

THE LHS

tom~tom

ILLINOIS Budget CRISIS

by Andrea Earnest
Head Editor

The recession isn't only effecting banks and the stock market, it's effecting public schools as well. In a weekly message on the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) webpage, State Superintendent, Christopher A. Koch states, "The situation does not look like it will improve anytime soon. This is a slow revenue period for state government."

Many schools in the area are trying to cut down on expenses. While LHS has made a few budget cuts, ultimately, the student body hasn't been affected. Sophomore, Matt Bonfitto,

said, "LHS is actually pretty lucky, we just got the new tablets, the football field, the PAC, and all the projectors. Most schools don't get the opportunity that LHS students receive every day."

The state of Illinois' bills add up to a total of 3 billion dollars, which is the highest ever recorded. In an interview with CBS news, Illinois State Comptroller, Dan Hynes said things are going to get worse before they get better.

Later in his weekly message, Koch said, "There are more than 10,500 unpaid vouchers from the Illinois State Board of Education, and schools are owed more than 600 million [dollars]."

As for LHS, the Board of Education and Administration have been cautious and proactive in expenses and saving money in reserve funds. In an email interview, Superintendent Sandra Doeberth said, "The Board of Education and Administration in District 210 have worked hard over many years to prepare for economic situations such as this including the low cost of living indexes freezing our revenue from taxes and difficulty with receipt of money from the state. The situation is serious. We will be using reserves that have been put in place over the years to see us through this situation."

The budget crisis in Illinois won't be going away anytime soon. Facilities all over the country will be reevaluating their expenses, and everyone should be prepared for budget cuts.

View State Superintendent, Christopher A. Koch's message here http://www.isbe.state.il.us/board/archivemessages/2009/message_102609.pdf

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NHS Welcomes New Members

by Kristen Peterson
News writer



On Wednesday, Nov. 4, the National Honor Society Induction Ceremony was held at LHS. There were 117 members inducted into the Harold Julian chapter, named after the longtime LHS teacher who tragically died in 1963.

At the ceremony, hosted by sponsors Marek Dron and Anna Kemp, each inductee was asked to light a candle, representing the start of their NHS lifestyle. Each old member was told to re-light their candles from last year to show their lasting commitment.

NHS was established in 1921 by the National Association of Secondary School Principals

Dr. Thomas Trengove, Lemont High School's principal, addresses the National Honor Society

(NASSP) in order to recognize all around excellence of high school students. The committee wanted to create a society that promoted leadership, developed character, and showed scholastic achievement.

Requirements for membership include a cumulative grade point average of 3.5, having a vast amount of leadership and participating in extracurricular activities. When academic eligibility has been determined, candidates are then considered for membership on the basis of their service, leadership, and character.

Raegan Larberg, Zach Howell, Arlene Bozich, and Lauren Dohse each spoke about Scholarship, Character, Leadership, and Service, respectively, at the ceremony. A candle was lit for each quality, representing what an NHS member should hold and obtain.

Teacher Matt Doherty spoke of his experience as an NHS student, and how it continues to mold his decisions to this day.

"[I applied for NHS] to reward myself for my academic career throughout high school," says junior Natalia Okon; "I'm excited to be a part of an environment where students work together to better the school and community."

Photo by Melanie Bagal



News

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LHS

Achieves High Scores on Report Card

by Courtney Miklos
News writer

LHS received their 2009 Illinois State Report Card that showed ACT scores, graduation percent rates, PSAE scores, and academic history. LHS students achieved high scores setting new academic records for the school.

LHS receives an annual report card with statistics on test scores, composite ACT scores, and class averages that not only met, but exceeded standards.

The class of 2009 earned an average composite ACT score of 22.4, the second-highest in school history. Furthermore, the class of 2009 set records for the average scores in each subset of the ACT receiving 22.3 in Math, 22.4 in Reading, 22.5 in English, and 21.9 in Science.

More impressive highlights in the report card include LHS' 96.4 percent graduation rate and 70 percent of LHS' student body met or exceeded standards in all 3 areas of the PSAE (reading, math, and science).

LHS students credit the high scores to the LHS staff. Annie Forzley, a junior, said, "We did weekly practices in our math class which were similar to problems that would be on the test."

The class of 2010 received the best PSAE scores in school history with 73.8 percent of students meeting or exceeding standards. (This was an improvement of 4.7 percentage points from the class of 2009).

Billy Slobodnik, a senior, said, "We took many practice tests and examples which helped prepare me [for the test]."

To visit LHS' Illinois State Report Card visit:
<http://www.lhs210.net/about/schoolreportcards.aspx>
(Statistics courtesy of Tony Hamilton, Director of School and Community Relations)

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THE D O W N FALL OF BLOODSUCKERS

Twilight phenomenon on steroids

by Emily Hartl

Head Editor

2005: Crowds suffocated local bookstores, trying to get their hands on the sixth Harry Potter book. Meanwhile, somebody casually glanced at a book called Twilight, thought it sounded decent and decided to delve into vampire romance instead of witchcraft and wizardry.

Stephenie Meyer's saga began as a single story while she was an unknown author; it took Meyer only four years to expand the Twilight series into four parts; the first three books of the series together spent 35 weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list, according to palmbeachpost.com.

A saga with that kind of popularity couldn't possibly be contained as just a book series; *Twilight* took over Hollywood when it came out in theatres in 2008; *New Moon* will be released on Nov. 20.

Meyer sets a wonderful example for capitalistic authors worldwide. The *Twilight* following is something to be proud of....except for the wretched acting abilities of *Twilight*'s actors, the anti-climactic ending of the series finale, Breaking Dawn, and the absolute obsession with either Edward Cullen, a purely fictional character, or Robert Pattinson, who is undeniably and desperately in need of a haircut.

And despite the disappointing quality of *Twilight*, the movie still made nearly \$70 million during its opening weekend.

If you think the film brought in excessive amounts of money, look at the industry that blossomed from the teen series.

If you were to walk into Barnes and Noble, you would immediately notice that the central table of the fiction section is dominated by *Twilight*-related products: bookmarks, wooden and paper calendars, rubber stamp sets, journals (three different kinds, as if one wasn't enough), jigsaw puzzles, purses and t-shirts.

Commercial exposure for Meyer? Absolutely. Totally necessary based on the ratings of the first movie? Not at all.

The first book of the series was excellent; had it been poorly written, the series would not have exploded internationally and become one of today's most common pop culture references.

However, it's possible to have too much of a good thing.

I was once an avid *Twilight* fan myself, I'll admit. I read all four books ravenously, I told my friends and family to read them and I purchased my midnight ticket for *Twilight* weeks in advance.

But the extreme popularity has developed into obsession: squealing pre-teens at the sight of Pattinson,

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*WHERE HAS ALL THE REAL **LITERATURE** GONE?*

swooning Taylor Lautner fans around every corner and an unusually peaked national interest in silver Volvos.

According to wiktionary.org, to “jump the shark” means to undergo a storyline development which is so ridiculous that previous quality is considered to have been lost. There is no more accurate a description of the Twilight manifestation.

The difference between the Twilight industry and the Harry Potter phenomenon is simple. Twilight spurred a low-quality, juvenile upsurge in teen series, all about the same topic: vampire and werewolf romance. How many other books are shelved near the Harry Potter books, all about the exact same topic? Virtually none, especially in comparison to Twilight’s literary following.

Where has all the *real* literature gone?

Images courtesy of Google

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MR. PRESIDENT meets the

media

by Kelly Lyons

Editorials writer

It's no secret that President Barack Obama is a key player in the entertainment world as well as the political one. Upon opening a magazine, it wouldn't be surprising to find an article about the detail's of the President's personal life.

However, looking back at the previous President, George W. Bush, there wasn't as much celebrity buzz. If the public had known more about Bush when he was in office, would he be as popular a public figure as Obama is now?

Every aspect of Obama's life, from his wife's latest makeover to what's going on in his kids' lives, can be found on popular entertainment websites such as eonline.com. When Bush Jr. was in office, it was quite rare to hear about his personal life unless he was being mocked.

While Obama is usually portrayed in a positive light in the media, there are many people who make rude passes at Bush Jr. via internet and television. One website, politicalhumor.com, is dedicated to showing the public "a compendium of idiotic and maniacal utterings by President Bush Jr.," which is a collection of quotes from Bush deemed unintelligent and funny.

Could this unflattering light in the media have contributed to Bush Jr.'s general unpopularity with the American public? According to commondreams.org, by 2005, his approval rate dipped to 45 percent from 90 percent in 2001. By the end of his presidency, his approval reached a low of 22 percent.

However, Obama has had his fair share of jabs, including a Saturday Night Live skit dedicated to making fun of him. Stand-up Comedian Bill Maher also made a pass at the president, saying,

You don't have to be on television every second of every day. You're the president, not a rerun of Law and Order." Even after these jokes, Obama's image stays generally more highly regarded.

Clearly, Obama has made a breakthrough into the media. For



Images courtesy of Google

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example, he is the first President to appear on the “Late Show with David Letterman.” He was very affable and joked around, winning the affections of many citizens.

Would Bush Jr. ever be featured in articles such as these on E! Online: “Jennifer Lopez and Marc Anthony Hang With Obamas,” or “Kanye Who? Lady Gaga Sides With Obama”?

Clearly both Obama and Bush Jr. have received a lot of media attention. While Bush Jr. was primarily made fun of in the entertainment world, Obama has been put on a pedestal. Being in the media has only made him more liked by the general public.

Although Obama has been in office less than a year, he has received more status in the entertainment world than possibly any President before him. Even though media coverage on Bush proved to be mostly negative, Obama has benefitted from it.

Being in the public eye has made his country feel closer to him, and has overall given him a more relatable image to all of his fans.



Features p. 8

It's all about the **PLAID**

by Orla Ruane
Features writer

We loathe Mondays and anticipate Fridays, but what about that glorious day in the middle of the week? Those PLC Wednesdays where you can catch up on sleep, make up a test, or get together with your friends to eat some breakfast. But for seniors Jack Horky and Colton Mandell, Wednesdays at LHS have a totally different meaning.

Plaid shirt Wednesdays started two years ago when the boys were sophomores, and at this time, plaid wasn't really in style.

"One day I wore a plaid shirt and then a few days later Colton wore one. Since nobody really wore plaid, we both complimented each other on our plaid shirts and mentioned that we both had a few more at home," said Horky.

Eventually, springing out from an inside joke, the two boys decided to dedicate a day simply to wearing

just plaid. "For the longest time it was only me and Colton who participated, it wasn't until last year when more people started joining and now at least 20 kids participate each Wednesday," Horky added.

Jack and Colton hope that plaid shirt Wednesdays carry on at LHS after they graduate this spring, and they encourage everyone to join the plaid shirt Wednesday craze.

Photos by Melanie Bagal



Gold Classic Cinemas

by Melanie Bagal
Features writer

Have you ever gone shopping with your friends or family around the Promenade Mall and after you were done shopping, you wanted to go see a movie? Well now you don't have to worry about going shopping and not making it to your show on time because Gold Classic Cinemas are opened Nov. 6. This isn't like any other movie theater out there because the Gold Classic Cinemas is like having dinner and a show all in one place.

You will also have a place to put your bags and jackets instead of having them right by you. You go into Gold Classic Cinemas, lift up the arm rest, and put your things inside of the chair. When you go to Gold Classic Cinemas you will have your own personal server. They also have themed events birthdays and anniversaries. Plus if you are someone who is looking for a job Gold Classic Cinemas is currently hiring at the Promenade Mall.

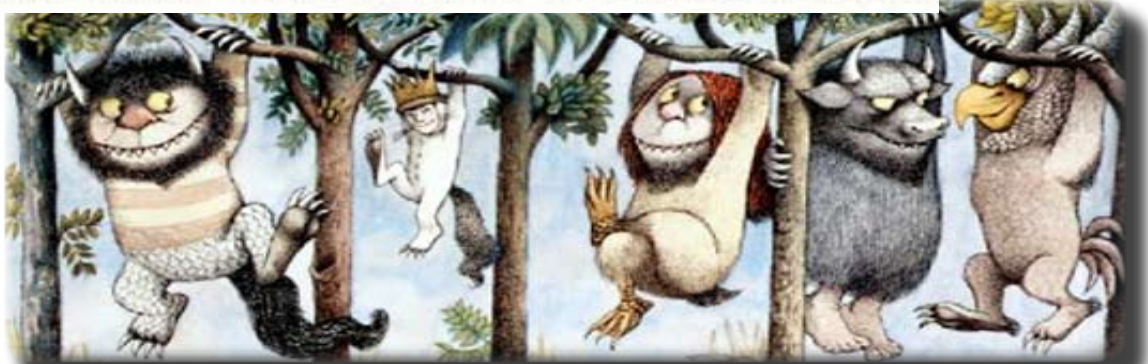
Have lunch and a movie instead of just watching a film that you have seen a thousand times, and get out of your house. When this movie theater is built go and check it out. If you want more information go to <http://www.goldclasscinemas.com/>.

Photo courtesy of Google



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WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE



by Hannah Johnson
Features Editor

New York Times Best Illustrated Book and winner of the Caldecott Medal *Where the Wild Things Are* has now hit the big screen. Whether or not this film resembles the award winning book is questionable.

People our age remember Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* as being a happy and cheerful book, and where the wild things lived seemed like the best place to be. The kids we babysit these days will have completely different thoughts and feelings about the story after growing up with this movie. Although the previews to the movie seemed to give you the same idea, the film as a whole was nothing resembling those feelings.

Directed by Spike Jonze, the tone and mood of the film turn dark as the wild things can't seem to find any happiness. Their unhappiness, combined with frustration, paranoia and disappointment drive the film.

Yes, some may like the deeper meaning that has been strung though the nine-sentence, 20-page book, but as for me, I want to watch the movie and remember the joy I felt when sitting on my mom's lap listening to the book be read. I want to see the interaction of those goofy monsters and exciting adventures they go through. The book as I remember was full of color and the monsters had smiles on their faces. Instead, in the movie, a depressing reality has been portrayed.

I give this film a two star rating for its camera work and effects, but beyond that, the film was a disappointment for me.

Sure there may be deeper meaning within those pages, but sometimes it's nice to get away from the tragic reality of what really is, and this book for me seemed to do that.

In the book Max runs away from his home and meets gentle creatures, not carnivorous monsters that are shown in the movie. The fun and friendly feel in the book is what appealed to younger children, but the movie detracted this feeling, leaving children with a bad connotation to *Where the Wild Things Are*.

Images courtesy of Google



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DANCING YOUR WAY TO INTERNET STARDOM

by Annie Fox
Features writer

Matt Harding was merely an avid gamer, just a deadbeat from Connecticut with low expectations for what his life would be. With a little help from youtube.com, a desire to be a wanderer, and his life savings, he became much more than that: he became an internet sensation.

His life revolved around video games until the day he realized he just might be missing out. Matt quit his job, took his life savings and headed to Asia to wander the continent until his funds ran out. He started a website to keep his family updated on his whereabouts along the journey, unaware of the fame that was ahead.

What started with one stupid dance eventually blown up worldwide. Without a thought a friend recorded Matt dancing in Hanoi, and as the video was passed along his fame exploded over a year's time. The video of the dance sparked the attention of the folks at Stride Gum, and Matt got his shot to show the world his dance.

Stride proposed a trip around the world to show off "The Matt Dance," 39 countries in six months paid for by the folks at Stride Gum. His fame exploded once again, sparking conversations around the world about "The Matt Dance," and yet another brilliant idea was born. With the help of Stride, Matt set out, once more, to invite the people of the world to join the dancing, and they did just that.

On his website, Matt tells his fans, "The dancing gives me an opportunity to see places I'd never get to otherwise. I love to travel. The people and experiences have taught me a great deal. But the video is a project. As fun as it is to make, I take it seriously and put a lot of work into it."

Now, according to his website, Matt lives in Seattle, Washington with his girlfriend. He hasn't had a real job since that fateful call from Stride. Matt says he "doesn't mind working, but he doesn't much care for having to show up at the same place every day." And now, he doesn't have to. Just think, six years ago, Matt was simply a 32-year-old deadbeat from Connecticut.



Image courtesy of Google



Boys golf team **TIES FOR 5TH** *at State Tournament*

by Jamie Wiatr
Sports Writer

This year the Lemont Boys Golf Team has flown high above the competition and produced exceptional scores that have led them to success.

With the help of Lemont's top golfers Kevin McMahon (senior), Rob Smierciak (junior), Nick Szerzinski (junior), Jake Groselak (junior), Shane Purtle (sophomore), and Kevin Kling (sophomore), the boys' golf team has ended the season on a good note. The team competed in the SSC Tournament in September, and everyone on the team finished with exceptional scores. Kevin McMahon finished with the top score of 77, which was backed by Shane Purtle and Rob Smierciak shooting an 80 and Nick Szerzinski with an 82.

"The wind was bad," McMahon said. "It affected my drives, but not my irons. I only hit three fairways, but I did hit 12 greens."



At this year's IHSA Sectionals, the team finished in second behind Joliet Catholic Academy, with a top individual score of 79, shot by Kevin McMahon.

With the ongoing success of the team, the boys ended the season by attending the IHSA State Tournament, hoping to place higher than their last years finish, in sixth place. They did just that as they tied for fifth place with Springfield. The top individual score was Shane Purtle who shot an 80 and the top overall score for the tournament was Rob Smierciak with 163.

"This is the third year in a row we've been to state and we've improved every year, from 10th to sixth to fifth this year," Lemont coach Mark Hollatz said. "It's a good experience for our young kids. We're only losing one senior from this team, so we hope to use this finish as a springboard to next year."

Although the season is over, Coach Hollatz and the team hope to continually bring success and keep improving individual scores; maybe even capture a first place win at the IHSA State Tournament next year.

Image courtesy of Tony Hamilton



LIVE TO RUN



by Emily Pellegrine
Sports Editor

The Lemont Cross Country team has been vigorously training since June when summer running first began. The top seven runners consist of Seniors Megan Johnson, Katie Kester, Mariah Balinski, Sophomores Amber Trick, Mary McKevitt, Morgan Rex and Freshman Wendy Mazur. The Sectional race took place at Niles West on Saturday Oct. 31.

The day of Sectionals arrived and everyone's nerves were a little shaken. With the flu going around and bitter weather rolling in, the conditions were not at peak. The girls were warned about the condition of the course, with the non-stop rain the field would be extremely muddy and torn up, making it that much harder to run.

These factors seemed to disappear once the race started, nerves vanished and the race was on. The girls took off determined to qualify for state again. Sophomore Amber Trick placed in the top 10 with Senior Megan Johnson close behind, placing in the top 15. When asked how it felt to qualify for the state finals for the second year in a row Megan said, "It's honestly an amazing feeling! It was our ultimate goal for the season and it's awesome that we could do it back to back!"



The team placed fourth place overall at Sectionals, earning them the honor to run at state in Peoria Saturday Nov 7. This race proved that Lemont was not ready to give up their reputation anytime soon, and their coach Tim Plotke feels the same. "The culmination of our hard work over the last five months should pay off for the girls and lead to personal bests." With that being said it's clear that the top seven is ready to race, and are not ready to be defeated.

Image courtesy of Tony Hamilton