

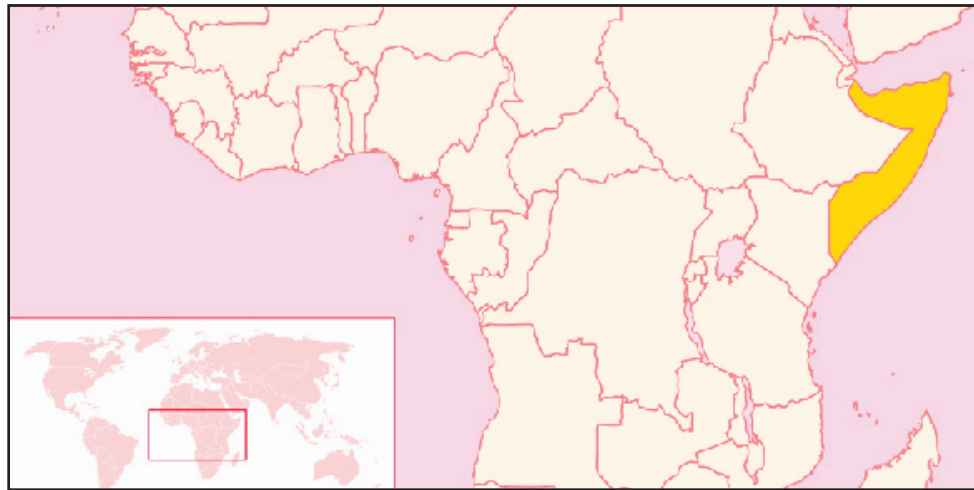
Yo ho, Yo ho! Pirates still sail the seas

HILARY DIRKS
News Editor

Back in the 1560s to the 1720s, piracy was all the rage in the Caribbean, as recent Hollywood movies have noted upon. The adventures of such famous pirates as Blackbeard have been romanticized and woven so thick with fable that it is difficult to tell the truth from fiction. However, in the Gulf of Aden, just south of the Suez canal and off the coast of Somalia piracy, in its raw form, has made a come back.

"When I think of pirates, I think about pirate ships, treasures, and eye patches," said junior Bethany Johnson. "Actual pirates."

Pirates can never seem to be separated from treasure and even though the "booty" of today's oceans is not gold doubloons, it is no less lucrative.



Somalia has suffered from an unstable government and pirates

Photo Courtesy of Wikipedia.org

These Somalian pirates have been getting bolder, recently capturing a Ukrainian ship carrying 33 tanks and requiring \$20 million for ransom. In the past, they have captured merchant ships, aid ships and even a cruise ship.

Some shippers are considering using an alternative route around the southern tip of Africa in order to reach Europe and North America, instead of the unsafe waters around Somalia, which has been estimated to cost shippers \$18-30 million in ransoms this year alone. The extra mileage around Africa would require more oil and drastically slow down world ocean trade.

The trouble is coming from the volatile country of Somalia, which lost its functioning government in 1991, and even though a government was formed in 2004, it has no real power to enforce laws.

Many governments such as France, United States, Russia and Germany have promised to send help.

"The US navy should defend American ships," said American government teacher Mr. Rich Baldwin. "We don't have the right or the responsibility to be the international police."

The United Nations Security Council has promised to take steps against the pirates, but nothing has been done as of yet.

"The U.N. needs to have more of a presence in Somalia in order to reduce piracy," said Mr.

Presidential race heads toward the finish line

SADIE DELASHMIT
Writer

With the election right around the corner there are many opinions about who should be the next president.

"Students have all seen reality TV shows, like American Idol, where it starts with a large pool of people and then is narrowed down. The election is narrowed down to two very similar people," said government teacher Mr. Joe Lewis.

Controversial issues are debated between the candidates, Senator Barack Obama and Senator John McCain. The war, health care, education and the future oil sources are some of the issues discussed.

"Obama said anyone who makes under \$250,000 gets a tax break. Then he switched it and said anyone who makes under \$50,000. He is lowering taxes for big businesses and raising taxes and pay roll for small businesses like my family's," said junior Leo Marquardt, whose family owns Denny's Doughnuts.

With the stock market crash and economy concerns Mr. Lewis said that neither candidate has formalized a plan to pull the country out of this situation. He said the bailout for the stock market crash is \$7,000,000,000, that means \$23,000 for

each person in the US, but we already are in debt \$31,000.

"The stock market is not only affecting our country. In China their stock market has went down the biggest drop since the Great Depression," said senior Jack Healy

Recently Obama's vice president, Joe Biden, and McCain's vice president, Sarah Palin, have also debated issues facing the American public.

"Palin is McCain's last attempt to get female voters. It is disrespectful to choose such an ignorant woman. She has no idea about the topics that she is talking about," said junior Claire Maurer. "She only goes off Q-cards which scares me because what if she has to talk to a leader of another country and what if they ask a question she doesn't have written down. Therefore she makes America look bad."

"Vice presidents are marketing ploys. They need to be different from the main candidate so they can get voters the presidential candidate wouldn't normally earn. It is like a bad commercial," said Mr. Lewis.

As of now Obama is leading the polls over McCain with 46 percent versus 41 percent.

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