

# The Oracle

Volume 44 Issue 1

Student Newspaper Of Shaler Area High School

November 2017

## Behind the scenes at The ScareHouse

by Maura Fisher and Gabi Girton

Although many people only think of the Etna ScareHouse during the months of October, planning for the ScareHouse actually begins as soon as the previous Halloween ends. Using customer feedback and original ideas, five team members work year round to turn ScareHouse into your most terrifying nightmares.

The ScareHouse opened in 1999 and has been producing different horrific themes for patrons every year. The themes, often referred to as "haunts", are decided after a lot of research on what people are scared of. The ScareHouse puts out a survey and receives an overwhelming amount of feedback from customers on ways to make The ScareHouse even scarier. The most common themes they acquire are spiders, chainsaws, and clowns. Then they work to implement them into the haunts.

The ScareHouse is run by Scott and Wayne Simmons, who rely on a trusty team of actors, planners, and marketing coordinators to create and design the different haunts.

"We do year round surveys and I look at data to see what the customers liked and what they didn't like so [The ScareHouse Team] meets in January to analyze data to plan and change the haunts and then we start building in March," said marketing supervisor, Katie Dudas.

In every room, there are usually 1-2 hidden actors. They are given certain lines to say and actions to do, but they also improvise depending on the reactions they get. The actors aren't the only things that are used to scare people. There's almost one mp3 player in every room. Scarehouse relies heavily on sound effects to make the scenes more scary. Along with the sound, the use of lighting, specifically strobe, flashing, and complete darkness are crucial when concocting the right amount of terror for each room.

This year, the first Haunt was Sunset Lodge, which is set up as a cheesy 80's motel. However, this motel doubles as a serial killer's workshop. In the haunt, you would have seen the motel laundry room, honeymoon suite, storage room, bar, breakfast nook and the serial-killer stalking room. The team uses ideas from crime shows and real life stories to make their rooms look realistic, gory and terrifying.

A lot of time goes into the construction of each room. Starting in March, the team works nonstop to perfect the terrifying details of each and every room in the haunted house.

"You start by making [the rooms] pretty, meaning painting and things like that, and then you make it look absolutely disgusting. It really emphasizes the grossness that we want the

Cont. on page 2

## New grading scale designed to help students compete with students from other districts

by Gabi Girton

Recently, the grading scale used through the school district was modified.

In the 1990's, several schools in Allegheny County changed grading scales in order to reflect more competitive, and elite districts. In order to heighten the rigor of classes, the typical 90% A was changed to a 92% A. Ten years ago, however, many schools started to abandon this model because they realized that the rigor is reflected by the quality of work being done, as opposed to the point value assessed by the schools.

As of last year, Shaler Area was one of the only Districts in Allegheny County that still used the 92% A grading scale. But, starting in August, the scale will resemble the schools like Hampton, Pine Richland and Mars.

Although changing the grading scale by 2% for an A may seem like a small deal this also changes the way a failing grade is calculated. Instead of a 64% fail, students now can pass as long as they have above a 60%.

The main reason for the scale change, according to superintendent Mr. Sean Aiken is that a more challenging scale could potentially put Shaler Area students at a disadvantage when applying for colleges.

"Many school districts started pulling away and going back to 10 point scale. I noticed we did not go back to that scale and there was this adjusted grading scale that possibly could disadvantage our students...If you're being compared to students from North Allegheny, or Hampton or North Hills and they have a 10 pt scale and we did not, it could look like their GPA's are higher than yours. With everyone competing for scholarships and grant money, we wanted to make sure our students are well represented and competitive, and put you guys in the best place to achieve whatever is possible," Aiken said.

Cont. on page 4

## "Sleepy Hollow" set to come to life



*The Legend of*  
**SLEEPY HOLLOW**

by Tanner Nowakowski

An interesting twist to a well-known classic, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow", is to be expected in this year's play. Cast and crew members are excited for the comical take to the seemingly scary play.

"The audience should expect much laughter, superb acting, amazing singing, and spectacular sets and costumes. This is a fun, family-friendly show," Mrs. Anne Loudon, the director of the play, said.

The lead performer of the play, senior Andrew Lesnett, is excited for the audience to see Sleepy Hollow the way he thinks it should be seen.

"Everyone will think it's scary, but in reality it is a comedy," Lesnett said.

Lesnett's character, Ichabod Crane, has a very comical twist that will take the audience by surprise.

"He tries to fit in and be someone that everyone loves, but everything he does sucks and it's really funny," Lesnett said.

Another challenge of the play this year is performing with the punk, dark theme of Sleepy Hollow. This sort of theme is the first of its kind for the cast and everyone involved.

"Our greatest challenge this year will probably be the execution of the "steampunk" element; however, with our gifted stage crew and scenic designer, Jeanne Marshall, I know this will be a challenge conquered," Loudon said.

The theme was chosen by Ms. Simonetti, the costume designer for the play. Simonetti wanted to do something different from previous shows. The "steampunk" theme has not been done in other shows and is perfect for "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow".

Steampunk is a genre of science fiction where the technology is dated back to the 19th century steam engines, also featuring dark settings with a frightening tone.

"Our variation invites the audience into a fantasy world inspired by Steampunk. Since the *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* is a work of speculative fiction, a type of narrative encompassing futuristic and supernatural elements, our Steampunk adaptation is fitting," Loudon said.

The seniors involved in the play are very excited to be performing such a different style of play for their last show.

"I'm super excited to tell such a fun and complex story. It's my last play this year and I'm so grateful for the opportunity to put on a new and interesting show," senior Zach Reed, who plays Brom Bones, said.

Many people are coming together to make this a great show. Seniors are taking directing roles to help others perfect their craft for the play.

"Our student directors have shown incredible leadership. Lexi Cerny and Joey Franz have done an excellent job ensuring that rehearsals run smoothly. Emily Yuretich, our vocal director, and Sidne Shipman, our choreographer, have shared their talents for singing and dancing. All four directors are incredibly gifted and Ms. Susany and I are appreciative of their dedication," Loudon said.

"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" will have three performances: Friday, November 10 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, November 11 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

# OPINIONS

## SnapChat getting away from privacy roots with Snap Map feature

by Tanner Nowakowski

The popular app Snapchat has come a long way from its release in 2011. It all started as a place for people to send pictures to each other that would be deleted into the internet air after a certain amount of seconds. The app seemed to be geared around privacy and fun. With the new updates and recent features added, Snapchat has really taken off as one of the most popular social media platforms.

Snapchat, however, released a new feature that has some people feeling a little worried. Snapchat went away from the privacy of the app, when the creators came up with a new Snap Map feature.

This feature shows all of the people that have you added where you are, it even shows when you're driving and sleeping. You can also zoom in enough to see streets and houses where a person is near and zoom out to see where people are all over the world. Many people feel that their privacy is being invaded by the app. It is scary for people that others know

exactly where you are going and who you are going there with.

This new feature has many people staying "ghosted" on the app. Being ghosted means that nobody on the map can see your location, unless you choose certain people to be able to see.

Even while being ghosted, your Snapchat animation or Bitmoji is able to be seen. You can still see your Bitmoji character on the map with your current location, but nobody else can see you unless you choose for them to be able to see you. The only thing keeping you private is a sign with a ghost on it that covers your animated face.

This leaves people wondering if someone else can still see where they are. Are people at the Snapchat Headquarters able to see all of the Snapchatters every move? After all, Snapchat is able to send you themed snaps, such as Christmas and Thanksgiving themed snaps, so obviously it knows your username.

Being able to send snaps to someone means that you are mutual friends, which is the only qualifica-

tion to be able to see someone on the map. Many people at Snapchat deny being able to see people on the map and only your mutual friends on the app can see where you are. It is up to you to trust the people behind Snapchat and it's new update.

Personally, I am ghosted on this feature and I plan to stay that way. I do not have a huge problem with this feature because of the privacy options that it still has on the map, but I do understand where the frustration is coming from. Phones have a record of your location on it anyway, but nobody can see your location on your phone unless you share it with them. This is why I am ghosted on the app because this gives me the power to choose who I want to see my location, if I choose anyone at all.

Snapchat went way too far with this feature. There is no reason for someone to be able to see my every move throughout my day. It is pretty unsettling that the app knows where you are at what time, when you are driving, when you are sleeping, and who you are with at that time from the screen of their phone.

## Behind the scenes at The ScareHouse

from page 1

haunts to have," says Katie Dudas.

The designers also like to hide easter eggs in the haunts for their own enjoyment. They are small things that people walking through won't notice. For example, they hide props from previous haunts throughout the entire experience.

Evil gingerbread men with different variations of amputations, which are easter eggs from the retired Krampus haunt, are hidden alongside the butcher's den that is located in Sunset Lodge. Also featured are boxes of food with the creators names on them.

After Sunset Lodge, you entered Nocturnia 3D. This haunt is circus themed, as a fear of clowns is present in many people of many ages. The fear never seems to go away, making it a perfect theme for haunted houses. The Scarehouse began using this theme in 2016, and continues to use it, especially with Stephen King's best-selling novel 'It' revamping the fear of clowns.

Before entering Nocturnia 3D, you were given 3D glasses that distort your depth perception. The walls are painted black and white and then a variety of bright colored dots and stripes are painted over top. The glasses make it so some of the colors pop out more, causing the illusion of the 3D effect and making some colors seem closer to you than they actually are.

Walking through Nocturnia 3D, evil clowns and mechanical props jump out at you as you shuffle through the tight path. "Dave the Clown" is The ScareHouse's notorious 6'5 clown. With his size, makeup, and actions, he perfectly fits people's nightmares.

The particularly calculated mirror maze is a challenging obstacle course where people must find the exit in a room of mirrors reflecting every dark shadow and creepy figure. The ScareHouse also uses the classic vortex tunnel, but with a twist. The black and white vortex is splattered with vibrant paints so you are still getting the effect of depth distortion with the glasses. Now add that with the spinning tunnel, and it's almost too much for your mind to handle.

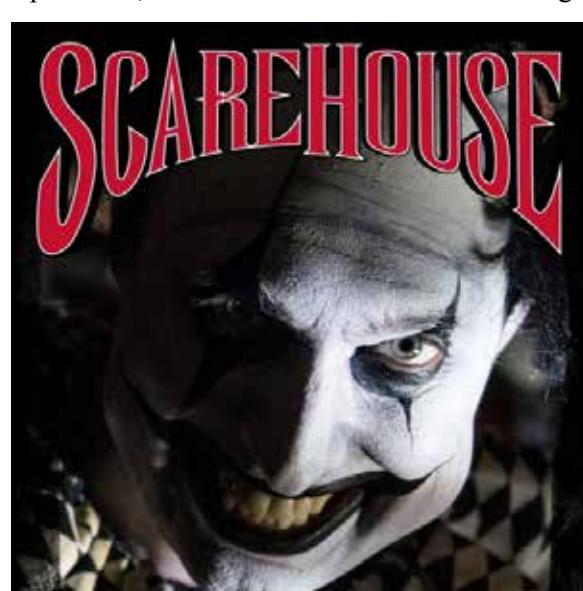
The final haunt was a demon infested garden, and portal to hell called Infernal. This haunt has been around since 2016 as well. First, you would have walked through a museum of haunted artifacts. These props are based on real demonic and haunted artifacts. People tend to associate satan with dolls, so Infernal is filled with demonic dolls. Infernal is designed to be a portal to everyone's worst fears, a true horror movie come to life, which includes props from several actual horror movies that were shot in or around Pittsburgh.

Over the years, The ScareHouse has also become well known for their Basement Haunt. Costing between \$34.99-\$44.99, the Basement is designed to help people get over their fears. They're supposed to emerge from the basement feeling better about themselves.

The way they accomplish this, however, is by subjecting customers to one-on-one time with an actor in the dark, where no one knows what the actual haunt entails.

"The thing that really gets people about [the basement] is how close the actors get to you. It is more psychological than anything else," Dudas said.

Part of the Scarehouse History includes a dark and mysterious past happening in the building. Although the building was originally a recreational facility, the back part of the facility was known for lucrative gang activity that included poker, gambling, and murders.



The team has conducted multiple tests on the presence of paranormal activity and they have come up positive. One test they ran was a sound check, where the spirits could somehow put words into the soundcheck machine. One time, when a fire truck went down the street with its sirens blaring, the machine said words like "accident" and "emergency". Some of the actors have even experienced the para-

normal as well. When Marketing Manager Kate was an actor, she said she would sometimes hear voices even though there was nobody there.

"I would hear people coming and I would go to meet [the customers] around the corner, and there would be nobody there. We just have to hope for the best that things we hear are actually people," Dudas said.

Although the Scarehouse is meant to be scary, none of the actors backgrounds should actually cause people fear.

The ScareHouse is very selective in who they hire to be part of their haunts. The age requirement is 18, and the workers go through background checks to make sure they are safe and able. Most of the actors are recommended for the job by actors that already work for The ScareHouse, while others see the advertisements that The ScareHouse team puts on facebook.

The ScareHouse opened on Friday September 15th and will stay open until November 4th. In October, they were opened on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 7-11. Fridays and Saturdays are The Scarehouse's busiest days. Ticket prices vary from \$24.99-\$34.99 and the famous ScareHouse basement prices vary from \$34.99 to \$44.99.

With the attention to detail and research that goes into the Etna scarehouse, it is obvious to see why it has won so many different awards like "America's Scariest Halloween Attractions" by Travel Channel, as well as features on Good Morning America, USA TODAY, CBS news, ABC News, Buzzfeed, Forbes, Geek & Sundry, and many other national media outlets.

The Scarehouse also does a special event in November called a "Lights Out" tour, in which patrons will be given one glowstick per group, and go through the ScareHouse with no other source of light. This event will take place this weekend Friday November 3 and Saturday November 4. More information can be found on the Scarehouse website.

**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.

# Mr. Williams finds his path to teaching and coaching

by Cece Robinson

History teacher Mr. Cory Williams can often be found laughing and joking with students in the hallways. With a booming voice to follow, his involvement at Shaler has stretched from his history classroom to the football field, impacting students' lives as he goes.

Self-described as a "marginal student at best", Williams found himself, like many high school students, unsure of his path outside of high school. Occupations such as a police officer, firefighter, carpenter and lawyer, were just a few of Williams' possibilities when decision time came around.

"I worked with my dad a lot, who was a carpenter. While I was on construction sites I began to realize that I was okay at it, but it wasn't something I saw myself doing for the rest of my life," Williams stated.

So, he decided to try his luck at college. After being accepted to the University of Pittsburgh as a history major, he wanted to use that knowledge for background in a career as a lawyer. Williams found his freshman year to be an awful experience. Having to deal with the passing of his grandmother and the tragedy of 9/11, a drive to enlist in the Air Force arose in Williams.

After not being accepted into the Air Force Academy, Williams found himself back at college, searching for some sort of enjoyment. His first class ever, U.S History in 1877 to Present, was where he and longtime friend, current Shaler Area teacher Mr. Nick Haberman, really started to enjoy themselves. After the teacher began handing out tests and graded assignments, Williams received a wakeup call.

"We started going to school, and I love history, and I think it's something that I'm good at. I was always a top-notch history student, but on my Professor's first two assignments I was getting C's. I was like what is going on? I was always good at this stuff. It was a good wakeup call that this is college and I needed to try a little harder", Williams said.

Christmas break during his freshman year, Williams found himself back at home reevaluating his



**Mr. Williams with his daughter**

future and what he wanted to do with his life.

It was a friend's father, who was a prominent attorney, that sat down with him and helped him figure out if a future as a lawyer was something he truly wanted to do.

"He was a University of Pittsburgh law graduate. We sat down and told him, 'I think I want to do this law thing.' He walked me outside of his house and said to me, 'You know this is all great, I've got the house and the beach house, and I have all of this stuff, but I never get to see my family.' Because of that I realized becoming a lawyer wasn't something I wanted to pursue. I wanted to have a wife and a family and spend time with them," he said.

After that conversation he met with another friend's dad, who also happened to be his former high school football coach. He gave Williams the idea to continue on the history path, but instead with teaching.

Williams did his pre-student teaching and student teaching with middle school history teacher Mr. Tom Gray.

"When he taught his first lesson on his own I knew what a great teacher he was. I was so impressed with his content knowledge and classroom management that I ran down to the office, grabbed the principal by the arm and said 'let me show you why you need to hire this guy!' And the rest as they say, is history," said Gray.

One of the appealing aspects about becoming a teacher was not only the ability to influence students' lives in the class, but also outside on the football field.

Williams' interest in football began when in 8th grade, through a program called "Friendship Through Football", which gave him a chance to play a teenage football team from Russia.

"This is 1994, you're talking two or three years after the Iron Curtain has fallen, communism is ending, and the place was dirt poor. And I remember when the kids had showed up, they were massive kids, I mean huge. And our 7th and 8th grade football team beat them. These were 16-year-old Russian kids that didn't know how to play football. It was such a crazy cultural thing to have gotten to experience," Williams said.

After his football experience in high school, Williams knew that if he was going to pursue teaching, coaching football was something that he wanted to do as well.

"I decided that if I wanted to go into teaching, football was something that I had experience with and knew a little bit about and I would be willing to

**Cont. on page 7**

## New library policy enjoyed by some, disliked by others

by Brandon Kurzawski

Students have seen different procedures in order to sign-in to the library this school year. Beginning this year, the library can no longer be accessed during Study Halls and lunches without having a pass from the teacher assigning work prior to visiting the library.

In the beginning of the school year, Librarian Ms. Kate Wilcox and Principal Dr. Tim Royall came up with the idea of the new policy in order to reduce the amount of disruption in the library. Some students who regularly use the library find the new policy to be a hassle.

"I don't like the new policy; a lot of people don't want to come in here because it's just inconvenient," Senior Taylor Wolf said.

Wolf uses the library for research and scholarships, however she mentioned the inconvenience of trying to get a pass to get to the library during the school day.

The new policy came in an attempt to change the environment of the library after years of being loud and obnoxious. Many students would just come to hang out and not to do work. For those who came to actually do work or study, there wasn't enough room for them, especially when there was a class using the library.

While students don't like the idea of obtaining a place to access the library, some teachers are in favor of this plan, praising the idea of a quiet, productive library. Mrs. Anne Loudon, an Honors World Literature and AP Language and Composition teacher, loves the idea that there's more space in the library and the students who are coming are actually coming to do work, not just to hang out.

"As an English teacher who gives assignments requiring library resources and as an English tutor who requires students to attend writing conferences, I appreciate this change in the library, (it's) now a productive haven filled with patrons with the ambition of getting work accomplished, acting respectfully toward one another, the resources, and the staff," Loudon said.

She also mentioned how much cleaner the library is without having food

**"I would like to find a balance between last year's crazy-town and this; I want there to be a place for kids to be social, but not at the expense of kids who actually work."**

**-- Mrs. Kate Wilcox**

to come again.

"It will just take time (for students to get used to)," Jack said.

The librarians as well as teachers appreciate the fact that there's now control within the library. With students now coming to do work, it's a library atmosphere like you would see at the Shaler North Hills Library. Classes can now be conducted without the disturbance of rowdy students in the library.

"During my tutoring period, I have witnessed classes being conducted so much more efficiently than in past years. These classes do not have to compete for space and resources, nor do the teachers and librarians constantly have to remind patrons to be quiet," Loudon said.

It is unknown what changes might be made. Wilcox said this policy is a pilot program and the policy may be amended.

# Shaler Area on display in new Netflix series

by Maura Fisher

The Shaler Area High School cafeteria was supposed to make its on screen debut in the Netflix Original Series "Mindhunter" in March of 2017. However, due to recasting and behind-the-scenes issues, the series premiered on October 13. "Mindhunter" is an adaptation of a New York Times Best-selling book by John E. Douglas and Mark Olshaker.

"Mindhunter" is a psychological drama with some very dark undertones set in 1979 in the FBI behavioral science unit. It follows Special Agent Holden Ford and his partner, Special Agent Bill Tench, as they study the minds of serial killers.

At this time, the terms "serial killer" and "profiling" were unheard of. Ford suggests that to catch serial killers, they first have to understand what a serial killer is. The pair interview incarcerated killers in hopes of learning what they do, how they do it, and most importantly why they do it.

"How do we get ahead of crazy if we don't know how crazy thinks?" is the tagline for the new series.

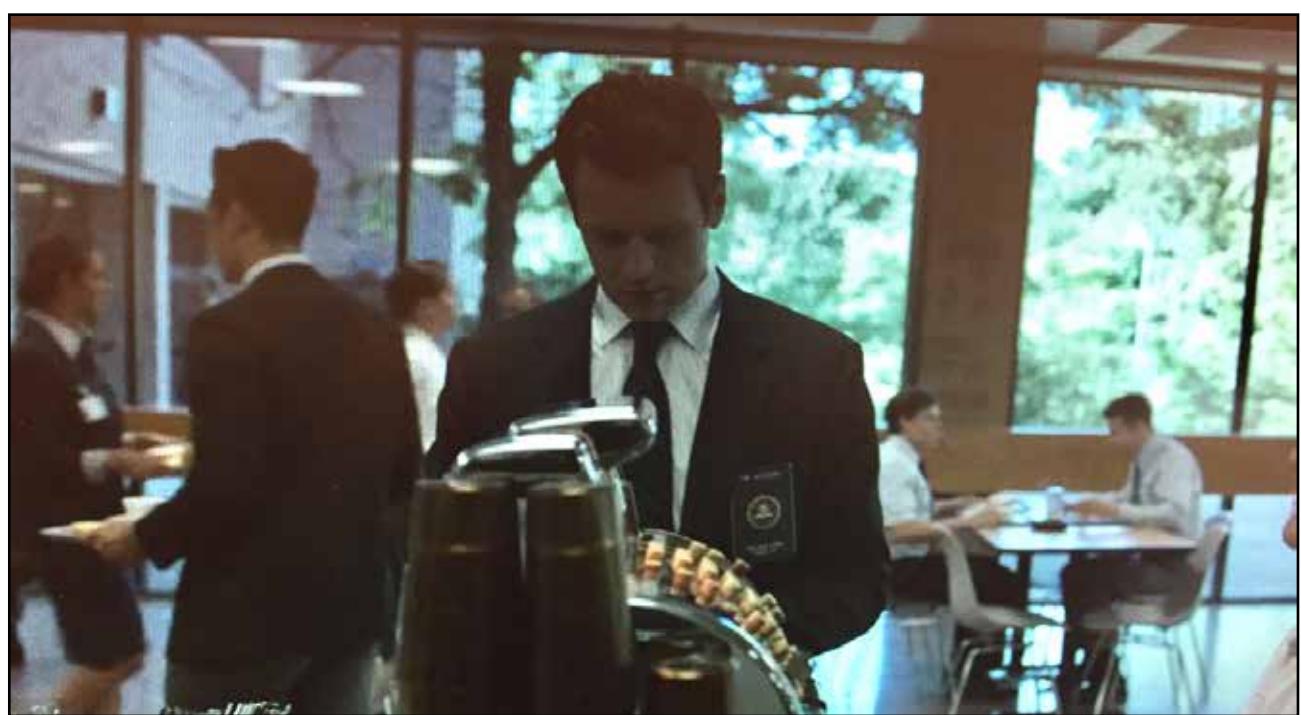
"Mindhunter" stars Jonathan Groff as Holden Ford, an FBI agent. Groff is well known for his role as Jesse St. James on ABC's hit series "Glee". He also voices Kristoff in Disney's "Frozen", and plays King George III in the Broadway hit "Hamilton". Holt McCallany plays special agent Bill Tench. McCallany is best known for his roles in "Fight Club" and "Jack Reacher: Never Go Back".

The show also stars Anna Torv as Wendy Carr, a psychologist that Ford and Tench confide in. She is best known for her role in "Fringe".

"Seeing the actors in our school cafeteria was really exciting. Just knowing that you were there and they were there is really cool," Senior Cece Robinson said after watching the first episode.

The school cafeteria is not the only tie that "Mindhunter" has to Shaler Area. Dale Mangold, a custodian at Shaler Area High School, plays a small role. Mangold is consistently in the background of many scenes as an extra.

Mangold got involved in the production through



A scene from "Mindhunter" that was shot in the cafeteria

his booking agent. He often gets emails about being background characters. He also met the producers when they came to check out the cafeteria.

Mangold was one of the background characters that was asked to be in multiple scenes to keep the continuity of the show. Though he didn't have any speaking lines, Mangold can be seen in shots doing things like standing in a crowd or driving a car.

"I was one of the lucky ones that [the producers] called back to be in multiple scenes," Mangold said.

Since the show's release, many people have talked to Dale about his role in the show. He plays an FBI Agent, and not a janitor, as most people think.

"I think it's interesting seeing all the scenes put together. We shot them out of order, so seeing everything sync is pretty cool," Mangold said.

The high school cafeteria was chosen by the producers out of luck. They were looking for school buildings in the Pittsburgh Area that looked as though they were built in the 1960s or 70s. While on the school website, a single picture taken in the cafeteria caught their attention, and they visited the

school to check it out. Pittsburgh itself was selected for its location and appearance.

"Pittsburgh looks like a lot of different cities. We have hills, rivers, and rural areas which makes it easy to manipulate it into looking like different places," Mangold said.

Many of the scenes were filmed in Washington County and the VA hospital next to Shuman Juvenile Center off Washington Blvd. The exterior of hospital is filmed as the exterior of the FBI Headquarters. Some scenes were also filmed in Downtown Pittsburgh and in the Strip. There is a studio in the Strip where they can build different sets to film different scenes. Hollywood also chose to shoot in Pittsburgh because they get a tax break, so they do not have to pay taxes to film.

Season 2 of "Mindhunter" is in the making with no release date yet. So far, the show has taken Netflix by storm, and critics have given it a 96% on Rotten Tomatoes and a 9/10 on IMDB.

"It's really scary, but it's such a good show. I really recommend it," Robinson said.

THE GRID		If you could be on any game-show, which one and why?	Movie that everyone seems to like that you can't stand?	Song that you have to sing every time you hear it?	People might be surprised to know this about me:	If you could have any type/model of car, what kind would you get?
Garret Reinsfelter			<b>Elf</b> 	<b>Sweet Caroline</b>	<b>I have a Dairy Allergy</b> 	<b>BMW M2 Coupe</b> 
Jake Bartosh		<b>Wheel of Fortune because I feel confident in my spelling and I would do better there than on Jeopardy.</b>	<b>Nerve</b> 	<b>Don't Stop Believing</b>	<b>I dont have Netflix and I'm good at flips and stuff on a trampoline.</b>	<b>Toyota Camry 2008</b> 
Brandon Berdik		<b>Family Feud</b>	<b>Frozen</b> 	<b>All of Migos' songs</b>	<b>I am the hooded one.</b>	<b>Yugo</b> 
Juliana Wayman		<b>Are You the One?</b>	<b>STAR WARS</b>	<b>Mad by Hoodie Allen</b>	<b>I can sing.</b>	<b>Jeep Wrangler</b> 
Mr. Eric Schott		<b>Deal or No Deal so I can hang with my brother in baldness, Howie Mandel</b>	<b>The Notebook</b>	<b>Piano Man</b>	<b>I taught or coached Mr. Piring, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Yeckel, Ms. Susany and Mr. White</b>	<b>Batmobile (1989 version)</b> 

# Students struggle to balance school, jobs and activities

by Alexa Stewart

Many students in high school have to deal with the stress of sports and activities in addition to their schoolwork. At the same time some are expected to get jobs to be able to pay for things they want to do like going out with friends or even saving up for college.

Senior Lachlan Loudon, who participates in the play and musical, believes that the workload is just too much.

"Teachers have this false narrative that we just sit around, party and watch football on the weekends so they think we can grind out all this homework and study for Monday exams. It's hard to do that when we have play practice on Friday, work 8-5 on Saturday, a choir performance on Sunday and top it off with float meetings every night of the week. There's almost no time to do anything else," Loudon said.

While it may seem that all students think this way, that is not the case.

"I don't think students have too much of a workload. I think high school is the time to figure out how you learn and study and what works for you. You need homework and papers and labs and exams to help you figure out what's best for you," Emily Weidner, a senior member of the Dance Team said.

Most student athletes don't have time to maintain a job because of time commitment to their sport.

"Football takes about three hours a day Monday through Thursday. Then on Friday, game day, it takes about six hours from my schedule and three hours on Saturday so about 21 hours a week," Senior member of the football team, Brian Colarusso said.

Some teachers in the high school have had first-hand experience of balancing a sport and activities in addition to school work.

"I was involved in both sports and additional activities in both high school and college. I found that my best grades came when I had less free time. I know that is somewhat paradoxical, but I found that having less unstructured time forced me to focus," English teacher Mr. Chris Gaul said.

Trying to balance a job and after-school activities is hard for many students but it mainly is about good time management. When students have practice until 4:30, go to work after that until 9 or 10 then have to go home and try and eat and do all of the homework assigned to them during the day it makes it difficult to not run themselves into the ground.

"When I'm trying to prioritize what needs done I usually make schoolwork first priority after I finish baseball practice/game. I don't think teachers realize how much a student athlete has to do to main-

tain good grades and good athletics," Senior baseball player, Christian Seelhorst said.

Many students feel the same way. Teachers seem to think that their students only have time to do their work outside of their class. So between the hours of homework for APLAC plus the hour for Precalculus and the hour for Economics it makes it difficult to do anything else.

Senior Natalie Albinger, a member of the girl's soccer team, thinks that student athletes are sort of run into the ground.

"There is very little time to focus on school work and study. I always do the bare minimum on my homework on game days. I come into school super tired and fatigued almost every day. Student athletes should be given a study hall instead of gym to get it done, or be given more time on assignments," Albinger said.

College-bound students are all expected to have good grades and be involved in virtually everything they can to make it into college. It's a known fact that colleges like to see a lot of involvement on students applications, so students quite literally run themselves dry with all of the things they are expected to do such as advanced/honors classes, sports, activities, and a job.

What about a social life or normal student activities? It's simple. There is almost no time to spend with your family or friends or significant other or even just for yourself. During the time that students are free, they're either showering or eating or sleeping. There's not enough time in a week for all of the things they want to do.

The stress is even harder on college-bound seniors who are trying to pack anything they can onto their resume. Between school and jobs and extracurriculars, they also have to worry about touring colleges and applying.

Some of the teachers in the high school see this as both teachers and parents since they have high school aged children. Mrs. Ellen Chomyn, a science teacher, doesn't think that the workload on students is too much to deal with.

"Healthy stress is a normal part of life. Sports and activities seasons generally last 1-2 months, so it

is usually not too taxing for motivated students who like to be involved," Chomyn said.

English teacher Mrs. Anne Loudon has two children in the high school. Although she thinks kids have too much going on that doesn't mean that she doesn't consider it as a sort of good thing.

"It is a good training ground for time management because when they get to college, time management is a priority," Loudon said.

Students have a lot to balance in their schedule. They have a large workload which is easier for some to handle than others. Most students need to have a job to support themselves while others work just to have extra money to spend. The stress of having to deal with a job, activities, sports and schoolwork isn't easily avoided. Most students need to do all of these

**College-bound students are all expected to have good grades and be involved in virtually everything they can. It's a known fact that colleges like to see a lot of involvement on students applications, so students quite literally run themselves dry with all of the things they are expected to do such as advanced/honors classes, sports, activities, and a job.**

things to be successful in their search for college.

Although it is a lot of hard work for students, working themselves this hard will pay off whether it's in college or in their job when they're an adult.

World Literature, journalism, and newspaper teacher Eric Schott has a son in high school. He questioned why it's always the teachers that seem supposed to expect less over anything else students do.

"I've seen this from the perspective of a teacher, a coach and a parent. The teacher in me wonders why does it always seems that teachers need to be the ones to be more understanding and expect less from our students? Why doesn't the coach cut back on practice time or employers cut back on hours? It always seems the implication is that school is the least important," Schott said.

So really who is at fault here? Is it the students that should cut back on their workload, the teachers to assign less work or the coaches and bosses to be a bit more understanding?

All in all, there really is no answer. No one is really at fault because everyone realizes what's going on but in the end everyone has a job to do. For those involved students, they know what they're signing up for but it can still be another stress in their lives.

\* A 10-year-old boy stole his mother's car and led police on a high-speed chase Thursday, authorities say.

Cleveland police say it's the second time in two weeks the boy has taken cars on joyrides.

A man called 911 and reported the boy's car was swerving in and out of traffic and had almost run several vehicles off the road. He also said a woman was following him in a red SUV. A woman called 911 and said the boy appeared to be driving around 90 mph.

Three Westlake officers tried to stop the 2004 Toyota Avalon along the interstate and followed it for more than 15 miles high speeds until the boy drove through a toll booth and entered the westbound lanes of the Ohio Turnpike, Westlake police Capt. Guy Turner said.

Highway Patrol Sgt. Tim Hoffman said that's when at least four state troopers began joining the chase and attempted a rolling roadblock as the

boy drove erratically along the turnpike with speeds reaching 100 mph. After a pursuit of around 20 miles, the boy slowed down and veered onto the grassy berm to avoid driving over stop sticks, Hoffman said. That's when one trooper nudged the boy's car at a slow speed into a mile post sign with his cruiser, and another cruiser blocked the car and prevented it from re-entering the road, Hoffman said.

"It was very lucky no one was hurt," Hoffman said.

Cleveland police say this is the second incident involving the same child.

A Cleveland police report shows that the boy previously stole his mother's 2013 Dodge Charger. Police went to the mother's home and, a short time later, other officers responded to a call

about a car driven by a small boy on I-90 in Cleveland in the high-speed lane with three flat tires, according to the report.

\* An Alaska woman who arrived home to find a moose attacking her car and mailbox filmed helplessly as the animal brutalized her vehicle.

Alberta Laktonen, who posted her footage to YouTube, said she initially spotted the moose wandering in a neighbor's yard while she was walking her dogs.

Laktonen said she arrived him to find the moose was attacking her mailbox and her Toyota Prius.

"Car repairs estimate \$5,600 dollars (possibly totaled). No humans or dogs were injured," Laktonen wrote.

Ken Marsh, a spokesman for the

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, said the bull moose was exercising pretty typical «demonstrating» behavior for the rutting season.

"Basically it means their hormones are raging and they have this need to show off and show how tough they are," Marsh said.

\* Youngstown State University has apparently set a world record for the number of people dressed in penguin costumes when 972 Youngstown State University students, alumni and community members gathered on the school's campus to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary as a university.

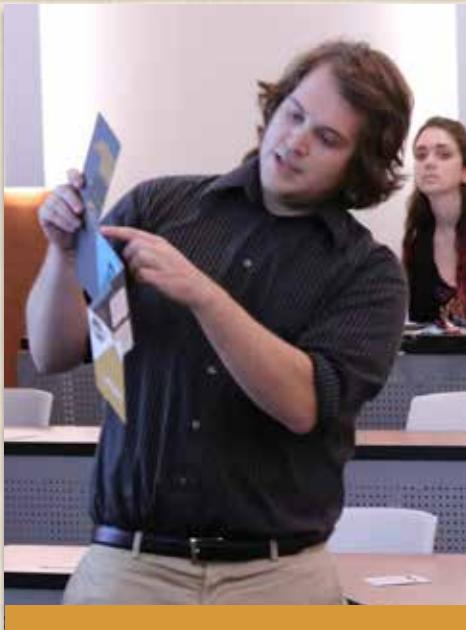
Youngstown State's nickname is the Penguins.

Saturday's waddle of faux birds apparently broke a mark recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records when 624 people dressed as penguins gathered at a children's hospice in England in 2015.





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# Athletic Hall of Fame inducts new members

by Jake Newport

On October 14, the Shaler Area School District inducted six individuals and one team into the Athletic Hall of Fame. A wide range of sports are being recognized in this year's class: football, boys soccer, baseball, cheer, and track and field. The Class of 2017 inductees are Ron Budziszewski, Jason DeFranco, Valerie McQuade, Phyllis Schatz, Dan Schwartzbauer, Sam Wisotzkey, and the 2012 Girls Track Team.

Ron Budziszewski was a coach for the Shaler Area football team from 1980 all the way up to 2013. His 33-year coaching career included starting the football weightlifting program in the 1980s with his own weight set. Budziszewski was also a member of the coaching staff for the 1998 Quad A North section championship team.

Jason DeFranco was a star soccer player at Shaler Area, where he was a three-year starter and was named to the WPIAL all-section team twice. Among other high school accolades, DeFranco was also named to the WPIAL Finest 15 three times and he was also All-State. After high school DeFranco went on to play soccer at Robert Morris University, where he made Northeast Conference section and Regional All-American for three years.

Valerie McQuade played basketball and was a member of the Track and Field team. She was a member of the 2011 girl's basketball team that won the WPIAL Championship, and she scored over a 1,000 points in her career.

When asked what made McQuade such a special player, Ms. Gina Chmielewski, who was a member of

the girls basketball coaching staff when McQuade played, said, "She was a quiet leader and she was able to get her teammates involved and also score."

McQuade also excelled in track and won two WPIAL individual medals in 2011. After high school, she went on to play basketball at Niagara University for four seasons, where she also became an assistant coach later on. McQuade is currently playing basketball in Germany.

In his time at Shaler Area, Dan Schwartzbauer started all four years on the baseball team and was a captain. Schwartzbauer also contributed to Shaler Area's winning of the 1999 WPIAL Baseball Championship. After high school, he went on to play baseball at Duquesne University, where he would be named captain. When his college career was over, Schwartzbauer was selected by the Pittsburgh Pirates in the 2004 MLB Draft. In his time with the Pirates he spent four years in their minor league system.

Sam Wisotzkey played soccer at Shaler Area and lettered all four years. He was also a three-year captain. Wisotzkey was named to the WPIAL All-Star team for three years and the Western PA State Select team for two years. Wisotzkey then went on to play soccer at Bucknell University, where he started every game for all four years.

The 2012 Shaler Area girls track team featured seventeen individuals and three relay teams that went on to compete in the WPIAL championship meets. Among those at the WPIAL



Hall of Fame inductees (from left to right) Jason DeFranco, Sam Wisotzkey, Phyllis Schatz, Ron Budziszewski and Dan Schwartzbauer.

championships, nine individuals medaled and so did all three of the relay teams. Seven of these individuals qualified for PIAA state meets along with the 4x800 team. Overall, from the 2012 girls track team, thirteen athletes moved on to compete in the NCAA.

The committee also inducted Shaler Area's long-time Varsity Cheer coach, Ms. Phyllis Schatz. In her 32 years at Shaler Area, her squads have competed at numerous levels of competition including local, state, and national. Overall, under Schatz's guidance, they have won nine state championships and one international championship.

It took many years for Schatz to be inducted, but even though she finally received recognition for her hard work, she stands by the idea that not all recognition has to be seen by others and made public.

"Recognition does not have to be external. As long as you know that you

have done the best you can do and have pride in all that you do, that is the only recognition that a person needs. Making a difference in a person's life does not need validation, but when it is given it is really appreciated," Schatz said.

However, as much as she is elated to have received this honor, she wishes to thank the individuals and groups who have made it possible to receive this recognition.

"Over the past 38 years I have attended over 400 football games, about 800 basketball games, as well as soccer and wrestling matches. The comments I have received by the fans, as well as participants, of how well disciplined the cheerleaders are and how proud they are of them, only solidifies my pride in Shaler Area School District and community. I believe that I have been rewarded every year that I had the honor of coaching my fantastic teams," Schatz said.

## Mr. Williams enjoying life as teacher, coach and father

**from page 3**

help kids out," Williams said.

Head 9th grade coach at the time, Mr. Roger Rech, graciously took Williams under his wing and mentored him.

After coaching for several years in the program, this year Williams decided to take a break from coaching in order to spend more time with his wife and one-year-old daughter. While he is enjoying that time, there are parts of coaching that he misses.

"What I miss most is spending time with those kids, the line guys and I were like a brotherhood. I enjoyed teaching them how to be good young men. If you can focus beyond trying to win a football game, but at crafting a good, strong young man and citizen, that's what it was all about for me. That's something that is really hard to walk away from after ten years of coaching," said Williams.

Although he is on a current hiatus from the Shaler football team he will still be the head senior coach for the annual Powderpuff game.

"I'll be coaching the Seniors in Powder Puff this year. Partially because Mrs. Thiel asked me to, partially because I still miss football every day, but mainly because I plan on crushing Mr. Mitchell's Juniors with some old-school, hard-nosed, smash-mouth football. We are going to fly to the ball on defense, and we are going to pound the ball down people's throats on offense." he said.

In the classroom, Williams loves the diversity of topics and students he has taught throughout the years. This year Williams has been asked to tackle a new class, AP U.S History.

"I'm really excited to teach A.P.U. S History. It's a huge undertaking teaching an AP class for the first time because of the amount of prep work, but it has been incredibly rewarding though because the kids seem to be really excited about some aspects of history, and even the ones who aren't that intrigued by history

are still motivated to engage in a deeper level of understanding and discussion than I've been able to get into in my CP 9th Grade American History classes," said Williams.

No matter the academic level of the student, Williams makes it a goal to sculpt the class to the students, letting every student learn in the way that works best for them.

In the future, Williams would love to see a History of American Music class offered as an elective.

"Music has been the great art form of our society. I think you can learn so much about life, politics, economics, etc. by observing the popular musical trends for any given time period. It's truly the people's way of expressing their views on the world around them, and it's an enjoyable way to observe that commentary," Williams said.

Along with his love of History, Music, and Football, Williams loves travelling and enjoying nature.

If Williams wasn't teaching, he would love to be a National Park Ranger. Williams would love to one day take part in a wilderness survival course or homesteader training.

Aside from his affinity for the outdoors, Williams has been all over the globe. He's been all across Europe, including Germany, England, Italy, France, and Belgium. Williams has also enjoyed traveling to different states and to Canada, most of which involved elaborate journeys to their National Parks.

"Every trip I've been on has been an unbelievably rewarding experience whether the trip has gone well or not. You cannot fathom the people there are to meet, the conversations there are to be had, the places there are to see, the food there is to eat. There are millions of places to see and feel on this planet, and you really only get this tiny sliver of a window of time to go see them," Williams said.

**"I'll be coaching the Seniors in Powder Puff this year...I plan on crushing Mr. Mitchell's Juniors with some old-school, hard-nosed, smash-mouth football. We are going to fly to the ball on defense, and we are going to pound the ball down people's throats on offense."**

-- Mr. Cory Williams

# Cafeteria hopes to make things more appetizing for students

by Brandon Kurzawski & Madison Tarlo

Students may have noticed many changes occurring in the cafeteria this school year. A wider variety of items is now available for students to enjoy.

Francine Schmid, food service director of the Shaler Area School District, worked over the summer in collaboration with students and staff members to come with new ideas for breakfast and lunch periods.

New lunch items are being offered for students to enjoy. A make-your-own salad bar as well as BBQ and Omelet bars have also been added rather than the same rotations of taco or pasta bars every other day. Soup bowls will soon be added to the deli area that is available as part of a regular lunch for all students to enjoy. These soup bowls are just like soup-de-jour, however, they're free for all students to enjoy and are portioned correctly for a balanced meal.

Although an item may not be mentioned in the menu, Schmid likes to keep with the trends and try new things for students to enjoy. Trends like Buffalo Chicken Mac 'n Cheese have been offered for lunch. Schmid plans to make more creative options available for students as the year continues.

"We can make any meal fit; we try to make some very fun things happen here," Schmid said.

In addition to new items being served, students who don't have a lunch no longer have to worry about the struggle of not being able to eat all day with new, grab-and-go, four compartment trays that students can pick up. Schmid realized there are students that have too busy of a day for a lunch period, so the four-compartment tray was made for those

students to be able to eat.

"We found last year that many students actually don't take a lunch, they schedule themselves in another class, and the four compartment trays that we have available are for them," Schmid said.

There are a selection of trays available for students to enjoy. The trays are available inside the cafeteria grab-and-go rack. Similar to a Lunchable, trays like pepperoni and cheese, hard-boiled eggs, and a variety of fruits such as strawberries are among the many items the trays offer. Grab-and-go trays also on sale at the Titan Cafe.

Students may have also noticed the new ambience of the snack shack. Renamed the Titan Cafe, the snack line creates more of a cafe feel than a concession stand look. Rather than a blank white wall, a menu is now featured on the back wall of the Titan Cafe.

"We wanted it to look like a cafe; we didn't want it to look like a concession stand anymore. I just don't think the concession stand look is the feel of our school anymore," Schmid said. More creative items have also been added in addition to the ambience.

Specialty "Splash" drinks are also now available on Wednesdays and Fridays as well as Ice Cream is now available with a specialty flavor being offered each month in the Titan Cafe.

Expansions of breakfast variety have also been made as well as homemade donuts and pecan rolls have been added to the breakfast menu in addition to omelets and homemade cinnamon rolls are now available.

If you have an idea, Schmid encourages students to express their opinion to help increase cafeteria variety. Schmid can be emailed at [schmidf@sasd.k12.pa.us](mailto:schmidf@sasd.k12.pa.us) or called at (412) 492-1200 extension 1580.

# Grading scale to help students compete

from page 1

After changing the grading scale, some schools chose a retroactive grading scale or one that is applicable to all years preceding it. However, this is not the case in Shaler Area for several reasons.

Although there are several students and parents are pushing for the scale to be retroactive, the situation is much more complicated than one would think.

"I think it is a very bad idea to do retroactive grades. Retroactivity of the grading scale assumes that classes would be graded the same," Said Paul Stadelman

Stadelman, a math teacher at the high school, mentioned how the grading scale actually changes the way classes are graded. So the choice not to do a retroactive scale could potentially put students who have had to retake classes, and students who are on academic scholarships at a disadvantage.

"Should we go back and adjust grades for students that earned an 81 that we as teachers may have adjusted to an 82 so the student would have a B and now doesn't need the adjustment and can go back to an 81? What if a student earned a 63 which was an F and paid for summer school or is repeating a course and now they passed it and are in a class this year that they are no longer getting credit for. What should they do?" Stadelman asked.

On the other hand, some students feel cheated by the fact that their work in the past years will not reflect the new grading scale.

"I don't think it's fair that all the underclassmen are given the opportunity to have higher GPA's because I could have used that boost when I was applying to colleges," Senior Maura Fisher said.

Other students are frustrated that their class rank will not change, and they may be losing out on scholarship opportunities.

Mr. Aiken explained that making the grading scale retroactive could potentially leave the school exposed to lawsuits and litigations, and that in order to prevent that, the grading scale is carefully explained to all colleges through the school profile that seniors use when they're applying to scholarships and colleges.

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