

THE PERFORMER

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Run For Lasso

By: Aly Wolf

Sometimes heroes lose their precious lives because of undeserving circumstances. A person, no matter how brilliant, loving, and caring, can fall prey to the dangerous people who inhabit the darkest corners of this world. Recently, the world lost one of the most selfless men. A few short months ago, Robert Lasso, Freemansburg police officer and son of LVPA's very own secretary, Judy Lasso, was unfairly shot and killed while responding to a disturbance call. Lasso also left behind a family – a beautiful wife and two children. The tragedy which has befallen them should never have to be experienced by a human being. Unfortunately, thoughts of the impending severity of the act did not run through the killer's mind when he performed the terrible deed. The man, now claiming drug use, shot the police officer in the back of the head after Lasso pulled

out his taser to subdue the man's dogs, which had begun to attack the officer upon the visit. Says Secretary Judy Lasso, "What hurts the most is that he is bragging [about killing a police officer]. To me, it doesn't really matter what the result of the trial is; nothing is going to change what he did, and the fact that [Robert] is gone now."

The family has received a variety of emotional and financial support from the charitable people of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, as well as other members of the nation. Support to aid the cruel injustice has spurred a movement stretching throughout the state. Closer to home, a 20,000 dollar donation approached the family after an enormous shirt and wristband sale in Palmer Township. Restaurants such as Five Guys Burgers and Fries and Red Robin also contributed sales to the cause, holding "Benefit Nights" and donating their proceeds. Bethlehem even held a motorcycle rally, and continues to plan promotional activi-



rally and continues to plan promotional activities, and the readers of *The Performer* now have the opportunity to show their support in this exclusive upcoming event.

An inaugural 5k run and walk will be held in Lasso's honor, beginning and ending at the Bethlehem YMCA on the morning of Saturday, April 21st, at approximately 8:30 AM. The course

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Republican Candidates: Their Stances On the Issues

By: Gina Lerman

The country has been buzzing for nearly a year about the upcoming 2012 Presidential Election. President Obama will be running for a second term in office, but the opposing Republican nomination is still up for grabs. Many politicians have announced their candidacy only to later drop out, leaving Mitt Romney, Ron Paul, Newt Gingrich, and Rick Santorum as the last men standing. These names most likely sound familiar, but who are these men, what are their ideas, and what will they do as the 2012 Republican Nominee?

In order to make an informed vote this election or to just be able to speak knowledgeably about it, one must learn all about these candidates and their

stances on important issues.

There's just one catch: in order to do that, one must also sort through a thick layer of bias and political jargon. To aid in this process, *The Performer* has compiled a few brief summaries of Romney, Paul, Gingrich, and Santorum's views on some hot button issues.

Many republicans are against granting amnesty, which NumbersUSA.com defines as "a governmental pardon for violating policies related to immigration", for illegal immigrants. Amnesty would allow illegal immigrants or undocumented aliens to gain permanent residency in the United States. All candidates look to handle immigration and border security more aggressively, but for what exactly does that call?

Romney favors the completion of the fence around the Mexican border as a part of his immigration platform, but in previous years, he claimed to favor a path to citizenship for illegal residents. Paul opposes a border fence. Instead, he has called for bringing in troops to patrol the border. Gingrich has also called for complete control of the Mexican border, using the National Guard. He opposes deporting all 11 million illegal aliens. Santorum approves of the border fence, but thinks the country should wait until its completion to decide what exactly to do.

The four candidates have also all promised tax cuts in hopes of stimulating the economy. Santorum has an

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features a mostly flat route with two challenging inclines. A registration fee of \$20.00 will be donated to the Robert Lasso Memorial Fund, along with any other proceeds from the event. Race packets, which include a complimentary T-shirt, pin-on number, and various goods, can be picked up the day before the race at the YMCA from 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM. If needed, packets will also be available from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM the day of the race. The foundation will also award both male and female overall winners of the race. Register to run on the form downloadable from a link on the City of Bethlehem's website. Once completed, send the entry form along with the fee, making sure to make checks payable to:

The Bethlehem Police Department Runner's Club (or BPD Wish Fund - Runner's Club)
10 East Church St
Bethlehem, PA 18018

For additional information, contact 610-865-7187

Featured Artist: Field Mouse

By: Jackie Bastidas

Society, in general, tends to ebb and flow in musical taste preference. Currently, underground music has become better known and, in essence, unearthed for all to enjoy. Popular underground genres include, alternative, indie, dubstep, and screamo. Field Mouse is an example of a band that mixes pop and indie together to create something unique and exciting to listen to.

Field Mouse is a four-person band that was formed in Brooklyn, New York in 2010. The indie/ powerpop band consists of co- songwriter, vocalist and guitarist Rachel Browne; co- songwriter and guitarist Andrew Futral; bassist Danielle DePalma; and drummer Geoff Lewit. Field Mouse's music is described as having "lush sonic textures and expansive soundscapes" (fieldmousemusic.com). With the use of synthesizers as well as guitar, bass, and drums, Field Mouse incorporates all the ingredients necessary to "give an edge to [their] soaring arrangements and pop sensibilities" (fieldmousemusic.com). This music enhances the wistful vocals of Browne. The band's songs focus on themes such as lost love, renewal, and heartbreak. The lyrics are amplified with delicate, yet complex harmonies created by Browne and Futral. Field Mouse's first release, through Small Plates Records, can be ordered on their website, fieldmousemusic.com. The release is entitled, *You Guys Are Gonna Wake Up My Mom* 7.

Field Mouse has been travelling and on- tour since the release of their album. They have travelled up and down the East Coast. The band will be playing near the Lehigh Valley during April and May. Some upcoming shows include: April 13 at the Mercury Lounge, April 14 at the TD Bank Community Stage, and May 26 at the Kung Fu Necktie. If you want to see Field Mouse, drive to see them in New York City or Philadelphia for only 10 dollars. Buy tickets on Field Mouse's website. You can also see Field Mouse locally at Steel Stacks for free on April 14. The free concert is at the TD Bank Community Stage on the Capital BlueCross Creativity Commons from 8 PM until 11PM.

Like Field Mouse? Buy their record or download it on iTunes to support them. If you really like this band, consider booking them for your own show by contacting Avery McTaggart at avery@windishagency.com or their manager, Matt Halverson, at matt@bantermm.com. You can also contact the band to tell them anything you want, talk to them, or even, ask them for advice on some of your own music or maybe a commission for a future album cover, e-mail Field Mouse at band@fieldmousemusic.com.



extensive entrepreneurial background, having earned his money through big corporations. He wants to eliminate corporate income taxes, and his record under the Bush presidency showed support of increased spending. Paul also favors tax cuts, and plans on making deep federal funding cuts in areas such as military spending. Romney wants to stay away from both reduced taxes on the highest and lowest income and increased taxes on the middle. He has proposed eliminating all taxes on capital gains, dividends, and interest. Previously a part of the Bush administration, Gingrich believes that the Bush tax cuts should be made permanent, instead of expiring in the year 2013. He also supports cutting corporate taxes down to 12.5 percent and eliminating capital gains and inheritance taxes.

Each of these Republican candidates has come out against gay marriage. Gingrich believes homosexuality is an individual's decision, and if elected, he would reinstate the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy. Paul has indicated that he sees marriage as between one man and one woman, but maintains the issue be a state matter. Romney previously supported LGBT rights, but his opinions have shifted over the years. "Marriage is an institution between a man and a woman," he claims and thus will "support an amendment to the Massachusetts constitution to make that expressly clear." However, he does want to appropriate certain benefits to those in "nontraditional" relationships. Santorum accepts homosexuality, but opposes homosexual acts. He vehemently opposes the notion of people acting outside of the normality of traditional heterosexuality, believing that it "undermines the basic tenets of our society and the family."

These socially conservative stances allow minimal to no room for women's reproductive and privacy rights. This includes a range of products and medical services including access to birth control, contraceptives, and abortions. Gingrich favors severing funding to Planned Parenthood, a provider of these and other services, including breast cancer evaluations, STD testing, etc. Santorum has said abortion should be outlawed even in cases of rape or incest, and doctors who perform abortions should be prosecuted as criminals.

Romney is currently favored to win the nomination. Gingrich and Paul are still in the race, but they are significantly behind in the polls.

Those who will be 18 by this November, please do not forget to vote. Even students under 18 years of age can make a difference by writing letters to local congressmen (and speak to Mrs. Nesfeder, Mr. Shuman, or Mr. Timbrell about any questions). It takes small voices to amount to any big change.

Artistic and Academic Tutors: Boys and Girls Club

By: Jackie Bastidas

The Boys and Girls Club of Bethlehem is a safe place for youths to spend their hours while not in school. The mission of the Boys and Girls Club is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens. Their "Core Beliefs" are that the Boys and Girls club provide:

1. A safe place to learn and grow
2. Ongoing relationships with caring, adult professionals
3. Life-enhancing programs and character development experiences
4. Hope and opportunity

To ensure that children in grade school and middle school continue to receive the benefits of the club, they are asking for the help of high school students across the Lehigh Valley.

The Brothers and Sisters program, through the American Red Cross Club at LVPA, provides the opportunity and experience for young artists and scholars to share their talents and learn the fundamentals of teaching a few hours each week. The hope of the Brothers and Sisters program is to inspire students in elementary and junior high school to strive for excellence and be the best they can be. The Boys and Girls Club of Bethlehem is located just a few minutes away at 1430 Fritz Drive.

The Boys and Girls Club, open Tuesday through Saturday, is a welcoming home for students of all ages. It's a place where meaningful friendships are forged. Imagine what it would have been like if when you were younger and struggling with something, a Math problem, your English homework, or even just how to pass the time, someone offered you a fun and creative solution, and was there for you no matter what. Now you have the opportunity to do that for someone else. If you would like to volunteer at the Boys and Girls club with fellow LVPA students, contact Jackie Bastidas at 484 896 0567 or e-mail her at jackiebas21@gmail.com.

If you want to dedicate your time without the commitment of joining a club, or would rather go on your own, contact the Bethlehem branch of the Boys and Girls club at 610 865 4241.

Gay Marriage Bill

By: Erynn Moletterieri

New Jersey usually appears in the headlines for its hit MTV reality show *The Jersey Shore*, but recently, New Jersey has been making hard hitting headlines with the state legislature's passing of the Gay Marriage Bill. The vote resulted 24-16, a drastic change from the January 2010 poll, when the state legislature did not pass the bill because of results: 20-14, the only other time the legislature mentioned the Gay Marriage Bill. According to the bill, the state of New Jersey will recognize gay and lesbian marriage, which only eight states and Washington D.C. acknowledge and have legalized in their states. However, the bill is now considered a moot point for the next two years because the governor of New Jersey, Chris Christie, vetoed it when it came to his desk. Once the two years pass, the state legislature



can bring up the bill for another vote. By that time, the legislature plans to have enough votes to override the Governor's veto.

Governor Christie originally planned to give the Gay Marriage Bill up for a referendum, a process in which the public can take a vote on the issue. However, the democratic leaders of New Jersey did not want to give the trust of protecting a minority group to the majority of the people. "Don't be fooled by the governor's call for a public referendum ... it is nothing more than a political smoke screen designed to cover the tracks of those retreating from their leadership and lawmaking responsibilities," Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg exclaimed, with the conclusion, "Civil unions have already proven to be a failure and no ombudsman can change that." Many, like Mrs. Weinberg, remain steadfast in their mission to provide equality for those of an alternate sexual orientation.

New Jersey differs from most states because the state does not actually have a state constitutional amendment banning gay marriage; they just do not allow it. In 2006, New Jersey did give lesbian and gay couples legal protections, but these were to be known as "Civil Unions," not as a marriage. When John Lewis, a civil rights leader, came to New Jersey two weeks ago, he simply remarked, "I think the day will come in New Jersey and all across our country, when we will look back on this period and say, 'we were just silly.'" Of course, reactions from the other side of this ongoing debate have also surfaced. Expectedly, some people still oppose this change.

The people who support the legalization of gay marriage argue that people against gay marriage will not change their views regardless of any sort of change. Nonetheless, the lives of gay and lesbian couples will alter drastically, for the better. The debate boils down to the equality every human being deserves. New Jersey took an opportunity to encourage universal acceptance, creating a huge step forward for this country. In supporting this movement, America can only become stronger.

Fact or Fake?

By: Kalina Mellman

Can you guess which article is fact and which is fake? In the last issue Loving the Golden Arches was the real story.

Happy Home?

From time to time, we all indulge in obsessive *Star Wars* watching, but we usually don't live the obsession like the Star family. The Star family children were given *Star Wars* names, a trend put into motion by the father. Surprisingly enough, their son, Luke, 12, was not the father's son. This caused the family to break out in uproar. Soon after learning that Luke wasn't his son, the dad left the family, and is currently trying to fight the law over child support. Looks like "Darth Vader" may have to fork over some money in the near future.

Best Teacher Ever

Ever wanted to out rap your teacher? Mark Grist, 30, of Peterborough introduced rap in his English class to try and engage his students. "It has helped to inspire my pupils to achieve and given them a much stronger interest in English," he said, to Orange.co.uk. "I've always loved poetry and my interest in rap stemmed from there. I am not a cool rapper. I'm probably the squarest one you'll meet." The video of "suit wearing" Mr. Grist captured him crushing the computation, MC Blizzard (one of his English students). The video went viral on Youtube which helped his gain popularity as a "rap star." He is now in a rap group called The Dead Poets, which infuses rap with poetry; he still works as a substitute teacher when not on tour.

Technology: Are We *Too* Dependent On It?

By: Sarah Grapek

Look back in time one hundred years ago: the railroad was booming, people were driving basic cars, just starting to use the light bulb, and talking on the telephone. These “modern” inventions in technology were considered a convenience, but not necessarily a necessity. Nowadays, people drive to work, make calls on their cell phones, type away at the computer, and rely on electricity to light up the night. To the people of the twenty-first century, technology no longer serves as a convenience, but as a requirement to fulfill everyday tasks.

Computer systems are a great way to keep everything in check. They handle money, store files, and give people the information they need at their fingertips. The question is: Are humans too dependent on the technology they take for granted? When the news warns the population of a possible disaster, such as a hurricane or earthquake, they panic. The grocery stores become crowded as many bodies file in line to buy necessities, and the citizens who evacuate fill the highways with traffic. When people take this into account, they pose the question: What would happen if the whole world lost the technology everyone relies on to keep the cycle of society running? Many millions of pieces of information could possibly disappear, because people rely on computers and electronics to keep books, memorabilia, and other data safe. Electricity in cities and towns across the globe could also falter, which would cause much panic.

The dependency humans have on technology also radiates through the negative effects electronics have on human development. Many people spend hours each day at the phone, computer, or in front of the television. Research in regards to child development shows how dependency on technology hinders focus. According to John Lister on infopackets.com, “technology also appears to be damaging critical reasoning and attention span, leaving children less skilled at concentrating on a particular point for a long time.” This statement’s accuracy proves itself in the dependency many children and teens have on texting and using computers for homework. Studies also show excessive computer usage can cause dependency. According to Matt Richtel in the New York Times’s article “Attached to Technology and Paying the Price,” “scientists say juggling e-mail, phone calls and other incoming information can change how people think and behave. They say our ability to focus is being undermined by bursts of information.” The article continues to point out how, “in its absence, people feel bored.” Many people say that multitasking is productive, but more tasks mean trouble focusing, which causes stress. Although technology is very helpful and essential in our everyday life, there are positive and negative sides to the issue.

To possess a broad perspective on the status of technology, one must approach the subject from four angles: the positive effects, the negative effects, the possible future, and the past. In 100 years, human beings went from starting to develop modern conveniences such as phones, electricity, and cars, to perfecting the advanced technologies already developed. Maybe people would benefit from trying to become less dependent on technology in case anything should happen to affect it or destroy it. Humankind’s never-ending use of technology makes it a double-edge blade, affecting the mind in positive and negative ways. Yes, people are dependent on technology. After all, even the newspaper is online now, isn’t it?

National Record Store Day

By: Devon Zilinek

Record stores, and even the idea of buying physical records, seem like a thing of the past. With digital media stores such as iTunes, not many people buy physical records anymore. This fact is causing many record stores to close their doors. Fortunately, one independent record store owner came up with a plan to save record stores across the world. In 2008, Chris Brown came up with the idea for “Record Store Day,” and by 2012, the day has become a worldwide event.

Record Store Day occurs on the third Saturday in April and celebrates the art of music. It brings together fans, artists, and independently owned record stores around the world. To celebrate the day, artists make special appearances, put on in-store performances, and release limited edition vinyls and CDs. Moreover, many artists re-issue early albums that may be difficult to find.

The first Record Store Day happened in 2008. The band Metallica officially kicked off the day at Rasputin Music in San Francisco. In the first year, just 300 record stores participated in America. Bands such as Death Cab for Cutie, R.E.M., and Vampire Weekend released special Record Store Day items. Furthermore, Billy Bragg, a British folk-punk musician, kicked off the day in the United Kingdom with a special live appearance. Today, Record Store Day has expanded to 10 countries around the world.

This year, Record Store Day will take place on April 21. The official ambassador of the event this year is Iggy Pop. In honor of the day, Arcade Fire plans to release a special edition vinyl of remixes. Metallica will also be celebrating this year’s Record Store Day by releasing their new EP, *Beyond Magnetic*, on silver vinyl. This event estimates the participation of over 600 artists and thousands of independent record stores, making it the world’s largest music event of its kind!

People can celebrate Record Store Day right here in the Lehigh Valley. Double Decker in Allentown and Compact Disc Center in Bethlehem are both participating in this year’s Record Store Day. Support the musical fundraiser and join in on all fun!



Kurt Vonnegut: Famous Letters

By: Jackie Bastidas

Science fiction novelist Kurt Vonnegut did what all writers tell you, "Write what you know." Vonnegut, known for *Cat's Cradle*, *Breakfast of Champions*, *The Sirens of Titan*, *Welcome to the Monkey House* and *Slaughterhouse- Five*, embraces this mantra. A man of humble origins, Kurt Vonnegut Jr. grew into a giant of literature.

Vonnegut's love of writing and literature developed at an early age. In high school, he edited the school's daily newspaper. Later, while attending Cornell, Vonnegut wrote for the Cornell Daily Sun. In 1943, Kurt Vonnegut enlisted in the U. S. Army. While fighting for our country in World War II, he was taken prisoner after the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium. While in captivity and struggling for his life, Vonnegut gained inspiration for many of his novels, specifically *Slaughterhouse- Five*.

Slaughterhouse- Five, subtitled *The Children's Crusade: A Duty- Dance with Death*, recounts Vonnegut's experiences during the war through the eyes of a soldier named Billy Pilgrim. The novel was written in 1969 and still remains popular today. Ms. Jacqui Pratt's English 11 CP students read and discussed the novel, keeping it one of the most influential and well-known works of American literature from the 20th Century.

A unique attribute of *Slaughterhouse- Five*, though recounting Vonnegut's trials as a soldier, is the novel's sense of time. Billy Pilgrim uncontrollably travels through different periods of his life becoming "unstuck in time," making the chain of events in the book neither "chronological and/or linear" (sparknotes.com). Each section of the novel describes a different place and time. This aspect of the inventive novel keeps the reader guessing what will happen next.

Like Vonnegut, Pilgrim is captured by the German forces and taken to a POW camp after the Battle of the Bulge. After time- tripping, Billy Pilgrim travels to Dresden and is in a work camp. The camp occupies a former slaughterhouse. When the Allies bomb Dresden, Pilgrim and other POW's survive the firestorm, asphyxiation, and incineration by stuffing themselves into an airtight meat locker. When they emerge, they are saved by the Russians just as Vonnegut and his fellow POW's were.

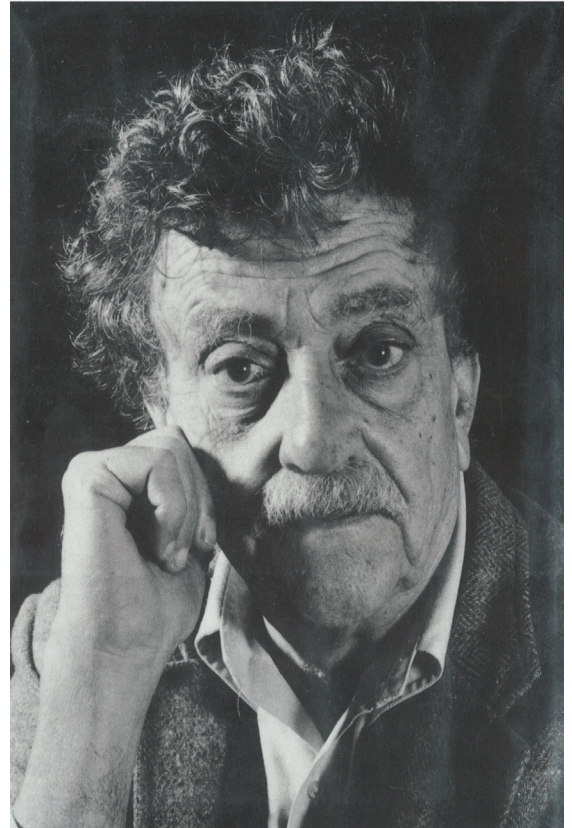
Kurt Vonnegut, unlike Pilgrim, wrote the following letter while staying at the Red Cross Club in the Le Havre P.O.W. Repatriation Camp. The letter, shared by friend of *The Performer*, Bernie O' Hare, blogger of the Lehigh Valley Ramblings, is "in many ways, ...[Vonnegut's] first draft of *Slaughterhouse Five*" (lehighvalleyramblings.blogspot.com). A copy of the letter was mailed to the O'Hare family as a Christmas present in 1996. O'Hare's father was one of the fellow POWs in captivity with Kurt Vonnegut during World War II. There, the two men developed a life-long friendship, which is discussed in Charles Shields' novel "And So it Goes." And now, without further adieu, Kurt Vonnegut's letter and gift to the world written 24 years before the publication of *Slaughterhouse Five*:

Dear people:

I'm told that you were probably never informed that I was anything other than "missing in action." Chances are that you also failed to receive any of the letters I wrote from Germany. That leaves me a lot of explaining to do - in precis: I've been a prisoner of war since December 19th, 1944, when our division was cut to ribbons by Hitler's last desperate thrust through Luxemburg and Belgium. Seven Fanatical Panzer Divisions hit us and cut us off from the rest of Hodges' First Army. The other American Divisions on our flanks managed to pull out. We were obliged to stay and fight. Bayonets aren't much good against tanks: Our ammunition, food and medical supplies gave out and our casualties out-numbered those who could still fight - so we gave up. The 106th got a Presidential Citation and some British Decoration from Montgomery for it, I'm told, but I'll be damned if it was worth it. I was one of the few who weren't wounded. For that much thank God.

Well, the supermen marched us, without food, water or sleep to Limberg, a distance of about sixty miles, I think, where we were loaded and locked up, sixty men to each small, unventilated, un-heated boxcar. There were no sanitary accommodations - the floors were covered with fresh cow dung. There wasn't room for all of us to lie down. Half slept while the other half stood. We spent several days, including Christmas, on that Limberg siding. On Christmas Eve the Royal Air Force bombed and strafed our unmarked train. They killed about one-hundred-and-fifty of us. We got a little water Christmas Day and moved slowly across Germany to a large P.O.W. Camp in Muhlburg, South of Berlin. We were released from the boxcars on New Year's Day. The Germans herded us through scalding delousing showers. Many men died from shock in the showers after ten days of starvation, thirst and exposure. But I didn't.

Under the Geneva Convention, Officers and Non-commissioned Officers are not obliged to work when taken prisoner. I am, as you know, a Private. One-hundred-and-fifty such minor beings were shipped to a Dresden work camp on January 10th. I was their leader by virtue of the little German I spoke. It was our misfortune to have sadistic and fanatical guards. We were refused medical attention and clothing: We wore given long hours at extremely hard labor. Our food ration was two-hundred-and-fifty grams of black bread and one pint of unseasoned potato soup each day. After desperately trying to improve our situation for two months and having been met with bland smiles I told the guards just what I was going to do to them when the Russians came. They beat me up a little. I was fired as group leader. Beatings were very small time: - one boy starved to death and the SS Troops shot two for stealing food.



Cont. on page 7 (Letters)

Letters (continued from page 6)

On about February 14th the Americans came over, followed by the R.A.F. their combined labors killed 250,000 people in twenty-four hours and destroyed all of Dresden - possibly the world's most beautiful city. But not me.

After that we were put to work carrying corpses from Air-Raid shelters; women, children, old men; dead from concussion, fire or suffocation. Civilians cursed us and threw rocks as we carried bodies to huge funeral pyres in the city.

When General Patton took Leipzig we were evacuated on foot to [...] the Czechoslovakian border. There we remained until the war ended. Our guards deserted us. On that happy day the Russians were intent on mopping up isolated outlaw resistance in our sector. Their planes (P-39's) strafed and bombed us, killing fourteen, but not me.

Eight of us stole a team and wagon. We traveled and looted our way-through Sudetenland and Saxony for eight days, living like kings. The Russians are crazy about Americans. The Russians picked us up in Dresden. We rode from there to the American lines at Halle in Lend-Lease Ford trucks. We've since been flown to Le Havre.

I'm writing from a Red Cross Club in the Le Havre P.O.W. Repatriation Camp. I'm being wonderfully well fed and entertained. The state-bound ships are jammed, naturally, so I'll have to be patient. I hope to be home in a month. Once home I'll be given twenty-one days recuperation at Atterbury, about \$600 back pay and - get this - sixty (60) days furlough!

I've too damned much to say, the rest will have to wait. I can't receive mail here so don't write.

May 29, 1945

April School Events

Young Choreographers in Concert (April 27-29)

YCC is an informal concert of works by senior choreographers. Each senior creates original choreography that is based on a theme of their choosing. It takes place in the Black Box.

Girls Just Want to Have Fun (April 29)

A mother/daughter fashion show will take place at the Four Points Sheraton in Allentown from 2-5 pm. There will be appetizers, desserts, coffee and a cake auction. All proceeds from the fashion show will benefit LVPA.

Senior Instrumental Recital (April 30)

LVPA senior instrumental majors will perform works from the classical and contemporary genre. It takes place in the Black Box starting at 7:30 pm.

Cosmo's World II

By: Lana Brucker

On Tuesday, March 20th, the Pennsylvania Wild Resource Conservation Program's new video series, *Cosmo's World II*, made its debut at LVPA. Seven students from the theater department (Teague Fernandez, Aria Sivick, Rachael Davis, Gabriel Hoffman, Matt Hogan, Joya Widney, and Victor Abreu) participated in the film as well as a few other students from the state of Pennsylvania. The educational piece contains four sections: "Water," "Energy," "Agriculture," and "Biodiversity." Each part utilizes student interaction as well as a cartoon named Cosmo to "teach middle school students about the importance of good stewardship," as Ann Gillette explains in a press release for the premier.

A science team, Greg Czarnecki and Jessica Sprajcar, and creative team, Teri Haddad, Scott Paul, and Brandon Pousley, coordinated and developed *Cosmo's World II*. Greg Czarnecki, the leader behind the series, has been launching videos for about 30 years. However, until *Cosmo's World*, the work always consisted of half-hour long documentaries and excluded children. About three years ago, the team met with the idea of making a video series for the classroom, to encourage students to become more eco-friendly. Teachers recommended that they literally use kids in the film because kids will listen to other kids more easily and rapidly than they would scientific adults. Moreover, they decided to make the video clips fairly short because children often have short attention spans.

The first cycle of *Cosmo's World* is aimed towards elementary school students. Greg Czarnecki used his daughters to relate to the other children her age who would watch the videos. Then, about a year ago, Greg Czarnecki and Jessica Sprajcar started to create lesson plans for a middle school version of the series, *Cosmo's World II*. The team turned to LVPA as a source for actors in the series, as well as a few other high school students throughout Pennsylvania, to keep the content active. The video expands on the importance of biodiversity and sustainability, as well as what students can do to assist in preservation of such environmental concepts.

Cosmo's World II will be promoted throughout the state of Pennsylvania to celebrate Earth Day in April. The video teaches in depth study of how the cycle of nature works and how simple lifestyle habits can make the universe a cleaner, continuously abundant source for human life. Students learn that even creatures many people believe to be nuisances greatly benefit the environment. Moreover, they explore how choices, such as buying locally grown produce, can affect an entire network of healthier, cleaner, environmentally proactive ways of preserving the planet.

Both middle and high school students should watch *Cosmo's World II*. It even teaches young adults information regarding the science behind cliché sayings such as "Recycle!" and "Don't waste water." Technically astounding and creatively enticing, the video series serves as a wonderful tool for reaching out to a younger audience. Hopefully it has and will continue to inspire many, as it has inspired the audience at the *Cosmo's World II* premier. Congratulations to Greg Czarnecki and Jessica Sprajcar for providing an amazing message, as well as to Teri Haddad, Scott Paul, and Brandon Pousley for executing the film beautifully!

“How About a Drawing Today, Folks?”

By: Gina Lerman

Tugging nervously at my too-big pencil skirt, I set off on the first of many long marches up the hill behind Dorney Park, my town's local, trashy amusement park. I set down my portfolio, also too-big, upon entering the room, and took a deep breath. Thus began my very first interview for my very first job. Two men sat on the other side of the table, much younger looking than I'd imagined. One of them was a very white, stereotypically obese man with gauged ears and an intangible kind of confidence. By his side was another man, his total opposite: slim, Asian, and chirpy.

I shook their hands in the "firm way" I had read that employers liked and tried to answer each question with composure.

"Name?"

"Gina Lerman."

"Department of interest?"

"Caricatures."

"Favorite movie?"

"Austin Powers."

I recall mentioning my aspirations of one day becoming an International Man of Mystery myself. I like to pretend this is what got me the job.

As far back as I can remember, one thing has remained consistent: there has always been a pencil in my hand. Luckily, my parents took notice of my artistic tendencies and nurtured the hell out of them. Thus, I received sets of crayons, colored pencils, and pastels that became increasingly elaborate with every passing birthday. However, regardless of any tricked out art supplies I was in possession of, I always needed art. Essentially, whether through writing, drawing, or something in between, I have always and still continue to create constantly..

My creations weren't always masterpieces (see: all of middle school), but I was always practicing. I drew on walls and other undesirables, which always seemed justified whenever I won a coloring contest and brought home the blow-up snake or free milkshake to prove it. I later went on to skip gym class in favor of working in the art room. Through delinquency and determination, I filled stacks of notebooks and sketchbooks that now line my bedroom floor and yet still yearned to improve.

By the time I reached the doors of LVPA, my vat of creative juices had begun to bubble. Ready to become serious with my art, my writing took a backseat. Eventually art started to feel like work, which probably had something to do with how I was doing it for homework, and that took a backseat as well. I was confused, suddenly feeling like I had no direction or motivation. Jealous of my passionate peers, I climbed out of the backseat and into a completely different car. Still, somehow, I yearned for the inspired days of my youth.

When I received my job as a Caricature Artist at Dorney Park, I also received the blue polo shirt and khaki bermudas to match. The blue represented my being essentially at the bottom of the art shop hierarchy. In the coming months, I would come to earn my spot through the normal beginner work, such as simply dealing with the cornucopia of terrible people at Dorney Park. The list for beginners includes being bumped into, snarled at, hit on, and at the receiving end of many lame pranks. Moving on to advanced territory, I also nearly passed out, almost annihilated two cash registers, and completely jacked up countless people's faces.

One of such instances I can only ascribe to the category of "reasons why amusement parks are the armpits of society" to explain an incident which occurred sometime near midday on a Saturday shift. I should have known this woman was trouble from the moment she requested that I, "just draw her face, not her head". Brows wrinkled in confusion, I asked her to clarify what she meant. "My hairs don't look good."

It took some time convincing her that I had to draw her head because she couldn't just have a disembodied face with no hair or cranium (those cost extra). Assuaging her worries, I said I could draw her hair how it normally looked if she explained it to me. Suddenly, I was bombarded by a myriad of voices; each one louder and more eager to explain this woman's hair than the last. Eventually I found myself drawing from a picture she'd taken herself, beautifully composed with pouty lips and a toilet seat in the background. With her pink rhinestone phone at hand, I could finally draw in peace.

However, the assault on my eardrums continued as another member of the posse appeared with a man, a security guard, and a lot more yelling. The man she was arguing with had a voice that I can only describe as an angry Boomhauer, which was at once hilarious and terrifying. By the time the security guard sorted the squabble out and left, my drawing was barely halfway finished. Yet, out of the corner of my eye, I noticed the woman's peeking over onto my easel. Suddenly, she risd from the plastic chair saying, "Uh-uh, I don't like that Miss," and proceeded to walk away. "Thank you, come again!" I replied.

Aside from those who are downright comical in their rudeness, there have been scores of great customers with whom I actually enjoyed conversation. Sometimes even ones that aren't as fun to be with are ones I end up loving just because they have interesting faces to draw. At the end of the day, the drawing is the greatest part of my job.

Despite all my sweat, complaints, and hand cramps (and more sweat), I recognize that being a Caricature Artist has truly strengthened my skills. I've gained a great wealth of information and experience from what I do. I feel like I have a better idea about how to work with the public and communicate with the unwashed, plebian masses. I've also had the opportunity to grow up over this summer in many ways, one way involving a real taste of the joy and the tedium of working life. I wear the stains on my blue polo with pride, because they represent this growth, but also that I need to use both hands while eating a bagel.

Perhaps the most valuable thing that has come out of being a Caricature Artist is the moment where I realized I actually have a job drawing all day. This realization has helped me rediscover, for the first time after attending an art school, that art is what I truly love. What's even more exciting is that actually having art in my future could be a real possibility.

Prom Dress Shopping Advice

By: Lana Brucker

Attention Juniors and Seniors: Every girl wants to go to prom in a beautiful dress, something unique, artsy, elegant, and complimentary to her body. However, most prom dresses range in price from 300-1,000 dollars! Why spend that much on a dress one might only wear for one night? Many companies sell expensive dresses with the motto: "it will be the best night of your life." Then, when the night passes, so does all that saved up money. Many stores and online sites sell stunning, high quality prom dresses for affordable prices.

Caché in the Lehigh Valley Mall has frequent sales on their dresses throughout March and April. Personally, I bought a striking prom dress there on a final clearance sale for only \$45. The dress has remained in perfect condition, and I have worn it to a wedding and another formal event since the prom two years ago. Department stores, such as Macy's and Bon Ton, often offer a huge selection on prom dresses at amazing prices, especially in April. Both stores also give away coupons in *The Morning Call*, as well as other name-brand newspapers, each week. Save up coupons, check out the sales, try on dresses, and find a bargain!

Sometimes, a girl may not always find a dress or an affordable selection the first entry into the store. If that happens, leave and come back when the sale percentage escalates. Many malls have a wide variety of stores selling formal dresses, so make a day of it! Explore with friends, compare prices, and choose carefully. Do not fall into the trap of looking "prom-y," and obtaining a standard princess-like gown. Find a dress suitable to the person wearing it. Prom dresses do not need to give off a particular vibe. They can appear short or long, sexy or adorable, intriguing or striking. Do not worry about it fitting any style.

Hate trying on dresses in stores? Many online sites also offer discounts on prom dresses. Everytide.com has a sale of up to 80% off their prom dress selection. Lightinthebox.com offers weekly deals on dresses. Unfortunately, shopping online means paying shipping and handling fee as well as not knowing exactly how the dress might fit once it arrives. My advice to anyone who wishes to purchase a prom dress online is this: Pay early and check the return policy. If returning merchandise does not involve a strenuous process, order the dress, try it on, and if it fits and you love it, then great! If not, return it and start over until the right dress comes along.



Finding a prom dress can seem like a financial burden. It does not have to be though! Explore stores and only look at selections with reasonable start prices (about \$500) and at least a 30% off sale, preferably greater, especially if the dress costs closer to \$500 than \$100. Make a deal; get the dress of your dreams without ridding your pocket of enough money to pay for all of your dreams. Remember, any beautiful formal dress can classify as a prom dress, and it might serve well to purchase a dress you love enough to use again for other formal occasions. Wearing a dress more than once, for different occasions, never caused any harm. Explore, take your time, hold onto your money, and buy a dress that makes you feel beautiful to celebrate the end of your high school career. Have a wonderful prom!



PERCY *the Persian* PERFORMER



Ah, spring
is in the air!



'Tis the
season of all
my favorite things

allergies,
spring cleaning,
annoying young
couples,
and **DIETING**



I'm on this
new diet where
I only eat



what I can
steal from
others



I think it's
working pretty well



don't you?

Hall Style

By: Devon Zilinek and Gina Lerman

Junior Vocal major Fabian Gomez loves to shop at thrift stores and describes his style as “unique.” His favorite articles of clothing are shoes because, “shoes are what people look at the most.” Fabian’s fashion advice is to “express yourself through your clothing” because, in his opinion, fashion articulates the essence of a person and showcases his or her personality.



Sabrina Francisco is a sophomore Visual Art major. Her favorite store is Mod Cloth. If she could describe her style in one word, it would be “vintage.” In regards to fashion, Sabrina advises to “be true to who you are and wear what you like.” She feels a lot of girls just wear what looks popular instead of having their own style.

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