



All photos relating to superheros are courtesy of Google.

THE BATTLE OF OBESITY: A FIGHT TO THE DEATH

by Janelle Fennessy
News writer

Eating supersized meals at fast food restaurants, spending hours watching television, taking the escalator instead of the stairs- these everyday habits help contribute to one thing: obesity.

According to ObesityinAmerica.org over the past six years the number of adults with obesity increased to 34% and the number of children with obesity increased to 17%. With the prediction that nearly 50% of America's population will be obese in ten years, health officials are concerned for the future of the United States.

Obesity is now the number one health risk in America and causes nearly 400,000 deaths a year according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Obesity increases a person's risk for developing serious obesity-related health conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension and heart disease which can later lead to death.

At the recent U.S. Conference of Mayors, First Lady Michelle Obama stated, "Over the past year, I've been thinking, reading and speaking a lot about this issue, but the statistics never fail to take my breath away. Right now, nearly one third of children in America are overweight or obese -- one in three. Something needs to be done."

To help battle the increasing numbers, Obama will launch

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her anti-obesity initiative next month which asks mayors from across the country to encourage their city or town to join together in battling obesity. Her long-term goal is to help cities adopt a lifestyle of healthy eating and regular exercise. The program is not about losing weight, but about losing unhealthy habits.

Obama's main focus is starting healthy habits at a young age through "healthy schools." She plans to increase the number of schools where kids can access nutritious food, campaign about the importance of physical education, provide access and affordability to healthy foods and create a consumer campaign to publicize the issue.

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NEWS



BLACK HISTORY Month

by Dylan Blaha
News Editor

OBESITY CONTINUED

"I think as a country we are so overweight because lots of people get lazy and would rather buy [convenient], cheap food than make their own," said Junior Keara McGraw. "I think it's great that [Michelle Obama] is doing something about this crisis."

Sophomore Phil Thomas agrees, "Something needs to be done about obesity and I think [the anti-obesity initiative] can help as long as we try to change ourselves to be healthy."

Along with numerous schools across the nation, Lemont High School is on its way to fitting into Obama's "healthy school" criteria due to things like the installation of a salad bar and awareness programs like Wellness Week.

"[At LHS] we do many health-based things, we use heart rate monitors in gym classes and we've put in a new cardio room with ellipticals, treadmills and bikes," said P.E., Health and Driver Education teacher Mrs. Cindy DeLude. "We are truly a fitness based physical education program."

"I think it's really good that schools are becoming healthier and trying to prevent obesity, including LHS," said Junior Jasmin Nunez. "We need to keep doing things to stay healthy or our country could be in a lot of trouble in the future."

In front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. on August 28, 1963, a black man cried for equality, acceptance and the end of ignorance. "...I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their char-



acter," Martin Luther King Jr. stated to over 200,000 civil rights supporters.

Jackie Robinson single-handedly broke the Major League Baseball color barrier in 1947 when he was called up from the minor leagues by the Brooklyn Dodgers. The first African American professional baseball player earned Rookie of the Year honors, along with leading the Dodgers to six league championships and a World Series title during his career.

On December 1, 1955, African American civil rights activist Rosa Parks refused to follow bus driver James Blake's orders and move for a white passenger. This action led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and, eventually, more black rights.

Throughout the month of February, America celebrates blacks like King, Robinson and Parks for their lasting contributions to society. CNN and MSNBC are just two of many television stations that will take time to honor world changing black Americans.

Carter G. Woodson, black historian, founded Negro History Week in 1926 in order to show the nation how children of Africa played a crucial role in modern civilization. According to CNN.com, "Black History Month, a federally recognized, nationwide celebration, provides the opportunity for all Americans to reflect on the significant roles that African-Americans have played in the shaping of U.S. history."

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3 NEWS



Black History Month CONTINUED

Besides honoring King, MSNBC remembers famous black inventors, athletes and actors. In the past, the network has covered the effects of the U.S. Supreme Court Case, Brown v. Board of Education, which outlawed segregation.

LHS senior Za'cora Quinn celebrates Black History Month every year. "I wear African clothing and I watch BET," she stated.

"We should celebrate [Black History Month] more around school," commented sophomore Becky Scott. "I think it would be cool to have black history facts on the announcements and learn more about African American history."

"America is a big melting pot," said Quinn. "We should give all of the races a month! They have Asian month in March and Hispanic month in the fall, but I'm sure there can be more."

Sophomore Morgan Costello added that "exploring other cultures" contributes to the high school experience and shapes students into better people. "Learning about different religions and races really helps to better understand their attitudes."



Photo courtesy of Google

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Editorials



What's on your mind?

I CARE SO MUCH.

Share

by Arlene Bozich
Editorial writer

Well, right now I'm feeling a bit tired, distracted and cold. And kind of hungry. In addition, I would enjoy a text from one of my friends.

Did you really need to know that? Of course not. Nobody cares about the random thoughts and feelings zooming through my brain.

But every day on social networking websites like Facebook and Twitter, users are sharing this personal, and uninteresting, information with the world wide web.

"I check my status...often," said LHS junior Enrika Grigorjevaite. "I update it from my cell phone, so it's easy. Almost like sending a text message."

While I don't know how "often" Grigorjevaite updates her status, I feel no need to update the world on what I'm doing. I'm not an introvert, but I'd rather be out living my life than changing my status.

However, there is reason for Facebook status junkies to rejoice. There is a psychological reason behind the obsession with status updates.

During adolescence, people sometimes develop an "imaginary audience." Psychologist David Elkind coined this term in the late 1970's. The "imaginary audience" is the tendency for individuals to assume that their behaviors and actions are the center of others' attention.

This "tendency" is often coupled with another one of Elkind's terms: the personal fable. When people fall into a personal fable, they strongly believe in their uniqueness. And while we're all beautiful, unique snowflakes, citizens of the personal fable mindset think the world could never understand how they feel.

Because we're all so different, right?

Back to the topic at hand- when individuals fall into an imaginary audience paired with a personal fable, they believe everyone is paying attention to their obviously unique experiences. So, the rest of the world has to deal with their obscene amount of status updates on their oh-so-interesting and unique experiences.

Please, status junkies, even though it's not *technically* your fault you constantly and annoyingly update your status every three seconds, keep the rest of the online world in mind. Status updates are best used in more important situations. Examples of "more important situations" include; you've found out you have superpowers, you won tickets to a demolition derby, your dog Lassie saved a boy named Timmy from a well, etc. Reserving your status updates for more interesting events makes each of your statuses more important and rare.

In closing, cut back on the status updates. We care about you, but not enough to hear about your feelings every minute or so.



EDITORIALS



Hey!

That's my spot!

by Katie Callaghan
Editorial writer

Not only did my 16th birthday offer me the privilege of getting my license, it also meant I no longer had to ride to school with my mom in our hideous station wagon. Believe me, that was the only thing I was looking forward to. Back then, in my sophomore year, I had no problem with parking on the top of the hill and walking what seemed to be an extra mile to the field house.

But now, since I'm a senior, I'm a lot lazier. So I get more upset when my spot in the front parking lot is taken just as the bell is about to ring. Kevin McMahon, LHS senior who shares my sentiments, said that "Once when I was running late to school I tried to park on the bottom lot and it was full and all spots near the stairs on the roof were taken. So I had to park at the very back of the parking garage. I was in a bad mood the rest of the day." Instead of spending the five minutes walking straight from the parking lot and into the building, I drive frantically around school checking every lot for a space only to find myself parking on the top of that hill.

This is a problem that could be easily avoided if student drivers had assigned parking spots in lots that are directly used by students. "If the administration made the regulations fair, I wouldn't be against having an assigned parking space," said McMahon.

In my fantasy dream world, where every student driver is considered, every parking space would have a number. Then, every student would be given a number and expected to park in the same space every day for the rest of the year. But, in order to get a decent space closest to the building, students would have to pay for the parking passes in advance. This would be a great incentive for lazy students like me who don't want to walk more than 50 feet from their car to the building. "I park right by the stairs in the parking garage that way I don't have to walk too far to get to and from my car, I guess that's part of being a lazy senior," stated McMahon.

Not only would assigned parking spaces be less of a hassle for those who park in the same spot anyways, it would also prevent any disputes over parking spaces and help carpoolers find their rides a lot easier. It's an annoyance when I drive the same kids home every day, and every day my phone vibrates with the same text messages, "hey Katie, where'd you park?" You'd think they would understand that the answer is the same most of the time, which is "in the front lot, back row, left corner. See ya there!" This problem and waste of 10 cents a text could be easily erased if my fellow carpoolers knew exactly what spot I would be in every day.

So close your eyes, and picture this dream world. You pull into school and drive down the middle row and head to spot number 74 and smoothly pull your car into your personal spot. Shift it into park, turn it off, and walk only 35 feet to get to class with 5 minutes to spare.

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Editorials

Superman, Batman, and...Spellchecker?

by David Timm
Head Editor

There is a seldom appreciated superhero hiding within the shadowy pixels of every nearly every computer. Green grammar rays and red stripes expose his foes for what they are: bad writing.

Fighting bad grammar and misspelled words with a vengeance rivaling Batman, this underappreciated defender of the English language enforces justice, vigilante style, regardless of the writer's intentions.

But is spellchecker always looking out for *our* best interests? Must we always bow to the demands of this strict, uncompromising tyrant?

This is where the rub comes in: there is no easy way to communicate to your computer exactly what you intend to do. In fact, *we* don't always know what we are intending to do. As a result, many students spend hours unable to decide if that green squiggly line is telling the truth or not. To ignore or not to ignore? That, is the question.

For example, the above rhetorical fragment, which happens to be a genius allusion to Shakespeare, is currently being attacked with the green grammar ray of death, a choice weapon spellchecker decides to use quite frequently in my papers. Now, is there anything wrong with the sentence? No, it's a grammatically correct rhetorical fragment, but spellchecker is stubborn and, of course, unable to comprehend the writers intention.

One potentially embarrassing spellchecker problem is its inability to detect words that have different meanings but are very close in spelling; fore example, Deer John, I have been having issues with my martial skills, I was wandering if you could help me and my wife work out and comprise our difficulties. Now, of course the writer did not really mean to say that would like to work on his martial art skills with his wife. Unfortunately, without an editor, this little note might thoroughly confuse and surprise their marriage counselor.

Isn't that the biggest problem with superheroes? They think they know everything. Though they may be protectors of justice, peace and all cats stuck in a tree, they do have faults. Take *The Incredibles* movie for example; while Mr. Incredible has super strength, he cannot, no matter how hard he tries, stretch his body like Elasti-girl. For one, it would be weird, and more importantly, it's not within his abilities as a superhero.

However, most students, like seniors Pat Nazario and Matthew Hutton, weren't exactly sure what they would do without spellchecker; "dictionary...internet or something" guessed Nazario. Hutton cited the mother-of-all search engines, "Google" as his fallback should spellchecker not exist.

I guess that's the point here - we may be a little too trusting of our spellchecker; being totally dependent on anything is a bad thing. There are many different super-editors out there to save your writing from the clutches of sneaky sentence structure slip-ups and the many muddled-up masterpieces you write for English class: they come in the form of teachers, parents, and peers. While one might have the power to spell like it's his job, another can help you organize content, spur on ideas or even tell you that you should, under no circumstances, become a professional writer when you grow up. But let's be realistic. As Nazario so aptly put it, spellchecker is "very convenient."



Feaatures



The *Lovely Bones*, from Novel to *Film*

by Dale Erdmier
Features writer

After being raped and murdered before the age of 14, poor, innocent Susie Salmon must now watch over her family from “the in-between”. The popular novel *The Lovely Bones*, written by Alice Sebold, moved to the theaters on Jan. 15.

Since all LHS students were required to read the novel four years ago, the film would be a good one to catch. “Honestly? I think I liked the book better than the movie because it was so disturbing to actually see.” said junior Samantha Reddy.

The controversial ideas in this novel are portrayed throughout the film, making it stomach-wrenching. Scenes with dead bodies and creepy effects made me uncomfortable. The strong feelings developing for the characters make it heart-wrenching to see bad things happen to them.

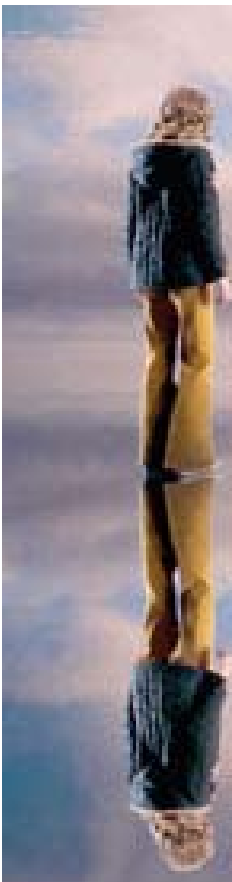
Junior Jimmy Myers stated, “I didn’t really mind the movie, but I feel like it would be better as a book, so I plan on reading it.”

Making the novel into a movie has stirred up new interest for Sebold’s novel, but perhaps the visual should have been left open to interpretation. Even though the beginning of the novel is extremely disturbing, it compels the reader, while the movie makes viewers look away and cringe. Even the scene where the large chest is being rolled towards the sinkhole seems to last forever, simply because every viewer knows it contains Susie’s body. This makes some ask the question: when will this be over?

“I enjoyed the book, but some people are turned off by the first chapter because it is so graphic, but I guess it depends on how much you can stomach.” said English teacher Mr. Lazzari.

Whether the novel or the movie earns more money is up to society, but both are components of the sad story of Susie Salmon. “I’d say it is worth seeing, simply because it is part of our culture, as long as you can make it all the way through.” Myers stated.

Photo courtesy of Google





Features

Why the heck are you graduating early?

by Rachel Colant
Features writer

The youngest person to ever graduate was ten years old, yet many LHS students are surprised to hear that a few of their classmates are graduating at 17. If you're a genius, I figure, why not? I'm being facetious, of course – you don't need to be a genius to graduate early. In fact, many of Lemont's best and brightest students aren't graduating early in hopes of soaking in as much of the "high school experience" as they can.

"I like seeing my friends a lot. If I graduated early, I would just sit at home and do nothing. I wouldn't have a job, I wouldn't see my friends, so there's really no point in graduating early," commented senior Josh Eby.

For those students who aren't interested in said "high school experience," graduating early becomes an enticing option. This isn't the only reason for booking it, though. Some students have plans for the future they'd like to get a jump start on. Crazy, right? A 16-year-old that has goals extending past their weekend plans.

"I'm graduating early because I'm eager to get the rest of my life underway," said junior Annie Fox.

There are two options when it comes to graduating early: the one semester and the full-year. The former is seemingly more popular and widely accepted, whereas a look of horror and numerous snarky comments are an expected response to the latter. "Why would you want to graduate early? Don't you want to walk with your class? Don't you like high school? Isn't it hard?" are common questions bombarding an early graduate.

"It's not as hard as you think. This is the easiest year of my life," said Fox.

The misconceptions about graduating early come from a lack of knowledge. There are three classes you're

Photo courtesy of Google



required to take senior year: Government, American Problems, and English IV. English IV can be taken through the mail or through an online course, and government and problems fit easily into most schedules. You are only required to take 2 credits outside of school when you graduate early.

"I'm graduating early because I don't feel like wasting my time in high school taking electives that I'm not required to take," said junior Haley Simone. "Not because I hate my class or high school."



FEATURES

Manga

MANIA

by Kathleen Clark
Features writer

*“Read a Ton,
It Can Be Done”*

by Orla Ruane
Features writer

The library staff at LHS has been struggling to encourage students to read more books and has seen a falling trend in student interest. But a grant recently received from the South Suburban School Business Officials (SSSBO) has supplied the LHS library with new fiction books. These books aren't your typical stories though. They are comic books.

The new comic books, or “Manga” in Japanese, will be used to complete the “Read a Ton” approach in order to gain interest students and to get more people to check out books. Students who check out these books, after reading, will return to the library and check in with LHS librarian, Catherine Mayer. “After the students read the books, they will come in and we will weigh the book they read and track the weight. The main goal for the Read a Ton program is to reach 2,000 lbs of read books by May 14th,” said Mayer. Anyone who checks out one of these books will also receive a form that they must fill out after reading in order to receive credit.

In order to spark encouragement, Mayer explains that if the school reaches the 2,000 lb goal, then those who participated will have lunch in the courtyard at the end of the year.

These books are open to all students to check out, and they include series like *Dragon Ball Z*, *Bleach* and *Deathnote*. Any student wishing to support the Read a Ton approach may also contact Ms. Mayer with details.

So, all you comic fanatics, support your school; get your “Manga” on and READ A TON!

Trying to expose yourself to a variety of new things? Have you ever heard of Manga? I didn't think so.

According to head librarian Mrs. Cathy Mayer, Manga is the “Japanese equivalent of comic books.” . Mayer stated, “cartoons equal anime and comic books equal Manga; Manga covers a variety of topics: male and female, mythical, etc.”

Manga is “published in book format, there are a lot of books in a series,” stated Mayer. Our school library has purchased six series of the Manga comic books, and our students at LHS donated two other sets. Mayer says, “Other school appropriate donations are welcome.”

Although not considered an official club, there are a group of students that gather every Wednesday after school from 2:45 until 3:30 for meetings about Manga. They have discussions on what Manga they are reading. Sophomore Ren'e Tovar heads this group of students. Mayer says “Ren'e asked if a group could get together after seeing [Manga] signs”. The group consists of students who share the same interest in Manga.

The group's coordinator, Tovar, said, “[We thought] it would be interesting to have [the Manga] group because it's something we didn't have. People could get together to discuss [Manga]”. Ren'e thinks “it would be fun for people who don't read them to come to the group and check it out”.

Having read Manga for the past 12 years after being introduced to them by her older brother, Tovar has read quite the fair share. Her favorites are *Dragon Ball Z*, *Bleach* and *Naruto*.

English teacher, Mr. Jon Deguzman, is a Manga fanatic. , “Oh my gosh! [I've been reading Manga] since I was a sophomore in high school. I was watching anime well before that when I was a little kid,” he stated.

Mayer's closing thought: “We encourage students to come check out the Manga series. They're nice because they're quick to read. They can easily be picked up and read in a weekend”.



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FEATURES



LHS: Monochromatic



or Unique?

by Christine Alwan
Features Editor

Photo courtesy of Tony Hamilton

Upper classmen finding a seat at lunch on the first day of school.

Being a student at Lemont High School does not exactly feel like attending a daily UN conference. But (believe it or not) Lemont High School does have diversity. Just ask bilingual LHS junior Britney Garcia.

Garcia's first language was Spanish. As a student who participates in the Spanish for Native Speakers class, Garcia feels that being bilingual definitely has its advantages. She enjoys learning about her heritage and expanding her language skills.

This has its challenges, however. "Sometimes I can't think straight...I will randomly switch between languages, and people will give me confused looks," said Garcia.

These challenges are also shared among newly-immigrated students. Mr. Roy Nees, LHS English as a Second Language teacher, sees the challenges his students face, especially when it comes to learning U.S. history. His ESL classes, "split almost right down the middle between Polish and Lithuanian students" focus on learning to speak, write and read English effectively.

This class is the key to academic success in the United States for many LHS students. "I had one student who graduated two years ago," Nees recalls, "She came into my class knowing almost no English. Now, she is a junior at Loyola studying pre-law."

Diversity is definitely present at LHS, so let's celebrate it. Garcia said, "There are some things that go unac-

knowledge[d], but I feel that [LHS] celebrate[s] differences. It's about how we are treated equally, and I have never felt discrimination or anything like that."

So, the next time you catch yourself musing LHS's densely white population, take a second look. Newly-arrived immigrants and bilingual students who are well-versed in their culture have stories to share and lessons to teach. We just have to be open to learning them.

Look out for more information about LHS's bilingual student population in future issues of the *Tom-Tom*.



Photo courtesy of Tony Hamilton

LHS freshman walking the halls.



LUGE



what?

by Emily Pellegrine
Sports Editor

Photo courtesy of Google

Load! Paddle! Grip! Take the line! Never heard these terms before? Then you aren't familiar with the Olympic sport of Luge. Sure we've all watched the graceful performances that figure skaters put on, the jumps and slick moves that snowboarders perform, and the speedy cross country skiers who make racing down a mountain side look easy. There are many winter Olympic sports that everyone is familiar with, but luge is one that seems to be forgotten.

Luge is the French word for sled, hence why they use a sled to race around the four km track. The racers start by sitting in a fiberglass sled and pulling on fixed handles that lay within the ice. The racers wear spiked gloves to grip the surface of the ice for acceleration before lying on their backs. The racer's feet must stay stretched out in front of them, and their heads are to be back at all times. For a luger to steer, they have to mainly use their legs and shoulders. The only way to stop is by sitting up, putting their feet down and pulling on the sled runners.

There are 14 men and women athletes that make up the 2010 American Olympic luge team. The only difference between the women's race and men's race is that the women start farther down on the course. Four heats are done over two days, and the lowest combined times over the four runs win. The athletes will reach speeds of over 80 mph, faster than the maximum speed on a highway.

Some of the best lugers come from the United States. Tony Benshoof, Brian Martin, and Erin Hamlin have all been Olympian medalists for luge representing the United States. The strength training for lugers is immense. Their training schedules consist of four hour sessions, six days a week. A majority of the training consists of sprint drills, and the rest is weight training. The sport of luge is not as easy as it looks; the Olympics in Vancouver kick off on February 12th. Be sure to watch the luge races and see how fascinating it really is.

1/2 SPORTS



WHO WILL BRING HOME THE TITLE?

Stephanie D'Amato
Sports writer

Super Bowl XLIV is almost here and anticipation for the game is growing. The two teams who have made it into the final pairing, the Indianapolis Colts, coached by Jim Caldwell, and the New Orleans Saints, coached by Sean Payton, are set to due battle.

The Colts and the Saints have both had seasons to remember. The Colts are going into the Super Bowl with a 14-2 record while the Saints have a record of 13-3. Both teams have worked so hard for one purpose: to return home with a championship trophy.

Being one of two teams that make it to the Super Bowl is what every NFL team hopes for when the end of the season is near. It's the roar of the crowd, the anticipation when it comes down to the last few seconds of the game, and feeling of victory when they are able to hold the trophy in their hands is what makes it all worth it.



VS.



Another big part of the Super Bowl are the commercials. People who don't even like football watch this game just so they can see sheep "streaking," or a hot supermodel eating Doritos. Big name companies spend billions of dollars all for a 30 second time slot during the Super Bowl. All it takes is a short little clip for a product and its commercial to be the talk of the town.

No matter who is rooting for whom, the Super Bowl brings people of all ages together. It's a time for food, fun and a few good laughs.

The Super Bowl is airing on CBS on February 7th with kick off at 5:28 pm.

So who is going to win it all, **Saints** or **Colts**?

"Colts all the way"-Helen Dickson (senior)

"I'll take the Saints because Drew Brees because he deserves it and Roman Harper, my boy from Alabama needs one too"-Ross Kwasneski (senior)

"I'll take the Colts because Manning is the man!"-Keith Spencer (senior)

"Saints all the way!!"-Carl Chanda (sophomore)

"The Saints, not because I know anything about football, but because I think their colors are a lot more intimidating. Besides, I'm just looking forward to the commercials."-Becka Anderson (junior)

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Sports



BLACKHAWKS



won't Back DOWN

by Jamie Wiatr
Sports writer

It's official: the Chicago Blackhawks have become a target for a number of NHL teams looking to prove themselves. The Hawks continual drive for success has helped them travel much farther down the road to the Stanley Cup. I guess this is what it's like to be on top.

Although the playoffs are in their sights, the Hawks are still a long way from being crowned champion. But, by holding a current record of 37-14-4, it's safe to say the Blackhawks have had fate on their side this season. An eight-game winning streak back in November gave hope to not only the team, but also to Blackhawks fans everywhere that the Hawks were ready to get things done.

Hawks Coach Joel Quenneville told Post-trib.com, "It's a fun team to coach, for sure. Right now we're getting some results, but I like the guys' attitude. They like being around each other."

With a handful of youthful players including Jonathan Toews, Patrick Kane, Duncan Keith, Patrick Sharp and Kris Versteeg, this process has been something to learn from. But with the loads of young talent, the team is being criticized by the media and hockey fans everywhere. Although people are starting to doubt whether the Hawks can handle the pressure as the year progresses, true Hawks fans are not ready bail out just yet.

Skills and talent are obvious key factors in the Hawks triumph, but enjoying what you do is something they certainly can relate to.

Winning is not a simple task to accomplish, but with many things playing in their favor, the Hawks don't mind taking on the challenge.

"It's going to be tough. They're right at the top and it's for first place. There's a lot on the line. It's a tough building to play in but it's also a lot of fun and a good challenge," says defenseman Duncan Keith.

