

# The Oracle

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## Shalerpalooza set to take the stage

by Maura Fisher

If you don't have any plans tonight or you and your friends can't figure out what to do, come down to Mr. Smalls for Shalerpalooza. Students of all different backgrounds unite through their passion of music, whether as a performer or as an enthusiast in the audience. The Tenth Annual Shalerpalooza is showcasing 16 acts of singers, bands, musicians, and DJs.

Since its origin, Shalerpalooza has been massively successful. The show raises approximately \$2,000-\$4,000 for class funds, and is expected to do just as well this year if not better. Also, for the Tenth Annual concert, there will be t-shirts for sale designed to represent the Tenth Anniversary theme. The shirts will be sold at the venue.

This year, the concert has its biggest lineup of performers, each bringing something unique to the show. With 16 student acts and the house bands, Dale Mangold's band Tobacco Road and The Act 80's band which consists of Mr. McDermott, Mr. Haberman, Mr. Krenn and Mr. Stivisan, the show is packed with talented performers, some returning to the stage and some newcomers.

"It's going to be jammed packed lineup which I'm very excited to see. A wide variety of musical genres too. Ranging from rock to pop music. Mix in the djs with rave/house/dub style music," Shalerpalooza creator Dale Mangold said.

The returning bands are The Book Club, EJ Project, Wildflowers. DJ Pickl and DJ Laethe are returning DJs. Lexi Cerny, Kellie Millegan, and Savanna Scholl are all solo performers who have sung in ev-



ery Shalerpalooza of their high school careers.

Joining the veteran performers are solo acts Jennifer Raymond and Cole Pawlak. The new bands performing this year are Stage Flight, MCF^2, Nox Lupi, The Reclamation Act, The EK Band, and The Repercussions.

"[The concert] is intense and electric. You go out there and the pressure's on because there's so many great performers and you want to make your mark," Scholl said, "The crowd's energy just makes your heart race and helps you let loose and enjoy yourself."

Shalerpalooza has been a big event in Shaler since its creation in the 2009/2010 school year, when Mangold booked Mr. Smalls to debut his new album and asked some students to be open acts. There was a lot of interest in the concert, and the First Annual Shalerpalooza was a huge success.

Performers and show-goers alike wanted to keep the concert alive, and there has been one every year since. Mangold hosted the first concert in the name

senior, Jessy Peluso, who was tragically killed in a car accident at the beginning of that school year. The first show was a benefit concert where proceeds were put into a scholarship in her name.

All students at Shaler Area High School are encouraged to perform in or attend Shalerpalooza. Every year, more and more students join. If you want to get involved, do it.

"No one is against you. Everyone in the crowd and even the performers will be cheering you on because we want to see you succeed. It's the biggest satisfaction to do something you love on stage," Scholl said.

The concert is tonight, March 9th, and begins at 7pm and should run until about 11 pm. Tickets will be sold at the door for \$10, and there will also be a 10th Annual Shalerpalooza t-shirt sale. People of all ages are encouraged to come and support their fellow community members who are performing. This is a fun event for everyone involved, and you won't want to miss this show.

## New state code about lunches creates issues for district

by Brandon Kurzawski

On December 6, Shaler Area School District approved an updated version to the school breakfast/lunch payment program for all students and parents. Due to revisions of the state Public School Code, the district had to make an update to the meal program in order to comply with new changes. In the new state policy, districts are no longer allowed to "lunch shame" and must provide a student a lunch regardless of his/her meal account balance.

This change comes after allegations of "Lunch Shaming" throughout Pennsylvania schools. Lunch shaming is when the cafeteria would be required to take a meal away from a student and substitute it with another meal because he or she owed too much money.

In the past within Shaler Area, if a meal account dropped to a balance of negative \$25, meals would be taken away and substituted with a peanut butter and jelly or cheese sandwich.

However, with the new state policy in place, school districts in Pennsylvania are no longer able to restrict a student from purchasing a lunch or breakfast. With no charge restrictions, the amount of money due to the district has almost doubled since the policy went in place.

"Right now with this new policy, the amount of money charged to the district has gone from \$14,000 to \$26,000 in a relatively short period of time, so we have to figure out a way to combat this somehow," Aiken said.

The district must pay off any negative account balances to the Nutrition Group since it is an organization separate from the district.

Beginning in February, if a lunch/breakfast account falls to \$5 or less, calls will be made home to inform families that their child's account is low in order to help prevent negative balances within accounts. Once a student's account goes below \$0, emails will start to be sent to the parent weekly, followed by letters if

the account reaches negative \$25.

Snack line purchases still remain restricted as in years past. In order to purchase something a student's account must have enough money to purchase the item selected from the snack line.

If a payment is not made to the cafeteria when a negative balance exists within 30 days, access to Edline will be restricted until the payment is made. If it becomes necessary, the due payment could be sent to a collection agency where it can be sent to a Magistrate for further action. Transcripts may also be withheld until the negative balance has been paid.

Payments can be sent through the district's free MyPaymentPlus online portal. Balances can be checked to help prevent a negative balance. Payments can be made with cash or check.

In the past, the peanut butter and jelly or cheese sandwich restriction worked well since the student wasn't allowed to purchase lunch or breakfast. With a charge limit no longer in place for student meals, the problem that still exists is how to reconcile with the increasing money due to the district.

"A lot of times what happens is students might have a hardship that we don't

know about, so one of the things we've encouraged them to do is fill out the paperwork for the free and reduced lunch to get your lunch for free," Aiken said.

Lower-income families receiving SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps) are eligible to receive free or reduced lunches. For the average family of 4, if the income is lower than \$44,000, the family is also eligible to receive free and reduced lunch. Guidelines can be found at [benefits.gov](http://benefits.gov).

In a letter addressed to parents, Aiken said, "The purpose of this policy is to establish fair and consistent rules regarding charges, allow the food service department to collect monies due for meal service provided, and build positive and clear communication between the food service, district staff, and community regarding these guidelines."

**"Right now with this new policy, the amount of money charged to the district has gone from \$14,000 to \$26,000 in a relatively short period of time, so we have to figure out a way to combat this somehow."**

**-- Superintendent Mr. Sean Aiken**

# OPINIONS

## A Conversation on Gun Control and School Safety

by Cece Robinson, Maura Fisher and Gabi Girton

Cece: TBH guys I don't even know what to think about this whole Florida shooting thing. Like how are we supposed to "fix" this or keep it from happening?

Gabi: I'm definitely not about all the politicians coming after the victims and calling them 'crisis actors' and going after them for trying to organize protests and rallies because they're 'just kids'. That's so demeaning.

Maura: I don't understand how people think now isn't the time to talk about gun control. "Give the families time to mourn" They wouldn't need to mourn if we had stricter gun laws.

Cece: Yeah, Maura I agree with the time sensitivity piece of it. I feel like the politicians and others use it to brush things under the rug. The reporters are pushing cameras and recorders in this community's faces and we don't see these people turning away and asking for time to mourn. They want the attention to stop this from happening and for awareness on this topic.

Gabi: Especially since the actual families themselves are the ones speaking out. The students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (MSD) in Parkland believe that in the face of the

tragedy, people need to focus immediately on developing actions to prevent another event like the shooting from happening, instead of just sending thoughts and prayers.

Maura: If now isn't the time, then when is? When 17 more kids are killed for going to class? If the cold blooded murder of 20+ elementary school kids at Sandy Hook Elementary wasn't enough to change the laws, I'm terrified to see what is.

Gabi: My favorite thing were some of the students responses to politicians tweets. Like a student at MSD tweeted back at the president and said, "I don't want your condolences you (expletive) piece of (expletive), my friends and teachers were shot, multiple of my fellow classmates are dead. Do something instead of sending prayers. Prayers won't fix this. But Gun control will prevent it from happening again."

Maura: I for one am sick of hearing people speak about their right to bear arms as if it's greater than my right to life. There's no predicting when this could happen again, and why couldn't it happen here? We're no different than MSD, and I bet they never imagined something like this happening. Then

all of a sudden it does. It's happened before and I'm sorry to say this but it will happen again.

Cece: The whole "bearing arms" thing is super tricky. People are getting confused with control and confusing it with the idea that it means we want guns taken away completely for civilians, and that's completely not true. At least for me it's not. All this change of raising the age limit to buy a gun is what we are talking about, having tougher background checks and things like that.

Gabi: I agree, I don't think the government will ever completely be able to get rid of guns, and honestly if you want a gun to go hunting or even to go shoot targets I mean that is your business, but you do not need an AR-15 in order to do that. I think the precautionary measures that have been made by stores like Dick's and Walmart to change the gun buying age to 21 is a huge step in the right direction. Gun control definitely does not have to equal taking away all guns.

Cece: Totally Gab! Such a great point to make. Let's be realistic about the type of guns "regular people" should be able to acquire. I think may-

be using those guns for having fun at a shooting range or in a regulated facility is fine, but taking them home for unregulated recreational use is where the issues arise. And I saw on Twitter, now yes twitter, it may be right or wrong but i think Oregon made anyone that has a record of domestic abuse harder to acquire a gun. That's what I want.

Maura: I kind of disagree. I think that the only people who should have guns are law enforcement and military.

Cece: Why? That's taking away the whole idea of "right to bear arms".

Maura: So? It's not like we're afraid the British are coming to take over like we were when the right was written. I don't see any use in a civilian owning something that could kill somebody in an instant. I understand that my thoughts are somewhat illogical, as so many people have guns it would be pretty much impossible to take them all away. However, I think that should be what we're working towards: a future where nobody has, and nobody needs, a gun.

Cece: So then obviously you're against teachers carrying weapons in

————— **Cont. on page 3**

## Advice for those eating lunch in the cafeteria: Grow Up!

by Jake Newport

Lions and tigers and bears, oh my! Over recent weeks the cafeteria has turned into a cage filled with animals using their peers as target practice to pelt them with apples and various other food items. There was recently a fighting incident that occurred directly because of the food throwing. Due to this, I say to you, Shaler Area High School, that your cafeteria has become a zoo.

All this activity has led to students seeing more lunch detentions and suspensions. To be real, sometimes these are rightfully handed out. On the other hand, some students have seen trouble come their way when it is not even their fault. Some students actions are retaliatory and they aren't completely at fault.

Believe me, I've been in this same exact situation. I will admit that I have thrown food in the cafeteria before. There have been both occasions where I started the food throwing and I also retaliated to somebody else throwing food. However, there is still a better solution out there.

Mostly, this issue focuses on the maturity that we, as high school students, need to display. Honestly, we need to grow up. All of us. From freshman all the way up to seniors. There will always be freshman and underclassmen that come in and don't understand how to conduct themselves. That leaves it up to the seniors and upperclassmen to display the behavior necessary to end it before food throwing just becomes part of a daily routine.

To end behavior like this we need to understand that freshmen are like little babies. Their minds are like sponges; anything they see seniors do, they will mimic that action and behavior exactly as they saw it. One of those is food throwing.

First of all, we are young adults, or at least we claim to be. We expect to be treated with respect and as equals to our teachers. Throwing food is not one of the ways to earn respect. To earn this respect, we need to do the right thing and handle these situations properly. Proper handling of these situations requires us to reach out to a teacher or administrator, so they can step in and end it before it gets too ugly. Reaching out to an adult to handle the situation also requires us to acknowledge and accept any repercussions we may face should we be guilty of any food throwing of our own.

For example, a senior friend of mine faced a situation like this where he was repeatedly being hit with apples by a sophomore, who was trying to look cool in front of his friends. My friend then retaliated by throwing the apple back. This continued for a few days until another friend got hit and returned fire. Unfortunately, his apple ricocheted off two kids and then hit a teacher. He received two days of lunch detention. To punish someone for throwing an apple that hits a teacher is fair in all respects. However, punishing someone for defending their self while leaving the person who began the whole problem itself is unacceptable. This continued for a few days before my friend decided to go to a teacher

who then directed him to the office to handle this situation properly. Since then I haven't heard anything about this continuing so I'm assuming that it has stopped.

To make my point clear, if someone is throwing food, just tell them to stop it and grow up. If it continues, tell someone who can do something about it. This isn't tattling, it's just doing the right thing.

To think of this as tattling or snitching is the type of immaturity that begins the food throwing in the first place. Honestly, food throwing shouldn't be problem at all. We're in high school, not middle, elementary, or primary school, or even the monkey exhibit at the Pittsburgh Zoo. At this point we look just as "smart" as those primates flinging their poo at each other.

Let's recap then, shall we?

Freshman, you still have a long way to go. Keep growing and be the class at Shaler Area that eliminates food throwing as a Winter Olympic sport at the cafeteria.

Sophomores, you're a little ahead of the freshmen, but don't get ahead of yourselves. Some of you tend to thoroughly enjoy throwing food, but you are all still young and have room to grow. So make sure that the food throwing isn't there by the time you are all seniors.

Juniors, just because your senior friends throw food doesn't mean you have to do the same. Show those underclassmen how they should act in the cafeteria and even throughout the whole school.

Seniors, it seems a little late to stop, but it would be worth it. Not only to ourselves, but to the underclassmen who look up to us. Use your last few months of high school as a guide for how you should conduct yourself in the future, and as a guide for the rest of the school to use as well. Finish your high school days as a polished young adult, not a gold medalist in the Apple Pelting games.

### The Oracle

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# New dance policy affects Sadies both positively and negatively

by Tanner Nowakowski

The craziness of the Homecoming dance raised concern for the Sadie Hawkins dance and a new contract was applied to curtail inappropriate behavior.

Action was taken against students for being under the influence of drugs and alcohol, as well as distasteful dancing. Students are now required to sign a contract in order to attend any dance, with Sadies having been the first dance to hold this policy.

These new rules seemed to work for the Sadie Hawkins dance, as the experience was pretty smooth and made many parents happy.

"It went really smooth, I got a lot of positive feedback from parents a lot of random parent emails saying we love it, thanks so much, this is a great idea," Thiel said.

Although parents and faculty were happy with the new rules, many students were not and it reflected in the attendance.

"The crowd was a lot smaller, we normally have 600-700 kids at the Sadies dance, this year we only had

about 325. It was a little disappointing but the 325 people that were there seemed like they were having a good time," Thiel said.

The significant dip in attendance cost the Junior class \$1000 in fundraiser money. Last year's Sadies dance raised about \$2000, this year only about a thousand was raised as half of the students decided to stay home.

"I heard a lot of grumbling but not so much backlash a lot of grumbling from students saying they won't sign the contract and it's stupid if you feel that way then don't come and a lot of people didn't come," Thiel said.

The controversial contract may be new, but the rules have always been the same and they are not going anywhere.

"I don't think we can take the contract back at this point I think that it is something that we need to have in place. What surprises me is that the contract isn't anything new. Those are

the rules we have always had," Thiel said.

Even Prom will be following this new contract as well as dances in the future.

"I think it is something we are instituting for Prom and it's something students will see next year for Homecoming and going forward," Thiel said.

**"It went really smooth, I got a lot of positive feedback from parents...The crowd was a lot smaller, we normally have 600-700 kids at the Sadies dance, this year we only had about 325. It was a little disappointing."**

**-- Mrs. Mindy Thiel**

## Conversation about Gun Control and School Safety

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school right? Cause that to me is just an insanely dumb idea. I want to know the actual SOUND logic behind that. You're basically telling teachers 'oh yeah let me pay you no money AND give you the decision on whether or not a situations requires a life to be taken.' What if they mess up? Are they protected from any consequences?

Maura: I think that's one of the stupidest ideas. There are so many things that teachers need more than guns. Paper, pencils, dry erase markers, field trips- the list goes on and on.

Gabi: I read that the teachers at MSD had to stop printing tests for a whole week because they did not have paper. If schools can't afford to pay for necessities like paper, I do not understand how it is possible to pay for the guns, ammo, and training that the teachers would have to undergo in order to be more beneficial than harmful. It just takes away from money that was going to the school, and money for schools is pretty slim as is.

Maura: Not to mention, not all teachers support this. You can't force a firearm on them. Also, I've heard stories on Twitter and Buzzfeed about teachers reacting poorly/aggressively to situations, and if those teachers had guns... you don't need to be a genius to put two and two together there.

Gabi: Plus there was already a situation in Georgia where a teacher broke down and fired a personal weapon on school property. That just sounds dangerous, so I doubt giving guns to teachers is the best solution. Some schools, MSD included, have trained cops or security guards that are carrying weapons but even that didn't prove to be helpful in the case in Florida because the security guard literally ran away.

Cece: Swear! Everyone says "we need more armed police officers in school", but schools have them and there is evidence that their efforts are honestly a joke and just a waste of thousands of dollars. That sounds harsh and I feel bad, but you're telling me that the MSD guard signed up for that job, they obviously though he was qualified and then he dipped when his paycheck was actually expected to be used for its purpose.

Maura: I completely agree. So what can we do about this? I think we should quit electing government officials who take money from the NRA.

Gabi: I would definitely rather have someone who makes decisions based on morals and the people they're representing over someone whose decisions are merely purchased.

Cece: I think it needs to stop being a political issue and more of a stfu this is an human issue. It shouldn't matter if you're a democrat, republican, whatever, or whoever, if you agree this is wrong and that this shouldn't happen again then you have the same amount of responsibility as the person standing next to you.

Maura: I couldn't have said it better myself.

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# Taylor lives by his motto to never stop learning

by Gabi Girton

Shaler Area's Mr. Tim Taylor is anything but boring. Although many may only know him as an Anatomy and Physiology teacher, Taylor is constantly working on new projects, new ideas, and new activities, and despite being an Eagles fan, he is widely regarded as one of the high school's favorite teachers.

"I grew up outside of Philly, west of Philadelphia, so naturally I am an Eagles fan. I was really afraid to hope that they would win the super bowl though. It's kind of like always a bridesmaid never a bride," Taylor said, defending his team.

Although Taylor is obviously popular among students, he wasn't always dead set on being a teacher. During his first semester of college, Taylor was not necessarily sure what he wanted to study.

"I always thought about becoming a teacher but it wasn't like the moment I was born I knew I wanted to teach. In high school, I was part of 'Future Teachers Of America', but I was never completely sold on the idea. My senior year of high school I took AP Biology and realized I really loved it and was really interested in it, so I decided to major in it," Taylor said.

After four years of Biology at the University of Pittsburgh, Taylor realized that although he loved Biology, he wanted to spend time teaching it instead of simply being stuck in a lab.

"I liked talking about research and talking about science and reading about it instead of actually doing it, and I thought I should probably become a teacher, because you know, I talk a lot," Taylor said.

He started out as a Biology teacher at Shaler Area, but halfway through his first year a position for teaching Anatomy and Physiology opened up, to which he applied and for which he was selected.

"In college, I took some Anatomy and Physiology courses and I really liked them. When I first decided I didn't want to be doing research I considered going into the medical field, but I liked the understanding of how the body worked without being like 'Okay I'm gonna do a weird procedure on you'," Taylor said.

Starting as an Anatomy teacher was a new experience for Taylor, since the last time he had dissected something was in the 5th grade when he dissected a



Mr. Tim Taylor

small fish. However, part of the high school Anatomy curriculum includes dissecting a cat.

"I had never dissected a cat before... everything I learned about dissection I learned as an adult. I got to the part of the class where you dissect a cat and I realized I didn't know what I was doing, so one Friday I took home a cat and a tray and all of the materials but my wife wouldn't let me do it in the house so I went outside in the 40 degree October weather and did it. It's a funny story though because my neighbor was a city cop, so he came home and saw me dissecting a cat and I had to explain that it was for school and that it wasn't animal abuse," Taylor said.

Despite not majoring in Anatomy and Physiology, Taylor's different research endeavors all stem from the Anatomy branch. Most notably, Taylor is credited as one of the main authors for the Anatomy portion of the website 'Innerbody.com', as well as editing a chapter of a book about anatomy.

Taylor fosters an environment where students are encouraged to explore different facets of Anatomy, and the cat dissection highlights the variety of different things students can learn about anatomy in a cat, and how it reflects in human anatomy.

"Taylor offers an unmatched beehive of learning where he is the queen bee, and we want to absorb his knowledge," Said Senior Matt Potock.

Taylor's influence doesn't end with anatomy though. Taylor can be seen in various rooms during his break periods tinkering and solving different technical difficulties around the school. He works doing tech support for Shaler Area, as well as doing different freelance projects working on his home and his car.

Taylor also has worked to organize a Shaler Area Brain Bee team that will compete against several other school districts at a competition that quizzes students on the different anatomy and functions of the brain and nervous system.

Additionally, Taylor coaches softball and baseball for his 10-year-old daughter Izzy, and his 7-year-old son Ian.

Although many people assume as a science teacher one would typically focus on just science, Taylor goes above and beyond acting as a counselor, teacher, mentor and friend.

"Teaching is hard. You have to do all the things, you have to do math and science and english and public speaking and we have to counsel people and teach and speak and encourage and handle technology and be organized and it's a lot. The hard thing about being a teacher is that you have to wear a lot of hats. Sometimes you have to teach people when they really would rather being doing anything but learning, it's difficult," Taylor said.

According to his students, Taylor goes out of his way to make class as enjoyable as it is educational.

"Taylor makes learning fun because he brings new ways to keep student interested," Senior Izzy Hartley said.

Students like Taylor for his enthusiasm inside and outside of the classroom. He doesn't just teach anatomy in the classroom, but tries to give advice on all aspects of life, while throwing in humorous anecdotes every now and again to keep students engaged. Taylor loves teaching as much as he loves learning, and has incorporated it into his everyday motto.

"Learning is a lifelong pursuit, you're never done. I believe you have to keep running to stay in the same place," Taylor said, "I think it's great, the human brain is never full, you always have room to grow. You're never done, you just have to keep going, and that's the secret to success," Taylor said.

## Shaler Area again one of the leaders at Fairchild Challenge

by Maleesa Reese and Gabi Girton

"The fairchild challenge is a free, multidisciplinary, standards-based environmental education outreach program designed to give high school and middle school students an opportunity to creatively shine. By appealing to their innate sense of curiosity about the world around them, the Challenge invites students to investigate the thorniest environmental issues, devise imaginative and effective responses to these issues, and take action to address them," Says Phipps Conservatory.

The challenges are offered to students in the GATE program, and typically Shaler Area sees great success.

After winning the first challenge, Shaler Area succeeded again in the third challenge, "Eco Lots". Students were asked to write a one to two page description of a theoretical plan for an empty lot in their area and explain the advantages for the environment and community that would come with that plan. At the end, the students also had to describe if their plan met the mission of what they expected to create.

"We created a community garden next to the upcoming Millvale Food Truck Park to supply them with local, pesticide free produce and encourage clean eating in the community," Junior Emily Ehrenberger said.

Ehrenberger and her partner Sophomore P.J Squire finished their lot design, and their project idea succeeded, although some concerns arose.

"I think the hardest part was determining if the lot was appropriate to use for the project, since it was technically already a food truck park and the prompt was

to use an empty lot," Ehrenberger said.

However, they took the risk and it paid off and the project was awarded first place.

Squire did the artistic rendering of the Eco Lot, and Ehrenberger ended up doing the written work for the project.

"We were inspired by a video on Vox that explained the ways to lessen the environmental footprint of a food truck park," Ehrenberger said.

The next challenge, "An Ode to Nature", is due Feb. 23 and focuses around the book "If You're Not from the Prairie..." by David Bouchard, which showcases the beauty of the prairie. Students have to write a book of poems that have a connection to local nature and have to create an illustration as cover art. The maximum point value offered for this challenge is 200 points.

After "An Ode to Nature", there are only two challenges left. One of them is optional and only will bring in a maximum of 100 points. Students have to create a video that is at least 3 minutes long. The video has to raise awareness on a proposed environmental law, and discuss the law's effect on humans and the environment.

The last activity of the Fairchild challenge 2017-2018 is "Environmental Action: Home, School or Community". A school can get up to 300 points for this activity. Students have to turn in a tri-fold display or report of a project that promotes environmental awareness and conservation area in their target area.

After this activity, the overall winner will be announced, and Shaler Area's chances to win the whole challenge are pretty good after winning two of first three activities.



# “Souls of Shaler” features community members

by Gabi Girton

Eighth grade teacher Brenda Barner has initiated a new way for students to build bridges and learn more about the teachers and faculty at Shaler Area Middle School. The project is called ‘Souls of Shaler Area’ and is a blog where students post an excerpt of an interview, and a picture of the person being interviewed.

Similar to the website, ‘Humans Of New York’, students are encouraged to seek out different teachers, staff, lunch personnel, custodians, central office personnel and members of the community and ask them questions about their life.

In 8th grade, all students are required to read ‘To Kill A Mockingbird’ in which the character Atticus Finch says, “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view ... until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”

This idea translates throughout the blog, as students ask questions and try to learn new things about the people in their school, and in their community.

“Students choose who to write about, select questions from a list of suggestions or come up with their own and interview the person. Then they decide which quote works best to showcase the humanity of that person,” Barner said.

The students choose one person to interview and ask them a variety of questions, like, ‘Did you have any heroes or role models as a child?’ ‘What was your senior quote?’ and ‘What are life experiences you would like to share?’

From there, the students had to choose a single quote or story from the interview and post it online.

“They have to figure out, ‘what small part of this can I take out and put onto the blog that will sound like a human experience that everyone can relate to?’” Barner said.

Eighth grader Rowan Turok decided to interview Justin Carnprobst, a hockey coach, for his blog post.

“I wanted to choose someone who would be easy to contact, and someone who I didn’t know,” he said.

In another case, a student interviewing custodian Chris

Sutton chose the quote from his interview that highlighted Suttons goals and aspirations.

“My dream is to sail around the world,” Sutton said.

Another student chose to interview crossing guard Donna Shores.

“If I could solve any one of the world’s problems, I would solve the problem of racism because there needs to be more equality in our world,” she said.

The ‘Souls of Shaler Area’ blog allows students to learn more about people in their schools and community, for example, the students could learn about the crossing guards and custodians as well as coaches, teachers and other faculty.

“I think it’s a great project to teach them how to interview people, be personable, how to write and how to communicate. It gives them a lot more skills than just, say, reading a novel and taking a test on it,” Barner says.

**The ‘Souls of Shaler Area’ blog allows students to learn more about people in their schools and community**

# Ping Pong Club up and running

by Maura Fisher

At the beginning of the school year, there was a lot of talk about a new club. Ping Pong Club was an idea that three senior boys wanted to make happen. With the help of chemistry teacher Mr. Jeff Ward, Dean Newland, Jake Jashinski, and Garrett Reinsfelder started the Shaler Area Ping Pong Club.

“My friends and I enjoyed playing [ping pong] so we thought it would be fun to start up a club at school. I asked Mrs. Thiel during a student government meeting and she told me how to get it started,” Club President Dean Newland said.

The group faced a couple issues when they were starting up. They needed a sponsor, tables, a place to store the tables, and a place to play. After wearing down Ward, he agreed to sponsor the club. After a suggestion to utilize the backroom in the cafeteria, storage and where to play were no longer problems. All that remained was getting the tables.

“In a moment of weakness, I agreed to be the club sponsor,” Ward said.

The club has gained a lot of school-wide attention since it originated. Every Wednesday, 20-30 students ranging from seniors to freshman meet in the cafeteria to play the game. Although the momentum of the club has slowed and not as many students are attending the club meetings, students consistently come to meetings.

Ward is also accompanied now by sponsors Mrs. Wilcox and Mr. Shannon. The students play against each other, and at times even challenge the sponsors.

The current leaders of the club want to see the club expand in the future, in school and out of school. Out of school, the club hopes to compete in tournaments that other schools host.

“We haven’t tried to get in any tournaments yet because our numbers have been down, but we’ve looked into [a tournament] at Central Catholic because they have a good setup and provide training for amateur players,” Newland said.

It is easy to become a member of the club, the fee is just \$5 and then you get to play the game with your friends in the club.

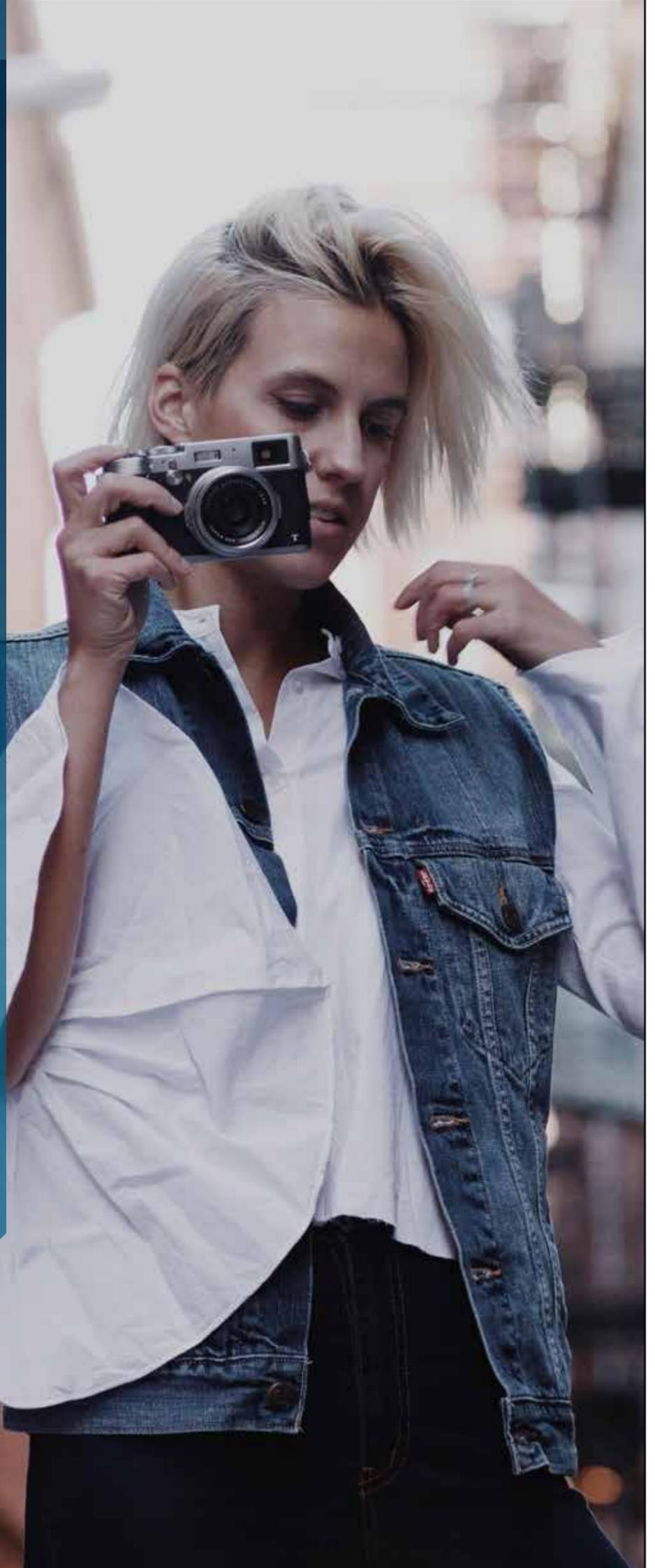
“Hopefully, it continues in the future, but we definitely need the underclassmen to step up and take leadership roles in the club,” Ward said.

<b>THE GRID</b>		<b>Favorite TV show as a kid</b>	<b>If you could tweet Trump and he'd see it what would you say?</b>	<b>Best Vine?</b>	<b>Weirdest or Cringiest word you know?</b>	<b>If you could have any job in the world what would it be?</b>
<b>Senior James McGrath</b>		<b>The Diary of Anne Frank</b>	<b>What's up Dawg?</b>	<b>“Road work Ahead? Yeah I sure hope it does.”</b>	<b>Puffy</b>	<b>Sheetz Cashier</b>
<b>Junior Jake Solomon</b>		<b>The Wiggles</b>	<b>I love you</b>	<b>Grape Vine</b>	<b>Moist</b>	<b>Maid</b>
<b>Sophomore Rosie Piett</b>		<b>Zoey 101</b>	<b>You don't want to know :)</b>	<b>Kid on Crack</b>	<b>“Good Looks” “Glooks”</b>	<b>Vet</b>
<b>Freshman Lexi Costanza</b>		<b>Ed, Edd, and Eddy</b>	<b>Heck off</b>	<b>“I'm washing me and my clothes”</b>	<b>Entomphagy</b>	<b>Etiminal Psychologist</b>
<b>Mr. Matt Hiserodt</b>		<b>Thunder Cats</b>	<b>Money can't buy happiness</b>	<b>I don't even know what that is</b>	<b>Anything with a hyphen in it</b>	<b>Paid Travel Blogger</b>



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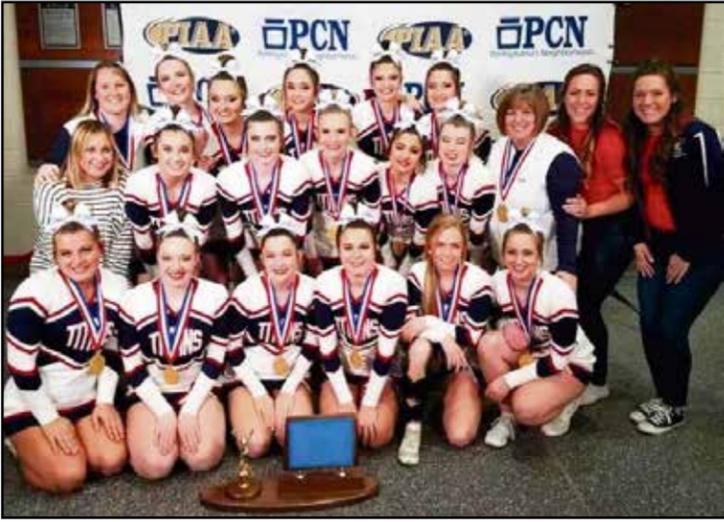
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## Cheer PIAA champs



**This year marks another impressive year for our cheer team as they finished 1st in PIAA championships at Hershey, PA and then were able to take 2nd in the nation and 3rd in the world competition in Orlando.**

**"We didn't win (in Orlando) but it was great to see us go out on the floor as many times as we did in two days and do that good, the feeling of walking out onto the floor and hit in front of the castle for the last time was the best feeling ever," Senior Kaylee Franc said.**

**With new competition entering their division, this year was much more difficult than any other year.**

**"The competition was super hard, we were in one of the hardest divisions at nationals, a lot of teams switched into our division so they could beat us, so going up against the hardest teams and knowing we did our best and ended 2nd was great," Franc said.**

**The seniors of the team, as this was their last competition, were a big help in the effort to stand among the best at the competition.**

**"All seniors played a big role, we didn't have captains this year, so all six of us worked to make this a good year. We really wanted to push the team to our full potential and not slack because as we are seniors; this is our last time ever to compete with this team," Franc said. (by Tanner Nowakowski)**

## Seniors find an option for basketball in CYO

by Cece Robinson

The class of 2018 has many seniors who take part in a CYO (Christian Youth Organization) basketball team. An after school option that accommodates those who want to find the balance between sports and school, without the time commitment a school team requires.

The St. Mary's of the Assumption CYO basketball team, which has half of its players from Shaler Area, has gained a small following around the high school. The community league basketball team rallies together once or twice a week.

The season begins in November, with the team competing against churches in the surrounding area such as St. Sebastian's, Sacred Heart, St. Louise, etc.

Because of the league's recreational aspect, structured practices aren't required. The boys from Shaler, North Allegheny and Central Catholic meet up and mess around in a few open gyms. When the games actually start, all they hope to do is show up and have fun.

"We pretty much just show up every game with the hope to have fun. We are all pretty familiar with the fundamentals of basketball so we just kind of know where to be on the court at the right times," Senior Davis Deasy said.

Senior Joey Soranno has been playing for the St. Mary's team since 10th grade.

"I've been playing basketball since 1st grade and in 10th grade my older friend Sean Funfar told me I should play, so I gave it shot," Soranno said.

As this year's team captain, Soranno averaged 12 points a game. The team had 12 wins and 4 losses, and advanced to the playoffs for the first time in six years. Although they lost to St. Gabriel's, who eventually won the state championship, the opportunity was one the team was happy to have.

Soranno and Deasy, both being seniors were eager for playoffs, but apprehensive to see their final season pass. With the flexibility and lightheartedness that the CYO team brings versus playing for the school team, both seniors have been able to find the balance with school and sports.

"A high school student would choose CYO over the school team because it brings the fun back into basketball. You get to play more and everyone is more laid back, and ending the day with a win is such a great feeling," Soranno said.

"CYO provides the opportunity to play basketball for those who may not be as talented as others. CYO also has a much more flexible schedule than playing for the school. It's kind of nice not having to go to practice after school and worry about everything that comes with it, it provides a fun alternative," Deasy said.

## SATV has come a long way since its start in the 1980s

by Brandon Kurzawski

Typically during the 4th period announcements block, students tune into the daily SATV Morning Announcements produced by the Television Production class broadcasted to the High School. Though it has been a tradition for years within Shaler, SATV didn't always exist and like everything and everyone in the world, it has an origin somewhere in time.

SATV was originally just a video club outside of school lead by Mr. Joe Miller. In the fall of 1984, SATV began with just a few members focused on football games filmed by Miller. With funds from a football booster, a camera was bought to film the Shaler Area football games. After filming the games, a father of a team member who worked for Comcast (formally Center Video) would then take the tapes from the camera and broadcast the games to the community.

Miller's son was a football player at the time, so Miller would film the football games while his son played. A few games in, three announcers were gathered that were all friends with Miller's daughter

While Miller and his crew of announcers were filming a football game against North Allegheny, they noticed another video crew filming the game who had a van that read 'NATV.'

"It was probably about the 3rd-4th game, North Allegheny came to Shaler to play football. At the time, they had a very detailed video production crew and they would send a signal down to a van and record the games. On the side of their van, it said 'NATV.' So they said, 'We should be called SATV'" Miller said.

From there, SATV continued to develop. Eventually, the program started filming a variety of other events such as basketball games and graduations, but everything started with just football.

"It just perpetuated itself from there; people liked what we were doing," Miller said.

Lou. Martig, former well-known athletic director and coach of Shaler Area endorsed the idea of SATV. Eventually, the tapes were brought back and a highlight tape was made for the 1984 football season. After the reopening of Titan Stadium on Mt. Royal Blvd, the field was named Lou Martig Field. Martig is a member of the first class to be inducted into the Shaler Area Athletic Hall of Fame.

Miller also helped with setting up other district programs in the area including North Hills' and Pine Richland's video programs.

Mr. Lee Myers, director of SATV, didn't start off directing the morning announcements when he first start teaching in Shaler Area in 1996. Though Myers was hired in the Technology Education department, he was hired to teach Electronics, Junior Engineering, Metal and Wood Shop as well as other technology related classes within the district. Miller's video program existed within Shaler Area, however, there weren't any classes offered in the High School.

Before Television Production and Video Production was a class within Shaler Area, there wasn't a morning announcements show. Myers, after student teaching in other districts with video programs, brought the idea of a video class to the school board.

"I student taught at two different schools that had video programs already established and I was able to take part in them. I thought this is really neat to see these kids come together and were able to produce their morning announcements and broadcast them throughout the school and even the community. And I always had an interest in video so I thought, 'Wow, this is great! I thought it was really cool, something students would really enjoy or like,'" Myers said.

After establishing the idea for a video program to be founded in the district, Myers went to administrators about starting the program. With school administrators on board, Myers presented the idea to the educational committee. The Video program was started the following school year, 1998.

With the video program now at the High School, Myers was now able to provide more students who were trained in filming and editing for the video club to grow and flourish.

"The interest was there, and now they were able to help out Mr. Miller in filming a lot of these different events," Myers said.

Though a small amount of equipment was present at the time, the program developed over the years. At that time, a Television Studio wasn't developed yet. Though a room was established, the room was smaller with no studio or editing rooms.

Over the next few years, the Morning Announcements show began. In 2001, the district started to invest money into putting TVs into each classroom in order to broadcast announcements. In the 2001-2002 school year, SATV Morning Announcements officially began to live broadcast to the High School.

Among Shaler graduates, Heather Abraham, a current KDKA reporter, was part of the first year of the morning announcements show in the fall 2001-2002 school year. Other names including Carly Lynn Morgan, a former WPXI reporter, had their start with the SATV morning announcements show. Through the years through, many improvements have been made.

Originally, the Video Room was just one big room, however, walls were built to separate the rooms into a control room, classroom, editing room, and TV Studio. The TV Studio lies where a former Drivers Education simulation used to be.

In the 2017-18 year, new equipment was added to the TV Studio, including a new switcher, graphics program, and the ability to record in HD rather than having to film the shows on tape. For the years to come, SATV continues to broadcast with Myers as the head of the Television Production department. Looking back, Myers realizes how far SATV has come since the start of the program back in the fall of 1984, almost 34 years ago.

"We started out in one classroom with standard definition equipment recording on VHS tape to the point where we have multiple rooms and we've moved toward HD video instead of VHS tapes," Myers said.

# SA well represented at Scholastic Awards

by Alexa Stewart

Recently Shaler Area art students were recognized at the Scholastic Arts and Writing awards. Shaler received 26 awards with three students placing with gold keys, four students receiving silver and 19 honorable mention awards.

Scholastics Arts and Writing is an art competition that spans over six states in which students submit work which goes to a panel of judges to be scored and reviewed.

In the past there was a field trip to go see the show because it was held at La Roche and it allowed students to see the best works from the region that placed. The gold and silver key winner's artwork was displayed while the honorable mentions were on a slide show playing on the wall. This year it was a big deal if students received an honorable mention, let alone if they got a gold or silver key, due to the region that the school participated in.

"All of the honorable mentions this year would have been gold medals in the past, but our region got so much bigger this year and works that I thought could have been silver or gold keys only got honorable mentions. Formerly it was just Pittsburgh and now we are included in the Northeast region, that includes New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and parts of Ohio. We were competing against a lot of schools that are specifically art schools in all the big cities," art teacher Jeffrey Frank said.

Shaler Area came out highly successful this year. Art teacher Dave Boyles spoke of how proud he is of his students that placed.

"It's a pretty high level competition so the fact that you place is extremely significant. I think all of my students that placed were exceptional. It's a very, very high honor especially this year as we have expanded the region to a much larger region. I'm not only just proud of the gold key winners, but the silver key winners and all who competed. It takes a lot for a person to put themselves out there," Boyles said.

Placing this year was definitely something to

be proud of due to the high number of submissions that Scholastics received. There were approximately 60,000 works submitted and out of those Shaler Area received 26 of the awards, one of which was a gold key by Shannon Roche.

"Shannon Roche placed gold for a piece of jewelry she made, a necklace. The amazing thing about it is that out of the 60,000 applications they only accepted six gold medal winners for jewelry and we got one at Shaler which I think is phenomenal. Shannon has impressed me with her improvement, work ethic and willingness to take risks," said Frank.

The students that received gold keys will be moving on to a national competition and will be recognized for their high achievement.

Kelly Cross- Gold Key  
Alexis McKee- Gold Key

Shannon Roche- Gold Key, Honorable Mention  
Claire Raines- Silver Key  
Bailey Ritchey- Silver Key  
Claire Schreiber- Silver Key  
Alexa Stewart- Silver Key, Honorable Mention  
Sarah Blackwell- Honorable Mention  
Jessica Early- Honorable Mention  
Jamie Handyside- Honorable Mention  
Meghan Harris- Honorable Mention  
Sam Heim- Honorable Mention  
Ian Hunt- Honorable Mention  
Brianna Impavido- Honorable Mention  
Regan Pegher- Honorable Mention  
Lindsay Sammel- Honorable Mention  
Michaela Scott- Honorable Mention  
PJ Squire- Honorable Mention(x3)  
Abby Stewart- Honorable Mention  
Dakota Tigney- Honorable Mention(x2)

## Anything Goes

**The cast of the musical Anything Goes, which was performed over the past two weeknds in the auditorium.**

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