

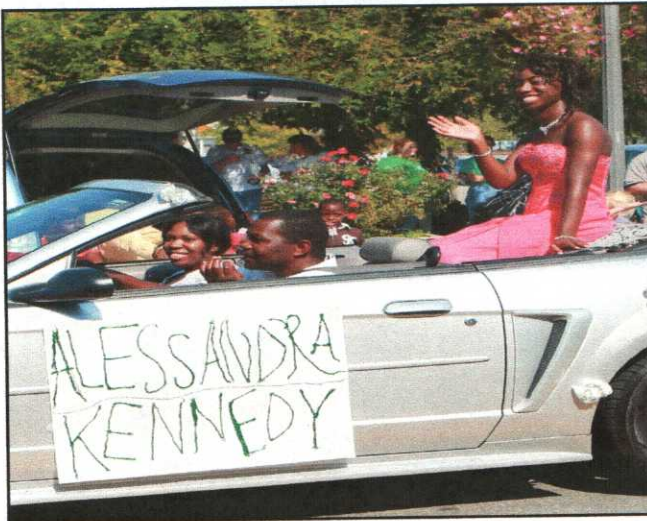
Junior Homecoming Beauties



Maya Everett



Freshman sponsor Jeff Thomas enjoys a tasty Cougar Club Sandwich at Greenie's Diner!



Alessandra "Cookie" Kennedy



Sophomores "Cage the Cougars"

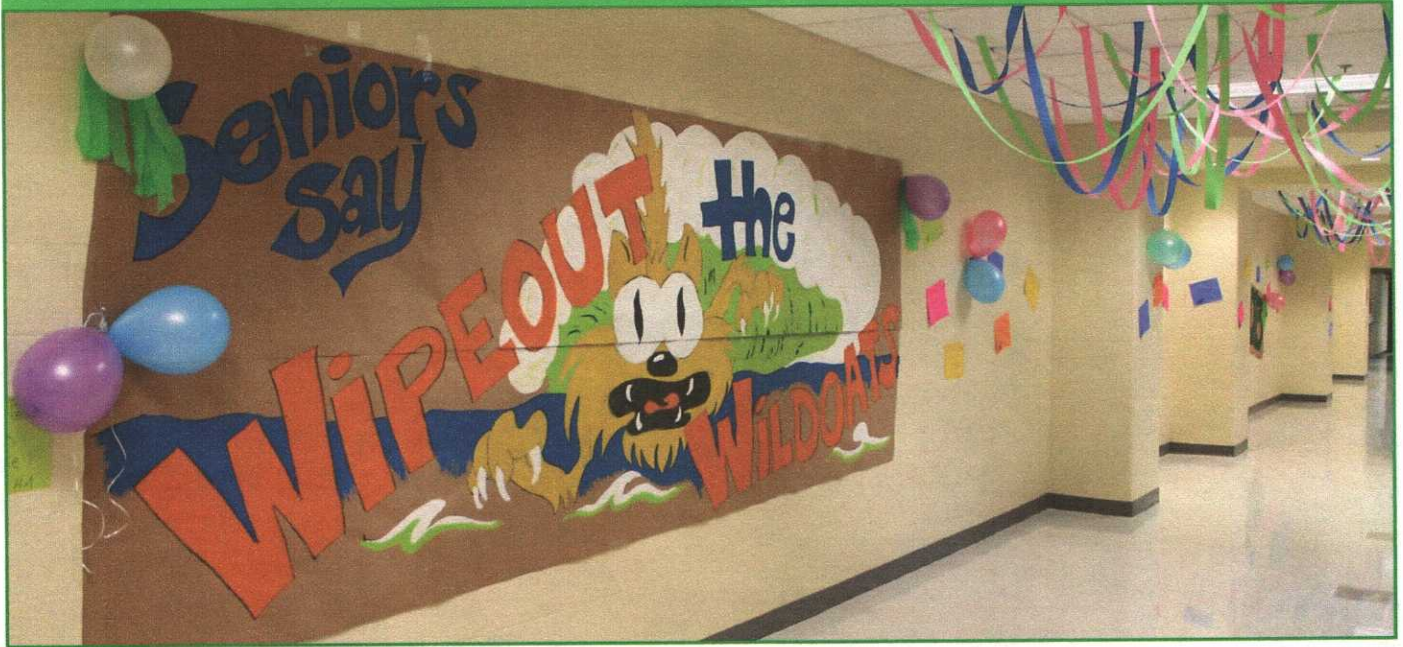


Megan Ball



Poor Juniors....
Everyone is searching for their float!!!
"Where's the float?"





Seniors know how to celebrate with spirit!



Parade filled with beautiful girls



Drug testing

By: Rebecca Strange

As of the 2011-2012 school year, Leeds High School began administering drug tests to randomly selected students. These tests are given to any student who participates in a sport, extra-curricular activity, or drive to school and park on campus. The tests occur at random times throughout the school year.

The students are randomly selected by computer generator, so some students may be tested three times, even though others haven't even been tested yet. Now if you ask anyone who *has* been tested, they will probably tell you it was not a pleasant experience. Although, it is necessary if they want to continue to be a part of their team or have permission to park on school property.

Here are quotes from some students with their opinions on the random drug tests.:

Sophomore Ali Chambers stated, "I think the drug testing is rational, but only to the people who are involved in sports or serious extra-curricular activities. I think that if you drive to school, but aren't involved in any sport or club, you shouldn't have your name put in for the testing." As a cheerleader, Ali has the possibility of being called to test.

Not all students are against the testing and some don't even mind. Aspen Snow, sophomore, added, "It's a good precaution for the people involved in school activities."

Also, sophomore Sarah Brooks said, "I've been tested three times and it didn't bother me at all."

Three men in charge of major programs at Leeds High School added their comments.

Head coach Keith Etheredge said, "I love it. I think everyone should be tested, even the coaches."

Band and choir director Chip Wise stated, "I wish we had had this testing when I was in high school."

Principal Michael Turner added, "Best thing ever to happen to Leeds High School. It serves as a purpose for students to be accountable for their own actions so they can stay involved in their various extra-curricular activities."

There are many students who would say otherwise. Most would say the test is "stupid" or "an invasion of privacy". We all have our opinions, and I think that these tests are making our school a safer and better place.



Ms. Hunt wins Teacher of the Year Award

By Lupita Beltran

Ms. Becky Hunt, Department Chair of Special Education, was selected by The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4758 of Pell City as "Teacher of the Year". She received this honor in recognition for her efforts in promoting Citizenship Education and the principles of the VFW.

Ms. Hunt, herself a "veteran teacher" of 35 years said, "It was such a surprise and honor to be chosen to represent our school. To be chosen by this particular group means so much because of who they are and what they represent. I am thankful for the men and women who have served our country to give me the freedom and opportunity to do what I do. They made a difference in my life so I only hope I can make a difference in someone else's life."

Ms. Hunt was honored at a banquet on December 4, 2012, in Pell City.

**2013
Mr. & Miss
Leeder Pageant
7:00 PM
Saturday, January 26, 2013
LHS Auditorium
Reserved Seats \$10.00
General Admission \$8.00**

Gibson and Purser receive grant money



Each year, the Leeds Educational Foundation awards grants to deserving teacher applicants within the Leeds City School System. Participating customers of Leeds Water Works and LCS teachers donate to the fund. The teachers anonymously apply for grant money by writing proposals that will aid in their individual educational endeavors. A committee reviews the proposed suggestions and choose the winners.

This year the Leeds Educational Foundation awarded grants totaling \$8,366.80. Two LHS faculty members, Terri Leigh Gibson and Valorie Purser, received a total of \$868.99.

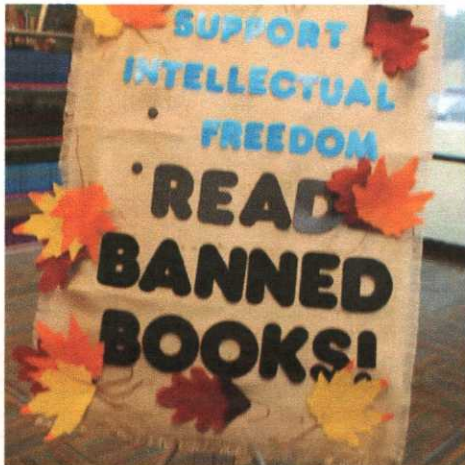
Mrs. Gibson, LHS Librarian, was granted \$500.00. She plans to buy new fiction books for the library.. To make sure that great selections are made, Mrs. Gibson said, "I am taking suggestions from the students and teachers."

So if there is a fiction book you would like to see in your school library, let Mrs. Gibson know.

Valorie Purser, a special education instruction, was granted \$368.99. Ms. Purser plans to buy books and a reading program, Take 10 Reading, for her classes.



LHS Library lookin' good



By Rachel Stoves

Terri Leigh Gibson has taught math for 18 years – 8 of those years at Leeds High School. During that time, she took a year off and worked part-time at the Jane Culbreth Library in Leeds.

Last year, she decided it was time for a change from the classroom, because she said, "I've always been a librarian *wanna' be.*"

When she learned there would be an opening position for a librarian at LHS, Gibson applied and was selected for the job. She enrolled in an online class at The University of West Alabama to get her Library of Science degree.

She says "It was an easy transition from the classroom to the library, but I think that going back as a math teacher would be hard."

Her biggest challenge is to get the students and teachers to use the library more than they do.

Gibson also noted the need for funds for more books and computers. In an effort to bring funding into the library account, she has opened The Library Café where teachers and students can purchase hot chocolate, cappuccino, spiced tea and Biscotti.

The library focuses on holidays and special recognitions occurring each month. Gibson showcases events with interesting literary displays.

Gibson is a lifelong resident of Leeds and her entire family graduated from Leeds. She has two daughters, one is a chemical engineer and other is a language teacher. Gibson is known as G-Bird to her three grandchildren.



Abbie Ellison (seated center) signs her Letter of Intent to play softball for Troy University. Joining Abbie for the special occasion are her parents, Kim and Kevin Ellison. Standing (l to r) LHS Principal Michael Turner, LHS Trainer Kathy Blakey, LHS Athletic Director Linda Brasher, Softball Coach Natalie Hyde, and Keith Etheredge, LHS football coach. Abbie plans to major in broadcast journalism.



Library celebrates holidays each month



Check out a good book!

And a Happy New Year...

By Maya Everett

By definition a New Year's Resolution is a commitment that a person makes to one or more personal goals, projects, or the reforming of a habit. Annually, prior to the first of January, people worldwide prepare for the new events and changes for the upcoming year.

In a survey conducted at Leeds High School, students were asked about the effectiveness of the past year. They were also asked about what they like and dislike about their year. Finally, they were asked what would be their resolution for the upcoming year and to give their own definition of what a New Year's Resolution was in their own words.

When asked was the year 2012 effective, Michael Hill responded "Yes, I have stepped up my game in getting good grades."

Many others described their year as ineffective or less than expected.

For some, the year 2012 was very enjoyable. A senior, Cassidy Deshazo, said "I found love and I had a lot of fun with friends."

Well, you may think what could be better than finding love but other students had stories of their own.

Amber Patton, a junior, said "I enjoyed the fact that I have more of a social life, I am busier, and people seem to be more responsible."

Freshman Garrett Karns wrote, "I disliked what I learned about the people I once was close to and about all the time I gave up."

In contrast, junior, Kelsey Mitchell associated her problems with herself instead of others. She said, "I disliked some of the decisions I made. I thought they were good at the time, but they weren't."

Senior Nicholas Marbury seemed to have the most trying year. He said, "I disliked the amount of pressure I had forced upon me — trying to complete work and deal with family issues."

A successful year is usually based on the expectations set at the beginning of the year which is known as New Year's Resolutions.

Courtney Purkey, freshman, defined a New Year's Resolution as "what you aspire to do in the upcoming year."

That is correct and, sadly for some, it's something that some have never heard of before.

The troublesome part emerges when it comes down to staying true to the goals set for the upcoming year.

Gabriel Johnson, a junior, wrote, "I do not agree with making a New Year's Resolution."

However, many others like freshman Franki Piazza, rather than disagreeing with the notion altogether simply said it's easy to forget.

Jasmine Davis, LHS junior, is a success story because she stayed with last year's resolution, "Yes, I stopped hanging with a lot of people and I'm starting to not let things get to me."

Junior Makiah Rogers said, "My resolution is to stay out of trouble, be a good example for my siblings, nieces and nephews. I also want to make good grades and graduate in order to go to college."

Rachel Stoves, LHS junior, said, "My resolution is to stay the same, keep improving in school, find the college I would like to attend, and work very hard to make that happen."

Senior Jamie Finch said, "I want to become a better person and become more fit. I want to start taking care of my health and body."

I personally suggest to all my friends that you should work hard to achieve your goals, make needed changes in your life, and excel about the altitude of the sky.

The final question is: Will 2013 be a better year for you than years past?

Where do you stand?

By Chace Pearson

When we look back on high school, some peoples' memories are going to be better than others.

Unfortunately for many teenagers, in the young, chaotic minds of high schoolers, you are nothing without your social status.

Consider the stereotypes. For example, if you were a popular cheerleader who was friends with everyone or a football player who started in every sporting team in school, your memories of those four years are probably soaked with parties, dates and thrills.

But, take the nerd who kept to himself, except when helping others do their homework, and except when absolutely required to participate in social events, or a self-proclaimed "teacher's pet" who spent her days helping teachers grade papers, and their memories are better aligned with being stuffed in lockers, being made fun of, or getting tripped on purpose in the hallway.

Hopefully, for most of us, any reputations that exist now in high school will be left in the dust when we go off to college. But there is always that one person who will continue to live life as if they are forever in high school.



Senior Sponsor Angela Walker's father, Sammie Patterson, is the CEO of Float Construction at LHS.

Origin of Thanksgiving

By Kayla Murry

The origin of Thanksgiving is conveyed as a friendly feast between Native Americans and European pilgrims. This in reality was certainly not the case.

In 1970, the 350th anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims, Frank B. James, president of the Federated Eastern Indian League, prepared a speech for a Plymouth banquet that exposed Pilgrims for having committed many crimes, including the robbery of Wampanoag's graves.

In actuality, a feast never took place. The Indians who attended were not even invited. The Pilgrim crop had failed miserably and the Indians produced twenty acres of corn. The Pilgrims invited the Indian Sachem Massasoit to their feast to which he invited 90 other Indians.

All of the food was prepared by the Indians and the white men flashed their weapons in an attempt to intimidate.

The fables we tell our kids are twisted tales of reality. This tainted history that has been passed down from generation to generation has painted a peaceful picture of the bloody truth.

Thanksgiving was proclaimed a holiday in 1863 by Abraham Lincoln.

Counselor's Corner

Texting while driving is a growing trend and a national epidemic that is quickly becoming one of the country's top killers!

Mrs. Lisa Hudson, LHS Counselor

Call 699-4510 for an appointment

What's the magic number?

By Maya Everett

What's the magic number? Currently, the significant figure is eleven (11). In English, it is the smallest positive integer requiring three syllables. In mathematics, it is the 5th smallest prime number. In science, it is the atomic number of sodium.

All in all, it is a compelling number yet an alarming number! According to the Allstate automobile insurance company, an average of 11 teens die every day in a preventable car crash.

At Leeds High School, the topic has surfaced sporadically. Last year, the dual enrollment class, led by English teacher, Amanda Beason, hosted an assembly program featuring the "Don't Text While Driving" documentary sponsored by AT&T.

This year, the issue emerged once again when Alabama passed a law on August 1 banning texting and driving.

The LHS chapter of FCCLA (Family Career and Community Leaders of America) and the FACS (Family and Consumer Sciences) classes collaborated in an effort to halt the use of phones while driving.

FCCLA and FACS sponsor, Miriam Turner, coordinated the two groups in promoting the "It Can Wait" pledge and advocacy of downloading the AT&T "Drive Mode" app.

However, even with the support of the school, there was no affirmative understanding of the student body on the topic as noted in the results of a poll. Students were questioned regarding their awareness of the dangers of texting and driving and if they spoke up when friend was texting and driving. The majority of students answered "Yes."

The overall response by the students was reassuring that they were aware of and concerned with the epidemic.

Because 11 is the magic number, there must be at least 11 ways to save the 11 lives that are lost each day.

Students were asked to suggest ideas to prevent these costly deaths and the countdown began:

11. "Stay focused on the road and be a safe driver at all times." — Stephon Montgomery (11th grade)
10. "Let everything else wait." — Leslie Zarazua (11th grade)
9. "Understand that not only are you responsible for your safety while on the road but others' as well." — Juan Luna (12th grade)
8. "Realize that no one is above death and we must be very precautious and take driving seriously." — Maya Everett (11th grade)
7. "Be responsible with the privilege to drive that you have been given. Stay focused on your surrounding and always expect the unexpected." — Russell Alicea (11th grade)
6. "Be focused at all times." — Mikal Williams (11th grade)
5. "Stay one step ahead of everyone else on the road." — Abbie Ellison (12th grade)
4. "Turn your phone off so you won't be tempted to text." — Rachel Stoves (11th grade)
3. "Keep the music down and stay focused on the road." — Chace Pearson (12th grade)
2. "Stay focused while driving. If someone else is driving and not doing the right thing, speak up!" — Lupita Beltran (12 grade)

...and finally —

1. "Pay close attention, be aware of your surroundings, and do not allow distractions." — Alexandria Shorter (12th grade)

So much can be accomplished with just 11 people. Texting and driving is a choice and these eleven students choose not to text and drive.

The Leeds High School programs continue to educate the student body with hopes that soon the magic number of 11 will cease to exist.



Alarming Statistics

- 23% of all auto accidents involve cell phones.
- 34% of young adults say they've texted while driving.
- 52% of young adults say they've talked on the phone while driving.
- 77% of young adults say they are very or somewhat confident they can safely text while driving.
- 52% of young adults claim it's easy to text while driving.
- Texting while driving makes a crash 23X more likely; talking or listening makes a crash 1.3X more likely; reaching for your cell phone while driving makes a crash 1.4X more likely.
- 5 seconds is the minimal amount of time your attention is taken away from the road when you are texting, so at 55 mph, that equals the length of a football field.