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The St. Clairion

Volume 9, Issue 5 - March 2008 - Upper St. Clair High School- Pittsburgh, PA 15241

All the news that fits...And then some!

Upper St. Clair girls' basketball team wins the WPIAL AAAA Championship

By: Kelsey Short
Editor-in-Chief

The 23-6 Upper St. Clair girls' basketball team had one of the most successful regular seasons in recent years, and upon making a playoff berth, the Lady Panthers put away an easy win against North Allegheny, 59-35, in the first-round of the Quad-A tournament. The team stormed on to seal wins against New Castle in the Quarter-finals and Oakland Catholic in the Final Four.

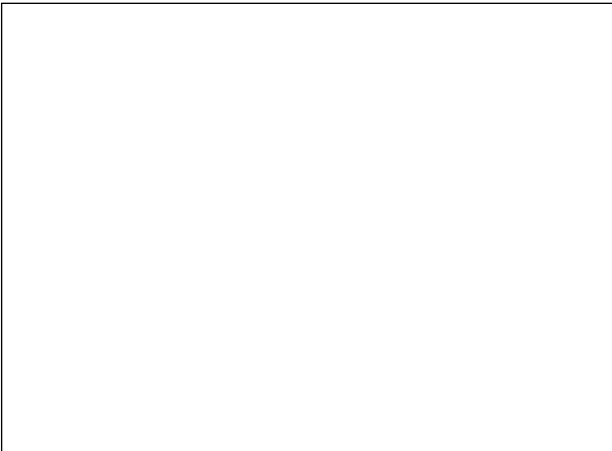
In a blowout-win at the Pulumbo Center on Saturday, February 23, 2008, the girls triumphed over Peters Township, 69-40. The victory shattered the record for the biggest point margin in Quad A Championship game history (www.pittsburghpostgazette.com).

The Lady Panthers' senior players , Alex Gensler and Meghan McLean, who rank among the top WPIAL leaders, and the other senior girls carried their team throughout the regular and post seasons. Meghan McLean says, "We've all played together since the fourth grade, so the season means a lot to us. It's our last year playing together, so we want to make the experience memorable."

Among Gensler, McLean, and the other starters, the team's offensive prowess makes them hard to beat on any court. Senior Andrea Pion, along with under-class talent Grace Hyland and

Emily Mueller, are threats to any offensive play.

"We have a good starting five," said Coach Ernie Koontz.



"We've learned that we can't win with one or two people. To exploit what teams try to do to stop us, we need all five play-

ers. We stress the importance of having no weak links" (www.thealmanac.net).

Mueller, Hyland and Pion are forces to be reckoned with on the defensive side of the ball. Emily Mueller continued to pull down rebounds and block shots while Andrea Pion made getting inside the paint difficult for the teams the Panthers faced in the playoffs. Hyland says of the Lady Panther defense, "I think that our defense is really what wins us games. All 5 girls on the floor play amazing 'in-your-face-D.'

Even if we don't get the steal, deflections are just as important."

In the Semi-Finals against the Oakland Catholic Eagles, senior Meghan McLean held top scorer Colleen Kiss to just 3 points, much lower than her average of 15 points per game: a testament to the power of the

Lady Panther defense. Though the Eagles took a 43-41 lead late in the game, a disorganized show of offense by Oakland Catholic and an 8-3 run sparked by Pion in the final minute of the game sealed that win for the Panthers.

In the WPIAL Championship game, experience in playing at such a high level played a big factor in the Lady Panthers' decisive win against the Peters Township Indians. The Peters team was new to the high-stakes gameplay; whereas the Upper St. Clair girls have many players who have played at such a high level.

"We definitely peaked at the right time of our season," remarks Hyland. "For last few games we really came out strong because all of us would love to be able to come back a few years from now and see 2008 WPIAL Champions on that banner in the gym."

The Upper St. Clair Lady Panthers continued to play in the state playoffs and fell to to the Mt. Lebanon Blue Devils.

Singin' in the Rain debuts as an Upper St. Clair first

By: Kirstin Kennedy
Opinions Editor

For the first time in the history of Upper St. Clair theater history *Singin' in the Rain* was performed as the spring musical. Opening on February 29 and running through March 9, the musical was undoubtedly a success on the stage.

From lead roles to chorus members, the actors were in the minds of the 1920's characters that they played. Ben Benack, cast as the role of movie actor Don Lockwood, impressed everyone with not only his vocals, but his unleashed ability to dance while it actually rained on stage.

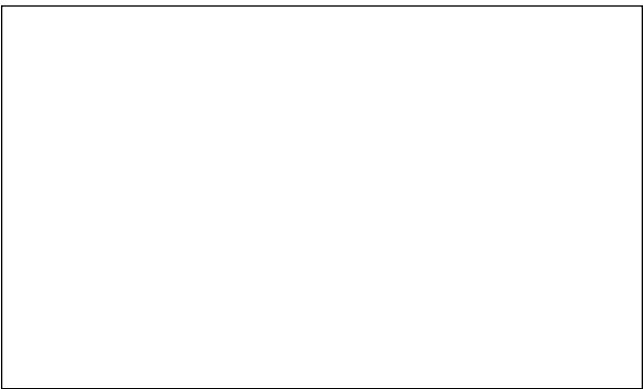
Croaking in a wrenched voice as she played the silent-film star Lina Lamont, Liz Bennett performed excellently, making all audiences despise her character.

Tommy Hoffman tapped his way through the show, flipped off of walls, and sang like a bird, while the lovely Jordi McDoughanah won the hearts of the audience while playing the sweet, yet determined Kathy

Seldon.

Other fabulous actors included Gina Iracki, Grant Carey, Andrew Graham, Shawn Summers, Daniel Rosen, Adam Motonic, Anne Cerlone, Becca Nadler, and Steve Franz.

Many students were sceptical about performing this show because of the complex and involved dancing. All uneasy minds were rest assured when the



choreography was taken over by dance instructor Sherry Offerman. By professionally training the cast and dancers, Mrs. Offerman taught the cast how to make the show dazzle.

Speculation about actually making it rain on the stage was also worrisome. Many adults were fearful that the water would

leak onto the stage and ruin the new flooring. The terrific stage crew, however, lead by the creative Mr. Williard, made all visions for the staging of *Singin' in the Rain* come true.

The show also featured a series of filmed sequences. This was completely student filmed by juniors David DeBuis and Zack Zanone. With work from the actors and the student staff, the films were highly impressive.

Costuming, make-up, and staging were sincerely spectacular and truly enhanced the acting, singing, and dancing that went on on the stage. Women wore pin skirts and men slicked back their hair as they paraded across the street-set to portray a 1920's motif. Seniors Emily Kauffelt and Brigid McCabe as well as Seniors Jill Rodgers and Kelsey Short were the student co-heads of the Costume and Make-up Crews, respectively.

The production turned out to be worth all of the work that crews and cast members put. forth Congratulations to all students and adults involved.

Myron Cope lives on as a Pittsburgh tradition

By: Amanda Dasdorf
Entertainment Editor

Myron Cope has been a Pittsburgh tradition for many years. He coined infamous Pittsburgh sayings such as, "yoi," "double yoi," and "okle dokle," as well as created the terrible towel, a staple for every Steelers fan.

Myron Sydney Kopelman was born January 23, 1929. He graduated from Allderdice High School and then the University of Pittsburgh, with a degree in journalism, making him a true Pittsburgher.

His first job was writing for the *Erie Daily Times*. Later Cope moved to freelance journalism, mainly for *Sports Illustrated*, then moved to color commentator for Steelers radio. He commented Steelers games for 35 years before retiring (www.post-gazette.com).

Cope was also known for his spoofs of music videos in

which he would dress up like the artist and replace the words with football terms and his own jargon. He also gave nicknames to different players and teams the Steelers played. He gave Jerome Bettis the popular nickname "The Bus," and was known to call the Cincinnati Bengals the "Bungles," and the Cleveland Browns the "Cleve Brownies."

Cope has been recognized many times for his success as a football announcer. He is in the Pro Football Hall of Fame and is also the only announcer in the National Radio Hall of Fame. In 2005, he was honored during halftime at the Steelers versus Ravens game for his lifetime accomplishments. (www.post-gazette.com).

Senior Justin Andreen comments, "I will miss Myron's general enthusiasm for the game of football. He was a great guy and a part of the city of Pittsburgh."

Panther
Predilections

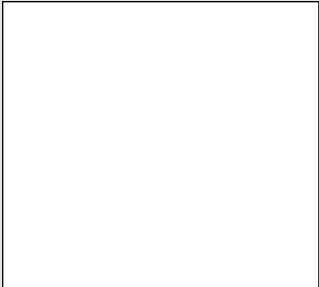
What are your spring
break plans?



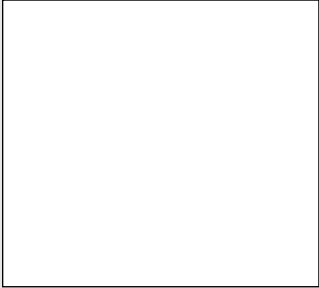
“Watch T.V., I guess.”
– H.b. Mertz
Freshman



“Live life to its fullest, and
don’t leave anything
behind.”
– Sammy Furlong
Sophomore



“I’m going hunting in
Buffalo even though I
don’t own any plaid.”
– Kent Berthoud
Junior



“Sleep. Lots of sleep.”
– Joe Jaquay
Senior

By: Brigid McCabe
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Desk of the Editor
Voters must take a more analytical look at election polls

By: Kelsey Short
Editor-in-Chief

In the midst of the election season, American voters are being bombarded with a deluge of data polls that project who is the frontrunner and what percent of the vote each candidate is expected to win. Exit polls in each of the state primaries have been reporting the winners of the election, the concerns of voters, and the type of voters coming out to vote. While the polls are not necessarily fabricated, they are quite biased because the “polls are commissioned by candidates, political parties, interest groups and media organizations and they can enlighten but they can also distort or even mislead, sometimes intentionally” (www.pbs.org).

As a result, voters, especially first time voters, should be wary about how they interpret poll data and understand the process and dangers of conducting and interpreting election surveys and polls. PBS’s special project, “By the People,” recommends that savvy voters ask some of the following

questions to be sure they understand poll results and their implications:

1. Who sponsored or paid for the poll, and who conducted the poll?

Sponsors often have a motive for conducting certain polls, which “should raise questions about the validity of the poll” (www.pbs.org). Though most would like to believe that polls are conducted for the good of the public, they are conducted for a specific reason, whether it may be to gain information or forward a cause. In addition, political campaigns and special interest

groups usually ask “slanted questions and employ inappropriate sampling methodologies” (www.pbs.org). According to the National Council on Public Polls, trustworthy sources, including well-known polling firms, will not compromise the legitimacy of their

polls or their professionalism with tricky phrasing of the question and sampling procedures.

2. What population is being analyzed?

The groups of people who are targeted in polls must be distinguished, such as people between the ages of 18 and 35 or registered voters ages 65+ (www.pbs.org). The same poll given to different socioeconomic and demographic classes, for example, can have very polar responses.

3. How were respondents chosen?

Respondents are part of the sample of the population that answers the poll questions. The key to sound respondent selection is that respondents cannot select themselves to be part of a poll. Random selection of respondents reflects a more random opinion of voters without the aggregation of certain biases within the poll sam-

ple.

4. What is the size and error of the poll?

According to *The Voter’s Guide to Election Polls* By Michael W. Traugott and Paul J. Lavrakas, “People who design samples use the term ‘margin of error’ to describe the precision of a sample estimate. This is a statistic that provides an estimate of the likely difference between a sample measure and the actual or ‘true’ value in the population.”

The larger the margin of error of a poll, the less accurate the information can be and the more the given information can deviate from the truth. By the same token, the more people interviewed in a poll, the smaller the margin of error. If the margin of error exceeds $\pm 4\%$, the veracity of the poll comes into question (www.ncpp.org).

5. What other polls were done on this topic, and do they say the same thing?

Comparing the results of polls conducted about the same topic can help to determine if they are reliable. Conflicting polls should raise a red flag in a voter’s mind.

Senior Kelsey Short,
Editor-in-Chief of *The St. Clairion*

Why you should not hate Hillary Clinton

By: Kirstin Kennedy
Opinions Editor

Between the media coverage and public opinion, it is clear that the general opinion of Hillary Clinton is not very favorable. Whether it is because chauvinists don’t feel that a female is emotionally equipped to handle the presidency or because some women believe that it was wrong of her to remain married to her adulterous husband, the public opinion is not based on Clinton’s policies. Before judging Clinton solely on her personal traits, the public must look at Clinton’s political policies to formulate an opinion.

To understand this candidate, you must first identify with her beliefs. OnTheIssue.org has provided a complete list of Hillary Clinton’s voting during her time in Congress. For a complete voting record or policy list of any candidate, visit www.ontheissue.org. Senator Clinton has voted for the following issues:

Abortion

- * Voted YES on expanding research to more embryonic stem cell lines. (Apr 2007)
- * Voted NO on notifying parents of minors who get out-of-state abortions. (Jul 2006)
- * Voted YES on \$100M to reduce teen pregnancy by education and contraceptives. (Mar 2005)
- * Voted NO on banning partial birth

abortions except for maternal life. (Mar 2003)

- * Rated 100% by NARAL, indicating a pro-choice voting record. (Dec 2003)
- * Expand embryonic stem cell research. (Jun 2004)
- * Provide emergency contraception at military facilities. (Apr 2007)

Economy

- * Government action to tackle recession, not tax cuts. (Mar 2008)
- * The economy is not working for middle class families. (Jan 2008)
- * We need immediate relief for home heating and housing crisis. (Jan 2008)
- * Voted to limit credit card interest to 30%. (Jan 2008)
- * FactCheck: Consistently against making bankruptcy stricter. (Jan 2008)
- * 2005 bankruptcy bill was by big credit cards and lenders. (Jan 2008)

Gay Rights

- * Telling kids about gay couples is parental discretion. (Sep 2007)
- * Positive about civil unions, with

full equality of benefits. (Aug 2007)

- * Let states decide gay marriage; they’re ahead of feds. (Aug 2007)
- * GLBT progress since 2000, when I marched in gay pride parade. (Aug 2007)
- * Supports DOMA, which Bill Clinton signed. (Jul 2007)

Education

- * Parents are a child’s first teachers. (Jan 2008)
- * Get more teachers into hard-to-serve areas. (Nov 2007)
- * We have not yet reached consensus on education reform. (Sep 2007)
- * Universal pre-kindergarten; and make family

- the best school. (Aug 2007)
- * Working families cannot participate in school between 9 & 3. (Jul 2007)
- * It takes a village; American village has failed our children. (Jun 2007)
- * Establish right to education from pre-school thru college. (Jun 2007)
- * Early education affects things from IQ to lifelong earnings. (Dec 2006)

* 2001: Proposed and passed National Teacher Corps. (Dec 2006)

Oil

- * \$650 for help with energy bills to those who can’t afford it. (Jan 2008)
- * FactCheck: Oil & gas giveaways stripped from final 2005 Bill. (Jan 2008)
- * Investigate & move toward energy efficiency and conservation. (Oct 2007)
- * Opposes Yucca Mountain; earthquake fault goes under it. (Sep 2007)
- * Invest in alternative energy; jobs that won’t be outsourced. (Aug 2007)
- * End Big Oil tax break; \$50 billion for strategic energy fund. (Jul 2007)

When it comes to Hillary Clinton, and really any candidate, it is unfair to judge based solely on personal opinion. Clinton is grossly misunderstood in that many don’t take the time to learn her policies. If you have read the information above, provided by OnTheIssue.org, and you have determined that you don’t like her because you do not agree with her liberal opinions about education, her approving of female reproductive rights, or her open mind to gay marriage, then you have a solid case. Voting is based on personal beliefs in a candidate’s political policies. Do not let preconceived notions alter your opinion prior to taking the time to learn the facts about a candidate.

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The St. Clairion staff is made up of students who are committed to producing a newspaper for their fellow students that provides entertainment, self-expression, and relevant information in a fair, honest, thorough, and respectful manner.

The newspaper is financed by the sale of advertisement space to local businesses. Advertising rates will be sent to any business upon request.

The St. Clairion is a forum for student expression. Opinions expressed in by-lined articles are those of the authors, not necessarily the entire *St. Clairion* staff.

Letters to the editor are encouraged. All letters should be signed and submitted to *The St. Clairion* mailbox in the main office. Obscene, libelous, or otherwise inappropriate letters will not be printed.

St. Clairion Editorial

Go vegetarian: an ethical and healthy lifestyle is right for everyone

Vegeratarianism has been taking the country by storm in the past few years. It is about time to bring the vegetarianism outlook to students of Upper St. Clair High School. Going vegetarian may mean giving up some favorite mealtime staples, but the possibility of saving innocent animals and the health benefits outweigh the downsides.

Every vegetarian helps with the continual problem of the extermination of animals. Animals that are raised to be eaten live in horrible conditions. They are drugged, forced to live in dark, cramped, dirty, disease-filled pens, and are treated in a completely inhumane fashion. According to GoVeg.com, “By switching to a vegetarian diet,

you can save more than 100 animals a year from this misery.”

If each student converted to vegetarianism, hundreds of thousands of animals could be saved each year. It is not worth killing an animal to get the daily amount of protein in a diet. Dairy products and eggs have protein, and there are veggie burgers and protein bars that can provide a more than sufficient amount of protein needed in a day.

Killing animals is not necessary for survival and should not be done. Animals are living things that should not be murdered for the benefit of humans.

Vegetarians seem to live a much healthier lifestyle than meat eaters. According to benefitsofvegetarianism.com,

“Vegetarians, on average, live a little longer than the rest of us.”

There are many reasons as to why vegetarians live longer than non vegetarians. According to faqs.org, “Heart disease, high blood pressure, adult-onset diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, and certain cancers occur less often in people who are vegetarian. Science has demonstrated that these health benefits are related to healthful food choices. Eating whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds provides the body with the ammunition needed to fight disease and illness. A diet high in meat, saturated fat, milk, cheese, and butter does not provide the same health benefits.”

In fact, teens that live with

families who have a history of heart disease are often recommended by pediatricians to limit their animal intake, especially red meat.

Students will be able to live a much healthier and longer life if they commit to the path of vegetarians.

There are many different types of vegetarianism. Students could become either a vegetarian that does not eat meat, poultry, or fish, or they could become vegans that do not eat anything that came from an animal, such as dairy.

Start out small by just giving up meat, then proceed to poultry and fish. Every bit counts when it comes to saving animals and leading a healthier lifestyle.

Panther Predilections

What are your spring break plans?

“Hang out with my friends and host late movie nights.”
-- Julia Pasquale
Freshman

“I’m going to the beach.”
-- Natalie Kadar
Sophomore

“Hanging out with my friends in USC.”
-- Rachel Engel
Junior

“Staying in a house in Hilton Head with my friends.”
-- Colleen Friend
Senior

By: Brigid McCabe
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

The censorship of basketball chanting: how far does it go?

By: Ryan Stockton
Staff Writer

As the basketball season winds to end, what is it that we as fans recall most? Is it the thrill of the victories? Is it the excitement of watching Shea drain a three? Or maybe it’s just the atmosphere made by the outrageous costumes donned by the fans on theme nights for the big games. But for most, we remember the student section’s best chants.

As the years have progressed, it seems that the Athletic Department is cracking down on the vulgarity of the chants chosen by the student section. Who’s to say what is completely inappropriate? Naturally, it is always our mission to keep things diplomatic between schools. Thus,

we keep profanities to an absolute zero; we never get completely personal with any specific player, and we are never allowed to cause any serious trouble. It seems to be that one chant in particular always gets silenced yet seems to not fit into any of the problem-causing criteria. This chant is the infamous, “Push it!”

Upon hearing the news that the student section cannot currently chant, “Push it!” former student Sean Stockton, who graduated in the class of 2005, stated, “What? When I was a senior that was our favorite thing to chant! Anytime the ref made a bogus call that’s all you would hear us screaming. I think it’s ludicrous that they won’t let you guys say that one anymore...It’s a

classic!”

The times are changing. Is it possible that the times have changed so much in the last three years? Are we afraid of offending other schools? Are we afraid of tarnishing our own image as a school district? What are we scared of with the two little words, “Push it!”?

Obviously, we are scared that other fans in the gym will misunderstand our chant. Conversely, when the student section chants, people listen. There is not a soul in that gym that does not know that we are chanting, “Push it,” in substitution of its much more crude cousin.

When asked about it, Dr. Ghilani stated, “I personally love the chant; however, whenever someone says the bad words in place of the funny

ones, we have to pull them out of the section.”

When questioned about the topic, junior Pat Tye said, “I love the ‘Push it!’ chant! Everyone knows it...I think they shouldn’t tell us not to say that one. It isn’t vulgar and it’s not hurtful to anyone. I just don’t get what the big deal is about it.”

On the other side of the argument is junior Elise Anderson. When asked about her thoughts, Elise stated, “I think the Athletic Departement has every right to silence us. It is a vulgar chant and it is easy to misunderstand it.”

Clearly, the censorship of these basketball chants is a protection of the image of Upper St. Clair. But, how far does it have to go? Really, this is all starting to “Push it.”

The pros and cons of organic food vs. local food: which is better?

By: Hannah Mann
Staff Writer

Ever since our South Hills Giant Eagle renovated and became the more current and eclectic Market District, trips to the grocery store have become adventures. While going is certainly fun, recent visits have been almost stressful thanks to the countless food and drink options pelted at you from your first step in. Blood orange soda! Classic black and gold thumbprints! The Grapple (a mysterious hybrid fruit that “looks like an apple, tastes like a grape!”)! Promotions regarding organic and, more recently, local food have been popping up on the artsy chalkboards that border the food displays.

Organic and local foods have grown rapidly in popularity and availability of late. As global warming fears and “go green” trends sweep the nation, people seem to pay more attention to what they are putting in their mouths and maybe even how it affects the world. Before making such choices, be informed about the different types of foods and the practices associated, rather than seeing only what the mass media presents, labels claim, or Hollywood celebrities think is cool at the moment.

ORGANIC: THE BASICS

The good: Organic uses less energy (30 percent on average), is beneficial to soil, water and local habitat, and can be more ideal for harvesters.

The bad: Organic food costs more – way more - than conventional food. While the labor and time regarding production systems involved in the

usually smaller organic farms should reflect a slightly higher price, inflation by sometimes 300 percent seems questionable. Organic growers don’t get as many federal subsidies as conventional farmers, but there have been mysterious discrepancies between the true production of organic milk, and what organic companies say their annual output is. Therefore, some consumers who believe they are eating and drinking organic sometimes are not.

LOCAL: THE BASICS

The good: Supports local farmers! Secure and sustainable local food systems guarantee food that is fresh, affordable, nutritious, and cultured. You get to eat with a sense of place.

The bad: Local food takes effort to find, and may not have as many varieties as mass-produced and imported foods. But what you find will be a bargain; it will return to you tenfold in flavor!

While you can find food that is both local and organic, when given the choice, local is both affordable and ethical, not to mention delicious.

Where can I get local food?

Again, as local food grows in popularity, I’ve noticed it popping up in more and more – well - local places. Beyond Market District, farmer’s markets, like Simmons and Trax feature a wide variety of delicious produce and produce-pro-

duced novelties such as pies, spreads, and juices. The Strip District’s Carribean cuisine favorite, Kaya, uses local vegetables and meats to give their food exquisite taste and freshness. Roasted chipotle corn on the cob and cilantro-lime pork chops are just the beginning. I recommend exploring restaurants, groceries, and co-ops around Pittsburgh to find your own local favorites.

As previously stated, local food is ethically advantageous, and, many find, most tasty option. Often times, local food is organic, so if you feel better about eating organically, it can be a package deal. Organic regulations, however, are most likely not what organic producers lead one to believe. Organic milk cartons often feature pictures of happy and

healthy looking cattle grazing on unbounded, grassy hills in the sunshine. Organic cattle are often not given more grazing space than nonorganic, and are not allowed antibiotics when they get sick. So what are you really drinking? Additionally, organic producers use phrases such as “no dangerous pesticides or rBGH.”

Organic.org’s website reads: “Cloned food. GMOs and rBGH. Oh my! Interesting how swiftly these food technologies were rushed to market, when organic fought for 13 years to become federal law. Eleven years ago, genet-

cally modified food was not part of our food supply; today an astounding 30 percent of our cropland is planted in GMOs. Organic is the only de facto seal of reassurance against these and other modern, lab-produced additions to our food supply.”

Organic.org uses the words “modern” and “lab-produced” like they are bad things. And it’s true: words like “genetically modified organisms,” “added hormones” and “dangerous pesticides” naturally frighten the majority of consumers. Pesticides used in the production of nonorganic milk are not dangerous; they would be illegal if they were.

And what’s the problem with using modern technology to improve the efficiency of already limited and diminishing farmlands to feed a world doubling in population and simultaneously hunger? Eleven years ago, scientists were still in the process of finding and testing safe methods to improve world food production. Organic had to “fight” for thirteen years because of all the holes in their methods and questions in their motivations. Laboratories are not full of mad scientists, but it sure sounds like the organic industry hopes this is what the average world citizen thinks.

The bottom line is that you could be paying more than twice the price of regular milk, and not getting anything different. Local food demonstrates respect for land and farmers. Eat more seasonably by supporting your local farmers market while also supporting a sustainable economy beneficial to sellers and consumers.

Nader joins the presidential race

By: Kelsey Short
Editor-in-Chief

Ralph Nader announced his candidacy for president on Sunday, February 24, 2008, on NBC’s “Meet the Press” series. Though Nader is not running in the election with any prospect of actually winning, his objective is to infuse his views on issues that he feels the two main political parties are not addressing.

According to the *Knight Ridder Tribune Washington Bureau*, Nader said on the show, “You have to ask yourself as a citizen, should we elaborate the issues that the two (parties) are not talking about?”

He claims that voters feel “locked out, shut out, marginalized, [and] disrespected” about certain concerns, such as the Middle East and the hurricane Katrina cleanup (www.einnews.com).

Nader, a vehement consumer advocate, purported on Silver’s Sirius Radio show that the Democratic and Republican candidates are “not talking about the bloated wasteful military budget...which takes money away from repairing the public services in the country –

the schools, the clinics, the highways, bridges, drinking water systems, sewage treatment systems that would create a lot of good jobs that could not be exported to places like China” (www.swamppolitics.com).

He also aims to run against “the real political bigotry” of the two foremost political

Hillary Clinton called Nader’s announcement of his candidacy “really unfortunate. I remember when he did this before, it didn’t turn out too well for anyone, especially our country.” She continued, “I hope it’s kind of a [sic] just a passing fancy that people won’t take too seriously” (*The New York Times*).

On the other hand, Clinton’s competition, Barack Obama, seems to be unaffected by Nader’s decision: “I think the job of the Democratic Party is to be so compelling that a few percentage points of the vote going to another candidate is not going to make any difference” (www.washingtonpost.com).

Nader ran for president in 2004 as an independent and in 2000 and 1996 as a member of the Green Party (*Knight Ridder Tribune Washington Bureau*).

According to CNN.com, Nader won 2.7 percent of the vote in the 2000 election. He defended the legitimacy of his candidacy in that election: “Let’s get over it and try to have a diverse multiple choice, multiple-party democracy the way they have in Western Europe and Canada (www.miamiherald.com).

parties that he argues have “locked up the system” (www.baltimoresun.com). He is running as a third-party candidate. Nader wishes for great changes to the party system in the future, which is one of his primary reasons for running in an election that his opponents guarantee him to lose. Democratic candidate

Stanford waives tuition for lower income students

By: Rachel von Waldow
News Editor

Many high-end university tuitions have risen significantly faster than the rate of inflation. Ivys across the nation have taken steps to make attending the prestigious schools more affordable, thereby granting equal opportunities to low and middle income students.

No school took as dramatic of an initiative than Stanford University of Palo Alto, California, which announced on February 20, 2008, that it would eliminate tuition for students with annual family incomes totaling less than \$100,000. Additionally, the school will pay room and board for students with families making less than \$60,000 (www.money.cnn.com).

The opportunity is open to new and continuing students, both undergraduate and graduate. In effect the new academic year in September, the program is anticipated to cost the university \$3 million its first year alone (www.news-service.stanford.edu).

Stanford tuition is expected to rise to \$36,000 per year come next September. On top of the cost of the actual education, students are expected to pay \$11,000 for room and board. Stanford’s initiative to waive the astronomical tuition opens up the opportunity to attend Stanford to a greater number of qualified appli-

cants. Of the university’s 6,700 undergraduate student body, about one third is expected to qualify for the tuition break (www.yahoo.news.com).

Financial aid director of the university, Karen Cooper, explains, “Our decision to waive tuition is a direct response to the concerns expressed by the families” (www.ap.google.com).

Richard Shaw, Dean of Undergraduate Admission and Financial aid tells of additional reasons the financial benefits were instated: “When Jane and Leland Stanford created the university, they wanted students admitted based on their abilities, promise and willingness to work hard and not on whether or not they could pay the cost of tuition. (www.news-service.stanford.edu).

President of Stanford University, John Hennessy, further asserts, “Having a student body from diverse economic backgrounds benefits not just the students who receive financial aid, but also the entire student body—enhancing their academic experience and broadening their worldview (www.news-service.stanford.edu).

Stanford University’s endowment grew nearly 22 percent last year to \$17.1 billion. This gigantic sum proves that Stanford has a lot of room to reduce costs for students (www.sfgate.com).

Beef Crisis: U.S.’s meat is under inspection

By: JP Gooderham
Sports Editor

The United States Department of Agriculture has been trusted for decades with inspecting meat sold in the United States. Despite the USDA’s trusted reputation, a recent crisis has shocked meat-lovers nationwide. In California, undercover video displayed animal cruelty to cows in slaughterhouses, which prompted an unprecedented recall of American meat.

“A nauseating video of cows stumbling on their way to a California slaughterhouse has finally prompted action: the largest recall of meat in American history” (*New York Times*). Of course, the fact that the cows were unable to walk shortly after being inspected posed the greatest health concern for the USDA. Miriam Falco explains, “Since 2004, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has required that cattle be able to walk to slaughter after an inspection by a USDA veterinarian — largely as a precaution against [...] mad cow disease” (www.CNN.com).

As a result of the USDA’s discovery, a major national recall was issued: “Westland/Hallmark Meat Company has issued a full

recall of more than 143 million pounds of beef produced over the last two years, including 37 million pounds that went to school-lunch programs” (*New York Times*).

While meat that went to school lunch programs was able to be identified as dangerous, consumers were unable to check the status of their purchased meat. However, the Upper St. Clair School District was able to identify the meat before it reached the lunch trays of students district-wide. Superintendent Patrick O’ Toole explained in a letter to Upper St. Clair parents, “On Friday, February 1, Aramark, the District’s food service contractor, was informed by the United States Department of Agriculture [...] that all commodity beef products (those that are government subsidized, rather than commercially sold) needed to be placed on ‘administrative hold.’ This advanced notice allowed Aramark to respond sixteen days prior to the February 17 recall.”

Fortunately, it seems as though Upper St. Clair students and faculty will not experience adverse health effects. O’ Tool continues, “It is important to reemphasize that this meat has not been used in our nutrition centers since February 1.”

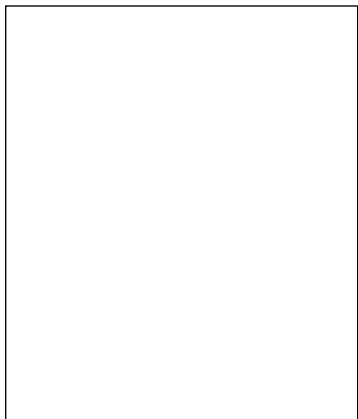
Fidel Castro steps down as Cuba’s dictator

By: JP Gooderham
Sports Editor

On Tuesday, February 19th, Cuban dictator Fidel Castro, officially stepped down as Cuba’s most prominent political leader. In Granma, the state run newspaper of the Communist nation, Castro announced, “My wishes have always been to discharge my duties to my last breath. That’s all I can offer. To my dearest compatriots, who have recently honored me so much by electing me a member of the Parliament where so many agreements should be adopted of utmost importance to the destiny of our Revolution, I am saying that I will neither aspire to nor accept, [...] the positions of President of the State Council and Commander in Chief” (www.CNN.com).

After years of tension between the U.S. and the small Communist nation, which is located only 90 miles from America’s border, Castro’s political move will likely lead to new relations between the new nations. In Castro’s place, brother Raúl Castro will likely assume power over the Cuban government. However, while the younger Castro has reigned as

Cuba’s leader in Fidel’s absence, his position has continually been low key. In fact, “Even when Fidel Castro underwent intestinal surgery in 2006 and Raúl Castro



became Cuba’s acting president, Raúl didn’t make a public appearance for two weeks, until after photos assured the country that Fidel was alive” (www.CNN.com).

While the leadership change seems to give new hope to better relations between the U.S. and Cuba, skepticism for this optimistic prediction exists. Anita Snow of the Associated Press clarifies, “President Bush said he hopes the resignation signals the

beginning of a democratic transition, though he doubts that would come about under the rule of another Castro. The State Department denigrated the change as a ‘transfer of authority and power from dictator to dictator light.’”

While the new leader’s track record on democratic or non-Communist reform is mixed at best, the prospect for change still exists. Snow argues, “The younger Castro raised expectations of openings in the state-controlled economy with his reported fascination with Chinese-style capitalism, calls for unspecified “structural changes,” and acknowledgment that government wages averaging \$19 a month do not satisfy basic needs. He also encouraged Cubans to open a fearless and critical debate, as long as they remember that the final decisions will be made by the island’s Communist leaders” (Associated Press).

Ultimately, the man responsible for the U.S.’s engagement in the Cuban Missile Crisis and the target of numerous American attacks has left his mark on Cuba, it seems that only time will tell whether or not Cuba will embrace reform.

Heifer International could prove a worthy cause for USCHS fundraiser

By: Hannah Mann
Staff Writer

Almost every year the USCHS student council president comes up with a charity that will be meaningful to both him or herself and hopefully a majority of the student body. Student council values local charities and participates in at least one each year. Past charities include the annual Holiday Project, which donates dinners to needy families in Washington County, Michael Spina’s dedication to the Washington City Mission, and most recently Josh Jackson’s establishment of the high school’s now traditional Military Project.

I naturally wanted to continue the tradition and select a unique charity that would hopefully strike the rest of the school as important. At the Pennsylvania Governor’s School for the Agricultural Sciences, students learn a lot about world food and the hunger that more than half the

planet faces on a daily basis. More than 840 million people in the world are malnourished (www.care.org).

World hunger only grows as already limited space for farmland diminishes. More and more land disappears each year thanks to pollution, industry, and unethical farming practices. Eighty-four percent of farmland is at risk of destruction. The USCHS can find a cause related to world food to which students could fundraise and donate. Heifer International envisions “a world of communities living together in peace and equitably sharing the resources of a healthy planet.” Their mission is “to work with communities to end hunger and poverty and to care for the earth” (www.heifer.org).

So how exactly does Heifer work to achieve its visions and mission? By “passing on the gift.” Proceeds to Heifer serve to purchase a heifer, or female cow who has not yet had a calf, for a family in one of more than 128 partic-

ipating countries with undeveloped regions. The receiving family must then pledge the cow’s first female offspring to a second family, the second family to a third, and so on, until each family has a milk-sustaining cow.

Although hard to believe, milk is a valuable treat for many people of the world. The basis of Heifer’s appeal is the continuous impact. The charity helps people helps themselves, which is the best thing I think we can do.

Since it’s founding, Heifer has branched out to other kinds of livestock (pigs, goats, sheep, chicken, etc.) as well as many varieties of produce, which recipients learn to grow and market in order to make a living and ultimately become self-reliant.

A favorable way to raise the money would be to host an additional school dance, called The Black and White Dance, in April. Details are yet to be determined by student council regarding the dance.

Can Missoni get out of its rut this year?

By: Brigid McCabe
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Italian designer Missoni’s Spring Ready-to-Wear Collection for 2008 has brought the signature knits, the typical prints, the expected florals, the customary zigzags, and the usual embroidery, asking the question as to whether it will ever transcend the old.

Like a cute frock passed down from generation to generation, Missoni has passed its design house from mother Rosita and father Ottavio Missoni, who met at the 1948 Olympic Games in London, to their three children (fragrancex.com). “Throughout its five decades in the fashion world, Missoni has come to symbolise chic knitwear with soft, comfortable ‘put together’ shapes that create an unmistakable image. [...] From swimwear and handbags to trousers and dresses, their designs are a wonderful combination of colour and tex-

ture” (www.vam.ac.uk).

Could Missoni be growing stale though? In the past, Missoni has been criticized for the way it shows its collections and for its inability to produce innovative couture. “It’s no heavy criticism to say that Missoni isn’t a stadium-filling collection: It’s a friendly-scale line of highly identifiable knits and prints that’s been enjoying an extended second life since young girls got into the label’s dresses,” comments Style.com writer Sarah Mower.

During last year’s Spring 2007 Ready-to-Wear show, Style.com editor Nicole Phelps harshly reviewed one of the key pieces, a V-neck sweater over a cargo pocket flowing skirt, saying “Few women could pull off a look that added such bulk to their frame, and even if they could, it’s doubtful they’d want to.”

However, it looks as though Missoni’s fall collection redeems and refreshes the legendary

design company’s image. With slouchy, dark sweater dresses, mysterious Japanese traditional prints, and a blend of preppy pants and French ponchos, Missoni takes a dive for the different. “It’s certainly a refocusing of the brand’s former something-for-everyone mélanges of items,” comments Sarah Mower (www.style.com).

Son Luca Missoni also passed the torch to sister Angela for the 2008 Fall Menswear, and she paraded an interesting line of suits, sweaters, and dress pants, both unique and comfortable, down the runway. Angela “aims to bring to the famed Italian knit company a sartorial sense of self” while still “Finding inspiration in her father” (www.hauteconcept.com). A blended knit of both modern and past seems almost as pretty as the blended knits and colors in the Spring and Fall Missoni Ready-to-Wear line.

Cooking column: St. Patrick's Day

By: Marni Schreiber
Features Editor

There is always a need to celebrate, and when there is celebration, there is always food. In the month of March, St. Patrick’s Day is a widely celebrated festival. So why not show off your spirit and cook to celebrate this fun day?

Cooking may seem like a hassle, or just too difficult; well its not! Everyone can cook or bake something when they set their minds to it. To help beginners, there are many easy recipes to follow to help you learn the ropes.

Cooking for the holidays is a great way to start off your cooking careers. St. Patrick’s Day would be perfect to whip up some great Irish food. Because Irish food is very traditional, it is not very hard to make.

One traditional Irish dessert that tastes great and is easy to

make is Irish apple cake. This rich cake is sure to please even picky eaters.

Ingredients:
4 tablespoons butter at room temperature
1 cup granulated sugar
1 egg, beaten
4 Granny Smith apples, cored, peeled and diced (2 cups)
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup all-purpose flour
Whipped cream or vanilla ice cream for serving
Procedure:
Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Generously grease an 8-inch square cake pan.

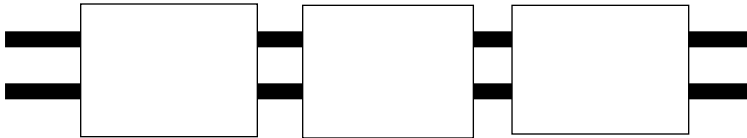
“In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Add the egg,

apples, nuts, and vanilla and stir well. Sift in the dry ingredients and mix well. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake until the cake is lightly browned and a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Let the cake cook in the pan for 5 minutes, then unmold and serve warm or at room temperature with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream. Serves 10-12” (www.razzledazzlerecipes.com).

This easy apple cake would be perfect for any St. Patrick’s Day celebration because it represents the true flavors of the Irish. This cake is also great to make at anytime, not only on March 17th.

Other great Irish recipes include Irish stew, Irish lamb, Irish chocolate pudding, and Irish cheesecake, along with many more.

Teacher’s Lounge



The gifted one: Mrs. Heins

By: Hannah Mann
Staff Writer

How much spare time do you have?

Mrs. Heins: Very little.

When you do have it, what do you do with it?

MH: Sleep or watch a DVD. The last one I watched was the show *The Unit*, but it was only on for fifteen minutes before I fell asleep. My favorite show is *NCIS*, and my favorite movies are the *Star Wars* series. I put them on when I’m doing things, because I know them so well by now that I don’t really have to watch them.

Are you a morning or night person?

MH: A mid-morning person.

What’s your favorite program you mentor?

MH: Engineering Design &

Fabrication.

Do you have any pets?

MH: A Miniature English Bulldog named Jack Bauer.

Favorite place you’ve ever been?

MH: Alaska.

If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?

MH: Thomas Jefferson.

Why?

MH: His engineering, [of course].

How much do you spend on lollipops every academic year?

MH: \$400.00

What one piece of advice do you have for graduating seniors?

MH: Maintain their good study habits in college.

Hannah’s Haute Spots

By: Hannah Mann
Staff Writer

Despite Pittsburgh’s rank as America’s most livable city by the *Places Rated Almanac* in 2007, we are a small city that many consider to be a relative stride behind the pack. This struggle only gives us character and inspires workers and businesses to be and to create the exceptional while maintaining a unity unbeknownst to most urban areas and their near surroundings.

Regardless of our countless accolades (Steeler and Penguin performances, superior chipped ham, our own native dialect) or few blots (mileage signs containing the word “Cleveland,” fourteenth most sedentary city in the nation according to Forbes), we will always have a tasteful pride regardless of what others think, but chances are they’ll think pretty highly when they see, or taste, the Pittsburgh area for themselves, starting with these local favorites.

Iovino’s Cafe – Less is more! Simple décor, white plates, tablecloths, and napkins allow for focus on the food. Young Mt. Lebanon couple Jeff and Carol Iovino own the lunch and dinner restaurant. Chef Jeff cooks delicious, original, and ever-changing entrees for regulars and newbies alike. Specialties include vegetarian-friendly innovations (bonus: he uses local produce!), as well as flavorful seafood dishes (a passion he honed while spending a summer on an Alaskan fishing trawler).

A repeat-customer favorite is the PLT. At just six bucks a plate,

this ambrosial sandwich consists of deep fried Portobello mushrooms, red pepper aioli, and of course lettuce and tomato with a side of sweet potato fries or salad to boot! The Post-Gazette’s Elizabeth Downer critiqued it a “neighborhood [gem] that follows modern, minimalist principles [and has a] dinner menu [that] is a work of art.”

Taste for yourself at 300A Beverly Road, Mt. Lebanon, 412.440.0414

Fiori’s Pizzeria – Off the sharp and steep angle of West Liberty Avenue lies a gold mine. One piece of advice: know what you want before you get to the front of the line! While the master of pie-tossing and shop owner, Fiorentino Moscoteillo’s slogan (“we fix you up”) is absolutely true, his manager’s gruff exterior and furrowed brow are known to be mistaken for hostility and can cause on-deck jitters.

When in doubt, go with two slices of plain cheese. He is likely to subtly counteract your insecurities with refills on the house or extra shredded mozzarella to top the oven-melted cheese (which will make your taste buds break into applause), but will not smile while doing so, fearing diners will recognize his humanity and draw the secrets of the Fiori dough out of him. While not too much can be said for the interior decoration, one customer says with conviction: “the framed Neil Diamond picture inside adds elegance and mystique.”

Taste for yourself at: 103 Capital Avenue, Pittsburgh, 412.343.7788.

Inside the USC football locker room

By: Ryan Stockton
Staff Writer

Upper St. Clair football has always been a tradition of perfection. With a superior record of 5 WPIAL championships and 2 PIAA championships, who is credited with winning these titles? Of course, Coach Jim Render and his staff of assistant coaches have always been credited with coming up with the plays and strategies to win the games; and naturally all credit should be given to them. However, behind the coaches is the ever changing roster of players. These players are always working hard to make it onto the varsity team so that they can play on Friday nights. Three men that have fought their way up to the top are Mike Shogry, Alex Smith, and Steve Lias. Mike Shogry will be a senior in

the 2008 season. Mike has been playing football for the past 10 years and has worked his way to play quarterback and safety for Coach Render. Mike stands at 5'11", weighs 175 lbs, and wears the number 12. Mike can confidently say that he was a member of the 2006 AAAA WPIAL/PIAA champion team and has lettered one year on varsity. As Mike recalled his past 10 years of football, he stated, "My two fondest memories for football would be Saturday practices with Coach Jay Junco and the time that I was swing dancing with Coach Render." Big man Alex Smith is a lineman and has 10 years of football experience. As he moved around on the line in his first two years on the team, he finally found his spot at left tackle in his junior season. Alex has a standard height of 6'1", weighs a powerful 245 lbs, and represents the

number 76 on Fridays. Like Mike, Alex was also a member of the 2006 AAAA WPIAL/PIAA championship team and has lettered one year on the varsity team. Alex also considers weight training with Coach Dan Stellute and having Coach Jay Junco accept him as an equal to be accomplishments of his high school career. Looking back through his experiences, Alex recalled two great memories: "I remember watching Billy Campbell try to catch a tire as it fell from the Visitor's stands...What I remember most though was Zach Doebler screaming, 'Billy, no!'" Alex also recalled, "I remember a time when Steve Lias was happy after a game, so he came dancing and singing into the showers...Steve didn't realize that it was slippery though, so naturally, he slipped and hit his knee on the handrail: he went on to need

stitches in his knee." Finally, Tight End/Defensive End, Steve Lias, comes in at 6'1", 210 lbs. Steve has only played 6 years but is the most distinguished of these three men. Wearing number 44, Steve has been a member of the 2006 WPIAL/PIAA championship team, has lettered 1 year on varsity, and went 2nd team All-Conference his junior year. As Steve recalled his short but distinguished career, he said, "My fondest memory would have to be watching Mike Rhoa fit 50 grapes into his mouth during lunch at Boyce camp my Sophomore year." In a sport as unpredictable as football, it's tough to say what the fate of Upper St. Clair's team will be. However, with players such as Mike Shogry, Alex Smith, and Steve Lias, we might just stand a fighting chance for greatness.

Pirates hope new facility will bring much needed talent

By: Greg Schlosser
Staff Writer

On January 21, the Pirates announced that they will be building a new facility in El Toro, Dominican Republic. This will replace the old one in the Dominican Republic and will encourage Latin American development. "The Pittsburgh Pirates were pioneers in Latin America," said Frank Coonelly, the president of the Pirates. "We've fallen down from that status in recent years. This is a commitment from ownership to become great again in Latin America" (www.MLB.com).

The 46-acre facility will be able to house ninety players, and will have two baseball fields. It will cost about \$5 million, and will be finished around the middle of 2009. This facility will replace the old one, which had only one field and an open batting cage (www.pittsburghlive.com).

"I came away with the strong impression that they did not have the tools they needed to get the job done and get the inflow of talent that we so desperately need in Pittsburgh," Bob Nutting, the majority owner of the Pittsburgh Pirates said. "It was clear to me that it didn't look like a Major League facility. It certainly was not a competitive facility"(www.mlb.com).

But the big question is, will it be enough to bring the Pirates back to dominant baseball?

"This is one more step in creating an organization that is designed to consistently compete on the field," Nutting commented. "I really believe this is a tangible example of the commitment the entire organization has to identify our needs and move forward and deliver those tools that are needed to get the job done"(www.mlb.com).

Like Nutting said, getting Dominican talent is key for this struggling team. In a league where forty percent of the players are from Latin America, an investment in this area is just what the Pirates need.

But, as MLB.com has reported, the Pirates won't just stop in Latin America. They are also considering investing in talent in the Pacific Rim. This region has produced talent such as Ichiro Suzuki and Kenji Jojima.

Over the past few months, the Pirates have made key strides looking for future talent. By investing into (possibly) two of the best baseball regions of the world, the Pirates have some hope to end their losing ways.

Pitt Panthers charge toward March Madness

By: JP Gooderham
Sports Editor

The men's basketball team, which has been a consistent participant in the NCAA Tournament since the 2002-2003 basketball season, faced an unprecedented level of adversity for their program this season. However, despite major personnel problems, the Panthers have managed to change their shape as a team and fine a winning formula.

Of course, the Panthers entered this season as a young team with unproven talent. Last season, 7-foot star center Aaron Gray departed for the NBA, and forward Levon Kendall also graduated. With two key components to the Panthers offense gone, Pitt was forced to pursue a new game strategy with a new team.

Fortunately for the Panthers, freshman Dejuan Blair (who graduated from Schenley High School last year) emerged as a star center to fill the shoes of

Gray. Additionally, Sam Young, who was known for his dunking abilities from his freshman season, returned as a new player: one that could play great defense to

complete the Panthers' astounding offensive abilities. In addition to two breakouts by big men, senior guard Ronald Ramon and junior Levance Fields began the season with great basketball

prowess and intelligent ball control.

Consequently, the Panthers opened their non-conference season with numerous blowouts of

small opponents, culminating in a tough, national matchup against the storied Duke Blue Devils near Christmas. However, despite a spectacular win over the Blue Devils,




the Panthers suffered the loss of senior forward Mike Cook, who suffered a season ending injury during the game.

Shortly after, junior guard Levance Field sustained an ankle injury during a loss against the Dayton Flyers (which was the first blowout Pitt suffered during the season).

Pitt coach Jamie Dixon explained, "We're extremely disappointed for Levance. We expect him to make a full recovery and return sometimes later in the season" (www.ESPN.com). With Mike Cook and Levance Fields out for unknown periods of time, Pitt's remaining players were left to seriously question the future of the 2007-2008 campaign. Sam Young, Pitt's star forward, stated, "I don't know. I'm trying to figure [our future] out right now. I'm sure the coaches and the rest of my team are trying, too. There's a lot of stuff going on, and we're trying to figure it out" (www.ESPN.com). Following a loss to Villanova after the Dayton game, ESPN analyst Dana O'Neill argued, "There is no answer, no blueprint to the finish line for a team that started the season in the top 20 and as the fourth-best team in the Big East and now is scrambling with seven scholarship players" (www.ESPN.com).


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Spygate: More bad news for the Patriots?

By: Greg Schlosser
Staff Writer

Early in September 2007, the NFL fined New England Patriots Head Coach Bill Belichick \$500,000, the Patriots organization \$250,000 and also took first round draft pick in the 2008 NFL for videotaping coaches illegally. The organization would videotape the opposing coaches' signals, which, if the Patriots 'decoded' correctly, would give them the play that the team would run. Subsequently, the Patriots faced unprecedented national pressure, which included being called cheaters by fans and players.

But since then, the topic has died down and people have begun to forget as the public's eye shifted to the Patriots perfect record. However, just before the Patriots' Super Bowl loss, Senator Arlen Specter wanted to meet with NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell about tapes that Goodell destroyed during the whole Spygate scandal. These tapes could

have had possible evidence that the Patriots have spied on other opponents (www.espn.com).

"There was confirmation that there has been taping since 2000, when Coach Belichick took over," Specter said after he met with Goodell. But, the conversation didn't go far due to the tapes being destroyed (www.espn.com).

"I think it was the right thing to do," Goodell said about the ruined tapes (www.espn.com).

But still, the situation unfolded even more New England employee Matt Walsh was found to have possibly taped the walkthrough of the St. Louis Rams right before the 2002 Super Bowl (www.espn.com). Now, Goodell is trying to strike a deal with Walsh, who is currently a golf pro in Hawaii, so that Walsh would be legally protected.

"The lawyers are still talking and we're anxious to speak to him. We're anxious to get an agreement to get him to come forth," Said Goodell right before the NFL

Combine. "We hope to be able to talk to him shortly" (www.espn.com). The two sides are still trying to strike a deal that would not leave Walsh too vulnerable.

To add insult to injury in the Patriots situation, Willie Gary, a player on the 2002 Rams, filed suit, which "accusing the Patriots of fraud, unfair trade practices and engaging in a 'pattern of racketeering'" (www.espn.com).

Gary's lawyer, Hugh Campbell, is also looking to add two new classes, to the case; all of the teams and fans who were affected by the Patriots cheating ways. He will also be joining Arlen Specter in his efforts.

"I think now that the lawsuits have been started, that I got the ball rolling, and the plaintiffs' lawyers are picking it up", (www.espn.com) remarked Specter. What has started out as a small taping incident has now turned into a long range mark on the Patriots organization, and even has Congress involved.

Upper St. Clair Panther football: where does it go from here?

Ryan Stockton
Staff Writer

Upper St. Clair has a tradition of excellence in athletics. Case closed, right? Right. However, USC Panther football in particular boasts a spectacular history. In such a competitive league, Upper St. Clair has managed to pull off five WPIAL championships and two PIAA state championships. As we are all aware, Upper St. Clair's latest championships came in the 2006 season, which included a perfect 16-0 season winning both the WPIAL and PIAA titles. However, the subsequent season was not so successful in the eyes of most USC citizens: the team was knocked out in the second week of playoffs by big dogs Gateway.

Of course, the 2006 team was completely dominant over all opponents. With an offensive and defensive line bigger than most, receivers that could not be stopped, a strong running game, and an impenetrable defense, the team was clearly unbeatable. However, for the 2007 season, after the whole starting 11 of the 2006 team

had graduated, the team was left with rookies. These rookies were often undersized and less skilled against much more formidable opponents. Despite a fairly good set of skill players, skill players being any player that is not a lineman, the team did not go anywhere. This was due to the offensive line being beat on by the much stronger opponents. Not to say that these linemen themselves were bad football players, it's just that their opponents were better football players.

As the team moves forward, we are left to ponder how the 2008 season will be played out. With many of these formerly undersized linemen coming back for their second season as varsity starters, it's safe to say that the line will put on a strong display of great blocking.

What is uncertain is how the skill players will do. With a new quarterback, new receivers, and a new running back, no one can really say how the offense will perform. As for the defense, with many returning starters, it is always a safe bet on a great defensive core.

The NFC prevails in the Pro Bowl

By: Mami Schreiber
Features Editor

Every year, one week after the Super Bowl, NFL players from across the league come together to play one last game of the season. This final game matches the AFC (American Football Conference) against the NFC (National Football Conference) with the best players of each NFL team selected by football fans playing against one another.

The Pro Bowl is always played in Honolulu, Hawaii at Aloha Stadium. The games have been played at Aloha Stadium since 1980 when the NFC beat the AFC 37 to 27 (www.espn.com).

Players from all across the league are voted on to decide who will participate. Many players are chosen, but only a select few start in the game. The starters do not play the entire game, which gives many newcomers to the Pro Bowl get a chance to play in the game as well.

The starting quarterbacks chosen for this installment were Brett Favre from the NFC's Green Bay Packers and Tom Brady from the AFC's New England Patriots. Brady, however, chose not participate in the game, which gave the starting spot to

Peyton Manning of the Indianapolis Colts.

Peyton Manning impressed many players with his limited snaps. In fact, he completed 11 of his 16 passes for a total of 147 yards. Also, he had a



quarterback rating of 118.5 and helped the AFC take the lead over the NFC by half time with a score of 27 to 21 (www.nfl.com).

Ben Roethlisberger of the Pittsburgh Steelers replaced Peyton Manning after half time. Roethlisberger had a few rough plays, but also had a great pass to T.J

Houshmandzadeh for a touchdown. Derek Anderson of the Cleveland Brown followed Roethlisberger as quarterback.

Even with the star-studded quarterbacks on the AFC team, the NFC was able to dominate the game. The NFC was able to score their first touchdown with seven minutes to go in the first quarter. Larry Fitzgerald of the Arizona Cardinals, a former player of the University of Pittsburgh, was able to catch a touchdown pass from Tony Romo of the Dallas Cowboys (www.nfl-headline.com).

Other points gained by the NFC in the first half include a touchdown pass to Terrell Owens from Tony Romo and a 17 yard catch made by Chris Cooley of the Washington Redskins from Matt Hasselbeck of the Seattle Seahawks (www.nfl-headline.com).

The NFC dominated in the second half starting off with a 17 yard run by Adrian Peterson of the Minnesota Vikings. Peterson scored another running touchdown in the fourth quarter (www.nflheadline.com).

The game was a very exciting one for NFC fans. The final score was 42 to 30 with the NFC coming out on top.

Fans jubilant over rec basketball

By: JP Gooderham
Sports Editor

Each year, dozens of players and fans gather in Boyce's gymnasium on a weekly basis to watch the stars of the recreation basketball leagues of years past take the court. While Upper St. Clair's top basketball players pursue the varsity roster, a unique blend of "never-were" athletes and tired basketball stars continue to live their dreams through the "rec" league.

Many players share the opinion about the league's requirement that all players receive nearly equal playing time. In fact, the recreation basketball league gives some players the chance to show off newly acquired skills, which were not yet developed during the popular middle school leagues. For example, basketball fan

Christian Wheeler remarks, "I think [junior] Jimmy Janis has really developed into a great player."

Other players have found different benefits from the league over the course of the 2007-2008 season. Junior Chapin Wright, who emerged as a leader of the White Team, argues, "Rec basketball is great for a lot of reasons. As a young Asian boy, it is a truly great experience for me to be able to live and play basketball like my hero, Yao Ming."

Over the course of the year, senior Greg Brown was able to accumulate a league leading 161 points. In fact, Brown was able to separate himself by a wide margin over contenders such as junior Danny Poljak, who scored 151 total points, and junior Danny McCune, who scored 121 points.

Steelers look to improve for next season

By: Dallion L. Townsend
Staff Writer

Ben Roethlisberger had an off season wish list, in hopes that the Rooney Family can play the role of Santa for an early Christmas for Ben. But Ben isn't too demanding, he only asked for three things, but each is a tall order to fill.

For starters, Ben wanted to make sure he was well protected for a few more years and asked for the front office to try to negotiate with All-Pro left guard, Alan Faneca who has been hostile at the negotiating table. However, the Rooneys were hoping to take a smaller hit to the salary cap and Faneca decided to test the free agent market. So the Steelers will either have to rely on backup guard Chris Kemeotu, or can

look to the NFL Draft in hopes of landing a top rated rookie, since Faneca moved onto the New York Jets for \$40 million over 5 years.

Ben's second wish was for a taller receiver, similar to Plaxico Burress, who stands at a towering 6'5. In Ben's rookie campaign, he had Plaxico's services and was not as effective as originally perceived. Hines Ward, who is 6 foot, is complemented by Santonio Holmes who is 5'10. Ben has an argument, but he has two tight-ends in Heath Miller (6'5) and Matt Spaeth (6'7) who fit the mold for his second request. But the wide outs who are at Ben's standards come at a high asking price.

Roethlisberger was finally hoping to settle on a new deal that can keep him in the "Black & Gold" in the long-

term. On March 3, 2008, Ben and the Steelers agreed to an 8 year extension worth \$102 million. His contract was based on achievements such as a Pro Bowl appearance, a Super Bowl victory, and an impressive regular season record. His contract value was also based on contracts of similar QBs such as Carson Palmer and Tony Romo who also signed lucrative deals in the past two years.

Unfortunately for Big Ben, the Steelers honored only one of his three wishes. To boost the roster of the team, they might have to rely heavily on the draft this year with a weak free agent market in positions the team needs. There are other areas the Steelers need to address such as special team coverage and strengthening the depth at free safety.

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Night Moves
FROM COLLECTION

It's the moment of truth for *The Moment of Truth*

By: Greg Schlosser
Staff Writer

Now debuting on Fox, “The Moment of Truth” is a show that lets contestants win up to \$500,000 if they answer the twenty-one questions they are faced with truthfully. But if they lie, they lose all of the money that they had previously won. Before the contestants go on air, they go into a room where they are hooked up with a lie detector and are asked 50 questions that might end up on the real show. For example, a question that’s worth a low amount of money might be, “Have you ever scratched a car, and not told the owner?” or “Have you ever had a man crush on someone?”

But as the contestants move on, questions get more uncomfortable, such as, “If you could, would you cheat on your wife?” or “Have you gambled away one of you kids’ college funds?” As the contestants move forward, they have the opportunity to either take the money they have before the question is asked, or

move on to the next question for higher money amounts.

The problem is that some of these questions can ruin relationships. Lauren Clari, a recent contestant on the show, revealed that she had been cheating on her husband,

Frank (www.foxnews.com). The two believe that they will probably not get back together.

“We’re kind of up in the air right now - I want to [get back together], but I don’t think he does,” Lauren Cleri had said about the situation (www.foxnews.com).

Besides that, the show is also a bit confusing. Some head-scratching questions that pop up are, why would any person want to take the money and leave? If they do, then the audience automatically knows the answer to the question. Another confusing moment is how do they know if the person is lying or not? If they tell the truth to the polygraph, why would they lie on the show?

The Moment of Truth has the base to be a good show, but it has some holes in its plot that keep it from being a top tier game show.

Heath Ledger stars in new *Batman* movie

By: Alivia Kandabarow
Photography Editor

Despite Heath Ledger’s unfortunate and timely death, Warner Bros. and director Christopher Nolan of the next Batman movie: The Dark Knight, completed all the shots he needed of Leger playing The Joker. Ledger’s performance is highly anticipated by his mourning fans not only because of their estrangement from the twenty eight year old Australian, but for Ledger’s genius performance. Ledger himself, in a post-filming interview, states that he “knew how to play the Joker five seconds after” he was asked (telegraph.co.uk.).

But, how much was Heath “pretending” to play the role of The Joker? The Heath Ledger after “Ten Things I hate About You,” “Brokeback Mountain,” and “I’m Not There,” always bounced back to his playful, room-lighting self whether he was pretending to be Bob Dylan or a forlorn, homosexual cowboy. Friends, family and the media began to see a dynamic change in Ledger’s behavior during the filming of The Dark Knight (foxnews.com).

“He didn’t look so well,” said a close of Ledger, who had been in solid contact with Ledger in recent months and spoke to him

just two days before he died, “He was exhausted and just kept complaining and complaining that he couldn’t sleep” (foxnews.com).

“He said that ever since filming *Batman*, he was having massive sleeping issues. He became so into that role that it really messed with his head, on top of what he had to go through in terms of the paparazzi and missing [his daughter] Matilda. He just kept saying that nothing he tried helped him sleep and it was stressing him out like crazy. But I really feel like it was Batman that tipped him over the edge” (foxnews.com).

Ledger’s death was directly linked, after a biopsy by L.A. medical examiner, to an accidental overdose of painkillers, sleeping pills and anti-depressants. More and more evidence is uncovering that Ledger’s inability to keep his work as a psychotic bank robber and his personal life separate is what drove him to begin taking subscription sleep aids. Director, Christopher Nolan worried about Ledger before his death: Ledger would show up on set on his off nights and when he wasn’t supposed to be there (MSNBC.com). Struggling through the death of their supporting star, Warner Bros. plans to release the movie in July of 2008.

Winehouse dominates Grammy Awards despite a Best Album of the Year surprise

By: Kelsey Short
Editor-in-Chief

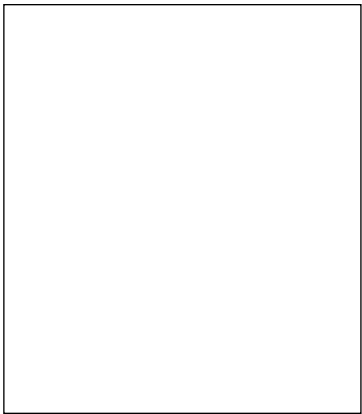
British soul vocalist Amy Winehouse stole the limelight at the Grammys on Sunday, February 10, 2008, receiving five awards, including three in the top four Grammy categories. According to Newsday, Winehouse has been in the news lately for her run-ins with the law and short stints in drug rehab and only left a rehab facility on Friday, February 8, to prepare for her Grammy performance in London via satellite.

Skeptics of Winehouse were disappointed that someone could be dealing with so many drug problems but still be nominated for so many awards. Music legend Natalie Cole agrees, “I think it sends the wrong message, that even in the midst of her stupor of drugs she can get nominated for all these awards” (www.nytimes.com).

Other artists supported Winehouse, including Chaka Khan who complemented the way Winehouse has held her head high despite her difficult battle with drugs: “She’s walking her walk. We all have a walk in life, we have hard and difficult times and going through that chaos often leads to clarity.” Khan continued, “We have to have that room and that space, that privacy time, to be able to walk your walk, make your mis-

takes and come out of it. It will make you stronger” (www.chicagotribune.com).

Winehouse’s big wins were not the only highlight of the Grammys. Kanye West won four awards and performed a literally glowing version of “Stronger.” He then delivered a



moving tribute to his mother who died after undergoing plastic surgery last year.

The audience could see the name “Mama” buzzed into West’s haircut as he received his award for Best Rap Album and spoke to his mother, “I know you’re really proud of me right now and I know you want me to be the No. 1 artist in the world and Mama. All I’m going to do is keep making you proud. We run this” (Associated Press).

The only major Grammy upset was Jazz sensation Herbie

Hancock’s Album of the Year win for “River: The Joni Letters” that surprised many because fans expected Amy Winhouse to take home that trophy as well (www.newsday.com). According to The Associated Press, Hancock said as he accepted his Album of the Year Award, “It’s been 43 years since the first and only time that a jazz artist got the album of the year award [...] I’d like to thank the academy for courageously breaking the mold this time.”

This year’s Grammy show celebrated its 50th anniversary with featured performances by veteran and new artist pairs, including a film of Frank Sinatra and Alicia Keys, Tina Turner and Beyonce, and Keely Smith and Kid Rock. The show also paid tribute to “the Beatles, Luciano Pavarotti, and to gospel and rock and roll” (www.newsday.com).

Former American Idol Winner Carrie Underwood won two awards for the Best Female Country Vocal Performance. Bruce Springsteen also took home three awards. The White Stripes, Justin Timberlake, and Mary J. Blige all won two Grammy awards each. The Foo Fighters, Herbie Hancock, and Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama for Best Spoken-Word Album each won an award (Associated Press).

The Tudors shines with glamour and drama

By: Brigid McCabe
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Showtime show *The Tudors* first season beautifully glamorized the historic political and romantic tale of King Henry the Eighth of England, and the second season, premiering at the end of March, looks just as promising.

The show has been nominated for two Golden Globes and has won seven awards at the Irish Film and Television awards. While not the most historically accurate, *The Tudors* still gives a glimpse of the political scandal, adultery, and papal corruption that really existed in the imperial kingdoms during the 1500’s. The show centers around Jonathan Rhys Meyers, who plays King Henry the Eighth,

a scarily powerful and seductive force who will stop at nothing to divorce the devoted and pious Queen Katherine of Aragon, played by Maria Doyle Kennedy, because she cannot bear him a son. King Henry meanwhile courts the beautiful, intelligent, and mysterious Anne Boleyn, portrayed by Natalie Dormer, who refuses to become just another mistress.

In one of the other major subplots, the King’s chief advisor Cardinal Wolsey, played by actor Sam Neill, struggles to keep favor with the King by granting him his divorce and keep footing in the corrupt Church of England. The Boleyn family, gaining power and recognition through the King’s love affair with Anne, plots against Wolsey to denounce him and

become the King’s right hand men. Furthermore, the subplots involving the plague, the broken alliances, and the church’s questionable practices make *The Tudors* an extremely interesting, scandal-filled show.

Because so many shows and films have focused on the Tudor family, the plotline may be familiar. However, the filming, music, costumes, and general presentation make up for the recycled storyline, which seems fresh and new. Also, the show is TV-NR, which means that it has not been rated; however, some scenes qualify as R-rated.

The season two premier begins on March 30th, 2008, and one should rent and watch season one before diving into the glitz and scandal of *The Tudors*.

The Eye receives mixed reviews

By: Marni Schreiber
Features Editor

The Eye, featuring Jessica Alba hit theaters February 1, 2008. The plot of the movie was based on the Japanese film Jian Gui. The horror movie did not scare many, but Jessica Alba’s performance impressed critics.

Alba plays Sydney Wells, a blind, professional violinist. To get her vision back, Sydney undergoes an eye surgery with the help of an eye donor. At first her new vision brings happiness to her life, but eventually, Sydney starts to see things with her new eyes that are not so normal.

Sydney believes that her new eyes are making her see horrible things no one else can see. Her family and friends begin to worry that she might be losing her sanity, and the gift of her sight quick-

ly turned into a living nightmare.

Critics had varying reviews for this horror movie. Many critics just thought it was a mediocre horror movie that does not impress the audience. According to Alex Markerson of E! Reviews, “So, there’s nothing in *The Eye* that’s scary enough to warrant closing your eyes. Sadly, there’s nothing exciting enough to keep them open, either” (www.eonline.com).

Critics complain that *The Eye* is just another remake of an Asian movie, yet not done with the same flair as the original. Leah Greenblatt of Entertainment Weekly says, “*The Eye*, yet another dull Hollywood remake of an Asian thriller... It’s as if, on the umpteenth Asian-horror Xerox, the ink has run dry” (www.ew.com).

Some critics on the other hand,

give Jessica Alba props for her performance in the movie. According to Geoff Berkshire of the Chicago Tribune reports, “Not as bad as you might expect... Alba makes for a solid B-horror movie heroine in a role that plays to her strengths” (http://chicago.metromix.com).

When *The Eye* reached theaters in early February, it did fair in the box office. In its opening weekend, the movie grossed \$12,425,776 in 2,436 theaters. The total box office gross has reached over \$27,428,086 worldwide in 2,470 theaters (www.boxofficemojo.com).

The Eye may not have the best acting or the best plot line, but it is still entertaining to watch. A recommendation would be to wait until the movie comes to dvd or goes to a dollar theater to see it.

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