

LOHS Betas attend state Convention...3

Vegans make better vegetarians...5

Franklin's food drive...7



# The Oak "K"

The Official Publication of LOHS



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## LOHS captures West Kentucky Academic Bowl

*Lucy Jackson*  
Co-Editor in Chief

The never ending struggle to conquer the academic world is one step closer to completion as the A-team pulls in yet another title as the champions of the West Kentucky Academic Bowl.

There were 17 schools from the first region all competing in the area of quick recall. Josh McGuire (12), Bryan Garner (12), Prमित Patel (12), Janie Toy (12), Jason Ramage (12), Amy Chapman (10), Jay Swacker (10), and Josh Woleben (9) made up the winning team.

LOHS made it to the finals which were held on December 10 and played Calloway County in the first round beating them 45-22. In the final match, the team pulled through again and defeated the sec-

ond place team Graves County who had previously won against Carlisle County. Lone Oak won the final match 33-17.

"Weaknesses we discovered over the season were worked on by a few members before the competition. This added effort proved to bring us success," said Patel.

This competition was founded by Edwin Reed founded the West Kentucky Academic Consortium which puts on the bowl annually. The competition is given as a way to recognize academic achievements.

This was LOHS' second year in a row to win this particular tournament. Besides the simple glory of winning and an impressive title, this competition also offers scholarship money to seniors.

Not only has the academic team

proved its excellency in this area, it has also made a name for itself throughout the entire country. LOHS placed second in the state and an outstanding 25th out of 1112 school across the country in the Knowledge Masters Open, a 200 question, multiple-choice test. The test covers all areas and points are based on accuracy vs. speed. It was taken by the entire Academic team.

Of 268 schools with approxi-

"We have goals for the Governor's Cup that give us a real incentive to keep working hard."

—Mr. Toy

mately LOHS' enrollment, the team placed sixth.

As expected, the LOHS academic team has ended this year at the top, to say the least. '99 is sure to be just as successful. Governor's Cup will be coming up and is the team's new focus. Districts will be February 13th, Regionals are February 27th, and State is march 14th and 15th.

"We are really excited about our season up to this point, but we are now concentrating on Governor's Cup. We have goals for Governor's Cup that give us a real incentive to keep working hard," said Mr. Toy, the academic team sponsor.

## Lady Flash dominates McDonalds tournament

*Blake Owen*  
Staff Writer

After a rough start the Lady Flash pulled out a big win over Carlisle in the finals of the McDonald's Invitational Tournament.

With the Oakers only scoring 11 points in the first half, Carlisle jumped out to a four-point lead at half time. When the Lady Flash returned from the locker room they bounced back with a 19-9 run in the final quarter. Heidi Seltzer, tournament MVP, scored six of her

twelve points in the final quarter with Tonya Stamper scoring all seven of her points, hitting five out of seven free throws.

From their performance in the McDonalds Tournament, the Lady Flash look to have a good season ahead of them.

All Tournament Team - Lone Oak: Seltzer, Stamper, and McClure. Ballard: Koehler, McClain. Fulton: V. Brown, T. Brown. Carlisle: King, Parham, Hoskins.



Stacy Adams(12) guards a Carlisle player

Photo by B. Owen

# Chemistry students test their skills

*Sunil Manchikanti*  
Circulation Manager

On November 12, 1998, Mr. Whitley took a group of four AP Chemistry students to participate in the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Chemistry Scholarship Tournament at Murray State University. Jeff Heath(12), Michelle Williams(12), Bret Martin (12) and Pramit Patel(12) traveled to Murray and took a 50 question, comprehensive chemistry exam for a chance to be awarded scholarship money.

All four of the LOHS students who took the test were ranked in the top fifty percent of the participants. Lone Oak placed seventh overall in the tournament, with only four higher scores. Many of the other participants are taking their



Chemistry students Michelle Williams, Bret Martin, Pramit Patel and Jeff Heath pose with Mr. Whitley at MSU.

third year of chemistry classes, opposed to Lone Oak's participants

who are taking their second year of chemistry.

The biggest success of the tournament was Jeff Heath's second place score. As an award, he will receive a scholarship if attends MSU.

It should be noted that even the MSU's chemistry faculty had difficulty with this test. One member missed three questions, one missed four, and another missed six(the same number Heath missed).

"And note that I would not dare to give this exam to my own general chemistry students; most would fail!" wrote Terry McCreary, an associate professor of chemistry at MSU.

Professor McCreary also noted that he missed one of his own questions when he took this test. The tournament was challenging for everybody involved.



Mr. Carr, head of security for McCracken County schools, informs students of the false bomb threat which occurred earlier this month.

## Art students win at Teen Spirit

*Jody Suhrheinrich*  
Staff Writer

It's time to give it up for all those super artistic LOHS students who earned the chance to have their artwork displayed in the The Yeiser Art Center's "Teen Spirit Competition." Andrea Ramey (11) submitted an award-winning entry while Robert Spees (9) and Amanda Hall (11) each were chosen to have their work exhibited. Ramey will re-

ceive \$25 for her two-dimensional, mixed media. To have your work displayed is a great honor since out of 458 entries only 50 are chosen, four were from Lone Oak. As an additional reward these students are invited to attend the Award's reception on Sunday, December 6, 1998. Make sure to stop by the library to catch a glimpse of the other prospective entrants.

## LOHS students audition for All-District Band

The following students were selected to play in the All-District Band concert that will be held January 16 at Paducah Tilghman High School: Elizabeth Tracy Smith (12), Rebecca McGuire (12), Monty Breneman Ragsdill (11), Jordrew Farmer (9), Emily Goehman (9), Rachel Yetter (9), Ashley Hart (9), Leah Wadell (9). The alternates are Carrie Sisto (12), Jonathon Light (12) and Kaelin Thistlewood (9).



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## Betas invade state convention

*Sunil Manchikanti*  
Circulation Manager

"The time has come," the walrus said, "to talk of many things!" This was the first line of Mandy Langston's candidate speech at the 58<sup>th</sup> annual Kentucky State Beta Club Convention. Of 3700 representatives from throughout Kentucky, 30 attended from LOHS. The representatives had a busy weekend participating in academic competitions, meeting with club members from other schools, and of course, promoting Mandy Langston (11) in the election for state secretary.

On Friday, December 4, Betas departed from the school at 6:00 in the morning. Although the first general session didn't start until 7:30 that night, there were still many things to do. Students working on Langston's campaign met for a skit rehearsal. Later in the day, Josh Watkins (12) and this writer participated in the team poster competition. The club scrapbook was also entered into a



Mandy Langston (11) campaigns after the first general session Photo by S. Manchikanti

competition. Becky Clausen (11) and Rachel Gearhart (11) both submitted entries for judging in the crafts competition.

Several students participated in academic competitions, each one consisting of a comprehensive exam. Tim Murphy (11) took in a social studies test. Tracy Smith (12), science; David Ham (12), Spanish; Angela DeJarnett (12),

math; and Lorrie Keeling (12) writing.

After all of their hard work, Mandy Langston was runner-up for the secretary office, and David Ham received first place in the Spanish competition.



## Science Dept. receives grant

*David Jolley*  
Staff Writer

The Berthel Jacobs Company gave a \$1000 grant to LOHS's Science Department. The company spend lots of time and money in helping people with agricultural problems and donating money to local schools.

The science department has already purchased a Geiger counter (radioactivity detector), a "fancy" thermometer which can be connected directly to graphical analysis, and a heart meter for measuring heart rate.

"... It (the items) carries out Kiris objectives... for real life events," said Bill Sensing, LOHS science teacher

Students can use these items now in the science department. They are helpful with labs, studying, and making things a little more convenient in the science lab.

"After all what is life with out Colorimetry" was science teacher Mr. Whitley's response.

## LOHS students get a little bit of TLC

*Kelly Reeves*  
Editorial Editor

Leigh Ann Collins (10), Sarah Sutor (10), Rachel Gearhart (11), Josh Luscombe (11), P.J. Jones (10), Lynn Huffine (10), Nathan Roe (11) Lorrie Keeling (12) and guidance counselor Sharon Reeves (chaperone) took a retreat on November 19 and 20 for a little TLC. No, not tender love and care, they learned some important lessons on leadership at the 1998 Regional Teen Leadership Conference at Kenlake Resort.

The conference taught students about


the importance of sexual abstinence, personal safety and how to go back to their own schools and be leaders, as far as being drug and alcohol free, for the rest of the school.

Collins said, "I was surprised at how much fun it was learning about how to be a leader."

Mrs. Reeves said, "The Teen Leadership Conference was a great chance for the leaders of our school to learn leadership skills along with students from area schools."

TLC participants Rachael Gearhart, Nathan Roe, Lynn Huffine, Leigh Ann Collins, Sarah Sutor, Mrs. Reeves (chaperone), P. J. Jones, and Josh Luscombe.





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# It's time to let go; it's time to move on



*Emily Riggs*

*Co-Editor-in-Chief*

As December 1, 1998 calmly ended, a sigh of relief was released. On this anniversary of the Heath tragedy, Principal Bill Bond stated in the December issue of *The Paducah Sun*, "It's been a good day. It was a day we were going to have to have. We had to get through today before we could move on to tomorrow. We all knew this day was going to come."

Making it through this, day life could go on and all the heartaches could be put to rest again. However, a Bowling Green attorney Michael Breen, representing the parents of the three victims filed a 25-page law suit. The suit is seeking financial damage against McCracken County Board mem-

bers, Heath principal and assistant principal, Heath middle and high school teachers, other McCracken County school officials, Heath students, Micheal Carneal's parents, Carneal, and a neighbor of the Carneal family. A total of 45 people will be subpoenaed to court.

The suit claims that the shooting could have been prevented because warning signs showed that Carneal was a troubled teenager. The suit includes pictures of Carneal, Kayce Steger, Jessica James, Nicole Hadley, photos from other schools where shootings have taken place, copies of reports on school safety and violence and color headings on different sections of the suit. Several attorneys have viewed the suit and agreed that it includes things that aren't

usually included in a complaint.

"I've been practicing law for 25 years, and I have never seen a suit like this one," said Mark Bryant, in the December 3 issue of *The Paducah Sun*. "There are pages and

**"I feel empathy for the families and their losses, but it's time to move on and allow the souls of Kayce Steger, Jessica James and Nicole Hadley to rest in peace."**

pages of irrelevant information before it gets down to the actual specifics of the complaint. There are numerous photographs, and

I have never seen photographs filed as a part of a complaint." Bryant is representing at least one of the students named in the complaint.

This suit has made a ruckus of our community. What will it prove? A year ago, this community along with the whole nation put together their hearts and hands to support

the families and friends involved in the incident. The suit to me seems more or less a way to receive sympathy or even just an act of revenge.

The fact that 45 people have been named as responsible is absolutely ridiculous. The entire responsibility for this tragedy lies within Micheal Carneal and Micheal Carneal alone. Not the Board, not Bill Bond, not even Carneal's parents. Don't you think our community has been through enough already?

Filing a lawsuit will not bring the girls back; it only is preventing the wounds from healing. It's time to let go. I don't mean to sound harsh or cruel, but believe it or not, life does go on. I feel empathy for the families and their losses, but it's time to move on and allow the souls of Kayce Steger, Jessica James, and Nicole Hadley to rest in peace.



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## Stop trashing the collection bins



*Sunil Manchikanti*

*Circulation Manager*

The holiday season is a time of generosity, and many find time to give gifts to those who are less fortunate. This is admirable, but many people disrespect these efforts and sometimes carelessly interfere with them.

The other day, during a visit a visit to Wal-Mart, I saw a large bin labeled "Toys for Tots." As I walked by the bin, I glanced into it to see how many toys had been

donated. None, but that wasn't what bothered me. The bin wasn't empty; the bottom of it was covered with empty soda cans and used candy wrappers. Even worse, a trashcan that could have held this junk was only a few feet away. People simply didn't want to make the effort to use it. Anybody who was planning on using the bin for its intended purpose might have looked inside and seen all the trash inside, then changed their mind about donating. If somebody decided to drop a toy in there anyway, the leftover soda could have ruined it.

The problem isn't limited to holiday toy drives. Half-full bottles of

soda are often dropped into the paper recycling bins found throughout the school. This makes emptying the bins very difficult for those students who volunteer to do this and may even discourage some people from helping empty the bins. The recycling process may also be interfered with by the extra trash.

Trashcans are easy to find, and it won't hurt if you have to hold your Coke bottle for the extra minute it takes you to find one. It is better than interfering with those who are making the effort to help the needy or to save the environment.

# Vegans: the better vegetarians



**Lucy Jackson**

Co-Editor-in-Chief

Animals. Are they here for us to eat and use for other products or not? Well, this is a highly debated question these days as vegetarianism becomes more popular and more and more people are turning away a nice hunk of beef for something a little more cow friendly.

Of course, different people have different reasons for doing this. Some people are vegetarians for nutritional reasons. They simply cut meat out of their diet in order to avoid fat, cholesterol and the complications that come with consuming too much of either of them. Still, a lot, if not the majority of vegetarians refuse to eat meat because they believe it is morally wrong. Veganism is an even stricter form of vegetarianism in which a person will use no form of

any animal product where the animal is harmed in any way. Not

make-up, etc.

Here I arrive at the point of my editorial. Although veganism is



only will they not eat meat, milk, or even honey, they won't even wear leather or use certain types of

more extreme, I believe it has a better argument. Vegans don't support the killing of any animal, whether or not it is for food. Even

though I am not a vegetarian in any way, shape or form, I do respect the decisions of the people who are, but honestly, only if they are vegan. I have heard the argument that eating an animal is more barbaric than using it for other purposes such as clothing, but I find this ridiculous. If you can use an animal for fashion, you ought to be able to use it for nourishment. If you honestly want to protect animals, then you ought not to support their slaughter regardless of what they will be used for.

Although I probably don't have room to make much of judgment, considering I am neither vegan nor vegetarian, I do find it irritating and irrational for someone to refuse to eat a hamburger because of their moral beliefs, but then justify sporting leather pants. I think people should consider what their beliefs actually are, and act accordingly.

## Do you listen or wait to talk?



**David Jolley**

Staff Writer

In the Directors Cut Edition of the Pulp Fiction film Mia Wallace (Uma Thurman) asks Vincent Vega (John Travolta) a series of questions to find out "what kind of guy he is." As a viewer you can't help but answer each question along with Vega and most of them are simple, straightforward questions with the exception of one.

"Do you listen or wait to talk" is that exceptional question that gave me a wake up call about my conversation.

It's really easy to lie, and I think that if you ask yourself honestly you'll find that almost all of us wait to talk. I've found at lunch, on the phone, and in the halls we all don't really care about what other people say. We sit and wait for the "talker" to

shut up so we can throw our two cents in.

As high school students, the most gossip-crazed and conversational people in the business, we are always going to have a hard time listening to what other people say. It's really hard to do and some of us always do, while others sometimes do, and others still never really listen.

Vincent Vega reluctantly answers that he waits to talk- which is ok, we can learn from his honesty. So, as you read this article are you waiting to give your opinion or are you listening? In lectures do you pay attention, or wonder what you could say? I think we, as society, would be much different if we had listened. Perhaps if we just closed our mouths and really listened to what people say. What if we had listened to students crying out, would others still be alive? If we could just be quiet and open our ears we may learn something, besides, do we ever have anything good to say?

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**Capitalism for Christmas**

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From Wal-Mart to J.C. Penney to  
Sears,  
There's a sale here and a sale there.  
As retailers fight for customers,  
Great deals seem to be everywhere!

Oh yea, for the sake of philanthropy  
The Salvation Army may be left a  
penny!

Jason Ramage (12)



The ladies of LOHS enjoy each other's company at their annual Christmas dinner at Patti's Restaurant.

**My New Year's Res**

"To stay out of trouble."- Zach Butler, 9

"To be on time for Mr. Werner's class so we aren't sent to the hall." - Lauren Vinson and Lauren Price, 9

"To be a better Christian." - Crissy Bell, 10

"To have a better attitude towards teachers."- Erica Lowery, 10

"Try to do my home work." - Judy Fields, 10

"To stop watching Romeo & Juliet and move on with my life." - Mandy Langston, 11

"To stop dating the Swedish Bikini Team." - Coach Neel

**Avoiding the holiday mayhem**

**Jody Suhrheinrich**  
Staff Writer

Ah, Christmas the most stressful time of the year. Time for basketball games, finals, choir/band concerts, church programs but most importantly, shopping. I know you probably scarcely have time to sit down much less think about what Aunt Sally might want for Christmas. So since I am so sensitive to the needs of those at LOHS, I've decided to scrounge up a little list to assist you in your pursuit for the perfect gift.

**Mom-** Moms work hard and therefore need to be appreciated, so I suggest something that makes her feel pretty. Maybe a nice sweater or something classy (not dirty) from Victoria's Secret.

**Dad-** Somewhere deep down in side your seemingly conservative gray-haired Pops is a 20-year-old from 1972 screaming to be let out. Hook dad up with a rockin CD like The Rolling Stones or John Mellencamp. If you swear this is not the case with your old man, buy him a John Grisham novel.

**Sister/brother-** Once again CD's

rarely ever fail. For sis I recommend such soulful divas as Jewel, Mary J. Blige or Tori Amos. On the flip side, your brother might enjoy such easy -listening (ha!) discs, like Korn, or Method Man's new releases. If music's not their thing, invest in a gift certificate to their favorite store or restaurant.

**Grandmother/father, Aunt/Uncle-** Sentimental family mementos like framed photos are usually winners. Throw in a sweet-smelling candle or two to complement the gift.

**Best bud or girl/boyfriend-** Just

because they're not blood-related doesn't mean they're any less important. Be creative this year and give something truly considerate of your feelings for this person. My best friend once gave me a friendship collage made with pictures and poems, and it was the best gift I've ever received. If you're not so great with the old paint set make a tape of special songs that describe your relationship with this person.

If none of these suggestions fit your bill, hit the hot stores like Hobby Lobby, Pier 1, or good ol' Wal-Mart. Good Luck!

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# 'TIS THE SEASON



...r's company at their annual Christmas



## holiday mayhem

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## My New Year's Resolution Is...

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"Try to do my home work." - Judy Fields, 10

"To stop watching Romeo & Juliet and move on with my life." - Mandy Langston, 11

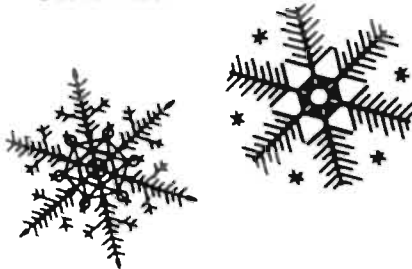
"To stop dating the Swedish Bikini Team." - Coach Neel

"To make all A's without doing any of my homework." - Matt Hernandez, 12

"To expand my mind." - Sandy McDaniel, 12

"To make plenty of time to get ready for work. This way I won't have to rush at the last minute." - Mrs. Reed

"To keep doing the best better." - Coach Roof



## Mr. Franklin open

*Jay Swarker  
Corone!*

For the past several years, Mr. Franklin, one of the math teachers here at LOHS, has sponsored a canned food drive. This year the cans go to Loudres Hospice.

Years ago, Mr. Franklin used to give the cans to a variety of worthy organizations. However, during one particular year, Mr. Franklin lost two friends to terminal illnesses. Through this tragedy, Mr. Franklin was exposed to the good work of the hospice, especially the food baskets they give out during the holiday season.

Inspired by this, he has faithfully collected cans for the hospice. The drive began on November 6, and will end on December 16. This years goal is 2,000 cans. At the moment, they have roughly 650 cans, which



is, "about a year."

In all of there is a fi



FBLA fills Hospice Baskets for club project.

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## Mr. Franklin's Resolution Is...

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"To expand my mind." - Sandy McDaniel, 12

"To make plenty of time to get ready for work. This way I won't have to rush at the last minute." - Mrs. Reed

"To keep doing the best better." - Coach Roof



## Mr. Franklin opens up a can of ... yams!

Jay Swacker  
*Covone*

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is, "about average for this time of the year."

In all of Mr. Franklin's classes, there is a friendly competition going

on. The class that collects the most cans by December 15 will receive a pizza party. A good incentive for a good cause!



FBLA fills Hospice Baskets for club project.

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## Underhill understands underaged underachievers (no offense to her students, it's just a catchy headline)

*Sunil Manchikanti*  
Circulation Manager

Teresa Underhill has been teaching at LOHS since 1993. In this short time, she has become a friend to many students and a valued member of the LOHS community. For these reasons, the student council has selected her as this issue's teacher of the month.

Ms. Underhill has spent her entire career at LOHS. She began as an English teacher, and has taught it from freshman to junior levels. She recently started a German class and has taught it from levels one through three. She enjoys the satisfaction of passing knowledge on to



young minds.

Her sophomore English teacher, Ms. Wilson, motivated her career choice. "She inspired me to overcome my own obstacles," said Underhill, she wanted to pass this on to others.

Underhill's favorite part of teaching is her students, and getting to know them outside of class, where she coaches the J.V. Academic team, co-sponsors the literary club, and chaperones the Biology club backpacking trip. She has also been

the director of the school play for the past five years and will be taking a group of students on a tour of Europe this summer.

"[Ms. Underhill] goes beyond being a teacher to being your friend," said Jennifer Hibbs (12), one of her students.

When Underhill was asked what her most memorable moment as a teacher was, she said it was when a former guidance counselor mistook her for a student, and yelled at her for being in the hallway during class.

By now, most of the faculty has figured out that she is not a student, and she has gladly accepted the honor of being chosen teacher of the month.

### Brad S. Mills, D.M.D., M.S. Orthodontist

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## Science whiz chosen as December's Junior Rotarian

*Dave Jolley*  
Staff Writer

The LOHS teachers chanted Jeff Heath as December's Junior Rotarian. Heath was chosen for his sports ability, academics, and extraordinary skills in chemistry and Spanish. Heath enjoys a good round of golf, as well as reading and "catching up on college applications."

"I wasn't really expecting it" was Heath's reply when asked about his nomination. He was also



quite modest when mentioning that his main influences were teachers and parents. There really isn't any thing modest about a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish in the Murray State Chemistry Tournament and a 1<sup>st</sup> place finish in the State Foreign Language Festival in Spanish.

We can be sure to see Heath in the future as a successful student. His main colleges of choice are Transylvania University or Georgetown College.

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## Oak "K" cartoonist FINALLY gets credit

*Lucy Jackson*  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

You've seen his masterpieces in almost every issue of *The Oak "K"* this year. His cartoons give flavor to some of our more comical editorials, but his name, well it's usually hidden in his drawings and is almost impossible to find. That is why I'm taking this space to give credit where credit is due. The mastermind who's always making art contributions to the newspaper

is Josh Watkins.

Even though Watkins is not a member of *The Oak "K"* staff, he always accepts with a smile when an hour before deadline I ask for a cartoon.

Watkins has been drawing since he was a child. "When I was little, I was going to try to sell my drawings for a quarter. It didn't work out," said Watkins.

Although he isn't in an art class and has never taken one outside of

school, he feels he gets his artistic ability from his grandmom. Aside from being *The Oak "K"*'s own personal cartoonist, Watkins also plays percussion for the LOHS Colonels and holds two jobs. He's eventually go into engineering.

On finding out of this tribute to the cartoons he so willingly produces for us each month, he said, "It's about time the world acknowledged my power and feared me!! Ha! Ha! Uh...that's all."



Senior, Josh Watkins

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## CLUB NEWS!

Tracee Werner  
Feature/News Editor

This December, clubs are busying themselves with spreading Christmas cheer around Paducah.

Beta - The betas are "adopting" an angel from K-Mart's angel tree and purchasing gifts to give to them. They are also helping with the HLOE Headstart Christmas Party, decorating the Western Baptist Transitional Care Unit, ringing the Salvation Army bell and packing baskets for HB Fuller.

Art - They will be putting their creative imaginations to work by decorating the Oak Tree Café with Christmasy decorations.

Key - Key clubbers are ringing the bell for the Salvation Army, collecting canned goods for the Paducah Cooperative Ministries and collecting Toys for Tots.

FBLA - The business classes are assisting the club members in furnishing wicker baskets with cologne, lotion, books, tapes, candles, etc. for terminally ill patients at the Hospice Center.

FHA - The homemakers filled stockings for the Salvation Army to give to needy children of Paducah. They are also adopting an angel from the K-Mart angel tree.



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BETAS

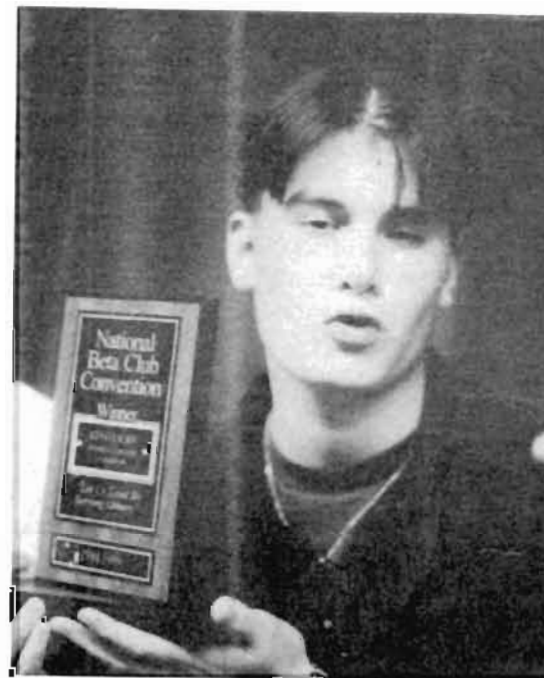


Aspiring beauty queen, Bryan Gamer (12) struts his stuff in his pretty new dress.



Liz Rigdon (12) helps Mandy Langston (11) prepare her campaign poster.

State  
Convention



David "hams" it up for the camera.

1998  
Convention Candidats

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## Flash earn runner-up trophy

**Jacob Mitchell**  
Sports Editor

The Purple Flash basketball team opened the 1998-99 season on Tuesday, December 1 in the annual McDonald's Invitational tournament. The four teams in the tournament were Lone Oak High, Webster Co., Fulton City, and Reidland. Lone Oak opened the first round against Webster.

After a dismal start, the Flash got back on track from the second quarter on. Junior Ryan Dunn, the leading scorer, scored more than half his game high 17 in the second period, sparking the Purple Flash to the comeback. Webster was held to four points in the second quarter

and the suffocating defense led the Flash to the victory, 54-40.

In the Championship game on Friday, December 4, the Flash met Fulton City who had previously beaten Reidland. The Flash got off to a better start this game, but Fulton was just too tough from the 3-point arc, nailing nearly 50% of their long bombs. A late run in the third quarter brought the Flash back to within striking distance, but it proved ineffective as the Bulldogs took the trophy 58-56.

Lone Oak's All tournament players: Bryan Powell (10), Matt Hopper (12), Ryan Dunn (11), and Jon Shelby (12).

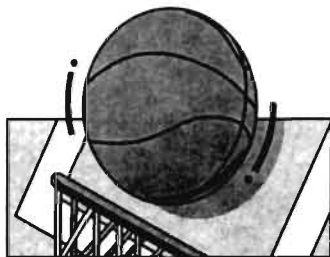


Photo by J. Mitchell

Purple Flashes (from left) Mitch Flood (12), Jon Shelby (12), and Bryan Powell (10) tighten up the defense against Fulton City in the McDonald's Championship game.

### '98-'99 Purple Flash Basketball Schedule

Dec. 17-19 Paducah Tilghman Christmas Tournament

Dec. 18 @ Calloway Co.

Dec. 28-30 Marshall Co. Christmas Tournament

Jan. 5 Heath

Jan. 9 @ Hickman Co.

Jan. 12 @ Tilghman

Jan. 15 Reidland

Jan. 19 @ Marshall Co.

Jan. 22 @ Webster Co.

Jan. 26 Tilghman

Jan. 29 Fulton City

Jan. 30 Graves Co.

## NFL officials: Refs or Inmates?

**Jacob Mitchell**  
Sports Editor

Every Monday night armchair quarterback like me has noticed a sort of void in the National Football League season. The men playing aren't the problem at all—it's the men in stripes that are the culprit.

NFL officials have been under fire since the first week of the season, and rightfully so. Refs are making big calls when they aren't necessary and not calling the obvious ones. What's the reason behind their imperfection?

For one, some referees aren't even qualified. Some of those "zebras" you see running around the field throwing those little flags and blowing whistles shouldn't even be in the stadium. Because these refs just show up on Sunday after a week of carrying on a normal job, it doesn't give them time to hone their skills and enforce the proper penalties.

A prime example of bad officiating was on Thanksgiving day. The Pittsburgh Steelers were playing the Detroit Lions. It had been a neck-and-neck game, and it ended regulation a tie, 16-16. The way to decide possession when overtime is necessary is the traditional coin toss. Pittsburgh, the visiting team, was the team to call

the toss. Jerome Bettis of the Steelers called tails. The ref thought Bettis had called heads, and the Lions got the ball. Detroit ended up pegging a field goal on that crucial first possession of overtime and won the game. That proves that bad calls win or lose ballgames.

In recent weeks, numerous teams have been sent letters by the league apologizing for clearly bad calls. Whether it be holding, pass interference, or late hits, officials have literally cost teams important ballgames that may affect their entrance into the playoffs.

The obvious answer to the ref's blunders is to bring back the very helpful instant replay. This would allow officials to correct their mistakes on the field, instead of costing a team a ballgame and making an apology later. Even though reviewing a play consumes a substantial amount of time, it would make calls easier to make.

The NFL is the most prestigious football league in the world. You'd think that they could find some qualified refs—but since they can't, let's just bring back instant replay to help those little "zebras" make the right calls.



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