

THE TOM-TOM

Lemont High School
800 Porter Street
Lemont, IL 60439

LHS to offer flu shots to students, community

By Dylan Blaha
News Editor

With flu season rapidly approaching, Lemont High School will attempt to lessen the effects these seasonal viruses have on the student body. LHS, with the help of Jewel-Osco, will host two flu shot clinics in October. The first, on Tuesday, Oct 13, is for students while the second, on Friday, Oct 16, is for community members.

Students age 14 and older are eligible for this shot, administered by a trained Osco pharmacist, between the hours of 10 AM and 2 PM in the school cafeteria. To receive the shot, students must provide a completed parent consent form and \$24.99. The school recommended that students return the forms, available in the Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) Office, by Monday, Oct 5, but are allowed to submit both on the day of the clinic.

Immunizations offered to the community will be available from 5-9 PM on Friday, Oct 16 in the Performing Arts Center located at the south entrance of the school. Medicare Part B patients age 65 and older will be exempt from the fee.

Lemont High School nurse, Mrs. Bobbe Fash, stated that the shots will protect against seasonal influenza but not H1N1 (swine flu). “[The H1N1 vaccine] just hasn’t been released from the government yet. I expect that it will be on the market by mid October.”

The first batch of swine flu shots will be of the “FluMist” variety and for people in good health only, while vaccines for everyone will be introduced shortly after. FluMist is the product name of a nasal spray influenza vaccine manufactured by MedImmune, Inc.

H1N1, which affects mostly children, adolescents, and young adults ages 2-24, has the same symptoms as seasonal. “Seasonal flu affects older adults more than young people, but I still recommend that kids get the shot too,” said Fash.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is strongly recommending everyone receives a seasonal flu vaccination now and the H1N1 vaccine as soon as it comes out. According to Fash, the biggest risk is “a sore arm” and the “positives definitely outweigh the negatives.”

Both clinics offer the inactivated flu shot, which is a killed virus injected into the muscle. Adults and teenagers are given one shot of the vaccine, while children under the age of nine are given two. The other type of vaccine is the attenuated influenza vaccine, which is a weakened flu vaccine sprayed into the nostrils.

Regarding the continuation of flu shot clinics at LHS in future years, Fash responded, “If it’s something that the community is interested in, the school will attempt to continue it for more years to come.” She also stated that the school is providing flu shots as a “convenience to the community” and that “the final turnout determines if the clinics will be continued.”

Students have mixed reactions in regards to the flu clinics. Senior Eliza Gawenda said, “No thank you. There are so many different strains of the flu out there that one little shot seems pointless to me. Plus, I hate needles!” On the other hand, many students have expressed a desire to be vaccinated because they are “tired of being sick all the time.”

Fash is hopeful that there is a big turnout for the influenza clinics. “We would like everyone to get the shot, if possible,” she stated. “Student and community health is our number one concern.”

To learn more about the inactivated influenza vaccine, call 1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO) or visit CDC’s website at www.cdc.gov/flu.

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Students participate in spirited week

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by Maggie Francisco
Guest News Writer

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Lemont High School just completed spirit week for the 2009 school year. Spirit week is a time for students to express their creativity and display school spirit. Although this is an important part of homecoming week, the true reason for this week is still apparent. Lemont High School collected 1,203 items of canned food to be donated to a food pantry, \$750 dollars worth of spirit links to be donated to Children's Memorial Hospital and 55 pounds of bottle caps, which will be recycled.

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The battle for first place was a tight race between the juniors and seniors with just a 41 point difference. "This is the closest race I have seen between juniors and seniors in eight years," says Elizabeth Raimondi, art teacher and director of spirit week. As spirit week heated up, so did the struggle for first.



The heightened sense of competition engaged school spirit and contributed to donations. Lauren Nitchoff, junior at LHS, donated \$220 to Children's Memorial Hospital and \$40 worth of canned food items. "I gave money for one reason: to give to charity. Otherwise, I wouldn't give it," says Nitchoff.

Raimondi also said the competition to win contributed heavily to donations, "If people did not want to win they would not participate. I'm glad that people are competitive because the money is going to charity." Senior, Justin Doebert dressed up for spirit week because "it's fun to get all into it and go toe to toe with the juniors. I think spirit week is a positive experience because we give a lot of money to charity and food for food pantries."

Lemont High School will be making a few changes next year to make sure the true meaning of spirit week is remembered. Raimondi said, "Hairspray needs to be gone, along with silly string because tagging is getting out of hand." The color pink is also under question because of some of the choices made concerning the dress code.

Some of the chaos that transpired was because "competition and school spirit was better between the juniors and seniors," states Raimondi. Students must make school appropriate decisions in order for spirit week to be a success; no spray or silly string will be allowed and students are encouraged to create school appropriate t-shirts.

"Spirit week is one week and part of the high school experience. It is meant to emphasize school spirit, which is not a bad thing. Next year, keep things in perspective and promote school spirit," reminds Raimondi.

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Lemont Tom-Tom goes digital

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By Dylan Blaha
News Editor

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It is unbelievable how much technology has advanced through the years. A few decades ago, the copy machine was a big deal. Then the internet came along and began to unite the world in ways some never thought possible.

News distributors have kept up with the times. Typewriters have evolved into keyboards, the 9 o'clock news has grown into whole cable networks and printed newspapers have given way to a new age: Digital News.

Newspapers such as the Chicago Tribune and The New York Times now have their own websites that cover more than print ever could. Updates and new articles are posted several times a day, a big improvement over what printed newspapers can provide.

The *Tom-Tom* has followed in the footsteps of these news organizations and will now stream online. With this new technology at our fingertips, we can reach a broader audience, publish more frequently and save money in the process.

The *Tom-Tom* news staff is comprised of News Editor Dylan Blaha and a rotating bevy of news writers, starting with Maggie Francisco. The team will work to accurately and efficiently report the news to our community. We take full responsibility for our part of this publication, and any errors will be corrected in an ensuing issue.

This year promises to provide many news-worthy stories and the staff is excited for what the future entails. We hope the new publication style will meet the needs of our readers and proceed to bring in bigger audiences week after week.

Scroll down for an important message from LHS superintendent, Dr. Sandra Doeber.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE STUDENTS OF LEMONT HIGH SCHOOL

From Superintendent, Dr. Sandra Doebert

Author, George Eliot wrote, “Our deeds determine us, as much as we determine our deeds.” This is a quote to consider every day as we make decisions about how we want to be viewed, whether it is by the college of our choice or the person we want to date. I think it is important to consider it in relationship to some of the actions during Homecoming week as well.

Homecoming Week is certainly intended to be fun and spirited. Time is spent by students, teachers, and administrators to plan for spirit days and assemblies to capture the excitement of the week. But like many things, that excitement and fun has parameters or boundaries. The actions during Thursday’s spirit events and assemblies went past those boundaries of appropriateness. Spraying colored hair spray on each other and the walls of the school, destroying people’s property, wearing inappropriate shirts, and being insubordinate to faculty and staff do not qualify as part of the fun of Homecoming and do not enhance any element of spirit.

Such actions violate the concepts of respect for others and respect for LHS that are central to the character of this school community. They result in tensions among students and frustration on the part of faculty, staff and administration. In the end students are disciplined, walls are cleaned, and shirts are thrown away. However, the effects are much longer lasting. Students involved in these kinds of activities are viewed differently. Faculty, staff, and administrators reconsider the freedoms associated with spirit activities to determine if the risk of immaturity or misbehavior outweighs the fun of spirit days or assemblies. In the long run, many students may lose some opportunities because of the behavior of some.

As indicated in the Eliot quote, we are each responsible for and judged by our deeds. We also need to recognize that our actions impact others. I have heard from many students that they are concerned about the behaviors they saw as part of Homecoming because of the disrespect it showed and because of the implications for ending future spirit events. These concerns are very justified. If spirit activities are to continue, students need to commit to setting and reinforcing appropriate boundaries and to ensure that respect for each other and this school is maintained in every action. That commitment needs to be in words and actions now and during future events. You, as students, need to take the leadership in this effort. It is in fact your deeds that will determine the deeds of others .

Face off: Issue - Homecoming spirit week

The Anti-School Spirit

by Emily Hartl
Head Editor, B days

It’s no secret that spirit week is our excuse for virtually everything. Late to class? Missing your homework? Lost a shoe? Not a problem. It’s Homecoming week.

But not every rule can be bent with the powers of the almighty Homecoming. The administration strictly forbids, for example, the type of obvious alcohol references that appeared on some senior t-shirts for

see *Anti*, page 5

The good, the bad, the sprayed

by Arlene Bozich
Editorialist

Hippies grooving in the hallways. Jon and Kate Plus Eight clogging the stairways. Freak shows, Yoda and the Heisman trophy kicking it old school in the cafeteria.

This isn’t a bad movie. It’s the characters who decided to show up for Lemont’s 2009 Homecoming Spirit Week.

However, according to some of the negative feed-
see *Good*, page 6

Anti, cont.

class color day. However, we *can* easily get away with strapless or spaghetti-strap dresses, shirts with holes and tears, or hats that relate to the day's theme.

The administration is kind enough to be flexible about the basic dress code rules for our beloved spirit weeks, and yet many take advantage of the freedom...and we all know how that ended.

"Overall, the week was very successful," said Vice Principal Dave Clark. "Our student spirit is outstanding... [but] it is still not fair for some students to abuse the privilege and place future participation in jeopardy."

So as a result of blatant disregard of the rules, the administration is looking to make some alterations to future spirit weeks.

"I did a poor job of advanced warning," Clark said. Next year, students will hear more announcements addressing what they can or cannot wear for spirit week, and there will be a large emphasis on loss of spirit points for rule-breakers. The changes for future spirit weeks will involve extensive review that includes student input.

As for participation, "we're very proud," Clark added. This was the spirit week with the highest participation in school history, and it was the closest call LHS has ever seen in a spirit week competition.

So kudos to us, in some regards. We achieved a goal that school administrators nation-wide are constantly hoping for: We were enthusiastic about being here. But some among us can't play by the rules, and for that all may suffer. And what if the school bans us from expanding on our creativity and places limits on our spirit-wear; won't our enthusiasm dwindle? To what will spirit week devolve? No questions asked, it might degenerate into the typical school week. We will drag ourselves through the front doors a few minutes before the bell rings, donning some sweatpants and slippers, with "apathy" stamped across our foreheads. A lack of judiciousness in spirit week self-censorship threatens to bring about this unfortunate result.

"We'd hope that students have common sense," said Clark, regarding infractions which included the use of spray paint and colored hairspray to vandalize the campus.

Our faculty shouldn't just have to *hope* for our rationality; we're old enough now to understand that an alcohol reference on a t-shirt or vandalism in the halls just won't fly. To attempt to get away with such a thing is purely a waste of time, both yours and the deans.

Sure, showing up to school in matching shirts unifies us, and there's no denying that dressing identically is fun. Yet, I can guarantee that your fun will be ruined, now and in the future, if said dress somehow refers to reprehensible behavior... underage drinking, for example.

Underclassmen have been warned: slowly, your spirit week privileges will be stripped if you follow in the offending seniors' footsteps.

"In the long run, many students may lose some opportunities because of the behavior of some," said Superintendent Sandra Doeber in a published letter to the student body ([see page 4 of this issue](#)). "If spirit activities are to continue, students need to commit to setting and reinforcing appropriate boundaries and to ensure that respect for each other and this school is maintained in every action."

We've taken for granted the school's tolerance for wild outfits and crazy skits accompanying our costumes. We may be teenagers, supposedly invincible and fearless, but we are not above the law, even when it comes to school rules and guidelines. If you don't believe me, wait for the consequences of your infantile actions and immature clothing to rain on your spirit-day parade.

Contrary to popular belief, rules are not made to be broken.

Good, cont.

back from administrators, this past spirit week could be vilified in LHS's history books.

"In the long run," stated Superintendent Dr. Sandra Doebert in her open letter to the students [see page 4], "many students may lose some opportunities because of the behavior of some."

That'll put a damper on school spirit any day.

Still, it's not hard to understand where Doebert and the rest of the administration are coming from. From references to alcohol on t-shirts to some immature student spray-painting the staircase, it's obvious that some spirit week participants did go overboard.

But what was truly accomplished that week?

For starters, students raised over \$700 for charity through spirit links, donated 1,203 items to the food pantry and really came together as a school. "During the Class Color Day competitions the school seems divided," said English teacher Kathryn Russell. "But we come back together on Friday [through mutual wearing of blue and gold] and see the good we've done."

And the school has accomplished a lot of good things. The NHS recycling program was kicked off with a great start through the pop tab competition. And students got together after school to find crazy ways to impress the judges for spirit points instead of zoning out in front of Facebook.

That seems like a pretty good week to me. But the problem isn't the student body as a whole. As a majority, the students participate positively.

Most likely, the real problem is the students who act out negatively every day. With the intense atmosphere that spirit week provides, these few...excited...individuals act out worse than ever.

The challenge now is to make Homecoming week even better than previous years. Namely, crack down on the few who carry spirit week to the worst extremes, but still keep the week enjoyable for everyone else. But how can this be accomplished?

"A lot of the responsibility rests with students," said Social Studies teacher Justin Weidler. "A majority of [spirit] points are given in the morning, so disruptions during class [inappropriate t-shirts and hairspray] are unnecessary."

And that's true. Being aware and using "common sense," as Weidler said, will limit a lot of the unruly behavior on the students' part. But a little help from the faculty wouldn't hurt either.

"Teachers can be more watchful," said Senior Spanish teacher Janis Casolari.

Look at it this way. You know that cop car that sits on the side of the road? How do you react when you see it? Personally, I hit the brakes, check my speedometer, and make sure I'm going at least two mph under the speed limit. Even if a cop isn't in the car, the car's presence forces me to be more conscious of the law.

Let's take Casolari's advice and get more "cop cars" out during spirit week. I don't mean stationing more security guards around the school; I'm talking about the teachers. If there's a teacher standing outside of his or her room during passing periods, I doubt students will act out as much.

While teachers shouldn't have to baby-sit the entire student body, a physical presence of discipline in the hallways will no doubt discourage potential rule breakers. And the teachers wouldn't have to do anything but stand outside of their rooms and keep watch.

"[Homecoming] is a great tradition," said Casolari. Let's work together to keep it fun for everyone, students and faculty alike.

Budget Backlash: LHS Responds to District 113A Cuts

by Christine Alwan
Features Editor

District 113A is struggling to eliminate the large deficit that it has accumulated over the past 7 years, according to the Budget Reduction Plan released by the district on Sept. 30. Old Quarry Administration is working with the Board of Education “to establish a Deficit Reduction Plan as part of the budget process.” Some possibilities, such as analyzing teacher benefit programs, are in place.

District 113A aims to make budget cuts that will be “least disruptive to the core program for students.” However, one of the proposed solutions is to decrease funds to the Fine Arts program, namely, music and the visual arts, and have students pay to be involved. This may have a negative impact. This concern is shared by members of the Fine Arts Department at Lemont High School who fear that these cuts may hurt their programs in the future.

LHS Band director, Mr. David Nommensen, is concerned for the Fine Arts Program. Although he does not “see [the budget cuts] affecting us at this time” he is concerned about the budget cuts affecting any aspect of the fine arts. He is resigned to face the consequences, though, since the LHS Band is “95% or higher” Old Quarry alumni. Budget cuts to Old Quarry’s music program may lead to decreased interest and participation in the fine arts at LHS since students will not have as much experience with or exposure to fine arts activities.

This dilemma is a disappointment to the fine arts community, but it is a viable solution to a serious problem. “I wish [the fine arts program] would not be cut, but I understand the difficult situation the board is in,” Nommensen stated.

The District 113A budget cuts will pose definite challenges for LHS, making the future of the Fine Arts uncertain.





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Umbrellas for LHS

By: Janelle Fennessy

Features Writer

Through Lemont High School's PAC entrance a twirling sea of colorful umbrellas dots the vaulted ceilings. These special umbrellas are filled with vibrant colors and dreamlike pictures, all the artistic interpretations of LHS students.

Artist Matt Lamb created Umbrellas for Peace, an international program aspiring to spread harmony, tolerance, understanding, hope and love through art. Lamb, a successful artist and philosopher helps children and teens of all cultures paint umbrellas to represent their dreams of peace and unity.

Lamb, started the project as a way to aid families and orphans affected by 9/11, came to LHS Sept. 29 to spread the message of Umbrellas for Peace which has now grown into a worldwide peace movement involving 24 countries and millions of people.

LHS was very responsive to Lamb and Umbrellas for Peace project as a whole. "[Peace and tolerance campaigns] are social issues," said art teacher Mr. Ryan Hennebry. "It is great that [Lamb] is able to spread the word to over eight hundred thousand worldwide in every continent through umbrellas."

Other responses, however, were mixed. Regarding her thoughts on the project, senior Emily Little said, "It was complicated, but if it's for a good reason, whatever, it's cool."

Students and teachers agree the umbrellas have helped spread Lamb's word while giving back to the school. Hennebry and participants said the project was "fun and rewarding for the students" while it added "color that students, parents and community members can enjoy."

Regarding the project's success at LHS, junior Nick Hayes said, "This brought together all the art classes and captured the theme of individuals working together to bring peace to the world. Umbrellas for Peace and LHS show that it only takes one person to start the chain reaction."

This project was beneficial for LHS students and staff. Hennebry would like to thank the Lemont High School Education Foundation and everyone else who made the Lamb Umbrellas for Peace possible.

To get more information on Umbrellas for Peace or to find out how you can help the cause visit <http://the-lamb-umbrellas-for-peace.org/>

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Tom-Tom Sports Section Preview

Danny McKevitt
Sports Editor

As the Tom-Tom goes digital, there will be many changes to the way we cover sports. For those who are unaware, there will be two different journalism teams covering sports this year for the Tom-Tom being that there is a Gold day and a Blue day class.

We will be alternating coverage every week to update the sports section as well as the rest of the paper so the Tom-Tom can be kept fresh and each sport can be covered frequently. Every other Wednesday, the Gold Day class will be publishing a paper.

For the Gold Day staff, there are going to be three different members. Returning veteran Nick Celis, senior, is going to be writing sports again this semester. Our new addition to our staff is Stephanie D'Amato, senior, and we expect big things from her. Rounding off the team is I, Danny McKevitt. I was sports editor last year and I am looking to improve my craft over the course of the semester.

Last year, our sports staff would typically give a recap of each team's current performance and it typically provided for some sloppy journalism overall. This year however, one writer from our staff is going to be attending one of the games. We are doing this to actually give a feel for each team and hopefully attract more fans to each game.

Another thing that you can expect from our section is a consistent format. Each week, we will have two teams covered at the least to promote our sports and to inform the general public. Also, each week we will have one writer that will be writing a sports editorial column. This coverage can range from information on unique sports to opinions on professional team's performances.

Even though the online Tom-Tom may not be what everyone is looking forward to, our section is. This is because it allows us access our information easier and give information about our athletic programs to the community of Lemont. As well as being cheaper, it also is saving some trees. So give the new Tom-Tom a chance and we hope that you like what you see.