

# THE BURROW


The Student Newspaper of Hamilton County Senior High School

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January 2008

## Chaos in the cafeteria

 **Brian Harland**  
The Burrow

Recent changes have taken place in the Hamilton County Senior High lunch menu which has caused a ruckus amongst the students. Senior Jordan Hamson said, "I have no clue what's going on. I know it is supposed to be chicken Mondays, but since when is it hamburger Fridays. And what happened to French fries?" Many rumors are circulating with so-called answers to Hamson's questions but the truth lies miles away in our state's capital.

The Federal Wellness Program controls types of meals served at schools with what is called reimbursable meals. In this program the state sets strict guidelines on what can and cannot be served in order for the district to get paid, or reimbursed, for the food that is sold. HCHS principal Mr. Fetcho said, "We must be sure and follow the guidelines that are set for us so we can continue getting the aid we need from the state."

Many people in the student body have spoken of taking action against the dramatic change in their eating choices. The idea of boycotting the school lunch surfaced with more and more students

bringing lunch from home.


Mr. Fetcho said, "Each student has the right to do this, but it is giving the wrong impression. With more students bringing their lunches, it makes it look like the cooks are doing something wrong when it is not at all their fault."

The state and federal food administrators are rapidly becoming more active in the health and well-being of junior high and high school students. Just as the state made junior high healthier with the ban of soda, it is attempting to make the future for each student long and prosperous with more healthy food.

With many things still in the mix about what is to happen to HCHS lunches, the administration is taking actions to straighten it out to give everyone a better understanding. The state is to meet with all Unit 10 head cooks during the week of January 21-25 to clarify any questions or problems that still need to be answered.

"The current selection of items may be fewer than what we are used to but I know for a fact that it is still better than most schools in our area. Please be patient and it will all work out for the best," Mr. Fetcho said.

## Illinois is smoke free

 **Jonathan Cantrell**  
The Burrow



Illinois becomes smoke free Jan. 1

On Jan. 1 Illinois became smoke-free in all public areas, such as restaurants, bars and even prisons. Though no one can smoke in public areas, smoking has not been banned completely. One can still smoke in private vehicles and homes. This new law seems like it was made to help people stop smoking, but instead of helping people it has angered some. Nearly 21 percent of U.S. adults are current cigarette smokers.

The people in favor of the law say

they can finally eat somewhere without having to worry about breathing cigarette smoke. People with heart conditions cannot be around any kind of smoke, neither can people with asthma because it can make them ill. But for people who smoke and have no intentions of quitting this law seems unfair. They feel that if they choose to, they should be able to smoke when and where they want, if they are of the legal age.

Junior Kaitlyn Sloan said, "The smoking ban won't stop people from smoking, if they want to they will smoke." Some believe, it's their choice, and the government shouldn't be able to make that choice.

Senior Erica Vaughan said, "I don't think people will stop, but they might not smoke as much. Even though people are harming their bodies, they are well aware of it." Vaughan said the law is unfair to those who smoke. In the United States, cigarette smoking is responsible for about one in five deaths annually, or about 438,000 deaths per year.

Sophomore Stephanie Sandusky said, "Yes, I think the law is fair because more and more people die from lung cancer and second-hand smoke every year."

On average, smokers die 13 to 14 years earlier than nonsmokers. In the past waitresses or waiters could not choose to work in a smoke free environment or not. Now they don't have to worry about breathing in someone else's smoke.

Sandusky also said, "Smoking is wrong, but even with the new law I don't think it will help people stop smoking."

In the United States, 23 percent of high school students are current cigarette smokers, and each day 1,140 people younger than 18 years of age become regular smokers.

There are many different feelings about the smoking ban, and a few people have told their opinions, but the only thing that matters is what the law says. We may not like what it says but it is the law and we have to do what it says. So as of Jan. 1, there is no smoking in any public area.

(Statistics from this story can be found at the Center for Disease Control website.)

## Meet the ladies behind the desk

 **Jeff Robinson**  
The Burrow

In our school there are a lot of things going on that students and some faculty never see because they are handled by three women alone.

The secretaries are kept busy in the offices, managing paperwork and affairs with students and faculty around the school.

According to the secretaries, their day consists of a lot of communicating with students and faculty members and computer work. They handle money and do plenty of paperwork.

Denise Campbell and Cindy Phillips operate the schools' main office. Theresa Belangee runs the guidance office. These ladies are responsible for our school running efficiently, although some never notice the work required.

Main office secretary Cindy Phillips



Secretaries Cindy Phillips and Theresa Belangee enjoy their jobs.



said, "I like seeing the kids everyday."

The secretaries are usually seen with a smiling face and friendly advice for students, faculty and visitors to Hamilton County High School.

When a student has a question about class scheduling Therese Belangee is there with answers.

When they need help calling home or putting money on their lunch account,

Cindy Phillips and Denise Campbell are more than happy to help.

The secretaries' efforts do not go completely unnoticed. Senior Erica Vaughan said, "They are very serious and dedicated to their job."

Senior Ann Marie Wiggins said, "I have worked in the office since junior high and have always enjoyed being around the secretaries."

## The New Year means a new resolution

 **Michaela Morlan**  
The Burrow

Year after year on Jan. 1, millions of people make New Year's resolutions. Some want to loose weight, stop smoking, start exercising, or to simply be a more positive person.

According to the website, www.proactivechange.com, 40 percent of 45 percent of American adults make one to two resolutions every year. The first week of the New Year 75 percent of people who made a resolution are still sticking to it. After 2 weeks 71 percent are pushing to maintain the resolution. After 1 month some people have given

up but 61 percent are still trying. After 6 months, a measly 46 percent of the 75 percent who made resolutions are actually sticking to them.

Students at Hamilton County Senior High have different opinions on resolutions. Senior Malena Rapp said, "I didn't make one. I don't really think they work anyway. People might have the desire to keep it at first, but then I think people get bored and give up."

However senior Brittany Webb argues, "I want to stay skinny, maybe loose a little weight. I plan on sticking to my resolution, or trying to at least. They can work, sometimes, if you really put your mind to it, I think you can succeed."

Starting a new year you have to stand

back and look. Are you going to be just another negative statistic or are you going to set your mind to something and stick



### Stories worth skipping to:


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## Austrian student joins HCHS

 **Jonathan Cantrell**  
The Burrow

On Jan. 3 Thomas Terzer, a foreign exchange student, arrived in America traveling all the way from Vienna, Austria. It took him 22 hours to get here, but with the 7 hour time difference he doesn't know exactly what time he arrived.

Terzer is currently living with the Moles family. He said, "I'm getting along with them really good and having a great time in America." He said most have been friendly and welcoming here. He misses his family a little bit, but so far, he is not homesick. He will be here for the next 6 months.

Terzer said, "There are so many things that are different from America and Austria I don't know where to start." One thing he




16 year old Austrian Thomas Terzer

notices to be different is the way people act. He notices a big difference in the way girls act and dress.

Out of all the classes he is taking, band is his favorite. He plays the saxophone, which is his favorite instrument to play.

After high school Terzer plans to go to college and go into law school.

## Political entertainment strikes again

 **Lucas Adkisson**  
The Burrow

This being an election year the candidates are running around the country getting support so they have a better chance of getting on the presidential ticket. However, out of the thirteen candidates only two are getting a whole lot of press: Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

They are the first already-known woman and the first non-reverend African/American to be in the race to get on the ticket. In essence, skin color and gender that breaks tradition is a big deal. Some news sources believe it important to give other candidates an equal amount of time as these two, which is good. Other, larger, news sources have deemed it necessary to dog the steps of these two democrats.

Clinton is, however, not the first woman to be in the primaries, just the first that is most likely to win. The same is with Obama, not the first African/American to be in the primaries just the first that could possibly succeed. So they are looked upon with delight by the female and African/American



"The Two Democrats At Play"

populations. They've both been getting a lot of support from immigrants since they both have less strict immigration laws planned out. However, until recently, they've been attacking each other. They seem to think the other is a threat.

They've been aggressive opponents since before the primaries and have continued it until just very recently. They decided to call a truce after they realized they were being put under the spotlight instead of the topics at hand. Since this truce, there has been some underlying frustration, but not much more than that. Anyone can tell that this truce has helped them both, and they now both have a decent chance of winning.



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# NEWS

## German student finishes year at HCHS



Lisa Wurche

**Johnathan Cantrell**  
*The Burrow*

On Aug. 31 16-year-old foreign exchange student Lisa Wurche started school in Eldorado, and finished school there in December. When school started in January for Hamilton County High School, she transferred and now attends here. Wurche is from Wuppertal, Germany.

Wurche said, "I miss my family sometimes." She has one brother, Jens, who is 13-years-old.

She said, between Germany and America, there are many differences. The 11th, 12th, and 13th graders in Germany are allowed to

have open campus lunch. However younger students are not allowed to leave.

The government system in the United States is not completely different but not the same as Germany. Wurche feels things are harder in Germany than in America. For instance, she takes 12 classes in one day in Germany.

Wurche is currently living with the Wheelers, the same family, former junior foreign exchange student Marleen Sandmann, was living with earlier this school year. So far she is getting along with them well.

After high school Wurche plans to go to college, and do something with either traveling or horses.

## Quarter exams scheduled

**Johnathan Cantrell**  
*The Burrow*

On March 10 through the 13 all students will be taking quarter exams in all classes. These exams will be 20 percent of the third quarter grade. Students will not have to take all tests in one school day, for tests are only planned to take up one class period. One will have an English exam one day and mathematics the next day.

Beginning this fall quarter exams will be given first and third quarters. Senior Devin Webb said, "I would rather not take them, but if it is going to keep my grade up, then I will."

According to Mrs. Lueke quarter exams have started simply because some parents believe their children are not ready for college exams. Although teachers already give semester exams, not all students are required to take them. The new quarter exam policy requires every student to take them, in the hope that all students will be better prepared for college exams.

Junior Bethany Anselment said, "I don't

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think quarter exams are a good idea because, why work hard and not miss any days if you are basically taking semesters." Quarter exams are meant to help you, not hurt you, like anything else, if you attempt to study and apply yourself, the exams shouldn't be difficult.

If one has a positive attitude for studying, and sets a schedule to study, one will be able to see a difference in study habits. Trying to get away from certain distractions will be helpful.

When you are studying don't focus on just one subject, use your time wisely. Organize your materials so that everything isn't crammed somewhere.

Taking notes in class, watching and listening to the teacher will make a big difference in memorization. Don't be afraid to ask a teacher for help, show them things you don't understand and let them help.

## VFW Vocies of Democracy Contest: McQuillen wins



Junior Robert McQuillen receives his certificate in December 2007 from Jewel and Robert Wilson, representatives of the McLeansboro VFW Post. McQuillen won \$200 from the local VFW Voices of Democracy contest. He then moved on to represent McLeansboro in next division of the contest in Mt. Vernon, IL on Jan. 13.

The VFW Voices of Democracy contest requires students to write an essay on a basic prompt that is related to veterans and then make a sound recording of the essay. Junior Robert McQuillen was the only Hamilton County High School student to enter. He was selected as the winner of the local division.

What follows is the essay that he wrote:

### How I Honor My Veterans

By: Robert McQuillen

I honor my veterans by respecting them and acknowledging them for what they did for me and our grand nation. As President Kennedy a World War II veteran said "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country." All veterans did exactly that, put their country first, understood that for every privilege theirs a responsibility. I'm glad that there were and still are people willing to sacrifice their lives for others.

I have plenty of veterans in my family. My uncle answered the call of his country in and recorded for the contest.

the Air Force. His three children followed in the family tradition, serving in the Army and Navy with combat tours in Vietnam and Desert Storm. My grandfather was in the Navy, serving in World War II stationed at Pearl Harbor; also he got to travel around the world twice while he was serving our nation. In grade school, I honored him by appearing on an ABC news broadcast. I proudly spoke on his behalf about his experiences throughout his tour of duty in

the United States Navy.

What do red, white, and blue mean to you? Too me, red represents the rights we have and the blood spilt to have our country. The white represents our wonderful nation and blue represents our beautiful way of life. The way of life that we get to have because our veterans risked their lives for our freedom.

As the Preamble in the Constitution states, "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America."

Our veterans are the ones who let us have this constitution and let us be our own nation. They are the ones who stood up for this nation, gave their lives up for us, and didn't ask for anything in return. So on that note, I honor my veterans any way I can, this essay is also a way I give them credit for who they are and what they have done. I'm so thankful that there are still people willing to fight and defend our magnificent nation we call home.



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## In memory of King

 **Arisa Vineyard**  
The Burrow

On Jan., 21 we have the school day off. It's not just a day off, it's an important day to America.

Sophomore Amber Shriver said "I think it is important to celebrate Martin Luther King Day."

On Jan. 15, 1929 a leader was born. Doctor Martin Luther King was a well known American figure. He led the Civil Rights movement during the 1950's and 1960's. His goal was to end racial discrimination.

He led the Montgomery buss boycott in 1955. This caused Rosa Parks to refuse to give up her seat on a public buss. This act caused riots and many deaths.

On Aug.28 1963, King delivered his "I have a dream speech," which told about his views on segregation.

In the year 1963, on the 100th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation, King organized a march on Washington, D.C. that drew 200,000 people demanding equal rights for



Martin Luther King Jr.

minorities.

King spoke at many spiritual meetings and changed the life of Americans forever. He was standing on a hotel balcony when he was shot in the neck by James Earl Ray. He died April 4, 1968 in a hospital.

Sophomore Mia Hodges said "It taught me that one day I can inspire people like Dr. King. Also to speak up and don't judge people by their race or gender but what's inside"

The third Monday in January is celebrated in his honor. Sophomore Sierra Dearing said "It is not just a day off it is a day about the King and his great works. It's about how he dedicated his life to making everybody equal."

## Moment of silence required by state law



Students observing the moment of silence

 **Jeff Robinson**  
The Burrow

A moment of silence has now been made mandatory in every school by the Illinois State Legislature. The bill was originally vetoed but was then overturned by the state legislature.

Until Oct. 11 there was a law that permitted, but did not mandate the moment. But on Thursday, Oct. 11 the law was immediately put into effect state wide.

The law states that at the beginning of everyday students will observe a moment of silence to reflect on their day. They are encouraged to think or use this moment however they see fit as long as they remain silent.

This new law has brought a lot of controversy into the schools. Some think this is an attempt by the state government to bring prayer back into school. Others argue that


students may do whatever they want and nothing but silence is being forced onto them.

Hamilton County High School students have found various ways to use their moment of silence. Ideas range from sleeping, preparing for oncoming day and remembering soldiers. Sophomore Orry Rodgers says, "I use my moment to catch up on homework or sleep."

Teachers seem to approve of the new daily occurrence. Teacher Sue Kinder says, "I always follow state law and I make sure my students remain quiet. I think this is an effective way of helping our students prepare for their day. I believe the majority of my students use this moment as a time of reflection to gather their thoughts for the day to come."

The moment of silence is falling under harsh criticism, but has not been reconsidered so far.

## Jumping back into the good ol' days

 **Arisa Vineyard**  
The Burrow

The New Year brought new hope to a student at HCHS. Struggling for her old life, her old personality, and wanting her old memories back, she jumps at a chance to start over.

Sophomore Violet Jackson returned to school after a long 8 months of recovery from an accident in June.

With only two weeks left at Ranken Jordan rehabilitation center Jackson is counting down the days until she can go to school full-time. For now she is only coming on Thursdays and Fridays.

Ashley Allen, Jackson's aide, said, "Violet tries very hard to do her best work, she is making good progress. She is able to comprehend most of the stuff we work on."

Jackson's accident left her with brain damage. Now back on her feet, she is trying to live the life she once knew. Strong and very willing, Jackson takes a step forward, to re-learn how to read and write.

Jackson said "I want to learn how to read Shakespeare again. I want to read love stories like Romeo and Juliet again. Stories like that are what I like."

Living in a world of confusion, she is trying to recover completely. Freshman Danielle Vineyard said, "I miss the old Violet, seeing her now makes me sad but also very happy to see her getting better. She's come this far, I know she can take the extra leap and be the old Violet."

Jackson wants people to be more aware



Sophomore Violet Jackson excited to be back at school

of her situation. She said, "I want people to treat me the same. Even though I am kind of different than I used to be, but that's because I have brain damage. Trust me I am still the same girl you knew."

Junior Alec Vineyard said, "Violet has always been a determined person, and I know she isn't going to give up."

She is looking forward to running track in the spring. She said "I am excited to start running. I hope my doctor and coach say it's okay."

"She has a long road ahead of her." Her boyfriend, Brent Reed, said, "Even though she's not the same as she once was, she is still a fun person to be around. She is going to pull through this and after it's all over, she will be stronger than ever."

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## Student Profiles



Senior, Caleb Tanner Spicuzza known to everyone as Tanner or Sqooz is an extremely familiar face at Hamilton County Senior High. Spicuzza's favorite parts of high school would be desktop publishing with Mrs. Auten and classes with Ms. Hall. "My favorite high school memory would have to be when golf went to state this year. I was really proud of the team," Spicuzza stated. Spicuzza has many likes about winter but is looking forward to summer so he can go golfing.



Junior Rebecca Marie Biggerstaff, better known as Becca has become a common face here at HCSH. Biggerstaff's favorite class would have to be English with Mrs. Jordan. "Me, Brooke, and Brandon all got kicked out of J's class sophomore year! I will never forget that, it was hilarious," Biggerstaff stated. She really enjoys winter but is upset it hasn't snowed, so she also is looking forward to the summer months.



Sophomore Lexi Katherine Karcher, or Kat as her friends like to call her, is almost done with her second year of high school and looking forward to her next two. Karcher's favorite class would have to be Algebra 2, but her favorite teacher is Mr. Guzman. "It's hard to remember just one but I am pretty sure all my best memories involve my friends and all the fun we have together," Karcher stated. Karcher loves winter and the snow and is really upset because it has yet to snow.



Freshman Shane Adam Williams is a fresh face in the hallways at HCSH. Williams' favorite part of his school day would have to be math class with Mrs. Vaughan. "I don't really know what my favorite memory is. Homecoming was a pretty fun time," Williams stated. Williams is a huge fan of winter and he is really disappointed it hasn't snowed. He's keeping his fingers crossed and waiting on some snow so he can build snowmen, go skiing, sledding and ice skating, and have snowball fights.

## By: Michaela Morlan

## Teacher Profiles

 Rachel Wall  
The Burrow



Mr. Guzman

**José Enrique Guzmán Rodríguez**, also known as Mr. Guzman, teaches Spanish I and Spanish II. His favorite class in high school was physical education. He graduated from MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Ill. with a degree in physical education and a minor in Spanish. His first job was as a criminal investigator for the DuPage County public defender's office in Wheaton, Ill. Mr. Guzman decided to become a teacher because his teachers made a difference in his life and he wanted to do the same for other kids. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing, playing soccer and working on 60s model Mustangs. An interesting fact about Mr. Guzman is that he is 100 percent Mexican. His New Year's resolution is to start a soccer program and a Spanish III class here at HCSH.



Ms. Crain

**Kathleen Marie Crain**, known to most as Ms. Crain, teaches a variety of history and political science classes here at HCSH. She teaches everyone's favorite class, civics, along with modern wars, world geography, current events, world history and 20th century pop culture. Of these classes, her favorite to teach is modern wars and her favorite class in high school was world history. Ms. Crain graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a degree in history and a teaching certificate. Her first job was at McDonald's and her favorite hobby is reading. She decided to become a teacher because she wanted to share her love of history with other students. Many know that Ms. Crain is an avid animal lover. She currently has 6 dogs and a cat. Her New Year's resolution is to eat healthier and be more organized.



Mrs. Barker

**Debra Lynn Hatcher Barker**, known to students as Mrs. Barker, teaches American history and social sciences here at HCSH. She graduated from Oklahoma Baptist University with a bachelor degree in education and obtained her masters in education from Southern Illinois University. Mrs. Barker loved high school and her favorite classes were short stories and a teacher prep class. She also enjoyed biology during the dissection unit. She took her first teaching job at Norris City as an elementary physical education teacher. Mrs. Barker chose teaching because she has several relatives who are teachers and she enjoys watching others learn. In her spare time she enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, reading and boating. Many people don't know that Mrs. Barker

took flight training in college and logged several hours in flight. Her flight instructor was a World War I pilot. Her New Year's resolution is to become a healthier person through exercise and better food choices.



### Valentine Ads

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## Girl's basketball season about over



**Luke Bowman**  
The Burrow

As the Lady Foxes season moves along it seems as though the girls are still giving it all their effort. Senior Nikki Ojala said, "The team is young, competitive and plays hard. We need to work on making our shots and dribbling." A record of 5-12 doesn't sound strong, but the girls did get second

in their own Lady Foxes Holiday Tournament. Senior Orry Taylor is an avid fan of the Lady Foxes. "They do very well for being as young as they are, but do have some rough spots around the edges," Taylor said. The Lady Foxes Junior Varsity team, on the other hand, is having a pretty good season with a winning record of 10-4. Freshman Kelsey Ann Bowman said, "The team is pretty quick and has some size. We also have some girls who are good at shooting those long distance shots." The girls' season is about over. With only a few games left, there is still hope they will come alive and do really well in their regional.



## Varsity boys look to rebound



**Jacob Harrawood**  
The Burrow

As the basketball season moves along, the Foxes continue in a slump.

Before the Foxes headed into the BIT, they won two games in a row against NCOE and Johnston City.

In their first two games in the BIT, the Foxes faced Pinckneyville and Cairo. They fell heavy to Pinckneyville, losing by double digits. In an intense game with Cairo, the Foxes lost 63-56, after being down 57-40 with just four minutes left.

Okawville, Benton and Carlyle are still left to play in the BIT and the Foxes could very well win out.

Junior Molly Hathaway said, "The record is not the best, but all the juniors are stepping up. Seth, Shelby, Tyler and Kane are doing awesome this year."

Although most attention is usually on

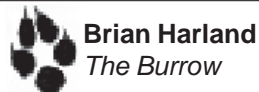


Varsity, the JV Foxes are making a run for back-to-back Black Diamond Conference championships.

Last year JV had a 19-3 record and is looking to break that record this year. On the way to an undefeated season, the JV Foxes are 7-0 after their last game, which ended with an amazing 97-23 win over Johnston City.

Senior Levi Link said, "I've never seen a JV game get that high in points before. If you almost brake 100, you have to be doing things right."

## Smells like school spirit



**Brian Harland**  
The Burrow

It can't be seen, smelled, tasted or touched, but it will overwhelm even the strongest willed. It is the feeling in the air, the pride in the hearts and the sense of camaraderie among the people.

With the Foxes basketball teams tagging wins onto their record, school spirit seems to be on a high, but some believe this to be the dark ages for green and white support.

"When I was little, the basketball games were amazing. The lights would go down and the cheerleaders did the flashlight show. People would rather die than miss a Foxes' game. Now it seems like people are dying to get away from the games. The whole atmosphere is different nowadays," senior Nicholas Burke said.

Senior Brody Mitchell said, "I'm glad all these people are showing up to the games, but it kind of defeats the purpose of being there if you don't cheer or support the team. Most people just come to hang out with their friends. They couldn't care less if we win or lose."

Some blame the lack of school spirit on the lack of numbers in the cheerleading squad or the change in the band's location, but others disagree.

Band instructor Mr. Brock-Jones said, "I

don't think the placement of the band really matters as long as they are there. The band is one of the only things that really gets the crowd going."

Thanks to the Beta Club, there is a pep rally in store for the HCHS student body on Jan. 25. The session will include everything that former fanatic Fox fans were used to before the installation of the current facility. Cheerleaders will grab their flashlights and make the boys feel like the entire world is supporting them.

On that night the boy's basketball team will take on the rival Eldorado Eagles. Also, the return of the Basketball Queen will take place. For the first time since 2002 candidates will compete for the title of queen.

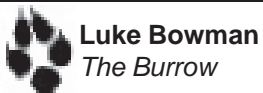
Senior Jennifer Rodgers has helped set up the pep rally and competition. Rodgers said, "It's just a small thing we thought we could do to get the kids excited for the game, maybe show a little bit more support for us."

HCHS has always been known for the way it involves the community ... to make them feel as if everyone is a part of the action and just as needed as the starting point guard. The school spirit goes beyond the Foxes den or the end zone. It extends to past Foxes, present Foxes and even to the future Foxes.

So when the ball goes through the goal or the cheerleaders yell their hearts out, be loud, be proud and make this season one worth remembering.



## Super Bowl approaches



**Luke Bowman**  
The Burrow

It's playoff time again in the NFL. With only 4 weeks until Super Bowl XLII, there are still eight teams left; four are done in the first week of the playoffs. The Pittsburgh Steelers, Tennessee Titans, Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Washington Redskins have all lost in the first week of the playoffs.

Meanwhile, the New York Giants, Jacksonville Jaguars, Seattle Seahawks and the San Diego Chargers remain. The New England Patriots, Indianapolis Colts, Dallas Cowboys and Green Bay Packers all get byes for the first week's games.

The AFC (American Football Conference) and 2007 Super Bowl

Champions, the Indianapolis Colts, look like they will have a little bit of a problem this year getting by the New England Patriots. Also, the Jaguars and Chargers are still in the hunt in the AFC. Both teams are still very strong and have a chance to go to Super Bowl XLII.

In the NFC (National Football Conference), the very surprising Green Bay Packers and Dallas Cowboys are ranked high. Also in the running are the Seattle Seahawks and New York Giants. The No. 2 seeded Green Bay had an awesome year, finishing out the season 13-3.

Who will win Super Bowl XLII – no one will know until Sunday, Feb. 3, when the teams kickoff at the University of Phoenix Stadium at 6:18 p.m. on FOX.



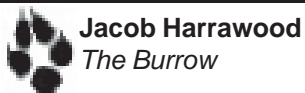
for 2008, after he received 35 1/2 of the 50 votes from a nationwide media panel according to the Associated Press.

Tom Brady's No. 1 receiver this year was Randy Moss, who was traded to New England from the Oakland Raiders last year. The New England Patriots said it was a gamble to bring him to the team. Their gamble paid off as Moss had 23 touchdown receptions this season, passing Jerry Rice who had a 22 reception record set 20 years ago.

Senior Jason Waier said, "The Pats are going all the way this year. Nobody can stop them. They have gone too far to lose now."

Over the course of the 2007 season, the Patriots hold a 75 total touchdown record and a league-record 589 points.

## Patriots go undefeated



**Jacob Harrawood**  
The Burrow

This year the New England Patriots made history in the NFL. The Patriots set five new records in one season.


New England's 16 victories this season represent the longest single-season winning streak in NFL history. The only other team to go undefeated in the regular season was the 1972 Dolphins, who completed a 14-0 season.

Although they aren't the only team to go undefeated, the Patriots won more games. In 1978 the NFL decided to expand the season to 16 regular season games. Since then, no team, until the 2008 New England Patriots, has gone undefeated.

Another record achieved by the Patriots included 50 touchdown passes by quarterback Tom Brady. Peyton Manning and Dan Marino hold second and third place with 49 and 48 touchdowns.

Tom Brady was voted the season MVP as well as the Offensive Player of the Year Award

## 2008 Presidential election gets controversial

 **Samantha Russell**  
The Burrow

The time has come to vote for the person who's going to run our country for the next four years. The most interesting circumstances for this election are the possibilities that we may have the first woman president or the first African-American president.

Senator Hillary Clinton, Democrat, is running and hoping to become the first of many female presidents. Online Internet polls have discovered that the women in the country have been back and forth with their support of Clinton. Her "Pro-Choice" platform seems to cause a lot of tribulation. Being "Pro-Choice" means she believes it should be legal to perform abortion, the act of terminating a pregnancy. I believe that choices are important, considering we all live in "The Land of the Free" but I am strongly against abortion. Voting for her would make it nearly impossible for me to have a clear conscience the rest of my life. Clinton is also 100 percent for Gun Control, feeling if guns aren't easily accessed the crime rate will decrease. Guns don't kill people, people kill people. They are one way of committing an act of violence out of infinite others.

Senator Barack Obama, also Democrat, is also running for president, with the hopes of becoming the first African-American president. Obama's platform includes supporting civil unions. In other words, he's against homosexual marriages. Gay marriages are highly debatable. Many citizens feel marriage is sacred and should be reserved for heterosexual marriages only. Others feel marriage is meant to unite two

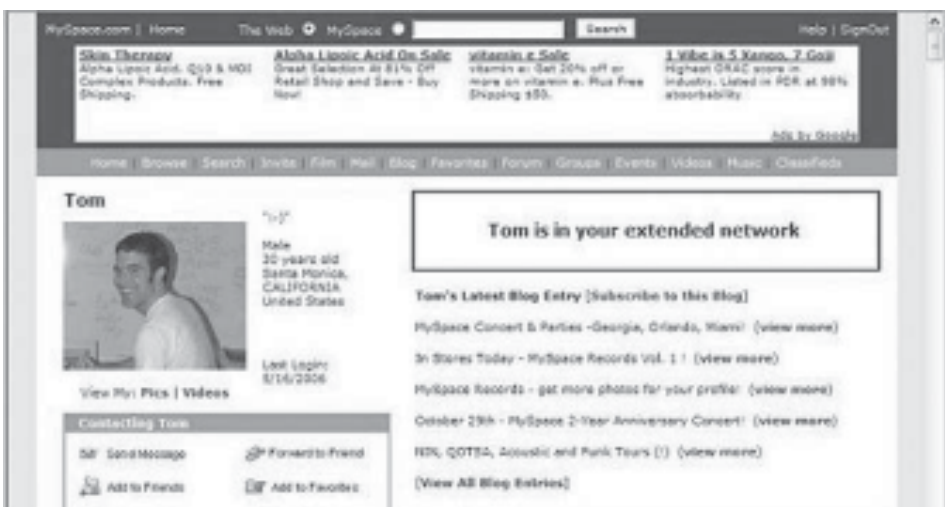


Barack Obama  
Vs.  
Hillary Clinton

people in love. I think it comes back to having the right to choose. Obama also supports a plan that will begin removing soldiers from Iraq, starting with 1-2 brigades per month. He has also commented on the right to have abortions legalized. He disagrees with the act of an abortion but feels women have the right to decide what's best for them and their families.

I am 18 and I have the ability to vote in this year's election. I haven't quite decided who to vote for, or even which party to vote for. I am firmly against many of the suggestions Hillary Clinton has in mind, such as legalizing abortions, so I can safely assume I won't be voting in her favor. For all who are 18, take your decision very seriously because every vote counts.

## MySpace isn't your space!



Tom from MySpace

 **Samantha Russell**  
The Burrow

Many of us are all too familiar with MySpace.com. Go to the website, fill out the profile, add pictures of you and your friends, and BAM, you're connected.


There are several parents who think MySpace is a bad thing. Age, sex, location, and other personal information can all be published for anyone to see. With all the pedophile attacks that originate from the Internet, parents have every right to be concerned.

I know some of you watch the reality series "Super Nanny," which recently aired an episode that portrayed an 11-year-old girl with an account on something similar to MySpace. The rules of the website are similar to those of MySpace, but there is an age limit which is 14. The parents of this girl realized she was chatting with 17- and 18-year-old boys, who thought she was 14.

Parents who aren't very Internet savvy don't really understand that the profiles can be set to public or private, allowing their children to decide who sees their information. Saying you're 17 from McLeansboro isn't going to narrow you down so much that a complete stranger could pick you up off the streets. Not only can you choose who sees it, but you can choose what they see. You don't HAVE to put your actual age on the website, nor your actual address or town.

I have a MySpace account, as do many of you, and being able to control who adds you as a "friend" or not is very important. If you don't know the person, the best thing to do is ignore their invitation to become a friend and go about your business. MySpace is harmless and there have been no reports of pedophiles using it to find their next victims or anything of that nature. It's a way to communicate with your friends, show your creative side with the way you set up your page and meet new people if you so choose.

## Facebook

 **Lucas Adkisson**  
The Burrow

When browsing the Internet for a social networking site, one will find MySpace, Hi5, Bebo, Flickr, and many others. Above all of these stands a site that blows away the competition. It is called Facebook, and it will blow your mind.

In the proverbial eye of the beholder, MySpace likes to stick out like a sore thumb. It spreads its darkness and evil to the every corner of the Internet. Many have fallen under its burdens and are now trapped by the chains of ignorance. For these followers have not the inkling of a thought about what is beyond MySpace. They are attacked by various colors and annoying, animated pictures that are difficult to load. The music that is given to patrons of this site is put on there only four songs at a time and the choices are limited. The oblivious slaves to this Space are only allowed one song, which is indeed sad. Users have to use a site that creates backgrounds and styles in code. And if the users don't know how to write in Python, then they have to go through the entire process to change just one thing. But




"Enough said."

there is hope on the horizon.

Standing out in the sea of social networking sits a light that shines forth a bright ray, a saving beam. Facebook is its name and it is opening the minds of Internet users daily. With its wider variety of music and applications, it stands on its own. For this site allows its denizens to have a plethora of music on their profile for their enjoyment and others. This site even attracts OCD victims with a very neat and tidy layout, which you can move around. Yes, it is less colorful, but in the same way it is less annoying and easier to load. Facebook is home to many college students, for they see it as a more mature site to call their home.

Yes, Facebook is superior to MySpace. And as people grow older they too will learn of its magnificence.

## Resolutions, a must have

 **Lucas Adkisson**  
The Burrow

New Year's Day has come and gone and now is the time for resolutions. We know what they are. At the beginning of every year millions of people say they are going to be different during the coming year. They will be kinder toward their fellow man, quit drinking and smoking and develop healthier eating habits. But this is all easier said than done.

The American people make gargantuan lists of resolutions, most of which include: stop smoking, cut down on drinking, eat healthier foods, exercise, get a love life, etc.

Does this mean all those things Americans usually say aren't that bad for them are now things they don't want in their lives?

Apparently so, since they're on a list of problems that need to be resolved.

Maybe 1 in 5 of these resolutions is kept. I guess the old saying "Once a smoker, always a smoker" stands true.

So, is it that Americans overestimate their will-power? Look at people in the workplace who go on strike. Look at people yelling at politicians to do what they believe is right. Look at the families just scraping up a living, and look at the rich who got where they did because they put forth necessary effort.

All of these people needed a strong will (not to mention a strong cup of coffee) to do this. And even if you aren't one of these people, if we had as strong a will as we do the capacity to complain, that huge list of problems would pretty much resolve its self.

So buck up, Nancy, and let's get something done.

## Who influences who?

 **Brittney Brewer**  
The Burrow

Some believe we are influenced by the media influences, while others say the media is a mirror to the world.

No matter which side you are on, the media and real life bare striking resemblances, particularly in movies. "The Breakfast Club" was made in the late '80s, "Clueless" in the '90s, "Mean Girls" in 2004 and one of the newest movies to depict teenage cliques, "Bratz," came out in 2007. Movies tend to stereotype people, but in all actuality, these depictions hold truth most of the time.

"Mean Girls," for example, shows how vindictive girls can be. In the end, we realize girls can be nice and smart, based on the way they are treated. "Mean Girls" is a good movie in general, but some of the situations give teenagers the wrong idea about high school.

For instance, where you sit at lunch is your decision, and no one else's. In elementary school we all hung around together, regardless of the brand of clothes we each wore. We didn't belong to any particular group of friends; we were ourselves. Somewhere along the path to high school that changes.

How do we get into the groups we're in? Ever dare to ask silently if we belong there?

According to boston.com statistics, girls are becoming more violent than boys. The worst types of cliques are those with all girls. Girls tend to nit-pick on stupid stuff, like dirty



looks. We call each other names and when we fight, we fight dirty.

The next time we think about saying something mean, we should stop to realize we are mimicking one of those "Mean Girls" from the movies and break the cycle of influence.

Give people a chance and take a chance yourself.

Valentines  
Next Issue!

## Young female country artist writes entire album

**Brittni Blades**  
*The Burrow*

Taylor Swift has been singing all her life, motivated by her grandmother who was a professional opera singer. At the age of 10 she was performing locally. At age 11 she sang the National Anthem for a Philadelphia 76ers game. She's currently in the middle of recording her second album, which she wrote every song for just like she did for her first.

Great American Country said, "At the age of 12 Swift picked up a guitar and started writing her own songs." She played for hours a day until her fingers started to bleed, or her mom would call her down to dinner.

Swift's parents began supporting her and noticed that she had real talent. They'd make regular visits to Nashville, Tenn. so she could meet with songwriters in the area and perform. The family finally decided to move to a suburb of Nashville so Swift's career could get going.

At age 14 she landed a publishing deal, and was the youngest songwriter to sign with Sony/ATV. While Swift was performing at



Country Artist Taylor Swift

Nashville's Bluebird Café, she caught the eye of music industry veteran, Scott Borchetta, who was launching a new label and wanted Swift to be one of the first acts to sign.

Junior Krista Welch said, "I love the song 'Our Song'."

Taylor Swift recently turned 18 and has already won a Grammy. Her first self-titled album garnered several hits including "Tim McGraw" and "Teardrops on My Guitar" in 2006, and "Our Song", in 2007.

Swift is working on a new album and said it is going to be better than the first. The second album has not yet been named.

Sophomore Leah Millenbein said, "I can't wait for the new album to come out."

## American Idol premieres



American Idol host, Ryan Seacrest

**Brittni Blades**  
*The Burrow*

Television's No. 1 show, American Idol, returns for its seventh season Jan. 15 and 16. Hosted by Ryan Seacrest, viewers vote each week for their favorite performer to become the next American Idol.

Sophomore Amber Shriver said, "I hope that this season has a lot of really talented people to make it harder to vote between them."

Every year thousands of people audition across the nation for a chance at stardom.

Sophomore Kayla Wellen said, "I like the judges, but my favorite is Simon Cowell. I like his honesty."

The show's judges – Paula Abdul, Simon Cowell and Randy Jackson – select a group of semi-finalists who sing their hearts out each week on national television.

The judges always get a word in after each performance, but it's the viewers who determine who moves on. One can call or text votes in at the end of each show.

Every week is a different theme of music and various artists come and share their expertise with the contestants.

Past winners include Kelly Clarkson, Ruben Studdard, Fantasia Barrino, Carrie Underwood, Taylor Hicks and Jordin Sparks.

Sophomore Breanna Brock said, "Sparks hasn't stood out as a winner like the others."

This year's auditions began in Dallas, and then went to Philadelphia.

Watch Fox every Wednesday to see who moves on and becomes the next American Idol.

## Assassins' Creed gets A+

**Matt Bryson**  
*The Burrow*

Assassin's Creed created pandemonium. This third person stealth game creates an amazing world based on events from the third crusade. The game was released for the PS3 and Xbox 360 world wide in November of 2007.

The gamer begins his mission as a bartender named Desmond Miles. Desmond is a descendant from a family of assassins. Taken by treasure hunters, Desmond is forced to use the Amnium, which recreates the memory of his grandfather, Altair. The player then proceeds as Altair.

The character's mission is to kill nine of the crusades' main propagators. Aside from the nine main assassinations, there are a number of side quests in which you must help citizens who are being harassed by guards and a number of other obstacles.



Ubisoft claims the game's setting is based on fact. The nine assassinations are based on historical figures that disappeared during the third crusade. The game is so popular that Ubisoft plans to release a prequel called Assassin's Creed: Altair's Chronicles for the Nintendo DS on Feb. 5.

Assassin's Creed is one of a kind with its historical background and awesome graphics. It is rated M for mature.

## WAR movie review

**Matt Bryson**  
*The Burrow*

Two of Hollywood's hottest action stars, Jet Li and Jason Statham, collide in one of this year's most blood pumping action thrillers, "War." Jack Crawford (Jason Statham) is an FBI agent who discovers that a hit man named Rogue (Jet Li) is back in San Francisco. It's been three years since he found one of Rogue's trademark titanium bullets. Crawford then pursues to capture the elusive Rogue who killed Crawford's partner three years earlier. Then, as two of San Francisco's Asian gangs break into an all out war over priceless ancient artifacts, Rogue and Crawford find themselves face-to-face settling a score from the past.

The movie has a number of great action sequences. It also included many twists and turns in the story line. "War" was funny and educational," stated Senior Rhet Vaughn.

This movie is great for those who enjoy a suspenseful battle every now and again. The only thing about the movie that could be disliked is its fast pace, which, at times, is hard to follow.

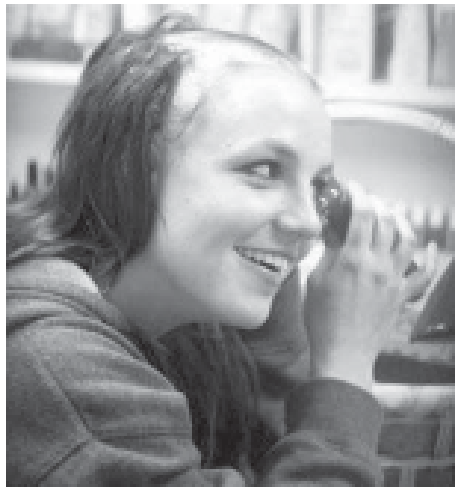
"War" is a great action movie. Jet Li and Jason Statham have gone all out in their second film together. In their first movie,



"The One", Li played the leading role while Statham played a supporting actor. In "War," however, Statham and Li play side-by-side, trading kicks, punches and bullets.

This movie is for the person who enjoys extreme action, car chases and a very surprising ending. It is rated R for sequences of strong bloody violence, sexuality/nudity and language.

## 2007 Entertainment wrap up



Just one of this years infamous entertainment stories

**Rachel Wall**  
*The Burrow*

The past year has brought triumph, tragedy, and many visits to rehab. From box office hits to album flops, last year was full of entertainment history. Celebrity train wrecks have become the most popular people in Hollywood, 5-star rehabilitation centers have become a second home, and court appearances wrap up any normal day as a celebrity in 2007.

The media became obsessed with Britney Spears in 2007 for her apparent poor parenting skills and her infamous bald head. She divorced her husband, Kevin Federline, and decided to make what some people consider the worst career move in history: she performed at the MTV movie awards. Spears was immediately scrutinized for her obvious lip-syncing and sluggish dance moves. She started clubbing with fellow party girls Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan, neither of whom had a great year. She

recently lost custody of her children and this year doesn't look any more promising than the last.

Celebrity party-girl Paris Hilton also had an eventful year. She served 23 of her 45 sentenced days in jail for driving with a suspended license. She was released early for medical reasons and describes jail as a "traumatic experience." Besides her run-in with the law, Hilton's album, appropriately titled "Paris," was one of the biggest flops of the year selling only 180,000 copies. Pregnancy among celebrities is becoming more and more popular, and 2007 proves it. Among the pregnant celebrities in 2007 is Halle Berry, Christina Aguilera and Jennifer Lopez. The most shocking pregnancy of the year came from 16-year-old Nickelodeon star Jamie Lynn Spears. Spears confirmed the pregnancy allegations in OK magazine in December.

Television suffered due to a writer's strike that started Nov. 1. The Hollywood writers believe they are not being paid enough and cannot settle on a new contract. Viewers were forced to watch reruns of their favorite shows such as Grey's Anatomy and Friday Night Lights. As the strike continues, other annual events, such as the Golden Globe Awards, are forced to be only a simple press conference rather than the star-studded red carpet event.

Despite the celebrity mishaps of 2007, life on the silver screen thrived. Top movies of the year include Spiderman 3, Shrek the Third and Transformers. Other hits include Dreamgirls, which put American Idol reject Jennifer Hudson on the red carpet. Top albums of the year include Miranda Lambert's "Crazy Ex-Girlfriend" and upcoming star Amy Winehouse's "Frank."

In all, 2007 was a great year for entertainment news.

