



The St. Clairion

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

Steelers are still super

By: Nick Buzzelli
Assistant Sports Editor

In the 1970's the Pittsburgh Steelers set a mark in the NFL by winning four Super Bowls in a span of five years. The Steelers are Super Bowl champions yet again, shattering the record books and becoming the first NFL franchise to win a sixth Super Bowl. The Steelers are among the NFL's elite teams and can still bear the nickname "Super Steelers" after a stunning victory over the Arizona Cardinals, a franchise that made their first ever super bowl appearance.

The team the Steelers were facing off against was the Arizona Cardinals of the NFC.

The Steelers started the game with a Jeff Reed field goal from 18 yards after a Ben Roethlisberger touchdown scramble was challenged by Cardinal's head coach and former Steelers' offensive coordinator Ken Whisenhunt. The play was ultimately overturned however. The

Steelers defense played tough in the first quarter, keeping the high-powered Cardinal offense off of the scoreboard. Gary Russell, the Steelers short yardage back came into the game to score from one yard out and give Pittsburgh a ten point advantage early in the second quarter. The Cardinals countered the Steelers attack with a Kurt Warner to Ben Patrick score. With the final seconds of the half closing in, Kurt Warner's throw to put the Cards ahead was intercepted by the defensive player of the year, James

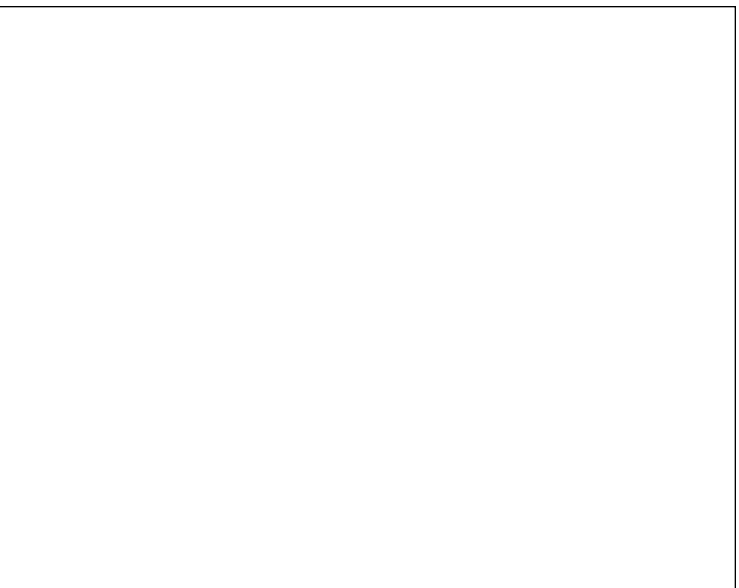
Harrison. Harrison returned

Although the play was reviewed by NFL officials, Harrison's pick stood, and it was the longest play in Super Bowl history. The Super Steelers went into the locker room with a 17-7 advantage.

Steelers' place-kicker Jeff Reed showed why he was a valuable asset to this team by adding another third quarter kick. Warner then connected with Larry Fitzgerald, the leading post-season receiver, for a short yardage score to shorten the deficit. While the Steelers were trying to get out of their own end zone and avoid a safety, Pittsburgh center Justin Hartwig

was called for holding, resulting in two points for the Cardinals. With less than three minutes left in the game, Kurt Warner once again connected with Fitzgerald on a 64 yard touchdown pass. Steelers' fans thought that was the final nail in the coffin of their season, but thanks to the late heroics of Roethlisberger and Antonio Holmes, the Lombardi trophy was once again brought to the 'burgh. Roethlisberger threw to Holmes in the back of the end zone for a game-winning TD. "My feet never left the ground," said the Super Bowl XLIII MVP Holmes. "I extended my arms and used my toes as extra extension to catch up to the ball" (www.post gazette.com).

Before Pittsburgh was awarded its sixth Lombardi trophy, a three-way tie was in place for super bowl victories between the Steelers, Cowboys, and 49ers (www.nfl.com). The football history books were rewritten and the Steelers are now the only franchise at the moment that will be able to do just that.



Steelers' LaMarr Woodley causes Cardinals quarterback Kurt Warner to fumble the ball as the Pittsburgh Steelers beat the Arizona Cardinals 27-23 in Super Bowl XLIII at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Florida, Sunday, February 1, 2009. (Terry Gilliam/MCT)

Warner's pass 100 yards for a touchdown right before the half.

Israel continues attacks after cease-fire

By: Madeline Kushner
Assistant Entertainment Editor

On January 7, Israel and Hamas shared a cease-fire that lasted three hours. The cease-fire ended when gun shots sounded at the edge of Gaza City (www.timesonline.com).

The cease-fire was the result of the deaths of about 40 civilians located in a United Nations school in Gaza. The deaths caused so much pressure for the cease-fire that Israel stopped its military action for the duration of three hours. The pause in action allowed charitable help and fuel to be delivered to citizens of Gaza (www.nytimes.com).

The fighting began again when leaflets were released by the Israeli army. The leaflets were used as a sign to get people who live in the city of Rafah (on the border of Egypt) to evacuate their residences, for Israel has been attacking tunnel systems with bombs. These tunnel systems allow weapons and goods to be taken to Gaza from Egypt (www.nytimes.com).

The fighting also resumed when a car containing a Palestinian man and his family exploded (www.timesonline.com).

Even so, Nicolas Sarkozy, the President of France, Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian President, and the Israeli government are proposing ideas to form a lasting cease-fire. Israel stated that the country would agree to a cease-fire when the launching of rockets ceases, along with the transportation of weapons to Gaza from Egypt. If these actions were to halt, Israel would allow citizens to cross the Gaza border in order to retrieve goods and people (www.nytimes.com). However, Hamas wants to control the border crossing and Hamas also wants the weapon trade from Rafah to Egypt to continue.

While negotiations were being made, air strikes occurred on the Gaza strip on February 9, 2009. The strikes were a form of retaliation to Palestinians who launched rockets in Israel a few days before the retaliation was made (www.cnn.com).

The air strikes were aimed at two Hamas bases which were located at both a northern and southern point of the strip. The two air strikes then allow there to be over 35 Qassam rockets, mortars, and Grad missiles to have been launched since the halt of cease-fires on January 21 (www.cnn.com).

President Obama fulfills promise of change as his term begins

By: JP Gooderham
Editor-in-Chief

Barack Obama's path to the White House was a hard-fought battle, and the American people ultimately recognized the Democrat as their leader because of his optimism and plans for progress. On January 20, 2009, Obama's first term as our President began in style with numerous festivities celebrating the Inauguration. Shortly afterward, however, Obama's sights were set on fulfilling his campaign promises.

The transition from the Bush Administration, criticized widely on the domestic and international fronts, to the Obama Administration was drastic. "From his first moments in office, Obama began initiating the sharp break with his predecessor's policies that he had promised as a candidate: meeting with military leaders to begin planning the drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq, signing executive orders eliminating many of the tools Bush had used in the battle against terrorism, imposing new ethics rules, and taking the first steps toward providing more transparency in government" (www.wash-

ingtonpost.com).

One significant policy change was the executive order to initiate the process of closing America's prison facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This order, given on Obama's second full day in office, states "that the detention facility be closed within a year. According to the administration, closure of the facility is the ultimate goal. The order establishes a review process with the goal of disposing of the detainees before closing the facility" (www.politifact.com).

Another significant shift occurred in Obama's proposal of a new policy on gas emissions. Unlike the Bush Administration's decision to limit the ability of states to set standards on automobile emissions, Obama's policy allows states to strictly regulate emissions: "The administration is not trying to burden struggling automakers, Obama said, 'it is to help American automakers prepare for the future.' For the sake of our security, our economy and our planet, we must have the courage and commitment to change" (www.usatoday.com). Through this policy, Obama hopes "to reverse our dependence on foreign oil

while building a new energy economy that will create millions of jobs" (www.usatoday.com).

After stating that he would remove the ban on stem cell research imposed by President Bush, the Food and Drug Administration rapidly allowed for new tests to be conducted. "The Food and Drug Administration approved a request from Geron of Menlo Park to test the stem cells on eight to 10 patients with severe spinal cord injuries. The study, which will be conducted at seven medical centers, is aimed primarily at determining the safety of the cells in human subjects, but researchers also will look for any signs that the therapy restored sensation or movement" (www.washingtonpost.com)

Although Obama's first weeks demonstrated his commitment to fulfilling his promises, the President has informed the public that some of his aims may take longer than expected. Obama explained, "I want to be realistic here — not everything that we talked about during the campaign are we going to be able to do on the pace that we had hoped" (www.news.yahoo.com).

Panther
Predilections

What do you plan on
doing for Spring
Break?

“Florida”
– Will Aloe
Freshman

“Stay home or hang out
with my frineds.”
– Serena Virgi
Sophomore

“I plan on going to the
Bahamas and hitting it off
with some hot Carribean
chick.”
– Joey Kennedy
Junior

“Hopefully get an accept-
ance letter from college.”
– Jordi McDonough
Senior

By: Dallion L. Townsend
Opinions Editor

Desk of the Editor
College admissions process challenges students

By: JP Gooderham
Editor-in-Chief

Any senior at Upper St. Clair High School would agree that surviving the college admissions process is no laughing matter. For some, the challenging world of high stakes college admissions has become a significant source of stress and worry over the last several months. Additionally, the anxiety that many seniors feel will only intensify in coming months, a time when many prestigious colleges will announce which applicants will be invited to attend in the fall.

It is a well-known fact, at this point, that being admitted to a highly ranked college or university is becoming increasingly difficult. Schools from across the board have seen application numbers rise, and many of these schools have reported that the 2009 application season has set record numbers for the sheer number of applicants.

These applicants, a majority of whom, in most cases, will be rejected, spent months (and arguably years) jumping through the hurdles necessary to become a competitive college applicant. Aside from the obvious prerequisites such as good grades or high scores on the college entrance exams, today’s college applicant is expected to do much more.

Stellar performance in extracurricular activities, partic-

ipation in volunteer opportunities, holding a part-time job, and other work outside of the classroom have become increasingly influential in decisions to admit or reject prospective students. As a result, the incentive to put

more on one’s plate, so to speak, has increased dramatically in the hope of standing out when the application reaches the admissions committee.

Consequently, some students find themselves stuck spending time in clubs, sports, and activities that they have little or no interest in, in the first place. There are obvious counterexamples as most students identify extracurricular interests that they actually enjoy, but students who frequently participate in clubs and sports will almost certainly remember a time when they have come across a less than dedicated student.

Although it is probably

healthy to experiment with new interests, forcing one’s self to participate may be detrimental. With little time left to explore our passions before entering the real world, the opportunity to search for clues as to what our future should include is a critical step in this transition. By limiting one’s participation in enjoyable activities in order to invest time in less desirable opportunities, students are deprived of a crucial component of a superb education. These attempts to pad a resume or dazzle the admissions board are frequently unsuccessful anyway as experts often recognize the difference between true passion and apathy.

After a student has successfully navigated through the obstacles en route to the senior year, he or she faces another overwhelming barrier: the application. Though many would contend that today’s student is significantly better off than those who did not have access to the now widely used Common Application, the development, in many ways, has done little to alleviate the difficulty of applying. While students no longer must submit basic information (i.e. name, address, activities) to individual schools, they are still faced with numerous supplements and slight differences among their potential schools. In this way, the most time consuming portion of the admissions process

may be as difficult as it was a decade ago prior to the Common Application. Given the difficulty of choosing among extremely qualified students, this component of the application is ultimately vital to helping the admissions office gain a better understanding of the student.

However, with admission rates plummeting as the applicant pool multiplies in size, students often drown in ten or more applications.

Though the application may be challenging because of its length, a concern that many students must cope with is the question of what colleges are looking for.

Many a student has tried to tailor his or her essays to give what they deem to be the impression which the admissions office would like to see. Ironically, admissions officers frequently respond to this question by telling students to be themselves.

Despite this advice, the lack of clarity as to how students are admitted or rejected bothers many applicants.

Despite the application’s measures to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the applicant, many students are still dissatisfied.

Senior Stephen Wellard, for instance, comments that “The application process doesn’t accurately reflect the applicant.”

Why not let the man coach?

Dallion L. Townsend
Opinions Editor

Joe Paterno has been coaching for Penn State since 1950, and has been head coach since 1966. “There is no simpler way to say it: Joe Paterno is Penn State,” writes Tim Hyland of www.about.com.

“Penn State coach Joe Paterno has a new three-year contract extension to go along with his new hip. The Hall of Famer and winningest coach in major college football history has agreed to a new deal with the university, the athletic department said [December 16] in a statement. The agree-

ment will provide ‘for the opportunity of Coach Joe Paterno leading the football program through the 2011 season,’ the statement said” (www.espn.com). This has led skeptics to believe that Paterno, 82, may be too old to continue coaching.

Even after a Rose Bowl appearance with the eighth ranked Nittany Lions (11-1), questions still linger whether or not this coaching legend is fit to go through the grind of coaching for the next three years.

Really? There is no such rule in intercollegiate sports saying that coaches have an

age limit, nor do they have to Who cares if his Gatorade bottle is filled with Metamucil? Who cares if he needs an ambulance on hand when he goes out onto the field of Beaver Stadium?

If the team is still winning and is still a force in the Big Ten, I do not see why JoePa has to take the fast-track to retirement. In an interview following his contract extension, Paterno stated, “There’s no reason for me not to think that I can go for a while,” he said, and continued “Now how long is a while? I don’t know” (www.ap.com).

If he feels good enough to

coach, that should be good enough for Penn State fans as well. His players and everyone in the organization respects him, but why can’t college football analysts or fans?

Despite being a top-of-the line coach, he is among the bottom five percent in coaching salary making just over \$500,000 per season in base salary. (www.forbes.com).

There is absolutely no reason to be distressed that the best college coach, arguably of all time, is coaching until he is 85.

If he claims to be healthy enough to coach, and the team’s still winning, why not “Let the man coach.”

The St. Clairion
Upper St. Clair, PA

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The St. Clairion staff is made up of students who are committed to producing a newspaper for their fellow students that provides entertainment, self-expression, and relevant information in a fair, honest, thorough, and respectful manner.
The newspaper is financed by the sale of advertisement space to local businesses. Advertising rates will be sent to any business upon request.

The St. Clarion is a forum for student expression. Opinions expressed in by-lined articles are those of the authors, not necessarily the entire St. Clairion staff.
Letters to the editor are encouraged. All letters should be signed and submitted to The St. Clairion mailbox in the main office.
Obscene, libelous, or otherwise inappropriate letters will not be printed.

St. Clairion Editorial

Governor Schools potentially close; students and alumni upset

Sponsored by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Pennsylvania Governor’s Schools of Excellence (PGSE) are highly competitive, five-week-long summer residential programs on college campuses geared toward artistically or academically talented high school students.

“Governor Edward Rendell (D-PA) announced that he is considering eliminating the Governor’s School of Excellence, which could potentially save the state \$3.2 million,” writes Amanda O’Rourke of the *Danville News*.

But what happens to those who applied to the schools this school year only to find that they might not be attending?

“I don’t think that most people really appreciate what students have to do to get into these schools. All the work they put in, only to learn that they won’t be going. It’s rough,” notes Bethel

Park Junior Bryan Volek, who was looking forward to attending Millersville University in Lancaster for teaching.

“It’s tough enough to get in. You have to be constantly watching your grades and a slip here or there could cost you a spot. You also have to get recommendations, write an essay, and be active in things other than just school,” added Volek.

Alum of the program Andrew Mahoney, native of Dansville, PA, feels that his life would have turned out differently had he not gone to Governor’s Schools of Excellence.

He said, “The experience I had at the governor’s school was the foundation for all of the achievements I have currently in my life. It gives you a process where you can affiliate with others of like-minded uniqueness and ability.”

He also stated, “When gifted children don’t get what they need (differentiated service), they

don’t flourish” (*Dansville News*).

The state may be saving money by eliminating the schools which could have a positive impact on the state budget. However, the growing mind of a gifted student is priceless and removing this opportunity may have a greater negative impact in the future. Knowledge is the greatest investment anyone could ever make. Of all the spending projects in this state, is education really a budget fatality?

Pennsylvania’s state revenue has grown three percent since last year and is projected to increase by up to five percent next fiscal year. Pennsylvania alone spends over \$2 billion per year (www.budget.state.pa.us). Clearly, we could look elsewhere for the \$3.2 million.

Technology changes with time. The economic climate is completely unstable. The only thing that we could ever assure future prosperity is the develop-

ment of the mind and exposing students to every available opportunity in education.

Stability is a virtue in today’s society and there is no use in removing one of our few fundamental building blocks to the future by removing the Governor’s Schools of Excellence.

Some students never take advantage of the opportunities presented to them such as attending these schools. But those who attend shouldn’t be punished by removing the program. If money is the issue, perhaps adding a small tuition might be a start to gain revenue.

Tens of thousands of students are part of the PGSE program each. That is a lot of potential lost if the schools close.

“In today’s competitive academic climate, students need any edge they can get when applying to a college. We’d be losing a HUGE edge if they do ultimately close,” concluded Volek.

Miley Cyrus is destroying American youth

By: Alaina Zemanick
Features Editor

Throughout the past year, Miley Cyrus found herself in several controversial situations. Just recently, a picture surfaced with Cyrus making gestures to her face that some deemed racist toward Asians (www.t TMZ.com).

Adding upon the bad taste of the photo, one of her friends was holding a rather large glass of wine.

The OCA, a group dedicated to protecting the rights of Asian Pacific Americans, told tabloid site TMZ that “the photograph of Miley Cyrus and other individuals slanting their eyes currently circulating the Internet is offensive to the Asian Pacific American community and sets

a terrible example for her many young fans” (www.t TMZ.com).

“In NO way was I making fun of any ethnicity!” Cyrus rebuted on her official blog. “I was simply making a goofy face. When did that become newsworthy ... It seems someone is trying to make something out of nothing to me ... I definitely feel like the press is trying to make me out as the new ‘BAD GIRL’” (www.foxnews.com).

Cyrus should think about why the press has given her a new image. She already has her fair share of dirty photos in her personal photo album, at only sixteen.

Last July, reporters uncovered a photograph of Cyrus in the shower wearing only a white t-shirt along with several

other snapshots that have mature undertones (www.news.com.au).

Besides the amateur shots, renowned photographer Annie Leibovitz snapped Cyrus for an issue of *Vanity Fair* only wearing a blanket that revealed her bare back (*Associated Press*).

Though Cyrus does represent popular television show, some could sympathize and say she is a normal teenager.

But the main different between the average teen and Cyrus is that she is supposed to be representing the child-oriented corporation of Disney.

Inadvertently, Cyrus’s job as playing tween pop star Hannah Montana has set an example for a variety of different girls across the country.

She sets the basis for how to

act, how to behave, and how to grow up.

Since Cyrus has created the partying, nonchalant archetype of a teenager, the public, especially parents, will question whether or not Disney is positively influencing American children any longer.

If the American youth will move towards the same road as Cyrus, has taken how the children will they grow up?

Could they possibly grow up to be unhappy party animals who are too insane to create a goody-two-shoes front?

Either way, a child could achieve her dream of being Miley Cyrus.

Society should watch out: Cyrus will have blood on her hands for our future generation’s vapid lifestyle.

Is fashion really worth mass murder?

By: Marni Schreiber
News Editor

Fur has been a staple on the runways for decades, whether full length fur coats, fur linings, or fur trim. However, many are not aware of the extreme cruelty and brutality needed to make these fashion statements. The animals killed for fur are not also used for meat. These innocent creatures are only killed so men and women can feel fashionable and high class while wearing an animal draped around their shoulders.

In the last couple of years, the fur trend has expanded, especially in fur trim. Many may try to convince themselves that, unlike a full fur coat, the small amount of fur used for a trim does not harm that many animals.

But, as a matter of fact, “[w]ith the trim trade growing, the number of animals dying is increasing. According to *Sandy Parker Reports*, a fur industry newsletter, the number of animal pelts used for trim will soon outnumber

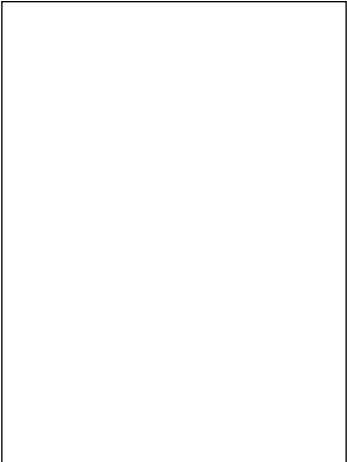
those used for all-fur garments in western European and U.S. markets” (www.furkills.org).

It takes an average of 40 wild animals to make one fur coat, and every year there are 10 million animals captured from the wild, from their natural habitats, for their fur. And the leghold trap, which has been banned in 88 countries, not only helps capture animals, it also tortures them in the process (www.ocpausa.org).

The leghold trap slams shut on an animals paw, causing extreme injury and pain, and “[w]ithin the first 30 minutes of capture, a trapped animal can tear her flesh, rip tendons, break bones, and even knock out teeth as she bites the trap to escape. Some animals will even bite off their own limbs in a desperate attempt to escape. The fact that an animal would sever her own limb shows how horrible the experience of being caught in a leghold trap is” (www.ocpausa.org).

And, if an animal does not kill itself during this unexplainable

torture, the trapper will “kill animals that are still alive by shooting them in the head, stomping on them, or by beating their skulls in” (www.ocpausa.org).



Seals and other animals are hunted for their fur and skins.

Not all the fur, however, is from wild animals. 31 million animals are killed on fur farms every year and there is a “misconception that ranch raised fur is ‘humane’. Unfortunately, there is nothing humane about depriving these animals from their behavioral and physiological

needs. Fur farming is nothing more than institutionalized torture” (www.mercyforanimals.org).

The methods of killing animals on a fur farm are extremely gruesome and inhumane. Foxes are killed by anal electrocution. Mink are usually poisoned, gassed, have their necks broken, be asphyxiated, or, an investigation found, by weed killers which cause 10 minutes of pure agony before death. And a common method for chinchilla death is to hook a metal clamp to the ear and one to the genitalia to cause electrocution. This is extremely cruel, and must be done in excessive numbers because it takes 100 chinchilla to make one fur coat (www.mercyforanimals.org).

The mass killing of innocent animals to make a fashion statement is entirely unacceptable. People who buy fur are supporting an industry that makes money off of torture and abuse. The solution to this problem simple; do not buy fur products.

Panther Predilections

What do you plan on doing for Spring Break?

“I will NOT cut my mouth open like I did last Spring Break.”
–Laurie Shonberg
Freshman

“I’m going to hire a private investigator to find out whatever happened to the ‘good fries.’”
– Dan Atman
Sophomore

“I’m going to sleep and visit my cousin in Colorado.”
– Tiffany Eby
Junior

“I plan on working on my space ship made of typewriter parts, maybe do a couple of test flights to the moon.”
– Bryce Doerksen
Senior

By: Dallion L. Townsend
Opinions Editor

Car sales and rentals continue to decline

By: Marni Schreiber
News Editor

The sale of automobiles continues to decline into the month of January, marking the lowest sales in decades. Many of the major car companies, including Toyota and General Motors, have been taking big hits from this decline in sales, and the rental car industry has also begun to significantly decrease.

January has been a very cruel month for Toyota.

The “[s]ales of every Toyota vehicle, from its small Yaris subcompact to the hulking Tundra pickup, fell from last year, with sales of its light trucks taking the biggest hit.” In all, the company’s sales have decreased an average of 30% in January (www.forbes.com).

General Motors also took a big hit. The company reported that its sales were down by 49%. Also, “GM said its fleet sales fell 80 percent to just over 13,000 vehicles in January, marking their lowest sales level

Joe Nemechek, driver of the No. 87 Toyota, tests his car out during Sprint Cup practice at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Florida, Wednesday, February 11, 2009. (Gary W. Green/Orlando Sentinel/MCT)

since 1975. GM’s retail sales fell 38 percent” (www.mlive.com).

Other companies have also hit record lows during early 2009. Ford Motor had a shocking 39% decrease of its Ford, Mercury, and Lincoln brands and a 40% decrease in the sales of Volvos.

Honda Motor and Nissan also fell dramatically with 28% and 30% decreases (www.money.cnn.com).

As bad as car sales were, the car rental industry has taken an even bigger blow. Ford’s director of sales analysis explains that fleet sales have decreased by 65% to 70% in January. Also, GM’s fleet sales have dropped by 80% and Chrysler’s has dropped a record 81% (www.money.cnn.com).

Hertz Global Holdings, Inc., a major rental car company, has been seeing these declines for some time. The company has been forced to lay off many workers. An estimated 4,000 jobs will be lost later in the month in an attempt to decrease costs (www.allheadlinenews.com).

The continuous decline of both car sales and car rentals has caused “Record low consumer confidence, stingy lenders, and a deep decline in demand among fleet buyers such as rental car companies have kept auto sales in the tank” (www.businessweek.com).

JonBenet Ramsey: Still a mystery after 12 years

By: Ali Cupelli
Entertainment Editor

The day after Christmas 1996, a six-year-old girl, Jon Benet Ramsey, was found dead in the basement of her Boulder, Colorado, home. After twelve years of investigation, there are still no solid leads. The investigation has gone through sad twists and turns, which include a false confession and unjustifiable suspicions of Ramsey’s parents.

This past July, John and Patsy Ramsey were cleared of suspicion by the police for having a part in the death of their daughter. However, Patsy died in June 2006 of cancer.

FBI results confirm that a man, who still has yet to be identified, touched JonBenet’s underwear. This touch DNA, as forensics would call it, was found in her underwear, mixed with her blood. Investigators theorize that the DNA belongs to the killer, but police are still waiting for a match (www.cnn.com).

Investigators hypothesized that JonBenet’s mother may have hit her in anger as reprimand for wetting the bed. They thought that strangulation was staged to direct their attention toward a possible intruder of sex predator. The family’s alibi was that they woke up early December 26 and found a two page ransom note on a staircase saying that JonBenet had been kidnapped and that she would be killed if the family did not pay the \$118,000 ransom. The Ramseys checked their

daughter’s room and discovered that she was missing. They then called 911 and filed a missing persons report.

Autopsy reports show that JonBenet had eaten pineapple before she died. She had been sexually assaulted, strangled by the cord that was wrapped around her neck and wrists, and had blunt force trauma to the head (www.cnn.com).

Two months after Mrs. Ramsey died, John Mark Karr, a teacher obsessed with the case, confessed to JonBenet’s murder. Police, however, said that DNA evidence shows that he did not execute the crime. Pam Paugh, Patsy Ramsey’s sister, states that “In the long run, we have to say [that] whoever did this to JonBenet, if they do not receive earthly justice, than clearly they are going to receive an afterlife justice that is not going to be pretty” (www.msnbc.com).

Years after the slaying, tabloids and crime shows attacked the couple for the death of their daughter. News reports also had suspicions that JonBenet’s older brother Burke killed her. In 2003, a judge handling a lawsuit involving the Ramsey’s stated that the evidence was more consistent with the theory of an intruder and not the parents. The media then apologized saying, “To the extent that we may have contributed in any way to the public perception that you might have been involved in this crime, I am deeply sorry” (www.cbc.com).

Parents argue over adopted child

By: Madeline Kushner
Assistant Editor

After a six year custody battle, the Tennessee Supreme Court decided that 10 year old Anna He should be returned to her biological parents.

Anna’s biological parents, Jack and Casey He, originally gave birth to Anna in Memphis, Tennessee. But, as a result of Anna’s premature birth, her parents could not care for her because of their financial problems due to by their temporary visas (www.cnn.com). Provisional guardians were needed for Anna until her bio-

logical parents could afford to take responsibilities for her again.

Louise and Jerry Baker, an American couple, decided to assist the He’s. The Bakers made a verbal custody agreement when Anna was only four weeks of age (www.associatedcontent.com). The custody agreement stated that the Bakers would watch over Anna until she reaches the age of 18 (www.cnn.com).

Years later, the He’s wanted to regain custody of their daughter which caused problems to the agreement. The He’s claim that

they agreed to let the Bakers care for Anna until they could take care of their daughter again. The Bakers argued that the custody over Anna was arranged through a Christian adoption agency, also that they tried to arrange a permanent adoption of Anna as well (www.associated-content.com).

But since Anna has been returned to her biological parents, she is now living in Chongqing, China. Chongqing, an extremely large city located on the edge of the Yangtze River, has an average population of 32 million people.

“It’s one of the worst places I have ever been. When I first went to the big city, there was so [much] pollution and so [it] always makes me feel bad,” says Anna complaining about her new home. Anna also added that, “I also don’t like the smell” (www.cnn.com). Now, in addition to Anna’s change of home, she is also

experiencing the separation of her “new” parents. Anna now lives with her mother, Casey. In addition, Anna has been enlisted into a boarding school and is struggling in school because of her lack of Chinese dialect (www.cnn.com). “I always hate staying in China,” explains Anna (www.cnn.com).

Scientists make breakthrough with stem cell research projects

By: Julianne Tarullo
Front Page Editor

For many years, the idea of human stem cell research has been under hot debate because of ethical controversies. Because embryos must be destroyed to obtain the stem cells, some say this is a form of homicide and should not be considered. Others argue that the embryo is not a human itself and that the use of the stem cells would greatly benefit the research of many diseases. There was no consensus on the topic until January 2009, when a US biotech company, Geron, was granted federal permission to use embryonic stem cells in

their work (www.religioustolerance.org).

Geron Corporation, located in Menlo Park, California, plans to use the stem cells to help paraplegics, those who have movement in their arms but cannot walk. The company intends to begin this summer on a project aimed at spiral cord injuries. The patients will receive an injection of stem cells derived from embryonic cells within two weeks of their injury. The procedure will be directed towards testing the safety of the operation, but signs of improvement will be watched for carefully (www.thepittsburghchannel.com).

“Embryonic stem cells can

develop into any cell of the body, and scientists have long hoped to harness them for creating replacement tissues to treat a

variety of diseases. Animal studies suggest that once injected, the cells will mature and repair what is essentially a lack

of insulation around damaged nerves, and also pump out substances that nerves need to function and grow.” (www.thehive.modbee.com).

This type of research brings hope to many people with currently incurable diseases.

With President Obama,

federal financing for such research will not be restricted as it was under the Bush Administration. Obama has said

that he would relax the policies forbidding federal funding for this research.

“It’s a milestone and it’s a breakthrough for the field,” says chief scientific officer of Novocell Inc., Ed Baetge. Novocell Inc. plans to begin a research similar to the spinal cord project for diabetes in the next couple of years.

Dr. Wise Young of Rutgers University adds, “A lot of hope of the spinal cord injury community is riding on this trial” (www.thepittsburghchannel.com). The US is taking a big step toward finding cures for life-threatening diseases by allowing the stem cell research projects to run.

Students experience offbeat oddities at Moleskine Club

By: Alaina Zemanick
Features Editor

A lone reporter from *The St. Clarion* encountered one of the oddest moments of her lifetime while investigating the ambiguous organization known only as Moleskine Club. Thinking she was in for a great day of writing in the famous black-leather-bound journals the club was named after, she headed into Ms. Moeller’s room only to see a frightening sight.

“I glanced in the window and saw them eating the most enormous bowl of spaghetti,” the anonymous reporter stated. The group, who was led by seniors Kevin Goodlett and Dominic Rodriguez, used their own hands to devour the sauce-drenched pasta and most certainly made a mess of it too.

The writer then continued her story: “After looking in the window for a couple of seconds, I

decided to walk in hesitantly. Upon seeing me, they just stopped and dropped all their food. Then, a humming noise began. I was so scared that I immediately ran out of the classroom!”

While running down the hallway, the girl reported that Moleskine members Dominic Rodriguez and Kevin Goodlett came chasing after her hastily. When they finally caught up to her, Rodriguez whispered softly, “I’m sorry you had to see that.”

“It was the marinara,” Goodlett chimed in.

Even though *The St. Clarion* member was startled by her recent incident, would she still take her chances and venture back to a Moleskine Club meeting?

“Of course!” she exclaimed, “Have you heard their *Christmase* CD?”

Moleskine Club meets every Monday in room 113.

Stock Market Club faces fourth quarter decline

By: JP Gooderham
Editor-in-Chief

The Stock Market Club, which was once one of the fastest growing and unique organizations at Upper St. Clair High School, has struggled in recent months. With declining membership and numerous obstacles that have effectively prevented the club from meeting, SMC’s future may be in doubt.

Brian Gaudio, the club’s founder and current leader, comments, “Although many would fault Scott McMurty, the real problem is the lack of organization on my part and the captains’ part.” Indeed, the “leadership question” has been one of the primary issues that the club must overcome to find success this year and in the future.

Gaudio explains, “Many stu-

dents have attempted to get political positions by coming up to me with bribes and asking for the position of president.

like Roberto [Capriotti] depend on the Stock Market Club. Their lives are somewhat empty without our meetings. Kids have come up to me very depressed, and I feel terrible because I partially blame myself.”

Senior Scott McMurtry agrees, “Our biggest problem has been the frequency of meetings.” Like Gaudio, McMurtry believes that the club may only rebound “in the hands of new leadership.”

Though Stock Market Club may be in a position of diminished strength, members believe that the club’s characteristics will continue to attract students. McMurtry enjoys the club because of “the real life application of economic principles through the game. It is a simulation of actually gaining and losing money, so it is good practice for future situations.”

Despite these qualities, many students struggle to see the relevance of the club and its mission. Senior Jacob Hofstetter, known for his passion toward academic opportunities, proclaims, “I don’t know what is interesting about stocks. We’re teenagers! What do you need to know? It seems like it is a pretty useless club.”

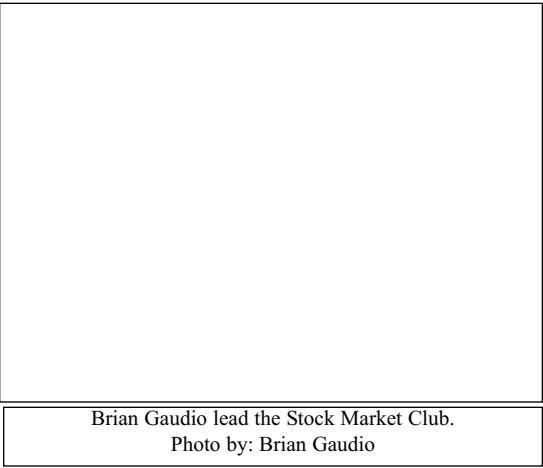
Senior Christine Prorok also was deterred from joining the club “because I’m really bad at picking stocks.” She concurs with Hofstetter, stating, “The stocks aren’t real, so there is no incentive to participate.”

Gaudio firmly believes that the club is widely revered by the high school community because of its members. He argues, “We are one of the most diverse clubs in this school. We have ‘nerds,’ first generation Americans, and even some varsity athletes. Our population represents more than six countries, from South Africa to Greece.”

The roots of the club are nearly as intriguing as its premise. Gaudio reminisces, “In seventh and eighth grade, I played the Stock Market Game in Challenge with Joey Rubino. We always played the Stock Market Game. We had a group that really enjoyed investing, and so I decided to create the club.” Today, as Gaudio agrees, “the Stock Market Club started as a coterie of my friends during my sophomore year, but has grown into something special.”

Although history may suggest otherwise, Gaudio is optimistic about the club’s future. He claims, “My newly appointed cabinet of Steve Wellard, Natalie Paladino, and Katie Abriola are willing to take the steps needed to re-establish the club as a premier institution at Upper St. Clair.”

McMurtry advises potential members to join as “there might not be a club after this year without new recruits. In the spirit of the club, you should join.”



Brian Gaudio lead the Stock Market Club.
Photo by: Brian Gaudio

However, I plan to create a point system similar to [college football’s] BCS to resolve this issue.”

While the club has not been able to find leaders, Gaudio and other long-time members are focused on identifying a feasible solution. Gaudio states, “It is really a shame because kids



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Only time will tell if the Panthers can repeat, but all signs point to another victory at states this year.

Entertainment

Grissom takes his leave of CSI

By:Ali Cupelli
Entertainment Editor

The last episode of *CSI* with the actor William Petersen, portraying character Gil Grissom, was aired on January 15, 2009. However, Petersen is not gone for good.

In an interview, Petersen said, “The hardest part will be saying goodbye to the cast and crew. So I’m going to stay as involved as I’m allowed to be throughout the remainder of this show until they turn off the lights” (www.ew.com).

He is still an executive producer for the show and will, on occasion, return as a guest star. In an interview on July 11, 2008, he said, “I want it to work for the writers, I want it to work for the cast, and, most importantly, I want it to work for the audience. I don’t want them to abandon the show” (www.ew.com).

Most people are concerned about how well the show will do without Petersen, and some are also concerned with the fact that since Jorja Fox and Gary Dourdan, the former co-stars of *CSI*, have left the show as well, the ratings and reviews will drop. However, Laurence Fishburne, who plays Dr. Raymond Langston, will hopefully keep the show’s number one rating and excellent reviews alive. With that in mind, it would seem that *CSI* fans are adjusting well to Petersen’s departure. The second episode with Laurence Fishburne, attracted 20.1 million viewers, a rating much

higher than the previous week. The show originally had a viewing of 17.6 million people for the first episode with Fishburne.

However, many are curious as to why Petersen left *CSI* in the first place. In an interview with *Entertainment Weekly*, he said, “The reason I am leaving is because I’m afraid I’m becoming too comfortable... I didn’t want to be on the show because they were paying me money and I liked the money. I didn’t want to be on the show because it saved me from having to go look for other jobs... it was too safe for me at this point. So I needed to try and break that, and the way to do that, for me, is the theater” (www.seattlepi.com).

Students from USC as expressed the same feelings the show’s critics and fans.

Julie Smith, a sophomore, said that “although Grissom is gone, I think the new guy [Laurence Fishburne] will add a new twist to the show which could be good or may be bad for the show’s ratings.”

However, some people who do not believe the show will be the same had a negative reaction to Grissom leaving.

Carly Straight, a sophomore, said “it won’t be the same anymore now that Grissom is gone. Sadly, it probably won’t be as popular either.”

With the large of viewers continuing to watch out of curiosity they will enjoy Dr. Langston and continue to watch the show.

Paul Blart: Slapstick comedy or failed attempt at humor?

By: Ali Cupelli
Entertainment Editor

Paul Blart: Mall Cop is about a single dad portrayed by Kevin James who tries to make do with the job as a security officer at a New Jersey mall. However, disaster occurs when Santa’s helpers, who are really undercover criminals, shut down the mall and take hostages including the love of Paul’s life, as well as his daughter. Paul will have to use the skills he knows in order to save the mall and the people he cares about.

The humor displayed in the movie could be considered slapstick humor and a whole lot of physical comedy. The hypoglycemia is stretched too far however. If Paul doesn’t get enough sugar in him, he’ll faint about every 20 minutes. This is not true. Hypoglycemics don’t fall while they are walking or standing and just fall asleep. It’s ridiculous.

Quite frankly, it’s surprising that Paul Blart raked in \$32.3 million within the first week it came out. But maybe it was just curiosity that got the best of the audience. The plot of the movie and the humor really was meant for kids in grade school to middle school. However there were some high school students who

enjoyed the movie. Melissa Ebeck, a senior at USCHS, said, “I thought the movie was interesting and funny. Kevin James is hilarious.”

The humor consisted of Paul Blart running into things and enjoying the company of food because for him “peanut butter fills the cracks of the heart” (www.latimes.com). It also included Paul scooting around on his Segway to “protect and serve” the mall. However, what was really irking in the movie, which could’ve been less elaborate, were the robbers and bad guys. The criminals appeared to be exciting because of their BMX bikes, skateboards, and gymnastic moves while trying to steal a million dollars from the cash registers in all of the stores. They keep the keeping other customers hostage and to get rid of Paul, who in their eyes is a pathetic, meaningless mall cop.

However, it is pretty funny that Paul has to blow up The Rainforest Café to save the mall and defeat the bad guys.

The critics gave Paul Blart a C, but the audience gave the movie a B. It may just be because critics have to pick out every part of the movie and be very analytical, but the audience doesn’t see it that way. So, one can see that it is not worth paying \$10 to see the film.

American Idol welcomes new judge

By: Madeline Kushner
Assistant Entertainment Editor

On January 13, 2009, *American Idol* judges Randy Jackson, Paula Abdul, and Simon Cowell observed new contestants for the eighth season of *American Idol*. But, in addition to the new contestants that presented themselves for the judges, a new face was also seen at the judges’ table: Kara DioGuardi.

The producers of the show, Fox and 19 Entertainment, decided to add a new element to the show as a result of the show receiving the worst ratings in the previous season. Producers thought DioGuardi would add a new element to increase ratings.

“We needed someone who would be credible musically,” states the alternative entertainment president for Fox, Mike Darnell (www.nytimes.com).

DioGuardi, a songwriter nominated at the Grammys, has written a number of songs for famous artists. Some well-known names include Carrie Underwood, the Jonas Brothers, and Kelly Clarkson. Paula Abdul and Kara DioGuardi have even worked together on the song “Spinning Around” (www.mtv.com).

DioGuardi was also chosen as a judge because of the qualities that she shares with each judge. For Randy Jackson, the quality is musical experience. Both DioGuardi and Paula Abdul are compassionate and the new judge and Simon Cowell are both not afraid to express their opinion (www.nytimes.com).

Sara Maurer, a senior at USCHS and a viewer of the show, has taken a liking to the new judge. “She’s opinionated, she fights with Simon, and she overshadows Paula. What’s not

to like?” DioGaurdi’s main goal is to add “a new chemistry” to the show (www.mtv.com). She also promises to stick to her wits and not cave to the opinions of the other judges.

“If I feel I need to be hard with someone in order to get that across, I will be. And if I feel I need to be softer and more nurturing with some of the contestants, I’ll be that,” explains DioGuardi (www.calgaryherald.com).

Even though DioGuardi is now considered an asset to the show, problems have surfaced for the judges. For instance, since there are now four judges on the panel, it is questionable as to how ties will be settled between the judges. Paula Abdul also feels that the new female judge is a sign that the producers of *American Idol* are trying to edge Abdul off the show.

Bedtime Stories: more than just a children’s movie

By: Nick Buzzelli
Assistant Sports-Editor

Bedtime Stories, Disney’s newest film, which hit theaters on Christmas Day, is more than just a children’s movie; it is a story that can appeal to all members of the family. Recently, Disney has been noted for gearing the majority of their films towards a much younger audience, but *Bedtime Stories* can be enjoyed by everyone because of an actor who recently made his Disney debut.

In the film, Adam Sandler, the “king of comedy” plays Skeeter Bronson, a hotel handy man who fights his way to the top of the hotel world in order to win over a position he has always wanted: hotel manager. While babysitting his niece and nephew, Bronson tells them fictional stories right before they go to bed. The plot of

the bedtime stories centers on Skeeter getting the hotel promotion and other things that were in his wildest dreams.

After telling the kids the stories he made up, Bronson soon realized that they were suddenly coming true. Skeeter then decides to make up a bedtime story in which he wins the manager position at the hotel. The story Skeeter makes up becomes a reality, but then he must decide whether he wants to construct a new hotel on the site of his niece and nephew’s school or if he wants to quit the hotel business for good.

The film received mostly negative reviews from critics because of a “choppy” plot line. The average critic score was a 4.4/10, while the fans averaged a score for the film at a higher 6.2/10 (www.rotten tomatoes.com). Despite the fact that the critics

rated the film so poorly, it has still had a high box office earning at \$20.5 million within the first two weeks of the film’s release (www.boxofficereport.com).

Adam Sandler brings his sense of humor to Disney, as well as some other actors that have made a name for themselves in recent Sandler films. Rob Schneider, a successful actor who has been noted for playing small roles in Sandler films appears in the movie as a thief. Another Sandler regular, Nick Swardson appears as a construction worker who is going to implode the elementary school which Sandler’s niece and nephew attend (www.imbd.com). The film has a good plot line and a warm-hearted story that appeals to all. Despite the negative reviews, Adam Sandler has finally made a movie that everyone in the entire family can enjoy.

New teen novels spark interest among many

By:Julianne Tarullo
Front Page Editor

Nothing to read? This season beings an abundance of novels bound to captivate teen readers everywhere. From romance to suspense, tear-droppers or advice novels, they’ve got it all. Whatever you’re looking for, hit the bookstore and it won’t be hard to find a novel to your likings.

The 6 Most Important *Decisions You’ll Ever Make: A Guide for Teens*, by Sean Covey, is an advice novel helping teens thrive in these difficult years. This insightful novel on the struggles teens these days go through will capture the reader with its unique and fun style. Covey gives advice to teens about academic stress, communication with parents, dating drama, addiction, depression, peer pressure and more. This book uses real life stories, quizzes, and quotes to show teens’ common mistakes and to help them through the stresses of everyday life (http://books.google.com).

Chinese Cinderella, “A riveting memoir of a girl’s painful coming-of-age in a wealthy Chinese family

during the 1940s,” by Adeline Yen Mah, is a true story of an unwanted daughter. Adeline Yen Mah tells the story of her own childhood, surviving the emotional neglect of her family. When Adeline’s mother dies giving birth to her, she is blamed for the death and is forced to live with that blame. Her father remarries, bringing a disdainful new stepmother and spoiled stepsiblings into the family. While her stepbrother and stepsister live in luxury, Adeline and her siblings live in the attic with no clothes but their school uniforms. This heart-wrenching novel will captivate many in its sad, yet courageous story of a Chinese Cinderella (www.search.barnesandnoble.com).

In to humorous romances? Sara Dessen’s *This Lullaby* will hit the spot. Told through the eyes of Remy, a very reserved 18 year-old, this novel brings readers humor while teaching us to take a leap. Remy is a no commitment kind of girl when it comes to relationships, learning much from her mother, who is on her fifth marriage. That is, until she meets Dexter, a scruffy musician who seems to be the only

one able to soften her up. Entering the summer with plans of relaxing before heading off to college, Remy does not expect for her cement wall to be knocked down. As readers follow Remy’s love story, it becomes clear that taking a chance is not always so bad (www.sarahdessen.com). “Sarah Dessens’s novels are really popular for teens,” comments Sammie Teel. Another sophomore Tatiana Bravo adds, “Her books always have good plot lines and are very interesting.”

“Your dreams are not your own.” Suspense is on its way in Lisa McMann’s *Wake*. 17 year-old Janie has come to realize her unwanted, yet unavoidable talent, as she is thrown into others’ fantasies, epics, and nightmares. She can share her mysterious skill with no one as she enters the confines of others’ minds. However, Janie begins to not only be a bystander in these dreams when she is pulled into a bone chilling nightmare of someone else’s twisted thoughts, and she can’t escape. This thrilling novel will entrance readers with its unimaginable plot of suspense (www.mcmann.com).

Valkyrie does not live up to expectations

By: Marni Schreiber
News Editor

The movie *Valkyrie*, released Christmas Day, did not live up to expectations from critics or viewers. While the story was an interesting one, as new take on the classic World War II movies, the movie was not able to captivate audiences like it was intended to.

Cruise plays Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg, the leader of the July 20, 1944 planned assassination of Adolf Hitler and the head of the SS, Himmler. This assassination, of course, did not go as planned.

Stauffenberg and the members of German Resistance, including Major General Henning von Tresckow (Kenneth Branagh), General Friedrich Olbricht (Bill Nighy), General Friedrich Fromm (Tom Wilkinson), and Colonel General Ludwig Beck (Terence Stamp) have convinced

themselves that they must kill Hitler at all costs (www.rottentomatos.com).

The group decided to rewrite *Valkyrie*, a plan made by Germans in case Hitler should die. The Resistance's rewritten plan made it possible, that after they assassinate Hitler and Himmler, they could carry out a coup d'état by "making it appear as though a gang of Party leaders was responsible for Hitler's assassination, the conspirators would use the Reserve Army to take over Berlin while they quietly put their new government into place" (www.valkyrie.unitedartists.com).

While the plot is unfolding, however, many things go wrong. The room where Hitler was supposed to have his meeting was moved into lodging with many windows, making the bomb less reliable. Also, the suitcase which held the bomb was moved further

away from Hitler during the meeting, making it less likely to cause death.

Even though audiences go into the theater already aware of the ending, the movie still has a vast aspect of suspense, especially while the plot is unraveling.

While the script may have sounded like a recipe for success, the box office numbers did not support this claim.

Many blame Cruise for the failure of the film. This is a somewhat unfair claim. Cruise did have one major mistake: he lacked a German accent, a flaw seen clearly because a handful of other actors put on German accents. But other than this blunder, he did a fairly good job playing the German general.

However, "if Cruise's career is seen as momentarily stalled, *Valkyrie* is not the electric jolt he needs to jump-start it" (www.hollywoodreporter.com).

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button mystifies audiences

By: Madeline Kushner
Assistant Entertainment Editor

Unbeknownst to Brad Pitt when he agreed to portray the title character of *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, he would then be nominated for a plethora of awards. When the movie premiered on Christmas Day, Brad Pitt was instantly nominated for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role at the Oscars, the Golden Globes, and the Screen Actors Guild Awards (SAG) (www.imdb.com).

The film, which was nominated for 13 Academy Awards (one of which was for best picture), explains the story of Benjamin Button.

Benjamin Button was born at the end of World War I, and grew up in the care of his adopted mother, just like any other boy. But what sets Benjamin Button apart from other movies is that Benjamin was born as an old man, on his way to the grave. He had cataracts in his eyes and had lost all elasticity in his skin. As Benjamin narrates the story of his "unusual" life, he overcomes many obstacles and becomes involved in a very complicated love affair (www.fandango.com).

James Leyden, a junior at USCHS, said "I enjoyed the mystery of his [Benjamin's] condition and the funny moments it created."

The movie, which was based on F. Scott Fitzgerald's short story *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, does manage to have a duration of two hours and forty seven minutes. So the movie is a little too long. Even so, no part of the movie proved to be boring or unessential.

Another thing that causes the movie to sustain its interest for the audience is the story line that Cate Blanchett's character, Daisy, who ages in the correct fashion, is given. Daisy, who is Benjamin's love interest, is a very talented dancer who adds an appealing element to the movie. The dancing that is done by Blanchett's character allows the movie to express artistic camera shots and intense dance sequences. The dance feature that accompanies Daisy also provides the movie with additional layers because of the complications she will experience because of her dance.

Overall, the movie proves to be worthy with an outstanding number of nominations (over 50) and its amazing eleven wins (www.fandango.com).

The Hills' Whitney Port sinks her heels into The City

By: Alaina Zemanick
Features Editor

On December 29, 2008, MTV presented a two-episode premiere of *The City*, the much anticipated spin-off of famed hit, *The Hills* (www.mtv.com). When news surfaced in early October that Whitney Port, *The Hills'* former co-star, was filming a new TV series after settling in New York City, many questioned whether the show would fulfill the legacy of its predecessor (www.monsterandcritics.com). Now, after several episodes, viewers are ready to stay on the east coast.

What makes *The City* so great

is that the atmosphere of the show situates itself on the entirely other spectrum of *The Hills*. *The Hills* was filled to the brim with insane catfights in posh nightclubs that ended in a loud, subtitled "Ugh, let's go." In contrast, *The City* girls keep their claws concealed at those similar hangouts and let the men do the work for them. The show keeps the drama to a minimum and creates *The City's* image as "ordinary" and not over the top.

In addition, Port's new position in the public relations department of designer Diane von Furstenberg brings a new fashionable twist to *The City*. Though

Port still braids her hair enough to make any milk maid hurl, her style has somewhat improved with the help of her New York surroundings and, of course, von Furstenberg herself.

But, possibly the greatest thing about this feature might just have to be one of the main characters: Olivia Palermo. In the months prior to the show's taping, Palermo was known in the New York social scene for her desperation to be a socialite (she calls herself a "social" on the show) and her silent rejection by top Upper East Siders such as Tinsley Mortimer and Lydia Hearst (www.nymag.com). *The*

City's audience members who are familiar with the story can only laugh at Palermo's desperate need for fame and her façade of being well-liked. Who didn't snicker when Palermo bragged that she was a friend of Manolo Blahnik and he didn't remember who she was?

The only question *The City* fans have to wonder is whether or

not the show will surpass *The Hills*. Will Whitney Port replace the near and dear Lauren Conrad on the red carpet? Will Speidi be swapped with Whitney and her gorgeous Aussie flame, Jay? Only time will tell if this spin-off will flourish into the legend everyone hopes it will be.

Tune into *The City* on MTV every Monday at 10 PM.

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