

# Hilltop: Valentines Edition

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## Make It a Double for Single

By: Sumer Slobodnick

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, Portage Area High School junior Maddy Single attended Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 6 Band Festival playing the flute. The Districts festival was hosted by Bellwood-Antis High School, and conducted by a guest conductor from Penn State's Blue Band. But before she auditioned and was selected to play for the district band, she had also participated in the PMEA County Band Festival in November which was hosted by Cambria Heights this year. It was at the County Band festival that she had successfully auditioned for Districts.

The District Band Festival lasted through January 29<sup>th</sup>. This year was her second year attending the band festival. The three days at districts consisted of playing challenging pieces of music that were picked out by the conductor. On the last day, Maddy and the rest of the band performed the pieces of music for family and friends that they had all been diligently practicing for the previous three days.

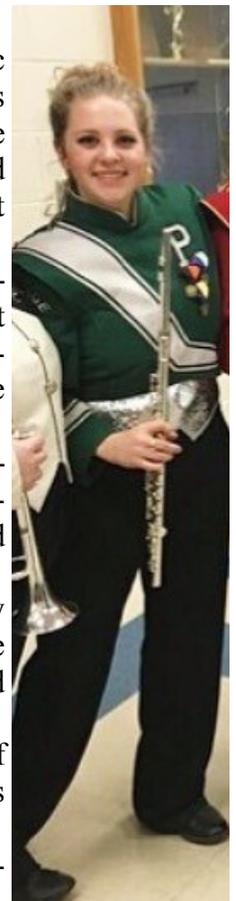
Much like the County Festival, she had the chance to audition for Regional Band while attending the District 6 festival. Maddy had a successful audition and will be moving on to the PMEA Regional Band Festival for the second year in a row. As well This year's Regional Festival will be hosted by Huntingdon High School on March 9<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>.

"I had a great time this year. I get to meet a lot of nice people from all over, and I get to play challenging music. It was exciting getting to play with a conductor from the Blue Band. More people should try out because it is such a rewarding experience!" commented Maddy about her experience at Districts this year.

Band director, Mr. Rousell, also gushed, "I am very proud of Maddy. She is a hard worker and she deserves everything that she has worked so hard for."

Maddy showed her hard work and dedication by starting to practice for Districts the day she received her music. She also takes flute lessons that will help her prepare for future festivals. She is excited to attend Regionals once again this year and to meet more friends that she can share her memories from the experience with.

With gratitude and excitement, Maddy further exclaimed, "I am looking forward to meet up with some friends that I had made over the past two years attending the festivals."



By: Katie Nolan

# Hoops for Hope

On Monday February 1st, 2016 the Lady Mustangs traveled to Conemaugh Valley to take on the Lady Blue Jays at 7:00. Monday night's game as well as Wednesday night's game were the last two games that counted for District 6 playoff rankings. The starters for Monday night's game were seniors Katie Nolan, Lexi Wozniak, and Kacie Baker and juniors Lauren McCabe and Abby Chobany.

Monday night's game was dedicated as the "Hoops for Hopes" game between the Lady Mustangs and the Lady Blue Jays. The game raised money for breast cancer patients and research through the selling of 2 "Hoops for Hope" items: t-shirts with a Blue Jay and a Mustang enclosed in a basketball and dedication basketballs for those who had family members who have passed away with cancer or are currently fighting cancer.

It was easy to see the Lady Mustangs had some spark for Monday night's game coming out strong from the tip. Lauren McCabe started the game off winning the opening for the Lady Stangs. And from that point, the Lady Stangs were on fire, scoring 36 points in the first half. Entering the locker room at halftime up 19 points with the score set at 36 -17. The Lady Mustangs didn't let up the entire game, coming out after halftime in man defense making the pressure relentless. The Lady Mustangs ended up winning the game by 20 with the final score of 60-40. Four Lady Mustangs scored in double digits with Katie Nolan tallying 17 points, Lauren McCabe 13 points, Kacie Baker 11 points, and Lexi Wozniak also adding 10 points.

On Wednesday February 3rd, 2016 the Lady Mustangs hosted Berlin Brothersvalley Lady Mountaineers in the Len Chapell Gymnasium for a 7:00 tip off. The starters for Wednesday night's game were the usual starting five. Wednesday night's game was the Lady Mustangs last game that counted as points for the District 6 playoff standings. The Lady Mustangs came out with a full head of steam bringing intense pressure until the end of the game. The Lady Mustangs were up 33 to 14 at the half but didn't let up after coming back out after half time. They continued to bring the pressure and ended the game with a win by 27, 61-34. With this victory, the Lady Stangs sealed their fate as the 6th seed entering the District 6 Class A playoffs where they will face West Branch at Tyrone High School Monday, February 15th as the opener of a playoff doubleheader with the tip set for 6:00. The boys will follow in the nightcap against St. Joe's.



# Black History Month

By: Emily Niper

Black History Month is recognized all throughout February. Although we now recognize February as "Black History Month," it was originally called "Negro History Week" in 1962. Most people don't know that black history hadn't even begun to be studied or documented when the tradition began. Black people have been in America as far back as colonial times at least; however, it was not until the 20<sup>th</sup> century that they had respectable presence in the history books. Most people believe that we started the tradition of Black History Month because of Martin Luther King Jr. but Dr. Carter G. Woodson is the one we owe the credit. Dr. Woodson was born to parents of former slaves. Through adulthood, he worked in the Kentucky coal mines and enrolled in high school at age twenty. Two years after enrolling into high school he graduated and went to Harvard to earn his Ph.D. He soon came to the discovery in his studies that history books largely ignored the black American population. Where they did fit into the picture was generally in ways that reflected the inferior social position they were assigned at the time. Woodson took the challenge of writing black Americans into the nation's history. The *Association for the Study of Negro Life and History*, now called *Association of the Study of Afro-American Life and History*, was written by Woodson in 1915. Just over a year later, he founded the widely respected *Journal of Negro History*. Negro History Week was created as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history. The second week of February was chosen for Negro History Week because it makes the birthdays of the two men who greatly influenced the black American population: Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

Five Facts you should know about Black History Month

1. Black History Month started in 1926. The observance was proposed by Carter Godwin Woodson, an author and historian, as Negro History Week. It expanded in the 1970s.
2. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded in 1909. It's now considered "the nation's oldest, largest and most widely recognized grassroots-based civil-rights organization," according to its website.
3. The U.S. isn't the only country to celebrate Black History Month. Canada also observes it in February, while the U.K. recognizes it in October.
4. There are more than 45 million African-Americans living in the U.S., according to Census Bureau data. That's about 15 percent of the nation's population.
5. In 2013, New York had the most African-American residents, with 3.7 million.

# Vassas' View: What IS a Caucus anyway?

By: Elliott Vassas

What is the Iowa Caucus? It is an electoral event that takes place in Iowa. All of the residents in this state meet in precinct caucuses. A precinct is a space enclosed by walls or other boundaries of a particular place or building. Rather than going to polls and casting ballots, residents of Iowa gather at a set location. Typically, they occur in schools, churches, public libraries, and sometimes even an individual's house. In the event of an election, a county or township is subdivided in precincts where the residents can go to vote. A caucus is a meeting of supporters or members of a specific political party. These members elect delegates to the corresponding County Conventions. There are 99 counties in Iowa, meaning there are 99 conventions in Iowa. The County Conventions choose delegates for the Congressional District Convention and the State Convention. These conventions then go on to choose the delegates for the presidential nominating conventions. Since 1972, the Iowa Caucus has been the first major electoral event of the nominating process for the President of the United States.

It has been shown over the years that this event has a high percentage of predicting which Democratic or Republican candidate will win the presidential election. The Iowa Caucus was held on Monday, February 1st with one hour to vote starting at 7pm. Results show that Ted Cruz won the Republican vote with 27.6%. Donald Trump followed behind Cruz with a vote of 24.3%. Marco Rubio was not that far behind Trump with a vote of 23.1%.

For the Democratic candidates, Hillary Clinton won with a vote of 49.9%. Bernie Sanders had a very close vote of 49.6%. Donald Trump thought he could take the lead with hopes that the surge of new voters would take his side. However, this is not the way it worked out in the end. A record of 186,000 Republicans caucused on Monday night. There were 65,000 more voters than previous years but this did not help Trump. Hillary Clinton had hoped that she could win by a huge percentage over Bernie Sanders but her victory was rather small. Coming up next is the New Hampshire primary on February 9th, the Nevada Caucus on February 20th, and the South Carolina primary on February 27th.



## Andrew's Automotive Assessment 2016 Toyota Tacoma



By: Andrew Koval

The 2016 Ford Focus RS (RS meaning Rally Sport) is definitely a unique vehicle. It is unique because of mainly the reputation that it gets for being a slow not powerful ecofriendly car. When in fact the RS is the complete opposite of that. This car has a 2.3 Liter 4 cylinder engine equipped with Fords Eco boost technology giving it an amazing 345 Horsepower and 345 lbs. of torque. That's more than the RS's major competitors, including the new Civic Type-R, Volkswagen Golf R, and Subaru WRX STI. That's extremely impressive considering it's a tiny 4 cylinder engine. The car also goes from 0-60mph in 4.7 seconds. Not only is the horsepower Impressive but it also gets pretty good gas mileage. 21 mpg in the city and 29mpg on the highway. The car also comes equipped with a 6 speed manual transmission which can also come with a short throw shifter on it for faster shifting time going through gears. Another thing that makes this car kind of unique with all the power it's pushing out of the 4 cylinder engine is that this car is a hatchback. That's right not a muscle looking car, not a fast looking car, just your normal looking hatchback. So basically you can go get your groceries while also going about 165 mph! Which is also the top speed that the Focus can go. The car also has a very nice new aggressive body style from the previous Focus in 2014. The curves are bolder and the corners are sharply cut making it seem big and mean. The Focus RS is also making its way to the United States for the first time ever since its creation in 2002. The car was mainly manufactured and still is today in Germany. The recent demand for the car to be available in the United States was mainly because of all the hype that ford put behind it. Ask and you shall receive America because sometime in spring is when the new RS's are set to land on U.S soil. In Conclusion this car is very impressive both performance wise and style wise.

# Richardson's Reflection

By: Alexis Richardson

## Mr. Jeremy Burkett

Q: What are you most grateful for?

A: My family

Q: Who's your favorite athlete?

A: Andrew McCutchen. He can play any sport

Q: How do you feel about archery in phys. Ed.?

A: I was nervous at first. But was happy to see the students enjoy it so much

Q: Why do you like to teach phys. Ed.?

A: I enjoy being active and teaching students how to be active

Q: In your own words, what is the definition of success?

A: When you achieve a goal

## Mr. Shuck

Q: Who's your favorite author?

A: Terry Pratchett

Q: Fiction or Nonfiction. Why?

A: Fiction because I get to escape from the world

Q: How do you feel about E- Readers?

A: I prefer audio books. I think the E- Readers have benefits. Such as not reading a book filled with mystery stains

Q: What scares you? Why?

A: Getting old because you fall apart

Q: What's a word that annoys you?

A: Paradigm

I should've asked a question that he could've answered "Bacon" (Shuck wants this in his article)

# Mustang Matters

By: Elona Krcishta

This year is the first year the PTO of Portage Area High School will be hosting a Father Daughter Dinner Dance that is going to be held on Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 p.m. till 9:00 p.m. The dance will be open to any school for a girl and her father figure. The registration is available on the school's website, [www.portageareasd.org](http://www.portageareasd.org). The Father Daughter Dinner Dance will be held the Cassandra Social Hall. Tickets are \$25 per couple and \$5 for each additional daughter. The attire expected for all coming to the dance is formal. The space is exclusive, so it is recommended to reserve your spot today so please respond by February 5<sup>th</sup>. Each couple will receive complimentary parking, craft to make, buffet style dinner, daddy daughter dancing, and one 5 by 7 photograph by La La B Photography. The menu includes drinks such as coffee, tea, lemonade, and punch. The buffet style dinner includes rolls, fruit salad, spaghetti and meatballs. The dessert for the night is assorted cupcakes. It is greatly advised to daughters and their father figures to attend this lovely event to spend quality time with the father and a night they will never forget. Dads will also enjoy the night with their daughters. In the form, again found on the school's website, also lists that you are able to pick your favorite song for you to dance to. Attached payment is required and additional information to be filled out is on the form. Majority of information is stated here but in order for you to attend you must fill out the entire form. This is the first time that the PTO is hosting this event and expect to have a great outcome. Everyone from fathers, daughters, grandpas, step-dad's, favorite uncles, and step-daughters of any school age are permitted to attend.



# History Behind the Hearts

By: Taylor McCloskey

Valentine's Day, also known as Saint Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is celebrated on February 14<sup>th</sup> each year. In the 18th-century in England, Valentine's Day evolved into an occasion in which lovers express their love for each other by offering candy, baked goods, flowers, and greeting cards which are known to us as "valentines."

In the middle ages, young men and women drew a name from a bowl to see who their Valentine would be. They then would wear the name on their sleeve for a week. The first Valentine candy box was invented by Richard Cadbury in the late 1800s, and now more than thirty-six million heart shaped candy boxes filled with chocolate are sold for Valentine's Day every year. This year nearly 8 billion candy hearts will be made for Valentine's Day. 8 billion is enough candy to stretch from Rome in Italy to Valentine in Arizona 20 times and back again. In the United States, about 190 million Valentine's Day cards are sent every year, and this is not including the cards kids exchange in school. But not everyone celebrates Valentine's Day.

In some Latin American countries, it is known as "Día del Amor y la Amistad" which means Day of Love and Friendship. In China, it is called Lover's Festival. India has the adoring of Kamadeva, In the Philippines, the celebration is known as Araw ng mga Pusò, meaning Day of Hearts; however, there are many other places that have different names for the Valentine's Day celebrations. Yet, there are some countries that don't celebrate it at all.

For example, in both 2002 and 2008, Saudi Arabian religious police banned sales of all Valentine's Day products and told workers to remove any red items present because Valentine's Day is considered a Christian Holiday. In 2012, the same religious police arrested more than one hundred and forty Muslim's for celebrating this holiday because of its supposed Christian holiday roots, then confiscated not all flowers, but only red roses from the flower shops. Muslims are not allowed to celebrate the holiday and non-muslims can only celebrate this holiday behind closed doors. Valentine's Day is in fact celebrated in many countries but it is not a public holiday in many of them either.

(Information and facts taken from: [www.wikipedia.org.com](http://www.wikipedia.org.com), and [www.weau.com](http://www.weau.com))



## No Mocking This Field Trip

By: Braedon St. Clair

On Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Mrs. Dobrowsky and the whole 11<sup>th</sup> grade class will be taking a class trip to see "To Kill a Mockingbird." This is in correlation to the junior English classes reading the book version of "To Kill a Mockingbird." The play will be taking place in Altoona at the Historic Mishler Theater. This is an event that the cast and crew is holding for school students only so therefore it is first come first serve in terms of saving seats for your class. Mrs. Dobrowsky hopped right on the chance to save seats for Portage as soon as she was informed of the event. After the play the cast and crew will be meeting with many different schools to discuss anything students have questions on or simply just to chat and connect with their audiences. The theater only seats 900 people that's why it's limited to the schools that call first and tell them that they're coming with how many students they are going to be bringing Students will be leaving anywhere from 8-8:30, so sometime during first period. The cafeteria will be providing bagged lunches for all students attending but students are allowed to bring their own lunches or snacks if they wish to. English 11 students are to turn in their permission slips by the 10<sup>th</sup> of February. The play will begin at 10 and is anticipated to end around 1. This means the kids attending will have to either eat lunch on the bus on the way to the play, during the play, or after on the way home. In "To Kill a Mockingbird", author Harper Lee uses memorable characters to explore civil rights and racism in the segregated Southern United States of the 1930s. Told through the eyes of Scout Finch, you learn about her father Atticus Finch, an attorney who hopelessly strives to prove the innocence of a black man unjustly accused of rape; and about Boo Radley, a mysterious neighbor who saves Scout and her brother Jem from being killed. When I asked Mrs. Dobrowsky about what her thoughts were on the opportunity to do something like this she and the rest of the junior class told me "we are excited to see the book come to life on the stage." This an all free play and this is the first time for this play.



# Boy's Basketball

By: Nathan Teno

The boys basketball team with a record 13-8 are on the verge of closing out their regular season. The team has had some recent close games which have come to a disappointing end favoring their opponents. Their game against Conomaugh Valley last week was a tough loss for the boys team who is suffering from many illnesses and injuries. The team kept a close game through 4 periods to come up just short against the Blue Jays by a score of 42-35. The next game on their schedule, a double header at the Mount College against the Penn Cambria Panthers was yet another heartbreaking loss for the Stangs. The team played solid the whole game just to have their 3 point lead with 10 seconds left, a lead that was thwarted by a banked in three-pointer. The three, hit with no time left on the clock sent the game into overtime. The team battled through OT and did not give up just to suffer a loss by 2, the final score came out to be 54-52 Panthers. Coming back from these two losses would be tough but they knew they had to win and gain some confidence back. Tuesday the Stangs played Berlin who only has one loss, a perfect statement game for the Mustangs. Unfortunately it was another off shooting day for the mustangs and they went down hard against the Mountaineers losing 83-34. The fourth game of the week for the Mustangs might be the biggest though, for the team. A North West Pac rival, Ferndale came to Portage to take on our boys who were looking to break their 3 game losing streak. Ferndale came out hot hitting contested shots forced by the strong Mustang defence. Halftime was a close game, Stangs trailing by 4. Ferndale ended up pulling away 55-36 being the final. Now, on their 4 game losing streak the mustangs are to finish their season against Conomaugh Township February 8<sup>th</sup>. The boys will also be playing in the playoffs against St. Josephs at Tyrone on Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup> so go and show your support!



By: Max Gossard

## Portage Palate Gossard's Grub

### Mom's Peanut Butter Meltaway Cake



#### **Ingredients:**

#### **Cake:**

1 cup butter  
 ¼ cup unsweetened powdered cocoa  
 1 cup water  
 ½ cup milk  
 2 eggs  
 2 cups granulated sugar  
 2 cups flour  
 1 teaspoon baking soda  
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

#### **Topping:**

¾ cup peanut butter  
 ¾ teaspoon vegetable oil  
 ½ cup butter  
 ¼ cup unsweetened powdered cocoa  
 1 pound of powdered sugar  
 6 tablespoons of milk  
 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract

#### **Cake Directions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit
2. Into a saucepan combine butter, unsweetened cocoa powder, water and milk over low heat
3. Add 2 eggs and stir constantly until small bubbles form from heat (it is important to not stop and stir vigorously as the eggs may scramble and you will have to start over)
4. Once heated through take the mixture and sauce pan off the heat completely and add your flour, sugar, baking soda, and vanilla extract .and combine to create cake batter (this is a dense cake, so mix by hand with a whisk, if you prefer fluffy cakes mix with an electric mixer, using the beaters attachment)
5. Grease a 9 x 13- inch pan and pour cake batter into the pan
6. Place into oven for 25-35 minutes
7. Let cool and let in pan

#### **Topping directions:**

1. Into a small bowl add peanut butter and vegetable oil and mix together.
2. Spread the peanut butter and oil mixture over the cake and place entire cake into refrigerator for at least one half hour
3. While cake is cooling, in another saucepan add ½ cup of butter and ¼ cup of unsweetened cocoa powder over heat and mix together until bubbles form from heat
4. Take off heat completely
5. Add and stir in the 6 tablespoons of milk then once mixed add in the 1 pound of powdered sugar and while mixing add the 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
6. Mix well until all lumps are out
7. Grab cake out of the refrigerator and pour the chocolate topping over cake, being quick to cover entire cake as once the frosting sets it is impossible to move.

*Best enjoyed with milk.*

# Why you Should Smell Good

By: Courtland Corrente

If you are an antiperspirant user, you probably use a lot of it on a daily basis, thinking that you are wiping out all of the bad odor bacteria. Scientists have conducted a study that suggests antiperspirant does in fact kill these types of bacteria, but also make your armpits a more diverse place to be.

According to a new public study, the use of antiperspirants and deodorant alter the microorganism biome under your arm. It is proven that antiperspirants kill a large number of bacteria, but leave a very diverse group of survivors than what is seen under the arms of people who use plain deodorant, or don't use any at all. So far there is no evidence of a health effect that would be caused by this alteration of bacteria. "Ultimately, we want to know if any changes in our microbial ecosystem are good or bad, but first we have to know what the landscape looks like and how our daily habits change it," study researcher Julie Horvath, who heads the genomics and microbiology research lab at North Carolina's Museum of Natural Sciences, part of NC State University said.

As many as 90 percent of Americans use deodorant or antiperspirants. Antiperspirants use aluminum salts to block off sweat glands to reduce sweating and to eliminate the nutrients the bad odor bacteria need to survive. Deodorants, on the other hand, kill off bacteria directly. According to the study, it was no surprise to see changes in the underarm's bacteria.

The study was conducted by asking 17 people to swab their armpits for 8 days straight. On the first day, all the participants were asked to carry out their normal day to day under arm routine, whether it being using deodorant, antiperspirant, or nothing at all. On days 2-6, everyone participating was asked to use nothing at all. On the last 2 days, everyone used antiperspirant.

The result of the experiment can be broken down into 2 facts. 1) People who don't use deodorant/antiperspirant have more bacteria under their arms. 2) People who do use deodorant/antiperspirant have less bacteria (and smell better) but have the possibility of having more diverse bacteria living on them. Don't let this information scare you into not using deodorant or antiperspirant. Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and not many people like to be around someone who has bad body odor. Would you rather smell good, have friends, but have (maybe) weird microscopic bugs living under your arms? Or would you rather smell bad, not have friends, and have millions and millions of bacteria in your arm pits? I think the choice is simple, but it's up to you.

By: Hannah Shaffer

## Hannah's Helpful Hints

February is upon us which means it's time for the most overrated, unnecessary holiday ever invented, Valentine's Day! Valentine's Day consists of us single ladies scrolling through Instagram seeing posts of other's activities including presents, pics together, and what is the holiday without seeing some promposals. For singles it can be the most annoying and miserable day of the year. Those of you thinking you are the only one without a "bae" out there, you are not alone! What if I told you there is no reason for you to be miserable? So put away your chocolate ice cream, turn off Netflix, and stop feeling sorry for yourself! There are tons of things you can accomplish because you are a strong independent woman who needs no man! I, from my expert experience, can give you hints on how to be single and the perks to being single on Valentine's Day!

Go to the store and buy Valentine's day cards like the one you bought for everyone in elementary school, then write the name of every single person who ever screwed you over and just burn them!

Post pictures online that shows you having a great time alone, it will drive your exes crazy!

Buy some flowers, have your friend put them in your locker, and act surprised when you receive them.

This holiday is the one excuse you get to eat as much chocolate as possible, so treat yourself to large amount without people being around to judge you!

Buy any heart shaped food like cookies and pizza, you have the entire thing to yourself

And now some perks: You never have to make any time for anyone but yourself

You don't have to buy any gifts!

In the long run, you can save some decent cash

You're always available although people don't exactly jump at that opportunity

Nothing is ever complicated



In conclusion, being alone on Valentine's Day isn't necessarily a bad thing. It is no excuse to sit around moping doing nothing but watching TV surrounded by your own tears eating your weight in ice cream. Get up, brush yourself off, and embrace it. After all, there's always next year! Ha! Who am I kidding, just become a cat lady and be equally as happy.