



Big in 05  
see page 8

# The Voyager

Homewood-Flossmoor High School  
Volume 47  
Issue 5  
December 16, 2005

999 Kedzie Avenue  
Flossmoor IL, 60422



Christmas Controversy  
see page 14



## Teachers propose calendar change

### Plan for changes would move first semester exams before winter break

ALEX REICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

The long-time H-F tradition of taking final exams after winter break may soon be put to rest, as the H-F Educational Organization (HFEO), the school's teacher association and union, voted in favor of recommending a change to the 2006-2007 school calendar.

Although the Board of Education maintains final authority regarding all scheduling matters, the HFEO will offer input at the scheduling meeting in February, after a November 30 survey of H-F teachers revealed a desire to move final exams before winter break.

"Historically, we have never done that here. Several teachers said that they had taught in districts that did it and liked it, or they knew of other teachers in other districts who said it was a good idea," said President of HFEO Scott Nemecek.

While the proposed calendar is not currently being released, it would require that school begins about two weeks earlier, allowing students to get out in May. First semester exams would also be moved to occur before winter break.

After initial complaints were made by nearly a dozen teachers regarding the current calendar, a three person committee was formed within the HFEO, headed by Leanne Morris of the English Department, to further investigate teacher opinion the matter. The calendar committee then conducted a

preliminary survey, in which the majority of teachers who responded claimed they would be interested in adjusting the current calendar. The committee then drafted a pilot calendar and again polled teachers. After the proposed calendar passed, the committee prepared for a final vote, publicizing the poll in staff e-mails. The final vote, held in the teachers' cafeteria, approved the calendar, approximately 67 votes to 40 votes.

Nemecek recognizes that the proposition is not flawless. If the plan were to go through, the Athletic Office would be faced with the task of re-coordinating practice dates for the sports. The Illinois High School Association determines what date, usually in early August, when schools can start practices. However, if classes were to begin early, teams would lose some summer practice time. Also, Advanced Placement (AP) classes would need to recalibrate their agendas to synchronize with AP test dates.

According to Nemecek, even though the proposal is intended for next school year, if approved by the Board of Education it still may not be put into effect until later, since other scheduling specifics have already been detailed for 2006-2007.

Nemecek maintained that the process is still in very early stages and the proposal is unlikely to make its way through all of the proper channels. "My personal opinion is that the proposal might not go through. There are many conflicts, like matching our calendar to the feeder districts, which makes change difficult," said Nemecek.

The final decision regarding the calendar will be made at a Board of Education meeting in February.

**Bump, set, spike** Many groups dressed up in costumes such as 90's beach volleyball players at The Red Rose Ball which took place December 3 in the South Building Cafeteria. The ball was sponsored by the Student Government. This year's theme was "Out of this World," which entailed decorations of outer space, including alien balloon blowups and star cut-outs. A new photography company was used this year allowing students to receive pictures the night of the ball. Also, new and different photo size options were available.

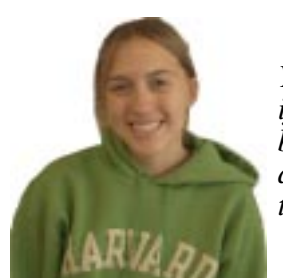
## students Say: Would you prefer to take finals before winter break?



**Eddie Barrett '08**  
*No, because we would have a lot more time to study for final exams if they are given after winter break.*



**Brenda Escamilla '09**  
*Yes, because we would not have to spend any time studying over winter break, therefore allowing us to fully enjoy our holidays.*



**Eileen Davidson '06**  
*Yes, because it is not as if I spend every winter break studying. I forget a lot over the course of two weeks.*

## Dean's Office overrun with student iPods, cell phones

DONALD GOENS  
STAFF WRITER

Bins stacked full of envelopes labeled, stuffed, and sealed. Inside are items ranging from hats and CD players, to expensive accessories costing up to 300 dollars. These are not items about to be shipped off in time for the holidays, but are student property currently being held in the Dean's Office. Some students will not have to wait until the holidays to get their expensive cell phone or iPod: they will just have to wait until their parents come to school and pick them up.

Mary Coradetti, a secretary in the South Building Dean's Office, has estimated that around 80 cell phones and as many as 30 iPods are in the custody of the Dean's Office in the North and South building. This is a result of the new policy concerning iPod and cell phone usage that deans and teachers have enforced throughout the year.

"This year it is more difficult to collect your items because parents have to come in and get the items. It is meant to discourage students from using them inappropriately," said Coradetti.

In past years, deans who have confiscated items, to their own discretion, allowed the person to reclaim their possession after serving an hour detention. However, this year, students' items are placed in a manila envelope with their name and information about why they were taken written on the envelope. It is then placed in a bin with the other confiscated items in the Dean's Office, and stored away until a parent or guardian comes in to pick it up.

"Now you might get one maybe two [cell phones or iPods] confiscated a day. Before you could have gotten anywhere from 10 to 15. The system is definitely working because kids know that their parents have to come and get their items instead of just serving a detention for them," said Dean Brett Geijer.

This new procedure has not only lowered the amount of items like cell phones and iPods being confiscated this year, but it has also increased the amount of items in the Dean's Office due to the policy's inconvenience to parents and students.

"Kids have other things to do whoever they are. If something gets taken away, you might not actually have the time to be able



**Lost and found?** In the Dean's Office, items such as those shown above are kept in manila envelopes and held in bins until students' parents come to retrieve them.

to go in and get it as soon as you had planned. So for deans to come and take something of yours away and ask you to call your parents, who may be at work, to come and get it may not be possible because of other things you have to do," said an

anonymous student who has had his cell phone taken away on numerous occasions in the past.

Sophomore Josh Ford recalls a time in  
**Continued on page 3**