



Forum Factorum

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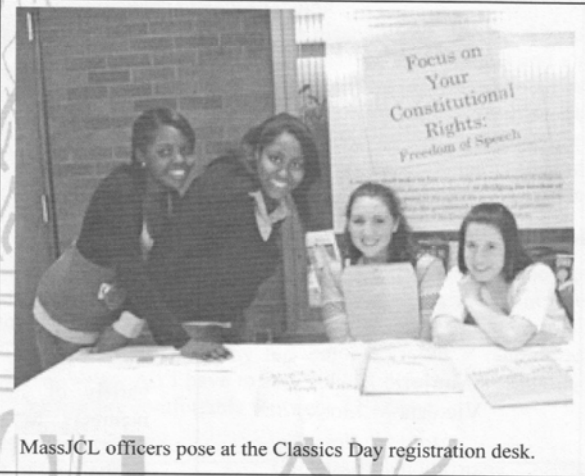
Classics Day at Boston University:

An exceptional workshop, an exceptional day

By Meseret Oldjira
Boston Latin Academy

This year's Classics Day was especially memorable for me, not only because it was my last as a JCLer, but also because I attended an exceptional workshop. I was really looking forward to attending the Byzantine Icon Painting Workshop since I had heard so much about the presenter, Christopher Gosey, and his work. To simply say I enjoyed this workshop would be an understatement. It was a truly amazing experience to meet and listen to someone whose profession is icon painting. This is special to me not only because I am passionate about art but it also discussed my religion and two very distinct cultures. The workshop covered a variety of topics such as the art of icon painting, history, symbolism, and theology.

The workshop covered the history of iconography beginning with its birth in Constantinople through the Middle Ages. Icons were produced as wooden paintings as well as spectacular mosaics. The most beautiful of these mosaics were made in the 4th and 5th centuries during the First Golden Age of iconography but much of the amazing images from this period did



MassJCL officers pose at the Classics Day registration desk.

not survive because from 726 to 843, a period of time known as the Iconoclastic Period, when the creation of sacred images was actually prohibited and many iconographers were killed or maimed. However, the most noted defender of iconography, Saint John of Damascus, helped lift the sanctions against iconography. Today icons are an essential part of Orthodox Christian churches around the world.

The most interesting part of the workshop was learning about the meticulous work that goes into creating an icon. Mr. Gosey showed us the wooden panels, materials, and colors he uses in painting the sacred images. Iconographers use pigmented wax and egg tempera as their media. I never imagined that I would get the chance to learn about work that goes into creating the icons I always marveled at in church, and I was overjoyed to learn about such things at a MassJCL event. I am now interested in learning the skills of icon paintings myself. I am sure that my great appreciation and reverence for icons will not end with this workshop.

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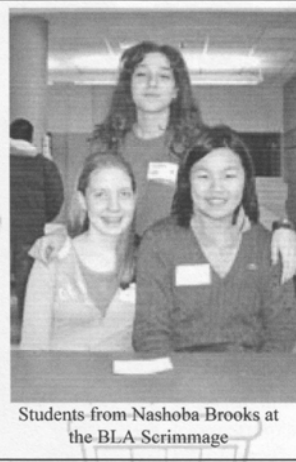
The *Forum Factorum* is a state-sponsored, quarterly newsletter produced entirely by students of the Massachusetts Junior Classical League. Its mission is to inform members of important happenings, showcase and highlight achievement, and to create a forum for discussion of statewide issues.

This Issue's Staff:
Meseret Oldjira, BLA
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Certamen Scrimmages:

A healthy dose of friends and fun...and even competition!

By Jacob Meister
Boston Latin School



Students from Nashoba Brooks at the BLA Scrimmage

MassJCL provides a variety of activities for its members to participate in, from feats of sportsmanship on the field to the artistic. My personal favorite is the game of certamen. It is incredibly hard to describe just what certamen truly is to a person outside of JCL; I usually take the easy way out, telling them that it's like Latin jeopardy. Certamen is really more like a composite of a variety of Latin-related subjects. The friendships I've made through it, though, are what really keep me coming back every year. Three of MassJCL's local chapters each sponsor certamen scrimmages each year; these scrimmages serve a dual purpose—to make new friends and to better prepare for certamen at that year's State Convention, which has a more competitive and formal

atmosphere than that of the scrimmages.

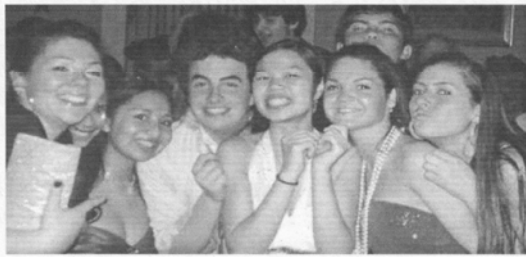
In December 2006, Boston Latin School's JCL chapter hosted its annual "Certamen Leve", with many schools attending. Being a BLS JCLer, I hope that people felt welcome at our school; we also managed to integrate a fundraising opportunity into the scrimmage. The caliber of play was intense, with a rapt audience in each room, but there were many social moments, with mingling in the cafeteria. Among several veteran participants were Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School, and Turkey Hill MS/ Lunenburg HS. We also welcomed new guests including, Austin Preparatory School and Abby Kelly Foster Charter School.

In late January, the Boston Latin Academy Classics Club hosted their own certamen scrimmage, drawing schools from all across the state, with many new chapters present, like Swampscott High School. The atmosphere was very welcoming and laid back in the earlier stages of the scrimmage, with people mingling in the cafeteria, buying pizza and soda. I got to meet some new folks, and the moderators and audience were very conducive in bringing out the best in all players. The rounds were, as always, filled with intense focus, but there were some fun moments.

It seems as though with each passing year, the competition gets fiercer, but it doesn't stand in the way of having fun. Without certamen, I'd never get to meet so many great people. So, play certamen and have fun!

A Night to Remember:

The first Annual MassJCL Snowball Semi-formal



JCLers pose at the first Annual Snowball Semi.

By Elizabeth Esborn
Notre Dame Academy

Red felt fedoras and the Electric Slide. Glowing necklaces and Michael Jackson dance contests. There are no words to describe the night of March 11.

The success of the First Annual MassJCL Snow Ball was evident upon entrance into the enormous coathroom. Having attended last year's JCL dance, I had been eagerly anticipating this year's event. Though many of us may feel more at home in a toga than in heels or a tie, the night still panned out in typical JCL fashion.

Held at the John Hancock Hotel and Conference Center, the night was certainly interesting and very

memorable. As last minute adjustments were made on decorations, members began trickling onto the dance floor. After arriving late and scaling the grand staircase as eagerly as I could in 4-inch heels, I was surprised to find myself in a nearly empty dancehall. Now, I may be fairly new to the JCL, but even I am aware of the enthusiasm that the Junior Classical League is known for. I could hardly believe that the twenty or so people lingering around the dance floor were the only members attending.

I was, of course, not disappointed. Within fifteen minutes, the room was nearly busting at the seams and all were eager to get the party going. The growing number of shoes piled against the walls was a sure sign that all were enjoying themselves. One highlight of the event was the dance contest, which gave members the opportunity to strut their stuff for a chance to win admiration or some appreciative laughter from their peers.

Soon, though, the night began to draw to a close, and the DJ played one final song. Members began gathering shoes, coats, and souvenirs, moving reluctantly in the direction of the door. My head may have been telling me I wanted to stay, but my feet confirmed that it really was time to go. All I have to say is I will definitely be sporting some more comfortable footwear for Round 2.

MassJCL Tidbits

One of the newest additions to the MassJCL is Nashoba Brooks School. A delegation from Nashoba Brooks attended their first event at the BLA Scrimmage, and also entered the T-shirt Contest.

Lunenburg High School's delegation is excited about combining with Turkey Hill Middle School at State Convention.

Lynn English has had their hands full preparing and performing *Coriolanus*, and getting ready to attend the State Convention.

Swampscott High School is set to attend States for the first time this year, having already attended classics day and gathered their club together to watch *Ben-Hur*.

Boston College High School once again participated in the classical Rhetoric Competition at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and is looking forward to future JCL events.

Members of Boston Latin School's delegation have dedicated much of their time to community service activities like gift Wrapping, and has also been fundraising and attending every possible event.

The Abby Kelly Foster School's chapter of the MassJCL has not only done outreach with preschoolers and fundraising, but also found the time to make

chocolate door-mice for Saturnalia this past holiday season.

The Advanced Math and Science Academy's delegation has been hard at work to make they're new club all that it can be, and hopefully will be attending their first State Convention.

Boston Latin Academy has been very busy preparing for state convention, keeping up with community service activities, and sending delegates to nearly every event.

Catholic Memorial's JCL chapter has been getting involved in community activities, even raising over \$1000 in the Breast Cancer Walk. They also have gathered to watch the movie *Troy*.



Another scene from the Snowball.

Welcome to the MassJCL State Convention!



2nd VP Carissa Williams and Vanessa smile at the Semi.

Top 10 Things to do at States

Brought to you by your very own MassJCL Officers

- 10) **Dance all night with Jacob Meister** (This one comes highly recommended.)
- 9) **Rent-a-Roman** and make a State Officer your very own *servus* for the day.
- 8) **Interrogate a candidate** for state office about their stance on the issues. (Do you support colored, or white togas?)
- 7) **Sing the JCL Song** at the top of your lungs.
- 6) **Have an impromptu dance party** in the hallways.
- 5) **Don a toga**, paint your faces, and prepare to lose your voice at the spirit contest.
- 4) **Enter a contest** that you've never entered before.
- 3) **Use a Latin pick-up line.** (*Carpe meum*, anyone?)
- 2) **Say "Salvete"** to everyone in sight.
- 1) **Enjoy!**

Dear MassJCL Delegates,

On behalf of the entire executive board, I would like to welcome you all to the 51st Annual Massachusetts Junior Classical League State Convention. This year marks a new beginning for MassJCL and I am very pleased to welcome you as part of the first ever two-night convention. The theme for this year is *Carpe Diem, Quam Minimum Credula Postero*; Seize the day, trusting as little as possible in tomorrow. With this theme in mind, we organized this gathering so that you may have every opportunity to indulge in new activities, bask in old favorites, discover new talents, make new, and hopefully, lifelong friends, and create joyous memories that will last a lifetime.

Convention is all about celebrating the classics through friendly competition. So, I challenge you. I challenge you to make a new friend from a different school. Play a ludi game that you have never played before. Sit with a different school during dinner. Sing your heart out at karaoke. I even challenge you to buy an officer at the Rent-a-Roman auction! Overall, I challenge you to step outside of your comfort zone and be the best person that you can be. It is not every day that all of MassJCL has the opportunity to gather together, so I urge you: Seize this opportunity and make the most of it.

I wish you the best of luck in all of your upcoming competitions, and I hope that you have the time of your life during our State Convention. Bona Fortuna!

- *Vanessa Durand*

MassJCL President, 06-07



MassJCL officers pose at the Snowball.

Thank You!

Recently, the MassJCL has had several generous benefactors donate to our club. This month, we would like to thank **Schell Printing** in Jamaica Plain, and **J.B. Edwards Uniforms** in Roslindale for their donations, and **Merrimax Web Mechanics** and Charles Hannigan, **Fenton, Pinsonnault & Quinn** for their ongoing work with the MassJCL.