

# The Oracle

Volume 39 Issue 7

Student Newspaper Of Shaler Area High School

May 2011

## Dr. Lee retiring after 14 years as superintendent

by Vince Lamanna

After 14 happy years here at Shaler, Dr. Donald Lee will retire, ending his 35-year teaching career in June. He began teaching at North Hills, then Seneca Valley, where he was principal at both schools.

His transition to superintendent happened at Seneca Valley where there was an opening. From there he took the job at Shaler Area where many of his friends were skeptical of the decision.

"Shaler had a reputation for not being very kind to superintendents. They fired them pretty regularly. Even my friends told me, 'Are you nuts? Why would you go to Shaler?' Lee said. "It was like a graveyard for superintendents."

Dr. Lee spent his first few years establishing himself as a leader and someone who could be trusted. He got to know teachers, administrators and community members, and tried to prove himself. Even today, 14 years later, Dr. Lee is still seen around the



Dr. Donald Lee (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette)

schools and at sporting events.

"My favorite part is the people, particularly the kids. I really enjoy being around the kids. I love coming up here (the High School) and being in a bell change, and just say hi to people," Lee said.

Not surprisingly, the people will be what Dr. Lee misses most. His favorite memories are opening day with the teachers and commencement at the end of the year.

Dr. Lee likes to get the teachers motivated and ready for the year ahead. Then, he also enjoys the commencement for seniors.

"It gives me great honor to give you guys your diplomas and I enjoy that very much," Lee said.

Yet, being superintendent comes with hardships; he attributes the hardest part to the people as well.

"The toughest part is dealing with unreasonable people. I think none of us like to deal with one who is unreason-

able," Lee said.

All in all, Dr. Lee has enjoyed his time at Shaler and will miss it greatly. Although he is retiring, he will still try to stay active. He is on a few boards, like Highmark and CCAC, and also plans to travel and golf.

Last week, at a special school board meeting, Dr. Lee's replacement was named. Assistant Superintendent Dr. Wes Shipley will take over starting August 1<sup>st</sup>. He was approved for a four year contract as Shaler's superintendent.

Dr. Lee's involvement in the community and charismatic personality will be missed. It won't be the same not seeing him on the sideline of football games, or hearing his voice on winter mornings. He loves Shaler and will miss it as much as Shaler will miss him.

Dr. Lee is ready to leave Shaler, but leaves it with a few last words, "I love the community," Lee said. "Keep doing what you're doing."

## Talent Show 2011



The show featured 24 acts, and they all were entertaining. Most acts were musical, and featured many bands. (Above) Paul Campbell and Jon Rankin played a guitar duet. Jon was in another band that played, Bad Acid.

In a one of the non-music acts, The Trackletes took the stage against the Lax Bros (below) in a dance competition.

The night culminated with the announcement of the Paul Schweiger award which is annually awarded to a teacher who is actively involved with activities at the school. Traditionally the award is given to a single person. This year, the award was given to the five Mr. Shaler Area contestants. The Mr. SA candidates participated in different activities on which they were judged. See page 8 for more details on Mr. Shaler Area.



## Holocaust survivor speaks

by Taylor Miksic

From 1939 until 1945 Jews, prisoners of war, political opponents, and many others were hunted, captured, mistreated, and often times even killed.

Last month a survivor of this mistreatment came to Shaler Area high school to speak to students about what he went through.

Herman Snyder, a Jewish man, is now 92 years old and just recently started telling his stories. He was born in Poland, but when the war started he and his family were forced out of their home and had to walk 21 kilometers to the next town and into a ghetto. In the ghetto there was very little food, very few showers, and the prisoners slept on straw.

He fled the ghetto about nine weeks after arriving, leaving his family behind. When he left the ghetto he had no idea what his family's fate would be.

"I became a fugitive, but I never committed a crime...my crime was that I was Jewish," said Snyder.

In June of 1946 he made his way to Russia where he met his wife with whom he had two kids, a daughter and a son. They moved back to Poland, then Slovakia, and then stayed in Germany for three and a half years before finally arriving in Pittsburgh on April 6 1949 after his lawyer finally got him a visa.

Within a year of moving to Pennsylvania, Snyder could fluently speak English, along with his other 5 languages (Polish, Hebrew/Yiddish, German, Lithuanian, and Russian).

He also got a job in a cabinet shop, but didn't like it so he went to Carnegie Mellon to become a general contractor. His daughter is a NorthWestern graduate of Orthodontics and his son is now an Air Force pilot living in Florida. Snyder said he "hates war" but "you don't control your children... don't tell them how to live." He now lives on Carnegie Mellon property in a house he built himself with his daughter.

He survived the war and has been very successful in making a life for himself and raising a family.

When asked why he lived he said, "You only die once, I didn't want to die... life is a gift."



Herman Snyder

# Laslavic traded broadcasting for teaching

by Samantha Raible

Mr. Joe Laslavic, an English and Media Literature teacher at Shaler Area High School, was not always a teacher. In fact, he went into college wanting to be a sports broadcaster. However, after a sudden chain of events a few years in to the industry, he turned to teaching.

Laslavic went to Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) to study communications and play baseball.

He wanted to be a sports reporter just like his uncle who was a sports broadcaster in San Diego. His uncle played professional football for 11 years prior to being in the media.

“When I would go visit him, he would take me into work and take me around, introduce me to the athletes and being around that situation, I really enjoyed it,” Laslavic said.

After quickly realizing he would have to probably be a professional athlete in order to become a sports reporter, he changed his mind to being either in the public relations department or event planning.

After he graduated his uncle called in a favor; he was very close with John Fedko, who worked with Laslavic’s uncle during the 1995 Superbowl.

“In the broadcast field it really helps to have a connection,” Laslavic said. “It really helps to know someone just in any industry. I was able to get a paid internship through WPXI.”

Things were looking good for Laslavic; he was



Mr. Laslavic works with Steven Langdon in class. (Sam Raible)

able to work in the broadcasting field doing something he really loved. He was able to go to any sports event and interview professional athletes. Although he was not actually on camera, he did a lot of off-air interviews, script writing for the teleprompter, and helping Fedko with his “Skylights” show by putting clips of games together.

“I was working 78 hour weeks,” Laslavic said, “but it wasn’t work for me because I was going to any sporting event I wanted, doing anything.”

As he continued to work as an intern, an older news anchor was retiring and instead of hiring a new reporter, WPXI gave another intern and Laslavic a chance to be part time sports reporters/producers. They continued to write scripts and sometimes be on camera. However, WPXI brought in Bill Phillips, who is still currently working there.

Then on September 11, 2001 Laslavic was to cover a Bill Cowher press conference, but his producer called him to say that the press conference was cancelled. He was very confused, but once he turned on the television he realized what happened; the World Trade Centers were collapsing.

WPXI and other stations decided to bus all their reporters, even sports reporters, to Shanksville where Flight 93 went down; he was to interview family members of the victims.

“I was thinking, ‘I’m going to have to interview someone who just lost a loved one on Flight 93’, Laslavic said. “At that moment I realized you have to have a stomach and thick skin for this and I can’t do this; that really made me get out of there.”

On September 12, 2001, Laslavic resigned, and went to LaRoche College and received his teaching degree in English.

“I miss it in the sense that I could go to any sporting event I wanted. I loved working with the people. I could have worked 100 hours a week and it still wouldn’t be work for me,” Laslavic said.

# The most memorable moments of 2010-2011

by Anna Porter and Kelsey Meehan

**-Red Man/Blue Man First Appearance:** We all remember when we got the facebook friend request: from a person named “Red Man/Blue Man” with a profile picture of two skinny figures dressed in red and blue spandex body suits. This was followed by a few days of frantic wondering of who these elusive people were. It was rumored that Red Man/Blue Man would be making an appearance at a football game; sure enough, they showed up and it was discovered that it was seniors Sean Langdon and Zach Nellis behind the masks (they had coincidentally convinced everyone that they would be out of town that weekend). They became an instant hit at games from then on. So congrats, on finally making the newspaper boys: way to fool us all and become the biggest hit at Shaler since the turkey supreme.

**-Football Senior Night: October 29 2010:** The senior band members had taken to the Titan football field one last time for a final performance. There seemed to be nothing that could steal the spotlight away from Shaler’s beaming band, until “Look! It’s a bird! It’s a plane! It’s...Phil Kenbok?!” The senior was leaping, twirling, and gyrating across the field, fueled by the cheers of Shaler’s student section. Unfortunately, the “Phil Kenbok Halftime Show” ended a little earlier than planned when he was chased and tackled to the ground thanks to Mr. Sarkis’ bouncer background and Mr. Eskra’s track and field training.

**-Girls Basketball WPIAL Champs: March 5, 2010:** 7:50 pm: “This is a good one. Chartiers Valley’s student section has just joined forces with Shaler’s. They just started chanting ‘Go home, Lebo!’” According to Post Gazette sports writer Mike White’s online blog, the Shaler student section at the 2011 Girls Basketball WPIAL Championship game was more notable than the actual game. Okay, that’s not entirely true; he did give a play-by-play of the exciting action for nearly two hours until Shaler pulled out the win, but we agree with Mike:

the student section was certainly notable. A sea of green showed up to the A.J. Palumbo Center ready to cheer the girls to victory, and that’s exactly what they did. With some help from CV’s Cookie Monster (did anyone actually know that guy?), seniors Jon Deasy and Zack Schramm led the students in what can only be described as epic cheers. Sure, we all nearly broke our legs when we did the boxing cheer, and we all lost our seats during the roller coaster, but it was all worth it when we saw the videos after. So here’s to you, girls: way to end the Three-peat. And here’s to you, student section; Seniors ’12 certainly have big shoes to fill.

**-Dodge Ball Tournament: March 18, 2010:** Senior projects have been at Shaler High School almost as long as Mr. Lishack has been. Hours have been volunteered and projects have been made, so having a senior project that is truly unique and even, shockingly, fun, is hard to find. That is, until Sam Spagnoletti decided to hold a dodge ball tourney. Along with a huge turnout by students, teachers and faculty also came out for a throwback to the days in the recess yard...or to the days when we were actually allowed to play dodge ball in gym class. It was a long, hard, and bloody fight, resulting in Team Dunder claiming the title of 1st place.

**-Senior Assembly:** Ask any senior about the “lawyer” that spoke to them at the senior assembly and we’re sure you get a few laughs. For those of you who weren’t lucky enough to be in attendance, here’s what you missed: in an effort to provide the Class of 2011 with some tips about life in the real world, Mrs. Thiel brought in a man with an impressive resume. The outcome: complete failure. The seniors, teachers, and administrators listened in shock to a “lawyer” discuss ways to not get sent to jail. Here’s what we learned: if we’re going to grow marijuana in our houses, we’ll be sure not to grow it in a front window. This was followed by a conversation about alcohol that had nothing to do with being responsible. It was a great effort, Mrs. Thiel, but for the sake of future classes, skip the speaker next time, unless you think your students are really sleep deprived.



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## The Oracle

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

Opinions expressed in The Oracle are those of the individual writers, not necessarily of The Oracle staff.

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](mailto:oracle@sasd.k12.pa.us).

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

# Faculty/Staff Class of 2011

**Mrs. Julie Sadowski**



**Position:** Secretary  
**23 years at Shaler**  
**Most memorable moment:**  
 "When we won the Quad North in football."  
**Plans for retirement:**  
 "I have so many, but definitely golfing and traveling."  
**What you will miss most:** "Our great students."



1994

**Mrs. Karen Ulrich**



**Position:** English teacher, former yearbook advisor  
**38 years at Shaler**  
**Most memorable moment:** "Being stuck here after the flooding hit after Hurricane Ivan; the crazy antics that staff members pulled on each other; Project RIGOR being instituted; dittoes and mimeographs—and the pre-computer days."  
**Plans for retirement:**  
 "I plan to volunteer, read things I didn't have time for before, take a vacation at a time (other than the summer)."  
**What you will miss most:**  
 "The interactions with both staff and students. You can't do a "people-oriented" job this long and not miss the people who made it worth your while to get up every day."



1983

**Mr. Jerry Koller**

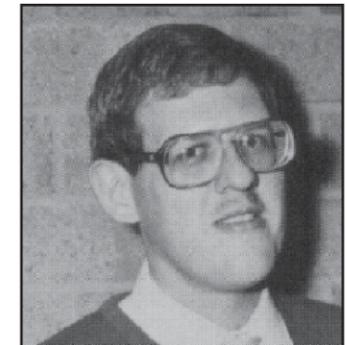


**Position:** Guidance Counselor  
**36 years at Shaler**  
**Most memorable moment:**  
 "There are many, but interviewing to get the job, I can remember it like it was yesterday."  
**Plans for retirement:** "I will keep busy. I have two children in the military I'm going to visit and to spend time with their families and my seven grandchildren." **What you will miss most:** "It's been a privilege working with the students, so that without a doubt."

**Mr. Rich Partridge**



**Position:** Math teacher  
**32 years at Shaler**  
**Most memorable moment:**  
 "The students."  
**Plans for retirement:**  
 "I am going to spend time with my wife and enjoy every minute of it."  
**What you will miss most:**  
 "The students because they bring life to the school."



1987

**Mr. Dennis Erb**

**Position:** Math teacher  
**40 years at Shaler**  
 "You won't be able to print what I'd say."

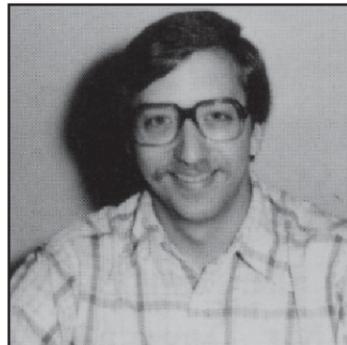


1978

**Mr. Jim Nicola**



**Position:** Tech Ed. teacher  
**32 years at Shaler**  
**Most memorable moment:**  
 "There are so many, but the first day I walked into my classroom, there were 24 holes in the floor from a driver's ed class and the rest of the room was entirely empty."  
**Plans for retirement:**  
 "Travel and volunteer. I'm going to Alaska in June."  
**What you will miss most:** "The people. I mean everyone: secretaries, principals, teachers and students. Teaching is a people business. If you don't bond with the people around you there is something wrong."

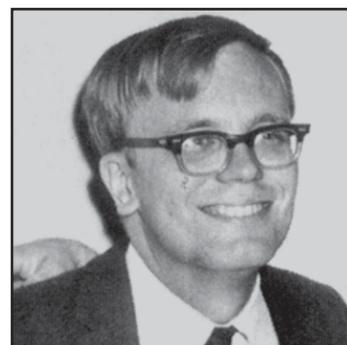


1982

**Mr. Tom Pivarski**



**Position:** Science teacher  
**41 years at Shaler**  
**Most memorable moment:**  
 "There have been too many to say one is most memorable."  
**Plans for retirement:**  
 "Travel, work on the house and try out some new hobbies."  
**What you will miss most:** "The fun times in the TWC and the classes I have taught and the students who bring positive energy to the class."

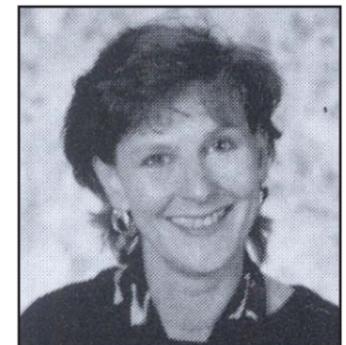


1971

**Mrs. Linda Dahl**



**Position:** Spanish, Sociology, Psychology teacher  
**17 years at Shaler**  
**Most memorable moment:**  
 "I remember watching the events in New York, Washington, and Shanksville unfold as we sat in the classroom watching the world change and sharing our feelings of outrage and fear."

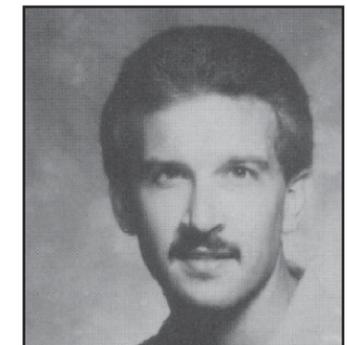


1996

**Mr. John Lishack**



**Position:** Math teacher  
**30 years at Shaler**  
**Most memorable moment:**  
 "Any time a student has a "light bulb" come on has always been wonderful as well as any student recognition of a teacher's positive impact on his/her life."  
**Plans for retirement:**  
 "Exercising the other side of my brain and avoiding winter weather."  
**What you will miss most:** "My students and colleagues and the energy I get from them. Thanks SA, I'm glad our paths crossed."



1987



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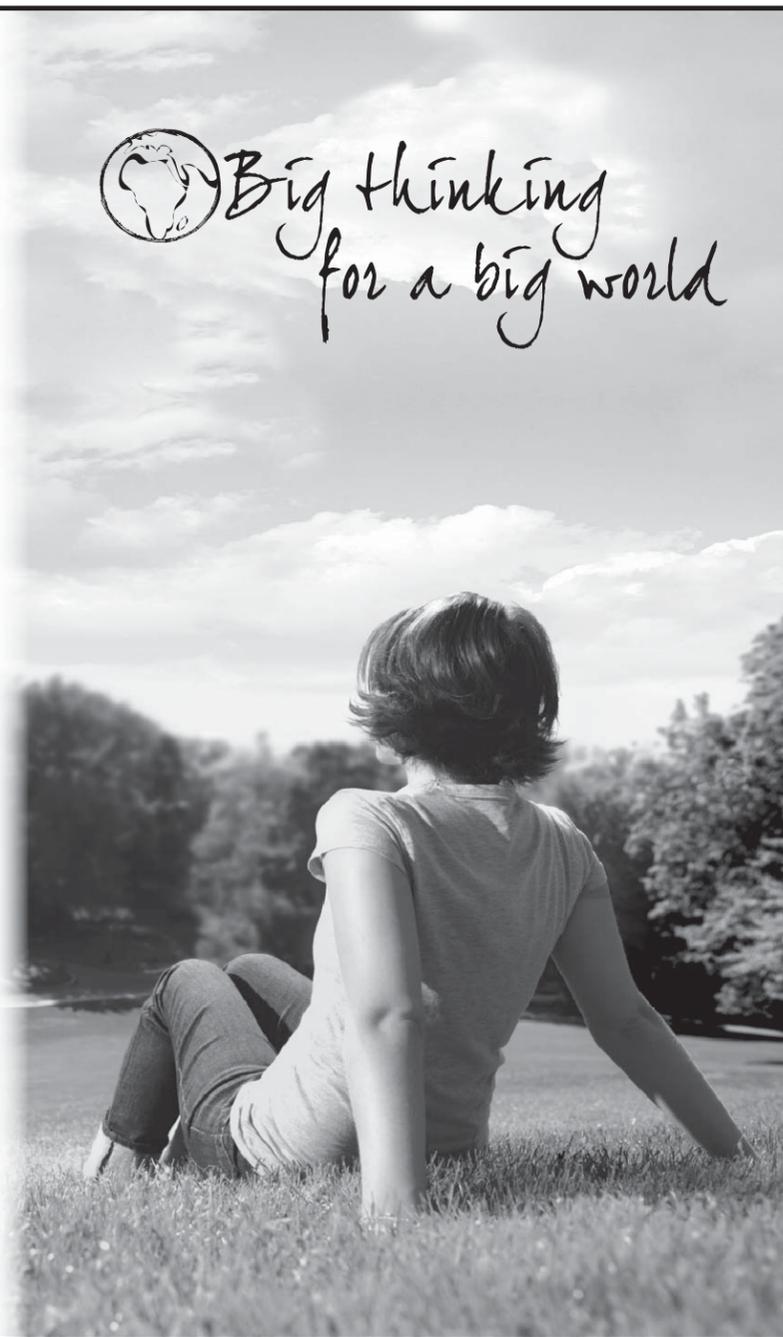
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	SAT	ACT
<b>Skills Tested</b>	Reading, Math and Writing	Reading, Math, English and SCIENCE
<b>Testing time</b>	3 hrs, 45 minutes	2 hrs, 55 minutes (plus optional essay)
<b># of sections</b>	10 sections total. (There are seven 25 minute sections, two 20 minute sections and one 10 minute section.) * <i>With each new section, the topic being tested switches (reading, math, writing) so be prepared to mentally shift gears multiple times!</i>	4 sections total. (There is one 45 minute English section, one 60 minute Math section, one 35 minute Reading section and one 35 minute Science section.) * <i>Once you complete a section, you are done with that topic – there is no jumping back and forth like the SAT.</i>
<b>Total # of Questions</b>	170 questions total. (Three scored sections each of Reading, Math and Writing for a total of 67 Reading, 54 Math and 49 Writing multiple choice questions.)	215 questions total. (There are 75 English, 60 Math, 40 Reading and 40 Science questions.)
<b>Question format</b>	All multiple choice EXCEPT 10 Math questions where you calculate an answer.	ALL multiple Choice.
<b>Experimental Section?</b>	Yes. The SAT includes an “experimental” section that is NOT scored but used to evaluate future test questions.	No. ALL questions are scored and count towards your total points earned.
<b>Essay?</b>	Yes. The essay is mandatory and an integral part of your overall writing score.	Yes. However, the essay is optional (Note: some colleges REQUIRE) and is scored separately.
<b>Penalty for guessing?</b>	Yes. The SAT deducts ¼ of one point for each incorrect answer. There is no penalty, however, for leaving a question blank.	No. There is no penalty for an incorrect answer so it is to your advantage to fill in every blank – even if you have to guess. .
<b>Reading Content</b>	3 different styles of questions: <b>Sentence Completion</b> (you complete a sentence from which 1 or 2 words have been omitted.), <b>Long Reading Passage</b> and <b>Short Reading Passage</b> (both test reading comprehension with either multi or single paragraph passages taken from social and natural sciences, and humanities.) Passage based reading questions are presented in the same order as story content.	Reading questions are based on 4 types of reading selections: <b>Prose fiction, Social Sciences, Humanities and Natural Sciences.</b> Similar to the SAT, question categories include main idea, context, sequence, cause and effect, drawing conclusions/inference, specific facts and authors tone. Passage based reading questions are presented in random order (do not follow story content order).
<b>Math Content</b>	Primarily tests 3 areas: <b>Arithmetic</b> (fractions, decimals, percentages, ratio/proportion and general problem solving), <b>Algebra I/Algebra II</b> and <b>Geometry.</b> The formulas for calculating area, volume and circumference are printed in your test booklet so you do not have to memorize them. You are also provided with angle measurements for circles, lines and triangles.	Primarily tests 3 categories of questions – <b>PreAlgebra/Elementary Algebra</b> (fractions, decimals, percentages, and basic algebraic expressions), <b>Intermediate Algebra/Coordinate Geometry</b> (linear equations, exponents, radicals, polynomials and placement of points, lines and geometric figures on a Cartesian grid), and <b>Plane Geometry/Trigonometry</b> (geometric solids, lines, angles, triangles, circles, quadrilaterals, and trigonometric identities)
<b>Science Content</b>	N/A	Covers a wide range of topics in biology, chemistry, physics and earth/space sciences.
<b>Writing/English Content</b>	Consists of 2 components – multiple choice questions test your grammar skills in identifying errors, improving sentences and improving paragraphs plus the essay.	Questions fall into 2 categories – <b>Usage/Mechanics</b> (which tests punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure) and <b>Rhetorical skills</b> (which tests writing strategy, organization and style).
<b>Scoring</b>	The maximum score possible is 2400 (800 points per section). The 2009 National Average SAT Score was 1509 (501-Reading, 515-Math and 493-Writing).	The maximum score you can attain is 36. The 2009 National Average ACT score was 21.0.

## SPORTS

## Titans win 5 of last 6 section games to make playoffs

by J.T. Schwartz

After winning seven of their last nine games, including a “do or die” game against Pine Richland, the Shaler Titan baseball team clinched a playoff spot.

In baseball, only the top three teams in each section make the WPIAL playoffs. But, because they won against Pine Richland, they forced a tie between Pine Richland, and Butler. In the WPIAL, there are no tie breakers in section play, so the Titans are the fourth team in.

“This section is brutal. It is just like the Big East in college hoops, so I expected it to be close,” Head Coach Brian Junker said. “I knew we were one of the best teams in the section but we didn’t start playing like that until when we played at North Allegheny, where we won 2-0. It was after that I knew we would make a run at it.”

The Titans knew that the game against Pine Richland would not be an easy game. Pine Richland started its best pitcher, Zak Laneve, a University of North Carolina recruit. That did not stop the Titans bats.

Two RBIs from Zack Schramm, a RBI from Jake Hetz, and a RBI from Derek Sullivan helped the Titans take a 4-1 lead into the third inning. After giving up three runs in the third, the score was tied at four. It remained tied until the seventh inning, when Taylor Colamarino singled, which brought Mike Logan into score for the go ahead run. Then Ben Mulig launched a three-run home run to expand the lead.

“The home run gave Temple some breathing room, and took some pressure



Derek Sullivan looks make a throw to first (North Allegheny website)

off our defense and helped them close out the game,” Mulig said.

Tyler Temple, who came into the game in the fourth inning to relieve starting pitcher Matt Bernick, closed the game, only giving up one hit.

To put the Titans in this do or die situation, they also had to basically win out the rest of their games. They almost did just that. Starting their playoff push was a shutout victory against North Allegheny. Following that win, they beat Latrobe, Fox Chapel, and avenged their early season loss against Seneca Valley. After losing to Butler, the Titans finished out the last four games of the season by beating North Hills, Woodland Hills, and Pine Richland.

“I am very happy with these players. They have worked so hard. Nobody gave us a chance this year because we didn’t have pitching. Well, now the pitchers have

stepped up and we could make some noise in the playoffs because of it, especially the junior pitchers, Matt Bernick and Tyler Temple. We have one of the best offenses and defenses in the WPIAL,” Junker said.

The team finished the regular season strong, with a record of 8-4 in the section, and 12-7 overall. As the team headed into the playoffs, they started with a clean slate. In the first round of the playoffs, as the eighth seed, the team was matched up against Latrobe.

“Our goal at the beginning of the year was to win a WPIAL championship, so that is what we are shooting for. There were times during the season that it didn’t seem like we would do that. We just kept working hard with the goal of getting better each day in mind,” Junker said.

## Track and field had strong showing at WPIAL Northern Qualifier meet

by J.T. Schwartz

At the AAA Northern WPIAL Qualifiers, the Shaler Track team had a great showing. Track and Field is a unique sport. Like most sports the team competes for a championship, but unlike

most sports, the individual players also compete for a championship. So, even if the team is not successful, the individuals have a chance to be successful.

The qualifier meet is a little bit different than other meets. Most teams send their top three or four participants in each event, from which, the top eight will go onto the WPIAL finals. There are three of these qualifiers for each classification. So, in addition to the top eight in each event from the Northern Qualifiers, the top eight for the Southern and Central Qualifiers will also run in the WPIAL Finals.

Some of the top Shaler finishes from the meet include sophomore Courtney Bauer, who came in fourth in the girls 200 meter dash, senior Angie Bagwell, who came in second in the girls 800 meter run, junior Megan Carter, who came in seventh in the girls 1600 meter run, seniors Val McQuade and Sarah Cook, who came in fourth and eighth respectively in the girls 100 meter hurdles, and freshman Delaney Quinlan, who came in eighth in the girls 300 meter hurdles.



Angie Bagwell finishes second (pa.milesplit.com)

The relay teams also did very well. In the girls 4x100 meter relay, Sarah Pfeifer, C.J. Belleci, Jessica Bagwell, and Allie Rouda came in sixth. Also, the girls 4x400 meter relay team came sixth and the girls 4x800 meter relay team came in fifth. In the jumping events, there were more girls who qualified. Shannon Powell and Jessica Farrell qualified for the high jump, Emily Schubert qualified for the pole vault, and Kylie Farrell qualified for the triple jump.

Although the boys team did not have anyone qualify for WPIAL Finals, there were some strong performances. Scott Hughes came in thirteenth place in the boys 400 meter dash. Dan Sowa came in sixteenth place in the boys 1600 meter run, while Kevin Mauser finished right behind him.

Freshman Caleb Wakeley, probably had the best chance to qualify for the finals, but he came in ninth place in the 3200 meter run, two seconds behind the eighth place finisher. If Wakeley ran in another section, he would have won first place for his event and would have qualified for finals. This shows that the Northern section is very tough, and that Wakeley is a great runner, especially as a freshman.

Overall the team did a wonderful job in the qualifiers, and the next step is finals. From there, it would be no surprise to see some of the individuals place in finals, and make it to states.

## Girls Lacrosse has successful season and looks toward playoffs

by Ben Mulig

The Shaler Girls Lacrosse team is working their way towards another successful and playoff-bound season. With only one game remaining against North Hills for the section title, the girls have an impressive record of 14-2, and are ranked 8th in the WPIAL. Most of the players on the team this year are returning from last year when the girls made a WPIAL playoff run. The experience and talent is there, now they just have to make it work.

The Titans have ran through their schedule so far this season, only dropping two games to powerhouse Seton-La-Salle and a tight game against rival North Hills.

The Titans are led by a core of five seniors. Kelsey Meehan, Amie Dobracki, Hannah Parks, Leah Jans, and Natalie Ambrozic are the seniors on the team. After the team had a very successful year in 2010, their expectations are only greater for the playoffs this year.

“We are hoping that we will go farther than we did last year. It’s been our goal to win Sections and then go on to win WPIALs, and based on how we’ve been doing this year, and how solid our team is, we have a really good chance of accomplishing that goal,” Meehan said.

The girls reached the WPIAL semi-finals last year before losing a hard fought game. This year, they hope, and expect, to surpass that point and to be crowned WPIAL champs. So far this year, they sit in the number two spot in their section only behind an undefeated North Hills team. A spot in the playoffs is guaranteed at this point.

Another big asset to the team is junior Elizabeth Casertano. Casertano was selected as the representative from the team to play in a WPIAL all-star tournament at the end of the season for her performance against Knoch earlier in the year. With Casertano playing well, and the leadership of the five seniors, the sky is the limit for the girls as the season is coming to a close and the WPIAL playoffs approach.

# SPORTS

## Softball season filled with excitement

Lady Titans clinch one hundredth win for the coaching staff and another section title

by Stephen Kimpel

Similarly to the previous years, the 2011 Lady Titans softball team has once again made excellence a staple of their regular season record. Finishing with a record of 16-1, the Lady Titans hope to continue their success into the post season.

However impressive their record may be, this year's Lady Titans squad has made history in the midst of their season. With an away win against North Hills, the Lady Titans were able to clinch a hundredth win for their coaching staff.

"To be on the Shaler softball team is a great privilege. Girls look forward to being a part of it and playing for Shaler. The coaching staff has one hundred wins and they take their job as coaches seriously," senior captain Jenn Anderson stated.

Although this 2011 season for the girls team has been one filled with victories, there has been a consistent difference between the level of competition and the closeness of the games. However, from the beginning of the season the Lady Titans have been able to maintain focus throughout every competitive setting.

"We keep our heads up and motivate each other no matter what the score is. As long as our spirit is high, we will focus in the games," senior captain Candace Tabrosky explained.

"During a softball game there must be complete focus throughout the players. There are no differences between a fifteen fun game or a closer game. The team rule is never take a team lightly, and once you get them down keep them down," junior catcher Lauren Hackett.



Sydney Smyers finishes a strike out to close out the inning on Senior Night (Stephen Kimpel)

The Lady Titans are focusing past the blowout games such as a fifteen run victory in the third inning against Oakland Catholic and turning their attention towards a greater goal.

"We want to stay focused on our competitors and the individual games. In addition, we do not want to see another WPIAL silver, but a gold," senior captain Shelby Tabrosky expressed.

It may happen that the Lady Titans face a fa-

miliar foe in the post season. For the past two years the Lady Titans have met Hempfield's softball team in the WPIAL playoffs.

"Knowing they have an undefeated softball program, we would love to play them in the playoffs this year. The game ending score will most likely be a low number and very close. It could possibly come down to who makes an error first," Hackett said.

However probable it is that the two teams will meet again in the playoffs, the Lady Titans have a lot of confidence going into this post season. This year the softball team averages 6.4 runs per game and allows only an average of 1.2 runs per game.

"We all contribute to winning and work hard to achieve that goal. Our bench is even good because they can come into the game and help out," Shelby Tabrosky expressed.

Although the success of this season can be attributed to a team effort, a lot of what makes this year's team special can be associated with the .600 plus batting average of Lauren Hackett, who had 6 homeruns on the season, and the exceptional pitching of Sydney Smyers.

"I think that Sydney is the best pitcher in Quad A. She works hard at practice and she is feared by many teams," S. Tabrosky said.

When asked about their unity and resounding success, numerous players attributed the majority of their in season success to the close nature of their team, even calling it a "family".

With only the post season remaining, softball fans should hope the Lady Titans "family" is still happy with their season as a whole at the end of May.

## Hackett making a name for herself at and behind the plate

by Samantha Raible

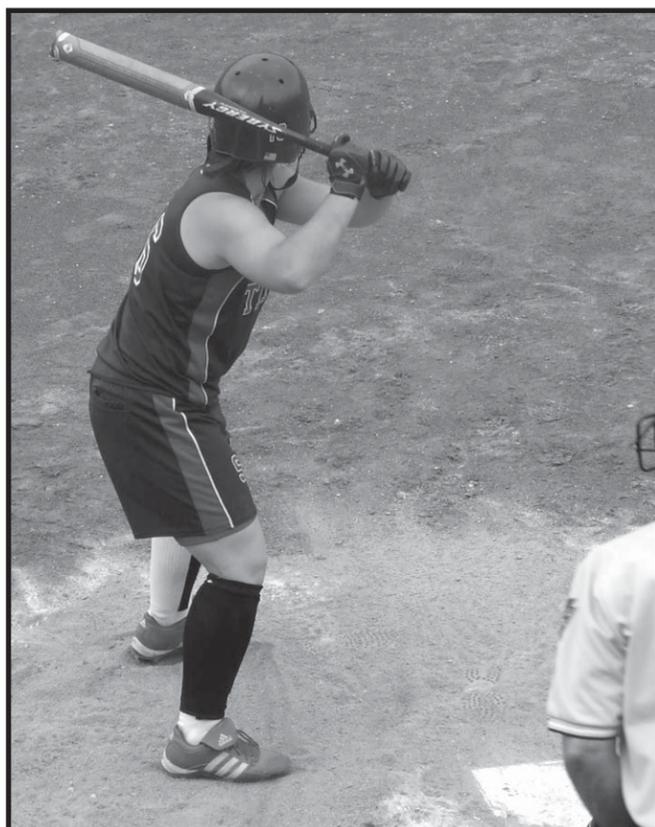
Lauren Hackett, a junior on the Shaler Area softball team has always been an all star player. When she was five she started playing softball and progressively moved up in the leagues. At age seven she started playing fast pitch softball for Pine Richland because Shaler did not have a team at the time.

At age nine she started playing catcher and excelled from there on out. Since freshman year she has been a starting catcher for Shaler's team; while playing for Shaler she has made some spectacular plays.

"There was a diving catch I made off of a bunt last year," Hackett said.

But that's not all, she currently holds the batting average record for Shaler and she is one of the top hitters in WPIALs.

Hackett has not only played for Shaler teams but has also played for local teams such as Pittsburgh Power and currently plays for Pittsburgh Spir-



Lauren Hackett steps to the plate in the third inning against Vincentian Academy to hit a double. Her batting average is .682, she has four doubles on the season, she has 26 RBI's, and she has only struck out twice (Stephen Kimpel)

it. Spirit has just formed the team this year and fellow teammates Jess Vanucci, Maddie Mulig, and Sydney Smyers play with her; however, Hackett went with Pittsburgh Power to multiple national championships.

She has also been to championship games since freshman year.

"We went to a WPIAL and State championship my freshman year, we went to the WPIAL championship last year, and lost in the quarter final for states. Hopefully we will be going this year," she said.

As the years have passed Hackett has been influenced by her parents and Smyers, who is the team's pitcher this year and one of her closest friends.

As the thought of college looms in her future, she plans to play softball. Coaches from Robert Morris University have contacted her, and she has also talked to the Ohio State coach about playing for them. However, she is still looking around and plans to see what will happen.

Although she is only a junior, Lauren Hackett is a force on the field and plans to take her skills to the future.

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# The Back Page

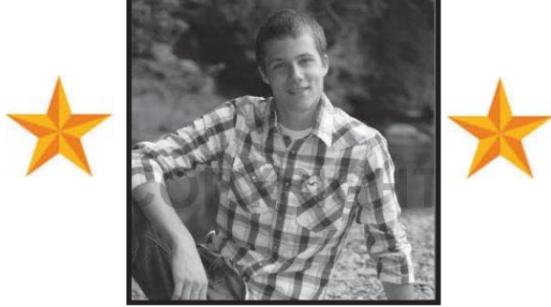
## Your 2011 Mr. Shaler Area is...

### Dom Deltondo



Height: 5'5  
 Weight: 150 lbs.  
 Talents: Growing facial hair  
 Role Models: Adam Sandler and Kimbo Slice  
 Why should you have won Mr. SA?: "Because my flow hangs to the floor"  
 What would you have done with the title?: "Abused it. If I were Mr. Shaler Area, I could cut in line"

### Sean Langdon



Height: 6'1  
 Weight: 160 lbs.  
 Talents: Living life, playing with fire  
 Role Models: Alex Deem, Jackson Rogers, and Zach Nellis  
 Why did you win Mr. SA?: "Because I've trained my whole life for this"  
 What will you do with the title?: "Go to prom gratis"

### Doug Thompson



Height: Short  
 Weight: 145 lbs.  
 Talents: An array of odd talents which one saw in the show  
 Role Models: Older siblings, Rambo, and Rocky  
 Why should you have won Mr. SA?: "I'm a boss"  
 What would you have done with the title?: "Held it in high regards and shown it around to people"

### Nick Michel



Height: Average height, for a girl  
 Weight: 145 lbs.  
 Talents: Drumming to popular pop songs  
 Role Models: Uncle Buck, Hootie and the Blowfish, and Herbert Hoover  
 Why should you have won Mr. SA?: "Because I do what I want"  
 What would you have done with the title?: "Went to Disney Land"

### Sam Greco



Height: 6'0  
 Weight: 180 lbs.  
 Talents: Dramatically reading Humpty Dumpty and getting all the ladies  
 Role Models: Mr. Sarkis, Martin Luther King Jr. and Bill Clinton  
 Why should you have won Mr. SA?: "Because I'm the King of Swag"  
 What would you have done with the title?: "Went 19-0"



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**Congratulations Mr. Shaler Area and to all Talent Show acts**