

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 5

JANUARY 19, 2007

## The Dane Who Became King

By Katelyn Woods

**H**e may be from a different country on a different continent with a different culture, a different weather pattern and a different language, but PHS senior and foreign exchange student Rasmus Larsen is not much different from a typical American teen.

Larsen came from Silkeborg, a small town in eastern Denmark. He wanted to be a foreign exchange student "to learn the language and experience a new culture."

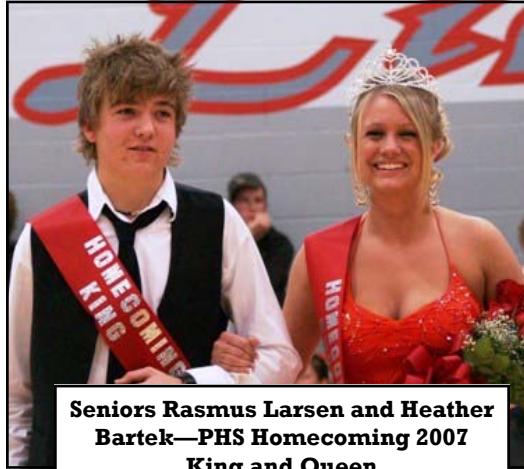
During his stay in the United States, Larsen is living with high school ASL teacher Mrs. McGee. In Denmark, Larsen lives with his mom, who is a designer, and step dad, who owns his own clothing shop.

"I miss Denmark and all my friends and family," Larsen said. "But Mrs. McGee and her family are really nice, and I am really enjoying my time here."

Larsen has only been in America for a few months, and in that time he has had several memorable experiences. One of them was going to the famed theme park, Six Flags.

"I rode the Titan. It was pretty fun. They have amusement parks in Denmark, but none as big or cool as Six Flags," Larsen said.

Several weeks ago, Larsen



Seniors Rasmus Larsen and Heather Bartek—PHS Homecoming 2007 King and Queen

was even crowned Homecoming King, becoming the first Dane to receive that honor at PHS.

"It was a really cool experience," Larsen said about winning Homecoming King. "I didn't think I was going to win, and when they called my name I was shocked."

In the short time that he has been here, Larsen has discovered his favorite and least favorite things about America.

"My favorite thing is probably the food, especially Mexican food. There is nothing like it in Denmark."

And while seen as a staple to most Americans, Larsen said his least favorite thing about the Home of the Brave is its obsession with fast food.

"I've eaten more fast food in the four months

See Rasmus Larsen, Page 2

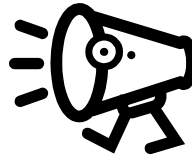
## Debate Argues On

By Vanessa Weidner

**K**icking off the new semester, the debate class has welcomed three new students. Joining the Cross-X team is senior Vanessa Weidner and to the Lincoln Douglas team are Amber Rogers and John Boyer.

Having just three weeks to prepare for the first debate of the semester, all new debaters had to cram to learn their cases, deeming more difficult than they had anticipated.

See Debate, Page 8



## ROWDY CROWD TIME Battle of 156 Resumes Tonight in Krum

By Lindsey Allen

**T**wo words describe the upcoming Ponder vs. Krum game: Rowdy Crowd. Last year, PHS students showed their school pride by sporting red attire with the phrase *Battle of 156* on the back. This Friday, fans should pull out their shirts, once again, and travel to Krum to support the five basketball teams.

Our biggest basketball rival, Krum is predicted to give the Lions stiff competition. However, the basketball boys and girls are hopeful and feel Ponder will dominate.

See Rowdy Crowd, Page 2

We're on the Web!  
[www.ponderisd.net/roar](http://www.ponderisd.net/roar)



Vanessa Weidner  
Senior 2007

## Vanessa Weidner

By Lindsey Allen

**I**t is not often an eighteen-year-old girl has multiple ambitions and hobbies that she is passionate about. Vanessa Weidner is an exception.

Weidner, a George Strait fan, has been a Ponder citizen for close to four years now. Last year she played tennis and is currently involved in Student Council. Her most loved activity, however, is showing her horse. Weidner has been riding for almost eight years and has had her own horse, Abby, since she was thirteen.

"I show her in English [a style of riding] and take her out to Aubrey one or two times a week to work with my trainer," Weidner said.

For nearly half of her life, Weidner has longed to be an interior designer. As a child, the award-winning rider says she "would watch Chris Lowell [a televised decorator] to get ideas" for when she became older. This fall, she will begin to make that dream a reality by majoring in Interior Design at the University of North Texas. Weidner is sure of what she wants in the status quo, and she is also positive of what she would like for the future.

"In ten years I'll hopefully be married with one kid and a house in the country, preferably Pilot Point, with a barn, arena and lots of land," she said. "I would also like my own design business where I decorate rich people's homes and make lots of money."

Full of eagerness, Weidner is definitely ready to take on life outside of high school.



Rasmus Larsen  
Senior 2007

## Rasmus Larsen

Continued from pg. 1

"I've been here than I have in my whole life," he said.

For leisure, Larsen enjoys playing basketball and golf (he is on the Ponder golf team) and listening to music, particularly The Fray.

"I pretty much like everything a regular American teen likes to do," he said.

One of the biggest differences between Denmark and the United States is their school systems. Instead of thirteen years, students only go to school ten years in Denmark. If in Denmark, Larsen would be in his second year of college.

After graduating from Ponder High, Larsen plans on returning to Denmark and attending college. He expects he will go to the Financial and Economic School that is in Denmark with hopes to someday own his own business.

Graduation is approaching, but there are a few more things Larsen wants to do before he crosses the Atlantic to return home.

"I want to see New York City," he said, "and a Mavericks game; I love Dirk."

Larsen said he will never forget his time in America, and PHS will never forget about the Dane with cool hair and a cool accent that became King. While Shakespeare's Hamlet may be the most famous Dane around the world, PHS' Class of 2007 graduate Rasmus Larsen is, and will always be, the most famous Dane at PHS.



## Rowdy Crowd

Continued from pg. 1

"If we win, we'll be one step closer to playoffs," junior Candice Smith said.

Friday night is the first district tournament game for both the 9<sup>th</sup> and JV boys' teams. The 9<sup>th</sup> boys and JV girls start the

night with games at 4:30—9<sup>th</sup> boys in the middle school gym and JV girls in the high school gym. The Lions are bound to pounce the Bobcats Friday with the help of a Rowdy Crowd.

# Spring sports Preview

## Softball

By Lindsey Allen

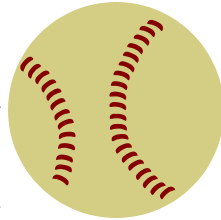
**S**oftball is finally just around the corner. This year's teams consist of seniors Heather Bartek, Nicki Franks, Mychelle Gregg, Burchelle Henderson, Wanda Malone and Katelyn Woods; juniors Kori McConnell and Candice Smith; sophomores Keeley Woods, Kristen Kimmel and Kim Singleton; and freshmen Ashley Anderson and Courtney Antle.

Although the team had a successful run last year ending the season in the Regional Semi-Finals, a new approach is being taken this year. The girls have decided to concentrate on "phases". With each phase, the team works on a certain area of their performance. The six seniors have named each of the ten phases, and each player has received a shirt to be worn during practice that corresponds to the phases.

The softball girls will begin practicing twice a day, during and after school, starting Monday, Jan. 22. This year everyone has been working on one of the team's weaknesses, "...which is speed and conditioning" Coach Wells said. Wells, who is extremely proud of the "work that the girls have put in," thinks competition, due to the new district, will be as tough as in past years.

Wishing that each senior "accomplishes all their dreams throughout life" and completes the final phase, winning the state title, Wells believes many of the players have potential to eventually play on the college level. In fact, star pitcher Wanda Malone has already signed with Louisiana Tech, a division I college.

"I love this group of girls," said Wells, "because they are relaxed." The future looks bright for the softball players who, as Wells continued to say, "know when to step it up and get the job done."



## Baseball

By Katelyn Woods

**F**ans everywhere are waiting, quietly humming *Take Me Out to the Ballgame* and longing for the taste of hotdogs and Cracker Jacks. They have been waiting all winter to hear the enthralling *ping* of the bat hitting the ball and to smell the aroma of freshly cut grass and line chalk, all the while counting down the days until baseball season arrives. Well, good news baseball fans, the wait is almost over.

With only two graduating last year and lots of new, talented players, the Ponder Varsity Baseball Team has high hopes for this year's season.

"We are looking forward to the new district and new competition," senior Jeremy Peters said, "and we feel good about the new freshmen who are going to improve our team."

In 2004, the Lions baseball team made it all the way to the state championship game. Though they did not make playoffs last year, many believe that they have a good chance this year.

"That is our goal, to make playoffs," senior Clint Crowell said. "And with all of the new, good players and the easier district, it is possible."

This year's varsity team is made-up of seniors Clint Crowell, Anthony Gallegos, Jeremy Peters and Dwight Rogers; juniors Dylan Barber and Lane Loiselle; sophomore Landon Hendrix; and freshmen Kaleb Broadstreet, Parker Brooks, Aaron Esterer, Scott Gregg, Zack Hendrix, Jeff Specht and Taylor Stout.

The boys begin practice on Jan. 29, and three scrimmages are scheduled. The first is on Feb. 5 against Brock, another on Feb. 9 against Peaster and the last against Argyle on Feb. 13. The boys will face Brock again for their first game on Feb. 20, and district will begin in early March.

## Tennis

by Keegan Farley

**W**hen the spring leaves begin to come out so do the spring sports, which includes the ever growing sport at Ponder High, tennis. The Ponder Tennis Team has been gearing up for what will hopefully be a ground breaking season.

"The tennis team will do well due to the upcoming new players and returning teammates," Michelle Frost, the tennis manager, said.

After many dedicated hours spent on the tennis court by many players on the team, Coach Dierker will be announcing the players on the varsity tennis team sometime next week.

"We have gotten a lot of good people that are new in the program, so the season is going to be very good," Carlee Garza said.

Two high prospects of the Ponder Tennis Team are sophomores Carlee Garza and Colton Ream. Spending most of their summer out on the

See Tennis, pg. 4

## Golf

By Vanessa Weidner

**N**ot only have spring showers and longer days come rolling in, but golf is also beginning to swing full force. Encouraging golfers to get out to the tee, Coach Liberto has given Ponder High School a promising upcoming golf season.

Ending the 05-06 season with drastic improvement, the boys scored their best team score, 368, and finished 4<sup>th</sup> at district.

Leading Ponder for the boys' team this year are senior Rasmus Larsen; juniors Ryan Lyles, Keegan Farley, Calvin Redfearn and Lucas Boudreaux; sophomores Glenn McBride, Cole Spann and Landon Hendrix; and freshmen Zack Hendrix, Wade Ford, Parker Brooks, Dakota Dixon and Patrick Stanton.

Making the roster for the girls' team are seniors Kristina Garza and

See Golf, pg. 8



**PHS Basketball - Lady Lions**  
**Varsity in District Chase / JV Undefeated**



**Varsity Girls**

By Krissy Boxell

**T**he Lady Lions left the Farmersville Lady Farmers in the dust on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, winning the game 66 to 33. This was the girls' second match-up and victory over the Lady Farmers.

The midway marker for the girls' district season has passed, and the varsity girls currently

hold a record of five wins and three losses. The girls have stomped district teams such as Farmersville, as well as Leonard, Blue Ridge and Anna. They have also put up a fight with Krum, Melissa and Aubrey, only mere points away from a victory in all three games. So far in district play, the girls are ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>.

"We have a really good chance of making it to playoffs," junior Kori McConnell said. "We've gotten a lot better and should have a strong start for the second half of district."

With over half of the season gone, the girls look ahead to re-playing the rest of the district teams. In their next game, the Lady Lions will take on the Lady Bobcats in a head to head show-down. In the Ponder Tournament, the varsity girls defeated Krum, 71 to 64. Then in the district game, Krum barely slid by Ponder, with a score of 33 to 42.

The varsity girls look to defeat the Lady Bobcats tonight in Krum.



**Lady Lions united as they face district foe Anna to end the first half of district play.**

**Tennis**

Continued from pg. 3

court, they have a lot to bring to the team.

"I think I have improved a lot," Carlee Garza said. "I have practiced hard over the summer break to improve my game."

A tournament that many of the team members look forward to is the Coppell

meet. "Although we lost a few good seniors last year, with the upcoming freshmen team members and the growing interest in tennis, we should expect to do better at district," Vanessa Weidner said.

Can Coach Dierker bring some new players up to make a difference on this year's teams? This year Ponder entered a new district, which could either be excellent or dire for this year's tennis teams.

Ellysia Dierker, the team captain, said, "this season should be an exciting one." As far as the district tournament goes, "we should have a good chance for district," she went on to say.



**JV Girls**

By Keegan Farley

**T**he JV girls' basketball team has set out this year to make a difference, and that's just what they have done. With a whole new set of players, the team has opened the eyes of many. So far this year, the JV girls have a season record of 10-7. In district play the girls have been undefeated with a record of 8-0, showing everyone just what they are made of.

The girls played against Farmersville on Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>. The girls played hard and in the end beat the Fighting Farmers back, ending the game with a 44-33 victory.

The girls started off district this year with a 45-25 victory over Farmersville. Then they cut it close with Ponder's rival, and favorite team to play, Krum, winning the game in overtime by one point with a score of 41-40. Other teams that have been defeated by the Lady Lions include Leonard, Melissa, Blue Ridge, Anna and Aubrey.

"It has been an exciting season so far," Katie Paterson said.

Another game that was cut close was Ponder versus Melissa, which entered into overtime, with Ponder coming out as the stronger team.

"What we need to work on most is the team's communication," freshman Brittany Allen said, before making their stand at the district tournament. District this year should be no problem after this captivating season.



**Freshman Lacoehn Cox takes it to the basket against Anna defender.**



## Boys Basketball

All Ponder Lions Remain Undefeated in District



### Varsity Boys

By Katelyn Woods

The varsity boys' basketball team is on the prowl for another District Championship. The Lions defeated Farmersville on Tuesday night with a score of 58-38.

Thus far in district play, the Lions boast a flawless record of 6-0, and they plan on defending their perfect record all the way through district.

"We still have some things to work on," senior Scott Lambert said, "but we have done pretty good in district so far."

On Jan. 9, the boys faced off against Aubrey and overcame the Chaps with a 50-44 victory. Later that week, the boys edged the Anna Coyotes 54-36.

With the 2005-2006 Lions having the title of state runners-up, this year's boys have a hard act to follow. Yet, the team is trying to take it one game at a time.

"Of course we are looking forward to playoffs," sophomore Jesus Lujan said, "but



Sophomore Jesus Lujan dribbles past Anna's press.

we have to keep working hard and taking it day by day and concentrating on each game."

The Lions will face long-time rival Krum, who already has one loss in district, in Krum tonight to wrap-up the first half of district.

"They are good," senior William Stanton said, "but we can beat them if we come ready to play."

Perhaps the biggest game of their season so far, the Lions are ready to show the Bobcats who is the "King of the Cats."

### JV Boys—Red

By Krissy Boxell

The JV boys have dominated in district so far this season. With an undefeated district record of six wins and no losses, the boys appear to be unstoppable.

Many of the JV boys' games have been blow-outs, with scores such as 67 to 29 against Blue Ridge and 53 to 14 against Melissa. On Tuesday, the boys played Farmersville and won with a score of 58 to 33. Many of the teams in the new district just don't seem to size up to the talent of the Lions.

"We've done pretty well in district so far," sophomore Landon Hendrix said. "We hope to continue working hard and winning our games."

Though the boys have beaten every district team so far, they still have to compete against Krum to defend their record. The JV boys played Krum in the Ponder Tournament in November, ending in a Bobcat victory over the Lions with a score of 40 to 42. Hopefully, the boys will step up tonight for the Ponder-Krum rematch and show Krum who is really boss.



Sophomore Dylan Ballard readies for a rebound.

### JV Boys—White

By Katelyn Woods

The JV Boys White team defended their undefeated record on Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> against Farmersville overcoming the Farmers 53-43.

So far, the JV White team has obliterated all the competition in preseason and district play and proudly display a record of 18-0. In recent weeks, the Lions have trampled the Aubrey Chaparrals 41-12 and pounded the Anna Coyotes 57-17.

"We work hard at practice," Zack Hendrix said, "and in the games we are not selfish. That is why we are good."

Next up for the Freshmen Lions is the Freshmen District Tournament on January 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>. The boys will play their first game against Krum today at Krum for the first game of the tourney. Because the boys have already played the Bobcats, who have been their biggest competition this season, they know what to expect.

"Last time we played them we didn't play good defense," Patrick Stanton said. "That is why we only beat them by four points. We have to play better defense and play smart to beat Krum again."

The following day, the team will travel to Blue Ridge to continue the freshmen district tournament and their fight for the title of District Champions.



Freshman Alex Huerta takes it to the basket.

# Stomp the Yard

By Vanessa Weidner

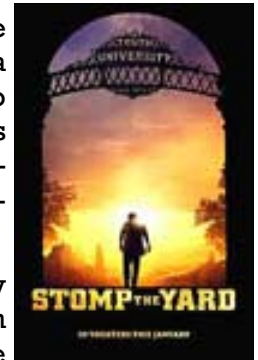


**S**tomping the box offices this weekend, the new movie *Stomp the Yard*, is an interesting twist to the new dance craze.

*Stomp the Yard* introduces a new type of dance, stepping. Stepping comes from an African American dance where teams demonstrate complex moves and create rhythmic sounds using their bodies.

Living in Los Angeles, D.J., a tough street dancer, watches as his brother gets killed in the midst of a gang fight. His mother, feared for his safety, sends him to Atlanta, Georgia to live with his aunt and uncle where he will attend Truth University, a university that his brother was going to attend. There, D.J. has a hard time fitting in. His cocky roommate brings him to a club where his dancing is discovered, making him the hot new commodity on campus. Wanted by the two major fraternities, D.J. finally decides to pledge with ONO, a frat whose

creed is community service and brotherhood. Having just a few weeks for the new pledges to learn the step routine, D.J. helps ONO come together for the stepping competition between surrounding rival colleges.



Although the movie was very predictable, it was fun to watch because of the dancing. With the new dance craze taking over with movies such as *Step Up*, *Take the Lead*, *Honey* and *Save the Last Dance*, *Stomp the Yard* differentiates itself by bringing a new type of dance into Hollywood, and there was enough of it to keep you interested throughout the movie. Their taste in music was good, too. The acting was also fine. Columbus Short (D.J.) and Meagan Good (April) portray very likeable and charismatic characters.

# Smokehouse

By Lindsey Allen



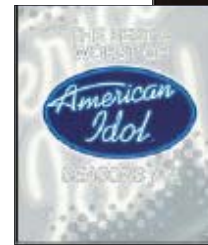
**L**ocated on Fort Worth Drive, next to XCW, many people are unaware, unfortunately, of the scrumptious restaurant *Smokehouse*.

The restaurant is not limited solely to, but known for its, Bar-B-Q. The menu ranges from catfish to brisket with countless choices in between. Senior Amber Spann prefers the delicious chicken strips. There are also many sides, including vegetables and potatoes (mashed, baked and French fries), which are homemade. For children, or those who are not extremely hungry, the kid's portion offers dishes such as grilled cheeses and hamburgers.

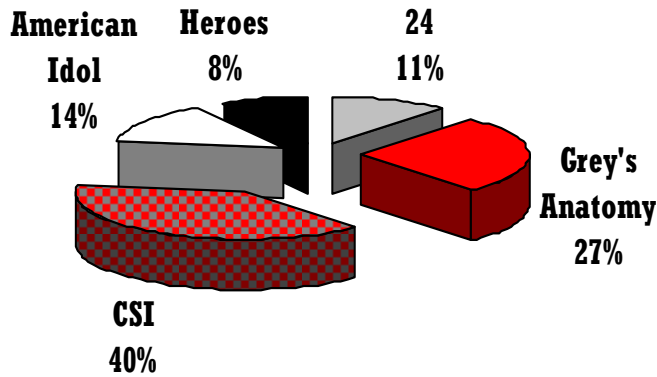


Customers can expect a calm and welcoming atmosphere and one large room. A smaller room exists, but it is mainly used for parties. The only problem with the huge open area is that there is no definite separation between the smoking and non-smoking sections. Diners will also notice a single television, most likely set to a sports channel. Rarely crowded, *Smokehouse* has both tables, located in the center, and booths. This restaurant has the volume of their music set perfectly, making conversation pleasant.

With a varied menu and exceptional service, Spann has it right when she says, "The Smokehouse is smokin'."



### What is your favorite TV Show?



Poll & Puzzle by Keegan Farley

### TV Show Word Search

- AMERICANIDOL
- CSI
- DEALORNODEAL
- GREYSANATOMY
- HEROES
- KINGOFQUEENS
- KINGOFTHEHILL
- MYNAMEISEARL
- ONETREEHILL
- PRISONBREAK
- SIMPSONS
- SMALLVILLE
- TWENTYFOUR
- TWOADAYS
- UGLYBETTY

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## Upcoming Events

By Krissy Boxell

### JANUARY

| Date      | Event  | Place/Time             |
|-----------|--|------------------------|
| 1/19      | 9B-JVG-JVB-VG-VB B-ball vs. Krum                     | @ Krum 4:30 P.M.       |
| 1/20      | 9 <sup>th</sup> -JV Boys B-ball District Tournament  | @ Blue Ridge TBA       |
| 1/23      | 9B-JVG-JVB-VG-VB vs. Leonard                         | @ Ponder 4:30 P.M.     |
| 1/25-1/26 | Fort Worth Stock Show—Goats                          | TBA                    |
| 1/26      | 9B-JVG-JVB-VG-VB B-ball vs. Melissa                  | @ Ponder 4:30 P.M.     |
| 1/27      | 9 <sup>th</sup> -JV Girls B-ball District Tournament | @ Krum TBA             |
| 1/30      | 9B-JVG-JVB-VG-VB B-ball vs. Blue Ridge               | @ Blue Ridge 4:30 P.M. |
| 1/30-1/31 | Fort Worth Stock Show—Steers                         | TBA                    |

### FEBRUARY

|          |  |                                    |
|----------|--|------------------------------------|
| 2/1      | Varsity Tennis vs. Liberty Christian           | @ Ponder 3:30 P.M.                 |
| 2/1-2/2  | Fort Worth Stock Show—Steers                   | TBA                                |
| 2/2      | 9B-JVG-JVB-VG-VB B-ball vs. Aubrey (Sr. Night) | @ Ponder 4:30 P.M.                 |
| 2/5      | Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Brock                | @ Brock 4:00 P.M.                  |
| 2/5      | Varsity Girls Softball vs. Argyle              | @ Home 4:30 P.M.                   |
| 2/6      | 9B-JVG-JVB-VG-VB B-ball vs. Anna               | @ Anna 4:30 P.M.                   |
| 2/7      | Boys and Girls Golf—Par Three Shootout         | @ Lake Park 8:00 A.M.              |
| 2/8      | Cross-X Debate—District Meet                   | TBA                                |
| 2/9      | 9B-JVB-VB B-ball vs. Farmersville              | @ Ponder 4:30 P.M.                 |
| 2/9      | Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Peaster              | @ Peaster 4:00 P.M.                |
| 2/9      | Varsity Girls Softball vs. Liberty Christian   | @ Liberty Christian 4:00 P.M.      |
| 2/9-2/10 | Varsity Tennis—Coppell Tournament              | @ Coppell 8:00 A.M.                |
| 2/13     | 9B-JVB-VB B-ball vs. Krum (Sr. Night)          | @ Ponder 4:30 P.M.                 |
| 2/13     | Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Argyle               | @ Argyle 5:00 P.M.                 |
| 2/13     | Varsity Girls Softball vs. Bowie               | @ Home 5:00 P.M.                   |
| 2/14     | Varsity Boys Golf - McKinney Invitational      | @ Oak Hollow Golf Course 6:30 A.M. |
| 2/15     | Girls and JV Boys Golf- McKinney Invitational  | @ Oak Hollow Golf Course 8:00 A.M. |
| 2/15     | Varsity Tennis vs. Krum                        | @ Krum 8:00 A.M.                   |
| 2/16     | Six Weeks Ends                                 |                                    |



### Debate

Continued from pg. 1

The amateurs studied hard and were ready just in time for the first debate meet of the semester. On Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup> all Cross-X debaters and one Lincoln Douglas debater packed into a Ponder SUV and headed to Princeton High School. There, freshmen Chelsea Pardue and Josh Daniel battled it out in three intense debates to end the night with a pleasing two – one win.

“We did really well, and each time we debate we get more clever and more aggressive,” Pardue said.

Juniors Megan Martin and Keegan Farley also ended the night with an acceptable two – one win.

“We need to work on our case, but I think that we’ll do well at district,” Martin said. And Farley added, “Each time we debate we get better, and by the time district gets here we will do well, no matter what team we’re against.”

Seniors Tyler Newton and Vanessa Weidner paired up for Weidner’s first debate. Pleased with the outcome, they too ended the night with a two – one win.

“We did pretty good winning two out of three with Vanessa’s first tournament ever,” Newton said, “even though she ran out of the room.” However, Weidner did return to her debate, allowing them to remain eligible, and won the round.

Rogers’ first debate went very well, also. She won one debate for the night, pleasing for her first debate ever.

With just one more debate before district the team sounds ready for the district tournament on Feb. 8.

### Golf

Continued from pg. 3

Heather Bartek; junior Charlotte Gooch; sophomores D.D. Darnell and Ashley Laughlin; and freshmen Vanessa DeLira, Kayla Darnell, Providence Betterton and Dominique Lord.

They say practice makes perfect, and that’s exactly what these players are doing. The golfers practice every day during 9<sup>th</sup> period, and most days they go to one of the practice facilities. Not only do they practice at the school indoors but they also have a small driving range behind the baseball field. Many players also go to Robson Ranch and Timberlinks in Denton for practice rounds.

Every player is required to hit eighteen holes minimum per week.



With a great end to last year, and all the practice players have put in this year, the team’s expectations are high.

“Our goal is to advance to regional golf tournament in Stephenville” Liberto said.

“I think we have a good shot at getting to regionals due to the new district.” Farley said.

In order for the teams to advance to regionals both boys and girls must finish either first or second in district. As explained by Coach Liberto, a team score is based on a combination of the four lowest scores shot by team members at the district meet. However, players can also advance individually depending on their placement.

As dedicated as these players are, district should be easy. As it steadily approaches, the teams must maintain their level of enthusiasm.