

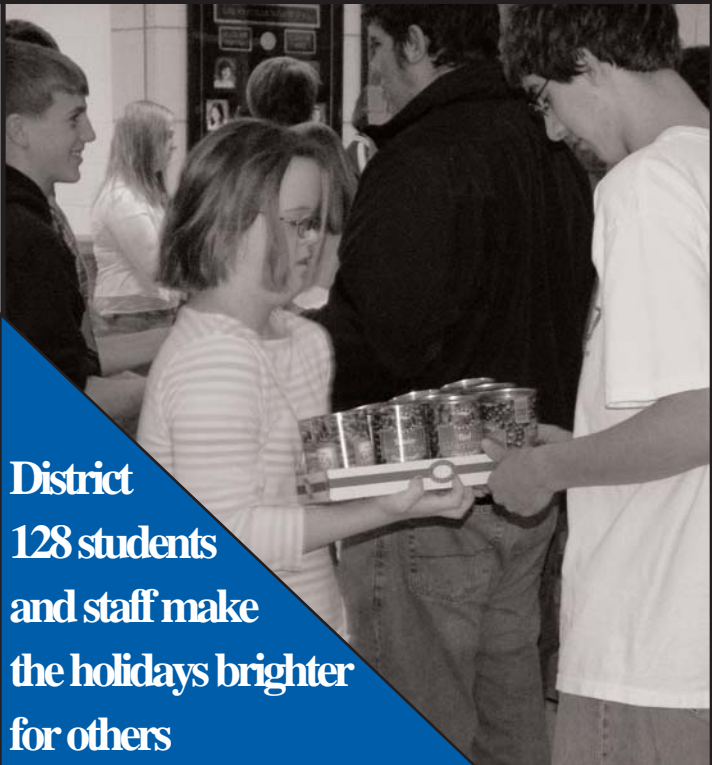


Paw Prints



*News and Information from
Community High School District 128*

Winter 2006



**District
128 students
and staff make
the holidays brighter
for others**



Administrative Offices

940 W. Park Ave.
Libertyville, Illinois 60048
847-367-3159

Libertyville High School

708 W. Park Ave.
Libertyville, Illinois 60048
847-327-7000

Vernon Hills High School

145 N. Lakeview Parkway
Vernon Hills, Illinois 60061
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<http://www.d128.org>

Board of Education

Anne Landgraf, President
Judy Sugarman, Vice President
George Sachs, Secretary
Jan Foreman
Pat Groody
Ellen Mauer
Dennis Ryan

Student Representatives

Jeff Boucher, Vernon Hills High School
Tom Engstrom, Libertyville High School

Administration

District

Dr. David L. Clough, Superintendent
Prentiss Lea, Associate Superintendent
Deborah Larson, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Yasmine Dada, CPA, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Mary Todoric, Director of Communications

Libertyville High School

Brad Swanson, Principal
Eric Maroscher, Assistant Principal
Diane Phillips, Assistant Principal
Ron Bjurstrom, Director of Student Support Services

Vernon Hills High School

Dr. Ellen Cwick, Principal
Jon Guillaume, Assistant Principal
Jean Aucutt, Assistant Principal

Community Education Program

Dr. Lester "Buzz" Perry, Director of Community Education and Grants

Paw Prints is published quarterly during the school year for District 128 families. Questions and concerns should be addressed to *Paw Prints* Editor Mary Todoric, Director of Communications at 847-327-7186.

Superintendent's Message

Community meeting brings answers and more questions



In the fall issue of *Paw Prints*, I made parents aware of a public information meeting held Nov. 7 at Lake Bluff Middle School. The focus of the meeting was the potential situation in North Chicago Community Unit School District 187 and its implications for surrounding school districts including District 128. Having attended that meeting, I'd like to provide you with an update on the discussion that evening.

U.S. Rep. **Mark Kirk** was the key speaker at the meeting. Kirk told the crowd in attendance that the U.S. Department of Education would provide "hold harmless military impact" funds for the continued education of students in North Chicago CUSD 187 through the year 2010.

Other elected officials in attendance at the meeting expressed concern about the declining number of naval students attending North Chicago schools as well as skepticism about the actual guarantee of funds from the Department of Education. They discussed what other options may be available for funding District 187 schools, including increased state funding.

As I mentioned in the fall issue, the Great Lakes Naval Base housing in North Chicago is being replaced. Representative Kirk is assisting the movement of a significant number of the new housing units from the base in North Chicago to federal property in Glenview and Highland Park. It appears that the more than 2,000 housing units currently at Great Lakes will be replaced with fewer than 1,000, with the remainder going to the aforementioned sites. Should the North Chicago Schools lose their "super impact status" as a result of fewer navy students, the district could lose approximately \$7 million annually. Even without the loss of these federal funds, the district is in a difficult financial situation and must borrow \$8 million in the current year to meet its payroll. If these severe financial problems lead to the dissolution of the North Chicago School District, its 4,400 students would be distributed amongst the contiguous districts including District 128, Oak Grove District 68, Lake Forest High School District 115, Warren Township High School District 121, Lake Bluff Elementary District 65, Woodland District 50 and Waukegan District 60.

As we look to the new year, we hope that 2006 will see further progress in providing answers to this problem. We also hope that it will be an answer that is in the best interest of the students served by the North Chicago School District. I will continue to provide updates to this situation as they become available.

I wish all of our District 128 families a happy and healthy new year!

David L. Clough, Ph.D.
Superintendent

LHS/VHHS Summer School 2006 at Vernon Hills High School

Libertyville and Vernon Hills High Schools students interested in taking classes in Summer School should see their counselor. If you are planning on taking Driver Education you must sign up (pre-register) with your counselor by March 17. If you live in District 128 but do not attend LHS or VHHS and would like to take Driver Education in summer school, you must pre-register between Feb. 13 and March 17. Pre-registration forms are available in the LHS Student Center. There are approximately 120 openings in the Driver Education Summer School session and these openings will be filled by a priority system based on birth dates, the oldest being accepted first. Fees will be paid and the selection of class time and road time will be done as a second step on Saturday, April 29, 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. in Room 151 at LHS. The starting date for Driver Education will be Monday, June 19 and the ending date will be Friday, July 28. There will be no school on Monday, July 3, and Tuesday, July 4.

The following courses will be offered if a sufficient number of students enroll: Applied Technology Supercircuit, Consumer Management, Keyboarding/Typing, English, Film Studies, Introduction to Critical Reading, Introduction to High School English, Algebra 1, Geometry, Trigonometry, Computer Science Honors-Visual Basic, Astronomy, Government, United States History, Research and Writing Skills for Social Studies, and Spanish Bridge Program. Class enrollment will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis. Summer classes will begin Thursday, June 15 and end Thursday, August 3. There will be no school on Monday, July 3 and Tuesday, July 4.

Summer School brochures are available in the main offices of both LHS and VHHS. Information is also available on line at www.d128.org. Students from outside of District 128 should check with their own schools prior to enrolling at District 128.

If you have any questions or need additional information please contact **Trudy Kulefsky** at (847) 327-7006.

2006-07 school calendar available on web site

The Community High School District 128 school calendar for the 2006-07 school year is now available. Visit the District 128 website--www.d128.org--and scroll to the bottom for the link to the calendar.

District 128 speakers available for community meetings

Consider inviting a representative from the Community High School District 128 Speakers Bureau to the next meeting of your business, civic or social organization. The Speakers Bureau was developed as an additional means of communicating with members of the District 128 community. District 128 administrators are available to speak on a variety of topics about Libertyville and Vernon Hills High Schools, including:

Athletics
Community Education Opportunities
Community/School Partnerships
District 128 Overview
Fine Arts
LHS Overview
Making the Transition from Jr. High to High School
Federal "No Child Left Behind" legislation
School Finance
Standards
Student Activities
Technology
VHHS Overview
And more . . .

Please contact **Mary Todoric** at 847-327-7186 or mary.todoric@d128.org for more information on this program or to schedule a speaker.

Community Education begins winter/spring '06 registration

Dec. 27, 2005

Community Education web site updated for winter/spring term

Dec. 27, 2005

Catalogs for winter/spring term are mailed to all District 128 residents

Dec. 27, 2005

Registration begins for the winter/spring term

Jan. 23, 2006

Winter/spring term classes begin

For more information, visit the Community Education web site: www.ComEd128.org

District 128 students excel

by Prentiss Lea, Associate Superintendent

There is much reason for celebration at District 128 as Libertyville High School and Vernon Hills High School have once again demonstrated their academic excellence at the state level. The *Chicago Tribune* recently published rankings of the best public high schools in the greater Chicago area based on the percentage of students who met and/or exceeded overall state standards on the Illinois Prairie State Achievement Tests (PSAE). Both District 128 high schools rank in the top 3% of all Illinois high schools by this measure. LHS ranked 11th and VHHS ranked 16th. Also, LHS and VHHS students continue to demonstrate consistent achievement increases on all standardized tests, which include ACT, Advanced Placement and the PSAE.

Special congratulations and thanks are in order for LHS and VHHS teachers, administrators and support staffs for their continued use of achievement data to focus on student learning needs in their overall school improvement planning and in daily instructional planning and delivery. And, a special thanks to you

for continuing to have high expectations of all District students and our schools, for providing us with sufficient resources to recruit and retain outstanding teachers and administrators who then have the ability to create great educational opportunities for our students, and for providing us an amazing level of support in our efforts to increase the achievement of all the students we serve.

Excellent schools are, in large part, the result of a sustained partnership between schools, parents and communities, which focuses directly on the needs of their students. Our District, our parents and our communities have demonstrated the power of that partnership in helping students achieve at higher and higher levels. Again, thanks for your continued support and assistance, and congratulations. Your efforts as parents and community members have made a difference in the lives of all of our students!

Have a safe and joyous holiday season!

District staff members recognized for student activity involvement



Vernon Hills High School staff members **Laura Bertermann** and **Peggy Cope**, along with Libertyville High School staff members **Sally Hauck** and **Brad Swanson**, received awards from the Illinois Directors of Student Activities at the organization's awards banquet held Nov. 6. The four received recognition for their work with student activities. Bertermann and Cope were nominated for the Educational Leadership Award, Swanson received the Principals' Recognition Award, and Hauck received the Community Educator Award.

Pictured at the event are VHHS Science Teacher and Student Council Sponsor **Laura Bertermann**, LHS Assistant Principal and Student Activities Director **Diane Phillips**, VHHS Principal **Dr. Ellen Cwick**, VHHS Data Processing Specialist and Assistant Student Council Sponsor **Peggy Cope**, LHS Dean and Top Cats Sponsor **Sally Hauck**, LHS Principal **Brad Swanson** and VHHS Student Activities Director **Debbie Beagle**. (photo courtesy of D. Beagle)

Board of Education approves new graduation requirements

by Deborah Larson, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

In August of this year, Governor **Rod Blagojevich** signed into law new high school graduation requirements for all Illinois students. Some of the new requirements went into effect with current freshmen, the class of 2009. For the past year, prior to the new legislation, District 128 has been reviewing the District's current graduation requirements by looking at data from previous graduating classes. After reviewing the new legislation, the District 128 Board of Education has adopted new requirements which will begin next fall with the incoming freshmen, the class of 2010.

The major changes to our policy occurred with increases to the core curricular subjects of English, math and science. All students entering District 128 next fall will need 4 years of English, 3 years of math and 2 years of science to graduate. Research shows that students that elect more core curricular courses are better prepared for college and the workforce.

The new graduation requirements are listed below.

Community High School District 128 Graduation Requirements

Twenty credits will be required for graduation, 18 of which must be from academic courses (everything except Physical Education and Driver Education).

To be a candidate for graduation, a student must have 13 ½ credits at the end of the summer before their graduation year.

A student may enroll in and earn credit in six academic classes plus Physical Education each year. A maximum of two credits per year may be earned in Summer School.

The requirements listed below are **minimum** requirements for graduation from District 128. Graduation requirements should not be interpreted as admission requirements for colleges or universities.

Graduation Requirements that differ by graduating class (differences are based on recent changes to Illinois State law and District 128 School Board action):

Subject	Classes of 2008 & 2007 (current sophomores & juniors)	Class of 2009 (Current freshmen)	Class of 2010 (Current 8 th graders)
English	3 credits	3 credits	4 credits
Writing	0	0	2 credits*
Mathematics	2 credits	3 credits**	3 credits**
Science	1 credit	1 credit	2 credits

* One credit must be an English course and one credit may be English or any other subject defined as a writing intensive course. Courses that award Writing credit are indicated by 'WI' in the course title.

** One credit must be Algebra 1 and one credit must include geometry content.

Graduation requirements that are the same for every graduating class:

Social Studies – Two credits
One credit must be U.S. History, American Government (½ credit) and elective (½ credit)

Consumer Education – ½ credit
Or pass the State Proficiency Test (no credit is awarded).

Health Education – ½ credit
Taken as part of Physical Education. Students will be exempt from physical education for one semester while they are enrolled in Health.

One Credit From –
Applied Arts (Vocational Education such as Applied Technology, Business, Family and Consumer Sciences), Fine and Performing Arts (Art, Drama, Music), or International Languages.

Driver Education – No credit awarded
30 clock hours of classroom instruction and 6 clock hours of behind the wheel instruction are required for this course. In order for a student to be eligible for driver education, he/she must have received a passing grade in at least eight academic courses during his/her previous two semesters.

Physical Education – Taken every year (1/4 credit per semester)
Must be taken and passed every semester of attendance unless a student is medically excused or exempt. A maximum of two credits may be applied toward graduation.

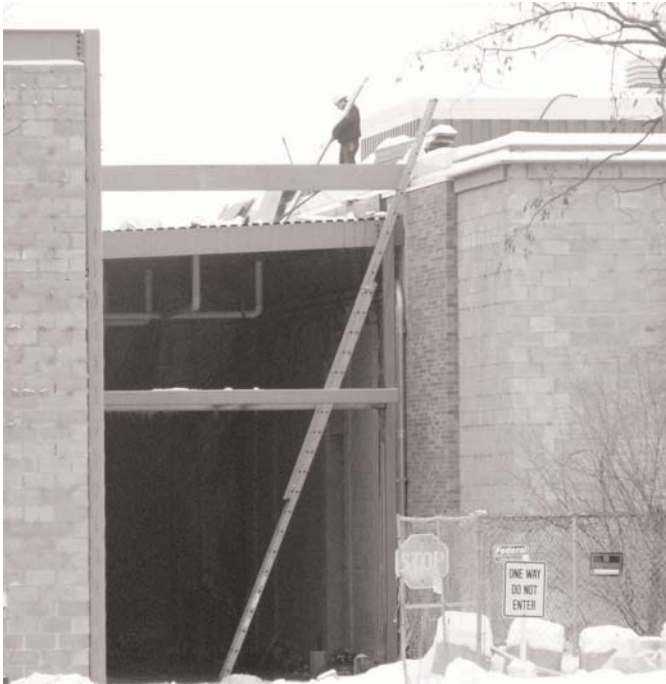
Prairie State Achievement Exam

Students are required to take the Prairie State Achievement Examination as a junior, unless the student: (a) is exempt according to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.64, or (b) meets ISBE's requirements for seniors who did not take the PSAE as juniors and were unable to participate in the retake.

Make d128.org your news and information source

Parents are encouraged to visit the Community High School District 128 web site at www.d128.org for a wealth of information about the District. The site contains links to both high schools, as well as links to the District budget, Board of Education meeting dates, meeting minutes, school calendar, news, publications and more.

LHS gym construction



Construction of the new gymnasium at LHS is scheduled to be completed on time. Students will begin utilizing the facility in the 2006-07. (photo by M. Todoric)

District 128 financial rating upgraded by Moody's

In November, Moody's Investors Service, as part of its ongoing surveillance efforts, upgraded the rating on Community High School District 128's outstanding General Obligation Bonds from Aa1 to Aa2/positive outlook. The upgrade affects approximately \$55.7 million in outstanding parity debt and recognizes the District's above-average, very healthy growth coupled with a substantial tax base; a healthy General Fund balance; and moderate amount of debt.

Moody's expects continued strength in the District's tax base as the service community continues to mature. The District's tax base has continued to grow, averaging 9.2% over the past five years, with a full valuation of \$6.9 billion in fiscal 2004. Wealth indicators in the District are strong, with both per capita and median family income exceeding state averages by 72% and 74% respectively.

Moody's believes that the District's sizable fund balances will continue to afford it flexibility. The General Fund Balance increased from \$23.1 million (58.1% of General Fund revenues) in fiscal 2003 to \$34.5 million (or a healthy 60.8% of General Fund revenues) in fiscal 2004 and the district recorded a surplus of \$11.8 million in the General Fund, meeting District officials' expectations. The District also increased its Working Cash Fund, from \$5.6 million to \$7.0 million. Moody's expects these positive trends to continue due to the strength of the District's financial policies.

The District has a low debt burden of 2.4% (0.8% direct), with a slightly above average 74% amortization of principal within ten years. Moody's expects the District's debt to remain manageable due to its large expanding tax base and limited capital plans.

Advanced Placement Literature class converses with author

by Ellen Renfroe, LHS student

In a class like AP Literature, it is rare indeed for students to be able to converse directly with the authors of the novels in their curriculum or even to receive advice on extracurricular writing.

However, when LHS AP Lit teacher **Marti Gorun** first contacted *The English Teacher's* author **Lily King** earlier this fall, students in her classes were about to benefit big-time from the recommendations and answers of a published author.

Students in AP Lit read King's novel, *The English Teacher*, outside of school for an extra credit assignment, which involved paralleling the book with Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and posing questions for King. Gorun then emailed the questions to King and King responded in detail a few days later, even including some advice to students who wished to pursue a writing career.

"One thing I always tell students who are serious about creative writing is that it's really important to separate the creator and the critic when you are writing. The creator is the pure voice of the imagination and in first drafts you have to listen to it and only it," King wrote.

AP Lit classes then discussed King's answers and writing suggestions.

"It seemed very rare for an author to take interest in a high school English class, and it was a treat to ask the author questions and even get some writing advice. What a great opportunity to hear firsthand advice from a successful author when many of the students may want to pursue writing careers," senior AP Lit student **Sam Bordignon** said.

Parent meeting focuses on important issues impacting teens

What is your student being exposed to today? What are the legal ramifications of unsafe teen behavior? How can parents talk to their teen about difficult subjects? What strategies can reduce the risk of your teen being involved in risky behavior? These questions will be addressed at workshops for parents of junior high and high school students on Wednesday, Jan. 25, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Vernon Hills High School. The workshops, sponsored jointly by School Districts 128, 73, 70, and 68, are tailored for parents of 7th - 9th graders, but they are open to any parent in the community. Topics will include sexual activity of teens, current drug/alcohol trends, and surfing the teen internet. Parents will have the opportunity to attend sessions covering two of the three topics. To register, call **Susan Roy**, LST Secretary, at 847-932-2285, or e-mail susan.roy@d128.org.

Students participate in Snowball

by Diane Busch, SAP Coordinator, LHS



On Nov. 3, 120 VHHS and LHS students joined students from Barrington and Glenbrook South High Schools for a day-long Operation Snowball. Operation Snowball is founded on the belief that every human being has the capacity to make sound decisions regarding his/her own life, based on accurate information and on the understanding of one's own self and one's motivation.

The program's purpose is to bring students and adults together to share information and develop positive attitudes about leading healthy lifestyles. Students learn and discuss various ways to make healthy, responsible decisions about issues facing teens.

This event was held at YMCA Camp MacLean in Burlington, WI. Students heard several powerful speakers, participated in a team's course and networked with the other students in small groups. Students remarked that the whole day was "awesome," especially getting to meet other drug-free students from other high schools in the area. District 128 students and staff members are pictured above during one of the outdoor activities. (photo courtesy of D. Busch)

VIP Training

Sixty VIP (Voices in Prevention) students from VHHS and LHS attended VIP training on Saturday, Nov. 5 at VHHS. The workshop, facilitated by **Jay Fontanetta**, a teacher and actor from Workplace Productions, focused on the skills needed to perform prevention skits at the feeder schools and in the community. By the end of the training, students had developed six contemporary skits focused on drug and alcohol prevention, bullying, and adherence to the extracurricular code of conduct.

4 out of 5 VHHS students don't smoke

VHHS is implementing a new science-based prevention strategy known as the social norms approach. The social norms approach normalizes positive behavior instead of emphasizing negative, at-risk behavior. Research shows that teenagers think that alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use is more widespread among their peers than it actually is. Because of this misconception, many youth feel pressured and justified to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs in order to fit in with their "imaginary" peers. When students are finally given accurate information and they perceive the true norm – that most of their peers DO NOT use alcohol, tobacco, and drugs – they are able to fit in with their

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Great American Smokeout 2005

VHHS students and faculty participated in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout on Nov. 17. The national event raises awareness of the dangers of smoking and promotes effective ways to quit. Students from the SPARK Club (Supporting Peers and Reaching Kids) provided an opportunity during lunch periods for students and staff to sign a pledge to stay smoke-free, to cut down, or to stop smoking. Staff members were also given an opportunity to pledge to start a healthy, new habit. Participants were given support literature to encourage them in their pledge and were entered in a T-shirt raffle. "Thank You" to the American Cancer Society and Tobacco Free Lake County for providing literature and give-away items.

IDEA Conference 2005

by Margaret Pither, SAP Coordinator, VHHS



VHHS and LHS students joined with approximately 1,100 students and adults who attended the Illinois Drug Education Alliance's 23rd annual statewide drug prevention conference. "Be a Hero – Lead a Drug-Free Life" was the theme of the two-day event held in Peoria Nov. 20 - Nov. 21. Nationally-known speakers, including **Kevin Wanzer**, an effective and entertaining speaker from Indianapolis, Ind., **Angela L. Ware** of Texas, **Willie Lopez** of California, **Nigel Wrangham** of Portland, Ore., **Rex Alexander**, **Mark Sanders**, **Fred Dryer**, **Jim Deder**, **Alan Markwood**, and the 2005 IDEA Youth and Alumni Boards presented current prevention information and techniques.

The 32 student participants who attended the conference, including IDEA board members **Melanie Renton** (LHS) and **Mike Arshonsky** (VHHS), will share what they learned with their peers and the community. "We know that prevention works in Illinois," said IDEA Co-President **Kathy Jobin**. "Studies show that the majority of students chooses not to use illegal drugs. It is because of the work of individuals and groups like SPARK (Supporting Peers and Reaching Kids) and VIP (Voices in Prevention) that we can be proud of our combined efforts toward prevention, which result in more children growing up safe and healthy."

IDEA is a state-wide, volunteer coalition of citizens and community organizations dedicated to the goals of drug-free youth and the prevention of illegal, destructive, unsafe, or unhealthy use of alcohol and other drugs.

Scholarship Opportunities

by Vic Capron, College/Career Counselor, VHHS

One of the most commonly asked questions by parents during the college admission process is, "Where can we find money to pay for college?" It is a great question considering the rising costs of a college education. There are two types of scholarships: need-based, usually referred to as grants, and merit-based. Need-based scholarships take into account a family's ability to pay for college. Merit-based scholarships are most often based on academic performance (class rank/test scores). Besides academics, other merit scholarships may be based on athletics, performing arts talent, and community service. The following are some resources to help you find out what scholarships are out there.

VHHS and LHS Monthly Scholarship Bulletin

The monthly scholarship bulletin published by the CRC lists many local and national scholarships. These scholarships, most of which apply to seniors, are announced in the daily bulletin, posted in classrooms as well as on the CRC web site. Check out the District home page at www.district128.org. Click on CRC and Scholarships. The Mundelein/Vernon Hills Rotary, Libertyville Rotary, Century 21, and MacLean Fogg are just a few of the many local scholarships that come through the CRC. While the local awards may not always be as lucrative as the national contests, your chances of winning a scholarship is better because there may be only a handful of applicants.

Besides the CRC, other resources to tap into for scholarship opportunities include:

- Your employer or your parent's employer
- Professional associations in your intended field of study
- Unions (if your parent belongs to one)
- Community/civic groups like the Elks, Jaycees, Lions
- Ethnicity-based organizations
- Religious organizations
- Fraternities and Sororities
- Military Academies, ROTC
- Reference section of your Local Library
- College/University Scholarships

Studies have shown that students are more likely to attend a school that awards them a merit scholarship. That's why a growing number of schools are using merit scholarships to allure talented students to attend their school. The school's financial aid web site is a good source of information to find

ACT Prep Class

by Ole Stevens, College/Career Counselor, LHS

In order to help prepare juniors for the ACT exam, an ACT preparation course will be offered at Libertyville and Vernon Hills High Schools. The American College Testing Program (ACT) is the predominant test in the Midwest and will be taken by all of our students as a part of the Prairie State Exams. It measures verbal, reading, science reasoning, and mathematical ability. Colleges use this test to assist in the selection of applicants.

For juniors, this is a wonderful opportunity to brush up on some testing skills and gain a greater familiarity with the ACT test itself. For freshmen and sophomores, the best way to prepare for the ACT is to take a solid college prep class load. Research strongly indicates the correlation between a good ACT score and effectively taking a rigorous set of core courses. Underclassmen should work with their counselor to choose the appropriate core courses that will help to prepare them for the ACT and most importantly, the academic rigors of college beyond.

District 128 faculty using materials and textbooks developed by Cambridge Educational Services will teach this course. The course includes two practice exams with assessment reports, 12 hours of instruction and a textbook. The twenty-hour course is designed to prepare students for the April 8th national test date and the April 26th ACT given as a part of the Prairie State Exams.

A brochure and registration form detailing the schedule and costs will be mailed to the parents of every junior before the first week in January. Registration materials must be postmarked by January 19th. Additional registration forms will be available in the LSTs. If you have any questions concerning the test prep program, please contact **Ole Stevens** (LHS) at 327-7161 or **Vic Capron** (VHHS) at 932-2166.

out what scholarships are available and how to qualify for them.

Free Scholarship Search Services

The Internet is the easiest place to begin scouting for free scholarship services. www.fastweb.com is the best known scholarship search service, but students have to put up with lots of ads. Other helpful resources are www.finaid.org and www.collegezone.com which provides Illinois residents with an array of financial aid information, including state and federal grants and scholarships, loans, and investment options.

Although there is no guarantee that you will be awarded a scholarship from these sources, it's worth trying – you never know what you might find.

Planning for academic success for students with special needs: IEPs and 504 plans

Steve Rochon, District 128 Transition Counselor

Students with varying forms and degrees of exceptional needs may have these needs addressed through either an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan. While these plans are similar in many ways, there are distinct differences between the two documents and their approach to providing services.

It is the duty of local school districts to identify students who may have an impairment that impacts school performance. Once identified, those students who require only *reasonable accommodations* in order to be successful in an academic setting can have services provided under the guidelines of civil rights legislations known as **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**. The resulting plan of action for providing these accommodations is known as a 504 Plan.

This 504 Plan is developed by a team of school professionals, includes the student and parent/guardian, and is facilitated by a 504 coordinator. This individual is designated by the district and is often an administrator or guidance counselor. Additionally, it is common for a special education representative to serve as a consultant to the 504 planning process. 504 Plans are most often an appropriate means of assuring that reasonable accommodations are provided. These may include simple classroom accommodations or the provision of assistive technology and can be implemented even in those cases in which a student does not qualify for special education.

For those students whose needs require more specialized instruction and/or coordination of services, support is provided under guidelines of different legislation, the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**. In this instance, districts

are required to develop an *Individualized Education Plan*, or IEP, as the legal document that specifies the duties and responsibilities for the educational support of the student. The guidelines of special education law and the ensuing IEP provide a more elaborate system of safeguards for the protection of the educational rights of the student and parent. These safeguards, not provided under Section 504, include such things as: prior written notice of all evaluations, changes to the IEP and/or changes in program placement; right to an independent evaluation at the public school's expense; the right to arbitration or mediation if the parent and school do not agree on the plan; an administrative complaint process, and; due process hearing.

In the case of either the IEP or 504 Plan, success is more likely when the district staff, the student and the parent(s) work together as a team in the development and implementation of a plan of action. If you have questions about an existing or potential 504 Plan, contact the student's guidance counselor. For questions concerning an IEP, please contact the case manager from the Special Services Department, or the campus special services program supervisor (*Kathy Colon at LHS, Robin Myerberg at VHHS*).

Information acquired from:
U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS).
Federal Resource Center for Special Education
IEPs vs. 504 Plans (<http://www.slc.sevier.org/iepv504.htm>)

How to make the most of your college visits

by Ole Stevens, College/Career Counselor, LHS

Let's face it: Since attending college is one of the most expensive purchases of your life, visiting colleges becomes one of the most important steps in the college admissions process. Have you ever bought a house without setting foot in it? Have you ever purchased a car without driving it? If you are an average American consumer, even considering the risk of a major purchase without investigating it is unthinkable. By the same token, deciding to attend a college without visiting it is equally as risky.

I understand that the prospect of planning a college visit can be overwhelming. Who has the time, money or energy to plan the details? Nevertheless, this is an important event that needs your attention. *First*, with each college visit, you learn not only about the specific schools you visit, but about colleges in general. You start to realize what is important to you in a campus and what is not. I like to say that *with each college visit you create a measuring stick that you use to compare colleges*. From freshman through senior year, students should constantly refine the definition of what college means to them.

Second, visiting colleges should be fun. Families get the opportunity to travel and visit interesting places they may not otherwise have a chance to see. Soon, the young man or woman may be planning vacations on their own or with college buddies, so it's time to make the best of the family vacation time that's left.

Finally, college visits give students more than one choice. Not all students are going to be lucky enough to get into their

favorite school and they might have to settle for a "safety school." *Visiting colleges can show that even safety schools offer great opportunities.*

When Should You Be Thinking of Visiting Colleges? The end of sophomore year might be a good time to start. For a sophomore just starting out on the college search process, a college visit will help them to *begin* to define what the college experience will mean for them. College visits for sophomores should be based on convenience. What schools can you easily visit during a family vacation? Or, if you think you are interested in Arizona State and it is just not possible to get there, then visit another large public school like U of I or Wisconsin instead. Keep it simple! Choose schools that are close and easy to get to. In addition, I would recommend that sophomores visit schools that represent a range of size and type (large public, medium and smaller liberal arts schools). Keep all options open. This is a great start to being an informed consumer.

Juniors, on the other hand, need to narrow their focus. At this point, a junior should have a working definition of what a good college means to them and they should be in the process of researching schools that meet their criteria. Armed with a list of colleges that might be a possible fit, they need to determine *which schools are good* and *which just look good on paper*.

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District 128 theater productions selected for state theatre festival

It is a rare event to have a school production chosen for the Illinois High School Theatre Festival. Imagine the excitement in District 128 when it was announced that the 2005 fall productions at Libertyville High School AND Vernon Hills High School were selected for this honor. The LHS production of *Pippin* and the VHHS production of *Story Theatre* will perform at the festival, held at Illinois State University, on Jan. 5-7, 2006.

Both LHS and VHHS offered their fall productions for adjudication (or judging) -the first step in the process. Theater educators attended one performance of each show and offered a critique session after the performance for the cast and crew. The adjudication process takes place at dozens of schools across the state. On the Friday after Thanksgiving, the Illinois High School Theatre Festival board meets to select the plays to be performed at the festival.

This is the 20th year that LHS is attending the festival, having had four plays selected for performance at the festival-1983, 1985, 1992, and now 2006. VHHS has participated in the festival for six years and has had two shows adjudicated and one selected.

The Illinois Theatre Festival, in its 31st year, is the largest non-competitive state theatre festival in the nation. Almost 4,000 students and educators convene for the festival each year. At the 2005 festival, only 24 productions were selected to be performed. The festival was attended by 147 high schools. The festival features three main parts: workshops for theater students and educators; performances of selected productions from across the state; and the presentation of the All-State production. The All-State production features students from all over the state who have auditioned for a role. It is a highly competitive process. VHHS student **Matt Nuernberger** will perform in this year's production, *A Chorus*



Line, along with LHS students **Samantha Shultz** and **Adam Hill**. LHS students **Kaitlin Pucci** and **Susan Bratton** will perform in the pit orchestra for the production.

LHS Chamber Orchestra invited to prestigious festival

In its first year in existence, the LHS Chamber Orchestra has been invited to perform at the Orchestra America National Festival in Indianapolis from March 23-25. Orchestras nationwide submitted recordings of their best performances from last year to the Festival evaluation panel. The Chamber Orchestra comprises the top 18 string players at LHS. Fourteen of these students, **Scott Bakshis, Kennan Ceba, Ruth Holzman, Joanna Hui, Christine King, Nicole Krampien, Carly Miller, Erin Park, Meredith Peacock, Max Rapp, Maggie Sledd, Kelly Spicer, Brendan Steffens, and Zach Yordy**, will attend the festival. The students are led by **Jeremy Marino**.

Orchesis members selected

Students have been selected for this year's LHS Orchesis group. **Tim Heck**, professional dancer and LHS alumnus, will choreograph one of the dance pieces. The Orchesis Dance Recital will take place on March 2-3 at 7:30 p.m. in the LHS Auditorium. An extra performance will be held on Sunday, March 5, at Wheeling High School. The Sunday performance will be part of "*Dance for Life*," a benefit dance concert for AIDS service organizations. For further information, contact **Eryn Smith**, 847-327-7800, ext. 8010.

District 128 Winter fine arts events

- | | |
|--|---|
| Jan. 11
District 128/Junior High
Jazz Festival 10:00 a.m.,
LHS Auditorium | March 2-3
Orchesis Dance Recital,
7:30 p.m., LHS Auditorium |
| Feb. 1
VHHS Band Concert
7:30 p.m., Auditorium | March 9
Cabaret, 7:30 p.m., Cafeteria |
| Feb. 10-11
LHS Winter Play, <i>Picnic</i>
7:30 p.m., Auditorium | March 16
VHHS Cabaret, 7:30 p.m.,
Foyer |
| Feb. 23 - 25
VHHS Musical, <i>Anything
Goes</i> , 7:30 p.m., Auditorium | March 17
Jazz Concert, 7:30 p.m.,
LHS Auditorium |
| Feb. 22
LHS Winter Band Concert
7:00 p.m., LHS Auditorium | March 21
VHHS Music Concert,
7:30 p.m., Auditorium |
| Feb. 23-24
LHS One Act Play Festival
7:30 p.m., Studio Theater | March 22
Orchestra Concert,
7:30 p.m., LHS Auditorium |

From the Principal's Desk . . .

by Brad Swanson, Libertyville High School

As I reflect upon my first semester here at Libertyville High School, I am continually amazed by the standard of excellence set by our staff members, and met by our students. Every day, we are blessed to be a part of such high levels of success throughout our school community. Our high performance is demonstrated in the classroom, in our clubs and organizations, in the sports arena, and at fine arts events. However, an area less recognized, but also of utmost importance, is the level of generosity and compassion exhibited by our students and staff. All of us associated with LHS have been blessed with so much. Recognizing this fact, it is refreshing that we seek out opportunities to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Led by their Student Council, Interact Club, TopCats Club and National Honor Society, the student body has given charitably to the Katrina Relief Effort, the Annual Canned Food Drive, the LifeSource Blood Drive, and the Adopt-a-Family program. They have also volunteered at PADS, mentored elementary school students, and organized the Senior Citizen Holiday Dinner and Concert. These are only a few of the ways that our students and staff have given to their surrounding community. Libertyville High School has a responsibility to not only produce outstanding students and leaders, but also future generous and compassionate citizens.

To this end, our school-wide First Class Program has partnered with the American Cancer Society (ACS) to host a Youth Relay for Life event on April 8 and 9, 2006, in our field house. This Youth Relay for Life event is a fun-filled, overnight (12 hour) event in which teams of students will collect donations to support ACS. During meaningful discussion in our First Class Program throughout the coming months, all of our students will be educated, informed, and encouraged to make a positive difference in the fight against cancer. We are excited and proud about the new partnership between our First Class Program and ACS's Relay for Life.

It is obvious to see that our thoughtful and generous students come from a community with the same heart. LHS can only be as successful as the level of support from our community. Throughout this school year, a number of businesses and community members have generously given to support a new staff tradition on Friday mornings, "Community Connections Breakfast." This breakfast is a time for staff members to build stronger relationships with each other and the Libertyville community. I offer a sincere thank-you to the following who have sponsored a Community Connections Breakfast during the first semester.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ■Sunset Foods | ■Liberty Restaurant |
| ■Einstein Bagels | ■Liberty Donuts |
| ■North Shore Sign-- Duane Laska | ■Moms-in-Touch |
| ■Law Firm of Swanson, Martin & Bell | ■Congressman Mark Kirk |
| ■Mayor Jeff Harger | ■Berry Tire-- Dan DeRose |
| ■Libertyville Bank & Trust | ■Allure Design & Beauty-- Judy Salzman |
| ■Parent CATS | ■ReMax Realty - Doreen Herman |
| ■Koenig & Strey-- Sheila Brooks (twice) | ■LHS - Student Assistance Program |
| ■Proctor's Cottage Florist (twice) | |

Under the direction of **Tim Frawley**, and the support of numerous other staff members, Libertyville High School's production of *Pippin* received the honor of performing at the Illinois High School Theatre Festival, on Jan. 6. Thank you to the cast and crew for your hard work and talent. Congratulations to all of you! LHS is so proud!

With all that happens throughout LHS, it is important to remember that academics always come first. Students - study hard and best of luck on your finals! Go CATS!

Students of the Month

Congratulations to the following students who were named November Students of the Month: **Drake Haigh, Kelsey Boscaccy, Sarah Wisniewski, Lindsay Zaboronski, Rita Lichamer, Michael Davidsen, Jacqueline Giannini, Stephanie Sliwa, Andrea Bologeorges, Armando Velasquez,** and **Scott Bakshis**

Congratulations to the following students who were named December Students of the Month: **Riordan Murphy, Margaret Sledd, Elizabeth Purse, Anne Paulson, Alex Gutierrez, Nicole Thomas, Courtney Cartwright, Heidi Josenhans, Jenna Guerriero, Kathryn Peterson, Byron Girmscheid, Ellen Williams, Patrick Fischl, Tim Powers,** and **Sean Gahart**

Student activities update

by Diane Phillips, Assistant Principal

Student Council - Canned Food Drive

The LHS Annual **Canned Food Drive** took place Nov. 18 – 22. Student Council held yet another successful food drive. A total of **44,579** food items were collected along with \$1,600. This year, two organizations benefited from the food items collected: Libertyville Township Food Pantry and Maristella. Thank you for your contributions and continued support of this great project. Also, thank you to the teachers, staff, students, School Board members and administrators who joined together on Nov. 23 to form a “human chain” that moved boxes of food from the second floor down to the front circle where the food was picked up by the charities.

Student Council – 3rd Annual Fall Blood Drive

The 3rd Annual Fall Student Council **Blood Drive** took place on Nov. 1. One hundred thirty-one individuals volunteered to donate blood. The total number of pints collected was **112** which benefited **336** lives. Thanks to everyone who attempted to give and who were successful in giving the gift of life. The spring blood drive will take place on Feb. 21.

Feasts for Beasts

L.E.A.F., Latin and English Literature classes and the Music Department held the 11th annual “Feasts for Beasts” canned and dry dog and cat food drive to help Save-A-Pet, the no-kill shelter near Grayslake. Food and monetary donations were collected. Many pets benefited from yet another successful food drive.

Senior Class – Clothing Drive

The Senior Class sponsored a clothing drive. Numerous items were collected and then donated to various organizations in the Lake County area.

Adopt-A-Family Project

First Class and the Interact Club sponsored their seventh annual Adopt-A-Family holiday project. Approximately 90 families that are serviced by OMNI Youth Services, St. Mary of Vernon Parish and Catholic Charities were adopted. All of the adopted families

attended a special dinner in the LHS cafeteria on Dec. 14 and received more than 800 gifts.

CLUBS/ACTIVITIES NEWS...

Amnesty International

Stephanie Gigon, Erin Kummer and **Meghan O’Dowd** attended a Halloween-weekend conference at the University of Cincinnati. The focus of the conference was to draw attention to the problem of human torture. A variety of sessions and visual displays covered this and many other human rights topics. The students were accompanied by advisor, **Dave Lapish**.

Academic Bowl

Although it is early, the Academic Bowl teams have been off to a very busy and successful start to the 05-06 season. The Frosh/Soph team, coached by **Karen Schnobel**, and captained by sophomore **Yuli Zhu** made an impressive showing at the Carmel Invitational on Nov. 5. The team advanced to the quarterfinals, and Sophomore **Adam MacTaggart** made the All-Tournament team for his toss-up contributions. Juniors **Jackson Lai** and **Karen Li** competed at the New Trier ScoBowl Solo Tournament on Nov. 12 and did very well. **Karen** earned a ribbon for her success in Geometry/Trigonometry category. On Nov. 16, both teams made a clean sweep, winning all six matches at the first conference competition held at North Chicago. The Varsity team advanced to the quarterfinals at the IHSA Kick-off Tournament, held at Wheaton North on Nov. 19. The team was undefeated in the morning matches and advanced to the quarterfinals. Captained by senior **Mike Ding**, with toss-up MVPs **Irvin Wang** and **Jackson Lai**, Coach **Kristi Robertson** is enthusiastic about the rest of the season and predicts further victories for both Varsity and the Frosh/Soph teams. December will be a busy month with three Invitational tournaments and two conference meets.

Best Buddies

Peer Buddies to Best Buddies matches have been completed. Peer Buddies have begun to call their Best Buddies and have started to build those impor-

tant friendships. Best Buddies sold puppy chow to raise funds for Adopt-A-Family gifts.

CAT-TV

CAT-TV once again participated in the WTTW membership drive for Channel 11 funding on Sunday, Dec. 4. Students who participated in answering telephones included: **Sam Greenberg, Stephanie Shebesta, Matt Rasmussen, Latrell Harvey, Demetrius Benion, Brian Jensen, Shelly Birch, Elle Webber, Kelsey Van Mieghem, Trevor Siu, Mike Kohlbrenner, Sam Waldie** and **Phil Skurski**. **Don Johnson**, sponsor of CAT-TV, accompanied the students.

Chemistry Day

Nearly 300 elementary and middle school students participated in the Joy of Toys Chemistry Day held on Saturday, Oct. 22. The three-hour event highlighted famous toys and how chemistry was used to invent and make toys. The 49 students in the LHS honors chemistry classes manned the 21 work stations to illustrate various chemical principles used in popular toys. Some examples of work stations included: the drinking bird – looking at the chemistry of cooling and boiling, diving subs – looking at the reactions of carbon dioxide and density, and glow in the dark items – looking at the chemistry of different energy levels and light. **Sherri Rukes** was the creator of this event. **Greg Herman, Sharon Crary**, and **Jason Rukes** assisted at the event. The theme for Chemistry Day 2006 will be the chemistry of Harry Potter.

Choral Department

The following students were selected to the **2005 IMEA District 7 Senior Chorus**. **Clare Colao, Carly Jones, Lindsay Schwartz, Britta Lundstedt, Camille Malecha, Emily Alexander, Carly Miller, Jay Fischl, Jon Weppler, Adam Hill, Matt Chapman, Max Mauer, Scott Bakshis** and **Harris Covington**. The senior festival took place on Nov. 19. Since October, the Choir department has been rehearsing for the annual **Holiday Music Festival**.
continued on page 13

Student Activities *continued from page 12*

The dress rehearsal was held on Dec. 13 after the Annual Senior Citizen Holiday Dinner, and the formal performance was held on Dec. 15. Groups that performed included: **LHS Orchestra, Concert Choir, Bel Canto, Chorale, Master Singers, Belle Choir, Treblemakers and Cleftomaniacs.**

Interact

Interact has continued to serve our community. Interact has participated in an Adler Park cleanup, sends weekly volunteers to the PADS shelter, and has raised money for the yearly Adopt-A-Family dinner. Thanks to the generous donations of the Sunrise and Noon Rotaries, Parent CATS, and students at LHS, Interact raised enough funds in order to make the gathering enjoyable for the approximately 90 families involved. Adopt-A-Family, being Interact's and First Class' biggest undertaking of the year, warmed the hearts of all those involved.

Library/Anime Club Anime is [Japanese animation](#), sometimes billed in the west under the [portmanteau](#) *Japanimation*. It is often characterized by stylized colorful images depicting vibrant characters in a variety of different settings and storylines, aimed at a variety of different audiences. Anime is influenced by the drawing style of [manga](#), or Japanese comics. "anime." [Wikipedia](#). Wikipedia, 2005. [Answers.com](#) 28 Nov. 2005. <http://www.answers.com/topic/anime>

This year, the Library/Anime Club replaced the Library Club. Since most of the members had a deep interest in anime, they were looking for a new club, so we just evolved the Library Club into the Library/Anime Club. And what a success the transition has been. The members then requested that we meet weekly and we are greatly enjoying the activities. We meet and discuss the latest and greatest in anime, view a video, then have discussions. Each week we have new students visit and explore an interest in anime.

The club members have been very active. Anime characters popped up on a store front for Spirit Week as the members wanted to blend the club

interests into the Homecoming theme. We were the only LHS club to sponsor the fund-raising event for the *Westfield Works Wonders* event on Nov. 13. The members sold tickets to the Sunday evening shopping spree for a very successful fund-raising event.

Model United Nations

Model UN is off to a fantastic start. On Oct. 29, five students competed at a conference at Stevenson High School. **Ann Kreitman** was named honorable mention for her outstanding performance. In November, LHS Model UN attended a National Conference at Duke University. Fifteen students from LHS worked incredibly hard and came home with six awards. **Jennie Choi, Blake Dahmer, and Monica Quimby** received Honorable Mention. **Rebekah Frumkin, Maggie Molitor and Austin Causey** were named Distinguished Delegates. Model UN will be back in action when they attend CIMUN in Chicago for another conference in December. **Matt Thompson** is the sponsor.

Orchesis

A company has been chosen for this year's Orchesis group. Thirty-one individuals of all grade levels are included. Student choreography is currently underway and rehearsals have already started for the March performances. **Tim Heck** (LHS graduate as well as a former dancer with Gus Giordano Dance Company, and current dancer with Thodos Modern Dance Company) will be a guest choreographer.

Physics

The Physics classes did their annual egg drop project on Nov. 4. Students dropped eggs from the press box and the Libertyville Fire Department Aerial Ladder. And yes, several eggs survived the drop. A special thanks to the Libertyville Fire Department for its assistance with this project.

Poms

The Varsity Poms Squad started the season of giving early this year. The Poms sponsored a Used Formal Dress and Accessory Drive in early November where they collected donations of gently used homecoming, prom and turn-

about dresses and accessories. Thirty-two dresses were collected and delivered to the Boys' and Girls' Club of Lake County where they could be distributed to girls in need of special occasion attire.

Sno Catz

The ski and snow boarding club, Sno Catz, has just over 70 student members in its debut year. Sno Catz was originated to provide students with the opportunity to go skiing and snow boarding to local ski areas in a safe and fun setting. Through various fundraising such as candy and bake sales, Sno Catz makes this expensive sport affordable for all students. The first of five trips took place on Dec. 16 at Alpine Valley. Other trips this season will include Wilmot, Devil's Head and Cascade. **Tyler Peacock** is the president and **John Piazzi** is the vice president. **Nikki Olszewski** is the club sponsor.

Speech/Forensics Team

The LHS Speech/Forensics Team finished in fifth place overall in the Metamora speech tournament. Notable individual performances: **John Oleksinski** took 2nd in Original Comedy; **John Oleksinski** and **Maddie Paul** took 5th in Humorous Duet Acting; **Kristina Grosspietsch** and **Megan Castle** took 2nd in Humorous Duet Acting. **Annie Jaeger** took 3rd in Prose Reading. The team is coached by **Tom Bizosky** and **Sara Hake**.

Wildcat Guard

The fall aquatic programs have been a success this year. Over 130 children from the community took swim lessons from our Wildcat Guard instructors and the Wildcat Guards continue to guard the pool on Sundays from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. during public swim. If anyone in the community is interested in enrolling their children in the winter session, email the aquatic director at swim@d128.org. See you at the pool!

WYSE

Twenty-eight teams of eight students each competed at Milwaukee School of Engineering on Nov. 22 in the

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Student Activities

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Opportunity Science Competition. Libertyville captured first place as a team and many students won individual medals. Both **Nader Awni** and **Mike Ding** received gold medals as overall winners of the competition. **Steve Jiang** took first in physics and **Joyce Fan** and **Mike Ding** tied for second. **Nader Awni** and **Tracy Branding** tied for first in chemistry. **George Kaliyadan** took second in biology and **Nader Awni** and **Mike Ding** tied for second in general science. **Jennifer Nichols** and **Irvin Wang** also contributed to the first-place team trophy. **Patricia Sharp** coaches WYSE.

Young Investors

Young Investors is off to a fast start in its first year at LHS. The club is tracking several stocks in a simulated portfolio over the past few months. Apple (aapl) and Cardinal Health (cah) are among the best performing stocks in the club's portfolio. President **Matt Clark** and Vice President **Mike Davidsen** organized a stock competition for the club where each member created their own portfolio of stocks. The club, sponsored by **Bill Pitcher**, meets every Thursday morning before school to discuss news, stock market trends and manage their portfolio.

Students you should know

IMEA District 7 Performance included: Orchestra – **Kaitlin Pucci** and **Eric Spanton**; Band – **Brent Kalman**, **Andrew Hur**, **Dana Joras**, **Laura Semmelman**, and **Erik Anderson**; Jazz Band – **Dan Pierson** and **Marty Gierczyk**.

Eric Adams created a memorial garden at Winchester House as his Eagle Scout community project.

Jay Fischl was nominated for the Sons of the American Revolution Award.

Winners of the Library Media Centers' 4th Annual Poetry Slam: first place – **Keton Nadkarni**, second place – **Jake Yordy** and third place – **Mary Bernecki** and **Perry Landers**. The slam was judged by English teachers **Karen Gibbs**, **Sharra Powell** and

Brian Twadell. The event was emceed by **Gary Saxvik**.

Samantha Shultz won Best of Show and a cash prize for her charcoal on mylar self-portrait at the Northern Illinois University High School Invitational art exhibit.

Siena Baldi received the Juror's Choice Award for three-dimensional artwork and cash prize for a ceramic and metal piece at the Northern Illinois University High School Invitational art exhibit.

A special thanks to the students, families and faculty that hosted the 20 **French Exchange Students** that visited our school for two weeks.

Shelly Birch collected toys, school supplies and candy for the Fill a Shoe Box Gift campaign sponsored by Samaritan's Purse for its Operation Christmas Child program.

The winners of the Student Halloween Contest were: first place – **Will Pomes**, second place – **Alex Schmaling** and third place – **Stephanie Meyer**.

Junior **Adam Hill** was selected to perform in the American Choral Directors Association's High School Honor Choir at next February's Central Division Convention. Adam competed against other high school students from Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan.

Senior **Tracy Branding** was selected for the *Daily Herald* Leadership team.

Senior **Kelli Goodwin** was nominated for the Daughters of the American Revolution Award.

Angie Sylvester collected games, books and school supplies for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. These items were donated to the American Red Cross.

Matt Bialek earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He is a member of Libertyville's Troop 71.

Attention Eighth Graders and Parents!

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the annual

**Libertyville High School
Eighth Grade Orientation Night
Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2006**

The evening will introduce incoming students and their parents to the many educational offerings and activities at LHS. The program will include curriculum presentations, extracurricular displays and refreshments. Further details will be mailed in late January.

News from the Hills

Principal's Report

by Dr. Ellen Cwick

I am extremely pleased with our fall semester here at Vernon Hills High School. I have simply been overwhelmed with the enthusiasm that I have seen in all areas of our school. We experienced fabulous weather for our outdoor activities in September and October. It was exciting to see students, staff, and parents highly involved and enjoying all these activities. Our homecoming dance had one of highest student attendances ever and filled auditoriums and a gymnasium were the standards at our music festivals this fall. Attendance is up in all three of our parent organizations and we love seeing our parents here at school, actively involved in their teen's school life.

I am also greatly impressed with the enthusiasm and hard work that I see going on in our classrooms. Great teacher-student interactions and high expectations for success are common themes I view as I travel from classroom to classroom. The best experience is the walking away from that electrically charged classroom wishing you could again be a student in that classroom.

I challenge our students here at VHHS to continue this enthusiasm throughout the school year. Grab a bunch on your friends, support your school and attend an activity that you have never before experienced!

New faces at VHHS

I would like to introduce five new staff members who have joined our Cougar family since the start of the school year. Please welcome **Lin Jackowski**- ESP Fine Arts, **Nancy DiCarlo**- ESP Learning Support Team, **Sarah Hillyer** and **Pam Eidmann**- ESP Library, and **Stephanie Kinser**- Physical Welfare Instructional Assistant.

Construction Update

Work has begun and is moving along at a fast pace on the new maintenance storage building located on the southeast corner of our main campus. A projected completion date is set for February 2006. Architect plans are currently being drawn up for tennis courts located at the north end of the Vernon Hills Athletic Complex. The goal is to get the drawings to the Board of Education for approval this January 2006. Work continues on the new boys' varsity baseball dugouts. This donated project looks to be completed by March 2006. We are continuing to look at alternatives to reduce costs for the girls' varsity dugouts. We hope to rebid this project in the near future.

Adopt-A-Family

The spirit of the holiday season is certainly exemplified in VHHS' Adopt-A-Family event. Our Interact and First Class programs sponsored the event on Dec. 15 with a new addition this year of welcoming both Hawthorn Middle Schools to join in and participate. Individual VHHS classes selected families and purchased gifts to produce a truly amazing evening. Over 90 adopted families enjoyed a party that included dinner, gifts and entertainment.

Special Upcoming Activities

Congratulations to Director, **Kevin Phelan** and the cast and crew of our Fall Play, *Story Theatre*, who have been selected to perform at the Illinois High School Theatre Festival at Illinois State University on Saturday, Jan. 7 at 10:30 am. This is quite an honor for the students and staff of our outstanding theatre department! We are also very excited about our third VHHS winter musical, *Anything Goes* with performances on Feb. 23, 24, and 25.

Athletically, we are hosting the IHSA Sectional Boys' Bowling meet on Saturday, Jan. 21. Come out and cheer on our Cougars!

Our Turnabout Dance hosted by Student Council is on Saturday, Feb. 18, 2006.

Attention Eighth Graders and Parents!

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the annual

**Vernon Hills High School
Eighth Grade Orientation Night
Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2006
at 6:30 p.m.**

The evening will introduce incoming students to the educational program at VHHS and assist families with the freshman enrollment process. Students and parents will learn about the many offerings and activities at VHHS and tour the building. More information will be mailed home in January.

Cougar Class Act Award winners

Congratulations to the following VHHS students who were named Cougar Class Act Award winners in December: **Lucas McKeever, Chris Czuj, Kelsey Anderson, Anjalika Gandhi, Jacob Block, Anna Nelson, Anatoliy Pikovskiy, Michael Gabriel, Neel Bhat, Jafar Abbas and Mellissa Gonzalez.**

Student activities update

by Deb Beagle, VHHS Student Activities Coordinator

Adopt-A-Family -- The VHHS Adopt-A-Family program is in its sixth year. It uses donations from students and staff to provide gifts to the needy families from Lake County. The program, run by Interact and First Class, is truly an intergenerational event. It started with the VHHS preschool, where felt mittens were filled with goodies. Third period classes, along with Hawthorn Middle School classes, each “adopted” a family and provided gifts from a wish list. The VHHS maintenance crew cleaned and repaired over 60 bikes that were donated. The Cougar parents prepared and served food. Senior residents of The Park crocheted scarves all year for the families. Many community businesses and residents donated to this cause. Santa attended the event as well. In the end, more than 90 families enjoyed a party and a brighter holiday because of the hard work and generosity of everyone involved in the annual tradition.

Academic Bowl – Congratulations to the Academic Bowl team on its Nov. 16 victories. Both Varsity and Frosh/Soph Academic Bowl teams made a clean sweep of the competition, defeating teams from Lake Forest, Mundelein and Wauconda. **Paul Kornbluh** led the scoring for the Varsity team with 12 tossups, **David Sievers** scored 7 tossups, and **Marc Gibson, Sam Rothstein, Filip Zucek** and **Andrey Dolinko** also scored points. Congratulations also to the Academic Bowl team on its Nov. 30 victories. The Varsity Academic Bowl team once again made a clean sweep of the competition, defeating teams from Warren, Grant, and Lake Zurich. The team is undefeated for the season, with a 6-0 record. **Paul Kornbluh** led the scoring for the Varsity team with 8 tossups, **David Sievers** scored 3, **Shaun Fernandes, Mike Montgomery** and **Marc Gibson** scored 2. **Nathaniel Olson, Sam Rothstein, Andrey Dolinko, Michael Mui, Tim Fong,** and **Eric Lee** also scored points for the Cougar Varsity team. Captains **Marc Gibson** and **Andrey Dolinko** led their teams to victory. The Frosh-Soph team also had a successful competition, defeating teams from Warren and Grant.

Art Club - The VHHS Art Club has once again worked with the Special Recreation Association of Central Lake County (SRACLC) Holiday Tree Festival benefit “Through the Eyes of a Child.”



Proceeds from the event will help support therapeutic recreation programs offered to children and adults with disabilities by SRACLC. The benefit was held Nov. 18 at the Ivanhoe Club and the club’s tree was auctioned off for \$275. Pictured at left with the

tree are (front) **Kim Power, Sylvia Kim,** (center) **Vanessa Ceballos, Katie Leaver,** (back) Art Teacher **Jim Savage.** Students **Sharon Ladorr, Debbie Yim, Hajin Lee, Liza Xu, Regina Kim, Lauren Clatch, Layne Perkowitz** and **Jingyu Lee** also contributed to the tree design and decoration.

Best Buddies – The Best Buddies Club hosted its 3rd Annual Thanksgiving Feast on Nov. 17. Buddies and their peer buddies worked together and brought food and made decorations for the event. The buddies, the peer buddies and their families all had a great time. The event raised about \$120 for the Lexi Kazian Foundation: Helping From Heaven which is a local not for profit organization that serves children with disabilities and their families. A special thanks to the **Palcek Family, the Wickland Family, Nancy Westover,** and **Melissa Silverberg** for supplying the turkey and ham and to all the other families who helped supply delicious food for the Feast! The event would also not be possible without the help of **Melba Campos, Mellissa Gonzalez, Alison Mascort, Mitchell Koziol, Dayna Haight, Taebee Chang, Aggie Padyasek, Jim Rodgers,** and others who helped set up and/or clean up!

Backlight Theatre – Backlight Theatre club just concluded several very successful student-directed one-acts. This year’s directors were **Kristen Meylor, Bryan Reid, Christine Nadrowski,** and **Goli Rahimi.**

Cougar Guard Club - The Cougar Lifeguard Club continues to offer swimming lessons to the children of the Vernon Hills and Libertyville communities.



Cougar Guard members are pictured at left giving a lesson. The third and final session of the school year will begin on Saturday, Jan. 14. For registration information, please visit www.vhh-scougars.org/athletics

and follow the aquatics link or call the VHHS aquatics director **Jim Pardun** at 932-2228.

FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) - FBLA is off to a great start this year boasting a record number of members. With **Andrew Krippinger** serving as president, the organization is looking forward to a great year of conferences and competitions. The students attended a social bowling outing at Hawthorn Lanes on Sunday, Dec. 4 and had a great time getting to know each other, the officers and the new members. With our continuation of young membership, VHHS FBLA is very excited to gain experience at the first competition of the year at the Illinois Northern Area Conference which will be held at Stevenson High School on Jan. 21.

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VHHS Student Activities

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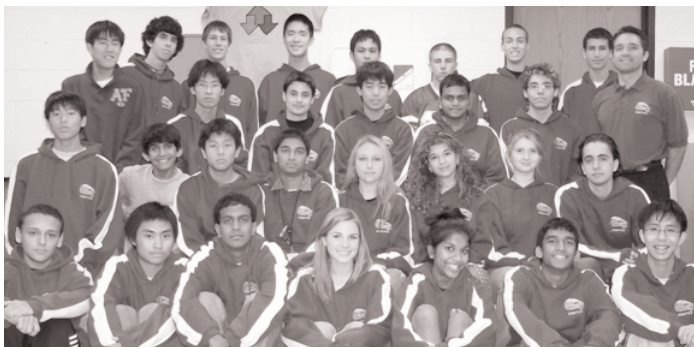
Math Team – The VHHS Math Team won first place at the second competition of the year held at Prospect High School. The senior and junior teams finished first with the sophomores finishing second. Special congratulations to **Jonathan Ahn** and **Evan Kozil** who received perfect scores. The team also won the Candy Bar Contest at the meet, so we took home a bag full of chocolate candy!

Model UN – Congratulations to the VHHS Model United Nations team which won several individual awards at the Duke University National Model United Nations competition in North Carolina in early November. **Mallory Usen** won the award of Best Delegate. **Ashton Youngquist** and **David Sievers** won the award of Distinguished Delegate. **Richard Lauber** and **Filip Zucek** won the award of Honorable Mention. Congratulations to this fine team for their outstanding participation at a national competition.

National Honor Society - Calling all cell phone users! If you are considering buying a new phone, why not donate your old one to a good cause? The VHHS National Honor Society is sponsoring a cell phone drive this January and February. You can drop them off in the drop-off box in the foyer or in other boxes located around the school. No matter the age of the phone, we can take it! Proceeds will go to NHS's charitable work and scholarship program.

In the past 3 1/2 months, Vernon Hills' NHS has completed over 600 hours of community service, including building with Habitat for Humanity, participating in SRACLCLC's (Special Recreation Association of Central Lake County) Fall Fantasy Dance and raising more than \$600 through Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF. If you have questions or know of future service opportunities for NHS, please contact **Wendy Meister-Louria** at wendy.meister@d128.org or call her at 847-932-2000, ext. 8667.

Robotics



The VHHS Robotic Engineers **Alina Konnikova**, **Galina Beylina**, **Lisa Pahomov** and **Ross Kupriyenko** placed first at the Robotics tournament on Nov. 15 with their champion "Tug of War" robot. The VHHS Robotics team also participated in two tournaments on Nov. 29 and took first place in both! Team Robocop took first place in the Robot Tug-of-War tournament. Team Robocop engineers are **Eric Lee**,

Omar Hassan, **Ani Rangarajan**, **Loyd Maverick Ty**, **Jeff Wang** and **Eric Han**. Team Big-Botics won the Robot Sumo tournament. Team Big-Botics created the only robot strong enough to flip opposing robots on their back. Team Big-Botics engineers are **Alan Xu**, **Dan Cho**, **Shaun Fernandes**, **Leo Serebryanny** and **Nisha Sutaria**.

Special Olympics - Special Olympics has begun! The team practices every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:15-5:15pm at VHHS. At the present time, the team is training for basketball and soon will be lacing up the snowshoes. Twenty athletes are in this year's program. Volunteers are always welcome, so if you would like to give your time and help us become better at what we do, come join us. The first basketball game was on Dec. 6 at Wauconda High School. Finally, congratulations is in order to **Jose Cossio** and **Jim Pahl** for winning a bronze medal and a fifth-place ribbon at this year's sectional bowling meet in Rockford. If you would like more information on the program, please contact **Andy Compton** at VHHS.

Speech Team – The novice VHHS Speech/Forensics team made a name for itself and for the high school in its first-ever tournament at Prospect High School. Nine schools competed in 13 individual events. In Extemporaneous Speaking, both **Alan Xu** and **Jingyu Lee** flexed their current event knowledge as well as organizational skills when they placed in second and fifth respectively. In Impromptu speaking, **Melissa Chua** thought quickly on her feet and placed fifth. **Ann Santori** entertained her audience and took fifth place as well in Humorous Interpretation. **Andrea Liu** impressed the judges with her radio personality in Radio speaking earning fourth place. Both **Valerie Szwaya** and **Joy Wu** invoked the poetic muse and performed well when they placed third and fifth respectively in Verse Reading.

Spotlight - Spotlight's theme for the March 11 show is Spinnin' Outta' Control. Members have been practicing twice a week since the beginning of school. Officers and choreographers have been working hard to organize the twenty runs, practices, and meetings. The guy/girl club will also perform at a girls' basketball game. Our show features hip hop, reggaeton, batcha, break dancing, techno, stomp, and dancing from the decades 1950 - 2000. Profits from the show will go to a local charity. Charities that the club has donated to in the past include: LaCasa, Lake County Haven of Lake County, and Youth & Family Counseling of Lake County. Tickets are available at the door. For more information, contact the advisors: **Sandy Gerbasi**, **Lesa Clark-Morgan**, and **Elissa Gong**.

Senior Class - The VHHS 5th Annual Senior Class Party will be held at VHHS on Friday, June 9, from 10:00 pm to 3:00 am. Stop by the main office to purchase your ticket. The Senior Class Party night is filled with food, prizes, dancing, games and entertainment. Close out your senior year by celebrating with your friends and classmates.

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VHHS Student Activities

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Student Council

Blood Drive – Student Council (Senior Class) will be hosting the annual Blood Drive on Thurs. Feb. 2. Donors must be 17 years of age to donate (16 years with parental permission). Members of the community are invited to donate. The blood drive will be from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm.

Canned Food Drive - Student Council (Freshman and Sophomore Classes) will be hosting a canned food drive at VHHS from Feb. 6- Feb. 15. Items will be collected in all 3rd period classes. The donated food items will be given to the Northern Illinois Food Bank for those less fortunate.

Decades Dance – Student Council (Freshman Class) hosted a Decades Dance on Dec. 3. Students dressed in 60's, 70's, and 80's attire.

Turnabout Dance – Student Council (Junior Class) will be hosting the Turnabout Dance on Feb. 18 in the VHHS Gymnasium. The Junior Class is currently discussing the theme and organizing the details.

S.P.A.R.K. (Supporting Peers and Reaching Kids) – S.P.A.R.K. members sponsored the Great American Smokeout on Nov. 17. During lunch periods, students and staff signed pledges to stay tobacco-free for life or commit to quit.

VH2O (Environmental Club) - VH2O has taken over recycling responsibilities at VHHS, collecting the bins of paper every Tuesday after school. Club members are hoping to increase the types of material that are recycled as well. Club members will participate in the Envirothon, a competitive, problem-solving event that will take place in April. The theme will be "Water Stewardship in a Changing Climate." Beginning in January, club meetings will include practice sessions for this exciting event.

V.I.P. (Voices In Prevention) - Twenty-five V.I.P. students performed prevention skits and facilitated group discussions for all 5th grade classrooms on bullying and rumors at the Hawthorn Middle School. Presentations were held on Dec. 13 for half of the 5th grade and will be held on a day in January for the rest of the 5th grade.

Whispers of Immortality – Five steps to achieving greatness: 1. Think. 2. Write down your thoughts. 3. Take pictures of things that express those thoughts. 4. Create art incorporating those pictures that express your thoughts. 5. Submit to Whispers. We'll do the rest. Submit creative original expressions to Whispers@d128.org or drop them off in the drop boxes placed in the LMC and Main Office.

Awards and Recognition

VHHS senior **Amy Palace** has been named a winner of the 2005 National Council of Teachers of English Achievement Awards. According to the NCTE, winners of this award are among the best student writers in the country.

VHHS Social Studies Teacher **Frank Underbrink** was chosen to receive the 2005 Yale Teaching Award from Yale University. Members of the incoming freshman class at Yale are invited to nominate a favorite teacher who stands out for the way he or she has fostered their intellectual and personal growth in high school. The nomination form asked students to tell the committee about teachers whose outstanding, even inspiring teaching ability has made a difference in their lives. Only 25 teachers worldwide received this honor. Frank was nominated for the award by VHHS 2005 graduate **Tom Ginakakis**.

VHHS English teachers and speech coaches **Sharon Arbiture** and **Sean Conroy** were invited to present a program at the recent Illinois Speech and Theater Association's 75th Anniversary Convention in Bloomington. Their presentation was titled, "Teaching Speech Objectives in the English Classroom."

VHHS junior **James Moss** was named a Tech Campus Student Ambassador in the Automotive Service program.

Seniors **Anjalika Gandhi**, **Elisa Visick** and **Marc Gibson** were recently honored for their performance on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

Congratulations to **Sara Stiles** for being nominated by the VHHS staff to be eligible to enter the DAR Good Citizens Scholarship contest. The DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) Good Citizens Scholarship is awarded to one senior female student that has demonstrated the following qualities to an outstanding degree: dependability, service, leadership and patriotism.

The **VHHS holiday concert** raised 2,000 food items and \$200 for the Vernon Township Food Pantry. Thanks to an anonymous sponsor who agreed to double the amounts raised by students, the Pantry received 4,000 food items and \$400.

Thank you from VHHS

On behalf of the Cougar Boosters, thank you to all the parents who supported Coaches' Appreciation Day on Oct. 27.

The coaches truly appreciated all of the planning, food and decorations. Many delighted in the delicious dishes and desserts made or bought for both the breakfast and luncheon that was served throughout the school day. We hope this day was a nice experience for you and will keep us in mind next year as we plan another great day for our coaches.

We also need to acknowledge the truly generous donation of **Carlucci** in Lincolnshire. The restaurant donated the fabulous Italian cuisine for the coaches luncheon.

Your help and enthusiasm was appreciated!

Diane Dunn and Patricia Bahnick (co-chairs)

Athletic Director's Corner

by Tim Albers, LHS Athletic Director

The Illinois High School Association (IHSA) is the athletic governing body for each high school in Illinois. The IHSA is constantly striving to make athletic programs in Illinois more meaningful and exciting with various changes that have occurred over the recent years. The IHSA Board of Directors recently drafted a proposal and reviewed this proposal with the member schools' principals and athletic directors. One of the draft proposals was generated to explore expanding the number of classes in selected sports. The question of class expansion is one that IHSA members have repeatedly asked the IHSA to explore for the past several years. One of the proposals coming from the IHSA is to explore a three- or four-class system. The models being discussed have been presented to all member schools in town meetings held statewide. These meetings are set up to get discussion and feedback from the member schools about various issues that need to be addressed and to find out if these proposals have merit and interest in the state to implement new rules or policies.

This year, one of the main topics from the IHSA was to explore expanding from a two-class system to a three- or four-class system. There was discussion at each town meeting between an IHSA director and the member schools' principals and athletic directors. Each school district will be receiving a survey concerning this topic and the data will be collected and analyzed by the IHSA Board of Directors. The IHSA has asked all member schools to complete the survey, keeping in mind the impact not only on our individual schools, but the entire state membership. In January, the Board will review the results of the advisory referendum and determine what, if any, action should take place regarding classification revisions.

The draft model suggests that for a three-class system to happen, there should be at least 450 teams in the state that compete in that sport. For a four-class system to happen, there must be at least 600 teams in the state that compete in that sport.

Currently we have a two-class system – A sport or activity must have at least 300 participating teams or 350 schools sending either a team or an individual. In 2005-06 a fixed cutoff of 735 students was established between class A and AA. Here is what the draft proposal for a three-class system might look like if approved.

Three-Class System (individual sports only)

A sport should have 450 participating schools

Class 1A 50% of all member schools

Class 2A 25% of all member schools

Class 3A 25% of all member schools

The following sports would be eligible for a three-class system:

Boys' and Girls' Track & Field, Boys' Golf.

The rationale to move to a three-class system is that it:

- *Creates balance in terms of schools and entries in each class.
- *Creates consistent classes for schools in those sports that may go to three classes.
- *Keeps reasonably close to two- and four-class philosophy.
- *Divides the number of schools and the number of entries equitably for each of the three classes.
- *Allows the sectionals in each class to qualify the same number of entries to the state finals and provide a comparable state final for each class in that sport.

Here is what the draft proposal for a four-class system might look like if approved.

Four-class system (bracketed team sports only)

A sport should have 600 teams participating

Class 1A 33.3% of member schools - Enrollments up to 289

Class 2A 22.2% of member schools - Enrollments from 289 – 714

Class 3A 22.2% of member schools - Enrollments from 714 to 1628

Class 4A 22.2% of member schools - Enrollment above 1628

The following sports would be eligible for a four-class system:

Boys' & Girls' Basketball, Softball, Girls' Volleyball.

	Total Schools	Base	BBB	GBB	Soft	GVB
1A	250	179	225	179	158	202
2A	167	160	164	161	159	156
3A	167	149	156	159	142	145
4A	167	161	163	155	153	151
Totals	649	708	708	654	612	654

The rationale to move to a four-class system is that it:

- *Divides the current class A and class AA in half, aligning it nicely with the two-class proposals.
- *Allows for eight sectional complexes with at least 16 teams in each complex in all sports.
- *Creates a good balance of entries in all sectional complexes for the sports that would be potential four-class sports.
- *Preserves, as closely as possible, the existing tournament structure.
- *Allows the IHSA to fulfill existing contractual obligations at state final sites.
- *Would qualify four spots in each sport for the state finals in each of the four classes (16 teams total).

Classification of schools is a policy that requires a majority vote of the Board of Directors to change.

In January, the Board will review the results of an advisory referendum and determine what, if any, action needs to take place regarding classifications. The Board will also review the results of the survey from member schools and will determine if the grouping/seeding policy has support. If approved, the IHSA Board would determine when and if sports will be split into different classifications. This would no longer be a recommendation coming from the individual sport advisory committees.

Another hot topic that the IHSA is exploring is the current grouping and seeding policy. The cornerstone of the IHSA state tournament has long been geographic assignments to the initial round of the state series leading to geographic representation at state final tournaments. The geographic concept helps maintain a reasonable balance between key factors such as education, time, money and travel, while at the same time providing a structure that is equitable to all member schools. The IHSA will again survey schools on this policy in December and will ask some of the following questions: Should the geographic principle continue to be the cornerstone of grouping and seeding? Should the geographic principle apply to football? Should sectional complexes be maintained? Should certain sectional complexes have sub-sectionals? Should the schools have the higher seeds be able to host 1st and 2nd round games? Should a school with a high seed but an inadequate facility be allowed to host?

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Wildcat profile

Name: **Dan Bleck**

Sports: **Willie the Wildcat, the LHS Mascot**

Dan is the LHS school mascot we affectionately named Willie the Wildcat. Dan has been our mascot for the past two years, and has done an outstanding job of making our events a great deal more fun because of his spirit and energy.

Dan plans to go to college next year and has already been accepted to Carthage, but he would like to hear back from DePaul University and Illinois State University before making his final decision. If he has the opportunity at any of these schools, he would definitely try out to be their mascot. His favorite subject in school is psychology, and to relax Dan likes to read, listen to music, and prefers to do things outdoors when the weather is nice. According to Dan, nothing is better than taking a good nap in a hammock on a nice day.

Dan plays lacrosse and also enjoys camping, hiking, wake boarding and has played guitar for six years. He is currently studying classical guitar. He has served our community as a volunteer at the PADS shelters and donates and helps distribute food and clothing to the less fortunate.

Here are some questions that we asked of Dan about his role as our mascot over the past two years.

Why did you want to become the LHS school mascot?

I wanted to try something that I have never done before. I enjoy putting smiles on people's faces, and I figured that being the mascot would do just that. Mostly I wanted to do this to have fun.

How difficult is it to put on the mascot uniform and to perform at each game?

The only thing that I need help with is strapping on the head. The head has elastic straps that are supposed to go under the arms, but that looked kind of funny when I had everything on

the first time around. I found a better way to secure the head by hooking the straps onto my lacrosse shoulder pads that I wear underneath the suit. It can get pretty complex putting

on the uniform. Performing in the beginning was difficult, but after a few games I got a better feel for it. There is a lack of vision and hearing when wearing the uniform that you need to get accustomed to.

What props do you make for every game?

I would just search my house for any possible things that would go with my ideas. I would build some of the props and if I didn't have something that I wanted I would go buy it or make it from scratch. The thing that I took the most pride in was making the costume for the state football final game. I thought it would be appropriate to dress as a Greek soldier and pop out of a big horse since we were facing the Trojans (Cary-Grove). This was a lot of fun and well received by our fans.

What is your fondest memory of being Willie the Wildcat?

Every game is a fond memory because being the mascot only happens once a week for three hours. The attention that I get, and cheering for our football and basketball teams are great. I will miss all the support that the fans gave me during the seasons I was the mascot. I will miss making people smile and laugh.

Athletic Director Tim Albers' Comments:

Dan has taken our mascot role to a completely different level. His energy, time and creative props have been a terrific hit with the young and older fans alike. The small kids in our community look forward to seeing Willie the Wildcat and literally go into a frenzy when the big cat waves to them. Dan is a special part of our athletic programs and a big part of our teams. He will be hard to replace next year and we wish him the the best as he pursues his dreams. Thanks Dan!

AD Corner *continued from page 19*

Should the IHSA review facilities of member schools to determine host sites for tournaments? Should the IHSA predetermine all host sites for all levels of the state series in a sport? These and many more questions will be asked of all member schools.

The IHSA is also looking at another important policy change. The IHSA Board of Directors is looking for feedback on its current travel policy. The current limit a school can travel and participate in contests is 500 air miles (one way). The Board is reviewing a proposal that would focus on loss of school time in place of mileage traveled. The new proposal would stipulate that schools cannot miss more than one school day to participate in out-of-state contests. A survey will be presented to the member schools in December. If this policy passes, it could take effect in the spring, giving our baseball program and girls' soccer program an opportunity not to just travel to where it is warm to practice, but the new proposal would allow these teams an opportunity to play contests if we so desire.

We shall soon see what the member schools have to say and the changes that might take place with these proposed changes. In either scenario, the LHS Wildcats would be classified 3A in a three-class system and we would be 4A in the four-class system based upon our current enrollment.

Stay tuned for the changes. They will be posted on the IHSA web site, www.IHSA.org.

From the Hills . . .

by Al Janulis, VHHS Athletic Director

Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) is not a topic of conversation around many dinner tables (as parents of high school athletes, many of you may have a limited frame of reference to a family dinner conversation – at least during season!), but perhaps our community should begin to realize the potentially fatal consequences if, in fact, one of our own were to be undiagnosed and so afflicted. HCM is a disorder in which the heart muscle becomes excessively thick. It is thought to cause one out of every three cases of sudden deaths among athletes. Athletes with HCM are at greater risk than non-athletes for heart related sudden death due to two primary factors; dehydration and increased adrenaline, both common elements of sport participation.

It is estimated that HCM is present in one out of every 500 persons and most vulnerable for sudden cardiac death appear to be male football and basketball players younger than age 35. African-Americans are among the highest group affected and most deaths occur between 3:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., during or immediately following practices or games.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, of the five million youths participating in competitive sports each year, the odds of a teen dying from heart failure while participating is less than one in 250,000. Each year, approximately 10-13 cases are reported in the United States. While this statistic is much lower than the 15,000 teens who die each year from motor vehicle crashes, many incidents may have been prevented with timely diagnosis and treatment.

Over the past year and a half, much local publicity has been given to an initiative started by **Condell Medical Center** to pro-

vide cardiac screening service to high school student athletes in Lake County. Condell currently has the largest sports medicine program in Illinois, and has taken a proactive posture to identify those student athletes who may be at-risk. According to Condell's Director of Sports Medicine **Larry Scire**, "The biggest catastrophe anybody associated with student athletics can face is the death of an athlete. Our goal is to create safety in sports and allow athletes to compete in a safe environment. I personally would like to see all high school athletes screened. The whole procedure takes less than 90 seconds to complete." Condell currently serves Cougar athletics by providing two certified athletic trainers, **Kirsten Rotan** and **Hilary Johnson**, to work with the sports programs and provides much of the diagnostic equipment found in the training room.

The program is coordinated through the offices of **Dr. Joel Okner**, of Northshore Cardiologists and on the medical staff at Condell. "While there are many causes for sudden cardiac death, in younger athletes the problem is usually a structural abnormality in the heart muscle." Such abnormalities can be detected utilizing the screening process which uses ultrasound waves to assess the thickness, size, and function of the heart. Dr. Okner and his staff of trained, certified, and licensed technologists utilize an echocardiogram with results provided to athletes' parents and physicians. Following the completion of a short medical history form and a parent/guardian authorization, students are scheduled to receive their echocardiogram. Athletes will have their blood pressure, weight, and pulse taken prior to the exam. The exam is performed in a confidential, private area where the athlete will be asked to lay on his/her side. The technician will apply an ultrasound gel to the chest area to be examined. The ultrasound head cover will be applied to the gel and moved in small circular motions. The conductivity of the gel and the ultrasound head will then produce an image of the cardiac walls onto a computer screen. This image will tell Dr. Okner if there are abnormalities within the cardiac walls that require attention.

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Fall All-Academic Selections

The following VHHS juniors and seniors have achieved a 3.5 G.P.A. (on a 4.0 weighted or unweighted scale) in addition to earning a varsity letter in their respective sports.

Cheerleading

Kyle Briggs, Jennifer Chrysler, Kaitlin Rosinski, Sara Stiles
Boys' Cross Country

Jeffrey Boucher, Brian Chrysler, Eugene Galinovskiy

Girls' Cross Country

Lauren Hansen, Alayna Puccinelli

Football

Evan Christensen, David Didier, Michael Fijalkiewicz, John Krippinger, Filip Zucek

Boys' Golf

Robert Groody, Kevin Hencier, Michael Mazza, Michael Stone

Girls' Golf

Allison Thoren

Pom Poms

Ashton Blair, Lauren Redig, Mindi Thommes

Boys' Soccer

Alex Brown, Scott Kempf, Craig McGrath, Michael Mui, Adam Ralph, John Short

Girls' Swim & Dive

Justine Anders, Carla Brioni, Florencia Brioni, Jessica Feld, Katharine Kleinhample

Girls' Tennis

Bernadette Baba, Anjalika Gandhi, Christina Scalzitti

Girls' Volleyball

Katherine Guglielmi, Katherine Kieपुरa

Athletic Training

Amanda Goldberg

Fall Sports Individual Awards

Cheerleading

Melissa Hart, UCA All-Star; **Regina Kim**, UCA All-Star; **Hayley Rubin**, UCA All-Star

Boys' Cross Country

Mahmoud Bahrani, NSC-12th Place Medalist, IHSA Sectional Qualifier; **Max Candocia**, IHSA Sectional Qualifier; **Brian Chrysler**, NSC- 13th Place Medalist

Girls' Cross Country

Danielle Dickman, NSC- 2nd Place Medalist, IHSA Regional-8th Place Finish, IHSA Sectional Qualifier- 25th Place Finish; **Tina Pisula**, NSC-5th Place Medalist, IHSA Regional- 15th Place Finish

Football

Drew Catanzaro, All-NSC Selection; *Daily Herald* All-Area Honorable Mention Selection; **Vince DeFrancesco**, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Selection, Illinois High School Football Coaches Association Class 6A All-State Selection; **Dave Didier**, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Honorable Mention Selection, Illinois High School Football Coaches Association Academic All-State Selection; **Mark Fleishman**, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Honorable Mention Selection; **Max Friedenberg**, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Honorable Mention Selection; *cont. on page 23*

Cougar featured athlete: Mike Mazza

by Alan Janulis, Athletic Director

Mike Mazza is the most decorated golfer in our school's history. He advanced through some of the most difficult IHSA regional and sectional competitions in Illinois to qualify for the state finals both his junior and senior years. This fall, he was the silver medalist in the North Suburban Conference Championship at Midlane Country Club, shooting a 74 and leading the Cougars to a third-place finish. This fall, his nine-hole and 18-hole scoring averages were 38.5 and 77.5 respectively. According to Head Golf Coach **Shawn Healey**, "Mike is a natural leader to whom classmates and teammates gravitate. Mike's upbeat confidence and focus galvanized the team whenever we faced a tough opponent. He is a fierce competitor who won't back down from any challenge."

Mike, how did you get started in golf? What got you "hooked?"

"I guess it was my dad who taught me to appreciate the game. We lived in Florida when I was really young. I had a club that was bigger than I was at the time. I must have been about three and I would hit whiffle balls into a fence in my back yard. When I was about seven, my family moved to Vernon Hills and my dad took me to the Vernon Hills Golf Course for my first real golf experience. I guess it was then when I got "hooked." I still love the seventh hole; it's one of my all-time favorites. I guess, however, the passion began back in junior high when **Mike Capasso's** mom and my mom bought us season passes. We played about two or three times a week. We hurried home from school and played the course until it got dark. He would beat me pretty regularly back then; it wasn't until just recently that it finally started to even out."

Whom do you think influenced you the most in your development as a competitive golfer?

"Well, my coaches have been great. The whole team couldn't have done as well as we did over the years without Coaches Capron and Healey. Their demeanor, attitude toward the game, and their knowledge have enabled us to do the things we have. I keep telling people that Coach Healey is a different person on the golf course. He has a great sense of humor once you get to know and understand him. I really respect him for all he has taught me both in the classroom and on the course, so I really tried to pick it up this summer. Something clicked inside me. I took lessons from **Tim Hval**, the pro at Royal Melbourne in Long Grove, and he helped me a lot with my short game. I participated in six IJGA tournaments over the summer, winning one on the Deerpath Course in Lake Forest and placing third in another. I pushed hard to improve upon last season where I was fortunate to qualify for the state tournament. I just had to overcome my worst effort ever on the state meet course as a junior. It was embarrassing. On the seventh hole, a par 4 dog leg right over water, I fired three balls into the pond and took an 11. It was like the scene from *Tin Cup* re-visited (Kevin Costner scored a 12)."

You've told us about your worst shot, how about your most memorable shot?

"That's a little harder, but I think I'd have to say it was again

at the state meet, this year. It was in the second round on the third hole, a par 3 once again over water. I remember it was real windy and I just wanted to hit an easy shot to play it safe. I teed it up and it took off on me. It bounced up onto the green about five feet from the pin and I putted it in for a birdie. That was sweet!"

I hear quite often how nice the course at White Deer Run is to play. Compared to other high school courses, how does it measure up?

"White Deer Run is one of the better courses we play on. The staff there treats us really good. It's a fairly difficult course, but very well maintained. Our girls' team should play White Deer more often if they can. I think it would help their games tremendously and they'd benefit from the experience. They've really improved this year."

You've got one season left here at VHHS. What are your goals for baseball this spring?

"Well, I've got a few. The first is to stay far away from Coach Czarnecki, because I'd have to hear about the White Sox over and over. The second would be to continue to hit home runs against Morreale in batting practice. Seriously, we should be pretty good this spring. We have a great facility, the dugouts will be a big improvement, and I think we've got a legitimate shot at the NSC title. I'd like to start off on a positive note and beat Ballard on the spring road trip."

What's your favorite memory of VHHS to date?

"I don't have just one. I'm so happy I decided to come here. I was thinking about Carmel, but the opportunities I've had here couldn't be matched. I love our coaching staff. In fact, all the teachers have been great! I haven't had a teacher I didn't like the whole time here."

Is there any advice you'd like to pass along to your brother or other freshmen as they begin their careers at VHHS?

"Never give up; never take the easy way. Stay organized and don't procrastinate. It'll catch up to you before you know it. Listen to your teachers and coaches and make yourself the best you can possibly be."

Author's note: Interviewing Mike, I discovered that we share a common golf experience. It's not that we both shot a hole-in-one, because neither of us ever has. But, we both have hit homes on the sixth hole of White Deer Run. While the author will continue to play from out-of-bounds, Mike will continue to hit the greens (while wearing the green of the Fighting Irish), as his early plans include attaining an undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame, however, he hasn't ruled out Miami of Ohio as a possibility. We all wish him the very best of luck.

From the Hills

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The test is non-invasive, painless and completed in about one minute.

Carmel, Stevenson, Round Lake and Wauconda high schools are among the schools that offer the cost-free program to their student athletes. With parent authorization, students at both VHHS and LHS will be able to begin screenings after the instructional school day as early as late January. Questions regarding the program may be directed to the VHHS Athletic or Training Room Offices.

Save the date!

The Cougar Athletic Boosters will present "Catch the Cougar Madness" winter fund raiser on Saturday, March 18 at the Chevy Chase Country Club. The event will feature a sit-down dinner, dancing, silent auction and more! CAB is also looking for donations for the auction. Contact **MaryAnn Walsh**, 847-478-8921, regarding donations. Contact **Patricia Bahnick**, 847-680-7296, or email **Jan Smith**, JSmith524@comcast.net, for ticket information.

Three Wildcat athletes sign letters of intent

Three LHS athletes recently signed letters of intent to compete in collegiate athletics. **Nicole Schachner** signed a letter of intent to play golf with the University of Florida. **Sam Kintzel** signed a letter of intent to play tennis at Bowling Green University. **Niko Boulieris** signed a letter of intent to play tennis at Marquette University.

Individual Awards *continued from page 21*

Brad Mahrenholz, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Honorable Mention Selection; **Dan Nagle**, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Selection; **Rajee Harris**, All-NSC Honorable Mention; **Jordan Miller**, All-NSC Honorable Mention

Girls' Golf

Kirsten Groody, NSC- 13th Place Medalist; **Allison Thoren**, NSC- 10th Place Medalist

Boys' Soccer

Alex Benson, All-NSC Selection; **Paul Hutchens**, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Selection; **Jake Short**, All NSC Honorable Mention

Boys' Golf

Bob Groody, NSC- 17th Place Medalist; **Michael Mazza**, NSC- 2nd Place Medalist, IHSA Regional Qualifier, IHSA Sectional Qualifier, IHSA State Qualifier; **Michael Stone**, NSC- 16th Place Medalist

Pom Pons

Ashton Blair, UDA All-Star; **Melissa Darden**, UDA All-Star, IDTA All-Star; **Tara Jennings**, UDA All-Star; **Michelle Jozwiak**, UDA All-Star; **Lauren Redig**, UDA All-Star, IDTA All-Star; **Mindi Thommes**, UDA All-Star, IDTA All-Star

Girls' Swimming & Diving

Katie Kleinhample, NSC: 6th Place Medalist-200 Medley Relay, All-Sectional: 6th Place Medalist- 200 Medley Relay, 6th Place Medalist- 400 Freestyle Relay; **Maddie Kleinhample**, NSC: 6th Place Medalist-200 Medley Relay, All-Sectional: 6th Place Medalist- 200 Medley Relay, 6th Place Medalist- 400 Freestyle Relay, **Melanie Lecaroz**, NSC: 6th Place Medalist-200 Medley Relay, 6th Place Medalist-100 Yard Freestyle, All-Sectional: 6th Place Medalist- 200 Medley Relay, 6th Place Medalist- 400 Freestyle Relay; **Myranda Tillis**, NSC: 6th Place Medalist-200 Medley Relay, All-Sectional: 6th Place Medalist- 200 Medley Relay, 6th Place Medalist- 400 Freestyle Relay

Girls' Volleyball

Erin Gallagher, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Selection, All-Lake County Team, *Waukegan News Sun*; **Katie Guglielmi**, *Daily Herald* All-Area Honorable Mention Selection; **Kasey Kiepora**, All-NSC Selection, *Daily Herald* All-Area Selection; **Anka Niemczewska**, *Daily Herald* All-Area Honorable Mention Selection

College Visits *continued from page 9*

For example, let's say you have done your work and you have a list of 10 possible schools. Your job is to plan your visits so you can determine to which schools you are actually going to apply. Students who do a good job in this stage should be able to narrow their list of colleges down from 10+ to three to seven colleges.

For seniors, the college visit is almost surgical in nature. By September of senior year, students will begin the application process. Fall is a perfect time to finish visiting some schools they haven't seen yet. By the time the letters of acceptance (or denials) come in the spring, they may need to revisit some schools if they are still undecided. Often, students have been accepted to two or three schools and they can't decide which one to go to. This is a great time to revisit schools before they make that final decision.

To find out more on visiting colleges, come to the CRC. We have several resources on how to plan a college visit, including **Visiting College Campuses** by The Princeton Review. Also check out the Student Services web site at <http://lhs.d128.org> for more information on college visits. If you cannot visit a college, come to the CRC and check out college videos and DVDs. This is a cheap and easy way to get a sense of what the campus is like. Students should also check with their counselors to see if they have any inside information about a school. We attend many college events in the area and we visit colleges as much as we are able. Just last month, for example, I visited Valparaiso, Notre Dame and Bowling Green State University. Each visit is different and enables me to get a feel for the campus, what's hot and meet the people who make the campus run.

I invite all LHS students to send me their pictures of recent college visits to put on our CRC Hallway Monitor. Let us see where you have been!

4 out of 5 *continued from page 7*

peers and be themselves, while abstaining from use.

The social norms approach at VHHS focuses on educating students on data gleaned from the Drug Use and Perception Survey, a student survey taken in October 2004. The results of this survey were also substantiated by the DePaul University Youth Tobacco Access Project, a survey that has been given to students at VHHS for the past four years. In the 2004 DePaul survey, six out of 10 students thought that "most" or "all" of the students at VHHS use tobacco. However, 77% of the students reported that they were not current smokers.

It is the hope of the Student Assistance Program that educating our students on the "actual norm" will decrease the use of these substances and promote long-term behavior changes. The program consists of putting data on posters and displaying them around the school.

The posters used for this campaign are being developed by students with the help of student focus groups and the collaboration of community members. A graphic designer from Rust-Oleum Corporation and several substance abuse prevention specialists from the Lake County Health Department/Community Health Center are lending their expertise to the campaign.

The first set of posters went up during Red Ribbon Week at the end of October and will remain through the end of January. Two subsequent sets will follow. Students will be surveyed again in the fall of 2006 to see if their perception is moving more toward the healthy norm. The posters are also being distributed at both campuses of Hawthorn Junior High.

For more information about the social norms approach or the VHHS campaign, contact **Margaret Pither** at 847-932-2158 or e-mail margaret.pither@d128.org. To view copies of the posters, visit vhscougars.org and click the *Information* link under the *Home* heading on the main menu. Then, select *Student Assistance Program*.

Front Cover: (clockwise from upper left) VHHS choir members help load a truck with some of the 2,000 food items collected at the VHHS holiday concert; LHS Interact members help arrange gifts in preparation for the Adopt-A-Family dinner; VHHS and Hawthorn Middle School students await the arrival of families at the Adopt-A-Family party; LHS students form a human chain to move some of the more than 44,000 food items collected during the annual canned food drive. (photos by M. Todoric and courtesy of VHHS)



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