

# The Oracle

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December 2011

## Students get inside look at Occupy Pittsburgh

by Audrey Schreiber and Anna Porter

This past September, some Americans decided that enough was enough. In New York City, thousands gathered to show their concern about the country's growing difference between the wealthiest 1% of Americans and the rest of the population. The movement in New York was coined "Occupy Wall Street," a term that not only pays ode to NYC's financial district, but to all financial markets in the United States.

Since then, "Occupy Wall Street" has been shut down by government authorities, but this reaction served as a catalyst for an entire world-wide revolution. Inspired by New York's "Occupy Wall Street," encampments have been popping up across the nation and across the globe. In the United States, every state has at least one camp, with California alone having fifty set up throughout the area. Borders did not hinder the fever, having spread from the Americas, to Europe, Asia, and Africa. According to Occupy Wall Street's website, over 100 cities in



An "Occupy Pittsburgh" sign outside of the camp city (Anna Porter)

the United States and 1,500 globally have taken action to protest the greed of their country's corporate government and overcome economic inequality.

Although some locations have been shut down since their start, one that remains is "Occupy Pittsburgh," the camp city located in Downtown, Pittsburgh on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Grant Street at Mel-

lon Green, a park privately owned by bank BNY Mellon. The park is filled with an array of tents that the occupiers have been living in since October 15, Day 1.

"Occupy Pittsburgh" and all occupy movements have received a great deal of negative attention from the media and those with differing views. Seeing news coverage of riots, violence, and arrests, made us hesitant on what to expect the morning we ventured down to the park. The first thing to be seen was a giant "Occupy Pittsburgh" sign situated at the very front of the camp. It was what a majority of passerbys did see and, fueled by their curiosity, stopped to see more. After passing the sign and actually entering the encampment area, we did not walk into an area full of rowdy demonstrators, or a peace circle of hippies, but a scene that looked inspired by L.L Bean's camping line. This was the last thing we were expecting considering what had been shown by the media for there were no riots, no violence, and

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## Cast proves It Is A Wonderful Life

by Katie Rees

The talented group of promising students lit up the Shaler Area High School's stage once again in the production of "It's a Wonderful Life." The play took place on Friday, December 2nd and Saturday December 3rd, just in time to get everybody into the heartwarming spirit of Christmas through this classic story of love vs. ambition.

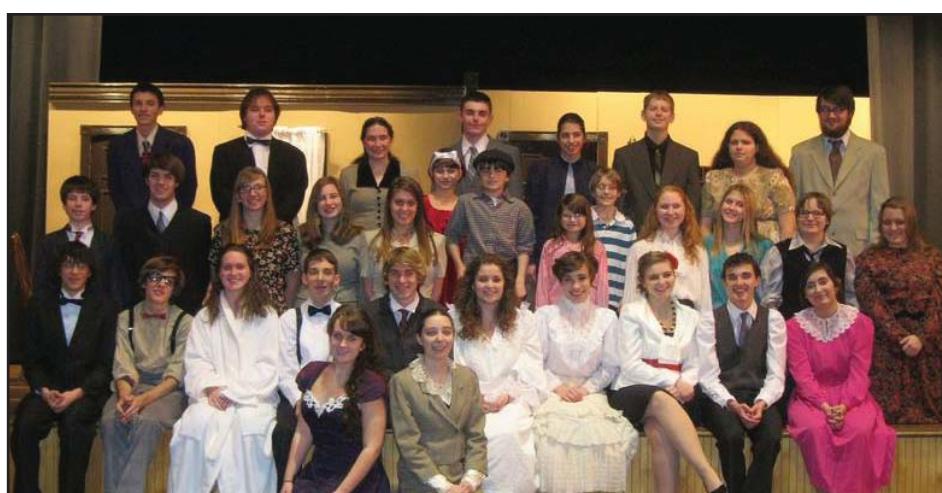
"Everyone involved in the play this year has worked so hard. The students really put their hearts into making this show happen," said one of the directors, Mrs. Domencic.

The cast had been putting their time and effort into this production since mid-September from after-school practices to rehearsals. Not to mention, the directors having to go hunting around for unique antiques to display in the show since July, as well. Regarding the title, "It's a Wonderful Life", gives off a very positive connotation, but what exactly was the play itself about?

"The play was about George Bailey, a young, ambitious man who struggled to discover meaning in his life. It's a Christmas story and appeals to all ages," Junior Collin Ziegler said.

The play, oriented for a variety of audience members, exceeded expectations thanks to the cast and crew who worked to make it happen. It offered a variety of cast members, from newcomers to experienced actors/actresses, who all delivered award winning performances.

Mrs. Domencic and Collin Ziegler were cer-



The cast of "It's A Wonderful Life" (Submitted by Emily McNeeley)

tainly not hesitant to applaud the efforts of the cast and crew.

"The stage crew for the play this year was especially important because there were so many props that were involved in this play especially. There were so many set changes and it was important to make sure everything was in its proper place. Allison Shaffer and Emily McNeeley were two of our many wonderful student directors who exceeded in all of our expectations concerning their amazing commitment to this play," Mrs. Domencic said.

The cast and crew should be applauded for all of their hard work. The dedication provided by the directors and the students was what created the play, and why the crowd was filled with comments of adoration when it was over.

"The students make up the majority of all productions-it's the students who are onstage, the students who move the sets, and the students who control lights and sounds. The directors and adults are excellent in their guidance and direction, but it's the students-from the leads to the ensemble members to the stage crew-who should be commended," Ziegler said.

## Friend remembered at memorial dinner



Victoria M. O'Neill (Submitted by Renae Fichter)

by Ali Tappe

On November 26<sup>th</sup>, a memorial dinner was held in honor of Victoria O'Neill, who would have been a senior this year.

Victoria passed away on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in a tragic accident that left family members and friends filled with sorrow and grief.

The Victoria M. O'Neill Scholarship Fund Dinner was the senior project of Renae Fichter and Sally McGinley.

"The dinner is usually held every year, and we didn't want to forget Victoria for her senior year. She was one of our best friends and we wanted to honor her memory," Fichter said.

The pair spent many hours organizing the event to make sure that everything went smoothly.

"We were preparing weeks ahead of time. We would do anything to prepare and make sure

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# Clarks' lead singer to perform here Dec. 22

Scott Blasey, the lead singer of The Clarks, will be performing in Auditorium Thursday Dec 22. Tickets will cost \$5 and are available in the Activities Office. The school will be running a special homeroom period at the end of the day on the 22nd. Those who buy tickets will be admitted to the show while those who do not will stay in homeroom. All money raised from the show will go to the Zak Piekarski Memorial Scholarship.

Blasey took the time to answer some questions as a preview for his show.

**One of my teachers said you told a story about dating a girl from Shaler the last time you were here. Can you retell that story?**

My college sweetheart was a girl named Susan Burig from Allison Park. She graduated from Shaler High School in 1984. We met at IUP and dated for 5 years. We got engaged after we graduated but never got married. We were too young and we both had other goals in life. She moved to Los Angeles and has a successful career in the movie business working on set design. She's married now and we're still friends. Penny on the Floor was written about her.

**What musical bands inspired you or inspire you today?**

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, The Beatles, Prince were all early inspirations for me personally. The band was inspired by U2, R.E.M. and the Replacements when we were starting out.

**When did you first discover that music was something you wanted to pursue in life?**

I knew very young that I loved it. It wasn't until I heard our music on the radio in Pittsburgh that I actually considered it a viable career choice, and at that point quit my day job and pursued it with vigor.

**What things in your life inspire you to write songs?**

I used to be relationships, break-ups. Now it's more family-stuff, although the last few Clarks songs I wrote were dark stories about characters on the fringe of society.

**Which of your songs do you feel is your band's best work?**

I think Born Too Late is my best-written song. Let It Go is my favorite Clarks album.

**How well do you and your band mates get along?**

Good now but it's not always been easy.

**Where/How did you all meet?**

We all met at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in the mid-80s. Dave and Rob approached me about starting a band because they heard I sang a little.

**Where do you see The Clarks in the next 10 years?**

Still doing what we're doing, playing fairs and festivals in the summer, probably release another album or two.

**What is your favorite song to perform?**

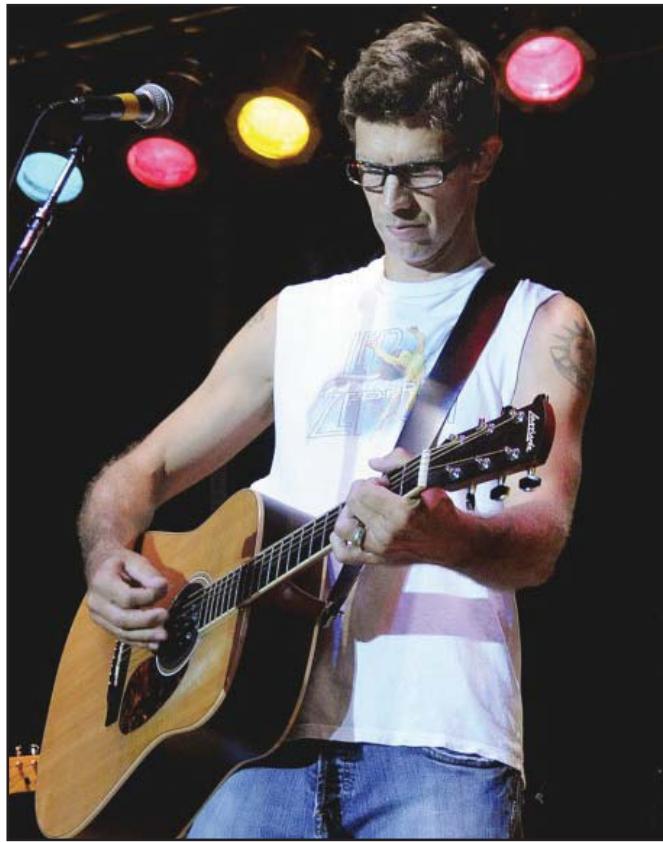
I still like singing Cigarette.

**Where's the coolest place you have ever played?**

The Troubadour in LA

**Out of all the cities you have been to traveling with your band, what has been your favorite?**

I love New York City. No matter what venue we're playing there's always



Scott Blasey at the 2011 Fayette County Fair

good food right around the corner, not to mention lots of other great surprises. It never gets old.

**What is your favorite/least favorite thing about touring?**

Touring is hard. It's hard on the body and the mind. The best part is discovering new cities. The worst part is the actual driving for hours and hours every day, day after day, week after week. It's not hard to forget where you are.

**If you could give a concert at any place in the world, where would be? Why?**

The Peters Township Library because my kids and their friends always come up and sing with me.

**What have some of your best experiences been as a musician?**

Playing on the late Show with David letterman was a highlight. The first Surge Festival at Starlake in 1997 was special too.

**What advice would you give to any bands hoping to make it big?**

Play in front of people as often as possible.

**What are your thoughts on how the music industry has changed over your lifetime going from cassettes to CDs to digital?**

When I was a kid my dad played records, LPs and 45s. I collected records from the time I was 4 years old. Then it was 8-track tapes, then cassettes, and then CDs. The Clarks' first album was on LP and cassette. Our heyday was during the golden age of CD sales in the 90s. We made great money selling our own product through local and regional distributors. Then around the turn of the century everything changed when music went to mp3. As an artist it was not so great because people were buying less CDs and you couldn't make as much money off of digital sales as you could with older media. As a fan it was great because I could buy whatever I wanted whenever I wanted. I'm still amazed at our ability to hear a song on the radio and decide to buy it and have it downloaded to our iPhones before the song is finished playing. I used to have to plan a trip to the record store to buy a \$15 CD for one song. No wonder the record industry has changed so much. The labels had every chance to change and they stuck with the old model and it killed them.

**How was it to play at the 2011 NHL Winter Classic?**

Awesome, a great experience all the way around. My wife and kids got to meet and hang out with Jackie Evancho. They were thrilled.

**I've heard that your song "Hey You" was about 9-11. Can you tell us about that?**

I wrote Hey You on the evening of 9/11. I was tired of watching the events on television and I just went upstairs and picked up my guitar. Hey You came out pretty fast as songs go. It only took an hour or so to write. I performed it the next night at Club Café at a hastily-arranged benefit show. I had a hard time getting through that one for the first month or two.

**What are some of the strangest/most bizarre things that have happened to you (that we can print) on stage?**

Rob and I played in our underwear (tighty whities) one night at the Decade. My amp caught on fire onstage. Rob did a show with a collapsed lung and went to the hospital immediately after. I broke my arm snowboarding and did a show that night.

## Friend remembered at memorial dinner

from page 1

the night would be a success. I'm going to bet that we put well over thirty hours into the dinner," McGinley said.

The girls received help from friends and family members.

"We had a lot of help from our parents and we received a lot of donations. We had so much to prepare: the food, decorations, and selling tickets. But we had been preparing for a month or two, so we didn't have to stress too much," Fichter said.

The evening of the event, guests were asked to make a \$12 donation. For dinner pasta, meatballs, and salads were served. After dinner, guests were welcome to partake in trivia games, dance and karaoke.

There was no exact count of how many people attended, but it was estimated to be between 200 and 250 people, which allowed them to raise around \$3,000.

"The purpose of the evening was to honor her; it wasn't about how much money we

raised. The fact that many people showed up, showed that people still do care about her and she is not forgotten," Fichter said.

Of the people that showed up, Victoria's parents and family members were most appreciative. For her friends, it was a night to celebrate the life of a dear friend.

"I think people enjoyed themselves. I think that seeing her pictures and the collage that was made, just brought back so many memories for so many people that it was tough at times," McGinley said.

Celebrating the life of Victoria meant a lot to many different people. As for Fichter and McGinley, it was an evening that they would never forget.

"It was definitely a rewarding experience; I am so glad that we did it. It was worth everything that we put into it," McGinley said.

Victoria touched the lives of many people and through her friends and family the memory of her life lives on.

## Who stole Christmas?

from page 4

Christmas. It's no longer about the simple things; it's all about material stuff.

I wish I could say I haven't fallen into this trend, but I have and most of you have too. I envy younger kids in the world. The excitement I used to feel on Christmas morning when I woke up to see that Santa Claus came is a feeling that has been long gone.

The world just needs to calm down. I'm not saying you need to believe in Santa Claus or act corny over the holidays, but let's all just think about the way Christmas used to feel and do something over the holidays that brings you back to that time.

The world seems to be maintaining its constant fast pace, which in many cases such as this, is a shame. Modern society's internet, television, and radio broadcasting will never stop hyping \$600 gifts that are necessary to buy those you love or spending \$200 dollars on your boyfriend or girlfriend.

The day after Christmas, you will see stores setting up for New Year's and Valentine's Day. The world can no longer live in the moment, it's always looking ahead. Let's all slow down and think of the actual meaning of Christmas this holiday season.

# World languages unite to celebrate, boost awareness

by Julie Rankin

Starting this year, the foreign languages have joined forces to create one Language Month, where each language will be given its own week to showcase their language, which started December 12<sup>th</sup>. This idea came about in order to boost language enrollment and awareness.

"(It was) something that we wanted to create as an entire world language group to kind of have a united front, rather than competing against one another," Spanish teacher Mrs. Surloff said.

With the idea to combine all of the usually individual language weeks into one month comes some drawbacks.

"It's a lot harder. We have made it a lot less individualized, as in the activities that we do are kind of throughout the languages rather than each language coming up with its own creative individual ideas," French teacher Mrs. Endy said.

For the Japanese classes, the disadvantage came more with the timing.

"If it was not one big thing then I'd do Japanese week later in the year and be able to do bigger, crazier things," Japanese teacher Mr. Balsomico said.

With all this being said, each was able to see the advantages a single language month will provide.

"It shows the solidarity of the languages. It shows how important languages in general are... It really allows the teachers to come together ideally and build one giant, large, exciting thing," Balsomico said.

Students may not have been as on-board with this idea as the teachers at first.

"They were a little disappointed at first because we normally do it during the Day of the Dead... so we do have to change things in that way so they were a little disappointed. But now that we're all on the same page, I think the kids are okay with it," Surloff said.



A poster made by language students (Anna Porter)

A similar reaction was seen within the French classes.

"The upperclassmen who know how it has been in the past have reacted in a negative way, because French Week has always been their thing and they're sad and reluctant to give it up," Endy said.

Although many students were resistant to change, they have been able to see the advantages this month would hold for the language department in the future.

"When I first told them they were a little disappointed but once I explained the reason was try to keep all the languages on the same month to try to not compete against one another and just to kind of say 'let's just do it all together', they were okay," Latin teacher Mrs. Barie said.

The languages have been planning for this exciting month with ways to make their week unique.

"To make it stand out we're going to do a couple of different things on SATV, we're going to have the bells where the one day we'll change the bells to the Spanish kind of tone... We're also going to do tickets around the building, like one day there will be hidden tickets in different classrooms and kids who find those tickets can use it to go to the cafeteria during the bake sale and get a free baked good," Surloff said.

The students and staff need not worry about all aspects of past Language Weeks being lost. Mrs. Endy happily reported that the French classes' crepes will still be sold.

One thing every teacher seemed to agree on was the benefits a Language Month would have in promoting the study of a foreign language to the student-body.

## Religious differences highlighted during holidays

by Casey Rastetter and Audrey Schreiber

During the month of December, there are generally only a few things on our minds: family, Buddy the Elf, and the spiritual aspects of Christmas. Shaler, as a whole, is predominantly Christian. However, there are many students among us that celebrate variations of the common Christmas, and there are students who engage in completely different traditions.

Students who don't celebrate a typical holly jolly Christmas may practice something all in its own. These differing religions in the Shaler Area community, especially the high school, may include: Islam, Judaism, and Russian Orthodox. Every person is unique in the amount of time he or she puts into his or her individual practices.

Juniors Noor Mirza and Tahmina Tursonzadah understand the importance of their faith, due in large part to their families. Both students practice Islam, which celebrates a different kind of holiday. None of the Islamic holidays are observed during the typical Christian holiday season. One of these holidays is Ramadan, which is the 9<sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar. The month it is celebrated in changes every year.

Tursonzadah described a typical day during the holiday: "I fast during Ramadan. We go to our local Mosque, we perform the specific Eid prayer and the Imam (like a minister or pastor) calls the prayer. The men are standing in front of the women and he (the Imam) says everything in Arabic."

The girls are accustomed to their faith based on the amount of importance their parents put on being Islam.

"Well my parents are strict—they would never be like 'Do whatever you want.' So yeah, it's alright," Mirza said.

Tursonzadah on the other hand said, "I pray 5 times a day, I read the Qur'an, I read like 2 pages a day... I can speak some Arabic and I can read in it," she said.

Though Christmas seems like it is a big part of all of our lives, from the movies, television specials, black Friday sales, lights, and decorations, neither Mirza nor Tursonzadah are familiar with Christmas celebrations, domestically.

"I receive money, but the whole getting a tree and putting lights up, no," Mirza stated.

Tursonzadah sometimes exchanges gifts with her friends, but ultimately, she said: "I don't feel isolated, I don't mind. I accept that I don't celebrate Christmas."

Other students of Shaler Area, like Junior Mike Tucker, and Senior Sam Beckas, get the best of both worlds. Both teenagers celebrate Hanukkah and Christmas making some of their families' customs branch from the religion of Judaism.

Being that Beckas is Jewish on her mother's side and Greek Orthodox on

**"It can be tough when kids judge or make jokes, but I'm proud of who I am. And the joke is really on them, because I get double the presents" - Senior Sam Beckas**

her father's side, she understands that a huge part of any holiday season is being with family.

Beckas explained the individual ways she celebrates the holidays: "Decorating, big dinners, being with the family...the usual stuff. Except for Hanukkah, we do one night all together as a family, instead of eight, since there are so many of us."

Beckas' Jewish celebrations may occur anywhere from late November to late December, while Tucker's celebrations are usually during Passover.

Tucker said: "It's fun, different, sometimes boring, but it is unique."

Though Beckas and Tucker do not attend services at a Synagogue regularly, they are appreciative of their religion.

"It can be tough when kids judge or make jokes, but I'm proud of who I am. And the joke is really on them, because I get double the presents," Beckas stated.

Other students in Shaler celebrate variations of a typical Christian Christmas. This is true for seniors Sam Schramack and Iris Matijevic. Schramack is Russian Orthodox and Matijevic is Roman Catholic.

For Schramack, his Mom is predominately Russian Orthodox. He at-

tends a Russian Orthodox Church. Passages are spoken in Russian and the congregation will sing Russian songs. He celebrates Christmas on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December,

but the Russian Orthodox Church also has a Christmas in January.

"Everyone thinks you get double the presents but I get little presents here and there. On Christmas, I get the big gifts, but on Russian Christmas I get small gifts," he explained.

Matijevic also celebrates a variation of Christmas. Being that her parents are from former Yugoslavia, her family has certain traditions that follow the county's customs.

She explained, "We go to mass and after, we come out and it's Christmas day."

After mass, it's tradition to eat the Soudjuk, which resembles sausage. The Soudjuk is made the week before Christmas from pigs that the families own. The adults drink Croatian whiskey as the Soudjuk is passed around for everyone to eat.

Matijevic said, "We have a huge feast with our whole family. Then there is a lot of singing and dancing."

The students of Shaler Area may practice many different religions, and celebrate many different holidays. But no matter what you celebrate, one thing is for certain, it's nice to know where you came from.

# OPINIONS

## How to cheat next year's Black Friday sales

by Casey Rastetter

When the holiday season is approaching in full swing, I deem it necessary in every sense of the word to be prepared. Now what do we have to be prepared for you ask? No, not the making of the gingerbread houses, or the family ice skating trips. One must get ready for next season's Black Friday shopping.

There are many bumps in the road when it comes to the treachery that is Black Friday shopping. Some people don't even partake in it because of its utter ridiculousness. Have no fear, readers of Shaler Area. I am here to help get everybody out of the "dark side" of the shopping.

Whether it is Walmart at ten p.m. on Thanksgiving right before the sales begin at midnight, or Chick-Fil-A at three in the morning, chances are, you don't want your younger sibling tagging along. "I want a bicycle!" "American Eagle doesn't sell those..." tends to be a conversation that someone in the world goes through on this infamous day.

However, one of my tips on how to defeat Black Friday is this: Bring the siblings, and have them do your dirty work.

It may be hard to admit, but our younger siblings, cousins, godchildren, etc. have this whole "I'm really



cute and everyone wants to pinch my cheeks" thing going for them. Everyone also tends to freeze frame when a child begins to cry. Yes, even when they sob in the middle of a jam-packed store.

What I'm trying to say is, promise your buddy that they can hang out with you and your friends IF AND ONLY IF, they cry so you can dodge the concerned adults and steal the last copy of Just Dance 3. One may regret their promise to little Joey in the short run, but will love that video game in the long run.

Not only can bringing the little pests along ensure a quicker, stress-free outing, but so can stealing Grandma's

Handicapped supplies. Before I go on, I would like to make it clear that this is the only time it is appropriate to do such a thing.

When one considers getting valet parking at Ross Park Mall because of the lack of spaces available, a handicapped pass is essentially the golden ticket. The alleged golden ticket will not necessarily help the ventures inside on Black Friday, but a wheelchair will, however.

In short, wheelchairs, or any vehicle in the mall, are intimidating. They may come at you and run over your feet within the blink of an eye. Even on the darkest days, people will most likely get out of your way and understand

that you are on a mission. It may be frowned upon to get out of the chair so it is my suggestion to stay in it.

Rolling over peoples' feet may not be a reasonable person's forte, I understand. Desperate times call for desperate measures. Some long time planning may be necessary if one would like to partake in the next unthinkable option of: Releasing the Kraken.

The kraken in this specific case is not a large and in charge octopus, it is in fact a bag full of snakes!

As far as I'm concerned, just about everyone would feel a little nervous or distraught at the site of snakes slithering around your local department store. Even Indiana Jones and Samuel L. Jackson wouldn't like it! So gather up the courage, go snake finding in Little Pine Creek, and fulfill your destiny of becoming the best Black Friday shopper of them all.

If none of these ideas are appealing and seem a little bit edgy, have no fear! One may still camp outside of the stores of his/her choice, and get in slap fights with the woman who picked up the last pair of clearance Sperrys.

But why be generic when you can just cheat the system?

## Who stole Christmas?

by Ross Budziszewski

Who stole Christmas? Was it us? Was it them? Was it me? Was it you? Was it our parents? Was it the retailers? Was it media?

Christmas has become a product of what is portrayed to be. From stores decorating for Christmas in October to crazy store specials, Christmas just doesn't even mean as much as it used to. You can't even watch television anymore without being bombarded with commercial after commercial of deals and gifts to buy people for Christmas starting as early as Halloween.

The media pressures people to buy early and a lot by saying that this is the only way you can please someone during the holidays. Also, I would imagine that everyone has been asked, "What are you getting for Christmas?", or "What are you buying for some else?" Is that really what Christmas is all about?

Christmas has turned into Black Friday specials, buying gifts for others, and knowing exactly what "Santa Claus" is buying you. When we were younger it used to be about seeing the first snowfall, being off from school, spending time with family, and believing in Santa Claus.

Don't worry about it, we just grew up. The commercialization of Christmas has drawn most of us into what can be a difficult time. Christmas is suppose to be a carefree time, but it seems as time goes on it gets harder to hold on to the real meaning of

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## 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU Holiday Edition

I hate how short the winter break is

It really is so small

I hate awkward gifts

Thanks for the bowling ball?

I hate obnoxious holiday adornments

Your lawn decorations shouldn't scare me

I hate when it doesn't snow in December

I want a white Christmas, like in the movies

I hate how much crap I eat

Say goodbye to the skinny jeans!

I hate holiday traffic

People can be so mean

I hate political correctness

Look at that nice...holiday bush?

I hate holiday consumerism

It's just a giving and gifting push

I hate remade holiday songs

Not another: "All I want for Christmas is you"

I hate a lot of things about the holidays

Just call me Ebenezer Scrooge

-- by Audrey Schreiber

The Oracle

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**The Oracle** reserves the right to condense or omit any letters or articles unfit for publication.

# “Occupy” movement spreads to Pittsburgh

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rests.

It was around 11 a.m. and we assumed most of the camp's inhabitants would be up and about, but it was more of a ghost town with no one walking around. They must still be sleeping, we assumed. We then heard someone approaching behind us, and hoping it would be a demonstrator, turned ready to rapid fire the person with questions. However, it turned out to be a typical businessman; middle-aged, glasses, trench coat and matching scarf included. In his hand were a dozen donuts that he had purchased for those still in the tents.

He is an Occupy sympathizer and explained: "This is what I did 50 years ago to protest the Vietnam war, so here you are, I have a kinship with you guys, I hope (they) succeed too."

Whether it was our voices or the smell of donuts (we're leaning more towards the latter) a young man poked his head out of a nearby tent. The man was greatly appreciative of the donut donation and we were even more appreciative that he agreed to talk to us. His name was Damon, he was 20 years old and had been living in the camp city for about two and a half weeks. This was where we first began to understand the ideas and views behind the camp.

"I felt that it was the best way for me to do something to change and to help fix the world that I'm living in," he said. "I hope to see some serious measures taken against the corporations because currently they're pretty much able to just rule the world. They can control and do whatever they want because they have the money to influence any politician, any country; they have more money than most countries do. It can't work that way—nothing can work that way."

We also met Jess, a 24 year old occupier who had been a part of the movement for about three weeks. She had similar reasons as Damon for joining the movement.

"Our country has been having a lot of problems for a long time, and we really need to address some of the inequality in this country that has just been getting worse over the last ten, twenty years," she said.

The Occupy Movement has met many disparaging opinions, to say the least. The movement boasts peaceful, nonviolent protesting and demonstrations yet government authorities and cities collectively have spent over \$15 million dollars trying to stop the individual movements, according to USA Today. Pictures and stories of demonstrators being pepper sprayed, arrested, and even beaten litter the internet and various news sources. Police have even gone so far as to close and forcibly remove entire encampments. Camps in New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles have recently been cleared out.

The morale at Occupy Pittsburgh, however, hasn't been affected, despite the threat of closing down.

"In some ways it makes us realize more, more how vulnerable we are, but we all knew the risk when we came... Hopefully (we'll be here) another year or



**Above:** Speaking to Jesse about the movement (Thomas Jefferson)

**Below:** A view of the tent city. On the cart hangs the Bill of Rights, which the protestors are using as a permit (Anna Porter)



two," Jess explained.

In fact, despite the police disruption in other encampments, all of the occupiers we talked to described the Pittsburgh police as being supportive and helpful. While we interviewed Jess and Damon, we even noticed an officer walking by the camp, checking to make sure the camp was alright.

"The police have been great here in Pittsburgh," explained Damon, "So far anyway. They patrol by; they make sure nothing's going on."

As we began to gain a grasp on the camps foundation, we met an occupier named Tom Jefferson, a late middle aged man who had been involved with the movement since the very beginning. Jefferson describes himself as the official photographer for the movement. He is also a professional photographer for many esteemed institutions, such as The Carnegie Science Center, Carnegie Music Hall, and Vitamin Water. His provided us with some insight on what the movement is, and what it is not.

"Contrary to what has been put out by the media, we do have jobs; we're not just a bunch of hippies looking for a free handout. The camp is pretty empty right now because people got up this morning

and went to work... We're totally nonviolent, totally peaceful, totally drug and alcohol free... As soon as we get violent then that gives them an excuse to arrest us, or shut us down, but we're not going to do that... People think that you have to run in the streets and throw bricks and shoot guns and things like that, all that does is get people more upset and escalate situations."

Jefferson has also seen support from teacher, steelworker, nursing, bus driver, and janitor unions. Another large percentage of supporters have been college students concerned with the price of education- a huge and growing debt that all students will be burdened with well after college.

Jefferson believes that people are finally awakening and standing up for themselves, for future generations, and for what is right. He left our generation with a challenge.

"Stay focused, stay aware, don't believe what you're told by the media. Question ev-

erything you're told, and analyze it. Because someone says something with conviction doesn't mean it's true. So you listen to one side, listen to the other side then average it out."

As we left the camp that day we realized that we had possibly been a part of something that would go down in history. Although it is difficult to not be influenced by the media, we firmly believe that before you formulate an opinion, you should receive all the facts first. This goes especially for our generation as we're handed a world that already has so much room for improvement. Even if changes are not made right away, every cause has to start somewhere.

"You can't put a time limit on progress. And when people say that it won't work, they said the same thing when they wanted to liberate slaves. They said 'You can't do that, it will make the economy collapse.' When Martin Luther King was marching they said 'It won't change,' but he kept at it. When Mohammed Ghandi was sitting in the middle of streets they said 'That won't work,' but people are using their methods and philosophies and they work," Jefferson said.

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The top 1% are taking more of the nation's income than at any other time since the 1920's

Today it is 400% more expensive to go to college in the United States than it was just 30 years ago

317,000 servers and 365,000 cashiers have college degrees in the United States today

In Chicago, more money is spent housing adult prisoners (\$21,000 annually) than educating students (\$10,000 annually)

According to the US Census Bureau, the median household income is about \$51,425, and median income per person is about \$27,041

From 1992-2007 the top 400 income earners in the U.S. saw their income increase 392% and their average tax rate reduced by 37%

# Mike Lange “blessed” to be in Pittsburgh

The Hall of Fame play-by-play announcer for the Pittsburgh Penguins recently visited Mr. Schott's journalism class. He shared his views on a variety of topics including his views on the team this year and the background to some of his well-known catch phrases.

**Q: Where did you grow up? Were you always interested in broadcasting?**

I was born in Sacramento, California, which is not particularly a hockey hot bed by any means. And I got exposed to broadcasting and I'll talk about that in a little bit, at a very early age, when television was actually just really getting under way and radio was this dominant factor. At that time, the San Francisco Giants baseball team that had moved from New York to San Francisco. So, I became kind of fascinated by the whole thing with radio and listening to games. When I was 9 years old, I knew what I wanted to do. I was pretty lucky. I wanted to be a play-by-play baseball announcer and that was what I wanted to pursue, so I kind of kept that dream.

**Q: How did a California kid get to Pittsburgh?**

I did not think that when I came to Pittsburgh that I would be here for more than two years. At the same time I was applying to jobs with the Atlanta Braves and a few other things, even the Pittsburgh Pirates when Bob Prince was released. But it all kind of gravitated, kept coming back to hockey. That's where I was and I kept doing it and I kind of built a relationship with the fans and the people, and I'm still here.

**Q: What is your advice for anyone interested in a broadcasting career?**

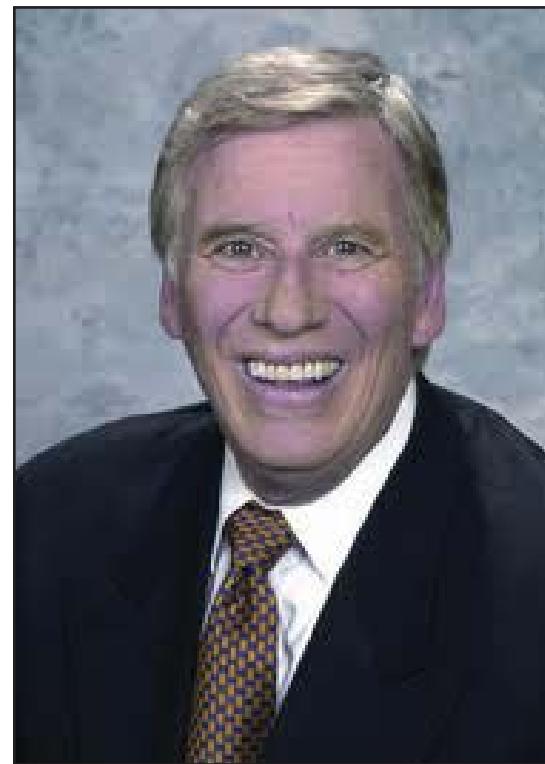
Whatever you would want to pursue and do, I think that would be something that you have to do with all of your heart. And make it a game, have fun with it. That's what I did. You just have got to have fun. When I applied for jobs, I'm a little different. When I was applying for jobs, I didn't do it in a normal way. I would send baseball bats with résumés wrapped around them. I would send hockey sticks, I would send pucks. When I applied to the Penguins, I sent a letter and I said that I want to put my two cents worth and I put two pennies on the letter. There's nothing wrong with being different, you know? In today's job market the way it is, you're going to get rejected. So you've got to come with a different angle. I bet I was rejected 150 times, at least. But that's okay. So many people get rejected once or twice and they think, 'It must be me.' But that's really not the case.

**Q: What do you remember from Game 1 of the 1992 Final against the BlackHawks?**

A: "Well I would say and I've said this before, it the biggest goal that's ever been scored was scored in that game. And we were down 4 to 1 in the game; Chicago had heavily out played us. We rallied and we came back and we tied the game. And late in the contest, we had a face-off and Mario Lemieux scored a goal on a rebound play. The building just erupted. I mean if you knew the Mellon Arena, you knew that the roof did open, well that night it didn't because it just opened up with the sounds, it was unbelievable. I said on the air 'I'm sure they here this in Center Avenue, outside the city, West Virginia, you can just hear this noise.' And it was the most incredible noise I've ever heard at a sporting event.

**Q: Was that your favorite Pens memory?**

A: Bob Johnson was the coach of the first Stanley Cup team. He developed a brain tumor and had it during our playoff series. He died in November of that year. And to me the most memorable thing that I've been involved with was the tribute to him at the Mellon Arena. It was dynamic, that's all I can say. It was moving. I can tell you that there wasn't one person in that building that didn't have an eye full of tears, including me. And I presented myself as a big tough guy. I just melted... and it was so genuine and so real. And it was for a wonderful man, a really great person. The players loved him, it was just unfortunate that he had developed his tumor and he isn't with us anymore. But his legacy certainly is. And when you



just said 'That is awesome, that will work.'

'He beat 'em like a rented mule.' I have a good stockbroker friend of mine who I knew from the mid 70's who lived here and now lives in Colorado and I called him one day and I said 'Davey, how are things going?' He said 'Pretty good.' I said 'How's the market going?' 'They're beating me like a rented mule.' I said 'What did you say?' He said 'They're beating me like a rented mule.' I said 'Thank you, Davey.' I knew that was good.

"Buy Sam a drink and get his dog one too." So one day I walked into this place in the South Hills, to get lunch. A guy came in and the bartender turned to him and asked him you know 'What do you want?' and he said 'Buy Sam a drink and get his dog one too.' And I just heard it and I just looked at him. I said 'What was that?' He said 'Buy Sam a drink and get his dog one too.' I wrote it down and I've been using it for a lot of years, a whole lot of years.

'Michael, Michael, Motorcycle!' was a big Texan guy who was leaving a restaurant and he had worked at a car dealership. When he left he just turned to me and said 'See you later, Michael, Michael, Motorcycle.' And I said 'Wow! That's cool. Michael, Michael, Motorcycle!' I've been using that for 30 years.

One of the ones we had, we had a contest with Iron City beer where people could sign in and send a phrase in. I would select the best phrase as being the contest winner. So that particular contest, the contest winner's is one that I still use today. And it's 'Shave my face with a rusty razor!'

I must have at least thirty or thirty five but they all pretty much have an origin.

**Q: Do you have an idea of how the Penguins season will turn out?**

A: "I wish I could give you a definitive answer. If you would have asked me one day before the season started, I would have told you 'We're going to win the Stanley Cup'. But then the other thirty teams in the league could have said the same thing. There are so many variables along the way, so many things that could happen

**Q: Can you tell us the origins of your signature catch phrases?**

A: 'Scratch my back with a hacksaw'? Okay that's pretty easy. I was going up to do a commercial at a place in Monroeville, the Monroeville Expo Mart. I was having trouble finding it, and there was a little security guard there. He looked like Barney Fife and he was standing at this little kiosk and he was just standing there. And he saw me walk by and he recognized me and he said "Do you ever take phrases?" I said 'I'll tell you what you do, just write it down for me and I'll keep it and I'll take it under consideration.' So I was standing there and I was watching him, and he started writing it. And he wrote 'Scratch... My... Back' and I almost got the adrenaline rush. '... With... a hacksaw.' And that was it. I

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# SPORTS

## Lady Titans face new year and new coach

by Anna Porter

Not only will the Shaler Area Girls Basketball team be missing a majority of their returning starters this year, but they will also be another vital component, coach Mr. Eric Mozzetti. The former physical education teacher announced towards the beginning of the year that this would be the end of his nine year coaching career at Shaler Area.

"I don't worry about how many games I've won, or how many years I've coached, I just enjoy coaching," he said.

Although he doesn't keep track, others certainly do. Mozzetti's track record boasts one State championship, four WPIAL titles, and eight section titles. He does not favor any certain memory from his long coaching career, which previously placed him at Duquesne University and Vincentian Academy, but that finally led him to Shaler.

"Just every year, having new kids and getting to know them, and being able to still keep in contact with them all. That's the part, it's enjoyable," he said.

When asked if he had any last words, he said "When I die I'll worry about last words."

On Wednesday December 7<sup>th</sup>, the school board approved Melissa McQuade to be the new girls' basketball coach. McQuade, whose younger sister Val

played for the WPIAL team last year, is a 2007 Shaler graduate who played for Mozzetti.

She went on to play basketball at Kutztown University where she is the school's all-time leading scorer with 1,623 points. She also holds the school record for rebounds and field goals.

If McQuade can convert her success on the court to success in coaching, the Titans should be in store for a winning season. Although she has no coaching experience, assistant coaches Mr. Tim Storino and Mrs. Gina Mullen will be helping her along the way.

"I don't have any experience with game situations, like we're tied with 10 seconds left what am I going to do? It's kind of nerve-wracking, but it's good to have Storino and Gina Mullen there to help me decide what to do," she said.

Another factor to help McQuade with her first coaching season will be keeping the coaching style that Mozzetti used.

"We're just going to keep everything the same," McQuade said. "We're running all of the same plays; I'm putting in little things here and there that I did in college, but for the most part we just want to keep continuity and keep doing what he was doing."

The girls clearly benefited from this, winning their first game against Knoch, 57- 16. Captain, Senior and returning starter Cate Potter scored 14 of the Titans points. She has faith in McQuade and in the

team as a whole.

"I think [McQuade will] bring a positive attitude and new ways to play the game because she herself was a player," Potter said.

There are only three seniors on the team, Potter being one, Payge Ferraro returning after being non-active for two years, and the other, Ashley Domachowski, who has not been able to play due to a concussion. Both Potter and Domachowski saw a large amount of playing time last year, and helped significantly in winning the WPIAL championship.

"Not a lot of players have varsity experience or not a lot of consecutive varsity experience. Our height for sure is a disadvantage too. But, are strengths are speed, shooting, and communication," Potter said.

With a new coach and young team, the girls could be facing an uphill battle. However, they are still more than capable of winning.

"With Cate and Ashley the only ones returning it will be different and a little bit difficult, but I told them don't worry about it, just work as hard as you can and whatever happens, happens," McQuade said. "We went over team goals and they want to make playoffs and hopefully be back in the same spot they were in last year."

The girls played Monday against Hempfield at home in a non-section match up. Tonight they will play section rival North Allegheny at NA.

## Young wrestling team hoping to show improvement

by Julie Rankin

Shaler's Wrestling team has spent a lot of time preparing for this season. The boys had their first official competitions December 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> at Gateway for the Eastern Area Tournament.

Training began this summer with lifting and conditioning.

"I only brought one freshman up

but I have a lot of sophomores. I'm gonna bring a lot of freshmen up next year so we'll be fairly young for the next four or five years," head coach Drew D'Agostino said.

"We have a couple of seniors and a couple of juniors, and then mostly freshmen and sophomores."

The losses in numbers have affected the team's ability to compete in the

past few years with major competitors such as NA. D'Agostino is hopeful that this will change in the team's future.

"We haven't wrestled NA in a couple of years because our numbers haven't been there but NA has always been a rival and like I said we want to try in a few years to start that rivalry again," D'Agostino said.

The team still has some great com-

petition to look forward to this season, including Butler, North Hills, and Pine Richland.

"I have a bunch of young kids that are really talented so we're hoping to get some of those kids placing in tournaments. Individually and in tournaments we should do fairly well," D'Agostino said.

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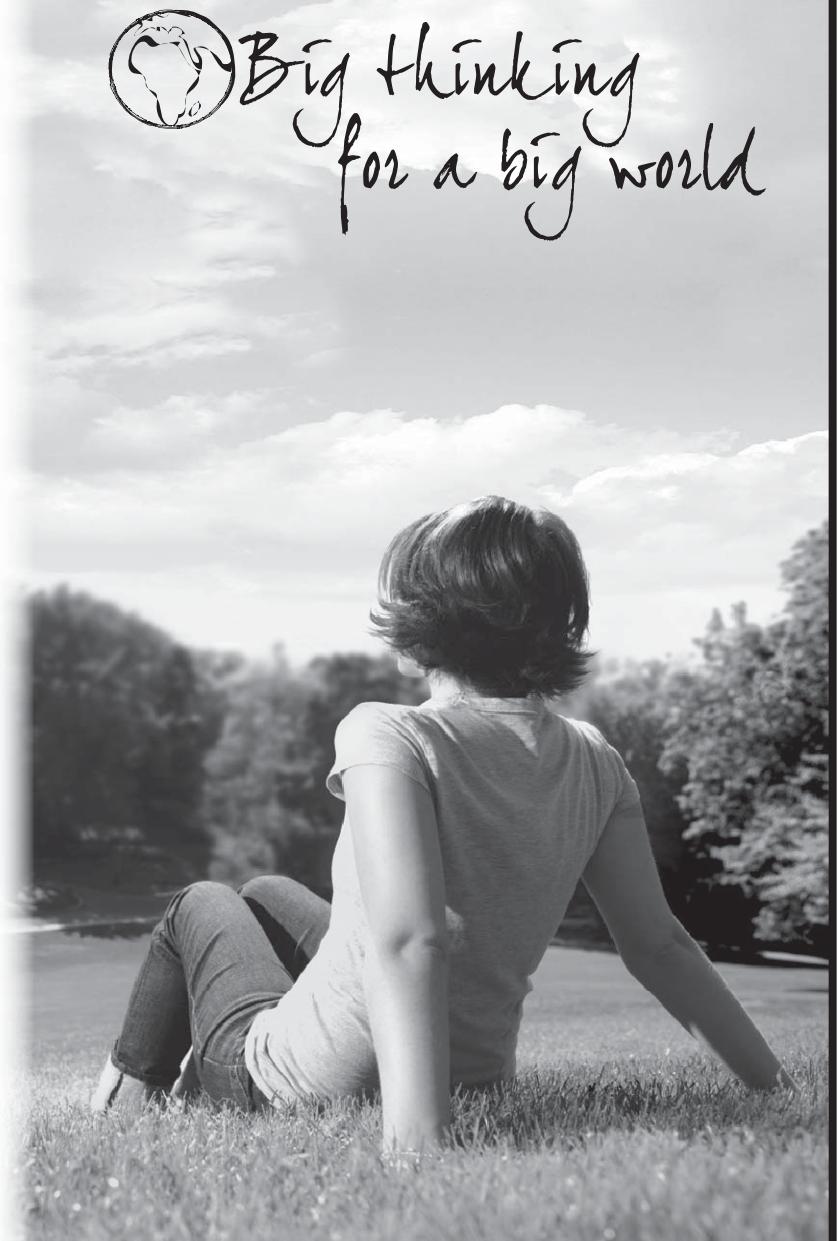
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# The Back Page

## Senior visits "Dance Moms" studio

by Casey Rastetter

The Abby Lee Dance Studio has become famous for teaching talented young dancers how to compete and become the best, with the help of its impressive owner Abby Lee Miller. The irresistible and entertaining reality show, "Dance Moms", is what has come of their conquests. One Shaler Area student got the opportunity to think of the cutting edge studio as something more than a famous setting found on the television.

Senior Leah Maurizio has always kept the art of dancing near and dear to her heart. The fact that she is the first captain of the world renowned Competitive Hip-Hop team Pittsburgh Poison Black Widows is just one of the factors helping her become a choreographer, her dream job.

"My coach, Matthew Zangaro, has choreographed at Abby Lee before and he had offered me to go and help him choreograph. So instead of taking the money, I decided to make it my senior project," Maurizio said.

Maurizio began her work at Abby Lee toward the beginning of October and wrapped the final touches up in the beginning of this month. Her and her coach's main objective was to teach a hip-hop duet to a boy and girl.

She described the duet by saying: "...It's based off of a romance and is danced to a song called 'Insomnia'. There's supposed to be a strong connection between the boy and girl."

Since hip-hop dancing comes very naturally to Maurizio, it was difficult to get the unfamiliar dancers to execute the movements as quickly. "It's hard when you're a very advanced hip-hop dancer teaching people who are strong in other areas," she stated.

The immediate cleanliness and understanding of the routine was not the only challenge that Maurizio



**Maurizio in competition** (Submitted by Leah Maurizio)

and Zangaro faced. Since Abby Lee's studio is found on The Lifetime Network, camera crews were an evident distraction for everyone affiliated with the project.

The senior said, "Being a dancer and going to Abby Lee Studio is a huge honor; it really adds to the reputation of a dancer. It gives me hope for the future."

While working with the duettists, Maurizio was lucky enough to meet the famous Abby Lee, and the children from the show. "Abby Lee was very nice and inspiring. It was also cool to be able to awe the kids from the show with

my dancing because so many people are in awe by them," Maurizio said.

The experience that Maurizio had at Abby Lee is one of her many. Being that she was in Pittsburgh rapper Mac Miller's video last year, she has anything but doubts for her future.

In order to expand her dance resume, the eleven year hip-hop veteran began taking ballet and contemporary. "I can connect with contemporary on a better level. Ballet is so unnatural... you have to do things you don't normally do," the senior explained.

With her senior project out of the way, Maurizio is ready to look past her high school career and focus on her future.

"I plan to attend college at the University of Pittsburgh for Psychology but only as a back-up. I want to dance and choreograph for artists, movies, music videos, you know the deal," she said. "One day I would like to own my own studio somewhere where I can teach people how to become famous in the industry because I never had that."

## WEIRD News

SHANGHAI- A Shanghai online gamer murdered a competitor by stabbing him to death because he had sold his friend's cyber-sword. 41-year-old Qiu Chengwei, stabbed competitor Zhu Caoyuan repeatedly in the chest after he was told Zhu had sold his "dragon sabre".

A "dragon sabre" is one of the assets you can win in the popular online game Legend of Mir 3. Legend of Mir 3 features heroes and villains, sorcerers and warriors, who often have huge swords to fight with. Qui reported Zhu to the police, but was told the virtual weapon was not real property protected by law. Paying by fingerprint at the supermarket Customers of a German supermarket chain will soon be able to pay for their shopping by placing their finger on a scanner at the check-out.

BROCKPORT, N.Y. — A 10-year-old upstate New York boy's message in a bottle dropped in the Atlantic as part of a school project has been retrieved across the ocean in the Azores. Curtis Kipple of Adams Basin, west of Rochester, wrote a letter in March along with his fellow fourth graders at the Fred W. Hill School in Brockport. The bottles were dropped into the Gulf Stream, 30 miles off shore, by a fisherman from North Carolina's Outer Banks. The Democrat and Chronicle of Rochester reports that the school received a return email this week from a tiny fishing village on the Azores archipelago off Portugal, about 2,600 miles from Brockport. The email said the bottle was found by a father and son out fishing.

BURLINGTON, Vt. — Police in Vermont say a woman who might have been angry about a dead raccoon left on a street took its bloody carcass to City Hall and angrily slammed it against the building's doors. Burlington police say the woman left the raccoon's body outside City Hall before walking off one morning two weeks ago. Witnesses have told the Burlington Free Press the animal might have been hit on a nearby street and that the woman might have been upset no one from the city had come to collect it. Police say the woman faces a possible vandalism charge. They also say her actions created a public health hazard.

ATHENS, Ohio- Athens County Sheriff Pat Kelly tells WBNS-TV the homeowner had a right to protect his property and himself. Kelly says that's what authorities believe the homeowner did Thursday when he chased the burglar and tied up the man's hands and feet. Kelly says when deputies arrived to investigate the theft at the southeast Ohio home, they found the suspect restrained in the back of the homeowner's car. He says the homeowner recognized the robber and went to his residence to subdue him. Homeowner William Stanley tells the television station his video game systems were taken earlier Thursday, and he later found the man in his home.

WISCONSIN- Two brothers were charged with disorderly conduct after police came across Facebook photos and a YouTube video of the two on a "planking spree," which included stiff-as-a-board poses atop a memorial monument, a police squad car, a bank ATM machine, and merchandise displays at Walmart and Lowe's stores, "the Smoking Gun" reports.

<b>SCG</b> <b>SHALER CULTURE GRID</b>		<b>What is your favorite Christmas movie?</b>	<b>What is the best stocking stuffer?</b>	<b>Who do you want to meet under the mistletoe?</b>	<b>What do you want for Christmas?</b>
	<b>Senior Julie Daw</b>	<b>The Year Without a Santa Claus</b>	<b>Christmas socks</b> 	<b>John F. Kennedy</b>	<b>To get into the college of my choosing</b>
	<b>Teacher Mr. Mitchell</b>	<b>Christmas Vacation</b> 	<b>Tube socks</b>	<b>My wife</b>	<b>A full time job</b> 
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	<b>Teacher Miss Susany</b>	<b>Christmas Eve on Sesame Street</b>	<b>Toothbrush!</b> 	<b>Kris Letang</b> 	<b>World Peace</b>