

Lemont High School
800 Porter Street
Lemont, IL 60439

Tom Tom

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Issue 1

New at LHS: Forensic Science

by Dylan Blaha
News Editor

Starting this fall semester, LHS students now have the opportunity to explore a new field of study: forensic science.

According to the LHS website, "This lab-based course allows students to explore a growing field in the scientific community, and incorporates techniques and concepts learned in Biology, Physics and Chemistry." Because of the diverse concepts, the school requires all forensic science students to complete Biology, Physics and Chemistry prior to signing up for the class.

LHS? No . . . CSI

During the semester-long class, science teacher Chris Hardy will teach pupils problem solving skills and expose them to simulated crime scenes and factual case studies. Some topics covered include ballistics, DNA fingerprinting, blood spatter, evidence collection and analysis, anthropology and glass evidence.

"I think all the labs will be interesting," said Hardy. "But, I think kids will enjoy the bloodspatter, fingerprinting

and ballistics labs." He also stated that anthropology labs, using bugs and different types of invertebrates, will be performed.

Case studies

In addition to lab work, at least one case study will accompany each unit covered in class, including Carlo Ferrier, Kirk Bloodsworth and The Atlanta Child Murders.

"I believe [forensic science] should be a fairly interesting class," said senior Matt Lithgow. "It seems different from the normal science classes you take here. Learning about things like bloodspatter and gunshot residue seems pretty cool."

The future

In the future, Hardy has no hopes of making Forensic Science a year-long class. "There were 240 students that signed up for forensics this year, and I think a semester-long class gives more kids the opportunity to take it."

"I think student feedback this year will help make the class better for the future," said Hardy.

The Tom Tom welcomes letters to the editor and encourages submission of poems, essays, articles and images. Submissions may be edited for length, style and content.

In this issue . . .

Sparknotes, Miley, Warped and Bears!

The Lemont High School Tom Tom does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender or orientation.

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To Sparknote or not to Sparknote?

Your favorite homework shortcuts might not be as useful in the longrun

by Kelly Lyons
Editorials writer

The Iliad, Ishmael, Pride and Prejudice: all titles many LHS students dread every summer. Trust me; I was one of those students. And when kids are too busy spending their summers relaxing, working or maybe just sleeping, there never seems to be enough time in those short three months to actually finish any school work.

But luckily (or not so luckily) for these students, websites like

Sparknotes.com are here to enlighten lazy readers about exactly what they're missing. Although some people actually use these reference sites as a learning aide, that isn't always the case.

The websites are commonly abused, now more than ever. Students have grown accustomed to having technology such as this, systems like weighted grading and downright copying to keep their grades up.

Lazy!

It seems as if these days there is always a way around actually doing real work in class. With so many shortcuts out there, students can much more willingly slack off without dramatically falling behind in school. And getting by without putting in as much effort is obviously appealing to teenagers who would rather be doing almost anything than studying and doing homework.

Unfortunately, this laziness will never be an effective substitute for actual learning. As a busy high school student myself, I understand how daunting some assignments can be, especially when there are clubs, friends, jobs and hundreds of other things to worry about.

Say you have a really long practice or you work late one night. Typing in 'sparknotes.com' and skimming a few chapter summaries seems a whole more appealing than reading the rest of book.

But in the long run, is just breezing by tests and homework really worth it?

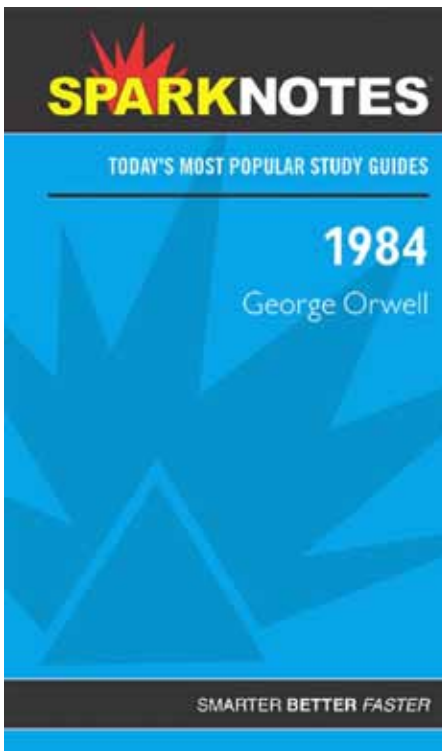
Declining test scores - connection to study aids/weighted grades?

According to chicagobreakingnews.com, Illinois students who took the ACT in 2010 brought down the state's ACT average from past years' increasing numbers. Even though reference websites are meant to be used alongside actual work from students, they aren't always used for the right reasons. This could be just one factor one decreasing test scores.

Weighted grading scales could be another cause to this widespread laziness as well. Let's face it: kids in honors or AP classes can procrastinate just as much as kids in academic level courses. If an honors student drops an entire letter grade in a weighted class, he or she has the mindset that he or she will still receive a decent grade in the long run because of grade inflation.

In no way do I think weighted grades are a bad thing, but

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they certainly can contribute to school-related laziness.

Senior Abbie Korte agrees that students “most definitely have too much of a cushion [to fall back on]” in terms of crutches such as weighted grading and student-help websites. However, she also believes that if that cushion were taken away, many students would dramatically suffer.

Less time studying

However, there are some non-school related factors to all of this laziness and procrastination. According to [observant.com](#), “students spend less time studying. The decline started at least 20 years ago,” and continues to drop.

Students are studying and doing homework an average of less than five hours a week, while students in the 90’s would spend upwards of 20 hours a week doing schoolwork. Maybe that sounds crazy, but then again teenagers didn’t always have Facebook and Twitter to waste all of their time.

Time to wake up!

As a whole, high school students seem to have gotten a lot lazier in past years. This is anything but a good thing considering the fact that college is right around the corner. Just think of

this as a wake-up call. Will sparknotes.com alone get you through a master’s thesis one day? And will you be able to count on weighted grades beyond high school?

It may be just the beginning of the school year, but you’ve got a whole future ahead of you that can be made or broken by slacking off today.



Images, unless noted otherwise, courtesy of Google

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The Last...Miley Cyrus Movie I'll Ever Watch

by Andrea Earnest
Features writer

If you've turned on a TV in the last few months, you've probably seen a preview for *The Last Song*. Based on the novel by Nicholas Sparks, it's what you would expect of a chick flick. Seventeen-year old Veronica (Ronnie) Miller, played by Miley Cyrus, is forced to spend the summer with her estranged father in a small Southern town. Liam Hemsworth plays Will Blakely in the other lead role.

Do I even need to tell you what happens next? Girl meets boy; girl plays hard to get; boy won't go away and then girl and boy fall in love. However, I've read a couple of Sparks novels, and I've liked them. So on Saturday morning, I turned on the TV, and

thought, "Why not?"

I actually had a little hope for Miley Cyrus' performance since I had heard some positive reviews. However, I was sorely disappointed. Her acting was awful, the dialogue was choppy and I felt like I was watching a really bad *Hannah Montana* episode.

Moments that were supposed to be funny were awkward, dramatic scenes made you want to laugh, and the "falling-in-love" montage was just plain cheesy. It included shots of them frolicking on the beach and writing sentiments of love on Ronnie's Converse shoes. That was the point of the movie where I logged on Facebook and checked my notifications.

The only redeeming qualities of the movie were Greg Kinnear, who plays Steve Miller, and scenes where Liam Hemsworth took his shirt off. Kinnear actually pulled off a decent performance, despite most of the cast dragging him down.

The movie received a 19% on the Tomatometer at rottentomatoes.com. The consensus of reviewers is, "As



shamelessly manipulative as any Nicholas Sparks production, *The Last Song* is done no favors by its miscast and overmatched star, Miley Cyrus."

Sophomore Rachel Kasperski agrees saying, "It was really predictable. I didn't like Miley Cyrus, she's definitely not a good actress."

So for any of you might have high hopes for this movie; you've been officially warned.

From the multi-million-copy international bestselling author

Nicholas Sparks

The Last Song

Do you ever really forget
your first heartbreak?



Features, p. 5

Warped Tour 2010, The Perfect End To Your Summer

by Annie Fox

Guest Features writer

I walked over to the Altec stage to check out Emmure, ya know, to get my hard core fix for the day. The guitars and the growling stopped, the crowd cheered and Emmure front man Frankie Palmeri opened his mouth. Red in the face, he screamed to the crowd “Make some noise if you’re sick of all the [expletive] bands you’re hearing.” I growled back, mocking his bad attitude.

What’s this all about anyway?

It was 1994 when the idea was born. Punk was a young twenty-something delinquent, climbing to fame as a new generation turned away from the mainstream, running full speed into the arms of an angry subculture. Kids were blasting The Casualties and Anti-Flag, Gwen Stefani was earning respect from the boys. This angry generation skated their problems away, punching their pillows at night, with Bad Religion blaring from the stereo.

Kevin Lyman was just a guy. Then Kevin Lyman came up with the idea to start Warped Tour. I wasn’t there, heck, I was just a baby, but I imagine it

went something like this. “Let’s get a bunch of really awesome musicians and some hard core guys together and drive around the country all summer. Showering? Unnecessary. Money? We’ll figure that out later.”

Summer of ‘94 rolled around and Kevin Lyman took the show on the road with only 16 bands, (CIV, Deftones, Face to Face, Fluff, L7, No Doubt, No Use for a Name, Orange 9mm, Quicksand, Seaweed, Sick of it All, Sublime, Supernova,

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Swinging Utters, Tilt, Wilzo) a sponsor and some adrenaline junkies.

Lyman started this tour to bring the things he loved together, good music and extreme sports. People like him all over the country supported his idea. It was about the music. Summer after summer Warped Tour's numbers grew; more fans, more bands, more stops, higher ticket sales. Day after day bands would drive, unload the van or tour bus, set up their merch booths and find out the line up and designated stage. Fans flocked to the wall to see when and where their favorites were playing.

As the tour grew and more bands were added to the mix, more genres were represented and the bands playing catered to a larger audience. This was cause for some criticism, like most changes seem to be. Many original Warped Tour fans saw the expansion as selling out, in exchange for seemingly "bad" bands, Warped Tour and their sponsors could make an extra buck.

The truth of that statement is questionable. Sure, it's an opinion but Kevin Lyman made a statement that sums up his reasoning, "Punk is the root of this. Everything else is an offshoot. Some of it sticks and some of it doesn't. The best bands rise to the top."

This is now

Warped Tour 2010 came to Chicago or Tinley Park rather, July 31. People from all over the state and even the region headed to the First Midwest Bank Amphitheater. Traffic was horrible, the parking lot was flooded and the sky looked a bit threatening, but the enthusiasm over flowed every car stuck in traffic on I-80. The gates opened at eleven and the crowds scattered, cars continued to pour into the parking lot for the next few hours. The music started quickly after the doors opened.

Fans of all genres walked through rows of merch booths, past music coming from any of the seven stages, ranging from pop, to death metal, to math core, to grind core, to acousi-pop, old school ska and classic punk.

There were new faces to the tour, some seemed out of place, but the crowd didn't mind. Mike Posner got the crowd moving with his hit single "Cooler than Me."

Although things have changed around Warped Tour, some things were the same. Reel Big Fish kept alive the ska feel from 1994. Pennywise, who played Warped Tour '95, kept the punk feel alive with songs expressing age old anger, a hatred for society and big businesses thriving from greed. They told the crowd punk rock was a family, which it is, has been and always will be. Vocalist Jim Lindberg asked the crowd "Who here is a true punk rocker?" and the crowd went wild. Alkaline Trio carried on the present day punk with an incredible set to their dedicated, somewhat cult like, fans.

The younger Warped Tour goers headed elsewhere to see the new faces of the music business, Mayday Parade serenaded the crowd with familiar melodies off their first two albums. Kelsey and the Chaos, Hey Monday, and Versa Emerge all rocked with female vocalists. When the sun went down it was time for two pop stars that dominate the pop music scene right now The Rocket Summer and NeverShoutNever had teenyboppers screaming for the young heartthrobs.

The show featured several local boys, making the music scene proud. The Frantic played for an audience of familiar faces and Mojoe's natives Breathe Electric played some promising new songs for longtime fans and brand new fans. They closed with a few oldies, leaving the crowd with a warm sense of nostalgia.

Hard core thrived as well this year, White Chapel, Suicide Silence, Alesana and Emmure fans opened up circle pit after circle pit. I Wrestled a Bear Once screamer/vocalist, Krysta Cameron, called for a "wall of death" and I watched as fans walked away, with split lips and black eyes, sweaty and disheveled, but smiling.

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This is what it's all about

As I walked through the parking lot to my car I smiled thinking about what Frankie Palmeri had said hours earlier. I, along with thousands of other people, had seen some really awesome bands over a period of nine hours. I was sweaty and sore from battling crowds and conquering the heat. I was hungry and tired, my shoes were ruined, my money spent. But I was smiling.

Where else in the world will you ever find such a diverse mix of people? Where else will you ever see your favorite band enjoying their favorite bands' set? Its one day a year. Its one day a year that it doesn't matter who you are.

It isn't about if you belong there, or what genre you follow. It's about bringing music lovers together with beloved bands. It's about pushing through a crowd of sweaty people to get a good spot. It's about belting out every lyric with everything you've got. It's about hearing and seeing the bands you love live before your eyes. Its about the way you feel when the familiar melody surrounds you like a warm hug. It's about the songs that got you through a hard time. It's feeling like you are a part of something bigger.

When it's all over and done with, the bands pack up and move on to the next state, and it's all pretty bittersweet.



NFL Season Begins

by Jamie Wiatr
Sports writer

The Chicago Bears have certainly had a rough start, losing the first two games in their pre-season. However, there may be a glimpse of hope in their future, thanks to key players such as Matt Forte and Julius Peppers.

The Bears have certainly had difficulties with their offensive line, but during the Oakland Raiders game on Saturday, Matt Forte broke the barriers and made an 89-yard touchdown run in the end of the first quarter. Things seemed to be looking up for the Bears, but that would be the first and last of ray of hope for the game.

Chicago suffered a 32-17 loss, but for Bears rookie Julius Peppers the rest of the season offers an opportunity to accomplish great things. He made his presence known against the Raiders,

consistently putting pressure on Raiders quarterback Jason Campbell. According to suntimes.com, Bears Coach Lovie Smith was hopeful after two turnovers in the Bears' favor.

"Two screen passes really put us on our heels. I feel we settled in after that, and the turnovers kept us in it," Smith said.

It still wasn't enough to pull off a win. While some seem to give up on the Bears, there are some that still believe. Senior Austin Morlock said, "The Bears may be off to a bad start, but I think they can still work some magic and have a great season."