



# The Dispatch

"A beacon of truth."

■ Issue 1, Volume 39

Huntington High School

Oakwood and McKay Roads Huntington, NY 11743



PHOTO: KYLEE KIESEL

## » news in short

**Safe Halloween draws many creatively dressed families. Full bags of candy and glowing smiles make the evening a huge success.**

**Holly Flores and Juli Coraor stun the the scientific world with their amazing minds. Holly advances as a regional finalist in the Siemens Foundation Competion. Juli was named a semi-finalist.**

**HHS's exchance program builds, and hopes to have students from China coming to HHS this winter.**

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# MOVING UP IN RANKS... OR DOWN?

*New floor grade policy leaves many confused*

by EMAL WAFAJOW

When it comes to calculating grades, Huntington High school is using new math:  $0 + 0 = 50$ . Starting this year, 50 is the lowest score a teacher can put on a student's report card, even if no homework is completed during the semester and every test result is a zero. Advocates of the more generous policy that makes 50 the minimum failing grade a student can receive say it is intended to give weaker students a better chance of passing. They believe it is aimed at keeping kids from being prematurely doomed by the numbers that are behind report card letter grades.

As principal of Huntington High School, Dr. Carmela Leonardi ultimately made the decision to adopt this policy. "We've discussed it for many years" she said. "It is an opportunity to give struggling students hope." Principal Leonardi also mentioned that several of the failing grades were correlated with attendance, something that is hard to change. Although many may think this new policy is the administration's way of looking better, no cumulative grade point average report of the school is given. "The only grades counted by the state are the regents. Floor grades don't do anything, they simply give students motivation" said Dr. Leonardi. "I looked at last year's statistics and have found that in Quarter 1, 11% of students who failed with less than a 50 passed for the whole year. For those who scored in the range of 50-64 in a course, 19% of them passed for the

Grade summary for Science	
	Points Earned:
Quizzes: (30%)	11%
Homework: (10%)	20%
Tests: (50%)	19%
Class Participation: (10%)	95%
Average:	24.30%

PHOTO: JACOB RODAY

➤ *Huntington High School has taken on a new policy that uses a different kind of math year.* Besides Dr. Leonardi, others also think the new proposal is beneficial.

"I think it's an effective policy when used appropriately," said Guidance Director Kitty Klein. "The intention of having initiated this policy was to engage the school community. We have to make sure that we tailor the needs of each of our students" said Ms. Klein. College counselor Bernadette Walsh also complied with the proposition. "I think it's fair and very realistic. Colleges aren't going to know. Floor grades are valuable for students who transition from regents to honors, or honors to AP" said Mrs. Walsh. Even some teachers mentioned that they have implemented a minimum grade system in the past in certain situations where they

set a minimum grade that any individual student could receive in the class. "I have used floor grades before, a lot of teachers had it to begin with," said Geometry and Pre-Calculus teacher Matthew Mattis. "The math department has only disagreed about one thing, and that was the amount of quarters floor grades would be used. In the end, we decided that two quarters was the most appropriate compromise." Special-Education teacher Anthony Troffa feels that floor grades are just what kids with difficulties need. "It's a way to stay in the game, and some kids who are having a hard time may need that extra push." While the faculty and administration feel that floor grades are an effective and powerful tool, students view it as nothing but

*see Floor Grades on pg. 3*

# Change You Can Believe In

*Mr. Polansky takes Huntington under his wing*

by JOSH MORRIS

This school year began with the introduction of the Huntington school district's new superintendent, Mr. James Polansky. Many of those who have had the opportunity to speak with Mr. Polansky can already foresee the progressive direction he plans to take this school district.

Mr. Polansky has an extensive history in the education system. He was a science teacher in the Syosset school district, where he taught a wide variety of sciences, including Earth Science, AP Biology and AP Chemistry. Following his time in the Syosset district, Mr. Polansky went on to be the K-12 director of sciences in the Oyster Bay school district. From there, he continued on to the South Huntington school district, where he spent two years as the assistant principal of the high school, seven years as the school's principal, and one year as the assistant superintendent of the district.

As a LI native, Mr. Polansky feels that the Huntington school district has a unique sense of community about it. The wide variety of programs offered throughout the district keeps the area tight knit. Mr. Polansky also said that there are high expectations set in the district, both for students and faculty members. which were not something he's often seen.

Some obvious changes have been made since Mr. Polansky entered our school district, several of which caught the attention of HHS students. Among these, many were riled up when they heard hats were banned during the school day. When asked if he had any other reforms in mind, Mr. Polansky said, "My approach is not to dictate something; that any change that occurs should involve input from students and staff." Mr. Polansky hopes to be available as a resource for students and staff in the education program. Becoming "the person to look to"

for solving problems is one of Mr. Polansky's main aspirations.

In 2010, the Huntington school district took the bold move in shutting down Jack Abrams Middle School as a result of parent protests and the common belief that the school was not situated in a safe neighborhood. Rumors have recently claimed that Abrams will be reopened in the near future. Whatever this fate might be, Mr. Polansky will definitely have a major say in the final decision. "I think that this is a topic that people feel strongly about, and difficult long-term decisions will require careful thought, concrete information, and meticulous planning before anyone can say for sure that it should go in one direction or another, and an analytical process needs to be conducted to gather feedback from as many people and officials as possible," Mr. Polansky explained. Many people agree with his opinion, and hope to see these ideas enacted within the coming year.

There are many sporting events, fundraisers and various meetings at Huntington High School and within the district. However, it is not a given that administrators will attend these events. Students have often been known to realize the absence of "the masses" from the seemingly "less important" events. Polansky hopes to put a stop to that. He is a hands-on guy, with a goal to make students and staff comfortable with seeing the superintendent during day-to-day activities.

Despite having his work cut out for him, Mr. Polansky considers himself an avid reader and an occasional runner. Most of his free time is devoted to his two dogs and two children, with whom he enjoys spending his day

In his closing, Mr. Polansky offered a word of advice to HHS students: "Enjoy and make productive use of your time, and recognize that high school is just a stepping stone to great things that you are destined to experience and accomplish."



PHOTO: HHSFS.EDU

➤ *Mr. Polansky*



# Cafeteria Dishes Out Change

*New ID scanning system and a divided lunchroom are a lot to take in*

by DIAMOND CABRERA

Have you noticed some of the new changes in our high school's cafeteria?

The school's new superintendent, Mr. Polanski, has been trying to work on ways in which the school can be improved.

One of the biggest changes is the new ID system. IDs have become a big part of the high school. The rule is that you now have to have your ID on at all times between the hours of 7:30 am and 2:20 pm.

Now, instead of just showing your ID to one of the security guards to get in the cafeteria, which can take a lot of time and can lead to long lines,



PHOTO: KYLEE KIESEL

✦ ID scans are now required to get into one's lunch period

student IDs have a bar code on them. The scanning of an ID

registers whether or not a student is in the correct lunch period. This process is supposed to be faster and easier than the prior one. It's more convenient to just scan the ID quickly as well. Student IDs are also being scanned when buying lunch in the high school.

Another major change that has taken place in the cafeteria is the "separation of sides." This new rule has been enforced for the first time, beginning this school year. Freshmen are assigned to sit on one side of the cafeteria, while upperclassmen are to eat on the other. Many people have different opinions on the

newly enforced rules. Some like this separation, claiming to be somewhat more comfortable with those in their own grade. Others feel that students should be able to sit wherever they please while eating their lunch. Numerous students have said they don't like how they can't interact with freshmen in lunch, and the freshmen feel the same about the upperclassmen.

Despite the change, the new ID system seems to be working well thus far and, despite several student complaints, the cafeteria division is going fairly smoothly as well.

## HBDMB On a [Drum] Roll

by ANNA GARFINKEL

This year's Huntington Blue Devil Marching Band was off to an x-citing start. The fabulous show, entitled "X!," takes spectators through a musical journey with x-clamation, x-celeration, x-haustion, x-otic and an x-plosion.

The HBDMB's first competition received 4th out of 6th place with a score of 67.4, a promising start. Only a week later, the band leaped to an amazing 73.00, landing them 1st place! And to add to that, the HBDMB took home another first place the following week, making their second win in a row.

Everyone was jazzed by the wins, saying they couldn't have been possible without the band's fantastic drum majors, Justin Lascalzo, Laura Ironman and Annie Coffey, as well as the spectacular field major, Alicia Ortiz. The band's success was also created by the huge amount of dedication from the members and staff, as well as the incredible Mr. Stellato and magnificent

Mr. Giachetti. Stellato, very proud of the HBMBD, quotes, "The 2011 HBDMB is a great group of hard working kids who care about giving their best each time out on the field. I can't wait to see how much the group will accomplish by the end of the season."

Considering their fourth place (out of twelve) recognition recently at Syracuse, the band seems to have gone very far indeed!

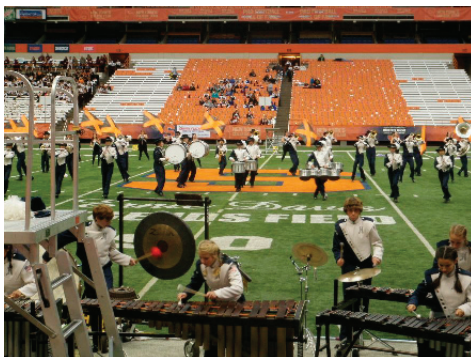


PHOTO: RICHIE MORRIS

✦ The HBDMB gets ready for action

## New Year, New Classes

by ANNABEL SMITH

Believe it or not, but school is actually a lot less boring if you take different classes each year. Fortunately, Huntington High School is adding new courses all of the time! This year, new classes include Military History and AP Environmental Science. Starting this Spring, Military History is a new course which will focus mainly on the American military, including its development and advancements, throughout time. In this class, students will also learn about the significant battles and accomplishments of the U.S. military. The new AP Environmen-



✦ Mr. McKee, teacher of the new "APES" course

tal Science class, taught full year by Mr. McKee, requires moderate knowledge of math, chemistry, biology, and Earth science. Without this background information, this class could be extremely difficult (although, not impossible). "APES" involves an expanding of concepts and numerous new vocabulary terms. Although this AP class is a lot of hard work, those pursuing a career relating to the environment, or in any of the sciences, will find this class very beneficial. Perhaps one of these classes might appeal to you and liven up your school day.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MS. PIERARD AND YEARBOOK

## Homecoming 2011 Takes the Float

by BRIAN J. McCONNELL, GAVIN LI, and MATT ROSENBAUER

As always, our spirited high school celebrated an exhilarating Homecoming this October, and the entertaining bash once again brought the whole town together in celebration.

This year's homecoming celebration was as action packed as it always is in Huntington. With the marvelous parade on October 22nd, each class had the opportunity to strut their school spirit by displaying their floats, based on the theme of children's cartoon T.V. shows. Leading the pack was the Freshman Class of 2015, with Mickey Mouse, an infinite classic, followed by the Sophomore Class of 2014 with Blues Clues, the ultimate toddler entertainment. Next came the Junior Class of 2013 with Scooby Doo, the timeless cartoon masterpiece. Finally,

the Senior Class of 2012 followed with one of the world's favorite animations, SpongeBob SquarePants.

Later, a football game was waged between our Blue Devils and the East Islip Buccaneers. During halftime, the Huntington Blue Devil Marching Band performed their show, "X!", and the Huntington Highsteppers danced an electrifying routine to keep everyone pumped up. By the end of the game everyone in the stands was happy because we had won 35-32.

Once night fell, the Homecoming dance got under way. A joyful time was had by all. When the entire prolonged, delightful festivities were eventually over, some students couldn't help but hope for another cheerful experience.



PHOTO: HHSFSD.EDU

✦ Senior class Spongebob float steals the show!



# WORD ON THE STREET

What was your craziest Halloween experience?



Kristina Casale

*"In second grade I dressed up as Shrek"*



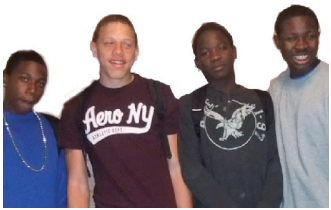
Jackson Cohen

*"A couple of friends and I dressed up as scarecrows and stayed still outside my front door until people walked by...by the end of the night we had made three little girls cry."*



Ms. Tedeschi

*"I was in Salem, Massachusetts during Halloween and there were a lot of different activities and events. The Ghosts and Legends Trolley Tour and the abandoned mental ward were really scary. The decorations and different haunted mansions were creepy and frightening."*



Darnell Thomas, Troy Greene, Shahieem Francis, and Johnnie Grahm

*"We were running around egging houses and then we got chased with by a chainsaw and then we went trick-or-treating."*

*The opinions expressed do not reflect the opinions of The Dispatch's staff, nor the HUFSD School Board or any affiliated.*

PHOTOS: ARI MOSKOWITZ

# The Occupied of HHS

*Will Shaw shares his Occupy Wall Street arrest*

by DAVID LEVIN

Will Shaw, a senior at Huntington High School, was arrested on October 1st during the Occupy Wall Street protests on the Brooklyn Bridge, with the charge of disorderly conduct. These protests started late September and show no sign of stopping.

When asked how he felt about being arrested for a cause he believed in, Will replied, "I feel kinda good about it. I mean it's not like it was something bad and I'm actually going to get in trouble. It was for a good cause."

As the major news outlets said, when the police were rounding up people, they let many women off the bridge to go free compared to the amount of men. As a few other students from our school were there (but not arrested), Will was asked if he thought his being arrested while other students were let go was an issue of gender or race. "Somewhat yeah, because they actually let a lot of girls go and when I was in my holding cell they brought the girls food but they didn't bring the guys anything." Will mentioned earlier he was due in court on the 29th, but a group said they would provide him an attorney. When asked who this group was, he replied "The National Legal Association I believe."

When asked how his parents felt, Will replied, "At first they were upset because, well their kid got arrested.

They thought I did something wrong... but once they got there and realized the situation they weren't too mad about it anymore."

After being charged with disorderly conduct, and when asked what the possible sentence would be if he were to be convicted, Will said, "I could get community service or pay a fine. Probably both." However, this is not likely. When asked if the way the police acted that day was a case of entrapment, he said, "Yeah, because it was a setup from the start."

It was recently said on the news that they'll be cleaning the park barring people from using tarps. When asked for *Occupying Wall Street* was, "Actually kinda fun. I enjoyed it."

his opinion on this, Will replied, "That's just a way for them to try to discourage people but it's not really gonna work."

Will was then asked if he felt the government is obeying the will of the people or just getting nothing done. "They're just getting nothing done. There is nothing being done about it. They're just talking about it." The next question was, "Do you plan on attending more protests in the future?" Will replied, "Yeah, probably. Hopefully I won't get arrested though." When asked about his overall experience,

Will said he learned "That if you're going to stand up for something at all, it should be to benefit everybody rather than just a group of people."

Following that, he was asked if he felt singled out among the group, to which he asked if the question referred to his classmates or the protesters as a whole. In reference to the whole group, he said, "Somewhat yeah, because the entire time I was being watched by the captain, it was like he wasn't trying to let me go at all. The girls, well, he walked over and pulled them out and let them get off the bridge and then he pulled me to get arrested."

Will was also asked if he felt the way the economy is would affect his education, to which he replied, "When it comes to college maybe, but not really right now."

The final question of the interview was whether or not Will thought his involvement in the protests would impact his chances at getting a job, to which he responded, "No, not really."

Despite it all, when Will described his overall experience, he left us with the message that Occupying Wall Street was, "Actually kinda fun. I enjoyed it."

## FLOOR GRADES from front page

a nuisance.

Senior Sarah Cerezo stands adamantly opposed to the idea. "Such a thing would be highly detrimental to the learning environment here at the high school because it's a free hand-out. They're giving out free for doing nothing, punishing kids who are working hard."

ing, punishing kids who are working hard. It just isn't fair. Higher absences, more cuts, and petitions from students who don't do well, but still work hard are probable" said the senior. Some of the students were hesitant in their response to the dilemma in fear of questioning authority. "It will just cause more tax money to be spent in keeping kids in school" said an anonymous freshman. Junior Christian DeFeo also finds the new policy to be a hindrance. "It's pretty dumb, because you can't have a 50 average if you don't know any-

thing. If you work and miss a month, you don't get 50 percent of your pay," he said. Junior Lucie Gulino claimed that it was a "false representation of graduation ranks." "It's a good concept but doesn't necessarily extend well in every circumstance," she said.

Sophomore Alex Castillo believes that "the grade you get should be a direct reflection of your effort."

To this day, there is much heated debate in the education community, and across the nation, over grading policies that best motivate students to take their schoolwork more seriously. The idea still remains to be a controversial matter that will require further analysis. Are educators fulfilling their roles as facilitators, or experimenting in a way that would hurt the current system? Only time and practice will tell.



# The Stage Setters

*Stage crew plays a role in productions just as critical as that of a performer's*

by EMAL WAFJOW

Lights, Camera, Action – But not without the help of our fellow stage crew! Stepping on to the stage, I got a glimpse as to what goes on behind the scenes of Huntington High School's drama productions. As I entered the auditorium, I could hear the loud and industrious sound of students at work. I never quite realized how integral the stage crew was until this point, but I was about to find out.

Not very different from a construction site, a wide variety of tools and devices lay before me. It was astonishing to believe that such an enormous task was given to only a few dozens of students under the commission of Mr. Gilbert. With this in mind, I knew that something had to change.

Talking to junior and sound engineer, Christine Powers, I got a new perspective of the stage crew's labor intensive duties. I could sense the exhaustion and trepidation, as well as excitement, in her voice. "We're in the process of building a stage extension, which may seem simple but it's big and bulky. Most of the guys do the heavy lifting, and we only have about six of them around. If the work isn't done, we get all the blame, not the performers," Christine said. Though it may seem as if the stage crew only carries out construction tasks, they are actually responsible for everything that goes on behind the scenes of our high school's performances. They construct the floors, platforms, stairs, and designs for the set. "Drama uses everything, and it's our job to make it available to them," said Christine. Every day after school, these students devote hours of effort from 6:30 to 9:00 pm. The stage crew's presence is even mandatory during weekend rehearsals.

Lights specialist and HHS junior, Gabe Goldman, noted that the stage crew's biggest challenge has yet to come. "It feels impossible. We're expected to build three turntables and a two story structure, with platforms and entryways, all by the beginning of

November. It's made even harder by the fact that we only have ten to fifteen people show up." Besides the sheer enormity of expectations, time constraints are yet another critical issue. The date of the play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is quickly approaching. "Our biggest issue is that we don't really have as much time as we need. If we did, we could make phenomenal sets that look really good," said senior President Michael Lambui. After Witnessing Huntington High School's past performances, one can still be assured that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* promises audiences something to look



Stage crew members Alexa Kaplan (left) and Christine Powers (right) know first hand how difficult stage crew can be

forward to.

Crossing the parade of concerned peers, I really got a feeling for the type of situation they were in. If more people were to join the production process, no matter their role, Huntington High School's entertainment enterprise could only be improved. Although everyone may not be able to devote the time required of this production, I still strongly implore many to consider it. People who have great creativity in designing Homecoming floats, or even those plainly interested in building things, couldn't find a better place to get involved than with the stage crew.

Make no mistake; stage crew members must not go underappreciated. They are the geniuses that lie behind the curtain. It's time to put a spotlight on the shadows!

# Part-Time Jobs for Full-Time Students

*Is the extra effort worth it? Students say, "Yes!"*

by LAURA ZENZEROVICH

Although balancing schoolwork, sports, clubs, and a social life can be a real challenge for those at Huntington High, some choose to add a new and daunting task to their list- Part-time employment. Many of these students have applied for and have received jobs in our local area, an awesome feat in such an awful economy. A walk around the village one weekday after school would definitely turn up a few high schoolers working the register or stocking the shelves, always polite and professional.

There are many good reasons to have a part-time job, the money of course being the biggest incentive. Whether someone is saving for college, a car, or just needs the spending money, a job is a big responsibility that can be very rewarding. "It definitely opens doors for you," said senior Erin LaSorsa, who has worked at the local Chip'n Dipped for six months, and has met many nice people along the way. Work experience is also valuable on a college application, and

shows colleges a level of dedication beyond the average student.

This isn't to say a job is a walk in the park; at times it can be quite the opposite. "Part-time" ranges anywhere from 20-30 hours a week, which for some students translates into work on three or four weekdays and some weekends. It's also possible that one will encounter impolite bosses or co-workers in a new job, and sometimes difficulty with customers. "Make sure you have enough patience if it's a customer service job," said senior Joe Tizzio, who's been working at a local CVS for five months. "If not, it's going to blow up in your face."

Employment is not for everyone in high school, but for those who are interested, it's getting harder and harder to come by. "Finding the job was very difficult," said senior Jessica Flores, who's been working at a local CVS for two months. The process included filling

out multiple applications for whoever was hiring, and then sitting for two interviews before getting the job. Competition can make an already difficult process even more stressful.

For those who want to get a job, remember that it's important to act maturely. "Try to be as professional as possible," Flores suggested for the interview. "Talk about all the positives and be yourself." Starting the search early also helps. "If you really want a job, start looking around May or even April, before the rush of people," LaSorsa suggested for summer jobs. Connections are also very useful, as talking to others with work experience can help in figuring out what good places are hiring.

The work place can be just as tiring as the classroom. A job may definitely frustrate and exhaust you, but hopefully at the end of the day, you're walking home with a sense of fulfillment, having new responsibilities that warrant the respect of others, and if nothing else a paycheck in your pocket.

*"For those who want to get a job, remember that it's important to act maturely."*

# Spanish Heritage Celebration Program

by STEPHANIE SHEA



PHOTO: COURTESY OF DR. LEONARDI

Friday, October 14th was the 17th Annual Hispanic Heritage Celebration Program at Town Hall. The Hispanic Task Force, who ran the event, works to strengthen the tie between all races of people, as well as helps to support our diverse community.

The evening began with an opening speech by Jillian Guthman, who introduced the mistress of ceremonies, Veronica Melgar. Mrs. Melgar is one of the co-chairs on the Hispanic Task force and also the mother of children in the Huntington School District. She spoke about the importance of children and their education, as well as the importance of all different types of people coming together to make our community a better place. Mrs Melgar then introduced the Huntington Chamber Choir.

Joshua Stickell, a member of the chamber choir, led the pledge of allegiance and the Chamber Choir followed with the National Anthem. Father Michael Bartholomew of St. Hugh of Lincoln Center R.C. Church

led an invocation in both Spanish and English. After the prayer, the Chamber Choir, directed by Veronica Mainville, was invited to perform Amor de mi Alma by Garcilazo de la Vega. The rest of the evening went on with remarks from the councilmen and women, as well as other musical selections by Theo Torres.

Maria Teresa Quick, the other co-chair of the Task Force, soon introduced the keynote speaker Vivian Viloria-Fisher. Lehti Laas Ramos, M.D., M.H.S.A and Huntington High School's very own, Dr. Carmela Leonardi. Dr. Leonardi was presented with a community service award for all of her contributions to the community.

Dr. Leonardi graduated from Hofstra University with a Ph.D in reading and cognition, and also received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the City University of New York; Queens College. She has been the Principal for three buildings within the Huntington school district starting in 1990. She was also the Bilingual Program and

K-12 Coordinator of Instruction and a teacher in the Lawrence School District.

Starting in 2001, Dr. Leonardi has expanded the level of learning in Huntington High School with more AP courses. Since then, there have been more students taking these courses and scoring well on the AP exams. Dr. Leonardi has worked hard for a long time serving our community and making Huntington a better place, and was very deserving of this award. After Dr. Laas Ramos' and Dr Leonardi's awards, 20 students were presented with achievement awards for having high academic and extra curricular achievements. The event ended with another performance by Theo Torres.

Overall, the 17th Annual Hispanic Heritage Celebration Program was a successful event, and was enjoyed by all. It truly showed the importance of all different people coming together to celebrate those who have made Huntington an impressive place to live.

HHS's very own Dr. Leonarda was presented with a community service award at the recent Hispanic Heritage Celebration



# Huntington High School’s Hidden Gems

by TODD COLVIN

How many students and teachers know that our high school has a fishpond in it? My guess is less than 25% of both students and teachers could actually point out where it is.

Well, the fishpond is in the courtyard outside of the cafeteria (although it might look like a garden with a lot of large green plants in it from far away, I can personally assure you it is a pond). It is home to several different types of plants, insects and bugs like spiders so big you would be shooting webs out of your hands the next morning if they bit you, and a surprisingly large number of tiny orange koi.

Are you surprised that your high school has this largely unknown, but nonetheless impressive, feature? Most people are. As a matter of fact, this high school has tons of impressive features that most people don’t know about. These “hidden gems” are interesting locations and objects that remain largely unnoticed even though they are right here, under people’s noses.

Most people walk in the back of the science hallway which connects the science hallway and math hallway at least once every day. The back of that wall is full of posters and photographs from Huntington High School’s past that are worth a look, such as the hilarious black-and-white picture of a teacher in a pinstripe suit. The same



PHOTO: COURTESY OF JACOB RODAY

✚HHS’s little known pond

goes for the Heritage Room. Most people have aimlessly stared at the many artifacts while being distracted in an assembly, but far fewer people have gotten up and really looked at the many objects. There are a ton of interesting artifacts from Huntington’s past that can only come to life when observed up close and accompanied by one of Mr. Abrams’s fascinating captions.

And what about the cafeteria? Everybody gets the hot lunch, sandwich, pizza, or burrito with a bag of chips or cookies. But how many people know that our cafeteria serves chocolate pudding? It might not be the most tempting option for most people, but it’s a fairly gen-

erous serving size, tastes pretty good as far as pudding goes, and is a good alternative for people with one dollar that are not sure if they are hungry or thirsty. I’m not saying that having pudding on our cafeteria menu is the greatest thing in the world, but it is there, and it is a decent option many people don’t know about.

The school’s club selection also has much to offer that lies unknown to most people. For those that are looking to bolster their college resume, make a difference within our school, or just have a good time, the Serendipity Club is for you. The Serendipity Club gives students a chance to socialize with the special education students during free periods. The special education teacher Mrs. Castles heads the club. This club is a fun and rewarding experience that is an excellent alternative for students with busy after school schedules.

Huntington High School has much to offer that the majority of students may be unaware of. Although I listed all of the hidden gems that I am aware of, I am sure there are many more lurking beneath the surface. Huntington High School can be an interesting and surprising place, as many upperclassmen fortunate enough to have an encounter with Patches, the now retired basement dog, can tell you. Huntington High School has plenty of amazing things to offer, you just have to know where to look.

# Discovering Spirit Week

by DONOVAN RICHARDSON

“Today is Neon Day!” Another annoying announcement that is wasting class time. “Come buy a Homecoming shirt!” Geeks from some club are trying to sell lame shirts that everyone else wants to buy. Soon everyone is bragging about their Homecoming dates and their Pep Rally routines. Oh please. “Report to the gymnasium for Pep Rally!” Not this again! Is no one excited for Spirit Week? Someone has to fix that!

The best part of Spirit Week for some people is the Pep Rally. For others, it is wearing weird outfits that are never seen outside of the closet, like a reindeer sweater. Pep Rally is the beginning of an exciting weekend, but it is also the end of the most school-spirited week of the year. Here are some tips to help catch spirit fever for next year.

First, remember to wear all the ugly clothes that are reserved only for spirit week. Neon green and pink, that reindeer sweater, and a fake mustache will always look normal during Spirit Week. Wearing the right clothes during spirit week is a surefire way to increase school spirit. It also reduces the shock of exposure to school spirit during the Pep Rally. If clothing can’t be found to match the theme, at least buy a Homecoming shirt Second, there will be many fundraisers for clubs who wisely take advantage of this burst of school spirit to make money. There are students during lunch periods selling Homecoming tickets. Don’t expect to get into Homecoming without a ticket. It just doesn’t happen. Instead, expect to regret not getting a Homecoming ticket. In years past, Homecoming shirts and tattoos, all blue

and white, have been sold. Wearing them at Pep Rally makes a great photo-op, and might just land you on the school website.



PHOTO: ANGELINE RAMOS

✚Students show their spirit!

Third, go to Pep Rally. The only way to get out of it is by being absent that day or being suspended. So, to ensure being present on that day, use soap on the hands and mouth to avoid cursing out Dr. Leonardi or catching a real fever. Provided that neither of those happen, just go when the announcement is made at the end of the day. In 2010, the Boy’s Soccer team’s routine was by far the highlight of the event. In other years, highlights also included the Highsteppers, the Step Team, and the Marching Band’s performances. While at Pep Rally, make sure to cheer, to avoid feeling left out. There is such thing as a silent Pep Rally, though. It’s called an assembly, but those aren’t as fun.

Finally, at the end of that day, there’s Float Night. This is where the Homecoming floats are made, or in the case of a more diligent class, finished. These floats are then pulled around town the next day in the parade. It seems on this day that Spirit Week gradually turns into Homecoming Day. Some classmates whose lives practically depend on Homecoming floats are there after midnight trying to finish. The next morning, some of these classmates who surely got only four hours of sleep spend almost the whole day at the high school, for the parade, the football game, and the Homecoming Dance. Another day full of memories.

## The Dispatch examines . . .



1) **Modern Family**- this ABC original has us all laughing

2) **Huntington Sweatshirts from the Class of 2013**- don’t tell me YOU don’t have one yet!

3) **Twitter**- @everyone #ifyoudonttweetwhatdoyoudo?

4) **Huntington Theme Songs**- “Put it on for my city so they know where I’m from...”

5) **The Paramount**-Huntington’s new claim to fame



1) **Kim K**- things that lasted longer than Kim’s marriage? This sentence.

2) **Snow in October**- mother nature gives us the cold shoulder early this year



3) **Justin Bieber’s Christmas Album**- Hey Justin, if we wanted Christmas ruined we would have called the Grinch.



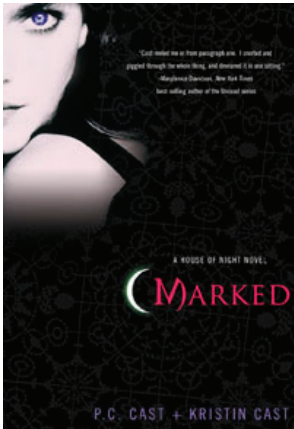
4) **Pajamas to school**- at least try to pretend like you don’t sleep through all your classes

5) **Yogurt Establishments**- when is Huntington going to realize enough is enough?

# House of Night: A Vampire Series That Does Not “Suck”

by ASAR NADI

The House of Night series, written by P.C Cast and her daughter Kristin Cast, can be best explained by the first book of the series, *Marked*. House of Night is not an ordinary series, as it is mainly about fledglings turning into adult “vampyres.”House of Night is likeable because the idea the authors used is very unique; people must be chosen to turn into a vampyre. Those lucky few must attend school as a fledgling and learn all there is to know about their new future. The series is also unlike Twilight and other similarly themed books where vampires cannot walk in the sun because the vampyres are able to walk outside. This series is a page-turner because of the foreshadowing and so much suspense that the ending could not come quick enough! The abun-



dant twisting of the plot made it hard to predict what was coming later in the book. The book was written so well that the imagery brought the story to life. *Marked* is unique in that it’s enjoyable and fun, even to those who don’t like reading. For fans of fantasy, especially vampire books, then the House of Night series is a perfect read.



# The Dispatch

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*The Dispatch* is Huntington High School's official stu-dent publication. Written for over 1200 students attend-ing HHS, *The Dispatch* is distributed to all students, staff and school community members at the school free of charge.

The Editorial Board is the newspaper's decision-mak-ing body, organizing and directing its operation. *The Dispatch* staff has adopted the following editorial policy to express the rights, responsibilities and philosophy of the newspaper for the 2011-2012 school year.

*The Dispatch* of Huntington High School is a public forum, with its student editorial board making all deci-sions concerning its content. Unsigned editorials ex-press the views of the majority of the editorial board.

Letters to the editor are welcomed and will be published as space allows. Letters are preferred signed, but may be published by request. The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit letters for grammar and clarity, and all letters are subject to laws governing obscenity, libel, privacy, and disruption of the school process, as are all contents of the paper. Questions, comments, and letters to the editor should be sent electronically to [dispatch@hufsd.edu](mailto:dispatch@hufsd.edu) or submitted to *The Dispatch* mailbox located in the main office.

Opinions in letters are not necessarily those of the staff, nor should any opinion expressed in a public forum be construed as the opinion of the administration, unless so attributed.

*The Dispatch's* goal is to provide readers with inter-esting content in a wide variety of areas. Such areas include the news coverage of school and community events, as well as features on relevent topics. In addition, *The Dispatch* will provide opinionated editorials on controversial topics, as well as provide previews and reviews for upcoming school and professional sports seasons and other forms of entertainment.

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# EDITORIAL

No one likes having to work at something that others are getting for free, so it's easy to under-stand why students are upset with a floor grade of a 50. Immediately, they think of the worst possible class-mate- the one who'll rarely show up for class, the one who interrupts every few minutes, the one who does absolutely nothing and has the nerve to call it a waste of his time. Everyone hates "that guy", whoever he is, and no one wants to watch him abuse the system. With a floor grade, he may end up cruising by the first two quarters while those around him work hard to pass the class, or worse, work hard and find out they're only doing as well as he is. It simply doesn't seem fair.

However unbelievable it may seem, Hun-tington High School makes its policies with the best interests of its students in mind. This poli-cy was made with the hope that it would boost student morale and motiva-tion. A 50 is by no means a good grade, but it's still a better than a 20 or 30, so a floor grade gives students a better chance of trying to pick up their grades later in the year, keeping them out of summer school. Some students out there will definitely welcome this change, because these students genuinely work hard for their grades, but often fall short of where they need to be. The safety net of a floor grade will help them adjust to the rigors of the course they're in and help them stay focused at the end of the year with the hope that they could still pass. The goal is to prevent students from giving up and dropping out if they feel like a previous quarter grade keeps them from passing the class.

So this seems all well and good, but what about "that guy"? Even though this system makes a few helpful changes, you can't deny that some are going to take this policy as an in-vitation to have an extended va-cation and turn up again some-time in February. The truth is some people aren't going to be changed no matter what policy is in place. If they take the 50 and come back in an attempt to make up for lost time, they probably won't catch up. The system is made to help those who actually try, not those looking for a free ride.

It's natural to feel upset about this policy, be-cause it's still giving credit to those who might not deserve it. It's interesting to note that the idea of floor grading is not new to Huntington High School, and many teachers have used it in the past. A little something called "effort" of-ten contributes to the grade a student receives from a teacher. It's difficult to measure, but still something important to note. Teachers are the most adept at distinguishing "that guy" from a genuine student, and naturally are more in-clined to help out the honest student with the grades. A centralized system doesn't give a teacher that freedom and the two may end up getting the same grade even though one defi-nitely worked harder.

The flaw in this system is that it tries to generalize a process that is very much depen-dent on individual circumstances, and should be applied on a case-by-case basis. As it is, this policy will both harm and help the student body. Only time will tell if it does one more than the other.

## No Shorts, No Hats, Big Problem

### *Student dress code strikes back with vengeance*

by BRIDGET WALSH

As you walk past the nurse's office before first peri-od, you spot many girls packed into a tiny space. A few are ar-guing with the security guard standing near the entrance, some are talking to their friends with the sound of annoyance in their voice, but most are look-ing just plain ir-ritated. The one thing they have in common is that they all have violated the dress code in one way or another.

Down the hall, a group of guys are being asked by a dean to take off their hats. As soon as the dean is out of sight, they

put those hats right back on again. Many students feel that the new dress code policies are ridiculous and completely un-necessary.

"I think the new rules are uncalled for. You can't even buy shorts that are the length the school wants them to be. What are we supposed to wear when it's hot out?" says sophomore, Christina Theimann, "Either the school installs some sort of cooling system, or they should stop making impractical rules regarding the dress code," she

explains.

Huntington High School claims that if shorts are more than three inches above your knee, they are a distraction to other students. Kristy Delwey completely disagrees with this. "We are kept in the nurse's of-ice during 1st period. We miss class and are sometimes even sent home to change. It's inter-rupting our education and it's outrageous."

Overall, students are not pleased with the new dress code policies and their en-forcement. Many feel that the school needs to adopt a more enlightened dress policy, as well as a realistic and efficient way to enforce it.



GRAPHIC: JACOB RODAY

The newly enforced dress code leaves students angry

# POINT / COUNTERPOINT

## Stand up for yourself

by KATIE PETROZZO

Through the years, the term “reaction” has garnered a negative image, seen as an action with a detrimental consequence. Despite the reputation reacting has gained, responding to an event does not always have to be repugnant. When there is injustice in the world, many are taught *“...responding to an event does not always have to be repugnant.”* Being a passive witness is said to make one just as guilty as the offender who brought upon the transgression. Despite the things people are taught, when someone stands up to an offender, that person is sometimes under critical claim. Typically, these reactions can be viewed as violent or offensive as well, though it can be argued that it is human nature to retaliate against an action that goes against one’s belief.

For thousands of years, humans have proved their right to protect what they care about, and when what they are protecting is threatened, it is an instinctual response to react against it. Not only is this meant to protect what a person cares about, but it also deals with matters of pride; no one wants their pride to be tarnished when someone attempts to degrade them.

When a degrading slur targets an ethnic race, sexual orientation, religion, or anything else offensive is thrown at a person, he/she should not let it go unnoticed. Responding to a wrongdoing does not always necessarily need to be done in a negative way, as that may be just as erroneous as the offending comment. In these situations it is best to reciprocate. Typically, offensive slurs are thrown at opposing teammates during sports games, when everyone’s hearts are racing and adrenaline is pumping. There is no time in such situations to sit down with the offender and discuss his/her discourse of actions, therefore the person receiving the comment must react quickly and to assure that this behavior will not be tolerated.

Those offended must react in an enthusiastic and defiant manner in order to assert their point and prevent this person from offending them again or in the future.

These situations are never easy to handle, but with a firm grip on the matter, and a reasonable logic behind it, it is possible to respond in an efficient and confident manner.

## Lashing out isn’t the answer

by ANGELICA TOME-RADIGAN

Say you’re playing a game of soccer. All is going well, but then someone directs a racial slur towards you. What do you do? Do you lash out at them? Of course, it’s only human nature to defend your pride and your culture. But is it always right?

When someone gets insulted the first thought is to defend oneself. One insult can lead to another insult, which can lead to fighting, and fighting can get physical. Fighting is never the answer, cliché as that might be. There are many cases where fighting has led to downfall. Take Zinedine Zidane, a player on the French soccer team. He head-butted an Italian defender in the World Cup for calling him a terrorist. It was a reasonable act of defense, but it ended up costing them the game.

So how can we defend ourselves without getting into trouble? It may not seem so easy, but in all honestly, it isn’t hard. No one likes to be a tattletale, but sometimes it’s the only route to take. As long as you’re doing it to protect yourself and not so you can get someone else in trouble, no one can blame you for snitching. In all reality, you’re not being a snitch; you’re letting someone know that you have been wronged.

Another question: who do we tell? There are a number of people to confront.

Friends, family or the school administration are some people to consider going to. Friends might not be the best choice, though. They can get defensive and will most likely side with you, and this can lead to greater physical confrontations. Telling your parents is a better choice, but parents, too, might end up taking it personally and might do the wrong thing. Probably the best people to confront would be a school administrator. As unappealing as it may sound, they can really help you with your situation. And there won’t be any physical fighting involved.

There is always a choice to just ignore what is being said. This can be both helpful and harmful, just like all the other options. On one hand, you are avoiding what could be a dangerous situation, but on the other hand, you’re holding in emotions that can lead you to lash out later.

Keep in mind, this issue is not just dealing with racial slurs. There are many derogatory slangs that can be used to insult someone. There are also many ways that you can avoid retaliating when one of these slurs are used against you. Everything has a positive and negative side. Your only worry is which is best to use. So, what will you do?

# POINT / COUNTERPOINT EN ESPAÑOL

A través de los años el término “El desquite” ha tenido una imagen negativa; la de una acción con una consecuencia injuriosa- A pesar de la reputación que la reacción ha adquirido, el responder a un suceso no siempre tiene que ser repugnante. Cuando hay injusticia en el mundo, a todos se les enseña a hablar claramente en contra. El permanecer como un testigo pasivo se enseña como ser tan culpable como el ofensor que causó esta trasgresión. A pesar del conocimiento ya sabido, cuando alguien le hace frente a un ofensor, ellos se encuentran bajo un lente crítico. Típicamente, estas reacciones pueden ser vistas como violentas o tan ofensivas como la causa, aunque se puede decir que es parte de la naturaleza humano el desquitarse contra una acción que va contra sus creencias. Por miles de años, los seres humanos han demostrado estar en lo cierto para proteger lo que a uno le importa, y cuando lo que están protegiendo está en peligro, la reacción inicial es reaccionar contra eso. No solamente es proteger lo que a una persona le importa, sino también un asunto de orgullo; nadie quiere que su orgullo sea empañado por



alguien que trata de degradarlo.

Cuando se usa un insulto para ofender por etnicidad, orientación sexual, religión, o cualquier otra cosa ofensiva, se lanza hacia una persona, no debe dejarse pasar. El responder a algo errado no necesariamente tiene que ser en forma negativa. Típicamente estos insultos ofensivos son lanzados a jugadores del equipo opuesto durante los partidos, cuando los corazones están latiendo rápido y la adrenalina corre por las venas. No hay tiempo en tales situaciones para sentarse con el ofensor y discutir las acciones a seguir, por lo tanto la persona que recibe el comentario debe reaccionar rápidamente y asegurarse que este comportamiento no será tolerado.

Aquellos ofendidos deben reaccionar de una manera entusiasta y desafiante para así consolidar su punto de vista y prevenir que esta persona los ofenda nuevamente o en el futuro.

Estas situaciones no son nunca fáciles de manejar, pero con asidero firme en el asunto y una lógica razonable que lo sustente, es posible responder de manera eficiente y segura.

Digamos que estás jugando un partido de fútbol. Todo va bien, pero alguien te lanza un insulto racial. ¿Qué haces? ¿Lo vituperas? Por supuesto, es solamente parte de la naturaleza humana el defender tu orgullo y tu cultura.

Pero, ¿está correcto hacerlo?

Cuando alguien es insultado el primer pensamiento es defenderse. Un insulto lleva a otro, lo que puede ocasionar una pelea, y la pelea puede llegar a ser física. Pelear no es nunca la respuesta, tan cliché como pueda ser.

Hay muchos casos en los cuales el pelear ha llevado a la ruina. Tomen a Zinedine Zidane, un jugador en el equipo de fútbol francés. Él atacó con un cabezazo al defensa italiano en la Copa Mundial por llamarlo un terrorista. Fue un acto razonable de defensa, pero terminó costándoles el juego.

Entonces, ¿cómo podemos defendernos sin meternos en problemas? puede que no parezca fácil, pero honestamente, no es difícil. A nadie le gusta ser un delator, pero a veces es el único camino a seguir. Mientras se haga en defensa propia y no cause problemas a otra persona, nadie puede acusarte por delatar. Realmente, tú no eres un “soplón”; solamente estas dando a conocer que has sido agraviado.

Otra pregunta: ¿A quién le decimos?

Hay un grupo de personas para confrontar; aunque los amigos podrían no ser la mejor opción. Pueden volverse defensivos y generalmente estarán de tu lado, esto puede llevar a mayores confrontaciones físicas. Decirle a tus padres es una mejor opción, pero los padres, también, podrían tomarlo personalmente y hacer algo errado. Probablemente la mejor persona para acercarse sería un administrador en la escuela. Aunque te pueda parecer poco atrayente, ellos realmente pueden ayudarte con tu situación. Y no habrá ninguna pelea física.

Existe siempre la opción de ignorar lo que se ha dicho. Esto puede ser al mismo tiempo útil y perjudicial, igual que todas las otras opciones. Por una parte, tú estás evitando que pudiera convertirse en una situación peligrosa, pero por otro lado, estás guardando emociones que podrían llevarte a vituperar mas tarde.

Recuerda: este asunto no es solamente para ocuparse de insultos raciales. Hay muchos insultos y vulgaridades que pueden usarse contra alguien. Hay también muchas maneras que tú puedes tomar represalias cuando uno de estos insultos es usado en tu contra. Todo tiene un lado positivo y negativo. Tu única preocupación es cual es la mejor forma de reaccionar. Entonces, ¿qué harás?

With much thanks to the help of Sra. Oranges!



# SPORTS

## Fall Sports In Review

A full season- abridged

by ARI MOSKOWITZ

As usual, Huntington athletics and varsity athletes excelled this past fall season. Both football and soccer finished with impressive records (4-4 and 10-5, respectively) and made it to the playoffs. The soccer team was awarded a home playoffs game vs. Kings Park. Unfortunately, they lost the tough match 1-0, but the team definitely shows promise for next year. The football team played their playoff game away at Islip, but sadly lost by one score. The team is very strong and has a lot of young talent that will lead them to future success. Boy's cross-country finished an amazing season with a 5-0 record, demolishing every opponent they faced. Boy's volleyball also had a strong season, finishing one game away from .500 at 5-7. Boy's golf had a tough season with two wins out of twelve games.



GRAPHIC: MOLLY PREP

This year, Huntington's girl's varsity sports played really strong as well. Field hockey made the playoffs with a 7-7 record, but they sadly lost in the first round. Some other strong performances were made by girl's varsity soccer, who missed the playoffs by a game and finished with a record of 6-6-3. The team is not losing any seniors this year, and have the potential to go very. Girl's tennis played a very strong season this year finishing 8-2 and sending six girls to leagues. The team was junior dominated and looks very promising for the years to come. Girl's swimming toughed out their season ending with a 4-2 record. Ten swimmers made leagues, and a few also made counties. Girl's cross-country had a strong year. Their 3-2 season definitely shows that potential and future success can be expected. Girl's volleyball ended their season with a record of 2-13. Better luck next year girls.

✦ *Huntington Varsity Sports had a great first season*

Good luck to all athletes in the seasons to come!

## Student, Athlete, or Superhuman?

Is it possible to balance sports and school?

by MIKE STAFFORD and VICTOR TELLEZ

High school sports have been known to improve grades, enable students to interact with others, build teamwork, and provide motivation. However, sports also take away sleep hours and induce stress, fatigue and injuries on the student.

Grades are usually improved for student athletes during the seasons they play sports because the student does not have as much time to do their work, causing them to focus more on school work during their free time. Procrastination becomes less of an issue, as student athletes have very little time to waste. Sports also build teamwork and help students with their school life. Coaches provide the encouragement and motivation the student needs during school. Sleep hours are usually deprived since sports sometimes take a major amount of time out of the student's free time, and so much focus could cause fatigue and injury for the

student athlete. Through research and interviewing a few student athletes and non athletes it is clear that sports can be either beneficial or unprofitable.

One of these HHS student athletes is John Cimetta, a member of Varsity Football. On the aspect of getting his work done he said, "Sometimes I find it difficult to do my homework comfortably but most of the time I get all of my work done and still manage to get a decent amount of sleep. I usually have enough time to get all my work done and sleep for about a good seven hours." John also said that he gets more work done during the football season, but did feel some fatigue from lack of sleep. Another student athlete, Summer Rudish, also had similar ideas to John about playing sports. While playing Varsity Girl's Soccer this year, Summer gave us some insight in that her grades were better during seasons that she played sports. She also claimed

to have less sleep during the seasons she plays sports. Summer said that she procrastinates less during the soccer

season because she needs to focus on homework to get more sleep.

Throughout the season she feels more stressed because of all the time management needed.

After interviewing students in Huntington High School, it seems sports usually improve grades because students focus more on schoolwork during their free time. Yet, some students may steer away from sports because of the time requirements, loss of sleep, and stress. High school sports are considered helpful in terms of building character and focusing on school but some people cannot take the stress and fatigue that sports put on a student every day.



PHOTO: MOLLY PREP

✦ *Junior and cross-country runner, Adelia Witt, balances her time by doing homework at meets*

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