

# Comcast



Lemont High School  
800 Porter Street  
Lemont IL, 60439

Images courtesy of Google

## Free Throws for Heroes

by Janelle Fennessy  
*News writer*

This year, for the second time ever, the Lemont High School boys and girls basketball programs combined to give back to military families in need. The two programs collaborated to collect and donate nearly \$3,000 to Free Throws for Heroes.

Free Throws for Heroes is a program in which the freshman, sophomore and varsity teams' players shoot free throws and collect pledges based on the number of free throws they make. The LHS basketball programs collected \$2,998, beating last year's donation of \$2,783.

Free Throws for Heroes is run by The Charity Stripe, a non-profit organization that raises money for American families experiencing financial hardship from military service, natural disasters and debilitating illnesses.

In this issue...

## Comcast Scholarship Award

by Janelle Fennessy  
*News writer*

Lemont High School senior Mariah Balinski will receive this year's Comcast Leaders and Achievers Scholarship funded through The Comcast Foundation. The \$1,000 scholarship is awarded to high school seniors who serve as models for their peers.

The Comcast Foundation bases the scholarship on a student's community service, academic achievement and leadership. The scholarship's goal is to help students prepare for the future, increase self-esteem, develop citizenship and service ethics, become strong leaders and see the value place on civic involvement by the business community.

Since 1999, the Comcast Foundation has given more than \$77 million in scholarships to communities nationwide.

Fear Not pg. 4

Ripped pg. 7

Someone in Need pg. 8

Treats pg. 9

Boys Tennis pg. 13

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**IDEA** by Janelle Fennessy  
News writer

## Regional Champions

For the first time ever, two students, seniors Mark Kaminski and Kathy Sitko, placed first in their respective divisions at the Illinois Drafting Educators Association (IDEA) regional at Joliet Junior College on March 5. Both students qualified for the April 24 IDEA state competition at Illinois State University.

At regionals, Kaminski won the Architectural Board division, where he had to design specified views, details or sections within three hours using provided materials, drawings and specifications. Sitko won the Introductory Board division where she had to draw views of a given problem in 90 minutes and complete a one hour written test.

The overall LHS team had its best-ever regional finish, taking third place. Other team members included seniors Nick Kelliher, Samantha Nelson, Scott Paloian, Jeff Peters and James Tuscher, juniors Matt McKenna, Zymante Petrusciute and Nick Strouss, and sophomore John Tomala.

In 2008, Ryan Strauss was the first LHS student to win a regional title through the 3D Architectural CAD modeling division and last year Nick Lawrence won first in the same division.

## LHS Contest Play

### ties for 6<sup>th</sup> at

## IHSA State Finals

by Dylan Blaha  
News Editor

On Mar. 26-27, during its first-ever IHSA State Finals appearance at the University of Illinois-Springfield, the Lemont High School Contest Play tied for sixth in the Drama category. The students' performance of *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* tied Joliet West's *Shadow Box* with a total of 21 points.

In addition to the team's success, senior Arlene Bozich and junior Rob Smierciak earned spots on the All-State cast. The 10-student cast also included seniors Justin Doebert, David Timm, Lauren Dohse, Patrick Hopkins and Katie Wallace, juniors Nick Taluzek and Nick Stokes and sophomore Cara Dohse.

At the competition, two of the five judges scored LHS in the top five, including a second-place vote. However, Oak Lawn's version of *The Miracle Worker* took home the state title by virtue of a tiebreaker over Glenbrook North.

"I'm very pleased with how we performed," said Wallace. "It was a very hectic two days but everyone had fun."

Mr. Dan Franke, LHS speech teacher and Contest Play director, indicated that going to state was a great experience. "I feel like [our students] had a fantastic showing and it was great to get [Lemont's] name out there. It would be great to eventually win state."

Set in Oct. 1904, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, Steve Martin's first full-length play, features a 25-year-old Albert Einstein and a 23-year-old Pablo Picasso, who meet at a bar called the Lapin Agile (Nimble Rabbit) in Paris. While at the bar, they hold lengthy debates about the value of genius and talent while interacting with several other characters.

Lemont advanced to the Drama & Group Interpretation State Finals after finishing second at its own IHSA Sectional on Mar. 20. All five judges named Smierciak to the All-Sectional cast, the only performer to do so.

"I enjoyed working on [the play] with [all the cast members]," commented Wallace. "I got closer to a very special group of people and I wouldn't trade my experiences for anything."



# Masthead

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The LHS Tom-Tom does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion or orientation.



## President's Volunteer Service Award

by Janelle Fennessy  
News writer

This year, Lemont High School senior Abby Rachwalski received the President's Volunteer Service Award through the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. This award is given to Americans of all ages for volunteering time to their communities and the country.

Rachwalski is President of LHS's Community Service for Everyone (CSFE) club and a member of the Student Council. Throughout high school she has volunteered time to numerous organizations, including the Caring for Kids Summer Camp, the Lemont Youth Ministry, Almost Home Kids and the Catholic Heart Work Camp.

The President's Volunteer Service Award is presented by Prudential Financial and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP) under President Barack Obama.

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“I’m scared.”

“I wonder if anything will happen...”

“My parents don’t think it’s safe.”

**Not.**

by Arlene Bozich  
Editorial writer

On Mar. 18, 2010 there were fewer students roaming the hallways of Lemont High School than normal. After an alleged threat to the safety of the school, many students stayed home.

At first, this seems logical; better safe than sorry, right? But this incident highlights the kind of behavior that could lead to bigger problems.

The students that stayed home and the parents that allowed them to do so fell into a state of fear. Fear, or a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger or evil whether the threat is real or imagined, is good in some cases. It is theorized that fear was originally a tool for the “fight or flight” method of survival.

In tough situations, fear focuses our minds’ attention and propels the body to perform at its optimal level. But fear can also cloud judgment, as seen on Mar. 18.

As individuals, people are intelligent and caring. People in groups, however, are stupid and fearful. Remember learning about the Bay of Pigs Invasion? Just to recap, President Kennedy and his cabinet approved an extremely flawed Cuban invasion plan. For a more in-depth look at the Bay of Pigs, click [here](#).

Anyways, the order for this invasion was pushed through by the psychological phenomenon groupthink. Groupthink is “a type of thought exhibited by group members who try to minimize conflict and reach consensus without critically testing, analyzing, and evaluating ideas. Individual creativity, uniqueness and independent thinking are lost in the pursuit of group cohesiveness.”

Basically, a team of usually intelligent individuals met together under a pressured situation, began to feel afraid of its responsibilities and decided to follow whatever the group thought was best. No one took time to analyze the consequences of what they were deciding because they were too afraid to cause friction in the group.

Peer pressure anyone?

Fear changes our realities. It warps the mind, sometimes for the better. But on Mar. 18, we saw students take

*Continued on page 5*



**SO BE BRAVE AND SHOW UP ON MAY 18 THIS YEAR. GO ON. I DARE YOU.**



*Photo courtesy of Google*

time away from the classrooms and sit at home; just because they were afraid something “might” happen.

If this is the case, then a lot of other days are going to be missed this year. Many seniors are turning 18 over the next few weeks; what if the threat was in reference to one of their birthdays? April 18 is also looming on the horizon. Granted, it’s a Sunday, but something could possibly happen on April 19. And let’s not forget about May 18; all of these days are possible targets. And we should be so afraid of someone who wrote a threat in purple marker. They obviously mean business.

Seems a little ridiculous, right?

If we let fear stop us from doing something as simple as going to school, how else are we limiting ourselves? Always following the “better safe than sorry” rule is ludicrous. If it were always true, we would be wearing crash helmets and strait jackets in small padded rooms for the rest of our lives. It might not be comfortable, but we’d be safe.

Fear can’t be the only emotion guiding our decisions. Sometimes, the most terrifying path is the right one. Feeling fear is normal, but letting it control you is unhealthy.

So be brave and show up on May 18 this year. Go on. I dare you.



by David Timm  
Head Editor

Did you hear? Lemont High School is going to be dismantled piece by piece by a radical group of Amazonian women promoting the color pink! It's true! I know because I heard it from a very reliable source. Who told me? Well, it was Dan, who heard from Stacey, who heard from Alisha, who overheard her father talking about it in the bathroom with a random bum who is her father's brother's nephew's cousin; twice removed, of course. Well it has to be true then, doesn't it?

Have you ever played a game called telephone? The general idea is one person thinks of a phrase like, "Lemont High School is going to be selling pieces of artwork on Amazon.com to raise money to promote cancer awareness." The players get in a circle and sit down; the first person whispers the phrase in the ear of the player to their left and that player whispers what they heard into the ear of the player to their left. Once it's made its way all the way around the circle, then, the last player announces what they think the phrase is. It is then compared to the original phrase. Most of the time it ends up looking something like, "Lemont High School is going to be dismantled piece by piece by a radical group of Amazonian women promoting the color pink!"

As you may have guessed the game is a metaphor for what happens in real life. As humans we cannot possibly perfectly recount everything we hear. Often we will embellish stories that seem boring in order to make a more interesting story. We've all done it at one point or another and it's not always a bad thing.

Rumors become dangerous when they damage people or their reputations. Take several weeks ago for example: we all heard about the vague graffiti on the boys' bathroom door. You probably heard frightened students recounting stories ranging from terrorist groups to suicidal kids. Maybe you even heard about a group of radical Amazonian women. Let's not forget this was written in washable marker. Terrifying.

Rumors can get of hand pretty quickly and it's not always intentional but it is important to remember while things we say have great potential to be helpful, they can also be incredibly hurtful. Every time you hear something that seems a bit conspicuous go through a few quick steps to determine if it has any worth. If you find it doesn't, why repeat it?

First think about who you hear your gossip from. Let's be realistic; we all know who those certain people are - the ones who are always exchanging the latest juicy gossip. Avoid them.

Next thing to consider is the bias of the story teller. Too often people hear something and then retell it with their own spin. Statistics are a great example of this; in fact Mark Twain said there are only three types of lies: "lies, damned lies and statistics." Beware the bias.

Finally, why don't you talk to some people who saw or heard the same story and get their opinions? It might not be entirely right or complete, but it will give you a much greater perspective on what is going on. Compare stories.

We all know about rumors; we all know they are bad; let's just be a little more aware of what is true and what has been through the telephone game. Otherwise we will hear a lot about radical Amazonian women, which might be interesting, but certainly can't be good for us.



by Kathleen Clark  
Features writer

When you're walking down the halls in school you might notice the many styles our student body displays. Leggings as pants, neon flip-flops and PINK sweatshirts are just a few different fashion statements teens are making. But one statement has caused controversy between faculty and students: ripped jeans.

According to the dress and appearance guidelines, "clothing with holes or rips above the knees is prohibited." Dean Brett Nelson stated that the ripped jeans policy is "very simple: no rips or tears above the knees."

It's clear that many students have an issue with this policy. From what I've heard, students are upset because some shorts reveal more than ripped jeans. Senior Amanda Smit said, "It's a ridiculous policy because there are girls wearing skirts and shorts [revealing more] than holes above the knees in jeans." Another student, sophomore Emily Heth, stated, "[The deans] think showing your legs is more provocative than showing cleavage; they're more strict about ripped jeans."

Another issue with this policy is that it is arbitrary. Dean Nelson stated, "[Deans] do the best we can [to strictly enforce this policy]. If we see [ripped jeans], we make [students] change." But obviously, with a student body of 1500, not everyone sporting the look gets caught.

This policy has "been in place for at least six years, since I've been here," stated Nelson. "It's a matter of inappropriateness. Everyone wants to be stylish but [rips are] inappropriate above the knee. [Deans] understand there are fads and fashions but we try to keep everything appropriate."

Sophomore Maggie Hodurek said, "It's ridiculous. It's not even that important; there are bigger issues than showing your thighs."

My take on the issue is a few rips here and there isn't going to kill anybody; but if the deans see any rips above the knee, it is a violation "and that's the bottom line."



# Shaving his head

# For Someone in Need

by Dale Erdmier  
Features writer

Guys with long hair walk the halls of LHS every day, but do you ever wonder if it is for more than just looks? LHS sophomore Dylan Rhodes started growing out his hair in May 2008, but shaved his head on Mar. 6 for Hair Docs in Bolingbrook.

Although it takes a long time to reach the preferred 12-inch hair length, he has donated his hair two times already. Rhodes said, "Nothing about it is difficult; I just love having long hair." He says he plans on "[donating his hair] forever" because he has gotten used to it.

Hair Docs cuts hair and offers regular salon services, but also takes hair donations. Rhodes only donated 10 inches of hair, which is acceptable. People of any age can donate hair as long as it is in good condition.

Many boys have long hair, and a fair share of them are mistaken for girls at first glance; just ask Dylan. Once, when waiting in line at Chipotle, a man said, "Okay what can I get for you ladies?" Apparently, the man mistook Rhodes for a girl. This resulted in enthusiastic apologies and a free Chipotle meal. Would this bother you? It didn't bother Dylan.

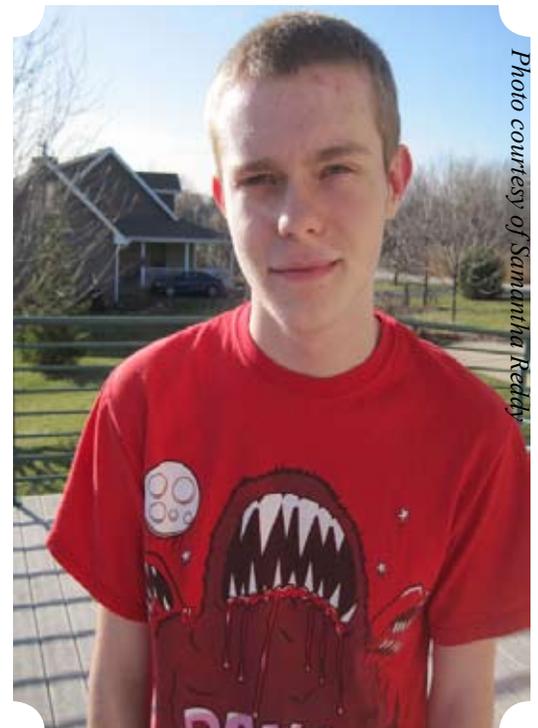
"My mom originally gave me the idea to grow out my hair. She thought it would be an easy way for me to help people," Rhodes said.

His whole family supports him and thinks this simple act is very rewarding.

Rhodes loves having long hair and likes the fact that his love for hair can help someone in need. The drastic change after shaving his head does take some getting used to, and he "misses the long hair very much," but it will start growing out again in the near future.

Junior Samantha Reddy stated, "I think it's great that he likes to help out people in need and I think he looks great with long and short hair."

To join Rhodes in this simple act of kindness grow out luscious locks and contact a salon collecting hair donations for those in need. Since, as he says, "It's so easy."



LHS Sophomore Dylan Rhodes after shaving his head



# Tom-Tom

by Christine Alwan  
Features Editor

Spring is here, and so are barbecues and family parties. The next time you need to bring a dish, consider this tasty treat I made in Miss Stevenson's Foods class last year.

Taffy Apple Pizza combines savory, cookie sweetness and peanut butter with the crisp freshness of Granny Smith apples and cinnamon. Start with:

½ roll sugar cookie dough

4 oz cream cheese

¼ cup brown sugar

2 T creamy peanut butter

¼ t vanilla

cinnamon

1 Granny Smith apple

½ cup lemon-lime soda

2 T caramel topping

2 T chopped peanuts



1. Preheat your oven to 350°F. On a greased pizza pan or cookie sheet, press cookie dough to form a 6-8" circle. Bake for 10-15 minutes or until lightly browned.
2. With an electric mixer, blend cream cheese, brown sugar, peanut butter and vanilla until smooth.
3. Spread evenly on cooled cookie.
4. Peel, core and slice/chop apples. Dip apples in lemon-lime soda to prevent browning. Drain thoroughly. Arrange apples evenly on top of cream cheese mixture.
5. Sprinkle apple slices lightly with cinnamon.
6. Heat caramel topping in the microwave for 10-15 seconds. Drizzle topping over apples. Sprinkle with peanuts.

Personally, I do not like to sprinkle my taffy apple pizzas with peanuts because I feel like it gets too nutty. After you have made the recipe once, feel free to adjust it to your tastes. I always like to add a little extra caramel on top!

Whether you forgo the peanuts or dump on the caramel, one thing is for sure: this treat is truly delightful. Take it from senior Bryan Clark: "It's delicious! I really enjoyed the peanut butter-cream cheese spread."

The next time your friend asks you to bring something to a bonfire or party, make this dessert and wow the guests.

Made this recipe? Let us know what you thought! Your critique could appear in the next issue of the *Tom-Tom*. Email us at [alwanmar000@smail.lemont.k12.il.us](mailto:alwanmar000@smail.lemont.k12.il.us).

Image courtesy of Google



If you're like me, you like bargains. And if you're like the majority of other Americans, you need to find them. That's where I come in. I'm here to help you, to guide you, to implore you to step out of your shopping comfort zone and take a trip with me. A trip to the thrift store.

Half of you, I'm assuming, probably cringed at your preconceived thought of a second-hand clothing store: a bleak room, dimly lit with hanging fluorescent light bulbs and that faint smell of moth balls, filled with someone's dead grandmother's used, forgotten and more likely than not, out of style, clothing. If you're one of those people, stop reading this article right now, because I would hate to be the one to shatter your mental picture of thrift stores.

Contrary to popular belief, thrift stores aren't only for your penny-pinching Great-Aunt Rose. In fact, though many other businesses are closing their doors or reporting decreasing sales, Goodwill stores experienced a 10% increase in retail sales last year – and that's not an isolated trend. Many other resale shops across the country are reporting similar sale increases. There is no denying that thrift stores are gaining popularity during the Great Recession, and for good reason.



Many LHS students are already aboard the thrifting bandwagon (yes, thrifting is the act of shopping at a thrift store), travelling frequently down Lemont Rd. to the 75th street intersection to the Salvation Army Thrift Store, which is tucked in the corner of the Downers Park Plaza.

“There are a ton of things that I've found at thrift stores that I would've never imagined. I bought a working Polaroid camera for \$6,” stated freshman Sonia Vavra.

Thrifting can be a rewarding experience. No, not because it's going to make you feel good about giving

*Photos courtesy of Google*



## *Thrifty cont. from page 10*



something back, (though that may be the case), but because it's similar to treasure hunting. Ever seen the Goonies? That pair of cowboy boots you just found that embody everything you've been searching for in a pair of boots for the last two months, in just your size? Those boots are One-Eyed Willie's treasure. I can promise that a find like those boots will elicit the same feelings from you that the gang experienced when they found Willie's ship. With patience, and practice, everyone can find a gem. Take it from a seasoned professional.

"If you've ever been thrifting, you know how awesome it is when you find something that you like. It's honestly like finding treasure," commented junior Danny Kulasik.

These gems sparkle even more when they are on sale. Yes, you read it right: a sale at a thrift store.

Every week, the Salvation Army Thrift Store in Downers Grove has a half-off sale. The color-coded tags on the items denote which are on sale – half off – and which are not, according to whichever color the sign on the front door says. The Salvation Army isn't alone, though. Most other secondhand stores also have frequent sales.

"We work hard to make sure that things are at least relatively organized here [at the Salvation Army Thrift Store in Downers Grove]. All donations are washed before they go on the racks and every week we go through all of our things and mark down the prices of those on sale. We just want to make it easier for people to shop here," stated Cody Loden-Chambers, Salvation Army employee and former LHS student.

Aside from scouring the aisles of the stores for clothes, books, shoes or picture frames, there is another important aspect of thrifting that you may have forgotten: donation.

"Some stores from around the area donate their out of season clothes, but the majority of our donations come from people," commented Loden-Chambers.

*Continued on page 12*





## *Thrifty cont. from page 11*

I know the prospect of taking your clothes to Plato's Closet and getting five dollars for an Abercrombie shirt, new with tags, which you spent 25 dollars on is incredibly appealing; however, the difference between a chain of stores like Plato's Closet and the Salvation Army is that Salvation Army stores actually help people. Sure, it's helpful to you if you need some extra money, or if you're interested in buying slightly over-priced used mostly brand-name clothing, but the Salvation Army's Adult Rehabilitation Centers are "100% funded from the proceeds of [their thrift stores]," according to their website, which means when you shop there, you're really helping somebody.

Donations from people aren't the only source of goods for most thrift stores. The Salvation Army Thrift Store gets donations from Target when the seasons change – in fact, you can still find multiple bikinis (unused with tags!) on the thrift store racks that were gracing Target's women's clothing section just a few months ago. Don't believe that thrift stores only have clothes that people don't want anymore; many items are there simply because they were left over at the end of a store's clothing season.

"About two months ago, the Hope and Friendship mission went to the Second Chance Thrift Store [in Lemont], looked through all the clothes, picked out all of the things that teens would like, and put them on a separate rack," said LHS junior Nicole Ahline. "I always stop in and look at their sweat pants and hoodies; I love Second Chance! I wish that more people would give it a chance."

If you went against my advice in the beginning of the article and I've changed your mind about secondhand shopping, there are a handful of thrift stores in the area who would love for you to bring your friends, stop in and look around.

### *Thrifty stores to check out:*

Second Chance Thrift Store  
44 Stephen St, Lemont IL  
630-243-1279

Goodwill Industries  
7400 W. 159<sup>th</sup>, Orland Park IL  
708-429-9030

Salvation Army Thrift Store  
1520 75<sup>th</sup> St, Downers Grove, IL  
630-968-2270

The Brown Elephant Resale Shop  
217 Harrison St, Oak Park IL  
708-445-0612



*Photos courtesy of Google*



# Boys Tennis

## Serves Up

## Plan of Attack



by Stephanie D'Amato  
*Sports writer*

The Lemont High School boys tennis team is starting to get into the “swing” of things, in order to prepare for their upcoming season. English teacher and coach Jon DeGuzman and Science teacher and assistant coach Scott Collins are preparing the boys for what DeGuzman expects to be a “promising season.” “I have good expectations for the boys,” states DeGuzman. “We’ve been working really hard and I think that we will be able to send our whole team down to sectionals.” DeGuzman also is anticipating a conference title and sending more players to state.

The boys practices employ a new training method.

“We’ve split up the 39 guys into four mini-squads, each led by a captain,” continues DeGuzman. “This helps because it gives the captains a chance to show leadership skills and to give the guys a better practice environment since it’s in a smaller group. A lot of conditioning and strength training are being done as well.”

Returning to the team for the last season of his high school career is senior Nick Drez. DeGuzman expects Drez to make it back to state, hopefully to day two and finish in the top 32.

He also has high hopes for doubles partners’ seniors Karl Zwick and Jerry Murphy.

“It would be the first time we’ve ever had a doubles team go down to state, so I’m hoping they can make it,” said DeGuzman

Can all the hard work that the boys are putting in pay off? Come see the boys play their next home game on April 12.

*Image courtesy of Google*