

The Patriot

Issue 2

Washington Township High School, Sewell, NJ

November 2006

Mannon crowned Queen

Alyssa Figueroa '08

When the ribbon was untied, the box opened, and the red rose observed, Jessica Mannon '08 said she did not process at first that she was this year's 2007 Homecoming Queen. "I was definitely shocked," Mannon said, "it was a surreal experience."

On Sat. Oct. 27, the annual Homecoming game took place, with the crowning of the Queen during halftime. All 12 nominees, their escorts, and their flower boys, took the stroll down the red-carpet track, and were then given boxes containing a rose inside. The red rose, contrasting with the 11 other white ones, was given to the winner. Mannon was one of the last to open her box. "I thought we were just supposed to take the ribbon off, and then they would tell us when to open the box!" Mannon chuckled.

When she finally opened her special delivery, all the other nominees, as well as others around her, stormed her with hugs. "I told her I'd be the first one there!" said Mannon's best friend for 6 yrs. and Homecoming nominee, Gina Turdo '08. "I hugged her and then we were crying for 5 minutes! I was so excited



Alyssa Figueroa '08/ The Patriot

Jessica Mannon plans to attend the University of Delaware and study dietetics.

for her!"

Receiving the most votes from the whole senior class, over 700 students, is quite a feat. "I feel extremely honored," stated Mannon, "this really means a lot to me." Many believed she was very worthy of the title. "Jess deserves

it," stated Turdo, "she represents the senior class well. She is extremely well rounded and hard working."

Mannon's teachers and mentors felt similar on her achievement. Mrs. Foster, Mannon's psychology teacher last year whom she became very close to stated, "Not only was she an asset academically, but she brought a feeling of energy and warmth into the classroom that could be felt by everyone present. I was so proud...she was rewarded...for being the amazing person that she is."

"Jessica is wholesome - peaches and cream," said Mrs. Costello, her Class Council advisor. "She is caring and genuine, and truly has the qualities that every parent wants to see in their child."

Not only is Mannon a benefit to WTHS in the classroom, but she is involved in many activities outside the classroom as well, including Class Council for 4 yrs., Peer Outreach, Freshmen Transition, and NHS. She also volunteers and works at Sensory Playhouse, where she hosts birthday parties for small children, as well as does activities with teens that have Down's syndrome. "I love it!" stated Mannon. "It's very rewarding to see the benefits you can bring to little

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Minutemen topple Chiefs

Rich Elles '08



Gina Parker '09/ The Patriot

The Minutemen take the field at Homecoming.

With the added festivities to this year's homecoming weekend at WTHS, it was easy to overlook the annual football game against a rival high school. However, after the Cherokee Chiefs football team arrived at the field on Saturday, October 27, the action on the field was the only thing on the minds of the WTHS student body. With an impressive offense and a stellar defensive effort, the Minutemen prevailed over a conference rival by the score of 24-14.

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Homecoming Dance destined to stay

Matt Neuteboom '08

October 28 was a night of revelry as 850 students packed into the 9/10 gym for the first ever Homecoming Dance. That night, all grades levels met for a night of dancing, food, and fun.

The Homecoming Dance was made to replace the now defunct Winter Twilight. The school assured students that they would get a replacement worthy of the Twilight dance, but many were originally skeptical of having the dance in the school gym with all grade levels. For many however, those doubts were put to rest on Friday night.

"At first I thought that it wasn't a good idea to include all grades," said Felicia Rivero '09, "But once I got there it didn't matter because I had a good time."

To make the gym fit the chosen theme of 'New York, New York' Student Council completely transformed the gym. That night the gym was altered into a stunning dance floor. The walls of the gym and cafeteria were lined with murals of the Big Apple, and decorations reminiscent of the city were set up all around the venue. Off to the side of the room, a giant stage and sound system were set up with TJ and Mitch from Dinardo Brothers

Entertainment as DJs. The cafeteria also came complete with giant martini glasses filled with apples as Frank Sinatra music filtered through the commotion.

"The theme was very creative," stated Nick Down '08. "The cafeteria was especially well done." During the middle of the dance, students were treated to a special performance by the homecoming queen nominees and their escorts. Students crowded around the stage to catch a glimpse of the dance performed by the couples. Cheers rang out the air as the nominees performed their well-choreographed number.

As the night bore on, the gym air became stagnant and humid.

"The gym was all hot and sweaty. Just a little taste of New York," said Chris Neuteboom '09.

Tables, bleachers, and indeed most of the surfaces in the room were covered with articles of clothing, purses, cameras, and cell phones. Students shed everything they could so that they would have more energy and room to dance. By the time the music stopped at 11:30, students were ready to fall to the floor.

The dance was a new experience for many underclassmen who, for the first time, were able to go to a formal dance with



Matt Neuteboom '08/The Patriot

The Homecoming Dance marks a new tradition at WTHS.

upperclassmen. Even the freshmen felt at ease amongst all of the seniors.

"The dance was pretty amazing. There really wasn't any pressure, it was just a lot of fun," said Reed Cassel '11.

Still, many upperclassmen were disappointed over the change.

"Twilight was all about the atmosphere, and was only for the upperclassmen. Having homecoming in the gym, and available for all four grades, really lost something in translation," commented Kristen Linderman '08.

Nevertheless, Homecoming has

been a huge success according to Student Council, and is here to stay. This event may just mark the beginning of the long standing WTHS tradition.

Student Council will be conducting a survey on what students liked and disliked about the dance. Student Council is open to any suggestions for next year.

"We have gotten a lot of positive feedback from both students and chaperones, and we can only hope to make it even better next year and in years to come!" said Ms. Francesca LaPenta.

Staying positive



Margaret Bonanni '09/The Patriot

Students gathered in the CBAC on Oct. 24 to hear Matt Bellace's nationally acclaimed presentation about positive choices. Bellace (right) focused on how students, through positive actions, can get a natural high without using drugs or alcohol.

Mannon crowned queen

From QUEEN page 1

kids and teens that can't function as we do."

Mannon hopes to attend the University of Delaware next year, where she plans to major in Dietetics. She also plans on moving to the city of Manhattan.

"I know Jess is going to go far in life," said Turdo. "She has the determination and willpower to do so."

Although going to a new place is quite scary, Mannon still feels she is "very ready to start a new chapter in [her] life."

Still, this last section of her life was a great amount of fun she claims. As a Homecoming nominee, she and the others made t-shirts, participated in both the Harvest and Spirit

Parades, made posters, and went to dance rehearsals to practice for their performance at the Homecoming Dance.

"I was taken aback being surrounded by the great nominees, my escort and flower boy, and the advisors," Mannon stated.

Mannon advises girls inspiring to be Homecoming Queen to, "just be yourself, but remember to be conscious of others. People have feelings and emotions and they will remember things; be remembered for the good things you do. I hope people feel that I am a good person. I wouldn't want to be remembered for anything else. Being Homecoming Queen is an honor; however, remember that it is how you live your life that defines you, not a title."

Students react to job actions

Alyssa Figueroa '08

You have either heard about it, witnessed the effects of it, or have already been affected by it. The teacher contract issue at WTHS is erupting before students who increasingly fear the year will run far from smoothly.

This controversy has been brewing since June 30, 2007, when the teacher's contract expired. When an expiration occurs, the Board of Education (BOE) and the teacher's union, Washington Township Education Association (WTEA), attempt to come together to negotiate a new contract. The negotiations are still in process, and as they continue students in the district are clearly being effected.

To draw attention to their cause, the WTEA membership resolved not to volunteer for school events until the contract was settled. The WTEA also emphasizes that writing teacher recommendations, and staying after school is completely optional for teachers, since they are not listed as requirements in their contracts.

The move has already effected several events. It is the reason the Powder Puff game has been postponed, since it is the teachers who usually coach. The SURE Coffeehouse, originally scheduled for November has also been



Jacqui Evans '08 / The Patriot

The Coffee House is one of several school events that has been postponed or cancelled.

postponed due to a lack of chaperones.

Another important student event that is temporarily canceled is Monzo Madness. The 24-hour dance marathon to raise money for Lou Gehrig's disease relies on teachers to volunteer as chaperones throughout the night.

"Monzo is really the event I look forward to all year," stated Interact Co-President Marissa Fernandez '08, who has participated in

the event every year since she was a freshman. "It's upsetting that during my last year of high school, the event will possibly not take place."

This problem is truly disappointing many students.

"PowderPuff is postponed, Spirit Parade did not have such a great turn out from clubs - it's a shame," said Olivia Devine '08. "I feel like some teachers want to help out but they can't; it's awful that students have to be put in the

situation."

Although events such as Senior Trip and proms will still be held, some students still dislike the fact that administrators in the district are the ones who will now be chaperoning.

"It's more fun to be with your high school teachers during events than administrators from your elementary school," stated Wesley Gallagher '08.

Some students strongly believe that the WTEA should have left as an option for teachers to volunteer for events.

"They should be able to volunteer for PowderPuff and Monzo because these events are held for a good cause; PowderPuff brings in most of the money for Project Graduation, and Monzo helps out a great charity," stated Gallagher.

"We are going to board meetings - we are supporting our teachers," stated Gina Turdo '08, "I think they should support us as well by volunteering for events, and together we can make a stronger team against the BOE."

Others believe the WTEA is taking a necessary step in the negotiation process.

"The teachers feel unappreciated, and it is only logical that they would have to take a stand to prove their point," stated Sam Baranowski '08. "It's effective because everyone could now clearly witness how much the teachers really do outside of their contract. They make the school the way it is, from Twp. Pride to success in clubs to making each event we hold a blast."

Despite the controversy, an opinion that many students share is an appreciation for their teachers.

"Our teachers deserve the best," said Devine, "I believe teaching is the hardest and most important job in the world, and we are lucky to have such wonderful teachers preparing us for our future," she stated.

As the negotiations proceed, this bumpy year may continue to be filled with disappointments for both teachers and students. It is the hope of many students that this process will be resolved, the sooner, the better, so the year can continue the way it is meant to.

Clubs parade spirit

Margaret Bonanni '09

On Oct. 27 WTHS showed its school spirit at the annual Spirit Parade. Before the homecoming game, selected organizations and clubs preformed and competed for a cash prize.

With Student Council's *Spice Up Your Life* taking 1st place, Jr. and Sr. Class Council's collaboration of *High School Musical*'s "We're all in This Together" at 2nd, and Sophomore Class Council's rendition of *Grease* at 3rd, it was a tough competition. Also, with the Dance Department's performance and Interact's display of Disney, it was not a show to miss.

"The dance [department's] performance was wonderful, and so

well organized. I think all of the clubs did a great job performing," said Jr. Class Council member David Samsel.

At half time, the 2006-07 Minutemen Baseball Team, who walked in the parade, was presented with their Championship Rings by Principal Farrow. The team was proud to receive their rings.

"It's good to be back with the team for such an occasion," said



Margaret Bonanni '09 / The Patriot

The Junior and Senior Class Council's enthusiastic choreography was well received by the crowd.

Joseph Favatella '07, "Getting the ring kind of sealed the deal in a way, and brought back all the memories about the season."

PTO showcases local eateries

Margaret Bonanni '09

On October 14, restaurants, food suppliers, and caterers from all over Washington Township gathered in the 9-10 Cafeterias to help present the 2007 Taste of Township. Sponsored by the Parent Teacher Organization, the event not only served as a way to unify the community, but also raised money for students.

"The event is mainly a fundraiser, but it is also a nice social event for Township," stated Mrs. Theresa Saponara, the fundraiser's organizer.

The event was presented as foods fair, where each business had a separate booth with their featured dishes. All different types of enterprises were showcased at the event, from local eateries like Slack's Hoagie Shack and Good Fortune, to chains like Applebee's, and Brusters. Restaurants featuring specialty cuisine, like the Creole Café and

Taste of Saigon, also had booths at the event along with markets like Bottino's and Acme. In all, forty two different businesses were represented, which is four more than last year.

Not only did the number of businesses increase, but the selection After visiting their choice booths and receiving their food, event participants ate in the 9-10 gym, which was refurbished into a giant dining hall. Complete with decorated tables, and musical styling from This Old House Band, its calm ambiance was a contrast from the hustle and bustle inside the showcase room.

"The PTO did a lot of work towards the fundraiser, with over two months of planning behind it," said Saponara, "The custodial staff helped out a lot by setting up the tables and chairs inside both rooms."

The event not only helped the students, but also facilitated the businesses by allowing them to



Margaret Bonanni/ The Patriot

Local restaurants and eateries pitched in to help the PTO raise money for students.

advertise to the public. Many eateries gave out menus, flyers, and brochures as a way to promote themselves. Other businesses, like

Edible Arrangements, gave out bags filled with coupons, gifts, and a full catalog of the baskets they sell.

The event was also advertised through flyers that were distributed to the participating businesses and circulated within the school system. Each flyer had the names of the participating businesses and information about the event. Additionally, the PTO ran an announcement in the newspaper.

"The event was advertised on channel 13, and each person who walked in received a brochure with the information about all the businesses involved," described Saponara.

The Classic Cake Company not only came with the intention of advertising their desserts, but to also advertise their new location. Originally located in the Wal-Mart Shopping Center, the business's new management decided to move to Hurffville Cross-Keys Road.

"We open on Wednesday, and thought this event would be the perfect way to publicize it," said Ms. Sharon Mossbrock, of the Classic Cake Co. "We couldn't have picked a better way; this event was phenomenal and was a nice event for the community to get involved in."

Seniors kick off new year

Margaret Bonanni '09

A downside of the class of '08 is their size. With over 700 students, it's difficult for them to unite as a class before their graduation. On Friday October 12, they were brought one step closer with the Senior Kick Off Dance.

Despite threats of bad weather, this year's dance was held in Quay Way with a unique "Under the Board Walk" theme. Decorations such as string lights, beach balls, and hanging beach accessories were used to give the space the right atmosphere. Also, sand was placed in the entrance-way, to make attendees feel like they were stepping onto the beach. To perfect the theme, upon entering the building, the familiar tune "Under the Boardwalk" by The Drifters was softly played as background music.

"The Student Council Executive Board Seniors thought of the theme," stated Ms. Apryl Palazzo, Student Council's advisor, "[The board] voted on it, and it was unanimous."

The Senior Kick Off Dance was not only a way to start off '08's senior year, but it was also an opportunity for them to unify as a class. Attendees at the dance

generally had a good time, as they spent the evening with friends, and bonded as a class.

"I enjoyed the senior kick off dance, it gave me a chance to bond with a lot of my friends that I was close with throughout the other years of high school," said Ali Kauffman '08, "It was a good way to kick off senior year, by introducing the homecoming court and having a dance for just the class of '08."

Although most students had fun and were pleased with the dance, there were some complaints. Some students did not like the dance being held outside in cold weather.

"It was too cold to hold the dance outside," said Russell Carmody '08.

With only one third of their class in attendance, other students were disappointed that there weren't more people at the dance.

"I thought [the dance] was put together pretty well. The only problem the dance had was getting students to show up," said Steve Brendlinger '08.

Despite the criticism, the dance met the expectations the participants had. Those who did attend appeared to have a wonderful time, and most

thought it was a good way to kick off senior year.

"It was a lot of fun, for everyone to come together for a good time with '08... it was exactly what I expected," said Kauffman.

The class of '08 seemed to have a good time. Some had such a good time that they found it hard to leave.

"It was the first time in a while that [the participants] stayed until they were basically told to go home," said Palazzo.

The dance was not only a good time for seniors, but it was also a milestone. The dance was one of their first class functions, and marked their first step towards becoming a united class.

"They seemed generally excited about being there," said Mr. Joseph Bollendorf, 11/12 Executive Assistant Principal, "The dance was successful in accomplishing the mission of giving them an identity as the class of '08."

**Got News? Share it! Email us at
wthspatriot@gmail.com about events happening
 in the school or the community.**

Going with the flow

Donors contribute to blood drive success

Katie Mount '09

This year Washington Township High School received the Outstanding Achievement award from the American Red Cross during the 2006-7 school year for being the leading school donor in the Pennsylvania-New Jersey region. The award caused anticipation for the next event and led to a big turn out for Interact's Oct. 12 blood drive.

"When I heard about the school and how we won the award, I was so proud that we could all come together to help others." First time donor, Shannon Murphy '09, said. "I wanted to be a part of that."

370 students were encouraged as well to donate. However the number of donors was over 400.

"Many people walked in without an appointment, asking if they were allowed to donate." Mrs. Tracy Naval, the leader of the Interact club stated.

In all, 385 pints of blood were



Gina Parker '09/ The Patriot

Paul Buono '09 prepares to give blood with the support of Mike Mollo '08 and Sue Scaramuzzi '08.

collected and over a thousand lives will be saved. Although their record from last year was not beaten, Interact is very appreciative.

"I'm very proud of our school," Gina Parker '09, a member of the executive board for Interact, stated.

"It's great to see all these people coming together for a good cause."

For their next blood drive, they aim to beat their current record. The current senior class holds over 772 students. With the amount of seniors that could potentially sign up and

the juniors, organizers feel that the outcome looks good.

"We're expecting that in the spring more juniors will volunteer since most will be seventeen," said Interact Executive Board member Joe Kocher '09.

When a person volunteers to give blood they must go through an evaluation. They must complete a questionnaire concerning their health background. For example, if a student is less than 110 pounds they are not eligible to donate.

Donating blood can cause side effects such as: fainting, nausea and dizziness.. To help minimize these side effects, volunteers are advised to eat a healthy breakfast the morning they are due to donate.

Although the fainting has discouraged some students, most will agree that it's worth it.

"Last year when I walked out of the donating room, I thought 'Wow! I just saved a few lives.'" Sarah Moore '08 says. "It was a great feeling."

Interact organizes night of fun

Gina Parker '09

As Halloween rolls around, Interact gets busy preparing for their annual Fall Pacesetter's Dance, an event that they hold for mentally challenged adults.

On Oct. 19, at 7:00pm Interact general members gathered in cafeteria C/D to dance the night away with superman, some pirates, and even Mickey Mouse. This year the theme remained the traditional costume party. Although the number of people at this year's dance wasn't as large as last year's group the enthusiasm in the room made up for the small sized crowd.

Interact co-president Marissa Fernandez said, "[I] had such an amazing time. As I witnessed the Pacesetters and Interact members dancing together and having fun I felt so lucky to be a part of it."

Behind the scenes this lively event required a lot of time and effort to organize. Along with this year's chairmen, Adam Stern '09 and Joe



The Patriot/ Gina Parker '09

Interact members and Pacesetters enjoyed dancing and having fun.

Kocher '09, Interact general members and members of the executive board stayed after preparing weeks before the event.

"We put a lot of work into making the decorations, painting murals and pumpkins, baking the cookies, and making and sending the invitations," said Kocher. Members

at the event agreed that the outcome of the night was well worth it.

"In the end our work paid off," stated Melanie Vizzacharo, "It is really rewarding seeing the smiles on their faces and knowing that you made their night."

One person you can always be sure of showing up to not only our

Fall Pacesetters dance but our winter one as well is Kenny Swartz. He and his family started this event and helped in starting the Pacesetters group over 15 years ago.

After Kenny got out of high school, he started to lose interaction with kids his age so the Pacesetters group was created in order to combine a group of people to do activities around their community. The Fall Pacesetter's Dance is just one of the many events they attend.

"Everything went well," said Kenny. "This is the best Halloween party ever!"

As it turns out, the Fall Pacesetter's Dance was a fun night for all those who participate. Gradually, Superman, the pirates, Mickey Mouse, and others left having reconnected with old friends along with making new ones.

For more information on inter-act events, visit thier EBoard, or see Ms. Naval in room I-103.

On a roll

Music department preps holiday show

Lillyan Ling '08

This year, the music department at WTHS has put together a massive holiday-extravaganza unlike any other: the Siberian Steamroller Project.

"When people hear that, they go 'What's that?'" said orchestra director Mr. James Beyer, "We've never tried this, but we wanted to do something different. Its kind of rock meets jazz in a concert hall."

The Siberian Steamroller Project features music of the Trans-Siberian Orchestra with Mannheim Steamroller. This project compiles the widest variety of musicians that the school has to offer: members of choruses, orchestras, bands, guitar classes, jazz bands, and rock bands. Over a hundred musician participants, including staff, will all be integrated together for this special collective concert.

The term "concert," however,



Lillyan Ling '08/ The Patriot

Musicians rehearse their parts in the Siberian Steamroller Project.

is not entirely accurate. Although music is a large part of the presentation, many visual effects will be incorporated to create the ultimate holiday performance for

both the eyes and ears.

Aside from the music department, the tech crew plans to contribute lightshows and other illustrative media. The dance

department is also anticipating an appearance, and the music technology students are working on sound mixing as well as any other musical engineering tasks. In this way, the concert is both educational and enjoyable for members.

"The music tech students are going to have a lot of work but also a lot of fun with this," said audio engineer and music technology teacher Mr. Shawn Dessaigue.

Beyer relates the musical taste of this performance to radio holiday music' or something leaning towards a more 'student-body' taste. With songs such as "Wizards in Winter" and traditional tunes such as "Jingle Bells" with a modern twist, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

"We really think this is going to be a great appeal to the audience," said Beyer. "Kick off the winter holiday season."

Despite the many scheduling difficulties, members of the Siberian Steamroller Project have been working hard and rehearsing four days and evenings a week in the band room since mid-September. These song arrangements are from the actual original script, and not watered down to simpler and more basic terms. But the constant effort is well worth it. Student members and faculty share the anticipation for the occasion.

"It's going to be an awesome experience, and it's so much more fun than our typical holiday concert," said violist Anna Lee Markano '08.

Students are encouraged to come out to the CBAC on Sunday, December 2 at 3:00 pm to support and witness the final result of the music, dance, and technology department's long-awaited Siberian Steamroller Project, the first of its kind to ever take place in our school. Tickets go on sale in Nov.; To get tickets see any music teacher or the box office.

Band hosts competition

Stephanie Foran '08

The Washington Township Minuteman Marching Band is nothing short of gracious when it comes to making other bands feel at home. On October 6, they played host to eighteen bands from all over south New Jersey at this year's Preview of Champions Marching Band Competition and Field Show. There was a very large spectator turnout and the proceeds will help fund the band's trip to the 2008 National Outback Bowl in Tampa, Florida over this year's holiday break.

"I'm excited for Tampa Bay this year. It's a great way to spend the holiday break with my friends," says Cathy Beatty '08.

In addition to playing at the football games and boosting student morale, the Marching Band competes in competitions in the surrounding areas hosted by other schools. This year, it was Washington Township's turn to host

the event. At the end of the competition, prizes are awarded to each school for categories such as Best Visuals, Best Colorguard, Best Percussion, Best Music, and Best Effects.

The eighteen bands that participated were split up into three groups of five and one group of three, plus an exhibition performance from the Minuteman Marching Band. Since this was an exhibition show for the Minuteman Marching Band, they were not eligible to win any awards.

Groups are split up according to the amount of people participating in the marching band; group one was the smallest and group four was the largest. As host, Township ended the show with the grand finale. The Colorguard dazzled the crowd with their impressive use of rifles, flags, and sabers.

Their 2007 show, entitled "A Classical Fantasy" featured classical serenades such as, "The Firebird" by Igor Stravinsky, "The Nutcracker"

by Peter Tchaikovsky, and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Student soloists in the piece include Aldrin Abastillas '08 on clarinet, Zachary VanArtsdalen '08 on alto sax, Joe Buono '08 on trumpet, and Matthew Frampton '09 on trombone.

The amount of work and dedication that the Marching Band puts into their competitions is astounding. "It's a lot of hard work," says Kristen Linderman ('08), "But it's really worth it in the end." The next show at Washington Township will be the Band State Championships, taking place on November 3 in the football stadium. The event will be open to spectators, who are welcome to come and support the Marching band.

To purchase tickets for Siberian Steamroller Project, contact the box office, or any participating music teacher.

Commentary

Two year campaign creates grueling race

Kurt Pflugfelder '08

This next presidential election will be one of monumental proportions. Will America elect the first woman president? Will we elect the first African-American president? My personal bet is on the rich white man, only because we haven't elected a president of any other profile for the past two hundred years. The fact is, whoever we elect will have to fill the shoes of a president who currently has the lowest approval rating of all time. So who is ready for this year's election? Wait a minute... You mean it's not until 2008?

Most of the candidates announced that they would be running way back in November 2006 mainly because they all wanted the extra media attention and fundraising time. But should they really have started two years ahead of time? Let's look at the numbers. Senator Hillary Clinton, currently the leading Democrat in the polls, reported to have raised \$36 million by April of this year, Barack Obama raised \$25 million during that first quarter, and John McCain raised \$13.6 million

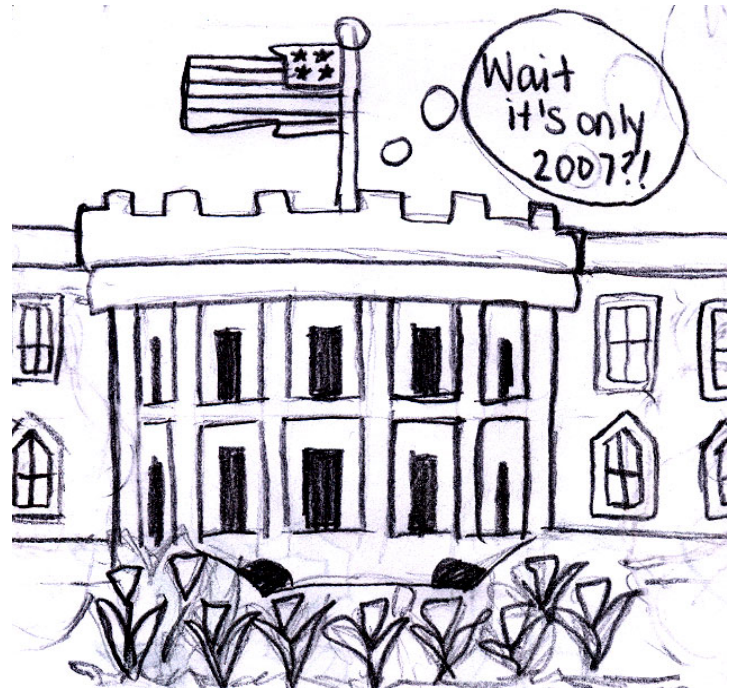
over the same period. McCain, however, has already reported that he is suffering from financial troubles: he only has \$2 million left in his campaign accounts and the election is still more than a year away. If McCain is saying that he can't do anything with that \$2 million, I'm sure there are more than enough people who would kindly take it off his hands. Now, because of this early campaigning, McCain may not be able to run at all.

“How else could a person justify saying that he or she is qualified to hold the fate of over 300 million Americans in his or her hands?”

Currently, there are over eighteen candidates from just the two major political parties. Unfortunately, there can be only one President of the United States. What's a rich, egotistical politician to do? I always thought that on top of being a true leader, a president also had

to be the most pompous person in the United States, or in this case, one of the dozen or so candidates. How else could a person justify saying that he or she is qualified to hold the fate of over 300 million Americans in his or her hands? But I digress.

When the Republican and Democratic Conventions come *next* August and September, the parties will have narrowed it down to two candidates plus the oddball Ralph Nader and whoever else plans on joining his merry band of hopeless dreamers. By that time, we will have learned to mute our television sets in between our favorite programs because we will be able to recite the election ads from memory. By November 2008, most, if not all, of the graduated senior class will be able to vote for our next president. As a young voter myself, I think I share the sentiments of many of my peers when I say that I really just do not care to see the soap opera drama that comes from starting a presidential race two years before the voting is scheduled to begin. With many as



Chelsea Oliver '08

current government officials, these candidates should focus more on doing their current jobs rather than using office hours to campaign for what will be the highest rung on the political ladder of one lucky candidate.

The Patriot

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point / counter point

Debating the course of action in Iraq

Defend our democracy

Mary Faralli '08

American perception on the war in Iraq has been muddled and fashioned by the pessimistic assessment given by the media and critics determined to label the Bush administration as a failure. Our reasoning for entering the war had been strong. The horrific acts of terrorism on 9-11 forced Americans to finally acknowledge and face the growing threat that the Middle East possessed. No longer could we ignore the hatred for our freedom that festered in that region.

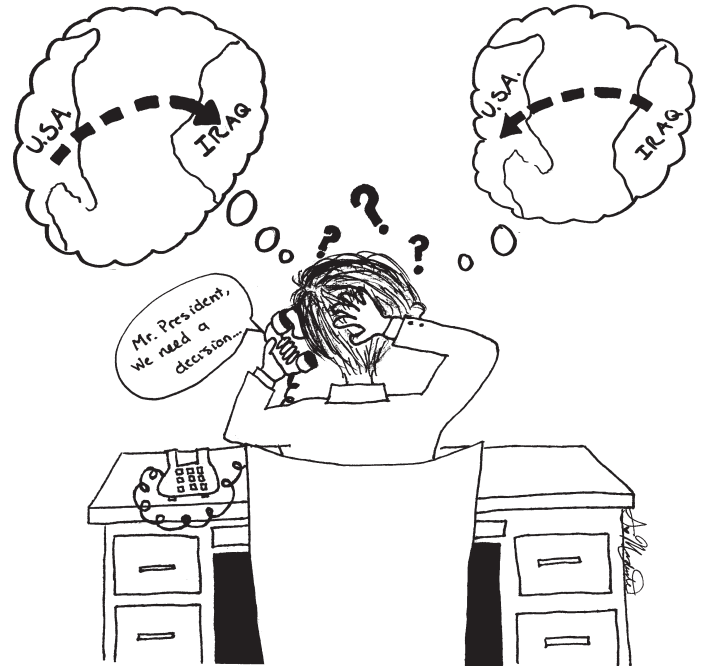
President Bush requested a declaration of war on Iraq for numerous and valid reasons. To solve a problem, one must discover the root of it and begin there. If you cut the funding, the hijackers can't carry out their plans. It was Al-Qaeda who deliberately set out to murder 3,000 Americans on 9-11. Saddam Hussein sponsored terrorism.

Another reason for entering the war was the implications that Saddam Hussein had and was producing Weapons of Mass Destruction. It is no secret that the dictator had a large supply of them throughout the 1980s. At one point, he had enough weapons to exterminate the eastern United States. He had previously used them against his enemies, whether they were his own people or outside forces. Though Iraq claimed to have rid themselves of these weapons after the Gulf War, it was Saddam who bluntly ignored 17 U.N. resolutions concerning the weapons and made confirmation of their destruction impossible for U.N. inspectors to attain. Where have these weapons gone? If they were truly destroyed, he could have easily allowed inspectors to verify this. Our entry into Iraq gave us control rather than uncertainty and fear. We can now live with the peace that he never can restore his weapons program.

America declared war to defend innocent people, potential American victims as well as the Iraqis. We are liberating an oppressed people and while doing so, fighting our enemies. America is spreading democracy to

Iraq, which will prove a catalyst for essential change in the Middle East. Progress has been made. Elections are held in all major cities; they have elected city councils and a National Assembly. U.S. intervention has made it possible for them to appoint a cabinet and employ a Constitution.

Perhaps more importantly, Americans have made a stand against extremist Islamic terrorism. We have acknowledged their threat to our society and have vowed to fix the problem, rather than put it off for it to just become more powerful upon being ignored. The future for the security of America lies within this war. We must have patience. Western democracy has prevailed on three separate occasions- the German imperialism of World War I, the Nazi regime of World War II, and the communist attempt at imperialism during the Cold War. These were not



Stephanie Mordente '08

easy and quick battles. If our nation refuses to pull out of Iraq and completes our job there, Western

democracy will prevail once again and the greatest enemy of our generation will be defeated.

Think again, act now

Morgan Buckmaster '11

The number of people dead in Iraq: 3849 American soldiers and at least that many Iraqi civilians, depending on who you ask. This inaccuracy reflects the kind of reasoning that lead Americans to war in Iraq in the first place. The war was established from a number of misrepresentations from the government and America's vulnerable position after the 9/11 tragedy. For example, at a time when the country was still reeling from seeing the Twin Towers collapse, the government claimed that Saddam Hussein had something to do with it. Granted, he was a cruel dictator, but he was not a member of Al-Qaeda, who is the attacking force claiming responsibility for the attacks.

In addition, the government claimed that Iraq had a secret stash of Weapons of Mass Destruction, including biological and chemical weapons, which could easily be used against the United States. Investigators from the United Nations, America, and other countries have searched Iraq and

have found no solid evidence of these claims.

The war has also served as the basis for undermining some of our most basic rights that are stated in the constitution. Suddenly, America is debating about whether or not to torture prisoners. Also, hundreds of people arrested after 9/11 because of their race or religion are *still* in Cuba, with no hope of getting a fair trial or even seeing their own families again. According to Amnesty International, prisoners routinely go on hunger strikes or commit suicide. It is a sad picture and one that could be somewhat familiar. After the attack of Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt had Japanese-Americans put in internment camps because of their race, where they were held for four years, claiming it a security measure. What is the difference between a Cuban jail and an internment camp?

As if the loss of life and faulty reasoning were not enough, America's position in the war has turned every American traveler into an unwelcome guest when visiting a foreign country. We are known as

"imperialists". Imperialists are people who take over countries and force them to share their ideals. It is hard to argue against that label when America is waging a war in another country, which has not attacked us, and holds policies that we do not agree with, such as women being shut out of society and lack of religious freedom. But why Iraq? The world has seen cruel dictators like Saddam Hussein and other countries have negative policies that America does not believe in. America didn't attack Pol Pot in Cambodia, who killed millions of civilians. Are we assuming the role of the "world police" for a world that assumes that all America wants is more Americans?

Unfortunately, it is not possible to erase our mistakes, so our situation now is how to manage getting out of the mess the Bush administration has started. America needs to pull out of Iraq. Dozens of candidates for the 2008 election have ideas about getting America out of Iraq. Let's just hope we can get out of Iraq with the least amount of damage as possible.

School security: safe or sorry?

Taylor Cohen '08

WTHS is a place where students should feel safe and secure. In today's society parents feel that their children are safe behind the secure doors and under the watchful eyes of a school's administration. But is WTHS really as safe as we think or is it possible for something to happen here similar to the horrible events that we watch unravel before our eyes on the 6 o'clock news?

Earlier this school year, a teenage girl, who may not have been a WTHS student, managed to enter the school and was found third period in the senior girls' locker room. During this time, the girl was able to steal money, cell phones, and other items of value from the careless array of open purses left behind while the students were participating in gym class.

Along with a large part of the student body, I experienced a feeling of violation and insecurity during the

school day. It was the first time I had ever questioned my safety during the school day. From growing up in such a safe town and environment, I realized we all may have come to take our safety for granted and have grown careless.

The question that remains is simple: how was this strange girl able to enter our school without being noticed?

There are many actions I think we can take to improve our school's security level. The most obvious idea would be to begin to wear the student ID badges again. If this takes effect, each student and staff member will be able to visually identify each person easily. This becomes a safer and more reliable source of identification in our school for both the

students and the staff at WTHS.

Another idea would be that students should not be permitted to walk on the exterior of the school during the changing of periods. With this in effect no one will be able to

walk right into the open doors unknown. How many times have you opened a door for a "student" or "teacher" between periods without even thinking maybe they might not go to our school? It's pretty easy to play the part if they've been paying close attention.

Although it's easy to blame the school, we as students are also to

blame. We let people into our school throughout the day, leave our purses and bags out during gym class, and even do careless things, like let our friends know our locker combinations. If we can change even some of these little things we do daily without thinking, we can make massive improvements in our school security.



Illustrations by Vincent Davidoski '09



Contraceptives raise controversy

Sarah Kurtz '08

Parents send their children to school daily believing that they will be chaperoned. They entrust school staff with the responsibility of protecting and guiding their children. But when does a school overstep its responsibilities?

Earlier this week, an article appeared in the paper about a middle school in Maine supplying birth control pills to girls as young as 11 years old. Some parents decided to take action against it, while others agreed to it.

After a rise in pregnancies among middle school girls, education officials have decided to make birth control accessible to girls as young as 11 through their health care center.

King Middle School in Maine has become the first, and probably not the last, to go to such extreme measures to prevent the increase in teen pregnancies. Within the past

four years, Portland had reported 17 pregnancies among middle school girls.

What really shocked me was that the girls didn't need a parents consent to receive the pills. A committee member, who is also the

“What really shocked me was that the girls didn't need a parents consent to receive the pills.”

mother of an eighth grader attending the school, supported the school's decision. She said that someday her

daughter might not feel comfortable coming to her to request birth control and she would feel secure knowing it would be available for her. But this situation poses serious potential risks. For example, an eighth grader most likely doesn't know their family's medical history, such as a history of blood clots. Blood clots are the largest side

affect associated with use of the pill. Although it is very rare that a clot occurs, there still is a risk.

Although a student's need for privacy is understandable, parents should get the chance to discuss their child's decisions to take birth control pills with a doctor

An eleven year old taking birth control is just disappointing. No child at this age should even consider being sexually active. In the effort to protect and educate children, it seems as if public schools are either teaching abstinence is the only key, or basically handing a child an "approval" pill to have sex. Schools need to find a balance to educate students without pushing the limit.

Parents try their hardest to raise their children with good morals. Sending them to school is one way to fulfilling that job. Parents shouldn't have to worry about their children being influenced by a school's opinion on sex.



Image by Google

Features

Heavy bookbags weighing us down?

Lauren Finneran '10

If you walk down the hallway between periods you are sure to see many students carrying book bags. Many carry their books for the next few classes while others carry everything that they will need for an entire day. Some simply prefer to have all of their belongings with them, while others just don't have time in the day to repeatedly stop at their lockers.

What does all of this weight on the back really mean for a person's health? Many people have never stopped to think how exactly carrying a heavy load for long periods of time can hurt. Common problems related to "to heavy backpacks" include sprains, strains, and other types of back pains.

These problems may seem insignificant to now, but these simple back problems can lead to much worse problems later on in life. Some of these problems may include scoliosis and deviating of the spine.

There has been an extreme increase in the amount of reported cases of back injuries in teenagers related to improper school bag use. According to The Consumer Product Safety Commission, in 2006, there was



Chelsey Gordon '08

a reported 7,300 backpack related injuries that were treated in the United States. Experts say that although this number is incredibly high, it might only be the start. They say that there are many unreported cases and people who don't realize that they are even having problems. If you are experiencing pain when wearing the backpack, tingling or numbness, red marks, and struggling when putting on or taking off the backpack, you might want to seek help.

In order to avoid potential back injuries before they occur, there are a few precautions to take. First of all if at all avoidable, you do not carry large loads on your back for long periods of time. If this is not possible, try to get a well-padded bag that is worn on both shoulders to keep weight evenly distributed, also avoid messenger bags that put all of the weight on one shoulder. Try to put the heaviest items at the bottom of the bag and transfer most of the weight of the bag to your

hips so that your back is not doing all of the work.

Often students carry many unnecessary items in their bags, which causes much extra weight. Try to clean out the bag frequently to avoid this and only include books and items that are necessary.

The American Occupational Therapy Association advises that teenagers should not be carrying more than fifteen percent of their body weight on their backs. If you weigh 125 pounds, you should be carrying about eighteen pounds, if you weigh 150 pounds, you should be carrying about twenty pounds. No one should be carrying more than twenty-five pounds on their back at any given time. Stick to this much weight, and you can reduce your risk of possible back injuries.

Next time you load your bag with books and heavy binders, you might want to think twice. Think to the future and what possible back injuries that you might end up with. Try to take more frequent trips to your locker or ask teachers if you can have an extra set of books. These few simple suggestions could really save your back in the long run and eliminate potential problems.

Rewind fast forwards to season twelve

Brittany Tartaglia '09

The start of a new year means a new cast for Monthly Rewind. This year, 16 seniors and 1 junior make up the group known as Monthly Rewind Season 12. Rewind students are usually interested in pursuing a field in Communications.

Every month students have to pick a topic, write the story, get film to accompany the story, and ultimately create a segment. The segments then have to be put together, edited, and completed. Although Rewind has been going on for 12 years, each year stands out for a various reasons.

"Every season is different because of what students bring to the table," says Mr. Bouchard, the advisor of Monthly Rewind. "There are

new personalities and a change of flow."

It is hard work, but the students have fun while creating their pieces. "It's cool to see what you've imagined come to life on the TV screen," said Rewinder Alyssa Figueroa '08.

Some of these segments include sports events, special school events, and even some original, quirky segments. In the past, students have covered events such as football games, Toys for Tots, and local bands. There is also a "Mailtime" segment every month. The segment features the host of "Mailtime," this year Olivia Devine '08, answering a letter each month in a comical piece.

Monthly Rewind is more than just a class. The students almost



Keith Marr '10/ The Patriot

The Monthly Rewind crew prepares the program that will be viewed on television.

become a family, which makes the show that much better.

Each new edition of Monthly Rewind airs the first Wednesday of

every month at 9PM on channel 13. However, you can catch it on channel 13 at the same day and time following the first airing.

Colorguard redefines meaning of elite

Kurt Pflugfelder '08

Many students at WTHS see the marching band color guard when they go to watch a football game. What some students may not know, however, is that we have another color guard which performs an entirely different job. Tom Miller '08 is the commander of the AFJROTC color guard at

WTHS. When his team is asked to attend an event, their performance is usually much more serious.

The drill team is one of the clubs students who sign up for AFJROTC class can join. For those who excel at military drill and marching, there is the color guard. Cadets do not join the color guard; they are asked by existing members to audition for it. Because of this

exclusive selectivity, only a few people are chosen to join each year. According to new member Joseph Primavera '10.

"The fact that we basically have to blow everyone else out of the water at tryouts in order to join makes us the elite of the corps."

Throughout the year, the team is called upon to be the honor guard for both the American and New

Jersey flags in numerous ceremonies for both the school and community organizations. You may have seen the color guard in action during the Spirit Parade or at graduation last year. The team is also proud to be the unofficial color guard of the Philadelphia Soul arena football team, and they take the field before every home game to present the colors.

"I feel really good about the team this year," Primavera said. "We have seventeen members, which is the largest our color guard has ever been. I expect big things this year and hope to bring home a few trophies."

This year, the combined drill team and color guard plan on attending at least eight JROTC competitions throughout the tri-state area to compete against other schools. This contests that will put our cadets against others from nearby high schools to see which unit comes out on top. Here's wishing our color guard the best of luck on their future victories!

Drill team prepares to compete

Nicole Heath '10

When many people think of sports they think of hard work, sweat, and will power. The ROTC drill team is just that. Although many people may think a drill team as just stepping, the ROTC drill is substantially different.

Different from regular drill teams, the ROTC drill involves precision in technique, movements, and all round appearance. Even the slightest spot on the uniform can lead to a deduction of points. The movements and marching styles must picture perfect.

"It's all about looking like one person," said Cadet First Lieutenant Adam Wassmuth '09. Wassmuth became captain of the drill team last school year. He believes to be on the drill team you have to have "extreme discipline."

Wassmuth would know. Aside from being a dedicated leader, he was the first sophomore ever to become captain of the drill team. As captain, Wassmuth has had to whip the team into shape. In the beginning half of last year the drill team didn't seem to be doing much.

"At practice no one would show up," said Wassmuth, "It would be only a few people."



Keith Marr '10/ The Patriot

The ROTC Drill team practices formation and discipline.

But since Wassmuth has taken the reigns, the team is going in a different direction. It wasn't easy to find members who would be dedicated to the practice and concentration Drill takes.

"I don't know how we did it," Wassmuth commented on how he and a few other members reformed the team. He believes people showed up for curiosity of the new sophomore leader. But others think differently. Cadet Captain Brian Opel, 08', thinks it was "the change in leadership" that got most people to join. Whatever they used it worked.

Now, the drill team enters many competitions during the course of the school year. Competitions, like other sports, take place at the different high schools. But drill competitions are like no other sport. Preparation for competitions doesn't just happen in practice.

Outside of practice, members have their uniforms cleaned, shoes shined, and hair must be the correct length. Most male members take a trip to the barber the night before a

competition. Getting up at four o'clock to prepare for a competition is a norm for the members.

These competitions are packed with dozens ROTC members.

"It takes about fifty people just to run it [competition]," said Opel. The judging of the competition is left to the senior ROTC cadets and sometimes takes hours. That's hours of holding their rifles, bracing, and standing at attention.

"You have to stay focused and be able to deal with people in your face telling you instructions," Cadet Sara Salah said. With such intense training and focusing, some may wonder how and why they do it.

"For me it's about the competition. It's strict, but it's a lot of fun," said Salah. Many members don't mind the work; they just see it as more time to be with their friends.

"The entire drill team is like a big family," said Wassmuth. The practices are three times a week and are long, but to the twenty-three dedicated members of the team it's all worth while.

Join
Pieces
Even numbered
Thursdays in
K-208

Join The
African -
American
Culture
Club

Meetings
twice a
month in
G-102
All Are
Welcome

Come and
Enjoy!

Lifestyles

Winter fashion gets a leg up

Sarah Kurtz '10

Sleek and stylish come to mind when thinking about this year's trendy fashion, leggings.

Not only are they fun to wear, but they have the look of the season. From celebrities, to just everyday people, leggings are sweeping the fashion nation.

Leggings first hit the scene in where else, but LA, where some of our most fabulous fads come from. What could be better than a way to look cute, feel comfortable, and not be overdressed? The answer is all in the legs. It doesn't matter your shape or size, leggings just mold to your curves like a glove. They are similar to spandex, but with a tad more glitz and glamour.

How do you wear leggings you might ask? Well, find a shirt, or dress, that comes to about

mid-thigh, and match your legging color accordingly. It's as easy as that. This look is casual or formal. It's a type of dress for any occasion. There's no problem with leggings.

For almost ever girl with a passion for fashion, you'll find this fabulous "it" item stashed in their closet. But what

shoes to wear? The answer is simple; anything. Leggings look fantastic with nearly every shoe



Google image

Leggings make a good fall statement whether its capri style or full length (as modeled by Kayleigh Addari)

Taylor Cohen '08/The Patriot

you throw its way. Flats seem to be the favorite of the season. The bright colors are a for-sure eye catcher and are fun to play around with. Heels or even Uggs go great with leggings. Also, be creative, Converse shoes are usually a safe shoe to wear with leggings.

You can be out on the town or in with the girls; leggings are here and ready to stay. Be creative with your style. Remember,

trends have to be set by someone, it might as well be you!

Nifty Fifties offers a taste of the past

Mary Faralli '08

All those neon signs and obscenely bright lights decorating the Black Horse Pike can only mean on thing: the opening of a new Nifty Fifties right here in Washington Township!

Nifty Fifties is an imitation 1950's diner. The retro theme is completed by waiters in paper hats, blaring fifties music, and bright lights.

Upon entering the diner, I was immediately greeted with a twenty-five minute wait, which involved standing in a disorganized



Nifty Fifties offers diner style food in retro setting.

line in a small and crowded waiting area-and a rush of familiar faces. Nifty fifties takes it upon themselves to hire local kids to compose the majority of their staff. It's great to go in there and know the people that are serving you.

As far as food goes, it's a burger and fries joint. The kind of place you go to get a full yet inexpensive meal. The menu is a standard diner menu, which includes a variety of greasy, grilled food such as cheese steaks and chicken sandwiches.

The only meal Nifty Fifties offers for those who don't eat meat or prefer to eat healthier is a Caesar salad. I had the classic diner meal- a coke, a cheeseburger, and Nifty Fifties own famous

spicy fries. Though the cheeseburger was small enough to force me to order another one, it was very good and the spicy fries were delicious. But the food isn't really the main reason why customers flock to Nifty Fifties.

They offer a huge variety of soda choices. Their soda fountain satisfies everyone's tastes. It ranges from many variations of chocolate flavor to ones such as bubble gum and cherry grape. The best part of my Nifty Fifties experience came after the meal, when I got a Reesey Cup milkshake to go. The milkshake was so good; I went back the next day and got another one. As with their sodas, they offer customers an assortment of thirty one milkshake flavors to choose from.

The service was excellent. Though we had a long waiting time, the waiters got the people in and out. There was no one in the restaurant who wasn't trying to help lessen our waiting time. Our waitress was friendly and attentive and brought our food to us within about ten to fifteen minutes of seating.

My experience at Nifty Fifties was very promising and I'll definitely be back, even to just get a milkshake! It's a family friendly restaurant that has easily

turned into a local hang out. The verdict: Nifty Fifties is

a great place for a cheap, quick meal!

Gina Parker '09/The Patriot

Let us know about great restaurants! E-mail us at wthspatriot@gmail.com

Skateboarding rolls into modern era

Amber Ogden '10

Skateboarding—often portrayed in the media as an extreme sport—can be a form of art, a hobby, or a method of transportation. It has been shaped and influenced by many skateboarders throughout the years.

A 2002 report by *American Sports Data* found that there were 12.5 million skateboarders in the world. Eighty percent of skateboarders who had polled were said to have used a board in the last year, and were under the age of 18.

Skateboarders of the 30s, 40s, and 50s had a straightforward mission: Start at the top of a hill and ride down. The primary goal was just to stay on the board and avoid collisions, given the humble equipment and rough road conditions, it was no small task.

In a blur of flying movements, skaters leap and skid over and onto obstacles, executing flips and turns of ever increasing complexity— all at top speeds.



Image by google

Ryan Sheckler performs the Ollie for an onlooking crowd.

For onlookers and beginners, it can be hard to follow the action, let alone answer the question that springs naturally to mind: How on earth do they do that?

Invented in the late 1970's by Alan "Ollie" Gelfand, the Ollie has

become a skateboarding fundamental. This became the basis for many other more complicated tricks.

What's so amazing about the Ollie is the way the skateboard seems to stick to the skater's feet in midair. Seeing pictures of skaters

performing, soaring 4-foot ollies, many people assume that the board is somehow attached to the skater's feet.

Although that common assumption is false, the ollie is a hard trick to complete. What's even more amazing about the ollie is that to get the skateboard to jump up, the skater has to push down on the board! Now it may look fairly simple, but don't let your eyes deceive you.

As you learn more tricks and develop skills the tricks get harder and more complex, as do the injuries. Broken bones, dislocations, gashes, cuts, bruises are just some of the most common injuries in skateboarding.

Many people see the injuries as a major turn off towards the sport. Many skaters don't just ride down hills and streets anymore. As skateboarding has progressively gotten more popular, certain devices were invented to make the ride more challenging.

Ramps and rails have become the most popular obstacles. These are equally as dangerous as the tricks performed. It's not just the tricks that are dangerous but it's also the ramps and rails involved. No matter who you are you will get hurt, it won't necessarily be a large injury, but injuries cannot be avoided when skateboarding.

Some classic films portrayed skateboarders as reckless rebels. The image of the skateboarder as a rebellious, non-conforming youth has faded in recent years.

The rift between the old image of skateboarding & a newer one is quite visible: magazines such as *Thrasher* portray skateboarding as dirty, rebellious, and still firmly tied to punk, while other publications, such as, *Transworld Skateboarding* paint a more modern, diverse, and controlled picture of skateboarding stars.

So get out there and just do it!

The sport is growing larger day by day, so you're bound to find someone willing to teach you.

All you need to do to be the next skateboarding sensation is a board, a good set of shoes, passion and determination...oh, and high pain tolerance level!

Turkey day traditions

Taylor Cohen '08

The 4th Thursday in November is usually something the students at WTHS look forward. We get a couple days off, get to see family and friends, fill up on good food, and hopefully, watch an exciting football game. Thanksgiving is a national holiday that we all enjoy celebrating every year.

The traditional celebration began back in 1600's with the early settlers of Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts. When the pilgrims came to the US they had no idea how to live. Unsure on how to harvest food and survive, they befriended the Native American, Squanto, who educated them on how to grow and catch food, as well as interpreting the native language between the other Native Americans.

Soon after they had planted their first seeds, the pilgrims had their first harvest in 1621. This was a celebration that involved food and praying to God. Although the story

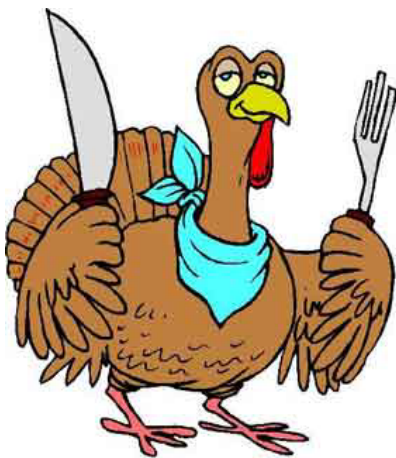


Image by google

says that the Native Americans were present, there is no evidence that they were. This is one simple thing that started a tradition that soon became something that would be celebrated every year.

Nowadays, when Thanksgiving rolls around, we think of a nice dinner with family and friends. Turkey is usually the favorite around the table, followed by mashed

potatoes, sweet potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, corn, turnips, yams, and for dessert pumpkin pie is the season's special.

The day after Thanksgiving is followed by a famous holiday in the retail world known as Black Friday. This marks the start of the holiday shopping season. This is usually the busiest day of the year in terms of customer traffic. Stores usually open around 4 or 5 in the morning.

The following Mon. is what the internet has named Cyber Monday. Within the past 10 years, online shopping has become more popular between parents shopping for their children. With the pros of no lines and no angry people, the popular items are always sold out or backordered, and most websites have trouble with all the volume from customers they have.

The holiday season is right around the corner Township! Get ready to gain a few pounds, see some family, watch a good football game, and get some shopping done.

People

Musician aims for success

Nikki Black '08

Aldrin Abastillas '08 lives in a world saturated with music.

"I play clarinet, piano, and guitar, and I'm in jazz band, marching band, and As We Are, a local indie-rock band," he said.

Abastillas plays guitar in As We Are, which is also comprised of Dion Daguanno '08 on bass, Craig Hobbins '08 on drums, Mike Otto '08 also on guitar, and Joe Granato '07 on vocals.

"We write our own songs, sometimes do covers, and play shows," said Abastillas.

The band meets every other week to practice, because the performers all have busy schedules. Abastillas's favorite place to play is at the Brunswick Zone bowling alley.

As We Are also plays at both of Washington Township High School's coffee houses, so he feels it is easy and inexpensive to see the band. Abastillas said he doesn't try to emulate anyone in his music, because he is "influenced by so many different types of music it would be hard to choose just one person."

Abastillas has a varied taste in

music, and enjoys classical, jazz, blues, rock, and metal. "I'm really into different indie groups right now," he said.

When Abastillas isn't playing guitar with his friends, he's playing the clarinet or piano in school bands. In marching band, he plays the clarinet, which he began playing in the fourth grade.

The marching band meets four or five times a week, and he feels it requires great dedication because of its competitive nature. Besides competitions, the band plays all of the school football games.

"I like performing in front of large crowds, but I get a little nervous during my solo. Sometimes my clarinet stops working, so that's kind of scary, too," said Abastillas.

Jazz band meets about twice a week, and the genre is relatively new to Abastillas, but he's enjoying it nonetheless. "It's definitely different. I never really played jazz before... it's a whole different feel altogether," he says.

Aside from music, Abastillas is involved in many different school activities and committed to his studies. He is involved with NHS,



Steph Foran '08/The Patriot

Aldrin Abastillas plays guitar in the local rock band, As We Are.

the Asian Awareness club, and French club.

This year, he hopes to keep his grades up and hold onto his friends, most of whom he met or bonded with through his musical interests.

He hopes to go to the University of Pennsylvania and attain a degree in Bio-engineering. "Just because you're going into a field like Bio-engineering doesn't mean you're going to make a ton of money," he said, "I feel there's a need for scientists. It's what I'm good at

and the subject I've always liked in school."

In order to prepare for his future, Abastillas has taken classes such as A.P. biology, anatomy and physiology, and physics. He also volunteered at a laboratory in Philadelphia over the summer.

Abastillas is not the first of his family to enter into the field of science, as his mother is a nurse and his father is a laboratory technician. "I find get a lot of support from my family," Abastillas said.

Dempsey considers teaching "best job"

Kaitlin Shockley '09

Mr. Michael Dempsey teaches math, (Pre-calculus and AP statistics), but there were many different events that led him to this position.

Dempsey went to Washington Township High School as a student then went to Rowan for college. The teacher that he remembers most is Mr. Tom Crane.

Dempsey said his favorite courses were history and math because "I like to read and solve problems."

Until he went to college, Dempsey was interested in being an accountant.

"My mom has always worked for an accountant," he said, "so although I saw how lucrative it can be, I also saw that it wasn't very exciting."



Sarah Kurtz '10/The Patriot

Mr. Michael Dempsey enjoys spending his free time with his family.

After he began college, he decided to go with teaching instead.

"I think the great teachers I had were inspirations, but it is in my

opinion the best job. I get to study and talk about mathematics and I get paid to do it. Also [I enjoy] June, July, and August."

The two teachers that most influenced him to join Township's staff were Mr. Robert Gorski and Mr. David Wright. Dempsey had been teaching for three years at another school before applying to Township.

"I didn't see any harm in interviewing here," he said. "After the interview, I knew that this would be a better opportunity and a place I would enjoy being for the length of my career."

Dempsey's career is not the only thing he enjoys. He comes from a family of five and has an older

brother named Sean and a younger sister Laura.

He also has a wife and two children, Colin (2) and Keira (10 months). Half of his mother's family lives in Ireland, and if he were able to, he would eagerly visit them.

"My mom is one of eleven children, half of her siblings are still over there and I don't see them much," he said.

While Dempsey's family is important to him, he also has several hobbies. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family, reading, golfing, and watching Notre Dame and Eagles football.

He also plays guitar. His favorite kinds of music are hymns and worship music.

He said, "I like a lot of different stuff, but hymns and worship music are most relaxing and focusing for me."

Helping students follow their hearts

Nikki Black '08

Mr. Robert Barnshaw has been teaching history courses at Washington Township High School for the past twenty-six years. He feels that history is an important course for many reasons.

"I don't think history repeats itself," he said, "but I think situations echo. They're like ripples on a pond. One group of circles creates another group of circles, so the common threads are worth knowing. If you're going to navigate the waters ahead, you've got to have some idea of how you got there."

Barnshaw feels that Americans are going through a particularly tough time at the present, and that by studying history we can have a better understanding of how to deal with the current situation.

The most important piece of advice he feels he could give to his students is to "show what's closest to your heart to the people you love." Barnshaw has never had a class he wasn't able to handle. "I've been very blessed with my students," he said.

For some students, history courses often have a reputation of being boring or slow. He has various



Gina Parker '09

Mr. Barnshaw shares his love of history with his students.

methods of combating the lack of interest students have for the subject matter. He uses humor, oftentimes poking fun at himself, and "lots and lots of documents," he said. Many of the documents were written by people of the time period reacting to important events or movements as they were happening, as opposed to the mere recitation of facts some history books seem to give. The direct connection to the past provided by the documents makes

it easier for students to become interested in the subject matter.

"I don't think the students are unwilling to learn, but maybe uninterested. Many students just want to get the history course out of the way so they can take other courses," Barnshaw said. He believes the American that modern citizens should most try to emulate is Abraham Lincoln, for his simplicity and honesty. Barnshaw's favorite time period is the mid-1700s to the

1800s because he respects "the people of the time and the causes they fought for." He believes people of this time period were less hampered by the beliefs of others and unafraid to stand up for what they believed.

Barnshaw first decided he wanted to become a teacher in his junior year of high school. "The bug bit me early," he explained with a smile. He considered going into a military or religious service, but ultimately found that teaching was the best fit.

Teaching history is only one aspect of Barnshaw's career. He also runs the Bible club, which has combined with the Future Christian Athletes club this year.

Barnshaw feels that this merge is a wonderful idea and will provide a space where Christian students can be who they truly are without fearing judgment from their peers.

He said that throughout his years as a teacher he has seen many students, even those strong in character, buckle under pressure and conform to their peers' views of how they should act.

He said, "It is those students who are not afraid to be their own person who are closest to my heart."

Student seeks future in print

Kaitlin Shockley '09

Dave Clements, '08, can most often be found in the locations he most enjoys, Drama Club, Game Club, or his Journalism/Creative Writing class.

Clements' friend originally told him about drama club. He had described it much like *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*. A fan of the show, Clements eagerly joined. Clements also joined Game Club for much the same reason.

"It gives me a chance to not think of school work," he said.

When he does think of school work, his Journalism/Creative Writing class is most interesting to him, not for fun, but because he wants to go to college for writing. "I plan on going to a four-year college for writing," he said, "then plan on putting that to use in the real world."

Clements enjoys writing, especially fiction, and has been pursuing it as a hobby for a while now. He looks forward to the day when he can make it more than a hobby.

Other than writing, Clements likes metal or death metal music. He plays electric guitar and has even been known as saying it is his "love."

"Headbanging songs get me pumped up and make me feel good," he said.

Clements enjoys a wide variety of things, from books to movies to video games and music. If given the choice, Clements said he would rather stay in township because he is almost done school, anyway.

As part of a small family, Clements is the only one in his family still in high school. He has an older brother who is in college at Kean University. He also has a dog named Tasha. She is a German shepherd/

husky mix and is "not the sharpest tool in the shed." He has lived here in township for his whole life, and attended Wedgewood Elementary and Chestnut Ridge Middle School before WTHS.

Even though going to school is not his favorite activity, Clements has been known to think rationally in situations most people are not able to do so.

He said, "The first three things I'd grab in a fire would be my wallet, the dog, and a fire extinguisher," rather than the classic response of some material items.



Kaitlin Shockley '09 / The Patriot

Dave Clements would like to pursue a career writing fiction.

Clements has even replied to the age-old glass half-full/empty question with an answer of his own. "That depends on whether you're filling it or drinking from it."

Odds & Ends

Life As...by Nicole Heath '10

...A Non-trick-or-treater

Halloween memories. Everyone in elementary school all dressed up. Classes having the best custom contest. Teachers handing out decorations to put on the door. Everyone talking about what candy was their favorite and how full their bag got last year. Parents trying to curb their child's sugar intake by only letting you eat two pieces of candy.

Good memories right?

Well, I have different ones. I remember being in Wedgwood Elementary School and watching all of the other kids parade around the school in their new costumes, while my brother, sister and I waited in the library with all of the kids who didn't celebrate Halloween. Trust me, there weren't many.

I remember the times when kids would knock at the door and scream trick or treat. My reply to them would be, "We don't celebrate Halloween, sorry." I learned to shut the door really fast, not wanting to see the disappointed faces as the trick-or-treaters absorbed the fact that they would not be getting candy from this household.

The disappointed kids weren't the worst thing. It's the ticked off parents that really got to me. They would stare at me like I was some kind of a monster, because I would not add to the over stretched bag of candy their kids were carrying.

Many might say that it's hard to be a trick-or-treater, but I say that it's harder to be a non-trick-or-treater. Many are not aware of the skill it takes to dodge the little kids with the costumes or how hard it is to not answer the door bell when the kids repeatedly hit it. Or the annoyance of having little children and their parents, who you have never seen in your neighborhood or life, come to your doorstep and demand candy. Many Halloween nights my family just gave up on answering the door and decided to go to dinner.

In elementary school we sat in the library, but in middle school and high school it is worse. We had to explain to every teacher, every schoolmate why we did not celebrate Halloween. Getting asked the same question and giving the same answers can drive people crazy.



Chelsey Gordon '08

There's no peace at home because of the trick-or-treaters and even the TV is filled with Halloween shows. The only way to find peace is to sleep with a pillow over your head.

These are the memories I've come to live with. Don't be confused, I'm not bitter at all. It's just that by now after a decade of living next to them,

I would think that my neighbors would finally get the point that we don't celebrate Halloween.

There are a few of us who on Halloween who would just like to be left alone. So if you see a house completely dark, with no lights or decorations. Do me a favor, please don't knock.

Colbert takes political comedy to the masses

Stephanie Foran '08

On Oct. 16, Stephen Colbert, host of *The Colbert Report*, declared that he was running for President. Unfortunately for Colbert and his supporters, the South Carolina Democratic Party (SCDP) decided that he wasn't a serious candidate for President. He was denied a place on the South Carolina ballot.

Colbert originally announced on *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, "I am officially considering whether or not I will announce if I am considering running for President of the United States."

Colbert also expressed that he wished to announce his candidacy on a "more prestigious" show: his own.

After "fifteen minutes of soul-searching", Colbert announced that he wished to run for President. However, he would only campaign



Image by Google

Colbert's presidential campaign was short-lived when he was denied a place on the South Carolina primary ballot.

in the South Carolina primary as running on both the democratic and republican tickets as a "favorite son". The term 'favorite son' is defined as a presidential candidate

that usually wins the support of their home states easily.

"When I first heard about it [Colbert running for president], I thought it was just a joke," states Kurt Pflugfelder '08, "but it seems now like he's trying to prove a point. He's saying a comedian could run for President."

Colbert's pursuit of the highest office in the land reminds many of *Man of the Year*, a movie where a comedian (Robin Williams) runs for President and actually wins.

Other students beg to differ

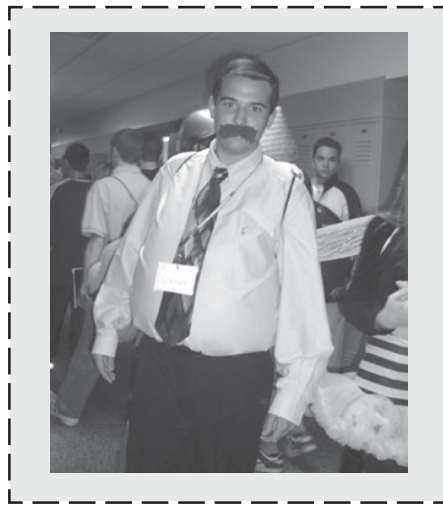
with Colbert's actions. Colbert is a well-known political satirist, but he does not have any actual political background. They believe his candidacy mocks those who pursue a career in the government and the government itself.

Keith Marr '10 believes that Colbert would be "taking votes from candidates who deserve them" and it would be like throwing away a vote.

The SCDP seemed to take a similar stance and voted Colbert's campaign down thirteen to three. Carol Fowler, representative of the SCDP, called Colbert herself to break the bad news.

She reassured him he would receive his campaign money back in the mail and encouraged him to run in the next election (in 2012). Perhaps this isn't the end of the Colbert dynasty; maybe it's just the beginning.

Halloween 2007 at WTHS



Tech Talk

Debate

The Great MySpace-Facebook Faceoff

MySpace gives freedom to users

Margaret Bonanni '09

One of the newest communication trends are networking sites. By allowing users to keep in touch with their friends and meet new ones, it's no surprise that the sites' popularity has skyrocketed over the past years.

But with popularity comes controversy. Myspace and Facebook, two of the most popular networking sites, are often compared, and their merits debated by many internet users. Although Facebook is the newer website, using Myspace is more enjoyable.

Myspace allows users to not only socialize, but also lets them show their creativity in the process. Unlike Facebook, it does not constrict users to a bland, white profile. They are given the freedom of leaving their layout plain, making their own using Profile Editor, or choosing from thousands of layouts you can find online.

Because Myspace is HTML based, users can take creativity to a whole new level. By using various codes, they can change their profile's font and structure, and can even hide elements such as their last log-in, comments, general information panel, and top friends. They can also make scroll boxes, graphics, contact tables, picture captions, and comment boxes that add flare to their layout.

Myspace is more user friendly. Facebook requires users to add applications to have features such as top friends, and profile songs. Myspace already comes with these features, and eliminates the hassle of finding the application users need and going through the process of adding it. In addition, users are given the privilege of choosing the number of top friends and songs they would like to have on their profile.

Users that have accounts on Myspace are also given more privacy. Facebook requires users to have their full name as their display name, which can be very uncomfortable. Myspace gives users the option of using their full name, nickname, a quote, or anything they want. Users can also control who sees their profile by making it private. These aspects give users another creative outlet that Facebook doesn't offer, and makes it easier to stay safe.

Facebook also has News Feed, which lets users friends see what they've done to their profile, what groups you've joined, and what they wrote on other people's wall (the equivalent to comments).

Although this feature can be helpful at times, it is a huge invasion of privacy. Myspace does not have this feature, and gives users the option

of hiding their comments. They also let users confirm or deny what comments their friends can see.

Myspace also has another way for users to contact each other. Blogs are a way users can post their thoughts, ideas, opinions, and writings, or can advertise events. Users can control who sees, subscribes, and comments on their blogs. They can also manage their blogs by editing or deleting them at anytime.

Because Myspace lets their users have more control over their layout, gives them more privacy, and comes with unique features, it's clear why more users would prefer it over Facebook.

Facebook offers privacy and protection

Katie Mount '09

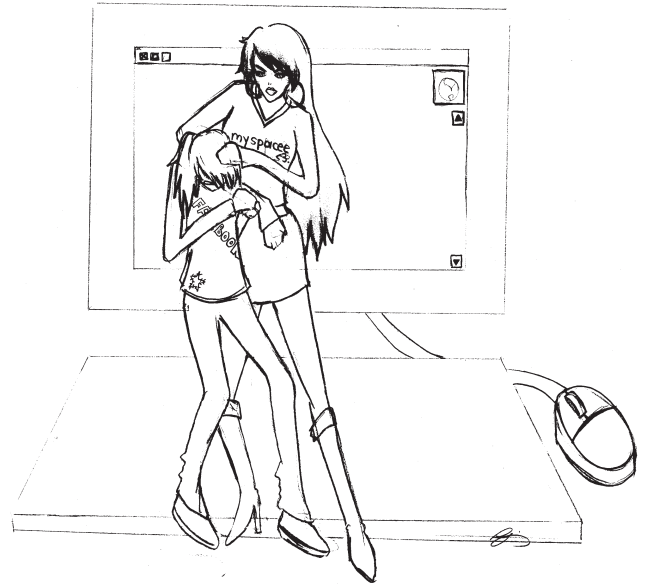
Social networking websites are one of the biggest fads among adolescents. These types of websites were created to provide users with a way to interact with friends. Two major websites are leading the trend: Myspace and Facebook. With all of the hype surrounding the two sites, it seems as though there is a silent rivalry between them. Most young people find themselves debating on which site is better.

When it comes to social networking websites, I believe Facebook wins by a mile.

What most impresses me the most about Facebook are their security measures. When I first registered, I decided to skip putting in the name of my high school. When I attempted to move onto the next step I received a message saying "Sorry, that registration option is only available for users 18 and over. Please register through your high school or college below."

At first I found it a little personal for the site to require the name of my high school. It wasn't until later that I fully appreciated it. In order to join your high school's network, you must be approved by an already accepted student.

This is a great tool to prevent pedophiles from pretending to be teenage high school students. Myspace pedophiles can simply fill out fake information, and then click a button to join.



Lillian Ling '08

Facebook is also cracking down on security when it comes to hackers and spammers. It uses a program called a "Captcha." These are tests that are used to prevent spammers from using programs or bots to create fake accounts and spam users. When a user requests to be friends with another user, they must type in a security code to prove they are not a spammer.

Myspace does not have the same security measures as Facebook. Therefore their site is filled with hackers and viruses. The advertisements at the top of the page are filled with spyware.

An annoying feature on Myspace is the control they allow their users to have when it comes to layout. Most of the time, Myspace users will change their layout to make it look "pretty". This usually makes their text harder to read, which coincidentally makes it extremely difficult to navigate around the site.

Facebook does not give their users that much control over their page layout. Myspace users may argue that this limits their creativity. Users can decide whether it is easier to find information when you don't have to search through a page of glittering graphics and obnoxious backgrounds.

The debate on Facebook vs. Myspace is still a hot topic among teenagers. It's obvious that social networking websites are here to stay. I hope that many will decide to go with Facebook. It's much safer than Myspace.

Players get wired at Gamerz Edge

Matt Neuteboom '08

For such a large town, Washington Township has surprisingly few gaming centers. There's a couple of game stores near the Wal-Mart center, and that's about it, save for large retail stores. That's why I was very happy to hear that a new LAN center had opened near Whitman Square.

LAN centers are few and far between outside of a metropolitan area. They rent fast, top-of-the-line computers to those who don't own them at an hourly rate. Essentially, it's an internet café geared towards hardcore gamers, and has energy drinks instead of coffee.

The new LAN center, Gamerz Edge, opened up about a month and a half ago around the start of September. I originally heard about

it from a friend of mine, and he told me I could find it at the very end of Johnson Rd., across from the intersection with the Wawa (Gamer's Edge must also mean "the edge of Township").

Whereas many LAN centers are open well into the night for all night gaming sessions, Gamerz Edge opens at 4 o'clock on most days and closes at 10 o'clock on the weekdays and midnight on the weekends. This gives many students a good opportunity to set aside some time to head over there, as their hours fit perfectly into an after-school schedule.

Upon first stepping into Gamerz Edge, it was clear that the new center was professional. Carpeted and decked out with sleek décor, the dimly lit center radiated an otherworldly blue from all of the



Matt Neuteboom '08

Gamerz Edge is the new LAN center located at the corner of Johnson and Berlin Cross Keys Rd.

glowing equipment. Countless computer stations lined both walls all the way into the back of the center.

At first, I was not impressed by their rates. It was \$2.50 for your first hour, but after that it cost a

whopping \$5 an hour. They offered me a catch saying that if I was a member for \$25 a year, the rate would lower to \$4, and that would also include privileges such as using day passes and participating in tournaments.

Sitting down at the computers, though, I understood what the money was going to. Top of the line systems adorned the shelves above my head, and each keyboard came with at least 50 additional buttons which could be mapped to various game functions (tournament players take their games VERY seriously). Each station came with its own convenient headphones for privacy in-game.

The game list was saturated with plenty of brand new games, both competitive online and single player. While the computers offered the staples of Guild Wars, and World of Warcraft, there was little else besides first-person shooters and strategy games. However, the game list was very recent, including games which were released barely a month ago.

Gamer's Edge also offers members the opportunity to play console games and compete in local tournaments for prizes. Not only that, but the center keeps track of all your stats, which can be viewed from their webpage. As you play more on their computers, you can earn neat incentives which include T-shirts, cash prizes, and even free hours.

I am happy to know that Gamer's Edge offers me a new chance to play the computer games I do not own or cannot afford. If you're into competitive or even single-player PC gaming, it's worth taking a trip to Gamer's Edge to see what's going on.

Why LAN Centers Exist

At a first glance, many people are confused why LAN centers exist. Why pay exorbitant rates for something that we can get at home?

One reason is price of renting vs. price of owning. Newer games continue to push the limits of what a computer can do. My own computer can't even play most of the PC games from last year, let alone those that debut this Christmas season. For the pauper like me, I don't have the time or money to upgrade my system (which often costs upwards of \$400), or buy the games, which are now nearing around \$60 or even \$70 a pop. LAN centers are especially useful for

those who can't even afford to pay a high-speed cable bill.

LAN centers also make it easier for community gaming and tournaments. Having your teammates sitting right next to you in a high-end tournament (some people make a profession out of this stuff) is much better than having them stuck over a phone shouting orders. The top of the line computers guarantee that there is no lag or slow-down, that all graphics are crisp and clear, and that game performance isn't hindered. Also, the dark, isolated environment makes LAN centers ideal for concentrating on a computer screen.

Opinion

"Sandbox games" destroying an industry

Melanie Moore '11

The only thing that's more annoying than ranting fanboys are "sandbox" games. They are those essentially lacking games based off of movies or TV shows that are notorious for clunky controls, last-generation graphics (or lower), and remotely no interesting core gameplay. The targets for the B-grade developers are usually young kids and casual gamers; people who don't really care about the quality as long as it features their favorite characters.

For the rest of us, we'd rather play games that define innovation, and sandbox games certainly do not fit the definition. It is irritating to find these games clogging the shelves because they are all generally the same:

a monotonous, repeating platformer that will definitely not convert anyone who is not already a fan of the genre. This pattern of repetition is how these games earned their rightful title. They are called "sandbox" games because none of them go "outside the box" and do something innovative or unheard of. Instead, they perpetually linger in the same area, hindering the absolute future of gaming.

Take the ancient Atari 2600 game "E.T.," for example. It is the father of all sandbox games, and it even caused the infamous video game crash of 1983. The game was so abysmal, the

remaining copies of this horrible game were buried in a landfill in New Mexico, because it was way too overproduced, and no one was buying copies.

I would advise even the most casual gamer to let these games rot on the shelves, and start building

up your own taste for genres based on classic, yet cutting-edge games. Sandbox games are truly at fault for the decline of quality for the

Sandbox games are truly at fault for the decline of quality for the platform genre.

platform genre. After all- our generation now will affect the future of gaming. Will we excel, or remain in the sandbox?

Books

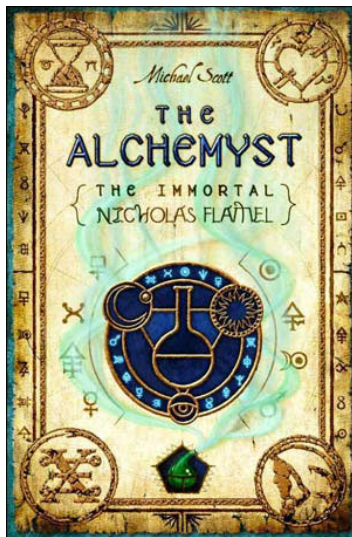
Scott creates gold with *The Alchemist*

Margaret Bonanni '09

The Alchemist: The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel by Michael Scott, one of Ireland's finest fantasy authors, is one of the most spellbinding science fiction novels to recently make the New York Times Best Seller's List. With its innovative spin on saving the world, the young adult novel can be appreciated by readers of all ages.

The novel is set in sunny San Francisco, where twin siblings Sophie and Josh are spending the summer with family while their parents are off on an archeological dig. They decide to get jobs at neighboring shops. One day a strange man steals a book from Josh's employer, Nick Fleming. During the robbery, Sophie and Josh witness Fleming and the stranger dueling each other with magic.

After the stranger flees, Fleming explains exactly what the twins had witnessed. The book the robbers stole was an ancient book called the *Codex*, which he had been entrusted to guard. The robber was John Dee, a spy for Queen Elizabeth I. Dee stole the book because not only did it contain prophecies and powerful magic, but it also held the



Google Image

***The Alchemist* is the first in a planned series of six fantasy, adventure novels.**

potential to destroy the world. Fleming also confesses that he is actually the legendary alchemist Nicholas Flamel, who used the book to find the Elixir of Life.

Overwhelmed, the twins doubt whether or not Fleming is telling the truth. Yet, with Dee after them, they must help Flamel find the book before the world they live in is destroyed, and a dark and terrible

age comes to life.

It's no wonder readers were excited to read Scott's newest novel. It is a unique mix of history, myth and thrilling characters. Many of the characters in the book are taken from Mythology, such as the Greek Goddess Hekate, the Egyptian Goddess Bastet, and Flamel's Irish accomplice Scathach. Others are actual historical figures, such as Nicholas Flamel, his wife Perenelle, and the novel's antagonist John Dee. Regardless of their origin, all the characters were well developed, and add their own unique twist to the story.

The novel's plot was also unique. In each chapter it becomes clearer and grows, so that the reader is left to piece details together. The plot also is surprising, and takes readers into a new direction with each turn of the page.

This novel is the first installment in a series Scott plans on writing. Although there are six books total, the events in *The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel* only happen over two days, and the entire series will span one month. The next installment, *The Magician* is scheduled to come out in May of 2008.

Novel explores genetic ethics

Kerry Dougherty '11

My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult tells the tale of a charismatic, young girl named Anna who is no stranger to hospital waiting rooms. She's not sick, but she's undergone numerous surgeries, transfusions, and shots to help her older sister, Kate, fight the leukemia that she's had since the age of three.

But now, Anna's parents want a kidney for Kate. It seems Anna was born to keep Kate alive. Her parents hired a scientist to hook up her mother's eggs and her father's sperm to produce genetic material to perfectly match Kate's. This makes Anna the perfect donor. However, at age 13, Anna knows her legal rights to her body.

So with the help of an attorney, Campbell Alexander, and a temporary guardian, Julia Romano, Anna fights for the right of her body. The reason Anna doesn't want to donate another organ will surprise everyone, even her own mother.

In a way, Anna is like every teenager - she wants her own life. There's a bit of all of us in Jesse, Kate and Anna's brother, who is very protective of the people he loves. You'll also relate to Julia Romano, the quirky guardian, who's suddenly sucked back into her teenage years when she finds who the attorney is that she will be working with to help Anna.

Jodi Picoult's characters will make you laugh out loud, then sympathize with them. Her extraordinary characterizations will make you see a part of yourself in every character. Her witty banter and thoughtful dialogue shows her intelligence and understanding of the human race.

This book guarantees to squeeze a few laughs, a few tears, and a few thoughts out of the most insensitive people. It'll tug on your heartstrings and won't let go. It's a great piece of literature that's suitable for a generation of rebellious teenagers. I dare anyone to put it down after reading the first five pages.

Classic manga series worth reading

Melanie Moore '11

Furuba by Natsuki Takaya is the manga (Japanese comic) series that is on almost every collector's bookshelf. It has touched the hearts of American fans since 2004, when the English translation, *Fruits Basket*, was first published by TokyoPop.

The basic plot is relatively easy to understand in early volumes. The story unfolds as an orphaned girl named Tohru Honda stumbles upon a strange family, the Sohmas, with a mysterious secret.

Based on the Chinese zodiac, whoever is born in the corresponding year, will turn in to that animal when hugged by a member of the opposite sex. After some odd circumstances, Tohru is welcomed to live with the Sohmas. They live each day with

faltering hopes for "the curse" to break, while Tohru tries to keep everyone smiling.

The reason why so many have embraced this manga so readily is because of Takaya's notable ability to create characters with such deep personalities and to fill the story with drama, romance, and comedic charm.

Currently at volume seventeen, the series is still being published. Takaya keeps the eager fans hooked by the mysteries of the curse and a love triangle including Tohru.

One of the most interesting aspects of the series is the art style. All of the characters look drastically different and beautiful, ranging from a goth who can sense waves, to an enigmatic novelist. With the vast number of characters populating this story, you are never bored; you are

always laughing or ready to shed a tear. All of the characters have their own idiosyncrasies and societies within.

Fruits Basket successfully breaks away from the traditional and trite shojo (manga aimed at a female audience) formula. The story is carefully woven from volume to volume with many details and interesting situations intertwined.

The *Fruits Basket* fan base is very large and active. They produce grandeur fan sites, dojinshi (self-published novels) and fan-fiction. Numerous types of merchandise have also been released, ranging from plush toys resembling the characters to lip gloss.

Overall, *Fruits Basket* has earned my respect ever since I reluctantly turned the last page of volume one and continued to read.

Young adult fiction becomes predictable

Nicole Heath '10

The shelves of Barnes and Noble are lined with an array of books. Some have decorative covers with fancy writing. Others are leather bound with golden engraved text.

As you make your way to the young adult section you notice how all the books have brighter colors, comical titles, and eye-catching cover graphics. All the books seem to be so different. But they're not.

Recent series like *The Clique* or *The A List* all seem to grab readers' attention, but once they begin to read the book, they realize that the plot is not colorful or original at all.

These new teen books are beginning to lack the creativity and authenticity the genre once had. Outside of fantasy and historical fiction, original plots are becoming harder to find.

A favorite cliché that authors like to use, is a girl or boy moving to a new school and miraculously defeating the oppressive 'popular kids' clique that dominates the



Photo Illustration by Katie Mount /The Patriot

To many readers, bookshelves have become a lot less colorful.

school. This plot has been used so often its once funny and unique storyline has become a predictable story. Plots are losing their depth.

Not only are the plotlines overused, but the description of

high school is completely false. Most teen books describe high school as a place where a bunch of cliques all trying to 'rule' the school. These authors barely touch the real things in high school that effect

students like teachers, classes, or even grades.

Other books like *The It Girl* develop an entire story around high school drama. True, high school drama is fun to read about, but when all the books are about the same problem and have the same outcomes it tends to get boring.

The only positive side to novels such as these is the humor. Most young adult novels can be described as poignant and funny. But with the use of the same plot and similar characters, even the jokes get old.

Many of these books are beginning to look like Disney movies like *High School Musical* and shows such as *Lizzie McGuire*. Recent novels look way too much like movies. For example, *Mean Girls* and *Bring It On* are all plots that are commonly found in books.

Although many teen books are conforming to predictability, there are a strong few.

Authors like Meg Cabot take the everyday plot and add a twist. The same can be said for fantasy writer Gail Carson Levine, who instead of rewriting the same fairy tales, creates her own spellbinding story.

Other writers like Christopher Paolini and Stephenie Meyer are also unique. But most of these authors belong to the fantasy genre, not the realistic fiction. If more authors relied on their own reality, rather than following the norm, the world of realistic fiction would be a happier and more interesting place.

Vampire novel sucks in readers

Brittany Tartaglia '09

Marked by P.C. and Kristin Cast is a story about a girl named Zoey Montgomery. Entering the dark, magical world of the House of Night, you see the world of vampires through her eyes. She was a typical teenage girl until she was "marked".

Zoey has two choices: turn into a vampire, which to the human mind is the equivalent of being a monster, or her body can reject the change and she'll die. Realizing that she has no real choice, Zoey moves into the House of Night, a private boarding school for vampires.

Taking on a new life requires a new identity; she chooses to be Zoey Redbird, after her Native-American heritage.

Think being the new kid in high school is hard? Try being the new kid in a school full of vampires. Just like any other school there are cliques, mean girls, and wannabes. However,

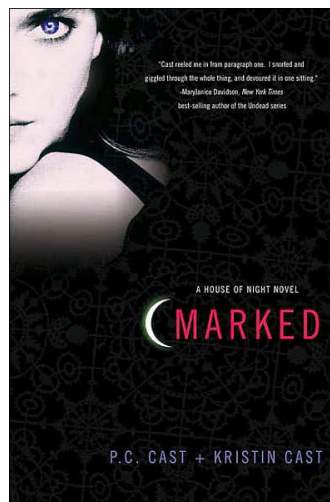
Zoey is different; she has more powers than the older students, and no one knows why. Zoey soon finds herself in the middle of a murder case, when students' bodies start rejecting the change. In the short time that she spends in the school, Zoey makes friends, enemies, and falls in love.

Marked was a creative and hypnotic book that I could not put down. The ending seemed to leave you wanting more, and makes you draw conclusions on what's to

Zoey has two choices: turn into a vampyre, which to the human mind is the equivalent of being a monster, or her body can reject the change and she'll die.

happen next. This novel could appeal to anyone who likes vampire books such as *Twilight* and *Vampire Kisses*.

The Casts, a mother and daughter team, are gifted with the art of detail. They make you feel as if you personally know the main character. Zoey becomes a beloved character that is only hated by the jealous teenagers of the House of Night.



Google Image

Just recently, *Betrayed*, the second book in the series was released. If the sequel is anything like P.C. Cast's other paranormal romances, it will be a captivating and exciting book. *Betrayed* is said to have twice the action, adventure, romance and should be more dark than *Marked*.

All in all I would rate the book four out of five stars. It was a great book, and I consider it to be one of my favorites.

Have you read any good books lately, and are interested in sharing your opinion?

Write for the book section!

Email us at wthspatriot@gmail.com.

Entertainment

All Time Low hits high

Mike Cedrone '10

Maryland pop-punkers All Time Low are at it again. With their new album, *So Wrong, It's Right*, All Time Low hopes to surpass the success of their previous EP, *Put Up or Shut Up*. All Time Low consists of Alex Gaskarth (vocals/guitar), Jack Barakat (guitar), Zack Merrick (bass), and Rian Dawson (drums).

They formed in 2003, still only in high school. In 2004, they released an EP and full-length album with local label, *Emerald Moon Records*. Shortly before graduating high school (in 2006), the band signed with *Hopeless Records*.

The album's twelve tracks are very optimistic and fun-filled. The songs are about summer, having fun, and basically anything to do with being a teenager. Fans can easily relate to All Time Low's music because each member is young and knows exactly what their audience craves.

The first two singles released off of the album were, "Dear Maria, Count Me In" and "Six Feet under the Stars." These songs will keep your finger on the repeat button.



Image by Google

Alternative Press magazine named All Time Low as one of the "Bands You Need to Know in '07."

They promoted the album by playing some of their new songs on this year's Van's Warped Tour. They also posted the whole album on their MySpace page a few days before the release. This idea let the fans preview the CD before they bought it.

Some standout tracks on the album are "Holly (Would You Turn Me On?)", "The Beach", "Remembering Sunday", "Vegas", and "Come One, Come All". The lyrics are very down to earth and

talk about common topics in any teenager's life. Some of the topics discussed are love, fun on the beach, problems with the radio disc jockey, and the repetitiveness of radio and the songs they play.

All Time Low has made some positive changes to their sound. Throughout the album there is a huge presence of gang vocals, which is new from the last record.

This gives the listener more room to sing along and makes for a

very exciting live performance. It gets the whole band involved and makes them seem more unified.

Not only are all the members of the band singing on most of the tracks, but some unfamiliar voices are also on the album. "Remembering Sunday", one of the slower tracks on the album, Juliet Simms from Automatic Loveletter, sings guest vocals. This adds emotion to the song and gives it the pretense of an actual conversation between two lovers.

The album, released on Sept. 25, sold 14,200 copies in its first week. It peaked on the Billboard Charts at #62. Their previous EP sold 60,000 copies as of the release date of *So Wrong, It's Right*. The album definitely has a long way to go to catch up with the success of the EP.

I believe All Time Low will meet their sales since this is one of the greatest albums of 2007.

This album that will make All Time Low a center-stage attraction, adding to their already great popularity. They are a band that will make some serious noise in the future.

Pushing Daisies digs up good reviews

Stephanie Foran '08

What would you do if you had the power to bring the dead back to life? For Ned (Lee Pace), the protagonist of the new show *Pushing Daisies* (ABC, Wednesday nights at eight), he and his partner Emerson (Chi McBride) solve murders by touching the deceased and bringing them back to life, asking for clues to solve their unfortunate death. *Pushing Daisies* premiered October 3.

Ned's life is nothing short of complicated. From a young age, he was picked on for being quiet and misanthropic, but it wasn't because he didn't want to interact with them; it was because he couldn't.

Ned discovered his "gift" at the age of ten when he accidentally revived his dog Digby. However, his

gift is full of complications—if the revived person is touched a second time by Ned, they will die permanently. If they are brought back to life for more than a minute, someone else nearby will die. Ned states in the first episode, titled, "Pie-lette", that it is "a random proximity thing."

Before the events of the first episode, Ned was very careful not to let anyone get close to him. He made a living making pies in his restaurant "The Pie Hole", where he often dodges the amorous attempts of his employee, Olive (Kristin Chenoweth).

His life does a one-eighty when he discovers his childhood sweetheart Charlotte "Chuck" Charles (Anna Friel) was strangled on a cruise. He and Emerson travel to Ned's hometown and revive

Chuck shortly before she is to be buried. After being revived, she is ecstatic to see her old friend (so is Ned).

Despite Emerson's urging to return Chuck to the grave, Ned cannot bare to hurt her. As they sneak out of the funeral home, the corrupt funeral director dies, as a result of "the random proximity thing." Emerson is unhappy to see a romance budding between the pie-maker and Chuck, but knows he is powerless to stop it. The unconventional relationship promises some interesting twists since the couple can't hold hands, kiss, or hug because Chuck would die permanently.

Pushing Daisies received rave reviews from shows such as The Today Show and Good Morning America. The show itself has a Tim

Burton feel to it, with the weird events being played against Ned and Chuck's picturesque hometown. Another unconventional element is the narration (voiced by Jim Dale) which gives each character's exact age, down to the minute. He also gives insight into the lives of the main characters.

It is the first show of its kind, dubbed by its creators as a "forensic fairytale." The cast is absolutely superb, right down to Olive's rendition of "Hopelessly Devoted" and Chuck's optimistic personality in the wake of her first death.

Its quirky humor and surprisingly touching plotline is sure to make it a hit for 2007. Fans are eager to see what happens to Ned, Chuck, Olive, and Emerson in the episodes come. I'm sure they will not be disappointed.

Join the Cult by Matt Neuteboom '08

Escape from New York: The future is now?

It is the year 1998, crime has sky-rocketed 400% and the island of Manhattan has been transformed into a giant prison. The bridges have been mined and the shoreline walled off, and inside the world's most hardened criminals are confined to roam the decaying streets. Once prisoners go in, they never come out. That is, until the president's plane crashes inside the city and he is taken hostage by the prisoners. Thus starts the 1981 futuristic adventure *Escape from New York*.

In steps Snake Plissken, a former soldier and a new prisoner to the island played by Kurt Russell. Snake is offered a deal: spend his life on the island or rescue the president before the world summit in twenty-four hours. To help keep him on task, the military secretly implants a microchip in his neck which will explode when the summit starts. Now rescuing the president wasn't just a matter of maintaining



Image from IMBD

Anti-hero Snake Plissken stares at the ruins of Manhattan.

world peace; it was a matter of life and death.

From start to finish, *Escape from New York* is a highly entertaining thriller which will quickly grab your attention. The fact that the movie takes place all in one day only highlights this fact (predating "24" by a full two decades). From the moment Snake enters New York it's a suspenseful race against time to see if Snake can get the president

out alive. At first, the mission is simple: get in, get the president, and get out. But we all know that isn't simple. The direction of the movie takes Snake all over New York, facing the various gangs that inhabit it, and eventually, the big "Duke of New York" himself.

Even for 1981, the special effects for *Escape from New York* are fantastic, with wide angle shots of the monumental shore wall and

collapsed skyline. Scenes containing fast paced action are done impeccably well (and still hold up to today's standards). One of my favorite old-time actors, Lee Van Cleef from the *Dollars* Western trilogy, comes back for one of his last roles as the head of the police force. Also, Isaac Hayes, (a.k.a Chef from *South Park*), makes his appearance as the one and only "Duke of New York, A-Number 1." For director John Carpenter, it's not the best movie he's ever made (that honor goes to *The Thing*), but it comes in as a close second.

What *Escape from New York* truly lacks, though, is a script and set that does not reek of the 80's. Kurt Russell trying to throw the deep gruff voice as the "bad boy" might have been cool back then, but now it's just cheesy. The same goes for all the one-liners dropped by the actors. All of the costumes have far too much leather, metal, and spikes, also reflecting the punk/hair metal trend just taking root at the time.

Still, though, one could argue that this tackiness would be the best part of the movie. The 80's cheesiness brings back fond memories to many who attended the theatre shouting lines at the screen with their friends.

The movie brings you back to a time when the future looked bleak and abysmal. At the beginning of the 80's, times were changing. An all new paranoia had sprung up among the populace. As crime and pollution got worse, analysts predicted the worst for future generations.

This post-apocalyptic sentiment is also echoed in the movies *Mad Max* and *Blade Runner*, both from that time period. It's no wonder that the New York presented in this movie has decayed into a desolate wasteland of criminals.

It was recently announced that New Line Cinemas would be spearheading a remake of the movie. Gerard Butler is already slated to play the lead role of Snake, and producers and writers have already been attached to the movie.

So why go see the movie before finding out what the original is like? *Escape from New York* is a definite cult classic, and one which you should plan on seeing if you're a fan of action movies.

Beatles tunes inspire new film

Margaret Bonanni '09

Directed by Julie Taymor, *Across the Universe* is a captivating musical of the romance between two lovers, told through Beatles music. Mixing the psychedelic feeling and the social turbulence of the era, this movie ingeniously captures the dynamic spirit of the sixties.

The movie begins with Jude (Jim Sturgess), a Liverpool native, saying goodbye to his girlfriend as he boards an ocean liner to America. There, he sets off to find the father he never knew, a former soldier who is currently a handyman at Harvard.

Not long after confronting his father, Jude meets Max (Joe Anderson). The two become friends and Max introduces Jude to his sister, Lucy (Evan Rachel Wood).

The two fall in love and the trio moves to New York City. After they get wrapped up in a bohemian lifestyle, the film shifts focus to the Anti-Vietnam protests and Civil

Rights Movement as they test the strength of Jude and Lucy's relationship.

The film's psychedelic feeling was attributed to Taymor's use of stunning visual effects. Trippy dream-like sequences, scenes shot in negative images, and cle-ver camera man-euvers make the movie a visual phenomenon.

Blasts of color in the scenery and costumes were eye catching and brought out details that would otherwise be unnoticeable. These effects gave the movie the element

of surprise, which Taymor used to her advantage.

The actors' interpretations of thirty-three Beatles songs used in the movie gives it a genuine tone, which is often a daunting effect for historically based

movies to achieve.

The actors' performances are concrete. Sturgess, a relatively unknown actor in the United States, makes an impressive debut. His

rough, Lennon-like voice nicely complimented Wood's harmonious voice and makes for many nicely sung duets.

Each song in the movie is charged with emotion of the chaos of the era, and adds to the intensity that most musical movies tend to lose.

The song "Helter Skelter" sung by Dana Fuchs (who plays the trio's landlord), is one of the most provoking songs of the film because of her powerful, deep vocals.

Second to her performance was Bono's cameo of "I am the Walrus", in which he nicely pulls off the performance of a southern cult leader.

Across the Universe closed with "All You Need Is Love". This song not only brought the romantic conflict in the movie to an end, but also served as a symbol: that love can conquer anything.

Taymor's film is a must see for any Beatles fan. The Fab Fours' hits were nicely recreated, and still strike a chord with today's youth. But aside from the music, the film can be enjoyed by anyone because of its strong romantic conflict and sixties influence.

Trippy dream-like sequences, scenes shot in negative images, and clever camera maneuvers make the movie a visual phenomenon.

Zodiac slays audience

Sarah Kurtz '10

We've all heard about those awful ruthless killings, the killings that puts a chill through your spine. Recently, a movie came out that caught my eye, *Zodiac*. When I watched the preview for the movie they said that it was based on true events. And while killing should never be right in any mind frame, they were brilliant. The Zodiac killer was beyond cunning in every detail. He knew how to cover his attacks, and how to play games with the police. The man was pure, wasted genius.

The movie starts out with two kids in a parked car on "Lover's Lane." A black car pulls up to the car and then drives away. The woman in the car seemed so frightened; it was as if she knew him and her fate. They were both shot several times. He survived, and she did not. Strangely enough, the Zodiac called and gave a confession about the murders.

Jake Gyllenhaal plays Robert Graysmith, a cartoonist at the newspaper that the Zodiac is contacting. He is a master mind at puzzles and begins to work the case on his own time. It becomes his obsession, and his marriage falls apart. Mark Ruffalo plays Inspector David Toschi, the main detective on the case. Robert contacts him and



Courtesy of IMDb

Robert Downey, Jr (left) and Jake Gyllenhaal (right) play journalists who track a brutal serial killer.

shows him he can be of help.

The Zodiac continues to write letters encoded with symbols and Robert continues to decode them. The letters are disturbing and each one tells about his next murder.

The movie is so mind rattling. You're trying to piece clues together like a puzzle through out the movie. It's exactly what the Zodiac wants you to do. He wants you to rack your brain to try to figure out these mind-numbing riddles. During the film, you see the Zodiac commit several murders, but here's the thing, you don't actually see the Zodiac.

The murders were brutal; at times it was hard to watch knowing that they actually took place, but to add to the twisted effect, happy music was played in the background. It was as if it was a

game, and to the Zodiac, it was. He didn't take money, purses, or sexually assault his victims; he just enjoyed the hunt. He said, "I like hunting man because man is the most dangerous creature of them all."

If you want a movie that you can count on for action, Zodiac is definitely your movie. It has plot twists that will have you jumping out of your seat screaming. If you dislike movies that are suspenseful and leave you with a chill, I would suggest leaving this one on the shelf.

The Zodiac was never solved. Over the course of twenty-one years, there was a man committing ruthless murders and taking credit for some that weren't even his. Maybe you could be the one to solve the case, so take a shot, and watch the movie.

Sex & The City makes comeback

Lauren Finneran '08

It's been three years since the final episode of *Sex and the City* aired on HBO. There have been rumors of a *Sex and the City* movie since right after the ending of the series.

The four stars, Sarah Jessica Parker, Cynthia Nixon, Kristin Davis, and Kim Cattrall, are all set for the filming which should begin this fall. E! News reported rumors that Cattrall held up the filming. She demanded more money and would not agree to make the movie with the others.

These problems have been resolved and the entire cast is on board. Michael Patrick King, executive producer and director is in the process of writing a script, but the plot line has not yet been released.

The *Sex and the City* movie is to be released on May 30, 2008. If everything goes as planned, filming will begin shortly in New York City. The movie should start off where the series finale ended in 2004. In that episode, each of the ladies was paired with their man; Carrie with Mr. Big, Miranda with Steve, Charlotte with Harry, and Samantha with Smith.

The movie will need to have an extremely innovative and exciting plot line in order to keep the show's faithful followers involved and intrigued. The only differences will be the ages of the characters, which will alter where the movie will pick up.

There are many leaks circulating online about what the plot line will include. If you want to be completely surprised when you see the film, beware that certain online sites may contain plot spoilers. While it is not guaranteed that any of these sources are correct; you should watch out for information that you do not want to know ahead of time.

For long-time *Sex and the City* fans who want to be surprised, avoid internet fan sites and simply wait for the movie to come out.

Austen's life story captivates

Margaret Bonanni '09

Jane Austen was one of the most celebrated female authors of the 1700's. Not only did she see a world that went further than social position and money but she overcame the social expectations for women of her time. In the biographical movie, *Becoming Jane*, director Julian Jarrold does an exquisite job of rendering the events and passion that would later inspire some of her great romantic novels.

The story is set in the year 1795 in a rural English countryside. Austen (Anne Hathaway) wants to make a living by her pen, but her parents wish for her to marry for financial security. She doesn't start

to take marriage seriously until she meets the roguish Mr. Tom Lefroy (James McAvoy), a flirtacious, broke lawyer. Austen and Lefroy soon fall in love, starting a secretive romance that falls fate to an inevitable failure. This failed romance will become the basis of some of her greatest novels.

Although the movie was a set in truth, the romance in the movie between Austen and Lefroy was exaggerated. The screen play for the movie was based on the book *Becoming Jane Austen* by Joe Spence, which was taken from Austen's letters and accounts of her life.

Spence's book and many others about the young author acknowledge the romance between the two lovers,

but no one but those two know the exact extent as to how far the relationship went.

I recommend this film because of its top notch depiction of Austen and the period she lived in. Everything from the scenery and costumes to the vernacular used in the film was true to the time. Hathaway's portrayal of her character was also very accurate to Austen's personality, and in my opinion is her best acting to date.

Hathaway and McAvoy's passionate, witty on screen romance was highly entertaining and will have viewers waiting for more. Additionally, watching this movie will help Austen's readers better understand her work.

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See NEWS section for more info!

Local music scene...

DATE	WHERE	BANDS	TIME	COST
11/24	Skater's Choice	Attention! Attention!, The Atlantic, The Crosstown Rivalry, I Call Fives, The Revival, When These Days End, Love In A .45, The Fourth Avenue, Major League, Death Do Us Part.	5:30pm	\$10
12/15	First Methodist Church	As We Are, The Atlantic, The Crosstown Rivalry, I Call Fives, The Skeleton Rock Shock, Slobbergun.	7:00pm	\$5

Commerce Bank Arts Centre upcoming events

Event	Date	Ticket Prices
Tegan & Sara Opening: Northern State	Friday, Nov. 23 7:00 pm	\$27.50
Dave Coz & Friends Smooth Jazz Christmas with Wayman Tisdale, Jonathan Butler and Kimberley Locke	Tuesday, Nov. 29 8:00 pm	\$37 - \$70
Cirque Dreams: Jungle Fantasy	Thursday, Dec. 13 7:30 pm	\$47 - \$57
Moiseyev Dance Company	Tuesday, Jan. 15 8:00 pm	\$27 - \$52

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Sports

Minutemen advance to semifinal

Chris Fox '10

Story written prior to state semifinal game.

Living up to their title, the boy's varsity soccer team has done an excellent job this season. The Minutemen secured the conference title with a win against Eastern, and is a major contender in the state playoff tournament. This season the team posted a strong record while exhibiting positive team qualities like team work.

There were few weakpoints in the season where the team established a 14-2-2 record. In addition to a great record, the boys varsity soccer team dominated South Jersey by reclaiming the title of the Olympic Conference Division American champs. Even compared to last year's team who had a successful season posting a record of 12-5-2, the current team has performed well. They have advanced to the state final having outplayed some of the areas best teams.

The Minutemen's veteran coach, Mr. Tom Patterson, is extremely proud of his players for their performance and effort, but couldn't really pick a standout player.

"We have a very balanced team. Every one helps everyone to win games," said Patterson.

Captains Chris Dunn '08 and Todd Kleinstuber '08 were able to lead their teammates by example and expressed great leadership on and off the field.

Another very important aspect of the Minutemen soccer team that many other teams



A.J. Nisbet '08/The Patriot

Dwayne Dove's talent with the ball was just a piece of the high-powered Minutemen offense this season.



A.J. Nisbet '08/The Patriot

Darryl Richardson takes a shot on goal after scoring what proved to be the game winner versus Pennsauken. The Minutemen advanced deeper into the playoff tournament after beating Toms River North.

do not possess is their lack of difference in skill between starters and substitutes.

"I don't even refer to them as subs, because there's no difference between the two groups; subs are just as good as the starters this season," said Coach Patterson.

This ability to switch players on and off the pitch with no change in skill undoubtedly gave the team the boost that helped them eventually clinch the division.

Many players were spotlighted this season including John Adamo, the starting sweeper, who is said to be one of the team's most improved players. Also, John Cicalese '08 led the Minutemen in goals scored.

"We're the best, bottom line," said Cicalese when asked about playing in the state tournament.

The Minutemen advanced in the playoffs Thursday afternoon after beating Toms River North 1-0. The Minutemen outshot their opponent 15-5.

This victory came days after a 2-1 win against Pennsauken, where the Minutemen were able to come back from an early deficit. This game featured Darryl Richardson's '09 second half game winning goal.

Richardson, and under classmen who will return to play next year, said, "I hope to have the same chemistry with the team next season."

In every game, the Minutemen were faced

with a challenge. Winning games took a whole team effort. This season, thirteen players on the team scored at least one, making the whole lineup a vital part to the team.

"We're tight on and off the pitch," said important starter Kevin McMullen '08.

This is the first time the Minutemen has gotten this far since their division title in 1989 and 1990. With few obstacle left in their way, the Minutemen look to be crowned state champions for the first time in school history.



A.J. Nisbet '08/The Patriot

Todd Kleinstuber provided senior leadership for this year's varsity squad.

JV squad posts impressive record

Weston Eldridge '10

The Junior Varsity boy's soccer team jumped out to an impressive 9-0 start this season. Coach Mr. Jeffrey Rearick, is very pleased with the team's performance thus far. Before the season, Rearick wanted all his players to improve their fitness, work to potential, and to implement tactical strategies.

"The team has performed above expectations," said Rearick.

Rearick feels that Jerry Guzzo '10 has shown the most improvement throughout the season

so far. As a result, Rearick decided that Guzzo was ready for the next step, playing on the Varsity team. Rearick then had the difficult job of filling his position as sweeper on the JV team. Rearick felt that C.J Walker '11 fit all the requirements for the open spot.

"C.J. Walker contributes in the sweeper position because of his leadership qualities as well as technical abilities," said Rearick.

Players were given the chance to vote for their captains. Rearick named two veteran captains, Dave Lanza '10 and Guzzo.

Rearick felt that the team's best game so far was when they defeated Shawnee 1-0.

"It was the team's best defensive performance," said Rearick.

While the Shawnee game stood out, the most memorable moment for Rearick was when his team beat Cherokee in their third game of the season. It was rewarding for Rearick because he felt that all the players united as one team to achieve the victory.

Rearick credits the team's success to the player's cooperation and attendance. His outlook on

practice is that if a player cuts practice, he will be cut from the team. Rearick's discipline methods allow him to keep the team's full attention during practice. He feels these methods will lead to team chemistry on the field.

Aside from being considered a top notch coach by all his players, Rearick is also a P.E. teacher for the tenth grade. He's been teaching for five years and finds balancing coaching and teaching comes naturally because both have similar goals. He wants the best for his students and players.

A View from the Stands by Rich Elles '08

Philadelphia "back with a vengeance"

The start of a new hockey season had always been a time of great optimism for Philadelphia sports fans. However, after last season's terrible results and massive disappointment, the Flyers supporters could not help but be cautious when placing faith into the 2007-8 squad.

At the end of last season, the Flyers were the joke of the National Hockey League and lacking a true identity as a team. With the hiring of a new general manager and head coach, a constantly shifting roster, and a dizzying amount of trades, even the most ardent fans might have struggled know the players who were forced to band together during that unbearable schedule.

However, new general manager Paul Holmgren put his rapid-fire trading style and the off-season to excellent use, quickly reshaping a team that finished last season with a franchise-low 56 points and 22 wins. Though, as in many cases, the Flyers had to get a little worse before they could get better.

Holmgren began by trading away the team's leader and international superstar, Peter Forsberg for several young players and a top draft pick. Then, recognizing the team's major need to replace slow-skating defensemen with more mobile players to suit the faster style of play in the new era of the NHL, Holmgren immediately acquired defensemen Lasse Kukkonen and Braydon Coburn.



Google Image

Daniel Briere is a vital piece to the Flyer's strong start.

After getting below-average goaltending from a young prospect and a seasoned veteran, the team moved in a different direction, trading for goaltender Martin Biron just minutes before the trade deadline. Not only did Biron get the opportunity to start in Philadelphia after serving as backup in Buffalo, but his determined effort and gritty play allowed him to become a fan favorite in the City of Brotherly Love.

The Flyers continued

excelled in Buffalo under the new rules, agreed to an eight-year contract with the Flyers, completing the mold for the 2007-8 season. Fans were not sure what to expect coming into the season, as the roster contained eleven new starters who were not on the team at the end of last season.

This year's team has raced out of gates, seizing the division lead and regaining some of the respect it had lost last year. The new rules that had been constantly berated in Philadelphia due to the team's inability to adjust are suddenly sitting well with Flyers fans, as the team seems to be flying around and swarming to the puck.

The most noticeable changes on the ice are clearly the ability of the defensemen and the spectacular play of the goaltender. The valuable shot-blocking skills combined with the good coverage of the opposing team's most dangerous goal-scorers have made the job of Martin Biron much easier. And, by posting back-to-back shutouts against rivals New Jersey and Carolina in the first few games of the year, the new Flyers goalie is certainly doing his part to restore the glory in Philadelphia hockey.

Though early season numbers can often be deceiving, this year's impressive squad seems to have returned with a vengeance, looking to return to the playoffs and finally bring the Stanley Cup to the championship-starved city of Philadelphia.

In arguably the largest signing in the NHL over the off-season, Daniel Briere, a center who had

Girls win WTHS's 100th title

Molly Sweeney '08

The Minutemaids soccer team clinched the Olympic Conference Championship on Oct. 23 to become the 100th sports team in school history to win the conference. The 2-1 home victory gave the Minutemaids their second consecutive conference title.

Scoring the two goals for Township were Katie Margiotta '08 and Christina Caltiabiano '08. Goalie Lauren Cicatiello '10 had eight saves in the title game.

The coaching staff was very pleased to win the conference, but head coach Mr. Shane Snyder said the team wasn't concerned with the securing the school's 100th title. The team was looking at it as if it were just another game, not a major school record.

Although the girls' team is excited about setting the school record, they are even more proud of winning their second conference title in a row.

"We're very proud of the girls, and winning the conference two years in a row is not an easy feat considering that Eastern is a good team and our conference is very tough," said Coach Snyder.



A.J. Nisbet '08/The Patriot

The Minutemaids marched through another successful season with a final regular season record of 17-2-1.

Capturing the title was a fitting end to an extraordinary regular season. The Minutemaids finished the regular season with a record of 17-2-1. Janine Valerio '10 was the team's highest scorer of the season, scoring 12 goals, while Margiotta followed closely behind

with 11 goals.

"The hard work, team work, and the toughness of the girls are what made the season so great. The girls really work hard for each other, and that's why they've accomplished so much," said Snyder.

The Minutemaids recently fell to Toms River North after a 1-0 victory over Williamstown on Nov. 1st. Despite the late season loss, the Minutemaids finished a very successful season on Monday.

Alyssa Pasquini '08 thinks the 100th conference win is a great achievement.

"It's great to contribute to the school and leave such a great mark (on the school's athletic history), but the win wasn't just because of one person. It was the result of the work ethic of the team as a whole," said Pasquini. For next year though, the seniors believe that the underclassmen can keep the record going.

"We wish the juniors luck for next season and hopefully the team can keep the conference-winning trend going," remarked Margiotta.

With another successful regular season and an exciting post-season run, look for the Minutemaids to be back in the mix next year.

Homecoming victory sparks momentum

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The first quarter of the game was a true field-position battle, as the teams exchanged possession until Cherokee finally broke through late on a long touchdown drive with just under four minutes to go. And as if the 73-yard touchdown drive had woken a sleeping giant, the Minutemen began to fire on all cylinders on both sides of the ball.

Just two minutes later with the end of first quarter looming, Township running back Skyler Robinson '09 sprinted 55 yards to the endzone, bringing the massive crowd to life for the first time in the game. With the game tied 7-7 the Minutemen special teams and defense went to work.

Early in the second quarter, kicker Dan Maltese '08 watched his 31-yard field goal sail through the uprights following a terrific special

teams play by Tom Mihalic '08. Mihalic rushed down the field and recovered a fumble on a kickoff to set up the offense for another score. Leading 10-7, the Minutemen defense held through most of the second quarter to give quarterback Steve Graziano '08 chances to push the offense into the endzone.

With just 3:44 to go before halftime, Graziano and the Township offense struck again, as the poised quarterback hit wide receiver Matt Bosnjak '08 for a 34-yard touchdown, giving the Minutemen a 17-7 lead. Despite the score, the game was not yet in hand, as the Chiefs quickly answered with another touchdown run to cut the lead to 17-14 at halftime.

After the halftime festivities, the game resumed and the Minutemen defense came alive, standing tall for the entire second half. The inspired unit did not allow

a score in the third quarter and again set up the offense for another score. Graziano ran a quarterback sneak to punch the ball into the endzone from the 1-yard line to reclaim the 10-point lead at 24-14.

Despite the offensive success and long touchdown drives, the game's highlight came early in the fourth quarter when the Minutemen defense put together one of the best stands of the season. With first and goal inside of the Washington Township 5-yard line, the Chiefs were stopped on four consecutive plays, including a fourth-down rush for no gain just inches from the goal line, sending the crowd into a frenzy.

At the final gun, the Minutemen celebrated the victory over the Cherokee Chiefs by saluting the crowd just before the fireworks show. Washington Township did not commit a single turnover and played

a nearly flawless game in front of an appreciative home crowd.

Graziano propelled the Minutemen to victory, completing 5 passes on 9 attempts for a total of 87 yards and one touchdown. After the game, he commented on the importance of the team's win.

"It was one of the biggest games of the season and we really played well," said the quarterback, "The defense was solid all game and made the huge stop which was key in finishing the game."

The win over Cherokee went a long way toward securing a playoff spot for the Minutemen, who now stand at 7-1. With the skilled play of both the offensive and defensive units, the leadership of a constantly improving senior quarterback, and a large sense of team unity, the Washington Township football team should be fun to watch when the playoffs begin.