

# Tom-Tom

Lemont High School

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Issue 19

## Dancing in the Dark

by Emma Houran  
News writer

“I mean, who wouldn’t love a black light rave in the cafeteria?” said student council president Stephen Tuscher. It’s been a little over four months since Lemont High School students have set foot on the dance floor; since the homecoming dance last fall, the wopping and wobbling had been in hibernation for too long.

On Saturday Feb. 16, students attended Lemont’s third-annual MORP dance sponsored by the student council. Having



Class of 2013 seniors at this year’s MORP dance, held on Saturday Feb. 16.

roughly 250 students attend last year, that number has increased by at least 100 students this year. Tuscher and fellow council members have already set their expectations accordingly: “For next year, we’re hoping to attract even more people than this year and make this an event that people really look forward to.”

With this attendance came roughly \$1,000 in proceeds that has been collected by the student council. Sponsors Kathryn Kupchek and Elizabeth Raimondi say the revenue makes it “easier to pay for senior scholarships” and upcoming events. This “FAR exceeded our expectations!” stated Tuscher.

Lacking the stress factors of prom or homecoming, students seemed pretty enthused about ‘MORP In the Wild’ last week. When asked why he found the dance to be so much fun, freshman Jack Buday mentioned its casualness along with “everything being less expensive” – one less skin-tight dress (never to be worn again) or oversized tie to borrow from Dad and no having to worry about buying anyone else’s ticket.

Being a more casual dance has also increased MORP’s popularity, and that junior Lizzy Forzley can attest to: “I can be more comfortable at the dance... Everything is so much more carefree.”

“So far, I’ve heard nothing but positive feedback from people that attended,” states Tuscher, having received similar responses. Kupchek and Raimondi also came across many students expressing how fun the dance was and that they “want to do it again.”

“It’s all in the attitude,” says Raimondi. Kupchek adds, “You’d be surprised how much fun you can have.”

Being grateful to everyone who bought a ticket, Tuscher also thanks Kupchek, Raimondi and the rest of the student council for helping make MORP happen.

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## FBLA has 17 First-Place Regional Finishes

by Nicole McKeivitt  
News Editor

Lemont's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) attended the Central Northern Area Conference regional at Lincoln-Way East High School on Jan 26. Lemont finished first in 17 of the 27 events they entered, totaled 44 top-three placements in all and won the 'Battle of the Chapters' competition.

Senior Tom Griffin says "At Regionals, every kid participates in a business related event. We either take a test on the subject or give a presentation or both. And in between all of this we have guest speakers come in and talk to us about college and what to expect and business related programs we can do in college."

Lemont students placed first in 13 individual events and four team competitions. Seniors Monika Filar, Katie Putna and Courtney Toth won in the Community Service Project category; seniors Justin Brady, Joe Paloian and Jake Smagacz won in Emerging Business Issues; seniors Paul Grossi and Nick Westerhausen won in Entrepreneurship; and seniors Michael Krueger and Tadas Vildziunas won in Management Decision Making.

Individual event winners are seniors Jack Bort (Business Procedures), Tom Griffin (Accounting I), Ethan Parafink (Business Communications), Zach Reitz (Accounting II), Justin Stanwyck (Spreadsheet Applications) and Matt Vitt (Business Law); juniors Rebeca Bagdocimo (Public Speaking II), Lizzy Forzley (Fu-

ture Business Leader) and Apollonia Kasprzyk (Cyber Security); sophomore Jake Rangel (Word Processing I); and freshmen Spenser Bailey (Introduction to Business Communications), Olivia Matthews (Public Speaking I) and Julissa Nuñez (Impromptu Speaking).

Lemont also had 16 event runner-up finishes. Seniors Shannon Burke and Katelyn Koehler were second in Entrepreneurship; juniors Lucas Heatherington and Andrew Kramer teamed for second in Business Ethics; juniors Maggie Ernst, Rachel Papiernik and Margaret Rogers were the runner-up in Management Information Systems; sophomores Mairead Hogan and Bansi Padalia were second in Emerging Business Issues; and freshmen Matt Filar, Ace Matthews and Mike Prasauskas were the runner-up in Marketing.

Other second-place finishers are seniors Helena Fugiel (Business Communications), Ryan Gaffney (Accounting II), Conor Matthews (Impromptu Speaking) and Dan Totura (Job Interview); juniors Austin Economos (Economics), Jenny Hennig (Hospitality Management), Lauren Kowalczyk (Business Procedures), Kevin Trojak (Accounting I) and Adam Wallace (Personal Finance); and sophomores Katie Atherton (Word Processing I) and Will Totura (Introduction to Business Communications).

The state competition is on Apr. 12 in Springfield.

## Old McDonald Had a Factory? A Not So Egg-cellent System

by Laura Harding  
Head Editor

You need eggs. You roll your squeaky-wheeled grocery cart over to the dairy section of the supermarket.

Choices: Brown eggs, white eggs, jumbo, cage free, vegetarian, free range, commercial, generic brand, USDA organic. They're all eggs.

You grab the cheapest carton, plain-old white, extra large eggs. Naturally, you check to make sure none of them are cracked before putting them in the cart. Nobody likes a cracked egg—that's gross.

What's really gross are all 12 of those extra-large eggs you just tossed in your basket. But hey, they were the cheapest ones.

Cheapest because they're commercially manufactured as a part of the appropriately-coined "agribusiness."

The food industry took something as natural and wholesome as a chicken egg—a product that needs time and specific care to create—and engaged in its mass production. Animal welfare is secondary to the maximum yield of the product.

Hens that lay conventional eggs are often kept in battery cages. The name itself gives way to the difficulties hens face in these cages. With little more than 50 square inches of space, hens cannot turn around or even stand in a nature erect posture.

Normal laying behaviors such as nesting are restricted in battery cages. Dr. Ian Duncan of the Department of Animal and Poultry Science at the University

of Guelph in Canada observed "extreme frustration" in battery-caged hens wanting to lay an egg.

Battery-caged hens are denied the calming practices such as wing-flapping, preening, dust-bathing and exercising. This can lead to osteoporosis, violent behavior and feather pecking. In order to minimize violence between the stressed hens, their beaks are clipped.

While the normal lifespan of a hen can reach a decade, battery-cage hens rarely survive more than two years before they are "unusable" and slaughtered.

Of course, cages stacked upon cages leaves for little cleaning capabilities. To compensate for the spread of disease in the close quarters, hens are pumped with antibiotics—only about 20 percent of which are sustained by the hen. The other 80 percent is defecated and in turn incorporated into the soil as fertilizer and runs into waterways, causing pollution and algae blooms, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In contrast to battery-caged hens, cage-free laying hens are able to move about freely. They are offered a higher degree of animal welfare compared to battery-caged hens. More natural behaviors of a hen are ensured, including the ability to nest.

However, simply omitting battery-cages is not a cure-all for the egg-laying system.

Cage-free hens still have their beaks clipped to stop pecking. While they are technically "cage-

free," the hens are still confined to—sometimes small—floor systems that can result in crowding of the hens.

Nevertheless, cage-free systems are a step in the right direction. The best option, however, are free-range systems.

Free-range hens are allowed access to the outdoors, unlike the confined quarters of battery-cages and floor systems. The hens can roam in and out of a barn at free will, or are allowed to travel outside for certain time increments.

Hens on a free-range barn are given the most animal welfare. In addition

to nesting, they are given access to fresh air and allotted enough room to move about more freely. Ground-pecking for grubs and worms, a natural behavior for the hens, is also allowed on free-range farms.

Naturally, the expense of ultimate animal welfare must be paid by the consumer. While commercial eggs scan around \$2.29 a dozen at Lemont's Jewel-Osco, cage-free brands range from \$3.29 and up, depending on factors such as feed-type and organic options. Free-range eggs are a bit harder to hunt down, many of which come from private farms.

Your egg choice becomes a matter of values versus value. Are you willing to pay an extra dollar to ensure that the product you and your family are consuming is attained in a humane way? After all, these hens are doing a service to you, so shouldn't you do a service to them?

**While it may seem like an egg is an egg is an egg, there are many different types of eggs to choose from:**

**Organic Eggs:** Eggs coming from hens that have been fed with feed free from chemicals, fertilizers and hormones.

**Vegetarian Eggs:** These eggs come from hens on a diet free from meat or fish by-products.

**Vitamin-Enhanced Eggs:** Some eggs are enriched with omega-3s and vitamins B12, B6 or E in order to supplement nutrients that may not be met in daily diets. These eggs can be more expensive because of the type of feed given to the hens.

**Pasteurized Eggs:** Eggs are put through a water-bath in order to kill bacteria such as Salmonella and viruses without cooking the egg.

# Love Is Not Real

by Paige Buschman  
Freelance writer

The concept of love is in the air. Valentine's Day just passed and that means there is a ton of candy on sale at Walgreens. All this romantic goo got me thinking about the idea of love and what it really means. What I came up with, some people may find alarming.

Love is not real. People believe in it because it's all over the media, and they've been taught since they were little that it is part of the meaning of life. I think Fear is a motivation, as well-- people are afraid that they will live their entire lives alone. In fact, the idea of struggling through life alone is unbearable to some people. A lot of them will admit that, too.

Even biologically speaking, people are not necessarily meant to stay with the same partner for life. In fact, most mammals have MANY mates in one life time. Most other species do too. I acknowledge that there are at least 20 species that mate for life, but many include birds, and scientists would say that this practice is not crucial for their survival. Some scientists would say it even hurts their survival.

It is also evident that there are chemical releases in your brain that "trick" you, perhaps, into thinking you are in "love". Many "feel good" hormones are released during processes that couples go through, like physi-

cal contact. Naturally, your body wants a constant source of this. It's like a drug.

That feeling can last up until you have a child and all biological responsibility is dealt with—longer than that if you have a really solid relationship and the hormones keep pumping. Then one day you may wake up next to a complete stranger and ask yourself, "What have I done?" You've made a lifelong commitment to someone you aren't really in love with because love isn't really real. (<http://www.youramazingbrain.org/lovesex/sciencelove.htm>)

To stray away from love between males and females there is also the question of love between a mother and a child. A lot of people believe that the second a child is born a mother has instant love for it.

The problem here is that there is a giant misconception of what love stands for. Mothers naturally care for and are protective of their young. A child is the result of an animal's desire to perpetuate their genes and their species. While baby making isn't really something the world needs, it's still what people are supposed to be doing, not falling in love. Biology says nothing about love.

It is then their obligation to continue the process and try to keep their offspring alive. So, yeah, of course mothers appear

to love their children. As humans, we also have more developed brains that can allow for a "deeper emotional connection" between mother and child, but is that love?

Kids love their parents back because kids owe their parents one for not eating them when they were little like some animals do. It's the same concepts with dogs. Dogs love their owners because we feed them, pay attention to them and give them somewhere to live. Kids love their parents for the same reasons.

My arguments may sound harsh, but it makes sense if you put your emotions aside and think about it. Doesn't it? It is completely true that part of this argument stands on biology, which I believe human beings have a right to (and often MUST) ignore. All I'm saying is that the deception of love is all around us. Thinking twice before jumping into marriage, sex or blind acceptance of the concept of love is a good call. My goal isn't to stop marriage or stop love from happening... or to stop people from being happy. I'm just trying to shed light on an idea that may change the way people think, and the way they live their lives.

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# A Rebuttal to *On Gun Control*

by Spenser Bailey  
Freelance writer

In the wake of the tragic shootings in Newtown, Connecticut, there has been a large amount of information circulating about the topic of firearms and possible new firearm control legislation. Some of it is proven fact, while regrettably the majority of the rest is speculation. My intent in writing this editorial is to identify what is fact, and what is opinion.

It is a common belief that American soldiers go into battle in Afghanistan carrying the semi-automatic AR-15s that the average American can buy in a sporting goods store. Every aspect of this assumption is false.

The weapons carried by American soldiers all possess automatic or three-round burst capabilities, which basically means multiple rounds are fired with each trigger pull. Semi-automatic firearms (such as the AR-15) are defined as ones that "[discharge] a bullet after every trigger pull and are immediately ready to fire another." In other words, they can fire every time the trigger is pulled, and no action on the part of the operator is required to load the next round. This is the distinct

difference between the two.

Another point that deserves attention concerns the term "military style semi-automatic rifle." Many individuals on both sides of the debate have used this term quite a lot in recent months. It is not entirely accurate. Even though the AR-15 is the civilian model of the military M16, all military M16s possess a three-round burst or automatic fire option. The AR-15 does not.

My penultimate point concerns the topic of magazines used by the AR-15 and other weapons. The magazine, commonly (and incorrectly) called the clip, is the part of the weapon that holds the bullets prior to their firing. Many people wish to limit their capacity to 10 rounds, down from twenty, thirty, or even more. These individuals believe that reducing magazine capacity will somehow reduce the effectiveness of the weapon. This is also not true. An experienced marksman can switch out three ten-round magazines almost as fast as it takes to fire a full thirty round magazine.

High capacity magazines also

tend to jam. In fact, the perpetrator of the July 2012 shootings at the Century 21 movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, James Holmes, possessed a 100 round drum magazine for his semi-automatic rifle. It jammed only minutes into his rampage, and no doubt prevented him from causing further carnage.

The last point I would like to make here is about freedom. New York governor Andrew Cuomo stated, in a recent speech, "You don't need more than ten rounds to kill a deer." Whether you need ten rounds or fifty does not matter. It is not the business of government to tell us how many bullets we can carry in our weapons.

The main reason the Founding Fathers included the Second Amendment in the Bill of Rights was to ensure that the American people are able to defend themselves against tyranny. When the government starts trying to limit our abilities to procure weapons, our continued ability to do so is called into question. As Americans, we must not allow this to happen.

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## To Write Love on Her Arms: Storytellers

by Sonia Vavra  
Features Editor



Freshman Annie Ernst writes "love" on teacher Darren Lynch's arm.

a student organizer works with a faculty advisor on behalf of their high school to create awareness about mental health issues, bring the TWLOHA message to their school, and foster community on their campus."

This campaign, sponsored by freshman Annie Ernst, will be taking place at LHS for the months of Feb-March.

"Essentially, TWLOHA brings awareness of mental health, [such as] self-harm, depression, anxiety addiction," said Ernst, who organized the event. "When it started, they found a lot of people struggling with [mental health issues], so it brings awareness and lets people know there is hope and there are people who want to help the people they know are struggling as well."

To help raise awareness, the Storytellers campaign is doing a number of events at LHS, including selling bracelets at the student-faculty game and having student artists write "love" on people's arms in the commons in the morning and during all lunch periods.

There will also be an open-mic night at the Front Street Cantina downtown Lemont on Feb. 24 starting at 4 p.m., open-mic starting at 5 p.m. That evening, the Front Street Cantina will be donating 10 percent of its revenue to the Storytellers campaign.

With the help of the Storytellers campaign, adolescents should feel like they don't have to be ashamed of themselves or afraid to ask for help. The Storytellers is trying to encourage kids and teens to reach out to others and talk.

"I hope it can make people more aware of [mental health issues] and create a better environment for people who need help to get help," said Ernst. "It's hard admitting that you need help, and I have no doubt that there are people here who are going through that. So hopefully people will become more comfortable with being able to talk to somebody about it, even if it's somebody they don't really know."

TWLOHA states in its vision for the Storytellers campaign, "We hope to see a movement rise up that declares love and acceptance, holds stories above stereotypes and makes conversations about hard issues more common."

This program is a way to reach out to fellow students and teachers and spread hope amongst each other. No one should ever have to feel alone or ashamed. Thanks to the Storytellers, students are provided with the reassurance that they never are alone, nor will they ever be.



Freshman Annie Ernst writes "love" on senior Keaton Wall's arm.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, depression is the leading cause of suicide, 2/3 of people struggling with depression never get help and suicide is the third leading cause of death among adolescents.

These are difficult topics to talk about, but they are also unfortunately occurring amongst teens and even kids all over the world.

For this reason, To Write Love on Her Arms (TWLOHA), a non-profit movement that provides help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide, has created a campaign for adolescents to spread awareness called the Storytellers.

According to the TWLOHA website, "The Storytellers is a two-month campaign where

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## Real Horror Show

by Sam Moffett  
Features writer

No one today can argue that horror movies are going down the drain. Remakes of remakes, over the top splatter flicks, never ending series, when will it stop? While horror isn't doing so well on the big screen, it's shining on the small screen.

The horror genre has moved on from theatrical releases and has settled within our televisions, bringing us popular shows like *American Horror Story: Asylum*, *The Walking Dead* and *The Following*. All three shows are critical successes, each bringing top views to their networks. Each show revives a certain type of horror genre, ones that have been overdone. Does it work though?

*American Horror Story: Asylum* is the second season of the FX series *American Horror Story*. The plot takes place in - where else - a mental asylum, where the main characters struggle to cope with mysterious things that happen with the walls of the asylum.

Art teacher Elizabeth Raimondi, an avid fan of the show, sung its praises. "Each episode is different," she explains. "The characters are so interesting and diverse. Everything has a twist to it." With the word "horror" in the title, you expect some really weird stuff to happen. The genre that *Asylum* revives is the old "crazy" genre where madness and sanity constantly battle and bleed into reality.

Movies like *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors* and *Crazy Eights* blend somewhat supernatural elements into their storylines, using

insanity as a leverage to keep their story going, similar to what *Asylum* does. Luckily *American Horror Story: Asylum* takes this overdone cliché and makes it its own twisted original.



(left to right) *The Walking Dead*, *The Following*, *American Horror Story: Asylum*

With this show being one of AMC's most successful series, *The Walking Dead* has breathed new life into the zombie genre. Zombies are a subculture in horror that has been done to death. Those movies are a dime a dozen, all having the small plots, the same characters and the same violence. But *The Walking Dead*, based on the best-selling comic books of the same name, takes a step in the right direction.

Senior Eddy Sinovich says [*The Walking Dead*] isn't about the zombies. "It's about family, it's about all the tolls that people take and the circumstances they have to overcome in order to survive." The story about a policeman and his group trying to survive shows the darker side of human nature, similar to the film *28 Days Later*, which explored survivors coping with the loss of humanity. Sinovich says,

"The suspense is killer. When it turns dark, and you hear the walkers around, you know stuff is going to go down."

But through all the dark asylums and post-apocalyptic worlds come something different. Realistic horror, a genre that's faded away. Movies like *Manhunter* and *The Silence of the Lambs* brought this home with tight plots about serial killers and their inner machinations; all while being chased by a hardboiled detective willing to do anything to bring them down.

That's where *The Following* comes in. As Fox Networks new show, it's already causing some major buzz. The story revolves around detective Ryan Hardy - played by Kevin Bacon - who has to stop a cult of serial killers and their leader.

"The main character keeps the show together because he's not quite together himself," says senior Sarah Semetulskis. "The plot is interesting enough, but the suspense and violence keep me on edge." *The Following* does a new twist because there isn't just one killer; there are multiple followers, all of them waiting on the command of their leader to kill.

*The Following* draws in the audience with its brutality and solid performances, but the manhunt is what really locks someone in.

Horror was once a dying franchise: all the overdone clichés boring audiences all over. Luckily though, television has swooped down and rescued the beloved genre, giving it another chance by with lacing it new threads that'll be sure to keep you up at night.

## National Signing Day at LHS

by Adrian Kalata  
Sports Editor

Lemont's success proved itself last Wednesday, Feb. 6, when five student athletes signed intents to play next-level sports. Three senior football and two soccer athletes signed to begin in late 2013.

Football linebacker Connor O'Brien signed a National Letter of Intent with the University of North Dakota, offensive lineman Tim McAuliffe signed with Bowling Green State University, defensive back Jake Lemming signed with St. Xavier University.

Both seniors Kyle Hamann and Andrew Putna have committed to play soccer at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Senior Nicole McKeivitt also signed to play soccer at Millikin University.



Soccer coach Rick Prangen stands by senior Nicole McKeivitt as she signs to play soccer at Millikin University.

it is nerve wrecking when you wait for your first offer, if you are even lucky to get an offer.

Every signing athlete at LHS agrees that balancing school with sports will be the most difficult part of playing college sports. "If I put in the work necessary, I know I can be successful in both [sports and my education]," said McAuliffe.



Soccer Coach Rick Prangen stands by senior Kyle Hamann as he signs to play soccer for UIC.

"It's a weight off your shoulders," said Hamann. Hamann has been playing since he was four years old, and has dreamed of playing at a Division I level in the core of the city. Both Hamann and Putna have worked hard to make both of their dreams reality.

O'Brien, who also signed to play Division I football, said he is not worried about balancing sports with his education which is a concern for many athletes. "High school has prepared me for that," said O'Brien.

"The waiting game is the hardest part," said Lemming. He explained that



Football coach Eric Michaelson stands by seniors Jake Lemming, Tim McAuliffe, and Connor O'Brien as they sign to play football in college.

## Big Ten Basketball

by Cody Caballero  
Sports writer

This year the Big Ten has put out some of the best teams in all of college basketball. Indiana, Michigan, Ohio State, Michigan State, and Minnesota have made the Big Ten a force to be reckoned with.

On Thurs. Feb. 7 Indiana, the number one team in the country, was upset by Illinois.

When Indiana lost, it was the fifth straight week the number one team in the country was beat.

Senior Forward Tyler Griffey of Illinois made the game winning layup as time expired.

Indiana bounced back from the upset and beat number ten Ohio State on Feb. 10 with a final score of 81-68.

Illinois also played the same day and beat number eighteen, Minnesota, 57-53.

Indiana still remains number one in the AP Top 25 for week fifteen.

Two days later after Indiana lost, the Big Ten's second best team, the Michigan Wolverines, lost to the Wisconsin Badgers in overtime.

With time winding down in the second half, Tim Hardaway Jr. of Michigan shot and made a three-pointer to break the tie.

Wisconsin had 2.4 seconds left and inbounded the ball to Ben Brust who shot from a couple of steps past the half court line with a man in his face and drained the shot to send the game into overtime.

Brust then got another chance in overtime to take a three that was from a normal distance and wound up being the game winning shot for Wisconsin.



LEGENDS



LEADERS

