LN Food Drive

Once again Loy Norrix brings in thousands of cans for the Greater Kalamazoo Area Holiday Food Drive. Check out the totals from this year.

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Bowling: Sport or Game?

Some say "Sport". Some say "Game". What do you have to say about it?

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Glowfriends Say Goodbye to Old Venue

Local band "The Glowfriends" perform their hearts out at Kraftbrau.

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Knight Life

The Voice of Loy Norrix High School

Loy Norrix High School, 606 E. Kilgore Road, Kalamazoo MI 49001

Volume 48 / Issue 2 / December 2007

NEWS BRIEFS

Omaha Mall Shooting Leaves 9 Dead

On December 5, 2007,19 year old Robert A. Hawkins entered the Westroad Mall's Von Maur department store in Omaha, Nebraska concealing a rifle underneath his sweatshirt. He then open fired, killing six department store employees as well as two customers. Hawkins took his own life after the shooting.

The mall shooting was the deadliest shooting in Nebraska since Charles Starkweather killed 10 people in Nebraska and one more in Wyoming in January 1958.

The gunman apparently has had a troubled past. Hawkins recently split with his girlfriend, has been fired from his job at McDonald's, has a criminal record, has either left or been kicked out of his parents' house, and dropped out of school during his senior year of high school in March 2006.

Authorities are still investigating what it was that provoked the teenager to go on a shooting spree.

Sutherland Sentenced to Jail

Actor Kiefer Sutherland, known for his role as Jack Bauer on Fox's TV drama "24", has been sentenced to serve 48 consecutive days in jail for a second drunk driving arrest in three years.

Sutherland pleaded no contest in October to driving with a blood-alcohol level above the legal limit of .08 and was sentenced December 5. Sutherland was on probation from his 2004 arrest for driving while intoxicated, and has also been convicted of reckless driving related to alcohol consumption in 1993.

Sutherland was ordered to complete his 48 day sentence by March 30. In addition, 60 months of probation, a $510 fine, and enrollment in an alcohol-education class and weekly alcohol theraphy sessions were a part of his plea deal.

Winter Solstice

The Winter Solstice, also known as the longest night of the year, occurs on December 21st. Starting December 22nd, more and more sun shall shine.

Securing a Baby's Future

Two Loy Norrix Students Strive to Provide their Children with the Best Life Possible

Kristen Wehling
News Editor

High school students experience a vast amount of life changes during the course of their high school career such as a first relationship, attending prom, applying to and getting accepted into college, and graduating from high school. Preparing for the future is a difficult task at any age and for some, this preparation includes having a child. According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 31% of young women become pregnant before the age of twenty, that is nearly 750,000 girls each year.

Here at Loy Norrix, 36 young women are currently enrolled in Cynthia Goss' Continuing Education for Young Families class, a class offered to young girls at Norrix who find themselves pregnant or who are currently parents. This number does not include all of the young women at Norrix who are currently pregnant because the class is optional, but many girls choose to enroll in the class to learn how to properly care for their body and their developing child.

"Becoming a parent is difficult at any age, but particularly for young parents. A lot of people think, 'Oh a cute baby, that would be wonderful!' but they don't think of the details involved… there are problems with not getting enough sleep and not having time to do homework, falling behind on credits, financial problems, and changes in relationships. The responsibilities can be overwhelming," said Goss.

Though being pregnant at such a young age can be difficult at times, it is not stopping these girls from attending school and achieving personal goals. Junior Beth Gashaw, who gave birth to a baby girl on June 4, 2007, admits that it is difficult raising a baby while continuing to go to school.

"She has made it a lot more difficult to focus on certain things like homework. She's a fun baby and I like to play with her more than anything, so I don't get things done like I should," said Beth.

Beth, along with the several other students at Norrix, struggles balancing her education while raising a child. According to My Choice 2 Wait, a website promoting abstinence among teenagers, only 13% of teenage mothers graduate from high school and 80% end up on welfare at some point during their life.

Determined to give their children the best education possible, these young women strive to further their education beyond high school. Beth intends on graduating and attending college in hopes of becoming a midwife or a pediatrician working with children.

See **TEEN MOMS** Page 2

ASHLEY GASHAW/ GUEST PHOTOGRAPER

Introduction of IGNITE Peer Mentoring Program Seeks to Change School Environment

Emily Rooney
Madison Kay
Editor in Chief
Web Master

Loy Norrix High School has a history of dealing with violence, disrespect, and other behavioral issues. To confront, and hopefully resolve these issues the school has introduced the peer mentoring program called IGNITE. This program looks to change the environment of the school by providing mentors for all of the freshmen in the school.

Executive mentor junior Chase Mazur compares the process of changing behavioral issues to digging up a tree, recognizing the importance of correcting the core reasons behind the problems.

ALISON ALESSI/ KNIGHT LIFE

IGNITE coach Kristin Harenagel explains what committees were available to executive mentors at a meeting on November 27th.

"When you are digging up a tree you have to start from the roots up or it will grow back," said Mazur.

The IGNITE program has numerous different levels, starting with the IGNITE coach Kristin Harenagel who teaches the lessons to the mentors. The IGNITE coordinators Jane Ryan and Anne Bowser are in charge of organizing the meetings, selecting the mentors, and facilitating other things for the program throughout the school. However, the goal of the program is that it be run by students, with executive mentors supervising the students acting as mentors. In each classroom there are three to five mentors, and each of them have five to eight freshmen in their 'family' that they work with.

The mentors come to the freshmen classrooms for thirty minutes once a month to teach a lesson to their freshmen mentees. These lessons generally deal with how to resolve problems, make new friends, and other social issues that will help the freshmen to be successful socially and academically in high school.

However, their role as mentors goes beyond teaching a lesson to their mentees. They also give advice, homework help, and get to know their freshmen 'family.' The mentors' main purpose is make connections with the freshmen and help them adjust to the high school atmosphere.

IGNITE coordinator Anne Bowser has high expectations for the program. Bowser hopes the program has the ability to make a significant difference in the school.

"My 'pie in the sky' expectation is that we will save the school. My realistic expectation is that we will change the lives of some of the students, both ninth grade students and the upperclassmen who are helping them," Bowser described.

ALISON ALESSI/ KNIGHT LIFE

Executive Mentors Marissa Rojas-Rodriguez and Kyle Johnson decide which IGNITE committee they are going to be a part of. The different committees help the program run smoothy and spread awareness about what IGNITE is doing among other things.

Daestine Sanchez, an executive mentor, had to sub for one of the mentors in his group during the first mentoring session on November 8th. At first he was scared to mentor his group of freshmen, but his fears were soon proven wrong.

"I was scared at first because I thought I was going to have those kids that didn't want to work, but I had kids that really wanted to be there," said Sanchez.

It seemed like most of the freshmen were really anxious for this program to start, although some of the freshmen thought they didn't need the program because they were doing well in school. Meriah Lucas was one of these students, but she recognized that it was a good idea for the other students that needed help.

"I don't think I need the program, but it is a lot better than sitting in class doing work because the kids that need the program are getting helped," explained Lucas.

Some freshmen were very excited to have help from their mentors with schoolwork. Melissa Schreuder, a freshmen who is having trouble with some of her classes, hopes the program will help her and other students who need assistance.

"I think it will help the people who are failing. I'm sort of failing right now and I'm grateful to have help from my mentor," said Schreuder.

The IGNITE program has the potential to make a notable difference in the school, but the success of it depends on many factors. Bowser recognizes the potential of this program, but she also acknowledges that the cooperation of the whole school is essential to success.

"The success of the program is based not only on the work of the mentors, but the willingness of the faculty to support this program and the willingness of the freshmen to accept it. It looks to me like many of the Freshmen Academy teachers are very excited about the program," said Bowser.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

New Years Fest
December 31st, admission $5.00 in advance at any Hardings. Located Downtown in Bronson Park, and other locations. Don't miss out on all the New Years fun!

Bob Marley
Bob Marley Birthday Bash December 26th at the State Theater

Regional Leadership Conference
Come see this marketing challe nge that the DECA orginization is participating in, Thursday December 20th, 8:30 - 3:30

"Avenue Q"
The first community theater to do this show! Opens January 18th at the Kalamazoo Civic Theater