



OUR TOWN...

LEMONT

by Erin O'Connor
News writer

The Lemont high school drama club will be putting on a production of the play, "Our Town". They play will be performed on Friday February 11 and Saturday February 12 at 7 p.m.

Our town originally debuted in 1938 in Princeton, New Jersey and later moved on the New York. The play is centered around an average American family. The character of the stage manager helps the play flow with interjections bring other situations into perspective as the play is acted.

"Our town", originally written by Thorton Wilder, is about the lives of ordinary people, in an ordinary town during the 1930s. However the LHS Drama Club has put its own spin on things and changed the play to be about our very own town of Lemont.

The play portrays many of life's usual events: school, marriage, raising families etc. and shows Senior Clare Rogers said, "...the fact that life is important, and that people need to realize how wonderful life really is as they live it."

Rogers said that the stage will have minimal set and due to how the characters act and look, the audience will infer their location. Not only is there very little set in this play, but the characters will not be using any props – bringing the audience's attention towards the actors' actions once again. "'Our Town' has really helped us to grow as actors," explained Rogers.

Putting a different spin on the usual play performed here at LHS, "Our Town" seems to have a unique effect that will draw its viewers into the story itself.

Photos courtesy of Googe

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NEWS²

To be pants or not to be... That is the question.

by Caroline Celis
Fashion columnist

Caroline: Absolutely! Why wouldn't they be? Yeah so they are tighter than sweatpants but what is the difference? Perhaps it is because I love the eighties that I am completely okay with this trend but it just as likely could be that they are so darn comfortable. Not to mention the versatility, pants capris, casual or dressed up. I love leggings as pants and I'm not afraid to admit it. If you've got the confidence to wear em' I say go ahead and do it.



Photos courtesy of Googe

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NEWS³

SILENCE

by Caroline Celis
News writer



Photos courtesy of Googe

The passing of a federal law mandating a moment of silence in school has caused controversy across the country. The U.S. Court of Appeals recently ruled the law constitutional and Illinois public schools immediately put the policy back into effect.

An injunction was formerly filed against the moment of silence law but was lifted Friday. The Illinois State Board of Education let all school districts know of the change on Friday, and explained that the law would go into effect at once.

LHS, along with every public school in Illinois, debuted the moment of silence on Tuesday morning immediately following the pledge.

While some LHS students seemed surprised, some embraced the law and some believe it is not an adequate amount of time.

LHS student junior Rebekah Michaelson said, "I think it was a good idea but the moment wasn't long enough for people to actually reflect or pray."

LHS senior Nick Hayes agreed that the new law is a positive addition to school tradition. Saying, "I think it is interesting, and that it is a nice way for people to take a moment to recognize the special things in life and a nice way to start the day."

The controversy across Illinois is whether or not this law does indeed violate the constitution, with the issue of separation of church and state. This issue, for which the law was suspended in 2007, is anticipated to be a major topic of discussion in Illinois in the near future.

PLEASE!



EDITORIALS 4

Education:

by Maribeth Van Hecke
Editorials writer

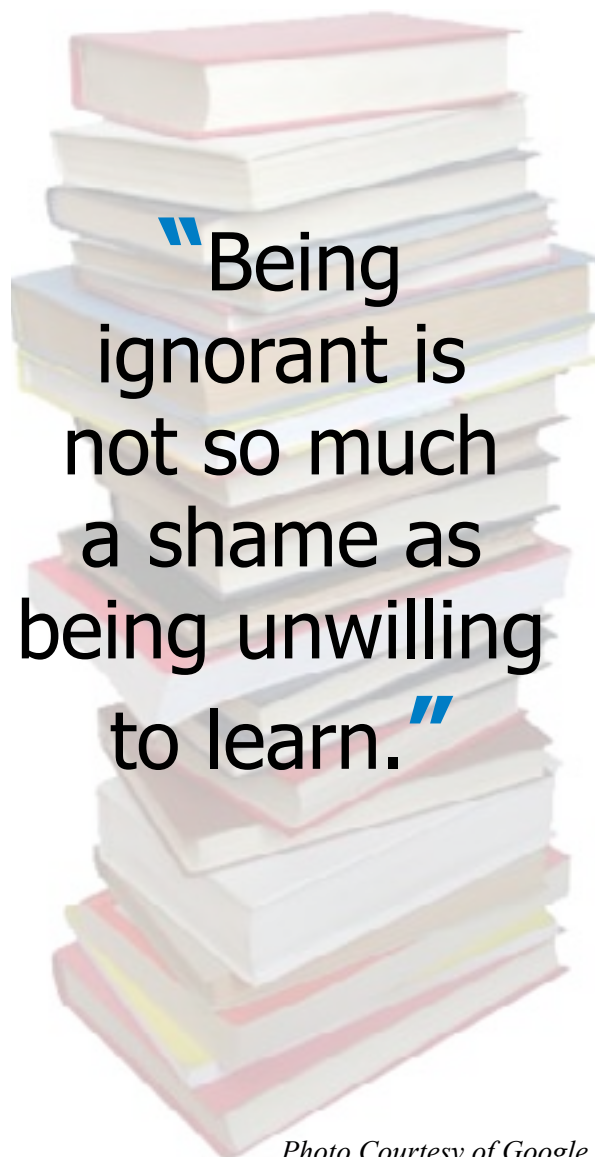
Burden or Privilege?

Sitting in English class, one often hears a chorus of moans when homework is assigned. The same students complain three pages into a book because of an “absence of plot.”

Many students give up on the material before diving into it. The same students, and many others, forget how lucky we are to have such easy access to education. Lots of students forget the value of education and stop taking it seriously.

Seven out of ten LHS students say they are usually the ones who grumble when reading homework is assigned. Yes, it is understandable to be frustrated with tons of homework, but any teacher would assure you that it wasn't just for fun. Teachers don't necessarily enjoy grading the work, either.

Nine out of ten LHS students feel like the assigned homework is either a waste of time or assume it is boring. Still, teachers obviously assigned it for a reason. Students sometimes overlook their assignments and see them more as a burden. Truth is, hundreds of students around the world wish they were lucky enough to have an assignment.



“Being ignorant is not so much a shame as being unwilling to learn.”

Photo Courtesy of Google

According to UNICEF (an organization that works to provide children's human rights), one third of children in sub-Saharan Africa are unable to go to school because of conflicts or discrimination. You think you're jealous? I can guarantee it doesn't mean that they're on holiday with their friends or surfing the Internet instead. These are usually the same children that are impoverished.

Even still, some children around the world who are able to attend school meet in tents and under trees. Their supplies sometimes only consist of an exercise book and pencil. That makes our library full of books and computers look like we're pampering students with easily accessible information.

As students we should make sure to take full advantage of our education and focus on our schoolwork because not all youth have the same opportunities as we do. Ignoring the work assigned is not an answer to any problem. As Benjamin Franklin said, “Being ignorant is not so much a shame as being unwilling to learn.”

Is Silence Really Golden?

by Elizabeth Bernabe
Editorials writer

Every morning, with the exception of PLC days, students at Lemont High School rise to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and hear the daily announcements. However, on Jan. 18 students were informed that public schools in Illinois would be instituting “The Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act,” allowing a moment of silence or prayer following the pledge.

According to the Chicago Tribune, the controversial act was reinstated after a four year court battle. Yet, four years for a 15 second moment of silence seems silly. The Huffington Post claims the Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act came under public scrutiny since it began in 2007.

Officials say the act does not bring religion into the public school setting, but with the words “Student Prayer” in the act, one cannot deny the intent. The act simply conceals the actual message that the silence is just a prayer.

Supporters of the act point to the “silent reflection” part in the name which does not command students to pray, but gives them a choice to reflect on the day. Once again, 15 seconds to think about the day is not a very good use of time.

Senior Melanie Bagal says, “No, I don't think we should have a moment of silence, not unless someone has died. Plus, no one is silent during class; everyone just talks to a friend.”

Religion should have no place in public schools and the act is not necessary. Having this particular act will not make a school run more effectively, nor will it make students perform better on tests. It is not like the moment of silence will make me obtain an A+ in English instead of a B. It is just a waste of time. The price of the combination of school and religion is too great for just a mere 15 seconds.

Almost since the colonization of America, the arrival of people seeking refuge from religious freedom has been noted in history. The Pilgrims were one such group of people that fled England for the opportunity to raise their children to be free from religious persecution.

The Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act basically rejects the American ideal that our country is a place free from religious tyranny. Illinois public schools should follow these freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.

As the Illinois government continues to debate this controversial issue of instituting prayer and reflection in public schools, officials need to remember we are teetering on the edge of religious freedom. Should we fall over the side, we can harm the freedom all students should be guaranteed. In this case, silence is not golden.

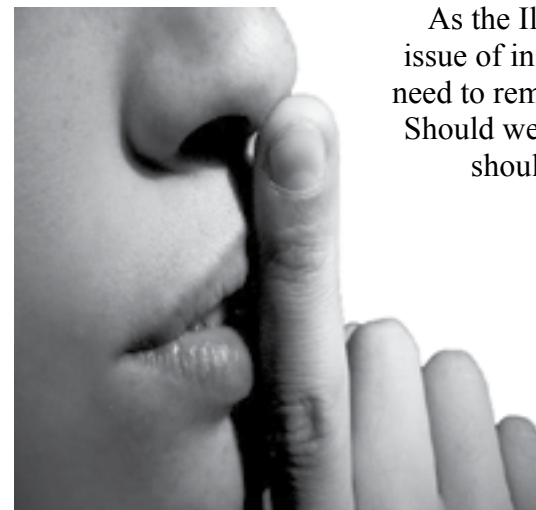
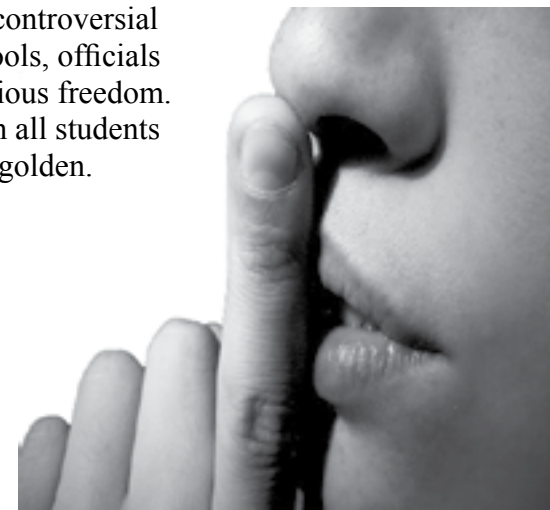


Photo Courtesy of Google



FEATURES 6

Denim Styles Making Their Way Back

by MikeyG
Features writer



Paris, Milan, New York City and Los Angeles: These huge fashion capitals are constantly changing the clothing that comes to the world. There are fashion shows every season to showcase some of the work that comes from these places.

Top designers from around the world come together to create new styles out of old favorites. They put together different spreads, shows and magazines to show what to wear, how to wear it and what can be altered to become something completely fresh.

One trend returning to clothing stores is vintage denim. Earlier this year, we saw jeans that were acid wash, skinny, full of holes, as short shorts and, did we mention, SKINNY? These styles are very 80s, which we can see in a lot of clothing these days, but they came back with a twist.

Now, fashionistas around the country are bringing back the jean jacket, overalls, denim button downs and the jean dress. They are now available in more colors, washes, styles, fits and other variations, so you don't end up looking like your mother or father. These were displayed at the D&G fashion show earlier last year, and are now available for the public at a variety of retailers.

Overalls have been stripped down to a normal pair of jeans with suspender-type straps. Denim button downs have been fitted and darkened to gain a more classic look. The jean dress has become slimmed down, lower cut, higher risen and gained a more "teenage" look. The jean jacket has also been tightened, ripped, dyed and now has more of a modern look to it.

Different washes are key things to look at when buying denim. It is better to buy a dark jean jacket and let it fade and tear over time than to buy a washed out holey jacket. According to *GQ Magazine*, "A hard denim jacket that's made of unwashed, undistressed denim gets better with age and essentially becomes one of a kind."

Many designers chose to bring back some of our favorite, or not so great, styles because there is always something more you can do with them. Classics become reality and reality becomes classic; that's how it works in the fashion world. One day we may go back to Hawaiian shirts and Muumuus, and that makes you wonder: what's next?



Photos Courtesy of Google

FEATURES 7

The Meet the Parents Trilogy

by Lindsay Simonetta
Features writer

Some may believe one movie is too much, but the *Meet the Parents* trilogy continues to do entertain audiences. The trilogy consists of the movies *Meet the Parents*, *Meet the Fockers* and the latest, *Little Fockers*.

The series start with *Meet the Parents*, which was released in 2000. Gaylord Greg Focker, played by Ben Stiller, meets his fiancée's parents, but the father is every guy's worst nightmare. Robert De Niro plays the crazy ex-CIA agent who is the father of Greg's fiancée Pam Byrnes, played by Teri Polo.

The trilogy continues with *Meet the Fockers*, which came to theaters in 2004. The movie revolves around the crazy encounter of the upscale Byrnes family and the politically incorrect Focker family. Things get a little more than awkward when Bernie and Roz Focker, played by Dustin Hoffman and Barbra Streisand, show a bit too much of their wild side to the uptight Byrnes family. In the end, the two families unite despite their differences and Greg and Pam get married.

First we met the parents, then we met the Fockers and now we get to meet the children of Pam and Greg. Much like the previous films, *Little Fockers* is a handful of laughs and sticky situations. However, new director Paul Weitz takes on a different approach than the previous director Jay Roach.

The title *Little Fockers* of course implies that the movie will be formed around the next generation of Fockers.

However, the only reference to the kids is that they have a birthday at the end of the movie. *Little Fockers* still centers on the infantile behavior of the "grown-ups." For example, it can also be referred to as the film that Robert De Niro takes fake enhancement pills and spies on Ben Stiller because he suspects that he is cheating on Teri Polo with Jessica Alba. All in all, it is more of a grown-up movie.

Many may find *Little Fockers* discouraging compared to the first two films that appeared nearly half a decade ago. Find out for yourself if this movie is for you.



Photos Courtesy of Google

SPORTS SPORTS

Lap two

by Ian Stratta
Sports writer



As a sport that may not be as popular as others, swimming has struggled to find its place in LHS news. However, the sport that Michael Phelps made famous is taking large strides to get out to the public, starting with the LHS boys swim team.

Swimming is fairly new to Lemont. Boys’ swimming has not had an official LHS team for a very long time. Officially, it is only the second year that the sport has been involved in the school’s list of extracurricular activities. While boys’ swimming has only been around for two years, girls’ swimming has been around since 2002.

Last Thursday, the team faced Tinley Park. Lemont’s varsity team lost to Tinley Park 108-62 while their junior varsity team also lost 46-124. Senior Gregg Husa finished first in the 200 free while freshman Brian Brown finished first in the 100 breast stroke and second in the 500 free. Brown says, “We did well, even though we lost.” Junior Aaron Gory finished second in the 50 free and sophomore Connor Ganzer finished second in the 200 IM. Ganzer says, “I think the team’s performance in general has been off for the past couple of weeks. This goes for practice and the meet on Thursday. The reason for this is probably because everyone is sore from wearing [t-shirts] during practice.” Sophomore

Scott Franklin also says, “As a team, I feel we did pretty well [at the meet]. We tried our hardest, but most of all we came out to swim.”

Franklin went on to say, “To me winning doesn’t mean as much as going out and knowing that you tried your absolute hardest in order to become a better athlete. We lost, no big deal; you’re always going to lose some battles, but we move on and we keep training hard. I’m proud of this team. We have a bunch of good guys.”

This the season, the team has had a record of 5-4 in the Conference. Considering most of the swimmers have, at most, only two years of experience, the record is very impressive. A top priority of the season for the team’s coach, Erin Boyd, is to make her team better.

Boyd wants to be at the top of the Conference. She goes on to say, “Oak Forest and Tinley Park are two of the top teams in our Conference and we want to definitely give them a run for their money.”

Boyd knows that the season is not over yet, although she also knows that she has to begin to think about next season. She says, “We want to get a state qualifier and to build the program even more for next year.”



Photos by Katelyn Bittke

GIRLS' TRACK

JUMP

READY TO

START SEASON

by Gregg Husa
Sports Editor

The girls’ track begins their season on Feb. 14, but many are already looking ahead to a new season. With first year coach, Tim Plotke, who also coaches cross country, the team looks like they could accomplish big things this season.

“Expectations are going to be the same [as cross country]. We are going to work hard and I have assistant coaches that I trust who can help in the throwing and jumping” said Plotke.

As far as differences from cross country, Plotke does see a few. “In cross country your goal is to have seven runners run as close together as possible to achieve the lowest score. But in track, in order to have a good team you have to be good in all aspects: running, jumping and throwing.”

When the season begins the goal is for the girls’ to “believe in themselves and their abilities.” Hopefully once they do that many of the girls’ can string together some of their best performances of their high school careers, especially the seniors.

Two key seniors will be Anna Las and Katelyn Bittke. Las runs in the 100 and 200 meter dashes. On occasion, she competes in the 4x400 meter relay with fellow senior runner, Bittke. Bittke also runs the 400 meter dash as well as the relay. Bittke has been a top runner for Plotke’s past state qualifying teams, but missed this season due to a stress fracture.

The team’s first meet is an indoor meet at the Plainfield North Invitational on March 5. With about three weeks of preparation, the girls’ team should be ready for the meet when it comes around. Added Plotke, “I’m excited to back into track, since I haven’t coached in some years. It’s going to be a fun year.”