

The Oracle

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Student Newspaper Of Shaler Area High School

March 2016

“The Addams Family” set to take the stage

by Kayla Snyder

Shaler Area High School will be putting on the production of “The Addams Family” for this year’s spring musical. The creepy, cooky, mysteriously spooky family is taking over the auditorium stage tonight at 7pm, tomorrow at 7pm, Sunday at 2pm, March 11 at 7pm and the final show will be on March 12 at 7pm.

“The Addams Family” may sound like a darker musical, but actually, it is comical and light-hearted. The story is focused around the daughter, Wednesday Addams, a twisted teenager, who falls in love with Lucas Beineke who comes from what seems like the perfect American family.

Wednesday wants to bring Lucas home to her family for dinner. She hopes for one normal night with her abnormal family. Throughout the story, Wednesday learns that acceptance and confidence is the most important thing.

“This show is mostly comedy and it’s a modern musical,” said senior Zak Marshall who plays Lucas Beineke. “There are funny characters and the show doesn’t take itself too seriously.”

Mrs. Kristin Tepshich, one of the directors, said this story is not just about the quirky family you hear about from TV.

“I really think it’s about an underlying message,” Tepshich said. “So many people are striving for normalcy, but there is no clear definition of what normalcy is. The whole point of the musical is to teach you to accept yourself and others for who they are.”

The musical this year is considered a lesser known musical which presents challenges for the cast, pit and crew. From the music to the accents, this show tests the performers.

“It’s a different challenge, sound and genre for the kids to tackle,” director Ms. Kristen Susany said. “The hardest part is always putting all of the aspects together. Sometimes the pieces are seamless and sometimes we have giant holes and then sometimes the pieces just don’t mix.”

Challenges aside, this musical is unique for a number of reasons. One is that every ensemble member has the chance to be his or her own individual character that has to be developed. Senior Tori Lorenz, who plays Wednesday Addams, said this aspect makes the experience fun and interesting.

“This production is cool because it gives everyone the opportunity to be their own character,” Lo-



Senior Kylie Byers and junior Dan Bittner rehearsing (Lauren Davis)

renz said. “In this show, we have the ancestors as the ensemble and they can be from a variety of decades which makes it really unique because they can create their own character. That brings something special to the show.”

In addition to the characters, the set for the production is also something creative and different compared to previous years. Set designer Mrs. Jeanne Marshall said that student artwork will be featured in the show this year.

“I wanted student artists to help because Shaler has a fantastic advanced art program,” Marshall said. “They’re painting a series of windows that will be suspended from a bar and they will drop in to suggest a second floor finished background. On either side of them, we will hang very large paintings and that’s the portraiture that the other artists are creating.”

“The Addams Family” is a comical show with humor that is intended for students and young adults. There is an overall entertainment factor that is made for high schoolers.

“The humor reaches from young adult to adult with some kid jokes,” said junior Dan Bittner who plays Gomez Addams. “The humor is something high school students will appreciate and come to love if they see the show.”

However, Tepshich said that some of the innuendos and jokes in the original production had to be modified to make the audience feel comfortable watching the show.

“There’s a fine line between keeping things authentic because that’s how they’re written and between making sure that we appeal to our audience,” Tepshich said. “We’re not just putting on a theatre production, we’re also bringing together a community. There’s still some subtle underlying jokes that adults will get a chuckle at but nothing blatant that a young child would question.”

Despite the changes, Tepshich also said the show still should intrigue the audience from the very start.

“It’s one of those shows that you can keep coming back to every single time and see something new,” Tepshich said. “I think the audience is going to want more. It’s one of those musicals that you get wrapped up in, you’re not just sitting back and watching the show because you feel included in this quirky family. You feel connected to everything going on. It’s going to be something that intrigues them to come back for more.”

Tickets are being sold in the Activities Office, Reserved tickets are \$10 and General Admission tickets are \$7.

Scholarships available to help offset college costs

by Maddie Eichenlaub

Both students and parents worry and stress about the money that college education is going to cost them. Scholarships can help take away some of that stress.

In the guidance office, a huge bulletin board is full of available scholarships for students. Students are able to pick up an application for any of those scholarships on the table below from the corresponding folders.

“Most range from \$500-\$1500, maybe as high as \$2000. The scholarships don’t always list the amount because it depends on the amount of money the scholarship committee raises during their fund raising events,” guidance counselor Mrs. Mary Beth Miller said.

There are a handful of scholarships that do get applied for by a lot of students. Some of them are easy to apply for because the student only has to complete one page of information. Some are popular because the criterion applies to a large group of people. An example would be a scholarship that lists volunteer services as part of the criteria. That scholarship is usually applied for by many students since so many students volunteer with Key Club and other organizations.

Local scholarships, like the Glenshaw Century, are also popular with the stu-

dents. The Heather Claire Miller and Mary Ruth Jeffery are the most popular. Scholarships for Band, Chorus, or musical participants are always very because of the large number of students that participate in those programs.

However, certain scholarships have a very specific criterion that limits applicants to minorities or people going into a certain field. “There are ones for students going into engineering and you at least have to have your initial major as engineering in order to apply for it,” Miller said.

Shaler Area Education Association, or the teacher’s union, has its own scholarship it awards a student. The student needs to be planning to pursue education as her or his major.

While some of the scholarships receive many applicants, other scholarships are unpopular among students.

“A consistently under applied scholarship has always been the Millvalin. Initially offered to students from Millvale, but when no one applies, it’s opened up to all students planning to attend CCAC,”

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OPINIONS

Keystone Cops

Content, hidden costs, revised graduation guidelines all part of Keystone controversy

by *Antoni Miladinov*

Have you passed the Keystones yet? These standardized tests are a pain in the butt for everyone.

“Do I agree with the test’s content? No, I think a lot of the tests are geared more toward kids who are definitely college bound whereas the whole point of school should be preparing you for life-long learning and whatever lies ahead. Not every student goes to college, not every student should be required to know the content at that level,” physics teacher Mr. Greg Mason said.

The Keystones are primarily designed to test kids on material that they will need for college. This is an unfair test to give all kids considering not all kids are going to go to college. How about a test that is fair for all students whether they are college bound or not?

“I don’t hate the idea for students being accountable for their own learning. I don’t think that this test does the job correctly,” biology and anatomy teacher Mr. Scott Krenn said.

With the implementation of the Keystones, people don’t realize how unfair it is not only to the students but also to the school.

“I don’t know if they realize how much of an unfunded mandate it is. In December we will be giving the Keystone exam over 6 days. It will just be in the mornings so that amounts to 3 full days. That costs us money because teachers need to proctor the exam, teachers need to monitor the exam, and we pay them their regular salary and if they work extra and help us out with that then we pay them for their time,” Royall said.

The funding that is needed ranges from the exam, teachers proctoring the exam, teachers being trained to change the material they teach and teachers for remediation classes for students who don’t pass the exam.

The Keystones aren’t the only tests in the district that are government mandated, but they are the ones that will most affect high school students and their plans for post-

secondary education. Basically, Shaler Area, along with all other public districts in the state, is being forced to spend money it doesn’t have in order to ensure students can take and pass the exams they might not even need.

Though the Keystone has its issues, Shaler Area is not to blame for this.

“There was some conversation when the Keystones were being developed that school districts could develop their own assessment and many school districts said ‘well let’s just use our final exam as the assessment.’ But the federal government said they had to approve the final exam and it needed to meet their criteria. It was such a difficult process that school districts defaulted to the Keystone exam. The standards that the state had were very cumbersome,” Principal Dr. Timothy Royall said.

Originally, the federal government was to blame for the improper testing material that the Keystone has. With a change in legislation, this is not the case anymore.

It may seem that there is no stopping the Keystones, however, on December 9, 2015, the United States Senate ruled to abolish the No Child Left Behind Act and to enable the Every Child Achieves Act.

This new act removes the federal government’s negative educational policies. Each state will now have the ability to assess its own schools, measure the achievements of those schools and decide how to help struggling schools.

The state Senate is now finally making moves that will affect the Keystones. On Wednesday, January 20, Senate Bill 880 was approved by the state Senate and was signed by Governor Tom Wolf on February 3. This new bill will postpone the graduation requirement of passing the Keystone exams until 2019.

This means the class of 2016, 2017 and 2018 won’t have to pass the exams or take any remediation classes. It’s sad to see all of the time and resources that have been wasted on kids to pass these tests when now, they’re not a graduation requirement.

Kesha case highlights problems with abuse cases

by *Kaitlin Parente*

Pop star Kesha Sebert recently attempted to end her contract with Kemosabe Records, a sublabel of Sony Music Entertainment, because her contract forces her to be in contact with her producer Luke Gottwald who allegedly raped, drugged and abused her from 2006 until 2014.

There are no criminal charges against Gottwald, known as Dr. Luke, in place. Kesha’s civil suit was only to get her away from the one responsible for the alleged mental, physical and sexual abuse she endured.

The court ruled that Kesha could not leave her contract because there was not enough medical evidence supporting her abuse claim. Consequently she must still make six more albums with Sony Music Entertainment. Kesha and her mother were spotted in the court room sobbing at the news that she will be forced to work with her alleged rapist.

The first alleged occurrence of Kesha’s sexual abuse was roughly 10 years ago. Because of this, some people are calling her a liar because she did not report the abuse immediately. Kesha claims that Dr. Luke separated her from her family and alienated her from loved ones, which is why she did not feel safe reporting the abuse.

According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), 68% of those who are sexually abused never report the abuse. Of the 32% that do report abuse, statistics suggest that half of the victims waited more than a year before coming forward. Additionally, RAINN states that only 3% of all rape accusations are false.

Some do not feel safe coming forward due to the abuser being in close contact to them and others are unable to speak of and recount the monstrosities that happened to them. Victims also deal with the humiliation that comes with publicly reporting rape.

Even when victims do report the abuse, only about 2% of all rape charges result in the rapist going to jail, according to RAINN.

Outrage over the ruling in the Kesha case has spread throughout social media with trending hashtags like #FreeKesha and #SonySupportsRapists. Trending hashtags will not change the outcome of Kesha’s case, but hopefully something good will come from the bravery she displayed by coming forward, like a change in the way sexual abuse cases are handled.

What I don’t understand is how Zayn Malik was able to get out of his contract at SYCO Records and leave One Direction because he claimed to be “unhappy” and did not have the creative freedom he aspired for, but Kesha claims that she’s been raped and she’s not allowed to leave hers?

Zayn didn’t even have to go to court in his case, yet Kesha is going on two years of being in court and a final decision over her alleged abuse has yet to be made. Maybe I’m just being an “angry feminist” here, but that is messed up.

Kesha isn’t the only one who has trouble in court cases dealing with rape and abuse. The amount of cases that go unnoticed and unsupported every year has become a serious issue.

The first questions still asked when someone reports a rape are: “What were you wearing?” and “Were you under the influence of alcohol or drugs?” God forbid someone asks the rape victim if they’re OK or need someone to talk to.

Support for Kesha has been strong including celebrities such as Lady Gaga, Demi Lovato, Lorde, Ariana Grande, Adele and Sara Bareilles through social media. Taylor Swift has shown her support for Kesha by donating \$250,000 to support her.

Despite all the support and publicity Kesha’s case has garnered, it is still not likely to change the outcome of her case or the 293,000 cases of sexual abuse that occur yearly in America according to RAINN. It is disgusting that this is even a topic of conversation. Things need to change in the way sexual abuse cases are both handled and perceived. I don’t want to live in a world that treats rape cases the way this world seems to treat them.

#FreeKesha

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Terrorist group ISIS rooted in strict religious beliefs

by Kaitlin Parente

The terrorist group currently plaguing the globe has quite a complicated back story. Known by three different names, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), or the Islamic State (IS), got its start as an al Qaeda break off group.

Back Story

Like the start of big terrorist groups, such as al Qaeda, it always revolves around one main point of action or belief. In the cases of al Qaeda and ISIS, their reign of terror is consistent in attempting to restore a major religious belief throughout the state and government.

Statistically, the majority of the Middle Eastern countries are Muslim. However, there are two main sects of the Muslim religion: Sunni and Shiites. While it seems like there would be little to no conflict between the two main sects of the Muslim religion, it is the opposite.

This goes back to the very basis and start of the Muslim religion, right after Mohammad and his family's murder.

"In terms of religion, the central difference between the Sunnis and Shiites is over who they believe should lead the Islamic community, or ummah," World Cultures teacher Mr. Matt Hiserodt said. "Shiites felt that the leader should be a blood relative of Mohammed, specifically Ali, and Sunnis felt that anyone who was holy and like Mohammed could lead after his death. This person became known as the caliph (means representative as in representative of God on earth) and he was viewed as both the religious and political leader of the growing Islamic state. The state or empire itself became known as the caliphate – a country where religion and law were one and the same. A stated goal of al Qaeda and later

ISIS is to reestablish the caliphate, something that has not existed since the breakup of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. This is very much a Sunni notion as Shiites reject the legitimacy of many of the later caliphs."

Al Qaeda, and now ISIS, identify as Shiites, which is the stricter of the two sects because of their belief on final judgment after death.

While the Sunnis believe in individual judgment, Shiites believe in group judgment, meaning that everyone surrounding them and their actions—good or bad—will affect their final judgment, causing Shiites to have very strict, oppressive, and violent rules to follow in order to ensure that all of humanity will go to heaven together in the end.

Because of the differing beliefs on judgment, ISIS has reinstated Sharia Law, which brings behavioral restrictions and consequences of your actions back to the ways of 8th century Islam.

Sharia Law, which cannot be changed, states that *any* opposition or criticism towards Mohammed, god, or the Quran is not allowed, a man is not allowed to marry a non-Muslim woman, women cannot drive, four men are required to testify in court alongside a woman for a case of rape to be proved against a woman, and Muslims should actively engage in Taqiyya, which is lying to non-Muslims to make Islam seem better.

These laws and many other, more gruesome laws cannot be broken in the current ISIS implementation of the Sharia Law. If they are broken, that per-



son can easily be punished by a merciless death or amputation(s). The Sharia Law is the reason why so many public executions, crucifixions, amputations, and other acts occur at the hands of ISIS.

Important Facts to Know

Religion is important in the vast majority of Middle Eastern countries, so much so, that there is rarely a split between state and religion. The leader of ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, is currently based in Syria, where a civil war is occurring.

This long, bloody civil war is only further complicated when you bring ISIS into the mix, which is trying to enforce Sharia Law, which is not accepted among the Sunni population. However, in Iraq, 65% of the population is Shiite, which is why there is more backing for ISIS in Iraq than in Syria.

Because of those who have opposed ISIS, according to CNN, at least 17,000 citizens have been murdered, at least 100 children have died of thirst and many women have been sold into slavery (a number was unable to be attained). Unfortunately the numbers will only continue to rise unless ISIS is stopped.

ISIS has also taken a bold approach to social media, posting reactionary politics and religious fundamentalism, along with executions, announcements, and threats.

Civil War, refugees and ISIS all part of Syria's story

- Current Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad, who has been in power for almost 16 years, runs an authoritarian regime, which means Assad is an absolute dictator. The Assad family regime has lasted for the past 46 years, after Bashar's father, Hafez al-Assad, appointed himself leader in 1970. The religious groups are so severely divided that the government is of a Shiite sect of Islam and the rest of the country is of the Sunni sect.

- The Syrian civil war began in March of 2011 when teenagers were arrested for painting revolutionary phrases and descriptions on the walls of the schools. They were then tortured for their vandalism under command of Assad. In response to this, there was a large pro-democracy protest where government security opened fire on protesters and killed several people.

- Violence spread throughout the country quickly and a civil war officially broke out between the Assad regime and rebel forces. The rebels tried to take control of cities, towns, and the countryside, but were immediately met with government forces. According to the United Nations, by June 2013, 90,000 deaths were attributed to the civil war. That number continued to double yearly from 191,000 deaths by August of 2014 and 250,000 by August of 2015.

- According to BBC News, currently, 11 million people have been forced to leave their homes and a total of

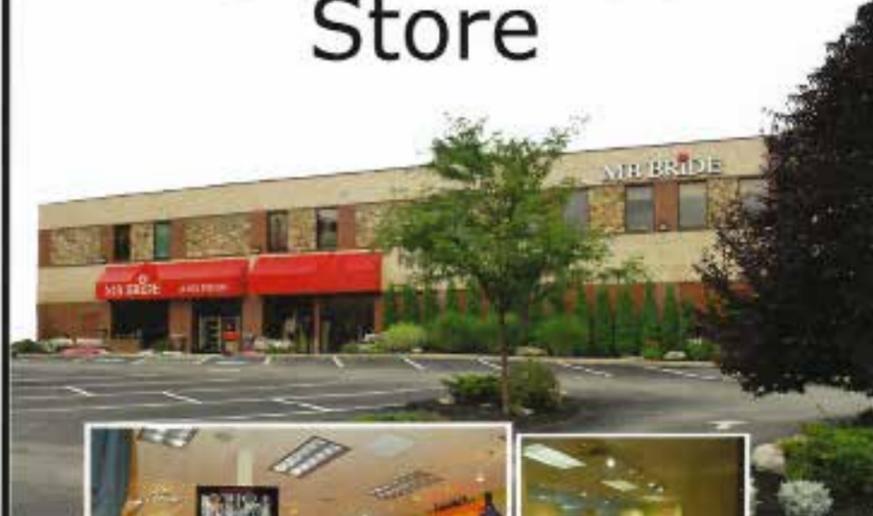
12.2 million are in need of humanitarian assistance; 5.6 million of that total are children. 7.6 million people have been displaced within their own country and 4 million people have fled the country as refugees into nearby countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, which are currently struggling to accommodate the large amount of people seeking refuge.

- There is a debate going on currently over allowing Syrian refugees into the country. This is mainly because of the many terrorist threats that the Islamic State militants, which occupy northern and eastern Syria, that are directed towards the U.S. Allowing in refugees has the possibility to compromise the country's safety because there is no way of really knowing whether or not the refugee is an Islamic State militant.

- Many states have now refused to allow refugees into their borders, even though President Obama has asked for all states to welcome the Syrian's into their borders, very few have complied. Pittsburgh, however, has. Mayor Bill Peduto has publicly announced that Pittsburgh will welcome Syrian refugees into the city during the next year and a half, and asked that the city of Pittsburgh welcomes the refugees, according to The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

- This very complicated debate only gets stickier and more heated with many threats coming from the Islamic State as the situation continues to develop with no clear end in sight.

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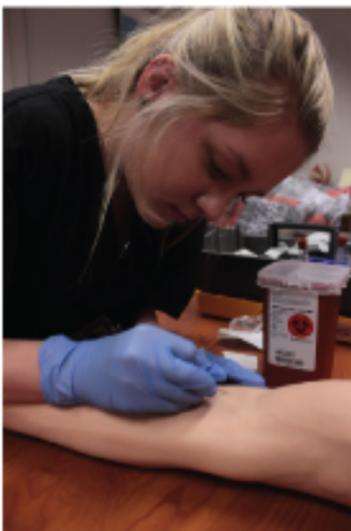
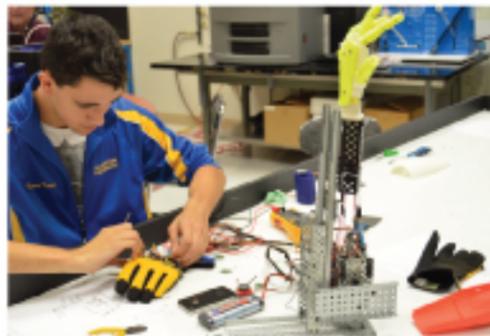
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Shaler Area one of few still using class rank

by Kayla Snyder

Within the past decade, seven of the nine schools districts represented at the A.W. Beattie Career Center have either eliminated or found alternatives to reporting traditional class rank to colleges and universities. However, Shaler Area is one of the two districts still using the class rank system.

The traditional class rank system was set up to compare students to their peers and to determine a valedictorian and a salutatorian, but the system has become one that hurts students more than helps them.

“At one point, [class rank] was a system to outline the quality of the individual student in comparison to one another,” guidance counselor Mr. Mat Anselmino said. “It gave admission counsellors a chance to really see how certain students stacked up within a particular school... It’s an antiquated system that doesn’t indicate a student’s true value or success within a school,” Anselmino said.

There are some positives to having a class rank system in place, but the benefits are only realized by students who fall in at or near the top of their class.

A few years ago, the school board was presented a proposal to eliminate class rank. However, parents whose children were some of the top ranking students fought to keep the system in place.

“The families who are maybe in the top 20 highly value class rank. I also think (the desire to keep class rank) is based on a lot of tradition. Shaler takes pride in holding on to some strong traditions,” assistant principal Mrs. Joanne Townsend said.

For scheduling purposes, Anselmino believes the traditional class rank system is a disservice to all students as those near the top of a class try to manipulate class selections to increase their GPA, and consequently, class rank.

“Students that may have a desire to really explore a content area but simply do not have the space (in their schedule) beyond lunch aren’t given the opportunity to actually take the class,” Anselmino said. “Students who may want to take another Science class, for example, in lieu of their lunch, haven’t been able to, simply because it would give them an unfair advantage in class rank. All students are negatively impacted because of the fact we limit their scheduling opportunities.”

“With a true number one system, students are sometimes motivated to take weighted classes just to increase their GPA to try and be #1 more so than taking classes they are truly interested in and want to learn from.”

**-- Mr. John Baxter
Fox Chapel High School**

Other local school districts including Avonworth, Deer Lakes, Fox Chapel, Hampton, North Allegheny, North Hills and Pine Richland have found alternatives to class rank or have eliminated it.

“We got rid of class rank to encourage students to focus more on learning instead of a number,” Avonworth guidance counselor Ms. Nicole Levis said.

“Also, we found students were not getting admitted to post-secondary schools because of their rank.”

Avonworth is just one of the local schools that has eliminated class rank. However, a majority of the other districts have found alternatives to the system.

Fox Chapel adopted the decile system to report class rank in categories instead of an individual number. They take the total amount of students and break them down into 10% slots which represent the decile. For example, the first decile would be for students falling in the top 10%, second decile top 20% and the third decile would be the top 30% and so on.

“With a true number one system, students are sometimes motivated to take weighted classes just to increase their GPA to try and be #1 more so than taking classes they are truly interested in and want to learn from,” Fox Chapel High School guidance counselor, Mr. John Baxter said. “Competition is not always healthy in this respect.”

Even though Shaler Area still utilizes the class rank system, Superintendent Mr. Sean Aiken wonders if class rank is worthwhile.

“I just don’t know if [class rank] means anything to the next level. It should serve a purpose. Is this purely for bragging rights or is this to help you get into the school of your choice?” Aiken said.

Several local colleges and universities including

LaRoche and the University of Pittsburgh do not focus on class rank. Class rank, at one point, used to be a deciding factor for the majority of colleges and universities, but times have changed.

“LaRoche College does not use class rank in making an admissions decision,” LaRoche Admissions counselor Terrance Kizina said. “We consider the following in making an admissions decision: the courses taken in high school, how they relate to the major in which the student is applying to and how the student has performed in those courses, the student’s

overall grade point average as computed from the high school and SAT or ACT scores, which will be superscored.”

Mr. Marc Harding, the chief enrollment officer at the University of Pittsburgh, said that the admission decision for Pitt is not solely based on a student’s class ranking.

“Class rank is reviewed as part of the high school transcript. The admissions committee considers it a factor, but with holistic review, it is one of many factors,” Harding said.

The question becomes: Why is Shaler Area sticking to a system that many high schools and colleges seem to be minimizing in importance or eliminating altogether? As Townsend suggested earlier it could be as easy as one word: tradition.

“Shaler Area is a middle class, blue-collared community,” Activities Director Mrs. Mindy Thiel said. “The people that live here are very proud of what Shaler has been built upon because that’s who we are. Once people get engrained that is how we’ve always done it, that’s how it should be, in their mind.”

With the election several new school board members and the selection of a new district superintendent over the past couple of years, the topic of the class rank system may be revisited, but that does not mean it will be changed.

“To make any big changes in a place like Shaler is hard because there is so much community and tradition here... I’m not opposed to change, but change for the sake of change is not necessarily good. Change for the sake of making something better is something that I would be in favor of,” Aiken said.

Get “A Taste of Shaler”

by Alyssa Wolfarth

On Saturday, March 19, from 5pm-7pm, the Shaler Area Education Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting educational needs and advancing the curriculum, is holding its first annual fundraiser in the Shaler Area High School cafeteria.

Profits made at this event will go to additional resources to further the education of the students here at Shaler Area.

The Shaler Area board of trustees has been planning this event since September.

“We are very excited to invite the community to join us in supporting the Shaler Area School District by raising money for initiatives, scholarships and mini-grants that will expand classroom programs and student opportunities in the district,” Dr. Timothy Royall, president of Shaler Area board of trustees and principal of the high school, said.

There will be food from several local restaurants including Frank’s Pizza and Chicken, Demore’s Pizzeria, Le Thai Café, Hog’s Heads Bar and Grill, The Nutrition Group, Cole Café, The Boulevard Restaurant and Bar, Pasquale’s Pizzeria, Wilk’s Eats and Treats Deli and Luca’s Pizzeria.

In addition to the food, The Bleil Brothers will be playing Jazz music.

Patrons will also be able to look at many different art pieces. These pieces are brought to you by the talented student artists at Shaler Area.

There will be a silent auction throughout the night and the highest bidder on each art piece will be able to take it home with him/her.

Finally, a \$5,000 Duquense University scholarship will be up for auction. The starting bid will be \$2,500 and the highest bidder will receive the scholarship. The auction will begin the night of the fundraiser and continue until Thursday, March 31.

Tickets are available now in the activities office for a donation of \$20 or you can get one at the door for \$25.

Shaler Area music on display at Band-O-Rama

by Shayla Nyugen

On February 11, over 300 musicians took the stage to participate in the second annual Band-O-Rama. The musicians consisted of students from the Elementary School, the Middle School and the High School.

An event that allows band students from different grade levels to perform together has been talked about for years as it would also allow parents and students to see what the future looks like in the band department. The idea finally came to life last year with the school’s first Band-O-Rama and a participation of roughly 130 students. This year 315 students shared the stage.

Mr. George Tepshich, the high school band director, said that the increase in numbers is due to the amount of elementary school students that joined this year.

“It is wonderful to see that the program is thriving in the younger grades and my hope is that this will

help to encourage the instrumentalists to stick with the program throughout their school career,” Tepshich said.

Band-O-Rama has been well received by both students and parents. Tepshich said that many people have told him how great Band-O-Rama has been for them or their kids.

“Everyone who either participated or watched the performance gave great feedback and enjoyed the performance. I received a wonderful email from a particular parent commenting on how one of our high school students helped her son throughout the evening. Her son is now very excited about coming to the High School in a few years,” Tepshich said.

Tepshich will continue to promote this event and he said that it will definitely happen again next year and for many years to come.

“Each year, I receive more and more feedback from students and parents about the life changing experiences that occur,” Tepshich said.

T H E I N S I D E

Shalerpalooza's smashing success



Dale Mangold (far right) and some of his costumed friends were part of the annual Shalerpalooza concert held on Feb. 20. The concert drew more than 300 people to Mr. Small's and raised approximately \$3000 for Shaler Area High School class funds. (Ryan McMahon)

WEIRD News

* A 3-year-old Egyptian boy has been sentenced to life in prison for a crime he allegedly committed when he was 16 months old.

In what appears to be a bizarre case of mistaken identity, a military court last week found Ahmed Mansour Qorany Sharara — and 115 others — guilty of killing three people and sabotaging public and private property.

The crimes allegedly took place during a January 2014 protest by supporters of ousted President Mohamed Morsy.

Ahmed was 16 months old when the demonstration took place. He was just a little over 3 years old when the military court sentenced him to life last week.

The boy was also sentenced to additional three years for related charges by a civilian misdemeanor court.

The military released a statement the following day saying the person wanted in the case was a 16-year-old with the same name as Ahmed, who had fled authorities. (CNN-Cairo)

* Manny the cat loves to take selfies, or at least fondle GoPro cameras. According to Instagram user @yoremahm, Manny learned to use the camera by chance when it reached out to touch the camera during a shoot one day. Now, Manny's selfies have become an Internet sensation.



"He is a stray, that is very intelligent, thinks he's a dog, follows us on walks, and is very, very friendly to humans," Yorem told Bored Panda. (boredpanda.com)

* An 18-year-old has been charged with fraud after he allegedly posed as an Ohio senator at a rural high school and gave a lecture to a class.

Documents provided to BuzzFeed News show Izaha Akins of Marion, Ohio, was indicted by a grand jury last week on one felony count of telecommunications fraud and one felony count of impersonating a peace officer for the December stunt.

Akins is accused of telephoning a teacher at Mohawk High in Sycamore to say he had been appointed to replace Sen. David Burke, who the teen said had resigned due to a illness, according to the Toledo Blade.

Burke had been scheduled to address students in January.

The teen then showed up at the school on Dec. 15, well-dressed and in a hired car with a private driver, having allegedly used the same story to defraud a dealership, Mohawk Schools Superintendent Ken Ratliff said.

Akins was then given a tour and spoke to a government class for 45 minutes.

"The presentation was about being active in politics, political processes," Ratliff told the Blade. "Everyone thought it was legit, bought into it, including the teacher." (Buzzfeed News)

* As if the European Union does not have crises enough, now traffic chaos in its congested capital Brussels is being blamed on hungry mice.

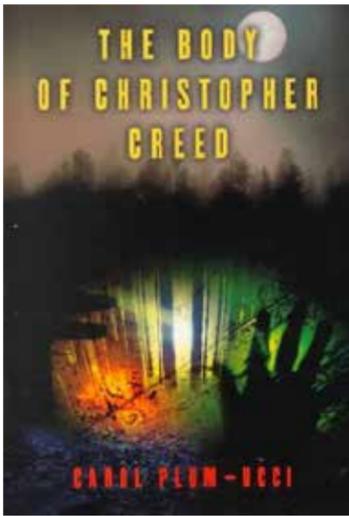
EU leaders, gathering for a summit on Thursday to deal with the refugee crisis and British threats to quit the bloc, find a city struggling to cope with repeated closures of key road tunnels caused by crumbling concrete and years of decay.

Now the Belgian capital's regional parliament has been told that repairs are being held up because original construction plans have been destroyed -- apparently eaten by rodents.

The tunnels provide vital arteries across what is often described as Europe's most traffic-congested city. But for decades the plans for their construction were stored in the pillars under a motorway bridge, for want of space elsewhere.

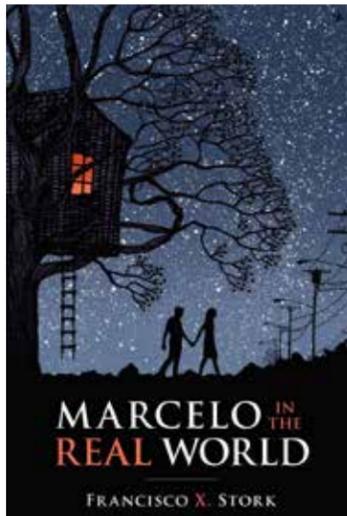
"They may have been eaten by mice," the former head of the city's infrastructure agency told city lawmakers on Wednesday. (Reuters)

Check these out (of the library)



Chris Creed grew up as the class freak—the bullies' punching bag. After he vanished, the weirdness that had once surrounded him began spreading. And it tore the town apart. Sixteen-year-old Torey Adams's search for answers opens his eyes to the lies, the pain, and the need to blame someone when tragedy strikes, and his world comes crashing down around him.

Marcelo Sandoval hears music no one else can hear--part of the autism-like impairment no doctor has been able to identify--and he's always attended a special school where his differences have been protected. But his father demands that Marcelo work in his law firm's mailroom in order to experience "the real world." He learns about competition and jealousy, anger and desire. But it's a picture he finds in a file that truly connects him with the real world: its suffering, its injustice, and what he can do to fight.



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usatodayhss.com/market/shaler-hs-pa



Best of Netflix Bracket

Parks & Recreation

The Office

Breaking Bad

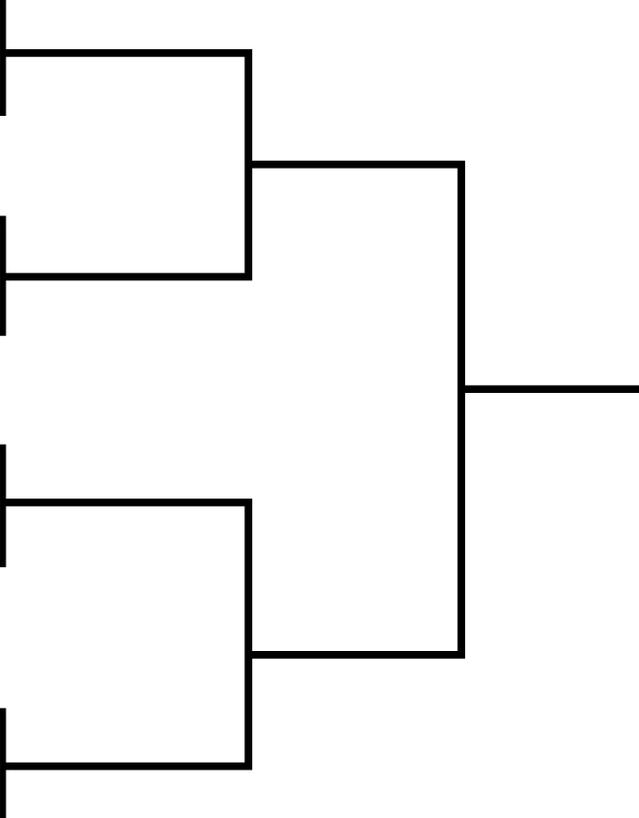
The Walking Dead

Grey's Anatomy

Friends

Orange Is The New Black

Making A Murderer



E D I T I O N

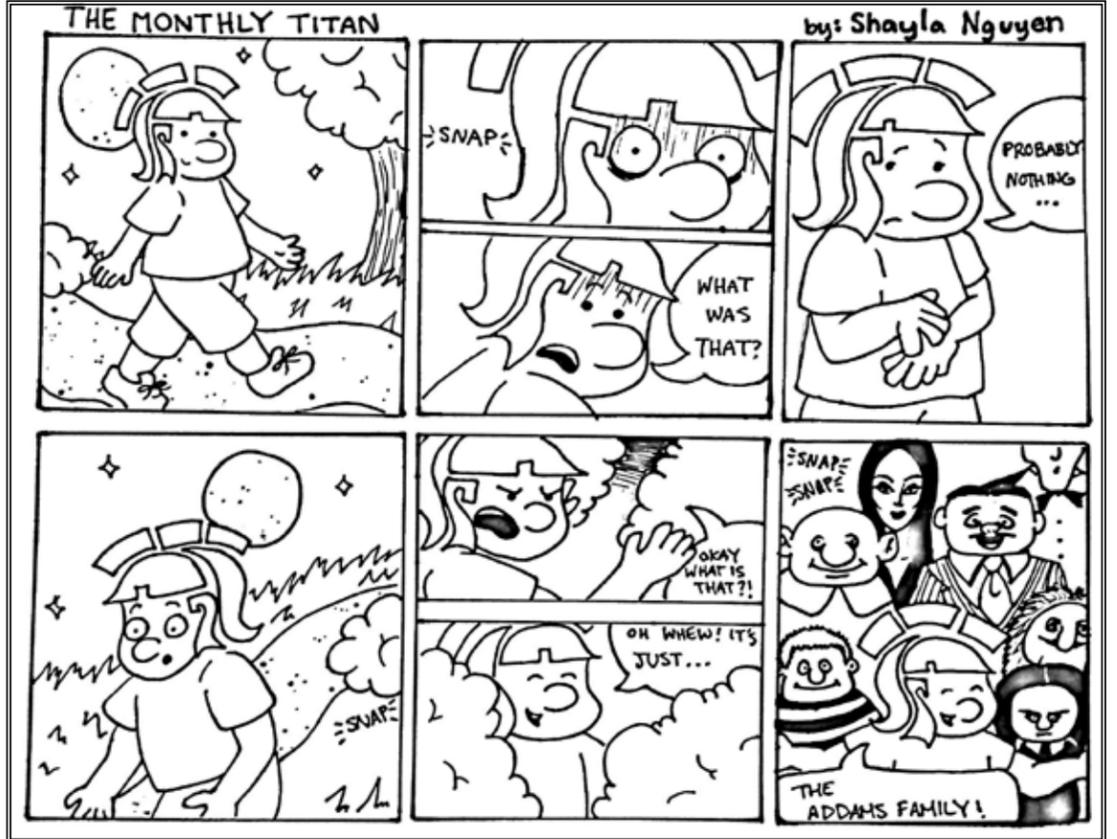
MARCH MADNESS

S L E Q V O U E M B W F R T E L Z S I G
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ARIZONA
 BAYLOR
 BEARS
 BLUE DEVILS
 BOILERMAKERS
 CAVALIERS
 DAYTON
 DUCKS
 DUKE
 FLYERS
 HAWKEYES

HOOSIERS
 INDIANA
 IOWA
 JAYHAWKS
 KANSAS
 KENTUCKY
 LONGHORNS
 MARYLAND
 MICHIGAN STATE
 MUSKETEERS
 OKLAHOMA

OREGON
 PURDUE
 SOONERS
 SPARTANS
 TERRAPINS
 TEXAS
 UTAH
 UTES
 VILLANOVA
 VIRGINIA
 XAVIER



Titans in Washington DC



On February 19, students from several classes travelled to Washington DC. The group took a walking tour of the WWII Memorial, Korean War Memorial, Lincoln Memorial (pictured above) and Vietnam War Memorial before heading to the Holocaust Museum or Newseum. The Newseum group witnessed the Presidential motorcade pass by as President Obama was on his way to the Supreme Court to pay his respects to the late Antonin Scalia that day.

THE GRID		Most embarrassing moment as a teacher?	If you could bring one musician back from the dead, who would it be and why?	If you could only take 3 items with you to a deserted island, what would they be?	What was your dream job growing up?	If you could be any age for a week, what would you pick and why?
	Mr. Tim Taylor	A student pooped in my classroom	Elvis, so that he could teach me to be a King	Sunblock, bugspray and a multitool	A public high school biology teacher	A baby, so that I could sleep, eat and be babied
	Mr. Dante Orsini	I sat on my desk and it fell over and so did I.	David Bowie; androgyn would be in again	Ron Larson's boat, Ron Larson's textbook and Ron Larson	Designer of the Hunger Games	22 because its a palindrome
	Mrs. Mindy Thiel	The first day on the job, I screwed up the Pledge. Completely forgot it.	Elvis. Just because he is Elvis	My family, kindle and chocolate Twizzlers	High school social studies teacher	100 so I could go on all the morning shows to celebrate my birthday
	Mr. Jeffery Ward	Told the junior class that their homecoming float was from the movie "It" instead of "Up"	One of the Beatles; everything they sang and played was a masterpiece	Running shoes, a heaping plate of nachos and peppermint tea	A stand-up comedian! I found a job where a crowd HAD to listen to my lame jokes	25 because its old enough to know better, but not quite enough to worry about things

Shaler grad works the sidelines at the Super Bowl

by Jared Panza

While no Steelers were playing on the field during the Super Bowl, Shaler alumnus Steven Labate was on the field. Labate is an athletic trainer for the Carolina Panthers and was there for the entire season, including being on the sidelines for the Super Bowl.

With such an interesting new career, Labate still has strong ties to his hometown where he realized what he wanted to pursue as a career.

"I knew I wanted to become an athletic trainer after shadowing Bill Coutts, Shaler Area's Head Athletic Trainer, during my junior and senior. He introduced me to the profession and thanks to him I was able to pursue this career at the highest level," Labate said.

After his graduation from Shaler Area, Labate attended California University of Pennsylvania, and later earned his master's degree in exercise science from South Dakota State University, where he served as an athletic trainer for the university football team. He also completed two consecutive internships his junior and senior years with the two NFL teams: the Cleveland Browns and the Buffalo Bills.

Labate returned home to get a more local job in Warrendale at the Pittsburgh Therapy Institute, in which he worked for 11 months.

Soon thereafter, Labate was hired by the Carolina Panthers as a seasonal athletic trainer.

As an athletic trainer for the Panthers, Labate's job starts at 5:30am and can go past 7:30pm. All that work behind the scenes is necessary for the players to perform to the best of their abilities, because of which, the staff must give up a lot of their time.

"There is a lot of sacrifice that is required with this job. What the fans see on a Sunday afternoon is just a small snapshot of what we actually do throughout the week," Labate said.



Labate holding the NFC Championship Trophy, won by the Carolina Panthers

With all that time dedicated to the job, Labate says how he rarely has time to make it home, noting how he had to miss holidays, birthdays, and weddings while on the job.

"The one part I dislike about my job is the fact that I spend a lot of time away from friends and family. Fortunately, my family and friends are my biggest support system and without them none of this would be possible," Labate said.

Labate has had the opportunity to experience things most people could never have imagined. He considers working in the Super Bowl one of his greatest moments.

"The Super Bowl was the best experience of my life. We left on Sunday, one week prior to the game. We practiced out in San Jose and stayed there

all week as well. It was really cool to go out early because only a few select groups from the organization get to go out early with the players and coaches," Labate said.

While many people would have loved to experience that, Labate says how it has been his dream job for a long time.

"I had the opportunity to live out my dream this year by going to the Super Bowl and by working in the NFL. Winning in the NFL is one of the best feelings in the world. I get to work with professional athletes on a daily basis and utilize my clinical skills at the highest level," Labate said.

One of the professional athletes Labate works most with is NFL MVP Cam Newton.

"Cam is one of the nicest guys I have ever met. He is so fun to be around and loves to joke around and always have a good time. He is so generous to the entire organization and is a first class guy. He also buys us dinner every Thursday night during the regular season," Labate said.

With the season coming to a recent end, Labate is now working with the players during the off-season, and preparing for next season.

"When most people think of the offseason, they think of everyone being on vacation. Football for us never stops. Immediately after the season, we are scheduling surgeries for players and getting ready for the NFL combine. The offseason is a time that we focus on rehabbing players and getting them ready for next year. Also, our days are shorter. Instead of working 85 hours a week, we now work 40," Labate said.

While Labate is fulfilling his dream of working in the NFL, his next goal is to get a job closer to home working for his hometown NFL team.

"I hope to move back to Pittsburgh one day so I can be closer to my family and friends and join the Pittsburgh Steelers medical staff," Labate said.

NFL and Sciuolo present SAHS with golden football

by Justin Jockel

Shaler Area was recently presented with a Wilson Golden Football through the Super Bowl High School Honor Roll sponsored by the National Football League. High schools, domestic and international, received a Wilson Golden Football for every player or head coach who graduated from that school and was on an active Super Bowl roster.

The NFL Foundation has donated over \$1 million in support of the program. Nearly 3,000 players and head coaches were honored and more than 2,000 high schools were recognized.

California received the most golden footballs, totaling 432, with Pennsylvania receiving the fifth most at 124. The Steelers had the second highest number of players that presented footballs totaling 215, while the New England Patriots had the most players at 256.

Forty-eight of the 50 states have received a golden football. Maine received one, marking the fewest number of footballs a state received. New Hampshire and Vermont are the only two states to still yet produce a player or head coach on a Super Bowl team.

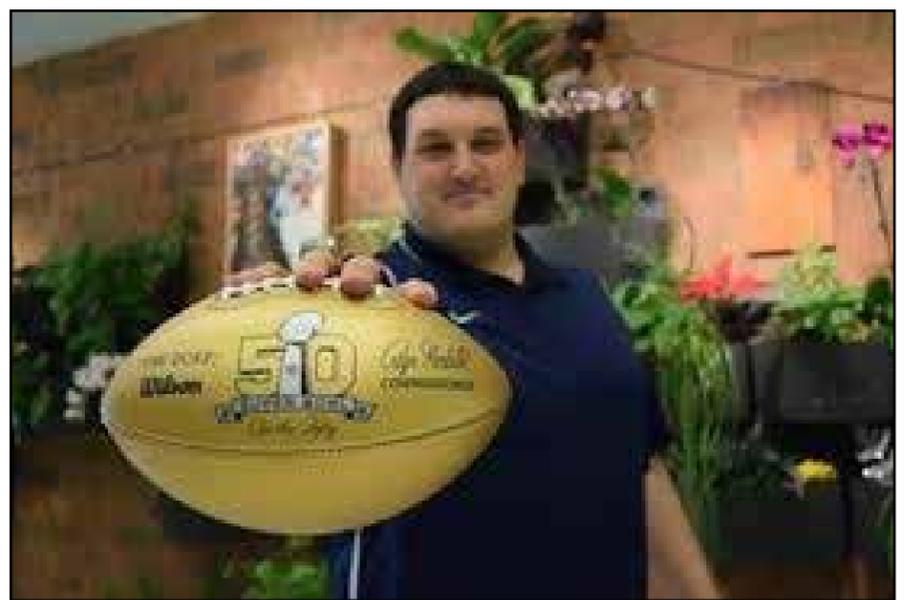
The player that represented Shaler Area in the program was former NFL guard Mr. Steve Sciuolo. Sciuolo graduated from Shaler Area and continued playing football at Marshall University.

Sciuolo had the pleasure of playing alongside two former 1st round draft pick quarterbacks while at Marshall, Chad Pennington and Byron Leftwich, who were drafted by the New York Jets and Jacksonville Jaguars, respectfully. Sciuolo said he had a great time while playing at Marshall and made lasting friendships.

"I had an unbelievable experience at Marshall and it really shaped who I am as a person. There is a clip that gets played constantly with myself and teammates carrying Byron to the line of scrimmage while he played with a broken leg," Sciuolo said.

Sciuolo stated he is blessed to have forged the relationships that he has through the game of football.

"I got to win championships after I left Shaler and I played with great players and was coached by great coaches," Sciuolo said.



Sciuolo presented Shaler Area with a golden football for his contributions in Super Bowl XXXIX-

Following his attendance at Marshall University, Sciuolo was drafted in the 4th round by the Indianapolis Colts. Sciuolo said the whole experience of being picked in the draft was unforgettable.

"A memorable moment for me was being drafted by the Colts while with friends and family in Shaler Township. So was getting to play for division champions in Indy with Hall of Fame member Marvin Harrison, future Hall of Famers Peyton Manning and Edgerrin James, and coached by Hall of Fame member Tony Dungy. The following year I played for the Philadelphia Eagles and got to play in Super Bowl XXXIX, obviously a career highlight," Sciuolo said.

Sciuolo is currently the head football coach at Deer Lakes High School where the Lancers are coming off their second playoff appearance in school history this past season. Sciuolo works as a paraprofessional at Hampton and his goal is to eventually become an Athletics Director.



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MY COMFORT ZONE AND
GREW AS AN INDIVIDUAL.
I LEARNED TO UNDERSTAND
OTHER CULTURES.

- JESSICA FINKE '15
Pre K-4 Teacher Education | Special Education



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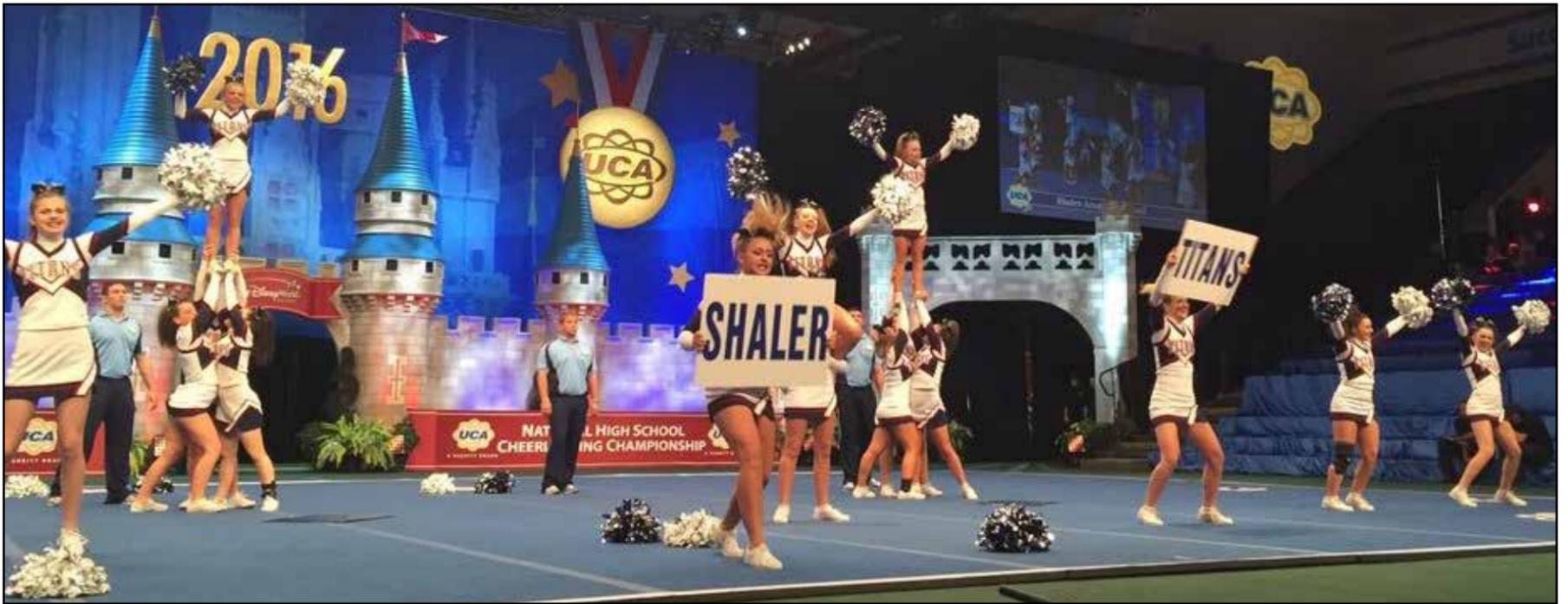
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Cheerleaders wrap up season with Orlando competitions



Shaler Area cheerleading squad performing at National High School Cheerleading Championships in Orlando, Florida.

by Bridget Nickel

The Shaler Area girls' competitive cheerleading squad placed 15th at the National High School Cheerleading Championships and second in Cheerleading Worlds in Orlando, Florida on February 6 and 7.

In the National competition, the squad competed in the medium division, a squad consisting of 12 to 16 girls, against 56 teams from around the country. In the World competition, the team went against nine teams in the same division from around the world. Both competitions are high level and only the best squads make it.

In order to qualify for Nationals, the team was required to get a bid, which is a payment from the competition organization in order to compete in a higher level competition, at a regional competition. In November, the squad competed in their first competition in Dayton, Ohio where the team received a National bid.

Phyllis Schatz, head coach of the team, said at a regional competition there may be up to 20 teams competing for only three to four bids.

"It's not an easy thing to do. You have all of these teams in the US that try to get there, then the best of the best are the ones that get to Florida," Schatz said.

Despite finishing 15th in the nation, the squad was able to qualify for Worlds because of the performance of the team last year. In order to qualify for Worlds, the team has to place the previous year.

Schatz was very confident in her team before the competition started because

of how much she has seen them bond throughout the season.

"I'm always confident in their skills, but on any given day you have no idea what's going to happen out on that floor so you're nervous," Schatz said. "As each element hits, then you breathe a little bit easier. So as you're going through the routine, which is extremely difficult, [as a coach] you're always nervous even though you're confident in their skills."

The girls started preparing over the summer to be a strong team and receive a bid to Nationals.

After practicing and spending so much time together, the squad has grown stronger on and off of the mat.

Taylor Laffey, a senior captain, agreed that this season was full of growth for her team.

"Everyone [especially the underclassmen] learned that just because of past experiences, nothing is just given to you," Laffey said. "The current sophomores had an incredible freshmen season and never really experienced hardships, so now I think they will work even harder for next season."

Schatz was extremely proud of the team and loved the enthusiasm they showed.

"They went into each challenge enthusiastically trying to overcome any obstacles and they didn't give up," Schatz said. "I think that's the thing I love most about them. They worked very hard. No one knows the amount of time and energy that goes into this and I was just so proud of them."

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Q&A with author of “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” Jeff Kinney



by Kaitlin Parente

Jeff Kinney, author of the hit comic series, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, is known worldwide for his famous children’s book and being the creator of the website Poptropica. Along with being on the *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *New York Times* bestseller list for more than 450 weeks, Kinney has received many awards for his writings including two Children’s Choice Book Awards and five Nickelodeon Kids’ Choice Awards for Favorite Books. Jeff has also been a part of *Time* magazine’s most influential people in the world. Kinney also received a movie deal and now has three movies based off of the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series.

How did *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* come to be?

Jeff: *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* was born of my failure to become a newspaper cartoonist. My big

dream was to be on the comics pages, like Charles Schulz and Bill Watterson. But my work wasn’t good enough, and I had to find another way in. I came up with the idea of a kid who draws comics... Greg Heffley... and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* was born.

How did you get your start in writing?

Jeff: I spent about eight years working on the first draft of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. When I was ready, I showed it to an editor who was at New York Comic Con. Luckily, he liked it, and a year later, my first book came out.

What was going through your mind when you found out you had a movie deal?

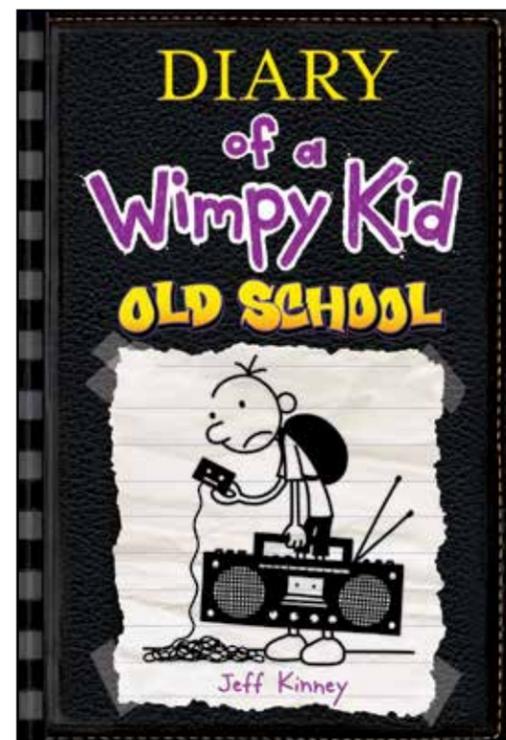
Jeff: It was scary, actually. When a movie deal comes down, it comes down fast. You have to make a decision, and you’re on a time clock. I had to make the decision under less-than-ideal circumstances, when I was on a book tour. But I pulled the trigger and went for it.

How do you get inspiration for your books?

Jeff: I use a lot of childhood memories, and I look at the world around me. I’m convinced that writing is just a filter... a good writer has a certain way of viewing the world. Funny things happen to all of us, but I have a decent comedy filter.

Did you take any writing classes in high school?

Jeff: I took English, which was more reading than writing. But we had a very strong essay writing program in my high school, which focused on college-style term papers. That proved to be invaluable to me.



Are you currently working on anything new? Can you give any details?

Jeff: I’m working on the 11th *Wimpy Kid* book. Every year is a challenge. I have less material going into this year than I’ve ever had before, so it’ll be interesting to see what the final product looks like.

Did you base *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* off of yourself?

Jeff: Quite a bit, actually. Greg is a like a twisted, exaggerated, funhouse mirror image of myself. He’s all of my worst parts, combined.

Q&A with Ron Larson, Precalculus and Calculus textbook author

by Kaitlin Parente

Ron Larson, author of the precalculus and calculus textbooks used at Shaler and creator of CalcChat, is a professor at Penn State Erie. His advancements in calculus and other areas of mathematics have been published in more than 45 books, which are available for purchase.

How did you get your start in the mathematical industry?

Ron: I started teaching at Penn State Erie when I was 28 years old. After 3 years of teaching, I decided to try to write a calculus textbook. I wrote the book in 1973 and submitted the 1300 pages of manuscript to several publishers. They all rejected it. I repeated this process again in 1974 and in 1975, each receiving nothing but rejections. It was discouraging, but I felt determined to learn from my failures. Finally, in 1976, I wrote what was to become the first edition of *Calculus*. This manuscript was accepted by 7 publishers. I was ecstatic. Do you know the feeling of wanting something so much that you can’t sleep and you live with both the fear of failure and the fantasy of success? Those few times in life when our fantasies come true stick with us forever.

How does one write a text book? How long does it take?

Ron: This depends on whether a person knows what he or she is doing or not. When I first started writing, I didn’t know how to write a book. Consequently, that first book took 6 years to write. After many years of making mistakes, I finally learned that the way to write a good book is to remove yourself from the picture. Instead of spouting your own ideas, start listening to the ideas of your readers. When you do this, the whole process goes much more quickly.

How do you determine your word problems?

Ron: Once the books started selling, I started

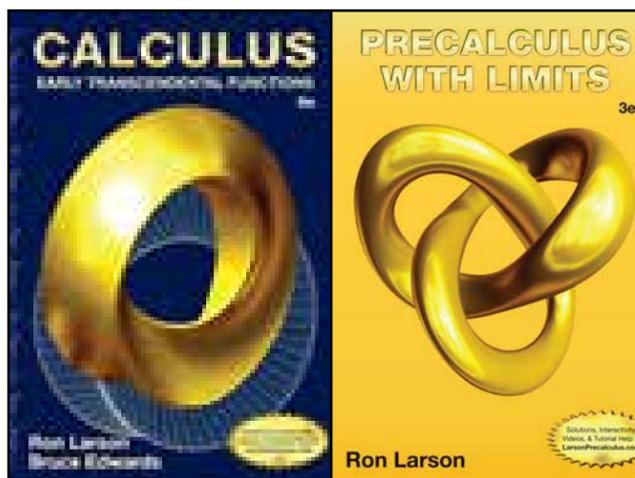


Photo Credit: CalcChat.com

hiring people to help me produce the textbooks. Now, at Larson Texts, in Erie, PA, we have about 80 employees. Many of them have math degrees and spend time researching realistic problems.

What made you want to become a mathematician?

Ron: I got married at age 18 when I graduated from high school. At the time I didn’t want to go to college. Finally, 3 years later I started in a community college in Vancouver, Washington. I thought I would major in pre-law. Finally, in my sophomore year I switched to math. My personality fits this subject. Words like “probably”, “maybe”, and “usually” are a bit frustrating for me. That is the reason I was drawn to mathematics. I much prefer the certainty of words such as “always” or “never”.

What is Larson’s Custom Quilting and what happened to it?

Ron: After I got married, my wife and I took an apprenticeship in custom quilting. We opened our own business working for interior designers making quilted bedspreads and quilting for upholstery. It didn’t take us long to decide that there had to be an

easier way to make a living. It was at that point that we sold the business and I started college.

Why do you only give the answers to the odd problems in the back of the books?

Ron: Giving the answers to only the odd-numbered exercises is traditional in math books. The practice started because it gives teachers the option of assigning homework problems in which the answers are provided and assigning homework problems in which the answers are not provided.

How did CalcChat come to be?

Ron: I started CalcChat.com in 2001. Most math textbooks provide a printed Student Solution Manual that has the worked-out solutions to the odd-numbered exercises. In 2001, I decided to start providing these worked-out solutions for free. Since that time, CalcChat has grown to include free online tutoring and free APPs. In 2015, students downloaded over 50 million solutions from CalcChat. The “live tutors” who work at CalcChat are college students who work in our intern program. You can read about this program at LarsonTexts.com. It offers partial college tuition reimbursement to students who work at Larson Texts at least 1000 hours a year.

Do you think high school teachers put too much of a work load on students?

Ron: Oh boy! I am not going to answer this one. I don’t want to get myself in trouble.

What is your opinion on students taking college level math in high school?

Ron: I have mixed feelings about taking college level math in high school. There is so much depth, history, and deep understanding that can be gained from a slow-paced intense course in high school precalculus. When a person truly understands all of the sophistication of precalculus, it makes calculus much easier to understand.

Manage stress for better personal results

by Kimberly Yurasits

Stress. We as high schoolers are all well acquainted with it. In fact, stress is a daily issue for most, if not all, of us. Therefore, we are all also well acquainted with the problems stress brings.

Technically, stress is simply the body's non-specific response to any demand made on it. However, we normally associate it with anxiety. The two seem to go hand in hand but, scientifically, are not the same.

So, how does this "non-specific response" affect us academically? There have been quite a few scientific studies done to try to answer this question.

One of these studies was done at The University of Minnesota's Boynton Health Service. The researchers matched grade point averages with health problems such as stress, smoking and drinking as well as typical lifestyle choices such as gambling and excessive screen time. They found that students with unhealthy behaviors had significantly lower GPAs, which doesn't come as too much of a shock.

What was surprising was how big of a role stress played on the students' performance in school. Of the 69.9 percent of students who reported they were stressed, 32.9 percent said that stress was hurting their academic performance. Those who reported suffering stresses such as student debt, failing a class or conflicts with parents had an average GPA of 2.72 while those who dealt with little or no stress had an average of 3.3 GPA.

Another study done at the UKM Centre in Malaysia found that a total of eight percent of students in the study had a moderate level of stress while 53 percent and 39 percent had a high and severe level of

stress respectively.

That means 92 percent of students were above the normal level of stress. Imagine the effect this can have not only on academic performance, but later in life as well if not taken care of and managed.

Mental health is just as important as physical health yet this problem is not discussed nearly enough. Many students quietly suffer with this issue, just complaining with their friends, but never really doing much to manage the stress.

"All stress is not bad. Feeling some stress can be a source of motivation, an opportunity to grow. Experiencing excessive stress over a long period of time, however, can lead to a variety of health problems, both physical and mental," Ms. Mary Lou Bentrem, the school psychologist, said.

However, setting one specific path for dealing with stress because everyone reacts to and deals with stress in very different ways.

"Different people react differently, I'll see people who cry. I see anger. We have people who punch walls, who punch lockers. We have people who do that and say they do it in anger but the anger comes from stress. So I see some physical stuff and even altercations," Ms. Leslie Scheuer, the school nurse, said.

Often, stress itself can actually lead to many physical problems as well.

"One of my students said it very well to me when he said your head is related to your stomach which means your nerves or your anxiety can make your stomach hurt. Sometimes it's hard to know the difference. I have a lot of headaches and stomach aches we do attribute to stress," Scheuer said.

However, if students are able to control their

stress, those things don't become as harmful.

"If students can manage their stress, then their stress level will not matter," Dr. Ed Ehlinger, director of Boynton Health Services and a lead author of the study, said for an article posted on Health News.

So how does one manage the stress, especially when there is so much to stress about.

"The first thing is to recognize that it is happening. Then think about what relaxes you and what you can control. One thing does not determine your whole life. Keep it in perspective," Scheuer said.

Stay organized. It may seem like a small step, but it greatly reduces the pressure felt when trying to finish a project an hour before it's due. Split up the "To-do" list into small manageable pieces.

"Keep an agenda. Study, do your homework, prepare for class. If your study skills and organization/planning skills are poor, ask for help—talk to your teacher, your counselor, your parent," Bentrem said.

If worst comes to worst, take a break.

"Take 20 minutes and start again. A lot of kids will be like, "Oh he's faking coming down here." But often we just need a stress break. As adults we need that too. When you're in school you don't have the luxury of saying, "Oh I need that now because you're in math class or social studies or something," Scheuer said.

The most important thing is to not wait to get help.

"Your school counselor is a professional resource available to help students learn healthy ways of coping, and to intervene before problems become too overwhelming. Take advantage of the help that is available," Bentrem said.

Scholarships available to help offset costs from page 1

guidance counselor Mr. Matthew Anselmino said.

Last year the scholarship sponsor contacted the school and told the school that two students had applied. Miller contacted five students that she knew could qualify for the scholarship and gave them applications. None of those students applied for it.

The Louise Salinger scholarship for fashion students also often gets a small number of applicants.

"People don't want to commit their time to the scholarships because some require more effort than others," Miller said.

Miller believes students don't apply because they believe they won't be approved or be awarded the scholarship. In reality, if a student had been meet all the criteria and no other students applied then the student might have gotten it.

When filling out applications, students need to consider other things than just criteria though. They need to decide which ones to apply for.

"I say as apply to as many as you can and qualify for. That can be overwhelming because there are a lot," Miller said.

Students should always take their time when filling out the applications and make sure the application is well done and neat. Before turning in the application, an applicant should always make sure that his or her application includes everything that the scholarship asks for, like references or the reviewers of the scholarship would consider the application incomplete. Students should not just look at the how much a scholarship offers, because usually the ones worth less are easier to complete.

Scholarships provide help for students when it comes time to pay for college. Sometimes, the money the scholarship gives out is not a large amount, but that doesn't mean that the scholarship isn't worth the time it takes to fill out an application.

Many of the scholarships are memorials to members of the Shaler Area community. Here are some brief sketches of some of those for whom the scholarships are named.

Michael J. Crawshaw

- * Class of 1996, member of football team
- * became a patrolman for the Penn Hills Police Department
- * 32 years old when he was shot and killed in an ambush while responding to a call.
- "Michael was a giant teddy bear who would always ask, 'How's it goin?'" and gave the best hugs." —Mrs. Mindy Thiel, Activities Director

Jessica Peluso

- *17-year-old senior when she was killed instantly in a car accident
- *Track and Field captain remembered as hard worker with great personality
- *Teen Advocate
- *Aspirations of going to culinary or law school
- "Jessy was hard working, committed, talented and comfortable. She was not trying to impress anyone or be someone that she wasn't. She was one of the best teammates that I've ever coached." —Mr. Dave Interthal, Jessica's Track and Field coach

Carl Seidl Jr.

- *Longtime teacher and coach at Shaler
- *Vietnam Veteran and teacher of 32 years
- *Graduate from Millvale High School
- *Held several coaching positions and worked with wrestling, baseball, and football teams
- "He had an incredibly quick wit and a great sense of humor. He made people immediately feel welcome and he was always generous." —Ed Seidl, brother of Carl

Gene Biles

- *Was 63 when he passed after a 3-year battle with cancer
- *His legacy as a longtime soccer coach at Shaler Area High School lives on today.
- *Shaler Area's first boys coach in 1972 and continued to coach until 1995. Shaler Area won the WPIAL championship in 1979 and was runner-up in 1995.
- "Coach Biles influenced many of the educators in the district today, especially in the PE department. Mr Biles took the time to sit me down and discuss how my actions would determine my future. I still use the lessons that I learned from him to this day." —Mr. Chris Catanese, middle school PE teacher and girls' soccer coach

Zachary J. Piekarski

- *16-year old junior who died in house fire in September, 2001
- *Basketball player and straight A, good-natured student who had ambitions to attend Princeton University, his family said.
- *He tutored younger students and was known for energy and kind-heartedness
- "Zak was one of the most diverse and unique individuals I've encountered here. He was an honors student, an athlete and a musician just to name a few things. He was one of the few kids who could fit in with any group of kids in the building. It was hard not to like Zak." —Mr. Eric Schott, one of Zak's basketball coaches.