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Issue 4

Thursday, February 14, 2008

www.neshaminy.k12.pa.us/playwickian/

The Students' Newspaper of Neshaminy High School

2001 Old Lincoln Highway Langhorne, Pa. 19047

News in Brief

Fire occurs in D-Hall

On Jan. 21, the D-Wing experienced a small fire provoked by previous events. A contractor drilled too far into the roof while preparing to destruct the metal power shop just three days earlier.

That night, rain fell and the room was flooded causing water damage in various places including the roof. The heat-bonding tool became overheated while repairing the damage and caught fire. The builder extinguished the fire with his jacket and within five minutes the fire was completely out.

D-Wing was completely evacuated and no one was injured.

Yellow Ribbon Week

On Feb. 4, Neshaminy's SADD/SAVE organized a full week for students to celebrate life. After the touching assembly with Dale and Dar Emme last October, the clubs decided to organize daily events throughout the week of Feb. 4-8 to promote the yellow ribbon organization.

On Monday, students celebrated Information Day; Tuesday was No Pressue Pajama Day when students could literally roll out of bed and attend school. Wednesday, students and staff were given the opportunity to buy white and yellow roses. Thursday was Compliment Day, where flattery and stickers were awarded simultaneously. Finally, Friday was a Wear Yellow Day, where many students showed their willingness to be a part of the program and show their appreciation.

Overall, the program was successful and has been for the past year, helping many students overcome their fears of talking to others about their problems.

Yearbook wins award

Teacher Joseph Geddes along with this year's yearbook staff have received The American Scholastic Press Association Award.

"It's nice to be recognized by a national organization for the work of your students," Geddes said. "It lets Neshaminy students know that the yearbook they're receiving is of high caliber and truly representative of Neshaminy's tradition of excellence."



Crazy statistics you won't believe in the new by the numbers section - 3



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Students write messages in this year's Love Lines - 10



Foreign film causes controversy - 13



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Everything's 'Thoroughly Modern'



Chelsea Drummel struts her stuff as Millie Dillmount shortly after arriving in New York City.

Photo/Becca Jacob

From Feb. 13 to 16 at 7 p.m., Neshaminy's music department will present its annual musical, "Thoroughly Modern Mille," a jazz-inspired Broadway sensation with a comedic twist.

By Becca Jacob
News Editor

"Thoroughly Modern Millie" is a musical comedy based on a 1967 film. The upbeat jazz-filled musical takes place in the 'roaring '20's when women were changing the norms of New York City society. This

was the time of the crazy women who bobbed their hair, raised their skirts and entered the workforce.

The Neshaminy version of this show takes place Feb. 13, 14, 15 and 16 at 7 p.m. There are two performances at 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday. Tickets are \$7 and can be purchased at the door.

The show starts off with a beige-clad company that takes to the streets of New York City. Jazzy melodies mixed with flashy, fast-paced dance breaks make up this happy-go-lucky twenties musical.

This musical is different from musicals many because it has two big tap numbers. "I like the fact that we get to tap this year because you get to act as weird as you

want when you're on stage and no one can judge you," dancer Kristina Kucey said about the fast paced tap numbers.

The show centers around a flapper named Millie Dillmount, played by Megan Magee, Kaitlyn Waterson, Chelsea Drummel, and Jackie Wiatrowski, who leaves her home in Selena, Kansas in the hopes of making a life in the "Big Apple."

She soon realizes that her path to self-discovery will be a bumpy one when soon after she gets off the train she is mugged and left with nothing more than a shoe on her foot and the clothes on her back.

see **THOROUGHLY** on page 2

Superintendent explores new career option

After two years with the Neshaminy School District, Kadri emerges a finalist in a Michigan-area school district.

By Jillian MacMath
Editor In Chief

Neshaminy Superintendent, Paul Kadri, is currently undergoing an interview process for another superintendent position in the Plymouth-Canton School District in Michigan to replace retiring superintendent Jim Ryan.

Now weeks into the process, Kadri is one of two remaining candidates. The other finalist is Craig Fiegel superintendent of Evergreen Park Elementary School District 124 in Illinois, a district of 1,900 students as compared to Neshaminy's 9,200 students. Plymouth-Canton's district includes nearly 19,000 students.

According to hometownlife.com, Kadri applied for the position after discus-

sions with the current school board, "which led both sides to conclude that he should seek another position."

Neshaminy School Board President Richard Eccles declined the opportunity to comment on the situation.

However, William Spitz, a school board member, openly discussed the possibility of Kadri leaving with the "Bucks County Courier Times." According to phillyburbs.com, "Mr. Kadri has the support of the overwhelming majority of the Neshaminy community, including staff, students, parents and residents," Spitz said, through e-mail.

"But there are a small number of influential people who clearly do not support him and who have made it impossible for him to be successful here. Because of that, I am saddened, but not surprised that he is looking elsewhere."

Both candidates have now completed the second round of interviews, which included an "open-process" interview, where public and press were permitted to



Kadri is one of two finalist in Michigan's Plymouth-Canton School District's search for a new superintendent.

Photo/Courtesy of neshaminy.k12.pa.us

see **KADRI** on page 2

Safe school survey results released to public

Last year, students and staff took part in a school safety survey. On Jan. 9, the results were released to the public.

By Becca Jacob
News Editor

On Jan. 9, the Committee for Positive Schools released the Safe Schools Assessment Resource Bank (SSARB) Survey Results. Some of this committee includes Neshaminy staff members Louise Boyd, Geeta Heble, Michael Hoy, Richard Kane, Florence Lutterschmidt, Steve McAloon, Jaqueline Rattigan, and Betsy Worthen. Last year, 1,399 Neshaminy students and 123 staff members filled out an online Safe Schools Assessment Resource Bank survey. Participants rated various school safety-based questions on a five-point scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.”

The survey was created by the Division of Educational Research and Service at the University of Montana. Areas of suggested concern included drug and alcohol use, politeness of the student body, and student respect toward staff and bullying. Some common areas of strength (scored 3.5 or higher) were extracurricular activities, suicide prevention and positive behavior encouragement by the teachers.

The survey does not just focus on the negative; it celebrates the positive improvements already being set into motion. “It is an objective snapshot of a single point of time and will form the basis from which we can grow into a stronger organization,” the release sent out by the Committee for Positive Schools reads.

Major areas of disagreement between staff and students were rewards for positive student behavior, parent involve-

ment, students following the rules, and students solving problems nonviolently.

“Teachers don’t know about the things that go on in this school,” junior Branden Karnell said about the issues of rule breaking and violence.

“Many teachers are neutral about violence, because they don’t come across it on a day-to-day basis and probably aren’t aware of how often it occurs,” Bader, a chemistry teacher, suggested.

Senior Matt Snyder took the same view as Karnell. “I don’t think students follow the rules; most kids don’t care. They don’t see some of the rules as important,” he said. “Everyone uses their cell phones in class; they pay more attention to their cell phones than they do the teacher.”

“The reason teachers are neutral is because we believe there are procedures and organizations set up to deal with this problem,” math teacher Loven replied after viewing the results. “Because of peer mediation, I don’t believe we feel that we need to solve this problem individually, but we should allow pre-organized groups to solve it.”

The results say that the consequences for breaking rules are fairly enforced, but responses differed on the subject of rewarding positive student behavior. “I don’t think students who behave well need rewards, because they should know that they are already doing the right thing,” Snyder said.

“Students should be rewarded because it will lead others to follow,” senior Amanda Dubell argued. “We should try to set a good example for others to follow.”

One question this survey brings about is that of parent involvement. Are parents well-informed and active in schools? Do they need to be?

“Kids are old enough to make their own decisions; they don’t need as much

parent involvement,” Karnell said. “Parents should only step in when needed.”

“Parents should be involved more or else they wouldn’t know what’s going on for most kids don’t tell their parents anything,” junior Michelle Jones said.

The Committee for Positive Schools believes that the confidential nature of this document and the data it contains should be respected. It is vital that they have the opportunity to review and reflect on this data within our system. At this point in time it is only appropriate to share this data among high school staff.

The committee’s response to the

information collected in the survey is a phase plan; they are currently in phase one, information sharing. This phase involves the distribution of SSARB data to administrators and staff. The next phase is title understanding, which offers staff the opportunity to reflect on the data and provide feed back to committee co-chairs.

The last three phases are planning, implementation and evaluation. They include building level teams to draft a plan of action and evaluate the implementation of this plan and make adjustments as necessary.

Finding A SOLUTION

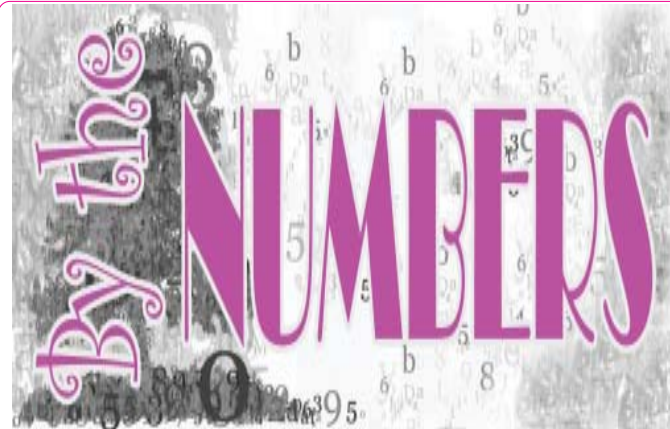
Areas of Strong Concern among Students and Staff

Polite and respectful environment

Drug and alcohol abuse

Bullying

Students show respect to staff



57,000

Out of 127,000 seniors who graduated in 2006 from PA public schools did not achieve proficiency on the assesment tests, according to nytimes.com.

The number of alcohol related crashes on average every day in Pennsylvania, according to lcb.state.pa.us.

37

The number of teens who have admitted to abusing prescripton pain medication, according to drugfree.org.

1 in 5

Percent of girls age 14 to 17 report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend, according to endabuse.org.

40

THOROUGHLY from page 1

“The role of Millie is the best anyone could have asked for in their last year,” leading lady Magee said. “It is truly a dream role, especially during your senior year.”

The show is graced with colorful characters, including Millie Dillmount, a young “modern” from Kansas, Jimmy Smith, an attractive young paperclip salesman, portrayed by Kyle Stapleton and Marc Histan. Trevor Graydon, Sincere Trust Insurance Company head boss, is played by John Lukin and Jamie Lefkowitz.

Liz Calabro, Brenna Markey and Jessica Moutoux play Dorothy Brown, a new actress in town and Millie’s best friend.

Mrs. Meers, evil owner of the Hotel Priscilla and her two Chinese hench-

men, Ching Ho and Bun Foo are protroyed by Shana Kelly, Liz Arrington, Jessica Lieb, Dan Feldmen, Matt Snyder, Dan O’Conner and Sean Markey.

“What’s different about this year is that we have two gentlemen who speak Mandarin Chinese so they have to speak with subtitles,” musical director, Kristen Cloak said.

As the two Chinese men speak, an English translation will appear above the stage. “It was quite an experience to have to speak Mandarin Chinese,” Snyder replied.

The original screenplay was written by Richard Morris and Dick Scanlan. The music by Jeanine Tesori and the lyrics by Scanlan help to bring the story to life.

Neshaminy students will also help bring the musical to life during the show’s running time at the high school.

Board adds more weight to diplomas

By Stacey Mathew
Staff Writer

On Jan. 17, the Pennsylvania State Board of Education held a meeting in Harrisburg, Pa. where they voted 11-0 that students must pass a series of state endorsed exams before graduating from high school in 2014.

“Communities are saying that American kids are leaving high school without adequate skills,” John F. Jennings, the education center president to The New York Times said. “Report after report shows that American kids are not competing with kids in other industrialized countries; they do not know as much, and they do not graduate as often.”

Many administrators and school officials feel that students have been handed “empty” diplomas. “We have allowed diplomas to be awarded to students who have not been able to demonstrate basic levels of preparedness,” Education Secretary Gerald L. Zahorchak told the Pennsylvania Department of Education Newsroom. “By handing out ‘empty’ diplomas, we are cheating our children.”

Students will be given various options to meet the new graduation requirements and prove their general knowledge in English, math, science and social studies. Students will have options, such as passing the new Graduation Competency Assessments.

At the moment, it is actually unclear as to how the competency exams will affect Neshaminy directly. “It is too early to predict how the state level mandates will impact Neshaminy,” Neshaminy High School principal, Alex Menio said. “However, it is very positive that there will be a variety of ways for students to demonstrate their competency, and any measure that has the potential to support student achievement is a step in a positive direction.”

KADRI from page 1

sit in. The second round took place on Monday Feb. 4 for Fiegel and Tuesday, Feb. 5 for Kadri.

Kadri did not wish to discuss his status, as the deliberation regarding the position is ongoing. In addition, Kadri has not yet made a statement as to whether or not he will be leaving the Neshaminy District if he is selected for the position but has agreed to discuss the situation once a final decision has been made.

Plymouth-Canton school board trustees referred to Kadri as an “out-of-the-

box thinker and innovator.” However, they also expressed apprehension, feeling that Kadri may “make change for the sake of change.”

“I still have more questions for both of them,” trustee Steven Sneiderman said, according to hometownlife.com. “But from what I know at this point, they have the potential to do a great job here.”

The Plymouth-Canton Board of Education has stated that they may make a hiring decision by Feb. 19 in order to prepare for the Feb. 28 retirement of current superintendent Jim Ryan.

Lynn Castle, seamstress

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Drama classes debut student production of parody

With shows on Jan. 29, 30, 31 and Feb. 1, drama classes for the first time ever presented their audiences with a fun and exciting parody.

By Chelsea Drumel
Entertainment Editor

Before “Done to Death,” only a small fraction of the student body knew what it took to put on a full-scale theatrical production. However, the consistent efforts of Ms. Gina Chiolan and the dedication of four periods of drama led to the first in-class play the Neshaminy stage has ever seen, allowing more students than ever before to be exposed to theatrical arts.

What distinguishes this show from the other theatrical presentations held annually at Neshaminy such as Laughingstock, the fall drama show, and the musical, is that it was produced and practiced solely throughout the school day. For five days out of the week, over 90 students were able to have a role in the show, whether it be acting on the stage or working with the set and lights.

Mrs. Chiolan, who has taught drama class for the past ten years at Neshaminy, decided to do “Done to Death” to give students an opportunity to work with a script. The class itself emphasizes skit-creation and quick-thinking improvisation. Some people find themselves completely comfortable doing this every day, yet others do not always feel the same way. To be able to dissect a character, learn a script, and find the meaning behind each line (For some characters, there were 300-400 of them) requires time and earnest commitment. Putting on a show as it is written by a playwright is a totally different experience than putting on a show as it comes to you at any moment.

One of the most remarkable effects of this show is that people who feel more at home on the field were able to find a place on the stage. As a result, kids from nearly every social spectrum found themselves wandering towards G-9A to see this production. More importantly, people who are not typically immersed in the arts showed support for their classmates and interest in becoming a part of drama class next year.

The show had a successful run during the last week of January, with each period performing on a different night and a final performance featuring the master cast. “The best part of this was just seeing how excited everyone was about their performances and how much they really enjoyed being a part of this,” Chiolan said. Each and every member of the “Done to Death” cast deserves to be commended for not only putting on a fantastic show, but also for keeping the art of the theatre alive in the halls of Neshaminy High School.

After receiving the most delegates from their respective political parties, Senators Hillary Clinton and John McCain intensify the most publicized presidential election in history.

By Kelly McClay and Ellen LoManto
Staff Writers

Election season is in full blow once again and the hype over who will win each party’s nomination is becoming crucial. With the Super Tuesday results in, Hilary Clinton and John McCain receive the most delegates from their parties, but the race is too tight between Barack Obama and Clinton to fully declare the party’s nomination to the former First Lady. McCain however, is likely to receive the party’s nomination since Mitt Romney has stepped out of the race.

The Democratic Party is favored to win the election because they’ve had much more media coverage versus the Republican Party. Also, with the opportunity for Americans to vote abroad, more people will participate in this election than ever before.

For the first time, Democrats around the world who are citizens of the U.S. will be able to vote online. The new online elections presented by Everyone Counts Inc. will allow Americans in 34 countries to vote online, by fax, through mail and in person.

Through the new program, U.S. citizens join Democrats Abroad before Feb. 1 and specify that they would rather vote online instead of in their local primaries in their hometowns in the U.S. Americans abroad are given personal identification



The cast of “Done to Death” collapse on the coach and quickly fall out of character after their performance.
Photo/Sam Gibilisco

Laughingstock delivers punchlines, high quality student improvisation

This year’s annual student production of Laughingstock entertained audiences on Jan. 18 and 19.

By Becca Stough
Entertainment Editor

A cast and crew of very talented Neshaminy students presented the annual comedy production of “Laughingstock” on Friday, Jan. 18, and Saturday, Jan. 19. in the performing arts center, better known as G9A.

The cast consisted of many of Neshaminy’s drama stars, including Devon Aaron, Sebastian Adolf, Steve Carroll, Hank Curry, Liz Fullen, Josh Havier, Shawna Kelly, Tori McCullough, Liz Offner, Joe Phillippi, Alex Sikora, James Tierney, and Zeke Woodson

True to tradition, the production is directed by students. This year’s director, junior Mark Histan, and his assistant director, senior Heather Lucas, really enjoyed the production as a whole.

“It was a great experience working with such different talents, they all brought a lot of really unique styles that were all their own,” Histan said. “I couldn’t have asked for a better cast, they were so much fun to work with and they put on an awesome show.”

Those who were involved with Laughingstock behind the scenes were advisers Chris DiCicco and Suzi Drake, props manager Grace Deacon, light technician Alexa Kloos and sound technician Candace Holmes. Laughingstock could not have taken place without the help and support of everyone who worked behind the scenes, advisers, directors, and stage crew alike.

“It was a challenging experience

overall and it was different from what I normally do, which is act,” senior Lucas said. “But it was definitely a good experience because it brought me closer to people I don’t normally talk to.”

“Laughingstock” consists of student-created comedic skits and a finale of improvisation games. The skits contained subject material ranging from exaggerated adaptations of real events, to movie parodies, to wild random stories that the cast members dreamed up.

“I liked the skits that we were all in, like “Code Blue,” because we could all throw in our own senses of humor,” senior Woodson said.

“Code Blue” was a popular skit in which the entire cast portrays their own version of Neshaminy’s code blue incident earlier this year. However, their version included a human pyramid, a comic-book-superhero style action fight, and flying skittles and banana peels.

When a parody of the movie “Saw” was combined with a hilarious cast and the song “Saftey Dance,” the crowd roared with laughter.

The “Deer in the Headlights” skit was portrayed by Sikora, Carroll, and Adolf as three daredevil deer who enjoyed getting hit by cars and at the end, one of them doesn’t get up.

Another popular skit was “Pididdle,” a reference to the popular car game.

Other performances included a skit with Curry playing three out of five characters while trying to find a date to the prom, a tin-foil-covered band from the future who travel on razor scooters, and stories of “the Hulk” in an awkward adolescent stage.

“As stressful as it was, we’re glad we got to do it,” Woodson said. The entire cast and crew put a lot of work and heart into the show and it really paid off.



Election turning into battlefield

After receiving the most delegates from their respective political parties, Senators Hillary Clinton and John McCain intensify the most publicized presidential election in history.

By Kelly McClay and Ellen LoManto
Staff Writers

number, which they use to log in online and vote.

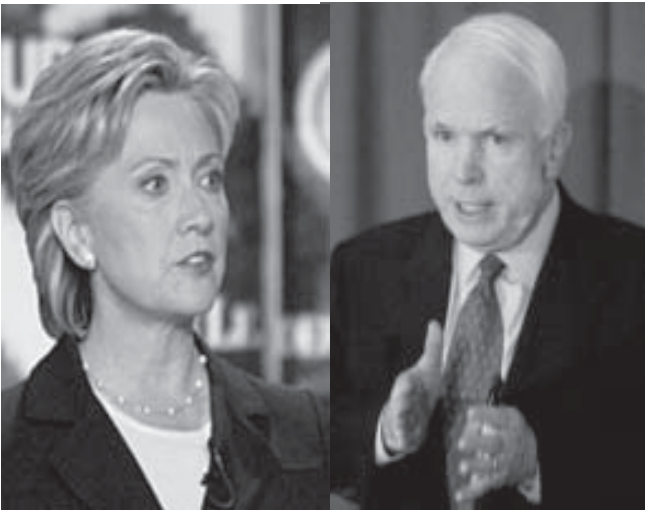
“We want all people to be able to take part in the primary whether they are a Peace Corps worker in Africa or a missionary somewhere in Asia.”

Hilary Clinton, the Democrat leading the race on Super Tuesday currently holds 825 delegates. Clinton has won Massachusetts, Oklahoma, California, Arkansas, New York, Arizona, Tennessee, New Jersey, Florida, Michigan, and New Hampshire primary elections and Nevada and Alaska caucuses.

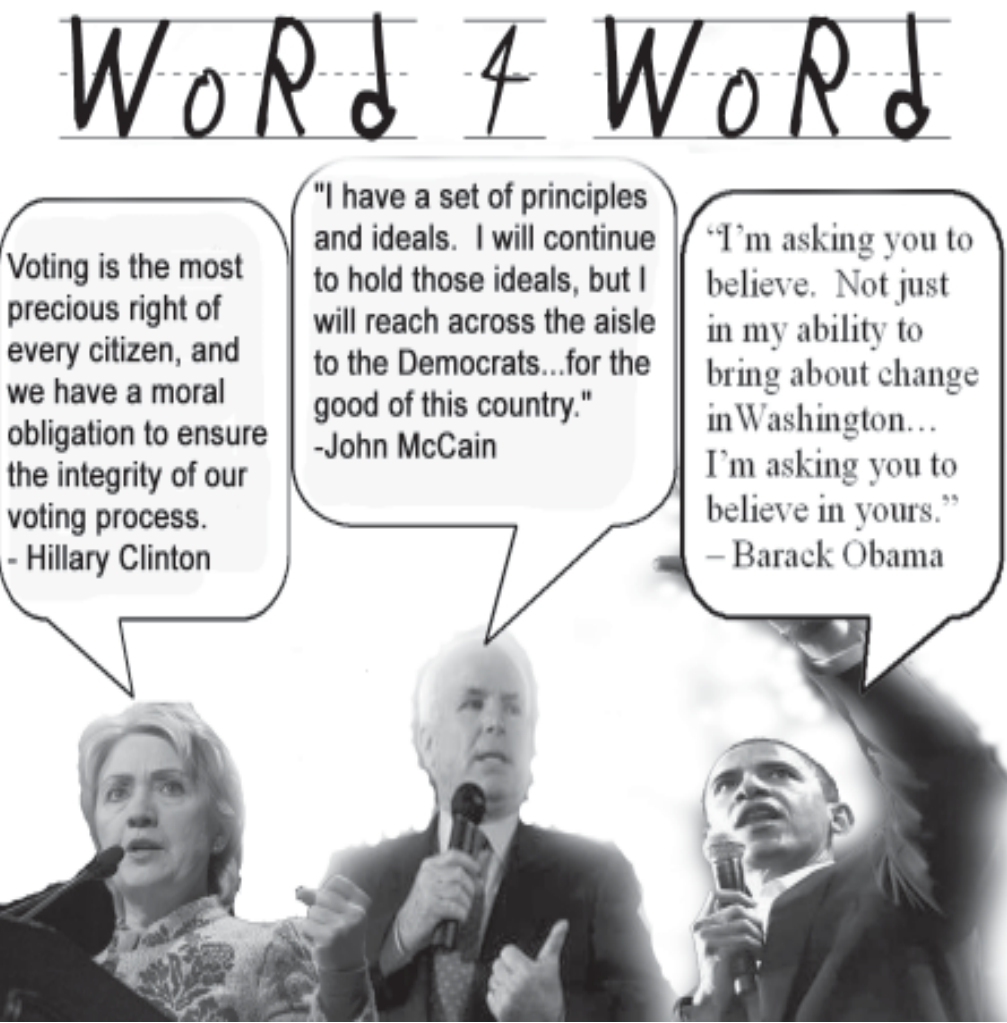
McCain leads the Republicans with 615 delegates with wins in Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Delaware, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Tennessee, South Carolina, California, Missouri and New Hampshire primary elections.

Not only are race and culture separating the elections but so are the usual issues such as abortion, global warming and health care.

McCain is dominating the Republican party, and Clinton and Obama are neck and neck for the Democratic party. At this



Hillary Clinton leads the Democratic party while John McCain represents the leading candidate for the Republican party after Mitt Romneys recent drop out.
Photo /Courtesy/cnn.com





Ninth grade rightfully moving to high school

After a heated debate between the Neshaminy School Board of Directors and the community concerning budget savings, a plan has been proposed to close one elementary and one middle school (which are still to be named), as well as Tawanka Learning Center, the district’s alternative education school. Included in the plan is the decision to have freshmen join the high school by September 2009.

With the board’s decision, not only will the district save money, but freshmen will finally be provided with the typical high school environment, allowing for growth and more opportunities to get involved. It is an educationally sound decision

While many students and parents oppose the decision based on possible overcrowding in an already congested population, it must be stated that the plans for the renovated high school include extra classrooms to accommodate the influx population. By the time Neshaminy is fully revamped, it will have the capacity to comfortably contain freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Most freshmen in middle school do not take their first year of high school seriously. As the oldest and most influential students in middle school, many ninth graders experience senioritis, when they should be realizing that they are actually starting the next level of their education.

School districts across the nation who have implemented this type of grade structuring have reported frequent discipline problems among freshmen, as well as a lack of academic preparation for high school curriculum. One such district in Maryland reported that less than two-thirds of freshmen passed a basic state mathematics assessment.

Additionally, freshmen find it difficult to get involved in extracurricular activities at the high school mainly because of the required commute. Spending their first year of high school with sixth, seventh, and eighth graders prevents them from enjoying the opportunities to be an active high school student. Pursuing activities and athletics in freshmen year benefits students greatly and fuels interest for possible career paths.

One must keep in mind that ninth grade is a crucial time in various facets of a student’s life. Education must be provided in a proper environment that allows freshmen to adapt to actual high school life. It is important that ninth graders be accustomed to such an atmosphere in order to succeed in all aspects of school life.

Not only do freshmen need academic growth, but social and psychological developments must be properly matured as well. Interacting with fellow peers who deal with similar problems is essential in the learning process.

Ninth graders generally deal with significantly different issues compared to those of students in middle school. With freshmen at the high school, they will be able to communicate and socialize with students who face those same situations.

If most high schools across the nation include freshmen and experience relative success regarding academics, then why should Neshaminy be any different? The district is one of only a few in the state that have ninth graders in middle school, and senior high schools in general make up a small portion of the nation’s high schools.

Although the plan calls for the closing of three schools that have been neighborhood landmarks for years, the board’s action serves in the best social and academic interests of both the community and the ninth graders in more ways than one.

Arguments against the ninth graders moving up to the high school are pale in comparison to the countless benefits freshmen can reap in Neshaminy Paradise. Education and social interaction make moving up the freshman to the high school building an excellent choice.

The unsigned editorial expresses the view of the majority of the editorial board.

We’re waiting to hear your comments

Is there something you’re interested in not in the paper? See anything you would like changed in the school? Send us a letter! All letters sent in will be read and considered for publication. It doesn’t matter whether you have a complaint, compliment, or suggestion—we’ll review and respond to your letter the best that we can.

Keep letters to a maximum of 300 words and make sure it’s appropriate. We reserve the right to edit for grammar and clarity, but a good literary sense is always welcomed. They will be published as space allows.

Drop off the signed letter to the Playwickian office or email it to playwickian@yahoo.com. We don’t bite, honestly.

So why are you still sitting there? Send in your letters; we can’t wait to hear from you!

~The Playwickian Staff

The Playwickian

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Since Neshaminy opened its new G-wing on Jan. 8, students have expressed both positive and negative opinions on the building. Here are some items the student body has brought up about Neshaminy’s new addition to “Paradise.”

Thumbs Up

- Personal space now exists
- Rodent free (for now)
- 42” flatscreen TVs that will NEVER get stolen?
- A brand new wanna-be zen rock garden
- Automated sinks that do the work for you



- Toilet paper now a right rather than a privilege
- Gym 3 graduates from “island” status; D-Hall demoted in its place
- Lights work. Atmosphere less like a horror movie
- More lockers to shove students into

Thumbs Down

- Windows that don’t open ensure that there is no escape
- Lack of window blinds ideal for stalking
- Guards find one-way doors a clear violation of justice
- A clockless pit that begs for senior pranks
- Lockers can only fit up to half a textbook
- Getting to classes is the new gym class
- High-def TV’s without the High-def
- Stairs make school more three-dimensional than students can handle.
- Lack of bulletin boards ensure that students know nothing



Staff Writers

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Policy Statement

Published monthly, the student newspaper of Neshaminy High School is a public forum, with its student editorial board making all decisions concerning its contents. Unsigned editorials express the views of the majority of the editorial board. Letters to the editors will be published as space allows. Letters must be signed and of appropriate subject matter. The paper reserves the right to edit letters for grammar and clarity, and all letters are subject to laws governing obscenity, libel, privacy and disruption of the school's educational process. Opinions in letters or commentaries are attributed to the author. Such views are not necessarily those of the staff, nor should any opinion expressed in a public forum be construed as the opinion or the policy of the adviser or administration, unless so attributed.

Awards

The publication has received recognition by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association in the following years - First Place: 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994. Bronze Medalist: 2001. Silver Medalist: 1995, 2000, 2003. Gold Medalist: 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007.



CROSSFIRE

By law, schools must measure students' Body Mass Index (BMI) and alert their parents if it is too high or low. Is this process necessary to promote healthy eating and lifestyles, or does it ultimately lower the confidence of overweight or underweight students?



Is BMI test for the best... Or does it cause stress?



By Jonathan Baker
Editorials Editor

According to an article written by Men's Fitness Magazine in September of 2005, Philadelphia holds the prestigious title of being the fattest city in the United States. Not only is this label extremely degrading to the entire community, it poses a serious health concern to the obese individuals in question.

Unbeknownst to most Americans, obesity is the cause of a multitude of dangerous, potentially lethal diseases. Obesity has been linked to hazardous diseases and health concerns including diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, and arthritis among others.

Since weight issues have become so prominent in our community and can have a substantial effect on an individual's health, the state should use whatever means necessary to alleviate this troubling problem. This includes supporting the ordinance that states public schools must test each student's BMI percentage.

BMI stands for Body Mass Index, and provides a simple way to assess how healthy a person is in terms of weight. BMI takes into account height when deciding if each individual is at an appropriate weight. This system of measuring weight has proved highly accurate and efficient, and is being used widely around the country.

Some individuals are concerned that testing a child's BMI percentage could be potentially harmful to their psyche and cause self-esteem issues. These individuals argue that BMI readings can be incredibly degrading for adolescents with weight issues and that they should not be subjected to the reading if they so choose.

Unfortunately, these individuals are misguided because mandatory BMI readings are a necessary precaution. Some self-esteem issues may result from these tests, but this information is vital in the ongoing fight against obesity. This reading can single handedly motivate a child to become more active and eat healthier, which will allow them to lead healthy, vigorous lives.

Also, the self-esteem issues that arise from BMI readings are avoidable if the test is conducted in a nurturing, educational fashion. According to Neshmaniny High

School nurse Sharon White, utilizing an educational approach to the BMI process often alleviates resultant confidence problems.

"Most students will respond positively to the BMI readings if they are presented in a neutral, educational manner," White stated. "If you present the information properly, most self esteem issues are avoidable."

The most important aspect to remember when surveying this argument is the possible negative consequences obesity can have on an individual.

Shockingly, if the obesity problem in our country continues, this generation will be the first generation to have a shorter life span than the previous generation. A large portion of those premature deaths would be a result of weight related issues.

Testing BMI is a positive start to combat obesity, but is only one small step in an epic struggle. Once given their BMI percentage, students should be instructed in how to maintain a healthy diet and remain active.

"If a child is obese, the doctor or nurse who performed the BMI test should promote healthy dieting habits, increased activity, and changes in lifestyle, as well as refer the child to a weight loss program," White said.

Ultimately, if the school were not to provide every student with a BMI reading, it would be jeopardizing that student's health and endangering that child's life. Mandatory BMI readings would certainly help to ensure that obese students would be given the opportunity to solve their weight problem and lead healthy, prosperous lives.



By Stephanie Wiltshire
Circulation Editor

When society talks about eating disorders, the words "purge" and "starvation" pop into mind, but instead it seems like the words "binge" and "eat" should appear. Binge eating is a disease that's sadly taking over America, causing a critical weight epidemic across the country. Unfortunately, the state believes that educating students about fitness and healthier eating habits are not enough to cure this obese society.

The state requires school district nurses to weigh all students and inform them of their BMI (Body Mass Index). By doing this, they are informing students of whether or not they are overweight or obese. A person is considered obese if his or her BMI (a ratio of height and weight) is over the normal standard.

For some students, that scale is not only a device that tells a person how much they weigh, but it is the ultimate enemy in his or her life. Once they step on that metal monster, the humiliation they suffer every day becomes more painful when they hear that their BMI is over the normal standard for healthy individuals.

"You see it and you probably hear it at home," senior Melissa Coates commented about weight. "So why should I hear it at school?"

To answer her question, she should not have to hear about it in school. By state law, school nurses have to measure the height and weight of students to calculate



A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, found that over one-third of U.S. adults, more than 72 million people, were overweight in 2007. Photo/Courtesy of jupiterimages.com

their BMI, according to Neshaminy High School nurse Cynthia Wells. However, a person's BMI is not an accurate way to measure whether or not they are overweight or obese. Since muscle weighs more than fat, a muscular person could have a higher-than-average BMI and be perfectly healthy.

For some students, this one moment can lower their self-esteem. According to kidshealth.org, teenagers with a low self esteem may become depressed, lose interest in activities or hobbies, have a harder time making friends, become more easily susceptible to peer pressure and are not able to enjoy life as much as individuals with higher self-esteem.

Coates, unlike other overweight individuals, has gained a high self-esteem through her other characteristics. "I've been overweight since I was born," Coates announced. "I'm used to it."

But this does not mean that all individuals are used to such ridicule. Some students are able to keep in shape by joining after school activities, like sports or workouts in the fitness room. However, there are some students who are not interested in sports or can't get motivated to work out.

Eating and exercise habits start at home, and when it comes down to it, a student knowing their BMI isn't going to change that. In low socioeconomic areas, families are more likely going to pick up some fast food than prepare a healthy meal that can be just a delicious, but twice as expensive.

Whether or not a student is overweight or obese doesn't affect the educational system, and even if it did, BMI is not an accurate measurement of a person's health. For some students, finding out their BMI can cause unseen problems, such as eating disorders, mood changes, etc.

However, students should make a daily attempt to eat healthier and exercise. They can eat healthier by having smaller portions of their foods and/or stay away from high calorie foods. They can also exercise more by walking daily, joining a sport or joining active activities.

The school also plays a part in helping students become more fit by lowering the calories in the food and serving smaller portions during lunch. They also allow students to participate in fitness training every Tuesday and Wednesday after school, from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.



Democrats, define change

With the presidential election right around the corner, candidates are doing anything they can to sway the youth vote.

By Jillian MacMath
Editor In Chief

With the presidential election rapidly approaching, candidates are promoting themselves everywhere: in commercials, on posters, through email and even on the internet. It seems their endorsements are reaching out particularly to youth these days by frequenting pop-culture hot-spots like Myspace and Youtube.

Don't get me wrong, I'm in favor of creative, modern promotion. With AP

testing, mid-terms, SATs and extra-curriculars, not every high school student has time to watch Hillary and Obama bicker over the issues on CNN; Myspace and Youtube are convenient ways to keep our nation's youth informed.

But are the candidates really informing us? Or are they just emphasizing words they think we like to hear?

With the election right around the corner, presidential hopefuls are doing anything they can to sway the youth vote. Obama is reiterating, "Hope, Action and Change" while Hillary promotes, "Politics with a difference." I understand the democratic emphasis is on change but it's getting old. How ironic.

I'm a fan of both Hillary and Obama. Obviously, with our economy ap-

proaching recession, millions of Americans out of jobs and soldiers fighting everyday in a war without a clearly-defined purpose, we really are in need of change. But here's an idea: how about preaching about what is going to be done rather than the fact that one is going to do something? Every president does something; it's the significance and impact that matters.

Now, I've watched a few full-length Obama speeches and, hands down, he's got my vote for candidate with the most charisma. His speeches are uplifting and persuasive, but when he's finished I find myself asking, "What were his plans again? Change? Oh, that's it. He's going to change things..."

I won't be biased though; Hillary has jumped on the band wagon as well. While she's more concise and direct in her sermon, she too drops the C-word at every opportunity.

For the record, I see change in a positive light. It's proof that a nation such as ours, the most powerful in the world, can still improve its ways.

But this election is potentially the most important one thus far. While it's the first election I'll be of age to vote, it's also the first one I've ever felt could affect me.

In actuality, this election affects every single American. Whether it be because people know someone who is fighting in Iraq, they're ready to go green, or simply

because they don't want to see another George Bush-type land in office- everyone is affected one way or another.

So do something about it. Read the news paper, tune into CNN, or watch the semi-annoying Myspace debates. Learn what the candidates are actually saying and shove aside their crowd-pleasing-youth-swaying-change-driven propaganda.



Does Obama genuinely advocate this abstract idea of 'change,' or will he say anything to snag the vote?

Photo/Courtesy of pictopia.com

Dear Playwickian...

“Christ” out of “Christmas”

I found your article “‘Tis the Season to Celebrate” in the December issue of The Playwickian very offensive. You told the readers all about the meaning behind Hanukkah, the reason for Kwanzaa, the Muslim holiday Eid al-Ahda, and even the Latin American holiday Las Posadas. It was the article about Christmas that REALLY got me. You explained to the readers the importance of Saint Nicholas, and not ONCE was the real meaning behind Christmas even mentioned. Christmas is one of the HOLIEST days in the Christian religion, and you didn’t even mention the birth of Jesus Christ, the ONLY reason we even have a Christmas to celebrate! The word holiday derives from “HOLY DAY.” What holy day are we celebrating when you praise a commercial figure? I cannot believe that The Playwickian had the nerve to leave out the most important reason that we have such a huge holiday season. What, were you afraid that you would offend people who don’t celebrate the religious Christmas? You have offended those of us who do, I believe you owe an apology to all of the Christian/Catholic students who attend Neshaminy High School.

Merry CHRISTmas
~Senior Marisa Ribgy

Students’ efforts paying off

I have often had the intention of writing to compliment you on your excellent newspaper, but somehow never managed to find the time. This time, though, I’m going to get a jump-start on my New Year’s resolution to stop procrastinating and do it today!

I thoroughly enjoyed the December issue of The Playwickian. The first thing to catch my eye was the “Student Life” interview with one of my former students, Nick DeFeo. I’m so glad to see Nick has kept his great sense of humor... I will never forget his fifth grade obsession with Austin Powers, and his tuneful rendition of “It’s Not Unusual” over the Samuel Everitt PA system on his last day of fifth grade. I was also pleased to see that Brian Picariello, another distinguished Everitt graduate, is continuing to develop his artistic talents. As I read the names of students on the Editorial Board and on the roster of contributing writers, it was very nice to see the names of several more former students. You all should know that your “old” teachers do remember you and are always glad to see you involved and contributing to the Neshaminy community.

I would also like to compliment you on your obvious commitment to diversity. The stories on the holiday traditions of Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Los Posadas and Eid-Ahda reflect the reality that our community includes families of many faiths. The first step towards decreasing fear and increasing tolerance is always education, and all of the young writers who contributed stories on these pages are to be commended for their work.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Jenna Overton, Joseph Pullins, and former Sandburg colleague Dennis Howie for their courage in addressing the issue of sexual preference and tolerance at Neshaminy High School. Many people do not realize that harassment is a problem not just for students like Joseph, but also students who have gay friends, parents, or other relatives. Although there are probably many people who would prefer that this issue were not addressed so openly, it is our responsibility as educators to make sure all students feel safe and welcome in our schools.

Keep up the good work, all of you!

~Mrs. Marianne Sutin, Music teacher at
Pearl Buck Elementary School

Guest Opinion: Congressman Murphy makes student financial aid more affordable

Like many of you, my final years in high school were busy, but I still found time to worry about how I would pay for college. My family wasn’t wealthy and I knew I would have to pay my own tuition. I worked several jobs throughout college, but that wasn’t enough. Now, more than a decade since graduation, I’m still paying off my student loans.

While the cost of college may be daunting, I can tell you that paying for the expensive tuition is worth it. Nothing has been more important than my education. But as you approach graduation and struggle with college costs, I want you to know that I’m working hard to make it a little easier for you.

We all know that college costs have skyrocketed, with public university tuition rates 41 percent higher than they were just six years ago. We cannot pass this burden on to students and their families. Forcing students to take on record debt or forgo college is not fair; we owe them better; we owe them an affordable education.

Since being sworn into Congress last year, I have fought to make affordable college education a reality by advocating lower tuition and expanding government loan programs.

The passage of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act into law was a tremendous accomplishment for American students and middle class families. This law increases grants and loans by \$20 billion over the next five years. It will cut interest rates in half on subsidized student loans and save the average borrower \$4,440 over the course of the loan. It also raises the maximum Pell Grant scholarship that a student can receive to \$4,310. This bill provides the single largest increase in college aid since the GI bill.

This historic law also provides incentives to students who choose to pursue careers in public service. Many capable young people have had to overlook vital public service jobs in fields like nursing, early childhood education, and law enforcement because those careers do not provide a salary sufficient to repay large college loan debts. After ten years of service, workers in these fields will have their loans forgiven. Additionally, students who commit to teaching at public schools in underprivileged neighborhoods will receive immediate tuition assistance.

In November, I introduced the Truth in Tuition Act, a bill which requires that colleges and universities provide the total cost of tuition for two-year and four-year degrees to students before they begin their educations. If this bill passes, you and your family would know exactly how much your education will cost from the start—with no surprise hikes and plenty of time to plan financially.

As a former professor, I firmly believe that our country’s future depends on equipping the next generation with the tools they need to compete in the global economy. I will continue to fight for American students like you in the hope that a college education becomes a possibility for every person who wants one.

~Congressman Patrick Murphy

Hypocritical intolerance of religious opinions in school

Lately, it seems that society is offended by just about everything. We’ve learned from Don Imus, Kanye West, and Howard Stern that it is essential to be politically correct or else risk the rejection of the country. In this holiday season, however, I am getting more and more annoyed by the people who cannot accept “Merry Christmas” as an acceptable salutation.

Christmas can be seen everywhere starting the day after Thanksgiving. Sure, many stores try to stay neutral with a “Holiday Sale,” but many still decorate with Christmas trees or Christmas lights. I recently visited a Dunkin’ Donuts at Neshaminy Mall with a dancing Santa Claus. CBS is showing an abundance of Christmas movies, including “Elf,” “Rudolph,” and “Frosty the Snowman.” Call it what you want, but they’re Christmas movies, not holiday movies.

This sort of hypocrisy is not healthy for our country today, with all of the corruption that can be seen. Why is it that people can acknowledge Santa Claus, Rudolph, and Frosty, but not the real main character of Christmas? There wouldn’t be holiday sales or presents under the tree if it wasn’t for the birth of Jesus Christ over 2,000 years ago.

It does not matter whether you’re atheist, Christian, or neutral; most people celebrate Christmas, which is a religious holiday. Whether you choose to accept it or not is the issue.

This brings up another valid point. In an editorial by Michael Zilberman in last month’s edition of The Playwickian, the staff writer wrote about a simple quote on a sign outside of TDS Concrete Incorporated in Trevose. The quote was: “Those who do not acknowledge Jesus are not from God.” As Zilberman put it, this quote was “intolerant,” “ethnocentric,” “faulty,” and “borders on hatred.”

As a Christian, these are harsh words to read. Yet, after a brief moment of disappointment, I began to realize, yet again, the hypocrisy of it all.

The quote itself, in my opinion, was not malicious. It simply stated the basic

principles of Christianity. It’s also borderline common sense. Do people really think they are “from God” if they’re atheist or they blaspheme at every opportunity they receive? This is an easy question to answer—an answer which was made public on a street sign.

How obsessed is our society with political correctness when people are “morally offended” by a sign outside of a concrete company? My simple remedy for people driving past TDS Concrete Incorporated on Maple Avenue in Trevose is this: keep driving.

The only solution to stop our “ethnocentric” ways is to acknowledge that there are different people out there. Granted, there are people out there who aren’t Christian that could disagree with the sign. This doesn’t mean that there needs to be a thousand-man-rally outside of TDS to get them shut down.

If people disagree, then they have the right as Americans to disagree. TDS isn’t forcing people to go to church or go to mass or repent for their sins. The company is simply expressing its beliefs as protected in the First Amendment of our country.

Recently, I was listening to one of my favorite stand-up comics, Auggie Smith. He was doing a sketch on the smoking ban in New York. His routine, though in a joking matter, was very profound. He argued, “Who is concerned about their health in a bar?” He goes on to say, “The way my theory works is: I don’t like Bed, Bath and Beyond. I don’t like what goes on at Bed, Bath and Beyond. So do you know what I do? I don’t go there.”

In the same way, Americans shouldn’t feel the need to publicly state that they disagree with something or make a scene. They shouldn’t feel obligated to be outraged at the religious, especially not when they turn around and celebrate a holiday created on the foundation of Christianity. The corruption in this country can be seen everywhere.

As members of Neshaminy High School, we reserve the right to express our

Christmas not explained

In December 2007’s edition of The Playwickian, there was a whole section devoted to the holidays of the season. Included in that portion was a brief description of each holiday, how it is celebrated, who celebrates it, and a short story of it. It came to my attention, however, that the real meaning of each holiday was written about in all of the holidays except for the most common one: Christmas. Christmas was described as a holiday revolving around a “Santa Claus” figure. That is the commercialized version of Christmas and it really upset me to hear that all the writer cared about was Santa Claus! What happened to the true meaning of Christmas, you know? The one with Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus? Perhaps you forgot! Here, let me remind you with evidence from a living document... something not very referred to unless it is senselessly bashed by people who cannot comprehend it or simply take something out of context (THE BIBLE):

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world (this was the first census that took place while Quirnius was governor of Syria), and everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the Town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her first-born, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in the manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1-7 NIV)

There. The real meaning of Christmas and, quite frankly, the most important! God bestowed His gift upon the Earth, which would eventually save all who believe in Him (just read Jon 3:16).

I have no problem with the usage of Santa Claus in the article, but you could at least include the history of the guy! I’ll refresh you on this one, too. Saint Nicolas was a man who was brought up in a very religious family and eventually went on to become a bishop. He was compassionate about the poor and anonymously left money for people who had nothing. He figured that since God gave the people dwelling on Earth a gift that he would also, in appreciation, give others gifts. This is originally why we gave gifts at Christmas time, and some still do, despite how commercialized it has become. “Saint Nicholas,” as his story was passed down the line and translated into many languages, became known as the now familiar “Santa Claus.”

Next time, if you plan to do a special on any holiday, make sure that you have your facts straight and that you actually mention in some detail what the holiday is actually about!

~Senior Holly Reddy

beliefs, accept other’s, and put an end to all the intolerance.

~Sophomore Kyle Ejsmont

Letters to the Editor

Focus the Nation promotes environmental awareness

The Focus the Nation teach-in, re-scheduled to Feb. 21, attempts to reduce causes of global warming.

By Maria Kelmansky
Student Life Editor

Imagine the world with stronger and longer lasting hurricanes and increasing amounts of floods and droughts. Imagine diseases, such as Malaria, spreading rapidly.

Say good-bye to Greenland, many islands, polar bears, and other species. Say hello to rising sea levels and dramatic changes in the climate.

This is what many scientists believe the future will hold if something is not done to prevent global warming. Over 1,750 institutions participated in Focus the Nation, an initiative to prevent the continuation of climate change, on Jan. 31.

Neshaminy High School planned

on being one of these institutions, but obstacles beyond the school’s control delayed the presentation, which will now be held on Feb. 21.

The Focus the Nation teach-in is aimed at informing students of the dire effects of global warming, and encouraging them to take action and write letters addressing the issue to people who are involved in government.

“If young people, students, go to government agencies and present the case, people will listen,” Mike Hoy, the organizer of Neshaminy’s Focus the Nation teach-in and the adviser of the Environmental Action Club explained.

Currently, the United States makes up only four percent of the world’s population, but creates 25 percent of air pollution. Focus the Nation hopes to reduce this by 80 percent over the next 40 years.

“My biggest concern is that if we don’t act very soon, we will pass the tipping point,” Hoy said. “We might be able to go back to the way we were, if we don’t

pass that limit.”

In addition to writing letters to government agencies, students can focus on conservation. They can use fewer materials and wear warm clothes instead of turning up the heat. Students can combine car trips, car pool and attempt to drive cars with low gas mileage.

In 1996, a melting Greenland dumped about 22 cubic miles of water into the sea,” Senator Barack Obama said in a speech titled “Energy Independence and the Safety of Our Planet,” according to obama.senate.gov.

“Today, just years 10 later, it’s melting twice as fast. All in all, Greenland has enough ice to raise the global sea level 23 feet, making a New Orleans out of nearly every coastal city imaginable,” Obama continued.

Approximately 530 students

were expected to attend the teach-in on Jan. 31. Hoy e-mailed the faculty, but many classes were unable to attend due to mid-terms and tests, which needed to be taken before the end of the second marking period.

“Hopefully changing the date will allow more students to attend,” principal Alex Menio said. He added that the auditorium can hold approximately 200 more people.

“Kilowatt Ours,” an inspirational documentary that explores the conservation of energy, will be shown during the presentation. Afterwards, students will be able to ask questions. They will also be given the opportunity to encourage the government to take action.

“In the course of the presidential debate the national media has only asked candidates three questions, out of 2,700, about global warming,” Hoy revealed. “That is the same number of questions asked about UFOs.”

“My biggest concern is that if we don’t act very soon, we will pass the tipping point.”

-Mike Hoy

Helpful Peer Mediation program sees decline in activity

The peer mediation program assists students in resolving disputes and keeping the peace at Neshaminy.

By Jennifer Martin
Staff Writer

Peer mediation has, throughout the years, been a very beneficial program dedicated to helping high school students like the ones here at Neshaminy. This program, ran by Lisa Schmidt, is meant to keep peace between students.



Peer mediation is a useful student based group that helps students resolve their issues. Photo/Sam Gibilisco

There are many arguments and problems between students that may never become resolved unless they have the opportunity to talk it out. Peer mediation is a safe, confidential way to work out problems with a fellow classmate, friend or someone else there is a problem with.

Most students are not comfortable with talking to others students about their problems mostly because they do not want their

secrets told.

Each and every mediator is not allowed to take any information shared in mediation and share it with anyone at all. What happens in the mediation room, stays in the mediation room.

“It really does help students when they need to be helped. If there is anyone who may need mediation, there is a place to work it out.”

-Tiffany Tucker

Also, some students do not know how to get a mediation set up. There are always referral papers to refer oneself to have a mediation.

These papers can be located in any office and online at www.neshaminy.k12.pa.us. Referrals do not have to be submitted by the individual with the problem.

If a friend or a teacher notices that somebody is having an issue with somebody else in the school, anyone can refer anyone if he or she thinks would find peer mediation helpful.

The peer mediation program receives referrals and holds dozens upon dozens of mediations per year. “Most students resolve their issues when a mediation is over,” Tiffany Tucker, an experienced mediator said.

The program has helped many students in the past due to its dedicated, well trained students and teachers. The program is underestimated by those who have a misunderstanding of it.

When a mediation is held, those individuals simply talk out their problems and lay all of their issues out on the table and try to come up with a resolution so there is no longer a problem in the future. The mediators are only there to keep the peace and make sure a resolution is in fact made.

This program is a very significant program, which students need to give a chance. “It really does help students when they need to be helped,” Tucker said. If there is anyone who may need mediation, there is a place to work it out.

Teenage nanny matures into superb Special Education teacher



Special education teacher Catie Romano uses past experiences to her advantage.

By Stefania Mancino
Special Features Editor

Constantly caring for younger children throughout her years of becoming a responsible adult, a career in education proves to be no revelation for Special Education teacher, Catie Romano.

Since 2003, Catie Romano has been teaching Special Education at Neshaminy. “Neshaminy has been a very welcoming community,” Romano commented. “I’ve made many friends since I’ve been teaching here.”

Before her position at Neshaminy, she was a day to day substitute teacher, which

helped her meet many new people.

She also worked as a nanny, which increased her experience and knowledge of coping with children.

“Neshaminy is the only district I have ever taught for,” Romano said. “However before I started teaching I was a full time nanny. When I can to Neshaminy I was a day to day sub which allowed me the opportunity to spend time in all the districts buildings and allowed me to meet a lot of people.”

Romano prepared for her fulfilling career of education at Kutztown University and by completing half of her student teaching in Plymouth, England.

She was a dual major in Elementary Education and Special Education. Moreover, she has continued to take courses at various colleges.

Inspiration for teaching came through her previous years of babysitting. A client of hers had been diagnosed with Autism.

Her commitment to this child, in addition to her summers in college working for Easter Seals, aided her decision to work with children with special needs.

“I knew I wanted to work with children in some fashion and my inability to deal well with pain kept me out of the medical field,” Romano said.

The satisfaction of watching her students make progress throughout their high school ex-

perience is the best part of her career.

“I have really enjoyed teaching at the high school level and watching students as they mature and ready themselves for life,” Romano said.

Romano has proven herself as a dedicated, caring person, in which she should be praised for her achievements.

The amount of hours may have increased from when she had the typical teenage baby-sitting job, but her great devotion and love of caring for children has none the less stayed the same.

LUZZLES

Luzzles are word puzzles from the creative mind of English teacher Dan Luongo.

1. I WRITE I

2. Lasting

3. Wear

Wear

Wear

Wear

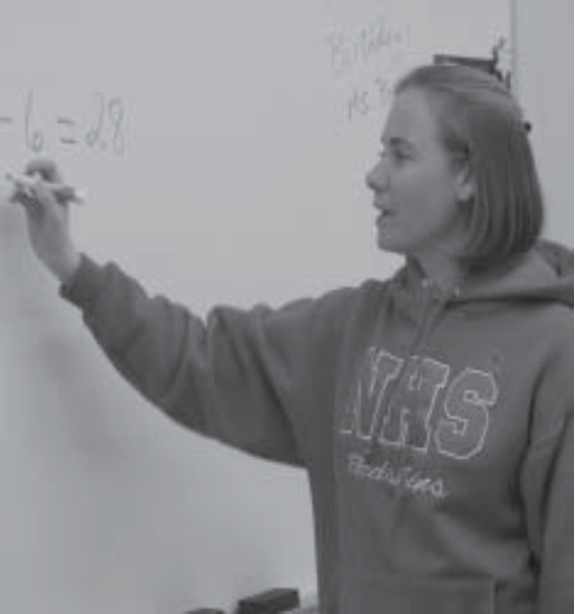
SUDOKU

7		3		9				
6	8			1	5			
1			2				7	
8	3							
	7	4				5	1	
							4	7
	1				2			6
			9	4			8	5
				6		1		3

Graphic/puzzle.about.com

Long lasting 3. A little for wear

1. Right between the eyes 2.



Special Education teacher Catie Romano enjoys her fulfilling career at Neshaminy. Photo/ Sam Gibilisco

F.B.L.A. crushes complex competition



Members of Neshaminy’s FBLA succeed at a regional competition and are preparing for the state finals.

By Kenny Thapoung
Student Life Editor

Neshaminy students not only use Microsoft Excel, but excel when it comes to taking the business world by the horns and coming out on top.

Neshaminy’s chapter of Future Business Leaders of America, F.B.L.A., is known for sending many of its members on to dominate, or at least represent Neshaminy, at the state finals.

Ever since the establishment of F.B.L.A in 1981, Neshaminy’s chapter of the 280 different chapters, has competed in regional, state, and sometimes national competitions.

Almost a quarter of a million students, from middle school to college, participate in national competitions. F.B.L.A

is meant to prepare students for careers in business.

On Jan. 10, Neshaminy High School was skilled enough to be graced with 47 awards at the leadership conference in Bucks County Community College.

“This year was our best turnout yet! We had 90 students join FBLA, and 76 of them competed in different events at BCCC,” Selger said. “We had about 47 students place from 1st to 5th place in different events, and 40 of them qualify to move onto the state level, which is held at the Hershey Hotel from March 31-April 2.”

After the 500 competitors faced off, Neshaminy came out with 38 students who are eligible to represent the school at the State Leadership Conference in Hershey, Pa. on March 31 to April 2.

Juniors Mike DeAngelis, Nick Ostash and Ryan Poserina have won spots as the state finalists for E-



Betsy Thomas, Meshael Jones and Megan Roberts will represent Neshaminy at the State Leadership Conference in Hershey.
Photo/Janet Dougherty

Business.

“Even though we had arguments, we still got the job done,” DeAngelis said. “It was like I accomplished something. I hope to go further in the competition.”

Ricky Adams, Alex Chae and Kenny Hassinger also became state finalists in the Business Financial Plan.

Other categories that Neshaminy was able to take first place in included database design, business communication, entrepreneurship and computer problem solving.

The number of members happens to increase each year. In 2004 to 2005, membership was at 41, but the number has escalated in 2007 to 2008.

According to DeAngelis and junior Drew Balis, the best part of F.B.L.A would have to be the actual competition.

“While I was excited about going to states for the second year in a row, I’m a little disappointed that we leave on the Phillies’ season opener,” Balis stated.

Typical F.B.L.A meetings usually consist of brainstorming fundraiser ideas and organizing, which members are best suited to take part in which individual competition.

The students and advisers get pumped up to prepare for their next competition at their meetings.

“There are about 60 different events to choose from to compete in,” F.B.L.A adviser Ashley Selger said. “There are computer based tests, individual objective tests, group events that could include 1-3 members, public speaking events, job interview, etc. There are really so many to chose from, and they add new events each year.”

Only three students can be on a team and not everybody can get his or her first choice.

It also provides strong leadership training for those interested in entering the business world.

“Anyone is welcome to join our club. We usually meet at the end of September and hold our first annual meeting,” Selger stated. “There is a membership fee of \$12 to join, which is to hold your place as a member. We have many students who join FBLA that do not take business classes, but still enjoy competing in different business events.”

Saint Valentine jailed

By Ariella Landau
Staff Writer

There is only one day of the year that is acceptable for Cupid to aim his arrow for the sake of love. Valentine’s Day falls on Feb. 14 every year, and is known to be the most important holiday to be shared with a significant other. There are many traditional items associated with Valentine’s Day, such as chocolate, teddy bears, cards, and, of course, flowers.

“Valentine’s Day is a time in which you spend with a loved one, and show them how much love there is to offer,” sophomore Chaz Reeder said. Valentine’s Day is a holiday that has been around for many years, although many do not know where it originated from and how it came about.

According to theholidayspot.com, Valentine’s Day began during the year of 270 A.D. in Rome. During this time, the Roman Emperor, Claudius II decided to forbid marriage. His decision was simply made for the reason that married men were more emotionally attached to their families, and thus, would not make good soldiers. Seeing the pain from all the young lovers, a bishop named Valentine would meet them in a secret place where he would then unite them in the sacrament of matrimony.

When the emperor learned about Valentine’s actions, Valentine was put in jail. While he was in jail, he came in contact with a man by the name of Asterius who had asked Valentine if he could cure his blind daughter. Miraculously, he did, and signed, “From Your Valentine,” which has turned into a very popular and used phrase today. Unfortunately, Valentine was executed on Feb. 24, 270.

Ever since his harmless actions, he has been known as a patron saint. Furthermore, hand written greetings full of affection were given out on Feb. 14.

One of the earliest Valentine’s Day cards was sent out by Charles, duke of Orleans, to his wife in 1415.

The first Valentine Day card made history and is currently posted in the British Museum.

Valentine’s Day cards are sold every year and have become extremely popular. “This holiday brings not only love and affection, but joy and happiness as well to those you care about,” senior Anthipe Paxinos said. The bliss of Valentine’s Day grows greater each year. “Valentine’s Day only comes once a year, so make it worth while,” senior Vanessa Madrigal said.

Valentine’s day objects of affection

1. Go with the basics. There is nothing like getting flowers for that special someone. Letting a guy flowers might be a little awkward, so try a not so creative box of chocolates or a stuffed animal.
2. Make a mix CD. Let affection be spread through corny love songs. This inexpensive gift is personal and sweet.
3. Cook something. Nothing says I care like a cupcake or a delightful delicacy covered with hearts.
4. Use words to express emotions. We’re not all poets, but even the cheesiest of rhymes create smiles, not to mention laughs.

“Thoroughly Modern Millie” - Feb. 13-16

Second Marking Period Report Cards issued - Feb. 15

NO SCHOOL : Feb. 18, March 17-21 ; EARLY DISMISSAL : Feb. 27

Gym Night - Feb. 29 & March 1

SAT Reasoning Test: March 1

F.B.L.A. State Finalists - Mike DeAngelis, Ryan Poserina, Nick Ostash, Ryan Adams, Kenny Hassinger and Alex Chae

Rotary Students of the Month:
Feasterville: January - Steve Jiwanmall, February - Serge Smolin
Langhorne: January - Alison Flesher

BCIT Students of the Month
January: Rob Christofaro and Ashley Woodmender

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GUYS' CUTS & COLOR

Stuck In the Middle

This page of the Playwickian will appear in upcoming issues, showcasing the writing of middle school students across the Neshaminy district. This month we welcome work from Maple Point Middle School.

Maple Point takes strides toward daily healthier habits

By Daniel Coleman
Grade 9

Childhood obesity is higher than ever before. The number of obese children has tripled since the 1980’s. In fact, over nine million children six to 19 are overweight or obese. Becoming obese even at age twenty removes 20 years from someone’s life, and the younger one becomes obese, the more years removed.

So why are teenagers so fat? Let’s just say, America’s schools are not helping the situation.

Cafeteria food. With the reputation of being just plain unhealthy, Maple Point

Middle School offers three common choices. The first is the day’s special. Ranging from the unhealthy to the even unhealthier, this option would not be recommended by most dieticians.

The second choice is a tray of french fries, which is obviously far from nutritious. The third option, which would appear healthy, is actually just the opposite. A bagel served with cream cheese has 1,173 calories, leaving just 837 for breakfast and dinner under the average diet.

In addition, 22 students out of a surveyed 40 do not even bother eating breakfast. “I don’t have time in the morning,” Ashley Kreyskop, 14, said, an excuse

which is heard countless times.

At least exercise is incorporated into the school schedule. Most Maple Point students have a fifty minute gym class two to three days a week. However, many ninth grade students take biology, and the accompanying biology lab counts takes the place of one gym class, leaving students with sometimes only one gym class a week.

Students are also allowed outside the cafeteria during lunch for extra stimulation. Although this time is valuable exercise, this privilege is taken away if as a punishment for unacceptable behavior.

However, Maple Point is trying to improve its statistics. Among the changes made to improve student’s health are the launch of the fresh fruit and vegetable program, the Jan. 15 opening of the salad bar, and extracurricular exercise clubs, such as the walking club. Maple Point may become the healthy haven people want it to be!

Salad bar, healthy alternative to student lunches

By Lara Salmon
Grade 9

Nutrition, energy, and healthy food choices are something not easily found in average middle schools, but Maple Point has recently extended their menu to add a salad bar for its students. The idea was first developed by five seventh grade boys: Ryan Jacobs, Alvaro Hurtado, Zack Miller, Ryan Wilhere and Jake Roberts.

“On the announcements, they always talked about being athletic and eating healthy,” Miller said. With the help of Kelly Macauley, a family consumer science teacher who also helped start the school’s fruit and vegetable program, they did just that. The boys gathered 412 signatures on a petition and thus the salad bar was born.

Jill Erb, a lunch aid at the Maple Point salad bar, thought the idea was excellent. “The kids love it, and it teaches them to eat healthy,” she said.

The fresh and nutritious food gives the kids all the energy they need. On the first day of sales, 245 salads were sold, and the number and the lines grew every day. On the fourth day, the salad bar was extended to two lines to help the lines go faster and to allow more students to get a salad without waiting too long.

Food Service Director Marie Wallace oversees meals prepared for fourteen schools. She manages the bid process for food, the menus, supplies, nutritional guidelines, and much more. “I did like the idea of a salad bar since it provides a nutritious meal for the students,” Wallace said. She also talks about planning to open a new salad bar in Neshaminy Middle School, hoping for another good reaction from the student buyers.

Varell gives proof for inspiration

By Ashka Patel
Grade 9

What do math, chess, and jokes have in common? Mr. Varell does all three of them. He has been teaching geometry to ninth grade for several years, he is the chess club coach at Maple Point, and he tells the funniest jokes.

Was he always good at math? He was always good at math, and he was even a math geek when he was younger. Mr. Varell had the same math teacher in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades who inspired him to be a math teacher too. This teacher, Mr. Bolinios, was funny and made Mr. Varell realize how much fun one could get out of teaching.

Varell grew up in Upper Bucks County, not too far from where his is now. He got his first car at age 17; it was a hand-me-down Datson B210 hatchback which had already been in four accidents and let off blue smoke whenever it was driven.

The first job he had was landscaping which he worked at for six years. Mostly he mowed lawns. Now that he is a teacher he loves his job. What does he love about it the most?

Peek in his room during lunch, and it is filled with students working on math problems and talking about school. It is no surprise that when asked if he likes teaching, Mr. Varell says, “Yeah, love it!” What is his favorite thing about geometry? The answer is obvious: proofs!

Outside of school, Mr. Varell has a cute cat named Scampers. He loves coffee with cream and sugar, his favorite color is green, and his favorite snack is Doritos. His spare time is filled with watching action movies, especially “Lord of the Rings,” watching the news on television, and playing Monopoly because he loves “buying and selling and building houses; plus I love free parking.”

There is a wonderful way to get to know Mr. Varell better: join his chess club! He is always looking for new players.

Teen social network remains controversial

By Katey Smythe
Grade 9

Ask almost any group of Maple Point students how they meet people, and many of them will mention Myspace. Myspace is an online social network used to communicate with friends and family. It is currently the most visited site on the Internet, but parents worry about its dangers. However, Myspace can be a safe way to interact and meet people.

Many adults have negative views about websites such as Myspace because they have never had the opportunity to interact with friends that way. New things scare people. For example, people do not blame car accidents on technological advances in the automobiles; it is the people themselves who cause the accidents due to carelessness.

Myspace can be looked at in the same way. . There are many settings on Myspace that allow one to have privacy, such as requiring people to enter a last name to request a friend, making private accounts, and hiding one’s pictures. If children want to rebel against their parents, they will do so with or without Myspace.

“Younger teens shouldn’t be on networking sites such as these but they are. The government is needed to step in and stop online predators from causing trouble among teenagers such as meeting them and eventually leading to much more serious issues,” Sean Evans, 23, of New Jersey said.

Sexual predators roam the internet, but they also roam the streets. Because they can get into teenager’s houses through the internet, parents must educate their children on situations such as these.

The government should be involved, but it is up to users to use the safety settings available.

Students participate in FBLA Conference

On Jan. 10, 2008, twelve students from the Future Business Leaders of America chapter at Maple Point Middle School participated in a Regional Conference that was attended by over 500 other students in Bucks County at Bucks County Community College.

The following students who received awards are now eligible to represent MPMS at the State Leadership conference, which will take place with 4,000 other eligible students who have also qualified in the state of Pennsylvania.

The FLBA State Leadership conference will take place in Hershey, Pa. from March 30 through April 1st.

The students eligible to compete at the state level from Maple Point Middle School include ninth graders:

Kyle George - 1st place FBLA Principle and Procedures

Tom Katelhon - 3rd place Introduction to Technology Concepts

Brittany Jones - 3rd place Introduction to Business Communications

Ashna Patel - 4th place FBLA Principle and Procedures

Happenings at Maple Point

Feb. 18 - School closed

Feb. 22 - Washington’s Birthday all day event; dress rehearsal for musical

Feb. 29 - All day County Music Festival

March 3 - PTO meeting

March 5 through 8 - The musical ‘The Music Man’ begins 7 PM

March 17 - Spring Recess begins

March 30 through April 1 - FBLA State Leadership conference

Maple Point Middle School Contributors

Daniel Coleman	Ashka Patel
Lara Salmon	Katey Smythe
Adviser: Diane Turek-Gever	

HOPE THIS HEART IS SIGNED, SIN

Oh Gregggy,
Your work ethic at practice is very motivating and inspiring.
– Da Franchise

Steve G-1Mall-
Here is your very first love line; hope you like it.
–Amanda K.

Roses are red, violets are blue, it’s been three years and I still love you!
Lynn Roberts

To: Chriss Katona
Happy Valentine’s Day loser!
Haha... I love you!
Love, Kate McElhare

Waddle,
You survived dental floss!! We definitely need to go to Dunkin Donuts soon, haha.
Erica Grey

Jimmy you’re amazing! PiDiddle!!!!
-Steph Waddle

Laura,
Why do you hide from me? I like your dancing skills.
Love, Danny C.

Rob Sinot,
I love you more than I love wrestling.
Love, your partner, Eric Edger.

Dear Claudio,
I love you so much! Thanks for everything you’ve done.
Love, Ambelina

Cara Gadzinski, I love you!

Jose, you dance super duper!
From, Val

Skip: After work you stink. You can’t tell red from pink. But I like you anyway.
Love, Val

Dear Kate-O,
I planned a date, I’m making tacos, So don’t be late!

Erin Knight,
Your hair is light, I sit to your right.
Love, Your Secret Admirer

Susan,
This is late but, HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY 18th BIRTHDAY BIRTHDAY BIRTHDAY!
Love, Joan

Dear Laura,
You are the cheese to my macaroni.
Love, Bill

Lady ‘Skins track,
You girls are the best. Whoever thought 12 400’s could be fun?

Matt Coulter is my husband! Ily!!

Roses are red, Violets are blue, All my base, Are belong to you
-Mufyns R. Yummi

Lindsay Lipsky, I love you soo much!
Brooklyn,
Thanks for making my senior year

so special!
Love, Brett
Soda machine,
I miss you by Blink 182, Grundy’s Ice Skating rink, 12/24/04
I love you
Love, Your Strawberry

Love lines are the number one cause of happiness.
-Joe Lally

NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?
NATHAN KEATING, WILL YOU MARRY ME?

Dear Greg Gough,
There is nothing better than having a nice long run with you.

I love you, Miss Dorothy!
–Ching Ho

Dear Greg,
Do you drink a lot of Snapple? Because you look like you’re made from the best stuff on earth.
-Mike Rotch
Alyssa & Michelle,
Thanks for the stories in Psych & English!
–Christine

Sara,
Thank you for making these past few months incredible. I LOVE YOU!
Dan

Amy S. + Page G. foreverrrrr
P.S. Steph is great.

Brett,
Morning rides, English class, locker chats, it’s all a blast! Team practice, of course there’s meets. You’re so much fun and oh so sweet!
Love, Brooke

To all my tennis girls:
Share the love; give it to your opponent
-Coach Bech

I love you, Crystal Morton. 4ever love, gabbi.
P.S. Brandon you’re my pancake<3

I love you Gangsta-M. You’re soooooo cute.
Love, John M Leachko

Katie Mac! I love you girl. We’ve been through so much. We’ll always be bffs!

I love Kelsey Lerman for giving me this dollar!!
Happy Valentine’s Day!

I carpet racecar almost never KitKat.

Luv u Bud!
Greg Gough—when we stretch for track, you love me the best. ~The One~

Courtney Curran, you’re such a great friend!
Love you. Happy Valentine’s Day!

To my six! Tay-bay, Erica B, Da-La, Trishka and Manders. I LOVE YOU ALL. LOVE ASIAN

Slick Willy,
Let’s cuddle.
Love Toots

Greg Gough,
My love for you burns like the bright, not intensity of a 1,000 suns.

Jose Garcia, I love you!!
P.S. You haven’t let me play your Nintendo Wii yet!

Mr. Geddes
I cannot substitute my love for you, it can only multiply.
Your admirer

Badger, BSF! Luv ya and our fun Science/English times. Rock out!!

Amy,
I’ve loved you for over two years and I don’t plan on stopping.
Page

Laura,
Can I come over Saturday night to practice my tuba?
Always, D. Castle

Peanut butter
I love you. Please don’t stick to my face anytime soon. Jelly, check your hood.

Whispered from behind a scarf, “Don’t lose hope now, Green Eyes. I still love you.”

Bamby is the bomb dot come! Skowls forever...skool!

Kelsey Kloiber,
Hope you have a good day, baby. I love you.

I LOVE LAMP! –Tristan Emig

ST,
Roses are red, Violets are blue, You turn lights on, I like you!
I worship the ground you walk on.

Happy Birthday Soozie!
<3, Steph Cat

Dear Ted,
I love talking to you online and watching you run.
Be mine, Kelly Dean

Stefania and Matti are soooo cool!
<3, Seth

Arica is a sexii beast! You should all bow down to her!
Love, Duck!

Always shimmy and shake. I love Amber.

ST,
Can’t you see, You’re the one for me.

To my lunch table-I love that there’s only

five of us. SENIORS ’08!
Steph,
Hey look! I’m in two states at once!
Haha!
Love, Jimmy.

Dear Sarah Carcia,
I love to hear your laugh and look into your eyes.
-Pete Trafalski (AKA Travis Rhoads)

Dear Tim Pavluk,
Through thick and thin you were there, just not for me.
<3 always, Meghan

Tim P. I’m sorry for all the past times. Please call me!!
Love, Girl in A-hall.

Dear Steph Waddle,
You are so amazing! I love you to death. Happy Valentines Day!

Brewer,
Thank you for protecting me! Love, The Universe

Pumpkiin! I love you! When you smile, I smile. When you laugh, I laugh. When you cry, I cry.

We can dance if you want to, We can leave your friends behind, And if your friends don’t and no they don’t dance, Then they ain’t no friends of mine...

Mike,
Next year the halls of NHS will be very quiet without you. I’ll miss you!
–Your favorite hobbit.

To my eighth period AP Psych Class:
So sad we broke up...can we go back out now? Circle YES or NO
–Love, E²

Mrs. Hammon,
You’re the cytoplasm to my eukaryotic cell.
Love, The A Team!

To My Beloved sixth period AP Psych Class:
We are still going out! Thanks for being so fantastic!
Love always- E²

Devon,
I wanted to thank you for giving me the best year of my life, I love you!

Hope-you know how-much I truly love you even if I’m too cheap to show it.

Drew,
I’ve loved you since the day we met in PE class two years ago.

Dear Chelsea Kail,
Words can’t describe how much I love Nick Jr.

Chelsea D,
My adorable gal, I love you more than words can tell. Love, Matt

Chel (Millie!), Happy birthday, love! Have the time of your life this week!
Love, M²

I love you more than I love cake.
Love, Your Life Partner.

Jon Baker,
You can bake me a cake any day of



the week.
–Bruce

To- Chips Ahoy!
I like you.
From- Cookie Monster

If you are reading this, you should prob-
ably find something constructive to do with
your time. I hope in time you realize how
foolish you’ve been. From- Alex DeMeo

I love you Teege!
-Chloe

Beth, I love you!
-Chloe

Every second from seventh grade to now
was so amazing.
Love you always, Big Bird

Indoor Track Girls,
You are the best! Really! I can’t
imagine my day without your company and
laughs. I love you guys. Stay strong, stay
focused, stay positive always!
-Mom

I hope you can enjoy this as much as those
cupcakes. I love you Matti!

Bree Hires,
You are the most amazing girl in
the world. I love you.

I wolf purple cat Hero electric retreat orion
in never love you, Tim.

Jenna,
I’ve wanted to say I like you for-
ever but I can’t.
<3, Your secret admirer.

Dana-Poo,
I just met you this year, but it feels
like forever.
<3, Your secret admirer.

Becca,
I love staring at the back of your
head during math class.
Love, Leah

Dear Chris,
Not “too bad.” Wish I thought of
you sooner.
Love, Brittani

Kristin-
My love is ironic. You get it?
-Brittani

Tank Gang-
Just keep swimming, swimming,
swimming...
-Betta

Darina-
Psssst.
-Achoo!

Chris-
Here are two love lines to make up
for last year.
Love, Brittani

From Hannah Montana to mastication to
Nick Lachey, you guys make my day.
Your favorite teacher
Becca, Jamie, Vanessa...and Mike (aka
“Smart Kids”),
No matter where we end up in life,
you’ll always have a place in my heart.
Thanks for your constant love and support.

I look forward to the rest of our future en-
deavors.
Your quiet gangsta, Steve

To the girls’ track team: Just so you know,
I’m single.
Love, Ethan

Derek D.,
You drive me insane, you frustrate
me, and you unconsciously mock me. But
for some unknown reason, I can’t get you
out of my head...
From, You-Know-Who

Amber and Court,
I love you guys. BFF’s!!!
FALEGLEG... haha.
Love, Nicole-Natsumi

Nick,
Happy Valentine’s Day baby! I love
you forever and always.
Love, Ashley

Greenberg,
Happy Valentine’s Day. You were
my favorite high school teacher.
Love, Your Student Nicole

Dear Val,
Roses are Red...Violets are
blue...yeah I can’t rhyme that well. Happy
Valentine’s Day!

Joe,
I love you so much! Happy
Valentine’s Day!
Love, Alyssa

Dan,
I love you so much! You mean the
world to me.
Love, Sara

Nicole,
You’re beautiful. Happy Valentine’s
Day!
Love, Anthony

Dave,
Happy Valentine’s Day. I am so
incredibly lucky to have you in my life. I
love you even more than PB&J!

I love you Pookie! Always and Forever.

You are dead sexy!
Love, Anonymous

Mike,
You’ve been my best friend for-
ever, I love you so much!

LBOO- You know I want to get close to
you. Stop running away. 123

I AIN’T GOT NO FEETS!

Greg Gough
You look so hot in your new RSX. Can I
ride with you?
Love, Tully

Greg Gough
Thanks for taking me to the dance
and your amazing work ethic.
Meg

Lady Skins track team,
Great job this season! Love you
girls!
<3, Steph Cat

KELSEY RUFFING-
YOU’RE MY FAVORITE.

ONE LOVE, DERBEAR

Bridget!
You’re the best Valentine ever!
Haha!

Nellie!
I love your uggulators! They’re
awesome! Happy Valentine’s Day!
Love ya– Lindsay

Basically, without you where would I be?
ATFWBTF.
Love, Cookie Monster

Other men have said they have seen An-
gels,
I have seen thee,
And thou art Enough,
I love you, Jani.

To all my math classes-
Have a wonderful Valentine’s Day!
You’re the best!!
Mrs. Loven

Dear Christopher Heinze,
I miss the days when we were little.
Happy Valentine’s Day!

Dear Robert Tidman,
Once there was a man, not just any
man, though. Happy Valentine’s Day.

Dear Thomas Gathercole,
You give me a toothache. Your
bright smile and pinchable cheeks give me
a reason to get up in the morning!

Dear Justin Mani,
Your studliness and manliness has
captured my heart forever. They should
call you Justin Manly.

James Nieves,
Your comical presence makes my
heart skip a beat.

Christine-
I love hearing stories about your
Onefooters. Kbye. P.S. 1,2,3

My friends in 10 words: Awesome, Brilliant,
Incredible, Fantastic, Amazing, Ridiculous,
Exciting, Geek-chic, Fun.

MJZ-
You’re everywhere to me, and
when I catch my breath it’s you I breathe,
you’re everything I know that makes me
believe I’m not alone.
<3, BRS

Dear J.G.B.,
You are truly Angels without wings,
and I have no clue who I’d be without you.
Be my valentine?
Love, Ace

P.S. I love you.

To all: Love stinks. Get over it.

I love you for you,
I love your flaws,
Your eyes so blue.
You make my heart pause.
-I.S.

Bill Offenbeck,
You’re incredibly hot. I’m in two
of your classes. Come find me.
SP

Hey Steph,
Sup? Way to ditch me on Satur-

da. .
Love you, Oren

PONK-
Where do Native American phos-
phates line? In ATP!
Love, PONH

Nick,
I’ve only thought about you once
since you asked me out...I just never
stopped.
Love, Jaki

Happy Birthday Nikki Lynn! May a multitu-
dinous amount of cooties attack you.
<3, Jaki

Chris,
You still give me that Christmas
feeling. I love you.
-Maria

My group of friends,
Good times! So glad we’re all
friends! I love you
-Maria

Happy Valentine’s Day Martina. I enjoy
spending time with you.
Love, Timmy

Becca,
I’m so glad that things turned out
the way that they did.
-Mike

Pooker!
Hey baby love. The past eight
months have been the greatest. You com-
plete me. Voop voop.
Love, Kelsbug

To the Playwickian staff,
This year has been great working
with you all. Keep up the great work!
-Stefania

Francesca,
You know you love me. Lol.

Daddy,
You’re #1! I love you! Happy
Valentine’s Day!
Love, Stefania (Your fa-
vorite daughter)

Mommy,
Thanks for putting up with me and
my crazy schedule this year. I appreciate it!
You’re the best! I love you!
Love, Stefania

Teddy,
Even though you’re injured, you
still run through my mind all day baby. <3

Matt-
The wonderful things about you are
countless. You continue to light up my life
everytime I’m with you. You are irreplace-
able. I love you.
Love, Chelsea

Regina,
I wish I had high school outfits as
cool as yours.

Mom: I love you up to the moon and back,
Always.
~Matti

Thomas and Max,
I love you both so much!
Happy <3 Day cuties.
~Mattison

These WORDS are my OWN,
From my HEARTFLOW

-Natasha Boedingfeld

Pumpkin,
You've made my heart complete. I
love you and ONLY you.
Always & Forever, Pookie

Sarah Klimowicz,
I love you so much. You amaze me!
Love, Your Secret Admirer

Redskins Swimming,
Thanks for making my last year the
best yet!
Love you guys! Kasey

My Love,
I'll be there 'til the stars don't shine,
'til the heavens burst, and the words don't
rhyme.
-Your Love

ChrissChriss,
Love you to pieces!
-Phil

Amanda,
Thank you for always being there
for me no matter what.

Stas Zharko,
You have beautiful eyes.
Love, Your Secret Admirer

Rachel,
You are the hot sauce of my taco.

Thanks for helping me with my homework.
-Rachel

Cardine,
You're the cheese in my Max
Cheese Sticks.
Jen

Hey Babe,
Happy Valentine's Day and six
months! These were the best six months
ever. I love you a lot a lot always and for-
ever.
Love, Vicky

Ali Spahr,
You're not such a nosebleed after
all. In fact, you razz my berries.

TJ,
Happy Valentine's day. You mean
the world to me. I love you.
Love, Maggie

Dear Greg,
Thanks for taking me to the dance.
-Meg Lutz

To the JV Circle:
Thanks for such a fun year. Can't
wait for next year.

Kerri Rose,
Happy Valentines Day girl! I love
you and can't wait 'til Prom!
Love, Jess G.

I love my friends: Jess, Hanners, Arica, Lex
and everyone else I forgot.
<3, Kerri Rose

To my lunchtable,
We have the most awkward, hilari-
ous conversations. I'm so glad I know you
girls. Happy Valentine's day!
Love always, Katy

Steph,
Ay mamii can I get ur number??

<3, Kerri Rose
KELLY WHITEY,
HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!
LOVE YOU! LOL!
LANCEY

Freddie~
Even through the ups and downs,
or everything in between, you make me
smile. <3
xo, Emily

Meg Lutz,
Wish I ran as fast as you. At least I
can dance.
Greg

Dear Scott Solomon,
I find you deeply attractive. Happy
Valentine's Day.
Love, Your Secret Admirer

Dear Matti,
Too bad I quit track and I won't
get to see you everyday during the spring.
-Steve

To my lovely Stefania,
You razz my berries.

I love Lisa! I love Lisa!

Dear Maggie,
I am so lucky to have you. I would
be lost without you.
Love, TJ

Brooke,
the last two months have been won-
derful. I love spending time with you and
seeing you smile. Happy Valentine's Day!
Love, Brett

Dear A.P. Gov. Class,
AP Gov FTW
From, Mikaesu

Dear John Burns,
Jay Beeeceeeeee!
From, Mikaesu

Erin and Alex,
Shake that bear
Mister Dee

I love Maria! I love Maria! I love Maria!

Stefania,
I love you!!

Jennifer Wennifer,
Tyra says you're "fierce"

Bruce,
Why don't you go by BJ anymore?
Love, Neshaminy

I'm buying this so Matti stops freaking out.
Love you Fats...

Brittani-snookums,
I HERD YOU LIEK MUDKIPS! I
LIEK THEM TOO! LET'S BE LOVERS!
LOVE KRISTEN

Dear the love of my life, Liz,
Your big brown eyes enrapture me
everytime I look into them and your soft
hands make me tingle with every touch. I
am truly, madly & deeply in love with you.
<3 S.O.S.

Emma Fradkin,
I still want to see you crank that!
<3, Stefania

Further Apart

By Kelly Dougherty

Look at that arm.
It confonts my sister, awkwardly.
She, wedging herself in that snug spot
between my mother's bend in elbow
that I know so well.

I look on with Lucifer's eyes,
wanting to conquer Earth, like him,
or, at least, her right arm, too.
These times are slowly forgotten,
and lives are gradually transformed.

The white and pink polka dot shirt melts
into my sister as my unsecured grip
permits my fuzzy doll to slip.

Slowly as the years pass,
breath fills the doll like floods on land.
The doll suddenly uncovers
its way back into the picture,
pushing me further apart from
my mother's embrace.

Expressions

Current Events

By Gabby Dando

Temperature is immune,
Highly sophisticated, custom-tailored...to an open mind.
So adamant about an aggressive style –
It's nothing in comparison to
The unique beans of homeless people
And the terrorist attacks,
Complex undertakings that lurk in the shadows,
Braving the elements with a wave of emotion
From the country faces
That we cannot begin to imagine
Are a far-flung bunch –
That could deter the forecast for the future.

Seeking True Meaning

by Nicole Nocito

A religious body seeks to impose an ecclesiastical source.
It roams across its many surfaces.
Fencing them in to protect themselves from unrelenting attacks.
What is most laughable,
Is the gritty and soulful audacity of hope,
Along with the willful and passionate excess of experience,
Ripping through the salty, late-morning air,
Combined with my internal state of mind --
A perfect marriage of the senses.

Expressions is an organization that seeks the creative prose, poetry, art,
and photography of Neshaminy's students.

Throughout the school year, work may be submitted at
Expressions@gmail.com.
It may also be handed in to the Playwickian Office in Room G-204,
to Dennis Howie in Room G-5, or to any Expressions editor.

Select works of writing and art may be chosen to be published in the
Playwickian, issued monthly, or the Expressions literary magazine,
which will be published in the spring.

So, put on your creative caps and submit your work to Expressions.

Seriously. DO IT.

‘Cloverfield’ stuns, leaves Godzilla green with envy

movie Review

The recently-released monster movie leaves some raving, some nauseous, and some a bit of both.

By Michael Zilberman
Staff Writer

After months of anticipation, endless questions from the public and perplexing trailers, “Cloverfield” finally made it to theaters on Jan. 18. And despite most movies’ tendencies to fall short of their hype, this final product was far from disappointing.

To say that “Cloverfield” is one of the greatest modern monster movies ever made might not mean much (considering that monster movies are so rare nowadays anyway) but to call it one of the most immersive and interesting thrillers in recent years will. “Cloverfield” is a stunningly original masterpiece of a monster movie—one that manages to focus more on the characters themselves than the monster without skimping on the special effects.

The effects in “Cloverfield” are absolutely glorious. The creature design is effectively cringe-worthy, and the movie always finds new ways of frightening the viewer even when it seems to have no more tricks up its sleeve. One of the biggest prob-



Smoke and explosions don't lie; something's rotten in the city of New York.
Photo/Courtesy of nymag.com

lems with movies like this is typically that they run out of steam before the credits—this one just keeps on going.

For all of the three people unfamiliar with “Cloverfield,” the basic plot revolves around a man who is given a surprise going-away party right before his big move to Japan. This party scene is decently long, but gives the viewer a fantastic sense of who the characters are before throwing them into

the heat of the action.

Then a monster attacks New York City, and the movie follows its characters as they travel through the danger zone in search of the main character’s girlfriend. This is when the movie goes from good to fantastic—the camera shakes violently as people run through the streets with buildings exploding left and right, soldiers shooting in unseen directions and military tanks firing rockets that explode in fiery, blazing light. Even when the action settles, the dust doesn’t. The wreckage-filled streets serve as a frightening reminder to the viewer of what’s to come as the characters move deeper into the city and closer to the monster itself.

To stifle the fears of those who blame PG-13 horror movies for being too tame, this movie is a major exception. The chaos that ensues within the crumbling me-

tropolis of New York City leaves the viewer so immersed in the movie that one can only pray that he or she does not have to go to the bathroom.

The actors do a tremendous job of creating immersion in the film as well. These are not famous, recognizable actors (not before this movie, anyway), but they manage to do a fantastic job, and never does the chaos seem forced or anything but horrifically believable.

If there’s anything that can be said against “Cloverfield,” it’s that the movie itself brings up a few more questions than it answers. The reason many people are going to see “Cloverfield” is the sheer mystery behind it—what is the monster? Where did it come from? Not all of these questions are answered, but the movie comes to a satisfactory conclusion that is chilling, despite only giving hints as to the answer to some of the movie’s questions.

The filmmakers placed some of these hints into the mix in some very subtle ways, which is a compliment rather than a criticism. An audio clip after the credits reveals quite an interesting message when reversed (as the dozens of related YouTube videos show), and as the movie comes to a close, the viewers should keep their eyes peeled for a little surprise that sneaks in near the top right corner of the screen.

Movie-lovers all over the world were terrified that “Cloverfield” would be nothing but hype, but rest assured—this movie is brilliant. Due to its perplexing nature, it’s not for everybody, and is destined to become a cult classic eventually.

So while the shaky camera work could easily lead to headaches and motion sickness, Godzilla is undoubtedly very, very jealous.

Turkey Rating (out of 5):



‘4 Months’ explores tragedy of social corruption



“4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days” explores the controversial issue of abortion and one young woman’s way of dealing with it.

By Amanda Kuehnle
News Editor

With the Palme d’Or Award from the 2007 Cannes Film Festival, the Best Foreign Language Film award from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association (LAFCA) and several other wins, “4 months, 3 weeks and 2 days” faces seven more nominations knocking on its humble Romanian door.

The Romanian film, with English subtitles, centers around a college-age woman, who at the brink of university life, resents the totalitarian views of her ‘80’s Romanian government. When Otilia, played by Anamaria Marinca, finds out she is pregnant she sets out to pursue an illegal abortion; punishable by five to ten years in prison.

Seeking help from her roommate Gabita (Laura Vasiliu), the two roommates contact the infamous abortionist Mr. Bebe to help them carry out the illegal act. Mr. Bebe, who is portrayed by Vlad Ivanov, was awarded the Best Supporting Actor award by the LAFCA for his portrayal of the secretive and thrilling character earlier this year.



Otilia struggles in a country where abortion is punishable by 5-10 years in prison.
Photo/Courtesy of movies.nytimes.com

Despite its title, the film only takes place within a day’s time in Romania, and the director does an amazing job of portraying the secretive lives of those going behind the back of their communist regime, and the horrors that often resulted.

As J. Hoberman noted in The Village Voice, “Abortion was made illegal in Romania in 1966; by the time Ceausescu was overthrown 23 years later, an estimated half-million women had died as a result of botched illegal abortions. The nation’s overflowing orphanages were notorious for their subhuman conditions.”

Mungiu doesn’t preach about his pro-life or pro-choice stances, but he does lay out the horrifying details with unwavering honesty. Mungiu expresses his awareness that in modern Romania, abortion is a common form of contraception and that being pro-choice doesn’t make him an advocate of the easy fix that abortion represents.

Usually language barriers have a way of separating people, and this film is no different. Not only are people dividing over the themes that the film represents, but many feel distant from it because of its foreign elements.

In America we often only choose to listen to things we recognize and can easily understand. The issues the movie address won’t hurt us. In fact, it’s good to hear different kinds of views from different cultures, instead of being so stubborn.

In the end, Mungiu creates a film to be recognized for centuries to come. He rips apart the molds by which Hollywood creates movies by and has no problem in offending anyone. Mungiu directs more than just a film; it is purely art.



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CW puts new spin on old favorite ‘One Tree Hill’

Four years after the characters graduate high school, their paths bring them back to their home town and back together.

By Jenna Overton
Editorials Editor

In every teen-drama show, creators are inevitably faced with the same dilemma: what to do with the characters once they finish high school. It would be extremely unrealistic for all of them to go to the same college, and keeping everyone at home doesn't appear to be an option that would yield high ratings either. The writers and producers of "One Tree Hill," which premiered on Jan. 2, completely dodged this particular bullet by deciding to flash-forward the gang four years into the future and having them begin the fifth season as 21-year-olds.

New problems face the kids of this CWTV-hit and the subject matter of each episode displays a significant increase in maturity. Instead of prom dates, scholarships or graduation, this group of young adults is now more interested in career changes, engagements and nanny services.

"It's basically [that] all the rules have changed," executive producer Joe Davola said on the CW website. "Our kids' looks have changed... we brought new characters in to sort of work within the fabric of the show."

The original actors and actresses may always rule the roost of the show's fictional North Carolina town, but a handful of new faces are definitely giving them a run for their money. A few include Michaela McManus as Lindsey, Lucas' new editor and serious girlfriend, and Kevin Federline as a rude and oppressive band leader. Real-life music star Kate Voegele also enters the world of "One Tree Hill" as the shy, but very talented Mia.

The characters' obvious chemistry on the show is a definite reason for its success. Every person seems to possess a divine sense of respect for his or her fellow entertainers, whether acting alongside them or cheering them on from the sideline. This

is apparent as Sophia Bush, who plays Brooke Davis on the show, spills about the cast's new superstar, Voegele.

"You look at her [Mia] and she just has this edge and this new glow to her as a person that makes you gravitate toward her, but she gets on camera and starts singing and you could just fall over; you love her immediately," Bush said on CWTV.com.

Though they may certainly create a bit of controversy, the new characters of "One Tree Hill" do not represent the only possibilities that have opened up as a result of the show's new spin. Flashbacks occupy entire episodes as fans slowly piece together the events that brought the Tree Hill kids to where they are today.

"It's really great that we get to do a practically a brand new show with characters that everybody cares about," Hilarie Burton, who plays Peyton Sawyer, told TV Guide. "I think the big part of our flash-forward is that we could reference stuff that's happened and go back...I think it's gonna be a really cool element of the show that we have four years to play with and do whatever we want."

Clearly, Burton is not the only one impressed with this new direction and its opportunities. Whether one loves to hate or hates to love "One Tree Hill," the show's new twist, storyline and characters undoubtedly make for an entertaining night for fans of all ages.

Ratings are "growing week-to-week" according to the CW as audiences cancel their plans and make a new date for Tuesday nights at 9 p.m. with the stars of Tree Hill, North Carolina.



Tree Hill's young adults are back for unravelling flashback twists.
Photo/Courtesy of tvliveshows.com

Barred from Grammys, Winehouse settles for rehab

Amy Winehouse, caught abusing drugs on the internet, has checked into rehab and will not attend the music awards ceremony.

By Nicole Onisick
Staff Writer

They tried to make her go to rehab and she said "No, no, no." Now she's up for six Grammys and she can't "Go, go go." With a beehive on her head and drugs in her

pocket, Amy Winehouse has us in an even more confused state of mind than before.

The soul/R&B artist gained much respect, and success with her first album, "Back to Black," released on Dec. 16, 2006, and has topped charts for weeks. With her doo-wop era beats and smooth early '60's voice, Winehouse seemed to be a fresh start for the drowning music industry. That is, until, her newly increased salary began to sponsor her new drug addictions.

Should we be surprised that with a beehive on her head, she was never in a sane state of mind? Her reckless and often

tipsy behavior was ignored for much too long. She let us all know by roaming her native streets of England at around 5 a.m. in nothing but her brassiere and jeans.

Could Winehouse be the Britney Spears of England? Much like Spears, it all went downhill for Winehouse when she ran down the isle with husband Blake Fielder-Civil.

We could blame Fielder-Civil for Winehouse's drug addictions, but she clearly had to be on serious medication when she said yes to Fielder-Civil's marriage proposal. The sunshine was never shining on this spotlight craving relationship. Months into the duo's marriage, the pair found themselves in a bloody dispute. The couple reportedly went into what some may consider a boxing match, after Fielder-Civil caught his bride attempting some drug-involved misbehavior.

The deluded pair may have each lost more blood from each other than they did getting their classy tattoos of each other's names.

Winehouse's addiction has been no secret. While she never confessed it, was extremely relevant in her behavior. There was no proof until recently, when a video was leaked onto the web showing Winehouse inhaling. She was also heard mumbling: "If I was that cat, I'd leave on my own accord. I'd call a cab. It ain't right.



With a hit called "rehab," we should have seen this coming.
Photo/Courtesy of myspace.com/amywinehouse

This ain't Toys R Us. They took my cat." There it is ladies and gents, words of wisdom from Winehouse herself.

Not only is her hubby violently trying to stop Winehouse's drug addiction, her mother Janis Winehouse also had a few effective words for her eccentric daughter.

"I've already come to terms with her dead. I've steeled myself to ask her what ground she wants to be buried in, which cemetery. Because the drugs will get her if she stays on this road," Winehouse's mother said to the British newspaper, the Sunday Mirror.

Could vicious words from her own mother, and a few slaps in the face from her groom be the solution for Winehouse's addictive behavior to come to an end? It just might be a proactive solution. The beehive-gone-blonde train wreck was spotted heading to rehab on Jan. 24, with her father close behind.

With her never-ending-roller-coaster life, Winehouse did manage another album, "Frank," released in 2007. The album was originally seen in the U.K. in 2003, and was only released in the U.S. after the success of Winehouse's first album. She questions her own antics in her song "Amy, Amy, Amy," where she sings, "Where's my moral parallel?"

Though Winehouse accepted five little gold men Sunday, Feb. 11 via satellite, there was much initial doubt as to whether or not she would attend in any way. According to perezhilton.com, Papa Winehouse wasn't too keen on the idea. "I'm not sure the Grammys are going to happen. I don't want her to go - I think it might be a bit too soon for her. She's not well - that's why she's in rehab. But she's doing OK. She is getting good treatment," Mitch Winehouse said.

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Well-rounded student achieves art college dream



Senior artist Kasey Campbell plans on attending Savannah College of Art and Design after graduation.

By Stephanie Catrambone
News Editor

Senior Kasey Campbell is an aesthetic and dedicated artist, but not exclusively. She’s made a name for herself as an able leader as captain of the swim team; and as a formidable athlete, qualifying for the District One Championships in four swimming events.

Campbell has recently been accepted into the college of her dreams: The Savannah College of Art & Design, also known as SCAD. There, Campbell will pursue a career in film, aspiring to become a advertisement designer, and participate in the Savannah Bee’s swim team.

“I love swimming, but it can be time-consuming,” Campbell said. Although swimming is her muse, Campbell wishes she could spend less time submerged in chlorine water and more time with a paintbrush in her hand. She prefers to spend the



Campbell favors natural subjects for her pieces, such as this one of an on-campus oak tree.
Photo/Stephanie Catrambone

little free time she does have sketching, painting, or getting lost in deep thought while letting music take her away.

With inspiration and beauty sprouting in every direction, Campbell finds the ultimate source of artistic notions within herself. “I’m moved by my own emotions,” she said. “Whatever I’m feeling at the moment inspires me. I love how you can tell what the artist was thinking at the time of their work just by looking at it.”

Campbell’s high school art career has been filled with many privileges. In 2007 she was given the once in a lifetime opportunity to work with muralist David McShane in Philadelphia’s Mural Apprenticeship Program, or MAP. Along with two other students, Campbell was chosen to learn the fundamentals of painting murals and help create a mural dedicated to a community-minded elderly man in

that neighborhood. “It was very interesting,” Campbell said. “It was cool to be part of something you know a lot of people will see.”

Campbell has also been in the Advanced Art program for three years, taking ceramics and digital photography on the side. “Kasey is a very quiet artist who becomes devoted to every image that she makes,” Advanced Art teacher Justin Bursk said. “Her humble and dedicated ways make her stand out as an artist. She’s in it to win it. Because she is successful at swimming, Kasey understands what it means to be successful in art.”

“What art means to me,” Campbell begins, “is being able to say things that I don’t know how to say in words.” Close friends of Campbell would describe her as unpredictable and eclectic. Some of the best times in her life were spent running in rainstorms in Holland, or climbing trees. Coincidentally, these are her favorite subjects to paint. “I am a huge believer that there is beauty in everything, some just can’t see it,” Campbell said.

Young star Ledger dead at 28, autopsy reveals drug abuse

Heath Ledger leaves a legacy after a tragic drug overdose causes his premature death.

By Kate McElhare
Copy Editor

The topic on everyone’s mind the morning of Jan. 23 was the death of 28-year-old Heath Ledger. This Aussie heartthrob, who starred in “10 Things I Hate About You” and “Brokeback Mountain,” transformed himself into an Oscar nominee in a matter of 10 years.

Ledger is the father to Michelle Williams’ two-year-old daughter, Matilda Rose. Ledger and Williams later split up in 2007. But the real question is, how did Ledger die, and why?

Ledger was found facedown on the floor in his Manhattan apartment by his housekeeper and masseuse during the afternoon of Jan. 22. There is a high probability that Ledger had died as a result of a drug overdose. Prescription drugs and over-the-counter



Fans fondly remember ledger’s many performances
Photo/Courtesy of cnn.com

sleeping aids were found inside of his bedroom at the time of his death, and an autopsy revealed that they were present in his system as well.

The autopsy report of Ledger’s body was taken on Wednesday, Jan. 23. His body has undergone strenuous tests on the tissue and for toxicology and according to TMZ, on Feb. 6 a medical examiner announced Ledger’s death was a result of the abuse of prescription medications.

More information has pointed to the drugs aspect of his life and his relationship with Williams. According to People magazine, Williams did not want their daughter growing up around the celebrity party scene and drug use that Ledger seemed to be involved in.

Williams is finishing up shooting for “Mammoth” this month and has another movie that she will be starring in as well. “Her priority will be Matilda, and she will stay strong for her,” a friend of Williams told People.

Due to release during the summer of 2008, in the Batman sequel, “The Dark Knight,” Ledger played a psychopath skateboarding “joker.” Many wonder if this role had anything to do with his death. In a New York Times interview, Ledger admitted to locking himself in a hotel room for a month to get into character. He also admitted to taking sleeping pills to catch up on much-needed sleep. Warner Bros. is still on schedule to release “The Dark Knight” in July 2008 and will make a tribute to the death of Ledger during the advertising process.

As many mourn the loss of Ledger, the question of why he was taken from the world at the age of 28 remains.

Classical for dummies: great-grandfathers of modern music



Teenaged classical music fans might be in the minority, but it’s getting easier to break the ice.

By Matt Huston
Entertainment Editor

Popular belief might hold that there’s nothing modern about 400-year-old music. Vivaldi, Bach, Dvorjak, Debussy—to the teenager of today, they’re all just antiquated, hard-to-pronounce names. Our century watches MTV. Our century listens to rap and hip-hop, rock and electronica. Who has time to bother with fancy, outdated orchestra music?

This is what normality dictates; a disinterest in the old. But there’s counterpoint when it comes to all things modern. These long-dead surnames so foreign to American youth, the true founders of music as we know it, are now more accessible—via the internet and file sharing—than ever before.

Some teens, it seems, are starting to get a clue about the roots of modern music, and there’s an incredible difference between the sort of “history” that’s read in books and the kind that’s experienced first-hand. There’s a reason people still talk about these guys.

Classical music can be intimidating to the average music fan, and understandably. Most compositions are named in a different language, and the expanse of the classical catalogue is immense. Yet the individual who takes the risk will undoubtedly find that classical composers were a lot more exciting than they’d always thought. In fact, the modern relevance of centuries-old music is sure to surprise the unfamiliar explorer.

A great way to break into the vaults of classical music is to start with pieces one has probably already heard.

“Claire de Lune,” a pretty piano piece by frenchman Claude Debussy, has made an appearance in just about every romance film in existence (and appears recently in “Atonement”). For those who have managed to avoid romance movies, Debussy is worth the listen nonetheless.

J.S Bach’s “Tocatta and Fugue” is another keyboard classic. Bach was killer on organs, and what most teens once

summed up as the scary church music from Phantom of the Opera might just reregister as the jaw-dropping masterpiece that it is.

Some call Antonio Vivaldi’s music “the rock n’ roll of classical.” “The Four Seasons” is considered his magnum opus—“Summer” is furious and his ten-minute long, colossal “Winter” concerto is one of Vivaldi’s best.

These old-school titles are hardly difficult to locate. iTunes is a good place to start. Local record stores are chock-full of “best of” CD’s.

Dare to crack the mold, and the seemingly distant gap between Van Halen and Mozart begins to close. Soon, the verse in that Green Day song, that MCR bridge and the Oasis chorus all start to sound a bit like Pacabel’s famous canon (the one always played at weddings). The progression from “Bach to rock” is more than a clever rhyme. All of today’s most talented and sensible musicians maintain some sort of connection to the original masters of the art, and their creation is well worth our attention.

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Girls’ basketball eliminated in first round

The Neshaminy girls’ basketball team has grown from an individual effort to a complete team in order to place fifth in the SOL.

By **Matti Curran**
Special Features Editor

The girls’ basketball team has recently ended a demanding season in fifth place, out of eight, for the Suburban One League. With a final record of 11-13, the Lady ‘Skins are seeded 32nd in the 32-team District One Class AAAA tournament.

Varsity head coach Joanne McVey has led the team since pre-season workouts in November. She knows the girls well and encourages them to work to their maximum ability at games and practices.

“She expects a lot out of everyone,” captain Jenn Slivka stated. “If you’re not giving everything, you will know it.”

Senior Captain Jackie Shunkwiler feels that the team is lucky to have a coach who is willing to work closely with each player. “She [McVey] gives each player individual attention to help the team play to its potential,” Shunkwiler said. The desire for improvement and high expectations of each girl plays a key role in the young team’s development.

With mainly freshmen, sophomores and juniors scoring for Neshaminy, the beginning of the season went slowly. More practice, and a little bonding have helped the team tremendously.

“We’ve become a much more rounded team. Initially a lot of the focus was on a couple of players. Now we have nine or ten players that contribute every game,” McVey added.

Of course, a few select girls on the team are skilled enough to continually stand out from McVey’s view on the sideline.

It is obvious to coaches, fellow players and fans that they have put forth the extra effort that helps lead the team in its triumphs.

Junior point guard Avery Wunder “has emerged as the on-court leader of the team...She is extremely unselfish, focused, and controls the tempo of the game for [Neshaminy],” McVey commented.

Captains Shunkwiler and Slivka are leaders on and off the court. Slivka is making major advances as a freshman guard by confidently assuming the most challenging defensive tasks in the face of any opponent.

In addition, Shunkwiler has had a solid season as the team’s most reliable strong forward.

The 2007-2008 season has brought about some commendable games. The ‘Skins won two impressive games against

Friends’ Central, 54-39, and Vineland, 42-36 in the December 28-29 “Boardwalk Classic” tournament in Wildwood, NJ. These victories made them winners of the Big Al Memorial bracket.

In a Jan. 8 home game, the ‘Skins defeated rival Pennsbury 60-46. Their fans, who were plentiful as a result of it being the team’s honorary Senior Night, went wild on Jan. 29 when the Lady ‘Skins triumphed over Bensalem 48-35.

Though it did not count for their league record, the Neshaminy girls welcomed Methacton on their home court on Nov. 30 to start the season off with some challenging competition.

Despite their loss, the ‘Skins were satisfied with the way they played the game, especially against a team seeded second in the bracket.

Sometime between November and February, the girls managed to combine their individual talents and personalities to become an accomplished team.

“Team chemistry is pretty good and for the most part the team is unselfish. Our defense has been improving and has been a real key,” McVey reflected. They continue to impress the coaches with their progress, even amidst extremely high expectations.

The girls played their last league game against Hatboro Horsham on Feb. 5

and devoted the rest of the week to training for their first playoff game.

Looking forward to the district playoffs, the girls worked hard to make particular improvements. McVey insisted that they needed to work on finishing offensive plays, utilizing transition more effectively and showing consistency in their game.

The Redskins (11-13) were matched up with the Downingtown East Cougars (22-1) in the first round of the District One Class AAAA bracket.

The first tournament games took place on Feb. 9. It was obvious that the Neshaminy girls would need to step up their game in order to compete with their top-seeded opponent.

The girls displayed courageous effort in their 48-28 loss in the first round. Neshaminy lost to the top seed in the tournament, the Downingtown East Cougars.

“We talked all week, each day we had a different story about an underdog,” McVey said according to the Bucks County Courier Times.

“We talked about fighting back. We talked about the “Miracle on Ice” and every day was another story about comebacks.”

The team had to play tough defense to even stay within reach of the opponent. The team had to guard 6-0 junior Kristen Blye. Blye is known as one of the state’s top prospects for college.

McVey hopes her team can be more aggressive in the following season to have a better chance of advancing farther into the playoffs.

“We’ve become a much more rounded team. Initially a lot of the focus was on a couple of players. Now we have nine or ten players that contribute every game.”

~Coach Joanne McVey

‘Skins wrestle their way to SOL National Crown

The Neshaminy wrestling team has aquired an abundance of confidence and hope as they ready themselves for districts and celebrate their qualification win for a part of the SOL Crown.

By **Tori Styner**
Staff Writer

The Neshaminy wrestling team has had a great season so far with their current



Neshaminy defeated the Pennridge Rams to qualify for a share of the SOL Crown.

Photo/www.nhscasportsnetwork.com

record of 10-6-0. The team recently had quite an impressive win against Pennridge at their last home match, on Jan. 30. The team’s win qualified them for a share of the SOL National Crown.

Neshaminy had been winning by a margin of one point leading up to the last match, when freshman Nick Russell pinned his opponent, winning it for the team. Russell wrestles for the high school varsity team, at the weight class of 103 pounds, even though he is only in ninth grade at Maple Point. Russell’s current record is 23-9.

Although the wrestling team is really split into varsity and junior varsity, when coach Mike Ortman asked his team how many had wrestled a varsity match in the past month, the majority of the team raised their hands.

Ortman feels the team has had a major turn around since their match against Pennsbury. “Earlier in the year we were struggling, but after the match against Pennsbury, things really turned around. The kids just started believing in themselves,” said coach Kevin Romano. “After the match at Pennsbury, everyone realized they needed to step up,” senior Joe Stemme said.

In fact, the team has greatly improved since the start of their season. “A lot of people were inexperienced when it first started, we just kept telling them to improve one thing everyday, and they really did,” Romano said.

The team practices every day of the week except Sundays, even through school holidays, during Christmas break the team had off only on Christmas day and New Years.

Although the team contributes a lot of time to practices, the team finds ways to make practice fun. As they warm up the team listens to music. “It lightens the mood,” Chad Kovac said.

Despite the team’s obvious improvement, both coaches, Romano and Ortman, believe that the progress the team has been making should not stop here. “We still have a lot of time to get better,” Ortman said. Both coaches have high hopes of taking members of the teams all the way through the districts and regionals, all the way to the state competition.

Whether the team makes it to states has yet to be decided, but it is obvious that the Neshaminy wrestling team has put in an amazing effort this year. As Stemme says, “We the champs.”

Boys’ club hockey team set for LBCSHL playoffs

The boys’ club ice hockey team concluded a tough regular season, but hope for better results in the playoffs.

By **Brett Schwartz**
Sports Editor

The stage is now set for Neshaminy’s boys’ ice hockey team. The playoffs have just begun and the team hopes to go deep into the postseason.

The Redskins, which are not a school-sponsored sport, hope for great success in the LBCSHL (Lower Bucks County Scholastic Hockey League) playoffs. The team concluded the regular season with a 3-15-2 record.

After a year where the team finished very close to .500, the team has won only three games.

The team had high expectations coming into the season after a great finish last year. The Redskins even beat eventual state champion Holy Ghost Prep during the regular season.

Head coach Mike Richards believes his team’s lack of production is due to the

age level of his team.

“We’re struggling because we are a real young team,” Richards said. “We are maturing every game, but I just don’t think we are at that level yet.”

Senior Captain Matt Lawall agrees with his coach’s statements. “We haven’t lived up to expectations this year,” Lawall said. “We’ve lost a lot of games we should have won.”

Several of these losses included lopsided losses to non-division teams. On Jan. 31, the team lost 6-1 to Roman Catholic and 7-1 to Archbishop Ryan the following day. Coach Richards believes the team is not performing well because of ice time.

“The problem is that we only have one rink slot a week. Many of the other teams can practice several times a week, so it’s hard to compete,” he added.

Neshaminy’s ice hockey team is a club sport and is not school sponsored. Although the team is struggling this year, Richards does not blame the school for a lack of funding.

“Our parents do a great job with paying for jerseys and helmets. I just want the kids to get recognized by the school for their achievements,” Richards stated.

The team did have several members compete in the LBCSHL All-Star game

on Jan. 7. Senior captains Matt Lawall, Garrett Harty and Chris Coleman took part in the event, along with standout junior Derek Harasim. Harasim notched an assist in a 5-4 win over the white squad.

The team hopes to avoid the year’s troubles by finishing the season on a high note. The team plays Father Judge in the first round. The game will be held on Feb. 11 with the team hoping to advance in the Commissioner’s Cup Championship bracket.

“We’re looking forward to the playoffs and finishing the season strong,” Lawall added.



Matt Lawall (middle right) hopes to win the faceoff in a showdown against rival Pennsbury. Photo/ Brandon Zacharias

Athlete of the Issue: Kara Wolfe bowls for victory

Senior co-captain Kara Wolfe led Neshaminy's girls' bowling team to an SOL Championship in a late-season match against Bensalem.

By Jennifer Ryan
Staff Writer

With too many strikes to count, senior bowling co-captain Kara Wolfe scored her personal record of 245 points against Pennsbury on Jan. 22, 2008. This being her first year as one of the captains, Wolfe has been dramatically improving since joining the team her sophomore year.

The team strives for a fourth consecutive championship, and Pennsbury is their biggest threat. In their match against Bensalem, the girls proved they were worthy of being champions by their 4-0 win on Feb. 4.

Wolfe dedicates her skills to her two coaches, Joan Wargo and Mike Episcopo.

"I would not know how to aim or even throw the ball right if it wasn't for Coach Mike," Wolfe said.

Wargo has been the bowling coach for nine years, and loves working with the girls on the team. She's been noticing dramatic improvement from Wolfe, and was proud of her score of 245 points.

"Kara is very consistent, and works very hard," Wargo said. "She constantly practices, even when we don't have practice." Wolfe is a top 10 bowler in the district, known as the "Golden Team" and she thanks her coaches for pushing her to be her best.

Wolfe's interest in bowling began years ago when she would hang out with her neighbor, Patty, and watch her bowl. She began to love the sport, and discovered hidden talents that she now puts to good use.

As well as the sport itself, Wolfe loves the close friendships she has made with her teammates. "I met so many nice girls, and they also love the same sport as I do," Wolfe said. Wolfe loves spending time with her teammates, in and out of their bowling

shoes.

One of her teammates, Christine Welhaf, has been bowling with Wolfe since tenth grade, and they still enjoy spending lots of time practicing together. The girls always manage to keep each match fun. For instance, before each match, the team says a chant that they've done for all the years Wargo has been a coach.

"We've always said this chant, and it doesn't phase us anymore because we have so much fun with it," Welhaf said. "It is, 'Hut hut, kick butt, owwww whoot whoot!'" It is their good luck cheer that seems to be working well for them.

Once the matches are over, Wolfe just can't seem to get enough of bowling, which is why she works at Penndel Bowling Lanes. She waitresses tables, but can help out anyone who needs a personal lesson.

The years spent bowling, and getting closer to her teammates made Wolfe's high school years extra special. She proved to her team, but mostly proved to herself, that she has what it takes to be successful.



Athlete of the Issue Kara Wolfe winds up for the strike. Photo/ Sam Gibilisco

Girls' track team hopes for strong finish at Penn State

Neshaminy girls' track and field team hopes to send several competitors to the State Championship meet at Penn State University on March 1.

By Lindsay Lipsky
Copy Editor

With the Lady 'Skins winter track team's season coming to an end, it is safe to say the girls had one incredible season. They may not have fulfilled all expectations, but if running in the freezing temperatures, snow, and rain does not show the commitment and dedication this team has, then nothing does.

The girls' winter track team is led by head coach Brooke Deacon, assistant coaches Steve Harnish and Ray Short, and captain Brooke Airey. "We are so lucky to have the great coaching and leadership our team has," sophomore Courtney Curran stated. "Without them, I know we would be nowhere."

The girls' drive and determination to success will soon be known, because all of their efforts and hard work will lead them straight to victory before long. "The biggest problem on our team is staying healthy," Deacon said. "In future seasons, I would like to see all of the girls injury free."

The top performers from this season consist of athletes from the distance, sprinting,

jumping, and throwing crews. They included Airey, Laura Histan and Kate Marrington. "The whole team makes me proud," Deacon declared. "With everyone just being at practice everyday and giving 100 percent, there are definitely no disappointments."

The team has grown so close over the past three months, which is why most of the girls will be continuing to the spring track team. All of the girls cannot wait until they are able to run in the nice weather, instead of the harsh conditions that they fight everyday during the winter season.

The girls on the team have learned that it does not matter what their record looks like; they understand that all of the hard work they put into their sport pays off. The winter season of track is very hard to win in, as there were almost 30 schools at every meet they attended.

Both Histan and Airey competed at the PFTCA Indoor Track Carnival on Feb. 9. Airey placed seventh in a time of 2:29 for the 800-m run. Histan medaled with a fourth place finish. She completed the 3000-m run in a time of 11:20. She hopes to improve on that time in the coming weeks.

The girls have two more meets before their state meet on March 1 at Penn State University, in which Histan is a big contender to qualify, So come on out on Feb. 15 and Feb. 22 at Lehigh University to watch and support the tremendous efforts of the outstanding girls' winter track team.

"I will be very sad when this season is over," Airey stated. "I love spending time with the team. We work so hard, but we're all very close."

"We are so lucky to have the great coaching and leadership our team has. Without them, I know we would be nowhere."
~ Sophomore Courtney Curran

Coach McVey provides empowerment to players



The Neshaminy girls' basketball coach, Joanne McVey helps her players compete to their full potential.

By Mattison Curran
Special Features Editor

Joanne McVey, the seven-year Neshaminy girls' basketball coach, is beyond devoted to the team. She takes her job seriously, accepting no less than 100 percent effort from every player, but maintains an encouraging attitude regardless of the team's performance.

McVey attended La Salle University, where she studied accounting and played on their basketball team.

After she had graduated, McVey was employed as a Certified Public Accountant. She was interested in becoming a basketball coach, but raising three boys while holding a job made such a time commitment impossible.

Once her children grew older, though, McVey decided that she was at a reasonable point in her life to share her love of the game and exceptional experience with other girls.

She is currently working as a CPA, but manages to devote plenty of time to the team, as well.

The girls are aware of the amount of time and effort that she puts in to coaching them. She does far more than providing supervision at practices and games.

"We are out there practicing six days a week for two hours," captain Jenn Slivka commented. "But she is there seven days a week scouting, putting together practice and game plans, and is really all about the team," she added.

At the beginning of this season, it was obvious that McVey had a lot of work ahead of her.

The team is particularly young; two freshmen, a sophomore and four juniors pick up most of the playing time. With improvement in mind, she used a great deal of energy in creating appropriate practice routines and game strategies.

By looking at their condition from Novemeber to their amplified potential in February, it is clear that McVey transformed the Redskins.

Captain Jackie Shunkwiler attributed McVey's attention to each player's needs to the team's advancement as a whole. Gradually, their dedicated coach helped unite the girls by teaching them to take advantage of each other's skills. Thanks to McVey, they "have all figured out what [their] jobs are on the court and what the team needs from each player during games," Shunkwiler said.

Junior Sarah Harrison has also noticed the individual and team successes that are a result of McVey's considerate coaching style.

"She's given me a lot of confidence on the court. She has definitely made us more of a team and has helped everyone of us enhance our game," Harrison concluded.

McVey has had this kind of success all throughout her coaching career at Neshaminy. Her fondest memories are of watching her teams accomplish their goals after a long, challenging season.

Winning the SOL league title in the 2004-05 season and making the state playoffs for the first time in school history in the 2003-04 season were some of the most memorable aspects of her time at Neshaminy.

Her years as a player and coach have helped McVey decide on three essential pieces of advice about basketball: "Prepare yourself for the season by working on your game in the off-season, play every minute like it's your last, and focus on the team and not on yourself."



Coach McVey has led the girls basketball team for the past seven years and took the team to the playoffs again this year. Photo/ Sam Gibilisco

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Wing Bowl: Philly’s own Mardi Gras

The highly anticipated wing bowl delivered the goods this year and bread a new champion, Joey Chesnut.

By Matt Hastings
Staff Writer

What began as a small buffalo wing eating competition has now emerged as one of the biggest spectacles in all of Philadelphia.

“Wing Bowl” began in 1993 with Al Morganti, a member of 610WIP’s morning team, when he realized that the city of Philadelphia needed a vice to deal with the playoff losses.

Morganti and Angelo Cataldi, the host of WIP’s morning show, came up with an idea that they honestly thought would never work.

The first wing bowl was held in the ballroom at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel. Only 150 people attended. Now the event is held in the Wachovia Center with over 20,000 raucous fans at six in the morning 6:00 a.m.

Many contestants have to qualify by performing some outrageous eating stunt to gain entrance into the contest. Humble Bob, of Havertown, ate 53 hard-boiled eggs in 15 minutes and Steakbellie, who hails from Drexel Hill, ate the entire McDonald’s dollar menu in five minutes.

This year’s wing bowl has been deemed “The Showdown in the Hot Sauce” and ended up being the one of the best ever, featuring five-time champion Bill “El Wingador” Simmons, and two time champion Joey Chestnut.

This year, the one local connection was Michael “The Unknown Eater” Sarian. The 42-year-old Middletown resident gained entry after completing Glen Macnow’s Slacks Hoagie Shack sandwich challenge, where he ate 16 sandwiches in less than four minutes.

At this year’s event, returning Philadelphia champion El-Wingador came out to one of the biggest ovations since the Flyers playoff run, or when the Sixers won the eastern conference championships.

During the competition one fan exclaimed, “How could something so small turn into an event this big and gigantic?”

Throughout the morning, people were cheering and booing not only the contestants, but also Wachovia Center security for breaking up fights. In the end, Chestnut the outsider retained his title and became the third consecutive champion of Wing Bowl.

The Wing Bowl is on pace to being acclaimed as highly as the mummers’ parade, where once a year the big guy gets cheered on, for one day the average blue-collar

guy gets his day in the sun.

Leaving the stadium, a man who seemed to be in his fifties said to his son “Only in Philly could you get 20,000 people in an arena to watch 30 fat guys eat wings, only in Philly.”

This competition proves to be Philadelphia’s own version of Mardi Gras.



Wing Bowl 16 champion, Joey Chesnut, shattered records after he ate 241 chicken wings in 30 minutes to become the champion.
Photo/ www.610wip.com

Boys’ track set for states

The boys’ indoor track team advanced to the state competition in hopes of beating their performance during states last season.

By Derek Donnelly
Managing/Expressions Editor

Spirit and morale have contributed to the boys’ track team’s advancement to the state competition.

Individuals in the 60-meter dash, 60 hurdles, the 200, the 400, and high jump have all qualified for the State Championships to be held March 1 at Penn State University.

The 4-by-200 and 4-by-400 meter relay teams have also qualified. Senior captains Tim Malloy and Nick Defeo, along with sprinting sensation Kevin Steinberg all are main factors in the team’s success.

“This year we are going to have a strong run at states. We hope to better our achievement of last year [2nd place overall]” head coach Chuck Lumio stated.

Steinberg is currently ranked first in the 60 meter dash in the state. He is also in the top 10 for the 200-meter dash, and is also a vital part of the four-by-200 team that is currently second in the state.

Malloy has also qualified for states in three events. Individually he has qualified in the high jump and 60-m hurdles, while he is also a main asset to the 4x2 team. The four-by-two team consists of Steinberg, Defeo, Casey Cappello and Malloy.

Defeo has qualified for the 200 meter dash and is currently ranked in the top 10. He is also slotted at third in the state for the 400-meter dash.

The boys indoor track team has had meets at Lehigh University, which is about an hour away from home. Now the team raises the bar higher in narrowing down their times to compete in states.

“We are top in the state in seven events for the sprinting events, which is very good so far this season,” Lumio said.

Sprinters are not the only contributor the team, as distance members and members in field events are assets to the team as well.

The throwers hope to send at least one individual in the shot-put, while distance hopes to qualify a distance-medley relay team.

“It’s going to be a long shot for our guys to qualify, but I still think they have a chance with two big meets left,”

MacDonald said.

Macdonald also believes that the throwers have helped add to the success of the team overall.

“Our throwers BJ Lockyer and Adrian Kizewski are a big assest, we haven’t had decent throwers in a while,” MacDonald said.

Both Lockyer and Kizewski are first year throwers and have jumped right in to the scene.

The team only has a few races left, but these races are the most important. The main goal now is to progressively shed time below the state qualifying time.

The team hopes to accomplish this goal at the Meet of Champions at Lehigh University on Feb. 16. The team then travels to Penn State University on Feb. 23 for a tune-up for the State Championships.

“The boys who qualified for states are already competing at the next level, states is up to them for the amount of competition they want to bring,” Lumio said.

The team hopes to defend their second place finish last year at Penn State.

Boys’ Basketball season ends with huge win over panthers

By Kelsey Ruffing
Sports Editor

The Neshaminy Redskins’ Boys’ basketball team completed their season Feb. 5 with an outstanding effort against Tennent, accumulating a score of 50-32.

Standout senior captain James Ward led the team and lit up the score board with 16 points. Senior captain Joe Spina was right behind Ward with a total of 10 points to close out the season’s final game. Neshaminy also beat Tennent earlier in the season 58-38.

Despite their concluding record of 3-22, the boys held their heads high and still played with a lot of heart.

“In a tough season like the one we had, a team has to find moral victories to

stay motivated and keep a love of the game,” Spina said.

On Feb. 2 the ‘Skins traveled to Villanova to compete in the Kobe Bryant Classic against long time rivals, Pennsbury High School.

The Falcons completed their third consecutive undefeated season after they defeated the Redskins 63-30.

The ‘Skins have been without junior captain Justin Deeter for most of the year after he tore his ACL in an early season matchup against Central Bucks West. This game was one of three wins that the team accumulated.

The returning players from the team hope to rebound after a frustrating regular season.

“In a tough season like the one we had, a team has to find moral victories.”
~Joe Spina

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Brittingham invited to NFL Combine

He made his mark as a high school football player at Neshaminy and Bloomsburg University, and now Jamar Brittingham is hoping to continue his success as a professional athlete.

By Kelsey Ruffing
Sports Editor

Former Neshaminy football star, Jamar Brittingham, is continuing his foot-



The Redskin team celebrates their state victory in 2001.
Photo/www.neshaminyfootball.com

ball career after college, with high hopes of making it into the National Football League draft.

Brittingham, a senior running back at Bloomsburg University, was invited to participate in the NFL Scouting Combine that will be held on Feb. 20-26.

Over 300 of the top college football players will be participating in the competition, while coaches from all 32 teams will be thoroughly evaluating each athlete.

“That’s a big invite. He will be testing himself against the best in the country,”

Neshaminy football coach Mark Schmidt said. “I expect him to go out there and give it his best shot, and physically he will do well.”

Brittingham was rated 27 out of 182 running backs and 425 out of a total of 2514 players, according to www.nfldraft.com.

He is now the sole holder of 28 school and Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference records, such as the most yards rushing (5,689).

While playing at Bloomsburg, Brittingham was named the PSAC East Rookie of the year as a freshman with a record breaking 991 yards rushing in 2004.

In 2007, he was named PSAC Eastern Division Player of the Year for the second time.

He has earned countless awards for his outstanding athletic ability, including 2007 Cactus Bowl All-Star, Offensive Player of the Year, and is currently 14th all-time on the NCAA

Division II career rushing list.

Brittingham became the first running back from Bucks County to go over 2,000 yards in one season, and led the ‘Skins to their Suburban One League District Championship accompanied with a state championship title in 2001. His talents helped to earn the Redskins their perfect 15-0 season.

“He knew he was a key ingredient to our team,” Schmidt said. “He never took days off; he never cut corners. He’s a special guy.”

During Brittingham’s career at Neshaminy he collected awards such as MVP Offense, Achievement Award for breaking the single season rushing record, Bucks County Courier Times Football Player of the Year, SOL first team as a running back and SOL second team as a defensive back.

Brittingham’s offensive stats for 2001 were 2,765 yards and 30 touchdowns.

One of Brittingham’s closest friends and teammate, Jay Collins, who also played in the 2001 state championship season, has seen Brittingham grow from a high school varsity letter to an up and coming NFL hopeful.

“With Jamar it’s always been there. It’s a goal he has always set for himself,” Collins said. “He is definitely a phenomenon. He is definitely going to be playing somewhere, and that is very exciting for all of us.”

According to NFLDraftBlitz.com, In the future, if Brittingham has the opportunity to continue running the football, he would choose to play for the Dallas Cowboys, because of his childhood fix with them.

Brittingham proves to be an inspirational role model for any high school athlete looking to become a star.



Brittingham led the team in rushing yards and was rated 27 out of 182 running backs.
Photo/ www.bloomu.edu

Swimming teams dive into District One competition

Although the boys’ and girls’ swimming teams experienced growing pains this season, the teams hope to cap off the season with a strong finish tomorrow and Saturday at the S.O.L. Championships.

By Brett Schwartz
Sports Editor

The boys’ and girls’ swimming teams came into the 2007-2008 season as polar opposites. The girls’ team had high hopes of competing with some of the best teams in the conference, while the boys’ just hoped to garner enough swimmers to compete as a team. Both teams exceeded expectations as they proceed into the major part of the season.

The girls’ team finished the season with a 6-7 record, as much of the team’s success could be attributed to senior captains Alyssa Boeggeman, Kasey Campbell, and Christina Lysun. Campbell has been the team’s catalyst as she has qualified for districts in five events.

Campbell qualified in the 100, 200, and 500-meter freestyle. In the 200 freestyle, she holds the second fastest time in school history, and also holds the third fastest time for the 500 free. She is also a part of the 200-medley relay, 200-free relay and 400-free relay.

Lysun and Boeggeman have also played key parts in their team’s success. Lysun has qualified in the 100-yd fly, while Boeggeman has qualified as part of several relay teams. Junior standout Chelsea Perugini has qualified for Districts in five events, while her sister, freshman Devon Perugini, has qualified in one.

The team finished off the season with three consecutive losses, but had key wins

earlier in the season. The team tallied three consecutive wins at the midway point, and romped in a 112-58 win against Lower Moreland.

“Although the season was a rebuilding year, I think we really bonded together and strove toward success at the end of the year,” Boeggeman said.

The boys’ team did not experience the same success as the girls’ team, as they did not record a win. But the team understood that reality coming into the season with a very young team. The team returned five swimmers and had six newcomers this year.

The closest meet of the season occurred on Jan. 18. The meet was against Lower Moreland on Senior Night. The team fought to the end in a close meet, that ended in a n 86-82 defeat.

The team is led by senior captains Joe Keefe and Dan Burke, junior captain Phil Green, and senior diving star Brian Gemberling. The team had many district qualifiers that propelled the team forward.

Boys qualified in three relays. The relays included the 400 free relay, 200 free relay and 200 medley relay.

“I think we should be happy with how we finished,” Burke said. “We bonded together late in the season and had a lot of fun together.”

Joe Keefe in only his second year of swimming qualified for Districts in seven events. He qualified in the 100 backstroke, 100 and 200-yd. freestyle, 200-yd. individual medley, 500-yd. freestyle and 100-yd butterfly. This feat is even more remarkable after knowing he qualified in zero events the previous year.

Head coach Brian Suter can not say enough about his captain. “You could take 30 kids and not have a leader like him,” Suter said. “You can have all the talent in the world, but you need great leadership.”

Suter is also impressed by his senior diver, Brian Gemberling. Gemberling has gone undefeated in the season and hopes to successfully defend his S.O.L. and District titles in the following two weeks.

“There should really be more done to recognize Brian in the school,” Suter added. “He has no local facility, and he still achieves such great marks off the board.”

The team hopes to successfully wrap up their season at the District One Championships on Feb. 28. and March 1 at LaSalle University. Gemberling will take part in the diving competition at North Penn High School on Feb. 22.

The team then hopes to advance to the PIAA State competition, which is held March 12 and 13 at Bucknell University.



Neshaminy’s boys’ swim to the finish in a late season matchup.
Photo/ Sam Gibilisco



Neshaminy’s girls’ swimming team competes in a conference meet at Neshaminy Middle School.
Photo/ Sam Gibilisco