

TOM-TOM

Photo courtesy of Google

Lyons becomes school's *first-ever* All-State performer

by Dylan Blaha
News Editor

LHS senior Emily Lyons, a member of the thespian society, became Lemont's first student to receive a role in the 35th Annual Illinois High School Theatre Festival All-State Production, "Urinetown." Lyons played the role of Pennywise in the Tony Award-winning musical comedy, which took place during this year's festival on Jan. 8 and 9 at Illinois State University.

Lyons received a smaller part in the All-State cast earlier this school year. She was asked to re-audition for the role of Pennywise, one of the female leads, after a student dropped out of the production. "I was really shocked that I made it into the play," she stated. "[Being selected] was a big honor because I saw [the All-State Production] last year."

This year's cast, crew and orchestra included more than 70 drama and music students who performed the play in fewer than 20 rehearsals. "We had weekend rehearsals one weekend a month for 12 hours a day in Des Plaines from August to January and a full week of rehearsals the week before the performance," Lyons told the Tom-

Tom.

In the play, Pennywise taxes people for urination. If they are unable to pay these taxes, they get sent to Urinetown. According to senior Eliza Gawenda, Lyons performed her role "magnificently" throughout the production. "[Urinetown] was probably what everyone talked about the most from Theatre Fest," she said.

"The whole show was purely fantastic and Emily Lyons was magnificent," stated senior Disrael Sanchez. "[Theatre Fest] was a really fun experience. I honestly wish I could go again."

Regarding the future, Lyons stated she plans on pursuing musical theatre as a career. Some of the eight colleges she is considering include Syracuse University, Ball State University, the University of Michigan, Indiana University and Ithaca College.

Photo courtesy of Google



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News

2—2010—

Lemont High School

students are named

Illinois State Scholars

by Janelle Fennessy
News writer

This year, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) named 49 Lemont High School seniors as Illinois State Scholars. Over 19,000 Illinois students, ranking in the top 10 percent of seniors from over 750 Illinois high schools, were awarded this prestigious title.

“Excellent high school grades are tremendously important for laying the groundwork for future college success,” said ISAC Executive Director Andrew Davis from collegezone.com. “Illinois State Scholars are the best and the brightest in our state’s high schools, and we salute them on this achievement.”

The nominees are chosen based on their SAT, ACT or Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) scores and/or class rank at the end of their junior year. The ISAC and high school guidance counselors then work together to choose the state scholar winners.

“I was surprised when I found out,” said senior scholar winner Christine Alwan. “I feel very blessed.”

Senior scholar Mariah Balinski agreed: “It made me feel good; like my hard work has paid off.”

While there is no monetary award for Illinois State Scholars, winners can use the title on college admission and scholarship applications and can apply for loans and financial aid from the ISAC.

“I take pride in my work,” said senior Lauren Dohse. “I plan to put this on college applications and prove to schools how hard I have worked.”

LHS honorees this year include:

Christine Alwan, Mariah Balinski, Zbigniew Baran, Malgorzata Bednarz, Cody Bengtson, Katlyn Bermele, Arlene Bozich, Natalie Bujak, James Crouse, Timothy Cunningham, Lauren Dohse, Adam Dolezal, Nick Drez, Jordan Fandrey, Kevin Gallagher, Cara Garvey, Eliza Gawenda, Elyssa Gentile, Rob Gialessas, Emily Hartl, Stephanie Hill, Patrick Hopkins, Jack Horky, Katie Kester, Jessica Leff, Meagan Lynch, Cassandra Marzo, Danielle Maturo, Kimberlee McAllister, Kevin McMahon, Amy Mizera, Adrianna Muñoz, Katerine Padilla, Timothy Pesole, Dominic Piazza, Alex Prasauskas, Abby Rachwalski, Anna Rebizant, Joe Rehfus, Melissa Rudolph, Alessandra Savas, Rebecca Smith, Rachel Stocker, Anette Szkwarla, James Tuscher, Natalija Vaznelis, Melanie Waszak, Ryan Winston, Crystal Wohead.

Editorials

3 — 2010 —

Never a day for a

by Katie Callaghan
Editorial writer

I pray the night before a long day of school that snow falling outside of my window will cover the entire town of Lemont and bring us hopeful children a snow day. I find myself awake at exactly 5am, waiting for the phone to ring and bring joyous news to my ears. I'll roll onto my side and face the door of my bedroom and wait patiently for my mom to come into my room and whisper into my ear, "I'm turning off your alarm because Lemont High School called in for a snow day today." After which I will roll back over and quietly mumble an "O.K." and wait for her to leave my room before I silently rejoice in my bed due to this miracle.

But this is just a dream because we all know that Lemont takes pride in the fact that we rarely EVER get snow days, even when it's 20 below. I would really like to know why Lemont refuses to let students have a day off because of the weather conditions. According to Mr. Gotlund, biology teacher, "schools should consider cancelling due to icy conditions rather than snowfall."

I live about 2 miles from school,



Photo courtesy of Google

which could easily be walking distance if it was sunny and bright outside. But it's not. Instead, I wait inside my house as my car unfreezes itself in my driveway. That's not even the worst of it though. Driving only 20 blocks to get to school, my little Blue Dodge Neon manages itself to swerve and slide around every single corner. It also takes at least 13 seconds for it to come to a full stop, at which point I'm already in the middle of the intersection full of angry honking drivers.

So when the streets are all frozen over and the snow is up to our knees, I think we'd all show a bit more appreciation if LHS granted our one Christmas wish and gave us our snow day .

Editorials

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GLOOM &

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DOOM

by Arlene Bozich
Editorial writer

When I wake up, I watch the news. When I wake up, I'm in a bad mood.

That's because every morning it seems the same stories appear in the news feed; murder, rape, lying politicians, disgraced athletes, etc. The constant deluge of awful stories never seems to stop.

Around the holidays there might be one or two happy news stories that lift the spirits. But as soon as January rolls around, morning news watchers might want a Prozac to go with their morning coffee.

Are people more attracted to depressing stories? "Absolutely," said Social Studies teacher Jodi Nye. Nye attempts to insert a Current Events segment in each of her classes, which means she's obviously watching the news. "People love train wrecks [and other unfortunate happenings]. We're fascinated by them."

So news stations are just giving the people what they want. I mean, would you rather listen to a report about an entire city block that is burning to the ground, or how a Girl Scout troop went to the circus?

Now, I am by no means a bubbly individual. If anything, I'm sarcastic and cynical at best. But though people need to know the evils of society, it might not be a bad idea to smell the roses and take in the sunshine. Adding a touch of positivity to the negative everyday can help put life in perspective.

Actually, some news organizations are already picking up on the idea. The Chicago Tribune has an entire section of their website attributed to Happy News, which dedicates itself to not being full of "gloom and doom". Also, CNN.com plays host to CNN Heroes, which sheds some light on inspirational, but otherwise ignored, individuals.

Next time the news gets to be too much, try visiting websites like Happy News or CNN Heroes. While being ignorant is never good, everyone needs at least a small shot of happiness in their day.

Editorials

5-2010

New Year

Crammed gyms, diet companies pulling in millions, this is the New Year, once again.

According to the Opinion Corporation of Princeton, NJ, 92% of Americans who make New Year's resolutions fail to keep them. This is not considering the 55 to 60% of American adult who didn't even bother to set any resolutions, let alone a list of them.

So what are we? Promise breakers? Unwilling to give up old habits? Or are humans simply bad at change?

Humans, as a rule, have always been slow to change; we need a couple thousand people to die before we get up at arms, we don't start living healthy lifestyles until ours has spun out of control and we don't fix the lock on the front door until we're stolen from. Habits are hard to break, let's face it. It's just not fair in our age of commercialism that we are perpetually bombarded by images of delicious, mouth watering, 10,000 calorie ice creams.

Every year, there is a slow shift in our economy from diet pills, gym memberships, etc. to fast food places full of customers, pizza delivery job openings and new, slightly wider clothes. We are inevitably pulled into a comfortable rut, holding onto our bad habits, living life saying "we'll start dieting tomorrow," or "I'll just eat this scrumptious brownie now and work it off later."

Why are we this pathetic? How come we predetermine our failure to meet resolutions before we've even tried? Not all people see resolutions as a necessary thing, however. Jack Horky, LHS senior, contends that he doesn't need a new year's resolution to motivate himself and instead sets "personal goals throughout the year."

Resolutions or goals need to be a part of our lives; bettering ourselves to better our lives and the lives of those around us is a must, or we would still be in the Stone Age. Senior John Lippner decided to "work out and practice better homework patterns."

So what's the solution? I truly don't know; for myself, I just have to really resolve to better my life and it doesn't necessarily start with the beginning of the year.

With others, though, it may not be the same.

The point is that everyone is different. You can be just as effective, or even more effective if you set goals throughout the year, or goals at the beginning. The most important thing is to set the goals. So even if you (conveniently) forgot to set your New Year's resolutions, you can still set goals and become a better person.

by David Timm
Head Editor

OldCycle

Photo courtesy of Google

Features

6 — 2010 —



As I sat in Loews Theater next to Cara Dohse, I eagerly anticipated *Avatar*, a movie fifteen years in the making by the director of *Titanic* and *The Terminator*; James Cameron. Written by Cameron, the script reflects his philosophies on nature, humanity and politics, subtle yet intriguing subjects for the average movie-goer.

Cameron's vibrant, futuristic cast of characters, lush scenery and romantic yet suspenseful plot had me on the edge of my seat. From the film's opening scene, with tribal music pounding in the speakers and the panorama of a distant planet promising adventure and intrigue, was better than I expected.

Senior Emily Lyons also enjoyed the film. "I really liked the plot because it was just like Pocahontas," said Lyons. "And I like the graphics."

The film begins with disabled Marine Jake Sully, played by Sam Worthington, arriving on the military-infested Pandora, a planet with a toxic atmosphere, a large mineral deposit of unobtanium and the Na'Vi natives, who are hard to kill and even harder to befriend.

What starts as a military conquest to relocate the Na'Vi, whose sacred tree, Erya, holds the souls of Na'Vi ancestors and connects all of nature and the Na'Vi people through a mysterious living network, rests above the largest deposit of unobtanium on Pandora, becomes a social experiment that head scientist, Dr. Grace Augustine (Sigourney Weaver), has dreamed of for years. Genetically manufactured avatars (half-human, half-Na'Vi) allow humans to walk among the Na'Vi and learn their ways.

Sully faces an ethical dilemma as he earns the trust of the very people he is supposed to betray.

After he is formally initiated into the tribe and falls in love with the chief's daughter, Neytiri (Zoe Saldana), an overbearing, bloodthirsty colonel (Stephen Lang) reminds Sully that the only way to regain his ability to walk is to persuade the Na'Vi to relocate. But relocation means leaving Erya.

With its unique characters, suspenseful plot and incredible graphics, *Avatar* is a movie that should not be missed. For more information go to www.avatarmovie.com.



New Year's

Congratulations! If you're reading this, you've made it through another year, and like most, you've made a few (possibly lofty) resolutions that you think you're going to forget a month from now.

A New Year's resolution is a promise that one makes to themselves in order to try to improve some aspect of their lives in a year's time. New Year's resolutions are said to have originated in Ancient Babylon, where the most popular resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment. In early Christianity, it was believed that New Year's Day should be spent contemplating past mistakes and resolving to better oneself in the up and coming year.

Though this tradition has been popular for thousands of years, many young adults are questioning it, asking "Why wait for a new year to make changes?" and "It's not like I'm actually going to follow through on this, so why try?"

These questions aren't necessarily uncalled for, however. Many popular resolutions include getting fit, getting a better job, reducing stress, volunteering more, and saving money, though a study featured in the book *Quirkology* has proven that only 12% of people succeed in achieving them.

"They're useful for me, but not for everyone. I always follow through on them," comments senior Stephanie Slobodnik. Junior Danny Kulasik feels the opposite, stating that he doesn't make resolutions

Resolutions:

An OLD Tradition?

by Rachel Colant
Feature writer

because he "doesn't want to disappoint [himself]."

According to the Miami Herald, the goal-setting skills you gain from setting a resolution are beneficial, especially if you actually plan to keep it. Goals expert Michael York explains that people don't achieve their resolutions because they either "don't expect to keep [it] while others don't know how to set up and keep goals."

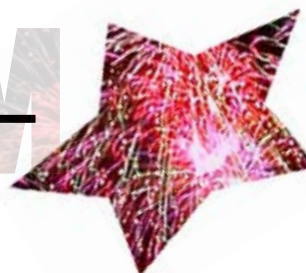
"If you have reasoning behind your resolution, it's more likely to happen," said Slobodnik.

The statistics in favor of failure may be daunting, but they shouldn't stop you from trying. Make it your resolution to be someone who has achieved their resolution.

Photo courtesy of Google



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Features

9—2010—

Is grá liom Éire... **I LOVE Ireland!**

by Orla Ruane
Feature writer

This winter break, I was one of the lucky ones: Anyone who is able to escape Chicago's brutal winter, or be anywhere but Lemont (aka LAMEont). This Christmas, I didn't spend it at my grandparent's house like usual, opening presents with the entire family, eating enough food to feed a small country and I wasn't even forced to Irish dance! Instead, I spent Christmas night at Chicago O'Hare airport. Most people cringe at the thought of being in an airport on Christmas, but it was all worth it because all I could think about where I would be for the next two weeks, Ireland.

The flight was hot, cramped and about 7 hours long. The plane was meant to leave at 7:00pm but because of the ice and snow, we didn't take off till around 8:30pm. After all the tossing and turning on the plane, and the nasty food that I swore wasn't real, I couldn't be any happier to hear that "fasten seatbelt" sound go off meaning it was time to land.

Our plane landed at around 9:30 am in Dublin, Ireland. As soon as I stepped outside of the plane and onto the tarmac to feel the crisp, cold, rainy air, a flashback occurred and memories of previous vacations of Ireland raced through my head. There is just something about the fogginess and eerie sense to the weather that gets me every time I step foot onto Irish ground.

We hopped on the bus and after 3 hours, we arrived in Galway. Galway City is like a second home to me. Even though its miles away from my actual home, I still know my way around like I have been living there my entire life. From every shop, church, park and all the twist and turns in the

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Photo by Orla Ruane

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roads, I know that place like the back of my hand; just call me the Galway Girl.

Two weeks seems like a long time for a vacation, but when you're in a place so amazing like Ireland, you don't want to waste one minute. Almost every day, me and my brother would get up as early as possible and walk into town, look at the shops, eat at different restaurants, listen to the people playing music on the streets, wander into old Irish book shops and just simply get caught up in the beauty of Ireland. One day was very memorable for us, and it was when we walked all the way into a town called Salthill and walked the Promenade. The Promenade, or better known as Prom is about a 2 mile walk down along Galway bay. When you reach the end of the Prom, it is tradition to kick the wall and turn around and walk back. On the wall, sit's a plaque that commemorates the local custom of kicking the wall, which is the traditional way of signifying the completion of Ireland's longest seaside promenade walk. Of all the times I've been in Ireland, and of all the facts I know about the place, I never once knew about kicking the wall at the end of the Prom, so it was interesting and cool to be a part of that tradition.

The atmosphere in Ireland is like no other. Everyone you meet gives you the warmest smile, and truly makes you feel welcome. I never really appreciated Ireland's beauty and how lucky I am to be a part of such an amazing culture until my previous trip. From the music, to the food, to dance, to the people and everything else about the country, Ireland is unreal. Being in Ireland has changed my life, and I hope one day to study abroad there. I highly encourage everyone to consider visiting Ireland, the land of dreams.



Sports

2010



by Stephanie D'Amato
Sports writer

Pack the PLACE

The varsity boys' basketball team defeated Reavis this past Friday night at the LHS "Pack the Place" game. The Indians started and ended the game with a strong defense and offense and a score of 57-52.

Leading the game with 21 points, five rebounds and three assists was senior Modestas Masiulionis. The night's second largest point contributor, senior Alex Nelson, dropped 12 points and grabbed six rebounds.

"This is what I think of our team: we're [pretty] awesome," comments Dave Podzorny after their game on Friday.

The team is able feed off of the energy that comes from their fans and the student spirit group The Tribe in order to keep spirits high and the momentum going.

"By being in the Tribe, it shows that the students have a great amount of school spirit," said Tribe member Becka Anderson. "I think it's a great way of boosting the morale of the team." Varsity player senior Mike Jaeger stated, "The atmosphere in the gym is great. We're able to get into the game more with the fans cheering us on. "It was a really good game, and Mo is the best!"

Come cheer on the boys at their next home game on Friday, January 22.



Photos by Steph D'Amato



LEMONT *aims* to take EM' DOWN

By Jamie Wiatr
Sports writer

With the start of a new year, people are beginning to set goals for the future and initiating change to achieve these goals. For the wrestling team, there is one thing they have their sights set on: state finals.

With last year's highly successful wrestling season, the team hopes to make this another year to look back on. A photo of the Assembly Hall in Champaign, the site of the state finals, hangs proudly in the wrestling practice room.

"We've got the picture up right there and that's where I tell our guys they want to go," said wrestling coach John St. Clair.

Last year Lemont sent six wrestlers to Champaign to compete in the state finals. Angel Cabral, then a junior, brought home a heavyweight state title, the first in Lemont history. Cabral, along with seniors Cody Kamberos, Matt Leibforth, Connor Nagel and junior Andrew Mason, are ready to lead the team and claim another state title.

"We've got a lot of guys back this year and we all want to make it back to state," says Nagel. "We all want to make it back real bad. For us seniors, we all want to do well and leave something behind."

It's going to take major focus and determination for success this season. The team is planning to make it back to state and Coach St. Clair believes that this can be achieved. "Potential is through the roof with this group," he says.

"We could possibly, if everybody stays healthy, if everybody lives up to their potential, we could do better than any other team in our school's history, and I talk about that all the time with the kids as something to be proud of."

Sports

2010

New Years

"Sportlutions"

by Emily Pellegrine
Sports Editor

Athletes' Resolutions for the New Year

Every new year people make resolutions, whether personal or physical they're all promises to become a better person, or better at something they do. Seven Varsity athletes were asked what there 2010 sports resolutions were.

Angel Cabral (Wrestling): "Win state"

Matt Leibforth (Wrestling): To win it"

Mike Jaeger (Basketball):
"Try to have a winning
record in 2010"

Mike Dvorak (Baseball):
"Have a twenty win
season"



Alex Nelson (Basketball):
"To end up in the upper
branch of conference"

Petar Vjestica (Wrestling):
"To stay in good shape
and win my matches"

With hard work, practice, and determination the goals of these Varsity athletes can be fulfilled. Through their hard work they have set examples that will lead their teammates to the same amount of success that they have reached throughout their years at Lemont High School.

Photo by Steph D'Amato