiding.

"A lot of this happens because we are afraid to question religion and those who preach it"

The latest addition to this series of events is Asaram Bapu- a self styled god man who, until convicted, was very well respected, with a following of millions of devotees. His son is also a god man, showing us how religion has become a 'family' business. Asaram Bapu has been accused of raping a 16 year old girl, and is facing charges of paedophilia. Asaram Bapu and his son continue to malign the girl and her family, making the public think that it was the girl to blame for the incident, and not him. He continues to deny the charges, and shows no regret or shame for his actions.

Despicable incidents like these shake people's faith in religion and in the general good of humanity. Asaram Bapu even threatened the Rajasthan government for arresting him, and has hired arguably the most influential lawyer in India, Mr Ram Jethmalani, to defend him. While the jury is still out on the verdict of the case, and the media circus continues, we are faced with the question - how much more is there to these God men, and what really happens behind closed temple doors. Mr Jethmalani's appalling statements in defence of the so called spiritual guru are equally frightening. He asserted that the victim had a mental condition whereby she was inclined towards seducing men, and said that her age had been fabricated and that she is in fact older than 18, thus painting Asaram as an innocent victim. The fact that he is trying to justify the case of sexual assault through baseless statements about the victim's age and her state of mind shows us how influential lawyers can often bend and if necessary subvert the law for their clients.

It is highly unlikely that the girl's family will be able to afford such influential lawyers as Mr. Jethmalani, and as a result, the case will probably never make it to the courts. Once the case moves out of the media headlines, as it has eventually done so, the pressure on the family will only increase, and without the right means or the connections they will have to 'shut up' and drop the charges.

As Asaram Bapu may walk free, due to his wealth and influence, and the poor victim is left embarrassed, hurt and traumatized, this is yet another example of the stark contrast that lies in our society about how differently men and women and rich and poor are treated. These cases highlight not only the injustice faced by many victims of girls raped by influential men but also the dangers of blindly following religion and religious leaders, and the strong need to question these so called god men and their methods.

Riddhima Wahi, 11

Barclays Premier League Five Predictions



1. Olivier Giroud will get injured. Arsenal does not have cover in the striker department and when Giroud gets injured they will suffer (Bendtner will probably start) and they will lose grip of the top spot.
2. Sunderland will start winning. Now that Paulo Di Canio is gone, and a more stable manager has been brought in (Gus Poyet), Sunderland, with its talented squad will start winning games. They will escape relegation.
3. Stoke, Fulham and Crystal Palace will get relegated- 18th, 19th and 20th position respectively. Stoke players are unable to score goals and that will cost them dearly (Stoke's goalkeeper Begovic, is joint top scorer for them). Fulham is not playing to its usual standards and will get relegated, even with Dimitar Berbatov. Crystal Palace is in complete limbo, without a manager and with a 23 year old as an assistant manager. The club will fail to win many games, and will finish rock bottom.
4. Tottenham will finish fourth with Arsenal, Manchester City and Chelsea occupying the top three in any particular order. Tottenham, even without Gareth Bale, has a talented squad and will manage to beat Liverpool to fourth place. Manchester City, Chelsea and Arsenal will fight it out for the top three places.
5. Top Scorer: Sergio Aguero- He has been in blistering form and will just beat Luis Suarez. Most Assists: Mesut Ozil- He is the best playmaker in the League and has been the reason for Arsenal's dominance this season.

Arman Puri, 10

The End of an Era



Some days in our life just start and end without something special, without leaving any memory behind. But surely there was something special about November 15, 1989. Yes! It was the first time the young curly haired 16 year old Sachin Tendulkar stepped on a cricket field. And now 24 years later, he has just recently announced his retirement.

"It's a decision taken from the heart, it has nothing to do with the body or mind" This

was the first statement made by Sachin once he had decided to retire, which has probably been one of the hardest decisions of his life. It's hard to imagine Sachin without cricket and harder to imagine cricket without Sachin. On October 10th he announced that the forthcoming two-test series against West Indies will be his last, taking his personal test match tally to a staggering 200.

"It's hard to imagine Sachin without cricket and harder to imagine cricket without Sachin."

In the world of cricket over the last 24 years, Sachin Tendulkar has become a metaphor for excellence. Over his career he has accomplished so much-nearly 16000 test runs and 18426 ODI runs. He was also the first ever cricketer to score a 100 international hundreds.

Be it for his innumerable runs or for he many records he has broken, the master blaster will always be remembered as passionate player, who took his sport to new heights. We'll miss you.

Namit Makhija, 8

We Have Become Slaves Of Technology

It is true that we have become slaves of technology. These days, instead of doing things ourselves we take technology's help. Here are the most important points I would like to share. First of all, after children come back from school they start playing games like PS3, XBOX, or Nintendo Wii. Instead of this, they should do their homework or play some sports outside. It keeps them physically fit. I insist on parents banning their children from playing a lot of games. Secondly, people spend a lot of time on their smart phones either sending messages or uploading all kinds of updates and pictures on social network sites like Facebook. Earlier, people used to write letters by hand and send them by post. Lack of physical activity is leading to health problems and diseases like back or neck pain. Even for a TV we have a remote to change channels so that we don't have to get up. Last, but not the least, people do all their shopping from the internet using websites like Flipkart, Amazon etc. Sometimes we are dependant on illegal software for downloading things for free. Utorrent, Vuze and Jailbreak are illegal websites that are banned because of this. I request all of you to avoid use of such software. Even though, technology helps us in many ways, we should not be too dependent on technology. By following the above steps, we should stop becoming slaves of technology.



Agastya Rattan IV - C

Diwali

Decorating houses is so much fun.

Interesting things we do.

We light up diyas.

Amazing is this festival.

Lights are all over the street.

I pray to God Ganesha and Lakshmi.

Ruhan Kumar II - A



All Work and No Play Makes Jack A Dull Boy

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Searching the world for Jacks.... ALERT! No results found.....

Examples like this topic are rarely found in this modern world. In the early days, when parents were strict, you could still give examples of quite a few children suiting this proverb. But since all this new technology has come, it looks like Jacks have changed into cool, awesome kids who hate studies. This proverb has been thrown into thin air by the same Jacks who were once a part of the same proverb. The reason is very simple. No child wants to WASTE his free time studying and racking his brain. They'd rather play on the Xbox, Playstation and hundreds of other gadgets. This proverb would not have been made if they knew what was going to happen in the future. Questions like, "Put down your worst teachers, starting with the worst" and "Do you like this teacher?" are passed around. It won't be long when this proverb is changed to 'All play and no work makes modern Jack a happy boy!!' More and more threats in the form of modern entertainment are causing old Jacks to become EXTINCT. Can you please TRY and save them? It's a humble request from one of the last Jacks. I suggest them to increase their play and the others to do the opposite. But truthfully, I don't think there are any Jacks left in this cruel world. Well, ALL ESSAYS AND NO BREAK MAKES ME A TIRED BOY so I suggest we all go home and rest.

Mokshya Wadhwa V - B

दिवाली दीपों का त्योहार

दिवाली दीपों का त्योहार है। दिवाली में हम दीप जलाते हैं। दिवाली अमावस की रात को मनाई जाती है। इस दिन लोग खुशियों मनाते हैं। दिवाली में गणेशजी और लक्ष्मीजी की पूजा करते हैं। सब लोग अपने घर में साफ - सफाई करते हैं और मिठाई खाते हैं। लोग रंग विरंगे कपड़े पहनकर आते हैं। हम सब एक बड़ी रंगोली बनाते हैं। हम पटाखे भी फोड़ते हैं मगर वो ठीक नहीं है। उससे जो धुआँ निकलता है वो वीमारी फैलाता है। मैं दिवाली प्यार से मनाऊँगा, दीपक से घर सजाऊँगा। मुझे दिवाली बहुत अच्छी लगती है।

ध्रुव अरोड़ा तीन - स

Feet

Feet, Feet, Feet
can dance on beat.
Feet, feet, feet
can walk on the street.

Feet, feet, feet
are like siblings of the hands.
Feet, feet, feet
are very useful to the man.

Khushi Anand IV - C

I have two feet
left and right,
I use them day and night.
For walking and dancing,
skipping and hopping,
running and jumping
with all my might.
I stand on my toes
it makes me grow tall,
to reach the jar of cookies,
on the top shelf of the hall.
I love to dip my feet
in salty water,
on a sandy beach
when the weather is hotter

Joy Ghatak IV - C

My feet are very small
They help me kick a football,
Because of my quick feet
I can become a good athlete.
While humans have two
And animals have four,
I know someone that has hundred
And it is a centipede.
We must keep our feet clean
To maintain good hygiene,
If you regularly cut your nails
They would not become dirty and pale.
I cried I had no good shoes
Till I saw a man who had no feet,
I am grateful to God that I am
truly blessed
That I can do so much with the
help of my feet.

Harveer S Kochar IV - B

दीप जलाओ
लक्ष्मीजी को बुलाओ,
अमावस्या की रात,
उजाले का त्योहार।

आओ दीप जलाएँ,
और हम रंगोली बनाएँ,
अब गणेशजी के लिए,
लड्डू बनाएँ और चीनी के खिलौने बनाएँ।
पटाखे बजें, धूम धड़ाम,
पूजा करें सुर में सुर मिलाएँ,
आओ दिवाली मनाएँ।

दीपावली

मैहर त्रेहन चार - स

The Vasant Valley School Art Marathon '13



For the first time ever, on the 21st and 22nd of November, Vasant Valley will be hosting an Art Festival. This festival is the brainchild of the Batch of 2014, and for many of us it is the first time that we have had to think out a large event, make people believe that it was possible and push for it to go through. The concept revolves around exploring creativity on a non-competitive platform and learning the various art forms from experts in the different fields.

On the first day, 21st November, there will be interactive sessions with the various guest artists, who will support the student participants in a workshop. Through the workshop process, each participant will be able to create an artwork. On the next day, students will exhibit their visual art and stage performances of the performing arts. This will be the culminating day of the festival, when the creations of the 1st day, will be celebrated and admired.

The Art Marathon aims to bring students of the visual and performing arts together, to showcase their artistic talents, express their creativity and celebrate the glory of art. We hope that every student of Vasant Valley will help make this event a success, in whatever way they can.

Shreyas Kadaba, 12

The Aitchison College Arts Festival



Our trip began on the 24th of October as we prepared to cross the Wagah border into Pakistan. After the long wait at the immigration center, we entered Pakistan. Our hearts were brimming with excitement at the prospect of representing our school at a huge event like this and naturally, all of us were gearing up for putting our best foot forward.

"The six days that we stayed there altered our perceptions forever"

After a good night's rest, we all woke up with a determination to win. The competition was relatively tough with us competing against 190 schools with over 900 delegates in thirteen events. We had put our heart and soul into our work and all those hours in the art room bore fruit when our team was declared the Best International Delegation and we won prizes in almost every category! Many of the judges were famous professionals who did an impeccable job with the judging and all of us learnt a lot from the workshops conducted there.

The six days that we stayed there altered our perceptions forever; from skepticism to strong bonds and from apprehension to admiration. None of us will ever forget the proud moment when we walked up on stage to collect our trophies as Vasant Valley students! The competition may have ended but the memories will remain etched in our hearts forever.

Kamya Yadav, 9

ASDFGHJKL

Font size? Check.
Paragraphs? Check.
No spelling errors? Check (Kind Of).
Article worth reading? Check (Duh, I'm writing it).
Scary Message from Namrata because this article is due? CHECK.



Looking back, I remember always being in awe of the newsletter. I remember holding those crisp white sheets between my fingers and eagerly reading each page, devouring all the witty and opinionated articles that filled them. I remember discussing the articles animatedly with friends, all of us gripping our separate copies tightly. Yet as I have moved from class to class and floor-to-floor, that same excitement has faded away. Except I don't know how, or more importantly, why.

Now that I've been on the Editorial Board for two years, maybe my eagerness to read it has still reduced but my appreciation for it, and more importantly for the members of Editorial Board has only increased. The originality of the ideas, how carefully each picture for each article is selected, the spacing, the alignment and so on are all adjusted to perfection, till finally the issue is considered good enough to print.

"And to everyone who actually does read the newsletter, thank you."

And, though it's a triumphant feeling when you compile an issue by yourself and you feel ecstatic over the fact that there will be a tangible proof of all your hard work, it seems pointless because ultimately all that hard work is used as a napkin, a paper plane or worse, no one even bothers to pick it up.

Before this article sounds too depressing or whiny, regardless of the readers, the one reason I will always love the newsletter is because of the opportunity it gave me – to write. Write whatever I felt like and to have it published, even if it is just a school newspaper. And I know I'm not alone in this, because on the rare occasion that I do get someone outside the Editorial Board to write an article, they're just as excited to read the newsletter and show it to everyone.

So write for the newsletter or read what your friends are writing, I assure you, you won't be disappointed. And even if you can't find the time in your amazingly busy schedule to read it just remember that behind those 6 pages of writing, are writers who miss One Tree Hill episodes to finish their articles and Editors who stayed up all night to compile their issues, so even if you don't read it, at least respect it.

And to everyone who actually does read the newsletter, you are infinitely superior to everyone around you, and the Editorial Board thanks you.

Tarini Sardesai, 11

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