

The Oracle

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Student Newspaper Of Shaler Area High School

December 2018

SA teacher among select few working in Antarctica

by Stephen Adametz

In November, a Shaler Area Elementary School teacher took the trip of a lifetime: a trip to Antarctica. Mr. Mike Penn, is a GATE teacher at the Elementary School. One of a few teachers in the country selected, Penn went through an extensive process to be picked for the program called PolarTREC.

Apart from Antarctica, Penn traveled to Christchurch, New Zealand. He spent three days there under quarantine before taking a US Air Force plane to McMurdo Station in Antarctica.

This year was actually the second time Penn applied for the program. Last year, he was rejected, but he sat down with his students and showed them his application. He was very open with them and asked them how they thought he could improve his application. As a member of the army and being able to speak German, Penn thinks these things may have helped him stand out.

According to the website, "PolarTREC (Teachers and Researchers Exploring and Collaborating) is a program in which teachers from the United States (both formal and informal) spend 3-6 weeks participating in hands-on field research experiences in the polar regions." The team Penn will be working with will be doing field research in meteorology.

For the application, Penn also had to write 14 page essays, have multiple clearances, and was tested in 47 areas of competency. Furthermore, PolarTREC met with Shaler Area School District Superintendent Mr. Sean Aiken, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Bryan O'Black, and Shaler Area Elementary School Principal Mr. Ian Miller.

To prepare for the climate, Penn ran ten miles a day and was even asked to gain ten pounds. However, Penn said it is very hard to gain that much weight while also exercising and preparing his body for the expedition.

When his team reaches the South Pole, the expected temperatures are at least twenty below zero. The coldest temperature ever recorded in Antarctica was 89 degrees below zero in 1983. To combat these extremely cold temperatures and the 9,300 foot el-

evations, team members will be equipped with special clothing and equipment.

"Due to the drastic changes in climate and elevation, a lot of the training is done to adjust our cardiovascular systems," Penn said.

Penn also traveled to Alaska to train in the Arctic conditions and took training classes in Madison, Wisconsin. During the training stints, Penn learned EMS training, climbing tactics, how to perform blood transfusions, and arctic survival.

He is hoping not only his students, but all elementary school students will be inspired by his journey.

The goal of the trip is to "get kids excited about science and get them interested in going into a possible career in the science field," Penn said. "Not many people know someone who has been to Antarctica," Penn said. "Knowing someone who has been there will make it seem more possible."

The atmosphere in the elementary school leading up to his journey was very supportive. Aside from just his students, many people in the building have been showing their excitement.

"Kids I have never seen before come up to me in the hallway and give me a hug," Penn said.

Many students have also written Penn postcards in their classes.

At the pole, Penn looks forward to experiencing no sound or no smell. He also said there will be no darkness during his time there. As they are venturing far into the center of the continent, there will also be no animals.



Mr. Penn in Antarctica

"There will actually be very little wildlife where we are since we are so far away from the coast," he said.

When many of us think of Antarctica, the penguins of Happy Feet may come to mind. However, most of these animals will stay within 30- 40 miles of the coast, while Penn will be much further inland.

Penn said the most important thing he'll be taking, in his opinion, will be his camera. For a once in a lifetime opportunity, he hopes to capture as much as he can.

Penn's journey will take at least four weeks, but should expect it to be closer to six. If it does, he will not be home until after the holidays. With a large family, Penn is not looking forward to being away from his kids, but said he has experienced it before as he is a member of the US Army.

He will not be able to skype his family, but they will have satellite phones and email that he can use to communicate with loved ones back home.

"I probably won't be back in time for Christmas, and I'll definitely miss Thanksgiving. My family isn't excited about that, but we've done it before," he said.

Moisture issues from summer still delaying SATV

by Stephen Adametz

For students who have been in the high school before, one highlight of the day is watching the SATV morning announcements. This year, the announcements have only been done over the PA system, and many are wondering why.

The mold school officials found at the beginning of the school year delayed school by three days and shut down various classrooms, including the TV studio. For the first two weeks of the school year, Mr. Lee Myers' room was placed on quarantine and classes were conducted in room 214. Quite a few of the first floor classrooms that serve electives were closed, including the robotics and preschool room also.

One of the most important pieces of equipment to the studio, the video switcher, was damaged by the mold. The circuit board inside the switcher eroded from moisture damage. The board was sent out to be fixed in California, and still has not returned.

The switcher, one of the most important pieces of equipment for SATV, is used to switch between different video sources for the show and is necessary in order have the show.

"The switcher is the heart of our system," Myers said.

He said it controls what device you see on screen, so different videos can be played together.

"It keeps everything together. We can't have the show without it," said SATV senior Brandon Kurzawski.

Replacing the switcher would have been very expensive. It was \$500 just to

repair it, and a new one would have been \$8,000. The warranty did not cover it because it was a moisture problem.

In the meantime, the board is being fixed and SATV crew members have been finding other things to work on. They are learning about other pieces of equipment and working on videos for intros to different segments. They have also been filming commercials to advertise different events in the school.

Students and faculty are asking him every day: "when will it be back, what happened, and why?" Myers said the students in SATV are getting very impatient in particular because they signed up for the class, and aren't getting to do it.

The staff was originally expecting the switcher weeks ago, but it seems the delivery has been pushed back "a week or two" quite a few times already.

"I've emailed them three times," Myers said. "Every time it's the same response."

Regardless if it does, it is still "ridiculous how long it is taking."

Myers said that they are waiting for parts to be sent in from Japan. The parts they need are on backorder.

At the beginning of the school year, the crew was out of their room for a week, and the cameras had mildew on them.

Although many have already forgotten the mold issues as we head into Christmas break, some classes are still feeling the ramifications that came with the issues over the summer.

Mr. Myers is hoping the switcher will arrive soon. He knows a lot of people rely on the television announcements since it's better than listening to someone over a loudspeaker.

Attendance secretary keeps busy keeping track of us

by Brandon Kurzawski

Whether you have an early dismissal, arrived late to school, or have to turn in an excuse from a missed day of school, there's always a lady sitting right at the Attendance Office desk directly when walking into the main doors of the school.

Mrs. Lynn Galbraith is the attendance secretary of Shaler Area High School, the one everyone will see every time they walk in late or need to turn in an excuse. Though interactions may be brief with Galbraith, she has a story behind her with many things that people may not know about her.

Galbraith grew up in Shaler and graduated from the old Shaler Area High School. At the time, the High School was located on Mount Royal Boulevard where the current Shaler Area Middle School stands.

After graduating, Galbraith went to CCAC for secretarial classes. After taking classes, she found herself taking on secretarial jobs at the Association for Retired Citizens. Galbraith also worked as the district secretary for Radio Shack.

Eventually, Galbraith found herself back in Shaler Area where she took on a job at Marzolf Elementary School as a classroom aide for a blind student for three years. Galbraith also worked at Shaler Area High School prior to her role as the attendance secretary.

An opportunity arose for Galbraith to become the attendance secretary at Burchfield Elementary School, so she took the job and was there for three years before she started her current position as the Shaler Area High School Attendance secretary.

Transitioning from younger students to older students wasn't any problem for Galbraith as she finds it easier to work with older students.

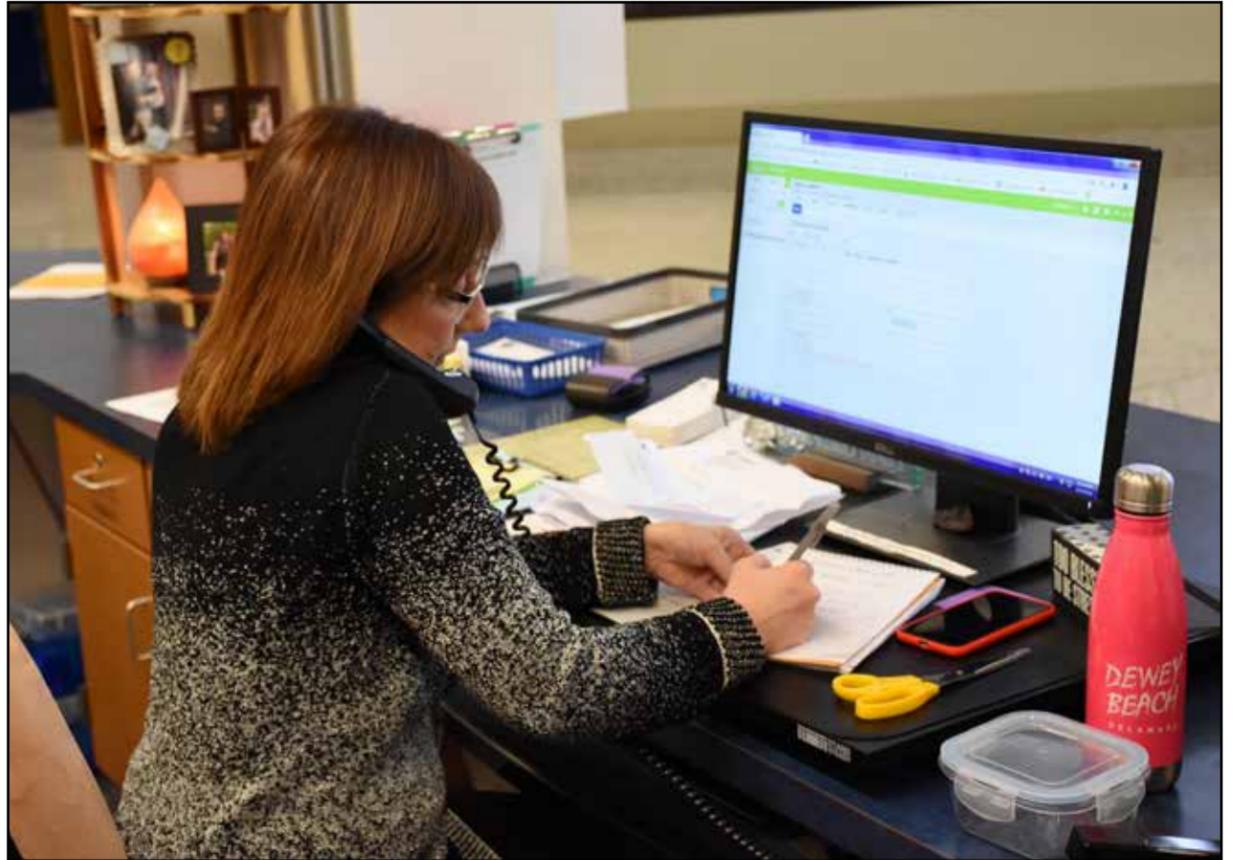
"I prefer the older [students]; you can actually carry on conversations with them," Galbraith said.

A typical day for Galbraith starts usually at 6:20am. People may wonder why Galbraith day starts so early and the reason for that is because she's very busy throughout her day with attendance.

"Basically, it is just attendance, but it just takes all day to do. There are days that I can have 50-75 kids come in late, so I have to enter all of that. I've had days where I've had 50 or more early dismissals

"There are students that try to call in and get themselves out, but I check phone numbers and call back just to double check. Even hand-written notes, I'll compare them to other notes that I have received; you can even tell by voices if they're a student."

-- Mrs. Lynn Galbraith



Mrs. Galbraith working in the attendance office (Aidan McKern)

and a lot of them are phone calls, so I have to take the phone calls and write them up and send for the students," Galbraith said.

Including student attendance, Galbraith is also in charge of the teacher's Act 48 hours as well as In-Service days. Whenever the teacher's have these days, Galbraith has to enter the hours into a separate state system.

Over the years, Galbraith has seen her fair share of student excuses for being absent or having to leave early. Some excuses Galbraith won't forget.

"I had a parent draw a picture of a student sitting in a tree holding a rifle hunting. Instead of writing it [the excuse], she [the parent] drew me a picture; she always drew pictures. It was interest-

ing," Galbraith said.

Often, Galbraith has students trying to get out of school early rather than getting through all nine periods. For her, it's easy to tell when a student is trying to get out by themselves early.

"I get them all the time; there are students that try

to call in and get themselves out, but I check phone numbers and call back just to double check. Even hand-written notes, I'll compare them to other notes that I have received; you can even tell by voices if they're a student— don't try to sneak out. I'll probably catch you," Galbraith said.

While Galbraith does enjoy her job, she finds it frustrating when teachers don't send attendance or whenever parents call in early dismissals rather than writing a note.

"It can get overwhelming trying to get all those notes out to the kids; I prefer that a student brings in a note in the morning, it makes it easier," Galbraith said.

For Galbraith, the best part of her day is being able to be with students throughout her day.

"I just like the students; that's actually why I chose a job here at the High School because I really enjoy the students and the interaction with the students," Galbraith said.

Infinite Campus has its many advantages for students and teachers. For Galbraith however, it makes things more difficult as she must have attendance from all teachers the same day.

In the past, Galbraith was able to put in attendance for students the next day if a teacher had forgotten to do attendance or was out that day, but now attendance must be submitted the same day.

Cont. on page 3

Items in vending machines, Titan Shop limited by laws

by James Engel

Michelle Obama may no longer be the First Lady of the United States, but her effects on school food and beverage are still being felt. The chocolate milk machine outside of the Athletic Office has been put on a timer and the machine sells no milk until 3 p.m..

This loss of milk has been devastating to many throughout the school, including athletes that seek a nutritious drink after exercise.

"Chocolate Milk is important for athletes post-workout, and when the school deprives us of that beverage, they deprive us of our recovery," senior varsity swimmer Eddie Sheets said.

Although chocolate milk may be the hardest goodbye to our beverage menu it is not to the only drink to go. The Pure Leaf Iced Tea in the vending machine across from the Gym A is also noticeably absent from its former home and it will not return.

The juices that previously inhabited the top row of the machine across from the Activities Office are now gone, and replaced with smaller bottles that are government compliant. Beverages are not the only thing being affected though.

The Titan Shop has lost many of its staple items, and the vending machine next to Gym A is turned off. The snacks currently stocked in the machine are not classified as "Smart Foods", which are approved by the Federal government.

"We are working with the company to put Smart Foods in the machine," Activities Director Mindy Thiel said.

The Titan Shop has lost many previously enjoyed items, including Cheetos, Peanut Butter Crackers, original Doritos, some popcorns, and even Wrigley's Gum. Now all snacks currently sold are in compliance with Federal legal standards. Thiel said the search continues to add snacks that are compliant with federal regulations.

"We are always looking for new snacks to add," she said.

With the loss of so many snacks and drinks that many students previously came to count on, a loss of revenue for the machines and Titan Shop is also expected which will negatively impact class funds. The profits drawn in from these locations is split four ways and distributed among the classes.

"Class Funds will be directly affected by these limited sales," Thiel said.

With this crackdown, some question why that some mornings school goes can walk in and purchase donuts or crepes, but not chocolate milk or Pop Tarts. The reason for this is exemptions offered by the government. Each school is given ten of these exemptions a year, which are used for things such as donuts sales.

Many efforts are being made in Washington to reverse or lax the current laws regarding snack and beverage sales outside the cafeteria in schools, but thus far, nothing has been approved. At this point, our only hope is to bring our own milk or wait until 3 p.m..

OPINIONS

Out with the elephant and the ass, in with the zoo

by James Engel

The country is divided. That is clear. I've got it. Everyone's got it.

Our current President carried Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Ohio in the previous election. All of these states were previously Democratic strongholds and were ignored by "their" party, which cost Democrats key votes.

Voting now is based on what has been placed into your skull by your family members and their choice of media. Plenty of people's political affiliation is rooted in, "My father was a Democrat" type of defense.

You need to vote for yourself in the present. Politics is not something to be bequeathed in a will and passed on.

Here's the solution to the country's divide: create new and more representative parties and liquidate the old ones. America is the most diverse country on the planet and only two parties represent us. That is not enough.

All other functioning democracies have many different political factions. Germany has seven parties in the Bundestag. Canada has five parties in its Parliament. France has 14 different parties, seven in each of its houses. Sweden has eight parties in its Riksdag. The point of our two-party system is to force cooperation between parties, but neither party has sought cooperation with the other.

The majority party in Germany, the CDU, holds

34% of their higher house, therefore they must cooperate with differing factions of the Bundestag to pass legislation, therefore their legislation is more representative of the whole, and ultimately the country is more unified.

In America, the first party passes its laws and when the other party is voted in, it repeals them. America has served as a role model for each of the above countries, and it is time for us to turn to them. We cannot allow ourselves to be the dying old man of the western world.

In the 2016 election, the poor and middle class of the United States were given two candidates: one worth 4.5 billion dollars and another worth \$45 million. How does that happen?

99% of the country can never hope to make nearly that much money in their entire lifetime, and yet they were presented to an election where the "poorer" candidate is worth \$45 million. The 99% lacked anyone who truly represented them.

The majority of our citizenry cannot truly be represented by an official who is paid millions by lobbyists and businesses. Don't vote for a "mainstream" candidate if you don't agree with him/her. Vote third party, or vote independent, or create your own party.

The fact that it is possible to enter a polling place and vote red or blue down the line without even seeing the names of those running is disgusting.

Voting cannot and must not be a thoughtless process, and to not attempt to halt the vicious cycle of

American party politics is either an act of blissful ignorance or satisfaction at the low status quo we have set.

Both parties are dead set on the badmouthing and/or reversing the other party's policies. We will forever be locked in this downward spiraling stalemate until the voters cease to support their monotonous and useless feuding.

Let's start anew and let's try to fix things in a different and more effective way. Voting back and forth between the two parties has brought nothing but unwarranted animosity between otherwise peaceful neighbors. We cannot let this continue, it is not feasible for the survival of our country. 2020 is calling for change.

"However [political parties] may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion."

George Washington said that, and we have ignored his words for more than 200 years, and have thus allowed ourselves to be subverted and usurped, just as he said. We must, as a people, explore options other than our current two engines, and free ourselves.

Busy keeping track of us

from page 2

"This new system is harder. I have to put in attendance for every teacher that is out for every period because they can't put it in the next day; it's blocked out to the teachers, so this system is actually a little more work," Galbraith said.

Outside of school, Galbraith spends most of her time with her three grandchildren. She also has spent much of her time after school helping her daughter open up her own hair salon.

"I helped out my daughter with opening up her own hair salon a year ago, so I [keep track of] all of her book keeping; all of her bills and everything she buys and her pay roll for her salon," Galbraith said.

While Galbraith is currently the Attendance Secretary of Shaler Area High School, she did have other jobs in mind rather than working as a secretary.

"I wanted to go into music therapy and work with special needs students; that's what I had originally set out to do; I was real involved in theater in high school and even after high school for a while and I've just always liked the music aspect," Galbraith said.

If students are looking to make their High School experience more enjoyable, Galbraith recommends students get involved like she was in High School.

"You'll enjoy school more, make a lot of friends, and make a lot of good fond memories for after graduation," Galbraith said.

After years of being an attendance secretary, Galbraith knows all the tricks in the book for sneaking out of school. As well as being the attendance secretary, Galbraith has been able to help special needs students which she originally wanted to do. With all this in mind, Galbraith is a great part of the Shaler Area High School staff and continues to follow through with her career path.

We want to hear from you!

Have something to say?

Have a story idea you want us to cover?

Have a reaction (good or bad) to one of our topics?

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Maybe see your comments printed here in our next paper



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The Oracle

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The Oracle is the official student newspaper of Shaler Area High School. Although it is published by the journalism classes, one does not have to be enrolled in a class to contribute.

Opinions expressed in The Oracle are those of the individual writers. Letters to the Editor are encouraged and welcome. Any letter intended for publication must be signed, but names will be withheld upon request. Articles and letters may be mailed to the high school (ATTN: The Oracle) or emailed to oracle@sasd.k12.pa.us.

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

Displays in classrooms help make each one unique

by Brandon Kurzawski

In every classroom, there are certain features that stick out and make the room unique. Although it may not be something big, whatever the detail is makes the room different from another room in the

school. In Shaler Area High School, there are several unique rooms throughout the building. Some of these rooms may have little features that stick out from the rest such as painted walls, or may be creative with artwork and posters you won't find in other classrooms throughout the building.

World language rooms are already unique compared to other rooms in the High School.

Mrs. Jessica Alexander teaches Latin in room 119. In her room, she has a bulletin board that she calls her "Latinus murus famae," which translates to Latin Wall of Fame. Every year, she takes pictures from Latin Honor Society events and makes a bulletin board out of the developed pictures. These pictures are from events such as their trip to Italy in 2012, making fleece blankets for Light of Life, Pumpkin Painting, Saturnalia at Olive Garden, Latin Honor Society Induction, and other events throughout school years.

"My 'Latin Wall of Fame' bulletin board is a way to showcase all of the wonderful service projects and activities that our Latin students are doing. It's also a way to recognize our Latin students that have gone above and beyond," Alexander said.

Mr. Steve Balsomico, the Japanese teacher, has a classroom full of Japanese culture and items from his many trips to Japan. In Balsomico's room, the first thing that may catch people's attention is the large Katakana symbols painted on the back wall as well as Japanese phrases written in Hiragana in front of the white board.

With all the Japanese culture in the room, there's also a random gorilla hanging from the ceiling.

"My first year of teaching, a student left the gorilla in my classroom and I had emailed the student, and the student had told me I could keep it, so I put him up there, and he's been hanging there for 7 years and has never come down," Balsomico said.

World Language classrooms will be different based on the different cultures taught in those rooms, but other classrooms throughout the building have their own culture and unique things.

Ms. Hilary Domencic, an American Literature teacher, has a classroom full of student artwork from previous school years as well as the current school year. As the school year goes on, pieces of artwork change to fit the current literature piece students are studying.

"I love to decorate with student art whether it be things I bought at Art Shows in the past or that students have made from creative response projects for my class," Domencic said. "Every year I add more



Some of the classroom decorations mentioned in the story include:
 Top – Artwork hanging in Mr. Haberman's new classroom
 Left – Mr. Balsomico's room
 Above – Mr. Schott's classroom

things to it and I really like that reflection of what students are capable of beyond the normal expectation of my class."

One thing students may not notice or think much of is a wall decoration hanging in the back of the room opposite of the white board. The decoration reads, "Be kind for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle." Domencic stands in front of this each day on purpose for a reminder to be kind and fair to all regardless of the day she is having.

Mr. Eric Schott has a room filled with posters and decorations. Not a fan of the white walls, Schott fills his classroom with posters such as his wall sized Lego Batman poster in the back of his room.

"In a room without windows, I wanted to try to make the room a little more vibrant for the kids and for me. So, there are a lot of outdoor scenes and a bunch of motivational posters to go with my corner of Batman, Star Wars, and Stephen King stuff," Schott said.

Some may also notice random souvenirs from different areas of the world. Over the years, Schott has collected several souvenirs from students who went on vacation during the school year.

"I would joke when signing extended absence

forms that the students needed to bring me something back and some students actually did, so I have everything from a Disney princess snow globe to a vile of sand from Cozumel," Schott said.

Mr. Thomas Anke, an Economics teacher, has a classroom that changes as time moves on. If you look in the back of Anke's room, you'll notice a bookshelf full of miscellaneous items that were either gifted or left behind including an Obama mask, with its face shaped with a football with a wig and viking hat on top of it.

Anke also has in the corner of his room on top of a shelf an Elvis portrait that he made in 8th grade during his woodshop class. Ever since then, he's held onto it and kept brought it to his classroom.

Mr. Nick Haberman, a World Cultures and Holocaust teacher, has a tri-panel assembly line painting made by Nicole Cmar, a former student, for a Holocaust class project that students may see in his classroom periodically.

"I don't keep it up all the time because I don't want the lights to destroy it, but whenever I take it out, in any class whether it be World Cultures or Holocaust class, this is a one of a kind work of art left for the classroom," Haberman said.

Some classroom walls are even painted a different color rather than white. Though this may seem like it's not a big deal, compared to the other rooms, these rooms specifically stand out. Mrs. Melissa Ravas recently had her white walls painted over the summer to make her room more enjoyable.

"I think the white is too stark; when you put a little color in the room, it makes it more relaxing rather than looking like a hospital room," Ravas said.

No matter what classroom you find yourself in, you'll notice the unique characteristics of every room. Some rooms may or may not be decorated as much as the other, but regardless, all classrooms are different in every school.

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Parental consent will be required for those who are under age 18.

Participants will be compensated for each stage of the study.



The Oracle eats at Le Thai Cafe

by Eddie Sheets and James Engel

For Shalerites intrigued by southeast Asian cuisine, look no further than Le Thai Cafe on Mt. Royal Blvd. When the weather is nice seating outside is available, but the inside decor also offers a comfortable setting for an evening Thai meal. The menu offers many appetizing meals, but it can be difficult to make a decision. Customers will have a choice on the spiciness of their dish on a 1 to 10 scale, 1 being least spicy and 10 being spiciest. Below is a list of some of the staff's personal favorites:

Eddie: Green Curry with Fried Tofu
Recommended Spice Level: Beginner: 1 or 2, Novice: 4 or 5, Master: 9 or 10

Price per person including 20% tip: \$15.54
Description: Dish consists of a variety of vegetables including, but not limited to, eggplant, carrots, green beans, and bell peppers, and is spicier than its red curry cousin. The tofu and vegetables are doused in a green curry sauce consisting of coconut milk and green curry paste made from green chilies and other spices and herbs. The curry is served alongside a plate of rice. Chicken, pork, seafood or other forms of protein can be added instead of fried tofu, including steamed tofu, but the fried tofu goes best with green curry sauce.

James: Crab Rangoon
Price for 5 or 6 Crab Rangoons including 20% tip: \$7.80

Description: Crab Rangoon, similar to the fortune cookie, is a mostly American invention, though it is based off of Burmese cuisine and other Southeast Asian influences. Inside the crispy shell is a smooth blend of warm cream cheese and crab meat. Neither element of the inside overpowers the other, and they blend to make a very unique flavor. The crunchy wonton shell juxtaposes the inner creaminess for a pleasant effect. This small dish is one of the best appetizers Le Thai Cafe has to offer.

Eddie: Pad Thai with Chicken or Shrimp
Recommended Spice Level: Beginner: 2 or 3,

Novice: 5 or 6, Master: 10
Price per person including 20% tip: \$13.80
Description: One of the most well known dishes from Thailand, Pad Thai is an assortment of slim, long rice noodles, mung bean sprouts, slim carrot strips, crushed peanuts, and a protein. Shrimp is the best protein option for this particular dish, but chicken also works.

James: Cashew Nut Stir Fry with Chicken
Recommended Spice Level: Beginner: 4, Novice: 6 or 7, Master: 10

Price per person including 20% tip: \$15.54
Description: This stir fry was tangy, sweet, and sour. It contained an amalgamation of several different vegetables including onions, peppers, and carrots. The dish was spiced with garlic, and garnished with mushrooms for added flavor. But let us not forget the star of the meal, the cashew. This nut added a unique flavor to the chicken, and gave the dish a crunchy texture. This entire dish is lathered in a sweet chili sauce that only adds to the flavors your taste buds will be greeted with. These components add up to a delicious and flavorful meal that will not disappoint.

Eddie: Pad See Ew with Chicken
Recommended Spice Level: Beginner: 2 or 3, Novice: 5 or 6, Master: 10

Price per person including 20% tip: \$13.80
Description: My personal favorite Thai dish since I was first introduced to the cuisine, Pad See Ew consists of thick rice noodles, broccoli florets, carrot slices, and a protein stir fried in a unique Thai soy sauce. Best protein for dish is probably chicken, but other meats also go well with the dish.

For those seeking a new experience in culinary cuisine, Le Thai Cafe is a wonderful place to begin such a journey. Though the dishes may be on the pricey side, the food is well worth it, and the restaurant offers an atmosphere associated with fine dining. For individuals who do not want to extensively travel to try new foods, Le Thai Cafe is a nice, local option.

WEIRD News

** Parents of students at a British elementary school are complaining after an assignment that involved the "murder" of a Christmas elf.

Parents said 8- and 9-year-old students at Flowery Field Elementary School in Hyde, England, arrived for class to find a crime scene had been set up, complete with the outline of the "murder scene" involving an Elf on the Shelf.

"There was a crime scene in one of the classrooms," a mother of a fourth-grade student told the Manchester Evening News. "There was police tape and a table had been knocked over. The idea was Elf had been murdered by another Elf. My daughter came home and she was absolutely traumatized."

Headteacher Ian Fell said the elf murder scene was part of a writing assignment.

** A Colorado police department shared audio from a 911 call placed by a 10-year-old boy who needed help -- with his math homework.

The Fort Collins Police Department posted a video to Facebook featuring the audio from a 911 call from a boy who was stuck on a long division problem.

"Hi, this isn't an emergency, but I'm 10 years old and I'm working on my math homework right now and I can't figure out what 71 divided by 3,052 is," the caller says to dispatcher Chris Clow.

Clow helped the boy find the answer: 42.9.

"Disclaimer: Not all dispatchers are as skilled in math and/or readily equipped with calculators as Dispatcher Chris," the department wrote, reminding residents to only use 911 for real emergencies and to call the police's non-emergency number for other questions.

"It should be noted that FCPD is not responsible for incorrect homework answers. If you or your child believe you need police assistance with an assignment, please contact your School Resource Officer during school hours," the post said.

THE GRID		How did you find out the truth about Santa?	The Christmas song you never turn off?	What's the one thing you want to know about your future?	Who is the one teacher you'd recommend to everyone?	Fortnite is...
Freshman Sofia Tapu		My mom told me when she didn't want to give me extra presents anymore	Happy Christmas by John Lennon	Where am I going to live	Mr. Williams	...actually kind of fun to play. I like that a lot of it is strategy.
Sophomore RJ Rebholz		I asked my dad for a PS4 and he got mad and told me	All I want for Christmas is You	How I will die	Mr. Stadelman	...cringy
Junior Blake Kucharski		My dad was tipsy and came downstairs with the presents	Jingle Bells	How wealthy I will be	Ms. McConville	...dead
Senior Carson Landolina		I was in 6th grade when my parents sat me down and told me.	Carol of the Bells by Trans Siberian Orchestra	Do I stay in Pittsburgh?	Mr. Haberman	...an alright game
Faculty Mr. Sarkis		My grandfather told me.	Little Drummer Boy	What are tomorrow's lottery numbers	Mr. Sarkis	...two weeks

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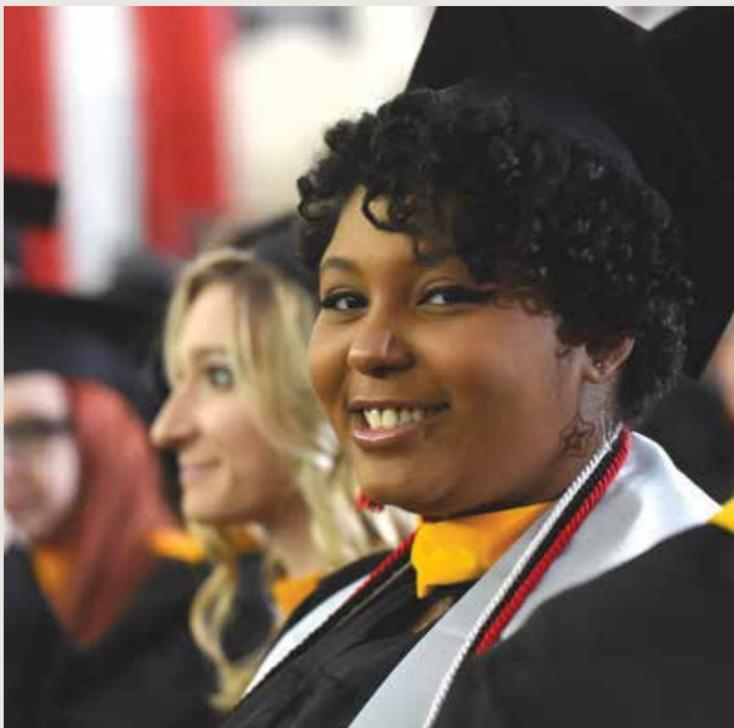
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Collaborate with like-minded high school and college students to flex your creative muscles in an immersive design project. Get up close and personal with the La Roche campus, tour our design studios and scope out a residence hall. Hear firsthand accounts from current design students, faculty and professionals about opportunities in the field.



PREVIEW DAY | Saturday, Feb. 23

Get an inside look at La Roche by meeting current students and campus staff, touring campus and having lunch in the dining hall. Learn more about campus life and how to apply and pay for college.



COMMUNITY FINANCIAL AID NIGHT Tuesday, Feb. 26 | 6 p.m.

Get an overview of the financial aid process, learn how to apply and see how to complete the FAFSA.

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Saturday, March 9 • 10 a.m. to Noon
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OPEN HOUSE | Saturday, April 6

Talk to faculty, have lunch in the dining hall, tour campus and attend presentations by academic departments, admissions and financial aid.



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Volleyball season filled with improvement and awards

by Julia Falgione

The girls' volleyball team finished off a successful season with an 11-7 record. In the middle of the season the girls started a winning streak that lasted 8 games after ending many games in the fifth set with a loss.

The game against Pine Richland was a significant game for the team. Coach Paul Stadelman's and senior Oyinda Agbale's favorite game was the game played against Pine.

"We competed the whole time and had a lot of confidence and we played as a team. The game required effort from the bench and the starters," Stadelman said.

Agbale, a senior starter, enjoyed this game tremendously.

"We went in really focused and knowing what we had to do. It was fun because a lot of people underestimated us and we were still able to win in their senior night," Agbale said.

The team started off the season playing North Allegheny, the defending state champions.

"They are good players. We played well against them. Not a lot of people can say they played the state champions two times in section play," Stadelman said. "The turning point was an away match at Butler because it was an adhesive win and a good rebound after losing against NA."

The volleyball team made it into playoffs. The first round of playoffs was played against Hempfield. Shaler won 3-1.

"It was exciting to finally make it further than the first round of playoffs," team captain Maizi Wohlge-muth said.

The team made it to the second round of playoffs facing Baldwin. Shaler lost the match 3-2, making it



Senior Oyinda Agbale makes a play at the net vs. Norwin. (Photo Ken Wunderley - Tri State Sports & News)

to the 5th game.

"I thought we played well, but we had error when they did not. In a 25 point set we could have come but, but a 15-point set was over before we were even ready," Stadelman explained.

Both Oyinda and Stadelman attended the Big 56 Fall Sports Banquet after the season had ended. Stadelman was chosen to be Coach of the Year by his fellow coaches. Oyinda was chosen to be AAAA WPIAL section 1 first team middle hitter.

"It was a really cool experience to get a plaque that have my name and the name of the award on it," explained Oyinda.

The team this year came back from many losses. The girls learned from their mistakes and turned early season losses into late-season wins.

The most rewarding part of the season for Stadelman was "watching the players improve and get better. Also watching everyone work together, support each other and play well together."

Two Cross Country runners represent Shaler at state meet

by Eddie Sheets

339 days of running in a year. Give or take.

That is what Dalton Kalbaugh's training schedule looks like. Lots of hills, lots of miles. For freshman Sam Hennen there is literally and figuratively a lot of distance to be covered in the future.

Both junior Kalbaugh and freshman Hennen have potential as runners, and they have both reached the state level.

Kalbaugh finished 46th at the PIAA meet with a time of 17 minutes, 10 seconds.

It is no surprise though considering his insane training schedule. Dalton takes a break from running once every two weeks.

Running a hard ten miles with lots of hills at North Park or Hartwood Acres on a Saturday or Sunday is never out of the question. Mile repeats on the track at a 5:10 or 5:20 pace are a personal favorite.

He has been running competitively since he was twelve years old, a total amount of time now going on five years.

Sam, a freshman this year, placed 58th at the PIAA meet and finished in 21:40. She never shies away from putting in the work herself. A strong runner in middle school, she would often come in the top three at local high school meets this past year.

"Being a ninth grader, to get to the state meet and be one of the best is a huge accomplishment," coach Justin Es-

kra said in an interview with the Tribune Review.

Through sheer grit and hard work both runners aspire to improve their place at States next year. This means more grueling practices, but it is a price they are willing to pay to become faster. Since cross country has ended winter track has now begun. The mileage is still being put in, and there are numerous meets scheduled for the season.

In the past the opportunity to go to an indoor track was usually limited, with only one or two indoor meets. Kalbaugh, along with some other teammates, is hoping to break the school record for a relay. Following winter track is spring track, and for runners like Kalbaugh and Hennen the entire summer will consist of running regularly.

However, this marks only the beginning of a future career in running. Kalbaugh plans on running marathons in his adult life for time in addition to other running events of different distances.

Hennen has three more years to see where running takes her in high school alone. Many marathon runners continue to run for time at a competitive level well into middle age, unlike many sports where athletes taper off once they reach thirty.

Kalbaugh, a runner now beginning to see the payoff of his efforts, has a long, steady running career ahead of him. Similarly, Hennen, only a freshman, has a long road ahead of her, that if she sticks to, is lined with success.

Titans' season surprises



Joey Kremer runs vs Hampton (TribLive.com)

by Brett Briselli

The Shaler Area Varsity Football Team surprised many people this year. After winning only two games in the past seven season, the Titans won four games this past season and qualified for the playoffs.

Going into the home game against Hampton, the Titans had not won a home game in seven years, but that all changed against Hampton as Shaler pulled off a 29-28 comeback win and overcame a 21-6 deficit in the process.

At the end of the season Shaler Area only needed one more win to make the playoffs and they did just that by trouncing Fox Chapel 62-0.

But Shaler Area's playoff run lasted just one game as it lost to West Allegheny, but it was a great season nonetheless for the team.

Coach Ryan thought from the start the team had a chance to make playoffs but didn't want to say that to his team.

"My fear was if I would put that in front of them too soon it would take away the immediate goals that we had to accomplish," Ryan said.

The standout players this year were running back Joey Kremer, who was the first player to rush for 1000 yards in 15 years, and quarterback Darin Mizgorski who was the first quarterback to throw for more than 1500 yards in 15 years.

"It's quite a while since we have had 2 milestones like that accomplished," Ryan said.

Shaler Area inducts new Athletic Hall of Fame class



Standing: 2009 Hockey Team, Scott Palmer and Tracy Hann honoring their father, the late Skip Palmer.
Sitting: Erich Kaiser, Tim Gralewski, Steve Sciuлло, Jerry Dickinson, Sam Robick

Jerry Dickinson- Jerry was a 2-year starter on the Boys' Varsity Soccer team, team captain his senior year, and the kicker on the football team. A two-time all-section all-star and senior year All-WPIAL selection. Jerry continued his career at Holy Cross, where he was the Crusader and Patriot League Defensive Player of the year, and 3-time team captain. Jerry became a Fulbright scholar after graduation.

Tim Gralewski – Tim was a 4-year letterman in both Varsity Baseball and Varsity Basketball at Shaler, captaining both teams his senior year. He was a 1986 North Baseball All-Star, a WPIAL baseball All-Star, and led the 1987 titans with a .444 average, with 7 homeruns and 34 RBIs. Continued his career at Pitt.

Erich Kaiser- Erich was a 2-year starter for

the Titans Boys' Soccer team, and team captain his senior year. He led the 1986 team to the section championship. At Slippery Rock, he earned all-region honors in 3 seasons, captained the team, and was selected to the Slippery Rock Ring of Honor. Erich also coached the Titans, being named Section Coach of the Year in 1996. He was also the Director of Player Development in the Hampton Soccer Club.

Skip Palmer – Skip assisted head coach Rich Massucci as the Lady Titans Softball team won a State Championship, then won 4 section championships, a WPIAL championship, and a State championship when he assumed control of the program as head coach.

Sam Robick- Sam was a 3-sport, 4-year letterman for the Titans (Football, Basketball, Track).

He was a Fab 22 North All-Star in football, and 3rd team All-State. He attended Tulsa University on a football scholarship.

Steve Sciuлло- After starting at Shaler for 2 seasons, Steve received a football scholarship to Marshall University. There, he became a starter for the Thundering Herd, and was a member of a MAC championship team. He won All-Conference honors, and played professionally in the NFL, including the Super Bowl.

2009 Boys Hockey Team- The 2008-09 Hockey team were section champions, Penguins Cup champions (equivalent to WPIAL champions) and PA State runners-up. Three team members went on to play collegiately for 4 years, and one played professionally.

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