

# The Visor

Bishop O'Connell High School

Volume 51 Issue 6



## Service Project Success

Taylor Brogan  
Editor-In-Chief

With last year's introduction of the school-wide service project requirement, there were many reluctant sighs and begrudging groans. The requirement meant that students would not be able to advance to the next grade without completing a project. Scary, right?

The projects also required that students turn in service logs and proposals and, well... a lot of paper work. And frankly, it's been difficult to keep track of all of it. However, to say that the projects have been a waste of time or paper would be a terrible mistake.

Many of these service projects have been incredibly successful. It's true—the service project requirement has inspired genius in many O'Connell students. Case in point: if you have used any of the multitudinous recycling bins that have been placed around the cafeteria, or even seen them, than you have witnessed the incredible power of the service projects. Juniors Jeremy Azurin, Alyssa McGowan, Ian McGowan, and Chloe

Moore made recycling at O'Connell possible last year when they worked together on their service project.

"I'm very happy I got to help inform people about the importance of recycling. The school has definitely made an improvement, and I see the recycling bins in the cafeteria filled to the top with water bottles," said Azurin about the project's success.

Junior Joanna Harkins also found success with her service project. She got the chance to tutor a boy from Korea about Catholicism.

"At first I wasn't sure if I would be able to teach him everything he needed to know, but in the end the experience ended up being really rewarding," she said. Now she is going to be his confirmation sponsor.

Junior Devon Spencer's project is a good example of how the projects can be both beneficial to the community and fun.

"Working at the Carpenter Shelter cook-off was not only a good cause, but also fun. There was live

music and delicious food!" she said of the event she attended.

These are just a few examples of all the great service projects that O'Connell students have completed so far. This year many seniors volunteered on their days off school to work the student retreats, giving up the luxury of sleep in order to inspire and guide the underclassmen. Many students have attended work camps through their parishes, building housing in developing areas and having a great time doing it.

There are many innovative and exciting ways that students can help out in their communities. I just started tutoring a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader who is having difficulties in English, and already the reward has been great. So, as this year comes to an end, and as next year's service project approaches, just remember that service is not a boring waste of time. With a little imagination and a grasp on your own talents and strengths, who knows what you can do?

## Prom Heralds the End for '09

Jamitress Bowden  
Staff Writer

Like many seniors across the nation, the seniors here at Bishop O'Connell looked forward to concluding the year with an annual rite of passage: Prom. Prom of 2009 took place on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2009 on the Odyssey, just as it has for many years. The boat left the dock at 8 o'clock p.m. and set sail until midnight. The seniors (and a select few from other grades and schools) enjoyed dinner and two dance floors for the night.

Maggie Luning said "Prom was a lot of fun; and I really liked my group. With the perfect atmosphere,

great music, and Chad Simms as the perfect date, it was hard not to start dancing once we got there."

Many seniors went as friends this year, which shows how close this group is. Even though prom is generally a perfect atmosphere for couples, with the deck, the perfect weather and some secluded areas for private conversation, Rowena Medina went with her best friend and said that she thoroughly enjoyed it.

Students have all day to get excited about prom, because seniors don't have school. While the rest of us

struggle from class to class the seniors spend the day getting prepared for their night of fine food, dancing, photo ops, limos and everything else that goes along with the big night.

But with that excitement is a sense of sadness; because it is their final high school dance. Their is a melancholy aspect to this last evening with special friends with whom each senior has spent the last four years of life, the same people that were seen everyday, who helped create countless memories, never to be forgotten. It is with a touch of sadness that each senior realizes

2  
days until  
Seniors Graduate

7  
days until  
Underclass Exams

13  
days until  
the close of school

that the year is at an end and finals are around the corner. The night provides one final opportunity for creating a few more special memories.

Prom is also a reminder to the rest of the school. Brothers and sisters will soon be leaving for college. The lives of younger siblings will also be forever changed.

## New 2009-2010 SCA Executives Elected

Kathleen Bettencourt  
Staff Writer

The school year is slowly coming to a close. Along with exams, graduation, and prom comes a new SCA Executive Board for the 2009-2010 school year. All candidates running for the offices of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer presented their speeches to the freshmen, sophomore,

and junior classes on Thursday April 30<sup>th</sup>.

After a close race, the ballots were all counted and the results of the election were released. The new Bishop O'Connell Executive Board for the 2009-2010 school year is: Grace Hollis (President), Michael Kerr (Vice President), Kayla Ferrari (Secretary),

and Alex Harrington (Treasurer). "I'm very excited for next year, but I'm sad to see this year's executive board go because we're all really good friends," said newly elected President, Grace Hollis.

The outgoing Executive Board seems to have mixed feelings about leaving and handing over the power to a new group of students. This year all SCA-run events were extremely successful, and all the board members committed a lot of work and time to the school. When asked if they had any advice for the new board they said, "Good luck next year. Try to measure up to us—we know it'll be hard."

Moderators Mr. Buckreis and Mr. Dueterhaus weighed in on the new Executive Board, saying "We hope that next year's board will be as least as suc-

cessful as this year's."

This year's board accomplished a lot and they did a fabulous job on Superdance and many other school events.

The new Executive Board is extremely excited for the upcoming school year, and has a lot of fun ideas. They will get to work right away when they meet this month with Mr. Buckreis and Mr. Dueterhaus to set goals and lay some plans for the next school year.

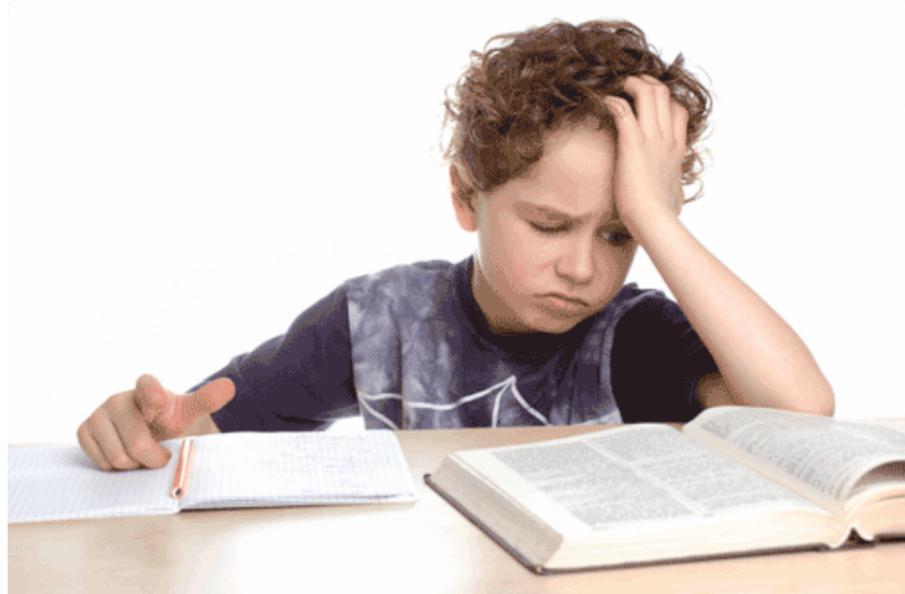
These four students have been entrusted with the countless responsibilities of being head of the SCA. SCA is involved in all the inner workings of the school; they have a hand in each event that is planned, and they help keep the school spirit alive.

### What's Inside:

What do Knights and Ducks have in common?  
Find out on page 3.

Learn about Daniel Tillson's Guinness Record-worthy Feats, also on page 3.

# So Close, Yet...



Most people probably don't want to hear this at this point in the year, with summer so close and all, but here it is: you have to work hard until the very end of the year! Yes, summer may be a mere few weeks away but it's these last few weeks of school that are vital if you want to keep up your grades. While everyone else has a serious case of spring fever this is the perfect opportunity to get ahead. Teachers know how hard it is, they'll quickly recognize anyone who's putting in extra effort.

That one last extra credit project or that last quiz of the year can make the difference between an "A" and a "B". By

now whatever enthusiasm that fueled most students through the first three quarters is running low. Don't give up yet! This is especially applicable to juniors. As you juniors have probably heard a million times by now, junior year is the most important year of high school. It is vital to keep your grades strong the whole year for college; they won't care if you suddenly drop a letter grade because you were thinking about flip-flops, beach balls, boys or girls. Between the SAT, sports, clubs, the college search beginning, and trying to remain sane with all of the work we're given, this is the hardest you will ever be working in school; hold on you're almost there!

## Seniors Bid Final Farewell with Senior Pranks

Walking through the halls on May 18th, it was clear this day was not a normal school day. Seniors strolled through the halls in uniform shirts plastered with multi-colored messages: "I'll miss you"... "Keep in touch!"

Senior pranks also accompanied their last regular day at O'Connell, many attempting to top those from previous years. This year, as in previous ones, it was a topic of debate as to what the pranks would be. There was speculation that the prank would be a tree planted on the football field, or maybe some event on the roof; but no one really knew what the pranks would be. The winners this year are:

The history hallway floor was covered in rubber bands. They were scattered all over the hallway because they could not be swept up; rather each rubber band had to

be picked up. By the end of the day, seniors and underclassmen were walking around with rubber bands on their wrists as teachers sought to retrieve each band, one at a time.

The staircases in various parts of the buildings were smeared with Vaseline. A student would begin to ascend the stair only to discover the handrail plastered in this sticky jelly. Junior cars were also rumored to be treated with the Vaseline, under the door handles where again the unwary victim was already caught when the trick was realized.

Maybe the best prank of the day was the cell phone alarms going off in unison. All the seniors set their phone alarms to 10:20 and then set their phones on high volume, so that all the phones would erupt in a massive noise when the alarms went off simultaneously. Nearby teachers were not happy about the disruption to their class-

One mistake, many students make at the end of the year is thinking that they don't need to study for finals. Yes, you are tired mentally and physically, but grab some Starbucks and hit the books! Remember that finals can have a big affect on your final grade. It doesn't have to be completely mundane, make a study group with a bunch of friends. You can get more done that way, divide and conquer.

Summertime will feel so much sweeter when you have the satisfaction of knowing you worked your hardest the whole year. Hard work never goes unrewarded. This, I know, has proved to be true time and time again. If you're thinking that one last grade or last few homework assignments won't make a difference, you're wrong. In fact, if teachers see you really trying to make up those last few points, they will probably give you the benefit of the doubt.

Senioritis is a completely different issue. By this time, most seniors know where they're going next year. With graduation so close slacking off is completely understandable. This isn't an excuse to stop caring; it's just that grades are not as pressing a matter for seniors as they are for underclassmen.

So, when the final bell rings on the last day of school, we will all be free and highly deserving of a good vacation. No matter how tired or discouraged you feel, keep working a little bit longer; you're almost there!

rooms and the administration was forced to open lockers and confiscate the phones. The point of the prank, however, was that the phones were in lockers. As stated in the handbook, the malefactors believed they were within the letter of the rules.

The first attempted prank involved the decision of the seniors to report to class with the aid of their scooters or razors. However, teachers and administrators were quick to confiscate them before this prank had a chance to develop.

Finally, always a classic, senior blocks provided their standard obstruction to traffic flow as many underclassman struggled to report to class on time. With its narrow halls, the senior blocks are an old and storied tradition of the final day. This year's class has set the bar pretty high for the class of 2010.

**The Visor**  
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## Confiscating School Sweatshirts: Theft or Charity?



For the past month, the O'Connell faculty has been cracking down on sweatshirts. The rule has been that students may only wear their class sweatshirt if they are cold. Previously enforced with after-school detentions, on May 13, an announcement was made that anyone who wore a sweatshirt other than his/her O'Connell class sweatshirt would have the sweatshirt confiscated and given to charity. Although it is understandable that faculty members feel that a clear line must be drawn, some believe this kind of permanent confiscation may be taking a step too far.

Most people can understand why this new punishment was implemented. Too many students have not been responding to the previous laxity in enforcement as an opportunity to "press the envelope." The resultant frustration on the part of the faculty and administration resulted in the

crackdown. The situation was bordering on insubordination and lack of respect. Given the situation, further punishment was a logical response. But many students feel there are better ways of dealing with the situation than the permanent confiscation of personal belongings.

Bishop O'Connell is a Catholic school that enforces Catholic values. Although charity is an important component of Christian teaching, confiscation bordering on theft is wrong. When teachers confiscate cell phones and iPods, they are returned after the student's parents have paid the obligatory fee. They are not taken away forever. Although some may argue that cell phones and iPods are too expensive to permanently confiscate, some coats and sweatshirts are also very expensive. Many students oppose the

confiscation of cell phones and iPods because they feel it is akin to theft. In some ways it is; and the same concept should apply to sweatshirts and other outerwear.

Since all personal items are private property, it would make more sense for the same punishments to accompany the sweatshirts as now accompany iPods and phones. Those who violate the rules and wear sweatshirts that are not permitted should be punished. But the items could be returned after paying a fee (and the fee could be given to charity), with a designated term of punishment, even the end of the year for flagrant violations. Thus, Bishop O'Connell would be able to maintain its uniform rules and address the issue of student insolence, while still maintaining its Catholic values.

\*Editor's Note: The sweatshirts will be ultimately returned to their owners.

# Mr. Feeney: You Will Be Missed

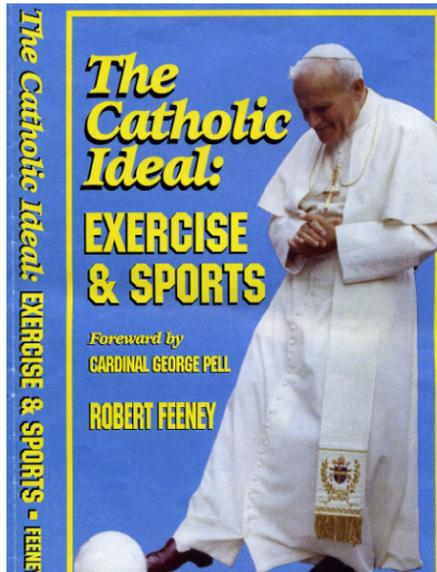
Grace Hollis  
Staff Writer

"He taught me that the rosary is the greatest and only weapon you need. We sign and pray the rosary and watch *Miracle* in class.

"Mr. Feeney is the best and I'm sad he's leaving," commented Junior Colin Pin on Mr. Feeney's last year at O'Connell.

After 15 years of teaching, Mr. Feeney has decided to look after his health and take a rest. He is also taking next year off to promote his newest book, *The Rosary: The John Paul II Method*.

"I have written several books," commented Feeney. "One is a best-seller in the United States and Australia, *The Catholic Ideal: Exercise and Sports*. Another is called *A Catholic Perspective of Sports and Exercise*. The reason for writing them is my devotion to the rosary. Mary saved my life in Vietnam



One of Mr. Feeney's Best-Sellers.

from almost bleeding to death when I was wounded. It was through praying the Rosary that she helped me." Senior Jeff Petroski said that Mr. Feeney made the rosary more meaningful than anyone else had. When many O'Connell students were asked about Mr. Feeney, almost all of them had the same response as Jeff.

Junior Pat Perez said, "No one has led me more spiritually than Mr. Feeney. He is definitely a wise man."

Mr. Feeney said his favorite memory at O'Connell was taking one of his classes to Camp Hemlock in Fairfax and seeing them outside the classroom.

"My great joy everyday was the opportunity to teach the faith about Jesus and Mary through the rosary. I'm going to miss the kids most- the twinkle in their eyes, their enthusiasm, their idealism, and their seeking of the truth." Mr. Feeney will surely be missed by the whole community next year!



## When You Can Call Dead Day a Success

Maggie Goetzman  
Staff Writer

On Tuesday May 5<sup>th</sup>, the SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) club had their annual "Dead Day," in which members of the club spend lunch periods pulling kids out of class and painting their faces white to represent the number of people who are killed by drunk driving, drug abuse, and other accidents each year.

The SADD club, strolling the halls all day in bright pink t-shirts, spent periods 4-7 going into classrooms and asking for volunteers to come into the cafeteria to have their faces painted white, a sign put around their necks, and then spending the rest of the period sitting quietly, without participating in any class activities. Their signs would say things like "I was killed today by a drunk driver" or "I died today from overdose." Each "dead" student would wear the white paint of a cadaver for the rest of the day.

In addition to being pulled out of your least favorite class and enjoying a free period with free pizza, the actual day had another good effect on the students, showing them just how much one stupid decision can affect your entire life.

"I feel like Dead Day is fun, not only because you get to miss one class, but it teaches kids what can really happen if you choose to drive under the influence," stated junior Rachel Potts. It gives us a chance to imagine what it's like to have an empty seat in a class, only in a real life situation, they won't be returning the next day.

# Politics and Record Books at 18



Natalie Coccozza  
Staff Writer

Bishop O'Connell's very own Daniel Tillson, an 18 year old senior, has already made greater leaps in the business world than some adults ever do. His hard work and determination have led him to attain significant success in politics. All of his accomplishments as a young Republican campaigner just might have won him the reward of his name in the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

Tillson had always been slightly interested in politics but never considered getting seriously involved until he was in-

spired by his 8th grade American history teacher, Brian Holoubek. He started with simple volunteer projects and worked his way up to field director, consultant, chief strategist, and finally, campaign manager.

Tillson states, "By the time I became campaign manager, I had developed political relationships with politicians and Congressmen around the US, with my specialty being the United States House of Representatives."

Tillson's journey into the Book of World Records began at age 15, when he became the official campaign manager for Mark Ellmore. Tillson commented, "A lot of people would say, 'Why would someone choose a 15 year old to run a national campaign of such great importance?' Because of this, I had to prove myself by work-

ing everyday to build connections and to run a successful campaign. Reflecting on it, it really took a toll on my body, physically and mentally, but I proved myself worthy of competing with those already on a national level and met my goals."

Ellmore went on to win the primary with a small budget of \$ 15,000 competing against a large scale campaign of \$ 64, 000. Ultimately, his strategy prevailed as he and his staff won by a 12% margin. Daniel Tillson did everything from talking to the media, devising strategy, making speeches, and managing the staff.

After this long journey, Daniel has made it past the first round of research and will know in 4 weeks time if he has officially made it into the book as the youngest federal campaign manager in the United States, specializing in the US Congress. Tillson stated, "I think a World Record plaque would be a really cool thing to hang in my dorm room".

Tillson was most recently the chief strategist for Chuck Smith, the most prominent Republican African American in the South running for United States Congress. Tillson now focuses on teaching new candidates how to run for Congress. "I especially like new candidates because they come in with new views, honest enthusiasm, and respect for their constituents," explained the ambitious young man.

Daniel Tillson reflected on the whole experience saying, "After reflecting on everything I have been through, I feel as though my accomplishments exhibit the reality of the American Dream."

## O'Connell 's Very Own Mighty Ducks Discovered in Courtyard

Tyler Bergeron  
Staff Writer

O'Connell is proud to announce a new addition to DJO's mascots: a mother Mallard duck and her ten ducklings. Some had seen the ducks briefly during lunch periods on Friday the 8<sup>th</sup>, but that was only the end of the bird's story.

The newest residents of O'Connell's campus were first discovered during Easter break. Mr. Synder had been taking his dogs, Duke and Aerial, for their walk through the school yards, letting them

roam free in the courtyard. When he gave them time to stretch their legs Mr. Synder called for them to return but they did not come. Surprised to see what had caused his dog's disobedience he went over to them. They had their heads in the bushes in the courtyard. When he tried to pull the dogs back from the shrubs they relentlessly returned to the bushy vegetation. Curious to see what had gotten hold of their attention, he parted the shrubs to unveil a Mallard hen incubating her eggs in a nest.

After this discovery Mr. Synder, Coach Hayes and other faculty members

relied on a bird expert, our very own Mr. Nolan Britt. From his advanced knowledge of the study of birds, he gave his expertise: Headvisednotdisturbingthenestinghabitat, adding it was best to just leave the mother alone. The cafeteria monitors were told to keep an eye on that part of the courtyard for the next two weeks, just to keep the peace.

Sometime between Thursday night and Friday morning the ducklings came into the world and their first sights were of their mother in O'Connell's school courtyard. They then began to take their first steps as they followed their mother around. A mother duck hen's first instinct



The Duck mother leading its chicks.

when her babies hatch is to lead them into the nearest body of water. This mother attempted to leave but every time they would venture to water, students changing classes would disturb their journey.

The last sighting of the duck family occurred near the back of the school by the basketball court at around 5:00 in the afternoon on Friday. They were most likely headed to a creek in Tuckahoe Park.

The latest additions to the DJO family departed abruptly: "Easy come, easy go." But the spirit of the duck family will live on forever in the vast and miraculous history of Bishop Denis J. O'Connell.

# Lacrosse Knights Gain Talent and Experience

Mark Azar  
Staff Writer

It wouldn't be fair to judge the LAX Knights' skill level by simply glancing at their record. Although they finished with a slightly disappointing record of 5-14, fans all agree that they are way better than their record. After a disappointing loss in the First Round of the WCAC Playoffs at the hands of St. Mary's Ryken, the Knights have a long off-season ahead of them to get their game on the right track as they get ready for next season.

Led by Head Coach Brian Rosenberger, this year's squad was also inspired by strong Senior class leadership provided by Senior Captains Mitch Brown, James Stapor, Keegan Weaver, and Justin Nouhra. Also on the team are Seniors Riordan Nolan, Justin Lawrence, Matthew Coit, Jon DeBernardo, Jeremy Paul, Chris O'Donnell; Juniors Brian Heise, Doug Timms, Ray Donahue, Julian Bonds, Alejandro Cardenas, Julian Pritcher, Chris Madden, Doug Shotwell, Tommy Griffin, Brian Olhausen, Riley North, Michael O'Malley; Sophomore Scott Rapuano; and Freshmen Sean Olhaver, and Kevin O'Malley.

The Knights' game against Ryken this past Monday was not an easy one, and early on it seemed like the Knights would be able to pull off the upset as they headed into the second quarter leading 3-1. Unfortunately, time and time again it has been proven that achieving victory requires constant hard work and hustle



Lacrosse Dominating in Action

for all four quarters. The game ended with Ryken pulling out a 17-7 come from behind victory.

This particular season has been tough on the team as many newcomers confronted the major commitment required by Varsity Lacrosse for the first time. Their schedule included practice six times a week along with one or two games, sometimes resulting in juggling a demanding academic schedule that competed with their Lacrosse commitment, sometimes narrowly resisting the resultant fatigue. Specifically, the team faced a stretch of 5 games in 7 days where they went 2-3 during the final

week of the season.

When asked about the highlight of the season, defenseman Justin Nouhra said, "When we won our first game against Woodberry Forest, 13-6, it was awesome." The team has had its own share of exciting moments this season, with their victories coming at the expense of Carroll, McNamara, Woodberry Forest, Annandale, and Ireton.

Another remarkable game to look back on this season is the memorable PVI game. Although they lost, which was disappointing, this rivalry was taken

to another level as the physicality of this game was intense. Each team wanted the win, and the game went right down to the wire with a final score of 12-11.

The team was disappointed to end their season early, but the players were also optimistically looking forward to next season to prove themselves and improve their reputation.

Nouhra said, "We learned a lot about ourselves and our competition. We got a lot better and improvement was shown. Hopefully these things will translate into more victories next year."

Many times along the season, the Knights played well for 3 quarters, but lost some of their edge during the final period.

Julian Bonds said, "We always have to come to play, and shouldn't take anyone for granted."

"We play scrappy and we never give up" is one of the many mantras the team uses to describe itself and inspire it to victory.

Knights Lacrosse had its ups and downs throughout the season but one thing that was certain was that the team steadily improved. This keeps their loyal following fans excited about next season, as the Knights hope to make a run for the WCAC Championship, perhaps with the help of some new prospects and the great experience the players gained this season. Offseason training will prove to be important as the team looks forward to the challenges of next season.

## Seniors Lead Varsity Baseball to Success

Haley Milon  
Staff Writer

A 14-9 baseball season that started out rocky ended up having many accomplishments, on behalf of both individuals and the team. Significant achievements included beating PVI 6-5 and beating Dematha, the 2008 WCAC champions, twice. The PVI rivalry drove the team's motivation to win even further.

"The intensity and passion that come along with those games is great. There's nothing like it around," said senior captain Sean Cabrera.

Cabrera, the ace pitcher, was one of the 12 seniors on the squad who were pivotal contributors to the Knights' success. Fellow Captains Colin Milon and Zack Tessier experienced setbacks due to injuries over the course of the season, although both of them came through with phenomenal stats overall.

"Getting Zack back in the middle of the season helped to jump-start our eight game win streak; he's not only a huge strength in the line up and a solid infielder, but he's been a leader for the younger guys," Milon said.

Tessier and Cabrera were not the only seniors who played well this season. Colin Milon was not only named to WCAC's First Team, but he was awarded WCAC Player of the Year. He received the Arlington Diocese student-athlete of

the year for baseball. He plans to play for Johns Hopkins University next year.

"I'm glad I got to play with these guys this season. I have a lot of memories with my teammates and coaches from the last three years, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to play in one of the best conferences in the country," Milon said.

Tessier will also play in the future for Division I High Point University. Zach has made massive contributions over the years, and has earned a reputation for being the Knights' power hitter.

"My time playing for O'Connell has been really memorable, but I'm definitely looking forward to moving up to the next level," said Tessier.

Seniors Ryan and Royce Nichols, third-year veterans, will continue their careers at the University of South Carolina at Aiken next year.

"I've really enjoyed coaching these guys the last few years. They're good ballplayers and good leaders. They'll be missed, but I'm glad I could work with them over the years," said head coach Rick Hart.

Hart has a lot of talent to look forward to in seasons to come. Four underclassmen started this year. Junior Beau Fitzpatrick and sophomores Nick Morbito, James Essex, and Micheal Katz have been extremely effective this season.



## 6 in a Row: Softball Wins WCAC Championship

Maggie Luning  
Staff Writer

When head coach Tommy Orndorff was asked how the WCAC championship game felt, he replied with two words: "Tremendous Intensity." The Bishop O'Connell girl's varsity softball team has done it again, winning their sixth straight WCAC title. The championship game was played against St. Mary's Ryken, with each team having only two hits, the game was pitcher-dominated. The O'Connell pitcher, sophomore Jilly Falle, pulled through as the lady knights won 1-0. It is the thirteenth league title that the team has won since 1994.

Tommy Orndorff has been the head coach of the softball team for twenty-four years, and plans on continuing. Coach Orndorff said he feels confident about the upcoming state tournament games. The semi-finals are on May 14<sup>th</sup>, against Liberty

Christian Academy. If successful, the Lady Knights will move on to the finals on May 15<sup>th</sup>. This could possibly be the softball team's seventh straight state championship. Asked about his captains, the head coach took pride in the team having "leadership from all around." Top players include freshman Allison Grasmeyer, sophomore Jessica Burke, junior Sarah Eidt, and the Giaquinto sisters, junior Maddie and sophomore Sophie.

There are three seniors leaving the team this year including Tori Portell, Kathleen Finley, and Sarah Page. But talent comes from all members of the team, with a starting line-up that includes two freshmen, three juniors, three sophomores, and one senior. With such a young line up, Coach Orndorff is understandably optimistic about next year, expecting that team to be, "even stronger."

## Swine Flu Sweeps the Nation

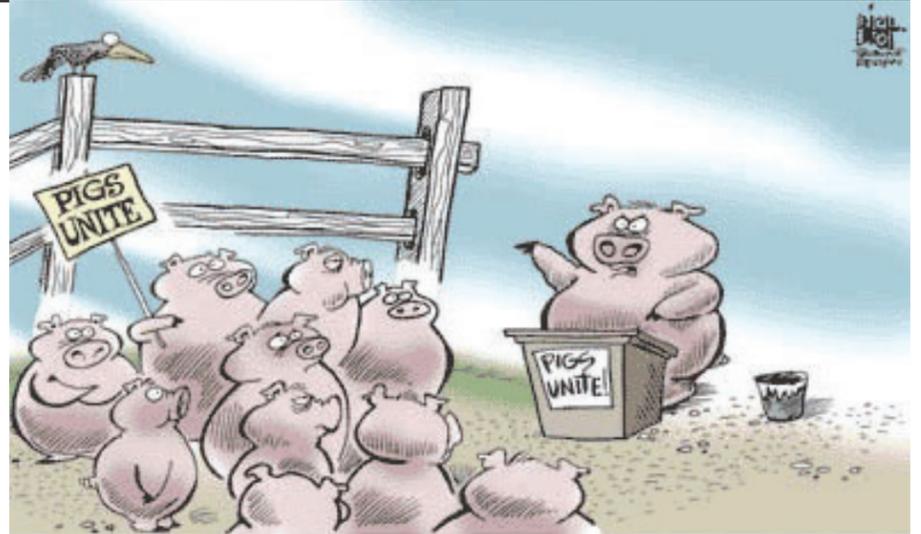
Tyler Bergeron  
Staff Writer

A recent epidemic that has been brought to attention is H1N1 commonly referred to as 'Swine Flu'. This is not the first time this mutation of influenza has been considered a threat. It was first generated to humans from a respiratory disease found in pigs in 1930's. There was also an outbreak in late 1976, resulting in the death of one man, 19-year-old Pvt. David Lewis of Ashley Falls, Mass. This became an issue of national concern and President Ford considered issuing a national inoculation for this unknown strain of influenza, but it was declined. Since then it hasn't been a national issue but it has now risen to the surface as a world wide pandemic. The Center for Disease Control has predicts several more cases, more hospitalizations and more deaths from this outbreak to occur over the upcoming days and weeks.

The H1N1 virus has similar symptoms to regular influenza which include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, chills and fatigue. Some patients have also reported diarrhea and vomiting. In very young children, the warning signs include fast or troubled breathing, a bluish skin tone, a failure to interact with others, and being highly irritable. The worst cause symptoms are respiratory failure. The lethal strains are found in age groups from 25-45.

In Virginia, the Department of Health has confirmed eleven cases of people inflicted with H1N1 flu. Seven of the eleven cases originated from Washington and Lee University. The other four were from the Health District of Chesterfield and Three Rivers. None of these cases involved a hospitalization and all patients have recovered or are recovering well.

There are antiviral medicines you can take to prevent or treat swine flu. There is no vaccine available right now to protect



THE TURKEYS HAVE BIRD FLU. THE COWS HAVE MAD COW DISEASE. I'M TELLING YOU, BOYS... UNLESS WE WANT TO SEE MORE HAM SERVED ON THANKSGIVING, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET OUR OWN DISEASE!

against swine flu. You can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza by:

- Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. You can also use alcohol-based hand cleaners.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.



## Flip Flops: More Flop Than Flip

Sandra Malone  
Staff Writer

Summer is coming up, and one of its simple pleasures is slipping into a comfy pair of flip flops and heading out the door. However, there are several health issues associated with wearing flip flops. Flip flops can lead to sole, ankle, and heel problems.

Experts in a research study at the American College of Sports Medicine in Indianapolis say that casual use of flip flops will not cause damage. However, because of their complete lack of foot support, everyday use of flip flops is not recommended. When people wear flip flops, they often scrunch their toes to keep the shoes on their feet. This motion stretches the plantar fascia, the connective tissue that runs from heel to toe, causing inflammation and pain along the sole, heel spurs, and tired feet in general.

In the study, researchers also found that the volunteers altered the way they walked. Those who were observed were reported to taking be shorter strides and turning their ankles inward to keep the flip-flop from falling off. This, the researchers worried, can cause long-term ankle and hip problems.

Flip flops are especially dangerous for people who have naturally flat feet. Flat footed people should buy shoes with an appropriate amount of arch support, depending on the size of their arch. Flip flops offer absolutely no arch support, in addition to causing a person to contort their foot into unnatural positions. This could cause serious health complications in the future. Although flip flops may be fun now, they will not be fun in thirty years when doctors are replacing thousands of hips and knees of people

who could have prevented their suffering simply by choosing smarter footwear.

There are several alternatives to wearing flip flops. Regular sandals with a strap around the ankle provide more arch support and eliminate the need for people to curl their toes to keep the shoe on. Closed toed shoes are the best to wear whenever possible, although this can be difficult in the summer. Going barefoot is safe for your feet in the sense that it is natural and easy for your feet, although it is inadvisable because of personal hygiene and sharp objects.

So remember this summer that, although flip flops may be comfy, it is not

### Nothing to Leap Over

Maggie Luning  
Staff Writer

There is currently a global crisis that may at first strike some as comical. But the ramifications of it may turn out to be extremely seerrious and significant. Frogs around the world, on every continent, are dying. They are being struck by the Chytridiomycota fungus, also called Chytrid.

Frogs have semi-permeable membranes for breathing and absorbing water, through their skin. The fungus attacks the frog, and grows on its semi-permeable membrane, either suffocating or obstructing the flow of water for the frog, resulting in its death.

Frogs are a critical component in the food chain. They help prevent diseases by eating insects capable of rapidly spreading diseases. They also serve as food for other animals, including birds and snakes. If there is a decline in frog populations, then there are declines

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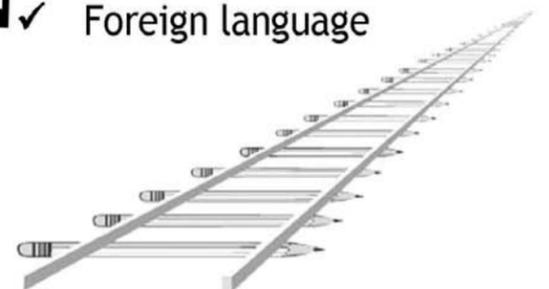
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in other animal populations, and a rise in insect numbers. This could have a huge impact on the global ecosystem.

Several theories have been advanced to explain how Chytrid has so spread so rapidly around the world. One is that hikers pick up traces of the fungus when hiking through the woods and carry it throughout the forest. There is also the theory of global warming supporting

the spread of the fungus, that increasingly warm temperatures are allowing the fungus to thrive and spread.

This is an issue that should be looked out for. Senior Matthew FitzGerald feels strong about this issue, "A world without frogs would be devastating. What are all the elementary science classes going to do?" Google Chytrid for more information.



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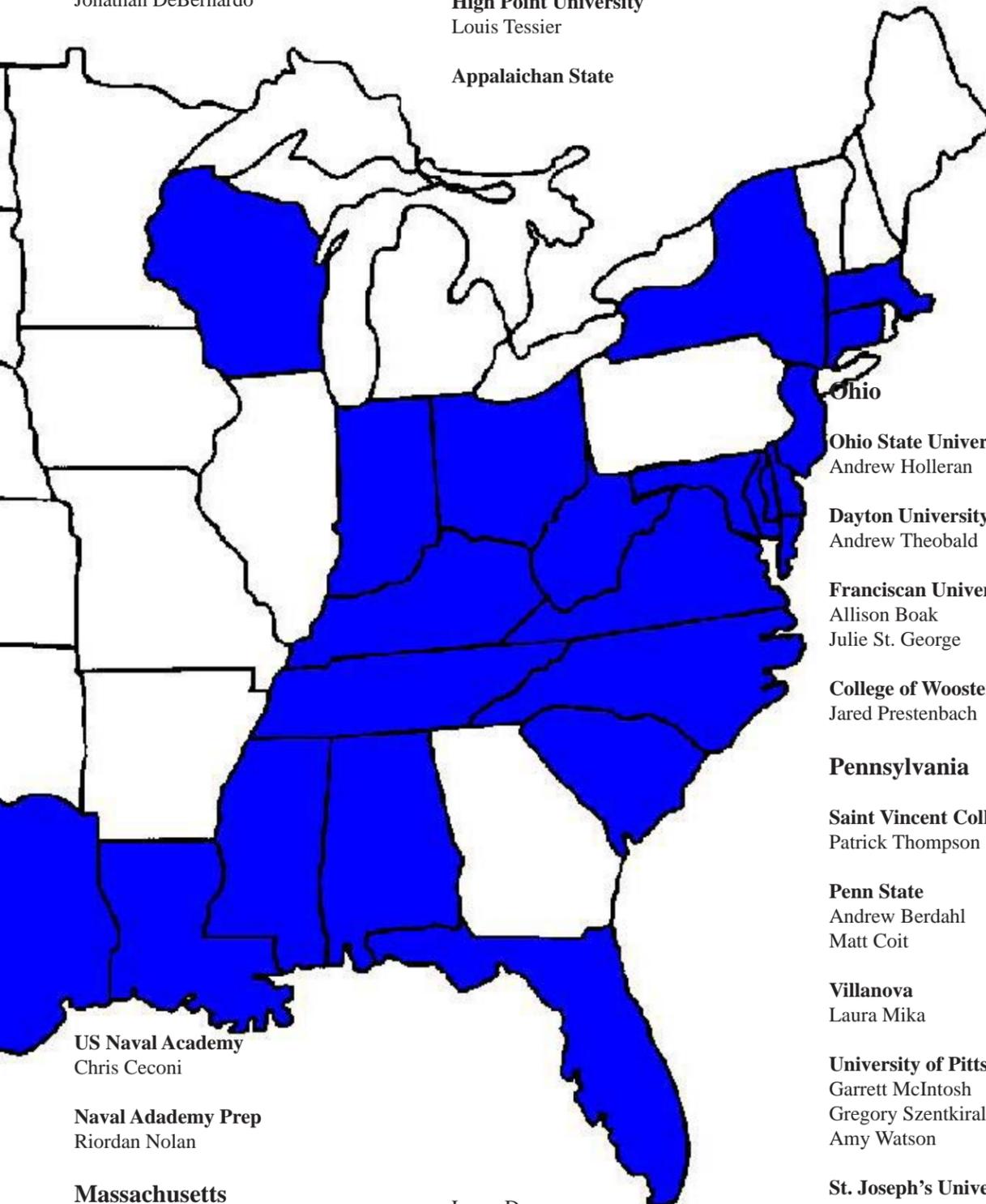
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## Summer Blockbusters

Rachel Potts  
Staff Writer

*Night at the Museum 2: Battle of the Smithsonian*- Based on the hilarious original, Ben Stiller returns as Museum Security Guard, Larry Daley. But this time, he's in DC to save Jedediah and Octavius, who have been accidentally shipped to the Smithsonian Institute Museum of Natural History. He goes through all the same sort of adventures while having to rescue them and return them to New York. Returning are Owen Wilson as Jedediah, Robin Williams as Teddy Roosevelt, and Steven Coogan as Octavius. However there are new cast members, such as Amy Adams as Amelia Earhart. It comes to IMAX and movie theaters on May 22, and is rated PG.

*Year One*- Set in the year 1, Zed and Oh, played by Jack Black and Michael Cera, are extremely lazy hunter-gatherers who are kicked out of their tribe because Zed ate from the forbidden tree. They start their own tribe called the "Muscle tribe of Danger and Excellence" and travel around the ancient world. Along the way, they meet characters from history such as Cain, played by David Cross, and Abel, played by Paul Rudd. Oh tries to get the attention of Eema, a former tribemate who is captured and sold as a slave. They go on the road to save her, disguising themselves as soldiers. While trying to rescue her, their disguise is revealed and they are also enslaved. Throughout, Zed meets Princess Inanna, and tries to impress her. Eema is played by Juno Temple, and Princess Inanna is played by Olivia Wilde. It opens in theaters on June 19, and is rated PG-13.

*Up*- This latest offering from Pixar, involves the story of a cranky 78-year old man named Carl Fredricksen, played by Edward Asner, who wants to fulfill his life-long dream of traveling to South America. He attaches thousands of balloons to his house and sets off. Once in the air, he realizes that he has a stowaway: his eight year old neighbor Russell played by Jordan Nagai. Russell is a Wilderness Scout who was on Fredricksen's porch when the house took off. They go on various adventures together while trying to escape tigers, insects, and other wild animals. Other cast members include John Ratzenberger, Bob Peterson, and Delroy Lindo. It opens on May 29, and is rated PG.

*Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*- following the hit summer '07 movie, the

second Transformers follows Sam Witwicky (Shia LaBeouf) and Mikaela Banes (Meghan Fox) on another journey. When the Decepticon forces return to Earth to take Sam prisoner, he learns about their ancient history. Optimus Prime returns and forms an alliance with armies to help fight in a battle for humankind. Junior Sean Kardaras says, "I'm really psyched about this movie because the first one was awesome and I bet this one will be intense." Optimus Prime is played by Peter Cullen, Hugo Weaving plays Megatron, and Josh Duhamel plays Captain Lennox. The intense sequel hits theaters on June 24, rated PG-13.

*Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*- the much anticipated 6<sup>th</sup> installment of the hugely popular *Harry Potter* series, it begins with Harry starting his 6<sup>th</sup> year at Hogwarts. There is a new teacher: Horace Slughorn, played by Jim Broadbent. Harry finds a book which on the front says, "Property of the Half-Blood Prince," and he learns about Lord Voldemort's dark past. The book has scribbles in the side-margins, which contain exciting and some dangerous new spells. He seeks the guidance of Professor Dumbledore to help him learn more about Voldemort and see if there is any way he can defeat him. He finds that Malfoy, played by Tom Felton, has been acting suspicious lately and Harry believes that he has been sent to do Voldemort's bidding. Harry sets out to find out exactly what he is up to. All the while, Ron has a new girlfriend, Lavender Brown, played by Jessie Cave, and Harry is trying to get the attention of Ginny Weasley, played by Bonnie Wright. Voldemort is rising to power and Harry has to figure out a way to stop him. However, some might not make it out alive. Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, and Emma Watson, all return, as well as Michael Gambon as Dumbledore. See the exciting new chapter of the series on July 15, rated PG.

*The Ugly Truth*- Abby Richter, played by Katherine Heigl, is a romantically-challenged TV producer who is looking for love, but can't seem to find the right guy for her. She is forced to team up with an obnoxious TV personality named Mike Alexander, played by Gerard Butler. He teaches her exactly what makes men tick to help her find Mr. Perfect. However, while spending more time with him, the end result is not exactly how they planned it. Some other cast members include Cheryl Hines, Bree Turner, and Eric Winter. The movie comes to theaters on July 24 and is rated R.

## Pop Revolution: Everyone Wants A Synthesizer

Devon Spencer  
Staff Writer

Metric, a Canadian "indie" band, released their fourth album *Fantasies* on April 7, 2009. This album follows the upbeat and grungy *Live It Out*, which was released in 2005. Metric's older music, *Grow Up and Grow Away* and *Old World Underground*, *Where Are You Now?* depend more on guitar and drums. Although *Grow Up and Blow Away* was composed from 1991-2001, it was not released until after *Live It Out*. *Live It Out* and *Fantasies* demonstrate Metric's progression into a more synthesized-pop era.

Throughout Metric's musical career, lead singer Emily Haines has brought in much of the attention and popularity. Her confident air, determined and prominent lyrics and singing capabilities have allowed her to shine not only in Metric, but also throughout the "indie" music scene. She has also been noted for her work with not only Broken Social Scene, but her solo project, Emily Haines & The Soft Skeleton, as well. Needless to say, Haines is a defining factor of the fabulous band that is Metric.

Back to *Fantasies*; a beautifully melodic, pop/electro beat combination. The first track "Help I'm Alive," will, without a doubt, get stuck in your head for hours on end. The intro has a catchy drum solo, supplemented by Haines' soft rock voice: "I tremble, they're gonna eat me alive/if I stumble, they're gonna eat me alive." Yes, these lyrics may sound a bit morbid and zombie esque, but they are intriguing and meaningful nevertheless. The overall message of the song is a promotion of love and elimination of hate/judgment, but also living without regret. "Sick Muse," "Satellite Mind," and "Twilight Galaxy" all captured a

softer tone, but are poppy and pleasant to listen to, because the emphasis is heavily on the synthesizer. "Gold Gun Girls" is guitar savvy, and rock and roll esque.

The following tune, "Gimme Sympathy," is probably the catchiest of the album, other than "Help I'm Alive." Inevitably truthful lyrics are made make Metric so amazing: "Talk like an open book/Sign me up/Got no time to take a picture/I'll remember someday/All the chances we took/We're so close to something better left unknown/I can feel it in my bones/Gimme Sympathy." If buying the whole album is not in the budget, "Help I'm Alive" and "Gimme Sympathy" are two necessities.

The rest of the album is a nice mix of mellow and upbeat songs. It combines the synthesizer with guitars but also separates them. The coolest combination of the two is clearly captured in "Stadium Love."

In addition to *Grow Up and Blow Away*, *Old World Underground*, *Where Are You Now?*, and *Live It Out*, *Fantasies* is a perfect evolution of sound, but also truthful to Metrics' origins. With Emily Haines as lead singer, they will continue to prosper throughout the music scene.

For a super neat video, check out the "Help I'm Alive" Deco Dawson Short Film on YouTube.com.



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