Adventures take students, teachers far on summer vacation travels

By Natalie Holley
Associate editor

Using elephants to maneuver the narrow road to Amber Fort, India, History Teacher Susan Shapiro and her daughter Robin, Class of 2008, enjoyed a good way to keep cool in the desert and architecture of Rajasthan this summer.

Ms. Shapiro first visited Israel, spending eight days in Jerusalem with her husband Rob and Robin. She attended the Eighth International Conference on Holocaust Education at Yad Vashem, Israel’s official memorial to Jewish Holocaust victims and the largest archive of Holocaust information.

She and Robin then took an 11-day trip to India, exploring local marketplaces, visiting historic locations and staying at the Rambagh Palace in Jaipur.

“We started in Delhi, which is an interesting city because it’s the capital of Hindu India but also a Muslim city,” Ms. Shapiro said. “We saw examples of Old Delhi versus New Delhi. The intertwining influences of Islam, Hinduism, and the West were obvious.”

Traveling with her mother, uncle, and two cousins, Sophomore Belle Pon enjoyed five-and-a-half weeks in Hong Kong, Macau, China, and Thailand. Belle has been speaking Cantonese ever since she could talk, but began learning Mandarin in 2nd grade.

“Now I’m more confident in my skills,” she said. “I can have conversations with my Grandma more, who was impressed by the slang my cousins taught taught.”

Also traveling overseas, a group of 15 U-Highers visited Cuba with Photography teacher Lieze Ricketts and Spanish Teacher Craig Reubelt, June 14-25.

“There were no restrictions on areas or people for pictures,” Ms. Ricketts said. “We could approach people and ask them if we could take pictures and they would be very hospitable, friendly and nice.”

Other teachers traveling overseas include Math Teacher Shauna Anderson, who traveled to South Africa; Art Teacher William Conway; History Teacher Susan Shapiro and her daughter Robin, Class of 2008; and English Teacher Robin Hensel, who traveled to Bangladesh.

By Sonia Bourdagh
Editor-in-Chief

From Michigan, Chicago and Ohio a librarian, Latin Teacher, and college counselor join the U-High family today.

Friends with former librarian Patrick Fuller and Lower School Librarian Lee McLain, Susan Augustine said she found out about the opening here through them.

Ms. Augustine attended Roseville Garber High School, in Roseville, Michigan, and later Western Michigan in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

“I worked at the Art Institute as a librarian for seven years, and before that at Columbia College and the University of Illinois at Chicago,” Ms. Augustine said. “I’ve worked with high school students when they came into those libraries and enjoyed it.

“Being connected with youth is a good way to keep cool in the world. Young people keep up with technology, social trends, and media.

“They are really in the heart of all of that and have a certain curiosity.

I’m really looking forward to working with high schoolers.

“Also, the range of students will be exciting, since they will be interested in more subject matters than just art.”

Having grown up in Chicago, Mr. Ristin attended St. Ignatius in the West Loop, the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, and the University of Pennsylvania. For graduate school, he attended the University of Cincinnati and Loyola.

Mr. Ristin taught at Regina Dominican in Wilmette for six years and will be teaching both sections of Latin One and one section of Latin Two. He said he is looking forward to being among other Latin teachers.

Mr. Wagner will counsel students with last names G through MC, and help ease the load College Counselors Patty Kovaes and Melissa Warehall have been handling. Having grown up in Ohio, Ms. Wagner attended Riverside High, in Painesville, Ohio, and later the Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and Ohio State University in Columbus.

“I previously worked at Morgan Park Academy and was the only college counselor there,” Ms. Wagner said. “I am very eager to work with other counselors because they often learn from and support each other. I’m looking forward to being in a team environment.”

“I heard about how excellent the education at the Lab Schools was and wanted to work where students are motivated, and there is a strong team of counselors.”

Leaving the school after 15 years, Ms. Ying Sau Cheung, mail room coordinator, retired last month. She for a long time was a Labs School parent.

“The Labs School is very diverse, which is really good for students, and everyone is like a family,” Ms. Cheung said. “I felt very comfortable working here.”
As the Midway sees it

Let the games begin on winning year

Here we go again. After a tumultuous year, the roller-coaster ride isn’t quite over. The new schedule, which contained some major issues last year, has only been tweaked. And after a disappointing Winter Formal in February, and nonexistent Spring Fling, Student Council hopes to pull off a Homecoming Dance that everyone can enjoy.

And issues from last year remain. Students and teachers are discovering how to effectively use the weekly 75-minute interspan, introduced in last year’s new schedule. That’s assuming students can register into those classes, as many U-Highers have experienced difficulties fitting in their requested courses.

While complaints concerning suggestive clothing and dancing at last year’s Homecoming, greatly increased teacher involvement and other changes brought down student attendance and satisfaction. As a result, Winter Formal was sparsely attended, and a planned Spring Fling was cut short.

In short, the Midway was not reviewed before publication by any administrator.

Mr. Bradner and Ms. Ricketts are the adults who review stories, photos, and designs prior to publication. But administrators are part of the publishing team, offering ideas and advice. Although we cover controversial topics, the Midway does not publish libel or anything that may disrupt or interfere with the running of the school. It is illegal to do so.

This year, the paper likely will publish fewer pages than last years, because of a smaller staff. But we will provide more stories on each page, and keep each issue reader friendly. The paper’s overall appearance has also changed.

We look forward to presenting you with a reader friendly publication and a closer look into U-High life.

Say What?

What are you looking forward to at U-High?

(Ashed of freshmen)

BRAD KOONTZ: I’m looking forward to high school baseball. I can’t wait for the season to start.

SAM ABONSON: I’m looking forward to meeting different people and being involved in clubs and new experiences that were not available in Middle School.

ROSE WEAVER: I’m looking forward to meeting the new students in my grade. I’m also looking forward to making friends with upperclassmen.

NORA LIN: I’ve heard there’s more freedom at U-High than I had in Middle School. I’m especially looking forward to having more free periods. But I’m also excited to meet new friends too.

By Duncan Weinstein

Opinion columnist

With few close races in Chicago this election season, politically minded U-Highers will have to seek volunteer opportunities farther from home.

Ronnies win’t vote for a senator or governor, and most of the competitive House districts lie in the northern and western suburbs. U-Highers who want to canvass for Obama will have to travel farther than Illinois, away from the competitive House districts.

Duncan went in 2008, and venture instead to Iowa. While local phone banks are easier to find, they are calling out of state. So’s life in a safe state like Illinois, where hasn’t voted for a Republican for over 20 years, and more Presidential candidates are more likely to visit for fundraisers than for rallies or town halls. With Illinois’s electoral votes securely for Obama, both campaigns are focusing their efforts on Wisconsin and Iowa instead, granting U-Highers a reprieve from a barrage of negative campaign ads.

President Barack Obama and challenger Mitt Romney have run a greater percentage of negative TV ads than any past pair of Presidential adversaries, according to Time Magazine’s April 24 issue. That has lowered voter enthusiasm even further, to far below the highs of 2008.

For Obama President, public disinterest could mean trouble recruiting volunteers, the Democrats’ answer to the Republicans’ Super PACs and others. Romney, who has at times appeared uncomfortable behind the podium, will almost certainly try to hit Obama on the economy, especially because the President has the upper hand on foreign policy issues.

Though they face an uphill battle in the electoral college, the Romney campaign sees hope in the fact that no President has been reelected with this bad an economy since FDR.

But having popular ideas doesn’t win the White House without a suitable candidate to occupy it. Just ask John Kerry.

All this gives Obama an opening to outperform in a Republican year.

To do that, the Obama campaign has doubled down on organizing, hoping to mitigate financial disadvantage with smarter spending. As a result, the Obama campaign strategy will work, that depends on if volunteers answer the call, including U-Highers.

An early start

Returning to school in mid-August, these three Midway editors-in-chief and several other members prepared this first-day edition of the Midway. From left are Duncan Weinstein, William Chung and Sonia Bourdaghs. The fourth editor-in-chief, Rolland Long, was still in China. The paper’s new design is based on layout projects produced by students in the Beginning Journalism course last Spring.

Only three students understand the new schedule, the new college counselors don’t arrive till Thursday, so students applying to Harvard, Rutgers, Columbia, Yale, and Stanford.

But I’m not sure about Harvard.

SHEIL DUNN

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This time, national election feels farther from home
Homecoming getting participatory planning

By Sonia Bourdags
Editor-in-chief

A mixture of policies from last year’s Homecoming and Formal are being considered by student Council and Principal Scott Fech as they plan Homecoming.

After students, chaperons and parents complained about dress, and dance styles and a culturally offensive (to some) unofficial senior class theme last fall, a Dance Committee was formed to discuss policy changes for Winter Formal. Revisions were agreed upon but many students walked out when adults began breaking up dances, a possibility that had not been dis- cussed. A mixture of policies from last year’s Homecoming was canceled when Student Council gave up on negotiations.

This summer, Student Council, Principal Scott Fech and faculty members worked together towards effec- tively planning Homecoming, 7:30-10:30 p.m, Satur- day, October 6, at International House.

Senior Homecoming Association Vice President Alexia Watters said, “We want to have two seniors, two juniors and one sophomore,” Amol said. “Since freshmen have never been to a dance, I don’t think it is appropriate to have them on the committee.”

Cultural Union President Rex Gu, senior, hopes changes will increase dance attendance.

“At this rate, the program would be at risk of being canceled,” said Student Council President Amol Gundeti hopes that Student Council will be more informed about policy changes than with Formal.

“The thing is transparency,” Amol said. “With the Formal last year, students were expecting one thing, and then found something else when they got to the dance. We want students to know what they will and will not be allowed to do.”

“We want the past five years of music for all the same kind of dancing, and we want to switch around the music a lot. The dances are never going to be the same as they were. The setup will be more based on what students and teachers want.”

Student Council members met with Mr. Fech August 29 to formalize a Dance Committee of students and faculty to determine Homecoming.

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Senior-slick soccermen putting big ranks to use

By Michael Glick
Sports editor

A starting lineup featuring just two seniors, soccermen will travel south to face Morgan Park Academy tomorrow, at 4:30 p.m.

Despite an 8-0 blowout of the Warriors last year, Steven said, “We haven’t started our season off with a win in a while, so it was good to get off on the right track this year.”

“With several players playing varsity for the first time, Coach Christensen has emphasized mental preparation.”

“Last year we didn’t get our first win until near the end of the season, so getting a win so early is great for our confidence,” he said. “We want to keep the mental side. We’re really focusing on putting, as well as the short game around the green.”

Cross country sees plus in big crop of new talent

By William Chung
Editor-in-Chief and Sports editor

Facing four teams at the Midway Miles 4:30 p.m. tomorrow in Washington Park, 10 new cross country runners of all grades level will join returning members to run the three-mile race.

The Maroons will face St. Ignatius next Saturday and Whitney Young September 22.

“I think that the Midway Miles will be a good experience for the new kids,” Junior Sonia Bozorgdahs said. “Washington Park is a beautiful place to run, and it is always nice to run on our course.”

Senior Sarah Garcia, co-captain with Senior Ben Meyer, believes the new runners, especially Freshman Lucy Weischer, will excel.

“Lucy will definitely be one of our top runners from the first race,” Sarah said. “I’m really proud and impressed with her dedication and training over the summer.”

“Last year we didn’t get our first win until near the end of the season, so getting a win so early is great for our confidence,” he said. “We want to keep the mental side. We’re really focusing on putting, as well as the short game around the green.”

Varsity will face Luther North September 13, Westminster Christian September 15, and Woodlands September 18. J.V. results—The Maroons have adjusted well to losses past Midway press time.

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