



THE LEONID



ONE OF BISHOP CANEVIN'S FINEST NEWSPAPERS
NOVEMBER, 2008 ISSUE 2

The Origins of Halloween

By: Colin Gribben '12
Leonid staff writer

Halloween, a shortened word for the phrase "All Hallow's Eve" is celebrated on October 31st every year. Originally a Celtic festival known as Samhain, Halloween was a celebration at the end of harvest season popular in Gaelic culture. It was a time where ancient pagans slaughtered their livestock for food for the winter season. Ancient Gaels believed that the boundary between the living and the dead would be broken on this day. This is considered dangerous to the living because it would cause problems, such as sickness, damaged crops and death. Though the holiday did originate in Ireland, it worked its way west, paving the road to present day Halloween

celebrations. Even bonfires were a tradition occasionally where the bones of the slaughtered livestock would be thrown into the fire. People also wore costumes in an attempt to mimic or ward off evil spirits at the fire, even though people today do not wear costumes for that reason. It is known as the eve of All Saints Day, a day of religious festivities in various northern European pagan traditions. Though many people today see Halloween as a joke where they mock the dead, it was taken very seriously back in the pagan times. The following day was a series of religious ceremonies and the dead could harm the living. According to Pope Gregory IV, Halloween begins on sundown on October 31 and ends at sunrise on November 1, the feast of All Saints.

Real World Villains: A True Halloween Story

By: Bo Tokarski '11
Leonid staff writer

What makes Halloween such a scary holiday? It obviously isn't the treats handed out or little children carving their pumpkins into jack-o-lanterns. No, Halloween is meant to be a holiday celebrating how far people's concepts of fear and courage can take them. Michael Myers or Freddie is

obviously not chasing people around in the true flesh any time soon. But there are some real villains in this world that *should* be frightening. This article examines one of these villains: Robert Pickton. This man is sick, vile, and crude in all ways connected to
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VILLAINS

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even the thought of him being human. Read along, and learn just how scary the real world can be.

Robert Pickton is a serial killer from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Pickton, along with his brother, ran a non-profit organization, called the Piggy Palace Good Times Society, a building on Pickton's pig farm, where prostitutes from downtown Vancouver would come, party, and over drink.

Over the course of the mid to late 1990s, when the Piggy Palace was open, Pickton was charged with attempted murders of several prostitutes. After one charged attempted murder case, one that involved Pickton stabbing a prostitute on the pig farm several times in a wild argument, police realized that Pickton was very dangerous. Police also realized their list of missing women was growing longer by the day, a list that included many prostitutes which were linked with Robert Pickton. After a search of his farm, Pickton was charged with second-degree murder charges for the deaths of six women. Pickton's trial ended up also being for murder charges of an additional ten women. There were so many witnesses related to the case that the trial ended up costing \$100 million. The 97th witness of the case, Andrew Bellwood, described what Pickton said he would do to the women on his farm. This discussion, sickening enough, took place over a pork dinner on the pig farm property. Bellwood said that Pickton would have sex with the women, and then he would kill them by handcuffing them and gagging them.

Then, Bellwood went on to say that Pickton would chop up the body and feed the pieces to his pigs to "dispose" of the bodies. He also put other pieces with pig entrails in barrels, which were dumped at a disposal plant.

Bellwood goes on to say that "Pickton acted out what he would do to the women right there for me to see. It seemed as if I was in some sort of play." In the end, the final verdict was life in prison for Robert

Pickton. In jail, Pickton confessed to the murdering of even more women to his cellmate, a number between 50 and 120.

After reading about Robert Pickton, I thought how amazing it is that a man like this actually exists in the world we live in today. The accounts of his murders are just so shocking that even the most strong-willed soul can't help but feel horrified. The story of Robert Pickton sounds like a script written for a horror film.

During this Halloween season, we shouldn't really be afraid of Jason or expect to wake up in a *Saw* situation. More importantly, we should be more afraid of those that actually exist, those that don't just live in our imaginations.

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CORRECTION FROM LAST ISSUE

Opposed to what was stated in the Leonid's article on Bishop Canevin's 50th year, the senior class of 2009 is not, in fact, the 50th graduating class. Because the school began with all freshmen, the class of 2012 is actually the 50th graduating class. We apologize for any inconveniences this egregious mistake has caused.

Battle of the Sexes: Halloween

His Side

By: Sean Arndt '09
Leonid staff writer

Halloween is a day for kids to dress up and go out. It's a day that kids go and ask people to give them candy. Going door to door and asking these people they don't know for candy is not too safe to do in the world we live in today.

This holiday, if we could even call it a day for celebration, is a day that should be taken off the calendar. All October 31st should be is just a normal day where children try to sneak candy before dinner and not be given it to them by strangers that have had it sitting in a bowl with other kids' hands all up in it. Those people that leave just a bowl of candy on the porch with a sign that says, "Take one" need some help. I mean, how safe is that candy?

I'm not too crazy for the costumes that people put on just for this night. I don't think that one-year-olds dressed as little pumpkins or Dalmatians are really that adorable. **No one** looks cute in a pumpkin or doggy suit! These kids are too young to eat candy. Their parents are basically just doing it to get their hands on the candy themselves. I think that's extortion and it's illegal, my friend.

To all other age groups that dress up for this unnecessary holiday I have to say that, **"Go out and buy your own candy!"** I mean you get what you want and you don't have to end up with that nasty candy you hate that will just sit there all year. That way, you can eat more candy and not have to walk so much.

Her Side

Catherine Lamm '09
Leonid staff writer

It is that time of year again. Since the middle of summer, stores were getting ready for Halloween, from costumes to decorations. Some masquerade stores are open all year round for those girls who love to play dress up.

It is time to flaunt our costumes. We could be anything from Disney princesses to pirates. What could be better than having fun trick-or-treating with our friends? We dressed as anything our hearts desired, with the freedom to express ourselves in a positive way.

We love to play dress up at any age. As we grow older, we tend to want to dress up from our past. When we were young, we were ballerinas, Barbie, Disney princesses, Dorothy, pop stars, superheroes, cute bugs, etc. In middle school, we may have dressed up as pop stars, pirates, witches, superheroes, Star Wars, etc. Now we dress up as anything just to have fun. We might be trying to recapture our childhood memories of dressing up.

I believe it is not silly to wear costumes for Halloween. Throughout the years, I have enjoyed dressing up. I have been everything from a pumpkin to Wonder Woman. My favorite costume was Dorothy when I was in third grade.

So, I have shared my views about wearing costumes and going trick-or-treating. I truly believe that we are never too old to have fun and wear costumes.



The Legend of the Stag

By Alex Shaw '10 and Alison Hufnagel '10
Leonid staff writers

Those of you who have been in Mr. Bowen's classroom are probably wondering about the giant deer head. Did Mr. Bowen kill it? Where did it come from? Why is it in the classroom? The **Leonid** staff has been asking these questions, too. We have the answers, a **Leonid** exclusive.

When Mr. Bowen was young, he would visit his grandpa's cabin in Gibsonia. William Monteverde was the one person in the family who sparked his grandson's interest in the outdoors. He made his ten acres of land look like an enchanted forest. Mr. Monteverde would make wooden sculptures of mythical creatures, beautiful paths through the woods, and playhouses and cabins for the children. The real magic of the estate was the head of a stag that hang over the fireplace. The fire would sparkle in its eyes and cast its shadows against the walls. Often, the deer seemed to be real to the young Mr. Bowen. To him, it was the "lord of the woods." His grandfather had killed the deer in Montana during the 30s or 40s.

When Mr. Monteverde died, the deer was moved to his uncle's produce warehouse. It was often a topic of conversation because of its size. When the warehouse was sold, Mr. Bowen had trouble finding a home for the stag. His wife would not let it in the house, and his daughter didn't want it. The deer just didn't have the same magic for them as it did for Mr. Bowen. He decided that he would bring it to Bishop Canevin and hang it in his classroom.

He wanted to share the magic with his students, hoping that the deer would inspire them.

So, Mr. Bowen went to the administration. Mrs. Reinhart told him that she could see the deer decorated with Christmas lights in the winter, and everyone decided that it was a great source of inspiration.

We asked Mr. Bowen what the deer means to him. "It reminds me of my grandpa and my childhood. It is the spirit of the woods, and it shows a connection between nature, our world, and our God," he said. Many hunters marvel at the size of the deer, and many others feel bad that it was shot. However, Mr. Bowen feels that the deer has outlived his generation, because he still hangs in B208 today.

We also asked Mr. Bowen if the deer had inspired any of his songs. "Although none of the songs are about the deer, in particular, there are many

songs about what the deer represents," he said. His song, *Wild Dance*, is about the cabin where the deer hung during Mr. Bowen's childhood.

The final question we asked was if the deer had a name. Mr. Bowen told us that it has two unofficial names—Fritz and Frederick. However, the deer does not have an actual name. The **Leonid** staff has decided to hold a naming contest. The person who comes up with the best name will get it published in the next issue. Just submit your name to Mrs. Finnegan in G105. We will send all entries to Mr. Bowen for judging. Good luck to everyone.



The Big Purse Scandal

By: Chloe Boehm '09

Leonid staff writer

If there was one thing that's changed at Canevin this year, it's the size of girls' purses. Ever since this year's "petite purse law" has come into effect, girls have regrettably downsized their purses into mini bags... and some have ignored the fashion faux pas entirely. To get a closer look, I asked some of the student body exactly what their opinions were.

Some students brought up a few good points against it, like junior Alex Shaw, who simply stated, "It's hard to keep myself organized without a big purse. I can't carry everything with me."

Kim Palastro (junior) said, "I think the situation is slightly out of hand."

Other girls, like Kristi McClellan (junior) have taken more offense to the excommunication of large purses. "I'm pretty sure my wallet doesn't fit in an envelope-sized purse," Kristi remarked.

It was surprising to hear what some of the guys thought of the issue. "Large purses usually don't disrupt the learning atmosphere, from my experience, so I don't see an issue with them. However, I'm not the one carrying one," senior Dylan Lutz said.

"I wish I could use a man bag. It's hard to carry an oversized calculator in my pocket the entire day," senior Casey DeWitt added.

I also encountered a few people whose opinions highly praised the new rule. Nick Marini (senior) rolled his eyes and agreed, exclaiming, "The only reason you [girls] have big purses is to text and not get caught!"

To gain a more well-rounded view of the issue, I asked a few teachers to give their valued opinions. Mrs. Rakaczky, a new member of the library staff, answered with a puzzled expression, saying, "What was the reason that the purses had to be smaller? I think the reason *why* the purse law is in

effect is key to its existence. If the reason is legitimate, then the rule should be welcome to stay."

On a complete opposite note, Mr. Schlicht kept it light and simple: "The bigger the better."



(drawing by Stephanie Ryan '11)

Mr. Wanamaker agreed, opening his desk drawer where his large leather briefcase is kept. "Does this qualify as an oversized bag?" he said with a small smile.

What will be the outcome of these outlawed purses? Will this reign of terror and inconvenience *ever* end? The world of Bishop Canevin may never know. I suppose that we will all just have to wait it out and see what happens. I'm in the same boat too, ladies.



8th Grade Visitation Day

By: Chloe Boehm '09

Leonid staff writer

The hallways were filled with the hustle and bustle of students on Friday, October 10... 8th grade students, that is. While Bishop Canevin students slept in and relaxed on a day off, the school hosted its annual 8th grade visitation day. Over 22 different grade schools attended this event, a much larger and more impressive number than previous years.

The morning began with a light breakfast for the teachers and an introduction for the students in the gym. Afterwards, the different schools divided

into groups and were taken to four 25-minute classes to gain a better understanding of how classes are conducted here at BC. The students were then given lunch supplied by our lovely cafeteria ladies, and the teachers were also given a catered lunch in the Conference Room. Students were escorted back to the gym for a traditional pep rally performance by the Marching Crusaders and cheerleaders.

The day ended in success, as many smiling faces left the school halls, excited about the next years to come at Bishop Canevin.

Caring Team Kickoff

By: Chelsea Pacconi '09

Leonid staff writer

On Tuesday, October 7th, the 20th Annual Caring Team Kickoff Luncheon was held at Heinz Field. The Caring Team is part of the Highmark Caring Place, which is a center for grieving children, adolescents and their families. It is dedicated to ensure that they find hope. The goal is to create awareness of their needs, provide programs and empower the community to effectively serve grieving children. BC seniors Chelsea Pacconi and Leighann Tully, accompanied by Fr. Al, attended the luncheon. Chelsea was able to start the ceremony with a prayer, part of a BC tradition since our school has been a part of the Caring Team since its creation.

Pittsburgh celebrities Caring Team Co-Captains Sally Wiggin and Hines Ward and Mayor Luke Ravenstahl were part of this luncheon. This event not only kicked off the Caring Team, but it also allowed

students to become familiar with what The Highmark Caring Place actually does. A guest speaker who visited the Center after a family tragedy shared her story. Students also had the opportunity to be photographed with Hines Ward, meet Steely McBeam, and network with Caring Team Sponsors to learn more about how they could be used with fundraisers to benefit the Caring Team.

This luncheon also gave Leighann and Chelsea ideas and willpower to get the Caring Team into full force back at BC. The first fundraiser this year for the Caring Team was the pie-in-the face competition held the week of senior pep rally. This fundraiser alone raised over \$800, more than double last year's earnings and more than half of the usual total money raised by Bishop Canevin for the Caring Team throughout the entire year.

To Pie or Not to Pie? That is the Question

By: Chelsea Raffa '09
Leonid staff writer

Traditionally, one of the most eagerly anticipated events of the year is the senior pep rally that recognizes all seniors who participate in fall sports and activities. This year's rendition was held on Friday, October 17, and was one of the most enthusiastic pep rallies I've attended. It included performances by the senior Crusettes, Cheerleaders, and Cavettes, as well as an inspiring game of "girls volleyball" by the senior members of the football team who frolicked quite gracefully out of the locker room to Cyndi Lauper's *Girls Just Want to Have Fun*.

However, the highlight of the pep rally is usually the "Pie in the Face" event that benefits the Caring Team. This year was no exception. Individuals with the highest bids had the opportunity to pie: Sister Judy, Mr. Amorose, and Mrs. Reinhart. In addition, the



Band, Crusette, Cavette and Cheerleading captains, along with several female faculty members were pied as well.

Naturally, when there are a few pies remaining, mayhem rules, and some unsuspecting victims bite the dust as well. Mr. Schlicht, Mr. Checketts, and Fr. Al were among those who suffered this inevitable fate. Even our intrepid yearbook

photographer, Mr. Romano, was the victim of a kamikaze attack by yours truly, but unfortunately, he didn't capture this Kodak moment for posterity. Fortunately, however, he was a good sport.

The event raised over \$860 for the caring team and exemplified the spirit and goodwill of both students and faculty alike. This exciting day was concluded with a resounding win over Cornell later that evening.



Interact Update

By: Maria Graziano '10
Interact reporter

As the new school year begins, Interact continues to donate its services to the community. It's going to be a very eventful year. There are many new members enrolled and lots of new projects to look forward to. Our first big project this year was the South Park Hundred Acres Haunted House. Interact is also teaming up with FBLA and sponsoring a handball tournament in November. All proceeds from this tournament will benefit Cystic Fibrosis. Interact members also have the option to sign up for career shadow days which will take place on November 6th. In December, Interact will take part in the Paws for a Cause gift-wrapping at

Robinson Mall, Toys for Tots, and holiday food drives.

Boys Soccer Update

By: Joe Knittel '09
Leonid staff writer

The boys soccer team has been anything but lugubrious in the second half of the season. After starting the season with an 8-2 record, we have continued with our winning ways by only losing two of our last seven games. This included only one in section loss.

When the WPIAL playoff bracket came out, the team received the number seven seed with a first round matchup against old section rival Quaker Valley. The game was evenly matched through the first half. However, in the second half, the scoring opened up. Christian Petticord broke the scoreless tie with a shot from 35 yards out to put Canevin on the board. Dan Mayer later added to the scoring to make the

score 2-0. Finally, after a late Quaker Valley goal, the game came to an end with a final score of 2-1.

Two days later, the second round began with a game against the number two seeded team from Greensburg Central Catholic. Canevin came out and punched in an early goal against the Centurions. Christian Petticord scored on a penalty kick for his second goal of the playoffs. Later in the first half, Joe Boulos capitalized on a glitch by the Greensburg defense to increase the lead to two. Even though technically the underdog, Canevin took the game 3-1 with a third goal coming again from Christian early in the second.

(Editor's note: When the paper went to press, the Crusaders were headed to the semi-finals on October 28 against Shadyside at North Allegheny High School.)

Cross Country

By: Jason Gerlowski '09
Leonid staff writer

Cross-country has always been a low key sport at Canevin ("we have a cross-country team?"). It can hardly compete for students' attention with established sports like football and basketball. Now admittedly, cross-country is not a very spectator friendly sport. It's almost painful to watch, lasts only 20 odd minutes, and can be hard to follow (pun intended). That aside however, Canevin's cross-country team was definitely worth watching this year.

The team had a great start, winning its first several matches against some of their section competitors like Brentwood, Neighborhood Academy, Keystone Oaks, and South Park. The cross-country team, led by Captain

Lucas Briola, then finished their section season with a win at home against South Fayette to clinch the section with an undefeated record of 8-0.

The team also competed in several Invitational races open to many schools from around the area. Perhaps the brightest moment of these races occurred when Canevin placed fourth at the Freedom Invitational, with more than 25 other schools in competition.

The last and most important race of the year took place recently near Slippery Rock, the WPIAL championship match. The team placed very well and ended the season in 6th place out of a total of 40 teams-- the schools best placement ever.

Overall, the team had a very successful season, with wins against

many other teams from around the area. Hopefully, with several more winning

seasons, the team and the sport will both get the attention they rightfully deserve.

Teacher Spotlight on Mr. Lang

By: Fran Lison '09

Leonid staff writer

I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Canevin's brand new religion teacher, Mr. Mark Lang. Mr. Lang is the leader of the campus ministry here at Canevin and is extremely well traveled.

Mr. Lang grew up on the North Side of Pittsburgh, attending North Catholic High School. "My thing in high school was sports," he laughed as he reflected on the time. He played everything from football to baseball, floor hockey to basketball. He played tight end and kicker on the football team, and played first base on the high school baseball team. After high school, Mr. Lang attended the University of Notre Dame as a pre-med major. "I was going to be a chiropractor," he added.

His life took a dramatic turn during sophomore year of college. He traveled with his band mates on a spiritual journey through some eastern countries, such as Japan, China and India. When asked about his travels, he replied without hesitation, "It was pretty incredible." During his trip, he experienced a cyclone, held a concert on the Great Wall of China and met Mother Teresa. "We got stuck in a cyclone. All these trees fell on the highway, and villagers ran over with their machetes to help cut them down. Everyone banded together, Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Jews...all came together despite the hostilities they had...it was super powerful," he added, reflecting on his 18 hour cyclone experience.

When asked about the most powerful experience on the trip, Mr. Lang excitedly retold the story of meeting Mother Teresa. "That was fantastic. We had a rosary

service with her. You could feel God's presence with her. She had a tough physique; her feet were walked upon. You could see the earth that she traveled," he said with great admiration for the woman.

His spiritual journey was life changing. "That trip drew me into religion. As soon as I got back from India, I couldn't even bring those two worlds together. I couldn't express it to my friends. I knew that whatever I experienced was God speaking, saying, live your life for me," he added.

One of the most important things in Mr. Lang's life is music. In college, he picked up the guitar and became "obsessed" with it. His college day band was George and the Freeks. "We were one of the early Christian rock bands, but we didn't want to be labeled as that... We sang songs that were meaningful, and we played for five years and were pretty popular at Notre Dame." George and the Freeks lasted for five years until changing lifestyles drew the band apart. In 2001, he put out a solo record that went on to sell 1,000 copies throughout America. "I've never really taken it to the record industry. I wasn't worried about a label. I just needed to spread the word in any way shape or form," he said. Currently, Mr. Lang is in a spiritual rock group called SoZo, the Greek word meaning 'wholeness' and 'healing.' The band plays shows throughout Pittsburgh periodically, and he hopes to get more involved with the project now that the school year has settled down a bit.

Mr. Lang hopes to "bring the world to Canevin." When asked how he is enjoying teaching here, he quickly said, "I'm happy and I hope to be here for years to come. I have to say, everybody on the



faculty is super kind, helpful and affirming. I feel like everybody is glad to be here. There's a positive energy and I'm glad to be

a part of it...I feel blessed." All of us here at Canevin are overwhelmed by Mr. Lang's faith and outlook on life.

Senior Spotlight: Calvin Cooper

By: Fran Lison '09

Leonid staff writer

Not only is Calvin Cooper the quietest man in the school and perhaps on the face of the earth, he fronts an edgy indie-rock band, has a passion for mixed martial arts, enjoys playing rugby when the time comes and has a deep love for philosophy and thinking. Coop is one of my best friends, and it is my somewhat worthless opinion that all of us kids could learn something from him. I recently had the chance to sit down with Coop and nail down some of his life...without further ado, I bring to you the senior spotlight on Calvin Cooper.

Calvin Cooper has led a very changeful life. After eight years of Catholic education at St. Philip's Grade School in Crafton, Calvin decided to attend the CAPA school for performing arts. He played upright bass in the concert band while balancing a tough curriculum that would most likely have normal kids heads spinning. "It was a good experience...a change of scenery. I got away from the whole catholic school scene for a while," Calvin smirked as he recalled the time. Ultimately, something was missing...at the end of freshman year, Calvin decided that the city life wasn't for him. "It was dreary," he added. Calvin transferred to Canevin and was one of five or six transfer students that



year. I like to think Calvin and I share a special bond in that we both came to an entirely new school and somehow managed to function properly and deal with the change. When asked his opinion on Canevin, Calvin quickly replied, "I like it a whole lot better."

Aside from his changing high schools, Calvin is rather well known for his musical talent. He's a wizard on the bass guitar and has a voice that could bring Robert Plant to his knees. Growing up, he listened to bands like Dream Theater and Les Claypool of Primus, artists who influenced his decision to pick up the bass. Calvin didn't realize he had any singing ability until two summers ago when he just started screwing around with a microphone at band practice. "One day at practice I just kinda hit up the mic and it's been that way ever since. I always loved to sing, but I never had the courage to do it," he chuckles. Currently, Calvin lends his singing talent to a Washington PA band consisting of myself and Dave and Dan Singer, a brother-rock duo that rocks something fierce.

Being such a close friend of Calvin's, one subject that is never far from his mind is philosophy. When asked what

drew him to such introspective heights, he thought for a minute and replied, “I just don’t want to go through this life meandering around without any meaning...I want to see if there’s any substance behind it.” Whether or not he actually has any better understanding of anything is up for debate.

“I think I’ve realized that I don’t understand things. I’ve taken what I thought I knew and everything I was taught and I **COOPER** (continued from page 10)

replied, “For one to really realize anything that’s going on around you, you have to step back from it, not from the perspective of being a part of it; seeing it as an outsider. You get a more objective perspective. That’s why I am quiet...a lot of times I just don’t see the reason behind what people do and I’d be lying to myself if I tried to fit in,” he thought for a while. Obviously Calvin is on some higher level of thinking.

After high school, Calvin wants to attend Washington and Jefferson College as a major in English and Philosophy. He’d use English for a living and would “enrich people’s lives with philosophy.” When asked what he’d like to accomplish in life, he responded rather deeply. “I want to have

questioned it – and now I don’t really know if it’s real or not,” he said. Calvin is a brilliant person – he questions anything and everything around him to find the validity of reality, something that sometimes leads to loneliness. As any student who knows Calvin will attest, he is extremely quiet and reserved. I grilled him pretty hard to get to the bottom of his outlook, and he simply
(continued on page 11)

completely come free of any influences I have on me and just know that I’ve...as hackneyed as it is...lived the best life that I can...and by doing that, I will have become my own person.”

Finally, when asked the traditional Canevin newspaper ending about superpowers, Calvin blew my mind once again. “I think my superpower would be immortality because in that case I would never be pressured...I’d have unlimited time to accomplish whatever I’d want to. But, I’d also want to have the ability to die. I don’t want to die without having accomplished everything I wanted to, but once I have accomplished everything, I don’t see a point in sticking around unless it’s to help other people get to that point.”

Calvin Cooper *is* the man.

A True Learning Experience

By: Calvin Cooper ‘09

Leonid staff writer

The music in literature class taught by Mr. Randy Amick, more commonly known as Mr. OG, is like a spot of oil in the rusty parts of the Bishop Canevin machine. As a student in his class, I can attest to the inspirational quality of his methods of instruction, which evoke an eagerness to learn and a fondness for knowledge.

The first day of the class was marked by Mr. Amick's vivid recollections of a number of difficult experiences in his life. He made sure we, as students, knew that we weren't going to be judged, that we could be comfortable speaking our minds in his classroom. I have never heard so many

new voices come from such old familiar faces than I have in the brief time I've attended Mr. Amick's class.

Before long, we were presented with a number of graphic novels, including “Persepolis,” the firsthand account of a young girl growing up in a war torn and culturally discombobulated Iran, and “Maus,” the harrowing journey of a man who lived as a Jewish prisoner through the Holocaust, as told by his son. Both graphic novels revealed to us the truth behind two situations that are often misrepresented, which in turn altered our perspectives on

issues including government, religion, and human life.

Each Friday, students are given a chance to play a piece of music to the class. In this manner, we gain an insight into our fellow students and are exposed to musical artists we would otherwise be ignorant to.

My experience in Mr. Amick's film and literature class has thus far been unique in my career as a student. Mr. Amick's aim is to provide his students with a stage to

discuss any and all facets of life. The class is less about earning a handsome grade, and more about experiencing humanity in all of its various forms. Inevitably, from learning so much about one another, whether it be during a class discussion or a presentation of a piece of music, we learn more about ourselves, and are therefore more prepared to lead meaningful lives that benefit the world.

Why Standardized Tests are Unfair

By: Tony Costantino '11

Leonid staff writer

We have taken standardized tests for a long time. These tests used to just be something that we did once a year in grade school that had no real effect on us. However, as we get older, the importance of standardized tests increases. Next year, we sophomores will have something major on our hands with the SAT's. This year having the PSAT's was bad enough, but next year, the real deal comes. We will be taking a test that could possibly decide where we will go to college. I believe that all standardized tests, especially the SAT's, are unfair.

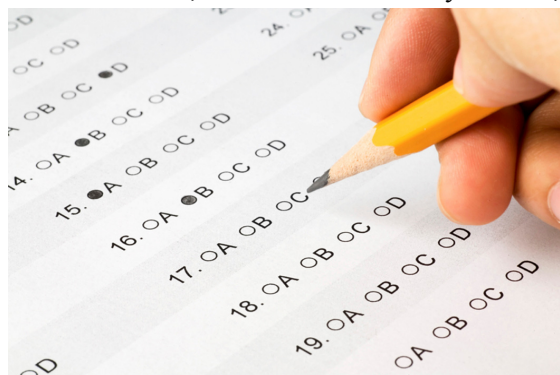
Standardized tests are unfair because we cannot study for them. We can familiarize ourselves with how the questions will be asked and general information on the topics of the tests, but we will not know the exact material until we start taking the test. How is a test fair if we have no means to prepare for it? Also, the vocabulary section on standardized tests is the most unfair of all the parts of the test. The people who create the tests can pull any obscure word out of the woodwork and put it on the test. We can be good students, but how are we supposed to know the meaning of some obscure word that we've never heard of and probably will never hear again in our lives?

I believe that standardized tests do not take into account hard work and effort. It is possible to be a student with an average intellect who is able to get good grades

through hard work and effort, but is not a good at standardized tests. Also, some people just aren't good test takers. Just because someone gets nervous while taking standardized tests or does not do well while

being rushed by a tight time frame does not mean that person is a bad student. I think more people would do better on standardized tests if there were more time. For example, I had to rush the whole time on the PSAT's and was not able to think about the questions very thoroughly. I think the time frame on all standardized tests should be expanded so it is possible to think through every question.

The one standardized test that I think is by far the most unfair is the SAT. The SAT is very unfair because it counts for so much. If we do not reach a certain level on our SAT's, some colleges will not even look at us, no matter how good our grades are. To me, that sounds really unfair,



because if we are smart and get good grades, but are not a good test taker, we may not get into some colleges. Also, what if we were just having a bad day while taking the SAT's?

Standardized tests have some good points, such as being a uniform test that

everyone takes. However, I think too much emphasis is put on them, and that they shouldn't be so important.



“How is a test fair if we have no means to prepare for it?”

A SIGN OF THE TIMES: Nickelodeon's Decline

By: Casey DeWitt '09
Leonid staff writer

I was a Nickelodeon baby. Born and raised on the stuff. The Disney Channel and Cartoon Network could never capture the magic that Nickelodeon once possessed. Sadly, this magic has come and gone. The genius that I once played witness to in Nickelodeon golden era has slowly faded into the garbage that is trying to be passed off as “quality” children's programming. In order to pay homage to this fallen paradigm, it is necessary to remember some of the more influential shows that have carried Nickelodeon to greatness.

Let's start out with the kids' stuff. Nick Jr. may have always been cheesy, but it still holds that special place in my heart. The biggest icon of Nick Jr. was obviously Face, and of course his trademarked, “ber ber ber!” (trumpet noise). “Oh Face, how your psychedelic color changes mesmerized me. Where have you gone?” Some of the more memorable shows of this time include: *Eureka's Castle*, *Allegra's Window*, and *Gullah Gullah Island*. All of these shows consisted of a cast entirely of partially made up of puppets. I recall the blue bat, Bately, and an obsession with peanut butter sandwiches from *Eureka's Castle*. *Gullah Gullah Island*, was of course home to that ridiculously huge yellow frog, Polliwog. Cartoons from this era

include the tender and insightful *Little Bear*, and the hectic *Busy World of Richard Scarry*. I do not remember all that much about this show with the exception of that awesome apple car the worm use to drive.

Once school started to get in the way of my television viewing hours, I would come home to the greetings of one of my most cherished childhood memories, Stick Stickly. I remember the various substances Stick would be dipped into in a segment called “U-Dip.” After school, game shows such as *Double Dare*, *Legends of the Hidden Temple*, and *Guts* were

always on. *Legends of the Hidden Temple* never appealed to me much because I was too young to answer the questions and also because of that freaky talking head, Olmec. *Guts* was always a disappointment due to the prizes given to the winner. After climbing the Aggro Crag, the only prizes they received were a medal and a piece of the mountain. Nickelodeon game shows were always famous for handing out pieces of their sets, though. Later on, *Figure It Out* became another popular game show. Billy the Answer Head was amazing, but the kids' talents on the show were usually pathetic. *Nick Arcade* was a

rare gem. I am almost positive this show was only on at 6:00 in the morning. Whenever I forced myself to get up and watch it, I was almost always asleep within the first ten minutes.

Most of the regular programming was just a build up for the highlight of the week, SNICK (Saturday Night Nick). This was two hours of heaven on a Saturday night for a Nick junkie.

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NICKELODEON

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A multitude of shows became famous through SNICK. *Clarissa Explains It All* starred the girl from *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*. *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* was definitely scarier than *Goosebumps*. *The Adventures of Pete and Pete* had some of the zaniest and most original humor at the time. *All That* was a great show until they changed the cast. *All That* also paved the way for one of my favorites-- *Keenan and Kel*. "Who loves orange soda? Kel loves orange soda. Is it true? I do, I do, I do-o!" Some of the other live action shows that dominated Nickelodeon's early days include: *Cousin Skeeter*, *Hey Dude*, *The Secret World of Alex Mac*, and the best of them all *Salute Your Shorts*. I remember one episode in particular that focused around the trivia question about the color of a giraffe's tongue. There was also another show called *Weinerville*. Mark Weiner hosted this program that was basically a series of puppet shows.

In many cases, Nickelodeon was most well known for its cartoons. I always admired Krumm's hairy pits from *Aaahh!!! Real Monsters*. Daggett and Norbert from *The Angry Beavers* were always kind of annoying, but Stump brought balance to their chaos. *CatDog* was always enjoyable due to Winslow's wisecracks. My most memorable episode was the one with Toothpick Head. *Hey Arnold!* appealed to a wide audience due to its diverse characters. It also had well thought out plot lines. Who can forget the famous "Stoop kid" or "Lockjaw" episodes? *KaBlam!* may very well have been the weirdest sketch show ever

devised. With skits like *Action League NOW!* and *Life with Loopy*, I cannot deny this show's truly deranged humor. I must admit to being a fan of the *Sniz and Fondue*, and especially the Prometheus and Bob segments, though. *The Ren & Stimpy Show* was a flat out piece of trash. I would classify this show as one of only a few shows in history that could mess a kid up. In my opinion it was the *South Park* of its time. *Rocket Power* was the source of many of my crushed dreams. This show caused me to ask, "Why can't I skateboard, surf, play street hockey, snowboard, roller blade, ride mountain bikes, ski, or do any other extreme sports?" This show illustrated all of the mediocrities of my life, and that was why it was so great. There's only one word I will use to sum up *Rocko's Modern Life*, and it is "Spunky!!!" *Rugrats* actually premiered exactly one year after I was born. The first episode was also about Tommy's first birthday. It was almost like destiny or something for me to like this show. How many other people in the world can say that they are exactly the same age as Tommy Pickles?

Doug may very well have been my favorite cartoon of all time. The character names alone ooze originality with names such as: Doug Funnie, Skeeter Valentine, Patti Mayonnaise, Roger Klotz, Beebe Bluff, Mr. Dink, Mr. Bone, Chalky Studebaker, and of course Porkchop. This show had so much depth that Doug, along with some of the other characters, had multiple alter egos which included: Quailman, Smash Adams, and Race Canyon. The show also had a great sense of music. Please forgive me in advanced for getting some of these songs stuck in your head. In one episode, Doug and Skeeter performed "Banging on a Trash Can. Drumming on a Street Light." This show also created an entirely unique band called "The Beets." Some of their hits included: "Killer Tofu", "I Need Mo' Allowance", and "You Gotta Shout Your Lungs Out." I feel sorry for anyone that does not recognize at least one of these songs. I really do miss this show, and I despise the Disney version with a passion.

One might say that I have moved on to bigger and better things. I



enjoy a good crime drama, and a sitcom is always good for a laugh, but it is just not the same. I possess some sort of nostalgic connection with many of the shows from my childhood. I sometimes wonder if my dissatisfaction with Nickelodeon's current state

is a result of some sort of newfound maturity, but then I find myself still watching all of the old reruns whenever they are on. I have never stopped liking them. If only I could grab one last shake with Doug at the Honker Burger.

Lance Armstrong Making a Comeback

By: Lucas Briola '09

Leonid Editor

One of America's greatest athletes is making a comeback to the sporting world. On September 8th, it was reported by *velonews.com* that Lance Armstrong, seven time winner of the Tour de France, would return to competitive cycling. On September 9th, Armstrong confirmed it in a press release, saying: "I am happy to announce that after talking with my children, my family and my closest friends, I have decided to return to professional cycling in order to raise awareness of the global cancer burden. This year alone, nearly eight million people will die of cancer worldwide. Millions more will suffer in isolation, victims not only of the disease but of social stigma. After the passage of Proposition 15 in Texas, a \$3 billion investment in the fight against cancer which is helping to make this disease part of the national dialogue in America, it's now time to address cancer on a global level."



Armstrong's Team

It looks as though Lance Armstrong will join Team Astana, despite rumors of him forming his own team, "Team Livestrong." Astana is backed by Kazakhstan's government and is registered in Luxembourg. This is not that surprising of a move, considering many of

Armstrong's old teammates are on Team Astana. Armstrong's old team, Team U.S. Postal, later renamed Team Discovery Channel, folded the year after Armstrong first retired. Johan Bruyneel, the mastermind and architect behind Armstrong's Tour de France success, transferred over to Astana to be the director sportif of the team, the same position he had on Armstrong's former team. Also, a majority of the riders, left without a team after Team Discovery Channel folded, signed contracts with Astana, including 2007 Tour de France winner Alberto Contador.

Team Astana was completely revamped that year. There was a reason for this. The previous year, the team was plagued with doping. A few of the team's top riders tested positive in the Tour de France, and the team was forced to withdraw from the race. Because of this, the team was not invited to the Tour de France in 2008, despite having the defending champion, Alberto Contador.

The team is star-studded and will probably be at the start of the Tour de France in 2009. I cannot imagine organizers turning down a team with so many stars of cycling. Also, the team has worked hard to prove itself clean from doping with internal tests and no positive doping tests for awhile.

Reasons for the Comeback

There seems to be two underlying reasons why Lance Armstrong is making the comeback.

First, he wants to raise cancer awareness across the world. Lance feels that he can do this more effectively on the bike. Because of this plan, Armstrong wants to race in as many parts of the world as he can.

Secondly, Armstrong wants to prove he's not a doper. He will have a strict self testing to go along with the team testing and

UCI testing. He will post results of the tests online and make them accessible to the public.

Armstrong's Racing Program

It appears that Lance Armstrong will make his return to road cycling in January in the first major race of the year, the "Tour Down Under." Don't expect any results from Armstrong in this five day race, with a mostly flat profile.

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ARMSTRONG

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Armstrong has said that he wants to race in South Africa, to raise cancer awareness in the country. There are two major races in South Africa. In early February, there is the 5 day stage race, the "World's View Challenge." In early March, very close to "Paris Nice," the "Giro del Capo" takes place. If Armstrong does race in South Africa, I would expect him to race in the "World's View Challenge."

Armstrong will then race in the "Amgen Tour of California" in late February. This will be Lance's return to racing in the U.S. While the stage race could favor a rider like him, with a decisive time trial in the middle of it, he will most likely ride in support of his teammate, American Levi Leipheimer. Leipheimer, one of the United States' most talented riders has won the last two editions of the race and is a California native. Lance will still be working on getting back on form, so he will gladly accept working for one of his teammates.

Armstrong will then race in "Paris-Nice" in March, a prestigious stage race in France. Armstrong will probably go for stage wins in this race, and help



support the team.

Lance will encounter the first big mountains when he races in the "Tour de Georgia." Armstrong has won this race before, in 2004, and I would definitely consider him to be a contender this year. Look for him to win the race. Earlier on the year, however, the "Tour de Georgia" lost its sponsor and may be shutdown. However, with Armstrong planning to ride in the race, I think the race will be able to find a new sponsor.

For the first time in his career, Lance Armstrong will be racing in the Giro d'Italia (Tour of Italy). Like the Tour de France, it is a three week stage race. This will be Armstrong's big goal of the year, and will be the leader of the team. However, many elite Italians will be trying to win because it is the Giro's 100th anniversary. While I don't think Armstrong will win the race, he has had a certain reputation for defying odds, and many cyclist and cycling pundits consider him to be a the number one contender for the win.

As shocking as it sounds, it looks as if Lance will not ride in the Tour de France. However, it really isn't that surprising. If he did ride the Tour, he would probably not be the leader, nor would he deserve to be. The team has some of the top contenders for victory in Alberto Contador, Levi Leipheimer, and Haimar Zubeldia. Armstrong might create a schism amongst the team, so he probably will not ride it. Racing in the Tour might deter and distract from his anti-cancer message with all the controversy that may surround him. Even in Armstrong does race in the Tour, he'd probably ride in support of Contador, giving up his own chance to win.

Armstrong's racing schedule is very cloudy after the Giro d'Italia. There is still question whether or not he'll do the Tour de France. He may race in smaller races around the world. If he doesn't race in the Tour de France, he may race in the third and final three week stage race of the year, the Vuelta a Espana.

I greatly respect Lance Armstrong in his comeback. It is a seemingly impossible and extraordinary task. He isn't doing it for any personal reasons. Instead, he is doing it to raise

cancer awareness. Who could possibly argue with such altruistic motives, besides the French?

“It looks as if Lance will not ride in the Tour de France and go for an eighth win.”

By: Brady Langmann '12
Leonid staff writer

While most of Pittsburgh’s population has turned to the Penguins and surging Steelers for the upcoming months and away from the Pirates and baseball altogether, one of the greatest post seasons in baseball history is in full swing. From the unbelievable rise of the Rays to the big names of Philly, here’s what you may have missed.

First of all, I have to start from the beginning with the power house Cubs falling at the hands of the Dodgers in an embarrassing 3-game sweep, sending every Cubs fan’s aspirations into the garbage for the 100th straight year—literally. Pitcher Cole Hamels plowed over the Brewers to set up an even match up of the Phillies and the Dodgers...or so we thought. The determined Phillies went on to score at least 5 or more runs in 4 of their 5 games in a 4-1 rout of Los Angeles, crediting most of their offensive outburst to perennial all-stars such as Ryan Howard and Chase Utley, both posting above a .300 average and 5 home runs between the two of them to this date. While it may seem like the extraordinary is taking over the NL, it’s even crazier in the AL! It all started when the reigning World Champion Red Sox strode into Anaheim playing underdog for the first time in recent memory as the Angels looked to ease their way into a World Series berth, coming into the playoffs as the #1 seed. That was not the case. Boston was well, Boston, as they jumped out to a 2-0 lead and barely looked back to win the series 3-1. Over in Tampa Bay, the Rays were under extreme pressure, facing speculation that their ball club had faded off since the first half of the season. That also, was not the case as the Rays, led by young guns such as Evan

for the Ages

Longoria and B.J. Upton, sent the South Side of Chicago packing en route to a 3-1 win. That leads us to the biggest highlight thus far in this post-season—Boston vs. Tampa Bay. Everything seemed great for the Rays, striding

into a comfortable 3-1 lead, until seven outs to go in Game 5. The Rays were winning by seven runs when Dustin Pedroia hit an RBI single to spark a historic rally that ended with an 8-7 win, all leading up to a decisive Game 7 where Matt Garza took the mound with probably the most important game of his career, and sent the Red Sox home titleless, while snagging ALCS MVP honors while holding the Sox to one run.

Well, there you have it. One of the greatest comebacks in baseball history, the franchises on the rise, the teams who just can’t get it together, and the young stars, as well as the old. The World Series pits the Rays against the Phillies, two teams who seven months ago, were never thought to be in this position, a long shot for even a playoff berth, especially the Rays, who had the worst record in baseball just one year ago.

So who will win this epic match up?! I’m going to have to go with the Rays. Pitching will probably be the key factor in this series, considering both teams have been superb at the plate, and whoever can stop the opposing offense will most likely have the upper hand, and although Cole Hamels and closer Brad Lidge have been lights out for the Phils, everyone else has been inconsistent and unreliable, while the unstoppable trio of Garza, ace Scott Kazmir, and



James Shields will prove too much for the Phillies, and Tampa Bay's deep lineup will overwhelm Philadelphia. All in all, I believe that Tampa Bay Rays will cap off their Cinderella season with a World Series win.

(Editor's note: When the paper went to press, the World Series had just begun.)

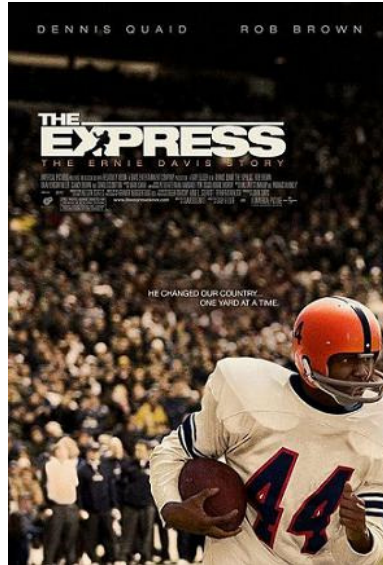
The Express: Movie Review

By: Catherine Lamm '09
Leonid staff writer

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to watch *The Express* with my dad. I saw the trailers, but I did not know what it was about until the day before on the radio. Sean Hannity interviewed the main people in Ernie Davis's life.

This movie is a definite tearjerker. It is an inspirational sports documentary based on the Ernie Davis story, which he wrote for a local newspaper. This movie deals with the themes of racism and courage.

The film begins when the Syracuse Orangemen were playing the Cotton Bowl championship game. Then it flashes back to when he was on the railroad tracks



in a Pennsylvania coal mining town. Ernie joins the Elmira peewee team and takes his high school team to the playoffs. Ernie is the fastest running back of his time.

Coach Schwartzwalder sees this teen's potential, so he lets him join the team. On the field and off the field there are signs of racism from the players and the fans, especially WVU and Texas. Ernie knows that he can play football, but realizes that he is fighting something deeper than football. This is his mindset while he is playing in the Cotton Bowl and breaking the barrier. He was the first African American to win the Heisman Trophy.

I think this movie was very informative and touching. I liked seeing the actual footage of President Kennedy shaking Ernie Davis's hand. I think it is ironic that Ernie died at the age of 23 of leukemia on May 18, 1963 while JFK died on November 22, 1963.

Question of the Month: Favorite Horror Movie

This issue brings back the question of the month. This issue's burning question is, "What is your all-time favorite horror movie?" Here are some of your answers:

Texas Chainsaw Massacre-- Zack Daley
The Descent-- Nathan Allen
Saw—Tori Murray
Carrie—Marque Marry
Chuckie-- Taylor Bodnar
Saw movies --Jessica Palfreyman
Scream-- Nick Capuano
Halloween I—Joe Knittel
The Exorcism of Emily Rose-- Jen Karabinos
The Others—Maddy Burgess
Scream – Angela Bianco

Saw-- Jamie Bond
The Exorcism of Emily Rose—Sean Cardello
Saw II-- Ray Fatfat
Dead or Alive-- Kelsey Heidenreich
Saw-- Nick Marini
It-- Dan Crowley
Texas Chainsaw Massacre-- Jake Presken
Scary Movie II—Ethan Shatzer
Saw series—Rob Hungerman
The Exorcist-- Mr. Bull
Quarantine—Nico Palmosina

Scary Movie—Trey Bucci
Hostel-- Kirk Nypaver
Jacob's Ladder-- Mr. Lang
Saw-- Brandon Barbarow
Halloween-- Alanna Trosky
The Notebook – Fran Lison
The Blair Witch Project – Calvin Cooper
It – Alex Shaw

Fright Night – Brianne Mackin
Amityville Horror – Alison Hufnagel
Silence of the Lambs – Casey DeWitt
Night of the Living Dead – Mr. Wanamaker
Amityville Horror – Chelsea Miller
Psycho – Catherine Lamm
The Shining – Mr. Romano
The Messengers – Jenny Klimek

Music Preview for November

By: Fran Lison '09
Leonid Staff Writer

For those dedicated subscribers of this literary publication that actually read the music section, I'd like to take a few pages to fill ya'll in on two of my favorite bands of the past ten years, the **Drive by Truckers** and the **Hold Steady**. Be aware that they are touring together for a monumental run of co-headlining shows that has united the southern and northern indie-music scenes in an unprecedented way. They roll into Pittsburgh on November 12th, and if you're new to bands with actual integrity and artistic value, seeing these two bands together would be an excellent starting point.

This fall and winter are shaping up to be quite exciting. **Neil Young** is taking the critically and universally renowned **Wilco** out on tour with him, and if I wasn't preoccupied with keeping all of the kids at Canevin happy, I'd hop in my Honda Accord and go on my very own magical mystery tour. Be on the lookout for the new **Ryan Adams** record, *Cardinology*, which drops on October 28th. From what I've heard off of my press copy of the album, it's quite good: slick, concise and melodic.

Music Review

Brighter Than Creation's Dark

The Drive By Truckers

By: Fran Lison '09
Leonid staff writer

America's favorite southern rock band, Drive by Truckers, have had quite a year. Key songwriter and guitarist Jason Isbell departed from the band following the dissolution of his marriage to DBT bassist Shonna Tucker, and legendary keyboard player Spooner Oldham came aboard to round out the sound in his absence. After the concise, brilliant *A Blessing and a Curse* in 2006, the Truckers' two mainmen, Patterson Hood and Mike Cooley decided to turn in a sprawling double album's worth of laid-back Americana with their 2008 release, *Brighter Than Creation's Dark*.

Brighter opens up with the most beautiful track Hood has ever penned, the mellow, acoustic driven "Two Daughters and a Beautiful Wife." The song tells the true story of a friend who was gunned down inside his home as his wife and daughters slept. After the emotional opener, the Truckers treat us to possibly the greatest Rolling Stones song never written, the Cooley penned "3 Dimes Down." Riding high off of a nasty, distorted guitar riff

and some slick slide guitar, Cooley spits out his infamous lyrical twists while Spooner Oldham hovers in the back with some nice organ touches throughout. From there we're taken on a joyride through the American midwest with Hood's "The Righteous Path," probably the greatest

song that Neil Young and Crazy Horse never wrote.

After the near perfect three opening songs of this record, things start to get sketchy. Shonna Tucker steps in to replace her husband's role in the band with "I'm Sorry Huston." While her track is very good and features some excellent backing vocals by Hood, it pales in comparison to previous Trucker efforts. Cooley steps up to the plate next with "Perfect Timing," and while it isn't his best song, it saves face for the time being. Hood is up next, with the lackluster "Daddy Needs a Drink," a song that very well could have been left off the record. The next three tracks, Cooley's "Self Destructive Zones," and "Bob," possibly the worst song he's ever written, and the Tucker sung, Dixie Chicks re-write "Home Field Advantage," are to be brutally honest, just plain awful.

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BRIGHTER

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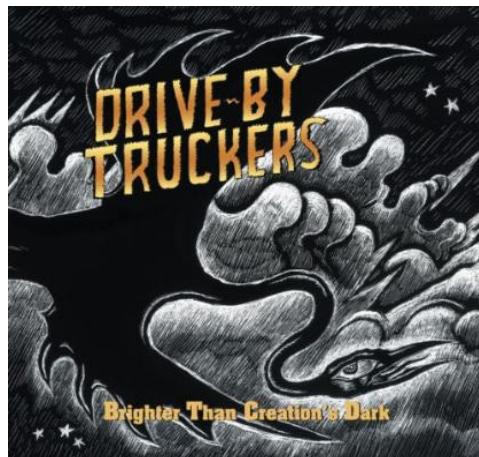
Thankfully Patterson saves the day with the laid-back yet brilliant "The Opening Act." Hood retells some of the Truckers' days as lesser-knowns, playing seedy bars with mechanical bulls and sleazy headliners. "I'm just the opening act," he sings, as a weeping slide and some depressed organ notes drone behind him. After this fleeting glimpse of brilliance after the three worst Trucker songs ever, Cooley threatens to ruin the record again with the country tune "Lisa's Birthday." Thankfully, as if to make up for Cooley's wretched tune, Hood distorts his Les Paul into oblivion and violently coaxes some Neil Young style riffs on "That Man I Shot," the album center piece and highlight. The tune is Patterson Hood's response to the Iraq war, a heartbreaking story told from the viewpoint of a soldier who had to kill in the heat of battle. The Truckers grind away behind him, with Cooley and Hood trading riffs and Tucker thumping away on bass. This song has classic Truckers written all over it, and it will certainly become a live

staple for years to come.

After the epic Hood tune, the Truckers really hit their stride and bring the record into its victory lap, but not without some hurdles in between. The Tucker penned "Purgatory Line" and the Hood lament "You and Your Crystal Meth" should have without a doubt been left off of this record. Thankfully, 5 of the last 7 songs are up to the Drive By Truckers level of brilliance. Cooley's final efforts, the haunting, aching "Checkout Time in Vegas," and the rollicking "A Ghost to Most" are up to par with some of his best songs. "Ghost" features some of his best lyrical twists, with lines like "*skeletons ain't got nowhere to stick they're money, nobody makes britches that size,*" tossed off like one liners come easy. Hood's latter efforts are also nothing short of brilliant. The weary "The Home Front" is Hood's female response to "That Man I Shot," a tale about a wife and a daughter left alone as their husband and father fights Bush's war. "Goode's Field Road," a blues-driven romp, takes the listener straight into the swamps of Muscle Shoals. Spooner Oldham lays down some groovy keyboards, while Cooley and slide guitarist John Neff trade off some guitar licks. Hood finally ends the drawn out *Creation's Dark* with the mellow send off "Monument Valley." Truly one of Patterson's most beautiful songs, it ends the rather dark affair on a hopeful note. "And when the dust all settles and the story is told, history is made by the side of the road," he sings, comforting the listener for whatever pain they might be experiencing.

Honestly, it pains me very much that there are some misses on *Creation's Dark*. After the epic run of perfect records from 2001 to 2006, there is no reason that the Truckers' latest effort couldn't have been perfect too. The songs are there; wipe away the ones that aren't up to snuff and you've got a brilliant, albeit dark record that explores depths that Hood and co. have never delved into.

The Truckers are taking part in the "Rock and



Roll Means Well” tour, co-headlining with indie-favorites The Hold Steady. They make a Pittsburgh stop on November 12th. Both bands are known for their incendiary live show, so this isn’t one to miss.

The annotated Brighter Than Creation’s Dark

- 1) Two Daughters and a Beautiful Wife
- 2) Three Dimes Down
- 3) The Righteous Path
- 4) I’m Sorry Huston
- 5) Perfect Timing
- 6) The Opening Act
- 7) That Man I Shot
- 8) The Home Front
- 9) Checkout Time in Vegas
- 10) Goode’s Field Road
- 11) A Ghost to Most
- 12) The Monument Valley

Music Review

Stay Positive The Hold Steady

By: Fran Lison ‘09
Leonid staff writer

The Hold Steady have made a name for themselves over the past few years, turning in perfect albums like *Separation Sunday* and *Boys and Girls in America*. They’ve been compared by just about every music writer to the likes of Bruce Springsteen to the punk rock edge of The Fall. In my estimation, what America has here is the best kept secret in the rock genre period. These guys party hard, make fun music, and most of all, they live for it.

Stay Positive opens up with the driving “Constructive Summer.” Lead singer Craig Finn sets the tone for the record instantly, opening up with the lyric “*Me and my friends are like...the drums on "Lust for Life." We pound it out on floor toms, our psalms are sing-a-long songs.*” After the Clash-like opener, The Hold Steady pounds out the most catchy single of 2008, “Sequestered in Memphis.” Driven by rolling keyboards and some dashing horns, the song is like a long forgotten classic rock staple.

Stay Positive takes a turn for the dark end of the street with the strange “One for the Cutters,” a narrative about a small town murder, backed by a harpsichord. Yup.... A harpsichord. This song is the most polarizing on the album, being criticized not only for its lyrics but its strange production. However, I personally feel that the song is nothing short of the peaks the Hold Steady has hit in the past. The only clunker on the record is track #4, the brainless “Navy Sheets”. I forgive Finn and the boys, though, because the next song could be the best one they’ve written so far.

“Lord I’m Discouraged” is the antithesis of every song the Hold Steady has ever written. It starts off slow, almost dirge-like, with disheartened lyrics that are quite self-explanatory. The song builds and builds, however, into an epic crescendo that climaxes with Hold Steady guitarist Tad Kubler launching

into the greatest 80’s power ballad guitar solo that never was. As Mr. Amick told me once, this song makes him want to hold a lighter in the air. It’s all up from there. The band launches into the keyboard driven pop song “Yeah Sapphire,” followed by the acoustic brilliance of “Both Crosses,” a song that hints back at Finn’s favorite lyrical subject, redemption.

Finally, I like to consider the last four songs of this record as the grand finale. The title track drives along a chunky power chord rhythm, with Finn singing the album’s mantra. “We gotta stay positive!” He sings, backed by “woah woah woah’s!” that would make any punk/ska band jealous. The next song, “Magazines,” is a power pop nugget that would win over any skeptic of the band. The final moments of *Stay Positive* are the most experimental and overall the most rewarding.

“Joke About Jamaica” is a rather tongue-in-cheek tale about Led Zeppelin and its lyrical quirks. The band jumps back and forth between a chunky rhythm on the verses and a soaring chorus, with Finn paying his respects to the band that started hard rock as we know it. This song sounds best blasted from a car stereo with the windows down and the breeze waving through your hair.

The Hold Steady saved the best for last, though. “Slapped Actress” is nothing short of

perfect. Kubler's guitar nearly jumps out of the speakers and attacks the listener, while heavy drums and keyboards pound away in the background. Finn also delivers some of his best lyrics yet, with lines like "*we are the theatre, they are the people. Dressed up to be seated, looking upwards and dreaming,*" referencing the cinematic element of their live show, which is reportedly a near religious affair. "*Man, we make our own movies,*" Craig Finn sings, as the

song fades into oblivion and all we are left with is collective backing vocals that sound straight out of a Greek chorus. Stay Positive is another win for the Hold Steady. Not only is it one of their best albums, it's up there with the likes of *Dig, Lazarus Dig!!!* for album of 2008.

Be sure to catch the Hold Steady on November 12th, as they roll into town with the Drive By Truckers for an evening of rock n roll, love and more rock n roll.

90s MUSIC

By John Gerlowski '09
Leonid staff writer

Recently, I've been getting nostalgic about things. This being my senior year, I find myself spending my nights waxing over the "good-ol'-days" by listening to some old cds, which, due to the generosity of my cousin, have grown quite extensively.

It's not that I don't like today's music, although I'm not particularly pleased with the mainstream music scenes recently, I just miss the days when I could walk into a friendly Wal*Mart electronics section and see a Less than Jake music video simultaneously playing on 25 TVs at once. Perhaps I'm just being negative, but I don't see any comparison between the likes of Pearl Jam, R.E.M., the Pixies, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Soulja Boy, T-Pain, Kenny Chesney, and Chris Brown.

Possibly the best thing about the 90s was the distribution of radio time through various genres. I could flip on the B94 at any time of the day and find some good music. Not only that, non mainstream bands still got play. I'm pretty biased, but if I remember correctly, even ska bands got a little playtime back then. Does anyone remember "The Impression That I Get" by the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, or "Don't Speak" by No Doubt? Even one of my favorite bands, Sublime, had some mainstream hits back then.

Another thing, so called "boy bands" absolutely took over the airwaves and the hearts of prepubescent girls all over the country in the 90s. I still personally feel that "Mmm Bop" might have been the greatest song of my small life, and I'm not ashamed; I have that record sitting on a shelf in my cupboard. Ya know what? I still remember going over my friend's house and seeing the Backstreet Boys case setting there. Of course, he denied it at first, but then we had to confess that they had some really decent songs in the end.

Perhaps in the "right church, wrong pew," would be the laid back feel. Music didn't have to be a dead serious ballad anymore. This gave some credence to fun bands such as the Spice Girls and the Aquabats (the latter of which never had ANY commercial popularity except in southern California) who gave light, relatable themes funky rhythms and lyrics that would stick in your head for months. Both bands had action figures and mythic personas and names which seemed to ad to the mania. Girls all around the country were asking themselves "Am I Sporty Spice or Ginger Spice?"

But, perhaps the greatest music movement of the 90s was the one with the greatest and most descriptive genre name in history, Grunge. Also called the "Seattle Sound," this was perhaps marked by the two greatest grunge bands, Nirvana and Pearl Jam. Pearl Jam was the only one who has truly stood the test of time, as far as mainstream success is concerned, but many grunge artists have followed in their angst-filled footsteps, such as the Stone Temple Pilots.

I'm not exactly "straight up from the streets," but even I could appreciate rap in the 90s, which, unlike rap and hip hop today, have some sort of conscience. Undoubtedly I'm talking about Coolio's "Gangster's Paradise," but there were other songs that carried a message, which seems to be missing in recent music.

Yeah, maybe I'm rambling here, but I must say that the creative freedom in the 90s was unbelievable by today's standards. Just look at the indie scene that has come out of 90s mainstream music. REM put out several solid albums in that decade, and Radiohead has been releasing albums consistently since then. Even though this may be a stretch, the Pixies are one of my favorite bands and released at least one album in the early 90s.

Now that I'm thinking about it, I'm not being picky, or negative, or fickle, or a rebel. The 90s was possibly the greatest decade in American music, and if not the greatest, then I challenge anyone to make a decent case otherwise. Anyway, you kids can have your fancy hip hop, music with your curse words and slang terms and whatnot. I miss the music that spoke to me. Now if you'll excuse me, my record label samplers are waiting for me.

The 2008 Election: an historic one

By: Zach Retort '09

Leonid staff writer

In this day and age of 24 hours news coverage, I often glance at the election coverage they show with its images of John McCain and Barack Obama. It's all starting to seem like a huge non-stop disco party of politics that is beginning to get really weird. But, I've said enough about this weird trip of politics that I seem to be going down. I'll just give the reader the facts about this year's election.

It started in January '08 when Barack Obama beat Hilary Clinton for the Democratic ticket. By that time, John McCain had already won the Republican Party ticket. Many candidates dropped out or gave up because they realized the sad truth that they couldn't beat a maverick like John McCain.

The candidates' running mates have histories of their own that can only be described. Joe Biden, Obama's running mate, has been a Delaware senator from 1972 to present. Sarah Palin, McCain's running mate is the governor of Alaska. Her effectiveness to run the country has been satirized on *Saturday Night Live*. Tina Fey does a pretty good job of covering Governor Palin's speech and mannerisms.

John McCain was a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War and serves his country proudly. Barack Obama was a lawyer for 14 years and campaigned for civil rights for African Americans everywhere.

The race for the presidency is shaping up to be an historical one. So, let's all sit back and enjoy the ride.

**In this room where shadows live
The light hits a barrier to create a life
They slither
They crawl
They darken
They grow
I'm absorbed in their lies, no matter how hard I try
The shadows will not dance; they do not jump
Sit there and pretend to be something they're not
They do nothing
They do everything
They create the scene
They destroy a corner that no one sees**

Now you see it, now you don't; the living shadows hold you by the throat
Always associated with darkness, shadows are,
But in this room where shadows live
We look
We fall
We see
We're deceived
Now you see it, now you don't; these politicians grasp you by the throat.

--Nick Hart '11

November Horoscopes

By **Overly Dramatic Dude**

Aries: So it's that time again, time for you to clean the wax from your ears before you miss the most important answer to come your way. If you miss it, then you will have to suffer through the rest of the month in agony of not knowing.

Taurus: Your life does not look good. Not getting the latest game is the least of your problems this month. You must take some chocolate milk and drink it before the worst to come gets you.

Gemini: If you were thinking about life right now, just wait until your report card gets there.

Cancer: Diagnosis is bleak. If you find yourself repeating the same old same old to those around you, then change your hair color, you conventionalist.

Leo: If you look up and see a cloud that is shaped like a heart, then you will find true love. If, however, you think that's a storm cloud, then hold your umbrella high.

Virgo: My dear Virgo, you get the lucky stick. Mundane and boring times are to come. Nothing good, but then again, you don't have bad grades-- so go out and enjoy life, you nihilist.

Libra: Knowledge is power, but it won't help you in that fistfight you got yourself into when you bumped into that brick wall.

Scorpio: Should you find any bug bites on your arms, I would recommend a quick trip to the doctors.

Sagittarius: Dreary is a word, but dilemma is a stronger word for your month. You will find yourself in a dark room, so turn on the light before you trip over something like your dignity.

Capricorn: The torment you are going to be put through by your girl/boyfriend is going

to be more intense than usual since he/she found that you were seen looking up the idiot guide to dating.

Aquarius: Consider the old words “when one door closes, another opens.” Yes, remember this when your girl/boyfriend slams the door in your face.

Pisces: Someone will really be enjoying your name, especially when they are using your credit card to purchase that new high-def TV they have been dying for.