

CARLYNTON

School District News



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CARLYNTON



Photos by Ginger Hites



MAKING MUSIC

The Cougar marching band hosted its annual band festival at Honus Wagner Field on September 30. In a moving opening ceremony, the 911 Airlift Wing Honor Guard joined the band as they performed the National Anthem.

The festival featured performances of eight high school bands, comprising Bethel Park, Bishop Canevin, Chartiers Houston, Chartiers Valley, Cornell, Steel Valley, West Allegheny and Carlynton. The Robert Morris University marching band capped off the music-filled night.

Band director **Todd Obidowski** said the throng of students represented their schools well. The stands were packed and people were standing along the fence.

Can't Stop the Feeling, *Cheap Thrills*, *Hello*, and *Sorry* were the titles of the songs performed by the Cougar marching band. "It was our strongest performance of the year," said Mr. Obidowski. "I think they (students) really fed off of the crowd interaction and put on a great show," he added.

The band festival could not take place without the support and organization of band boosters. From parking, concessions, a program, organizing gram tables and more, a collaborative effort made for one of the most successful festivals in recent years.

In addition to the home event, the Cougars have participated in festivals for the Chartiers Valley, Montour, Upper St. Clair, and West Allegheny school districts and parades at Kennywood Park, community Labor Day parades, the Bloomfield Halloween Parade, and the Veteran's Day Parade in Pittsburgh.

The band will travel to Disney World, Orlando, FL April 27-May 1, 2018 to perform in The Magic Kingdom and take part in a number of art-related workshops.





Sitting among friends, high school teacher Norm Palko, gathered with crew members of Team Rubicon in Houston, Texas. Palko and the crew worked side by side for a week to assist in the cleanup efforts after Hurricane Harvey.

Going the extra mile

There is little doubt that we influence others through our actions, especially when placed in a leadership role. Carlynton School District teachers go the extra mile to “lead by example.” By way of positive and productive actions, teachers are portraying the value of citizenship and scholarship to students and colleagues in a variety of ways.

★ To keep students engaged, Carnegie fifth grade teacher **Scott Donnelly** uses the acronym “SLANT” in the classroom: Sit Up, Listen, Ask/Answer Questions, Nod your head, and Track the speaker. With a desire to continue learning new methods to captivate students, he applied for and received full scholarships to attend educational workshops last summer. In addition to participating in a fully-immersed week at an educator’s NASA space academy, he traveled to Boston for professional development in STEM programming at the Museum of Science. With a focus on engineering, Donnelly learned to design a framework to teach engineering skills in the classroom. Tapping in to the natural curiosity of students, Donnelly hopes to cultivate a better understanding of science and math through engineering and technology challenges to tackle real world issues such as building bridges or designing biomedical devices.



Michael Kozy on the campus of Saint Vincent College where he was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame.

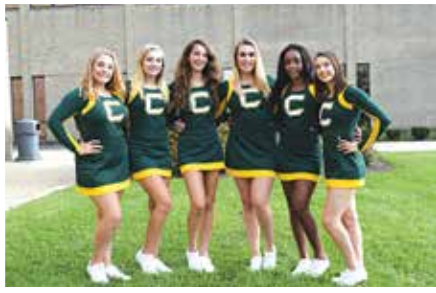
★ Statistics and calculus teacher **Michael Kozy** was recognized and inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame of St. Vincent College. Kozy earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in mathematics and economics from the college. He continued his education at Boston College where he earned a Masters of Art degree in economics in secondary education. While at St. Vincent College, he was a four-year basketball letterman and 1000-point scorer for the Bearcats. He was named All-American Scholar Athlete in his junior and senior years and second team all-district

in his senior year. Kozy also received accolades for academic excellence in economics. Mr. Kozy is currently the varsity head basketball coach for Carlynton and strives to lead by example on both the court and in the classroom.

★ With a desire to serve, high school teachers **Norm Palko** and **Matt Stagl** volunteered in the cleanup efforts in Houston following the devastation of Hurricane Harvey. In collaboration with Team Rubicon, Palko traveled to Houston the week of October 7-14. (At the time of this article deadline, Stagl was set to be deployed at the end of October). Team Rubicon was created by two ex-marines who felt the need to help in disaster recovery. Since its inception in 2010, the list of volunteers has grown to include thousands of veterans and civilians. Palko and Stagl attended readiness programs in preparation of deployment. While in Houston, responsibilities included the removal of debris and full demolition of properties impacted by the hurricane. At the high school, Palko is a physical education and health teacher; Stagl teaches American History and World Cultures. Both returned to the school with inspiring stories of overcoming adversity and a sense of worth as a volunteer.



MAKING HEADLINES

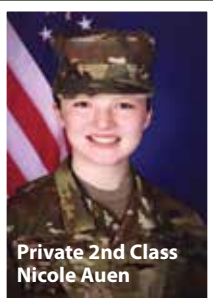


NEWS Six members of the varsity cheerleading squad have earned spots on the All American Cheer Team. **Ellie Davis, Lizzy Duffy, Tashe Earle, Sydney Franchick, Sydney Mollica, and Hanna Zaletski** were awarded the

chance to perform with cheerleaders from across the country at the All American Halftime Show Performance at the Citrus Bowl in Orlando, Florida in December. The varsity cheer squad completed an intense two-day cheer camp in August with Elite Cheerleading. The girls, as well as members of the junior high squad who participated in the camp, were awarded Ribbons of Excellence for talent, skill, and hard work.

NEWS First place medals were presented to the fifth grade team of **Charlie Burcham, Mateo Carrasco, Eva Milliner, and Lana Mihelcic** and a sixth grade team of **Mason Glover, Sean**

Hart, Ella Snyder, and Bailey Vetter as competitors in the 2017 Eco Challenge hosted by the Phipps Conservatory and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. The environmental challenge compelled students to investigate ecological issues with the goal of creating effective solutions to make a difference in direct response to those issues. The competition was developed by the Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden in Miami, Fl. The Phipps Conservatory was adopted as a satellite partner in 2008. The two first place teams will advance to compete at subsequent sustainability contests and projects in connection with the Fairchild Challenge. The mission of the Fairchild Challenge is



Private 2nd Class
Nicole Auen

For most high school students, summer vacation is a time to relax, spend time with friends and work at a part-time job. For rising

seniors **Nicole Auen** and **Nathan Bickus**, this past summer was spent in a more disciplined atmosphere.



For Nicole, who spent 10 weeks at an army camp in Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, it was about committing as a

junior to the National Guard. Sharing a room in a barracks-like dorm with 20 girls, the regimented experience included early wake up calls, strenuous workouts, learning combat tactics, shooting military rifles, hurling live grenades, enduring 30 seconds in a gas chamber and running countless obstacle courses. Nicole said mental and physical aptitudes were tested among the 200 in her company, with some not able to cope and dropping out. Within her regime, she was the

only female to qualify as a target expert on the shooting range.

Nate Bickus traveled in June to West Point Military and Preparatory Academy in New York to spend a week at a leadership camp. The first day, or beast day, began with strict requirements: no talking, endurance runs and more. As one of 10 companies at the camp, he was tested on training fields and in the classroom where he took part in workshops focused on engineering and physics. Studying a knowledge book was another requirement which included memorizing ranks, order and songs and then being tested for accuracy.

Nicole and Nate are enrolled in advanced placement classes at school and are well-organized, receiving top grades while managing extracurricular activities. Both plan to attend college.

Because of her involvement with the National Guard, Nicole will receive assistance with school costs and plans to study nursing or teaching. If deployed, she will finish school at a later time. Nate plans to earn a degree in computer or electrical engineering.



▲ Nate Bickus arrives at West Point for a week-long leadership camp at the military academy.



◀ Carrying heavy gear over a two-mile course was one of many endurance tests tackled by Nicole Auen, front and center, during a 10-week boot camp.

to foster interest in the environment by encouraging students to appreciate the beauty and value of nature; develop critical-thinking skills; understand the need for conservation and biodiversity; tap community resources; become actively engaged citizens; and recognize that individuals do indeed make a difference.



Crafton Elementary sixth graders recently participated in a financial literacy and career activity to examine various career opportunities in industries focusing on science, technology, engineering, finance, medical, and “green” fields. As part of an “Earn Your Future” initiative, employees from the firm of Pricewaterhouse Cooper visited the school to help sixth graders match personal skills and interest to corresponding career options. The



PWC professionals Emily Smerdell and Rebecca Wallace met with sixth graders at Crafton Elementary to discuss career planning.



Anthony Friend and Rachel Black offered support to students as they discussed career options and the costs associated with training to acquire a skill or a degree.

seminar began with some ice breakers and then moved on to pre- and post-surveys with engaging activities to allow students to identify a career goal and develop a plan and timetable for execution. The lesson included a review of the necessary variables or requirements to obtain a skill such as education or training, cost, and potential debt. Students were encouraged to analyze and determine the factors that can drive income and career potential, in particular, economic, social, cultural and political conditions. PWC professionals guiding the students through the literacy and career lesson were Rachel Black, Anthony Friend, Emily Smerdell, and Rebecca Wallace. Teamed in pairs in two separate classrooms, the financial experts emphasis was to guide the trajectory of pre-teens’ lives through the application of the financial literacy strategies.



High school Family and Consumer Science classes celebrated World Peace Day on September 21 by making and displaying “pinwheels for peace.” During the activity, students discussed a platform to become a driving force and vision for a united and sustainable world. The International Day of Peace is observed in honor of a unanimous United Nations resolution in 1981 when the General Assembly declared the day of peace to commemorate and strengthen the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples.



Using the high school campus as an outdoor classroom, biology teacher **Bill Palonis** led ninth grade scholar’s classes on a mini-field trip to illustrate biological systems and how they use molecular building blocks to grow, reproduce and maintain equilibrium within the environment. Walking across school grounds, Palonis uprooted Queen’s Anne Lace, the ancestor to carrots, allowing individuals to smell the root to discover it has the same scent as the common vegetable. As the students were led to the nature trail, they learned the winding path includes a long-abandoned coal mine that was sealed off before the high school building was erected. Chunks of the black, shiny coal could be found along the trail and some gathered and

pocketed pieces as keepsakes. Mr. Palonis called attention to the different trees, explaining the root system, the types of bark and pointed out the tall, straight growth of a yellow pine, which is largely harvested for telephone poles. During the tour, students carried clip boards and took notes, later to be discussed in the classroom. The outdoor adventure was just a small part of the hands-on biology class that studies living plants, animals and organisms to bring about a better understanding of the biological balance between internal and external environments.

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Top photo: Biology teacher Bill Palonis led students through the nature trail on the school’s campus to gain a better understanding of living plants in the environment.

Middle photo: Holding up a fern, Palonis explained that deciduous woodlands have three levels of plants: lichen, moss, and ferns, which live on the fertile floor of a temperate biome, or the flora and fauna occupying the habitat.

Bottom photo: Palonis showed students an example of how fungi feeds on the cellulose and lignin of a log, converting the wood into softer tissues and causing decomposition.



MAKING HEADLINES *continued*



The respect and admiration Damon Chiodo holds for his brother Devin Tomei was felt in an essay he wrote about his hero. The surprise homecoming was captured on camera and fetched national attention.



"Who is my hero?" Sixth grade English/Language Arts teacher

Cynthia Bevan asked students to write an essay about a hero. For **Damon Chiodo**, there was no question: "My hero is my brother, Devin Tomei," he wrote. Damon's heartfelt essay shared a simple story. Specialist Devin Tomei was stationed in Germany as a U.S. army helicopter mechanic where he maintained and repaired Chinook or CH-47 helicopters. "Hundreds of army missions depend on these helicopters," Damon penned, "And my brother must make sure that all of them are safe and ready to fly." When Damon was in third grade, his brother left for the army. Though they communicated by phone, Damon missed the companionship they once shared. Damon wrote, "My brother is brave and smart. He is always there for me, even if I just want to talk. I am very proud of him for choosing to protect me and everyone in the United States. He is not just my brother. He is also my friend." On September 29, Damon was reading his essay to classmates in the school's auditorium when his brother walked onto the stage. "Devin!" he screamed with shock, before jumping into his brother's arms. Local news stations and newspapers sent cameramen to capture the surprise homecoming. The story was featured on Pittsburgh news channels, Sunday evening's World News Tonight with David Muir, and Inside Edition. To celebrate the first day with his big brother, Damon was given the day off from school. Devin's visit with family was memorable although brief. In October, he headed to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky to continue his service in the army.



"When given the choice between being right or being kind, choose kind!" Fourth graders from Carnegie Elementary school have learned that lesson while reading the novel *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio. The main character in the novel, Auggie, is born with facial deformities. The storyline teaches personal and academic lessons as Auggie starts schools and tries to fit in. Teacher **Julie Lewis** said the book prompted in-depth discussions with students. "They are thinking of others and how their actions affect the people around them,"



As part of an assignment related to the novel *Wonder*, students created faces to resemble the main character in the book and then wrote five approaches to show kindness to others.



Twins London and Paris Lee sported black and gold face paint to show their support of the Penguins.



The Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation, in partnership with its Future Goals program, chose Carnegie Elementary as the recipient of 100 tickets for a Penguins vs. Columbus Blue Jackets game at the PPG Arena on Saturday afternoon, September 30. Teacher **Scott Donnelly** received the tickets in response to submitting evidence of STEM instruction in the classroom. For some, it was the first time to witness a professional hockey game. The Future Goals program is sponsored by EverFi, a nationwide critical skills education platform. Using hockey to teach lessons, classroom curriculum was provided for students to learn the engineering design behind hockey equipment. It also provided the opportunity for fifth and sixth graders to analysis data and draw conclusions when calculating ice surface area and volume, determining the circumference, radius and diameter of the hockey rink, inspecting the states of matter and phase changes to the ice, and examining the mass, velocity and kinetic energy of players. In addition to having a great time, the students discovered the science and math behind a game of hockey.

she said. The novel encourages the use of precepts, or words to live by. In response, the class is using "365 Days of Wonder: Mr. Brown's Book of Precepts" to apply a daily precept in the classroom. *Wonder* has been made into a motion picture by producer and Pittsburgh-native Stephen Chbosky and will appear in theaters in November. The fourth grade, Mrs. Lewis and parent chaperones have arranged for a private screening of the movie at the Settler's Ridge Cinemark. Students are excited to see how the movie corresponds to the book and to see words come to life on the big screen.



High school pep rallies kick off with the drum line marching through the halls with a deafening cadence. Stirring excitement, classroom doors swing open in spirited anticipation of what's to come. By the time students are dismissed for the rally, everyone is geared to display school pride, in an incredibly loud foray, while cheering on the Cougars before a big game.



In cooperation with the American Red Cross, the junior-senior high school will host two blood drives, January 12 and March 26, from 8:00 am to 1:30 pm in the school. The drives are being held in direct response to the need for blood due to Hurricanes Harvey and Irma in Texas and Florida. Many staff members and students, ages 16 and older, plan to donate blood.



American Red Cross

Residents of the district and neighboring communities who are

interested in donating can contact the school at 412-429-2500, press 1, and then extension 1113 to schedule an appointment.



Honored members of the 2017 homecoming court featured (standing, L-R) **Eliana Davis, Monika Karpa, Arieona Smith-Purdue, Nicole Auen,** and **Autumn Schaffer,** as well as (seated) **Tayvel Hutchinson, JP Cantwell, Owen Kalimon, Riley Post,** and **Hunter Crown.**

On October 20, during separate ceremonies, Owen Kalimon and Arieona Smith-Purdue were named king and queen. A formal dance with a southern charm theme was held in the high school gymnasium the following evening.



STEAM

science technology engineering arts mathematics



Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics or STEAM continue to play a role in lives of Carnegie and Crafton Elementary students. A recess rotation provides all students with the opportunity to take part in exploratory activities such as design challenges, coding, robotics, and recycled art projects. Some new ventures introduced this year include designing Origami bracelets and making homemade vanilla ice cream in a baggie. Bee Bots, Osmos, and Puzzlets continue to be a favorite among the younger children while older students learn to build with biodegradable materials and complete challenges using the EverFi website.



The familiar tale of *Peter Pan* will take the stage in the Carlynton Junior-Senior High School auditorium November 30-December 2. Featuring the Darling family, the Lost Boys, Never Land and Captain Hook, the show will highlight the talent of new and familiar faces. High school English and theater teacher **Tonilyn Jackson** will direct the play with assistance from teacher **Tracy Post**. Senior **Tara Wade** will get her feet wet as student director and will also play the role of Mrs. Darling. Sophomore **Camryn Kwiatkoski** will take the lead as Peter Pan. Seniors **JP Cantwell** and **Sydney Mollica** will respectively portray Captain Hook and Tinkerbell and sophomores **Elizabeth Duffy, Elana Heffner,** and **David Holderbaum** will play the sibling roles of Wendy Darling, Michael Darling, and John Darling. As the story of *Peter Pan* unfolds, be prepared for a few surprises, special effects, and vibrant, handmade costumes.

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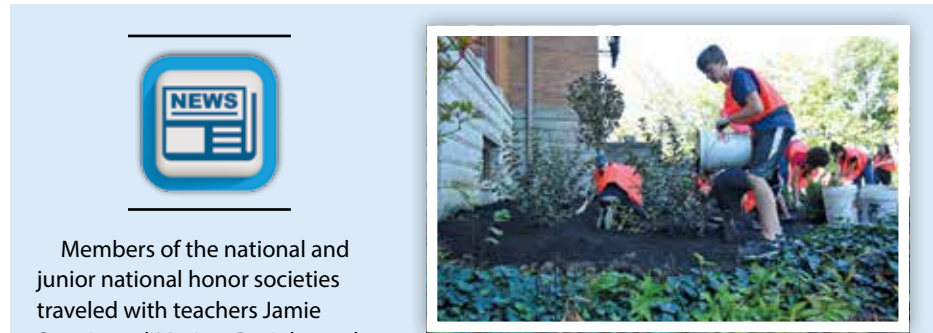
MAKING HEADLINES *continued*



Breakfast with Santa will return to the high school cafeteria Saturday, December 9 with Santa taking center stage and proceeds benefitting the district-wide backpack for kid's food program. In addition to a hearty breakfast there will be entertainment by the chorus and band, crafts, a photo booth with Santa and more. Be sure to save the date for this fun and rewarding event.



The youngest person to enlist in the Civil War from the state of Pennsylvania was nine-years-old. Soldiers were paid \$13 every other month for their service. To be eligible to become a soldier in the army, men needed to have a least six teeth and two fingers on their trigger hand. These, and various other facts, were among those told to students at Crafton Elementary during a visit of a Civil War Trunk. Offered and led by librarian Diane Klinefelter and historian Ken Steinmetz of the Carnegie Free Library and Music Hall, the experts exhibited period clothing and artifacts and shared true stories and events that took place shortly after President Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated in 1861. The civil war



Members of the national and junior national honor societies traveled with teachers Jamie Sonnie and Marissa Rusinko to the Carnegie Free Library and Music Hall in Carnegie on October 4. Working alongside the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, students planted hundreds of ornamental trees, bushes and shrubs around the library and music hall grounds as part of the first phase of the new library park. Over 40 teens carefully spaced the plantings and insulated them with fertilizer and mulch to frame the building with lush greenery. A new driveway, sidewalks, lampposts, and benches now grace the surrounding estate of the historic building offering an inviting welcome to guests who visit the library or attend an event in the music hall.

▲ Eighth grader Owen Schriver scatters mulch to an area with newly planted shrubbery while classmates nestle the mulch around each plant.

▼ The orange-vested workers gather for a photo on the steps of the music hall.



was in part the result of a long-standing controversy over slavery and went on for four long years, the students learned. The Civil War Trunk is an extension of the Capt. Thomas Espy Room maintained within the library building. Students in all grades had the chance to see artifacts and learn about the life of a civil war soldier from an age-appropriate perspective.

Professional genealogist and librarian Diane Klinefelter, dressed in Civil War-period clothing, spoke to students of Crafton Elementary about life during the Civil War.



Save the date!

2017

November 10 Veteran's Day Observed, No School
November 23-27 Thanksgiving Holiday Break
November 30-December 2 Fall Play, *Peter Pan*
December 5 JSHS Winter Choral Concert
December 9 Breakfast with Santa
December 11 Elementary Winter Choral Concert
December 14 JSHS Winter Band Concert

December 20
December 25-January 1
January 12
January 15
February 19
March 21-25

Elementary Winter Band Concert
 Winter Holiday Break
 Blood Drive at JSHS
 Martin Luther King Day Observed, No School
 President's Day, No School
 Spring Musical, *The Boyfriend*