

A look inside
The Oak "K"

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please
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Thanks for
Reading!

Sight Base Committee approves switch to AB Block

Blake Harrison
Editor-in-Chief

After 29 of 45 teachers and administrators voted in favor of AB Block scheduling, the Sight Base Committee decided at the conclusion of their meeting on February 24 that Lone Oak High School would operate under the AB Block scheduling system beginning with the 2009-2010 school year. This means that students would have eight, instead of six classes, per year. One day, students would go to four classes, and the next day they would attend the other four. This idea of flip-flopping days, or having "A days" and "B days" has been a topic for research and discussion among many teachers, parents, and administrators.

Under the AB schedule, each class would lose close to 45 days (a full 9 weeks) of class time. Given that fact, it is easy to see why one teacher was quoted as saying, "Losing that much class time is definitely a handicap—many classes need the daily reinforcement we are afforded under the current structure." It has become clear that many teachers feel as if losing that much time will be difficult while trying to cover as much ground as possible. However, it has been proven by several local schools that the system can produce higher test scores and can be instrumental in improving students' daily performance.

The main goal of switching over to AB Block is to give students the opportunity to pursue courses related to their career aspirations. Up to this point, students have been restricted by sports and other pre-college curriculum requirements in regard to how many electives they can

choose. The best part about AB Block is that students would get to take two more classes per year, and that LOHS is looking to add anywhere from 5 to 10 completely new classes. Two of the most popular course ideas have been Forensics and Sports History. That being said, there are a couple factors that may hinder the success of the additional courses.

For example, if the high school were to add 10 new classes, one would have to believe that the school would need to hire additional staff. "If the school is staffed and financed sufficiently, I think this will work. But, there are no guarantees," a concerned teacher pointed out.

With more teachers and no room to expand, the increase in staff would mean that more teachers would have to start sharing rooms, which on top of adjusting their teaching styles, would pose another challenge for teachers to conquer.

It is obvious that students and teachers alike will have to change and adjust in this new learning environment, but the administration firmly believes in the staff's ability to transition smoothly. The administration reiterated a commonality in the faculty's response to questions by making clear it that the whole point in switching to AB Block is to give students more choices, as to broaden the academic landscape of LOHS. "Our teachers will have to be strategic in the way they plan; it's not the schedule that makes the difference—it's all about planning." In speaking with administrators who have experience under the AB system, administrators learned that students are also capable of adjusting, and has confidence in their ability to do so.

Students recover from ice storm

Aaron Williams
News Editor

The aftermath of Winter Storm 2009 left in its wake damages that will cost our region millions of dollars. The damage to yards and homes was horrendous as power lines and trees snapped and wrecked havoc on the property of local students.

Now, even though it has been several weeks since the storm has passed families across the region are still picking up and trying to get back to their old way of life. The ripple effect of the ice has brought communities together and caused people to roll up their sleeves and get to work trying to clean everything up. *The Oak K* asked several students just how serious the damage was to their homes and neighborhoods and what they were doing to correct it.

Richard Scelzi (12) admits that while the damage at his home was minimal, he had to feel the repercussions of the storm at his place of employment. The farm Richard works on sustained large amounts of damage in addition to losing power. "We had to replace miles of electric fencing and barbed wire fencing that had been broken up by fallen trees," says Richard who went on to describe the tedious process he went through of having to manually to feed the cows because of the lack of power.

See Ice Page 2

Crazy Courtney

Kelsey Smith
Entertainment Editor

Active. Intelligent. Quirky. Courtney. Three adjectives to describe this month's junior Rotarian Courtney Jenny.



Photo courtesy Haleigh Fellows

Courtney has played varsity soccer for four years, ran on the cross country and track teams, and was briefly a part of the Paducah Swim Team. Along with athletic ventures, Courtney has also pursued academic endeavors. She was a member of the Future Problem Solving team, and after her junior year, she was accepted into the GSP program at Bellarmine University where she participated in biological studies classes. She plans on furthering her education in science by majoring in chemistry or biology at the University of Louisville next year and one day hopes to be a general surgeon.

But Courtney isn't all work and no play, she likes to be silly, enjoys indulging in all types of cuisine, and will be coaching a recreational soccer team for six-year olds. Fellow staffer Erin Conwell (12) says, "Courtney is an interesting, super-fun gal who has a lot to add to a conversation." Subjects she might mention in conversation are her dislike for vegetables or how much harder it is to arrive to school on time than the previous three years (can we blame her?). Some subjects she may place more favor on or be more excited about include: the color green, reading (which she does with superhuman quickness), or – something we may be hard pressed to understand- chemistry, physics, and calculus.

So, if you catch this 5'6, hazel-eyed junior Rotarian in the hallway or see her driving her old, white Mercedes, at least wave, or, if you have the time, strike up a conversation. You may find you're talking with this generation's Madame Curie, or you'll at least find yourself talking to an all-around wonderful person, just ask anyone.



On Sunday, February 22, Zach Hughes, Nick Jacobs, and David Spencer officially became members of the Eagle Scout brotherhood. This achievement comes after over ten years of dedication and service to the community. *The Oak "K"* salutes these young men in recognition of their accomplishments.

LOHS senior to attend National 4-H Conference

Jordan Price
Assistant Business Manager

Derek Operle (a.k.a. Weasel or Weez) has just recently been nominated to travel to Washington D.C. to represent the 4-H Club! This honor didn't come easily, but it was definitely worth the extra work.

The 4-H Club originated in 1902 in Ohio and has been a prestigious group in schools ever since. Its purpose is "engaging youth to reach their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development." This program was originally supposed to connect school with rural life and was referred to as



Photo courtesy Haleigh Fellows

the "Tomato Club" or as the "Corn Growing Club" and was focused in agriculture. Just as this program is extended to over 6.5 million members, it has also broadened its areas of focus to citizenship, healthy living, science, engineering, and technology programs. Wow! What a list of credentials for any member to add to their portfolios!

Derek slaved over what seemed to be thousands of essays and even missed all the games *his* indoor soccer team competed in. If ever asked of his plans during the week he would simply reply, "4-H". His dedication to this project obviously paid off because a fabulous trip to Washington D.C. is his grand prize.

See 4-H Page 2

NEWS

Ice cont.

Megan Sin (11) also had little damage done to her own home but her neighborhood was not so lucky. "My next door neighbor just put a new fence from last storm on for her fifteen dogs and it's all broken and bent from a tree falling on it," said Megan.

Finally, Chris Wadlington (11) perhaps suffered the worst damage of the students interviewed. "We didn't have power for two weeks, my cable line completely snapped off of the line to the house, the wooded lot next my house has two large hickory nut and oak trees completely down from the roots, and there are probably about like 10 to 15 branches down in our back yard that are like twice the size of me," says Chris.

When asked how he hopes to cut through the debris and clean his yard up, Chris explained that he would be employing the assistance of a trusty chainsaw to cut the large trees and branches down to size before hauling them off to a local landfill.

Though repairs are not complete yet, the students of Lone Oak will no doubt continue work alongside their families to get their property restored to a pristine state. But for right now, hot showers and television are probably enough to get people back to normal.

4-H cont.

This travel opportunity is the 28th of March when the legendary cherry trees will be blooming with pink blossoms, and hopefully an early summer breeze will be rifling through the Lincoln Memorial so that even pennies want to lounge in the sun.

Derek will be able to chat with a few of the stately Congressmen of Kentucky and tour the domed grandeur of the Capitol Building.

Derek will be traveling with four other students from Kentucky but is the only student of McCracken County, let alone our school that has been elected to represent the 4-H club.

The clover emblem of the club must be for more than just looks and to represent the heads, hearts, hands, and health of the members because it has rained good luck upon Derek.

So congratulations Derek on this great achievement and wonderful opportunity, and as the motto goes "Make the best better" ... in Washington D.C.!

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Monica Mutters

"In the political realm, the blame game is as popular as a game of checkers between two elderly gentlemen in a country drug store."

Monica Spees
Features Editor



A certain game that has existed literally since the beginning of time is becoming wildly popular in today's world. This game is sweeping the nation with its addicting strategy and comfortable room for creativity. There are really no rules and no age range. There is no board to assemble, no lengthy instructions to read, and no bothersome scorekeeping.

The name may vary from culture to culture, but here in America we refer to it by one catchy name: the blame game.

The blame game is everywhere. Domestic issues ("Well, it's not *my* fault that *your* son is failing Biology."), friendships ("She said that her parents would be home during the party!"), scholastic settings ("I would've gotten an A if *she* knew how to teach."), and, most popularly, politics, which will be explored more in depth. And now that I think of it, there is one rule to the blame game: it is never, ever your fault. Other than that, you have free reign to

attack others and accuse them of causing your downfalls. Deception is a frequently-used tool in this contagious pastime. Outright lying is discouraged, but half-truths are permitted, as well as exaggerations. This game has become so addicting that it has defeated "Monopoly" in length. Ironically enough, it is also more real than "Life."

In the political realm, the blame game is as popular as a game of checkers between two elderly gentlemen in a country drug store. When something goes wrong in this country, who gets the blame? Let's look at recent history, shall we? During Hurricane Katrina, did the country accept that horrible disaster as a horrible disaster that just *happened*? Did the nation realize that it was no one's fault that New Orleans was under massive amounts of water, which made rescues precarious and difficult? After the initial shock, America's next reaction was to blame the nation's leaders and rescue organizations. Why hadn't they gotten *everybody* out? Nevermind that the national news had been broadcasting warnings for days and all residents had been urged to evacuate. Why didn't they get the help there faster? I believe we've all seen firsthand this past month that aid during a disaster is a nice thought long before it's a secure reality. My point is: we're in such a rush to put the blame on someone else. True, some hold more responsibility than we do in those situations, but few

agreed to simply focus on helping the people of New Orleans and leave Mother Nature to blame.

Natural disasters are not the only playing fields for this finger-pointing game. We can't talk about the blame game in the present day and not mention the economy. I shudder to even say that, because I'm irked just by the fact that everytime I turn on the TV I have to hear something about the economy. My personal qualms aside, the reality is that there is a blame *tournament* going on right now regarding the financial situation. It's the government's fault. No, it's the rich people's fault. Wrong, it's the big corporations. Allow me to settle this all here and now. Our currency passes hands like blood cells and oxygen pass through our bodies. Heredity, smoking, poor eating habits, stress, and lack of exercise will serve up the perfect heart attack, and the healthy flow stops. All those things contribute; none act alone, and none deserve the full blame. We all participate in the economy, and sometimes we do things without realizing that they will be harmful later. No one person can be to blame, and these things will just happen. They've always happened, and they will continue to happen.

What have we learned? The blame game may be fun, but there's really no winner. It doesn't accomplish anything. Blame can be easily tossed around, but "Hot Potato" might be a more sensible game to play.

Aaron Williams 180°

"..I have come to grips with my feelings of hatred about Disney.."

Aaron Williams
News Editor



It is the night of Sunday February 8, 2009 and I am in a grand mood. The Jonas Brothers have just had their hopes and dreams at legitimate musical success stomped out by the lovely Adele at the 51st Grammy Awards. The unfortunate Jo-Bros have been beaten by the talented female songstress Adele in the category of 'Best New Artist' and out of the nominees the award, she certainly was. Yes, here I sit at my computer in a silent house because thanks to the ungodly wrath of

Winter Storm '09 I still am without cable. I thought my hopes at seeing how the Grammys turned out were dashed, but thanks to the live-blogging coming from the Los Angeles Times' webpage I am able to see all the results as they happen and I have never been happier.

Many of you may remember last month's angst-filled editorial about Miley Cyrus that I wrote. This is a follow up. I would like to say at this point that I have come to grips with my feelings of hatred about Disney created and publicized musicians and am willing to tolerate their place in society. So long as that place involves them failing again and again at every legitimate award they are nominated for until they ultimately become the joke of the entire music community. With this said, I can honestly say that I have found a mature way to handle my feelings about the recent disappointment that Kevin, Joe, and Nick sustained, and it is this: Ha! Ha! Ha!

Take that Jonas Brothers! It's about time karma caught up with you. First, Joe, you break Taylor Swift's heart and then you guys have the gall to beat AC/DC on Rolling Stone's Top 50 Albums of 2008. Not that I am a huge fan of AC/DC, but as a huge fan of music seeing a pretty boy garage band beat a rock and roll GIANT kind of irritates me. Guess that's Rolling Stone's fault and not yours. Unless Disney paid them off to do that. Disney, you dirty player.

Yes, my evening had been rather dull until I stumbled across the LA Times' coverage of this event and for that I thank them. They have brought satisfaction to me after many days of bitter cold and powerless existence. I'd also like to thank the Jonas Brothers for failing. Although your bodyguard does seem kind of cool. They should give him a Grammy, something like: 'Best and Only Bodyguard Capable of Listening to the Jonas Brothers Play Patty Cake for Eight Hours on a Bus.'

Also, let me thank you Disney: For if you hadn't created these abominable pop machines then they couldn't get the mainstream success required to earn them a Grammy nomination and then ultimately fail, putting me in a fantastic mood. Finally, thank you Adele. Thank you for Chasing Pavements and thank you for chasing the Jonas Brothers out of Hollywood.

Kelsey's Kvetch

"So why are we enslaving ourselves, copying worksheets the hour before they're due..?"

Kelsey Smith
Entertainment Editor



Students must listen to a lot of Pink Floyd because today "We don't need no education" seems to be not only a famous lyrical snippet but a popular mentality.

Tax-supported elementary schools began gaining support before the Civil War. Then in the 1870s, states began making the completion of grade school mandatory. By the 1880s and 90s, public high schools were becoming more common, and the government began to provide textbooks. Americans pushed for free public

education because they believed that a free government could not function successfully if its people were "shackled by ignorance."

Citizens today still lobby for education reforms, asking for more school funding, high teacher salaries, a larger variety of courses, more extracurricular programs. Why? Because they too understand that an uneducated nation is ultimately enslaved by that lack of education, that ignorance.

So why are we enslaving ourselves, copying worksheets the hour before they're due, typing a research paper in half an hour? Why are we wasting this opportunity to learn without having to put other responsibilities first? When will we realize that it isn't our grade that's most important but the knowledge we gain from our classes? Many students feel they can't miss an assignment - even if it means copying someone else's work or doing it with minimal effort - because they don't want to lose an 'A' in a class or a chance at a college scholarship. And yes, college tuition is high, even with state programs like KEES or other forms of financial aid. But what students don't realize is that they will lose an even greater amount of money if they get to college, can't keep up with their classes, and drop out.

I did my fair share of copying during my freshman and sophomore years; I had mostly 'A's, a 'B' or two. But I didn't pass the AP Government test freshman year, I became more lazy the next year, and if asked about almost any of the subjects I'd taken during those two years, I couldn't tell you much besides the name of the teacher who taught it.

I wonder how many of us have other responsibilities and how many of us just have other things we want to do. How many hours do we allow ourselves to sit in front of the television before even looking at our books? I wonder why I wasted not only my teachers' time but *my* time.

What we do now affects what we do later. How we do things now affects how we do those same things later. And I know that more than anything, I want what I do in the future to be honest and thorough.

Haleigh Hoofs

"Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not snubbing the artistry of any of these mentioned notorious designers.."

Haleigh Fellows
Photographer



I was dragging my over stuffed arms through every bargain shoppers haven, TJ Maxx, when a bright, eclectic Betsey Johnson handbag caught my shopaholic eye. I flipped over the white price tag and noticed the

original price of the retailed product. One Betsey Johnson purse: \$175.00. Of course my head screams, "ARE YOU KIDDING ME?" Even with the discount on the bag it was still rather expensive and way more than my wallet could handle for a tiny arm accessory. The feeling of disgust and disbelief surged through my body, and that's when I realized. People actually willingly pay for these cute bags of plastic, and don't think twice about it. But even worse than that, people probably shell out their cash just because it's Betsey Johnson and she's a well-known, prominent de-

signer. The same thing goes for designers such as Ralph Lauren, Gucci, Juicy Couture, and Lacoste. The importance placed on the feeling of need to wear name brands these days is seriously overrated, and shows the simple minds of today's society.

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not snubbing the artistry of any of these mentioned notorious designers but when you get down to the core of it, doesn't it seem a little ridiculous? People will buy something just because the label will get them a couple of extra looks at school or make them feel superior to others. The fashion industry seems to be taking advantage of our vain society and overpricing items knowing that people will sadly purchase their clothing, not caring that they are putting a serious dent in their wallets for one unimportant piece of name brand clothing. It amazes me that people feel the need to impress people by indulging in these expensive fashion industries. People have lost sight of the things that should really have people marveling. We should be focusing on the incredible intelligence of the human mind, the amazing talent of athletes, or just the charming personalities of those who make you laugh and feel special. These are the things we should cher-

ish, the things that should amaze friends and family.

For those who just wouldn't be able to part with their name brands, I suggest knock offs or look-a-liques. They end up looking nearly or exactly the same, but for a much cheaper price. What could possibly be wrong with that? And if you're really desperate, go to Hobby Lobby and look for a sew-on patch that is similar to the logo you favor. For those that can do without the name brands, just search for pieces that show off your personal style and that you think are cute. It shouldn't matter what the inside label says, as long as you feel comfortably cute that's all that's important.

I believe that we can better the present image of society by simply spending our money in more fulfilling ways. The lucky people that do have the money to throw away on name brand clothing, why not use it for charity or for something that's absolutely necessary? Even if you aren't as fortunate, you can save your money and the future debt by being wiser about your purchases. Don't let the fashion industry take advantage of our vain society. Lower the narcissistic standards of our world and just maybe, you'll see that Betsey Johnson purse for \$50.00 instead of \$175.00.

FEATURES

People in the Halls

❄ ❄ ❄ Winter Storm '09 Edition ❄ ❄ ❄

Questions:

1. How did you kill time during the storm?
2. How much time did you spend cleaning up?
3. How long did go without power?
4. How would you rate your survival skills?
5. How do you feel about Al Gore and his supposed "Global Warming" now?



Bobby Kaltenbach
(9th grade)

1. Played gaily in the storm.
2. Clean? I didn't even take a shower!
3. 6 days.
4. I'd rate myself at 2.3
5. I feel good.



Bailey Orr
(9th grade)

1. I took a big nap while playing ping-pong.
2. Like an hour.
3. 4 or 5 days.
4. About a 9.
5. I like it.



Johnny Kollenberg
(11th grade)

1. I went over to Roberto's house and played with his Wii... all night.
2. It's ongoing...
3. 11 days.
4. 5.5
5. As realistic as ManBearPig



Gabby Fellows
(12th grade)

1. Watched birds.
2. None. I made Haleigh do it all.
3. I think 6 days.
4. 10, cuz I'm a suvivah.
5. Who's Al Gore?



Mr. Neel

1. Reading "The Karamozov Brothers".
2. 3 days
3. 9 1/2 hulking days.
4. I watch Survivor Man.
5. I hate him and global warming.



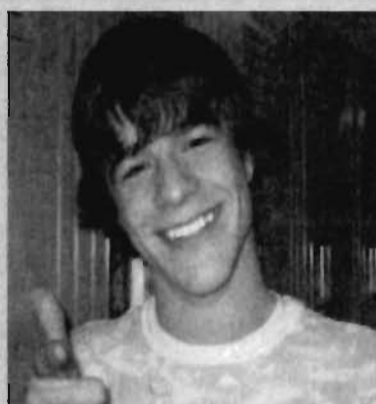
Kyle Marshall
(10th grade)

1. Took care of my chameleon.
2. 3 or 4 hours.
3. 3 or 4 days.
4. 1 out of 10
5. I don't care about Al Gore...



Katy Miller
(10th grade)

1. Hung out with a friend with a good generator and did some extreme sledding.
2. Several hours.
3. 3 or 4 days.
4. 9, definitely.
5. It was a good idea at the time.



Stephen Miller
(11th grade)

1. Basking in 70° propane heat.
2. Days on end.
3. 3 days.
4. About a 6 I'd say.
5. More like paradise!



Mrs. Carter

1. Protected my delicate daughter from Mrs. Helmich's wild boys.
2. Cleaning up? Are you serious!? That's why I have a husband.
3. The tally marks I scratched into the bathroom wall was 21 when the power returned
4. 10, because she survived that long and never once came to school greasy.
5. I think he should have spent 21 days in primitive Casa de Carter...

The Oak "K"

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MOTHER NATURE'S COLD SHOULDER



Photos courtesy of Yashaswee Malla



Photos courtesy of Time Piece Photography

THE PURPLE FLASH CHAPTER FOUR: THE POWER BY SPENSER PRICE

WHILE LONE OAK REPAIRS ITS CITY, TWO PEOPLE IN THE OUTSKIRTS WANDER AWAY FROM ITS WRECKAGE.

HE IS FILLED WITH COUNTLESS QUESTIONS.

WHILE SHE WITHHOLDS THE ANSWERS.

YOU MUST TRAIN WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN.

MY NAME IS EMMA.

I KNOW YOU ARE BENJAMIN HOOD.

WE WERE TOGETHER ON THAT ORBITING STATION AND SOMETHING HAPPENED THAT GAVE US CONTROL OF ELECTRIC CURRENTS...

THAT'S JUST IT. WHAT HAPPENED BACK THERE?

WHO ARE YOU?

BASICALLY.

YOU'RE CRAZY!

THE MEANS OF CONTROL ARE DIFFICULT AT FIRST.

STRIKE ME.

WHAT?

NEV?

WHAT DID YOU DO?

I'M--

THIS IS VERY REAL BEN!

IN A BURST OF LIGHTNING A NEARBY LONELY OAK TREE WAS SHATTERED INTO CHARRED SPLINTERS AND CELDRIS.

EMMA HAD FIGURED HOW TO TRIGGER BEN'S POWER.

FOREVER TO REPRESENT THEIR ABILITY.

CONTROL IT BEN!

SHE TAKES HIM WITH HER.

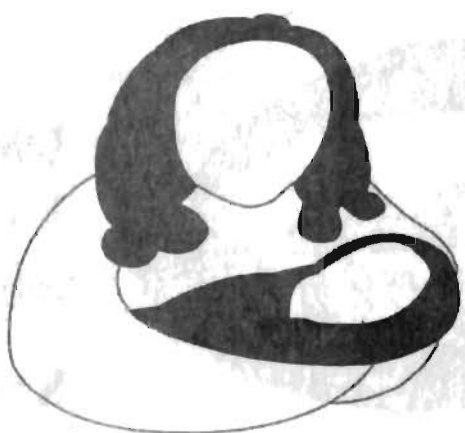
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BROTHER.

ONCE THE EXPLOSION SUBSIDES...

TO BE CONTINUED.

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PHISH PHINALLY REUNITE

Derek Operle
Entertainment Editor

Phish is a band that not many people get into... they are a jam band, one of the most legendary jam bands of all time, right up there with the likes of the Grateful Dead and the Allman Brothers. Phish went through a few lineups following their formation in 1983, the lineup that stands today was established in 1985 and consists of Trey Anastasio (lead vocalist and guitarist), Mike Gordon (bass guitarist), Jon Fishman (drummer), and Page McConnell (keyboardist). Once this group was together, they never looked back. They spent 19 years touring the country, playing their rather eclectic mix of tunes that range in style from bluegrass to jazz and everywhere in between, in the process playing 1426 concerts, playing set lists that contained a total of an amazing 650 songs, and, even with all that touring, they managed to release 13 studio albums. The band's excessive touring and improvisational style has captured the imagination of many a "phan" and this is showed by the incredible amount of Phish live material available on the internet; this live music was recorded by the phans at the concerts, they, of course, have the band's permission, the band even has an official taping policy on their website.

The band, however, went on hiatus in August 2004. Trey was arrested for drug possession in December 2006; he would eventually plead guilty to these charges and become part of a drug court and community service program. After his sentence was carried out, he

graduated the program in June 2008. Since then there has been an extraordinary chain of events, the results of which will excite a phish phan across the globe.

On October 1, 2008, Phish announced that they would be playing a three show stint at Virginia's Hampton Coliseum, the sight of many a Phish concert and the place where one of their best live albums, *Hampton Comes Alive*, was recorded. As if this news wasn't enough to excite the Phish heads of the world, in January, it was announced that Phish would be playing a 10 concert tour, including stops in St. Louis and Knoxville. Phish will also be playing at the Bonnaroo music festival this summer alongside bands like Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band, the Beastie Boys, Nine Inch Nails, and Wilco, among others.

Phish is one of the one of the best live bands of all time and they will return to the stage again this summer to face both the new generation of Phish heads, who have discovered the pure awesomeness of Phish via the wondrous world of the internet, and the old, who have been yearning for a chance to hear them live again, in the phlesh. Phish will reunite on stage for the first time in nearly five years on March 6, in Hampton, Virginia, bringing their incredibly different, amazingly awesome music back to the stage for the world to enjoy.

Coraline: One of a Kind

Rachel Lundberg
News Editor

In a sense, the *Coraline* movie was a bit like the world of the "other mother" that it portrayed. In that it just couldn't measure up to the original. That, of course, was to be expected, as movie adaptations rarely do justice to their parent books. However, the movie simply did not have the power to draw in the audience as did Neil Gaiman's novella. Gaiman uses just enough description to help the reader's mind create the entire world that little Coraline Jones finds behind the door leading to the empty flat. Reading *Coraline* is something of a unique experience. Never have I read a children's book so disturbing, and rarely have I read any book so strangely endearing.

Henry Selick's screen adaptation seemed poorly paced, dragging out the beginning for most of the movie and leaving only a few minutes at the end for the story's crescendo. Coraline's final defeat of the beldam and her remains. It became less about a chilling escape from the hands of a monster, and more about a confused little girl wondering if maybe it wouldn't be so bad to have buttons for eyes as long as she got to eat ice cream whenever she wanted. The movie's addition of Wybie Lovat, grandson of the old house's owner, was completely unnecessary and only served to further erode the suspense of the film by giving away certain plot twists and introducing cumbersome sub-plots.

The stop-motion animation strongly resembled that of *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, also directed by Selick. As is the case with any stop-motion film, the animation was far from smooth, and certain elements of the sculptures, notably Coraline's face, were amateurishly unrealistic. While that sort of thing may have been fine in 1993 (*The Nightmare Before Christmas* being the first feature length stop-motion film), I see no excuse for its low quality with the technology of 2009.

The film was not entirely without merit: there were a couple of scenes that greatly benefited from a more visual medium, but most simply did not live up to their full potential. One of the book's greatest strengths was its eerie, slightly sinister mood, like a strange shadow seen in the daytime, an element not unusual for Gaiman's work. The movie was largely unsuccessful in portraying this.

While *Coraline* is not a beautiful or miraculous piece of literature, and the plot may be a bit predictable at times, it can be a very enjoyable read for what it is, if you are willing to lay aside deep analysis. It's a children's book, most simply, but if you allow yourself to forgive its simplicity, it can be an enthralling story for a rainy day. As for the film, your time could be better spent on a more finely crafted fantasy or a more straightforward children's movie, depending on which element of *Coraline* most interests you.

A.C. Gets Guilty

Andrew Croft
Sports Editor

I have been listening to Canadian/American indie band from Vancouver called The New Pornographers for a few years now. Despite their slightly vulgar name, they have succeed in creating a very mature, almost retro rock/pop sound, often compared the sound of Cheap Trick. I normally say they sound like a more upbeat Beatles. They have succeeded in putting out four well known studio albums from 2000 to present, the first three reaching the top 40 on The Village Voice's Pazz and Jop year-end poll of hundreds of music reviewers.

Almost all of the band's material comes from their front man, Allen Carl Newman, performing as A.C. Newman. Newman was the front man of indie rock band Superconductor and Zumpano prior to his involvement with The New Pornographers. Though he still records and performs with The New Pornographers to this day, he has released two of his own solo albums. He said he chose to record on his own because he liked the way it sounded.

I was introduced to A.C. Newman long before I had even heard of The New Pornographers. I received his first solo studio album, *The Slow Wonder*, from a friend of mine when I was in 8th grade, and fell in love with it right away. His musical sensibilities as a solo artist are often compared to those of Ray Davies, Harry Nilsson, and, the one and only Ben Folds. When

comparing Newman's solo material to The New Pornographers sound, they are almost identical, both consisting of a raw electric guitar and Newman's unique voice. However, on his own, Newman is capable of focusing more on the lyrical aspect of his songs, and produces a more confident, direct approach.

Newman recently released his second solo album, titled *Get Guilty*, on Matador Records on January 20, 2009. With this album, he has succeeded in creating a very retro sound, without sounding outdated. In many ways, *Get Guilty* is basically a continuation with his work with The New Pornographers, more so than his first solo album.

Though this album has less experimentation than his first, it has several up-tempo tracks. "The Palace at 4 AM" starts off with a fast drum beat pushing the song into catchy, vocally led versus backed by powerful guitar. Several of the songs get better the more you listen to them. The albums opener, "There May Be Ten Or Twelve Things I Could Teach You," is probably the most unique song, but is the most catchy due to Newman's sarcastic lyrics and soothing vocal tone.

Though I really enjoy listening to the New Pornographers, I would rather listen to A.C. Newman on his own. In my opinion, A.C. Newman's material is superior to that of The New Pornographers at this point in time. If you have never heard of A.C. Newman, or even The New Pornographers, I would highly recommend purchasing "Get Guilty."

From Rags to Raja

Yashaswee Malla
Business Manager

"What ... can a slumdog possibly know?" That is the million dollar question—or the 20 million rupee question in this case—and the very thing that *Slumdog Millionaire* strives to answer, question by question.

With the whole of India watching, Jamal Malik (Dev Patel) is one question away from winning an astounding 20 million rupees on India's "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" According to the Indian police inspector (Irfan Khan, father in *The Namesake*), professors, doctors, lawyers, general knowledge-wallahs never get beyond 16 thousand rupees, but now here is this street kid who is just one question away from the big prize. How did he do it?

The police, who suspect Jamal of cheating, try to torture a confession out of him. For how can an 18-year-old uneducated orphan from the slums of Mumbai earning a living as a chai-wallah (tea server) at a call center know so much? The answer lies in Jamal's troubled youth.

Desperate to prove his innocence, Jamal delves into the devastation of his past to demonstrate how various incidents in his life have helped him to be uniquely prepared to answer the multiple-choice questions set before him by cynical "Millionaire" host Prem Kumar (Bollywood star Anil Kapoor).

The story is seamlessly weaved together through a series of scenes that swiftly yet systematically sway back and forth from the interrogation room, the hot seat of the famous game show, and numerous flashbacks to Jamal's childhood—a childhood haunted by murder, abuse, intentional maiming of children, corruption, theft, guilt, and deception.

We follow the lives of Jamal, Salim, and Latika—each bruised character played out by

three sets of terrific actors—as they grow from orphaned children to mischievous adolescents to present-day teenagers, losing at every stage of their lives what little innocence they have. Jamal recounts details of his childhood spent with his arrogant older brother Salim and first love Latika; each story illustrates how he is able to answer the game show questions; each heartbreak teaches him another valuable lesson that in turn serves as the key to unlock his good fortune on his way to riches. The only irony in this is that he has no desire for the monetary reward or the popularity he has gained from being on the show.

Jamal Malik has learned all that is essentially important in life, except how to lie. Life has taught him how to endure the cruel twists of fate and the unforgiving hands of time; it has quickened his wit and strengthened his moral fiber; it has made him the young man he is today, without allowing him to forget the past that defines who he is. In the end, he retains all that has ever been important to him as he walks toward his destiny... "Maybe it is written, no?"

The screenplay for this ambitious film was adapted from Vikas Swarup's novel, *Q & A*. This visually stunning and emotionally significant motion picture was originally intended to receive a PG-13 rating, but was ultimately released with an R rating for its intense tone. In a world that tries to cover up the harsh reality of things, this powerful movie shamelessly sheds light on the injustices and inequalities that still run rampant around the world today.

The movie ends Bollywood style, breaking into a dance number on the train station platform as the final credits appear onscreen. Brimming with humor and heartache, strewn with comedy and calamity, and filled with playfulness and pain, *Slumdog Millionaire* opens both your eyes and your heart. Many are calling *Slumdog Millionaire* a fairytale; no fairytale is complete without a moral and this modern day rags to riches story carries with it the simple message that the most intense life experiences yield the greatest education.

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SPORTS

Slew of Flash athletes sign scholarship papers

Blake Harrison
Editor-in-Chief

On February 7, five of Lone Oak's finest made their decisions final, and signed their Letters of Intent to become college athletes. Four football players signed their letters along with one Lady Flash soccer standout.

Ally Heine (12), who signed at Ole Miss to play soccer, let the university speak for itself while making her decision. "I just love the campus down at Oxford, and can really see myself getting used to being a Rebel." Heine, the Lady Flash's most outstanding offensive player, had discussions with several other schools, including Lipscomb, Murray State, and the University of Louisville before deciding on Mississippi. Ally drew the attention of the Ole Miss coach while displaying her skills at a camp there this summer. Because of her outstanding play, she was presented with a scholarship offer, which she accepted on the spot. Heine's immediate goals include earning playing time early and meshing well with her teammates.

Quarterback **Jamarielle Brown (12)** signed Western Kentucky University's scholarship offer with his sights set on starting as a freshman. Brown says he chose WKU because "they are a program on the rise," and because "it felt like home." Brown is prepared to transition back to his natural position of wide receiver, where, as a junior, he set state and national records. After his story book junior sea-

son, Jamarielle received attention from powerhouse schools such as Tennessee, Louisville, and UCLA. He even toyed with the idea of joining former teammate Corey Robinson at Troy, but ultimately chose to become his rival within the SunBelt Conference. Brown is looking forward to playing in the WKU atmosphere, and playing close to home.

Wide receiver **Logan Francis (12)** is one of three players to sign at Campbellsville University. Francis burst onto the scene late in his junior year, and made huge plays on both sides of the ball as a senior. Logan credits his father for pushing him to get to this point, and said the coaches at Campbellsville swayed his decision. Francis is looking forward to fighting for playing time on this rebuilding team, and is also excited to take the field with two of his high school teammates.

Offensive lineman **Jeff Prescott (12)** will be joining Francis at Campbellsville. A three year starter for the Flash, Prescott is unsure of what position he will be playing in college. As a part of Lone Oak's recent success, Jeff said, "I don't like to lose," when asked about Campbellsville's recent struggles. Prescott has a unique connection to the program in that a former middle school coach will now be coaching him on the next level. That should only make the transition to college football that much easier.

Justin Jackson (12) was a late addition to the university's recruiting class. Jackson did not accept their offer

(one of his two), until a few days after National Signing Day. Like his fellow signees, Justin said the proximity to home made the decision easier. Jackson, who has two gold metals from last year's state track meet, believes that "if my grades were better, I could have gone Division-I."

Cody Martin (12) rounds out this year's signing class by committing to play for Maryville College near Knoxville, TN. Martin, who played a variety of positions in high school, has one goal in mind. "I want to be a team Captain my senior year because every Captain's name is etched into the bricks lining the walkway to the field." Cody credits his father and older brother with helping him reach this point. "I thought I was going to have to walk on to earn a scholarship—I couldn't have done it without them."



Photo courtesy www.mccracken.k12.ky.us

Lone Oak baseball & softball preview

Kyle Fouse
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

With the end of winter nearly in sight, many young students here at Lone Oak High School have more than a couple things on their minds. The Ice Storm and the extreme cold safely behind them many have started to prepare themselves for the All-American pastime that we all know as baseball. With the season starting in mid-march, the team has already begun to practice and train vigorously, knowing that you get out what you put in. With a projected 36 games to play during their regular season, the Lone Oak boys will have to be physically fit and properly disciplined to ensure quality play and a rewarding season.

This brings me to the fact that with the recent retirement of Coach Mizell, who had been the standing varsity baseball coach for about 37 years (give or take), the team has undergone some fundamental changes in the way that the program is being run and supervised. Although for some it has been a difficult transition, coach Sims believes that the benefits of where the program is going will be quite evident during this year's season.

With the experience and leadership of several returning seniors, including Dylan Murphy, Jon Freeman, Forrest Walter, Josh Byrd, Ryan Mitchell, Allan Haase, Ryne Parsley, and Derek Roof, the outlook for the team as a whole is completely optimistic and confident. With the adjustments to the changing of power and a new system of coaching that happened last year, the practices have begun to improve greatly and the benefits of the practice and training will be easy to see come spring.

The team has already had tryouts and (by my understanding) has the roster set, although a few more cuts may not be completely out of the question. With an approximated 30 players that are just as eager to play as their teammates, I hardly think that coaching would be hard pressed to fill any defensive or offensive holes that may arise during the season.

When asked about his opinion of this years Lone Oak Purple Flash Baseball season expectations, all Coach Sims had to say was "You certainly have a lot of questions, but concerning the baseball team, the talent, coaching, and desire are all there, all we have to do is see how we stack up against all of the competition." Certainly a typical coach's view of his team's chances.

However, the student athletes that participate in the program are a little bit more light-hearted and easy going about their potential for greatness this year. **Drew Harrison (11)** had this to say about his hopes for this year. "I'm lookin' forward to swinging some sticks and hitting some balls this year with the rest of the guys! It should be a lot of fun." This kind of confidence from one of the key members of the team definitely gives me the impression that their season will not be a disappointment, and will be well worth the couple of dollars of admission to go and see them play this spring. Although I won't be the only one to advise you to dress warm and bring a blanket large enough to share with your friends!

Jordan Price
Assistant Business Manager

Despite the recent dead season and the lack of scheduled practices due to the 10,000 pounds of ice that sheathed Paducah the past couple of weeks, the Lone Oak High School softball team is wasting no time preparing for their first game on March 23.

Although the season has just begun, **Assistant Coach Chris Gregory** said, "I think they have the potential for a good season." Wow! The team must be shaping up pretty well if Coach Gregory can already see the possibility for greatness in the players after just a few practices. **Coach David Sheer** expressed that he is "pretty excited about what we (the team) have" along with sharing that with new members comes new attitudes and he is looking forward to a great season with his "fundamentally sound" team. "Good things will happen."

Sophomore player, **Shelbie York**, revealed truthfully that "Coach tells us we're not allowed to say sorry"—but I'm sure there's no need to say sorry with a softball team like Lone Oak's. Soon, when throws are perfected and stepping up to the plate means a home run every time, the team will be among the best in the league, which will not be a surprise.

This year's winning team is made up of five seniors and many returning starters; a few new faces are also in the lineup. This combination of athletes makes for the ultimate dynamic team. Varsity and Junior Varsity positions have not yet been decided upon, but many seniors who will be playing Varsity have a positive outlook for the season. When questioned as to how they feel, they all gave an enthusiastic hoot: "Heck, yeah, we're excited. We're seniors!"

Basing the upcoming season on last years statistics, we are in for a fantastic year. The Junior Varsity team beat the infamous Reidland team 3-0 last year and we can only hope that our girls will be able to up the ante and beat their opponents by a landslide. It looks like this spring will be one of success, filled with win after win and encompassed by numerous victory laps.

Fortunately, no one was cut from the extensive two day try-out period, which means that the team is compiled of the best and most capable athletes ready to play their hearts out for the love of the game.

When March 23 rolls around the corner, there is no doubt that our girls will be ready, hungry for a win. So good luck with the season and, oh ... go Lone Oak!



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