

**Is BAC Sometimes Too Loud?**

By Carissa Stots

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By Jackson Bunis

**School Spirit: Good or Bad?**

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Is there too much homework? At my elementary school, there was no homework until second grade. And even then it was only two or three nights a week. My principal, Mr. Springer, a cancer survivor recently interviewed on Arthur, didn’t believe in homework. However, he had to be given, though, to prepare students for the tests that would arrive in middle school. Studies show that kids can only concentrate on schoolwork a certain amount per day, and Mr. Springer thought that that time should be spent in school, under the teacher’s watchful eye, making sure that the kids are learning the information correctly, and at all. Most homework sent home is done by the parents, anxious for their kids to get good grades. Sometimes, the parents do it so their children have something to turn in the next day. Those kids aren’t learning a thing. Instead, they are playing video games while their homework is being done by various pieces of technology. Parents might also just supply their kids with the answers so their kids have a higher grade. But what good does that do come test time? I asked a girl in the BAC what she thought of homework. “If there is any homework, I don’t get to play much, or even at all.” Maybe homework is part of the reason obesity rates are growing. Overloaded with homework, the kids have less time to play and, at the same time, exercise. I am often tied up with homework and after-school activities, I sometimes am not able to do much more than homework and dinner. If too much homework is assigned on one night, kids might rush through and produce bad, but completed, homework. Why do we want our teachers to cover our homework with red pen just because we had too much?

**Obama: Nobel Laureate or not?**

By Vikram Krishnamachari

The Nobel Peace Prize is the highest recognition that any humanitarian can receive. Many famous peacekeepers have won this honor, such as the late King Hussein of Jordan and Nelson Mandela. This year, the Nobel laureate was U.S. President Barack Obama. According to the Nobel Committee, he was awarded this great honor because of his efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples.

President Obama has accomplished a lot in his voyage to the presidency. However, I believe his accomplishments cannot be compared to those of great past recipients. Martin Luther King brought equality, justice, and civil liberty to America. Nelson Mandela brought an end to apartheid in Africa, and helped to lay the foundations for a new democratic South Africa. But President Obama has not accomplished enough yet to be considered a member of this elite group. Previously, U.S. presidents have won the Peace Prize while in office. In 1906, Theodore Roosevelt won because of his role in bringing an end to the Russo-Japanese war. Woodrow Wilson won the peace prize in 1919 for his Fourteen Points peace program and his work in achieving the Covenant of the League of Nations. At their time, their prizes were controversial, but both Roosevelt and Wilson accomplished what they set out to do. However, President Obama has not yet made a major accomplishment towards world peace. In his acceptance speech, President Obama acknowledged “the continuing global controversy that your [the Nobel Committee’s] generous decision has generated, in part because I am at the beginning, and not the end, of my labors on the world stage.” Should the Nobel Committee reward a promise?

Another controversial part of President Obama’s prize are the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. President Obama is working with his military commanders to responsibly end the war in Iraq. According to the constitution of Afghanistan, and has authorized the deployment of 30,000 troops this month, bringing the total amount of troops in Afghanistan to 100,000. At his Nobel peace acceptance speech, he said that “As a head of state sworn to protect and defend my nation… [I] cannot stand idle in the face of threats to the American people. For make no mistake: evil does exist in the world. To say that force is sometimes necessary is not a call to cynicism, it is a recognition of history: the imperfections of man and the limits of reason.” Gandhi ended the British rule in India without resorting to violence. Martin Luther King brought civil rights to African Americans and nonviolently battled the US government. Nonviolence works. Wars destroy precious lives and resources. These resources can be used to strengthen homeland security so future attacks can be prevented.

Throughout the 2008 presidential campaign, I supported President Obama. He is a great politician, and is capable of bringing change to America, and to the world. But this is the future. The Nobel Committee should not reward those with future hope or promise, but should reward actions have accomplished much, and have never been defeated by struggle throughout their journey to peace.