

Cregar sets, breaks swim records

Blaise Lacca '07

A lot of guys wouldn't consider joining the swim team because they don't like the idea of wearing a Speedo. This is not the case for Billy Cregar '07, Township's top male swimmer. Cregar, 17, has been competitively swimming since the age of five years old, and not once has the thought of wearing a Speedo bothered him.

"I don't even notice that the suit is a Speedo because I've been swimming for such a long time," Cregar said.

When it comes to racing, the time Cregar spends in the pool is actually getting shorter. Several times this season he has broken school records only to set a new mark in the next meet.

He is the state champion in the 200 yard (eight laps) individual medley, and the 500 yard (twenty laps) freestyle. Other state championship accomplishments include finishing 6th in the 200 yard freestyle relay where he teamed with Bill DeMarco '08, Blaise Lacca '07, and Dan Bower '08 to set a new school record, and finishing 14th in the 400 free relay where he was joined by teammates DeMarco, Lacca, and Andrew Wood.

For Cregar, this success was the result of a lifetime of dedication to his sport.

His first swim team experience was with the old Wedgewood Swim Club before the pool was shut down. It was on this team that Cregar officially learned the sport of swimming and found his talent with two strokes, the freestyle and the butterfly.

Cregar instantly found the sport to his liking and this enjoyment made him eager to strive for greatness. As his swimming career took off, he decided to join the U.S.A swim team at GCIT. There Cregar endured grueling three hour a day daily practices in and out of the pool. Now that he is older, Cregar attends practices in the early morning hours before school, and then returns to the pool for the second practice after school.

"There is a lot more hard work that goes into the sport that most people don't know about, most people believe that all you have to do for the sport is dive into a pool and swim back and forth for a while," said Cregar.

Cregar reveals that practices for a U.S.A team are half in the pool and half out. The practices out of the

pool are known as dry land practices. These practices include running, stretching, crunches, push ups, some weight training, and a lot of medicine ball exercises. The other half of practice that takes place in the pool is not just a bunch of laps cruising back and forth. These practices include a warm up, multiple short distance sprinting laps, kicking on a kickboard, swimming without use of the legs, long distance swimming, and starts and turns.

"It is hard work, but my accomplishments are well worth the effort," said Cregar.

One accomplishment Cregar has achieved is qualifying for the New Jersey State Individual Championship Meet every year since he was a freshman.

"Making States as a freshman was a huge achievement for me because only a few freshmen from all over New Jersey qualify for the state meet," Cregar stated.



Rob Cavella '07/The Patriot

Billy Cregar won the state championship in two freestyle events.

He has gone on to win and place in multiple events over his high school career which has given him valuable experience to continue at the collegiate level.

Cregar plans to attend the University of Georgia and will begin his college career in the fall of 2007. He chose not to follow in his father's and sister Amanda's footsteps by attending University of South Carolina.

"I want to go to my own college," Cregar said, "Not that there is anything wrong about University of South Carolina." Cregar said.

Prior to selecting Georgia, Cregar said that he seriously considered the University of Texas, Florida State, Auburn, and Indiana. Each of those institutions caught Cregar's attention because not only do they have top notch swimming programs but an extensive science curriculum.

He felt the University of Georgia will give him the best opportunities to accomplish his goals which include becoming a member of the Men's U.S.A professional swim team.

"This is a huge goal of mine, and it is something that would pay off for all the hard work I have put in," Cregar admitted.

The road to become a professional swimmer is a long one, but with a thirst for greatness, and strong family relationship behind him, Cregar feels these goals are well within his reach.

Girls make state tourney

Blaise Lacca '07

On March 8, the girls swim team held their annual end of the season banquet at the Whitman Fire Hall. At the banquet the girls were honored by their coach, Jessica Slates, not only on their individual accomplishments but also their successfulness as a team.

Throughout the season the girls racked up quite a few wins. They finished with a 9-3 record, including making it to the second round of the state tournament playoffs.

Other team accomplishments include finishing sixth at the "Swim Fast" Relay Carnival, sixth at the South Jersey Coaches Invitational meet, third at the South Jersey Swim Association Championship, and first at the Gloucester County Championship meet for the fourth year in a row.

"The girls weren't swimming for themselves anymore; they would



photo courtesy of tori pellerito '07

Danielle Mocella '08 lends helping strokes to state tournament

swim races they weren't used to just to pull out a win for the team," said Slates, "Humble in victory and united in defeat."

After the season ending loss to Cherry Hill West, there was still work to be done.

Andrea Castiglione '07, Cassandra Cregar '07, Jamie Noonan '08, and Catherine Wood

'09 teamed up in the 200 free relay at the State Individual Championship meet to finish fifth overall.

"I'm really proud of how hard all the girls worked this. It was a great way to end my swimming career here at Township", said Castiglione.

Victoria Pellerito, Noonan, Wood, and Cregar also came together in the 400 free relay to break a school record at the state meet.

"Our whole team really came together this year. We swam for each other, and at states we wanted to leave everything in the water", stated Cregar.

Individual successes were captured by Cregar in the 200 freestyle placing third, and she also finished second overall in the 500 freestyle.

Noonan finished 4th in the 200 freestyle, and 7th overall in the 100 backstroke.

The Patriot

Issue 5

Washington Township High School, Sewell, NJ

March 2006

Township staff takes stage

Margaret Bonanni '09

Township's got talent, and proved it on February 15, 2007 at the Faculty Talent Show. The show was envisioned by Mrs. Debbie McFadden, Mrs. Carol De Lucas, and Mrs. Karen Muro in 1996, and is now produced by McFadden, Mrs. Pat Brown, and Mrs. Criquette Norris. It has become an anticipated event for students, and a growing tradition.

"I've been in all six talent shows, from the beginning, and every year the crowd gets bigger. You can tell from the energy that students are excited about it," said Patricia Conroy.

That night the audience was able to see some of their favorite faculty members display their incredible talent. Opening the show was *This Old House Band*, featuring popular music from the past, and today. With their great choice of music the band's performance was a great way to open the show, and give the audience a taste of what was to come.

Other music was performed by Mr. Robert Hart's band, who chose



Photo Courtesy of Colonel Wolozyn

Mrs. Cheryl Silverman and Mr. Chris Lawler as "Silvy & C-Law" wow the crowds with their rendition of "Mockingbird"

a more contemporary selection of songs.

"It was great when they played 'Wonderwall' by *Oasis*, and over all the show was fun," said Alex Quinn '09.

In addition to the opening of the show, Hart's band also played during intermission and in between performances of the show.

In the first act, the audience was dazzled with amazing dance acts such as *The Evolution of Dance*,

which received an exciting reaction from the crowd. In this piece teachers danced to a mix of songs from different decades and music types, and showed how dance has changed over time.

"This had to be the best act of the night," says Desiree Trzaska '09, "It was so cool to see the teachers dancing on stage and having fun."

Another great performance in the first act was *Teachers With an Attitude*. The crowd was stunned by

Mr. Raymond Anderson's fierce James Brown impression, and their performance of 'Lets Get It Started' by *The Black Eyed Peas*.

In the second act, *Township Fire* reminded students and faculty were reminded of the great times they've experienced at Washington Township High School with a slide show. The slides depicted images of Township from the past and present and got a great response from the audience.

"I thought the slide show was hilarious, especially when they showed the part about the chickens being caught in Quay Way! It was my favorite part of the show", stated Kayla Dieter '09.

The show closed with Sgt Schirmer's Clan, where the guidance department got to get funky with their rendition of Lou Bega's 'Mambo Number Five'. This performance left the show with a comical positive note and sent the audience home smiling.

Not only was the show comprised of great performances, and a sight to see, but it also benefited students. The proceeds from the show went towards Project Graduation and Renaissance. Be sure to catch next year's Student Talent Show on its usual date before the Presidents' Day Weekend.

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The editors of the Patriot would like to apologize for the delay of Issue 5. Production issues prevented us from distributing at an earlier date. Please enjoy!

FCCLA "lovin' it"

Club serves up good time for kids in need

Laura Marder '07

On Feb.20 FCCLA made a difference in a group of very special people's lives at the Ronald McDonald house in Camden. For the fourth year in a row they nourished the resident's appetites, as well as their hearts as they served dinner for the families of seriously ill children receiving treatment at nearby hospitals. FCCLA prepared a delicious meal of

Chicken Devan with multiple appetizers and desserts. The club helped prepare the food at the school and the officers brought it over and spent the evening with the residents. Besides preparing the meal, they brought crafts supplies and led the families in working together to make decorative masks in the spirit of Mardi Gras.

"Seeing the kids faces while doing the crafts was so rewarding, they

were so happy to have something to keep and remember us by," said Letty Scanlon '07, president of FCCLA.

"Everyone was so appreciative, all of the parents thanked us," said FCCLA officer, Julianne Curry '07. Ronald McDonald house is made up of 20 nicely decorated rooms where the families stay. Each room in the home is sponsored by a different group in the community. Washington Township Student Council sponsors one of the rooms in the Camden house. The families get visits each night from

See FCCLA pg 2

“Personal honor” focus of ceremony

Alyssa Figueroa '08

“Personal honor is the ability to do and say the right things when no one else is around, and when there is little risk of getting caught,” announced Mr. Beyer, this year’s keynote speaker for the National Honor Society (NHS) induction.

This year, on Jan. 25, 167 students were inducted into NHS, raising the number of current members to 290.

“Our society consists of 9% of the student population,” said Mr. Lawler, co-advisor of NHS, “we are one of the largest organizations in the school, despite the fact only juniors and seniors are admitted.”

But the large number of inductees does not make each individual any less praiseworthy. “It’s absolutely fantastic to have a large number of students inducted,” said Mr. Anderson, co-advisor of NHS, “these students truly represent the best of the best.”

Each new inductee walked across the stage that night, in the CBAC, to receive their medal and certificate. However, most felt as if they had really received a sparkling trophy of commendation.

“It was a profound experience being honored for the accumulation of hard work and efforts I’ve made throughout the years,” said new member Cristina Virgilio '08.

Hard work indeed. Being in NHS means more than just making the honor roll.

“It’s all about what NHS stands for: leadership, scholarship, service, and character,” said Anderson.

Also at the ceremony, members inducted last year had the chance to essentially give back honor by having their self-prepared speech, acknowledging a teacher, coach, mentor, or other advisor, read aloud.

“It is important to recognize the individuals that have made an impact in your life,” said NHS Executive Board Co-Chair Sarah Martin '07.



Photo Courtesy of Mr. Lawler

Mr. Jim Beyer served as the keynote speaker.

The recognized advisors then responded to the admiration by placing a red stole on the member.

Mr. Barnshaw, who was acclaimed by three students, the maximum allowed, stated, “To be honored by the honorable was a humble experience.”

Following the ceremony, refreshments were served in the 9-10 cafeteria, which also required much preparation. “We’ve been planning the whole ceremony since

a memorable occasion. Afterwards, it was fun being able to see your friends and celebrate.”

But with celebrations of new accomplishments, sometimes comes the farewell to others. At the end of the ceremony, Mr. Lawler acknowledged his final year as co-advisor of NHS.

“I feel that a change will be good for me and the organization,” said Lawler, who has been an

advisor of NHS for 4 years. “I would really like to focus 100% in the classroom.”

Certainly, Mr. Lawler will be tough to follow. “He is an outstanding man and advisor who works with a vision of what he would like done. I really can’t say enough positive things about him; he will truly be missed,” stated Anderson, who has worked with Lawler on NHS for 3 years.

But as we move on, Beyer advises that, “you’re only worth what you can give away; if you have leadership potential, and you don’t display it, it’s no good.”

And when alone, with no audience to share your talents, remaining honorable is the key factor.

“For my speech, I had a totally different topic planned, but the word ‘honor’ kept resurfacing,” said Beyer. “Having personal honor is what true honor is all about; and the only person who knows if you possess it is you.”

FCCLA shares food, fun

From FCCLA pg 1

different organizations. Sometimes even celebrities and members of the Philadelphia Eagles come in. No matter who it is that visits the residents are always gracious. FCCLA tries to volunteer twice a year.

“It’s nice to give back to the community, it’s nice to interact with the kids and hear their stories of why they are there,” explained Scanlon.

Last year the officers were really touched by the story of a two year old girl from Iraq who had gotten her legs blown off in an explosion.

The officers are greatly moved by the stories they hear and the interactions they have with the families.

“I know I want to be someone who helps other just like we have helped those less fortunate through FCCLA,” Curry. For many FCCLA helps students prepare for their future careers. Scanlon plans on going into the field of interior



Photo Courtesy of Letty Scanlon '07

FCCLA officers and advisors smiled for the camera after hosting their event for the residents of the Camden Ronald McDonald House.

design, which she has improved on in FCCLA. She competed in the spring conference and won gold.

“FCCLA really gives me a better idea of what interior design will be like as a job,” said Scanlon. FCCLA is made up of 60 people who dedicate their time to helping the community while preparing themselves for careers in the fields

they love. Along with volunteering for the Ronald McDonald dinner, they also participate in March of Dimes, collect cans and tabs and have cookie bake offs once a month to raise money.

Scanlon challenges the stereotype the club gets of being solely a food club and says, “We do more than just bake cookies.”

Brothers succeed on wrestling mat

by Maria Basco '10

James Higgins '10 and his brother Frank Higgins '08 are two of the best wrestlers on the Washington Township Wrestling team according to team members and stats.

James Higgins wrestles varsity 103 and has won 21 matches and lost one this season. James has been wrestling since kindergarten on the Washington Township Recreation league.

“It’s been ten hard, but enjoyable years [wrestling],” said James Higgins.

James practices once or twice a day, seven days a week. James’ hard work makes him one of the few better wrestlers on the team. James loves having his older brother on the team because they both share the same sport that happens to be one of the most important things in both of their lives.

“Its great having wrestling in common with Frank,” explains James, “I always have someone to drill with at practice and at home.” James’ dad, his brother Frank, and his coaches are some of the main people that inspire him to work harder. His partner, Anthony Curcio '09 (112/119), a district champ, pushes him in practice to be better than he is.

Usually, practicing for hours a day can get very tiring and take up most of one’s life.

“Yeah, it does get pretty tiring but my team is fun to be with and the coaches make everything into a joke so I don’t mind practice at all,” states James.

James and Frank’s parents always attend every match. Their voices along with Frank and James’ fans always motivate them to work harder on the mat. Unlike James, Frank tends to block out all the commotion from the stands.

“I really get tunnel-vision out on the mat. I’m able to block out the crowd and focus on the task in front of me,” explains Frank, “I guess it all just comes with mat experience.”

Both James and Frank have to keep up with grades to wrestle. Their parents stress this to them immensely.

“My mom and dad want James and me to do great in life so they always push us to do well in everything we do,” explains Frank, “They are the worst when it comes to grades. [Low grades are] the one thing they do not tolerate.”

Frank recently transferred from another school. He had to wait till January 17th to wrestle for Twp. Frank has been wrestling since third



Richie Elles '08/The Patriot

Wrestler Frank Higgins has tallied over 60 wins in his high school career.

grade at the age of ten. Frank was actually influenced by James to wrestle. His first team was the Washington Township Midget program. Frank has been wrestling for eight years.

Just like James, Frank practices once or twice a day, seven days a week. Along with TWP wrestling, Frank is involved with DECA and two wrestling club teams. In Frank’s career he has won 61 matches and lost 13. To be the one of the best on the team, Frank practices his hardest and dedicates all of his spare time to wrestling. Frank doesn’t mind dedicating so much time to wrestling because he is always having fun while practicing the sport he loves.

“We have a great group of guys on the team; we always have fun together.” Frank explains, “With the combination of guys we have and a coach like Coach Ross, there’s never a dull moment!”

A View from the Stands by Richie Elles '08

NHL suffers identity crisis

As the second season under the new rules is winding down, the NHL seems to be recovering well from its fallen giant status it acquired during the lockout of the '04-'05 season. Sure, with the shootouts and faster-paced action than before, attendance is higher than it has been in 10 years.

But are fans really turning out in record numbers to see traditional hockey, or are we being dazzled by a mere substitute created for the sole purpose of remarketing the NHL?

Growing up watching hockey at every opportunity as any avid NHL fan would, I came to know and love the strategy involved in the game. Coaches were always designing plays around the structure of the rink, incorporating the structure of the ice into every offensive rush. Teams would protect their leads by setting up traps in the neutral zone to prevent a comeback. Players were labeled as enforcers for their physical play and tendency to wear down their opponents.

But with the new rules, all the careful planning went out the window as the game was changed forever.

In the present NHL, speed rules the game. With the elimination of the two line pass, the fastest players can simply wait for the breakaway feed from their teammates to get a shot on goal uncontested. Slower, heavier players who were considered fighters before the lockout are constantly taking penalties using their old methods on the ice.

Big hits are a rarity in today’s game, as the penalty box opens after almost every thunderous crunch against the boards, much to the dismay of many fans. Fighting in the new NHL is almost non-existent, dropping forty percent after the lockout.

The physical play that we had come to enjoy and expect from the game is no longer a part of the action, but a noticeable ghost that hangs over the ice.

Finally, the addition of the shootout after the standard four-on-four overtime has directly impacted the standings. At first, the concept of a high-energy, pressure situation was entertaining enough to sell out arenas and was accepted as the

standard after overtime. But after a year of the three shot format deciding games, the initial excitement that had fans flocking to the seats has worn off. Is putting the game in the hands of the defenseless goalie fair to all teams who are seeking vital points in the standings?

Eliminating ties from the new NHL has taken the excitement and urgency out of overtime, creating a game where the bonus period is looked upon as just a longer time until the shootout, instead of a sudden death war for one extra point.

After all is said and done, aside from the fact that the game is still played with a puck on ice, is the NHL still hockey?

Looking back on the changes made, the NHL has been saved after a work stoppage, but at what cost? Records will be broken, stars will fade out, and teams that were once dominant will fall from grace.

In the end, the impact from the new rules will hurt both the integrity of the game and replace traditional hockey that had been played for a century before.

Next Issue:

-Season recap of Girl’s Basketball’s run in the state championship tournament
-Check out the new season of Spring sports

Got News?
Let us know.

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Eight straight

Cheerleaders captures conference title... again

Sarah Kurtz '10

On Feb. 25, the Washington Township High School cheerleading team conquered the Olympic Conference for the 8th year in a row.

"It feels awesome knowing that we work so hard to keep our legacy alive. The "family" bond that we have is what leads to such success," said cheerleader Caitlyn McFall '07.

With battle at the Capital right around the corner the girls are excited to compete and once again come home with a win.

This year the girls captured the Olympic Conference American

Division title as well as the Olympic Conference Grand Champion designation. They beat out eight other teams for the titles, out-scoring their competition by forty points. The girls felt their routine was nearly flawless as they tumbled there way right into first place.

The championship was not won without a lot of hard work. The cheerleaders work everyday to turn their bodies into human silly putty. With a perfect routine, their ultimate goal, they put their bodies through a tough work out.

A typical practice begins with warm-ups as the girls stretch to make

sure that they are ready to perform. Next they practice their stunts before doing their routines full out. After the first week of cheerleading your body has experienced being in so many different positions, your entire body feels like jello. Practice for the champs usually ends around five everyday.

They try just as hard at practice as they do on competition day, every second counts.

Although cheerleading is known to be a lot of fun and full of spirit, sometimes it just doesn't matter if they are doing their best. They always do their best, but sometimes they feel their best just doesn't cut it. They have

somebody judging them who they have never met before. The judges don't know their routine they don't know what they're about. They have one chance to make the judges believe and know that they are the best, out of everybody there. They have to prove that WTHS cheerleaders deserve to be the title holder.

This year's varsity team consists of ten seniors and twenty-five girls total. The girls feel that the best thing about the team is just to know that they did their best and that they were good enough to be considered the best. But we all know, when it's WTP not the best?

Ice hockey repeats championship

A.J. Nisbet '08

After a long, successful season and a bunch of intense playoff wins, The Washington Township ice hockey team won their second championship in a row. Throughout most of the season, Township dominated its opponents in pursuit of a championship repeat.

Going into the championship without a playoff loss, Township took over the home side of the Skate Zone. With a packed house and a ceremonial beginning, the game started just as the last playoff game against Shawnee left off, end to end and fast paced as the teams exchanged goals as well as leads. It was a hard fought game, but WT was able to pull through in the end winning 7-6, led by a hat trick from the team's captain Chris Biscardi '07.

"It felt good to be able to help my team the way I did in the biggest game of the year," said Biscardi.

The big victory capped a long 14-2-2 season, which earned themselves a second place seed, three points behind the number one seed, Shawnee Renegades.

Five seniors on WT earned a spot in the top ten point leader category with Colin Davis leading the team with 59 points [second in the league]. Following Davis were Biscardi (43), TJ Dispaldo (40),

Cameron Rowand (39), and Christain Fleagle (35).

This season the team's seniors were not the only ones making an impact on the leaders' column. Freshman Jared Emmet was high up in the standings with 21 points. This season was just a preview of Emmet's talent, who is looking forward to three more varsity years.

Along with WT's high powered offense their starting goaltender, Joe Scafisi '07 was among the league's best, leading all goalies (with more than 400 minutes played) with the least Goals Against. Scafisi also was given an award prior to the championship game for being the MVP of last year's championship game.

Since earning a second seed going into the playoffs, Township also earned a bye into the next round of the two game elimination tournament. Their first game of the playoff tournament was against Cherokee, another high-powered offense. After a scoreless first period, Township began to pull away with three goals in a row in the second period. All township goals were scored by different players in the 4-2 victory.

After giving one championship contender a loss, WT went on to face Shawnee, one of the only teams that were able to defeat Township in



A.J. Nisbet '08/ The Patriot

Colin Davis '07 helped lead his team to a championship with 59 regular-season points.

regular season play.

Both teams went into this game without a loss, and that reason was evident in the beginning. The game was end to end, each team exchanging scoring chances. After Biscardi tied the game up 1-1 in the second period, everything would be on the line in the third. The game remained tied for most of the third period after the teams once again exchanged goals.

With 1:26 remaining in the game, Shawnee was able to get one past Scafisi, taking a 3-2 lead late in the game. Things weren't looking good until Township got a power play for

the remainder of the game. At this point all shots were on net in desperation for the tying goal. With 11 seconds left in the game, Fleagle netted one sending the game to overtime. One overtime was not enough to decide a winner, as Dispaldo ended the game in double overtime, sending WT to the Championship game.

While Township was waiting for its final opponent of the season, Shawnee was able to bounce back from its first playoff defeat in the double-elimination playoff tournament and beat Cherokee 5-4, setting up a WT-Shawnee championship.

With another championship title, the winning tradition stays alive in the WT hockey club. Despite winning the championship, the team's path still does not come to an end. The team got invited to the Flyers Cup tournament, where they have earned a number two seed and a first round bye.

Students set pace for great dance

Kaitlyn Fernández '07

Each year, the Washington Township Rotary Interact Club hosts two Pacesetters dances for mentally challenged adults. Interact held their second dance for the 2006-07 school year on Friday, Feb. 2, 2007 at Masso's Crystal Manor.

Approximately fifteen years ago, parents of mentally challenged young adults began a group called the Pacesetters. This group began working with the high school's junior Rotary club to plan events that would allow the Pacesetters a few nights out each year.

Some Pacesetters may live on their own or with their parents, while others stay in local group homes. These adults are usually afflicted by Down Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy and the Interact dances are often the highlights of their year," said Interact chairperson Meagan O'Kane '07.

"All the hard work is worth it because it is amazing to see how much they enjoy something as simple as dancing."



Photo Courtesy of Arielle Milstein '07

Both Interact and Pacesetter members had great time at the dance.

Since its establishment, this relationship has continued and grown into the three biggest projects hosted by Interact each year. The second of three events for the Pacesetters group, the Winter Pacesetters' Dance, is held each February for approximately 175 guests and 30 students.

Because the club didn't have to worry about catering—which is

handled by Masso's—the student organizers spent most of their planning time working on this year's theme, Under the Sea. Co-Chairperson Christine Boyajian '07 said that this theme "made the dance a lot of fun to plan."

Murals around the room were painted scenes of various fish and characters from movies like *Finding Nemo* and *The Little Mermaid*. All

of the tables were decorated with fish centerpieces and bags of Swedish Fish were given out at the end of the party.

WTHS senior Chris Holleran DJed the event. His previous work was at the Fall Pacesetters' Dance and the Monzo Madness 24 Hour Dance-a-Thon.

The winter dance is especially exciting for the Pacesetters because it is a semi-formal, with the participants wearing dresses and suits. Victoria Garner '08 said, "It's like [their] prom, and I am always so happy that I can be there to share it with them."

An increase in guest attendance and pre-dance planning made this year especially successful for Interact. Even the unfortunate winter weather couldn't minimize the excitement of student volunteers and Pacesetters alike.

"I was proud, as always, of the efforts of the Interact students who planned and carried out Winter Pacesetters," said advisor Tracy Naval.

Teens welcome wage hike

Richie Elles '08

For a teenager, spending money can be a rare commodity, even for those with an entry-level job.

Teens across the nation continue to search for that extra dollar from their low-paying jobs to keep them financially afloat in a society ruled by material possessions. And now, it seems the prayers of the next generation entering the workforce have been answered.

On January 10, 2007, the House of Representatives voted in favor of a bill to raise minimum wage from the current amount of \$5.15 per hour to a sizable \$7.25 per hour.

The increase, which would occur in three \$.75 increments over two years, still needs to pass in a Senate vote before being moved along to the President for a signature.

Many students at WTHS are excited about the possible guaranteed raise and feel that it couldn't have come at a better time. Christy Pettit '08, employed at the Custard Shack,

shared her thoughts on the bill recently passed by the House of Representatives.

"I'm really glad that they will increase the pay of students across the country. I think it will be even more fun to see how the money is spent," said Pettit '08 with a smile.

The last time minimum wage was raised was in 1997 by President Clinton, upping the amount to \$5.15 from \$4.75, a small increase. The thought of a \$2.15 raise has many teens on edge, as they anxiously await a larger payday and that extra trip to the mall afterward.

Currently, those holding their low-paying jobs are bound by the lowest minimum wage among the prominent economic countries in the world.

Ireland has adopted an astounding minimum wage of \$11.69 per hour, with the United Kingdom checking in at second with an \$11.22 set as the lowest employees can earn in one hour's work.

The vote on wage limits has teenagers hanging in the balance,

anticipating a pay increase. Students holding their first job are waiting for the chance to earn a little extra spending money, whether it is spent hours after the paycheck is cashed or saved for a much larger purpose.

Brad Elliott '08, who works at Commerce Bank as a teller, commented on what he will do with the small bonus.

"Saving for a car and college is my number one priority," said Elliott, "It's great that there will be that much more money to save for later in life."

Despite the potential increase, the question still remains, is the new amount sufficient for teens?

Today, material goods, such as type of car or the clothes one wears, rule the social world. With the United States having the lowest minimum wage among other world powers, is a raise of just over \$2.00 enough to keep today's teenagers placated?

As the bill passes through Congress keeping minimum salary employees on the edge of their seats,



Google images

Small increase will make a big difference in the pocket's of teenagers.

workers across America can be assured that the government is making an effort to reward hard-working teens across the nation.

Bomb threat forces evacuation

Matt Neuteboom '08

On Friday, Mar. 2, students found themselves sitting in the bleachers instead of their classrooms. It was in response to a bomb scare for the second time this year. Unfortunately, however, in addition to the school's students, the threat also caused the evacuation of approximately 2,000 second graders in the CBAC on a field trip that would have to be cut short.

Second graders from all over the county had flocked to WTHS for a play being performed here that day. Regrettably, before even half the show was done, all

students had to be evacuated. Buses were immediately called in, and the second graders were the first to exit the school.

WTHS Principal Rosemarie Farrow commented, "It's really a shame, because this hurts our reputation as a safe school. You have to wonder what people will think when their students are going to come to this school on a field trip."

The play was paid for by the students, and refunds will have to be given to all the students who attended.

Farrow said, "I felt terribly sorry for these kids. They hadn't even seen half the show before

they had to be evacuated."

The threat came around 10:30AM, and was discovered written in one of the school's bathrooms. School administration immediately began the evacuation process starting with the CBAC.

As of Mar. 9, county police had yet to catch those responsible for the threat. Police are, however, continuing their investigation.

This bomb scare marks the second time this year that Farrow had to deal with a stressful situation. Two bomb scares in one year is not unprecedented, but Farrow commented that "it is definitely unusual."

Fortunately, the weather was much better than wet conditions on the Valentine's Day bomb scare two years ago, or the frigid climate during the scare this past Oct. 23.

Staff and students seem to be getting used to these emergency situations, as it only took about an hour and a half to get students back and situated in their classes.

Farrow said "You can make a million plans all pinpointed down to perfect detail, but what it really comes down to is those who have to carry out the plan, and I think the kids and our faculty responded beautifully with full cooperation."

Cooking spices up school day

Alyssa Figueroa '08

When you walk into G-104 during 1st or 2nd period, there are usually two things you will notice: the tempting smell, and the appearance of "hell's kitchen," as described by Ms. Molle, the Culinary Arts III teacher.

"We are always cooking in here," stated student Amanda Brown '07. "You have to be very responsible and creative, and you can't fool around."

Hence, this double period, 10-credit class, is definitely "not for those who do not have a real, sincere interest in culinary arts," said Molle.

However, not everyone who takes this class aims to be a chef. Although Mike Vespia's ('07) goal is to "become a chef and own my own restaurant," Brown wants to become a speech pathologist; but she "loves this class!" and is "very interested in cooking."

An ordinary day in the class could start off with an extraordinary task. In one such recent assignment, students voted on an executive chef, and then divided into two teams. They had to create an appetizer, entrée, and desert to serve at their 'restaurant' and have all three courses ready by 8:30 on the dot.

"They've had a long time to work on this," explained Molle. "They have to know exactly what they're doing - down to which frying pan



Alyssa Figueroa '08/ The Patriot

Everyone in Culinary Arts III contributes to the daily assignments. (l-r) Michael Vespia prepares crab cakes, Tony Pragosa cooks spicy sweet potato fries, and Dana McFadden and Amanda Brown prepare the fillet mignon.

they're using. That's why each minute late is 10 points off your grade."

The class is mainly designed to challenge you. "The students are mostly graded on effort rather than the final product, to ensure they didn't 'play it safe,'" said Molle. "The executive chef's grade depends on how each team's dishes are presented on the table, and how well he or she was overseeing everything."

Most students have maintain some merriment under all the pressure. "It's not *all* fun and games," said Brown, "but overall, this class is a blast!"

"You get to create the recipes and make what you want," said Allison Perry '08. "And there's a lot of

freedom," added Kaitlyn Hughes '07.

One of the students' favorite assignments is the 'mystery box.'

"The class is divided into two teams, and each team receives a cloth-covered tray with the same ingredients on it," stated Molle. "Then they all uncover the trays and get 55 minutes to prepare a meal."

"I love it!" exclaimed Brown, "You never know what to expect."

Neither does Molle, who has to constantly watch over the students. "My biggest concern, 'how much oil is in that pan?,' is that my kids have basic safety knowledge" said Molle, as she skimmed around the room.

It was quite clear that Molle both

cares about and teaches her students very much. "She is one of my favorite teachers because she's just so supportive," stated Jazmine Cora '08.

And support is crucial since every attempt is not always a success. "Ms. Molle always tells us, 'if you had to do it again, now you know how to do it better' and sometimes we get an opportunity to correct our mistakes," said Brown.

So when you next walk down G-hall, and swear you smell fillet mignon, you probably do. Culinary Arts III is definitely a fascinating class filled with passionate students that love to fry, grill, bake, and sauté. Perhaps the best part of taking the class is that "you get to taste everything you make!" declared Brown.

Rock Across the Sea by Stephanie Foran '08

Miyavi speaks universal language

For the past four years, there has been a man dominating the music charts of Japan. Along with his ever-changing style of music and even the identity of his own name, Miyavi (Also known as Miyabi or MYV), has always been one of the most popular rock stars in Japan.

Miyavi was born in Nisikujo, Japan on Sept. 14, 1981 to a Japanese father and a Korean mother. Due to undisclosed differences, his parents divorced as a child and soon after he moved with his mother to live near his grandparents. Miyavi was always a good student and had become quite skilled in playing soccer, but an injury left him unable to play.

As a result, the soon-to-be musical superstar started to play the guitar and write songs. He has been playing for eleven years.

Miyavi's career, however, did not start out as a solo act. At the age of eighteen he joined the band, Dué le Quartz as the lead guitarist. In 2002, the band disbanded when



Miyavi, challenges the norms of Japanese rock stars.

bassist Kikasa left due to personal reasons. Soon after Miyabi (as he was known in DLQ), under the name Miyavi, also left the band and produced his first major solo album, titled *-gagaku-* under the label PS Company. He lost many of his original fans that he had gained in Dué le quartz because he had altered

his image and the style of his music, but gained an entirely new audience in return.

The rockstar's music has been called everything from eccentric, to downright quirky. But there's always one aspect you can depend on Miyavi for: his fantastic guitar skills. There is almost

always at least one solo or amazing riff in his songs, especially ones in songs like *Shindemo Boogie-Woogie* and *Freedom Fighters*. Even though all of his songs are in Japanese, Miyavi is the type of artist who can transcend the language barrier. From a fan's perspective, his music is cheerful (most of the

time) and something you can definitely dance to. Miyavi had reached international superstardom in 2005, with the release of his third album, *Miyavizm*.

Aside from being a rockstar and an international heartthrob, the Japanese rocker has also starred the 2004 movie, *Oresama* and is regularly

featured in such Japanese rock magazines such as, *Shoxx*, *Fools Mate*, and *Arena 37c*. He was due to tour in the United States in 2004, but had to cancel the tour last minute due to staff issues. He changed labels in that same summer to Universal Records with the release of *Miyavizm* and has again changed his name to 'MYV'.

Despite his loud and outgoing personality, Miyavi is generally very quiet and polite when meeting fans. When checking out his albums, there is normally a Japanese character next to his name, which means 'elegant.' It has not changed since the days of Dué le quartz. He is unusually tall for his nationality, standing at six foot one inch. His favorite color is pink and his favorite foods include chicken, sushi, and chocolate cake, as his website states. Miyavi has been battling an addiction to smoking for most of his career, but he finally quit the habit recently. His website is <http://www.o-re-sa-ma.com/> if you're interested in learning more about the elegant Miyavi.

Spektor delivers haunting vocals

Robert Brennan '10

On Feb. 18, 1980, a musician was born who would develop a beautiful voice and extraordinary talent on instruments such as the keyboard, guitar and musical chair (drumsticks played on a wooden chair). Regina Spektor was born into a musical family in Moscow, Russia with a photographer/amateur violinist father and a music professor mother. At the age of six, Spektor began studying classical piano. The Spektor family first moved to Austria, then Italy, and then finally settled in Bronx, New York.

Commonly associated with the anti-folk scene, which is a mix of punk and American folk, from New York's, East Village, she had a hit with "Fidelity" and released her album, "Begin To Hope" just in time for all her newly acquired fans, who had to make due with her past releases, "Soviet Kitsch" and "Live At Bull Moose".

Her music consists of

seemingly simple piano riffs, but features mood-setting riffs and lyrics that impact the listener immediately. There is no simple classification for her music, as all of her songs have different attitudes, themes and styles ranging from electronic to hip-hop, from quirky to bittersweet, and from jazz to pop.

Regina Spektor's songs are based around fictional characters and scenarios that she draws from her imagination. She first recognized this talent on a field trip to Israel in her teenage years, when her peers were amazed at her ability to make up songs while hiking.

She explores her vocal abilities non-stop while using a thick New York accent on some words or using jazzy vibrato or a breathy high register.

In her lyrics she sometimes uses abstract narratives or first-person accounts. Her songs are more or less short stories put into a song. She also frequently includes references to famous people such as, Boris Pasternak in "Apres Moi" and Ezra

Pound in "Pound of Flesh". She often has recurring elements in her songs such as the mention of gravediggers or the name, Mary Ann.

In contrast to newer artists, Spektor's voice is left more-or-less unaltered on her CD's.

She has performed on a bright red Baldwin baby grand piano since 2005 and has made appearances at local venues such as, "The Electric Factory" and "The Theatre of Living Arts". She has toured across America and Europe.

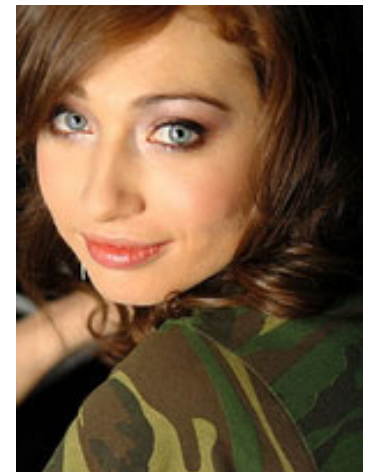
Spektor has appeared on shows such as, "Late Night with Conan O'Brien" and "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno". She has also performed on "Jimmy Kimmel Live" and "Last Call with Carson Daily".

The popular show, *Grey's Anatomy* has featured her songs "Fidelity" and "On The Radio". Spektor's song, "Better" is currently being used in a commercial for XM satellite radio.

Spektor has had one of the greatest successes of any artist on

the web, "Youtube" with her video for "Fidelity" being viewed 200,000 times in two days.

I recommend "Soviet Kitsch" and all of Regina Spektor's other titles to everyone who has an open mind about music and appreciates great vocals and amazing piano playing.



Regina Spektor's music was featured on Grey's Anatomy.

Scorsese arrives with *The Departed*

Mob flick finally brings home Oscar for director

Josh Bennett '07

Note: At the time this was written, the *Departed* had just recently been released into theatres. It has since gone on to gain numerous nominations at the Oscars, and even took home Best Picture and Direction.

I went into the *Departed*, honestly, not knowing what to expect. I wasn't even 100% sure what the movie was about, but with such an all-star cast of Jack Nicholson, Leonardo DiCaprio and Matt Damon, I had no doubts it would be a decent film. With that said, I can sit here now and be quite blunt with you: this is the movie of the year, easily.

Basically, the story revolves around an ongoing rivalry between an Irish-American gang and the Massachusetts police force. To try and demean the other, young cop Billy Costigan (DiCaprio) is chosen

to infiltrate the gang while Colin Sullivan (Damon), a young criminal and informer for the gangsters, has managed to gain a position of power within the Special Investigations Unit. Costigan quickly gains the confidence of leader Frank Costello (Nicholson). Eventually, it becomes rather obvious that each side has a mole on the insides and it becomes only a matter of time before someone's identity is revealed.

Like I said before, this film had a perfect cast. The entire cast delivered a stellar performance and I give the Oscar nod to all three of them, especially Jack Nicholson. He was such a perfect villain, as always. I really shouldn't forget to mention that there are also appearances from Mark Wahlberg, Martin Sheen and Alec Baldwin, creating a true ultimate cast. Wahlberg managed to steal every scene he was in, and that's a strong statement, figuring he shared time with most of the main characters.

With the direction of Martin



Undercover cop, Leonardo DiCaprio and mob boss, Jack Nicholson, confront each other in *The Departed*.

Scorsese, who has created such great films such as *Goodfellas* and *Raging Bull*, there was no way this film could possibly fail. Scorsese now has yet another masterpiece to add to his list. Maybe this time he'll actually win the Oscar for Best Picture, as he's already lost numerous times over his lengthy career.

The film's quite lengthy at two hours and twenty-nine minutes long, but it's so worth every minute. It'll keep you on your seat the entire time, it's just that thrilling. Though it's rated R, you should definitely do your best to try to get in and see it.

Labyrinth explores escape from fascism

Kaitlyn Fernández '07

It is 1944 and World War II is slowly ripping the world apart. In Spain, a fascist regime under General Francisco Franco is growing more and more repressive as the Nationalist army attempts to snuff out the Republican rebel forces living among them. To escape the terror of real life, Ofelia, a young girl living with her mom and step-father, creates a dream world filled with fantastic creatures. But as she finds out, even this fantasy isn't picture perfect.

Mexican writer/director Guillermo del Toro unfolds *Pan's Labyrinth*, or *El Laberinto del Fauno*, from the depths of his imagination as a gothic fairy tale set on the background of the ending of the Spanish Civil War and the beginning of Franco's regime.

The story begins with the inquisitive Ofelia driving with her mother to live with her new stepfather, Capitan Vidal, at his military encampment. Though young Ofelia (Spanish actress Ivana



In *Pan's Labyrinth*, the bookish young stepdaughter of a sadistic army general escapes into an eerie but captivating fantasy world.

Baquero) looks to the fantastical world that she reads about in her favorite books, she will not be able to escape the cruelty of the new world she is entering.

Near her new home, Ofelia finds adventure in a sprawling labyrinth filled with old statues of strange beasts and creatures including the most peculiar of creatures—a real-life faun (half goat, half human).

Stifled by the real world, she turns to the faun again and again. His promises that she is a long lost princess and she may soon be reunited with her real family keep her attention. Even as he sends her on various missions both frightening and dangerous, she clings to him when she cannot cling to her mother.

Since the film's release it has earned enormous critical support and

won 3 of its 6 nominations at the Academy Awards, which is an extraordinary feat for a foreign film.

Pan's Labyrinth is one of the most beautifully made movies I have ever seen. The imagery, art direction, and cinematography are, quite literally, out of this world. Rich with detail, the creatures that Ofelia encounters are realistic enough to give me nightmares.

Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, del Toro shot the entire movie in Spanish. Rather than dubbing in lines, audiences must be prepared to read subtitles for the film.

At the same time, this movie is not all ancient creatures and fairy tale quests. The movie was rightfully given an R rating for it's more than slightly gruesome scenes of Capitan Vidal's torture of both the revolutionaries and his own forces. It is only through the innocence and strength of Baquero that the movie remains enchanting despite the brutality. For those who are faint of heart, do not expect this spellbinding movie to be comedic relief.

What's Happening

Relay volunteers act out against cancer

The American Cancer Society's Relay for Life brings together millions of people across the world to raise money to prevent cancer, to save lives, and to diminish suffering from the disease. This year the WT community will gather and participate in the fight against cancer in a Relay hosted by WTHS on June 1 & 2. Teams of people take turns running or walking the high school track for the 24 hour event while listening to music and having fun.

If you cannot participate in an actual Relay team, there are many other ways that you can participate: You can volunteer to help out at the event. You can also sponsor someone you know in their mission to raise

money. Or you can donate a "luminary" intended to keep "the fire of hope" burning in memory of someone who has lost their battle with cancer or who continues to fight today.

You can register with friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, or classmates to form a 8-15 person Relay team. For more information, attend the next meeting on Tuesday, Mar. 27 at 7:30 PM in room C-2, call 1-800-ACS-2345, or register online at <http://www.cancer.org/relayonline> or <http://www.acsevents.org/relay/nj/washingtontownship>.

- Kaitlyn Fernandez '07



WTHS students, Sami Loeber '07, Cait Chew '07, and Erin Dunphy '09, work on the Relay Committee.

Rewind records year's events

There are many things for a student at Washington Township High School to look forward to at the end of the year--half days, proms, and yearbooks. Among the list of things that come at the end of the year is the video yearbook.

The video yearbook is compiled by Monthly Rewind. Michelle Scott, a senior explains, "Rewind goes around through out the year filming events and clubs. At the end of the year we throw it together in the yearbook."

Scott is one of the Rewind staff members in charge of the video yearbook. This year will differ from last year's.

"It will be better," Scott says, "It'll be less boring and more to the point. The segments will be shorter and packed." The video yearbook

will be organized into three categories. These categories include events, clubs, and sports. "The sports will have text that gives the record of the teams," Scott says.

Monthly Rewind should be completed the video year book by May. Although a price hasn't been determined yet, Rewind members including Scott believe that the yearbook will be well received, "The yearbook is just going to be something you're going to love," Scott says, "You can relive every event as if you were there each time you pop in the DVD."

- Kyle Marr '07

Students save babies with March of Dimes

Be on the look out for the pink and blue MoD bracelets and shoes being sold by the Interact Club. March of Dimes is a foundation dedicated to preventing the birth of premature babies. You can make a donation to the cause with an Interact member, or sign up in Room I-103 after school to participate in the walk scheduled for Sunday, Apr. 29, 2007.

- Kaitlyn Fernandez '07

This month with the Book Club
For April, the student book club will be reading *The She* by Carol Plum-Ucci about a sea-related tragedy that changes a young boy's life. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, Apr. 24th in the IMC.
- Katie Mount '09

Wear your smile

Buy a Smile Pin for Operation Smile. Interact members will be selling these pins in April to raise money for children with facial defects. The club hopes to raise \$1000, enough for 4 children to receive this surgery.

- Kaitlyn Fernandez '07

Don't forget to vote!

School Board Election April 17th

absentee ballots available on district website at www.wtps.org

Pieces seeks student work for mag

Look out for the *Pieces* calendar handed out earlier this month. Submissions for the upcoming magazine will be accepted until Apr. 8. *Pieces* accepts writing, artwork, or photography. Either drop off your work to K-208, or send it in an email to pieces.magazine@gmail.com.

- Katie Mount '09

College Fair offers prospects for juniors

On Wednesday, Apr. 11, the Guidance Office is hosting the college fair from 6:30 to 8:30 PM in the 9/10 Gym.

More than 100 colleges and universities will be represented at this free exhibition for students and parents.

College representatives will be present to answer questions and hand out all the information college applicants will need.

- Kaitlyn Fernandez '07

District Art Show

WTHS will hold the annual District Art Show on Thursday, Apr. 12 from 7-9 PM. Student artwork from all district schools, kindergarten through high school, will be on display throughout the building.

WTHS art students will do various artistic demonstrations. Some student work will also be available for purchase. Finally, there will be a senior student juried art show in the Permanent Art Gallery on the third floor balcony of the CBAC.

- Kaitlyn Fernandez '07

Toward a healthy horizon

Megan Robertson '09

The question of whether smoking should be banned in all public places has never fully been answered. Some states already have smoking bans; however, they have not been established in all. Many people feel smoking bans should be enforced in all public areas across the country as a serious health precaution.

The hazardous effects of smoking are just as dangerous to nonsmokers as they are to smokers. Statistics show an average of 470,000 people die each year from smoking- about 50,000 of them from second-hand smoke. Studies have also shown that overexposure to the carcinogens found in cigarettes, may lead to carcinogenesis and cancer. It is not fair that nonsmokers have to suffer the consequences of smoking, when they chose not to smoke in the first place.

Environmental tobacco smoke is also very harmful to children. When children are exposed to an excessive amount of smoke, they are more likely to catch pneumonia and bronchitis. In fact, it causes about 150,000 to 300,000 cases annually. On average, one million children are diagnosed with asthma every year due to passive smoking. It has also been proven that children with parents who smoke make more visits to the doctor than children with parents who do not smoke. Not only can the hazardous effects of smoking be passed to an unborn child through a mother who smokes, they can also be passed through a pregnant mother who is only exposed to passive smoking.

The establishment of smoking bans has been known to increase quitting rates and decrease consumption. Studies have shown an average of 5% of smokers quit due to smoking bans. Many smokers decide to quit because of the inconvenience of having to step outside to smoke.

It should be clear, these laws benefit everyone. Nonsmokers are able to avoid inhaling smoke filled air while smokers are being encouraged to quit and improve their own health. With these new laws intact we can help to provide a healthier living environment for everyone.

Joe Granato '07

On Jan. 15th, 2006 the New Jersey Smoke-Free Air Act (NJ SFAA) was passed by New Jersey legislature and signed by Governor Codey. Effective Apr. 15, 2006, the new law requires all indoor workplaces and public places to be a smoke free environment. This includes factories, restaurants bars, clubs, theatres, race tracks, hotels, train stations, and even parking garages. It also prohibits smoking outdoors on all the property of elementary and secondary schools, both public and private.

This legislation is long over due. About a year ago I walked into Whitman Diner, sat down and right as I was about to eat, I caught the terrible stink of someone's cigarette they were carelessly puffing away on as they simultaneously ate their eggs. I was in the nonsmoking section, however, since these sections were divided by a three inch piece of plastic and ten feet at the most, it wasn't surprising that I lost my appetite instantly.

It has been proved that being exposed to secondhand smoke in great quantities can eventually lead to heart and lung damage similar to that of a smoker. Large research studies single out environmental tobacco smoke as the culprit for a number of childhood ailments and chronic diseases. Something so harmful should not have a place in restaurant and other public facilities.

Second hand smoke is a toxic cocktail consisting of poisons and carcinogens. There are over 4,000 chemical compounds in second hand smoke; 200 of which are known to be poisonous, and an upwards of 60 have been identified as carcinogens. Despite those facts, in June 1999, for the second time in many years, a jury refused to find the tobacco industry liable for the cancer death of a nonsmoker.



Nate Gutoski '07

However, the world is making a change. I feel that the restriction of smoking in all public places is a great step forward for mankind. Second hand smoke is destructive to everyones health, and the passing

of this new law creates a much more wholesome social atmosphere. I praise this law for improving the health of future generations to come and showing the world a beautiful, new healthy horizon.

The Patriot

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Fall Out Boy takes risks

Erin McFadden '07

The first sounds on *Infinity on High*, the latest album from Chicago-based pop-punk darlings Fall Out Boy, come from the mouth of rapper Jay-Z. This confusing introduction, though perhaps the band's way of flaunting their connections at Island Def Jam, is highly representative of the awkwardly ambitious fourth full-length album from Patrick Stump, Peter Wentz, Joe Trohman, and Andy Hurley.

The album's first single, "This Ain't a Scene, It's an Arms Race," left many fans optimistic about the release it preceded. The track features the high powered chorus, frantic beat, and witty lyrics that have trademarked Fall Out Boy's songs for the past five years, but the track is a near stand-alone on *Infinity*.

The delicious spite evident in the lyrics of past albums has been replaced by melodramatic depression, as evident on tracks like "The (After) Life of The Party" and "Golden." The latter represents an



Fall Out Boy's sound has matured but has retains its youthful passion.

uncharacteristic attempt at ballad writing from Stump, the band's singer and principle songwriter, at which he succeeds only in producing a song to put the audience to sleep.

Fall Out Boy lyricist Wentz, while recently catapulted into the spotlight by internet scandal, has been most well-known in the alternative rock community for the

insightful and caustic one-liners that have punctuated his band's songs. On *Infinity on High*, he shows his awareness of this by composing entire songs of such lines. The result tends to come in the form of unbearable strings of nonsensical metaphors and puns, as seen in the track "Don't You Know Who I Think I Am?"

The songwriting team of Stump and Wentz meet their respective musical and lyrical talents with the best results in tracks like "Hum Hallelujah" and "Fame < Infamy," both of which call upon traditional Fall Out Boy formula beloved by fans on past albums *Take This to Your Grave* and *From Under the Cork Tree*.

The band's attempts at maturing their sound while still producing good songs are occasionally successful. The tracks "Thnks Fr Th Mmrs" and "I've Got All This Ringing in My Ears and None on My Fingers," both featuring orchestras and dramatic vocals in the style of fellow scene successes and FOB protégés Panic! At The Disco, are musically interesting and appropriately bitter. The choral gang vocals and minor-keyed verses of "Bang the Doldrums" are also new to the Fall Out Boy style, but provide an interesting contrast that adds to the conflicted nature of the lyrics.

Infinity on High is an awkward album from a band who many had assumed had already grown up. Perhaps the evident lyrical melancholy and innuendo mixed with musical schizophrenia will prove lethal to the TRL generation of Fall Out Boy fans, but those who know the band well will find redeeming qualities in both the old and new elements of the songs.

Wincing through the Shins' latest

Joe Granato '07

Indie rock kingpins the Shins are back with the long awaited *Wincing the Night Away*, an album anticipated by many to be a near perfect one for the new year. However, this bearded band disappointed many fans on January 23rd with an album that fell extremely short of being called some of their best work.

Many of the Shins' best songs evoke a feeling of comfort that's immediately recognizable but rarely experienced. Since their debut album in *Oh, Inverted World* (2001), intimacy has been the bands best weapon. These tendencies became tradition in their follow up album *Chutes Too Narrow* which sold well over 395,000 copies since its 2003 release. This album brought the Shins into the limelight with songs that were eventually featured in movies such as "Garden State" and "In Good Company." *Chutes Too Narrow* was then nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Recording Package.



The Shins try maintaining their vibrant personalities with *Wincing the Night Away*.

The Shins writing style on *Wincing the Night Away* has changed direction, bringing their sound back to their roots. James Mercer's (singer, guitarist, song writer) well known guitar strumming patterns are drowned out by synthesized arpeggios and other miscellaneous sounds. The drums and bass lead each track but sometimes over power even Mercer's unique vocals.

The mundane colored cover art much reflects the albums lack of ability to change up the feeling from song to song. Coming from the vibrant recordings of *Chutes Too Narrow*, fans may have

On top of all this are enough keyboards to start a Styx cover band. With all these elements mixed together for what seems like the entire length of each song, the melodies feel musically cramped. The phrase "less is more" has clearly come to

mean nothing to the band. Though the recorded quality of this album is much more professional and cleaned up, it loses the raw sound that the Shins are known for. The Shins have successfully followed up their ground breaking *Chutes Too Narrow* with an album that has arguably more emotional depth and maturity. *Wincing the Night Away* will continue to carry the Shins' career into a positive light and expose them to the world more and more. So in a sense the album did all an album is expected to do, which must mean that the Shins are extremely proud of it. Now if you're asking me if this album will change your life, then the answer is no.

Wincing the Night Away is just another album you'll hear, enjoy and forget—nothing more. Maybe that is all the Shins were aiming for and all the fans need right now.

Exposing Reality by Randall Beatrice '08

Moore blasts gun culture

It's hard to believe that a single movie can change the world in ways no person can possibly imagine but it has still proven to be true.

Documentary films have been around for a long time; however, the genre did not become more increasingly successful in theaters until just recently.

And whenever a moviegoer thinks documentaries, they think Michael Moore. But for those who are not aware of him, he is a film director who focuses on political rights and current controversy in the United States. He is widely known for his outspoken and critical views on sensitive topics like globalization, large corporations, gun violence, and the war in Iraq. He has been directing movies for more than a decade, but he did not gain much popularity until he released *Bowling For Columbine* in 2002. It received much acclaim and



Michael Moore, creator of *Bowling for Columbine*, takes aim.

praise from critics and film festivals around the country and it even won him an Academy Award later that year.

The film focuses primarily on gun violence and explores the possible reasons and causes for the Columbine High School massacre. He also attempts to understand the minds on the shooters involved and what kind of background and environment they grew up in. The

as well. Moore argues that high gun ownership is not responsible for violence in United States and instead that there must be something else about the American psyche and the media that makes the nation uniquely prone to high rates of murder and shootings. In support of these claims, Moore states that other countries have similar gun ownership laws but much less problems with violence.

Despite all of the controversy, many changes were made shortly after the film hit public theaters and his opinions did not go unheard. Laws surrounding gun control became much more strict as well as the offences for threatening or attempting to hurt someone with a firearm. This in the long run, made schools around the country a safer place for students to learn and reduced the amount of murders and accidents involving these weapons.

Join the Cult by Matt Neuteboom '08

Plan Nine from Outer Space: So bad it's good

Plan 9 from Outer Space has often been considered one of the worst movies of all time. But few realize it might just be one of the greatest movies ever made by man.

Any movie can be horrible and boring. You can take bad acting, bad writing, and bad production and simply make the audience lose interest. That's an easy task. But it takes a special kind of film, the kind that acts like a big-budget film when it obviously isn't, to be so bad as to be entertaining.

Plan 9 from Outer Space details the workings of an alien race, whose name or origin really doesn't matter at all. After plans 1 through 8 failed, they predictably move on to Plan 9. For this scheme, the aliens will resurrect the dead in order to coerce planet Earth into cooperation with their race.

You'd think that after about 6 tries, they would have given up with the plans and simply blown up the planet. But no, these are some persistent aliens, and they're going through with it. It is revealed

throughout the film that they are actually trying to save the human race, despite the fact that Plan 9 explicitly requires that they kill half of the human race to do so.

Haven't seen or heard of Plan 9? Here's just what you're missing. Plan 9 boasts a stellar acting crew, with a Swedish wrestler that plays a detective, aliens that are just humans in glittery uniforms, and a cop who scratches his head with a loaded gun. Let's not forget to point out that the aliens speak English and wear lipstick.

The acting is only outmatched by its production values. You can watch as the same movie clip is played five times in a row in a one minute period. The outstanding set creators managed to put together tombstones made of cardboard (that do fall over during the middle of the movie) and an alien ship so advanced, their equipment is a bunch of radios on end tables.

The list goes on. Shots that go from midnight to midday, then back again, actors that trip on screen, and more clichés than an old

episode of Batman.

The director, Ed Wood, decided not to go with a professionally written script, or any script editing. Why would he? With classic lines such as "future events such as these will affect you in the future," and "I'm muzzled by army brass!" there's just no need for re-editing.

With actors who would have been apt for a sixth grade school play and a script written with an audience of chimpanzees in mind, it almost makes it seem like the movie was made to be bad. But what truly makes it entertaining is that it wasn't. This movie was genuinely trying to be a masterpiece and how bad it ends up is the reason this movie is so hilarious.

This is the movie we all see spoofed by modern sci-fi movies, the type that are so bad it's a wonder it even got produced. Just the fact that it was makes me wonder if the producers lost a bet with the director and were forced to put this in theaters.

But you have to hand it to Ed Wood. Even when one of his star actors died during production, he



bit the bullet and pushed through. Not many movies can be so badly and cheaply made that they are actually funny. With its dollar store special effects, cheap sets, cornball writing, plot holes so big you could drive a bus through them, and acting as cardboard as it comes, this is a movie you are not soon to forget.

Stressed out teens

Lauren Finneran '08

Homework, family life, jobs, extra curricular activities and still trying to make time for a social life are all factors that play into your stress level.

Stress is defined as tension, pressure, or strain which affects the mind and body.

Many people, adults especially think that stress just affects people who are in the "real world" and who have to live on their own. However, this is not the case. About.com said that a study was conducted at the University of Michigan which showed that one third of US teens say that they feel stressed-out on a daily basis and nearly two thirds of teens say that they are stressed at least once a week.

Teens get stressed out about different things. For some it's the constant load of schoolwork they have on a nightly basis and for others, it's having an after school job or family issues to deal with.

"As for schoolwork, you start feeling guilty when you watch TV, or do something instead of doing your work" complained Alyssa Figueroa '08.

Teens have many stressors similar to those of adults, teens worry about money, their future, family, and friends. Just because they aren't "grown up" or "in the real world" doesn't mean that their problems should be ignored or taken lightly.

"Being stressed is mentally and physically exhausting" exclaimed Figueroa.

In a poll taken of teenagers in Baltimore, school work, parents, and romantic relationships were some of the issues that caused the most stress. It was also concluded that girls are affected by stress more than boys are and boys respond to stress by not dealing with it at all.

Many experts agree that teens need to have a strong support system to help them with their stress and should have someone that they can confide in. Exercise, proper nutrition, and meditation can also help.

Lawsuits don't fit

Rob Cavella '07

Every year in America the social class difference among us all is becoming greater and greater. The rich are gaining more prominence and the number of citizens living in poverty in the U.S. of A is growing annually. The traditional American middle class is gradually being altered from an actual "middle" ground to a social status serving as a slim divider between those that hold wealth and those that are on welfare.

So what is the "American way" to skip those stretched out rungs on our social class ladder? Many people find ways outside the typical hard work method to get ahead in life and take them from the gutter to financial glory. Some will have the good fortune to feel a boom in the stock

market. Yet others who are musically inclined will seem to find their ticket on the money-train by landing a record deal. But now more than ever in America, those that are perhaps unlucky in Wall street or are musically challenged are turning to an impulse that seems to find it's way within all of us. Sticking it to the man.

We've all done it in some way, shape, or form. Some people let Sam's Club pay for lunch by devouring every free sample that can be found within the store on the weekend. Others lessen the burden of their workday by taking excessive, strategically spaced out paid bathroom breaks. But for a select few that possess the gall, ingenuity or just plain desperation for more, legal matters are taken.

From lawsuits against McDonalds

causing obesity to hair salons' unsatisfactory cuts causing clinical depression, the nerve of people never ceases to amaze me. The thing that gets at me the most is the strong possibility of people actually winning cases of this nature. It has gotten so bad that in 2005 The House of Representatives passed the "hamburger bill" which legally blocks people from trying to sue fast-food restaurants because their food causes obesity.

Although a finger obviously needs to be pointed at the individuals that have the weakness of character to try to take a bite out of the dollar sign many companies represent because of a bad haircut or coffee that's too hot, the legal system that allows this happen is the one that needs to be...well.... put on trial.

Editorial Cartoon by Alex Parkin



"Discussion" in the CBAC, Jan. 16, 2007

The Patriot welcomes any letters from its readers. The Patriot reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, content, and space.

Letters should be limited to 200 words.

Write us at wthspatriot@gmail.com

Divided views on county consolidation

On Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2007, Washington Township's Board of Education called a township-wide meeting at the Commerce Bank Arts Center to discuss a Senate Bill S-49 that would create a Gloucester County public school system that would replace individual school districts.

The Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders, including Senator Stephen Sweeney of the 3rd Legislative District and Assemblyman and Washington Township Mayor Paul Moriarty maintained that the plan would have saved a large amount of money that could be used toward projects for the entire county and not just a specific community.

Though withdrawn, the bill stirred up reaction among students.



Rob Cavella '07/The Patriot

Washington Township Mayor Paul Moriarty addressed the concerns of citizens at the county-wide meeting to discuss Senate Bill S-49.

Poor-planning defeats bill

Say good bye to lower taxes. According to New Jersey politicians a decrease in taxation was going to be the outcome of voting yes to Senate Bill S-49.

Having watched residents' performances on television I could not help to think that children could have made a more mature stand on the issue. The parents of students, booed, screamed, and chanted at Senator Sweeny and Mayor Moriarty while they attempted to answer the questions of the people. They had an idea in their heads that they were losing authority over decisions made in our school district. They found catch phrases in the bill and twisted words around without seeing the big picture.

While I do not agree fully with bill, I do agree that consolidation can save money. I think that if the bill were written more clearly, and the

real initiatives were comprehensible, the NJ Senate would have had much larger support.

Words like "a ten year pilot program" and "only one superintendent picked by the governor," did not help the cause. There should have been a much larger period of time for the people of Gloucester County to digest the information. If the Senate really wanted this program to pass, they should have campaigned the good qualities of it. If loss of freedom of choice, teachers losing jobs, "vanilla education", tax dollars funding other district projects, and redistricting students were false rumors, then the Senate should have tried to dispel them much sooner than the town meeting, where they were met with such hostility.

-Christine Lafferty '07

Wrong move

With over 3,000 students enrolled, WTHS has been a high-ranking educational facility. Praised for its academic excellence and high standards in the past years, WTHS has also been recognized for its diverse student body as well as the vast amount of extracurricular activities offered to students.

As one would imagine, the county district proposal met an impenetrable wall of resistance and for good reason.

From my point of view, it seems like we were about to be punished for being above the curve in Gloucester County. With a superior educational facility, the students and faculty of WTHS would be at the mercy of the County Board. Our educational future would be at stake, with possible redistricting, movement of faculty, and/or elimination of extracurricular activities to save money.

-Richie Elles '08

CBAC meeting all sound and fury

As a student and soon-to-be voter, I entered the CBAC with an open mind. I honestly expected to learn something about Senate Bill S-49.

Perhaps, I am still a bit too naïve to expect straight facts to come from the mouths of adults, but the meeting was not only complete chaos, but also an utter waste of my Tuesday night.

Senator Sweeney and Mayor Moriarty's names were met with boos and they could barely speak without jeers from the crowd. When they did try to defend the bill, they talked themselves into a corner appearing flip-flop on whether or not they actually agreed with it.

It was almost amusing to see the teachers, voters, and parents so quickly enraged by a threat to the status quo of public education. Speeches given by board members and tax payers were met with standing ovations and cheers after such canned statements as "I care about the students" and "We hire the best" and "If you vote yes for this, I can't vote yes for you."

The sensationalism didn't stop there. Mr. Robert Scardino poked fun at the dramatic meeting with allusions to the Boston Tea Party. A Washington Township graduate received ovations for simply being a graduate of Harvard Law School.

What I had hoped would be engaging, intellectual debate turned

into a mean-spirited lynching of our local politicians.

The Board of Education officials were not much better than the crowd. BOE President Mr. Richard Gerber frequently cut off state officials who he felt were speaking out of turn, but did very little to restrict outbursts from the mob. It was clear that no one cared to actually *listen* to the legislators.

Now, don't get me wrong. From my first reading of this piece of legislation, I strongly opposed it. I did not enjoy that our state representatives had planned a so-called "experiment" lasting ten years. This would be almost the entire academic career of a student. This made me sick. Later, I was relieved to find that the bill had been "killed" by the Senate.

However, that Tuesday night, I left the meeting feeling very unsatisfied on three counts. My local politicians were inept at explaining their support of a bill that they admitted was incomplete and vague. The Board of Education officials were too caught up in a thinly veiled hatred of state officials to care about presenting the real and total facts to the people of our town. The tax payers themselves fell so quickly for various scare tactics and unsupported rumors that they failed to have an actual discussion.

-Kaitlyn Fernandez '07

Ambler Warning continues Ludlum's legacy

Richie Elles '08

Robert Ludlum was always known for his ability to keep his readers on the edge of their seats while adding the element of mystery to his writing.

He is best known for his *Bourne Identity*, *Bourne Supremacy*, and *Bourne Ultimatum* series, which have been successfully transformed into a movie series.

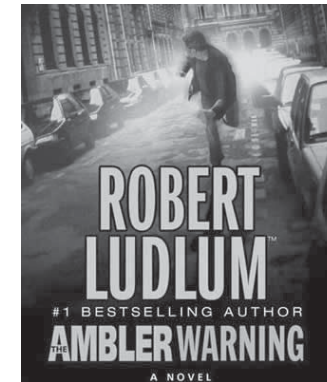
When Ludlum died in 2001, he left behind several unfinished manuscripts, which have since been completed by unnamed ghostwriters. One of these brilliant novels, *The Ambler Warning*, was left as a manuscript by Ludlum, but has been finished and turned into a best seller.

The Ambler Warning features a former government clandestine

operative named Harrison Ambler who has been placed in the Parrish Island Psychiatric Ward after his service with the American government. However, he is not mentally ill and internally questions his reason for being in the facility.

Finally, with the help of a sympathetic nurse who he eventually meets with in the outside world, Ambler escapes the facility on to find that he has been erased from life, and all memory of his existence has been washed away.

While running from the retrieval teams from the medical facility and dodging old enemies from his previous career as a government-trained assassin, Ambler tries to recover his own identity. Memories begin to come flooding back as he calls upon people he has met in his



Ludlum's protagonist, Harrison Ambler stops at nothing to ensure a quick escape.

He fights with his own sanity as he can convince no one, not even his own high school classmates, that he is indeed Harrison Ambler.

Robert Ludlum uses a brilliant technique of intertwining flashbacks and old memories that Ambler recovers with the events in the present that unlock them. His representation of the many internal conflicts Ambler wrestles with make the novel a solid choice for a good read.

The constant action is by far the best aspect of the novel. It seems that everywhere Harrison Ambler turns, the retrieval teams are after him. The 'white vans' always seem to show up at the worst possible time, leaving just enough room for a spectacular escape. The fast-paced action combined with fantastic descriptions give the reader the ability to create a very vivid mental picture.

Overall, I would give this book a rating of five out of five stars and would recommend *The Ambler Warning* to anyone looking for an entertaining plot filled with suspense. I found that at times, I simply could not put the book down as either a new secret about Ambler's past was being unlocked or an action sequence had sucked me into the suspenseful scene.

Throughout his lifetime, Robert Ludlum was a brilliant author who even enjoyed posthumous success, as ghostwriters pick up where he left off. *The Ambler Warning* perfectly exemplifies all of Ludlum's classic techniques and styles, and enjoyed a great amount of success atop the New York Times Best-Seller List.

Hit series dawns with Twilight

Stephanie Foran '08

Originally published in 2005, Stephenie Meyer's novel, *Twilight*, has rocked the shelves of bookstores all around the country. *Twilight* is a young-adult, romance, and horror novel that has taken an overused cliché of vampires and added some spice to the mix.

The book takes place in the life of Isabella Swan, more commonly known as Bella throughout the novel, in the rainy little town of Forks, Washington. Bella is the new girl from Phoenix, Arizona who just doesn't fit into the small town environment of Forks.

At her new school, Bella is attracted to the mysterious Cullen family with their unnatural beauty and reserved natures. In particular, she is attracted to Edward Cullen, a boy she sits next to in one of her classes, and later falls for him after he saves her from an accident. She finds out that the Cullens are a family of vampires and gets so engrossed in their lives that her own may be in danger.

All readers alike will be able to appreciate Meyer's use of the vampires, action, and romance. Even if you do not like vampires or usually aren't interested in the supernatural,



Meyer's *Twilight* sets the tone for a captivating vampire series of action and romance.

Twilight is still a great read. Never in my life did I think I would be so engrossed in such a story. It took me about five hours to read non-stop; I simply could not put the book down.

A potential weak spot in the Meyer's character Edward could be his nonchalant nature towards Bella, though it's shown in later that he just wanted to protect her from harm or perhaps himself. However, how Meyer describes the rest of the characters, the

settings, and every detail of this book is fantastic.

Fan reaction to the book has been overwhelming. Its sequel, *New Moon* was published in Oct. 2006 and became even more popular than its predecessor. Meyer has stated to the media that the series is not over yet. The third book in the series is titled, *Eclipse* and scheduled to come out in Oct. 2007. A fourth book is due later in 2007, but the title has not been revealed yet.

Twilight may even make it to the big screen. According to Meyer's website, the book has been optioned by MTV Films, Paramount Pictures, and Maverick Films. Also on the website, the decision on if the hit book will be made into a movie or not will be made in April 2008. If you like the supernatural, romance, or just need a good book to read, *Twilight* is definitely the book for you. It's a novel you can really sink your teeth into.

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Coffee takes hold

Melissa Cheng '07

I don't remember what my first tip-off was that I'd become addicted.

It was probably when I started hitting Wawa every morning before school and pushing to pay for the unaffordable-on-a-student-budget Starbucks coffee every week.

So yeah, I might be a coffee addict.

It's the experience we keep going back for though. You know the scene: snuggling up into a big, comfy coffee-shop seat with an oversized, foaming java cup in hand.

A lot of students these days are trying to find themselves, seeking a new identity. And becoming a coffee drinker - it's an art.

Go to all the big named cities and you'll see those business associates walking by the high rises. They'll be reading their newspaper with their brief case in one hand and



Cassy Matos '07

coffee in the other.

Then there's the artsy coffee addicts. With funky eye glasses and artistically clashing clothing to mark their individuality, all they need is a cup of Joe to complete their connoisseur image.

The modern established working woman won't leave the house without adorning her high class fashion. She is the epitome of 'chic.' This includes the high heeled shoes, faux-fur, and of course, a cup of coffee.

"Want to go for coffee?" It's a first

date invitation or a way to reconcile after a fight. Hearing those words when she's angry, she'll feel as though you care to listen to her share her heart.

Those five words say you have time for her. It says that you want to talk without any other distractions, and that you want to get to know her better.

College students: studying for exams and dragging yourself out of bed in the morning is going to require some sort of caffeine.

Adults drink coffee. In the morning when you're getting your kids ready for school, you'll need to be awake. Business meetings, job orientations, and student-teacher conferences all offer it.

You're going to have to face it at some point. The reality is, you want to be a coffee drinker. Everyone says they won't like it, but no one starts off drinking it black.

Time to give lack of sleep a rest

Lillyan Ling '08

Well, you're an ambitious one. You go to school, and then stay after, and then to go work or music lessons or sports activities, etc., all of this and more. Of course your goal in life is to be happy and conquer the world and of course you won't fail because you've got your mind set to it.

But you forgot to sleep within the passing days and soon you find yourself haggard, slapping in vain at the abused snooze button. You have time to do anything, but you've cheated time on your sleep.

A teenager needs an average snoozing time of nine hours a night. Getting this much sleep dosage makes the day more functional: higher grades, better sports performance, obviously, but it also prevents auto accidents with a more alert consciousness and faster reaction time. Plus, the more sleep you get, the brighter you feel.

You can probably tell that nine hours isn't happening for most of us. Hypnotized students sitting in their desks at homeroom stare like zombies at the energetic commercials

of Wake Up Township, missing punch lines. First period gym teachers know all too well of the reason of the sluggish air on the volleyball court.

"Good morning" has become an infamous oxymoron: the less sleep, the less "good" you feel. Sleep deprivation has become one of those secret pandemics.

Caffeine and naps are two short-lived solutions we've come to rely on too heavily. Counting masses of imaginary sheep has also let us down. What can we do to sleep better in the long run?

The main key lies in being able to control the internal body clocks we each own. Of course, one can't expect to be able to sleep immediately at nine when they usually do so at eleven. Shifting sleeping patterns is a gradual process to be done in reasonable increments over a period of days, so to start off, treat your bedtime like it's an appointment: don't be late. Slowly start to go to bed earlier each night.

You have to make time for sleep so budget your time. Last year, I watched in awe as a girl who sat in

front of me in geometry wrote out a schedule minute for minute. She even had "brush teeth from 6:00 to 6:02. Of course, you don't have to be that meticulous, but the point is despite all she had to do, with schoolwork and sports, the bottom of the list still had "sleep" as early as 8:30 p.m.

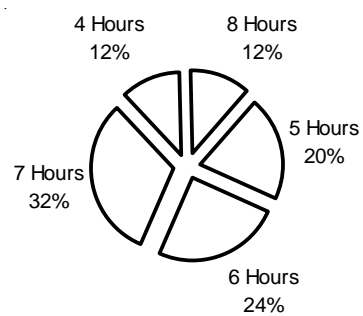
It makes it easier to sleep if you're in the right environment: stay away from bright lights including computer or T.V. screens, light tells the brain to wake up. Make sure it's quiet, not too hot or too cold. Avoid naps and caffeine if you can. Try not to consume any caffeine after 4 p.m. and try not to take naps exceeding 30 minutes, or you won't be able to fall asleep later.

If you've got a test soon, study in increments beforehand so that you don't pull an all-nighter. Chances are you'll probably do worse because you stayed up so late, and you won't be able to concentrate during late hours if your body is demanding sleep. In short, you'll be too tired to contain information and you'll just be wasting time.

Also, don't forget to relax: that's what sleep is all about. Don't think too

much about tomorrow's mid-term or that scary movie you probably shouldn't have watched, or any issue that's causing worry or stress.

A good night's sleep is rare at this age, and it's usually the case that negative thoughts bombard your mind when the alarm clock forces you to wake up. A good night's sleep is the key to a good day.



Out of 50 students surveyed none recieved more than 8 hours of sleep

Time to think differently about iPods at lunch

Many students have often complained about their music devices being confiscated at school.

Although most students do not agree with these rules, but we are bound to follow them. It's disrespectful to have any kind of electronics out in academic classes, but the rule that is ridiculous is that we can't listen to our mp3 players during our lunches or study halls.

Sitting in lunch or study hall can become very boring if you don't have work to do or anything else to keep yourself occupied. Many students have I-pods or other kinds of mp3 players to keep themselves entertained and are having these things confiscated because they're supposedly distracting them from their studies.

However, studies show that music stimulates the brain; so why deny students the opportunity to do so?

Last year, one of my friends had her CD player taken away in lunch by an administrator and did not get it back until the end of the day, which I didn't think was fair.

She told me, "I don't understand why they had to take it...I was just minding my own business in lunch, listening to music."

Obviously this is a big concern to many students because they want to know why they can't do something they enjoy on their own time.

For some people, music relaxes them and keeps them focused. So why should they be deprived of something that helps them succeed?

Having the right to have a mp3 player out during lunch or study hall should not be denied.

-Lauren Brown '07

Earth needs our help

All ten of the hottest years on record, globally, have occurred in the last fifteen years.

Global warming is something that we can no longer ignore. People try to say that we have plenty of time before anything severe happens to the earth but severe changes are already taking place all around us.

For decades factories and cars have been spewing billions of tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, and the climate has begun to show some signs of warming. Many believe that this is just a taste of what is to come. If we don't curb our greenhouse gas emissions, then nations close to sea level could be covered by ocean, rain

and drought patterns across the world could change, hurricanes could become more frequent, and El Niños could become more intense. Many believe that global warming caused the tsunami that struck southern Indonesia.

These are all possible effects of global warming. However, these effects can be brought to a halt. It isn't difficult to help save the earth because there are cheap simple ways that everyone can cut back on greenhouse-gas

emissions and fight global warming. Carpool with your friends when you can to cut pollution. If every U.S. household replaced three regular 60-

If every U.S. household replaced three regular 60-watt light bulbs with florescent bulbs it would be the equivalent pollution reduction of taking 3.5 million cars off the roads.

watt light bulbs with florescent bulbs it would be the equivalent pollution reduction of taking 3.5 million cars off the roads. Use a microwave instead of the oven. Because they cook faster, microwaves use one-third the energy of conventional ovens to cook the same food. Recycling and throwing away one less bag of garbage every two weeks can reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by more than half a ton a year. Find more information on www.stopglobalwarming.org.

Don't feel alone in this race to save the planet. People everywhere are marching against global warming. New hybrid cars are becoming more popular each year because the average driver can save 16,000 lbs. of CO₂ and \$3,750 per year. Many companies are converting to renewable energies such as solar and wind.

Seattle, Washington has displayed a series of recommendations for curtailing Seattle's greenhouse gas emissions. Many of Seattle's citizens have taken to riding bikes or electric bikes. The pizza shops even use electric cars for deliveries. This is just a small example of what we can do to reverse the destructive process of global warming.

However, someone once said, "To gain an understanding of global warming, it is necessary to know the science behind the issue." So don't read this article, say "yeah he's right" and forget about what I've said. Research global warming for yourself because I am not trying to convince you, I am merely trying to make you aware of how dangerous a future this planet has if we don't do something about it now.

Every single person can make a change that can ultimately save our beautiful planet and the generations to come.

-Dan Lacca '09

-Joe Granato '07

Student firefighters make a difference

Rebecca Kilborn '08

Heat. Flames. Smoke. These are just three of the things that volunteer firefighters deal with every time they rush into a burning building. With lives potentially at stake, these courageous people have no time to worry about being nervous.

Among the many volunteer firefighters in our community, WTHS's Steve Bredlinger '08 is one of the few high school students who dedicate their time and energy for a good cause.

Bredlinger started his firefighting career in the summer of 2006. He operates out of substation 10-3 in Birches West. This substation is one of six, three of which are substations, three of which are main stations. Calls are sent out by a beeper, and the station that is closest to the alarm is the one that takes the call. Some of the most common calls are auto accidents, dwellings (fires), and alarms.

Although it is a volunteer program, you must be at least sixteen to join the company.



Photo courtesy of Steve Bredlinger

Steve Bredlinger and other students dedicate much of their time to local fire companies.

Recruits also have to take an oath to uphold the responsibilities that come with being a firefighter.

"Once you turn seventeen or eighteen, they take you a little more seriously and give you more responsibility," Bredlinger said.

So what do the firemen do

when there are no calls? At the stations, there are television rooms where they can relax, eat, and sometimes sleep. They also clean the fire trucks and rescue vehicles, along with making sure that station is kept clean.

"When we're not getting calls, the station's a cool place to hang out and mess around," Bredlinger said. "We're like a big family...everyone watches out for everyone else."

Bredlinger joined the volunteer firefighting company for one main reason. With all of the accidents and fires occurring in Washington Township, his generosity and selflessness have encouraged him to service.

"It's a way to give back to the community," he said. "I enjoy it. It's an interesting thing to do."

Thanks to Bredlinger and the other volunteer firefighters in Washington Township, the community is safe year-round.

If you are interested in joining the volunteer firefighting program, you can visit their website www.wtfd10.com.

Hobby inspires new club

Margaret Bonanni '09

The Knitting Club may not sound like the most exciting club, but like any other after school activity, it is a place with people can socialize while sharing a common interest.

Thanks to the Gina Parker '09, the president and founder of the knitting club, this club is a reality. The knitting club had its first meeting Jan.9.

The inspiration for the knitting club was an eight grade teacher Parker had, Mrs. Nancy Mazgajewski. After eighth grade, Parker has relentlessly been working of different pieces of knitting, and has received compliments on several occasions. Since then it has been one of Parker's favorite past times.

"I like knitting and it's extremely fun to know how to make things like scarves that you can wear," she said.

The club was started when Mrs. Jennifer Monaco, Parker's history teacher, commented on a scarf Parker wore to school. She then said that she knitted the scarf herself. After having conversations on knitting, an idea struck.

After thinking the idea over, Parker asked her teacher if she would want to start a knitting club and be the advisor.

They completed some paperwork, and the club was finally approved. The club originally met on Tuesdays, but is trying to find a date that doesn't conflict with other clubs, and decided on Thursdays.

"Anyone can join, staff or students," Parker says, "We're always open to new members and exciting ideas."

Once you get the knack for knitting, you can make just about anything: scarves, purses, hats, gloves, wallets or even socks. If you're looking for a new hobby, or just something to try for fun, Knitting Club meets on Thursdays in room K-211.

Hispanic Dancing Club steps up

Nicole Heath '10

With all of the new clubs at WTHS each year, the Hispanic Dancing Club is one of the most original. Hispanic Dancing Club is open to all students and is greatly diverse. Students who join will fund that the club is very entertaining.

"It's a lot of fun," club member Mike Santiago '08 said, "and it's good exercise."

Though just starting this year, the inspiration for the club was last year's student talent show. At the show, club president Jiselle Morales '10 performed a Hispanic dance with friends. After the performance, Morales and her sister came up with the idea to start the club.

"Everyone in the audience was motivated," Morales said. "After the performance, I didn't want it to end."

With the help of her older sister Jackie Morales, now a freshman in college, and club advisor Ms. Francesca LaPenta, Morales was able to start the Hispanic Dancing Club.

At club meetings, students learn and practice three Puerto Rican dances called Merengue, Bacchatta, and salsa. The meetings begin with a quick warm-up before the club begins to practice their various dances.

Though Morales is the club president, she has much help. Active club members include Junmar Borrueal '10, and Morales's sister Jackie also assists in the running of the club. Though she is attending college, she comes home to help with the Hispanic Dancing Club when she can.

"I'm a really shy person, so it's nice when my sister helps," Morales said.

Though the club is new, its leaders have already set goals for it. Charity seems to be the main focus of the club as of now.

"We want to do some charity work," club advisor LaPenta said. "We would like to do some work for hospitals and Ronald McDonald house."

Morales is still making plans for the club for later in the school year and has some goals concerning dancing.

"I would really like for us to perform in the Puerto Rican parade in Camden in June," she said, "so I'm trying to prepare for that."

With these ambitious goals, WTHS's Hispanic Dancing Club has a lot of work ahead. For now, the main objective of the club is, as Morales said, "to get on our feet."

The Wii vs. PS3: Console Showdown

Melissa Cheng '07

Everyone remembers Nov 17 and 19 when people camped out for hours regardless of the weather to get their hands on a PlayStation3(PS3) or Nintendo Wii. But what did they really get?

In that sleek piece of hardware from Nintendo, the Wii contains a good bit of interactive functions.

There's a Secure Digital(SD) memory card slot that allows use of digital camera pictures which can be viewed in the photo browser.

The Wii also offers up the Opera browser. This gives the user access to the web for handling common internet-related tasks such as visiting websites, sending and receiving email, and online chat.

With that said, the Wii includes a series of "Wii channels" which include news and weather feeds. It even gives the gamer a low-power, always-on option of the WiiConnect24. This promises to deliver updates, messages, and other downloadable content right onto the console while it's in standby mode.

Another of the main attractions is that the Wii is 100% compatible with GameCube, Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES), Nintendo64, and Sega Megadrive console games.

The biggest benefit of having the Wii, without question, has to be the Wii Remote. It uses a Bluetooth



Nintendo's Wii remote versus the PS3's standard controller.

connection with a range of 10 meters and features a 3-axis motion sensor with an on-screen pointer. For more conventional menu navigation and gameplay, there's a 4way D-pad, a trigger, and five other function buttons.

There's even a secondary controller: the Nunchuck. It can be plugged into the Wii remote for your other hand and also has a motion sensor and an analogue stick with a pair of trigger buttons.

With these two controllers for interactive gameplay, the Wii has become something like an aerobic exercise that everyone can enjoy.

The best part about the Nintendo Wii is that it's only \$250. That's more than we can say for the more expensive PS3. Coming in at \$499 for a 20GB PS3 and \$599 for the 60 GB PS3, this could put a nice sized hole in your wallet.

So why's it so expensive? High definition (HD) video output isn't exactly cheap to come by. With full

need for a computer anymore. The PS3 has an incredible amount of features in that slim multimedia container.

And Nintendo's not the only one with access to the web. Sony's PlayStation3 also has WiFi and Ethernet connections, making getting online a breeze.

PS3 also offers a USB port and allows the use of a memory stick. SD memory cards and Compact Flash cards are also capable of being used in the gaming console. So feel free to pull out your cameras and upload them onto your television screen.

Web and photo browsing aren't the only extras in common between the PS3 and Nintendo's Wii. That's right, the wireless, Bluetooth, motion sensor controllers are available from Sony too.

Pick up Blazing Angels and be able to control the flight of the fighter jets by simply moving the new and much better controllers, featuring seven degrees of free flow movement. Not only are the controllers greatly revised but the numbers of players are too. Now gamers can have up to seven different players.

So which piece of machinery will win the console war? It might be another five to six years before we ever find out. But one thing's for sure, these two gaming platforms are going to change the face of gaming for the future.

Another plus, PS3 is powered by Cell. Confused? Cell was the microprocessor breakthrough in multi-core architectural design. It features supercomputer-like floating point performance with clocked speeds greater than four gigahertz (GHz). This means an improved, real time response for better entertainment.

Along with the impressive improvement in graphics, the pre-installed Hard Drive Disk (HDD) makes loading time effectively reduced to four or five seconds.

There's no more entertainment

--Nintendo Wii--	
Pro Wii Quotes	Wii Benefits
"It's more interactive." -Adam Stern '09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% compatible with GC, NES, SNES, N64, and Sega Megadrive games
"The Wii is the king of game play." -Jeffrey Lamb '09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opera browser WiiConnect24 Photo browser Wii Remote // Nunchuck (secondary controller)
"It's different." -Brandi Smith '07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$250

--PlayStation3--	
Pro PS3 Quotes	PlayStation3 Benefits
"Full HD support. It's just better." -Dylan Sharkey '09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blu-ray discs Bluetooth gives PS3 motion sensor
"Better graphics. Better sound. Better everything." -Pat Little '07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full HD support (1080 pixel means six times the detail of a regular tv picture)
"PlayStation3 is setting the bar when it comes to how much we can pack into a console." -Carl Jewell '07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to seven players Pre-installed HDD (reduces loading time) Ethernet (web)

On the Web

Fantasy hockey checks out Yahoo offers GM experience for free

A.J. Nisbet '08

Yahoo Fantasy Hockey will get you in front of your computer screen managing your own NHL team for free.

By just logging on and signing up, you get to pick your league or create one. You even get to pick your team through a live draft, and go through the season making changes to fulfill your ultimate goal in the end, winning the championship.

To start off your season long fantasy hockey journey, you have to sign up on yahoo. The fact that this game is free won't make it any harder for you to sign up.

At this point you get to pick a draft that you can attend or, if you would like to, you can create your

own league and compete with your friends.

You get to pick your team name and the different rule types you would like to play by in order for yahoo to place you in a public league.

On draft night, you log onto yahoo and get ready for the live draft, one of the coolest aspects to the game. During the live draft you connect with all the other players around the world, or in your own league. You pick your players while others talk about certain pickups and other things about the upcoming season over the web.

As the season starts, you can make changes to your roster. This includes line chances, trades, free agents, and much, much more.

To make this part of the game

easier and more enjoyable, Yahoo provides notes and information on each player like streaks or injuries. With all these things to do to your team in order to get the best lineup possible, you can find yourself staring at your screen for countless hours.

Since this game is played over the World Wide Web, it allows you to interact with different league participants. For example, users can vote on trades. If a trade seems unfair to people, they can vote on it and reject the trade. This can be the one downside of the game for some people, but overall is very even.

Each game is a week long, ending on a Sunday night. Throughout the week you try to get a line of players which will add up to the most points at the end of the week.

Points can be earned through goals scored, penalties and things of that nature. The person with the most points at the end of the week wins that game.

The goal is to win as many games, but also to get as many points as you can. It is possible to lose a game but still have more points than another team which has won their game that particular week.

As the season winds down, teams are put in two playoff divisions. One is for the top seed and the others being for the lower seeds. So even if you have a losing season you can still keep up with the fun in some kind of playoff format.

Unlike the real NHL where playoffs are a best of series, fantasy hockey is a one game, "win or go home," series.

Winning the championship does not only give you that victorious title, but it shows how much time you put into your online NHL team. All the work and changes you made during the season finally pays off.

If you happen to be looking for a free online game that puts you in the front office and in charge of your very own NHL team, then Yahoo fantasy hockey is definitely the right game for you.

GameBoy

by Alfred Wainwright '07

Yoshi's back to laying eggs for Nintendo

Yoshi's Island DS came out Nov 13 last year, 2006. It is essentially the original Yoshi's Island. The only exceptions are the different levels and the new babies riding ontop of Yoshi's back.

It looks, controls, and feels basically the same as it's predecessors on the Game Boy Advance (GBA) and the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES).

Being a handheld game about one of my favorite Nintendo characters (Yoshi), I just had to pick it up.

Something new to the game is the fact that there are multiple babies for Yoshi to carry on his back, like baby Peach, Donkey Kong (DK) and strangely enough, the villain from the first game, baby Bowser.

They each have their own special abilities that they can grant Yoshi when they are with him.

An added feature is the fact that Baby Mario will also make "M" blocks appear. This allows Yoshi to climb up to places he wouldn't originally be able to reach on his own.

When little Peach is riding, she carries an umbrella which allows the various Yoshi's to float upwards.

Baby DK allows our different colored Yoshi friends to climb objects and reach new heights.

Wario carries a magnet to attract large metallic objects that are usually in the way.

Lastly, Bowser gives Yoshi the ability to breathe fire to take out enemies that are in the way.

SAT success a matter of attitude

Erin McFadden '07

Spring time is a busy one for juniors as they make their senior year schedules, plan for their first prom, and begin the college search process. In preparation for the mad college rush of senior year, many juniors begin to tackle the dreaded burden of standardized testing.

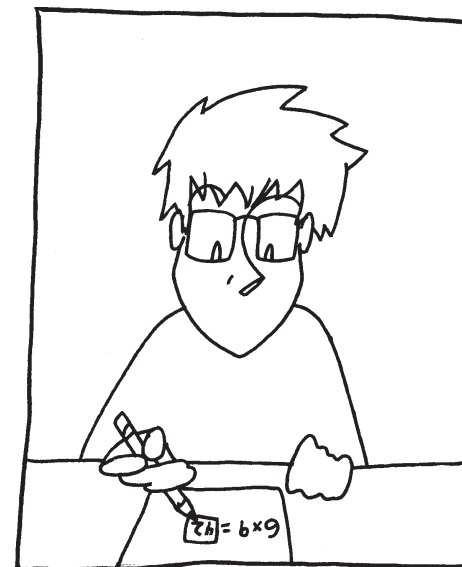
With the popular April, May, and June testing dates fast approaching, now is the time to think about the SATs.

Here are some tips to help you walk into the test in a good state of mind, and maybe in walk out with the score you were hoping for.

DO: Prepare

Spend some time training your brain for the SATs. Pay attention during those vocab lessons in English class, as you may see many of the same words on the test.

In the weeks before your test date, brush up on your test taking



Matt Johnson '07

skills by reading over the suggested strategies and answering the SAT Question of the Day posted on www.collegeboard.com.

DON'T: Cram

Chances are, sitting at home

with a pile of flashcards the night before the test won't raise your score. The SAT Reasoning Test is meant to gauge the knowledge and skills you've accumulated over your school career, so there's not much you could teach yourself in a few hours that would help you on the test.

DO: Relax

Rather than stressing out, take in a movie or spend time with friends the night before the test. Be sure to get a good night's sleep, but wake up the next morning with plenty of time to avoid being rushed. Give yourself some time to shower and get your testing materials together before you head to the testing center.

DON'T: Show up in your PJs

It's never a good idea to just roll out of bed on test day. Being too comfortable so early in the morning can easily backfire; if you don't give yourself an opportunity to wake up, you will be much more inclined to doze off during the long hours of testing. Dress comfortably, but leave the bunny slippers at home.

DO: Take it seriously

Put out your best effort when writing the essay, try to work through tough math problems, and carefully consider all of your options when answering reading questions. The new SAT keeps students in testing for at least four hours, but slacking off due to boredom or fatigue can severely hurt your score.

DON'T: Forget you can take it again

If the numbers on your score report aren't quite what you'd expected, you can always take the SAT again. Many colleges look at only the highest scores in the Critical Reading and Mathematics sections separately, so you can concentrate on improving upon your weaker section as you prepare for the test the next time around.

Lack of lunch helps some get ahead

Nicole Heath '10

Lunch is a well-known favorite period for many students. It is a time to talk to friends, finish homework, listen to music, and unwind. Most students at WTHS take advantage of this time, as the cafeterias are packed third through seventh periods.

But is lunch essential to a student's school day? Students have the option to drop lunch to take an extra class or gain a study hall. Starting sophomore year, it is possible to schedule another academic class or elective in place of a lunch. The number of students who take advantage of this opportunity is small, but those who do are able to earn more credits and possibly even raise their grade point averages.

"I want to take accounting to prepare for the HSPA," Parinda Patel '09 explained. She plans to drop lunch to take an extra course. Patel and others see a year without lunch is worthwhile if it can help them academically. Those who are worried about lacking food

and nutrition throughout the day find that some teachers allow them to eat a snack in class when students do not have a lunch.

But even sympathy from teachers would not be enough for some.

Student athlete Karen Haberland '10 can't see herself dropping lunch.

"If I kept doing sports, I don't know if I could drop lunch," Haberland said. "I need to eat." Athletes who are eager to take the extra class can find pretzels sold in both wings of the school after classes. The school also has vending machines where they can buy food after school.

Students are not required to take a course if they decide to drop lunch. Instead of a class, it is possible to schedule a study hall.



Erin McFadden '07/The Patriot

Many WTHS students take advantage of a lunch period to eat and socialize.

Some students prefer this option because they like time to themselves, which can also be found in some electives.

"I'm considering dropping lunch for art," Jonathan Harris '10 said. "I don't like socializing."

Though many students opt against it, dropping lunch is always an option. It has its disadvantages, but is a popular choice for those looking to get ahead academically.

Tech Class



photo by Melissa Cheng '07

Mr. Bozzuffi helps Jim McCollough '07 with his program.

"I'm always amazed when seniors say they're going to major in computer science and they've never taken a computer course. They should take a programming course, like Pascal, to see what it's all about before spending big bucks."

-Mr. Bozzuffi

"It was fun with Numbers."

-Dan Chopik '08

"Pascal's got to be my favorite class."

-Mike Drews '07

"I'm learning what programming is really about."

-Laura Louie '07

"Mr. Bozz is just a cool guy."

-Matt Mackowiak '07

"When I'm on the computer, I understand how much time and effort was really put into some of the programs used. And it's for the simple stuff too."

-Carl Jewell '07

Come check out the...

District Art Show

Thursday, Apr. 12
7-9 PM

Student artwork will be on display from all the district schools, kindergarten through high school.

Admission is free!

Student art demonstrations and arts and crafts tables for kids will be also be present.

Lifestyles

City Lights by Laura Marder '07

NYC offers more than just good pizza

When someone living in Washington Township hears the word "city," they automatically think of Philly. Philadelphia is very exciting; however, there is another city not so far from home you could venture to. Though NYC seems very far away, especially to the high school's young drivers, it's really not too far from South Jersey.

Getting to New York City is easier than you think. Greyhound offers a round trip bus from Mount Laurel to Port Authority New York for \$40, just about how much you would spend on gas and parking. Buses run every half hour, for more information on schedules and prices check out www.greyhound.com.

Stepping into New York City is like stepping into a whole new world. Upper Manhattan has been significantly cleaned up. The mayor has taken steps to refurbish old buildings. The NYPD has worked to make NYC a safer environment. Time Square, once a center of illegal action including drug sales and prostitution, is now a beautiful shopping and theatre area.

NYC is the place to go if you want name brand shopping. Walking up and down 5th and 6th avenue you can find stores like; Coach, Louis



Vinton, Abercrombie, American Eagle, Tiffany's, and Sean John. You can also find discount stores such as Virgin Records, H&M and Strawberry. And these stores aren't

just a little one floor shopping area. Some were built to be as tall as 10 stories high. Even just window shopping is fascinating because of the unique window displays.

But that's not all there is in a city bursting with history. Sightseers should check out St. Patrick's Cathedral, built in 1858. It is the largest gothic-style Catholic cathedral in the US. The New York Public Library is also a must see. Built in the early 1900's, it is one of the largest public libraries in the world. Grand Central Station, Rockefeller Center, Empire State Building, The Plaza Hotel, and Ground Zero are some more amazing sites around the city.

Dozens of museums around the metropolis focus on art, dinosaurs, history, war and children are scattered throughout the city. Check out <http://www.ny.com/museums/all.museums.html> to find out about the NYC Museums.

NYC is also the home of multiple famous Broadway shows. Going to see a show can be a little pricy but truly worthwhile if you enjoy theater. World class performers act, sing, and play instruments in everything from Disney shows to musicals and ballets to huge orchestra performances.

All of these amazing things are only two hours away? Explore a new city and visit the wonderful, lively Big Apple.

Local eatery reminiscient of Italy

Nicole Fedorko '07

It seems like you would have to travel to the city to be served a nice, homemade, Italian cuisine. But the Tuscan Tavern, just on the outside of Washington Township's borders, offers exactly that.

Located on Blackwood-Clementon Road in Blackwood, the Tuscan Tavern is a quaint Italian restaurant that serves imported Italian pastas and other great Italian dishes.

They have amazing chicken parmesan and every kind of pasta you could think of. There is angel hair, raviolis, and rigatonis (just to

name a few). They also serve regular "American" food, such as hamburgers and chicken fingers, for those who aren't into the Italian cuisine.

Other popular Italian restaurants in our area include Olive Garden, Mozzarella Grill, and Carrabba's, but none compare to the homey feel of Tuscan Tavern.

When you step foot in the Tavern, you feel like you are really under the Tuscan sun. The décor makes it really look like Italy. There are murals of the Italian landscape painted on the stone walls and there are plants hanging from the ceilings to make it look like Italy. The

dimmed lighting really adds to the atmosphere.

Not only is the atmosphere good, but the service is incredible. The waiters pay attention to their costumers and do not let people sit and wait for food for an obscenely long amount of time. They really take their jobs seriously.

The dress is casual and there is a bar located in the middle of the restaurant. Four flat screens TV's placed throughout the restaurant make sure costumers won't miss the game. There is also a separate seating area where you can enjoy your meal without hearing the roar of the crowd.

Now for the important part—the food. If you are an Italian-American, you know how it feels to have some nice homemade pasta and gnocchi with real meatballs waiting every single Sunday at either your house or your grandparents' houses. Imagine that, but you don't have to serve yourself and you don't have to clear the table either!

There is something for everyone and the meals aren't too expensive either. The average entrée costs around \$12.00 and the dessert is around \$5.00. If you like great Italian food, but can't find a place in town to go to, then head over to the Tuscan Tavern.

Fashion File by Megan Robertson '09

Ugg-ly boots are all around

Aussie inspired Ugg boots are dominating the fashion world. Both fashionable and comfortable, they are the perfect shoes. Made from the sheepskin and wool, the boots hug your feet keeping them warm and dry. Although you wouldn't think that they are a very stylish boot, when worn tucked in jeans or with skirts they can actually make for a cute outfit. They are also seen regularly on the fashion runways and the feet of Hollywood celebrities.

Ugg boots originated during the nineteenth century in Australia. In the beginning, they were worn by ranchers and farmers. Later, Aussie war pilots wore them on long flights and referred to them as "Fuggs" or flying Uggs. It is not known for sure how the name Ugg came about. However, there are two theories: Some people believe the word Ugg comes from the way Australians pronounce hug referring to how the shoes hug the feet. Another theory is

that Ugg is short for the word "ugly" because the early versions of the boots were actually considered unappealing.

Today, the Uggs we know and love were created in 1978 by Brian Smith, a young Australian

surfer. Uggs were first used by surfers to slip on after they came out of the water to keep their feet warm and dry. The comfortable boots made it easier for these surfers to trek across sand and stone. Smith eventually realized he could market his boots internationally—especially in the United States. Beginning in Southern California,



The Uggs are offered for men, women, and babies (above).

Americans fell in love with Uggs and the huge success spread across the nation.

Authentic Ugg boots can be very pricey; however, they are definitely worth the money. The prices range from \$100 to \$140 depending on the style you choose. The shorter the boot, the less expensive they are. Ugg also offers several different variations of boots that differ slightly in style, color, and price.

Although I strongly recommend buying the official Ugg boots, there are many stores that offer cheaper versions. Less expensive versions can be just as comfortable and stylish if

you buy them from the right place. Many department stores have well made options that look and feel just like the actual Ugg boots. The most important thing to check for when buying fake Uggs is that the inside lining is soft; this will make a huge difference in how they feel on your feet.

These boots originally intended for surfers have transformed the fashions of America and other countries across the globe. Although they are seen on many teenagers, these boots are appropriate for all ages. In a fun new fad, even tiny Ugg boots are available to fit infants. It is obvious that a lot of people enjoy wearing these comfortable boots.

Many people think they are only to be worn during the winter and cooler months; however, Ugg boots are specially designed to keep your feet warm when it's cold and cool when it's hot. These boots are the perfect shoe for all year use.

Heading back to the eighties

Kiersten Heath '07

Think back to the 1980s, specifically the fashion in the 1980's. Now, return to the current fashion. You might find some similarities. It's a cliché, "Everything old is new again," fashion is recycled every so often. The leggings, skater wear, VAN sneakers, long, long shirts and even the sweater vests are all fashion trends that bustled into our malls and outlet stores for the general public during the 1980s.

Fashion during the 80's, just like today, was heavily influenced by much of the music industry during its transfer from fashion moguls to the youth. Trends weren't, and aren't, just influenced by the powers of MTV. Movies made a big splash in what people wore as well. Mega-popular movies such as *Footloose* and *Flashdance*, among others, had both girls and guys rushing out to their favorite store to copy their fashion from movie ideals. For example, thanks to the movie *Flashdance*, leg warmers began to make an appearance in wider society. Now, years later, are still worn by many today.

When you look at what the

average teenager wears, you might be surprised to find the common look that was apparent about 20 years ago. Even in the halls of our high school, there is a diverse number of fashion statements made. There is preppy look, which is worn by teens to reflect their social status, a grunge look for "whatever happens, happens" kids, a punk look for heavy metal or rock teenagers, and an urban look for adolescents who are find appeal in the hip hop or rap world. These looks were just as evident in the 1980s as they are today.

Many people may or may not like the return of a genre of such eccentric, trendy fashion fads. They may argue that the popular styles now are cleaner and sophisticated, rather than the 80's eclectic, 'anything goes' trends.

Truth be told, fashion has become more subtle, and less complicated, yet the trends from almost 20 years ago continue to peek through. Major department stores, who target the nation's youth, continue to sell 1980's items such as ripped jeans, plaid Bermuda shorts, bubble skirts, tank tops, bangle bracelets and shirts with "popped



Kaitlyn Fernandez '07/ The Patriot

Author Heath (third from right), and friends, exemplify the 80's style finding a revival on the runway and in the halls of WTHS.

collars."

The era of the crazy 80's was a decade that has been reborn, or at least in fashion. Other eras are shown in the current fashion trends like the 70's with the platform shoes or the 1950's by means of the cardigan.

Over the past years, fashion designers have based their look off of past styles and fads, but none as prominent as the 1980's. That decade, almost 20 years ago, has been and will continue to be a major influence on modern vogue.