

## The heat is off 11/12 warms up to new air conditioning

Erin McFadden '07

After more than a year of anticipation and several months of restricted access to the 11/12 due to construction, students and faculty alike were anxious to begin this school year in the newly air conditioned building. While this excitement was nearly unanimous, the response to the system's initial performance has not been so consistent.

The installation of air conditioning in all schools without HVAC (heating/ventilation/air conditioning) systems was included in a package of school and district improvements voted upon by Washington Township residents in 2004. This referendum also allowed for the placement of synthetic turf on two high school fields and the renovation of the 11/12 auditorium. After state assistance, tax payers contributed approximately ten million dollars to the projects.

While much money and time has been spent on the project, those who spend much of their days in the 11/12 have found that there are still several kinks in the system that need to be worked out.



Erin McFadden '07/The Patriot

### Students learn in Mr. Jerry Cullen's much cooler classroom

"Some units were left in test mode. Ours blew out so much air, it sounded like a jet," said Mr. Jerry Cullen.

This concern about the noise created when the HVAC units emit air into classrooms is shared amongst many members of the WTHS staff.

The fans are considered too loud by many teachers, who have found themselves speaking much louder than normal while instructing.

Students, too, have found the noise disruptive as it prevents many from being able to hear from their assigned seat.

"It's just a pain because I can never hear. It's actually put me behind in class," said Steph Brettman '07 who is seated next to the air conditioner in several classes.

Teachers' relief from the noise they have been fighting comes when the blower systems shut off. As this has been happening in rooms—or sometimes entire halls—seemingly at random, students find themselves traveling between extreme heat and cold as they change classes.

Lauren Kienzle '07 commented, "The past three years, See **AIR** Page 3

## Breathalyzer invited to dances

Josh Bennett '07

Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, all school dance participants will now be subjected to breathalyzer testing upon entry. Furthermore, you may even be tested once inside the dance and as you are walking out as well.

Mr. Joseph Bollendorf, 11/12 Executive Assistant Principal, outlined what could be done, "We can actually do three things: first, test everyone, second, conduct random testing and third, simply test those we think may be under the influence due to our own observation."

According to Bollendorf, the decision to introduce these new tools was made in response to a lot of publicity about other schools who had started to use kits in an effort to ensure the safety of all students attending their school dances. Our



photo courtesy of Arielle Milstein '07

### Students pack the dance floor at last year's junior prom.

school basically got curious, did some research and found out they truly are reliable, and relatively inexpensive, costing just \$400 each.

Even though only a few people were caught at last year's junior prom, out of roughly nine hundred attending, Bollendorf insists it is still a problem for the school.

"Coming under the influence is not tolerable. Drinking is not appropriate." He said.

It should also be noted that because of these changes, there may be a number of checking-in delays. It takes about fifteen seconds to test each person, and the presence of four to

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# Driving violators warned

## Police to issue tickets in parking lots

Laura Marder '07

Ever since new drivers have roamed the Washington Township parking lots, there have been a couple accidents.

In effort to lessen the amount of fender benders and unsafe driving Washington Township police have been keeping a close eye on the parking lots before and after

**"It ... makes you feel like you're driving in a safer environment," -Kim Lebb '07.**

school. Tickets will start to be issued to those who break the laws. You are lucky if a ticket costs you under one hundred dollars.

The fines and hassle can be avoided with safe driving.

"It's kind of nerve racking to know cops are always watching our driving in the parking lot, but

it also makes you feel like you're driving in a safer environment," said Kim Lebb '07.

Washington Township has a security staff that really cares about the students well being. Officer Lori Postiglione is one of the Washington Township Police officers who patrol the parking lots; she has been an officer for 13 years. She and Officer Leone make sure rules are being followed in the parking lots before and after school.

"I was stopped for having too many people in my car, I know its not allowed because I have a provisional license but a lot of people do it and I drive safely," explained Dana Dean '07.

Many students are complain-

ing that the police are too strictly enforcing rules. People are being stopped for speeding, not stopping at crosswalks, having too many people in their cars and not wearing a seatbelt.

"Right now I'm being easy on them, I've only stopped about 7 to 8 cars since the beginning of the school year," said Postiglione.

Officers will be starting to issue tickets and warnings soon because the rules have been laid down and everyone should know by now that the police are serious about keeping the parking lots safe.

"The main thing I look for is seatbelts, that's one of the main reasons for us to stop you," explained Postiglione.

"I automatically buckle-up when I get into the car so the seatbelt law isn't an issue for me," explained Lebb. This small but significant law is a little hassle to obey, but a big hassle if broken.

WTHS has hundreds of new drivers out on the street. Some say this is a scary thought. However if everyone remembers the laws we memorized in Driver-Ed sophomore year, it won't be too bad. It could save you a lot of money, stress and even your life.

# Stricter drinking policy in place

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five breathalyzers is most probable.

Students found under the influence will not only be sent home, but also receive the usual 10-day suspension. Additionally, they will also be barred from all dances for the remainder of the year as well as the entirety of next year.

Supporters of the new policy believe this is just another technique to try to leave an impression on students in hopes that they will decide not to come to the dance under the influence. However, student's opinions seem to be mixed on the matter.

"If they really want to go to the prom drunk, they'll find some way," Says Tony Pragosa '07, "It'll definitely cut down on the amount of people doing it, but it won't stop some people."

Andrea Meritt '07 comments, "I think people will just come high."

"There's not much we can do about that. My hope is that we'll pay close attention when giving these tests in hopes of catching those who choose to do so." said Bollendorf.

# New air system requires adjustments

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I knew it would be hot, and would dress appropriately. This year, I don't know if my classes will be hot, cold, or in between... No matter how I dress, it's wrong for more than one class."

Despite these common complaints, some students and teachers see the bright side of finally having central air in the 11/12.

"Having to talk a little louder is worth not having to sit in gross heat," said Arielle Milstein '07.

Sunny Sawhney '07 agreed. "I don't even notice the noise if it's always on. You get used to it, and the air is just more comfortable for students," he said.

In the 11/12 gymnasiums, where students had become accustomed to working up a sweat in previous school years, the inconsistency in temperature is most noticeable. Despite frigid locker rooms and strikingly warmer conditions in the gyms themselves, phys. ed. teachers remain optimistic.

"It really got hot in the gym," said Ms. Donna Headly. "We're

glad to have the air conditioning, and we understand that they're still in the process of regulating it."

Considering the concerns of faculty and students, administration stands firmly in support of the new system.

11/12 Executive Assistant Principle Mr. Joseph Bollendorf believes "this is a 'no pain, no gain' situation," saying that this period of adjustment is necessary to experience the long-term positive effects of having an HVAC system.

When the problems in the system are finally worked out, he anticipates that the 11/12 wing will become a "healthier, more productive" learning environment.

While the school year progresses, WTHS students and faculty can expect to see maintenance on the HVAC system continue. With some tweaking, it should be keeping the 11/12 wing cool from the spring of 2007 and into the future.

In the mean time, Milstein suggests, "If it's too cold, bring a jacket!"

## The Patriot

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# The sweetest taboo

## Fundraising, classroom, cafeteria, feel bite of candy ban

Kaitlyn Fernandez '07

Remember the elementary school days when birthdays were celebrated with munchkins? When Halloween was all about sharing candy the next day? When teachers handed out candy canes at Christmastime?

Those days are over.

In June 2005, Richard J. Codey, New Jersey's Acting Governor, launched the "most comprehensive school nutrition policy in the nation." It mandated that all NJ schools would adopt policies to give students "a longer, healthier and more enjoyable life."

On July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the Washington Township School Board implemented the School Nutrition/Wellness Policy at all district schools. The new guidelines included bans on "foods of minimal nutritional value," foods with sugar as the first ingredient, and candy being served or sold.

The explanation for this policy is the growing levels of obesity in young Americans. Studies indicate that childhood obesity deducts two or three years from average life expectancy and increases chances to develop Type II diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol.

Studies also show that maintaining a healthy body and eating nutritional foods make a huge difference in a student's ability and willingness to learn.

Despite the benefits of the policy, the elimination of sweets is hitting students and teachers around the building surprisingly hard.

Jerry Cedrone '07, Vice President of the Renaissance Student Committee, is wondering how to make money for the new school year.

In the past, Back to School Night sales of candy grams sent from parents to children have provided early fundraising for the club.

Similarly, the Interact Club raised \$500 last year for the MS Foundation through candy sales.

Cedrone says, "The new food policy is a good thing because it forces clubs to be more creative with their fundraising."

Reaction to the policy extends beyond fundraising as its impact is

also being felt in the classroom.

11/12 English teachers, Mrs. Debbie McFadden and Mr. Jerry Cullen, had always considered candy an important part of their classroom experience. McFadden had created a classroom management game called the "Bucks System."

The game rewarded class participation with Bucks that could be traded in on "Buy Back Days" for chocolate candy bars.

Cullen found that the Bucks allowed students to be involved and excited for class without worrying over "ruining their reputation."

While there had always been

alternatives to the candy—vegetables, pretzels, and even dropping low grades—McFadden said, "Teenagers love chocolate."

The Foods Curriculum is also changing. Foods teacher Mrs. Peggy Kelley feels that the new policy creates an opportunity to teach about nutritional value—especially as instructors continue to teach their desserts curriculum. They will begin to change ingredients of the sweeter recipes to give students the experience of different tastes—for example, whole wheat flour over all-purpose flour.

Another Foods teacher, Mrs.

Betty Sue Drozd, added the reminder that their students are in class "to learn the methods, not to eat."

The biggest change in Foods is that no students will be permitted to bring the sweets outside the classroom.

"It shouldn't have come to this," said Mrs. Pamela Merkle, who cannot even give sugary treats to her Day Care children, "but [state officials are] not going to change their minds now."

Now, Merkle adds optimistically, teachers and students alike must get their "creative juices flowing."

Just keep the juices sugar-free.

## New lunch mandates not sitting well

Rob Cavella '07

Lunch. For some, the most sacred period of a day at school. We went through a lot of unrest last year during our cherished forty-five minute cafeteria reprieves. First we were devastated with the loss of our beloved "big cookie". The final two months of lunch last year held no grilled cheese day, the undisputed favorite lunch of Washington Township high school. And now again this year, the cafeteria is inflicting even more pain.

On September 1st of this year the U.S.D.A enacted their new "Wellness Policy", enacted to give students a healthier choice. In an effort to comply, our cafeteria is serving reduced portions such as fries, no Welch's fruit snacks, twenty-ounce drinks, or food with sugar as the primary ingredient. Goodbye Kandy Kakes, Glazed Honey buns, and delicious fudge bars.

This health-centered adjustment is causing some ruckus in the lunchroom. But various studies and publications have cited the U.S. as the fattest country in the world. The North American Association for the Study of Obesity believes schools nationwide are taking a step in the right direction to help us as students escape from being a part of this gross statistic before we continue to run into the rising threat of weight related health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart attack.

According to the NAASO,



Rob Cavella 07/Patriot

### New state regulations seek to make lunch more nutritious.

over 64% of adults in America are either overweight or obese.

"Obviously there's a problem here [with student eating habits, health issues]. Schools need to steer the children. We're taking the responsibility to guide them with a healthy choice; but it is still a choice", stated Washington Township's food services director Mrs. Virginia Bowden.

Along with the new adjustments to the lunch menu, it's only fair to mention some of the other options we have here at WTHS. Our cafeteria offers a breakfast program that many other high schools don't get to take advantage of, as well as reduced and free lunch for the students that need it.

Although New Jersey's new lunch policy is one of the most stringent in the country,

considerations are being taken to keep our lunch period as enjoyable as it has always been. New snack choices are going to be added to the cafeterias, along with our brand new low-fat soft serve ice cream machines that churn out five flavors (Marble mint, Cookies n Cream, Strawberry, Chocolate, and Vanilla).

It doesn't end there though. In the process of taking away some of our old favorites from the lunch menu, many new options are ready to be chosen. Mrs. Bowden feels who better to choose them than the very students that love lunch the most?



If you would be interested in being part of a student testing committee for new lunch additions, drop us a line at [ourlunch@gmail.com](mailto:ourlunch@gmail.com) so you can contribute to make our lunch all it can be.

# To freshmen, WTHS big, but not so bad

Lauren Meloni '09

We're back to school again, entering the same surroundings we had last year; dreading all of our new classes and homework assignments. But for some of us, the high school is a whole new environment.

As a freshman coming into the high school, it can be stressful and frightening. The school is larger, the hallways more congested, and you may have some classes where it's necessary to travel to the 11-12 wing.

"It's not as bad as people said it would be; at first it was hard to get around, but after a couple days you get used to the transition," said Jenna Nuzzi '10.

Being in a larger school with upper classmen can be quite a change when you are just coming from the middle school where you were considered an upper classman, and now you're back to being the youngest of the group.

Many incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders would assume they would get picked on and made fun of for being a freshman; most are relieved to find that is not the case here. In our high school the upper classmen don't bother the younger students because they were in the same position once before.

"I wasn't really bothered by the upper classmen; I was kind of scared but once I got to be around them, I realized that they weren't going to torture me," said Alanna Sabo '10.

During your freshman year it is most important to try and get involved. In our school we have approximately fifty clubs to join for all different sorts of interests. Most



Rob Cavella '07/Patriot

**Many freshmen have found that joining a sports team has enabled them to meet new people and connect with old friends.**

upper classmen feel being in clubs can help you academically and help you meet new people.

"I have been involved all four years in various clubs," said Amanda Jones '07. "I joined most of the clubs my freshman year, because my friends went to the meetings with

me. All the activities I've been involved in during my time in high school have helped shape my life and make my years in high school so much more enjoyable."

In addition to activities, sports are a huge part of the high school experience.

"I joined the swim team and S.A.V.E. my freshman year. It's good to find a sport that you enjoy because it's easy to stick with all through high school," Lauren Long '07.

As said in the back to school introduction if you're unaware of all the clubs, or want to join any sports teams, ask around.

Get involved. Freshman year is one of your most important years because it's the beginning of your high school experience, enjoy it!

## Frosh campers find their way

Melissa Cheng '07

Freshman transition camp had an all time high this summer with 140 incoming students participating.

The Freshman Camp is four days of prepping for high school at WTHS. It's only open to the graduating 8<sup>th</sup> graders. They show up around 9am and then separate into groups. The groups change every day but the basic gist of it is that they meet other people in their grade, some of the upperclassmen, and learn how to get around the school. They also learn studying and time-management skills.

The cost is set at \$80. But, the number of students paying to get in shows that the price of acclimating yourself in this new environment is worth it.

The person in charge of the camp, guidance counselor Mrs. Andra Williams adds, "We're self funded. All the money goes back into the camp... price includes snacks, lunch, t-shirts, and supplies."

Was it worth the money? Mike Finley '07 has participated as an upperclassman helping out for two years straight. His feels "the camp covers all the basics; test taking strategies, study skills, and problems that happen in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. I wish I



Photo Courtesy of Mrs. Andra Williams

**Some of the graduates of the camp display their diplomas.**

knew about the camp as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader because it would've helped a lot."

The seniors seemed to have a lot of fun. "There were 30 of us, upperclassman. And we made it fun," said Stephanie Vitt '07 "for us and for the freshmen. We even got to talk to them without the teachers for a bit so they could ask us anything. We had a lot of fun."

According to the evaluation forms filled out anonymously by the participating class of 200, the upperclassman seemed to make even

the more boring of educational setups a whole lot more interesting.

It's not all fun and games though. Mrs. Williams stresses, "we meet with the upperclassmen before camp and try to get across the importance of staying positive and keeping everything a learning experience."

With a growing number of kids every year participating, both upperclassmen and incoming freshmen, it looks like the Freshman Transition Camp has really taken off.

**Come out  
and join  
The Patriot**

**1st meeting  
October 10th  
2:20  
Cafeteria B**

# So many events, so little time

Laura Marder '07

The forty weekends during the school year may sound like a huge number, but when you think about the countless music performances, plays, sporting events, trips, dances and meetings it can be tough to work them all into the schedule.

Recently there was an uproar from the Model UN upper classmen when Winter Twilight was scheduled for the same weekend as their regional conference in Hershey.

The issue was brought to the Model UN director Mrs. Kristen Harner and to the high school principal Mrs. Rosemarie Farrow. It was resolved by moving the dance to Saturday, January 20.

Amanda Esposito, the student council president, said that all potential dates for holding an event are given to administrators ahead of time so when the issue was brought to her attention she felt bad but knew that the conflict wasn't on purpose.

"Model UN hadn't put the date on the calendar when the dates of the dances were scheduled, but once we were aware of it we were thankful it was able to be fixed to make everyone happy," explained Esposito '07 who worked with administration to move the dance.



Laura Marder '07/The Patriot

**Mr. Corder regularly updates the DynaCal on the district website, where you can find a listing of all scheduled events.**

The NJ State Aquarium, the venue for this year's Winter Twilight dance, allowed the dance to be rescheduled to be on a Saturday evening. She was happy to announce there was no longer a conflict.

"It was really nice to know that during my senior year I won't be missing any events that are really important to me," said Jackie Petruzzelli '07, a student in Model UN who worked hard to get the date changed.

Everyone was very happy about the change. Not every scheduling conflict can have such a

pleasant outcome; many students still have complaints on other issues. Senior Prom is the Friday night before AP testing begins. This issue doesn't directly interfere, however it does hinder plans some may have of spending a weekend down the shore after prom.

"Prom won't be changed because of AP testing, it is up to the students taking the test to be responsible and if they are serious about the testing it won't be a problem," said Mr. Steve Corder, Assistant Principal and Director of Student Activities.

Corder is in charge of all the scheduling of events in the school. It is a very challenging task to hold hundreds of events a year. In March all the directors of activities and clubs have a meeting to plan the year's calendar. They look at all the dates groups have requested and try their hardest to make sure there are never two major events on the same date.

Even after finalizing the schedule sometimes there is a conflict with sports because an unexpected playoff game is scheduled. To resolve this Corder works with Mr. Kevin Murphy, the assistant athletic director to gather all potential playoff dates so very few conflict with other events. Corder admits it is difficult to make everyone happy.

"It's a very big school so it's hard to plan so many events, but at the same time it is a lot of fun. I like to be involved and make it to most of the events," said Corder.

It is good to remember that most problems can be resolved if the proper steps are politely taken.

"I think it is awesome that the school recognized our issue, even though it was only a matter of 50 people, I want to thank the school for recognizing us," said Michelle Scott '07, president of the Model UN.

## Two reasons to move your feet

Alyssa Figueroa '08

If you happen to be a student at WTHS on Friday October 13, from 7-10p.m., you could go see a movie, go to the mall, head to your friend's house, or do any other customary event you might do every Friday night. Or you can have a memorable night at this year's Senior Kick Off or Back to School Dance.

Still a tough one?

Well, consider this. For a mere \$5 seniors can join their class in Quay Way as the homecoming court and their escorts are introduced.

Mrs. Apryl Palazzo and the student council put in much work to organize this dance. Palazzo stated that the students "spent hours on the decorations" for this Las Vegas themed event.

"When it comes to the kick off dance," she said, "Each senior class always tries to outdo the last!"

There's no doubt that a great deal of effort was put into making this dance worthwhile. Student Council president, Amanda Esposito '07, revealed that the student council "has been working on this since August." This dance will certainly be, in Palazzo's words, "a nice night outdoors, and a great way to get to know your class."

Student Council vice-president, Mitsu Asher '07 agreed, "It's a good way to kick off your senior year!" And as to the theme, she added, "Don't gamble away senior year, just come to Senior Kick Off."

If you are not a senior, you

may not be able to visit Las Vegas just yet, but also on October 13, for the same price, you can surely attend the Back to School Dance in the 9-10 gym. The sophomore class council and their advisors Mrs. Gina Gallaher and Mrs. Kimberly Griffiths have organized a dance for all underclassmen so as Gallaher stated, "Everyone can kick off the school year together."

The Back to School Dance, a.k.a. the Holla Back Dance, will also have a fantastic highlight.

"The homecoming court will come through the dance," says Gallaher, "so the underclassmen can see some fresh faces."

Therefore, no matter what grade you're in you have a terrific chance to become comfortable with your hundreds of schoolmates!

If you are an underclassmen make sure you don't miss out on the excitement because whether you dance all night, or just become acquainted with more students, the organizers feel the night should be absolutely amazing! Believe it or not, "you don't have to dance to have fun," Gallaher adds. So no excuses!

And as for the seniors who "don't dance", "It's not just about dancing, there will be refreshments, great decorations, and it's a fun place to hang out with friends," Esposito insisted.

Asher added, "The spirit of being a senior starts at the kick off dance!"

So go ahead and travel to Las Vegas, meet the homecoming court, make new friends, and have an unforgettable night.

## Commentary

# Time to make a name for ourselves

Kelly Gallagher '07

On the first day of school, most of the student body had arrived. The twelve members of the Senior class Council, including myself, sat in our closet of a headquarters in A-26, while Mr. Bollendorf spoke to us about the upcoming year. He informed us of the new drug and alcohol testing policies, the new location of the Winter Twilight dance, and spoke of his hopes for the coming school year.

However, he made one comment that struck a chord in my mind. He told us that we had big shoes to fill. He not only told myself and my fellow class officers, Mrs. Farrow told the entire class the same thing the next day at the assembly.

They are, of course, correct.

The class of 2006 did many unprecedented things. However, I think that my class, in trying to fill the shoes of those that have come immediately before us, will be robbed of any hopes of a uniqueness of our own. I believe that what made "Oh Six" great is not something that can



be coaxed out of a group of people. The things that they did were so new and fun because they did them without anyone asking them.

I am in no way saying that it is bad for our administrators to encourage us to get involved. In fact, please, go to school events! However, as my fellow class officers and I sat in our homeroom trying to connect schemes to out-do "Oh Six",

I began to think that attempts to be the best class would just render all of our amazing accomplishments invalid, because they were performed in a spirit of contempt and separation instead of one of fellowship, that is, "Township Pride".

For every plot I've heard for the class of 2006 to tailgate at a football game, I've also heard just

as many recent graduates say they're coming back to get there before we do and not let us in!

We should not be trying to compete with each other; we should be trying to encourage each other. If the class of 2007 wants to tailgate, or only wants to because we feel as if we should, then we shouldn't! We also should not be racking our brains to come up with new traditions to beat those who came before us. These things should come naturally!

As a member of the class of 2007 who has always connected much better with those older than me, I urge all of my fellow seniors to simply follow your hearts for your last year at Washington Township. I do not believe that Oh Seven's legacy should be a new and improved Bleacher Creatures or some other gimmick. Our legacy should be our individuality. If you are moved to do something new and great, go for it! However, if you are not, don't force it. There is already plenty of senior year excitement to get caught up in, so make it count Oh Seven!

## Irish festival wraps up summer at the shore

Melissa Cheng '07

September 21st thru September 25th, the Irish partied until the "wee" hours of the morning at the Irish Festival in Wildwood.

It was definitely a weekend worth going to. There's always something to do. After five consecutive years of attending, I'm still not bored for a single moment during the entire weekend.

Every hotel or condominium has a pool and/or hot tub. On top of that there's the car show during the day and the burn out contest in the evening, where a good portion of the thousands of people there come and see the hot rods show off.

There's the main event, the festival. And there we have the Irish bands rocking out all night, the bars (for the adults only, of course), and the fireworks around 9pm.



The boardwalk's always open and, come night time, the piers and all the rides light up their dazzling colors.

So, for those non-North Wildwood party-goers there are other things to do especially when it comes to family vacations.

After only a few days of the boardwalk and the festival, you could probably spend tons of money on beads, shirts, food and drink, hats, kilts, and basically anything they can color green or put a shamrock on.

I am, unfortunately one of those people. But, I do know of a few ways to save if you plan on going down with your friends next year or your family.

Pick a good hotel. That's the only thing you should not try to get a good deal on.

There are sleazy hotels and motels, even around here. In a place where you're not familiar with the landscape, you want to go safely.

Second, go to the dollar store and pick up a ton of green beads there. They look exactly like everyone else's. And bring a lot of green clothes with you. That'll prevent sellers from harassing you about their product.

And finally, if your room has a kitchenette, bring your own food. Do cheeseburgers and hot dogs one night and maybe pasta the next. It's a whole lot cheaper and easy to make. Also, stock up on water bottles and a few bottles of soda. Prices on the boardwalk or at the festival can run as high as \$3 for this dinky little bit of soda filled to the brim with ice.

If you're looking for a good time and you like the shore, or the bay, or just some good old Irish fun, then Irish Weekend is the third weekend in September every year.

You don't need to waste a ton of money to have a good time. So many of the things down in Wildwood during Irish weekend are free of charge and you'll have an amazing time either way.

Well, after saving money on everything green, food and drink, the only thing left to buy is funnel cake.

# Indigestion over recruitment

Rob Cavella '07

Pressure.

It's something which WTHS and teenagers everywhere are accustomed to. Alcohol, drugs, sex...all forms of pressure we've all seen in some way, shape, or form. I've noticed a new addition to the list right here in our senior cafeteria.

Recruitment.

I'm not talking about Mr. Bostwick's continual quest for the next distance running prodigy, trying to see if you're the ectomorph he's been looking for. This is something nowhere near as amusing, but instead far more intruding.

Military recruitment. Its presence isn't felt on a daily basis like our other anxieties and pressures of present day teen culture; but when

its presence is seen, it's almost too strong.

Marine Corps dress blues, shimmering medals, and all but forced conversation; when all you wanted was to enjoy grilled cheese day.

All it takes is one inadvertent flash of eye contact with one of these neatly pressed and polished walking military posters for you to be caught in the storm; wedged between a barrage of rehearsed career questions and your lunch tray.

"Have you considered joining the military? What are you planning on going to college for? Well you could be a meteorologist in the Marine Corps!"

I know maybe the sarcasm should be reserved for some other topic, but is it really that out of line after taking a moment to realize the



especially nowadays. With that said, I just can't seem to harbor the same feeling towards recruiters practically breathing down our backs.

They seem phony. But maybe they really do care about our future...as long as it involves our enlistment.

As young adults we really can make some of our own choices; one being to recruit ourselves. So instead of these forced, rushed interviews in the lunchroom give out some pamphlets, let us know where the nearest recruiting office is, and let us be on our way.

insincerity of their questioning and the urgency they portray searching for enlistees?

I fully support and have great respect for people that join the military,

## The new girl

Alyssa Figueroa '08

"How many hallways can a high school actually have?!" I wondered when I first toured this building. "But if Hall C is *here* and Hall B is *there*, why is Hall A nowhere to be found? Oh wait! There's a regular A Hall and then there's a little one. What!?"

Not only is being the newbie overwhelming in this colossal school, but also it makes you feel like a freshman all over again. Definitely not the kind of status I'm looking for as a full junior.

Coming from a small urban town near North Bergen two hours away in North Jersey, this area alone is a new world in itself.

"What in the world is a Wawa?" and "Where are all the sidewalks and high rise buildings?"

This suburban way of living is a huge change from the city life I'm

used to. There are more lawns and trees in this township than I have ever seen in my life!

I was also used to a small high school of less than 500 students...TOTAL.

So imagine the surprise I received the first day! The school day seems like an obstacle course: hiking up stairs, making your way around people, running to classes, and walking for miles!

Nevertheless, I enjoy the immense number of students and seeing different faces all the time. At first I was nervous I would stand out, but with over 3000 students it is no wonder why most people don't even

realize I am new at this high school.

So I figure, why not tell everyone that reads this.

A whole life transformation might take awhile to get familiar with. However, change is something everyone needs getting used to. Each day I feel a bit closer to comfort as I



Rob Cavella '07/The Patriot

**The arrangement of hallways and classrooms in WTHS is not the most intuitive. Ask anyone new to the school.**

adjust to a brand new life- far away from sixteen years of my past.

So don't be shy to say hi in the hallways and help me find the right classroom!

I would truly love to meet as many people as I can. After all it's the people with whom you form bonds that makes all the difference for an easy transition to any change.

If you have an opinion you'd like to express, we'd like to hear it.

[wthspatriot@gmail.com](mailto:wthspatriot@gmail.com)

**Join The Patriot**

1st Meeting

October 10

2:20

Cafeteria B

No experience necessary

## *The Office* sells droll twist on reality TV

Kaitlyn Fernandez '07

This summer, fans of television's most unusual comedy were left waiting by a season-ending cliffhanger. The fans: Absolutely crazy. The cliffhanger: Will everyone's favorite will-they-or-won't-they couple finally hook up? The comedy: *The Office*.

Adapted for American television from the hit BBC series of the same name, *The Office* had a shaky take-off. TV insiders felt that a show revolving around the droll cubicles of a boring desk job would be unsuccessful.

At first, it seemed they were right. *The Office* premiered halfway through 2005 to lukewarm critical reviews and audiences. But NBC picked the show up for a second season.

Departing from the original BBC show and with the summer success of Steve Carell in *The Forty-Year Old Virgin*, the second season found new life. Critics hailed the show as awkward, cringe-inducing, but ultimately ingenious.

The show is shot as a "documentary" filmed of the boring life at

Dunder Mifflin, a paper company in Scranton, Pennsylvania. As in a documentary, there is no laugh track or live audience—and the long awkward silences remind many of real life.

And who do you find doing the most tedious job in the world? A crazy bunch of people trying to keep themselves entertained.

As regional manager Michael Scott, Carell thinks that he is one of the greatest living comedians. In reality, his comments are often completely inappropriate and most of his employees hate him.

His sidekick, Dwight Shrute, played by Rainn Wilson, is the annoying nerd who never grew up.

Dwight's arch nemesis is Jim (John Krasinski), a salesman who should probably have moved on to better things, but is in love with the engaged office receptionist, Pam (Jenna Fischer). Together, they play pranks on Dwight and Michael.

The audience watched as Michael and Dwight grew more ridiculous, while Pam and Jim became more hopelessly (and silently) in love. The often



Steve Carell (seated) is Michael Scott, surrounded by *Officemates* (l-r) Dwight, Pam, Jim, and Ryan.

politically incorrect comedy is underplayed with subtle facial expressions direct from *real life*.

By the end of the season, the show had found new ground on television, and many considered it heading a new phase of television comedy away from the sitcom. Over the summer, the show proved its worth when it won the Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Series.

Even with praise and accolades, the audience is wondering just one

thing. In the season ender, Jim finally confessed his feelings to Pam. What's going to happen next?!

At least Dwight's love of Michael will never change.

As Dwight puts it, "We're like one of those classic famous teams. He's like Mozart and I'm like Mozart's friend. No, I'm like Butch Cassidy and Michael is like Mozart. You try and hurt Mozart, you're gonna get a bullet in your head, courtesy of Butch Cassidy."

## Filmgoer, snakes reach new heights

Josh Bennett '07

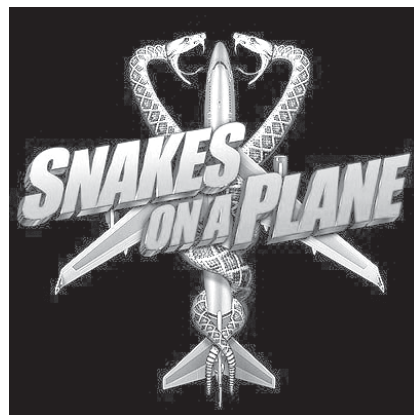
Surely you've heard the hype. If you know the title, you already know what it's about.

Nearly one year ago, when it was originally announced, it sparked the biggest internet phenomenon since...well...ever. People everywhere were excited, thrilled and no doubt amused.

I'm talking about *Snakes on a Plane*; a film with snakes, Samuel L. Jackson, and a plane.

Sweet.

Having gained so much pre-release hype and fans, the filmmakers had decided against any special screenings or early screenings for critics. They decided the first ones to be blessed should be those responsible for most of its hype, the fans.



Consequently, the film was released nationwide Thursday, August 17, with 10 PM showings.

Because I work at the theatre, I was there that night; however, I was actually working and was not due to get off until midnight.

I was saved though, around 9:00 when my boss informed me that I could get off for the show and finish my work afterwards. She was well-aware of the true excitement shared by some of my coworkers and me. We were anxious to lay our eyes on this glorious masterpiece.

We got into the theatre a little after the trailers had begun to play. There was nothing really interesting, until we got to the last one.

The screen was black, when suddenly, music began to play and Samuel L. Jackson appeared. The crowd went into roars and applause for the one and only. The preview concluded. For anyone interested, it was called "Black Snake Moan".

Kind of ironic it has the word 'snake' in it, but hey, it happens.

Let's just say that throughout the entire film, the crowd went crazy. From every time Jackson appeared to every time a snake took a bite out of someone. Specifically, when Jackson spit his famous line. (You know what I'm talking about, the one line I can't print here, as much as I'd like to.) It was a glorious moment, and very comedic at that.

The film was amazing, and the most fun I've had at the theatre in a long time. In describing it, I can't say words like *fantastic* enough.

It's just not possible to describe all the greatness of this film. Everyone was totally into it, and it was great.

It was quite possibly the best movie of the summer.



# Bravo reality hit “Makes it work”

Erin McFadden '07

With the October 11<sup>th</sup> finale approaching, the Bravo network's fashion based series *Project Runway* (Wednesday 10 P.M.) has succeeded in achieving wide-spread popularity. Students and teachers alike are tuning in to see the designers work through another challenge.

While viewer numbers have increased, those who enjoyed seeing the beautiful designs and enjoyable commentary from designers like Austin Scarlett or Daniel Vosovic—of seasons one and two, respectively—are finding the *Project Runway* has come to favor drama over talent.

The show serves as a search for new talent in the fashion industry, giving fifteen unknown designers the opportunity to showcase their work on national television to a panel of big names.

Each week the contestants are given an assignment, budget, and time constraint meant to test their ability. Recent challenges have had the designers digging through a recycling plant in search of material and designing outfits for each other's mothers.

The challenges put the designers under pressure and often create good television. This season, several team assignments led contestants to conflict or caused them to stretch their abilities in interesting—or horrific—ways.

While completing such daunting tasks, designers are aided by experienced fashion mentor Tim Gunn. Gunn's flamboyance and wit have made him beloved by the designers and audience alike. His weekly motivation of “Make it work!” and “Carry on!” are anticipated and appreciated by *Project Runway* contestants.

**Super-model Heidi Klum hosts the season finale of the hit series, *Project Runway*, October 11th.**



After the frantic sewing comes the runway show. The designs are modeled by girls who are competing for a spread *Elle* magazine if she is paired with the winning designer.

The primary purpose of the runway show is for the outfits to be judged. Weighing in their opinions are super model and *Project Runway* host Heidi Klum, *Elle* fashion director Nina Garcia,

designer Michael Kors, and a rotating guest judge.

After seeing the designs on the catwalk, the judges confer and decide on the best and the worst. Designers are called back and informed whether they are “in” or “out.”

“In” designers are eligible for another week of competition, while the latter must pack their sewing kit and leave. One lucky contestant is named the winner, often gaining immunity for the next challenge.

While the process is familiar to *Project Runway* fans, some of the judge's recent decisions in this third season have baffled audiences.

Unskilled and unfavored contestants Angela Keslar and Vincent Libretti, both of whom were prone to conflict and crazy designs, remained on the show long after talents like Alison Kelly and Bradley Baumkirchner were “out” after one bad design.

Such changes have made for an underwhelming final four. Designers Laura Bennett, Uli Herzner, and Jeffrey Sebelia have been repeatedly criticized for lacking versatility in their designs. Fans have watched them send similar pieces down the runway week after week.

The most interesting contestant—in terms of both ability and personality—that remains is young Atlanta-native Michael Knight. His urban sensibility and sense of humor allowed him to win two consecutive challenges and the hearts of viewers.

Even without the excitement and endearment of previous seasons, many loyal viewers will remain glued to their television sets as *Project Runway* finalists show their collections at Olympus Fashion Week for the final episode and for future seasons.

## *Suikoden V* revives series spirit

Melissa Cheng '07

The Konami Digital Entertainment took yet another adventure with *Suikoden V* in March of 2006.

After playing the fifth installment to come into the series, I can't say I'm not surprised. It brought back a lot of aspects of a good RPG game together while still keeping to *Suikoden* roots.

Your character is the Prince of the Queendom of Falena. In this female dominated society, you soon realize how little male royalty means. The beginning of the game starts slow, running errands for the queen and doing all the dirty work, but as the plot unfolds, you're quickly swept away in political madness, traitors amongst friends, and fighting to keep your nation together.

As one of its predecessors, it plays as a six player turn-based battle system. However, you do have the ability to pick your formations, giving you the upper hand if used correctly.

Not only do you participate in group versus group turn-based battles, but there are one on one duels where decision and reaction time mean everything. There are also



**The Prince (3rd from left) strives to save a nation.**

army battles where you control a fleet of ships or cavalry and infantry.

One of the key parts of this one-player RPG is the much loved *Suikoden* 108 stars of destiny. This lively bunch of desperate individuals are each born under the patronage of their own celestial house. Successfully recruiting these 108 stars is the core of the *Suikoden* experience.

Another key element is the power of the three runes that hold much of the Queendom's fate. There are the Dawn, Sun, and Twilight runes. The tracking, controlling, and protecting of these runes play a huge part in the storyline of *Suikoden V*.

It won't just be the narrative that intrigues you. There are multiple endings depending on your decisions and how large your completion percentage is for key events and people.

It's also great to see the development of your own character, the prince, from a meek errand boy used as a pawn to a confident commander rallying the nation to his cause.

All in all, *Suikoden V* is a great RPG game, with an interesting storying, mysterious and loveable characters, defining battles, and beautifully animated graphics. It's a game to go out and play.

# Sports

## Back in the swing of things Tennis captures county title with tournament win

Richie Elles '07

The WTHS girls tennis team is back with a bang this year and has already made a splash in this young season. Led by two senior captains, new varsity coach Rich Flemming, and a surprising young singles player, the Varsity Girls Tennis squad looks better than ever.

The Minutemaids defeated Eastern High School for the first time in ten years in their first match of the season. The big victory created a lot of excitement and optimism for the season that lies ahead. Coach Flemming has confidence in his team to continue the success through the season.

"This is the best girls team I've ever coached," he said, "Maybe even the best the school has ever seen."

The team is being led by two outstanding captains, Trish Young '07 and Amanda Matticks '07.

After a summer at the prestigious Bollettieri tennis camp in Florida, Young is ready to dominate this season at the first singles position.

"I'm extremely excited about the season," said Young, "We are a really tight group this year, and I think we can do really well."

Matticks, a member of the returning Gloucester County Champion doubles team along with senior Carmelita Reyes '07, worked hard all summer long in preparation for her last high school season, really getting to know her teammates better and helping the incoming freshmen.

"Over the summer, we worked really hard together, picked uniforms, and got everyone pumped up for the season."

The varsity squad was given a pleasant surprise at the start of the fall and watched a freshman rise to the third singles spot on the team. Alison Salkowski '10 has proven herself to be a large part of the winning efforts this year going 4-1 in her first 5 matches.



**The Girls Tennis team proudly holds their trophies after their solid victory in the Gloucester County Tournament. (l-r): Coach Rich Flemming, Carmelita Reyes, Amanda Matticks, Trish Young, Kristen Abdallah, Kristin Urban, Shontae Smith, Ali Salkowski.**

"I really enjoy just being part of the team," said Salkowski, "The bus rides are great and all the players seem to get along really well."

The team will be tested later in the season with a rematch against Eastern, Lenape, and a final showdown with Millville. The

state tournament is also a big challenge for the girls, as they go up against the top teams in New Jersey. Coach Flemming has set high goals for the team heading into this year's competition.

"I really want us to advance to second, or even the third round in

this year's tournament."

After a quick start to the season, varsity girls tennis looks ready for the challenge to be the best they can be. With solid veteran leadership, a skilled rookie, and a team effort, the Minutemaids' hopes are high for a great season!

## New coach sets high goals for team

Lauren Meloni '09

Football season is one of the most exciting times of the year for our high school. This season should be no exception.

With the passing of legendary WTHS Coach Tom Brown last year, the varsity is adapting to new playing tactics along with a new coach.

New head coach Mr. Mark Wechter played here at Washington Township and had Coach Brown, as his coach.

"I was with Coach Brown [as an assistant] from 1991-96, and then I came back in the year of 2001," said Wechter. "A lot of what Coach

Brown did, is what I do, so what he built is still here."

Many of the players agree.

"Some subtle changes were made, but no drastic changes, he still runs things the same way," said offensive tackle Ethan Thies '07.

During the summer our team has trained and prepared for the upcoming season.

"Summer training was hard but fun at the same time. Wechter's strict sometimes, but I understand his purpose," said quarter back of the sophomore/JV team, Garret West.

Most of the varsity players, as well as their coach, seemed to be ex-

cited for the year and are looking forward to our homecoming game against Pennsauken.

"It's going to be a very competitive football game," said Wechter.

This year on the varsity team there are a lot of talented players.

"We're fresher, we have a lot more fresh legs to run the field," said Wechter.

Since the team has more players or 'fresher legs' it will give the starters a chance to take a break.

Out of the goals that Coach Wechter has for the team this year, he would like to win the championship. With new players, and fresher legs, anything's possible.

# New offense sparks strong start

A.J. Nisbet '08

After an impressive run last season, the '06-'07 Minutemaids field hockey team, led by senior captains Kate Montgomery, Emily Wagner, and Rachel Bram, looks to bring Washington Township their first field hockey championship in many years. With their season goals set, a new offensive strategy in place, and the idea of teamwork clearly in mind, the Minutemaids have been working tirelessly to add the title of "champion" to their team's resume.

This year's tryout was the first time under the management of head coach Ms. O'Conner that they needed cuts because of the large turnout.

"It was hard to see players get cut because everyone wanted to be on the team. We all knew the players wanted to be there and that they love the game," said Montgomery.

Although there were cuts this year, none of the freshmen who came out for the tryout got cut.

"Ms. Stockel and Ms. O'Conner thought about making cuts for freshman but decided against it because they still want them to come back to the program," Montgomery stated. "The problem was that there were too many people to play so they had to cut some players. They had skills tests, conditioning tests, and the 8 minute mile. They also had a profile on every player while every coach was involved in the evaluations. They really thought about their decisions and tried to do what was best for the team."

"Even though some players were cut, they still come to support us. Some are even team managers," Wagner added.

While the varsity team consists of mostly upperclassmen, there is a freshman who tried is currently playing varsity.

"The talent level of the incoming freshmen increases each year. This season we have a few players that play up," Bram stated.

Even though at the varsity level nothing has changed in coaching staff, there is a new coach in charge of the JV team. Mrs. Griffiths has taken over as head coach and looks to prepare her players for the varsity level.

While there is more of a "family" feel to the varsity team this year, there has also been a change in strat-



Photo courtesy of Kate Montgomery '07

## The Minutemaids' senior captains. (l-r) Emily Wagner, Kate Montgomery, and Rachel Bram.

egy. This year the Minutemaids will be adding an offense to their front line, leaving one less defense.

"Putting one more person on our front line leaves the defense with a lot more responsibilities than be-

fore," Montgomery said.

As the team will be high powered in offense this season, don't forget about the team's goalies.

"Our goalies are probably the unsung heroes on our team. They really help us out by talking behind the scenes," Wagner said.

While the team has many goals for this current season, "Winning a championship, having no regrets, and making the best out of their last season," is at the top of the senior's lists this year according to the senior captains.

As seniors of the 06-07 field hockey team, Montgomery, Bram, and Wagner look to lead their team by encouraging others, not looking down on players, and learning from their experiences as underclassmen.

With a whole season ahead, this family of Minutemaids has their eye on a championship.

# Jones provides talent, leadership

A.J. Nisbet '08

While most athletes begin their sports careers by idolizing other athletes or watching sports events on TV, Sammi Jones found her love for one sport alone at the age of two.

Sammi Jones, the captain of the WTHS gymnastics team has been involved in the sport for almost 14 years now. Her gymnastics career began at Atlantic Coast Gymnastics, where she now finds herself training to compete with top of the line gymnasts.

"At one year I liked to swing across the monkey bars. I found out I loved being upside down," Jones said.

Being a level ten gymnast, the highest level in the sport of gymnastics, Jones has many goals that she would like to pursue in her sport.

"I would like to make it to nationals, and later get a college scholarship," Jones stated.

Although her dream college, the University of North Carolina, has a good gymnastics program they also have a highly rated physical therapy program which has Jones interested.

"You never know when you are going to get injured in the sport of gymnastics so you always have to have a backup plan," Jones said.

As captain of the team, Jones has many responsibilities.

"My main responsibility is to make sure everyone is acting like a team. I also have to help out at practice and encourage the rest of the team throughout our competitions," Jones stated.

"Sammi is the strongest member of the team," said teammate Melissa Krouse '08. "I think that alone makes her a leader. She pushes us during practice and encourages us to do better every day."

"I like the responsibility, and that chance to be a leader," Jones said.

Out of all the events that Jones takes part in each meet, her favorite events are vault and floor.

"Vault and floor are my two favorite events but also my best ones," Jones said.

While Jones has many personal goals for her future in gymnastics, she also has a goal for this year's



photo courtesy of the Jones family

## Sammi Jones executes a difficult move on the balance beam.

team. Like the others on the squad, she hopes to qualify as a team for the state competition.

"We had a 6-6 season last year and I believe this year we will do a lot better," Jones said with confidence. "The girls from the team last year worked hard over the past year

See GYMNAST p.12

# Ryan Howard: Rightful king of swing?

Richie Elles '08

The following story was completed prior to the end of the Phillies' season. There were 7 games remaining

Though the 2006 Major League Baseball season is nearing its end, the city of Philadelphia is still hanging on every pitch.

The Phillies' second-year first baseman Ryan Howard is closing in on what used to be the most meaningful number in sports: 61. The number of home runs hit by Yankees outfielder Roger Maris in 1961 had stood for thirty-seven years before Mark McGuire shattered the mark with 70 longballs. Sammy Sosa followed in that same year with 66, creating a media-friendly race that unfolded throughout the 1998 season. Finally, Barry Bonds overshadowed both with a seemingly remarkable 73 home runs just three years later in 2001.

Cue the steroid probe and bring in the speculation.

Could performance enhancing drugs have driven these three sure-fire Hall-of-Famer's to steal the



Phillies young slugger Ryan Howard watches a longball.

record, collapsing the integrity of the game? And if so, does our young star deserve the title as the true King of Swing?

Over the season, Ryan Howard has dazzled fans with his spectacular display of power, hitting nearly 58 home runs with seven games remaining. His showcase of contact hitting mixed with pure strength has put him in a position to win the Most

Valuable Player award. Breaking the previous record of 61 longballs seems inevitable for this rising star, and some will consider him the real record holder due to their suspicions of Bonds, McGuire, and Sosa.

And why not? The evidence has been presented out in the open for all fans to see. Bonds missed nearly the entire 2005 season due to an apparent knee injury that some could have rehabilitated in just two months. Sosa is now out of baseball after a lackluster, injury-filled year with the Baltimore Orioles. Finally, McGuire retired in 2001 after three years in which a physical and statistical struggle followed his magical '98 season. More importantly, he refused to testify about his past in baseball at the Congressional hearing on steroids in 2005 and was mentioned as a user of performance-enhancing substances in José Conseco's tell-all book *Juiced*.

With those three tainted players out of the home run record picture, should Howard hit his 62<sup>nd</sup> blast into the seats, will there be a celebration for his rare talent and outstanding achievement?

No, of course not. There is no

'concrete' proof of steroid abuse from the big three from 1998 to 2001, at least not at this point in time. So until we find something solid to implicate Bonds, McGuire, and Sosa, credit must go where it is due, fairly earned or undeserved.

Regardless of the praise and merit Ryan Howard gets from eventually breaking the previous home run record, the Phillies and their fans will have something to cheer about for a long time. Who knows, Barry Bonds' record of 73 could be next in the sights of our sophomore slugger, who should keep fans at the edge of their seats anticipating that deep drive to the bleachers for years to come.

## Love of sport, gymnast's motivation

**GYMNAST** from p.11 and the freshmen are doing great for their first year."

While all athletes have their reason for loving the sport they play, or in Sammi's case, the sport that has taken over much of her life, her reason is unique.

"High school gymnastics is not like other sports. We do have our rivals, for example, Cherokee, but all the competitors talk to each other and cheer each other on."

This year Sammi Jones looks to lead her team to states through hard work and leadership.

## Interested in Sports Journalism?

Come to Cafe B  
at 2:20 on  
October 10th

for the first  
meeting of  
*The Patriot*

## Teachers ride against MS



On Saturday, Sept. 20 over 7,000 cyclists rode from Philadelphia to Atlantic City in first half of the MS 150. Among them were several WTHS faculty members. Their group raised over \$7,100 to fight multiple sclerosis. Pictured here before their early morning start are (front l-r): Rick Ambacher, Joe Wolozyn, BJ Schuler, Kassandra Huerta, Jerry Cullen, (back row l-r): Harvey MacNeil, Gary Mount. Ambacher and Wolozyn made the return trip on Sunday.