

TOM-TOM

Faculty Idol 2010



by Kristen Peterson
News writer

The Performing Arts Center was buzzing with excitement on Friday, Apr. 9. For the fourth consecutive year, Faculty Idol was held at LHS.

This year it was hosted once again by the LHS Speech Team, having all profits go towards the team. "It's awesome we can raise so much money for the speech team because God knows we can use it!" said member of the speech team Rhiannon Lindgren.

"Faculty Idol 4: Lemont's Got Talent" was put on a little differently than in past years. A difference was that instead of students and teachers being limited to only singing, the competition was open to many other types of performances, varying from dance routines (Mr. DeGuzman and Disrael Sanchez's "zombie" Thriller dance), to metal bands.

After being narrowed down through two cuts, the audience selected a winner based on how loud they applauded for the act. In the end, the winning act was the Ska Band, featuring Seniors Scott Paloian, Chris Nottoli, Ken Urbanski, Tom Szafranski and Jim Durham, and Junior Nick Taluzek and Mr. Matt Doherty, band director and Fine Arts teacher.

The band played two songs, "Sell Out" by Reel Big Fish and "The Impression That I Get" by The Mighty Mighty Bosstones.

"I assumed that I would play trombone, guitar, or bass," says Doherty, "But they somehow talked me into singing."

After his last performance in Faculty Idol where he proposed to his wife during his rendition of "I Can't Help Falling In Love With You" by Elvis Presley, Doherty decided to come back and play with the students.

"This was a fun change for me, and I had the opportunity to play some music from my favorite band with a lot of fantastic student musicians. This year was slightly different. The students came to me to get involved," says Doherty.

The night turned out to be a success, and the speech team was thrilled with the outcome.

"You could tell everyone had a lot of fun with it," said Lindgren, "And that's what it's all about!"

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Photos taken by Danny McKeivitt

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EDITORIALS 4

Don't believe the **BIG KIDS**

by Emily Hartl
Head Editor



Working in a café that offers some of the best-looking but most fattening deserts in the entirety of Bolingbrook, I see some pretty atrocious transactions take place with certain customers. As if particular Starbucks beverages were not bad enough for someone's health, the typical Barnes and Noble customer usually tacks on a desert item, sandwich or stuffed pretzel to his order.

One slice of cheesecake in that café is roughly 800 calories. At the same time, all RDAs (Recommended Daily Values) of vitamins, minerals and fats are based on a diet of 2,000 calories per day. That slice of Double Chocolate Cheesecake is nearly half of the calories you should consume in a single day.



Photo courtesy of Google

And imagine those poor souls who tack on a White Chocolate Mocha or a Caramel Frappuccino to their desert. They think that they're "treating themselves" when in reality they're slowly killing themselves.

But I've lost interest in these people. I strongly believe that adults should know better than to put, essentially, edible heart attacks and artery cloggers into their bodies.

I do worry, however, about their children.

While there's something to be said for the age of accountability, children base their big-kid food choices on what they were taught as youngsters.

For instance, when a preschooler goes to Starbucks with Mommy and has a "vanilla milkshake" purchased for her, complete with whipped cream, she is imbued with the idea that these "milkshakes" lack consequence in her diet. They are safe

beverages. They taste really good and it's okay to order them... whenever she wants.

So when she is in middle school and walks to Starbucks on Friday afternoons with her friends, she throws caution to the wind and buys herself a Vanilla Bean Frappuccino, because she's been drinking them for years, all thanks to dear old Mom.

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“Big Kids” Cont. from pg. 4

The same concept applies to any fast food: when busy parents are on the run and kids are sitting in the backseat of the car complaining of hunger, Mom and Dad instinctually pull into the drive-in at the nearest McDonalds or Burger King and order up. They never hand their children some cheeseburgers and simultaneously add, “By the way, kids, these burgers are terrible for your health so we’re sorry for purchasing them. But we’re desperate.”

Those parents who avoid fast-food and fattening restaurant purchases, unfortunately, still have to worry about what’s in their kids’ lunchboxes...or worse, what’s being served for hot lunch every day at school.

Raise your hand if you remember the good old days at Old Quarry, where every single day you could purchase a big slice of pizza, a bunch of delicious French fries and an iced, sprinkled sugar cookie for lunch, without breaking your wallet full of (allowance) money.

If your mother saw that meal, she would throw a fit. Admit it.

But who’s there at school to regulate our diets when we’re young? Lunch ladies, while maintaining

reputations as incredibly nice people, do not have the authority to stop you before you make a purchase and say, “By the way, there’s three days worth of saturated fat on that tray. It’s not too late to change your mind.”

Obviously those who rocked the reusable lunchbox in elementary school were under the law of Mom and Dad when it came to food. Every single day in fifth grade I had the exact same lunch: a PB&J, an apple, carrots with ranch dressing, and some type of carbo-loaded snack plus a juice box. I frequently gave the apple away, I drowned the carrots in the fattening dressing, and my juice box typically had enough sugar in it to send me into diabetic shock.



Photo courtesy of Google

While parents think they’re making fantastic choices about their kids’ diets, they just don’t read labels closely enough, or they politely ignore the artificial sweeteners, trans fats and empty calories in their shopping carts each week.



Photo courtesy of Google

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“Big Kids” Cont. from pg. 5

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, there is a 70 percent chance that overweight adolescents will be overweight or obese as adults. The risk increases to 80 percent if an overweight child’s parent is overweight or obese.

Basically, the growing waistlines are part of a vicious circle. Add to the equation our dying economy that makes people beeline for the cheapest food possible (which happens to be the unhealthiest), and you’ve got a national crisis.

My parents often make the claim that we can’t afford organic produce and all-natural food. They’d prefer to nonchalantly waltz into Jewel Osco every so often and grab the dirt-cheap apples and bananas, generic loaves of bread and some Raisin Bran if it’s on sale.

These items just scream pesticides, additives and high fructose corn syrup.

Isn’t it worth the extra money to spring for whole, organic foods if the kids eating it are going to be healthier, happier individuals because of it?

According to *Eat This, Not That*, a reference book by David Zinczenko, “Fruit snacks might as well be called gummy bears” and granola bars are only a small step away from candy bars. He adds, “A bowl of Trix or Lucky Charms has more sugar than most ice cream bars.”

But Zinczenko also makes helpful suggestions in regards to fast food and restaurants, the busy parent’s vice, to help kids make better choices.

For example, at Chili’s, the Pepper Pals Crispy Honey Chipotle Crispers—a popular selection from the kids’ menu—packs a powerful 770 calories, 41 grams of fat (8 grams of saturated fat) and 1,870 mg of sodium. By choosing the Pepper Pals Little Mouth Burger instead, kids cut out nearly 500 calories, almost 30 grams of fat and a whopping 1,500 mg of sodium.

Other smart, kid-friendly food swaps that Zinczenko suggests include eating whole wheat English muffins instead of Pop Tarts for breakfast (saves 19 grams of sugar and 80 calories!), trading in those Kashi GoLean bars and getting organic multi-grain granola bars instead, and substituting low-fat graham crackers for Wheat Thins to eliminate some fat grams and calories.

Extra money? Probably. Worth it? That depends: are we okay with stuffing kids into plus size clothing and hoping they don’t suffer from weight-related health complications? Doubt it.

Check out the next B-Day issue of the Tom-Tom to see why an animal-free diet is superior...ahem...we mean... better for you.



Photo courtesy of Google

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TAKING THE ACT?

No pressure, it will only make or break your future

by Kelly Lyons
Editorials writer

Junior year is said to be the most stressful year for many high school students. As a junior myself, I'd have to agree. This is usually the time when we suddenly realize that, in less than two years, we won't have to set foot in high school again.

On top of all the pressure of thinking about what colleges to apply to or which careers to consider, juniors also have to worry about the most feared standardized test of them all: the ACT.

And as if the test wasn't stressful enough already, most colleges and universities take students' ACT scores into great consideration. Some schools won't even look at an application if the test scores aren't high enough for their standards.

Nothing seems more intimidating than a test that analyzes aspects of everything you've learned since the time you began your schooling experience. I'm sure you've taken your fair share of standardized tests over the years, but none seem quite as scary as this one.

However, there are many people out there, like myself, who tend to be pretty nervous test takers. How can the ACT completely gauge someone's intelligence if getting a high score is primarily based on strategy?

Of course this test's scoring can be accurate, but depending on your test-taking habits, including how fast you read and how nervous you get, the ACT may not be completely right for everyone.

Junior Abbie Korte agrees, "I don't think [the ACT] can be the only way to judge a student's intelligence. Other things should be taken into account too."

Even though tests from all years of a student's education are looked at, it's not always fair that some schools won't even look at applications if an ACT score doesn't reach a certain average.

Regardless of recent standardized testing scores, all students should at least be given the chance of acceptance to the college of their choice. Well-rounded students that are both intelligent and involved should have just as much credibility as a great test taker who doesn't do much else.

However, some schools take the extreme route and forgo admission tests completely. Fairtest.org found that, "Over 830 four-year colleges do not use the SAT or ACT to admit substantial numbers [of applicants]." Although intelligence should be taken into account through standardized testing, there are other factors that should be judged as well.

Obviously this test is unavoidable (especially for us lucky Illinois residents, where it's mandatory), but all that I'm saying is that a little less emphasis should be put on ACT scores. Colleges may look at other factors besides your test scores, but it's common knowledge that many respectable schools have a set standard of how high applicants' scores have to be.

As a junior, I can completely relate with anyone else in my grade who claims to be near their mental breaking point. Maybe it's just the stress talking, but this test can potentially make or break the future of some students.

Although I know there's no way to avoid the dreaded ACT, it would be very helpful if the number I end up scoring won't brand me with a certain degree of intelligence for the rest of my life.

FEATURES

Giving a Face Value

by Alyssa Busse
Features writer

Our generation could eliminate the 'us and them'

Many believe that the social, day-to-day racial tension has completely run its course. But is racism silenced, or has it just evolved into a modern day concept?

Do we care about what we say, or do we just care about where and when we say it? Our generation is crucial in ending the racism that lies beneath the surface of all of our outward tolerance.

We can create a just society; the question is how far we are from creating one. Christian author and activist for The Huffington Post, Jim Wallis, dedicates his time and work to debunk social issues and current events. Following the Obama election, Wallis wrote an article regarding racism in America today.

Referring to Obama's election he states, "That a still predominantly white U.S. would elect a black man as head of state was stunning to many -- and, I must admit, to me. Frankly, it made me think that the country was better than I thought it was. That historic accomplishment is a sign of great progress and a hope of better things to come for racial equality and justice in the United States."

Some aspects that shape the culture of our youth stand as examples of our modern day discrimination. According to Urban Dictionary, a website designed to define contemporary language, it is now common for teens that are not of African American race to call those who are a 'Monday.'

A senior at Lockport High School first introduced me to the word this year. She explained, "Whenever we want to talk about a black person and we don't want them to know we're talking about them we say 'Monday,'" I asked her the reason for that specific 'code name' and she replied, confused as to why I didn't already know this, "Well everybody hates Mondays because they are annoying and unavoidable and everybody hates black people because so are they."

This shocking and ignorant idea is, unfortunately, not unique. A quick look at Urban Dictionary shows a slew of racial slurs, often taken lightly in some daily teen conversations. Maybe you have only heard a few of these names, or maybe you have heard of all of them. Either way, they prove racial ignorance is not dead.

Some may view Lemont as a place where such ideas have been largely eliminated, but in reality these words are commonplace and almost impossible to avoid. Although many teens today argue that discrimination is long gone with times of slavery and separate bus seats, some African Americans maintain that they are constantly ridiculed.

Internet programs such as Facebook, YouTube, MySpace, and Twitter are often times windows of opportunity for students to make anonymous racist comments. With bumper stickers and posted comments of videos or pictures, we have ideas thrown out into widely viewed websites that could offend or upset those that are Caucasian or African American.

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Educating Equality

Classes such as Sociology and Cultural Diversity are excellent examples of how education can encourage cooperation and interaction among different races simply through understanding diversity in our contemporary culture.

This semester on April 19, the B4 cultural diversity is presenting the 'Follow Me to Equality' class project. There will be videos of interviews playing in all lunch periods and students will be available to talk about the project. The class will present art work illustrating the purpose along with garden display.

A portion of the curriculum included in the Cultural Diversity course, taught by Mr. Robert Hammerschmidt, has been to study and discuss the modern racial issues that are significant today. Our class was asked to answer selected questions from the Race Test, which was created by Hamilton College to determine adolescent racial attitudes in the late 1990's.

Some questions on the test include: 'Do you think that because other minorities have worked their way to equality, that blacks should do the same?' 'Do you believe that whites are harder working than blacks?' 'Are you likely to attend a concert in which you would be the only person of your race in the crowd?'

These questions, along with others, encouraged the class to differentiate from what is politically correct from their honest opinion. One pattern caught my attention. Although many young Americans believe that the government should see that there is racial equality in jobs and



that there are racially integrated schools, more than half agree that African Americans should work their way to equality without any special favors.

What are the facts and results of prejudice or misconceptions in our country or state right now? This question can make a politician, lawyer or any government official uneasy. This is because we often don't want to admit the reality behind our prejudice, especially in our seemingly socially developed society and justice system.

We need to ask ourselves how much racism we are willing to witness and tolerate, or deem as acceptable. Our speech, body language, actions, and perceptions are the factors that hold this ugly truth of 'separation' in its place.

Exploring the topic of racism and debating its impact on our society today may be considered controversial, but the past has shown equality won't defend itself. Discussing these issues is the first step in erasing prejudice completely from American mentality.

When talking to African Americans and other racial groups there is irony involved in the situation. Most want to forget about racial tension, and have a healthy interaction with each other; yet, there is a daily struggle in understanding and co-existing that keeps some people of different races from completely accepting each other.

FEATURES 10

Maybe we're not racist; maybe we're just ignorant to the other half.

Our Generation

According to the recent research done by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), in the past it was more likely in diverse schools for teens to form friendships within their own racial group, but in recent years social studies have shown that the likelihood of choosing friends in other racial groups has increased.

James Moody, Ph.D., Assistant Professor from Ohio State University explains in a recent NIH article, "Even in schools with students from many racial backgrounds, kids are often graduating from essentially segregated schools, with little meaningful exposure to other races because they never form relationships with students of another race, they are viewing other racial groups at a social distance, which can bolster stereotypes."

One great thing about our society today is that there are so many more opportunities because of technology and modern media and music to find common ground with those that come from a different background. Sometimes the attitude can be, "Who cares if you're black or white? We both like the same music or TV shows."

Although there has been an increase in integrated friendships and social interactions, the core of racial prejudice in early adulthood stems from the lack of exposure to a variety of races in their junior high and high school years.

Tolerance becomes cooperation through bonding within friendships; having positive past experiences and having beneficial relationships or friendships with teens from different racial backgrounds brings peace of mind with that race when entering college and the work environment.

Media Matters

Movies have a large impact on the way we view issues and communicate modern ideas. Especially when it comes to racial tension and status, movies can create humor that either lightens the situation or worsens it.

Our Family Wedding is one modern movie depicting this issue. Although the descriptions of the movie explain that the main conflict involves the complications of joining families through marriage, after seeing the movie even though that is a conflict, it is not necessarily the main focus.

America Ferrera takes on the role of a daughter in a richly cultured Hispanic family. She hides her engagement from her family for personal reasons, one of which includes the fact that her fiancé is African American. When she finally breaks the news to her traditional minded family, they are appalled and question her decision and her overall sanity.

If there was ever a doubt that dating or engagement among racially diverse couples was still difficult or questioned, this movie, which was only released last month, erases that doubt. In 2010, we still can say that this struggle is relevant in today's relationships.

Youth today may find themselves asking if movies such as Our Family Wedding produce positive humor that just brings light to the reality of inter-racial relationships, or if re-creating this humor will just fuel the endless fire of separation and prejudice.

If movies that highlight these conflicts didn't exist anymore, would we slowly believe that because it's not addressed in the media or moves that simply isn't a prevalent issue? Regardless of what movies come out in theaters, the level of effects from any form of entertainment are up to us.

All people are a part of our culture and of our generation. Whether you're 15, 27, or 62 years old, there is that decision at some point in life when you can either strengthen the bond or slow down progress.

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SPORTS II

by Nick Celis
Sports writer

Who Says Girls

Well...who says? Sure as heck isn't Lemont. We know better than to mess with girls who spend most days after school beating the crud out of that diamond, who have a near perfect season record (6-1), and whose thirst for success wasn't even remotely quenched by last year's regional finals performance. Plus, most of them could probably shove us into our own lockers anyway.

The girls dominated last year's competition with an overall record of 19-11, and a 2nd place conference finish. Not to mention five, count 'em, five All-Conference players.

I know what you're thinking, "four out of those five players have graduated". Don't mention that to senior outfielder Ashley Stube, "Sure, we lost seven seniors this year, but we have a herd of really talented juniors,

plus a sophomore and freshman we brought up."

And these rookies aren't getting any slack. Constant hitting and fielding practice after school foreshadows what these younger girls can expect during the season, and just how badly this team wants to win.

This young gun squad has their sights set high this season, and doesn't plan to disappoint. With plenty of team morale and practice under their belts, junior pitcher Becka Anderson has the utmost confidence in her girls. "The difference from this year's team from last year's is that a lot of us played on the same summer league teams, which means we've had a lot more time to bond. We have an improved sense of enthusiasm and dedication this season."

With a 13-3 conference record last year, and the season thus far looking bright, can this team find anything to be nervous about? "Oak Forrest" continued Anderson "going up against the defending state champ is always nerve racking...but were playing better overall, and were really looking to give it to them this year."

These girls have all the right tools to make it as far if not, farther than they did last year. With good senior leadership, and a healthy amount of promising underclassmen, the girls are making real noise, real fast. "I can't wait to see how far we can go this season", said Stube. "I really want to take conference and even go to state!"



Photo courtesy of Google

SPORTS 12

Kicking to Victory

by Bryan Clark
Sports writer

The Lemont girls' soccer team is off to a strong start. They kicked off their season defeating Eisenhower 7-0, along with a 6-0 win over Oak Forrest. The team let the next two games against Sandburg and Tinley Park get away from them as they lost both games 0-1. However the team split the next two games as they won one game 5-0 and lost the other 2-0 to Downers Grove North.

The girls are looking to do as well as they did last year and they have big shoes to fill. Last year's team finished second place at state in Class 2A: the best finish in school history.

Senior captain, Colleen Regan is enthusiastic about their season this year. "This season is still very early so anything is possible." Regan states, "If we work hard at practice and at games like we did last year then we have the potential to make it just as far. We practice [nearly] every day for two hours."



The Varsity Girl's Soccer team circles up before a big game.

While yes, the girls are going to have to work very hard to be as good as last year it seems to be an attainable goal.

The team suffered greatly when losing core seniors such as Tammy Contorno, Erin Stahurski and Shelly Hadlock, but make up for these losses with a new wave of underclassmen. Sophomores Sydney Goushas, Kelly Trojak, Amber Trick, Shannon Briggs and Sheridan Newberry have been placed on varsity, along with freshman Reilley Sullivan.

"I personally really love being on varsity" Sydney Goushas said, "its more work and a better challenge for me then JV is. Yeah there's a lot more work, but I always love getting myself involved in something that's going to make me a better player. . . We all have to work really hard at practice; age doesn't matter, the coaches expect the best from all of us."

With a strong wave of raising talent, and plenty of senior experience, the club is showing early signs of becoming something of a dynasty in the eyes of IHSA soccer.