

Tom-Tom

Lemont High School

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Nina Moeller Advances to IDEA State Competition

by Nicole McKeivitt
News Editor

Senior Nina Moeller came in second out of 8 competitors in the Architectural Board division at the Illinois Drafting Educators Association (IDEA) Regional Drafting competition on Mar. 8. She qualified to compete in the upcoming IDEA State Drafting Competition at Illinois State University on April 20.

Moeller says that, "IDEA is a non-profit education organization with a mission of advancing the drafting occupation through a better education."

Nearly 120 students representing a number of Joliet-area high schools competed in eight divisions at the IDEA Joliet Junior College Regional, which was one of 18 regional sites across the state. All first and second-place finishers earn the right to compete at the IDEA State Competition.

The eight divisions in which students compete are: Introductory Board, Introductory 2D CAD, Architectural Board, 2D Architectural CAD, 2D Machine CAD, 3D Architectural CAD Modeling, 3D Assembly Modeling, and 3D CAD Modeling.

"In Architectural Board," says Moeller, "I get 2 hours to rescale a floor plan and add any missing items like doors, windows and appliances."

Moeller is "really looking forward to state because this is something I have never really thought I'd excel in. My parents are both involved in construction so drafting is nothing new to me."

There is not much Moeller can do to prepare for the competition, but she states "I've been reviewing symbols that could possibly be used in the competition."

Lemont's drafting program, under the coaching of Industrial Technology teacher Scott Duensing, has had a great deal of success in recent years at the IDEA Regional level. For the fifth time in six years, Lemont High School will be represented in the state's drafting competition.



Senior Nina Moeller

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NEWS

Connor O'Brien Receives National Football Foundation Scholar-Athlete

by Carly Tucker
News writer

Due to his academic integrity and tenacity on the football field, senior Connor O'Brien was rewarded with the one of the most prestigious and competitive high school academic honors in the country, the National Football Foundation (NFF) Scholar-Athlete Award.

For O'Brien to receive this award is "a real honor. All my hard work on and off the field has paid off," said O'Brien.

Excelling in school as well as excelling on the football field are just two of the factors that distinguished O'Brien as an NFF scholar-athlete. As one of three athletes chosen for the award, O'Brien will receive \$6,000 in scholarships towards University of North Dakota, where he intends to play football in the fall.

Throughout his life O'Brien had constant support in everything he did. O'Brien said, "My parents and coaches have motivated me so much throughout my life and they have gotten me to this point in my career."

One of those motivators, Lemont's head football coach, Eric Michaelsen said "I am very proud of him, he put in a great deal of time to become as good a player as he could be."

Michaelsen also added that what really sets O'Brien apart from other players is his "work ethic, intelligence, and an internal wanting to be as good as possible."

On Feb. 18 O'Brien attended the NFF Chicago Metro Chapter Annual Awards, where he received the award. The Bear's commentator Jeff Joniak was the Master of Ceremonies. The guest list included former college football and National Football League players, as well as coaches. O'Brien said "It was really cool to see big time college coaches because it made me realize how prestigious this award is."

Not only is the award an honor for O'Brien but "It is an honor for our football program," said Michaelsen.

Also receiving the NFF Scholar-Athlete Award is Batavia's Zach Strittmater and Lincoln Way East's Nick Colangelo. The players were each introduced by their high school coaches and given engraved trophies.

As one of Lemont's top students and football players, O'Brien has one motivation that has helped him and will always help him in his endeavors. "My motivation," said O'Brien, "whether it be in school or on the football field is when life knocks you down four times you get back up five."

EDITORIALS

College Expenses Put Students On the Fences

by Kayla Neetz
Editorialist

College is hard enough, shouldn't academics be the only thing a student worries about? Unfortunately this is not the case.

How are students planning to pay for college? Attendance secretary and loving mother at Lemont High School, Heather Richa said "We put a lot on [our daughter], having her look for scholarships. Budgets will definitely look different next year. We will be eating a lot more ramen."

The cost is so outrageous is it even worth it? After all, college is supposed to help you accomplish your goals, not forever make you regret working hard enough in high school to go to a four year institution.

Are students feeling the stress? How could they not? In today's economy it is not rare to find a family that simply cannot afford college. At best, families like these can qualify for loans and make low monthly payments while their child is in school.

But debt - much like other things - rolls downhill, and who is at the bottom of the hill? The student. How is anyone expected to be able to get ahead financially when they have \$40,000 of debt? Richa said "I think it is a lot of pressure for a recently graduated student. Especially since you most likely won't be making a lot of money right out of college."

It seems there is no way

around it. According to Lemont High School Dean Brent Gagnon "If there was a choice [to go to college or stay home due to loans] I would say go to college."

Despite the fact that students are more often than not up to their eyeballs in debt, going to college offers too many opportunities and connections to pass by.

So when you are buried under homework, stressing over debt, and tweaking about your jobs remember that college offers a truly unique experience you couldn't possibly get anywhere else. Keep your head up. Everything will fall into place and you will make it through this crazy time of your life.

It's Always the Same

by Madelyn Kulis
Editorialist

If you have nothing nice to say, don't say anything at all. Didn't we all hear this at one point in our life? Yes. Did any of us ever follow it? Probably not. At one point in our life all of us have probably said a joke or a name to someone who took it the wrong way. Does that make us bad people or bullies?

Growing up, I went to a private school and truth be told, didn't have many friends. At recess when all the kids were playing, I would sit aside by myself not really talking. When I got home, I still wouldn't

talk. All of this because of one girl. She defined who I was, even though it was wrong, but I believed her and changed into that person. Was she wrong to do that? Yes. However, I was also at fault for letting her do that to me.

According to Susan Eva Porters of L.A. times "Today we see children as being either dangerous villains or helpless victims, but the truth is kids haven't changed that much in the past generation." Perhaps today's society has become overly sensitive when pointing

out "bullying."

With teens, labels define us, and when we start hearing someone call us a name one time, we believe it. We call that person a bully, when in reality, that may just be the easy way out.

As teens we realize someone will judge us because all of us do it too, and as we get older we will continue to be judged. We can't continue labeling someone as a bully for a one-time happening— maybe it's time we grew some thicker skin.

Ode to a Stereotype

Jonathon Clark
Columnist

As though I thought it were not true. What has become of me and you? I wait until the moments here to struggle along in senior despair. Senioritis is such a peculiar thing. I, a hard-working and dedicated student, have officially accepted my succumbing to this disease in which I thought would never happen to a student like myself, but apparently it is an epidemic which pertains to most high school seniors and even some juniors.

It is important to depict laziness from senioritis. Laziness can entail sloppily doing your work, turning in half-sheets, making the regular excuse for not being effective in class. Senioritis attacks from the roots. When a fully-fledged case is observed, you'll notice that the victim's empathy and determination for school work no longer exists.

The term senioritis is made up of two segments into a delicious compound. The first, senior, explains the current status of victims, as they are seniors in high school. The latter is itis, is generally a suffix to an illness or disease. With this knowledge I asked myself, who better to ask than the deranged, but lovely, Melissa Bruckner, Kiley Rendak and Wendy Mazur?

As the ladies struggled in the library to complete homework due next period, I interrupted for a quick interview. Mazur explains, "I don't have senioritis as bad as some other seniors, I still care about my grades." She adds, "That being said, I have little to no effort on assignments, I spend little time on them, but I still study for tests."

Bruckner describes her case when saying "I complete all of my work at school. It really opens up time out of school. I can go off and do pointless stuff."

Rendak would describe her case as "Very bad, but not as bad as others." As the other two have explained, Rendak confirms that she spends less time on homework allotting for more free time.

LHS has seen its fair share of goons, slackers and lunks, but senioritis is something that affects the majority of seniors. It's an unavoidable disease but can be managed and you can make the most of your senior year.

The Way You Look Tonight: Prom 2013



A Walk in Their Shoes

by Shannon Burke
Features writer

Speed walking trying to get to class just so that no one will push them into a locker, throw their books or say something horrible to them. No one should have to be afraid to walk down the hallway. Some kids have to deal with this on a daily basis because of bullies.

The documentary "Bully" follows 5 adolescents around school and captures them being bullied on film. Each of the 5 has a different situation and is bullied for a different reason. One of the girls is bullied for being a homosexual, a young boy is bullied for the way he looks and one family's son committed suicide after being relentlessly bullied for years.

The documentary approaches the seriousness of bullying by walking the viewer through a day in the life of the victim.

Along with talking to those being bullied the film crew also talked to the families of the victims. Many of the families in the film shared a complaint: the school was not doing enough to prevent the problem.

Junior Viktorija Bieksaite said, "The staff didn't seem to do much". The teachers would talk to the child being bullied but nothing seemed to change. It was not until after the parents had a consultation with the principal that more was done to resolve the problem.

In the documentary the way the schools dealt with the bullying "did not seem to be handled well" according to Beiksaite. She continued, "I think our school takes care of this issue [bullying] seriously and takes action to end it".

According to the student handbook bullying is "any words or actions that make another person feel unsafe". Dean Brent Gagnon said "each [bullying] situation is a little different" Gagnon continued said the school officials combat the problem through use of "social workers, counselors, peer mediation, and discipline consequences when necessary".

The school uses the resources it has available combined with early

action to stop the problem before it becomes a more serious issue.

Although the schools shown in the documentary "Bully" did not handle the situation well at the time, seeing the documentary may have been the nudge they needed to take a more serious approach. Sometimes it is hard to understand how serious something is until it is seen from a new perspective.

Seeing the pain the victims go through is hard, but the documentary is worth watching. Seeing it can open up others' eyes and can cause people take a stance, so that no one is ever scared to walk down the halls again.



Teenagers all over the country suffer from bullying on a daily basis, whether it be in school, on the streets, or even online.

The End is Nigh

by Alyssa Cinatl
Features writer

The 2012-2013 school year is coming to a close. No longer will we endure studying, talking to people we don't want to, or wondering "did I have homework due today?"

For some people this is a blessing. For others: it's terrifying. The fleeting school year means students are one year older and one step closer to college. Everyone will make the transition from care-free teenager to responsible adult.

So what can we do while we're still teenagers? Maybe join some clubs, go to parties, or proclaim your undying love for your high school crush?

Seniors who will make the necessary life changes for college in fall are wrapping up their high school bucket lists. Personally, I wanted to join speech and musical my senior year because it was my last chance to try them (Done and done).

Other seniors are also hurrying to end the year with a bang. Senior Chloe Vavra said, "I want to paint as many paintings as I can before I graduate." Senior Ashley Murphy said, "I would love to pull a senior prank but I don't think that's realistic." And senior Liz Martinez said, "I'd like to have a feeling of accomplishment in the sense that I had the best time I could in high school."

Some seniors are excited about graduating and some are nervous. While most students look forward to moving on, high school years and friends will be missed. Martinez commented, "It feels kind of bitter sweet because I'm excited to start a new chapter in my life but I'll miss my high school friends." Senior

Angelica Kociolek said, "I'm excited to know I have a whole future waiting for me after but also nervous about leaving the safety of our little bubble at Lemont." Then there's senior David O'Sullivan who said, "Honestly, it just feels like I'm coming to the end of another year of high school; it doesn't feel any different than past years."

Most seniors can reflect on their high school years and feel accomplished or successful. Senior Ashley Baldyga in particular is proud that she, "made the cheer leading team for three years, made good grades, and made a lot of friends." Vavra is proud that she's going to the college of her choice. Other seniors are proud of various achievements that they've done over the years such as making sports teams, getting good grades, or earning certain positions in extra-curricular activities.

Underclassmen are wrapping up their year too. Junior Amanda Huegelmann hopes to, "Ace my finals. That's all I want to do." Sophomore Maria Castrogiovanni wishes to, "get my grades as high as possible and have the best sophomore year I can have because I only get one. And I want to get a new personal record on track." Before the end of the year junior Kevin Lindgren wants to "Work on my grades, and have fun at prom. That'd be a nice way to end the year." Most underclassmen just want to keep the grades up for the remainder of the year.

School is a learning experience (duh) but in more ways than just academics. Each year in school you start to get the hang of it more and more. Huegelmann thinks that as a senior she can improve herself by, "getting more

organized, and learn how to study better." Lindgren wants to buckle down for his senior year by staying focused on school work and to continue being an active Speech Team member. Castrogiovanni said, "Next year I want to get more organized and manage my time better because junior year is the hardest year." Junior Lisa Gawron hopes that next year she doesn't get Senioritis.

Now that the freshmen have an idea of how high school works, they're prepared to become sophomores next year. Freshman Hanah Olson said her first year was a "positive experience" and to improve next year she'd like to make the freshman volleyball team.

Veteran seniors can lend some advice to help their underclassmen to prepare for the years to come. Martinez said, "Be yourself. If you have to fit in with a group of people to be friends with them you won't have fun in high school." O'Sullivan advises, "Don't tell yourself you won't get senioritis. It will just happen so prepare for it" And Vavra said, "Don't slack off your freshman year."

Everyone can agree that high school years are once in a lifetime opportunities to try new things and have new experiences. Many students focus mainly on learning about the Pythagorean Theorem or World War Two, but these adolescent years can have more to offer than academics. Kociolek said, "[In high school] I learned a lot about the kind of person I am and who I want to become."

Taking a Gap Year

by Michelle Awad
Features writer

When graduation enters one's mind an immediate thought succeeds it: college. "Where did you apply? Where have you gotten in? Have you made a decision? Any scholarships?" All of these personal, loaded questions seem to become small talk when April rolls around. But what if college immediately after high school isn't always the best option?

Perhaps a gap year isn't such a bad idea for some students. A gap year is defined as a period of time when students take a break from formal education to travel, study, intern, work, perform, research or any combination of these activi-

ties.

So what's the point? What is a year going to do? Well, a gap year can help clarify career interests and goals, gain a sense of maturity and self confidence, renew passion for college coursework and learning after 12 years of continuous school, develop organizational and life skills, discover interests, broaden perspective of other cultures, views, and global awareness. A gap year can even improve job prospects with employers seeking graduates with practical experience.

"I don't think every high school graduate is ready to go to school

and have to make decisions about their future," said junior Anne Marie Alwan. "If they have absolutely no idea of their interests or what direction they want to head toward, the gap year gives them time to mature and exposes themselves to new experiences."

Of course the idea of college is both exhilarating and incredibly frightening. To know that perhaps it's an option that can still be accomplished, just at a later time, can provide comfort for those who are a little lost and know that time can lend some guidance.

Pursuit of Happiness: Do What You Like, Like What You Do

by Bridget Lynn
Features Writer

Happiness is most often derived from a human's devotions, passions and desires. Though happiness is influenced by psychological factors, an individual may elicit such a feeling from social interaction, music, sports or academics. See, humanity has the capability to indulge in activities that promote well-being and contentment.

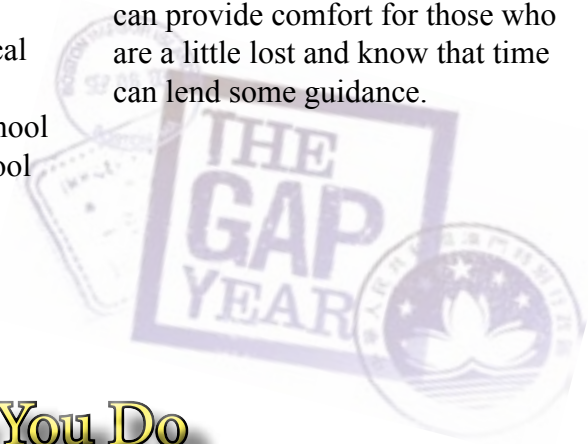
Humanity often has a harmonious relationship with music. Music is a universal language comprised of culture and expression. Banjo player Mike Foreman stated, "I play music because I

couldn't imagine a life without it. There's no limit placed on the musical knowledge you can obtain." Perhaps, happiness is a direct result of an individual's effort to continually expand upon current skills.

Mental strength of athletes is recurrently tested through various hardships and successes. Happiness can be drawn from the completion of trying tasks such as a golfer carding an eagle on a par-5 or a soccer player learning a bicycle kick. Junior Annie Svitak, believes although everyone can improve their skills, "it's impor-

tant to know everyone holds great capability and potential." Quite possibly, the ultimate destination is a state of tranquility following success.

Despite obstacles and "mountains" to climb, humans embark on remarkable journeys to manifest feelings of contentment. Every win, loss, triumph or disaster allows humanity to ponder happiness' benefits. Maybe it's time for humans to follow the brand, "Life is Good" and learn to "do what you like and like what you do."



Knockin' it out of the Park

by Erika Truschke
Sports writer

The sun is finally shining bright on the LHS softball fields. With the delayed start due to cold weather, the girls' were excited to finally play a game.

After playing 12 games, the varsity girls' have a strong record of 10-2. Head Coach Chris Traina looks to keep a winning record throughout the whole season.

Last season, the team lost in the Regional Final game versus Providence. Unlike previous years, Providence is now in IHSA class 3A; Lemont will not have to face them during the playoffs.

Many hours of practice were spent during the long wait for the season to begin. Traina said, "Our strengths this year include a combination of hitting and pitching; base running is a key point, we as a whole, need to work on."

Sophomore Mary Durkin added, "I think practice really does make perfect because it helps us [the team] learn how to grow as a team and get to know each other's strengths and weaknesses."

The hard work pays off during games and with having "a great group of young ladies ready to play is just an added bonus," according to Traina.

The girls' next game is away at Bremen on April 18. Looking at the season as a whole, the Bremen game marks a general mid-way point. Every game on forward is important to their record and their chances of making the playoffs.



Lemont girls' varsity softball team.

Indian Lacrosse 2013

by Kevin Dowiarz
Sports writer

The Lemont Indians Lacrosse team is looking for a strong season, especially with seniors like Tom Griffin leading the team.

The team opened up with a solid 7-6 victory over Mount Carmel. Despite the non-ideal weather, the Indians played well. The Indians also had a hard-fought 12-8 loss to the top tier team Brother Rice High School. Right now, the Indians are 1-3, but there is a lot of season left to play.

Griffin, when asked if the team will improve, said "I think we will. We are a young team that is still coming together". There are a majority of juniors and sophomores on the Varsity team, which isn't bad, as there are some very good underclassmen in the system. Griffin went on to say that "this year is more of a rebuilding year, but we still have hopes of making it to the playoffs." Despite the rebuilding, the Indians still expect to make the playoffs.

As the year plays on, the Indians are preparing for the playoffs at the end of the season. While it may be too early in the season to have any solid prediction for any potential matchups, the Indians are focused on winning now and using that momentum to take them as far as possible in the playoffs.

"This year is more of a rebuilding year, but we still have hopes of making it to the playoffs."

-Tom Griffin

Photo courtesy of Tony Hamilton

Girls Soccer Storms into Spring

by Kieran Ruane
Sports writer

The girls soccer team in recent years has been one of Lemont's most successful sports programs, with two state tournament appearances (second place in 2009 and third place in 2011 respectively), two super sectional titles, two sectional titles, 3 regional titles, and 4 conference titles spanning from 2008-2012. This season the girls are looking to take their rather young team and compete with some of the top teams in the state.

Last season the girls were knocked out in the first round of playoffs by Providence Catholic after having a rather successful regular season. It was a disappointing loss; however, the team is motivated to bounce back stronger than ever this season, even with the loss of some key players.

Some of the students have come out in support of the team, such as freshman and self-proclaimed "superfan" Jack Buday.

"The team is really fun to watch," said Buday. "I love being able to come out and cheer them on with all of my friends. It's a great time and I definitely encourage more kids to come out and watch the girls play."

When it comes down to it, soccer is a team game. But when you're dealing with a young team such as this year's, you need a few players to be able to step up, lead by example, and support the rest of their team as the push through a tough season. Who are these players you may ask? That's right, the captains.

"I have to lead my team on the field," said senior captain Wendy Mazur. "It's important for me to first of all always play my best and encourage the other girls to as well."

Mazur continued, "I have to be extremely vocal to make sure everyone is doing what they are supposed to be doing and to keep them motivated."

Although the team may be young, with the hard work and excellent coaching that defines the girls' soccer program at Lemont, the team will most certainly be successful as they power through the regular season and, most importantly, look to regain their dominance at the state level.

"It's important for me to first of all always play my best and encourage the other girls to as well."

-Wendy Mazur

Photo courtesy of Tony Hamilton



Lemont girls' varsity soccer team.