

The Oracle

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Student Newspaper Of Shaler Area High School

October 2012

2012 graduate diagnosed with rare cancer

by Katie Rees

High school graduates are at the cusp of adulthood, excited to start a new chapter in their lives and ready to move forward with their educational journey.

Now, imagine being told that everything you have worked for over the past four years must be put on hold. Even more nerve-rattling, imagine you have been told that because you have a rare form of cancer developing in your body.

This depressing scenario has sadly come true for 2012 Shaler graduate, Sean Boyle. Ambitious, driven, intelligent, and brave are all qualities that can be used to describe Boyle. Throughout his high school career at Shaler, he enrolled in multiple advanced placement classes and played football.

Boyle received a full academic scholarship from the University of Pittsburgh. He must put this college plans on hold, however, while he undergoes treatments. For now, he is taking two online courses per semester at CCAC in order to stay in the swing of things.

His AP credits and online CCAC credits will all compile to about 37 credits which is about a full year's worth of college credits. The University of Pittsburgh cannot guarantee that Boyle will receive his full academic scholarship after he is done with chemotherapy and able to attend school. He will have to reapply as a new student once he is healthy enough to pursue his educational journey.

The 18-year old was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma in late July and has been undergoing treatments



2008 graduate Erin Boyle and 2012 graduate Sean Boyle (Erin Boyle)

ever since. Ewing's sarcoma is a rare form of cancer found in the bones and soft tissues of the body. It is most common among adolescents.

"I noticed a bump on my thumb the week of graduation. I did not think much of it; however, I've had a lot of issues with that thumb from playing football. A month later it was still there, so I decided to go and get it checked out. That was when they diagnosed me with Ewing's sarcoma," Boyle said.

Boyle undergoes two different treatments at Children's Hospital. He spends up to ten days a month in chemotherapy, and is getting ready for an upcoming surgery.

"I can't go to a regular college due to the fact that I'm in the hospital so much," Boyle said.

Boyle credits his family for supporting and spending time with him during this horrific phase of his life.

"If there is anything that I have learned from this experience, it is how important my family is to me. Getting diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma has brought my family a lot closer together. I get to spend a lot of time with my mom, dad, and sister nowadays," Boyle said.

Erin Boyle, Sean's sister, organized a fundraiser called "Stronger than Sarcoma," in order to raise awareness about Ewing's sarcoma. "Group Fitness-a-thon" was held on October 13 at Slippery Rock University. This event raised over \$3,000 in order to help pay for Sean's medical bills and was also put towards cancer research.

"I have my bachelor's degree in Exercise Science and am AFAA Certified Primary Group Fitness Instructor, so I decided to use my skills for the fundraiser," Erin said.

Group Fitness-a-thon consisted of aerobics, zumba, and yoga at the Slippery Rock gym. Around 200 people attended in support of Sean.

"I was thinking about how strong Sean had been throughout the first month of finding out about his cancer, and the slogan just hit me. Sean is stronger than sarcoma. From that day on I did nothing but plan and organize for t-shirt and bracelet sales. Stronger than Sarcoma means everything to me because every time I hear it, I think of nothing but Sean," Erin said.

Father of teen victim speaks on dating violence

by Casey Funtal

On October 27th, the juniors and seniors had an assembly to make the student body aware of teen dating violence. The LHAS (Ladies Hospital Aid Society) explained to the upper classmen how dating violence is a real issue affecting one and a half million teens each year.

The information presented during the assembly was shocking to most students because it was evident that dating violence can happen to anybody.

In 2007, Demi Brae Cuccia, a sixteen year old girl, was murdered by her ex-boyfriend. Perhaps the most surprising part of the assembly was the fact that one of the advocates who spoke was her father.

When Mr. Cuccia spoke, the entire auditorium was silent. His daughter, Demi, was stabbed sixteen times the day after her sixteenth birthday for breaking up with her boyfriend. Demi's boyfriend was her brother's best friend and no one had any idea that he was so controlling.

"You just don't think it could happen," Mr. Cuccia said.

Demi was a cheerleader at Gateway High School. She had many friends and had good grades. The point that Mr. Cuccia wanted to make is that no one is safe from dating violence.

"By doing nothing, it's really hard to deal with," Mr. Cuccia said.

After Demi's death, the Cuccia family had to

learn how to live life without their daughter.

Since losing a child will never become an easy task to deal with, Mr. Cuccia and his wife started to advocate against teen dating violence.

They tried to get a law passed to teach students in grades 7-12 about teen dating violence in health classes. By the time the bill was passed, it was grouped together with other requirements that students must learn in years of health class, and teaching about abusive relationships became optional.

The Cuccia family was not satisfied with a bill that only included watered down information. They started telling Demi's story to students to try ensure that what happened to Demi would not happen to other students.

"There is nothing glamorous about what hap-



Mr. Cuccia with a poster of his daughter

pened to my daughter," Mr. Cuccia said.

In a relationship, control is not love. At first the attention may seem nice, but when it gets to a point of control, it is abuse. Dating violence is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse committed by a person against a current or former dating partner.

The point of the assembly was to raise awareness and to give students advice as well. Demi's father wanted everyone to know not to break up with an abusive partner alone. Mr. Cuccia stressed the fact that being alone in an abusive relationship is dangerous.

Also tell parents, teachers, or friends if you know something about a friend who is involved in teen dating violence. If these two things had occurred for Demi, it is possible that she may still be alive today.

February is teen dating violence and awareness month. Students will be wearing Demi Cuccia t-shirts to raise awareness. The student body is encouraged by the assembly to get involved and raise awareness. Demi was a normal, teenage girl. After the tragic loss of Demi, students should know dating violence can happen to anyone.

OPINIONS

New regulations in the cafeteria

by Katie Rees

The Healthy Hungry Free Kids Act has tweaked some of its portion sizes and food offerings for the 2012-2013 school years. These new Federal regulations include additional portions of fruits and vegetables for students buying lunch at Shaler Area High School, as well as subgroups of vegetables offered weekly.

The push to stay healthy has been prominent throughout this decade and has made its way into school systems and cafeterias throughout the nation. However, is this change making a difference in students' diets, or is it simply a waste of fruits and vegetables?

When a student decides to buy lunch in the high school cafeteria, he/she is offered five different components: protein, bread, vegetables, fruit, and milk. According to the Healthy Hungry Free Kids Act, students may still decline two of the five components; however, they must have a fruit or vegetable on their tray in order to complete the meal. Students may not buy their lunch without a fruit or vegetable on their tray. Being healthy is very important, but the new changes are not making much of a difference at the high school.

Students go through the lunch check-out lines with healthy meals on their trays. After they pay, they hurriedly scamper over to the trash cans to toss out their portions of fruits and vegetables. I have witnessed multiple students following through with this act.

It is the student's decision as to whether or not he or she wants to make healthy choices. The school is only losing money when the students decide to toss out perfectly fine fruits and vegetables. There will be kids that decide to pick the apple over the bag of chips, but there will also always be students that decide that they are going to make an entire meal of French fries. This is their choice. It is only hurting the school by making students buy fruits and vegetables that they are not going to eat.

The push to be healthy is a bad thing. I would prefer a juicy apple over a fattening bag of potato chips any day. However, the actions that are being taken are not being taken seriously by the students. If the school wants the students to make healthier choices, they might as well bring back the Jello-powdered apple slices instead of forcing the kids to purchase fruits and vegetables.

Recycling bins not being used properly

by Emily Matthews

Recycling is an issue that must be addressed everywhere, even in school. Green bins that are intended to be used to recycle paper are found in *most* classrooms, but is their mere existence enough to make an impact? Having the bins is one thing. Using them properly is another thing.

Dale Mangold, a janitor here at the high school, shared why the green bins do not always serve their intended purpose.

"The green bins are strictly for paper, but once food and other items get thrown in there, it actually contaminates the paper, and it makes it a harder process to recycle that in the long run. A lot of times, some of the classrooms just use them as extra garbage cans.

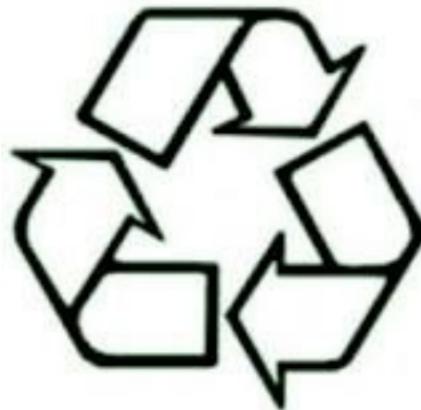
Students and teachers should know to recycle paper only in the green bins.

Sometimes, you have to throw (paper intended for recycling) out," he said.

This misuse could be the result of students not being aware of the green bins' purpose. Many students do not know what should and what shouldn't go in the bins. Something needs to be done to influence students to use the green bins properly.

Paper is not the only item present in the high school that should be recycled more efficiently. Students buy bottled drinks and carry them around the building every day. When students are finished with their drink, they often do not know where to put their empty bottle and resort to throwing it away in a garbage can or one of the green paper recycling bins.

Students and teachers should know to recycle paper only in the green bins. Recycle the bottles in any of the bottle-shaped recycling bins they notice around the building and throw trash away in trash can, not recycling bins.



Season left Pirates' fans wanting more

by Brett Ford

After collapsing last year, the Pittsburgh Pirates' theme this year was "finish." Manager Clint Hurdle instilled this idea in the players during spring training. The team needed to finish at-bats, innings, games, and the season.

Clint Hurdle created this philosophy for playing after the Pirates had a dismal second-half collapse during the 2011 season, during which the Pirates ended the season going 21-46 after being 51-44 on July 19. Throughout most of the season, this motto seemed to be working. On August 8 the Pirates were a season best 63-47 and had a 3.5 game lead ahead of St. Louis for the second wild card spot. The thought of another tailspin seemed nearly impossible.

After August 8, they were an abysmal 16-36 and ended the season trailing St. Louis by 9 games. During this slide they lost to the bottom feeders of the league, such as the 61-101 Chicago Cubs and the 55-107 Houston Astros. After the All-Star Break, the Cubs were 8-26 on the road; at PNC Park they are 5-1. Many fans, even some of the most faithful, find themselves asking what's wrong with this organization.

Many people will point at the general Manager Neal Huntington. This isn't really a fair assessment due to the fact that he has gotten key players that have or should have helped the team win. Before the season he acquired the veteran starting pitcher A.J. Burnett, who got 16 wins this season. At the trade deadline, he secured solid players such as the veteran Wandy Rodriguez, the 2011 All-Star first baseman Gaby Sanchez, and young outfielder Travis Snider.

Clint Hurdle has also taken some scrutiny from critics. If it weren't for Hurdle, the Pirates would be winning 55 games instead of 79. He instilled a winning attitude that was much needed on a team with little confidence in recent years such as the Pirates. A much more acceptable explanation for the Pirates' recent decline has been the way the players have been performing, which is to say horrendously.

The most obvious instance of a player cooling off was the right-handed starter James McDonald. Going into the All-Star Break, he bolstered an impressive 9-3 record with a 2.37 ERA. After that his ERA rose to a subpar 4.21. Another prime example of this

was the superstar Andrew McCutchen's decline. On August 8 he had a .370 batting average which dropped down to .327 by the end of the season. Even on defense the team has played poorly. On September 7, the Pirates committed an embarrassing seven errors.

Watching a season go down the tubes for the second consecutive year is very discouraging to Pirate fans. The talent on the roster might be good enough to be a playoff contending team for parts of the season, but cannot be trusted to be consistently produc-

tive. Can a real playoff contender play the likes of Jeff Clement and Rick Vandenhurk and expect to beat out other teams for a playoff spot?

So next year, if the Pirates have a promising first half behind a young and inexperienced roster, don't be disappointed when the team collapses. If the Pirates want to be true contenders, they need to add more experience to the team this off-season like they did last year with AJ Burnett who helped the team with his own performance and leadership of the younger players.

The Oracle

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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.

Students take mission trip to Nicaragua

by Victoria Mikita

Over the summer the youth group at Elfinwild Presbyterian Church traveled to Nicaragua for its yearly mission trip. They were involved with a group called “Young Life”, whose purpose is to bring in kids with troubled lives and teach them about Jesus.

This was the first year that the youth group has gone out of the country for a mission trip. Previous trips have been closer to home where the group can help out in a soup kitchen, paint houses, or help out at a kids’ camp.

The group was able to do a trip like this because of Joanne Best, a member of Elfinwild who passed away. She left money for the youth group to be used to do a mission trip outside of the country.

The purpose of this mission trip was to help build and prepare the camp for the children who would be coming the next week. Upon arrival the group members each had a one-night home



Shaler youth group members travel to Nicaragua on a mission trip (Tori Panza)

stay with a citizen of Nicaragua before they would go to volunteer at the camp for the remainder of the week. They were provided a guide so that they could have a tour of Nicaragua

before their volunteer work began.

Members of the youth group elaborated on how much we take for granted after visiting Nicaragua. There was only cold water to shower

with, and houses had only the basics. It is a much simpler way of life.

“A mission trip in a country like Nicaragua versus somewhere in the states is more involved because you really get to see the effect that it has on people,” junior Tori Panza, who has attended other mission trips, said.

“The leaders of the camp of Young Life went to the same camp as kids, and that’s how they turned their life around and became Christians. Now they’re back to teach kids what they’ve learned,”

Although the Elfinwild youth group members were not able to stay for the arrival of the kids, they knew that what they were doing was truly going to benefit the kids’ stay at the camp.

“It just comes full circle and I just knew from what I was doing it was going to impact the life of so many kids. It’s a good feeling to know that even though I won’t be there for the kids to learn everything, the leaders are there to assure that it actually works”, Panza said.

Law enforcement a rewarding career path

by Julie Rankin

Many of us dream about the day we’ll leave high school, but few of us really know where we’ll end up. Our interests are what guide us in the choices we make regarding our futures, but more often than not we don’t really know what certain jobs entail.

People within our community that we consider every day heroes include those working in law enforcement.

There are a number of job opportunities in this field, including being a forensic scientist, state trooper, FBI agent, and one more familiar to us, a police officer.

Many local police officers are passionate about what they do. Some officers took the opportunity to share their stories about what life is really like as cops.

Mike Spagnoletti, Crime Prevention and Community Relations officer for the Allegheny County Police department, did not expect to end up in law enforcement.

“When I was in high school I thought I would be an accountant. I even majored in accounting my first year of college,” Spagnoletti said.

Patrol Trooper with the PA State Police Erik Fisher also majored in accounting at first.

“Originally I attended Pitt, but finished at Point Park. I have a B.S. in Accounting and a B.S. in Business Management,” Fisher said.

Patrol Sergeant and Emergency Management Coordinator for Shaler Township, Sean Frank, also didn’t plan to be involved in law enforcement.

“I worked in the funeral home from the time I was a teenager and when I began college, my plan was to complete 60 college credits and then attend mortuary school,” Frank said.

For these men, life would lead them elsewhere.

“While attending LaRoche College, I was a full-time Deputy Coroner working the night shift. I was also a volunteer Firefighter, EMT, and then a Paramedic. My volunteer experience led me to full-time work as a Paramedic. During my work experience as a Deputy Coroner and Paramedic, I worked closely with police officers from the State Police, Allegheny County Police, Pittsburgh Police, and local municipal police departments. I became very interested in

law enforcement and looked forward to a career in this field,” Frank said.

A typical day in the life of law enforcement isn’t glamorous, but is often rewarding.

“I patrol all the interstates within Allegheny County and SR 22 and I576 in Washington County. I mostly respond to crashes and disabled motorists along with any other incidents that might affect the normal travel conditions of these roadways. I also patrol a few small communities that do not have police departments, which means I respond to domestics, assaults, burglaries, thefts, etc.,” Fisher said.

Spagnoletti promotes safety in the community in another way.

“Most of my days are spent teaching safety programs to children and adults from preschool aged students to senior citizens,” Spagnoletti said.

Frank works with logistics in the system.

“I respond to emergency and non-emergency calls and supervise the other officers on my shift. I file police reports for the calls that I handle and I review and approve the reports written by the officers on my shift,” Frank said.

It is important when picking a future career that you love what you do.

“The best part of my job is when I have the chance to help someone who needs me whether it is through teaching them how to be safe or actually performing a police action to keep them safe,” Spagnoletti said.

The duty of helping others was a common thread when it came to why these officers loved their jobs.

“I love helping people who need assistance. I also love the people I work with. You could not ask for a better group of people to be associated with. They are truly dedicated individuals who are willing to give the ultimate sacrifice,” Fisher said.

Like any job, there are aspects of law enforcement that can become frustrating.

“The judicial system, the courts, can also be a negative aspect because the ‘wheels of justice’ usually move very slowly... There are many criminals that are given too many freedoms and continue to commit similar crimes over and over again. This can be frustrating to police officers and leads to “burn-

“The best part of my job is when I have the chance to help someone who needs me.”

**– Mike Spagnoletti
Allegheny County Police**

out” of some officers,” Frank said.

Often, dealing with people can be one of the most difficult parts of a job.

“(A negative aspect of law enforcement is) dealing with people at their worst or seeing how awful some people truly are to others,” Frank said. “Also, when I realize that it is either too late to help someone or there is nothing I can do to help them.”

Law enforcement can also be very demanding time-wise.

“(Negatives include) shift work, working holidays, weekends, midnights, etc. I miss a lot of family events,” Fisher said.

Most occupations have stereotypes, and law enforcement is no exception.

“I think that many people believe that police officers are not educated or the profession is not actually a professional occupation,” Spagnoletti said. “Most officers I know including myself are highly educated and hold college degrees including master’s degrees and PHD’s in many areas of study.”

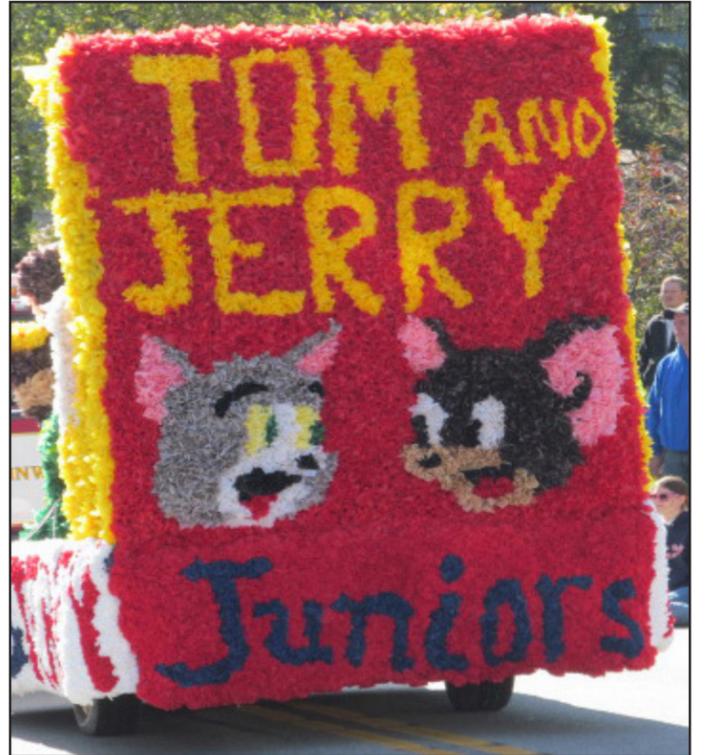
For those interested in pursuing a law enforcement career, those in the field have some advice.

“Anyone can apply to attend the police academy, but I would recommend going to college to get a degree in something like criminal justice or another law enforcement, public safety, or legal studies related field before applying to the academy,” Spagnoletti said.

Students should keep an open-mind when venturing into this field.

“My suggestion to current students is to seriously consider a career with a federal agency such as the FBI, ATF, Secret Service, US Postal Inspectors, or even Homeland Security. State and County Police agencies are also a good option because there are more opportunities for advancement and varied experiences with larger agencies,” Frank said.

Homecoming Floats 2012 -- Tooned In



For the third year in a row the band float (above left) took first place. The band's float was Wily Coyote/Roadrunner themed and included both characters chasing each other around the float. An electric wheelchair motor was used for the effect. The juniors were tough competitors, finishing only two points behind the band with a Tom and Jerry themed float (above right). The junior's pumping technique and use of color helped secure second place.

How to be...a successful politician

by Julie Rankin

Have you ever pictured yourself waking up in the White House? Do you want to walk out on your front lawn in the morning with your footie pajamas and coffee to see tourists by the dozens staring at you through the bars of your fence? If you want to experience all of the joys of being a politician, there a few tips that will send you on your way.

"I can relate, my great-great-grandfather once removed worked in a toothpaste factory when he first came to America," once said every politician to run a major campaign. If you want to rock politics in the future, you need to make yourself relatable to the public. Now you have them feeling just like you know their situation, right? Great, you're on the right path.

To make yourself even more 'common', be sure to bring your family with you everywhere, looking good enough to hit the runway. Take notes from Michelle Obama.

I wonder how much that stylist cost. Or maybe you or your family didn't win the election; to hold on to any ounce of fame you formerly had, enlist yourself

in your own reality TV show! This will ensure that you continue about your not-so-normal life more normally, shout-out to Bristol Palin.

If you want to win the votes, you have to be super cute. I'm talking Ron Paul cute. Oh wait, he's no longer in the running... but it worked for JFK.

Anyway, no candidate has ever won an election without making a promise they knew they couldn't keep, so start slinging the empty promises right away. Let's start with something simple... You could tell voters that you'll end the boy band craze that began 52 years ago. Because that's impossible (anyone who says they don't like One Direction is lying to themselves), it's the perfect platform for your campaign. Look to the politicians of today for inspiration.

In 2009, Barack Obama said "Today I'm planning to cut the deficit we inherited by half by the end of my first term in office." As the present has shown, that promise had as much validity as the meat Chicken McNuggets are made out of, but was just as tempting. If you don't make these promises, you aren't a true politician.

Do I want a chicken or beef burrito from Chipotle? Should I get hot, medium, or mild salsa?

Although these may seem like the hardest decisions you'll ever make, there are issues out there that are even more difficult.

Just ask Mitt Romney (you may know him as Mittens). Good ol' Mittens can't seem to stick with a side. Is he for or against abortion?

Where does he stand on Obamacare? How does he feel about Snooki raising a baby? I don't know, and chances are you don't either, because he's a classic flip-flopper.

Flip-flopping has been in politics for awhile and it's a skill you must master. If you stick to your guns, no one likes you; go home.

My advice to you concerning the election is this: write-in Ron Paul, because he's cuter than your grandpa.



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Titan of the Month: Collin Ziegler

by Anna Cunningham

Senior Collin Ziegler is someone who has immersed himself in activities here at Shaler Area. Some of his many activities include Drum Major of the marching band, involved in school plays and musicals, President of National Honor Society, member of PMEA Honors Band and member of the statewide Mock Trial Team. Because of his involvement he's our Titan of the Month.

Oracle: How many activities are you involved with and what are they?

Collin: Marching band, chamber choir, the fall play, the spring musical, the student-run play at the end of the year, National Honors Society, French Honors Society, the Buddy program, I'm a peer mentor, and I think, but don't quote me, but I think that's all. It changes throughout the year. The thing is to just say yes to everything. Oh, and pep band. Oh, I have another thing, state wide mock trial. And Moot ICC, those are both law competitions, and I do honors band.

Oracle: So why did you decide to get so involved in everything?

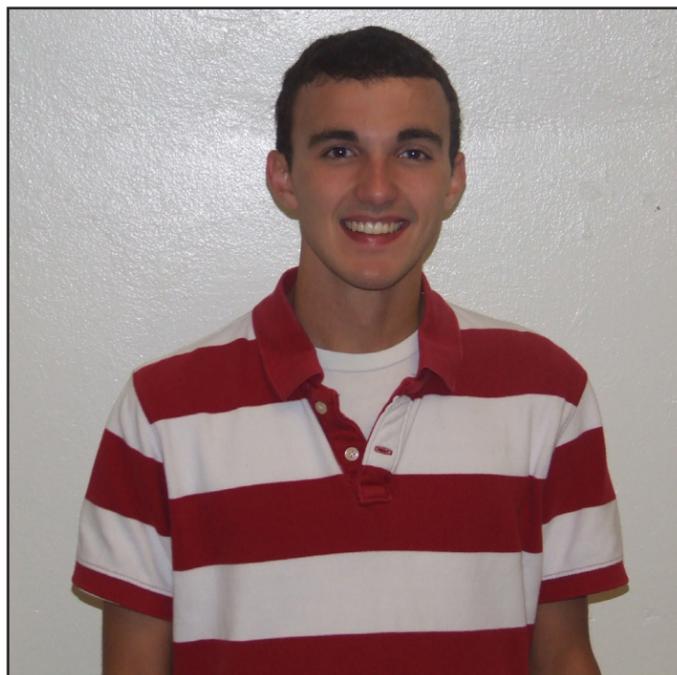
Collin: Well, when I first came to the high school, I just wanted to do everything. As I signed up for activities, I realized that I was having more fun doing those activities than I would have just going home, or going home to hang out with my friends, because these opportunities give you a chance to do things you've never done before. Now that I'm a senior, I'm realizing that I may not have the chance to do some of these things in college, or even later in my life.

Oracle: What are your favorites?

Collin: The play and the musical are definitely the highlights of my school year. As drum major of the marching band, I also enjoy that, but I don't see myself going into theater as an adult, so I really appreciate it and look forward to being on that stage as much as possible. Being in the spotlight, that's a really good feeling and I love it.

Oracle: Do you have any advice to younger students about getting involved?

Collin: The answer is right there in the question, get involved. Do something, it doesn't matter what it is. As a freshman, I was scared to do too much,



Senior Collin Ziegler (The Oracle)

even though you can't tell. I started with play and then I slowly started doing more. The very first group I did was the fall play and I realized, you feel kind of lost in the high school your first year. A lot of kids don't like it; they're bored with their classes, but the minute you get involved you start to get excited. You wake up and you say, "Oh, I have to go to school but, right after, I get to go do something I love." It makes every school day so much more fun.

Oracle: You mentioned classes and not wanting to do too much, what classes are you taking that you still manage to do all this?

Collin: I am a dedicated AP student. Last year I was in only three AP classes, this year I signed up for four. I absolutely love my language, AP French. I have been with Madame Endy for four years and I look forward to French every single day. I'm also in AP Literature and I love reading. I love talking about books, and that just feels like a club I'm in and I love it. And I'm unsure about economics and physics, but I love learning new things so right now, I'm kind of diving into it, so far it's ok.

Classes aren't the bad thing that everyone makes them out to be. I really enjoy being given the oppor-

tunity to learn new things and dive into new fields.

Oracle: Is there a specific event that you're involved in that you are looking forward to, this year specifically, or something you look forward to every year?

Collin: Last year, Emily Pirt and I won first place in the Moot ICC competition and it was a totally new experience for both of us. We loved it. I would love to go back to the assembly and win first place again. I'm also looking forward to the honors band. Last year I went to states, and I would love to go back to states again this year because that was an experience unlike any other.

Oracle: Do you have any ideas of where you want to go (to college)?

Collin: I visited twelve colleges this summer, which is a lot. I didn't know that was a lot until I started asking other people, but all the schools I'm looking at are small private liberal arts schools. I don't know what I want to do, which is making it very difficult for me.

This kind of goes back to the beginning, all because I want to do so much. There are so many majors I want to try, like French. Anyway, some colleges I'm looking at are St John's and Cornell; I have a big crush on Cornell.

Oracle: I've been told to mention Crime and Punishment and ask you about that?

Collin: This summer, I made it my goal to read all the books by Dostoevsky that I have not read. I almost achieved it; there are two more left that I have not read, but they're small ones, so I'll probably finish them sometime during the school year.

Ever since Mr. Schott's class, I've had quite a crush on Fyodor Dostoevsky. It sounds really dark, but there's a lot of things in Dostoevsky that I think we as students don't think a lot about like duality of the human soul, and consciousness, and what it means to really understand your own being. I know that just sounds really dark, but I think as students we don't get the chance to think about those things, but in Mr. Schott's class we did.

Oracle: Do you think that getting involved is the most important thing for students in high school, or is there something else?

Collin: Try new things and make new friends.

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SPORTS

Tennis team battles through adversity



Seniors Kristen Rost, Kristel Chatellier, Andra Labanc and Courtney Ambrozic

by Katie Rees

The girls' tennis team had to make many adjustments at the start of the season due to the fact that the tennis courts at the high school were under construction. This obstacle impacted both their practices and games.

The girls were forced to ride a bus to North Park for their summer practices as a result of not having access to the courts at the high school. Nonetheless, the team is in fourth place and hopeful to make it to the playoffs.

"We've worked our way through riding the bus everyday due to the unfinished tennis courts. I give the girls a lot of credit for being able to put up with the circumstances without any complaints," Coach Chuck Mura said.

The team is going to be competing against the most dominant tennis players in the league this season.

"Shadyside and Fox Chapel are the two best teams in the league that we will be up against. We will soon be competing against Woodland Hills for third place in order to have a spot in the playoffs. It should be a good match," Mura said.

In addition to seniors Andra Labanc, Kristen Rost, Kristel Chatellier, and Courtney Ambrozic, underclassmen Larissa Guering and Michaela Golden are two key players on the team.

"Larissa and Michaela are two very strong athletes for Shaler. Guering goes up against Fox Chapel girls who are nationally ranked. Both of them provide a lot of inspiration to the team, and it is a pleasure to have them," Mura said.

Lady Titans looking forward to playoffs

by Anna Cunningham

The girls' volleyball team at Shaler is having a successful season so far. Assistant varsity coach, Mr. Paul Stadelman, is impressed with how the team is performing, and he has a positive outlook for the rest of the season.

"I think they are doing really well. The seniors are providing great leadership; the underclassmen are working very hard to perform at their best. The kids are really up to the challenge," he said.

Some of their biggest challenges, according to Stadelman, are Plum and Oakland Catholic.

"We lost to Plum in the second match of the season in five games, so the next time we see them will be an important match," Stadelman said.

In their first loss of the season, the girls won games two and three, but lost games one, four, and five. In their second loss, against Oakland Catholic, the girls lost games one, two, and three.

Of the team's wins so far, the best, in Stadelman's opinion, was the match against Butler.

"We started out very slow, and lacked energy, but somewhere in game two the momentum shifted, and we were playing very fast, very well, with very high energy, and ended up winning the next three games," Stadelman said.

Besides Butler, Shaler has beaten Gateway, McKeesport, Penn Hills, Plum, Erie McDowell, Baldwin, and Woodland Hills.

With eleven wins under their belt, the outlook for the rest of the girls' season is good.

"We're definitely a playoff caliber team, but nothing's free. We have to beat the teams we're supposed to beat and really push to try to be a section title contending team. Right now, we're not in first place in the section, so that's something we have to take away from other people," Stadelman said.

The team has a good chance of making playoffs and becoming a title contender. Stadelman said that the girls are very athletic, hardworking, focused, and serious about what they are doing.

"That makes it easy as a coach," he said. "The other thing that really makes it a lot easier is this team seems like a pretty cohesive unit. They get along; they're fun to be around. You can laugh at them, have a good time, and it doesn't take away from the importance of being involved in a competitive sport."

The girls are 8-2 in their section and 11-3 overall. They play two more games in the regular season. Mr. Stadelman is excited for the rest of the season.

"This is a fun group. I like our chances, I think we're a dangerous team," he said. "We aren't the favorite, we're an underdog, but there are a lot of teams that, if they draw us, aren't going to be too excited."



Lady Titans block at the net. (Shutterfly.com)

Boys' golf team targets improvement

by Julie Rankin

The boys' golf team went into the season hoping for a fun year and striving for improvement.

"Sometimes we'll go to the driving range and just hit golf balls while the coaches watch us and he'll give us some tips as to how to change, or we'll play a practice round where we actually go to the course and we play and we just try to improve on the course," Senior Jake Raible said.

The boys' home course is Pheasant Ridge Golf Course. The competition for the guys this season was rough.

"We are probably the worst team in our section; teams like North Allegheny, Central Catholic, Seneca Valley, Pine Richland are very good teams," Raible said.

The team experienced victory early on in the season.

"We beat North Hills twice so they're the closest we can actually play with," Senior Alex Banfield said.

The top six players from each school's golf team advance to WPIALs. Out of the six that Shaler sent, all performed well but didn't qualify for the next round.

Being involved with the golf team has helped individual players to develop skills they can utilize in the future.

"(The team) helped me develop my game to the point where I can play somewhere in college, so I can take that from it," Banfield said.

All in all, the team had a fun and memorable season.

"We expected a fun year, but we didn't expect too many wins," Raible said. "We were 2-0 after the first two matches and we thought we'd have a good year; we've shown signs of improvement so it's a good year."

Girls' golf shoots for more participation

by Nick Polito

The girls' golf team has had a rollercoaster type of season. The team had some great matches but also had some struggling moments. As Coach Thomas Anke put it, "It's been a rebuilding year this year."

The team graduated three seniors last year and is going to graduate three more this year. The team is competing with only six girls, two of them are freshmen. One freshman, Natalie Abt, is proving to be a top golfer, shooting in the low 40s.

Senior Mallory Stack is the team leader. She qualified for the WPIAL individual championships and also set a course record at Pheasant Ridge.

"The most memorable moment this year was when she shot a one-over, a 37, which is a course record," Anke said, reminiscing about the moment.

It is a struggle for the girls to compete with such little participation.

"Other schools have 20 girls come out and they take 12, so we're limited in the number of girls who come out," Anke said.

SPORTS

Football team struggles to find winning ways

by Brett Ford

The football team has struggled so far this season. In the first six games the team is 0-7 with an average point differential of -36, giving up 45 points per game while only scoring 9.

The team lost a majority of senior leaders from last year. Only one starting offensive and one defensive player have returned from last season. Despite struggling this season, there have been some bright spots for this team. Most notable is the emergence of sophomore receiver Robbie Reinheimer, who has three touchdown receptions.

After the departure of a strong senior class, the Titans were ready to begin a new season in late August. The first game of the season the Titans squared up against the Central Catholic Vikings. The Titans lost 35-0.

The following week the Titans traveled out to Butler and faced the 0-1 Tornadoes and lost, 60-26. After the loss at Butler, they played the rival North Hills Indians at the Indians' home field. The Titans lost this game 42-8. At 0-3 Titans returned home to face the 2-1 Peters Township Indians. The Titans lost the game 36-7.

Despite the winless record, the team was encouraged going into a matchup against the 0-4 Fox Chapel Foxes. The Titans' defense didn't allow a single yard passing, but the Foxes racked up 378 yards on 50 carries. For the Titans, the only offense came on behalf



Bill and Robby Reinheimer in pro-game warmups. (WPXI.com)

of senior lineman Nick Carey. He only touched the ball twice, but scored each time he did. He scored from two yards out in the second quarter and from one yard out in the third. Although Nick Carey had a big game, the team did not and lost 49-14.

Next, the Titans were looking to upset Seneca Valley. The Titans gave up 386 yards while only gaining 110 yards on offense. There wasn't much of a bright side for the Titans this game as they fell to

0-6 and lost 49-0.

Nothing changed for the Titans this past Saturday for Homecoming. Pine-Richland outgained Shaler in yardage 491-106 and posted a 49-6 victory.

Although the team has struggled, the players are not discouraged. They all seem to keep a positive attitude about the season and have a "never say die" attitude. Though they are still fighting for this current season, many players have looked to how the team will fare in coming seasons.

"We are building a foundation for the future of the Shaler Area football program," junior linebacker Ryan Fitzpatrick said.

Along with the players, first year head coach Chris Siegle also isn't letting the team's struggles get the best of him. He himself has kept a positive attitude which in turn has given the players much-needed confidence that will help them finish the season on a high note.

"Some of the things that I have been encouraged by are the efforts of our kids. We have kids that want to see this thing through and want to work. It's my job as the head coach to show them how to achieve those things," he said.

The Titans have two games remaining. Tomorrow the Titans will host undefeated North Allegheny for Senior Night. The season will end on October 26 at Norwin.

Soccer teams battling injuries and tough section competition

Girls' team rides through up-and-down season

by Nick Polito

The girls' soccer team has had an uphill battle all season long. They are competing at a high level with only twenty-five healthy girls to play JV and Varsity. Other teams in the section have rosters of 15-20 more girls. Even with this disadvantage of participation, the girls' team is 4-9-2 overall and 3-7-2 in section play. The girls are playing hard and keep improving each and every day. They are in fifth place in a five team race to make the playoffs. The top three teams advance to the playoffs.

Girls' soccer has had great moments and also heart-breaking moments thus far. A heart-breaking moment was when the girls lost in double-overtime, for the second year in-a-row, to the rival North Allegheny girls' team.

On the good side, the girls did draw a tie against Hampton, who is 5-1-1 in section play so far. The girls were also able to avenge their double overtime loss at North Allegheny by beating them 1-0 at home. Some of their key players this year include senior defender Megan Ochsenreiter, junior goalie Sam Bahorich and sophomore forward Megan Schwartz, who leads the team with three goals. Sam has recorded three shutouts thus far and Megan Ochsenreiter "has been a rock with her play and leadership," Coach Chris Catanese said.

They suffered a tough Senior Night loss to the Seneca Valley Raiders by a score of 1-0. It was a disappointing loss to a one-loss Seneca Valley team, but the girls played hard and gave all they had to win their senior night.

Boys' team dealing with season full of adversity

by Nick Polito

The boys' soccer team has struggled this year. The team is 3-11-2 overall and 2-8-2 in section play. They have been dealing with many key injuries this year, including the two senior captains Chris Brasile and Clint McElheny.

The boys got a new coach this year and was only hired a week before the team started practicing for the season. Even with this hardship, the boys have ten seniors on the team which gave them a lot experience coming into the year. As their preseason was concluding, there was a lot of optimism heading into their season.

The season has been disappointing to the team. Five out of their eight section losses have been by one goal, including a 2-1 loss to North Allegheny, at home, on a goal scored with under a minute left to give North Allegheny the victory. They have not been able to get a one goal game to go their way.

The boys did have a great moment this year. They beat the previously undefeated and section champs Pine-Richland Rams 1-0. The Rams were ranked number 1 in the state and number 19 in the nation. It was a huge victory for the team who struggled this season.

"It has been a tough year for us, but we are working hard," said senior Clint McElheny.

Cross Country teams pushing for faster times

by Emily Pirt

Despite losing nine seniors last year, the boys' and girls' cross-country team has not stopped trying to improve. Unfortunately, the Titans are talented individually, but are unable to win meets in their section due to tough section matchups. So far the team is 0-5 this season.

"When it comes to wins/losses, we're in such a difficult section that it is very difficult to do well as a team because of our competition. That's always kind of disappointing as we go through the season, but then I always look at the end of the season when we have our big race, at the WPIAL championships, and how the team did there," Coach Mike Dusch said.

Last season, the boys lost a lot of seniors which hurt the team and made it more difficult to compete in their section.

"It's definitely affected us by not having the top people and getting good scores for our team," junior Matt Pontzloff said.

The boy's team has also been plagued with the injury to their star runner, Caleb Wakely. Currently Wakely is coming off of a knee injury and is trying to work his way to states where, last season, he placed 25th as only a sophomore.

"His knees are a little sore but he's been coming through the season. He was first place at the Knoch/Seneca Valley race," Dusch said.

On the other hand, the girl's team only lost two seniors last year, Elizabeth Shields and Meghan Carter, while recruiting Brianna Schwartz as a freshman. Brianna placed at both WPIALS and states last year. Recently, Brianna placed 1st at the Red, White, and Blue invitational at Schenley Park.

"She's coming along; she's worked hard all summer, she's prepped herself, and she's reaping some of those benefits right now. Bri was first overall [at the Red White and Blue race]. She ran an 18:07, a course record," Dusch said.

Senior Allison Spagnoletti explained how the girls have tough competitors too: "I'd say that North Hills has some pretty good runners on the girl's team. We have some good runners too, but overall, the team hasn't done too well so far."

Overall, the focus of the season will be to improve the runners' times.

"I think that some runners will get their personal best time but I don't think we're going anywhere... but it's still early in the season," continued Spagnoletti.

The Back Page

Lots of unique places to take that special someone

by Sarah Breen

Date night with your boyfriend or girlfriend, wife husband, is always the same right? Are you sick and tired of going on the same date, like dinner and a movie?

Date night is important, especially if you want to make a good impression and do something that no one has done before.

October is a busy month of course, with all of the haunted houses, hayrides, and homecoming.

There are rumors of Pittsburgh being haunted; How would you like to experience the haunts for yourself?

In downtown Pittsburgh there is a spine chilling tour called The Haunted Pittsburgh Ghost tour.

The tour only costs 15.00, and lasts about an hour

and a half. You will have a tour guide that will take you places around Pittsburgh like the court house, the county jail, and a haunted dorm room. This is not your average tour; it's nothing like a haunted house where people jump out at you from bushes because the tour guides tell you stories about the people who still haunt in these places today.

Another tour in Pittsburgh is located in Zelienople called The Nightmare Tour; the price of admission includes a ticket to future strand classic theatre film, and the tour itself. This tour is similar to the Pittsburgh tour except around Zelienople on a coach bus. Price of admission for the tour is 15.00 per person.

If haunted tours aren't really your style then you could just simply enjoy going to a pumpkin patch or farm.

A local farm, Reilly's Garden Center, has its harvest festival every weekend in October. The festival starts at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. The cost is only 6.50 per person (plus the cost of a pumpkin if you get one)

This festival includes a hayride out to the pumpkin patch, a petting zoo, a chance to make your own scarecrow, a cornstalk maze, and more.

Another farm in Wexford, Soergels Orchards, also has festivals going on every weekend in October through the 27th and 28th. Soergels offers pumpkin patch rides and be sure to also check out their apple cider, it's to die for.

Wherever you choose to take that special someone just remember to have fun. Fall is a great time of year, look at all the colorful leaves and enjoy yourself.

Crowded lunch periods starting to see improvement

by Emily Matthews

Lunch is a time during the school day in which students enjoy eating with and talking to their friends in a comfortable and calm matter. Unfortunately, the lunch room on the first day of school was everything but comfortable and calm. The lunch lines during every lunch period were the longest that anyone had ever seen them. Once students finally received their lunch, they roamed around the cafeteria, looking for a place to sit. Some students were unable to find an available chair and were forced to sit on the ground, or not eat their lunch at all.

Many people believe this overcrowded situation was caused due to the elimination of fourth period lunch.

"I think it makes more practical sense and more common sense to have four lunch periods and maybe fewer students...Not going to three lunches

to begin with might be the easiest solution. I know there's student decline in enrollment, but I don't think it was that significant to go down to three lunches," Dale Mangold, a janitor here at the high school, said.

Mr. Royall, however, does believe the decline in student enrollment is significant enough to make changes in the school. He has said that at one point, nearly 1900 students were in the high school. Now, there are only about 1500 students in the building. When the ninth grade was added to the high school four years ago, the addition of fourth period lunch was a necessity. Until then, there had been only three lunch periods.

"There always used to be just three lunches, so really we're just going back to the way it always had been...Until the population increases, we'll leave it at three lunches because we anticipated that it's going to continue to decline for

at least the next three or four years," Mr. Royall said

Up to this point, solutions have been made in the cafeteria to ease the problem. Mr. Royall believes that the problem on the first day of school was not due to the lack of chairs.

"We anticipated that there would be about 500 students per grade in the cafeteria, and we knew we had enough chairs, but we didn't anticipate that students would have so much trouble finding a seat, so there were enough seats. It's just that there might have been one extra seat on the left side and one extra seat over here on the right side and students wanted to sit in the middle, so there was difficulty finding the empty seats," Mr. Royall said.

To allow students to sit where and with who they want, new tables have been put in, the faculty dining room has been opened up to students, and garbage cans have been added to the

outdoor courtyard so students can eat outside. Plans for the addition of more tables are being made, too. Round tables have been ordered for the faculty dining room. Mr. Wells and the wood tech. class have also been asked to make a few picnic tables to be put in the outdoor courtyard. One is hoped to be ready sometime this month.

The new tables have decreased the amounts of disorder in the cafeteria. Freshmen Andrea MacDonald, Tori Lorenz, Val Stedeford, Anniston Bieri, Julie Loesch, Marina Varvaro, and Leann Mullen who sit at one of the new bench-seat tables say they are nice because they eliminate the possibility of someone stealing your seat. As more tables get added to the cafeteria, it seems like everyone will have a permanent place to eat their lunch.

SCG SHALER CULTURE GRID		Favorite fall activity?	The strangest thing found in your Halloween basket?	Favorite Halloween candy?	Favorite Halloween costume?
	Teacher Mrs. Paladino	Pumpkin carving 	Religious handouts	Reese's peanut butter cups	Notre Dame cheerleader 
	Sophomore Stephen Callen	Jumping in leaves	Inflatable ball	Reese's peanut butter cups	Shy Guy 
	Teacher Mr. Taylor	Throwing kids in leaves 	Candy	Twix 	The Burger King 
	Student teacher Ms. Hayes-Rowan	Picking Pumpkins 	Popcorn Balls	Milky Ways 	Rock-star bride 

WEIRD News

COQUILLE, Ore. — Oregon authorities are investigating how a farmer was eaten by his hogs. Terry Vance Garner, 69, never returned after he set out to feed his animals last Wednesday on his farm near the Oregon coast, the Coos County district attorney said Monday.

A family member found Garner's dentures and pieces of his body in the hog enclosure several hours later, but most of his remains had been consumed, District Attorney Paul Frasier said. Several of the hogs weighed 700 pounds or more.

MIAMI — The winner of a roach-eating contest in South Florida died shortly after downing dozens of the live bugs as well as worms, authorities said Monday.

About 30 contestants ate the insects during Friday night's contest at Ben Siegel Reptile Store. The grand prize was a python.

Edward Archbold, 32, of West Palm Beach became ill shortly after the contest ended and collapsed in front of the store. He was taken to the hospital where he was pronounced dead.