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# The Playwickian

2009 - 2010

Issue 3

The Students' Newspaper of Neshaminy High School

December 18, 2009

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[www.neshaminy.k12.pa.us/playwickian/](http://www.neshaminy.k12.pa.us/playwickian/)

## Patrick Murphy comes to town



Congressman Patrick Murphy addresses Neshaminy students, answering questions from the Black Box Theater and via satellite. Photo/Josh Reznik

**Colleen Kane**  
Circulation Editor

With Christmas rounding the corner, students at Neshaminy were not fortunate enough to receive a visit from Santa Claus. However, many of them did have the chance to meet Congressman Patrick Murphy.

After getting re-elected this past November, Congressman Murphy is not here to give presents from under the tree, but to inform the youth of Neshaminy the importance that politics plays in our

everyday lives.

On Monday, Dec. 14 in the Black Box Theatre, students, including David Heaney's freshman and junior social studies classes, received a hands-on experience of what it is like in the field of politics. Not only did Neshaminy benefit from this speech, but 13 other schools including nine districts had the chance to view this conference via satellite, which is considered the largest video conference in our high school's history.

In 2008, 52,000 students voted in the KidsVoting of Southeast PA, and

with the instruction of Heaney and the help of Superintendent Louis Muenker, it was possible to have Murphy in our school this year to discuss the topic. This program was "to show students that they do have a voice, they can affect change and they can influence policy, if they get involved," Heaney said.

Many of the schools had the chance to ask Congressman Murphy a question on concerning subject matters in the United States today. Topics ranged from the war in Iraq to healthcare reform.

**See Patrick Murphy on page 2**

### News Flash

#### HOLIDAY CHARITIES

The Salvation Army  
[www.salvationarmy.org](http://www.salvationarmy.org)

Christmas Wish  
Q102, Chio in the morning

Make-A-Wish Foundation  
1-886-880-1382

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital  
[www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org)

Purple Heart  
[www.purpleheart.org](http://www.purpleheart.org)

Habitat for Humanity  
[www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org)

World Vision  
"Sponsor a Child now"  
[www.worldvision.org](http://www.worldvision.org)

Feeding America  
[www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org)

UNICEF: Charity for Kids  
[unicefusa.org](http://unicefusa.org)

Operation Smile  
[www.operationssmile.org](http://www.operationssmile.org)

## Bloody good time had by students and faculty alike

**Rachel Rotteveel**  
Staff Writer

Donating blood can make a remarkable difference in someone's life. Just one pint of blood can save up to three lives.

According to the American Red Cross, only three out of every 100 people in America donate blood. This statistic is surprisingly low in comparison to the number of Americans who require blood

transfusions.

"There aren't many opportunities for teenagers to do something that saves lives, but this is one of them," National Honor Society Advisor Lucy Weaver said.

The National Honor Society sponsored a blood drive on Dec. 10 in Gym One from before homeroom to after school. Registration was open to both students and teachers. Guidelines stated blood donors must weigh at least 120 pounds,

be 17 years of age or older by Dec. 31, 2009, and have blood pressure within normal range. In addition, student donors were required to submit a signed parent/guardian consent form.

About five million people receive blood transfusions each year. Hospitals need blood for people who are injured, as well as for pa-

**See Blood Drive on page 2**



Erin Quense prepares to give blood. Photo/Kate Pfeilsticker

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# Text messaging leaves drivers in serious jeopardy

By Emily Duke  
Staff Writer

There are places where text messaging is acceptable, and there are places where it is not. Behind the wheel of a vehicle is not an acceptable place for texting or cell phones at all for that matter... unless you would like a nice \$75 fine from the Philadelphia police.

The Philadelphia City Council passed a new ordinance banning the use of cell phones while driving. The rule went into effect Dec. 1, although the police have been issuing warnings since November “in an effort to educate citizens about the new restrictions,” Dana DiFilippo of the Philadelphia Daily News said.

Mayor Michael Nutter approved the bill last April. Hands-free devices like Bluetooth headsets are still permitted because they are not considered a distraction as they allow the driver to keep both hands on the wheel.

The recent cell phone ban has stirred controversy due to its exclusivity in Philadelphia. “We’re one of the few municipalities in the state where you have such a dense interaction between motor-

ists, pedestrians and bicyclists,” Lauren Vidas, an aide to Councilman Bill Green, who is one of the bill’s sponsors, said.

Although the law is currently being enforced only in Philadelphia, a state-wide ban in the works, many other states have established laws regarding texting and driving. “We hope that the citizens would



A driver glances at a text message, taking her eyes off the road.

Photo/Lera Salmon

showed that 69 percent supported a ban of cell phones while driving. Those in support of the ban believe that people should put down their cell phones when behind the wheel not just because it is the law, but for their own safety, and the safety of the others on the road.

Talking on cell phones while behind the wheel used to be the major problem with mobile devices, distracting drivers and making them more likely to get into accidents. While talking is still a prominent issue, texting while driving

has caused the risks of accidents to skyrocket.

Studies performed at the University of Utah have found texting while driving to be double the risk of drunk driving. David Strayer, one of the university’s psychologists, has concluded from his research that when drivers take their eyes off the road to text, sometimes it can be for the length of a football field, or more, without even realizing.

A recent analysis conducted by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute showed that “For every six seconds of

drive time, a driver sending or receiving a text message spends 4.6 of those seconds with their eyes off the road.”

These dangers prompted by those who use their cell phones while they drive are one of the main reasons that Philadelphia has taken action to put a ban on cellular devices. With this ban, the city hopes that the number of cell phone-related accidents will greatly decline. They want this law to make people aware that they are putting their lives and the lives of others in jeopardy.

## Blood drive Continued from front page

tients having heart surgery, organ transplants, cancer treatments, and treatments for other diseases that affect the blood, like sickle cell anemia according to [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org).

“If you eat a well-balanced breakfast, avoid caffeine, and drink lots of water, you shouldn’t have a problem when donating blood,” National Honor Society treasurer Seth Schimmel said.

Most individuals feel perfectly fine after donating blood with little or no side effects, and the process is virtually painless. “For students who are queasy or afraid of needles, there are people at the drive who will support you the entire time. The donating process only takes about 7-10 minutes,” National Honor Society Secretary Erin O’Brien said.

All the blood collected will be donated to the Community Blood Council of New Jersey. This organization distributes blood to hospitals and transfusion patients throughout New Jersey and Bucks County. Although the organization urges people of all blood types to donate, type O- is needed as it is most common, and cannot accept any other type.

December 10 was not the only opportunity to donate blood. “Our goal is to have another blood drive for the American Red Cross in the spring,” Weaver said. The Red Cross also holds numerous blood drives at various locations throughout the country.

“Every minute of every day, someone needs blood. That blood can only come from a volunteer donor, a person like you who makes the choice to donate. There is no substitute for your donation,” Redcross reported.

# LA dodgers come out victors in dodgeball battle

By Tori Hyndman  
Student Life Editor

The spirit of the competition was in the air at the Student Council’s second dodgeball tournament that took place in Gym Three on Dec. 9. Charging one dollar admission—or a canned food donation, this charitable event raised just under \$1000, used to purchase non-perishable food items, along with approximately 800 collected food cans for families in need within the district.

Participation from the last tournament to this one was said to have increased significantly; the competition catered to more than a dozen mixed-gender teams of seven students each.

The positive energy that was unmistakable amongst the competitors as well as the Neshaminy spectators was without a doubt what kept the enthusiasm up and the tournament lively and exciting.

In the first bracket of elimination-round games, a senior team dubbed

The Bagels came from behind to claim a shocking, yet well-deserved win. All hope seemed lost as they stood at an ob-



LA Dodgers take first place, while Student Council is able to donate 800 cans for charity.

his team.

“To beat five people in a row by myself was awesome,” Affet said with a proud smile. “I definitely worked off of the audience, their support was great,” he added before returning back to celebrate with his team.

Some of the younger teams proved to be stronger contenders than what was originally expected. The Dodgers, one of the younger, freshmen teams, successfully made it to the second round, despite the previous tough match they faced. Regardless, their triumph

was short-lived as they were eliminated in the next round.

Not to be mistaken with the overall winners of the competition, The LA Dodgers, a team composed of seniors and juniors took the hard-earned title with pride and celebratory smiles on their faces. Their journey to the top was no easy ride though. The runner-ups, The Hottails, which were another senior team, were intense game-players.

As the LA Dodgers were awarded their prize, gift certificates and medals, for their triumph. The champion team was ecstatic, yet humble in their win. “At first we came in and we weren’t confident, but after a few games we dominated,” junior team member Tene Ovecka said.

Ovecka, along with her fellow teammates: Becky Carlini, Megan Orr, Ed Packer, Dave Kostenbauder, Steve Hunt, and Brian Weiss, played vital roles in the charity tournament a success.


## Patrick Murphy Continued from front page

Students from all over the district were able to have the opportunity to interact with the man who speaks on our behalf down in Washington. Congressman Murphy stated that “[every kid] needs to be active and get out there and vote, regardless of their political preference.”

New Hope Solebury High School questioned Murphy on what the most efficient way jobs are being brought back to Bucks County citizens in which he went on to describe the role of green jobs. “[In Bucks County] jobs have gone up 40%,” Murphy said.

Even though most students are not old enough to vote, Congressman Murphy is taking the time to look forward to the future and welcoming the new branch of voters who are only a few years or even months away from determining our potential leaders.

Despite the minor technical difficulties that Neshaminy faced, the overall performance of the conference seemed to reach out to the student body in a positive manner.



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# Outlandish 2012 rumors dispelled by NASA

By Emily Duke  
Staff Writer

The recent blockbuster “2012” which hit theaters Nov. 13 has stirred up controversy, instigating curiosity left and right. The disaster film’s plot revolves around the apocalyptic theory that the world will end on Dec. 21 2012, as a result of the end of Mayan calendar. Many have become panic-stricken as the date of our pending doomsday rapidly approaches.

Since the film’s release NASA has dedicated a page on their Web site to debunking various myths concerning Earth’s epic ending. NASA claims that those who believe that the world will end in 2012 have no scientific basis, yet the media continues to sensationalize the matter.

“Now, I for one love a good book or movie as much as the next guy. But the stuff flying around through cyberspace, TV, and the movies is not based on science,” NASA senior research scientist Dan Yeomans said.

Several credible scientists of NASA disregard the argument that any danger is approaching. Considering that our planet has been around for roughly 400 million years, it has faced dangerous sit-



The Mayan Calendar is a central point in the 2012 rumors.

Courtesy of [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

uations many times before. “The last time the world got all worked up over the mystical turning of a calendar was the false millennium of Jan. 1, 2000,” Director of Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles E.C. Krupp said.

The most commonly accepted theory that the world is going to end relates to the end of the Mayan Calendar. The Mayans were an ancient civilization located in Latin America thousands of years ago. They made prominent achievements in architecture, creating pyramids and astronomy towers to observe the night sky. The Mayans also created the first calendar based on their vast astronomical knowledge, and it was used to predict things like eclipses and the alignments of the planets.

Although not directly stated, when translated properly, the cycle of the Mayan calendar began on Aug. 11, 3114 B.C. and ends Dec. 21, 2012, the date of winter solstice, or the first day of winter. With this fact, NASA swoops in and offers reassuring scientific evidence.

“Just as the calendar you have on your

kitchen wall does not cease to exist after Dec. 31, the Mayan calendar does not cease to exist on Dec. 21, 2012. This date is the end of the Mayan long-count period but then, just as your calendar begins again on January, another long-count period begins for the Mayan calendar,” NASA’s website stated.

As far as other world-ending theories go, there are many. Another common theory circulating on the web is of Sumerian origin. The Sumerians were another ancient civilization much like the Mayans, and they predicted that in May 2003, a rogue planet called Nibiru, sometimes referred to as “Planet X,”

would be hurtling towards Earth, ending humanity indefinitely. NASA explains that if this “Planet X” were real, scientists would have been tracking it for decades and it would certainly be visible from the Earth by this time.

NASA stands by their facts that the world is not coming to an end in 2012, or anytime soon for that matter. “For any claims of disaster or dramatic changes in 2012, where is the science? Where is the evidence? There is none, and for all the fictional assertions, whether they are made in books, movies, documentaries or over the Internet, we cannot change that simple fact,” NASA reported.

WEIRD NEWS!

12-year-old girl sneezed 12,000 times a day due to irretractable psychogenic disorder.

[www.aol.com](http://www.aol.com)

A quadrapelagic wins case for hunting rights.

[www.ripleys.com](http://www.ripleys.com)

A driver who had just spent \$1.25 million on a 2006 Bugatti Veyron EB (aka the fastest and most expensive car in the world) accidentally drove the car into a salt-water inlet because he became distracted by a low-flying pelican.

[www.newsoftheweird.com](http://www.newsoftheweird.com)

## Recession affects charities

Deanna Zaro  
Staff Writer

The holidays grow closer, meaning the sound of bells will soon fill the air. Not the characteristic silver bells that are sung about each Christmas, but Salvation Army bells. It’s easy to recognize the red containers where people deposit their money during the holiday season, and this year they will be needed more than ever.

Due to the recession the country is experiencing, there are more needy people who could be helped by charities. With the recession fueling their misfortune, people who were previously well-to-do might soon be relying on charities.

Many people are dependent upon charities as a source of income to support their families. At least 1.3 million people have enrolled in the federal Food Stamp Program. Individual charities are also feeling the pressure put on them by the economy.

“We’re seeing an increase in overall demand, from groceries, to clothing to housing, up to 85, 90 percent.” David Magnuson of the Salvation Army said, according to an article by Fox Chicago.

It’s going to be difficult for charities to provide everyone with the necessities. Now that the holiday season is in full swing there are going to be a lot more organizations outside the local ACME or Genuardi’s asking for money to fulfill their higher demands.

To make the problem worse, the same reason that there are more needy people out there also means there are less people donating to help them out. People may also be more selective about the charities they give to. Two-thirds of public charities experienced decreases in donations and there was a 12.7 percent drop in the money given in 2008, according to MSNBC.

Rather than helping the unfortunate individuals of our society, people are struggling to keep themselves from joining them. “Donations were so slow last summer that we had to cash a \$12,000 CD just to keep paying our bills,” reported the treasurer of a local church. Not all places that provide assistance for those down on their luck have \$12,000 up their sleeves.

It is possible that some charities might go under, creating an even worse situation for those who require help from them.

The economy creates a lose-lose situation: more people in need, less people donating. It’s safe to say that charities are not going to be doing very well this holiday season and even more people are going to suffer because of the recession.

The Playwickian would like to apologize to the Drama department. The Fall Drama article relied on student testimony; however, the Drama teachers should have been consulted as well. Furthermore, we extend our apology.

“We’re seeing an increase in overall demand from groceries, to clothing to housing...up to 85, 90 percent”  
David Magnuson

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The Playwickian refers to the “Associated Press Stylebook” on matters of grammar, punctuation, spelling, style and usage. Unsigned editorials express the views of the majority of the editorial board. Letters to the editors should not exceed 300 words. Letters must be signed and of appropriate subject matter. Guest opinions, 500 words or more, will be published as space allows.

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.

Look AT iT OUR WAY

Gym Night: too many spectators with freshmen involved, not enough tickets, anticipate issues

Everyone knows the feeling of being the youngest kids in school. Being afraid in the new building and being at the bottom of the pecking order is a familiar feeling. The only difference now, is that freshmen are forced to walk the same halls as the sometimes-less-than-friendly sophomores, juniors and seniors.

However, this simple location change, and even the unfair hardships that go with it, results into an even bigger problem: Gym Night.

As anyone who has ever participated in, attended, or even heard of Gym Night would know, the over-50-year-old spectacle is no small matter. Gym Night defines our high school.

With the controversial move-up of the ninth grade, the issue becomes whether or not we can fit them in to our already tightly packed itinerary.

Sophomores through seniors have been the Gym Night participants for the past two or three decades, but in more recent years, the show has become more popular resulting in a greater audience.

Last year, due to a new gym and a smaller seating area, excess spectators were permitted to sit on the students’ side of the bleachers, in order to admit as many people as possible. By adding the freshmen, there will not be enough room on the students’ bleachers for excess spectators.

“It caused a big challenge,” Physical Education Department Chair David Coll explained. “We got another grade level and did not grow anymore seats, but I feel confidently that, with support from students, we can rise up. The challenge will still be there but we’ll rise up.”

According to Principal Rob McGee, plenty of seating will be available this year. However, we can only anticipate so many audience members, therefore resulting in a ticket distribution issue. How many tickets will be allotted per student? Should there be seniority in purchasing tickets? Or, should we stick to our old ways and leave it on a first-come-first-serve basis?

“It is just going to be really different. There will be some major changes, but we’ll figure it out,” blue color captain Alexa Bell said optimistically.

Another question that comes to mind is what exactly will the ninth graders be participating in? Just relays or the relays and the dance? Many will agree that if the dance gets added to the list, more and more parents will want to attend, which brings us back to our previously stated issue: seating.

When questioned, many freshmen admitted that they would only participate if allowed to dance. This would lead into an even greater participation rate on the student body, once again resulting in more bodies in the bleachers- both by students and spectators alike.

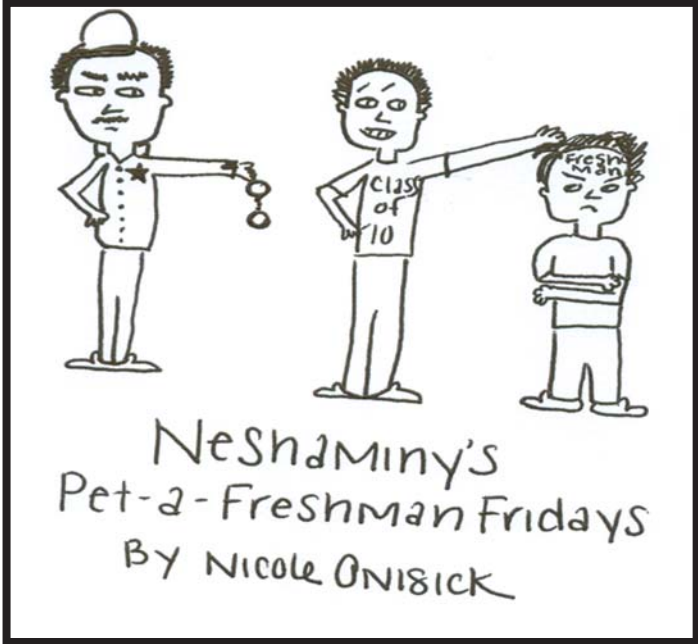
Also, because it will be their first year participating, it is important that they see the work that goes into it before they go into the much anticipated evening blindly.

“I remember my sophomore year, people were very immature during the practices,” senior Lauren Shanberg said. “By this I mean no one ever stopped talking and we could barely learn the entire dance in the amount of time we had.”

If nothing else works, and enough seating cannot be arranged, why not give the freshmen class a field day, much like they would have had in the middle school? Another option could be to add a third night to the program. However, if we add another night, that may turn into another day of practice, which will ultimately take away students from their classes. As fun as Gym Night is, it’s exhausting, not only for the participants but for all the staff members that contribute their time and effort to the typically two night event.

With all these concerns in mind, the captains, administrators and staff members seem positive and optimistic about the upcoming Gym Night event. Let’s hope that the seating issues, on top of other concerns, will not outweigh the many positives that come from it.

**This unsigned editorial represents the majority view of the editorial board.**



THE BUSS

What should Santa's new catch phrase be?



Senior  
Michelle Ohai  
“Where all my  
reindeers at?”



Senior  
Julie Geddes  
“Happy  
Chanukah.”

Who is your favorite reindeer and why?



Senior  
Joe Hastings  
“Rudolph, he’s gotta  
red nose, and no  
one else does.”



Senior  
Kelsey Ryan  
“Blitzen, like my  
neighbors’ dog.”

What is your favorite Christmas carol and why?



Senior  
Erin Quense  
“‘Santa Baby’,  
‘cause I wanna be  
Santa’s baby.”



Senior  
Shannon Poserina  
“I don’t like  
Christmas music.”

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, 2008. Gold Medalist: 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009.



Send Us a Letter!

Email your Letters to the Editor at  
Playwickian@yahoo.com





Every adolescent in the United States should have an interest and be informed about politics. The debate is over whether teenagers should have some sort of vote to get their opinions heard, or get no vote until they are mature enough to understand the political process.

# Adolescents deserve vote . . . or not mature enough?



By Josh Reznik  
Copy Editor

As soon as you turn on the television or log online to check your e-mail, it seems that we are constantly bombarded with the ongoing roller coaster ride that is American politics. Every minute it feels that someone is reporting about President Barack Obama’s latest decision or how some senators are opposed to the healthcare debate, while some are in favor. But what good is this for us? We’re only teenagers in which politics are not our primary goals in life, but rather social networking and hanging out with friends.

According to [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), it is projected that teenagers between the ages of 14 and 17 will make up about five and one-half percent of the national population in 2010.

In order to prepare for this incline and future voting, we should be getting more involved in the issues that surround us. Today, there are many outlets for teenagers to get involved in the political world.

The voting campaign Rock the Vote encourages young people to get more involved in politics. The official Web site, [www.rockthevote.com](http://www.rockthevote.com) provides young people with the facts.

“We empower the 45 million young people in America who want to step up, claim their voice in the political process, and change the way politics is done,” the Web site states.

We constantly hear about issues on healthcare, the economy, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, abortions, and gay rights. We should at least be able to have some information on the issues before we jump to conclusions on whether we want to be labeled a political party.

Being under age 18, teens have no official way for our opinions to be voiced. What were to happen if teens between the ages of 14 to 17 voted? On Election Day, we would go to the polls just like our parents, and then cast our votes. The votes cast by teenagers should be represented in a separate electoral college, allowing the opinions of teenagers to be voiced.

Granted, the electoral college of teenagers would not be as large as that of California’s 55 electoral votes, and it would count for a smaller percentage of the vote, but it would still be there to show all Americans that teenagers are worthy of having well thought and intelligent opinions on today’s politics.

A lot of things that are a result of the art of politicking affect teenagers. Teens should have the opportunity to have a voice in the issues that matter most to them, especially when it can make a difference when their voice is heard. I think it is our right as American citizens to have a voice in our democratic government even though we are not of age. Teens are the future of this country and deserve a free shake in the political world, and it would all start with the ability to vote in some way.



By Lindsay Lipsky  
Op-Ed Editor

While most teenagers these days are not exactly politically-savvy, many do take interest in politics and issues around the world. Those that do not have any sort of clue about issues taking place in our country and have no interest in politics is appalling. It is more important than ever for our teenagers to be informed of the issues taking place.

Our teenagers are the next generation of voters. Most teenagers do not even feel it necessary to learn about the politics that are taking place right now, so how can they even vote? How

would it be fair to the country’s leaders if uninformed adolescents were, in some ways, controlling their careers?

“If one is going to be a responsible voter one must have at least some understanding of the major issues the candidates will have to deal with when in office. To ignore these issues until one is 18 means one is going to be an ill-informed citizen and voter,” World Affairs Club advisor Kevin Hensel said. “No magic wand will be waved over a person’s head when they turn 18 making them knowledgeable of the world and its issues.”

If one walks into many classrooms in many high schools, chances are that more than half the students will not know anything about the health care reform or the situation in Afghanistan.

However, there are many teenagers who do take much interest in issues surrounding us. Nevertheless, if we give these teens the right to vote, we must give all teens the right to vote, including ones that would just mark a ballot that their friend told them to.

“I believe young people need to have interest and knowledge of the world prior to reaching voting age. Otherwise a significant portion of our citizenry will be voting blindly,” Hensel declared.

“Rock the Vote” is a campaign that informs America’s youth about elections, bills, reforms, and issues all around the world, but especially in America. On its Web site, [rockthevote.com](http://rockthevote.com), it describes many ways for children and teenagers of all ages to get involved.

Teenagers under 18 who want to be involved certainly can, not only with being informed and in the know, but with elections. Teenagers can work at polls, can go door-to-door and inform others, or can give out buttons and pins on the candidate of their choice. So although they are not directly voting, they are influencing the voters to get informed and to vote.

So while all teenagers should be taking steps to improve their political savvy-ness, they should also understand why it is not in their, or the country’s, best interest to hold any legitimate power in voting until they reach the voting age of 18.



Some students are very involved in politics, while some teenagers are completely uneducated and uninformed about politics. Every teenager should know about politics.

Photo/ Jenna Overton

# Holiday catchphrase may yield more harm than good

By Candice Sweeney  
Staff Writer

In this day and age, it’s easy to offend someone with words. But during the holidays it has become increasingly easy to offend, just by simply saying “Merry Christmas.” This is sparking up major holiday controversy everywhere. Although those saying “Merry Christmas” deserve respect, shouldn’t those who celebrate other holidays be respected as well?

Merry Christmas once had a very religious meaning, but currently, not so much. Christmas has been so commercialized over the past 100 years, that getting back to the true roots of Christmas is nearly impossible. So now saying “Merry Christmas” has gradually become less of

a religious statement and more of a ‘enjoy the season,’ phrase. Many are getting fed-up with making sure they are saying an appropriate greeting.

“Just say ‘Merry Christmas’ it’s no big deal. Everyone has their own beliefs, so you shouldn’t get offended,” sophomore Kevin Murray said.

The holiday greetings have not only caused troubles between strangers, but also in the work place. Recently in Pensacola, Florida, a woman was fired from her job for saying “Merry Christmas” to

a customer. Can’t we all agree that this is extremely unnecessary? Losing jobs, causing fights it’s safe to say that the true

“Just say ‘Merry Christmas.’ It’s no big deal. Everyone has their own beliefs, so you shouldn’t get offended.”  
~Sophomore Kevin Murray

meaning of Christmas has been lost in a frenzy of being appropriate. “It really doesn’t matter. People will always say it, but it’s annoying that people just overlook Hanukkah completely. It’s sort of a respect thing, I’ll always respect you, but can I just get some respect back?” sophomore Lia BenYishay said.

Most people who celebrate Christmas have a lack of knowledge of other holi-

days celebrated around this time.

But saying Merry Christmas isn’t asking someone for their life story. How are we supposed to know if someone celebrates another holiday? By saying Merry Christmas we are simply being friendly, no ulterior motives involved.

“Merry Christmas” has become a world-renowned saying during this time of the year. How does one explain to their children they will offend their classmates by saying “Merry Christmas”?

So the next time someone says Merry Christmas, let’s just let it be. It is not as though they re personally trying to offend us, they are simply being friendly, despite what ones background may be.

‘Tis the season of peace and love. The holidays are a time of giving, whether it is with words or otherwise.



# Fame

## Desperate attempts to be noticed drastically increases in celebrity-crazed America

**By CJ Colando**  
*Business Editor*

“In the future, everyone will have fifteen minutes of fame.”

This quote from legendary artist Andy Warhol is an accurate prediction of what the world has come to today as far as the extent people are willing to go to for fame. You could have octuplets, trap your son in a homemade balloon, or call yourself “Lady (insert any infant vocabulary word.)”

It’s safe to say these excuses to become worth people’s time are ridiculous. These people and their bizarre antics strive to grab the attention of the media for as long as possible, only to be forgotten soon after.

And for what? So people can see how messed up society really is? What are we to make of a woman from California having octuplets? We now know what kind of person NOT to have kids

with.

Looking for a chance to meet the president and get some nationwide attention while doing it? Crash a party at the White House and have fun while you can, because it’s only a short while before everyone knows who you are and your pathetic need for attention.

Or take some of the worst parents around, Jon and Kate Gosselin. They claim to want to stay out of the spotlight since their joke of a divorce, but somehow appear on countless news shows crying and complaining about their life situation. Even the things they say seems to be desperate attempts to grab attention. “Aliens have taken him away,” Kate Gosselin said in People Magazine of her ex-husband and his antics with other women.

The now infamous “balloon boy” incident would not have been fully realized as a hoax if

the boy himself, Falcon Heene, had not turned his parents in by accident on CNN. “You guys said we did this for the show,” Falcon said on live television.

Even celebrities, who have already proven themselves to be called just that, feel the need to go the extra mile to just be called lunatics and maintain their fame.

Britney Spears, who started as a sweet innocent girl, turns into a baby-popping bald-headed loony who beats photographers with umbrellas. Or even the waste of life Lindsay Lohan, who, like Britney, was sweet and innocent, became a pill-popping, coke-snorting, manic-depressive chick who likes switching up her sexual orientation every now and then.

People like this did not even exist until only a few years ago, when the swarm of reality television took over the minds of America.



*Do these people take it to the extreme when it comes to the constant need to be in the headlines?*

*Courtesy of TMZ.com, Perezhilton.com*

Are these acts to maintain the attention of the media or lousy attempts to put an end to all of the baggage that comes with being a celebrity? Why would Octomom and the balloon boy’s father want this status? It must be one of the aspects of today’s society that will forever be unexplained.

# Controversial Barbie

## proves inspiration to young girls

**IN THE KNOW WITH JENNA O.**

**By Jenna Overton**  
*Editor in Chief*

In an attempt to diversify the classic toy that millions of little girls know and love, workers of Mattel have recently created a Burkha-sporting Barbie doll. Wearing traditional Islamic dresses and chadors, 500 of these dolls were first introduced on Nov. 20 and have been on display at the Salone del Cinquecento in Florence, Italy ever since.

Though it is important for the creators of this multi-billion dollar corporation to come up with dolls that symbolize women from every country on Earth, the females represented by the Burkha Barbie fill a much more controversial, worldly role than those from other areas.

As opposed to women who simply live in a different area of the globe or speak a different language, women who wear Burkhas are generally from the middle east, inhabiting countries where the female sex is denied basic human rights.

In Saudi Arabia, for example, women are nothing more than vessels from which sons may be brought into the world. Baby girls’ spines are sometimes cut after childbirth, as their existence signifies nothing more than another mouth to feed.

Poor families often sell off their virginal daughters, some as young as 7 or 8 years old, to be raped by older men for money because it is the only way to bring food into the house.

Wearing Burkhas does not fill Islamic women with pride for their religion or family, but rather

fear and lack of power over the decisions in their lives. Afghan women have been known to call them “walking coffins.”

In 2002, 15 Saudi Arabian girls were caught not wearing the correct Islamic dresses while fleeing from a burning school. The religious police officials on the scene forced them back into the building and sentenced them to burn to death rather than let them be seen in daylight without



*Courtesy of bgalrstate.blogspot.com*

their Burkhas on, according to news.bbc.co.uk.

One witness recounted seeing an official beating these young girls to keep them inside the blazing school.

To Americans, these events sound like the elements of a disturbing horror movie. But for the women of male-dominated, middle-eastern countries, this is the reality of the world in which they live.

And that’s exactly why these dolls need to be in existence.

Young, Islamic girls who live in such desolate and hopeless conditions need to know that someone cares about their lives.

They need to know that someone out there cares, and that there’s hope they could escape from their terrifyingly underprivileged lives one day.

They need to know that Mattel cared about them enough to make a doll that looks like them.

“My mom always tried to buy me dolls that looked like me when I was a little kid,” senior Leah Longden said. “And that’s just a difference in eye and hair color, so little girls who are forced to wear Burkhas have it unbelievably worse when they see blue-eyed, blonde haired, cheerleader Barbie in the store.”

Though these dolls may portray women whose lives are fleeting and miserable compared to those in the United States, they continue to convey the

message that all women of the world are beautiful, whether black, white, wearing a cheerleading outfit or a Burkha.


“I know Barbie was something seen as bad before as an image for girls, but in actual

fact the message with Barbie for women is you can be whatever you want to be,” Italian designer of the Burkha Barbie line Eliana Lorena told the Daily Mail on Dec. 2.

# 2010

# Redskin

# Yearbook



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# Striking concert experience leaves memorable mark



Sequins, lightning bolts, and costumed fans were in no shortage at the Susquehanna Bank Center on Dec. 3. As part of her Monster Ball Tour, Lady Gaga served up her own dose of crazy in Camden, New Jersey, and my friends and I didn't hesitate to buy tickets.

Our interest in Gaga sparked when her outlandish lyrics caused hysterics amongst our group. Being such avid fans, we jumped at the chance to see the pop goddess live and in her element.

As the date neared, we prepped for an expected night of fun by creating crazy outfits of which Gaga would approve. I went in full Gaga mode and spent most of my spare time listening to her music and reading about the famed star.

Her impromptu album, "The Fame Monster" was written while Gaga was touring and released just four days before her first live show.

"I was leaving my heart on the floor every night on tour, and my fans were giving me so much that I was inspired to write more music, so I listened to my fans," Gaga said, according to MTV.com.

"You have exactly 96 hours to learn all of the lyrics so you can sing along, dress accordingly" Gaga wrote, according to Rolling Stone.

After a seemingly endless countdown, my friends and I gathered together

after a treacherously long day of school. And so the pre-Gaga prepping took place-hair, make-up, wardrobe, and constant documentation via digital camera.

After two hours we took our completed Gaga looks to the streets. It took about 45 minutes to get to Camden, but the time was shortened by Gaga serenading us in the background along the way. Finally my friends and I reached our long-awaited destination: Haus of Gaga.

We stepped through the doors and marvelled at the abundance of glitterfied fans loitering about.

It was pitch black and on stage appeared to be the first of two openers for Lady Gaga. We were escorted to our quality seats which were only \$58. Since the concert began at 7:30 and we had been a bit tardy, the first band, Semi Precious Weapons, was just wrapping up.

After an electrifying performance from Kid Cudi, we waited in anticipation for what we all came here for. Unfortunately, that anticipation turned into frustra-

tion as Gaga kept us waiting for over an hour.

During our waiting, our equally excited neighbors behind us jumped into a controversial discussion over whether the over-dressed fan to their right was a man or woman. They continued to question even after we turned around and settled the debate ourselves, concluding that he was in fact a man, a man in drag, but a man none-the-less.

We grew more impatient and random spouts of crowd uproar took place every five to ten minutes. Finally it began. The feature presentation, Lady Gaga.

Lights went out, the mob of Gaga fans roared and cheered, and, only adding to the suspension, was a 60 second countdown. As a modified intro to "Dance in the Dark" shook the room, the rowdy audience awaited her arrival.

5, 4, 3, 2...1, "Silicone, saline, poison, inject me baby," Lady Gaga belted out her lyrics as the countdown ended, and my friends and I cheered along with the hundreds of people beside us.

With each set Gaga performed, came a different story line. "Paparazzi" took on a strange Rapunzel motif. During the performance of "Monster" Gaga was devoured by her crow-costumed male dancing counterparts.

The shock-pop starlet continuously intrigued us by changing outfits between every two songs. Lofty shoulder pads, crow costumes, outrageous hats, and light up lightening bolt fashion decorated Gaga in top-notch weirdness.

"I want to create a space for my fans where they can feel free," Lady Gaga said about why she chooses the extreme outfits, according to ellen.warnerbros.com. "I like to create this atmosphere for my fans where they feel like they have a freak in me to hang out with and they don't feel alone."

Throughout the show Gaga paused to chat up her fans, encouraging all not to let anyone get in our way of happiness.

Lady Gaga created a new exchange; when she called for her 'Little Monsters,' her fans would throw a monstrous fist into the air and shout back 'Monsters!'

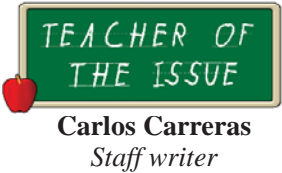
She wrapped up with a rocket performance of her new hit single, "Bad Romance" and bid us all a good night.

The night was simply unforgettable. 'Eh, eh, nothing else I can say.'



Lera (far left) and her Gaga-costumed colleagues readied together before their anticipated night of excitement.  
Photo/Lindsay Hyndman

## Troubled teen turned inspiration



American Studies, Sociology and U.S history teacher Richard Greenberg has inspired many students at Neshaminy, the same way he was inspired by a previous teacher he had when he was a student.

In his eleventh grade year, he met a phenomenal teacher, Michael Holland, who aided in making him realize how much he really wanted to be a teacher. Greenberg had Mr. Holland as a teacher for twelfth grade as well.

Although Greenberg enjoys his days at Neshaminy, he was not always a fan of school. He attended Council Rock South High School, a place where he held a reputation as what would now be called a troubled student.

"I hated high school, I liked the teachers and I liked the education, but I hated the students. They were snobby stuck

up jerks; I didn't really fit in with the majority of the kids," Greenberg commented. "When I met Holland, my social studies teacher, he was like a guardian angel to me, he stood up for me and he was there when I needed him."

After graduating from high school, he continued to enhance his education by receiving his bachelor's degrees at Penn State University and his Master's at Holy Family College. Greenberg and Holland have kept in touch over the years; as for his fellow classmates, he has only kept in contact with one or two close friends.

His mother was the one who inspired him the most. "Watching my mother achieve her dreams was inspirational to me. She didn't go to college after high school, so when my sister and I were in elementary school, we watched her go to college, have a career as a social worker and a therapist and still take care of the family."

After teaching for 12 and a half years, Greenberg can honestly still say he enjoys teaching. "The students are always teaching me something new as I'm also teaching them. So you're never too old to learn." Greenberg has followed Mr. Holland's footsteps.

"When my students told me that they submitted me to be teacher of the issue I asked why? I haven't done anything. And they told me because I inspired them and I'm there for them when I need them," he added

"He's extremely compassionate, he's dedicated to the success of his students. He's willing to work with others such as the cafeteria aids, teacher staffs, Bright students and not so bright students," Neshaminy Guidance Counselor Susan Fennecken said.

Greenberg has been an inspiration to not just students but teachers as well. His influence will continue to brighten the halls of Neshaminy.



Greenberg is always smiles teaching at Neshaminy  
Photo/ Ed Packer

PROSPECTS IN PARADISE

December 24-January 1

No School, Winter Break

January 18

No school, MLK Day

December 25

Christmas

January 23

SAT Testing

December 26-January 1

Kwanzaa

January 29

PMEA District Chorus at Souderton/  
Christopher Dock

December 31

New Years Eve

February 11-13

School Musical Performances

January 13

NHS Winter Concert, 7:30 PM

PUZZLE TIME

Meaning behind Hanukkah; White Christmas; Happy Holidays; All Eyes on Me; Apple-Bottom Jeans; Snowed In

Holidays

JEANS

Christmas

ME

snowed





# Timeless tradition of New Year’s

By Stacey Mathew and Lilia Tkach  
Special Features Editor and Staff Writer

The holidays are rolling around and it is time for Hanukkah wishes, Christmas cheer and of course the New Year.

Celebrating the New Year is a time honored tradition which can be dated back to earlier than the B.C. time period. Long ago, to kick off the New Year, people would give one another branches from sacred trees for good fortune. Later on, the gift of nuts or coins became more common. People who celebrated this holiday, thought of it as a way to reflect on the past and look forward to the future.

In the ancient Roman Empire, the people had a custom of asking their enemies for forgiveness at the beginning of every new year, and they would give their enemies gifts.

Another possible origin for the tradition can be found in Babylon. According to new-years-celebrations.com, the Babylonians started the tradition, although their resolutions would have been

quite different from the resolutions of today.

Today’s society thinks of only a few things at the mention of New Year’s: an excuse to stay up late for children, partying for the adults and to most, failed New Year’s resolutions.

Only about 45 percent of Americans always set New Year’s resolutions, 17 infrequently set them and 38 absolutely never set New Year’s resolutions. “I don’t make New Year’s resolutions, and I won’t this year either,” freshman Corrine Nelson said.

Of these resolutions, a winning 47 percent are related to self-improvement and education. This is followed by 38 percent related to weight, 34 related to money and lastly 31 related to relationships, (this adds to more than 100 percent because some people set multiple resolutions). “[I] try to do something good, rather than trying not to do something,” Teaching Assistant Tricia Boil said.

Of everyone who believes they start over with the coming of each New Year by setting a resolution only about 75 percent keep their plans past the first

week, 64 percent after the first month and 46 percent after six months. Freshman John Thomas has set, and kept the resolution of refraining from drinking soda beverages for nearly three years. “The best way to keep your resolutions is to not think about it, so you’re not tempted to do the opposite,” he said.

However, as popular as resolutions are, there are many who find them to be a waste of time. “I would not do resolutions because the resolutions always seem like a good idea on New Year’s Eve, but then it’s like Jan. 2, and you have already broken them,” junior Kate Pfeilsticker said. “It’s like setting yourself up for failure.”

New Year’s means different things to different people. For some, New Year’s means time off from school or work, for others it is an excuse to stay up late partying. But for the most part, the New Year is about starting fresh with a clean slate, setting goals for yourself and improving your lifestyle. So, upon celebrating the New Year, don’t forget to stop and think about what you could do to improve your life and the life of oth-

New Year's Statistics

-Most common resolution is losing weight, followed by saving money, getting a better job and spending more time with family.

-Less than 39% of people in their twenties achieve their resolution every year or every other year

-Only 46% of people who make resolutions make it past six months.

-Those who openly make resolutions are 10 times more likely to achieve them

2010 Predictions

By Nicole Gattone  
Copy Editor

1. Oprah will purchase the island of Tahiti and rename it “Oprahiti.” The island’s main exports will be free cars and self-help books.
2. Robert Pattinson will change his hairstyle. The resulting tears of teenage girls will collect into one huge river, which will run all the way from Maine to Arizona.
3. The Obamas will adopt another dog. Everyone involved in a media outlet will drop whatever they are doing in order to focus their collective attention on a puppy.
4. Facebook’s Farmville fad will die out and be replaced by Snow Planet, an oddly familiar game in which players build snow forts and hurl snowballs at their friends in order to earn coins.
5. Justin Bieber still will not hit puberty. Doctors will be baffled.
6. Hollywood will run out of comic books to turn into movies, so the majority of next year’s films will be based on toddlers’ television shows. For example, “Teletubbies in Space.”

# Colorful Customs: Diverse ways to celebrate New Year’s around world

By Danielle Olander  
Special Features Editor

The New Year obviously calls for celebration. It’s a time of new beginnings, good fortune and sometimes, strange traditions.

In the United States, the New Year is celebrated by half of the country gathering into Times Square, counting down to midnight. But the United States is only a small portion of the world.

In Great Britain, the English practice first-footing. The first male to set foot inside the house was supposed to bring good luck to the family. They were supposed to bear a gift like money, bread or coal. Whatever they brought was suppose to ensure plenty of that item for the family. However, if the first person to walk in was a red or blond-haired female, the family was said to have bad luck.

People who practice Buddhism ring in the New Year around the same time as the Chinese; mid February. Plenty of water is needed for their celebration as Buddhists like to go around and squirt people with water, regardless as to whether they know the person or not.

In Germany, the Germans have a more dangerous tradition. Very carefully, they drop a ball of molten lead into cold water. The shape the lead become: is supposed to tell the future. For example, a heart or a ring meant a wedding a ship meant a journey and a pig mean plenty of food for in the New Year.

The Japanese believe that hanging a single straw of rice on their door will ward off evil spirits. At the stroke of midnight, the Japanese start laughing as laughing is a sign of good luck for the New Year. Like a lot of other cultures, the Japanese have the ringing of bells. However, the Japanese chime theirs ex-

actly 108 times. The number 108 comes from the 108 earthly desires that one is suppose to be freed from.

Broken plates are a symbol of friends in Denmark. The Danish throw broken plates on the steps of their friends’ houses. Many broken plates mean many friends.

The Greeks make a special St. Basil’s Cake (St. Basil was one of the forefathers of the Greek Orthodox Church). The first piece of the cake is for St. Basil. The second is for the senior most member of the house (men over women and older over younger). Some even save a piece for their cattle. Inside the cake, the chef places a silver or gold coin. Whoever finds the coin in their cake is said to have good luck in the upcoming year.

In one part of the world, a cannon replaces the traditional New Year’s bells. In Iran, festivities don’t start until the cannon is fired. For their New Year’s diner, a special table must be set up with seven items all beginning with the let-

ter ‘s’ (Sonbul: hyacinth, Sabzeh: green shoots grown from grain, Samanoo: a sweet pudding made of green wheat, Serkeh: vinegar, Sumac: an herb, Seeb: an apple, Senjed: bohemian olives).

The Hungarian New Year is brought in with celebratory pyres. Scapegoats, called “Jack Straws,” are paraded through villages and finally up to the fire. The Jack Straws are then burned for the entire village to see. The burning of the Jack Straws is meant to represent the burning of the evil and misfortune from the previous year.

As different as traditions in various countries may be, the fact remains that celebrating the New Year with colorful customs is something that is shared around the world.

# Fun, different resolutions for 2010

By Danielle Olander and Nicole Gattone  
Special Features Editor and Copy Editor

## 1. Procrastinate less.

Specifically, take down those Christmas decorations before April. Seriously, no one wants to look at flashing snowmen and “Santa Stop Here” signs alongside blooming flowers. The lights are already too much to deal with during the holiday season. You’re throwing money out into the snow and keeping your neighbors up until two in the morning.

## 2. Read fewer books.

This resolution may seem a bit odd, but you know what they say: reading is knowledge. Knowledge is power. Power leads to corruption. Corruption leads to a life of crime.

## 3. Spend more time with family.

We know that you’re tired of having your cheeks pinched by your great-aunt Edna, but these people are your flesh and blood, and it wouldn’t hurt to get to know them a little better. Besides, think of it this way: if you get in their good graces now, you’ll get some pretty awesome birthday presents down the road.

## 4. Make new friends.

If you find yourself feeling shy, you can always make some friends up. At first, you’ll feel silly talking to thin air and you may even be a little jealous when your friends get into the movies for free, but we think you’ll grow to love them.

## 5. Confess to the person of your dreams.

The most opportune chance to do this is to write your special someone a Love Line for the

February edition of the Playwickian.

For just one dollar for every 25 words, you can reveal your heart’s deepest and innermost feelings. Please note that the Playwickian staff holds no responsibility for embarrassing and/or heartbreaking rejections.

## 6. Learn something new.

Did you know that sleeping on top of refrigerators is illegal in the state of Pennsylvania? Did you know that shameless advertising is awesome (see number 5)? You didn’t? Well, you do now! Resolution achieved!

## 7. Do your part to eliminate hallway traffic.

We’re not joking with this one. Today’s technology offers many methods of communication. Talk to your friends through email, text message, etc. Don’t stop in the middle of Main Street and create a violent 20-person collision just to exchange a piece of gossip.

## 8. Become more successful.

If you can’t sing, dance, act, write or do anything that will remotely benefit society, the perfect road to success is YouTube. All you have to do is “conveniently” slip on a banana peel or lip-sync to a one-hit wonder while a video camera is recording in the background. One upload later and you’ve got an automatic million views.

## 9. Read directions carefully.

This directly contradicts our earlier suggestion of reading less, but this resolution could save your life. If you see a label on your shirt reading, “Do not iron while on body,” you should probably follow its advice. First degree burns aren’t fun. Likewise, the iPod

shuffle bears the simple command of “DO NOT EAT.” Use common sense.

## 10. Enjoy your holidays.

Technically, New Year’s is at the end of the holiday, but that’s no reason to not have an amazing winter break. You get 11 school-free days; use them to the fullest.



Students' and Teachers' favorite resolutions

“I want to beat Pennsbury at a cheerleading competition.”  
-Junior Casey Fehrle

“I resolute not to make a resolution this year.”  
-English teacher Dan Loungo

“I want to work out more and get better grades.”  
-Freshman Nathan Nicholas-Brown



# Community service reaches peak in Interact Club



By Jocelyn Joseph  
News Editor

Neshaminy Cares recently acquired its new name, morphing into Interact, the globally-recognized service foundation. The newly fashioned group has already shown progress in various community and charity events.

The Interact group is already involved through volunteer efforts, collecting food for homeless shelters, wrapping presents at malls to raise money for Habitat for Humanity, and raising funds for other community and international needs.

The group is currently buying and collecting new pajamas for children living in Bucks County's only homeless shelter, in which the children have little but military cots for beds. Unlike in previous years, Interact is seeking to satisfy the children's needs with such a basic necessity.

Interact is a subdivision of the main Rotary in which local adults and representatives aid various international as well as local causes from global disease

prevention, to helping the needy in their hometown. From grade school onward, there are multiple levels of the organization, which includes Earlyact, Interact, and Rotoract—all of which have the same goal: "Service to others above self, on a global basis," Jim Barrett, secretary of the Feasterville Rotary said.

With over 1.2 million international members, Rotary is the only service group with a permanent seat in the United Nations, besides the Red Cross.

"On a local level we provide winter coats to children in need [through Operation Warm], food for those in need, scholarships for college and graduate students, and much more," Barrett said.

"During the first half of the twentieth century, no illness inspired more dread and outright panic than polio. In 1952, when polio was at its peak, over 21,000 cases of paralytic polio were reported," according to polio.com. Now with 98 percent of the world's polio eliminated, the Rotary group has set out to vanquish that last two percent. "Our number one global goal is the eradication of polio," Barrett added.

Interact has planned a program where they would symbolically paint one's pinky for a dollar in which the proceeds would go towards the foundation for the

prevention of polio.

They will also be hosting a gift wrapping charity event for Habitat for Humanity at Neshaminy Mall on Dec. 20 from 4 to 7 p.m.

"Students who are community-minded should definitely join Interact," Suzie Drake, faculty advisor of the group, said.

To get involved, you can check this

group out on Facebook, or come to a meeting, the next being Jan. 7; contact Drake via-email at [sdrake@neshaminy.k12.pa.us](mailto:sdrake@neshaminy.k12.pa.us) or find her in room G213.

Interact and its many community service projects aim to make the world a better place. This club and its affiliates have caused tremendous good and will continue to do so.

## Hungry Hofmann dreams big



By Tori Hyndman  
Student Life Editor

A die-hard food enthusiast with extensive life goals, junior Taylor Hofmann dances her way through the Neshaminy halls.

**Q: Who is your role model?**

**A:** Wait, is that really a question? Def [Lady] Gaga. She's got sick dance moves.



Taylor Hofmann strikes a pose in the style of her role model, Lady Gaga.

Photo/Tori Hyndman

**Q: What quality do you find most attractive in a person?**

**A:** Raspy voices. I like getting sick if I can get a raspy voice out of it. They're sexy.

**Q: What kind of deodorant do you wear?**

**A:** I like men's deodorant. Don't hate--It works good. Old Spice represent!

**Q: If you could be any type of food what would it be?**

**A:** Probably a taco. I draw them a lot, and they remind me of sombreros, and I like sombreros.

**Q: What is your dream job?**

**A:** Either a person who works at the toll booths, because you get to talk to everyone and ask them how their lives are, or a dog wig maker. Oh, or a roller coaster announcer-operator person. "Welcome back to Nitro!" That would be fun.

**Q: Do you have any pets?**

**A:** Yeah, but I want a bird so I can talk to it and teach it fun words.

**Q: Do you see yourself living in a city or a small town?**

**A:** I'm going to live on a farm and milk the cows, churn some butter, you know? I'll be a country singer and call my first album "Life on the Farm."

**Q: What was one of the best moments of your life?**

**A:** Probably when I went to the zoo and my friend Stavros got bit by a snake and was paralyzed for life. That was a good time. I didn't like Stavros very much.

**Q: Is Stavros OK?**

**A:** I don't have a friend Stavros.

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# Spirited substitute extends holiday cheer to all

By Annie Abdo  
Sports Editor

"Look it's Santa Claus," snickers a kid from the back row, nudging his friend to take a look at Neshaminy substitute teacher Tom Holtje. Holtje stifles a jolly laugh, knowing this is more truthful than they know. His long, white beard and big red cheeks are not a fashion statement, but preparation for his gig at the Franklin Mills Mall as Santa Claus from Nov. 14 to Dec. 24.

During the long mall hours, countless children sit on Santa's lap and whisper their Christmas wishes in his ear. "I can see between 20 to 400 kids a day. Christmas Eve is especially busy," Holtje said. The children come equipped with Christmas lists or a certain present request. "I get a lot of [requests for] Transformers and American Girl Dolls.

The strangest wishes are when kids ask for iPods or cell phones, even Black-Berrys by specific name," Holtje added.

But not all Christmas requests are materialistic. "The most heart-touching moment was when a little girl,

maybe five or six, said that all she wanted for Christmas was love," Holtje said. "The

special needs kids are another of my favorite parts of the job. They're so in awe, so happy and thankful. It's pretty awesome."



Holtje as Santa Claus at the Franklin Mills Mall brings holiday spirit to kids of all ages.

Photo/Tori Hyndman

though the good outweighs the bad of the job, Santa Claus does have some not-so-merry moments. "A bad day is when I only see 20 kids or a day that I get kicked in the shins a lot. Or when I have kids with dirty diapers," Holtje said.

"Kids bring me Christmas lists with cut out pictures from magazines. Sometimes they draw pictures of themselves, of their family, and of me, or well, Santa Claus," Holtje said. Aside from the bruised shins, Holtje considers this job "one of the best I've ever had." But as a Neshaminy substitute, the bar must be pretty high.

Take a trip to Franklin Mills to see Holtje in action. Or at least behave next time he substitutes your class, because you never know if your name will end up on the Naughty List...

## Neshaminy grads reflect College life proves drastically different

By Jess Romberger  
Staff Writer

As high school students are counting down the days to Christmas break, most college kids are already packing for home. The nice long break awarded to college students after their first semester is well deserved after long nights studying for finals, and days spent in labs and classes. Seniors probably can't help wondering, "Are we ready for this?"

Well ready or not, here it comes. Whether you're planning on attending a big school hours away, or a commuter school locally, there are going to be some adjustments to get used to. And the first semester is the toughest.

Getting used to dorm life, the large workload, meeting new people, and finding your way around might be a little overwhelming. But if you go into it with the right attitude, it can be easier than you think.

Chelsea Rota, Neshaminy graduate now attending Rutgers University, tells how different living at college is. "Dorm life is very different. Unlike being in a house where everything is under one roof, I actually have to leave my room for little things like going to eat, taking a shower or brushing my teeth," Rota said.

Majoring in communications with a minor of public relations, Rota not only is getting in her required classes but she also plays for the Rutgers field hockey team. Between an 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. field hockey practice, three to four classes a day, and the required eight hours of study hall a week, she admits it can get hard.

"I wasn't ready for that hectic of a schedule but after a few weeks of it I started to get the hang of it. Also, only having four classes a day is easier than eight periods in a day," Rota said.

Picking the right college for you is the key. Basing it on where your best friends are going will not help you get the most out of your college experience, but you don't want to rush your high school experience either.

Erin Boyce graduated from Neshaminy last year and is now attending Ursinus College majoring in biology and completing premedical requirements.

"During my senior year I could not wait for college. Now that I am in college, part of me wants to go back to high school," Boyce said. She admits to being nervous at first and getting overwhelmed from time to time, but said that other students with the same major as her have assured her everything gets easier after the first semester.

Boyce has four classes at the moment: biology, chemistry, Spanish, and an English class in addition to two labs. It really does not sound too bad, with only four classes a day, but the work load may be a bit of a surprise to college freshmen, as it proved to be for Boyce.

"You think that because you have fewer classes, you will have more time, but this is definitely not true," Boyce said. She manages it all by keeping things in perspective though; it helps that she is not too far from home, because a weekend at home once in a while can be a relief.

Many graduates go into college thinking about all the negative stuff they hear—the long hours, the endless homework, strict professors, and exams, but once they get there they are surprised at the things they find.

"Professors are much kinder than the high school teachers made them sound. They are people too, and really are there to help you as much as they can," Kira Marchione said. Marchione, another graduate from Neshaminy, is currently attending Arcadia University, majoring in Elementary Education.

Marchione was appreciative of Neshaminy, claiming that it prepared her by teaching her how to manage all of her schoolwork, an important habit essential to staying on task in college.

"Join clubs and make the most out of what is available to you. Use your professors and free tutors around campus as much as possible!" Marchione added as a tip for all incoming college freshmen.

Life after Neshaminy may seem far off, but in reality it will be here before you know it. Nerves are expected, but the key is to take it all in stride. "Don't let life pass you by too quickly," Boyce advised to all high school students.

High school only happens once, and so does college. But, all in all, make the most of both experiences.



This year the Student Council held a food drive for families in the community that cannot afford such necessities. Normally a responsibility of the Honor Society, the revolutionary Student Council coupled the drive with their dodgeball tournament and was able to make a significant impact.

Photo/Dan Coleman

## School struck by gym class villains

By Dan Coleman and Danielle Walter  
Student Life Editor and Staff Writer

Have you ever had anything stolen from you while in gym class, passing by in the hallway, or from your regular school locker? Recently, a crime spree has hit Neshaminy.

Most of these school thieves snatch phones, calculators, iPod/mp3 players, or money. The simplest remedies are either locking up your belongings or not bringing that type of stuff into school for people to steal. If an item is that valuable or expensive, it is not worth bringing in and risking theft.

When gym class is in session, the locker rooms are empty. People make their way into the rooms to steal valuables from open lockers. The thieves then often sell them over the internet or in Neshaminy's black market.

"It is so stupid when people have their stuff stolen. There is seriously no point



Thievery runs rampant in the halls and locker rooms.

Photo/Dan Coleman

to stealing. The teachers should have a better eye and should really watch the students more. Maybe there would not be as much theft in school," freshman Lauren Creamer said.

"People really shouldn't steal, but the people who don't lock up their stuff are at fault. The students should be more on edge about their surroundings. If people lock their stuff up, like they are supposed to, the thefts should go down," Freshman Zach Newman added.

Gym class is not the only time when items are stolen "The hallways at Neshaminy are so crowded that someone was able to go into my bag and steal my \$140 graphing calculator without me noticing" junior Liz Curtin said. In-school thefts only lead to paranoia and distrust.

"I think it is really pointless. These teenagers only do it for their self satisfaction" Hannah Denis, freshman, said.

"When people have their own belongings stolen, they probably feel really upset and they want to cry. What if you just bought something with your own money and were saving up for a really long time and then someone goes and steals it because you didn't bring a lock for one day? You would probably want to break down and start crying. You should just not steal," freshman Kelsey Fuller said.

Sharing combinations with friends can also lead to theft. To better protect your belongings, not telling anyone, even your friends, is a safe idea. Secrecy is safety.

Stealing is very avoidable. Either do not bring in valuables or take precautions to protect them. Until the crime spree ends, all students must be on high alert.



# Woods suffers endless ridicule for scandalous affairs



By Samantha Pipe  
Sports Editor

Tiger Woods has been the face of the PGA tour, the world of golf and the Nike brand for the past several years. At the age of only 33, Woods has won 14 major golf titles, 71 PGA tournaments and is the number one golfer in the world. Woods was also the highest-paid professional athlete in 2008 with \$110 million from winnings and endorsements.

Tiger Woods may be an outstanding golf player, but due to current events, may no longer be seen as a family man. At 2:25 a.m. on Friday Nov. 30 at his house in Orange County, Florida, Woods quickly backed out of his driveway in his 2009 Cadillac SUV and hit a tree and a fire hydrant. His wife then "rescued" him by breaking the rear window, ironically with a golf club, pulled him out of the car and issued first aid. Woods suffered from some facial injuries and bruises but was quickly treated and released from the hospital. Woods' fans have nothing to worry about; his recently injured knee suffered no damage.

The case of Tiger Woods' car crash was quickly closed for the Florida

Highway Patrol, but it was just starting for the media. Rumors started to spread about why Woods was speeding out of his driveway so early in the morning. A new story then developed; Woods' wife, Elin, had found out that he was cheating on her and that all those scratches on his face were not just from the car. Appar-



Tiger Woods with his "happy family."

Courtesy of [www.planetnora.wordpress.com](http://www.planetnora.wordpress.com)

ently Woods had fled the scene of the heated fight with his wife and that was when he got into the car crash.

In Woods' initial statement on his Web site, he denied all of these rumors of his alleged mistress, "This is a private matter and I want to keep it that way. Although I understand there is curiosity, the many false, unfounded and malicious rumors that are currently circulating about my family and me are irresponsible."

It didn't take long for new information to arise that would not help out Woods' story. Not one, not two, but six women stepped forward to claim that they had affairs with Woods and the number is still climbing. Text messages from Woods to these women were soon-discovered. Some of these women's mo-

tives and truthfulness were questioned due to the money that a few of them received from the tabloids that they told their stories to.

One alleged mistress, Rachel Uchitel, a night club promoter, comments on her relationship with Woods, "I live alone, I don't have a boyfriend, and I have my gay best friend staying over most nights. I'm a recluse. I don't go out, I stay home with my dogs and friends ... I do not have sex with celebrities, and I have not had an affair with Tiger Woods."

Woods then released a new statement about the situation, "I have let my family down and I regret those transgressions with all of my heart. I have not been true to my values and the behavior my family deserves. I am not without faults and I am far short of perfect. I am dealing with my behavior and personal failings behind closed doors with my family. Those feelings should be shared by us alone."

There are many questions that Woods' accident and affairs raise. Such as, will this news affect his golf career, his legacy, or his fan base and are athletes' personal lives any of the public's business?

The golf business better hope that Woods will be able to get past these

events, because many of their viewers are dedicated Tiger fans. Fellow golf star John Daly comments on Woods' situation, "He'll get over this. The family will get over it. They'll move on. Golf needs him."

His fan base will most likely also stick with Woods; the fact that he had an affair doesn't diminish his outstanding skills on the golf course and the excitement that comes with his talent. The legend that is Tiger Woods will also stay the same especially if he stays on course to beating Jack Nicklaus' 18 major titles. Unlike steroid or illegal drug use, Woods' affair will not put an asterisk next to his name in the record books.

Athletes, especially ones that are heavily endorsed, are heavily under the public's eye,

causing their personal lives to be exposed. Although many things that famous athletes do are wrong, as long as they are not doing anything illegal, such as drugs, beating their wives, or the popular issue of shooting themselves, then why should we care? Athletes get paid and are famous for their talent on the field, court, or course, not whether they have a perfect family life. Tiger Woods will still go down in history as one of the top golf players in recent history.



Rachel Uchitel is just one of Tiger Woods' many alleged mistresses.

Courtesy of [images.mirrors.com](http://images.mirrors.com)

## Sophomore leads basketball team



By Mitch McKay  
Staff Writer

Sophomore Ryan "Arch" Arcidiacono, has been playing basketball since he was able to pick up a ball. These days the Redskins' Varsity basketball team is putting the ball in his hands as Arch proved last season that he can handle the load.

As a freshman, Arch was a major part in turning the team around from their 2007 record which was a lowly 3-21 all the way to a respectable 16-10 record with two of those wins coming in the playoffs. "The program had come a long way and I was happy to help the seniors play in a playoff game and even help get a win," Arch said of last season's success.

Arch has already made some great memories on Neshaminy's basketball team. Last year, when the Redskins played in a tournament hosted by Holy Ghost, Arch hit a game winning shot with less than three seconds to go to stop Holy Ghost from advancing to the championship game for the first time ever.

He says though, that his favorite moment was when the Redskins upset the higher seeded Penncrest basketball team in the first round of the playoffs.

"We were a 23 seed (rank) and they were a 10 seed but our team was able to pull it out on the road by 8 points, it was a big win," Arch said.

Hoopscooponline.com, a site that ranks players nationally by their high school class, has him ranked as the 65 highest ranked sophomore high school basketball player in the nation. He has also received scholarship offers from division one schools like Rutgers and St. Joes.

"Arch is a special player and is a key to our team's success," said junior teammate Dwight Williams.

All of Arch's success didn't come over night, he admits to owing a large part of it to trainer and good friend Ben Luber, who worked with him on improving his dribbling and quickness. Arch says that without Ben he wouldn't have the pull up jump shot he uses often.

Senior players are among the happiest to have Arch as a member of the team. Senior teammate Steve Warhola, who was a sophomore player on the 2007 Redskins, said, "Before Arch, we as a program almost expected and accepted defeat. Now we have winners' mentality and play the game with much more passion."

Arch has a bright future and is looking forward to continuing his passionate ways in the upcoming basketball season.



Ryan Arcidiacono works hard at practice  
Photo/Marissa Beaton

## NFL concussion policy finalized

By Clay Snyder  
Staff Writer

The commissioner has instituted a new concussion policy for the NFL. After a recent increase in concussions over the past weeks, Commissioner Roger Goodell took the chance to use the new policy. "I don't want to see my players have the effects of football on them when they retire." He told ESPN's Jayson Stark.

The new policy states that a player that suffers from dizziness, vertigo, loss of memory or severe headaches must be held of the game or practice until examined by a third party official.

After concussions to Ben Rothlisberger, Brian Westbrook, and a career ending one to Jamal Lewis, the NFL and the NFL players association discussed how the concussion can

cause dementia and other neurological problems.

Eagles head coach Andy Reid said that his players would "get plenty of recovery time as mandated by the commissioner." Reid had Brian Westbrook and DeSean Jackson both out the past week, and both may play against the New York Giants on Sunday, Dec. 13. "I believe I'll be ready to go," Jackson said.

Although the players would like to play, they know that coming back too soon could cause permanent injuries. "I agree with any rule that protects players from themselves," Saints linebacker Scott Fujita told Howard Fendrich, a renowned sports writer. Many teams need their star players in order to win. These teams face a tough decision -- play their star player who is hurt and risk further injury, or go with a backup.

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# Iverson receives standing ovation upon return

By Omar Khan  
Staff Writer

The 76ers have been messing around with the idea of signing the recently retired NBA veteran back to his first ever NBA team's roster, the Philadelphia 76ers. Allen Iverson originally started his career in Philly with the Philadelphia 76ers. Iverson helped Philadelphia on the road to the NBA Championship seven game series but didn't achieve to win the one game that counted the most. Iverson still feels he has more gas left in the tank for yet another big season with the 76ers.

There was a big controversy that if Iverson would join the Philadelphia 76ers once

more. Iverson once said "I want to retire as a 76er". This was said in a press conference when he was traded to the Denver Nuggets for Joe Smith and An-

of play fits my strengths. I'm looking forward to playing with Carmelo, the rest of the Denver Nuggets, and for George Karl, who is a proven winner."

Whether you are a huge fan of Iverson or despise him, he has returned to the 76ers. He also had his first practice with the team and is expected to play his first game as a 76er in three years on the Dec. 7. The coach of the 76ers, Eddie Jordan said, "He made a difference already in practice." Iverson's return has given the Sixers a jolt in tickets sales. The Sixers, who ranked 29th in the NBA in attendance, have standing-room only tickets left for his return.

Iverson admitting that it was very frustrating for him flowing with the rhythm of the



Iverson may be the key for the 76ers to improve.  
Courtesy of Inside Hoops

dre miller two first rounds picks in the 2007 draft, even though Iverson was content with the trade saying "Denver's style

## Ice hockey fights to maintain desired .500 record

By Ed Packer  
Staff Writer

The Neshaminy Redskins' hockey team is almost back to an even .500 record. However, the team's overall record doesn't show how the 'Skins have been playing.

The team has used three different goalies this season. Though the Redskins have been struggling, senior goalie Connor McWilliams keeps an upbeat attitude towards the game. "We haven't really hit our stride yet; we've had little bursts but nothing to change the course of the season."

The Redskins hoped to start off the season with a win over the below average William Tennant Panthers. The team got into an early 2-0 lead when senior captain James Rambo netted two goals.

The Panthers scored late in the second period, and again scored late in the third. McWilliams kept the team in the game with late stops in the third. The 'Skins almost lost this game but it ended in a 2-2 tie.

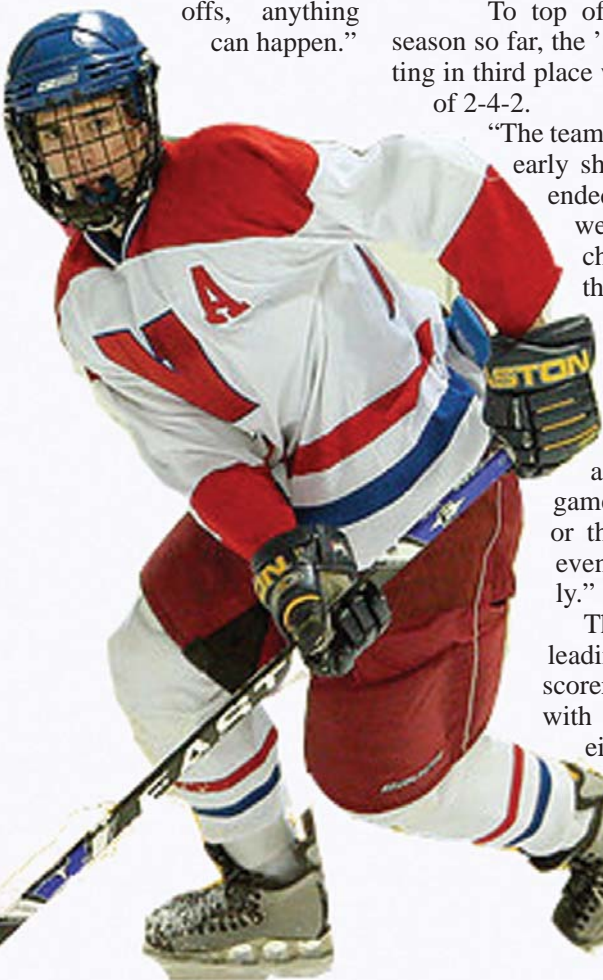
The team dominated the strong Abington team this season. Seniors Shane Thomas and DJ Bell both contributed with two goals followed by Rambo's. The 'Skins fought hard in this game and really

showed their true colors by earning a huge win.

The 'Skins lost their next three games against two of the SOL National's powerhouses, Council Rock South and Council Rock North. The team

then played an out of league opponent Pennridge High School, losing 8-5.

Thomas seems to be optimistic about the rest of the season. "We only need to win a few more games and we'll be in the playoffs. In the playoffs, anything can happen."



Senior Dave Pfeilsticker pushes the puck down the rink, aiding the team in its attempt to reach a respectable record for this school year.  
Courtesy of Suburban One League

The next game, the Skins were up against SOL Continental's second place, Central Bucks South. The team seemed to have finally hit their stride again. Rambo had a huge night for the 'Skins netting three

goals and Thomas scored five goals.

Thomas and Rambo weren't the only players to have a multi-goal game; underclassmen Mike Caputo had himself a two-goal night to help seal the 'Skins' big game victory.

To top off the team's season so far, the 'Skins are sitting in third place with a record of 2-4-2.

"The teams that we tied early shouldn't have ended that way, we had our chances to put them away and it slipped," senior captain Rambo said. "We can't have any more games like those or they could be even more costly."

This season's leading point scorer is Thomas with 13 points, eight goals and five assists. He is followed closely by Rambo and Bell who each have 12 points.

Rambo has seven goals and five assists while Bell has three goals and nine assists.

Ice hockey's future is bright with these stand out players this year and are hoping to finish with a stellar season.

Memphis Grizzlies. "Sitting out as much as I did, I kind of got off beat a little bit. It won't take me but a little while to get it back." Asking everyone to be patient with him, he is ready to get back on track once again with the Sixers.

Iverson had an emotional press conference announcing his signing with the 76ers. "I really think it's a blessing that I'm back here," Iverson said to the media. "When I had the opportunity to come back here I couldn't turn it down, I am just happy". All that happened to Iverson over the past few years bothered him. "With the mistakes I had made in my life I created a picture of myself that

isn't me". "I did a lot of things when I was young that I am not proud of, but I think those things helped to be the man that I am now," he said while weeping. "The last couple years have been hell because all I want to do is play basketball and help the guys that I play with".

"I was born to be a basketball player, and the only thing I can do and that I'm better at then basketball is being a father and a husband," Iverson said. "I know I can play and if I wasn't as good as I am accustomed to be I wouldn't have came back because then I would've embarrassed myself". This was both an emotional press conference and emotional experience.

## Ingram takes Heisman trophy

By Tom Sottnick  
Staff Writer

This year there were five players in the running for college footballs greatest honor, the Heisman Trophy. They are: Tim Tebow, Mark Ingram, Toby Gerhart, Colt McCoy, and Ndamukong Suh.

The first contestant in the Heisman watch was Tim Tebow. Tebow plays quarterback and is a senior at the University of Florida. He is considered by many to be the best college football player of all time because of his two national championship wins and a Heisman in 2007. Tebow passed for 2,413 yards on 182 completions out of 279 attempts with a 65.2 completion percentage and also with 18 touchdown passes and four interceptions. Tebow has rushed for 859 yards on 203 carries with 13 touchdowns averaging four and a tenth yard per rush. "It's something that I'm not thinking or worried about because our goal is to win an SEC Championship and that's our focus" Tebow said regarding the Heisman.

Next was Mark Ingram. Ingram plays running back and is a sophomore at the University of Alabama. He has rushed for 1,542 yards on 249 carries with 15 touchdowns averaging six and two tenths yards a carry and has not fumbled once this season. This year Ingram nearly doubled his rushes and yards compared to last year. "Mark has done a fine a job since I've been around," Alabama head coach Nick Saben said.

Also in the running was Colt McCoy. McCoy plays quarterback and is a senior at the University of Texas. McCoy has passed for 3,512 yards on 330 completions out of 468 attempts with 27 touchdowns and 12 interceptions.

McCoy's Heisman moment probably came against Texas A and M. In the game McCoy completed 24 out of 40 passes for 304 yards and three touchdown passes and also ran for 175 yards on 18 carries and a touchdown. "If anyone has a better Heisman moment than that I'd like to see it," Texas Longhorn's coach Mac Brown said.

The fourth was Toby Gerhart. Gerhart plays running back and is a senior at the University of Stanford. Gerhart has ran the ball 311 times for 1,736 yards with 26 touchdowns averaging five and six tenths yards a rush and has not fumbled once all year. Gerhart's Heisman moment problem came against Notre Dame in the season fianle where he rushed 29 times for 205 yards with three touchdowns averaging seven and one tenth yards a rush.

Last was Ndamukong Suh. Suh plays defensive tackle and is a senior at the University of Nebraska. Suh has 23 tackles for a loss, 12 sacks, three blocked field goals, and one interception. Suh's Heisman moment probably came in the Big 12 Championship game where he sacked Colt McCoy four times.

While all these players caused the race to be close, Ingram was selected as the 75th winner of the Heisman Trophy for 2009.

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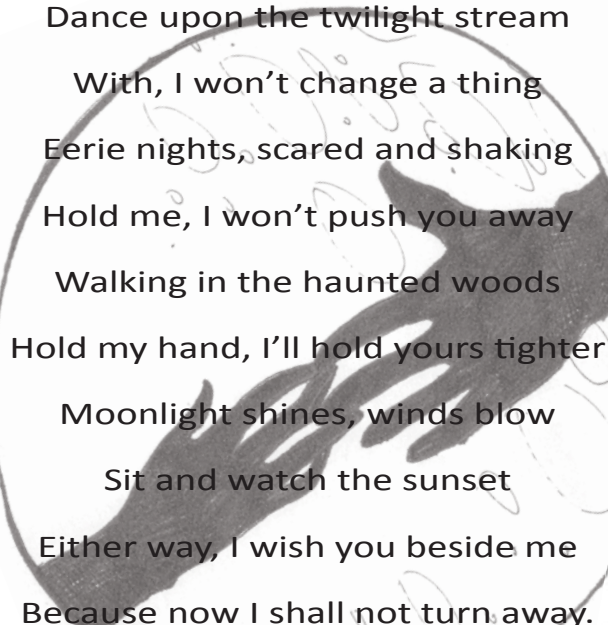
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## Moonlight.

by Paige Broonyan

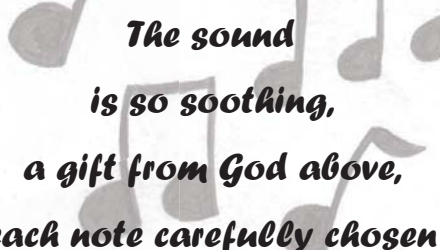


Dance upon the twilight stream  
 With, I won't change a thing  
 Eerie nights, scared and shaking  
 Hold me, I won't push you away  
 Walking in the haunted woods  
 Hold my hand, I'll hold yours tighter  
 Moonlight shines, winds blow  
 Sit and watch the sunset  
 Either way, I wish you beside me  
 Because now I shall not turn away.


# EXPRESSIONS

## Music

by Kelsey Lerman



The sound  
 is so soothing,  
 a gift from God above,  
 each note carefully chosen  
 with love.

Butterflies  
by Rebecca Yacker


Already the rain  
 falls differently  
 I walk through it  
 Hands in my pockets  
 Carrying thoughts  
 heavier than my body  
 I know you have  
 butterfly wings  
 I would never want  
 to tie them down  
 There is a whole world  
 out there to see  
 I want to see it too.

*Expressions* seeks your creative  
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 in room G202 or to Rebecca Yacker  
 or to Katey Smyth

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## Readers highly anticipate 'Lovely Bones'

By Juliette Rihl  
 Staff Writer

Christmas isn't the only thing causing excitement this month. It's also the premiere of the much-anticipated novel-turned movie, "The Lovely Bones." Written by Alice Sebold, "The Lovely Bones" is a twisted, yet touching story about a 14-year-old girl living in suburban Pennsylvania who is brutally raped and killed by her crazed neighbor. She proceeds to watch from heaven as her family attempts to cope with her death while at the same time trying to identify her murderer. Susie, the main character, struggles to choose between her will for her loved ones to move on and her personal desire for vengeance against her hostile killer.

The book has been popular with teenagers and adults alike, since it was published in 2003. The fans are hoping that the movie will stay as true as possible to the book. "The book is about such a controversial topic," freshman Annie Kopera said. "I would like the people who didn't read 'The Lovely Bones' to be able to experience the story line as it was written. I read 'The Lovely Bones,' and I'm going to the movies expecting to see 'The Lovely Bones.'"

Peter Jackson, the well-known director of such box office wonders as "The Lord of the Rings" and "Heavenly Creatures" is the man behind the film. Jackson fans are thrilled that he directed "The Lovely Bones" as his most recent project, and of course are anxious to see how he portrays the most sensitive and emotional parts of the story, such as the heaven that Susie lives in and how she comes in contact with her living family members and friends on Earth.

However, as elated as the readers might be that the film is finally here,

critics aren't sharing in their enthusiasm. It seems that opinions of the film are so conflicting that it is almost impossible to get a true sense of what the movie entails. The pre-screening of the movie received a disappointing 64% on rottentomatoes.com "Tomato-Meter," and critics' feedback is almost split down the middle. "Peter Jackson's infatuation with fancy visual effects mortally wounds 'The Lovely Bones'... Jackson undermines solid work from a good cast with show-offy celestial evocations that severely disrupt the emotional connections with the characters," Todd McCartney, of Variety, wrote.

The Guardian's review was also disapproving. "How does one make a PG-certified film about the rape and murder of a 14-year-old girl?" it asks. "Director Peter Jackson provides an answer of sorts with 'The Lovely Bones,' which leaves the murder unseen and the rape unmentioned."

In contrast, the film earned itself 4.5 out of five stars from boxoffice.com. "Peter Jackson returns to the engrossing and poetic imagery that earned him his name more than a decade ago... Jackson creates visuals that sweep and morph together for this melodrama-cum-detective story," Sara Schieron, Box Office journalist, said.

If your head is spinning from all of those strongly worded and severely contradicting opinions, don't worry, you're not the only one. The question on everyone's minds: has Peter Jackson created a brilliant and bittersweet masterpiece, or turned a beloved book into a genuine artistic disappointment?

At this point, it looks like fans will just have to wait until the movie hits screens and decide for themselves whether it deserves a thumbs up, or an empty seat in the theater.

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# Lambert shunned for same-gendered smooch

By Nicole Onisick  
Op-Ed Editor

It's the punch line in every movie, it's frequently used as the farthest thing from a term of endearment, and in the dictionary, its number one synonym is happy: gay. Now queue every stereotypical-macho-man flinching in fear of their manhood. Recently, at the American Music Awards, singer and former American Idol contestant Adam Lambert became the talk of the town and has been shunned from CBS for a "provocative" kiss shared with a male back-up dancer. This kiss was blurred out immediately, which leaves us wondering, in this day and age, why is homophobia still even around?

Let's head back to the infamous pop princess kiss be-

tween Madonna and Britney Spears (and Christina Aguilera) back in 2003. This notorious smooch was left visible for home viewers and hardly received negative feedback. Nevertheless, Lambert pulled the same shenanigan on-stage, yet was covered in shame? The hypocrisy is rather insulting to men and women alike, and also shows something about how many Americans continue to live in their glass houses and still share the same accepting values as the pilgrims.

As if being recoiled from his own individuality wasn't enough, on the heels of the controversy the television network ABC pulled the plugs on Lambert's appearance on the show Good Morning America. Although Lambert was deemed too controversial for his appear-

ance, the network picked the perfect replacement, singer and female abuser, Chris Brown. Many viewers are shocked and even disappointed with the mixed message ABC is sending to its viewers. A homosexual male or a convicted felon? Great call, ABC.

The CBS reps left a well, ironically blurred explanation for their behavior. "We gave this some real thought. The Madonna image is very familiar and has appeared countless times including many times on morning television. The Adam Lambert image is a subject of great current controversy, has not been nearly as widely disseminated, and for all we know, may still lead to legal consequences," CBS reps said. I'm not sure many knew that a same-gendered kiss was a 'legal

consequence.' Oh, that's right, because it isn't.

Many viewers just don't enjoy seeing excessive amounts of P.D.A. on stage, or anywhere for that matter, but to pardon a female-to-female kiss because of its appeal, and to shun a male-on-male kiss because it is offensive is unbearably hypocritical. This controversy only sends homosexuals across the nation steps back into hiding their sexuality. These popular networks are treating homosexuals as if their behavior is something to be ashamed of. They are sending the message to millions that their sexuality is only acceptable if it is straight

gendered, or in Britney and Madonna's case, attractive.

Adam Lambert has not apologized for his performance, and he shouldn't have to. We shouldn't be offended by celebrities' or any other human beings' expression of their individuality. We should allow the Lady Gagas and Adam Lamberts to convey their uniqueness freely (but Chris Brown- go back under that rock you've been hiding under). Freedom is something that many continuously abuse their privilege of, but if we cannot even express our love to one another, straight-gendered or not, then what exactly is the point of having freedom?

## Celebrity parents: Who earned their spot on our top 10 countdown in being the worst out there?

By Becca Erskine and Jenn Zaidman  
Entertainment Editors

Think you weren't dealt the best hand with your parents? Do you feel as if irresponsible, incapable "adults" gave birth to you? Well, think again. These celebrities got it bad, while their parents allowed the world to see, and the "winners" are well... obvious.

10. The hustler himself, *Flava Flav*. He currently has seven kids, each with different mothers, and apparently he's expecting more. You're probably wondering how he manages to see them in a given time, and well, the answer's simple... he doesn't.

9. Our "favorite" TV stars, *Jon and Kate Gosselin*. At the ages of nine and younger, what kid really wants to be filmed jumping rope or coloring pictures? Let's not forget the father-of-eight that left his family on one of the biggest channels in television.

8. Another one who has hit rock bottom, *David Hasselhoff*. Only wearing blue jeans, Hasselhoff allowed his daughters to film him intoxicated, while eating

a hamburger. "[My daughters] were concerned for my well-being, [and made a tape] to show me what I was like," Hasselhoff said, according to msnbc.com.

7. This will make you sick to your stomach, feel disgusted, maybe even offended, or all three. *Woody Allen*, 70, married his much younger step-daughter, Soon-Yi Previn, 35. "It was a turning point in my life for

*"There is no such thing as fun for the whole family."*  
~ Jerry Seinfeld

the better," he said, according to timesonline.co.uk. Allen has definitely crossed the line of age, and incest.

6. We all knew it was coming, the complete train wreck of a family, the *Lohans*. "Lindsay-ity," as she is referred to by Perez Hilton, isn't the only Lohan accused of cutting. Their father became a cutter at a young age. In this family, crazy is a gene, which has been passed down through many generations of related psychos.

5. A careless human being who parented the people he hurt the most, *Ryan O'Neal*. He's al-

ready been charged with illegal drugs, and passed his bad habits down to his son, Redmond. He figured he needed to do a little bit more in order to reach our number five spot. As an attempt, he went for his own daughter, Tatum, not at a family party, but at ex-wife Farrah Fawcett's funeral. O'Neal proved himself in being one of the most reckless and repulsive human beings to call himself a parent.

4. *Courtney Love*, the knocked up, Oxycontin overdosee, has been on just about every celebrity gossip site. If you go to Google and search "Courtney Love," you won't be surprised with what you find. Hopefully Love doesn't continue her habit of flicking cigarettes with her kids around.

3. The next parent, with octuplets... you already know who we're talking about, the star-driven "Octo-Mom," *Nadya Suleman*. After being singled out on plastic surgery, her infamous 911 phone call, and her past in being a stripper, Suleman can't even handle herself, so how can she handle 14 kids?

2. Being the perfect example of a cruel parent, *Joe Jackson*, who even after his son Michael's death, continued to be

## Graffiti thriving artist at Neshaminy



By Rebecca Johnson  
Staff Writer

Colleen Gallagher's earliest memory of art was when she was around three years old, sitting at the kitchen table drawing stick figures with color-changing markers. Ever since then, she has grown to love the artistic world, creating many interesting and impressive pieces of art.

Gallagher, a sophomore at Neshaminy, receives inspiration from everything around her, including nature, events, emotions, and especially stories. "I once drew myself as an armadillo because I claimed I was one in an essay," she commented.

Her favorite medium is standard pencils, because she finds them easy to blend and convenient for travel. Although this is the style that

Gallagher uses most often, her favorite piece of art is an enormous vase that she crafted in ninth grade. More than a foot and a half tall, and one foot across at its widest point, it took her about two or three months to create. "It also took another two or three months to carry it home," Gallagher laughed.

In the future, she hopes that she can have a successful career in art, in any capacity. She realizes though, that many aspiring artists never fulfill their artistic dreams. Gallagher knows that even if her future holds a career that does not involve art, there are still ways that she can include it in her life. "I can be a secret part-time graffiti artist, or something less illegal," Gallagher said, light heartedly.



the malicious man that all of us saw and heard about from the media. Jackson takes number two on our list, since even after Michael's death, he sued his son's estate for a monthly allowance.

1. The final negligent, *John Phillips*, father of Mackenzie Phillips. You won't see this pair at the next father daughter dance. He had ongoing sexual relations with his daughter.

"I woke up that night from a blackout to find myself having sex with my father," she said, according to allieiswired.com. How's that for parenting?

So, the next time you complain about your parents... think about these celebs, and know that it might not be all that bad. If they don't let you go to that party Saturday night, just think... it's better than seeing Ryan O'Neal in a dark alley.

### Christmas Day Movie Releases

**Sherlock Holmes:**  
As anticipated, Sherlock Holmes gets an updated new twist from the comic book series to a major motion picture. Get ready to see Holmes and his partner, Watson, engage in brawls with arch nemesis to save all of England.

**The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus:**  
Watch as Dr. Parnassus leads you in a fantastical morality tale with his ability to guide the imagination of others. Engage into the story of Dr. Parnassus and his fight to save his daughter. Be the first to witness this captivating, imaginative race against time.

## 'Call of Duty' gets world's nod of approval

Videogame Review  
By Andy Zubak  
Staff Writer

*I am battling for my life. I sink into the tall grass in my camouflage suit. I raise my head a little and see something. I duck, reload. I see another person coming toward me. Everything seems really slow, my vision goes white, it's all over.*

Is this a skirmish in Iraq? A battle in Afghanistan? No, this event is probably happening in a living room, maybe even in your own home. I've just let you in on a game called "Demolition in Call of Duty Modern Warfare 2." The successful video game was released at midnight on Nov. 10 by "Infinity Ward."

With more than 4.7 million copies sold on the first night of sales in the U.S. and U.K., the game has become a frequent pastime of game players around the world.

Like the first version of the game, the game features campaign, cooperative, and multi player modes. Even in the lower levels, the game is exciting. When the battle starts, the action explodes everywhere. The game also features a new mode called Special Ops where you can play on your own or with a buddy in timed missions with specific objectives. What's great about this version is that the guns and online play are phenomenal and addicting. The real reviewers of the game are the ones who buy it and are raving about it. Neshaminy students are buzzing over the game.

But not all are admir-

ing this game. In Russia and Afghanistan, it has been rumored that the game is banned for showing an uncomplimentary view of these nations. The game shows an American undercover agent watching Russians destroy a European airport. It also includes a game that takes place in Afghanistan and many people are killed. Activision denies these rumors and says that it had only released a PC version of the game in Russia on Nov. 10 so the video game could not have been banned.

"Call of Duty" is available nationwide for Xbox, PS3, and PC. The basic version sells for \$60, and the premium game with night vision goggles for \$100.

Turkey Rating (out of 5):







Weird Xmas

It is a British Christmas tradition that wish made while mixing the Christmas pudding will only come true if the ingredients are stirred in a clockwise direction.

In Yugoslavia, the second Sunday before Christmas, children creep in and tie their mother's feet to a chair, shouting "Mother's Day, Mother's Day, what will you pay to get away." The mom must then give them presents.

In Caracas, Venezuela, the streets are closed on Christmas morning so that people can roller-skate to church.

On Christmas Eve in Norway, all the brooms in the house are hidden because it was previously believed that witches and mischievous spirits came out on Christmas Eve and would steal the brooms to fly on.

- Editors' Playlist
- Holiday Song Remakes
1. "Baby it's Cold Outside" by Zooey Deschanel & Leon Redbone
  2. "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)" by Death Cab for Cutie
  3. "This Christmas" by Chris Brown
  4. "Christmas Must Be Something More" by Taylor Swift
  5. "Silent Night" by Mariah Carey

**Pickle in a Christmas Tree:**  
An old Victorian tradition was to hide a glass pickle in the Christmas tree the night before Christmas. Whoever found the pickle would either receive a special gift or get to open the first gift.

**Christmas Tree Spiders:**  
In the Ukraine, it is customary to decorate a Christmas tree with an artificial spider and webs. It is believed that a spider web found on Christmas morning brings good luck. If they were mistaken as real, they might also bring heart attacks.