

The Oracle

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Student Newspaper Of Shaler Area High School

May 2013

Music department a success in Chicago

by Emily Matthews

This year, members of the band, chorus, and orchestra spent April 25th to April 29th in Chicago competing with other high schools. Since March, students have been preparing for the competition at after-school rehearsals. Band Director Mr. George Tepshich, Chorus Director Ms. Kristin Demsey, and Orchestra Director Mrs. Shirley Rankin started planning the trip last May.

There are a few differences that set this year's trip apart from past ones. First of all, it was held in Chicago. The Wind Ensemble and Advanced Jazz Band competed this year. Also, Mr. Royall joined them in Chicago. Like every year, the venue, judges, and repertoire were different from last year's.

Students performed advanced pieces that showed off their skill level. They have been working hard to perfect these pieces.

"The students have to work hard individually and as a team in order to prepare for all of the competitions," Tepshich said.

Their performances were scored in several different categories. They also got to hear direct feedback from judges who are professionally involved in music. The judges' comments are helpful in improving students' future performances.

Along with participating in a rehearsal, competition, and awards ceremony, students also got the chance to go to the Navy Pier, Museum of Science and Industry, the Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago Trolley Tour, the Sky Deck, a Lunch Cruise on the Spirit of Chicago, the Water Tower Place, and a Blue Man Group performance. They also ate at the Rainforest Café, Medieval Times, Gino's Chicago Pizza, and the Hard Rock Café.

"The trip is also a great time for the students to bond as a group which does impact our performances," Rankin said.

The students always have a lot of fun on the trips, but their main goal every year is to perform well in the competitions.

"They have a lot of fun but they do work very hard to get to that part," Rankin said.

Their hard work paid off during the competi-



Shaler Area Wind Ensemble competes (John Rihm)



Shaler Area Concert Choir competes (John Rihm)

tions. The Marching Band, Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band, Drum Line, Majorettes, Women's Chorus, and Chamber Chorus all received Second Place Excellent ratings. The Dance Team, Silk Line, Concert Choir, and Concert Orchestra achieved First Place Excellent ratings. A few exemplary honors that were won include Best Jazz Soloist to Collin Ziegler, Best Student Accompanist to Olivia Harris, and Best Overall Auxiliaries for Outstanding Parade Auxiliary.

Possibly the most glorious and rewarding achievement for the music department this year was winning Dr. Tim Lautzenhauser's Esprit de Corps Award for their positive behavior and attitude. According to the Shaler Area High School Music Department's recent update about the trip, "personal integrity, quality character values, a desire for excellence, and a spirit of cooperation serve as the cornerstone qualities of the Esprit de Corps Award".

"Receiving this award is not only about our students' professionalism on stage, but also off the stage. I couldn't be more proud of them!" Tepshich said.

Student wins Positive Athlete Pittsburgh Award



Abbey Conrad

by Lexy Werner

Abbey Conrad won the Positive Athlete Pittsburgh Award for both her athletic abilities and positive attitude throughout her high school career. Abbey's aunt noticed her demeanor during basketball games and track meets along with her involvement with National Honor Society and other clubs. She nominated Abbey after reading the requirements for a "positive athlete," and Abbey fits all of the criteria. It goes as followed: optimistic attitude, encouraging teammate, team player, admits imperfections, always gives 100%, and puts the team first.

Hines Ward started the awards program to promote the benefits of "positivity" to young athletes.

"Positivity is being the best person you can be. Not everyone can be the best at everything but as long as you're putting yourself out there that's all that matters," Conrad said.

Ward personally sent her a letter and an autographed tee shirt to commend her for her hard work in school and in sports. When she received the letter her initial thought was excitement because her hard work isn't going unnoticed.

As far as for the future, Abbey will use this recognition to motivate herself and her peers.

"Some days when you don't think you can do anything, awards like this show you that you can go one step further and achieve more than you thought possible," Conrad said.

Students Brandon McNeill and Clint McElheny named Seton Scholars

by Katie Rees and Julie Rankin

Seniors Brandon McNeill and Clint McElheny were named Seton Scholars and received full-rides to Seton Hill University this past March. Both applied for the scholarship in January and there were two recipients per department. This was the first time since the Seton Scholar program was established that two students from the same high school were awarded the money, according to the Tribune Review.

The process was much like applying for any other scholarship.

"I had to get a letter of recommendation and write an essay about why I wanted to study History there," McNeill said.

McElheny also had to write an essay and attend a recruitment day. Although McElheny was already set on Seton Hill, he was overjoyed to receive this news.

"It's relieving that I won't have any debt after college," McElheny said.

Both were informed that they had won this scholarship during school. McNeill and McElheny were instructed into a classroom where they found high school administrators and their families. There they received giant commemorative checks.

"I was pulled out of class in March and surprised with the award," McNeill said.

McElheny officially signed for the Seton Hill soccer team. At Shaler, he was a defender for the high school's team. McElheny will be majoring in Criminal Justice with plans to pursue a career in homeland security.

McNeill is an AP student and was an active member of the boys' tennis team. He will be studying History with hopes to pursue a teaching career or law school.

"I feel I put in a lot of hard work these last 12 years, and I feel it has paid off," McNeill said in a Tribune Review article. "I hope to continue to work hard in college and in the rest I do."

OPINIONS

PDA becoming a major distraction in the hallways

by Casey Funtal

Walking through the halls ways of Shaler Area every day can become redundant and most students have turned on their auto pilot by this point in the year when walking to their classrooms. The one thing that tends to break the normal walk to class is running into a couple going at it as you walk around the corner. Almost every student or faculty member has seen some couple get a little too comfy in the halls at one point or another. Is that it really necessary?

The school day is what, roughly eight hours long? There are 24 hours in each day, so that leaves 16 hours outside of school to see a significant other. That is surely enough time to see your boyfriend or girlfriend, so why do I have to watch a couple cuddle in a corner and whisper in each other's ears?

The worst part is the death glares that I receive when I walk past a caressing couple because I am staring at them. News flash, the last thing that I want to see are two people sucking face, but it is hard to avert my eyes when we are the only three people in the hallway.

It is funny how couples hold one another as if it will be the last time they will ever see each other.

It is funny how couples hold one another as if it will be the last time they will ever see each other. Classes are only forty two minutes long. In that time period students are supposed to be learning not wondering what they will say to their boyfriend or girlfriend in the four minutes between the next class period.

The bottom line is that no one wants to see couples getting personal. It is unnecessary and uncomfortable for anyone who has to watch as they pass by. It should also be uncomfortable for the couple who is making out in the hallway. Your time together should be personal, not public.

Buying school lunches leads to lost money

by Victoria Mikita

If you're anything like me, food is on your mind 99% of the time. There is no better time to fantasize about it than during school hours, but every hope is crushed when you walk into the Shaler Area High School cafeteria.

First of all, I'm not sure what some of the food even is. There are a few edible items, but the price of them is higher than something you might actually want to eat. I can go to Panera and get a bread bowl with soup for two more dollars and it actually tastes good. The cookies that are probably on their way to putting us all into cardiac arrest are 50 cents each, and let's face it, none of us are buying just one. The best deal in the whole cafeteria are chips for buy one get one free, if you don't mind your frees ones having already expired.

There may be the possibility that you put money on your account to make sure you have enough to spend five dollars a day for a school lunch. If you do that: stop. It really is one of life's greatest mysteries where the money actually goes. A thirty dollar check will last you a week if you're lucky. My personal favorite is when you pay for your lunch and are told that you owe money even though you just left money on the account. I must have missed the math lesson where positive numbers turn into negative in the blink of an eye.

Another issue is charging lunch. Students can only charge up to a certain point and then they have to get peanut butter and jelly. This is fine, but if a student does not know they are up to their charging point and they try to buy a regular lunch, they are asked to throw it away. Obviously nobody wants pizza or fries that someone may have touched and put back, but why are we asked to throw away food items in closed boxes? If a student tries to buy a boxed salad or sandwich and does not have enough money on their account, then the lunch lady asks them to throw it away. I really do not understand how someone touching the box causes it to have to be thrown away, it is simply wasting money.

The cafeteria would benefit from lowering some prices of the food items and keeping better track of the money on students' accounts. It is unfair that on top of the food being so overpriced, we are being told that we owe money when we know we just put money on our accounts. Students should not have to spend so much money on school lunches, especially when it seems like the money is disappearing. If the high school cafeteria continues like this students will not want to buy school lunches in the future.

Students actually capable of showing generosity

by Emily Pirt

If there's one thing I learned in my four years at Shaler it was that as Shalerians, we have a bit of a "reputation" throughout the North Hills; that we're "white trash", "ghetto", and generally inferior to the other schools around us. Like any school, we have our fair share of jagaloons that ruin it for the rest of us, but I assure you there are still polite people that walk the halls of Shaler. In fact, it was only through my torn ACL that I realized this.

If you have seen me recently, then you know I've been currently crutching down the halls and fighting for elevator use. Even though I double strap my book bag (shout out to all you "21 Jump Street" fans), it can still be a challenge to maneuver when carrying my usual yard sale around with me. While on crutches I've had multiple people ask me if I need help walking to class. One time in particular, I remember a student that I've never seen before ask me if I needed help carrying my stuff to my locker. This totally caught me by surprise; the first day I attempted to hobble the halls, I was nervous that people would basically cross-check me into the lockers or kick my crutches out from under me. But at the end of the day I was pleasantly surprised with the decorum of the students; many people voluntarily moved out of the way so I could pass, as well as held doors open for me.

The character of Shaler students doesn't just take place in the hallway where everyone can see; it continues during class. In almost every single one I had classmates help me in a variety of ways, like offering to get papers for me, or put my laptop back in the cart. The best part? I didn't even have to ask them; they did it out of the goodness of their own hearts. Although we always mention the kids who stand up on their tables and yell during fifth period lunch (or at least I do), there are actually good people in this school who treat each other with respect.

My advice to my fellow cripples? "Keep calm and crutch on!"

Students should appreciate teachers at the high school

by Casey Funtal

For each student high school can vary in experiences from good to bad to awesome. How fun high school is depends on multiple factors, such as friends, family, grades, whether a student is employed or not, and also what teachers a student ends up with.

Here at Shaler there are multiple teachers for each subject in each grade. In other words, there are a lot of teachers. Sometimes the way that a teacher teaches his or her class can make or break it weather a student enjoys it or not. Sometimes a student may like the teacher, but hate the class. Regardless, each teacher here wants to help students the best way that they can.

Over your four years here at Shaler, there will be at least one teacher that will stick in your memory forever. There is so much that they do for us students beyond the classroom. Although many teachers were asked not to volunteer for activities, many still did just so that the students did not miss out on anything.

Many teachers stay after school for long hours working on projects with students. Students involved in the play, musical, newspaper, talent show, band, and other after school activities or clubs, see how much work the teachers put in so that the student's final project is what they want it to be.

In Shaler, there are many things to complain about. Sometimes the staff may be one of those things, but overall, our teachers here really do care about each and every student who walks the halls of Shaler.

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.

Where in the world is *The Oracle*?

Over the past few years, *The Oracle* has made its way around the world. It has been to: London, Italy, Yellowstone National Park, Trump Plaza, PNC Park, the Super Bowl, and many more places.



Titan of the Month: Mrs. Eskra

by Anna Cunningham

Mrs. Eskra is an involved teacher here at Shaler. She teaches economics, is the senior class sponsor, and tries her best to help her students in any way that she can. Eskra has been chosen as the Titan of the Month.

Eskra loves economics, and did not originally go to school to become a teacher. She went to Penn State University and majored in economics.

"I majored in economics because I took it my senior year in high school and loved it. I was one of those nerds," Eskra said. "I planned on going into consulting or something in business and decided very soon that that was not for me."

Eskra went back to school and got a master's degree in education. She has been teaching for nine years, and seven years at Shaler. Before Shaler, she taught at Cornell school district in Coraopolis.

"It's really small. There was one building for K-12 and they only graduate around 40 students. My biggest class had 86 kids," Eskra said.

Eskra taught world history and American cultures at Cornell. When she was hired at Shaler, she knew that she would be teaching economics.

"When I was hired here, they needed people who wanted to and could teach economics. Not many social studies teachers love teaching economics so it was pretty clear what I would be doing full time," Eskra said.

Eskra didn't mind teaching economics because she really loves the subject matter.

"What I love about it is that it's a completely different social studies than anything else. You study the economy and how it functions. You learn how the markets work," Eskra said. "There's a lot of psychology involved in it. It studies how people react and how people behave and why people make the deci-

sions they make on a daily basis. Whether it's why we buy something or why we save our money or why we go to work."

Having a teacher who loves what they teach can really help students get excited about learning. Eskra tries to help her students when they are having a hard time and is always available and willing to give her students advice. Her favorite part of teaching is being involved with her students every day.

"I love getting to interact with kids every single day and hopefully helping them to make really important decisions. I feel really lucky that I get to spend my days helping students. That's my favorite part of teaching, the daily interactions with kids, hoping that in some small way maybe I can help them figure something out," Eskra said.

Eskra gets involved with her students through her duties as senior class sponsor. Each class has a teacher assigned to help them with different events that happen throughout the year. The senior class sponsor helps plan homecoming, prom, graduation, and other senior events.

"I think it was my third or fourth year here where I decided I really wanted to get involved with the senior class because I teach all seniors. When Mrs. Thiel became activities director we needed another senior class sponsor because that had been her job. I stepped up then," Eskra said.

Outside of school, Eskra's life revolves around her one year old son, Luke. She also loves running, cooking, and baking.

"Luke and I go for runs almost every day that it's nice," Eskra said. "I don't have too much time anymore but I absolutely love cooking and baking as well."

Teaching keeps Eskra at school longer than she would like to be away from Luke. However, she thinks the experience has made her a better teacher.

"I understand now that every one of my students

"That's my favorite part of teaching, the daily interactions with kids, hoping that in some small way maybe I can help them figure something out."

--Mrs. Eskra

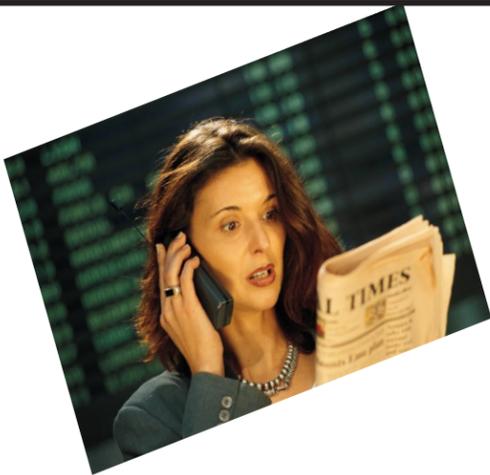
is someone's child. It gives me perspective on how I would want my own kid to be treated. I only want to help other people's children," Eskra said.

Eskra does get to see some of her family at school. Her husband, Mr. Eskra, is also a social studies teacher at Shaler.

"I don't see him that much at all, I hear him on the PA announcements more than I see him. We're both so busy when we're at school. We get to school and go our separate ways and see each other at the end of the day," Eskra said.

Eskra's schedule keeps her busy in and out of school. She loves teaching and believes that teaching takes more than going over concepts with students. She loves being involved in her student's lives and interacting with them as much as possible.

"Teaching to me has always been a lot more than just teaching in the classroom. I've always considered my classroom job as a very small portion of what I do," Eskra said. "When I was hired, I knew I wanted to get involved. I think it's really important to get to know your students and see what they do outside of your classroom."



Sept 2012—National news: The high school class of 2012 has taken its College Board exams and the results are NOT good. More than half (57%) of the 1.66 million SAT test takers FAILED to hit the combined score at which a student is deemed ready for college level work. Worse, 75% of the 1.66 million ACT test takers ALSO FAILED to meet the readiness standard.



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Talent Show brings audience to its feet

by Anna Cunningham

The Shaler high school Talent Show began on May 9, and ended on May 10. Students danced, sang, and performed their best as they showed off their talents to friends and family. The show was a success, and everyone who attended had a good time.

Mrs. Mindy Thiel, Activities Director, is involved with the Talent Show production. According to her, the show went wonderfully.

"We had great crowds both days, they truly applauded every act. Someone told me that even though there were different acts, there wasn't a bad act either day," Thiel said.

The performers were lucky to have such a great turnout both nights. They were able to show their talents to many of their family and friends. Over 600 people were in the audience on Friday night.

"The talent show is always popular, but to have a crowd of over 600 on Friday was unbelievable," Thiel said.

At the end of the show on Friday night, two awards are presented to the winning performances. One of these awards is the Mr. Shaler Area award. This competition is a favorite part of the show. Competitors are seniors who compete against each other to win the title of Mr. Shaler Area. They compete in six categories to win over the audience and the judges.

"The idea came about twelve years ago, to have a spoof of a competition and a consistent act throughout the show. The guys take it seriously though, it isn't a spoof to them," Thiel said.

This year, four seniors took on the challenge.

At the end of the show, two of them were recognized. Nick Razum won the audience vote. The public can put money in jars for whichever contestant they liked the best. The money goes to a charity that the winner picks. Razum chose the Four Diamonds Fund, a charity for children's cancer research.

The overall Mr. Shaler Area title went to Connor Yoho. This title was chosen by the judges based on Yoho's participation in each category.

The final award is the Paul Schweiger Talent Show Award. This award was started in memory of Mr. Schweiger who worked at Shaler and was involved in the talent show for over 28 years. This award is given to "the act that best exemplifies the spirit and cooperation and dedication for which Mr. Schweiger was famous."

There were two winners this year. The Shaler Area Drumline won for their ability to change their act when requested to without complaint. The second winner was Corrine Brazelle, who sang "I Dreamed a Dream," from Les Miserables.

"Corrine received three standing ovations, two after each of her performances and one when she won the award," Thiel said.

The talent show is always a popular event during the school year. Family and friends come out to see students show off their talents.

"The talent show gives our students the opportunity to showcase their talents. There is so much that students can do that we don't know. This is their chance to show us," Thiel said.

Prom Preview: Rave About It

by Emily Matthews

Prom is something the senior class looks forward to every year. This year, the seniors voted on the theme "A Night to Rave About". To go with the theme, the favors that will be given out include neon backpacks for the guys and glass hydration bottles with the theme printed on them for the girls.

Prom will be on May 24th at 7:30 PM in the Sheraton Hotel at Station Square. At prom, students will be able to eat dinner, dance, and get their photo taken against a neon gossamer back drop.

The after prom on the Gateway Clipper's *Majestic* boat will start around midnight and last until 3:00 AM. There will be a DJ on the boat and two buffets of snacks.

"We have caricature artists, psychics, air brush tattoos, kaleidoscope pictures, and a balloon artist on the boat as well. There's a lot to do. Or you could go up on the third floor which is the open deck and just enjoy the view," Activities Director Mrs. Mindy Thiel said.

Preparations for prom have been taking place since January, but everyone has been looking forward to it since the beginning of the school year. "A Night to Rave About" is sure to offer an enjoyable and fun time to the seniors at Shaler.

10 Things I'll miss about Shaler

by Emily Pirt

- I'll miss all the closed bathrooms
And the graffiti all over the stalls.**
- I'll miss the trash lying in the corner of
the stairs**
- And the boring white paint on the walls.**
- I'll miss the freshmen always being in
the way**
- And never being quiet.**
- I'll miss the jagaloons in the cafeteria
Always trying to start a riot.**
- I'll miss the old iced tea cartons filled
with dip**
- And the gangster-ed kids acting like
tools.**
- I'll miss all the PDA in the halls
And my classmates acting like fools.**
- I'll miss doing homework and studying
What am I going to do now? Sleep?**
- I'll miss watching the football team lose
Those are memories I definitely want to
keep.**
- I'll miss all the windows
And being able to see the light of day.**
- I'll miss writing for the Oracle
These "10 Things" make me want to stay.**

How To...Grow Up

by Julie Rankin

It is often said that growing up is one of the hardest things you will ever have to do in life. Whoever said that has obviously never tried licking their elbow. Growing up doesn't mean that you're not allowed to order dinosaur-shaped chicken nuggets from the kids menu anymore. It also doesn't mean telling your mom she can no longer put inspirational notes on the napkins in your lunch (milk that cow as long as you can). I'm talking about the deep stuff, you know, like progressing toward psychological maturity.

I think part of growing up is making mistakes. It's like when you go to Arby's and the cashier asks, "Would you like to replace your drink with a milkshake and get the Number 3 for only 50 cents more?" And you're all like, "Easiest decision I've ever made!" And then you eat the entire meal because you have no self-control and there are starving kids somewhere in Africa.

At this point I'd like to note that it's our natural tendency to think of Africa as one large land mass of sand and starving children. Thanks all of you sad infomercials that ask me for a penny a day for creating this outrageous and ignorant stereotype. Anyway, so you get home and lie on your couch and think of how different your life would be if you'd just said no to the kid wearing the red hat who gave you service with a smile. It's mistakes like this that we learn from and that contribute to our personal growth.

In order to move on from these mistakes and grow from them, you have to find someone to blame for each mishap. By pawning your mistakes off on someone else, you'll be able to live with yourself. Hey mom, why'd you ever let me wear stick-on earrings and scrunchies? Who let me eat my Lip Smackers like it was candy? Whenever I almost hit a parked car? Yeah, I'm going to blame you Justin Timberlake for distracting me with your beautiful voice.

Embarrassment may stem from each mistake you make, but it's an integral part of growing up. To quote a semi-tolerable movie (*Hot Rod*), "It's only embarrassing if you care what other people think." So maybe that's part of growing up: stop obsessing over what everybody else thinks about you. Sure, I think Furbys were the scariest thing to come out of the nineties, or maybe all of history. But if you have a collection of them as big as a rapper's ego at home, don't let me stop you. I just won't be heading over to your house for tea and crumpets anytime soon.

Treat each embarrassing adventure like a trophy and place it with care on your wall of awards, because let's face it, that "Thanks for Participating Even Though You Couldn't Hit the Ball" ribbon is looking pretty lonely.

I don't believe growing up is finding out exactly who you are, because that wouldn't be any fun. I also don't believe it's being "so mature" that you can't cry anymore. Hey Fergie, big girls do cry. And it's most definitely not about having all the answers, because then Wikipeda wouldn't exist. I think growing up is about believing in yourself enough to not let life's inconsistencies break you. But, just like most serious topics in life, *Hot Rod* sums it up better: "Life is short: stunt it."

SPORTS

Girls' lacrosse team ready for playoffs

By Nick Polito

May 23rd: the date that has the attention of every girl lacrosse player. This is the date that the Shaler Area girls' lacrosse team has on their mind. This is the date of the championship game.

This is a realistic goal because the Lady Titans are 13-1 overall with a 9-0 conference record. The team has played exceptionally well, especially in their nine game win streak after the tough loss to North Allegheny.

"We have been playing the best I have ever seen in my three years on varsity, with only one loss against NA," junior defender Morgan Burke said.

The team's exceptional play and undefeated section record have helped the team secure a section championship.

"It is especially exciting that we won the section because last year we were so close to section champs and this year we have finally reached our goal," junior defender Delaney Dobracki said.

The Lady Titans are also ranked 6th in the west.

"We are so proud of ourselves and are excited to continue having success on the field," Burke said.

This success has a lot to do with the great senior leadership on the team. The team has looked to the seniors for leadership and they have accepted the challenge. These seniors are: Courtney Ambrozic, Saige Greygor, Rachel DeLancy, Andra Labanc, and Kristel Chatellier.

"We have amazing leaders on the team who are so dedicated and enthusiastic," Burke said.

The two seniors who have stepped up to take the bigger leadership roles are Greygor and Labanc.

"Saige and Andra are both great motivators when we need a boost in a game. They also make sure that we practice hard and do what we need to in order to improve," Dobracki said.

With all of this leadership and exceptional play, the Lady Titans are hoping to make a big run deep into the playoffs.

"We really hope to make it to the WPIAL Finals on May 23rd," Burke said.

The girls are exciting for the playoffs but they know it will not be a simple task to achieve.



Courtney Ambrozic going for the pass (Lisa Montini)

Boys' and Girls' track seasons have very different outcomes



Girls Track Seniors

By Nick Polito

The boys' and girls' track teams had two very different seasons. The boys' team had a very rough season, winning only one meet all year. This is the second consecutive year that the boys' team only won one meet. It is a coincidence that both years the boys beat North Hills by a score of 76-74. Although the boys' team struggled, they have hard workers who care about the team before their selves.

"The boys work incredibly hard at practice to achieve goals together. Some even give up medaling in individual events to help a relay team medal because they are very selfless and dedicated," senior Courtney Bauer said.

On the other hand, the girls' team had a very successful season. According to Bauer they lived up to expectations by coming in 2nd in the WPIALs.

"As a team we achieved most of our goals. We pretty much expected to get this far because we had so much talent stay from last year's team," Bauer said.

The girls' team only lost two meets this season. They lost to Hempfield in the WPIAL championships and North Allegheny by 2 points during the season. However, the Lady Titans were able to get revenge on North Allegheny by beating them at WPIALs.

Some of the girls' top performers were Bri Schwartz, Catie Taylor, Bauer, Tori Soeder, Diana Cook, Rachel Booty, Carly Harris, Delaney Quinlan, Jess Farrell, Kylie Farrell, Erin Schreiber, and Megan Schwartz for their respective events.

The boys' top performers include John Colarusso, Scott Hughes, and Caleb Wakely who all qualified for the individual championships.

The team has a lot of athletes who qualified for individual championships and are hoping to have success there.

"We have high hopes for many of us to medal this Thursday at the individual championships and some hopefully will make it to states," Bauer said.

One of the athletes that is expected to have success at the individual championships is distance runner Bri Schwartz. Schwartz is currently ranked first in the state of Pennsylvania and seventh in the United States for her mile.

"She [Bri] is only a sophomore. There is so much to come for her. She runs a 4:50 mile and a 10:50 two mile, enough said," Bauer said.

Even though the girls had a lot more success than the boys, both teams work very well together and support each other exceptionally.

"We are incredibly supportive of each other and make track fun," Bauer said.

Both teams are hoping to build off of the girls' second place finish and have success at the individual championship.

Boys' lacrosse finishes strong and looks to future seasons

By Brett Ford

Yet another season has come to a close for the boys' lacrosse team; they finished 4th in their division with a record of 5-11. In a division containing 11-3 Quaker Valley, 12-5 Vincentian Academy, 7-6 Mars, 8-7 Aquinas Academy and 1-12 North Hills, the Titans had a 2-3 record amongst division opponents and ended the season with their only two division wins.

The team was very hot and cold all season long; at the beginning of the season they lost to Hampton 17-1 then beat Taylor Allerdice 18-2 the next game, proving that they had the talent to contend but lacked the consistency. The players on the team realized that they were a talented team despite their record and because of this they didn't let it bother them too much.

"Yes our record is disappointing but it doesn't accurately portray our talent. We're a talented team but lack varsity experience and suffered many detrimental injuries," junior midfielder Luke Lynch said.

The team also had to overcome some mid-season obstacles. Despite this, the team kept their focus and was competitive each game, thanks in large part to the stellar play of Dan Ireland, who split starts at goalie with Brad until being forced to start each game after Brad's departure.

The team seemed to come together towards the end of the season. After a rough 1-7 beginning to the season, they finished strong with a solid 4-4 mark in their last eight games to help boost the morale heading into next season.

"Next season we will be young but we will have about the same varsity experience as some other teams due to the amount of freshman varsity players we had this year. I'm certainly looking forward to how it'll all play out," Lynch said.

Boys' volleyball has high hopes for next season

By Brett Ford

The boys' volleyball season came to a close after a loss to section opponent Pine Richland capped off a disappointing 1-14 year. The team's sole win came against a section opponent, North Hills, in their fifth game of the season. Although the team's record left much to be desired, the players realize that all wasn't as bad as it seemed.

"We have a team of very talented players and have highly competitive games with some of the best teams in the WPIALs. However, our lack of height makes it very difficult to stick with taller teams," outside hitter Sam Maszkiewicz said.

A huge upside for the season was that it allowed for some players to really stand out and make a name for themselves on the roster.

"Sam Maszkiewicz has really matured as a player this year. He was the backbone of the team and could have easily been considered the go-to-guy on the roster," setter and team captain Steve Jordan said.

In addition to veterans getting a chance to stand out, some younger players got a chance to shine too, such as Nate Grande and Phil Lamanna.

"This year Phil Lamanna and Nate Grande have stood out more than any other players. Although they are only freshman, their skill level has increased exponentially over the past several months," Maszkiewicz said.

Looking ahead, things look very bright for the 2014 boys' volleyball team; they have a decent chance at making the playoffs once again.

"The expectations for next year will be obviously higher than this year since we have most, if not all, of our starting lineup returning," coach Paul Stadelman said.

SPORTS

Terrific season leads to a playoff berth for the girls

By Nick Polito

The softball team had a good regular season. The team finished the season with a 12-5 record overall and a 9-3 conference record. The girls finished second in the conference and made the playoffs.

However, after the girls started off the season with a 9-1 record, including a victory over 3rd ranked North Allegheny, they have hit a few bumps in the road. The girls were 3-4 in their last 7 games and three of the four losses came against section opponents. Through the first 10 games, the Lady Titans had a lead in the conference standing, but they ended up in second only by a game.

"When we started off our season winning, we had our clutch hitting. When we don't, we lose. That's what our slump was, our clutch hitting wasn't there," sophomore Rachel Nyman said.

After the slump towards the end of the year, the girls finally got going again. The Lady Titans won their last two games to finish off the season.

"We are starting to get our rhythm back," Nyman said.

The team has gotten its rhythm back at the perfect time: for the playoffs. The Lady Titans played their first round playoff game against Woodlands Hills the third place team from section 2.

Shaler easily disposed of the Wolverines 10-0 in a six inning game. Pitcher Bri Dobson threw a perfect game and shortstop Maddie Mulig gave the Lady Titans all the offense they would need with a two-run home run in the first inning.

The team is confident heading into the playoffs which is a key.

"I'm pretty confident for the playoffs; as long as everyone believes we can do it and plays every game



Maddie Mulig steps up to bat (AshLeigh Schelling)

like it's their last we should be fine," Nyman said.

The Lady Titans are hoping to make a run deep into the playoffs. In order for this to happen, the girls need to play as a team and rely on each other, not one person. This is has potential, so it will be interesting to see how they play in the playoffs.

"It just depends if we are having an on or off day, but if we think we can do it, we could definitely go all the way to WPIALs and states," Nyman said.

Baseball team wins first section title in ten years

By Brett Ford

Despite ending the season on a two-game losing streak, the boys' baseball team has won its section for the first time in ten years. They only ended their season with an 11-9 record, but their record in section play was an impressive 8-2, with their only losses coming to Pine Richland on April 18 and Moon on May 1. Outside of section play, however, the team had an alarming 3-7 record, but they aren't discouraged the least bit.

"8-2 is really an amazing record for this team because there are zero seniors in the starting lineup. The non-section record will hurt our seeding, but we don't care who we play in the playoffs. Bring on anyone!" coach Brian Junker said.

Throughout the long season many players on the team have progressed tremendously, perhaps no one more than catcher Joe Spalick.

"Joe Spalick has become a leader by example. We talk daily to the kids about what is most important and that is being a good person off the field. This is just a game that we get to play and we should be thankful for that because not everyone gets that chance. He talks a good game and backs it up. He has emerged as our starting catcher and team leader. A great player on the field, but an even better person off it. He is a true example of what Shaler baseball is all about," Junker said.

Throughout the season, the boys had no lack of exciting finishes. On May 3rd at home against Pine Richland they had a game that featured everything: a late game comeback, numerous clutch hits and even a walk off victory. What else could someone want in a game? Oh yeah, they also clinched their section with this win. The 8-7 nail biter was undoubtedly the highlight of the team's season and ended when who other than the team's leader, Joe Spalick, scored on a walk-off wild pitch.

"It was the kind of moment you always dream of; having a big hit late and then scoring the game winning run was unbelievable. It was such a huge win for the team because it won us our section and it feels great to play a part in that, especially since we haven't won our section since 2003. All season long we had such a great effort as a team; we wouldn't have been able to win that game or our section if it wasn't for the terrific play of my teammates all season long. We never gave up and it paid off," Spalick said.

Going into the playoffs the boys were seeded 7th out of 15 teams. Coach Junker has no shortage on good advice that will keep the players calm and collected through such an exciting time.

"We have a motto going into playoffs: 'So what, next pitch.' This means that if you make a bad play, you have to flush it and focus on the present; the only thing that matters is the next pitch. You just have to control the things you can control and since you can't control what's already taken place you must direct your attitude and energy to what lies ahead," Junker said.

With a little help from the umpires, Plum beat the boys 2-1 in a hard-fought game in the first round of the playoffs, despite Jake Potock's excellent 7 inning performance. The team feels a bit disappointed, but most move on to next year.

Disappointing season for tennis may lead to bright future for the team

By Nick Polito

It was a tough year for the boys' tennis team as they only won two matches. However, this was a major rebuilding year for the team, and, in a way, it was a very successful season.

"It was a rebuilding year so we have some tough losses and our record wasn't very good. In some ways it was successful because a lot of the younger guys got experience which will help us next year," junior Evan Conti said.

Two of these younger players who made huge improvements this season are Josh Bens and Sean Funfar. The team is expecting big things from these two freshmen in the coming years.

"I think they [Bens and Funfar] have improved a lot. They contributed to the team as freshmen and they did a nice job for us at the second doubles position," Conti said.

Bens and Funfar, along with all of the other younger players, would not have been able to improve as much without the help of some senior leadership. Jake Raible and Brandon McNeill, the only two seniors on the team, led the team very well.

"They were very important to our team on and off the court," Conti said.

Raible and McNeill have helped the young players improve tremendously.

"They have been very important to the younger guys. When only a few guys have a lot of experience it is important that those guys help out the inexperienced ones. It is unfortunate that they had to go through a rebuilding year as seniors but they have set us up for success in the future," Conti said.

The team has some optimism going into next season. After a long rebuilding year, the team will be a lot more experienced for next year.

"I think next season could go either way. We could have another rough year or we could turn it around. It really depends on how hard everyone works in the offseason to improve their game," Conti said.

Expect big things out of the boys' tennis team in the upcoming years.



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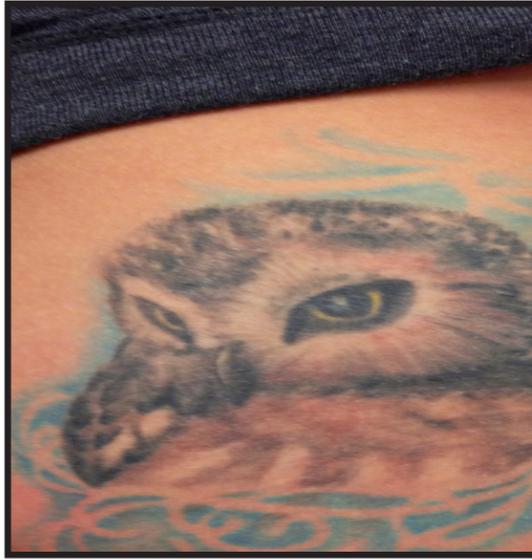
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The Back Page

Students speak out about what their tattoo means to them



"There are a few different meanings, one of which is for my mother, another which is for my friend Jimmy who passed away, and another which is for my celtic heritage."
-Senior, Chris Ruffner



"My tattoo represents my dad. He's the one who let me get my first tattoo. Owls are wise and he's older and always looks out for me."
-Senior, Rachel Dekleva



"The girls in my family decided to get a tattoo in honor of my grandmother. We decided to get puzzle pieces because 90% of our childhood consisted of building puzzles with her."
-Senior, Maddie Mulig

Fun date night ideas for the summer

by Sarah Breen

Never thought that the weather would be where it is now did you? Since the weather is getting better and we haven't had any freak snow storms lately, I think it's safe to say I can give you some outdoor date night ideas!

Bear with me here as this idea is quite cliché, but it's bound to knock your girlfriend off her feet. It's a simple one too. Instead of telling your girlfriend

to go make you a sandwich, make her one! Put it in a basket with a blanket and go to North Park. It's called a picnic. Didn't see that one coming did you? A picnic is a nice gesture that is sure to put a smile on a woman's face. North Park is also very easy to get to. Just be careful where you put your blanket; we wouldn't want any ant attacks now would we?

There is so much to do in North Park and it's

sometimes fun to just drive around and look at the sun fall on the trees. North Park is full of entertainment. Entertainment can include the North Park Swimming Pool, Gravity Hill, Blue Mist Road, mini golf courses, Par 3, ice cream places, and much more.

Sticking with a more outdoor atmosphere, there is also a place located on Route 8 that is pretty romantic. It's a place called Fall Run. There are some hiking trails there that lead to a waterfall. The walk is well worth it. It's also not a very strenuous walk either; there are lots of bridges to make it easier. It is also a good place to have a little picnic. Be sure to wear sneakers and not sandals. Once you're almost to the waterfall you start to hear it which makes it even more exciting and rewarding once you get there. It is also rewarding to know that you got some exercise while doing something fun.

Speaking of getting exercise while having fun, there are couple places downtown to take a nice walk and even rent a kayak. Down near Millvale there's a place to walk called the River View Trail. You could even take a bike down there if you don't feel like walking. The trail leads down to PNC Park, the water steps, and the Carnegie Science Center. Also located off of the River Trail are a couple restaurants. At least you wouldn't have to pay for parking!

If you're adventurous and don't mind the water then this next date idea is for you! Located in the Millvale area is a place to rent kayaks. This location is also near the River View Trail. You can rent a kayak for yourself or a tandem kayak for an additional cost that fits the you both. This attraction opens May 25, 2013. When renting a single kayak the cost is \$16.00 per hour. For an additional half hour the cost is \$8.00, not including tax. If you're up for a challenge and want to rent a tandem (a two seat kayak), the cost is then \$21.00 and an additional half hour is \$10.75, again not including tax. This date gives you a chance to test your problem solving skills with each other and is also a good way to see the city from a new point of view.

Like I always say, have fun and enjoy your date night. Summer time is a time to enjoy the outdoors instead of sitting in a movie theatre or on your significant other's couch. Enjoy the sunshine and fresh air on your walk, picnic, or kayaking experience.

This love guru is signing off. Good luck and have a great summer vacation and remember: date night is an important night.

SOG SENIOR ORACLE GRID		Favorite summer activity?	What are you most looking forward to about college?	Favorite memory from the Oracle?	What was your dream school?
	Sarah Breen <small>(The Love Guru)</small>	Swimming 	Meeting new people	Casey R. singing to Ross	New York Film Academy
	Casey Funtal	Letting my brain go to mush 	Freedom and new experiences	Ugly Christmas sweater day!	OU of course! 
	Victoria Mikita	Going to the beach	Having a fresh start	Harassing Nick Polito	Syracuse 
	Emily Pirt	Sleeping 	Freshman Fifteen	Mr. Schott	Penn State #bluewhite 
	Julie Rankin	Sunburning 	Potluck Roommate	Caroling for funds	Pittsburgh School of Napping
	Katie Rees	Going to the beach	Freedom! 	Casey and Brett Battles	Hogwarts 