

# Student's forum

## Answers to Last Week's Question: *What should you do if your friends are doing drugs?*

I would tell them the dangers of taking drugs and how it can ruin your life.

E.N.

You should ask them what is the smartest thing that they have ever done, and then ask them what the dumbest thing that they have ever done. Tell them that you would rather stay on the smartest curve of your life, and if you take drugs, you may not be able to remember what that was.

L.A.

Several of my friends use drugs. I have tried using some drugs but didn't like the way they made me feel, so I don't do it anymore. I still enjoy hanging out with my friends so we still go to parties together, we remain friends and enjoy going to movies together. I'm not going to let their drug use get in the way of our friendship.

J.S.

I wouldn't do anything. If my friends want to do drugs, it's their choice.

M.V.

## This Week's Question: *What are the advantages/disadvantages of being a leader of the student body?*

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Global Warming

from front page

Luncheon

from front page

issue,” Binstock said. “The United States has yet to commit to a global treaty that is considered fair and binding.”

Greenpeace wants President Obama to commit the United States to cutting global warming pollution 25 to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. “That’s what leading climate scientists around the world tell us is necessary to avoid irreversible damage to the planet,” Binstock said. “Greenpeace feels that any piece of legislation that Congress passes or any climate treaty that’s negotiated has to include those targets.”

Although President Obama and members of Congress have pledged and worked to address climate change, Binstock feels special interests have served as formidable opponents. She mentioned a recent Greenpeace demonstration where activists unfurled a banner across the face of Mount Rushmore. It had a picture of President Obama on it, and said “Americans honor leaders, not politicians. Stop global warming.”

Binstock hopes the cumulative effect of all the events will get the attention of politicians and bureaucrats who are preparing for the United Nations talks. “I think our event is really unique,” she said. “I think we will be able to send that powerful message we need to send to President Obama and world leaders.”

Although Greenpeace is known for controversial action, Binstock feels there is more to her organization than some outside observers might think. “We operate in over 40 countries around the world as leading research and policy experts...a big part of our core values are a commitment to nonviolent direct action and that’s a big part, but not entirely what we’re about,” she said.

Greenpeace has not only helped organize the event, but also spread the word about the event to other local organizations, explained Binstock. “I have dozens of volunteers, everyone from high school students to older retired volunteers who are working to help promote this event in their communities,” she said.

Kalapura described the event as unique because of the diversity of its participants. “It’s a family-friendly event and we’re hoping people will come out, walk down to the beach and bring their kids,” she said. An area will be set aside so people who are elderly and handicapped can still view the event even if they can’t walk down to the beach. “We’re looking to get anybody and everybody that wants to participate to come out there,” Kalapura added.

Galliani hopes people will get to the event in as “carbon neutral” a manner as possible. There will be a free bicycle valet system where riders can drop off their bikes, a free shuttle from the Northrop Grumman parking lot using buses borrowed from the County, and even a carpool program. “I know some of the hardcore bicyclists will ride over from all over the county to get here and we hope people locally from our neighboring cities will also ride their bikes down here,” Kalapura said.

Binstock thinks the City’s support of the event speaks to how environmentally conscious Manhattan Beach is. “I think Manhattan Beach is a perfect location for this event not only because the area experiences the real threat of global warming, but in addition to that, it’s a city that’s committed to the environment and environmental solutions,” she said.

Galliani, who has been working 12 hours a day to plan the event, is surprised by the support from elected officials and staff from the City and County. Other South Bay cities have pledged their support too.” I’ve been just blown away by the level of volunteer cooperation and enthusiasm,” he said. “Manhattan Beach is the Berkeley of the South Bay when it comes to environmentalism and it’s a city that is above and beyond for a green community.”

Organizers are asking participants to meet at the Manhattan Beach Pier by 3 p.m. Tuesday. For more information about the event, including parking and transportation information, visit [www.350.org/southbay350](http://www.350.org/southbay350). •

only does it draw students from the Manhattan Beach area, but because Hermosa Beach lacks a high school, students of that age have a choice between Redondo Union High School and Mira Costa. Manhattan Beach Middle School serves 1,316 students and opened its doors in the 1998-99 school year. All of the elementary schools in Manhattan Beach are kindergarten through fifth grade. Interestingly, Grand View Elementary was built by way of the WPA, the Works Progress Administration (later renamed Work Projects Administration), the largest agency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s “New Deal.” Meadows, Pacific, Pennekamp and Robinson round out the elementary schools.

Mrs. Seaton made sure to point out that at times, Pennekamp is referred to as Aurelia Pennekamp, named after a beloved school nurse. Furthermore, Robinson Elementary is sometimes listed as Opal Robinson Elementary. Manhattan Beach Preschool is the District’s lone public preschool. It has an enrollment of 352 students and, according to District staff, a waiting list that is just as long. Preschool students do not have to live within Manhattan Beach city limits. However, priority is given to families that do.

In terms of mapping success for student learning in the classrooms, Mrs. Seaton pointed out that the three R’s of “Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic” have been updated to “Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships.” In this vein, the District strives to implement academic initiatives, specialist support, character counts, and grades of green--formerly planet pals. It even has a nationally recognized arts program with a band that was featured in *Eagle Eye*, a 2008 feature film directed by D.J. Caruso and starring Shia LaBeouf.

In a time when proper nutrition has become a matter of extreme importance, the District has made efforts to strive for wellness. The comprehensive wellness policy has led to a reduction in the fatty foods offered in cafeterias. Furthermore, soda machines were removed and/or replaced with ones offering water and Gatorade. It was noted that there has not been much if any negative response from students regarding the change.

Budget is clearly a complex topic, wrought with the financial troubles of the state and nation. However, Seaton pointed out five potentially unknown facts about the District’s budget. Firstly, it receives much less money per student than many California school districts. When asked for a reason, Seaton noted that many schools receive more funding for English as a Second Language programs, as well as Title 1 or Title 2 stipulations. Secondly, local property taxes do not stay in Manhattan Beach. They are sent up to Sacramento and put into the system to be redistributed according to State Regulations. Thirdly, contractual obligations increase the District’s expenses by \$1 million annually. This is at least partially because of automatic salary advancements due to step and column. The fourth fact is that this year, the District will receive about the same money per student for general education as it did in the 1996-97 school year (roughly \$4,600). The fifth and final budget fact is that California ranks nearly dead last in state money per pupil.

Also in relation to budget issues was an overview of cuts within the last decade. In the 2001-2002 school year, the District had 6,349 students to go along with 320 teachers, 382 classified staff members and 26 certificated administrators. By the 2007-2008 school year, the number of students was down to 6,332, but the teachers, staff, and administrators had fallen to 317, 293 and 17 respectively. And by this year, the number of students went up to 6,580, with teachers falling to 319, staff to 279 and administrators to 16. To deal with the cuts, the District has had to rely more and more heavily upon contributions from the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation. In the 2003-2004 school year, the Foundation provided 3.5 percent of the District’s budget with \$2.2 million. For this current year, the Foundation has pledged \$4.1 million, which amounts to eight percent of the entire budget. Mrs. Seaton stated, “What we would be without them? I don’t want to think about.” Those interested in donating to the Foundation can contact Executive Director Susan Reynolds Warshaw at 310.303.3342, or [susan@mbef.org](mailto:susan@mbef.org).

Pier to Pier Friendship Walk

Sponsored by Sketchers, the Pier to Pier Friendship Walk will be held Sunday, October 25. The 3.4-mile roundtrip walk from the Manhattan Beach Pier to the Hermosa Beach Pier is a chance for the community to support The Friendship Circle - “An organization devoted to making a dramatic difference in the lives of special needs children and their families.” Registration/open check-in is from 8:30-9:45 a.m., with the walk starting at 10. For more information or any assistance, call 310.214.4999 x102, or visit [www.Pier2Pierwalk.com](http://www.Pier2Pierwalk.com).



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