

Tom-Tom

Lemont High School

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Issue 15

LHS Drama and Speech Members

by Nicole McKeivitt
News Editor

Attend 38th Annual Theatre Fest

On Jan. 10-12, 18 Drama Club and Speech Team members attended this year's 38th Annual Illinois High School Theatre Festival at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

Drama Club Director Roy Nees describes it as "An extravaganza organized by the ITA (Illinois Theatre Association) that is 2 ½ days of fun for over 4,500 students from all over Illinois."

Senior Vince Dory also says that "The point of it is to host workshops for kids, show stage productions of shows, and for kids to audition for colleges. And to have fun!"

Nees also comments that "Students have the opportunity to attend a myriad of workshops pertaining to the theatre, from make-up to how to audition, and numerous performances presented by schools from all over Illinois, as well as the All-State production, *Memphis*."

Senior El Cusimano thought that "*Memphis* was incredible. To sit and watch from the first and second row was insane. We were so close to the set and the actors themselves. I caught myself realizing that the people per-

forming on stage were the same age as us."

Junior Robert Rigler says that, "*Memphis* was just like a Broadway show, if not better. It was amazing." Junior Sara Van Hecke also has, "never been affected so much by a show."

At the event, Senior Alyssa Cinatl auditioned for 23 college representatives to earn scholarships. She performed 2 monologues and out of the 23 colleges, 17 of the colleges were interested, including University of Illinois and Drake University.

Senior Paige Gawrys learned a lot this year at Theatre Fest. "I learned some good techniques for diction, acting in front of a camera, how to prepare a monologue better, and how to answer the question 'tell me about yourself' at an interview."

Cusimano's favorite part of Theatre Fest was "Everything. I don't say that just an answer, I really mean it. I don't think there was a single time that I was unhappy or not enjoying myself. Even the drive to and from Theatre fest was fun. We watched a lot, learned a lot, had a lot of fun and met tons of new people."

Junior Anne Marie Alwan recommends that students attend Theatre Fest because, "You can hang out with people you love and meet so many talented people who are interested in the same things you are."



Photo courtesy of Google

IN THIS
ISSUE:
**Tom-Tom
Talks**
VOICES OF
THE SCHOOL!

IN THIS ISSUE:

BEING GAY IS OKAY: 4
REASONS WHY
PG 3

FOUR REASONS WHY BE-
ING GAY IS OKAY

STUDENT DIRECTION
PG 6

SPOTLIGHT ON WILL
VANDERBILT'S PRODUC-
TION OF THE BEGGAR
AND THE KING

SWISH
PG 9

RECAP OF THE BOYS'
AND GIRLS' BASKET-
BALL SEASON THUS
FAR.

Keeping Up With Clubs at LHS

by Carly Tucker
News writer

Speech Team

With the season already half-way over, the Speech Team is getting ready for its last few tournaments. In February the team will attend regionals where they hope to advance members to sectionals. Head coach Phil Lazzari said “We have a very good chance of meeting or exceeding the number of members that have ever advanced from regionals to sectionals.”

Future Business Leaders of America

Lemont’s FBLA, a nationwide club that allows competitors to learn about and test business subjects, is “looking forward to the rest of its season,” according to President Dan Totura. The team will go to their regional competition on Jan 26 where Totura predicts “we will definitely have some first place finishes.” Further in the horizon is the state competition which will take place in the spring.

Drama Club

Members of Drama Club attended Theatre Fest from Jan 10-12 at the University of Illinois. The attendees had the opportunity to attend free workshops on acting and watch some of the best high school plays from around Illinois. Attendee Ryan Luzzo said “The All-State show *Memphis* was absolutely amazing.” Drama Club is keeping busy with weekly rehearsals for the winter play, *A Comedy of Errors*, a play performed entirely in masks.

Model United Nations

On Feb 7 the Model U.N. club will depart for its much anticipated trip to the MUNUC

conference at the University of Chicago. President Peter Giankakis said “The club will try to the utmost extent to represent Lemont in foreign policy areas and to meet and collaborate with students on foreign policy from all over the world.” The team attended the Carthage conference early in November where they took home awards for best delegate and best position paper.

Foreign Language Club

On Friday Jan 11 the Foreign Language Club attended a private showing of the big screen production of the musical *Les Misérables* at Hollywood Boulevard. FLC sponsor Kelly Ercoli said “Most of the attendees enjoyed the musical but were surprised that there was no dialogue.” The club plans to take its next trip to see a Chicago Wolves hockey game. According to Ercoli, the much anticipated trip to the Melting Pot restaurant “has been moved to March, or April at the latest.”

National Honor Society

As a club that is heavily involved in community service, NHS will be participating in many upcoming events. One upcoming event, the Electronic Waste Drive, will give people the opportunity to dispose of any electronics at Lemont High School. Also on the agenda for NHS is the spirit week basketball game. NHS is sponsoring the event and will be working hard to recruit faculty and students to attend.



2012-2013 Foreign Language Club



2012-2013 LHS Speech Team



2012-2013 National Honor Society officers have some fun at this year’s induction.

Being Gay Is Okay: 4 Reasons Why

Paige Buschman
Editorialist

At high school age, a lot of people start to develop their own social and political philosophies. It’s fair to say that many people are exposed to ideals at school, through friends and parents, and (nowadays) online.

America, with its reputation for drastic civil rights approaches, has recently been caught on the topic of gay marriage and other gay rights. There are a lot of arguments and endless view points for them, and while finding a situation that pleases everyone is impossible, there are fair and unfair sides of the issue. Here are 4 arguments against homosexual marriage and 4 reasons why they’re wrong.

1) **Homosexual marriage threatens society as these couples are not capable of reproduction.**

Legalizing gay marriage will not turn the entire world gay. That is a fact. If a person is straight, then that’s what they are—laws saying that they can be with someone of the same gender will not automatically cause them to make the switch. Many heterosexual couples are also incapable of reproduction. Does that mean they shouldn’t be allowed to marry either? Our world is at a point where reproduction is a want, not a need. 7 billion people is enough.

2) **Homosexuality is simply unnatural, and therefore shouldn’t be recognized as legal marriage.**

I agree that, biologically speaking, homosexuality is unnatural. Electricity, vaccines, processed food, and cars are also unnatural, but they’re prized possessions of this society. Just because something isn’t natural doesn’t mean it’s bad. Until everyone in this world converts back to something simpler than Amish living, he has no right to say homosexuality is

3) **Same sex marriage opens the door for other legalization of other obscene sexual practices such as polygamy, bestiality, and incest.**

There is no proof of that. Also, bestiality and polygamy were and are already legal in many states (to some extent). And most states allow second cousins to marry, dancing on the edges of incest. The point is that one cannot jump to those sorts of extreme conclusions. Legalization of all acts warrants separate and unrelated arguments.

4) **Homosexuality is against my religion which states that traditional marriage is between a man and woman only.**

The government doesn’t have the right to make or not make a law solely based on a religion. People have the freedom to have a belief system, but when it interferes with other people’s ability to pursue happiness things have gone too far. Also, gender and sexuality are not necessarily easy to define. By allowing marriage between any two people regardless of who/what they identify as is the only way to ensure equality.

Here is what it comes down to: If you have a problem with gay marriage, don’t participate in one. Americans may one day appear as oppressive to homosexuals as it was to African Americans in the 1960’s and before. Bottom line: Gays aren’t oppressing you by loving each other. Don’t oppress them by withholding their basic human right to love.

Color Me Jade

by Laura Harding
Head Editor

Once upon a time, in a world filled with flannel and grunge, lived the dial-up internet. This modem stood between brave humans and AOL instant messenger. Many dared to weather the screeching of the dial-up internet to chat with friends “on-line.”

Soon humans looked to defeat the dial-up modem, no longer willing to endure the system’s dated and time-consuming method of loading the World Wide Web.

Thus began man’s struggle with modern technology.

The journey took many years and many great efforts. Naturally, humankind prevailed and created the majestic “wireless” internet.

Surely such a flawless system would not betray man’s quest for internet memes?

Alas, like every great creation, wireless soon revealed its one imperfection, its Achilles heel: spotty connection. And once again, man found himself waiting for tedious, long *seconds* as his computer loaded pictures of cheezburger cats...



Many teenagers today complain about “First World Problems” (FWP) such as problems with their smart phones.

We as a society are jaded by the constant amelioration of our “first world” lifestyle.

We are too busy cursing our smart phones for losing signal to realize that what we are holding in our hands – a tiny computer – is something that used to take up an entire room. Rather than gaping in awe at the futuristic rectangles, we comment on the few components it *doesn't* have: “Where’s 5G?” “Why can’t it just pick up my thoughts directly from my brain?”

But we *should* be amazed. Sure, we’re not at hover-boards quite yet, but the entire world is literally available at our fingertips. We’ve taken an infinitely large universe and shoved it inside of 4 inches of mechanics that very few of us can actually understand. It may as well be magic.

Perhaps, as a society, we are so accustomed to the best that any slight hiccup becomes an outrage. (Recall the debacle with iOS 6 Apple Maps upon the release of the iPhone 5.) Or, perhaps we’ve become so dependent upon our tiny electronic friends that any mishap seems to threaten our very livelihood.

Dramatic, yes. But realistically: Is it not more common now for drivers to refer to Google Maps or Apple Maps, what have you, than good old fashioned maps? Rather than walking outside to see if a jacket is needed, the weather app is loaded to check on the latest update.

Moreover, it’s near impossible to walk down a city sidewalk without dodging people with their heads buried in their phones—posting the latest picture, sending the latest tweet.

Though these electronics prove to be valued assets in our lives and take up so much of our time, we can’t seem to move past the small imperfections that maybe cause Facebook to load a little slower than usual every once and a while.

Simply put, a bit of appreciation for our battery-powered side-kicks is in order. Rather than cursing the gods of science over a cracked phone screen, vow to treat your appliance like the little miracle that it is.

Photo by Sam Moffett

Eat the Best, Leave the Rest

by Jordan Gembara
Editorialist

It’s third period, the clock is ticking and every stomach in the room is grumbling. Finally, the bell rings and the kids are free for one half hour. It’s lunch time.

Lunch is a favorite part of the day amongst the students of Lemont High School. Senior Mike Malloy said, “I love [LHS’s] lunches. I look forward to lunch each day—it’s a time where I can hang out with my friends and enjoy good food.”

Although seeing friends and getting out of class is ideal, the food itself is the real key element that makes lunch so great. With four lines and two menus to choose from, students have a wide variety of options each day. While the à la cart menu stays consistent, the Class A menu changes from week to week.

Cafeteria staff member Andrea Martig is very pleased with how popular school lunches have become. According to Martig, chicken and pizza are “favorites among the students”. In the à la cart line the salad bar has grown greatly in popularity within the last two years. Sales are very consistent and the students never complain.

“I think the [lunch staff] does a great job with the lunch sections each week,” said Sophomore Christine Martinez. “Some lunches like the buffalo chicken wraps are both delicious and healthy.”

But slapping together different lunch combinations each day isn’t an easy task—the school lunch staff takes a lot of time to make the school’s lunch menu perfect. What most students don’t realize are all the requirements school lunches must meet. Director of Cafeteria Services Kathy Cortesi ultimately has to make decisions for the menu that both meet state standards and will appeal to the students.

So what standards does the school have to meet, exactly? Every school lunch must have at least:

- 2-3 ounces of meat or meat alternative
- 1 cup of fruit
- 1 cup of vegetables
- 8 ounces of milk

However, not all students are big fans of the fruit and vegetable sections on the food pyramid. “We put the food on the plates, but some students still throw the stuff out,” said Cortesi. “We keep changing things to follow the food groups and get the students to eat healthier.”

New additions are consistently being made to get the students to eat better. Parfait cups are a new favorite that allow the kids to get their daily required fruit intake. Many other items have been switched to whole grain as well as fat free.

But it’s not just the food that is being changed. Even the beverages and snacks are taken into consideration. Arizona Tea was eliminated from the menu because of the high amount of sugar it contained. Half & Half Arnold Palmer contains less sugar, is equally as popular as the replacement to the sugary drink.

While some students may not see the point in keeping school lunches healthy, the act is an important one. Encouraging a healthy meal during school can promote healthier eating back at home.

In favor of the new lunch menu, freshman Stefan Puskar said, “I’ve gotten so used to the healthier food they sell at lunch that I now tend to eat a lot of the same things at home, too.” Even the smallest changes can make a big impact, so it’s important to do all that is possible.

The cafeteria staff at LHS plays an important part in the students’ everyday lives. Whether the kids realize it or not, the choices made at lunch impact their lives as a whole. So take the extra second to thank the cafeteria staff each day—they’re making the future a brighter, healthier place.



Cafeteria staff serving lunch to students.

Photo courtesy of Ashlee Berner

FEATURES

Student Direction

by Alyssa Cinatl
Features writer

When a play is performed at LHS it takes a huge cast, crew and faculty directors to put it together. But this year Will Vanderbilt, a recently graduated Lemont High School student, selected, directed and completely organized his own play.

On Dec. 14 senior Ivan Holguin and sophomores Annie Ternes and Alondra Ibarra starred in Vanderbilt's student-directed play. They performed *The Beggar and the King* and *Fourteen*, two one-act shows.

"It's always been a dream of mine to make my own show" said Vanderbilt, who had prior directing experience as the student director of *12 Angry Jurors* and *Picnic*.

"I like to direct because I like to tell people what to do, and you get to see your own ideas become something. I got the idea when my sister went to school here, her friend Tim Peeble's was putting on a production, and I thought 'that sounds fun' so I tried it myself. I'm glad mine was successful," said Vanderbilt.

Roy Nees, drama club sponsor, hopes and encourages more students to direct plays in the future. Nees was essentially hands-off when it came to this production, which is very different from the way plays are usually put together at school.

The actors in this show were excited to work with Vanderbilt. Holguin in particular auditioned because "Will is a good guy, I thought he'd be a good director."

Ternes added, "Performing on stage is a lot of fun. I have fun working with other kids and being on stage."

Overall the play received positive feedback from those who attended. Senior Vince Dory commented, "It was very nice. It was very simple and got down to the point. The actors did well which is what you want to see in a play."

Vanderbilt considered his show to be a success and a great way to end his senior year.



Poster advertising *The Beggar and The King*.

Photo courtesy of Roy Nees

Tom-Tom FEATURES

by Sonia Vavra
Features Editor

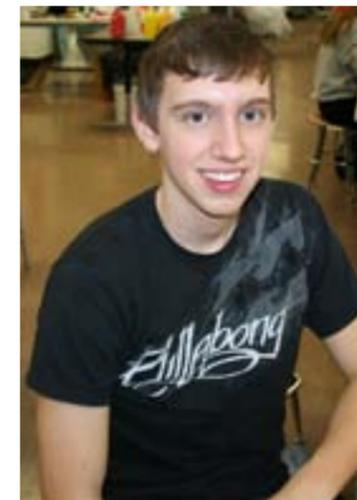
Tom-Tom Talks

It's a New Year, LHS, and you know what that means: a new Tom-Tom Talks! This month's question: "What is your New Year's Resolution?"



"My New Year's Resolution is to lose some weight, because I'm invited to three weddings this year! But overall better health."

-Margarita Piaskowy, Information Technology Assistant



"To get a 3.8 this semester."

-Chase Kobilca, junior



"My Resolution is to make the varsity softball team."

-Carli Jasper, freshman



"My Resolution is to get back to the gym at least three times a week."

-Cathy Mayer, LRC Director



"My Resolution is to get back to the gym at least three times a week."

-Ryan Hennebry, art teacher



"My New Year's Resolution is to be less awkward."

-Alex Keating, junior



Photos by Sonia Vavra

Tarantino Unchained

by Sam Moffett
Features writer

How do you describe Quentin Tarantino? The man of a thousand words? Insane? Bizarre? Well, all of those words. The writer and director has graced the big screen with so many things that it's hard to pin him down to just one word.

There is a strange uniqueness that hovers around Tarantino that either draws people in or sends them in the other direction. Some like the realistic dialogue and over the top violence while others find him overrated and racist.

Cinema Studies teacher Angela Duensing said, "Tarantino is daring. He's willing to take on subjects that no one ever would. He has one hundred percent creative licensing on his work and that allows him to do what he wants."

What adds to the uniqueness of Tarantino is his style of writing. His dialogue is brutally realistic and has an everyday feel to it. It sounds and reads like an actual conversation people would have. His words are harsh but they ring true, the conversations dripping with tension and humor.

An entire scene devoted just to the conversation between characters can be a complete snore if not done right. Luckily for Tarantino he's renowned for his dialogue. In his 2009 film *Inglorious Basterds*, the first scene is a Nazi soldier talking to a French farmer about a Jewish family that disappeared. The scene is like winding a guitar string: you keep winding and winding, but you don't know when the string is going to snap. The tension is so thick that you start to get uncomfortable with the pressure of the situation.

But then again, that can be something that turns people off about Tarantino. Some people don't like long "talky" scenes. In his *Django Unchained* review Michael Phillips of the *Chicago Tribune* called Tarantino, "writer-director-trash compactor." He states that through the devilish glee and copious amounts of slaughter, the movie isn't brought by an

"adult" Tarantino, but by the "eternal, talented but blinkered adolescent."

Though he's known for his dialogue, his use of slang, such as the "n-word", sets off both critics and audiences.

In *Django Unchained*, a movie about a freed slave trying to find his wife, some people objected to the movie's excessive use of the "n-word." Though it's been argued that that was the dialect back in the years of the civil war, certain viewers, including filmmaker Spike Lee, have argued it as racist. Lee called it an insult to his ancestors.

The Facebook page "Boycott Django Unchained" discusses the public's reasoning to why they believe the movie is racist. The movie teeters on the edge of being both racist to both white and black people. Facebook posts on how *Django* characterizes white people to be completely evil and the way the "n-word" is thrown around leads to more criticism from viewers.

People also argue that the extreme violence in *Django Unchained* – among other Tarantino films such as *Pulp Fiction* and *Jackie Brown* – is inappropriate.

"Though I can appreciate and I like the fact that he likes to recreate the culture that once was," says senior Kayley Bogdan. "But the plots for a lot of his movies are hard to follow and there is always too much blood. He has a very intelligent mind, but he wastes it on the same gimmick over and over again."

One of Tarantino's disadvantages is that he is too "odd." "He's too out of the box," says Duensing. "He's taking things people don't want to

see and making them into movies. He's uncomfortable. People don't want to be put in situations that make them uncomfortable."

But through all the controversy and backlash from critics, his creativity shines through. Duensing believes that it's his strongest quality as a writer/director. If someone told you to see a movie that involved mobsters and a mysterious briefcase, you'd immediately lose interest. Mob movies? Seen all of them! Been there done that.

But that's one of the main factors of *Pulp Fiction*, the film that critics say to be one of the greatest films of all time. Tarantino takes something so overdone and makes it fresh, whether people like the approach is solely their opinion.

As Tarantino once said, "Movies are my religion and God is my patron. I'm lucky enough to be in the position where I don't make movies to pay for my pool. When I make a movie, I want it to be everything to me; like I would die for it." A true filmmaker to the end.



Writer and director Quentin Tarantino

Photo courtesy of Google

SWISH

by Cody Caballero
Sports writer

With the second half of the school year under way, the Lemont Boys' and Girls' Basketball teams did not take any time off over winter break.

Over the break, the boys played in the Romeoville Christmas Classic. They won the tournament with a victory over Plainfield Central with a final score of 61-53.

The girls played in the Oswego East Holiday Classic where they finished 2-2. During the tournament Lemont opened with Metea Valley (48-38 L), their second game was against Plainfield North where the girls won by one point (45-44 W), they then played Aurora Central Catholic where they lost by six points 39-33, and their final game was against Joliet where they won (43-37 W).

Some might say that the girls' basketball team has struggled over the years in the win-loss column but this year things have changed.

Last year's team only had 7 wins; this year's team has 11 going into the second half of the season.

In regards to this year's team Coach Bill Bozue said, "We have a lot of returning players from last year; this gives us one more year of experience."

The boys have not slowed down either. They have a current record of 12-2.

Even though Lemont's boys have a big rivalry game coming up against Oak Forest on Jan. 17, all sights are set on the Hillcrest game, which will end Lemont's regular season.

When asked about the Hillcrest game senior Jack Shereck and junior Jake Terrazas both agreed: "Hopefully it will be for the conference championship, and we all know they want revenge from last year's game."



Boys' varsity basketball team huddles before facing their opponent.

Photo by Ashlee Berner

Swimming in the Fast Lane

by Ethan Parafink
Sports writer

The boys swim team is off to an unprecedented season so far. The team is currently undefeated in conference with a 6-1 overall record and does not plan on slowing down anytime soon.

"We are doing everything we can to continue our winning streak," said senior Dan Totura, who is a co-captain along with Justin Stanwyck. "Our goal for conference is to take first at our conference meet which has been our goal all season."

Head coach Erin Boyd believes the team's success is largely due to hard work and support.

"They are a close knit team and are always supporting each other in practices and meets," she said. "Because they push themselves, it allows me to push them hard in practice and that leads to results at meets."

Aside from team wins, these results include multiple team record times just in the past few meets. In a Jan. 15 meet against Shepard, Stanwyck, Conor Ganzer, Jake Rangel and Joe Zebell set a team record for the 400 meter freestyle relay.

Stanwyck agreed with Boyd about the reason for the team's success, but added, "For me, the biggest change this year was the size of the team. We now have about 30 boys, where we only had about 20 in the past."

The size certainly helps and so does experience as much of the team is made up of either upperclassmen or talented underclassmen. The team also puts in hours of hard practice each week at the Lemont Park District's Core.

"We swim thousands of yards and at least two miles every day," said Totura. "We push ourselves during practice and get as much distance as we can in for the time we have."

With all this hard work, the team also has plenty of fun outside of the pool as well. "We also bond at pasta parties and always have a good time," Totura added.

With high expectations, the team will look to continue its success and achieve its goal of winning conference and qualifying for state.

Photo courtesy of Lynn Stanwyck

A Leader on the Mats

by Adrian Kalata
Sports Editor

The Lemont wrestling program has had a rough season thus far. Strong wrestlers, both on the mats and in practice, work with individuals to strengthen the team's seasonal record. Senior Mike Devitt continues to show individual strength and impressive performance throughout the season.

Devitt holds a personal record of 17-11 and has proven himself as a vital figure in this season's team. Devitt's record reflects the hard work and dedication he shows in his matches, practices and actions off the mats.

"I show the same commitment in both wrestling and football. When I dedicate myself to something I strive to do my best," explained Devitt. Devitt said that being a senior allows him to "share and pass on what [he] knows about wrestling to the underclassmen who will be on next year's team."

"Devitt shows both the qualities of a good wrestler and a good role model," said senior teammate Chris Giattris.

Giattris also stated that Devitt is a team leader, which is just as important as being a good athlete.

Senior teammate Michael Frogner said Devitt is a great asset to the team. "Devitt knows how to wrestle, plain and simple," Frogner explained, "I've learned a lot from the years we've been on the team."

Coach John St. Clair said that Devitt is "a hardworking and dedicated athlete." He said that Devitt, being a state qualifier, means he puts in hard work and is better than the average varsity wrestler. Devitt "is always positive and helps everyone in the room understand the importance of hard work and dedication to the team," said St. Clair.

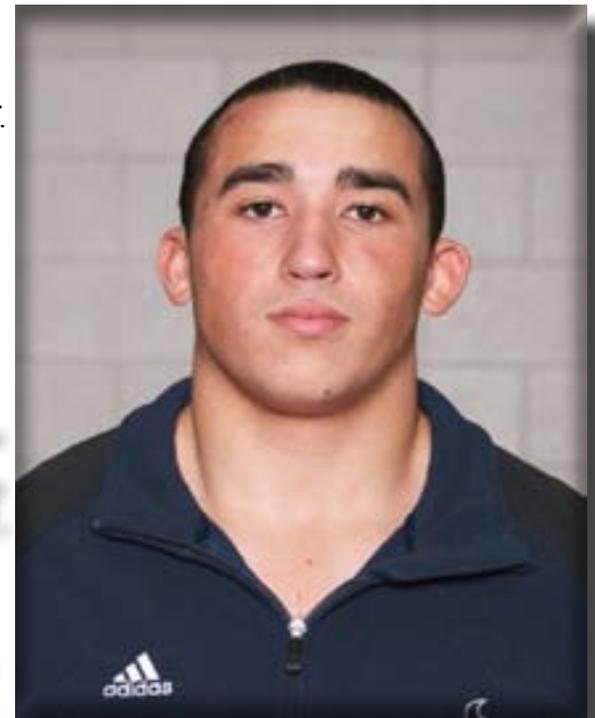
Devitt says being on the wrestling team has taught him many lessons that he can use later in life. "Wrestling teaches you self-confidence and believing in yourself. And as a captain, I also learned leadership and took on more responsibility," Devitt said.

The season comes to a finish in late February as the wrestlers strive to make state. Devitt said that he has "a good chance this year. That's what every wrestler strives for." But Devitt is not full of himself: "Other wrestlers worked just as hard as I did this season. We'll just have to wait and see what happens."

Wrestling is unique in that it is a team sport as well as an individual sport. Wrestling takes place one on one, but you win meets as a team. Being a good wrestler and a good team athlete is important to a wrestler's success and the success of the team. Devitt's performance over the years on the wrestling team (as well as the football team) shows his accomplishments in being a team member.

"Wrestling teaches you self-confidence and believing in yourself. And as a captain, I also learned leadership and took on more responsibility,"

-Mike Devitt



Senior varsity wrestler Mike Devitt