

EMBLEM

Since 1898 • Volume C • Issue 5

April 2009

DECA STORE STRUGGLING

Nicole Russo '09
Contributing Writer

Throughout the past year, the Southington High School DECA store has had a major decline in sales. This plunge has come from a restriction in the types of products the store is allowed to sell to students.

When the Board of Education accepted funding from the state of Connecticut, the Southington schools needed to comply with the Connecticut Healthy Standards Act. This act banned any product the state determined to have "too much" fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar, or sodium. The act also limited the overall size of items.

With the new, strict limitations, the DECA store is selling healthier foods in smaller sizes. However, not

many high school students seem to desire these healthy snacks, and they are buying elsewhere.

The school store is making less than half of what it did last year. From August through December 2007, DECA sales were \$37,541. Total sales from August through December 2008 were only \$16,130.

The decrease in the size of products has been a major detriment to sales. The size of bagels, for example, has been reduced from five ounces to three, and sales have decreased from 16 dozen to seven dozen per day.

The success of the DECA store affects the entire club. The organization, which has hundreds of students, funds several charity events year-round and makes donations to families

in need during the holidays.

The DECA store used to be bustling before home-room and during study halls, when students stocked up on their favorite snacks for the day. This year, however, is a much different story.

"I'm disappointed," said SHS senior Jim Longo. "The store used to sell things I'd actually buy. But now, I only shop there when I'm desperate for food."

This same mindset was shared by another senior, Angela Burbank, who described the DECA store as "overpriced with an unsatisfying variety of products."

When asked about the Connecticut Healthy Standards Act, Alec Ulyrch commented, "I don't think this act is a good idea for high school students. Kids our age should know how to eat properly by now. It's a



shame, and now our school store is suffering."

Mrs. Calvi-Rogers, a marketing teacher who has been managing the DECA store for eight years, said, "These are the worst sales I have ever seen. We're currently selling half as many products as we were at this time last year."

Because of the new restrictions, DECA plans to

reposition the store. It plans to move away from the food business and into other areas, such as selling SHS clothing and accessories. It is also considering partnering with the Corner Café to sell healthy snacks, such as salads and smoothies.

"What we really need," said Mrs. Calvi-Rogers, "is to think outside the box."

Bye Bye Birdie A Hit!

Jackie Ford-Cooperman '09
Staff Writer

On March 27 and 28, the SHS Drama Club performed Bye Bye Birdie to an almost sold out crowd on both nights. The Drama Club blew everyone away with their enormous

amount of talent, especially directors Mr. Lindblom, Mrs. Ossias, and Alyssa Fontana. The tech crew, pit band, and cast were energetic and left the audience with nothing but praise. On the other hand, it was a sad event for seniors Liz Sackett, Kayla Teel, Christina Volpe, Taylor Hira, Phil Pomposi, John Nitowski, Brandon Case, and Dan Orlando, who

took to the stage for the last time at SHS. They are extremely loved in the Drama Club and will be missed immensely. The cast found the show a challenge, but also very fun and rewarding and it showed in their performance. It will be fun to see their talent shine again next year when they hit the stage again.

More Photos on page 6



SHS Students of the Issue

EMBLEM is officially accepting nominations for Student of the Issue.

You can nominate yourself or one of your friends. You must have accomplished something significant (e.g. community service) or have shared a talent (art, music, etc.). A photo of the nominee (or you) would be excellent. (send as an e-mail attachment) and a paragraph or two about their (or your) achievement should be sent to: shsemblem@gmail.com.

Know an unsung hero?

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SHS Community

United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps

Jordan Otero '10
School News Editor



Have you ever wanted to have an opportunity to make new friends and have fun, all while learning valuable life lessons? Maybe you should consider the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps (U.S.N.S.C.C.). The program, for young men and women ages 11-17, could be compared to something like the JROTC. The program is completely voluntary but does require that participants have parental consent, as well as good health and a drug and felony free record. It's okay if you don't want to join the military afterwards – you won't be forced to, either; you will neither be pressured, nor required, to enter into any contract with any military branch.

The United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps participants, depending on their age, attend a one to two week, age-appropriate boot camp. You can do anything imaginable ranging from lifeguard and medical training, law enforcement and culinary arts. You can even attend FAA School (at a significantly lowered cost) and get your pilots license through the N.S.C.C – not to mention that colleges will be very impressed when they see your participation in the program on your résumé! Also, if you do decide to join the military, there are significant benefits such as an enlistment bonus, a possible promotion over your peers, and a heightened knowledge above the others...which will probably lead to a lot less criticism during your basic training.

The closest unit to Southington is the Barque

Eagle Division in Plainville at the Naval Operational Support Center (formerly the Navy & Marine Corps Reserve Center), about five minutes from Southington. Drills are held on the the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, and last from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The drills on Saturday last from 8:00AM to 2:00PM. Cadets are required to attend at least 75% of all drills, with the exception of special circumstances. At drills anything can go on, from various topic discussions and physical training, or you can go down to New London and either work on the U.S.C.G. Eagle, or work at U.S.C.G Station New London and assist the crew in patrols, boat maintenance and more.

SHS junior Alex Lada has participated in the N.S.C.C. since age twelve and has been actively involved for six and a half years. He has staffed two basic trainings as a member of the medical staff, as well as spent a week in the summer at U.S.C.G Station New London performing security escorts and boat maintenance with the crew.

"I love every minute of it," he says, "I am the Recruiting & Public Affairs Petty Officer for my unit. I also plan on joining either the Coast Guard or the Navy after high school."

Interested in learning more about the program? Contact SN Lada, Recruiting & Public Affairs for Barque Eagle Division by e-mailing seacadet-lada@yahoo.com. You can also go online to www.seacadets.org or www.barque-eagle.org.

Decca Wedding Dress Designers

Lauren Zita '09
Contributing Writer

For years, brides have been spending hundreds of dollars on a dress they will only wear once. Now, three girls from Southington High School made a bride's dream come true.

They invented a wedding dress with a detachable bottom, so a bride can dance freely at her wedding reception. Furthermore, she will be able to wear this gown again.

Since October, Kayla Teel, Chelsea Curran, and Brianna Bruneau have been spending countless hours on this project and it paid off. Their idea won them first place in the Fashion Promotion area of the Annual DECA state competition, which took place at the Aqua Turf in March.

"They had an awesome, creative, and very practical concept" said Mrs. Calvi-Rogers, DECA advisor.

Teel, Curran, and Bruneau used their own personal feelings and the voices of others to design the winning dress.

The dress is form-fitting and flares out at the bottom. The detachable bottom is fastened by hidden clips. When bottom is removed, it looks like a new dress.

The girls will be leaving for Anaheim, California, April 28, where they will be competing in the national competition with over 13,000 other DECA students from across the United States. Joining them will be other SHS DECA finalists: Annie Freer, Mackenzie Angels, Kathryn Young, Tyler Calvi-Rogers, Matt Roncaioli, Evan Rodriquez and Nick Perez.

"I'm so excited to compete at Nationals in California and to represent Southington High School," said Bruneau. "This is a life-changing experience."

"I am looking forward to the competition," Mrs. Calvi-Rogers said. "I have my fingers crossed that we have finalists and winners."

'King'size Opportunity for SHS Students

Everyone knows that the lion is the king of the jungle. Well, at Southington High School, our school's newest club, the LEO'S Club, is roaring into the spotlight as the most exciting and rewarding community service club. The club's name, LEO'S, stands for, "letting everyone openly serve." The LEO'S Club is a junior affiliate of the well-renowned Lion's Club; the club's community sponsor is Mr. David Santoro, director of the Southington Care Center. The LEO'S Club President is Kiah DeVona and Zack Etter is the Vice President. Mr. Cipollini is the club's school liason. Geared toward community service, the LEO'S Club gives high school students an opportunity to earn service hours, meet new people, and gain the self-confidence needed to succeed after high school. Becoming a member of the LEO'S community service club is a great way to make any college resumé shine, and any application shines brighter with a highly respected community service club's name on it.

Any student interested in becoming a member of the LEO'S Club can attend the biweekly Monday meetings in the library. The next meeting will be Monday, April 20, 2009, in the library immediately after school until 2:45. If you cannot attend the meeting, feel free to see Mr. Cipollini in the library, or see Kiah DeVona for information.

Goodbye Pontiac!

Philip Pomposi '10
Staff Writer

G.T.O now means good times over. That's right, the legendary automotive company Pontiac is now done and gone. It now joins Plymouth and Oldsmobile in the ranks of classic American cars that have since become obsolete.

Pontiac was founded in 1926 and was very obscure until 1955. Then, almost overnight, it became the car to have when, in 1955, the famous arrowhead emblem was first introduced.

If Pontiac had a rock star era it would be the the early 60s through the mid 70s. Classic American muscle cars were introduced in these years, and some of them included the Catalina, Trans Am), Ventura and the legendary GTO.

Pontiac was able to do something that other car companies could never do. While the styles changed, Pontiac always kept certain themes. Many cars were produced, then discontinued. Pontiac went on the look out for new trends, but the spirit was still the same.

While people who despise American cars may rejoice, the rest who appreciate these truly iconic symbols of Americana have lost an important symbol of an era .

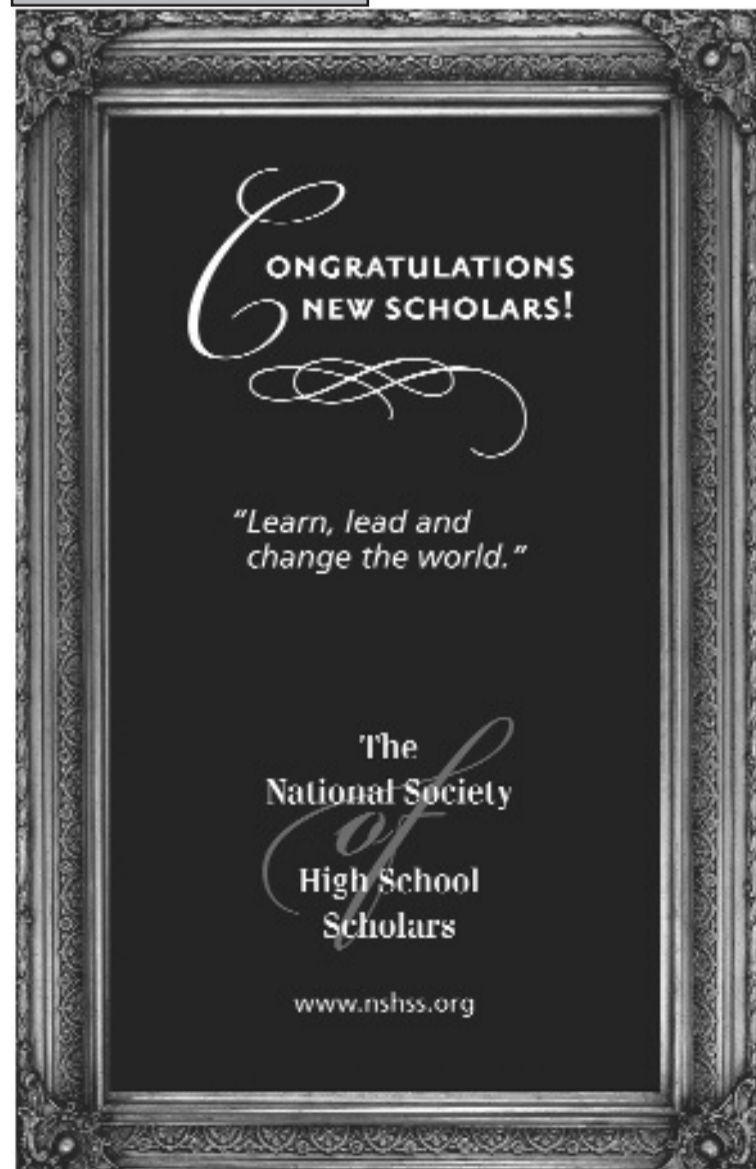
Maybe the residents of Pontiac Michigan, will change the towns name. Maybe Michael Bay knows about this and will have the Pontiac Solstice killed in Transformers.

General Motors, who owns Pontiac has said it will discontinue the brand but some "niche" models will still be sold. Among those models is the Solstice. Somehow, its just not the same.

This is one small step in GM's downward spiral. A month ago their subsidiary Saab was almost in ruins but the Swedish government gave in, and Saab is steady for now; however bankruptcy might be on the horizon.

The sad thing is that GM owns 13 different companies that operate in about 140 countries. For 76

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Emblem

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720 Pleasant Street, Southington, CT 06489
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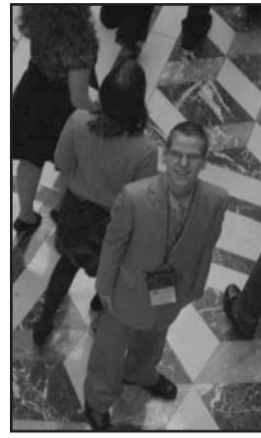
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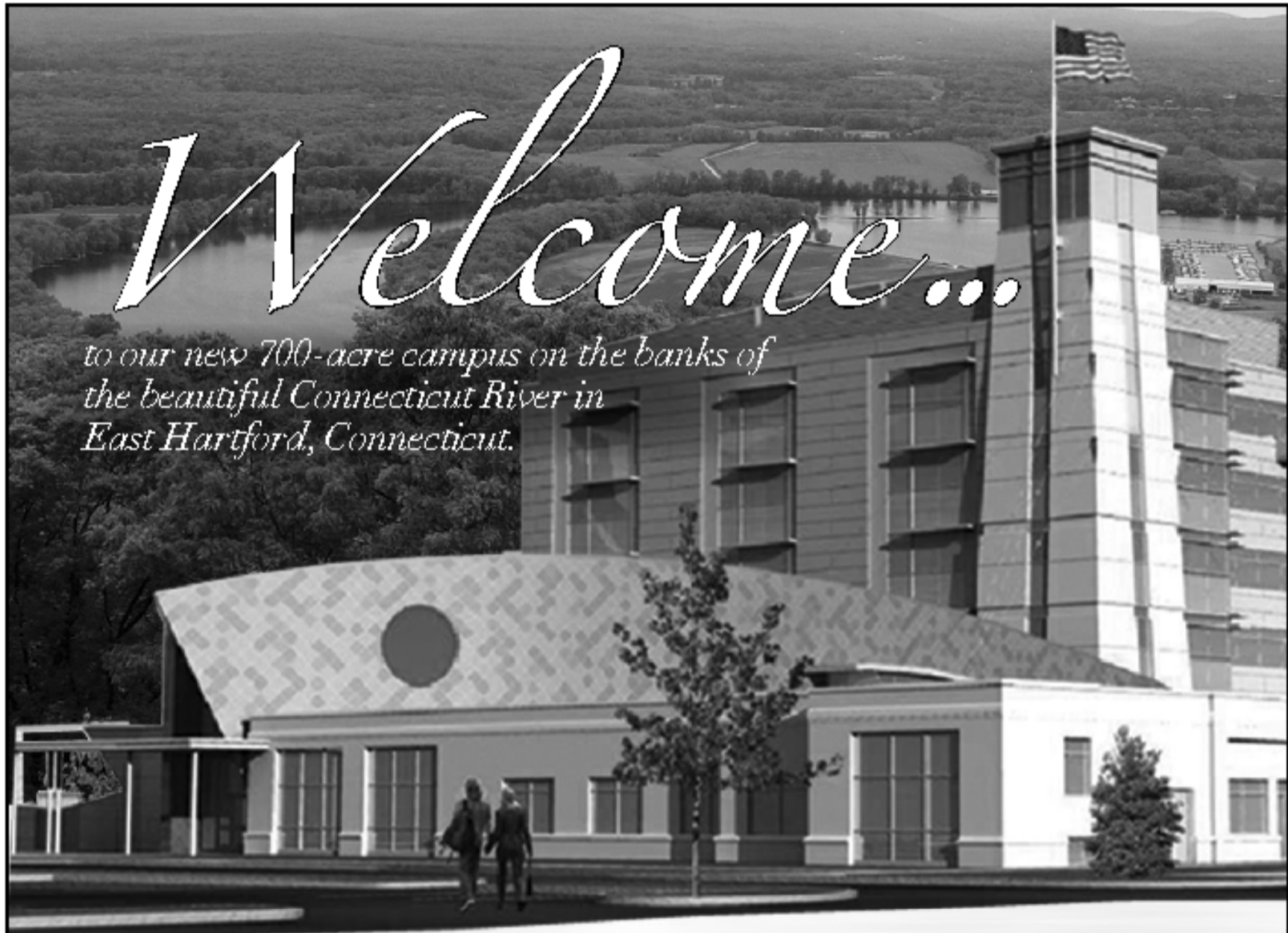


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The Southington contingent at this year's Youth and Government Program did very well this year as Matt Nowicky was elected CT Youth Governor and Justin Miller and Rich Donovan won for Best Bill

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Opposing Views: Obama's First 100 Days

100 DAYS OF PROGRESS

Chelsea Corarito '09
Staff Writer

The first one hundred days of any presidency are always under intense scrutiny. More than fifty days has gone by and from a liberal standpoint, Obama is doing all that he can, and with results that prove it, to repair and put our country back on its feet.

Looking at the economy, Obama has enacted the economic stimulus bill, helping struggling families survive one of the worst economic recessions since the depression. Naturally, the Republican Party tried to defeat the bill, but passed never-the-less, despite no Republican support in the House of Representatives. Unity on the issue would have been better for the nation as a whole, but Democrats have proven it is not necessary.

Regarding health care, Obama is making it possible for the millions of people that cannot afford sky high premiums to be protected if a tragedy should ever strike them. He has also proposed that all health records be standardized and electronic five years from now. This would save billions of dollars, help the environment by preventing paper waste, and stop the many medical errors that occur through paper transactions. CNN's website posted the following from Obama: "It just won't save billions of dollars and thousands of jobs -- it will save lives by reducing the deadly but preventable medical errors that pervade our health care system," [he] said during a January 2009 speech."

On the education front, the Obama administration has made strides in aiding families dealing with the rising college costs. He has increased the national Pell grants to \$5,500 and offered a \$2,500 tax break to those families with a child in college. Also, Obama has pushed for legislation awarding effective teachers bonuses, increasing the pay of teachers who excel in their field



and has called for a longer school calendar to increase US performance standards compared to other country's scores in math and science.

During his campaign, Obama promised to remove troops from overseas and he has, announcing most troops will be home from Iraq by the end of 2010. As for the increasing fear of conflict in Afghanistan, Obama has unfortunately had to ask for more troops to patrol the area, for international security purposes.

Seventeen thousand troops will join the current thirty eight thousand serving in Afghanistan. As for North Korea, tension is at its highest since N.K. has scrapped peace agreements with South Korea and apparently is ready to conduct testing for missiles that could potentially hit the United States. Obama's administration, specifically Hillary Clinton, is attempting to push peace to the brink in order to prevent a new conflict with North Korea.

Overall, Obama has been faced with an onslaught of issues in his first fifty days, and considering the situation of being a new president, each issue has been dealt with intelligently and with extreme caution. The United States resides on a precipice- depending on how Obama handles our country's affairs, we could be sent spiraling into self-implosion or rise from the bottom to our previous status as the world's only superpower.

America's Falling Barak Star

Richard Donovan
Staff Writer

Since January 20th, the United States has been led by our 44th president, Barack Obama. Since this day, the nation's economy has continued to decline, foreign powers have continued to act up, and the U.S. government has made dramatic and dangerous mistakes. To list everything that has gone wrong would take forever, so I'm going to stick with his biggest mistakes. First of all, 3 and a half trillion is a really big number. This is the proposed national budget, a huge increase over any national budget ever proposed. Many republicans have come out against the proposal, but have been criticized about their lack of a coherent proposal to replace it. Either way, it is likely that the budget will pass through congress, and that Obama will have his tax increases and spending increases. For those that believe that their taxes won't be a tax increase, you're right. The increased revenue will come from increasing taxes that are currently enforced, such as the income tax. To offset this, the administration plans to permanently eliminate taxes that have remained on the books but dormant for years. Overall, the tax increases will look like they're balanced out by the decreases. However, when it comes time to pay the taxman, the average American is in for quite the surprise. Next, the



nations economy has been hit hard over the past few months. There are some signs of recovery, but there is still a major fear throughout the public that will help keep consumer spending down and unemployment high. Obama's administration has been working hard to deal with these issues, but in the process have further alienated the consumer, especially those looking to buy big ticket items, and given the federal government too much power over American business.

General Motors, once the biggest corporation on earth, has fallen to near extinction. The president, in an effort to save the car giant, has come out with warranty guarantees, federal loans, restructuring, and even going as far as removing Rick Wagoner, the CEO since May of 2003. After flexing his shareholder might, the president is now dealing with conflicting reports about his desires to keep GM out of bankruptcy. Although he has said that he wishes to restructure out of court, top administration aids are saying that chapter 11 is still a very viable option. So, is GM safe in the eyes of the consumer...NO. Since that cold January morning, America has taken a completely new stance on many old issues, and we can see that, at least based on approval ratings, the American people are quickly turning their back on their favorite Barack star.

Russians Want Their People Back!

Rael Ramos
Staff Writer

The Russian government is trying to solve the country's severe population decline by luring back Russians who live abroad as well as their descendants.

Moscow has spent \$300 million in the past two years to get the program started of bringing back descendants, and officials estimated that more than twenty-five million people were eligible.

Even with the global financial crisis, Russia is more stable and prosperous than at any other time in its history, and the country is confident enough in its future. Now, they are ready to uproot themselves and begin anew, in the coastal area in Russia's far east.

The United Nations predicts that the country will fall to 116 million people by 2050, from 141 million now(down eighteen percent) largely because of a low birthrate and poor health habits. The government is also trying to increase the birthrate by paying families to have more children. So far, only 10,300 people have moved back under the government program. The program is not open to just any descendants of Russians. In general, applicants must speak Russian and be comfortable with the country's society and culture.

Pontiac: From Page 2

years it was the best selling automaker in the world then in later years it dropped to number 2.

There is speculation that the Saturn division is going to be joining Pontiac by the end of next year.

Just as Native American Chief Pontiac was unsuccessful in his uprising, car-maker Pontiac was unsuccessful in surviving a century.

ATTENTION WRITERS AND ARTISTS!!!

Do you enjoy writing poetry, short stories, haikus etc.? Do you like drawing, painting, or photography? Well, if you do, the SHS Literary Magazine is a great way to show your talent and creativity! This year, the "Lit. Mag." is completely new - it will be on a CD, an easy and convenient way to view students' work on your computer. In addition, not only are we accepting students' writing, but also students' artwork! If you take an art class, or simply like to draw, send us a picture or copy of your artwork and it will appear in the Lit. Mag as well! All submissions should be handed in ASAP, but no later than May 1. Remember, all submissions must include the name of the author or artist. Written material for the Lit. Mag. should be emailed to shslitmagazine@gmail.com. Any questions, please contact Diana Babineau, Emily Chubet, or Mr. Cipollini in the library.

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School News

Women In Science And Engineering

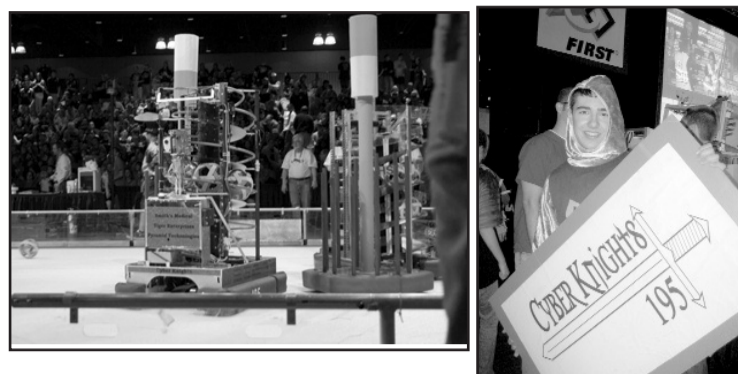
Shannen Kizilski
Contributing Writer

At Southington High School, a new club known as WISE (Women In Science and Engineering) has received a generous donation from the Hartford chapter of Society of Women Engineers. At the club's latest meeting, SWE Treasurer Carol Coppa, who is also a civil engineer at Northeast Utilities, presented the members of the club with a check from SWE. WISE will use the donation to organize activities that will expose the students to careers in technology and science areas, mainly in engineering. Later this month members of WISE will be touring

the ESPN facilities sponsored by one of their female engineers.

The club began this year with female students in the Project Lead the Way pre-engineering program; they wanted to raise awareness of the career opportunities for females in technology, math, and science areas. The club is open to any female who may be interested in pursuing a career in science, math or technology. Join WISE to meet other girls at

SHS with similar interests in math and science. If any female students are interested in joining or learning more about WISE, you may contact the club's advisor Miss Miller in the guidance office or at lmiller@southingtonschools.org.



DESIGNING A ROBOT TO PLAY LUNACY

Natasha Perri
Contributing Writer

Eric Meccariello is a member of the SHS FIRST Robotics team that competed at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. He discussed how the team prepared for the game "Lunacy" in the competition. He also talked about how the team has furthered his interest in engineering.

Q: How is the game "Lunacy" played?

A: There are six robots on the field, and compete three on three. We have to try to get the most orbit balls into the other team's trailers, which are attached to the robots. We can score the balls by either picking them up by using the robot or players can attempt to shoot the balls into the trailers manually.

Q: How do you know what to build?

A: On the first Saturday of every January we get a game through a NASA webcast. From there, we decide our strategy and build our robot around that strategy.

Q: How many people does it take to build the robot?

A: There are four basic teams that help build the robot: electrical, designing, programming, and manufacturing.

Q: Do the students get any help?

A: Yes, a lot. There are a few engineers, machine shop owners, and parents who help out.

Q: How does the team prepare for the events? Is there any kind of practice?

A: We scout, and look at other teams' robots and see how they did in other competitions. As for practicing, we practice after school until 3:15 and also from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on weekdays.

Q: What is your role on the team? What kind of things have you been able to do while being a part of the team?

A: I led the design team and learned a lot of basic manufacturing techniques. For example, I learned how to use basic shop machines. I also learned a lot of corporate design techniques.

Q: Has being on the FIRST team changed your outlook on college and your career choice?

A: I already wanted to be an engineer before, and being on the team just helped cement the idea of becoming an engineer.

Q: Do you believe being a part of this program has prepared you for life beyond high school?

A: Yes, it taught me how to be more self-sufficient and gave me a real world situation.

Q: What is the best part of being on the team?

A: I like interacting with my mentors, teammates, and even other competitors.

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Public Speaking Debates Hit SHS Library

Sylvie Chho '09
Staff Writer

A senior public speaking class taught by Ms. Zaccardo held debates on various current, controversial topics. The forum was held over two classes and was attended by many students in the audience. Mrs. Patterson, Mrs. Hosmer, and Mrs. Esposito all contributed immensely to make the debates a success. The topics and groups were:

"Should S.A.T. and A.C.T. scores be used for college admission?"

Debated by: Ryan Borawski, Kelly Paterson, Billy Mayer, Abby Debner, and Ryan Satterfield.

"Should liquor stores be opened on Sundays?"

Debated by Evan Honeyman, Bridget Sheehan, Sylvie Chho, Patrick Riera, and Jessica Baillargeon.

"Should exotic animals be allowed in households?"

Debated by Chris Daly, Lauren Cwikla, Kellen Jackson, Shelby Dattilo, and Steven Risser.

"Should P.E. classes be required for student-athletes?"

Debated by Matthew Roncaioli, Ryan Charamut, Alex Braziel, Shefali Patel, Kevin Thomas, and Marisa Tremaglio.

The public speaking debates served as excellent preparation for the upcoming college experiment and helped with student awareness of important issues. More speeches will be held as the course at Southington High School continues until graduation.



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A Slice of the Arts

Madame Tomorrow

Dear Madame Tomorrow,
 I was never very good at making decisions and in high school I seem to have to make a lot of choices that could really change my life. I guess my question is how do I know what I choose is the right path for me?
 Signed,
 Indecisive

Dear Indecisive,
 Everyone gets to a point in their life where they question their choices and decisions. Truth be told, you never really know exactly which path is right for you until you try it out. People make bad decisions sometimes and they can get into difficult situations. Imagine life being like a gamble, you'll never know if you win or lose until you go for it. As long as you can make the best out of every eventuality, you'll do fine.

The best way that I know to make the right decision for you is to think it over. List what you want to do and then weigh out the pros and cons. Contrasting the good and bad things about a choice is an efficient way to look at the decision rationally. People often believe that when a difficult judgment comes their way it is best to ask a friend or loved one their opinion. This may not be the best way to handle it because your friend or parent is not you and they don't know exactly how

you feel about the choice. Asking them is fine, but in the end you must give the final verdict.

If the conclusion you come to is life changing then best of luck. You may look at both decisions as realistically and logically as you possibly can and still find it to be a difficult judgment. In such a case you are just going to have to trust yourself and pick. Do not let indecision slow you down because you are just going to have to settle on one decision.



People have left it up to chance and allowed a life changing choice depend on the flip of a coin, others have believed that religion will guide them to the correct path, still others say they had a

good vibe from one selection. However you wish to deal with your big decision, go for it. There really is no sure way of knowing which way will work out the best, so my advice is to just pick and know that what ever the outcome you will remain optimistic because everything happens for a reason.

There is nothing more real than right now

Sincerely,
 Madame Tomorrow

Drama Kids Lend A Helping Hand

Jackie Ford-Cooperman '12
 Staff Writer

Since December 2008, five high school Drama Club students, plus one late comer, have helped direct Flanders Elementary School's first Drama Club production of The Big Bad Musical. The student directors have put in their own time in addition to their regular SHS Drama Club rehearsals. They are Marykate Scanlon, Anthony Yovina, Alyssa Rubin, Meghan Bowes, Emily Gerrish, and Jacquelyn Ford-Cooperman.

The show was an enormous success, with two sold out shows on March 20 and March 21. Not only did these six students help out, but also several other Drama Club members came to support the Flanders kids on their dress rehearsals and the night of their shows. "These kids show talent that's so unexpected that it amazed us all. They have showed an unbelievable amount of commitment and we couldn't be more proud," said student director Alyssa Rubin. With so much talent, the student directors are

Surround Sound IV

"Temptation"

Jordan Otero
 School News Editor

After over two months of strenuous rehearsals brass musicians, percussionists, and color guard members finally presented their indoor show, Surround Sound IV, on March 6 and 7 at 7:00PM in the SHS auditorium. This year's theme of "Temptations" definitely set the tone for a performance that ensured mass amounts of energy and amazing visuals. The musical arrangement from the show was very diverse, featuring music from "BLAST!", the popular band Styx, Michael Flatley's "Riverdance", and Earth, Wind, and Fire.



The show kicked off with a stately piece, "Fanfare / American Wake/Riverdance", which immediately showcased the musicians' superb playing ability. Following the opener was an arrangement of "Amazing Grace" played on the piano by Bridget O'Connor and performed by upper classmen members of the color guard, as well as their three instructors. Also included in the first act was "Symphony #2, Movement 4", "All Things Bright and Beautiful", a color guard performance, done all in black light, to the song "Threat" from Cirque du Soleil's "Ka", and "The Return of Three Stools and a Garbage Can", featuring percussionists Kevin Thompson, Isaac Monts, Dave Roy, and Jolene Vachon. Before intermission the audience was treated to a taste of Ireland with "Home and the

Heartland/Riverdance Reprise", complete with Irish dancers.

The second act opened with "Marimba Spiritual", a piece performed by percussion instructors Brett Berardi, Steve St. Mary, Bob Rush, and Matt Thompson. "Land of Make Believe", from "BLAST!", let the musicians let loose and have

SHS.

"As an alumni I'm all for coming back to see how the band program has evolved since I graduated," she says. "I did have higher expectations because Surround Sound is audition-based and marching band in the fall is an activity anyone can join. Surround Sound is for the people that want to be there."

Burstynski says that one of the things that continues to amaze her is how "only thirty or forty individuals can pull an amazing show like that together and project to fill an entire auditorium." SHS junior Brittany Robarge agrees. "I think that the visuals combined with the

fun with their performance. Next the band connected with rock and roll fans with a "Styx Flashback", featuring popular songs "AD 1928", "Rockin' the Paradise", and "Mr. Roboto". The under classmen color guard members received recognition of their talent in their presentation of "I Can See Clearly Now". Two percussion pieces followed - "Marching Season" and "Stubernic". The color guard performed as an ensemble with their tribute to the 70's with a medley of songs from Earth, Wind and Fire. The last tune, "Temptation", had a Spanish flair to it and ended the show with a surprise to the audience - colorful streamers dropped from the catwalk.

Dana Burstynski, now a senior at UCONN, is a marching band alumni who participated in Surround Sound I and Surround Sound II. Her sister, Kelly, is now a senior here at

marching and playing is what impressed me the most. Everyone looked like they were having so much fun up there - it kind of made me wish I was with them."

Freshman Meghan Bowes had no previous experience attending a Surround Sound performance like Robarge or Burstynski. "I saw some competitions this fall and was really impressed with the band, so I knew they'd be just as good in Surround Sound," she says. "The show was awesome...I liked it when the band members danced," she adds with a laugh.

Clearly, everyone involved with Surround Sound put on a show that this school will never forget. Just think -- if their performance indoors was this good, just imagine how great the fall show next year will be...especially with those snazzy new uniforms!

Right: The six drama club students that helped with Flanders' first drama club production **Pictured:** Marykate Scanlon, Meghan Bowes, Anthony Yovina, Alyssa Rubin, Emily Gerrish, and Jacquelyn Ford-Cooperman



ecstatic to help out again next year and reunite with the kids who are the definition of theater.

Features

Prom Fashion Secrets

Jacquelyn Ford-Cooperman '12
Staff Writer

Prom is one of the most important events that anyone will ever experience. With this being said, you want it to be the best night that you can make it. That includes picking the right dress and everything else that accompanies it. When finding the perfect dress, keep in mind that just because you are technically not in school, it doesn't mean that you should break all of the dress codes. For the Junior Prom, it is ok to wear



are every girl's downfall. Prom shoes should be cheap, but not

t o o c h e a p . Unless there was a miracle clearance sale, most shoes that are really cheap are

bad for your feet and aren't comfortable. The best prom shoe is comfortable, whether you wear them all night or not. Also, the best bet is to get shoes that have a sling back so that your feet don't get too hot. Hair is very dependent on your dress, but remember that waves are always chic. Accessories should be kept to the bare min-



shorter dresses, just no too short because it is still a formal event. For Senior Prom, it is best to stick to floor length. With prom dresses, it can be easy to fall for low cut styles. Keep it in moderation. When in doubt, modesty is always the best policy, but it doesn't mean that you have to necessarily have a turtle neck on. However, the best trick of all is to look for a dress that looks expensive, but is found at reasonable prize. One way to do this is with accessorizing.

Who said diamonds were a girl's best friend? Shoes



imum. Let it highlight your face and enhance your dress. It shouldn't overpower you or any other part of your outfit. Makeup should also be minimal, the biggest mistake is to overdo on eye-liner or eye shadow. Nevertheless, the one single most important accessory is your face itself. Nothing makes someone feel more confident and is the best outfit accessory than healthy looking skin. Prepare weeks in advance by not skipping skin care routines and not damaging your skin with too much sun or chemicals and by getting plenty of sleep.



STEPS Program

Kaitlin Higgins '09
Feature's Editor

We Challenge You to Take the Asset Test

S.T.E.P.S. = Southington's Town-wide Effort To Promote Success. It's a grassroots community program aimed at developing healthy and successful youth. Kids, adults and community leaders have formed S.T.E.P.S. to promote and build assets in Southington. What are assets?

Scientific research shows that the more assets kids have the more likely they are to succeed in school, respect diversity, show leadership and bounce back from difficult situations. The Search Institute has studied 40 developmental assets. The more you have, the better off you are.

Example: 61% of students with 0 to 10 assets were involved in violent behavior while only 7% of kids with 31

to 40 assets were.

Take the test yourself on the Search Institute's website search-institute.org and click on "Developmental Assets" and "40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents 12-18." How many assets do you have out of 40? To find out where you match up with other kids across the country, click on "What Kids Need" and then "Assets Research."

Bottom line: kids who have

more assets are more successful in life...why not help us build assets in Southington? See Mr. Hart for more info.

Kristen's Klostet Fund Raiser: Friendly's Restaurant, 408 Queen Street, Monday, April 27, 2009, 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Join us for dinner or ice cream and help us raise funds to assist local teens so they can attend their Proms. 15% of the sales between these hours will be donated to Kristen's Klostet, a Youth Services program which provides prom essentials to students in need. With tax prices and ticket prices staying the same or rising and some family's incomes going down, there are greater financial needs this year. No student should miss their prom due to inability to pay.

Skewing History: The Mad Monk

John Nitowski '09
Staff Writer

The Romanov family was the longest ruling monarchy in history. The Dynasty lasted for over three hundred years. Russia, being such a huge nation carried such an enormous population that simply caring for so many people became well... tiring for the Romanovs. After all, they had more important things to do than worry about a few thousand serfs in the Ukraine (a serf is like being a slave, only worse) going hungry. In fact, the most pressing matter for the Royal family in the 1900s was the matter of an heir. The Czar only had three daughters; he was finally gifted with a son - Alexei - only to find that he had the genetic misfortune of having hemophilia.

This is where the legendary Rasputin comes in. Born in Siberia with a gift for horse whispering, Gregori Rasputin became a priest and moved to the capital at St. Petersburg. The Czar and his wife were desperate. The Czarevich, Prince in Russian, was now a feisty young boy, falling down constantly and resulting with constantly bleeding bruises; the symptom of hemophilia.

The Czarina, Empress, heard about the new religious preacher who had mysterious powers. The Czar summoned Rasputin, and to his amazement, Rasputin knelt next to the bed, prayed, and Alexei was healed!

Doctors and scientists were shocked and confused. The Czarina was impressed and

enraptured with Rasputin. The Czar began looking towards issues of national interest (i.e. World War I). As Rasputin hung out around the Romanovs more often, he grew closer to the Czarina and the Princesses, and became a much more useful advisor to Czar Nicholas II than his official military advisors.

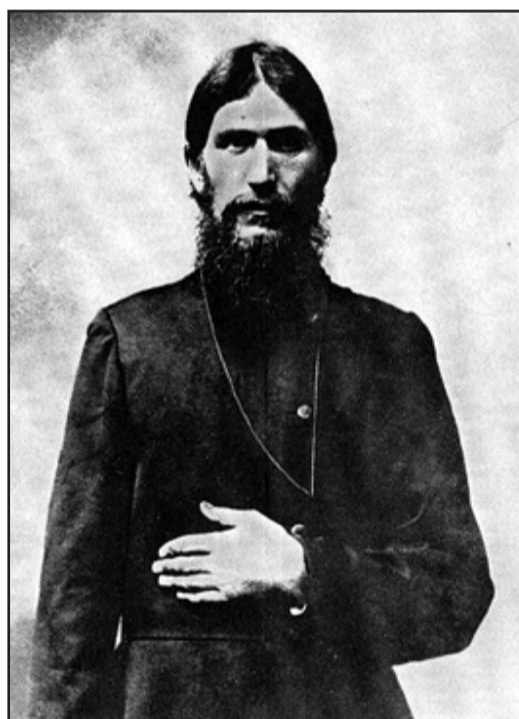
World War I began. Nicholas marched off to war with Germany while the Czarina

ing Russia's involvement in the war. Nicholas II returned to St. Petersburg to find his country in a state of revolution. Lenin was gathering his army and preparing for civil war. The Czar tried to banish Rasputin from the land and restore order. Only it was too late, Rasputin was too powerful. Sensing his end was near, Rasputin sent a message to the Czar: "my death will come soon, but if you or any member of your family is involved, you and your kin will all die."

In December, Nicholas' nephew orchestrated a conspiracy to kill Rasputin and restore the monarchy. (The details of Rasputin's murder are too epic to describe in this article. However, for a good read, just google "Rasputin death.")

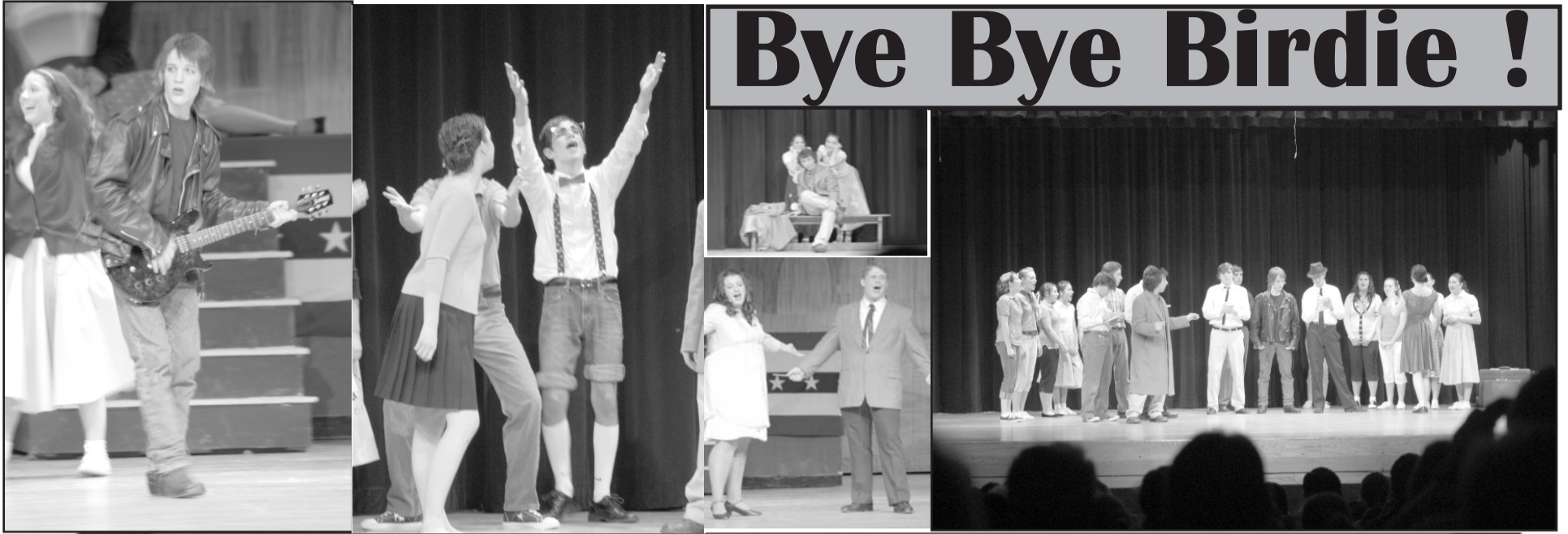
The Czar's family fled St. Petersburg amidst the October Revolution. They were eventually captured by the Bolsheviks, taken to a single room, and gunned down. The Romanov Dynasty had ended. The Soviet Union was born.

It's extremely difficult to say what might have happened if we subtract Rasputin from history. Perhaps without a heavy Rasputin hand ruling Russia during the war, Lenin might not stir up so much trouble. Russia might not have even gone to war without Rasputin's advice. One thing's for certain: without Rasputin, the Soviet Union would not have had as much justification for existence.



stayed in St. Petersburg... with Rasputin. Claiming to have slept with the Czarina, Rasputin gained a dark public reputation in the shady bars of St. Petersburg. The war dragged on, more and more Russians were killed at the front, and the Czarina began to believe Rasputin was nothing less than a prophet. In every aspect, Rasputin ruled the Russian Empire.

Russia signed a treaty with Germany in 1917, officially end-



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FBLA WINS!

Katharine Otis '11
Staff Writer

In this tough economy, the country needs all the talented leaders it can handle to get businesses running again. So it's comforting to know that Southington High School is a little talent pool in itself.

On March 31, the members of the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) attended their annual conference at the Holiday Inn in Waterbury. Southington received the Golden Chapter



Award for Outstanding Service and Leadership and a second place award for The Most Outstanding Chapter in Connecticut. Individual awards went to Alisha Washer, Lauren

Cwikla, Kelley Hwang, Jon Crevier, Angie Froscono, Milena Meluzzo, Marissa LaBelle, Evan Honeyman, and Katie Lainas. Some of the areas in which students could compete included Desktop Publishing, Introduction to Business Communication, and Impromptu Speaking.

Of course, not everyone can place. But that certainly has not hindered the hopes of those planning to return. "I think I will work even harder for it next year because I really saw

the competition and it definitely brings a feeling of accomplishment...when you do well," said Emily Jepson, a sophomore in high school but a freshman to the conference.

FBLA chapters from all over the state attended the conference, which made this day as much about socializing and networking as it was about competition. "You have the opportunity to meet other members," said Katie Lainas, secretary of Southington's FBLA chapter. Those who attended the conference were treated to a breakfast upon their arrival and had opportunities to learn about

skills important to life as well as business, such as credit. "It's competitive, but it's fun too."

Business these days, however, is certainly not fun and games. With the country's economy in dire straights, what is the general feeling among the members of FBLA?

"We're obviously worried about getting jobs in the future...We [FBLA officers] definitely talk about it and try to inform other members," Katie said. Their outlook, however, remains optimistic. "We can recognize what problems caused the recession and aspire to be a part of the solution."

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National and SHS Sports

THE BIG EAST

Joe Pesce '11

Contributing Writer

This season, the Big East Conference was the strongest in the country, filled with strong teams from top to bottom. The strength was shown throughout the regular season, into the conference tournament, and throughout the NCAA tournament. Each contest was considered a "big game" in Big East play and the regular season title was up in the air until the final games. Though Louisville came out on top, there were four other teams, (UConn, Pittsburgh, Marquette, and Villanova), who were in the running in the last few games of the season. Three teams finished the season with 31 wins, clearly showing the strength the conference has when they play non-conference games.

The Big East tournament was arguably the most exciting of all of the conference tournaments. Syracuse surprised everyone by making the finals, and though they lost, they played in an instant classic in their quarterfinal game. Playing as an underdog against a Final Four bound UConn team, the Orangemen forced six overtimes, playing an extra three-fourths of a game, eventually beat the Huskies by ten. Syracuse continued to the championship to play Louisville where they lost 76-66. From the beginning the Big East tournament was the most undecided conference tournament in the

country. Each team was strong enough to come away with the championship. Most thought it would be between the top three teams, UConn, Louisville, and Pitt. However, neither Connecticut nor Pittsburgh would make it to the semifinals. The sixth and seventh seeds, Syracuse and West Virginia, joined Villanova and Louisville in the semis. These upsets showed the depth of the conference, and proved that no game was an easy one in the Big East.

The depth of the conference paid off for its teams in the NCAA tournament because every conference game was a struggle. Five Big East teams made it to the Sweet Sixteen, breaking a record, and three of them advanced to the Elite Eight. When the Final Four teams were set, two of them were from the Big East. One of those teams was Villanova, a three seed in the East bracket who upset Pittsburgh. UConn was the second Big East team to make the Final Four after being the third Big East team to receive a one seed, another record. Led by Big East defensive and all around player of the year, Hasheem Thabeet, the Huskies played through adversity to march their way to Detroit to play in college basketball's biggest stage. Despite the Big East's presence in the Final Four, it took an upset over the tournament's number one overall seed, Louisville, to keep the Final Four from having three Big East teams.

Spring Baseball Preview

Chris Amnott '11

Staff Writer

As the snow melts and the ice thaws, hundreds of major league baseball players are getting ready for their seasons under the hot sun of Arizona or Florida. With opening day a mere three weeks away, every major league team opens with a clean slate. Some teams will quickly rise to the top of their leagues, while others may falter and sink to the bottom of theirs.

AL East

1. **Boston Red Sox** - The Red Sox have watched as their rivals, the Yankees, have spent over \$400 million on players this off-season. However, the Red Sox do not have a clear weakness on their team. The pitching staff and bullpen will be dominant.

2. **New York Yankees** - The Bronx Bombers are going for it all this year, as the signings of Mark Teixeira, C.C. Sabathia, and A.J. Burnett indicate. They will certainly give the Red Sox all they can handle during the year. How will the A-Rod Steroid Scandal impact their chances?

3. **Tampa Bay Rays** - The Rays had to be one of the greatest stories in baseball history last season. Bolstered by a dominating pitching staff and a young crop of players, the Rays will be competitive for years to come.

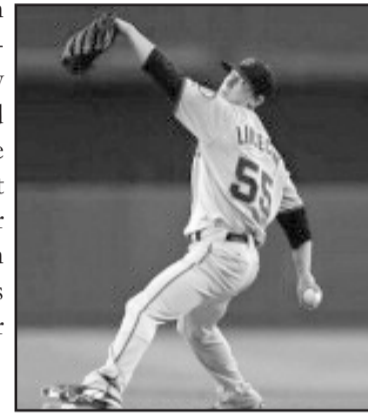
AL Central

1. **Detroit Tigers** - Last season was a major disappointment for the Tigers, even though Miguel Cabrera played MVP caliber baseball through the season. Look for Justin Verlander to bounce back in a big way in '09.

2. **Cleveland Indians** - The Indians seem play good baseball every other year. If the trend continues, watch out in '09.

3. **Minnesota Twins** - The

Twins were supposed to be terrible last season after losing All Star pitcher Johan Santana to the Mets. The critics were wrong, as Minnesota came within a one game play-off of the division championship. They are bolstered with home grown talent Joe Mauer and Justin Morneau, as well as closer Joe Nathan.



AL West

1. **Los Angeles Angels** - The Angels, who annually have one of the best pitching staffs in baseball, were dealt a blow when closer Francisco "K-Rod" Rodriguez bolted for the Mets. They will be a force again, even without Mark Teixeira, as Torri Hunter and Vladimir Guerrero will star.

2. **Oakland A's** - The A's acquired baseball's best kept secret this winter, as Matt Holliday came to Oakland via free agency. The A's will be led by Jason Giambi and Justin Duchscherer but will fall short of the playoffs once again.

3. **Texas Rangers** - The Ballpark in Arlington will be rocking as the Rangers are competitive again. Comeback player of the year Josh Hamilton, as well as Ian Kinsler, and Michael Young will lead the team to the brink of the postseason.

NL East

1. **New York Mets** - The Mets, like their cross-town rival Yankees, missed the postseason last year and made a big splash in the free agent market, acquiring two first rate closers: Francisco Rodriguez and J.J. Putz. The lineup is deep and powerful. The Mets could very well win it all in '09. Can they keep it together down the

stretch?

2. **Philadelphia Phillies** - After twenty eight long years, the Phils won the World Series. Although the loss of Pat Burrell is huge, the remaining core of players is intact. Raul Ibanez is the new left fielder for a potential pennant winner.

3. **Florida Marlins** - The Marlins, led by Hanley Ramirez, are back again in 2009 and ready to challenge for the NL East crown. A great young core of players should help the cause.

NL Central

1. **Chicago Cubs** - Can the Cubs end their 100 year drought of futility? The Cubbies finally let go injury prone pitchers Mark Prior and Kerry Wood, who spent more time in the trainer's room than on the field. All-Star outfielder Milton Bradley came to town in the offseason to help a flawless squad of All Stars.

2. **St. Louis Cardinals** - The Cardinals will be led once again by future hall of famer Albert Pujols. Third baseman Troy Glaus and outfielders Rick Ankiel and Ryan Ludwick will put up big numbers in the Cards new ballpark.

3. **Houston Astros** - The Astros will contend for the division crown once again behind Roy Oswalt and Lance Berkman. Will the rest of the team help out?

NL West

1. **Arizona Diamondbacks** - The weakest division in baseball will be won by the D'Backs, who boasts no only good young hitters, but two of the best pitchers in the game in Dan Haren and Brandon Webb.

2. **Los Angeles Dodgers** - The Dodgers lost a lot in free agency, as Derek Lowe and Brad Penny departed LA for different teams. They will be led by catcher Russell Martin, who some scouts compare to Carlton Fisk, and of course, Manny Ramirez.

3. **Colorado Rockies** - Do the Rockies have any "Rocktober" magic left from their improbable run to the pennant in 2007? Losing star Matt Holliday will hurt but they have the pitching and the bats to make another run to the playoffs.

2009 UCONN HUSKIES

Zack Etter '10

Sport Editor

WOMEN'S

Overall Record: 39-0
Big East: 1st (16-0)

BIG EAST TOURN.

Def. South Florida
Def. Villanova
Def. Louisville

NCAA TOURN.

Def. Vermont
Def. Florida
Def. California
Def. Arizona State
Def. Stanford
Def. Louisville- Champ

MEN'S

Overall Record: 31-5
Big East: 3rd (15-3)

BIG EAST TOURN.

Lost to Syracuse

NCAA TOURN.

Def. Chattanooga
Def. Texas A&M
Def. Purdue
Def. Missouri
Lost to Michigan State



AL Central

1. **Detroit Tigers** - Last season was a major disappointment for the Tigers, even though Miguel Cabrera played MVP caliber baseball through the season. Look for Justin Verlander to bounce back in a big way in '09.

2. **Cleveland Indians** - The Indians seem play good baseball every other year. If the trend continues, watch out in '09.

3. **Minnesota Twins** - The

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SHS and National Sports

SHS WRESTLERS TAKE FOURTH AT STATE OPEN

Jocelyn DenHollander '09
Contributing Writer

There were seven seconds on the clock. Southington High School senior wrestler and co-captain Mike Monson was down by a point in the finals of the 160-pound weight class in the State Open.

The coin was flipped and Monson took the bottom referee's position. All he needed was an escape to tie and go into overtime against opponent Kyle Lundberg from Guilford.

The crowd cheered as Monson made his attempt to gain control and earn the point. Then, the audience suddenly grew silent as Mike stood up and broke free. The referees had not awarded him the escape. Boos rang across the auditorium. The match was over and Monson fell short in his attempt to win the championship, 7-6.

Undefeated during the regular season with a record of 29-0, Monson also won the LL Conference Championship. His coach, Mr. Dion, had high hopes for him going into the State Open, which was held at Hillhouse High School in New Haven.

"Mike Monson is a hard worker," Coach Dion said. "He always does a great job with his preparation physically. He is a talented wrestler, and I'm glad that he stayed healthy enough to showcase his skills in the State Open."

The SHS wrestling team finished fourth overall at the State Open. Senior Dillon Ritchie wrestled at 189 and also finished second. Junior Cory Seeger wrestled at 140, and Doug Fontaine finished fifth in the 112-pound weight class.

By placing second, Monson and Ritchie earned the opportunity to compete in the New England Championships, where they capped off their high school careers. Although Ritchie wrestled varsity for four years, he does not plan to wrestle after high school.

"Wrestling can be draining," Ritchie said. "The biggest struggle is definitely the pressure and expectations from my coaches and everyone. It can get you a little worked up."

"In New England's, my main focus was to have fun," he explained. "It was my last tournament and whatever happened, I was okay with it. I have had a good season and a memorable wrestling experience at Southington High School."

Ritchie did not place in the New England championships, also held at Hillhouse, but Monson ended his high school career by coming in fifth.

"Placing fifth in New England was a bittersweet moment," said Monson. "I was happy I did well, but it was sad because I knew it was my last high school match."

ATHLETES OF THE ISSUE

Zack Etter '10
Sport Editor

Jake Rodriques



Football/Weight Lifting

One of the most important differences between football and any other sport, particularly at the high school level, is that year-round training is not only encouraged, it's necessary. Playing a full contact, collision sport, players on the Blue Knights football team have been lifting weights since January to condition their bodies for the rigorous season they will endure in September. Although games are months away, the Southington football team competed in a state weight lifting tournament at New London High School. At the competition, Jake Rodriques stood out the most, breaking the state power-clean record. Rodriques led the team cleaning 320 pounds, while also bench pressing 310 pounds, and squatting 425 pounds. Rodriques knows that working hard in the offseason is the only way that Southington can rebound from the disappointment of last season. He leads by example in the weight room every day, and his hard work will show in the fall.

Annie Freer



Girls' Basketball

Senior co-captain of the Lady Blue Knights Basketball team Freer, one of the scoring leaders for the Knights, led her team to the 2nd round of the Class LL playoff tournament with a victory over rival Cheshire, with a key shot that would ultimately be the game-winner. Throughout the year, the team had won many close games, but without the shot from Freer, Cheshire would have moved on to the next round. The Southington Lady Knights played well in their final game, but was out-matched against Ridgefield in the 2nd round. Annie Freer, who is one of five seniors graduating from the team this year, will surely be missed for her performance on the court. Her ability to get to the basket and drive the lane was an asset that the Lady Knights needed at crucial stages of games. She stepped up her game for the Knights when they needed a scorer, playing to the best of her ability until the final whistle blew.

BOYS' BASKETBALL RECAP

Joe Pesce '11
Contributing Writer

A less than successful year record-wise for the Southington High School boys basketball team doesn't overshadow the hope of good things to come out of a team that, at times, looked to its younger players for leadership. This year's team was anchored by its seniors from start to finish. This group, though undersized, played thorough adversity all season long and came up with some very convincing wins.

Playing in the CCC north, the Blue Knights faced very tough, athletic teams each game, leading many to believe that they played one of the toughest schedules in the state. Though their record may not show it, Southington was a very tough team to play against. With a roster full of hard-nosed players, each team they played had to face a strong defense led by senior Matt Roncaioli with 2.0 steals per game. Even with a lack of height, the Knights always found a way to rebound

against bigger teams. Dan Mayock took the role of center and led the team with 6.9 rebounds per game.

Even when most of the focus was on a defense that followed the team's motto; "hard work", the fast paced offense did not disappoint even if the game was not high scoring. Pat



McLaughlin, the senior point guard, led the team in points and assists with 10.2 ppg and 5.5 apg.

At times it seemed the Blue Knights couldn't catch a break no matter how hard and fast they played. Though they only won 5 games, their losses were usually decided in the fourth quarter, many coming down to the final few plays. Their shin-

ing point during the season was a home game against Glastonbury. A very talented Tomahawks team was short-handed and Southington exploited their weaknesses all night. That game showed a very hopeful view of the upcoming season, as the Blue Knights were led to arguably their best win of the season by sophomore Sal Romano, who led the team in points that night. Also, looking ahead, the player with the best three point shooting percentage was also an underclassmen - Junior guard, Nick DeFeo.

The Blue Knights finished with a 5-15 season, and though it is less successful than years past, there is no doubt that they were a very fun team to watch. Even when they weren't winning, the stands were always filled with fans that knew they could come away with a win in any of their games this year.

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Salvador T. Landa, SGT
Waterbury Recruiting Station
Telephone: (877) 203-9406
salvador.landa@usarec.army.mil