



THE TOM-TOM

Lemont High School
800 Porter Street
Lemont, IL 60439



Bass Fishing Team Advances to IHSA State Finals

by Dylan Blaha
News Editor

Lemont High School's Bass Fishing program, in only its second year, advanced to the State Finals after a 3rd place finish at the IHSA Tampier Lake Sectional in late April.

Sophomore Chris Walter and freshman Matt Burns caught two fish weighing a total of four pounds in sectional competition, earning them 3rd place out of 18 teams competing at Lake Tampier. Junior Kevin Fritz served as an alternate for Lemont at the competition.

The 2010 IHSA Bass Fishing State Finals will occur on May 7-8, 50 miles east of St. Louis at Carlyle Lake. The top three teams from each of the 19 IHSA Sectionals advanced to the state finals.

Last year, LHS became one of 200 schools to compete in the first-ever IHSA Bass Fishing State Series. The IHSA was the first state high school association in the country to sponsor a state championship in the activity. This year, the number of teams competing increased to 225.

Record Amount Awarded for 2010-11 Grants

by Dylan Blaha
News Editor

The Lemont High School Educational Foundation provided six grants for the 2010-11 school year, which altogether add up to more than \$32,000. Lemont High School faculty and staff submitted these grant proposals with the goal of enhancing educational opportunities for the school's students.

The total of \$32,371, which includes a stipulation that the funds must be used during the 2010-11 school year, is the Foundation's largest grant commitment in its three-year history, surpassing the previous \$30,000 mark.

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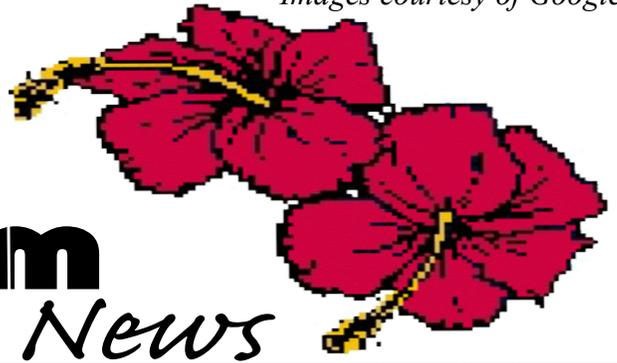
Included among the 2010-11 Educational Foundation Grants are the following proposals:

- * Adobe Creative Suite Design Software
- * Breakfast Buddies
- * Fostering a Discovery-Based Science Learning Environment
- * Navigating Through the Technology Classroom
- * We See College in YOUR Future 3.0
- * Writing Matters: Navigating the Demands of High School Writing

Images courtesy of Google



The Tom-Tom News



Goodbye America,

Bonjour Europe!



by Janelle Fennessy
News writer

In 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower made a pledge that he would create a way for the United States to promote world peace. Through Eisenhower's belief that interactions between ordinary citizens can lead to tolerance and understanding, the People to People movement was created.

"I have long believed, as have many before me, that peaceful relations between nations require mutual respect between individuals," said Eisenhower.

For over 50 years, People to People has sent American junior high and high school students to seven continents. Through this educational travel program, students learn about worldly customs and promote peaceful relations with foreign nations.

Last summer, I took part in President Eisenhower's dream when I went to Europe for two weeks. I traveled to the Netherlands, Belgium, France and England and had the chance to experience a new world of diverse cultures.

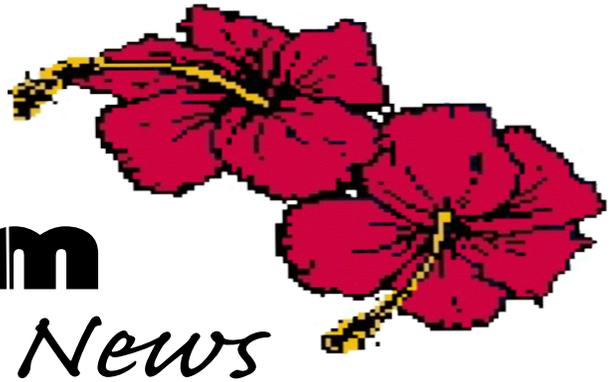
As soon as I stepped off the plane from my 8 hour flight to Amsterdam, I was exposed to not only a different language, but also a whole other world outside my comfort zone. Everything about Amsterdam was unlike back home; every person was friendly and said hello, everyone rode bikes everywhere and cheese was basically its own food group. There were always animals walking around and literally everything there was green - it was a nice change from the grey city of Chicago.

In Amsterdam, my delegation toured the tiny attic where Anne Frank hid during the Holocaust. I was amazed that there were still pictures and writings on the walls from when Frank first went into hiding. It was unbelievable to actually be in the place that I'd read about and seen in textbooks; I gained an immeasurable amount of respect for what Frank endured.

It's easy to become part of People to People; students can apply through the official website or are nominated by a previous ambassador. Once enrolled, students then have to interview, provide recommendations and



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“Goodbye America,” cont. from page 2

create projects and speeches. 40 students are chosen for the travel program, along with three or four teachers as delegation leaders. Following the selection there are monthly meetings so the students can learn common greetings in the other languages and get to know their fellow delegation members.

LHS sophomore Ryan Kahle also traveled to Europe last summer and reflected on the ambassador process. “[Preparing for the trip] definitely took a lot of time, but overall it wasn’t that hard; it was worth it.”

Being a part of People to People is not just about experiencing a new nation, it’s also about showing that nation a different side of America. As representatives of the United States, ambassadors work to change the American stereotypes and show everyone that not all tourists are rude or inconsiderate.

Although it was only a couple hours away, France was so different than the Netherlands. During our week in France, we went to Versailles, Paris and Normandy. In France, all the architecture was made from beautiful stone and full of history, especially in Versailles. The Palace of Versailles held many paintings and had a beautiful garden with marble statues and gold fountains, something I had never seen. In Normandy we visited the beach where D-Day occurred. It was sad yet empowering to see where men put their lives on the line for our country.

We went to the top of the Eiffel Tower to see the view of Paris; the whole city was laid out in front of my eyes and seemed to stretch on forever. We also saw the Arch de Triumph, Mona Lisa and the fashion center of Paris. Everywhere we went in France there were flowers and little bistros lining the streets. It all looked like a scene straight out of a movie and I fell in love!

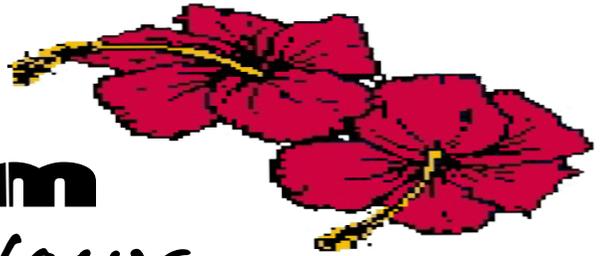
While in England, we stayed in London for four days and visited Wilkshire and Oxford. We saw Stonehenge and traveled to Oxford University to tour the 11th century campus. While in London we got to try authentic fish and chips numerous times and saw castles full of priceless paintings and royal diamonds. The best thing about London was seeing famous destinations like Big Ben and the London Eye; they were completely different from any landmark in the United States.

Kahle agrees, “The part of the trip I liked the best was probably seeing all of the famous landmarks, [they were] really interesting.”





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News



People to People gives students the chance to make lifelong friends with the people they traveled with. Being thrown into a new surrounding formed bonds between everyone in my delegation, and after two weeks, I walked away with amazing friends that I still talk to.

I thought People to People was merely a way to go abroad and have fun, but this program offers so many benefits besides the international experience. It teaches things like leadership and independence, can provide college and high school credit and can even lead to a future career choice.

Junior Teresa Newton went to Japan two summers ago and loved her People to People experience. "I became more independent [because of] my trip and learned that it's fun to travel with people other than my family," said Newton. "I think everyone should have the chance to go on one of these trips; it was a lot of fun."

Through my trip, I have learned so much about myself and the world outside our country; I even decided I want to pursue a career that allows me to work and travel abroad. Without this opportunity, I don't think I would have as much interest or love for the different cultures and people around the world.

For more information about People to People, visit their website at www.peopletopeople.com

LHS Sends Five Students to

IHSA Journalism State Finals

by Dylan Blaha
News Editor

On Apr. 24, a team of Tom-Tom writers traveled to Lewis University for the IHSA Journalism Sectional. When the day finally concluded, five LHS writers, including seniors David Timm and Taylor Thanos, and juniors Janelle Fennessy, Rachel Colant and Annie Fox, placed in the Top 3 in their respective categories and advanced to the IHSA State Finals.

Fennessy became not only the school's first Sectional champion, but also its first double-qualifier. She added a 3rd place finish in Editorial Cartooning, while Thanos earned 2nd in Newspaper Design, Fox received 2nd in Review Writing, Colant seized 3rd in Feature Writing and Timm, Tom-Tom co-Head Editor, took home 2nd place in Headline Writing.

Last Friday, Apr. 30, the students competed in the IHSA State Finals at Eastern Illinois University. Senior Arlene Bozich became the first-ever LHS Journalism State champion, while Timm finished 4th in Headline Writing. However, because it was a "pilot run" of Broadcast Journalism, the category Bozich won, her achievement did not factor into the overall team score of three.

Images courtesy of Google



The 5 Tom-Tom *Editorials*



Foul Play!

by Katie Callaghan
Editorialist

Think about the dirtiest places in America, places like downtown in the heart of the city, a garbage dump, or maybe even a younger sibling's room come to mind. Instead, picture a baseball park right after the favored team has won. Ew.

I went to the Cub's game on Tuesday night and witnessed some pretty grotesque scenes taking place as the game went from inning to inning.

Why is it necessary for every upset or crazed fan to feel the need to stand atop their seat and scream vulgar words at players who probably can't even hear them? While I understand the urge to say something, I don't get the point in using profanities. Remember the audience at baseball games. Players have a wide variety of fans ranging from old couples, ready-to-be-engaged love birds, buzzed bachelor parties, coworkers, expecting parents and vulnerable children.

Children under 13 are exposed to a rapidly growing world, even at the ballpark. While watching the game, it might be hard for them to tune out the bad language being yelled from the stands.

I say this because I witnessed my nine-year-old sister shouting words that would otherwise be banned in my home. "Where did you learn that?!" was all I heard from mom's mouth. I watched as my sister turned around and tilted her head up towards the bleachers behind our seats to say "someone up there said it, so I did, too!"

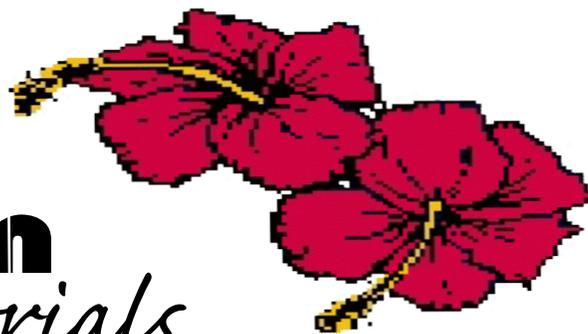
Besides my sister's trashy mouth, I found the ballpark floor to be utterly disturbing. Trash lined the rows of seats. Hotdog wrappers, personal pizza boxes, nacho trays and even sticks from corn dogs covered the cement. Empty plastic beer cups, diet coke cans and hot chocolate mugs filled the cup holders that stood in place on the backs of each chair. How could people be so inconsiderate to not get up from their seat and toss away what they didn't want into a trash can approximately 10 feet away?

But trash isn't the only thing that covers the ground. Peanut shavings and shells layered the hard floor. If I was mistaken, I'd think we were at Texas Roadhouse where we could toss our shells wherever we pleased (but even that restaurant stepped up their dinner etiquette and now there is a special aluminum can to toss your empty shells).

Maybe, though, talking smack to other fans and players and being able to toss your trash wherever you please is part of watching the game. Is there some sort of satisfaction in calling someone who makes three times your salary a vulgar name? I'm not sure, but the only phrase that will be coming out of my mouth at the Chicago White Sox game will be "CHARGE!" (after the instrumentals, of course) or singing off key to "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."



The 6 Tom-Tom Editorials



GENERATION Y,

by Arlene Bozich
Editorial Writer

Why Can't We Decide?

Different generations are given specific names and attributed with certain characteristics. One example you might recognize is the generation of the Baby Boomers, the independent and competitive group born between 1946 and 1964.

If you were born between 1980 and 2000, you're smack in the middle of Generation Y, also referred to as the Millennials. This is the generation of our student body, and we can see the pros and cons to this era. Generation Y, according to Sally Kane from about.com, is "tech-savvy," "family-centric," "achievement-oriented," "team-oriented" and "attention-craving."

All of that sounds fine and dandy on the surface, but two characteristics in particular stick out: "team-oriented" and "attention-craving." To me, those seem to be particularly problematic. But, let's follow the lifestyle of a so-called average Millennial and see how negative these characteristics actually are.

Kimmee McAllister, an LHS senior, is normal. She eats fast food once in a while, knows how to play video games (she has a particular attachment to the video game series *Crash Bandicoot*), has a Facebook, and watches television.

"I actually like [the show] *24*," said McAllister. "I don't watch MTV at all."

When McAllister was younger she played on a number of different sports teams. She swam for the Lemont Dolphins, played AYSO soccer for a number of years and even played for the local soccer club the Lemont Raiders.

From McAllister's story I can gather two things. One, she is loyal and works well in groups, as seen from her involvement in teams like AYSO and Dolphins. Two, action and fulfillment appeal to her, as seen from the time spent watching shows like *24*.

In McAllister's case, these characteristics don't seem to be causing any harm. What's wrong with wanting to fit in, or setting high goals for yourself?

The team-oriented thinking is okay, but only if it's in balance with that attention-craving attitude we supposedly possess. Together, I think these characteristics actually help us to become powerhouse workers; employers want people who are driven, or sometimes attention-seeking, but they also want these employees to work well in teams.

So right now our main problem isn't our attitudes, despite what our parents and teachers may believe. It's our inability to balance these two characteristics.

The problem is the imbalance in favor of a team-oriented attitude. I've already written an article on the difficulties of groupthink in relation to fear, which you can revisit by clicking [here](#) ("Fear Not", page 4). But our generation has a bigger problem than groupthink; we're losing our free will.

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Editorials



“Generation Y” cont. from page 6

If you crack open the Princeton dictionary, free will is defined as the “the power of making free choices unconstrained by external agencies.”

“...Unconstrained by external agencies...” there’s the catch 22. From what I can see our generation, more than previous generations, is greatly influenced by “external agencies”.

Let’s look back at McAllister’s story. She likes to eat out once in a while, knows how to play video games and checks her Facebook regularly. This seems typical for our age group. And all of these things could be considered external agencies.

Fast food is one of the main culprits of our inability to decide for ourselves. It’s accessible and easy to get, and fast food places like McDonalds or Sonic are usual meeting places for bored Millennials.

But besides making us obese and unhealthy, fast food actually affects how we think.

“Fast food restaurants are one of the impacts of modernization that enable us to save time. But, ironically, things that reminds us of the efficiency of time make us less patient,” said Sanford DeVoe, a researcher from the *University of Toronto, Canada*.

So, now we have bad attitudes, we’re unhealthy and our decisions are negatively impacted by our lack of patience. How could it get worse?

Two words: video games. Call of Duty, Halo, World of Warcraft, Final Fantasy; all of these popular games are actually employing psychological methods to get us sucked into their fantasy worlds and keep us from leaving and living.

Of course, we make the initial decision to play the game. But, after turning on the Xbox 360, or whatever console we’re zoning into, the game makers have us right where they want us.

Video games are designed with one thing in mind: keep the gamers playing the game so developers can make more cash.

In the early 1930’s, psychologist B. F. Skinner began to experiment with his invention, “The Skinner Box”. This box was a special rat cage. When the rat would press a bar or pedal in the cage, a food pellet would be dispensed for the rat.

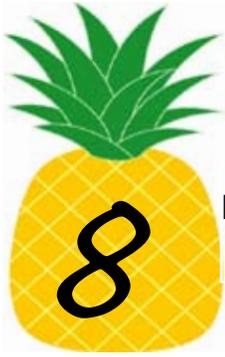
After a while, the rat would begin repeatedly pressing the bar and hoarding pellets. The rat learned to rely on pressing the pedal for rewards, and subsequently became addicted.

This type of learning is called operant conditioning, or according to psychologist Kendra Cherry, “a method of learning that occurs through rewards and punishments for behavior. Through operant conditioning, an association is made between a behavior and a consequence for that behavior.”

Video games are the modern Skinner Box, and we are the rats. When you beat a level in a video game, isn’t there usually some type of benefit? The behavior, playing the game, is reinforced by getting to the next level, or the reward.

So soon, all the little gamers (or lab rats) are just playing video games (or pressing the bar in the Skinner

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The 8 Tom-Tom Editorials



“Generation Y” cont. from page 7

Box), just to get to the next level (or get the next food pellet).

That’s a bit unsettling. But you say, “how can I make my own decisions when everything influences what I do?”

Well, you could just never play video games and you’d never waste your time with imaginary rewards, right? And you could never go to any of the fast food places in the world to avoid becoming impatient.

But then you’d also have to permanently shut off your television to avoid the media changing your attitude. And you couldn’t go to school or check Facebook and Twitter, otherwise your peers would influence your decisions as well.

So instead of becoming a hermit and living all alone in the middle of the woods, I have a simpler solution to becoming an independent thinker.

Think.

The next time you’re making a decision, reason out why you’re making the decision. Are you being overly impatient? Are you just waiting for the instantaneous reward? If you can understand why you’re acting a certain way, you can change it.

Millenials, we have a tricky road ahead of us. Some of us are graduating and running off into the big, scary sunset - and the rest of Generation Y isn’t far behind.

Our job for the rest of our lives is to not screw up the world more than it already is. If anything, we want to begin the healing process. We have a planet to clean, a financial mess to solve and a war or two to keep an eye on. The last thing we need is our difficult decisions swayed by external agencies.

Move over Baby Boomers; the Millenials have work to do.

“So instead of becoming a hermit and living all alone in the middle of the woods, I have a simpler solution to becoming an independent thinker.” Think.

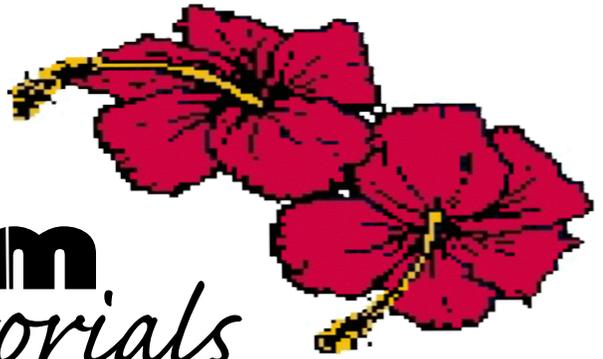
The Skinner Box or Baby Cage?

In 2004, author Lauren Slater published the book *Opening Skinner’s Box: Great Psychological Experiments of the Twentieth Century*. In the book, Slater claimed that Skinner’s daughter Deborah was raised in a Skinner Box and, as a result, became psychotic and later sued Skinner, then committed suicide.

The allegations were disproven when Deborah Skinner spoke out against the claims, after allegedly committing suicide. However, the rumors have caused a delay in the progression of Skinner’s theories due to the fear and negative connotation surrounding the Skinner Box.



The 9 Tom-Tom Editorials



Extreme Thinking and Fallacies

by David Timm
Head Editor

As you well know, vegetarians are invariably healthier than meat-eaters. Vegans are also much healthier than those animal-haters who enjoy the flesh of slaughtered animals. In fact, if everyone was a meat-eater, civilization would be set back at least one hundred years. And it's also a fact that all vegetarian/vegans are tree-hugging, PETA-fanatical hippies. Everyone knows vegans and vegetarians are all holier-than-thou and dislike even casual conversation with savage, backwards meat-lovers. Right?

Before I make myself any more despicable, I'd like to take a second to acknowledge the choices of vegetarians, vegans and meat-lovers alike. No matter what I actually say in this article, I understand it will be criticized, despite my best intentions to qualify this editorial and keep it balanced, people will get angry over it.

Contrary to popular belief, it's entirely untrue that vegans/vegetarians are tremendously healthier than meat-eaters. Most research is based upon general studies that do not actually isolate meat as an independent variable; there has yet to be a study that shows conclusively that the absence of meat in a diet is more or less healthy. This is excluding, of course, the studies that use an inordinate amount of meat in an individual's diet to prove the unhealthiness of meat in comparison to a balanced vegetarian or vegan diet.

And how could you possibly prove that anyway? The study would take exactly one lifetime, be variable-free and be done with thousands of different types of people. Because of this near-impossible task, it will be exceedingly difficult to ever determine if there is a noticeable difference in meat-eaters and abstainers.

Let me make this qualification, however: the amount of sacrifice and the actual will of the typical vegetarian/vegan lends itself to a healthier lifestyle because they are careful in what they eat and they therefore have a natural tendency to eat healthier overall.

To the same point, the typical meat-eater might not be as concerned about their intake which also lends itself to many "research triumphs" for vegans/vegetarians. These studies do not actually show a distinction between the healthiness of eating a balanced diet with meat or the healthiness of abstaining entirely, it merely shows a small group of people, dedicated to eating healthy v. a very large, varied number of people, the majority of which (as demonstrated by America's obesity issues) have major problems with weight. Seems a little skewed to me.

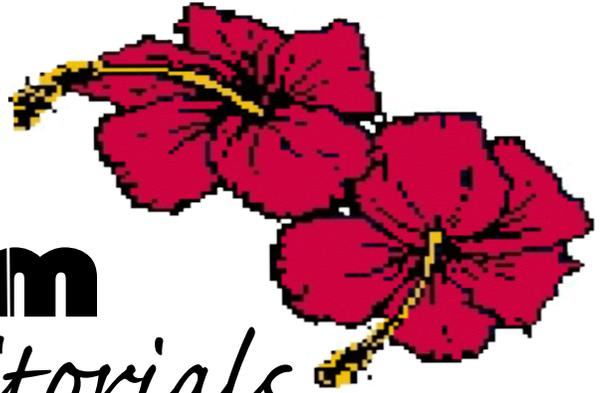
When is the last time you saw an overweight vegan/vegetarian walking around spouting vegan/vegetarian proverbs? It doesn't happen. Therefore, I would humbly contest every study that shows any type of major discrepancy between vegetarian/vegan lifestyles and that of those less animal friendly.

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The Tom-Tom

Editorials



“Extreme Thinking” cont. from page 9

Now I'll tackle the constantly referred to issue of animal cruelty. Let me preface this with the fact that I have no wish to commission the torture of innocent animals, but the issue of cruelty is a very controversial one and I understand that some even believe the killing of animals out of necessity is wrong.

I believe this quote from www.vanguardonline.f9.co.uk will sum up my approximate views: “We should... consider the animal's fate in the wild. Fish, fowl, mammals and insects in their natural state do not die of old age or go peacefully in their sleep with the family...they are generally killed and eaten (not necessarily in that order) by other fish, fowl, mammals or insects. We might assume that such deaths are...more frightening and painful than the swift dispatch they will experience in the slaughterhouse.”

Again, let me stress that I do not condone the mistreatment of animals on these farms, I merely wish to bring to light the fact that not all animals are mistreated and in some cases their “swift dispatch” in the slaughterhouse might be a kind of mercy compared to the savage wild. That is not to mention the relatively stress-free, predator-free, hunger-free, disease-free environment in which they are raised.

Although this article is primarily based on the vegetarian/vegan fallacies, I would like to point out the ignorance of many.

Why not find some middle ground? Obviously a balanced diet does not include only vegetables; at the same time neither should we neglect vegetables. Perfect example: the food pyramid - both vegetables *and* meat make the list. My advice? Take advice from the US department of agriculture and check out www.mypyramid.gov. After all, if they don't know what they are talking about, we are all in a little bit of trouble.

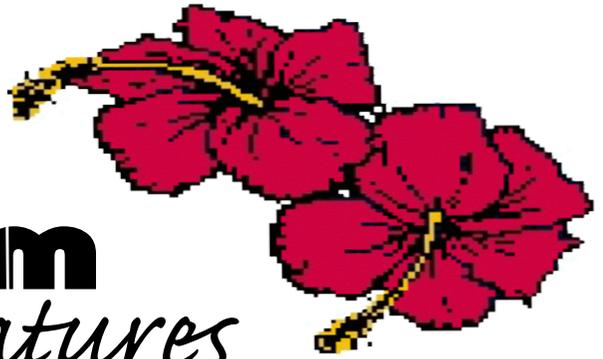
Once again, the point of this article is not to rip on vegan/vegetarian lifestyles; instead, I hope to point out some of the fallacies and maybe help some people understand that while vegan/vegetarians can be very healthy, you can be just as healthy as a meat-eater. The extremes of both sides might be just that, extreme, not to mention unnecessary to living a healthy lifestyle.

I am an omnivore; which, of course, is defined by www.wordnetweb.princeton.edu as “a person who eats all kinds of foods.” I am also undeniably healthy *despite* eating meat *and* vegetables.

I've said it before and it remains true in this arena of life: moderation is key.



The Tom-Tom Features



Follow Me

by Jessica Wienand
Features writer

“You can’t make a rainbow without more than one color.” This quote is featured on the tie-dyed banner draped across the third-floor balcony of the Lemont High School main staircase. The banner is only part of the LHS cultural diversity classes’ efforts towards promoting equality.

The “Equality Garden,” located in the courtyard, is part of the cultural diversity project that tied up their unit on inequality in America. “Different [minority] groups were represented with various colored footprints and flowers,” said junior Abbie Korte. The classes used the garden as a way to creatively obtain student attention.

The theme of the entire project was “Follow Me to Equality,” and each student took part in a committee. These committees’ responsibilities included not only working in the garden, but also interviewing students about diversity and issues for minorities, setting up a slide show presentation and making T-shirts with the help of the art department.

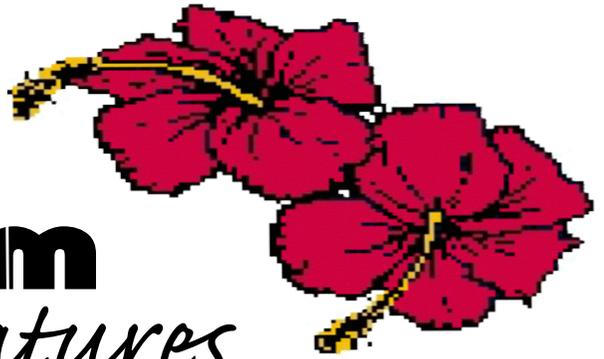
“I thought the whole idea was a good way to get the school involved in their project,” said freshman Marc Tokarski. “The garden got a lot of people interested in what was going on, and the videos of student interviews showed in the lunch room got everyone’s attention.” Tokarski also thought the presentation during lunch was a great way to get other students’ opinions on diversity and minorities in our own area.

In the small town of Lemont, it is easy to overlook the amount of cultural diversity we come across in our own school every day. We should recognize and appreciate our different backgrounds, and according to Korte, “students can promote our mission by accepting and embracing diversity among each other.”

...to Equality



The Tom-Tom *Features*



It's Time

by Christine Alwan
Features Editor

For a Clean Sweep!

It's spring, which means it's time for spring cleaning. And for seniors, this is the perfect time to purge your room of all the unnecessary high school junk you've been hoarding for the past four years.

For most of us, paper is the problem. Make sure you don't completely overwhelm yourself, especially if you have been a mega-hoarder (cough, cough Disrael Sanchez). Go through a stack of paper a day or when you are in your room, listening to your iPod.

If you saved notebooks, look at the courses you selected for college. Are you really going to need your AP Chemistry lab notebook if you are an art major? Recycle all of your junk. All those notes can still save the planet, even if they failed to save your grade.

If you are a freshman, start weeding out the unnecessary items now so you aren't left with the Mount Kilimanjaro of graded assignments you don't need.

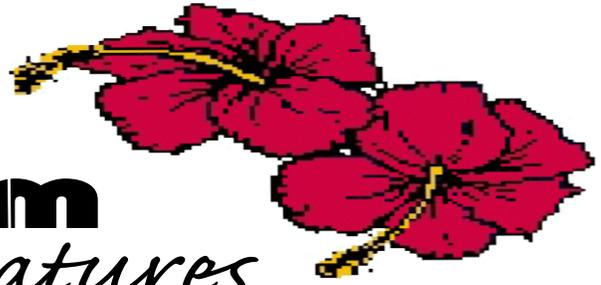
Now is also the perfect time to start organizing your memories. Make a photo album. Craft a scrapbook with all of your awards and varsity letters. Organize pictures on your computer so you know what they are from and when you took them. Having a place for everything and everything in its place will help you to de-stress and get ready for finals and all of the turmoil the end of the academic year brings.

Senior Eileen Batistich understands how spring cleaning can create zen during what can be a stressful time. "I get a sense of relief that my life is back in order [from spring cleaning]. I know spring cleaning means almost the end of the school year, which is always a plus."

Whether you are a freshman going onto sophomore year, or a senior moving on to bigger and better things, make sure to de-clutter, de-stress and get ready for summer!



The 13 Tom-Tom Features



READ ME!

by Dale Erdmier
Features writer

Pretend it's a Thursday evening: you have an hour of free time and grab the novel on the table. Oh wait, that isn't how most teenagers spend their free time? New generations are reading for enjoyment less than the previous ones and it can affect society in many ways.

Reading can be an escape for any person seeking time for his or her self, and gives people a moment to escape and focus on the novel's characters. Will Ronnie forgive her father? Will Kate live because of her sister? Will Annabel tell people about the night that ruined her life? Will Nick and Norah make it through the night? The reader simply sits and lets the events unfold, having no influence, decisions or part in the matter. Daily problems and stress can disappear for a short time and the reader can stress over the character instead.

Out of 22 Honors English students surveyed, 16 said they read for fun outside of school, while six said no. This statistic would be different for every class, but even six who simply said no can be considered a lot for this generation. After reading the Executive Summary of the latest National Endowment for the Arts report on reading, Elizabeth Kennedy was troubled to find that "Teens and young adults read less often and for shorter amounts of time when compared with other age groups and with Americans of the past." Kennedy said, "Reading is declining as an activity among teenagers."

New technology could make reading more popular, or increase the decline depending on how it is utilized. The new Amazon Kindle can be purchased on amazon.com for \$259.00, yet teens don't all have them in their backpacks. The Kindle is an electronic reading device that has an online store available at all times by wireless internet. Most novels are \$9.99 or less and can be delivered within one minute of buying. Since it reads like paper, and can store up to 200 books at a time, it is ideal for traveling. Weighing in at 10.3 ounces, the Kindle is lighter than most paperbacks. Since the battery lasts for days and contains 80,000 books and newspapers to choose from, who needs a book store?

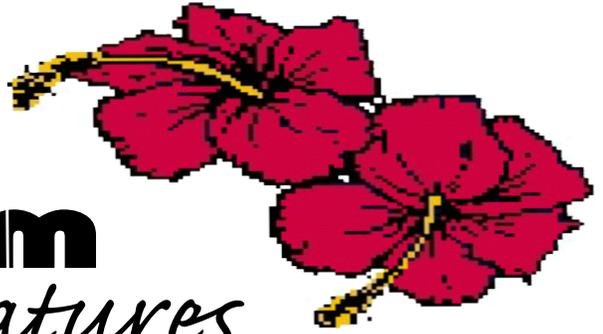
Junior Jimmy Myers stated, "I think the Kindle sounds like it is more convenient than a book, but it just hasn't become popular with our age group yet." Popularity with new technology can catch on quickly in a high school, but the Kindle just hasn't had the change yet. If the school decided to have Kindles available in the library, would more teens pick them up in their free time? New technology entices the younger generation and it might be able to encourage reading for enjoyment.

"In the 70's, new books were being produced for teenagers and the popularity grew, but now I think they are trying to keep up with the new electronics," said Mary Inman, Head of Youth Services at Lemont Public Library (LPL). Society tries to introduce new products and ideas all the time to catch the average citizens' attention, including teenagers.

Movie releases are another popular reading enticement for teenagers. Popular authors like Nicholas Sparks and Jodi Picoult have recently made their popular novels into movies. Teenagers obviously were aware the



The Tom-Tom Features



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movies were coming out soon because many Lemont High School classrooms would have a girl or two with *The Last Song* or *Dear John* on her desk. It is still true that many teens enjoy reading, but have more of a desire if they have a “time frame.” Having two weeks before the movie makes it almost necessary to fit reading into their busy schedule in order to finish the novel on time.

From the same 22 students polled, their favorite book was *The Last Song* the second favorite was *My Sister’s Keeper*. This poll does prove that students have read for enjoyment recently and their choices were influenced by the new movies. Maybe making new books into movies can continue increasing the reading popularity.

Reading novels for school can be time consuming as it is, so many teenagers don’t have time for an extra book in their schedule. All teens read at different speeds and many don’t even take the time to read the novels required for school.

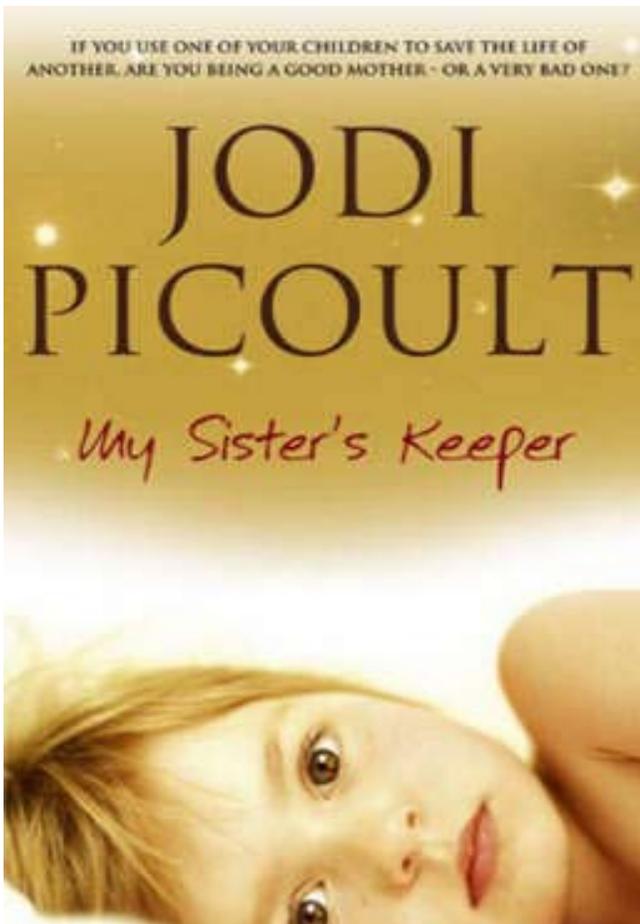
Spark Notes makes it easy. It’s 12:01 A.M? Okay take the five minutes on Spark Notes and go to sleep. Why spend an extra three hours actually reading the required chapters? Technology has made it easier to cut corners and find the least time consuming way to learn what happens in the chapters of a book.

Inman stated, “[Teens] battle for time. Pleasure [reading] gets left behind because of the priority of today’s teens. It hasn’t changed much since back in the 1800’s; the number one priority is friends. Reading is a solitary endeavor and you simply can’t do that with your friends.”

Schools and libraries are offering opportunities to encourage reading for enjoyment among teenagers, but ultimately it depends on them. “Teens don’t know that the library does have a lot to offer them. The Lemont Public Library has a young adult fiction section with a variety of books to read along with a manga/graphic novel section,” said Erica Liptack, part-time teen librarian at LPL.

This summer the Teen Summer Reading will kick off on June 11 and run through Aug. 4. Over the course of the summer, the LPL will host a bean-bag tournament,

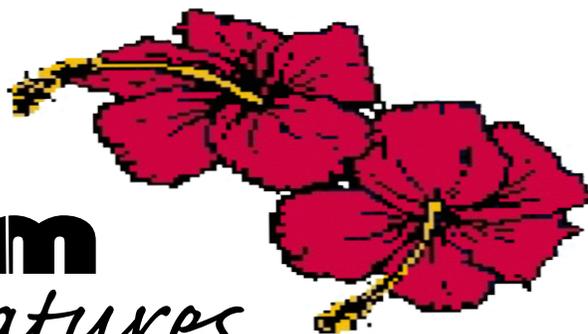
Images courtesy of Google Continued on page 15





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Features



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an *Eclipse* party, a live band concert and much more. Liptack encourages teens to come out this summer because “by doing some reading for fun and joining our reading program you also have chances to win great weekly and grand prizes.”

Essentially reading is an individual thing; it’s different for every one. As Inman states, “Cell phones, computers, school, family, friends and sports are much more popular. Everything else is given such a tiny percentage of their time. I don’t think [lack of reading] is because teens hate reading. They just don’t prioritize it.” Making time to read about the love of Ronnie and Will just might not be on the top of most teenagers’ priority lists.

SPARKS

by Kathleen Clark
Features writer

Nicholas Sparks began his career writing novels the summer after his freshmen year in college. He had suffered an injury due to running in track and became bored just lying around the house. Tired of his laziness, his mother said, “Don’t just pout, do something”. Nicholas responded with “what?” and his mother said “write a book”. That’s how it all began.

Over the course of his career, Sparks has written 16 books including *The Notebook*, *A Walk to Remember*, *Dear John*, *The Lucky One* and *The Last Song*.

His books are “easy reads” and appeal to a variety of readers. The novels are romantic and usually feature a lead male and a lead female role who develop a relationship.

Senior Sara Griffin has read many of Sparks’ novels. She stated, “I like how Nicholas Sparks is able to write books that pertain to adults but also interest young adults.”

Thus far, seven of Spark’s novels have been turned into major motion pictures.

Senior Jessica Urban has read *The Last Song* and said “I liked how the chapters were set up and how it was told from every characters point of view. In the novel you got to know the characters much better than in the movie, so I enjoyed the book more.”

Sparks is one of the world’s many wonderful authors. If you haven’t already, you should pick up his latest masterpiece!

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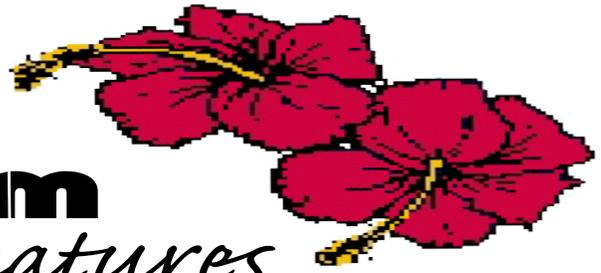
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The 16 Tom-Tom YOGA Features



by Kathleen Clark
Features writer

Feeling stressed? End of the school year closing in on you? Then maybe you need to try yoga.

Yoga dates back 5,000 years ago as illustrated by stone carvings. Yoga refers to traditional physical and mental disciplines.

Yoga originated in India. So where's a better place to take yoga classes than the Hindu Temple?! Conveniently located just across the Lemont Bridge, the Hindu Temple is open to the public.

Yoga classes are FREE and are offered every Saturday from 8:30 to 10:30am and every Wednesday from 7 to 9 pm.

Yoga class instructor, Gina Loftus, gave me some insight on yoga.

"Yoga classes have no religious restrictions or requirements. If you come to class looking for physical benefits, you'll get them. If you come to class seeking a deeper spiritual connection, I believe you'll find that too. That certainly is my intention when I teach a class," Loftus stated.

The class contains three parts. After arriving and spreading out your yoga mat, you are directed to take three deep breaths. Then the class jumps right into the physical body positions. These are called Asanas. There are many different Asanas, and to each one there are three parts: beginner, intermediate, and expert. "My favorite pose at the moment is the Pigeon and King Pigeon pose," said Loftus. After 90 minutes of challenging twisting and foreign body positions, it is time for breathing, which takes 15 minutes. It's called Pranayama. There are a few interesting breathing techniques.

To end the class, there is 15 minutes of meditation- or dhyana. During dhyana, you are to think of a mantra, which is a group of words that are considered capable of "creating transformation".

As the middle of the week nears and the stress begins building to a progressively less manageable mound, think about attending the Wednesday night class. Hope to see you there!

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The Tom-Tom



Sports



VS.



by Stephanie D'Amato
Sports writer

“Peanuts! Get your peanuts!” This is one of the sayings that baseball fans wait to hear every spring. The cries from the food vendors, the bellowing voice of the umpire, and the 7th inning stretch song of “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” remind us of our love for baseball.

It’s time for our favorite Chicago teams to step up to the plate once again. The Chicago White Sox and the Chicago Cubs are starting off their season with a couple of losses that fans are not too happy about, but the teams also have a couple of wins under their belt.

So it comes down to the debate: Cubs or Sox? Senior Lisa Donar likes the Sox because she thinks that “the Cubs are a disgrace to Chicago.” Senior Angelika Giatras agrees. “Sox are better; I guess it’s just a Southside thing.” But what about the Cubs? “[Cubs are better] because they are always considered the underdogs, just because they haven’t won a World Series in over 100 years,” says senior Ross Kwasneski. “Plus, Cubs fans aren’t arrogant like the White Sox fans are.”

Whether your loyalty is with the Cubs or the Sox, either way, everybody loves a good ball game.

Images courtesy of Google