

TOM-TOM



Lemont High School
800 Porter St.
Lemont, IL 60439

STUDENTS NEEDED TO SAVE LIVES

Dale Erdmier
Guest News Writer

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Lemont High School is accepting student blood donations on Tuesday, Oct. 27. Student Council will be sponsoring this blood drive with the help of Ms. Russell and Mrs. Raimondi, Art Teacher. All eligible students are encouraged to contribute.

Donations go to the Heartland Blood Centers where they are used for patient care. These contributions could end up saving the life of another, so Student Council encourages all eligible students to donate.

Donors must be at least 16 years of age, weigh a minimum of 110 lbs., bring photo identification to the blood drive, and turn in a completed permission form by Oct. 22. All permission forms are located in the PPS office to be completed and returned to the office, Raimondi, or Russell.

Many LHS students are willing to donate. LHS junior Delia Ercoli stated, "It's an easy way to help people. Teenagers can't help people in many ways, but this is something simple we can do."

Students over the age of 16 must have a parent signature according to Lemont High School policy. All donors will also receive a free pair of flannel pants upon donation.

Raimondi stated she expects this year to be a success. When asked about how this year will match up to previous years, she said, "I'm hoping it will be as successful as the past. Our largest amount of donors was about 90, so our goal this year is around 70. I think we will meet it because I've received a lot of permission slips already, and I think it might be because of the free pajama pants."

If you are interested please pick up a form from the PPS office and return it by Oct. 22.

<http://www.heartlandbc.org/>

Photos courtesy of Google



Heartland
Blood Centers

NEWS.....2

A HAUNTING YOU SHOULD GO

by: Janelle Fennessy
Guest News Writer

Lemont High School's drama department invites everyone to its fall play, a rendition of Tim Kelly's "A-Haunting We Will Go." The production follows Hollywood producer Norma Corwin, played by senior Arlene Bozich, as she spends the night alone at "The Inn of the Three Sisters," a famous hotel plagued by an unsolved murder and ghosts.

The production takes place in the LHS Performing Arts Center on Oct. 30 and 31, starting at 7:30 pm each night. Tickets, which can be preordered on the LHS website or bought at the door, are \$7 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under, senior citizens and students with valid school ID.

Mr. Dan Franke, LHS speech teacher and Drama Department Artistic Director, said audience members can expect to see many "ghostly" and "spooky" characters in light of Halloween. "Being the date of Halloween, we chose [A-Haunting We Will Go] which will be spooky and family friendly."

The production is directed by Ms. Sharon Jacobs, LHS Humanities Director and Drama Department Director, and assistant directed by Mr. Roy Nees, LHS German teacher, Drama Department Assistant Director and Technical Director. The play involves over 40 students and, as Franke described, "some of the greatest set, costume, and makeup demands drama club has ever encountered."

Recently the stage crew had to take down their completed set for a dance performance only to put it back up again a few weeks before the production. Regarding the recent challenges junior Danny Kulasik said, "We were about halfway through the setup and had to take it all down, which was hard; but we got it all set up again, so it's okay now."

Audience members are able to enjoy an intermission costume walk across the stage for children wearing costumes and a meet and greet with actors in the PAC lobby following each show.

Although "A-Haunting We Will Go" will be competing with Halloween for the attention of the community, the drama department hopes to spread the word of their show and sell out both nights. Franke said, "This will be a fun, spooky experience for the whole family: so everyone come see the play."

G DAY

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President Obama awarded Nobel Peace Prize

by Dylan Blaha
News Editor

Every year, a five-member committee of lawmakers elected by the Norwegian Parliament decides who is worthy to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. On Friday, Oct. 9, The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded Barack Obama, the 44th President of the United States, the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize.

Nominations for the honor had to be sent by February 1, only 12 days after Obama took office. Therefore, the President was “surprised and deeply humbled” when he heard the news.

“Only very rarely has a person to the same extent as Obama captured the world’s attention and given its people hope for a better future,” the committee said. The committee also chose Obama because of his “extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples.”

The unanimous decision received differing reactions from the world community. Analysts say the prize may “bring additional clout” while he plans for the war in Afghanistan and attempts to engage Iran and North Korea.

Obama supporters believe there is “new life” in the health care reform debate because the prize “will strengthen the president’s hand.” Mohamed ElBaradei, 2005 Peace Prize winner, told CNN.com that Obama deserved to win for his efforts to bring Iran to the table for direct nuclear talks with the United States.

In a fundraising letter to Republicans, Republican National Committee head Michael Steele wrote, “Obama won the prize for awesomeness... how meaningless a once honorable and respected award has become.” Fidel Castro, the former Dictator of Cuba, wrote in his column that the prize is a “positive step” but that the recognition is “more of a repudiation of [former President George W.] Bush than a recognition of anything Obama has done.”

Regarding Obama’s award, Mr. Mike Pryor, LHS Social Studies Teacher, said, “I would say that it’s not deserved; not because [Obama] hasn’t done anything, but because the nominations were cast barely after he became president. I think it shows that Europeans were mad at Bush and glad to have someone they can respect running the country.”

“I can’t deny that Obama has increased foreign relations and foreign diplomacy,” stated junior Billy Udziela. “But in such a short time, it may have been early or rash to give him the prize.”

Upon winning the award, Obama stated in his speech in front of the White House that he does not feel he deserves “to be in the company of so many of the transformative figures who’ve been honored by this prize.” “The Nobel Peace Prize has not just been used to honor specific achievement; it’s also been used as a means to give momentum to a set of causes,” he added. “That is why I will accept this award as a call to action – a call for all nations to confront the common challenges of the 21st century.”



Photos courtesy of Google

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What's our pt.1



culture

by David Timm

Head Editor

ANYWAYS?

The other day I was watching *The Sandlot* and I had an epiphany of sorts; I was watching the scene where the character Smalls lies about knowing who the “Great Bambino” is, cleverly saying, “Oh! The Great Bambino, Of course, I thought you said the great Bambi.” Smalls immediately gets a scornful “That wimpy deer?” and a look of disbelief from the tough, heavy-set Ham Porter. After all, who doesn’t know the greatest slugger in American baseball history? He’s an enormous part of the great American culture in the movie and in real life as well.

The movie depicts a culture, our American culture. If you’ve ever seen the movie, you’ll remember that the boys were always doing something. The internet movie database’s (IMDb) online summary says it best “[the boys] fall into adventures involving baseball, tree house sleep-ins, the desirous lifeguard at the local pool, the snooty rival ball team, and the travelling fair.”

This lifestyle the boys led was deeply rooted in the culture of their day. All of the positive, and occasionally negative (chewing tobacco), parts of the culture really help shape the boys identities. Young people are usually the most open to new things, ideas and ways of thinking. Their parents were involved in influencing them, even the old man who owned the dog was a part of the culture of the day

This got me thinking: If real boys from this era had done even half of the cultural things shown in the movie, then clearly there was a positive, rich and very real sense of culture.

Looking back to previous eras, I found almost every decade of American history has its own unique and wonderful culture. In every case there was some sort of mainstream “pop culture” influences that helped shape and define the generation’s identity.

America has long been the “melting pot” of many cultures, yet America has always emerged with its own unique and generation-defining culture. Culture has always defined, united and given substance to the American people, generation by generation.

Until our generation.

Looking at America today, I have one simple question: What is our culture anyway?

Searching for exactly what our culture is on Google and other popular search engines proved fruitless. I ended up finding things from past cultures quite easily, but finding a clear picture of today’s culture is today was near impossible.

I’ve come to the realization that our culture has split into so many different directions and variations that it has become unidentifiable; if we were to find out exactly what our culture is today it would be a huge collection of mismatched ideas, odds, and ends thrown together in the place of the much more clearly spelled out culture in the past.

After talking to students, the first things they thought of when I mentioned American culture were: Pizza, Chevrolet, Baseball, Football, the fourth of July, popular movies, Freedom, celebrities gone bad, and Levis jeans. However, when I asked if this was today’s culture, they had to disagree.

It seems the things we think of as American culture are not the same as today’s culture, rather we think of past American values.

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ACT Animosity

by Katie Callaghan
Editorialist

When it comes to sending in my applications to college, there is nothing that makes me more nervous than what colleges will think of the double digit number I scored on the dreaded ACT. Who knew that a number could be the deciding factor for the rest of my future. A number that distinctively labels me as the kind of student I am.

But how can a person depict one's level of intelligence with a single test addressing four of the most studied subjects in American education. It is unfair to me as a hardworking student to be denied the right to go to a certain school only because some other student scored better on the same test. My 3.8 GPA should prove to the college of my choice that I work hard for the grades I get and I deserve to be accepted. No three hour test should determine my admittance and take away from my chances for that acceptance letter I longingly await.

What the ACT does not know is how great of a student he or she may be. It didn't have a question about all the sports I participate in. It didn't ask about the lessons learned volunteering at the soup kitchen. Nor did it ask about the time when I actually applied the things that I learned last year in English in keeping my own daily journal. The ACT doesn't know what kind of student I am or the kind of student I plan on becoming after my four years of high school.

The history of the ACT dates all the way back to 1959 when there was just one national college entrance exam. The ACT was used in somewhat the same way as it is used today, except if you didn't get a certain score then you would automatically be denied access to some universities.

The ACT has continued to be valuable in two ways; helping students make decisions about which colleges to attend and what programs to study and also to help colleges decide which students should be admitted. The difference between the 1959 and 2009 ACT is colleges are taking into consideration things other than just the score. They are also looking at a student's GPA, character traits, class rank, transcripts, recommendations, and involvement in their school. Don't get discouraged if your test score isn't all that great. Keep in mind that college admissions will be looking a lot deeper into all these things rather than just your ACT score.

The unfortunate thing is that the ACT is placed on the top of the pedestal where as these other requirements are not compared with the same amount of value, which makes it unfair to judge a student on just the ACT score only without looking at their other capabilities with the same respect.

Once you hit submit and you send in your transcripts, then it's your future that is up for grabs and in the hands of someone who doesn't know a single thing about you besides the information you provided them with. Hopefully they won't judge you as "Katie Callaghan, ACT composite score of 24," but they'll see you for who you are and that they will take into much more consideration than some silly number that you scored on some silly test. Especially since no test can measure a student's capability to do great things.



Photos courtesy of Google

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Now I know it'd be easy to look back and say how good culture used to be was and ask why it can't be like that today, but I'm not going to argue this angle. Instead, I want to discuss the kind of culture we have, I think we'll find that it doesn't exactly fit the idea we have of culture from past generations.

For starters I think there is a culture today, and the reason we can't put a finger on it or define it easily is because no generation can say "look this is our culture" until it's past them (after all hindsight is 20/20). Another reason is that we haven't finished molding it and creating it into one of those picture perfect images in our minds (even if it never achieves the greatness that we will probably remember it for).

One of the greatest things about American culture is and always has been the diversity, LHS senior Josh Eby said it perfectly "We are like the food court at the mall, we've got everything." At the same time some are worried that we have every culture except our own; senior Mark Kaminski said, "We've got good and bad and lots of culture...yet nothing to call our own."

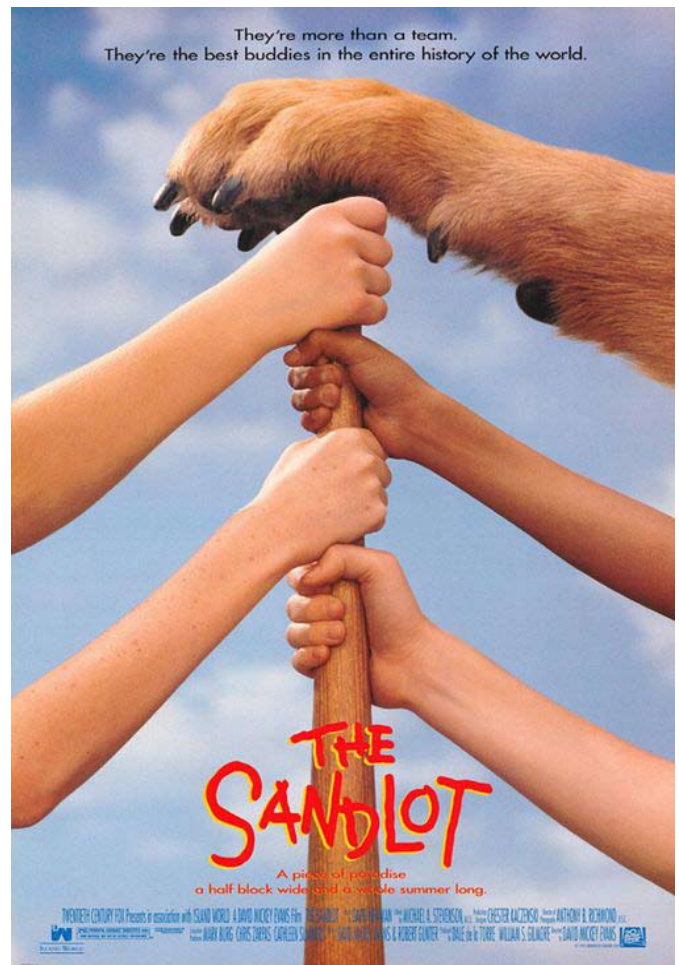
America is unique, it's "the place to escape to," said Kaminski; this is the reason we have so many different cultures melded together. There have always been immigrants, from the English and Irish early on, to the Latino immigration today and they have always brought unique cultural practices and integrated slowly into the melting pot that is American culture.

One thing that is really interesting to think about is the fact that in the past we've always had a "bogey man" as Advanced Placement (AP) American history teacher Mike Pryor likes to call threats to the U.S. He stated that Americans have "always had an external motivation to succeed," indicating that there is an uneasy lack of a unification factor for the American people today.

Think about our bogey men of the past, the biggest probably being the Soviet Union, and others like England, then Slavery. How about today? Well we've got terrorists I guess. But wait the only attack that even affected the United States directly was back in 2001. I was 10 years old.

Well, we are in a war...hold up, personally, I don't even know 10 people related to me in any way (neighbors, parents, friends, family) that are over there. In WWI and WWII, there were drafts and nearly everyone was unified against the threats to our country and against communism. The fact is today we don't have a bogey man to bring us together like in the past.

Because of the vastness of the subject of American culture, I forced myself to serialize this editorial so that you, the reader, had less to read. You're welcome, and stay tuned for part two of "What's our culture anyway?"



Photos courtesy of Google

Features8.

what's the draw of BLOOD?

by Rachel Colant
Features writer

In the past few years vampires have gained popularity in the media. From Twilight to Blade, there is no escaping these bloodsuckers. But what propelled them from under-the-radar books and underground horror films to the big screen and what is keeping them there?

Some say it's fascination while others say it's fear-inspired awe that cause vampires to constantly resurface in our culture. For many, a newly developed intrigue was inspired by Twilight's main character Edward Cullen (a.k.a "The Perfect Man").

Regardless of where this passion stemmed from, vampire fans everywhere are reveling in this vampire-themed media boom.

"Vampires are fascinating. The old kind, like from Dracula, not the glittering kind. . . vampires don't seem as unrealistic as a lot of other fictional characters, I think that's why people get so excited over them," sophomore Matt Bonfitto responded.

"I think vampires are awesome. I like the way they have a crazy effect on people, like when you look at them you're not quite sure what they are but you know it's something special. It just makes you wish you knew one in real life," said LHS junior Katya Kobilca.

Not all teens are so vampire-crazed, though. LHS senior Jon Van Koningsveld views this vampire epidemic as "just a phase."

Many ex-vampire addicts resent the image that vampires have developed through movies like Twilight and T.V. shows like True Blood. According to Slavic folklore, vampires are vengeful and jealous creatures only looking to harm humans. This is not the image that they have in movies, books, and television today.

"People don't like vampires, they like how they're portrayed. The media glamorizes them, but ultimately I don't think they're anything special," commented junior Jon Remiasz.

"[Vampires] look like people. People aren't scary. There are far more interesting creatures out there," Van Koningsveld stated. "I think the appeal of vampires to anyone who isn't a 13 year old girl went down with the release of Twilight."

Junior Jen Doornbos doesn't see the 'allure' that vampires have. "How can you be obsessed with something that wants to eat you?" Doornbos asked.

Whether you're indifferent, fascinated or disgusted by vampires, it seems the only way they haven't impacted you is if you live in a coffin.

Features9.

wake up! you're a drama queen

by Alyssa Busse
Features writer

Secrets, gossip, drama... Where do I sign up??

You finally make it home from school, back from another day you were sure was the longest of your life. You grab the remote and turn on the TV. What else is on but your favorite show, *Gossip Girl*. This is your escape from the everyday; the vibrant city, the gorgeous guys, and of course the drama-filled social scene.

Have a boyfriend but like someone else? No problem. Just cheat on him and he will never know. Have a fight with your best friend? Just talk behind her back until everyone sides with you and hates her. You can have all the answers to life's toughest situations, just as long as you have cable. LHS senior Natalie Hiller occasionally watches the show. Hiller responds to the show by adding, "I like the show as a whole; the city, the fashion, and the actors."

Though the life of a "gossip girl" is exaggerated, the core circumstances on the show are sometimes similar to those in our social lives. Lauren Budziak, an LHS junior, shared her reasons for watching the show, "I like the drama because there are hot guys, and there's cheating and backstabbing. It's so entertaining." Budziak also stated that she "can put herself in their situations and can relate somewhat to the decisions they have to make."

Rob Wostratzky, the sociology teacher here at Lemont, shared his thoughts about the show. "I believe shows like *Gossip Girl* attract guys and girls because the shows are exciting. Teenagers see kids that are living on the edge and they feel that they can have the same lifestyle." Wostratzky feels that "kids are desensitized because the gossip and drama scene is everywhere on TV and in our culture."

We might think that the shows we watch are just pastimes, or shows we watch because we're bored and in desperate need for serious backstabbing, hot-guy action. Wostratzky admits that, "for the most part teenagers are not superficial or self-centered because of these shows, although the continuous watching of shows like *Gossip Girl* do have a subconscious affect on their way of thinking."

Are shows like *Gossip Girl* really worth spending your time watching? Do the actions of the characters really set an example for how you should deal with problems in your life?

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Raw fish, anyone?

by Kathleen Clark
Features writer

Sushi dates back more than 500 years when it came into existence in China. Starting from a mere tuna roll, sushi has exploded into a modern- day phenomenon.

Getting away from the 16th century and into modern day 2009, sushi has entered a place closer to home- Lemont.

Kitaro is a Japanese sushi grill and lounge on State Street. Owner, Jon Yi, has been in the sushi business for 25 years. He says sushi is “very healthy- [it’s filled with] omega three [fatty acids]. It tastes good and is very important. It’s not greasy.”

So what is sushi? Yi says, “Sushi means rice, not fish. Sashimi means fish.”

Jon Yi’s wife, Carrie, is a waitress at the restaurant. Carries says Kitaro is good because it has “developed more variety for American taste.”

If it’s your first time trying sushi and you’re overwhelmed by the huge variety, Yi suggests trying Gozilla Rolls: shrimp tempura, cream cheese, avocado, asparagus, topped with crunch, unagi sauce and wasabi mayo.

So, want to try sushi but are too afraid to step out of the box? No worries, your Tom-Tom taste testers, Christine Alwan and Kathleen Clark, have done the work for you.

Christine and I planned a sushi date after school and did some personal investigating.

For an appetizer we had Eda Mame, boiled green soybeans. They were delicious and had a salty taste on the outside shell with a popping bean on the inside.

On to the main course: I had Kitaro Crunch, a type of “signature Maki”, lightly battered spicy tuna, cream cheese, avocado, asparagus, shrimp, tobiko crunch wrapped in a soybean sheet, drizzled with wasabi mayo and unagi sauce. This was a lighter type of roll which surprises when the wasabi, Japanese horseradish which is much spicier than American horseradish, kicks in.

Christine had Spicy Tataki, another type of Signature Maki that is seared spicy tuna, chili tobiko, over soft shell crab, cucumber, avocado, masago, spicy mayo, drizzled with chili oil and unagi sauce. Christine says, “I thought the Spicy Tataki was filling. It combined some of my favorite sushi components and had a

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unique kick at the end. I would definitely order it again.”

For dessert I ordered Exotic Bomba, mango passion fruit and raspberry sorbet covered in white chocolate and drizzled with chocolate sauce. This dessert was an excellent finish to the meal. It was light and the combination of chocolate to sorbet was superb.

Other rolls I would suggest trying are the California rolls: crabmeat, avocado and cucumber; Rainbow Dragon: lightly battered spicy tuna, cream cheese, cucumber, avocado, crabmeat, topped with assorted fish fillet, citrus tobiko and drizzled with citrus mayo; and Smokey Bear: seared smoked salmon over shrimp tempura with cream cheese.

Kitaro is excellent. It has a relaxed atmosphere, caring waitresses, and divine food. Everything is unique and extremely fresh. The food is beautifully presented with carrot origami birds carefully placed in the extra wasabi, ginger with every dish and thin apple slices arranged in flowers. For the month of October, Kitaro is having a 25% off special for Signature Maki.

So, step out of the box; try something new; go to Kitaro sushi grill and lounge.



Sports 12

Urban to return to State

Nick Celis

Sports Writer

As the first student to ever win conference every year she has played, Captain Jessica Urban, senior, has qualified for state a second year in a row.

Urban took 1st place at last year's sectional, and qualified for the 2008 IHSA Girls' Tennis state finals. She is looking to progress even further this year. Urban stated that she is, "really excited to be going to state again this year...I have been working really hard and it's starting to pay off."

The entire tennis team stole the show this year by going undefeated in their conference tournament; a 20-0 sweep.

This marks the fourth consecutive year that Urban has won the conference title; she is the first Lemont student ever to do so. "It's a really cool feeling to have that record, but I'm hoping someone comes along and goes even further."

Although Urban is the sole member of the team to qualify for state, she is hardly going it alone; she has the unquestioned confidence of all of her teammates.

Fellow senior captain Alex Prasauskas is behind Urban all the way. "She has definitely earned the spot light she is getting, were all pulling for you Jessica!" Girls Varsity Tennis Coach Chris Hill also exclaimed his enthusiasm and support, "This is the fourth year in a row she has finished first in [the singles tournament], a feat that may never be repeated."

Urban will be traveling with some her teammates down to Mt. Prospect this weekend to begin the tournament.

To find out more about when Urban will be playing, or just about the tournament in general, please visit <http://www.ihsa.org/activity/tng/index.htm>.



SPORTS13



Athlete of the Week Melanie Waszak

Stephanie D'Amato

Sports writer

TT: How long have you been swimming for?

MW: Since I can remember! I started when I was 6 years, so 11 years.

TT: How do you usually prepare yourself for a big meet?

MW: Sectionals and state are the two meets when there's a lot of pressure. I usually make sure I sleep good the week of the meet so I am well rested. I also eat right and load up on the carbs! I don't over think my races but I make sure that I am in the right state of mind and ready to compete.

TT: What are your goals for you and the rest of the girls for the remainder of the season?

MW: Our team has been doing really good for being a mainly underclassmen team this year. We've had a season of great swims and hard practices so hopefully everything will pay off for the conference meet Oct. 31. As for my personal goals, I'm just hoping to have a great sectional and state meet. I've always said I want to make the top 6 at state so it would be really awesome to accomplish that goal.

TT: Do you plan to continue swimming after high school?

MW: Definitely. I've been working hard for the longest time and I would love to see it all pay off for college. I'm looking at a couple divisions one schools right now so I'm definitely preparing for college swimming.

TT: What is/was your most memorable moment that you had from being on swim?

MW: My most memorable moment was winning conference my sophomore year. We had an awesome group of girls and all of our hard work paid off. I've had so many great memories with these girls, I just can't believe it's already over!

TT: If you had to swim in a pool of green jello or chocolate pudding, which one would you choose?

MW: Definitely green jello.

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MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

by Danny McKevitt
Sports Editor

PREDICTIONS

As we venture deeper into October, it's a great time for sports in America. The football season starts to heat up, professional hockey rinks open up across the nation and the baseball postseason is well underway. The postseason of baseball has been a part of our American culture since the 1880's. The postseason consists of plenty of heartaches, exciting games and occasionally the sweet sensation of your team winning the World Series. So far the 2009 postseason is no stranger to these elements.

With three games into the ALCS, there have already been two games that reached extra innings and two walk off hits. Right now, the series is 2-1 in favor of the Yankees. The Angels do have the chance to build some momentum after winning their last game at home. However, I do think that C.C. Sabathia will be able to recreate the success that he found in the first game of the ALCS when he only gave up one run in eight innings in game four. After the Yankees win one more game, the Angels will not be able to overcome the 3-1 deficit as two of the next seven games will be played at Yankee Stadium. I predict the Yankees to win the ALCS in six games.

As the NLCS has been a battle between the Phillies and the Dodgers for the past two seasons. As both obvious powerhouses of the National League, their match-up has provided for an exciting series. The Dodgers made a late comeback in game two when they scored two runs in the bottom of the eighth in game two. However, the climax of the series so far happened in game four as Jimmy Rollins hit a walk-off double in order to overcome a 4 to 3 deficit in order to get the win. The Phillies now lead the series 3-1. It seems unfair to predict against the Phillies after the way that they have been clicking as a unit in the past two years during the postseason. I predict the Phillies to cap off the series in Game 5 of the series at home.

If both the Yankees and the Phillies both reach the World Series, it is sure to be a fantastic all out battle. Both teams have great pitching and hitting squads that are sure to provide for an explosive series. The Phillies five man pitching rotation consists of Cole Hamels, Cliff Lee, Joe Blanton, J.A. Happ and Pedro Martinez. The Yankees five man pitching rotation **consists of C.C. Sabathia,**

A.J. Burnett, Joba Chamberlain, Andy Pettitte and Sergio Mitre. These lineups consist of some of the biggest names in pitching in Major League Baseball. In my opinion, the Phillies have the better of the two pitching staffs. After studying both of the batting orders, I do think that the Yankees have the better of the two teams hitting staffs. That is why I predict the Yankees to win the World Series in 6 games.

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