Preparing for, not expecting, the worst

Director says letters warning 29 teachers of possible nonrenewal present a precaution

By Jennifer Lim, editor-in-chief and political editor

"An institutional safeguard and a way of preparing for the worst," that is how Lab Schools director James Van Amburg described the letters he gave Dec. 15 to 29 teachers, a fifth of the Lab School faculty. The letters informed the teachers that the Schools could not guarantee the teachers' contracts would be renewed.

Mr. Van Amburg gave letters to all 14 teachers hired for one year only, five nonresident teachers on one-year contracts here for three years, and 10 senior teachers here more than three years. He would not say how many of the 29 have been with the Schools nine years or longer.

In a MIDWAY interview, Mr. Van Amburg explained that for teachers on one-year contracts the letters were contrary to the Schools' policy of tenure. Senior teachers have completed three years here, have been initiated into the Lab School community, serve on faculty committees, and work under three-year rolling contracts. They are always in the first year of the contract.

"There is no way that a director is allowed to give Dec. 15 letters to senior teachers to whom he cannot guarantee full-time employment," Mr. Van Amburg said. If they are sent letters, they have two years to go on their contracts. The director must send letters to these teachers each of those two years also before their contracts can be terminated.

The purpose of the letters he sent, Mr. Van Amburg explained, is "to protect the institution should enrollment continue to decline. They are a formality required by contracts. I'm not prepared for what I think will be a conceivable situation. However, in some ways things look better now than in December and I'm optimistic that enrollment will stabilize."

"The letters are strictly an enrollment projection issue," he continued. "We're not preparing for any devastating changes or massive cutbacks in program in the next 15 years."

When letters were handed out by faculty chairpersons, Mr. Van Amburg explained it to them, "Letters go out every year. There's nobody preparing for any scenario."

Mr. Van Amburg stressed to the MIDWAY that he regarded a public meeting he arranged with teachers as a "soft" meeting with whom he "met personally with everyone who got a letter and explained it to them," he said. "Letters go out every year. There's nobody preparing for any scenario."

In a MIDWAY interview, Mr. Van Amburg explained, "We're not preparing for any scenario."

He added that he plans to discuss the matter at a faculty meeting he has scheduled for next Tuesday but would be willing to answer questions about it. "I'd be glad to answer questions," Mr. Van Amburg said.

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When Mr. Van Amburg was asked what he was doing to help students and teachers deal with the "overload" situation, he replied, "I think it's important that we try to understand the reasons why more and more students are finding that they are having trouble with overload."

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**Blind Side**

By Gene Scalla, Midway columnist

**Suburbia seduces apologetic victim**

SUBURBIA IS EVIL

This is the supreme truth upon which all U-Highers must swear. Suburbans are the cor-

ners of the American society. Subur-

bans spawned disco and, when they tired of it, disco-introduced to U-Pers. Suburban girls
curl their bleached hair. Suburban guys wear

Rush tee-shirts and act accordingly.

In the process of creating work overloads, teachers also make it difficult for U-Highers to develop nonacademic interests. Over-

whelming workloads don't encourage, and often don't allow, students to get involved in extracurricular and out-of-school activities. And that makes a school which offers its students an excellent academic education, but often seems to forget about its students' lives and in-

terests outside the classroom.

No wonder the workload keeps winning at U-High. Nobody's fight-

ning it.

**The workload always wins out**

And it always will, unless

the faculty faces up to it.

Plenty of students and teachers agree. One reason U-Highers' workloads often get heavy is that teachers don't cooperate with each other to distribute assignments evenly. But no one seems to be doing anything about it.

In past years teachers have tried to even out students' workloads by passing around monthly calendars listing major assignments. When fewer and fewer teachers filled out forms used to compile the calendars, they became useless and were abandoned. Other methods of coordinating workloads have been rejected, and none exists.

The calendar system failed not because it was impractical, but be-

cause some teachers didn't make the effort to make it work. And teachers still don't seem to want to make the effort to make U-

Highers' workloads more regular.

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**The importance of explanation**

Rumors tend to thrive when explanation gets neglected

For many parents and students, and some faculty members, today's page one story may be the first they've heard of 29 teachers getting letters Dec. 15 stating their contracts might not be renewed. Among those who would not negotiate, hidden motives and impending disas-
ters far beyond what the director explains the letters signify. Even some of the teachers who get letters are confused. Without any infor-
mation or explanation, the school community mostly has rumors to listen to.

It's not as though communication would have been difficult. The letters could easily have been explained in a brief announcement sent to faculty members and parents or at a faculty meeting.

Maybe the reason there hasn't been much communication is that someone feels any explanation, no matter how reasonable, leads people becoming unnecessarily upset, and the less said, the less peo-

ple react. But the opposite, of course, is true. People fear most what they don't know.

After 444 days of captivity in Iran, America's '82 hostages a week ago became "returnees." That was plenty of reason to celebrate, but now it's time to let them get back to their normal lives, what they really were waiting for those 444 days anyway.

**Good new start, but disappointing finish**

"DOUBLE FANTASY" became difficult to judge passionately on Dec. 9 when John Lennon was murdered in New York City at age 40. This album of Lennon's and his wife Yoko Ono's collaborations contains the last work of a musical

legend who distilled a generation into his songs.

No matter how good "Double Fantasy" sounded it would be disappointing because it's the last John Lennon will ever write. The album's music is a fitting tribute to him and a chance to better it. And the record does disapp-

oint. The music and lyrics of Lennon's seven song collaborations are adequate, but not particularly

spectacular.

Lennon has achieved on this album doesn't break new ground in music. He has made the most of his contradictions with simple lyrics and pleasant tunes. The songs are good, his singing is better. Technically, there's nothing wrong. Excitement and feel good are sometimes missing. But basically it's the unexceededness of Lennon singing commercial dirt that sounds wrong.

Ono's contributions to the album contrast not only to Lennon's crooned love songs but also to each other. Her voice ranges from strident to cloying, her music from choppy to flat. The lyrics sound trite and repeat without creating a meaningful whole.

Lennon seems less versatile in "Double Fantasy" than Ono, but his songs range from his most romantic to his most biting. He is in his prime today. Representing the hero, "Watching the Wheels" seems to fit the image of a boy-

ish "peace, love and happiness" for the people. Words and music differ but the same theme of detachment from the crowd domi-

nates.

Both Lennon's and Ono's theme is mostly anti-American. Lennon writes about the light of Lennon's death, their songs about their continuing love for each other and for their son Sean seem tragic. They sing of it as a part of life and "always," and it should have been. Perhaps it was meant to be just the start of things for Lennon Music (Len-

non's and Ono's company). It would have been a fairly good start since it had to end, it makes a good finish.

**A journal covers loving family roots**

**The Winner and Still Champion… by Default**

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ple react. But the opposite, of course, is true. People fear most what they don't know.
ELGIN ACADEMY, new to basketball’s Independent School League, doesn’t top at least six of the eight ISL teams, in the opinion of U-High’s varsity coach, Steve Kroll. But just its presence, Kroll believes, makes the Maroons’ bid for the league title more arduous. And the fight is arduous, Kroll says: “Our players have good court sense,” he explained, “but they have trouble rebounding and keeping the number of fouls down.”

Prospects look brighter for the frosh-soph team. After two wins and two losses so far, Kroll cited guarded Lori Audrain, Caria Williams and Sabine Fethiere and center Nancy Markowitz as major contributors to the team’s success. Kroll said Lori and Caria for their exceptional shooting abilities, Sabine and Nancy for their sharp defensive play and Nancy for her rebounding power.

Lack of substitutes — only three — and inexperience are troublesome hindrances girl frosh-soph cagers face, coach Terri Toberman said. They have won 1 game and lost 1. Starters guard Jennifer Doro and center Kelly Werhane are the only sophomores. “They have had previous playing experience, unlike the others,” Toberman said.

She added that she is working with the younger players on their aggressiveness and ability to make decisions on the court.

With “one good quality swimmer in every event,” varsity swim coach Larry McFarlane expects a league championship and possibly some state qualifiers — a relay and a couple of individuals including Mike Raddat in the 50- and 100-yard freestyle.

Suffering the loss of sophomores David Siegel, Kenneth Truitt and John Wyllie to varsity, frosh-soph swimmers lack strength in breaststroke and the individual medley, coach McFarlane said. Though it doesn’t compensate for the loss, “freestyle is the strongest part of the team’s lineup, and we have a decent butterflyer,” McFarlane said.

With experienced members in short supply, the gymnastics team has won 2 of its 4 meets. “Though we haven’t won many meets, personal expectations are definitely being met,” said team member Amy Rudolph.

“We would like to get all our optional routines, the higher skill level routines to state,” coach Lynn Hastretter said. She thinks Jennifer Fleming, Adrienne Collins, Emily Schwartz, Vivian Derechin and Amy could reach state.

Because the boys’ indoor track team, which began practice Feb. 15, numbers 15, it lacks the depth of the girls’ team. “Just about all their meets will be tough,” coach Ron Dordt said.

The girls, however, backed by ign sprinter Heidi Haskell and distance runner Gabrielle Schurman, are strong uniformly, Dordt feels.

K E E P I N G S c o r e

Compiled by Gene Scalise

Basketball — “it’s been a rather colorless season for the varsity boys team.” The captains played their last 10 games with a 5-5-0 record. The team lost at Elgin in a tight game on Feb. 19, drew at U-High on Jan. 18, won 54-40 at home on Jan. 10, lost 69-65 at Lake Zurich on Jan. 31, lost 53-25 at St. Francis on Jan. 20, and lost 55-47 at Home on Feb. 19. The Frosh team is having a good season, according to coach Ron Dordt. The team has won 6 of their first 7 games. They lost to Lake Zurich 55-47 on Jan. 3 but rallied to beat St. Francis 69-65 on Jan. 20. The Maroons will face Lake Forest Friday and U-High Saturday.

Keep an eye on the cars. Guards Jennifer Scalise and Julie Scalise are interchangeable on defense and offense. They share playing time and are very effective.

Ski trip gives a lift

“It was great!” That’s how Geoff Blanco and many others involved felt about the Outing Club’s ski trip Jan. 17 to Willow Mountain in Wisconsin. The trip attracted 10 club members, paying $18 each, and 36 nonmembers, including four teachers, $23 each. Next the club plans to sponsor horseback-riding 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat., Jan. 31 at Palos Park and cross country skiing 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat., Feb. 7 at Palos Park.

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SHE FLOATS through the air with the greatest of ease. During after school gymnastics practice at Bartlett Gym, Jennifer Fleming performs an aerial cartwheel, with teammate Amy Rudolph spotting.

Play by Play
By Wilson McDermut, sports editor

BIRDS OF A FEATHER kick together. That is what it comes to soccer. More than 20 U-High soccermen have dedicated their dedication to soccer by entering an indoor league to play even during the middle of winter.

They joined the Hyde Park Soccer Club, which organizes three teams for Hyde Parkers: Intermediate, ages 14 and under; juvenile, 16 and under; and juvenile 18 and under. This is the first year the club has sponsored indoor soccer. It also sponsors outdoor soccer in the spring, which many Middle and High Schoolers from the Lab Schools have participated in since the club was begun nine years ago.

Club members explained why they play indoor soccer. Phil Pine, varsity soccerman and member of the junior team, said, “I can play all year round, because I love the game and never get tired of it.” He added that it will improve individual players and the U-High team. “Indoor soccer will improve us,” he said. “It’s mainly ball control and dribbling.”

Bill Pitchen, also a varsity soccerman and junior team member, said he plays indoor soccer because he wants to improve. “Soccer is the only sport I go all out for and I would love to get better,” he explained.

OTHER PLAYERS expressed an interest in playing because indoor soccer is something new. Said Roger Bowley, member of U-High’s varsity team and manager and member of the junior team, “Indoor soccer is faster moving, higher scoring and more energetic.”

As for the possibility of indoor soccer at U-High, Phys Ed Department chairperson Larry McFarlane said, “There are no other teams I know of that represent high schools that we could compete against.”

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Hunger strikes!

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Near, that is. Here you can feast on our deUcious deli food. And our quality bread. In a variety of shapes and sizes, gigantic toast sandwiches like BLT’s, 40¢, 75¢, $1, $1.50, and a variety of soups. You can’t go wrong — it’s all fresh. Our friendly staff are always cruising. They delivered Quigley North, 4-34, and St. Francis, 447-41. The fresh lunch is off at the Chiswickonore, giving it that extra edge.

OX BOX is the flying Lox Box. This team is still flying in its balance. The girls frosh-soph basketball team, which began the season with a 0-2 record, is now 9-6-2. They gained big in their first home meet, Jan. 13, beating Lake View 54-39. They defeated Palos Park 59-0 on Jan. 17. The team won at St. Benedict, score being forfeited.

The Flying Lox Box
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241-7050
Keeping Up

• Award honors senior
  For high scholastic standing and interest in science, Steve Padnos has won the Bausch and Lomb Award, sponsored by the scientific equipment company of the same name. The award is presented annually to seniors chosen by their science teachers at more than 8,000 high schools. Steve will receive a bronze trophy and the opportunity to compete for a four-year scholarship to the University of Rochester, N.Y.

• State cities scholars
  To date there have been named Illinois State Scholars by the Illinois State Scholarship Commission (ISSC) on the basis of test scores and academic records. Students entered the competition when they took the American College Testing (ACT) exam last spring. Winners will receive certificates of merit and are eligible for $1,000 scholarships to ISSC-approved Illinois schools. Winners are as follows:
  Greg Buckley, Calumet High; Hurley Chang, Alby Hahnl; Jennifer Johnson, Joliet West; Mitch Hickey, St. Charles East; Sami Kline, Fremd; and Mark Zieba, Mather.

• Enrollment rises
  U-High's enrollment has increased by one. Four seniors graduated in December but five new students enrolled this month. December grad interviews are as follows: Galina Prude, starting fourth semester at the Pots Dam State School; Michael Piazza, starting for the first time at DePaul University; Evan Brown, starting his second year at the University of Illinois; Jennifer Langeland, starting her first year at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; and Rebecca Frank, starting her first year at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. New students and where they entered:
  Jennifer Wiles, entering directly to the U-High College Program.

• Editor inaugurated
  Announcing a new President and the Midway has a new editor. Jennifer Lim was named winter quarter editor-in-chief at a publications staff party Dec. 18 at the Lin and Susan Evans. Also announced were the following:
  Advertising and advertising manager, Becky Adams; editorial writer, Kate Davey; political editor, Jennifer Lim; government editor, Lisa Morrow; community editor, Jennifer Lim; entertainment editor, Becky Adams; sports editor, Michelle Page; design editor, Dan Stamm; and assistant design editor, Christian Miller. "U Tall U," Michelle Dixon.

• College facts told
  Good grades in high school, clarity in interviews and applications and luck are usually the three most important factors colleges admissions officers consider, according to University of Chicago dean of students Charles O'Connell. Mr. O'Connell spoke at a college admissions workshop for juniors Jan. 12 in the Assembly Room, attended by about 35 juniors and their parents. Other speakers at the workshop included the following:
  Ms. Carol Ramsey, director of admissions for A Better Chance; and Mr. Bill Knott, director of admissions at the U of C.

• Assembly remembers
  "Free At Last," a half-hour choral composition celebrating the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., highlighted an assembly commemorating the 52nd anniversary of King's birth Jan. 15 at Rockefeller Chapel. The composition was performed by combined choirs from U-High and Kenwood Academy. It was composed by Kenwood's choral director, Ms. Lena McLin.

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Hello, I'm Becky Sadow, advertising manager of the Midway. You know, the girl with the cute new haircut. Anyway, I've been hearing disturbing things lately. Hard as it is to believe, some U-Highers evidently have never dropped by Bob's, the very strange and very special bookstore at 53rd and Lake Park. What are you waiting for? Here's what you should know about Bob's incredible selection of incredible books! His special sections on special topics make it that what you might include! His clientele that's worth a trip in itself? How much more do I have to say? Maybe you think of a bookstore as...a...well, bookstore. Listen, I think of Bob's as...well, an experience. Why don't you experience it?