

Winter's End Hilltop

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February 26, 2016

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Issue Number: 12

Chorus Regionals FIX

By: Taylor McCloskey

Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA), which is located in Hamburg, Pennsylvania is a statewide nonprofit organization of over 4,500 members. This organization is dedicated to promoting the musical development of all people in Pennsylvania. The membership that is present had evolved from a small group of band directors from as far back as 1933. Currently, Pennsylvania Music Educators Association includes people that are engaged in music instruction from every level, from early grade school through high school, as well as those in the music industry that are now involved in merchandising and publishing. PMEA supports the education, learning and performance of music as well as music education in schools and communities. PMEA also associates with The National Association for Music Education.



This year, the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Region III Chorus Festival 2016 is from March 17th through March 19th and is being hosted at the Altoona Area High School by Kelly Sipes. Senior Robert Ports will be attending on behalf of Portage Area. Robert had to go through the process of auditioning and being selected by the PMEA. A long time choral participant, Robert fits the bill of exceptional vocalist and will make Portage proud throughout his endeavor.

The festival is going to be conducted by Dr. Rachel Cornacchio who is Associate Professor of Music and Director of Music Education at Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. She has presented papers at regional, national, and international levels. Her specialized interests in music include Conductor Expressivity, Adolescent Voices, and Making Music with Children from ages zero to five years. She is active as a certified Music Together instructor and in early childhood music programs, as well as being a guest conductor and clinician.

For the festival, the students and directors both have schedules that they will be following over the three day time period. The concert is held the last day, March 19th at 11:00am. The cost to attend as an audience member is five dollars for adults, and three dollars for students. At the concert, the selected performers will be performing nine pieces. The repertoire includes the following: *Sing Joyfully* arranged by William Byrd, *Beatus Vir* arranged by Claudio Monteverdi, *Earth Song* arranged by Ticheli, *Iustorum Animae* arranged by Charles Villiers Stanford, *Wayfaring Stranger* arranged by Michael Engelhardt, *Tambur* arranged by Lajos Bados, *Laughing Song* arranged by David Dickau, *You Are the Music* arranged by Forrest, and *El Vito* arranged by Mack Wilberg.

Sources: <http://www.pmea.net/>

By: Sumer Slobodnick

Sumer's Cinema Reviews - Top 5

A new month means new movies coming to theaters, some in which people have been waiting awhile to see and some that people would never imagine seeing. Here are the top five movies in theaters as of February 18, 2016, according to Rotten Tomatoes.

Coming in at number five is *Hail, Caesar* (PG-13). *Hail, Caesar* is a comedy featuring Scarlett Johansson. It follows a day in the life of Eddie Mannix, a Hollywood "fixer" for Capitol Pictures in the 1950's, who cleans up and solves problems for stars in the industry.

At number four is *Zoolander 2* (PG-13). *Zoolander 2* is a comedy starring Ben Stiller as Derek Zoolander. This movie is about two characters by the names of Derek and Hansel being lured into modeling...again. This time in Rome where they find themselves as a target of a threatening company.

Number three on this week's charts is *How To Be Single* (R). *How To Be Single* stars Rebel Wilson of *Pitch Perfect* fame. This is a romance-comedy about lonely hearts (Alice, Robin, Lucy, Meg, Tom, and David) seeking the right match. They all have one thing in common and that is the need to learn how to be single in the world with ever-evolving definitions of love.

Kung Fu Panda 3 (PG) comes in at number two on this week's charts. This movie features the voice of Jack Black as Po. When Po's long-lost father reappears, they travel to a secret paradise. But when supernatural villain, Kai, begins to sweep across China defeating the Kung Fu masters, Po must do the impossible and train a village full of pandas to become the ultimate band of Kung Fu Pandas.

Finally, *Deadpool* (R) tops this week's box office charts at number one this week. *Deadpool*, starring Ryan Reynolds as Wade/Deadpool, is the story of former Special Forces operative turned greedy Wade Wilson, who after being subjected to a rogue experiment that leaves him with accelerated healing powers, adopts the alter ego Deadpool. Armed with his new abilities and a dark and twisted sense of humor, Deadpool hunts down the man who nearly destroyed his life.

*information from Rottentomatoes.com and IMDB.com



Hilltop Hilarity

By: Chad Salem



Weird Google Earth Sights

By: Courtland Corrente

Almost everyone at one point has been bored, so they went on Google Earth, typed in their home address, and stared at a view of their house from space. After this you probably scrolled around random locations, zooming in and out looking at random streets, buildings, and lots and lots of trees. This most likely resulted in you being bored once more, so continue reading to discover more exciting and strange sights apart from your neighbors' houses.

The first sight is a strange, black island the size of Manhattan. The island pops up on the map as a place called "Sandy Island". The strange part about this is that researchers say that this is an "undiscovered" island, and when scientists sailed to this location in 2012 they found open water instead of solid ground. It can be found in the South Pacific, Northwest of New Caledonia.

The next location is the world's largest island-in-a-lake-on-an-island-in-a-lake-on-an-island. It is a narrow, four acre strip of land in Canada. You can find this island (or lake?) after searching for the coordinates 69.793 N, 108.241 W.

The third sight is a high resolution picture of a herd of African elephants charging in the wild. The animals are located in Chad at the coordinates 10.903497 N, 19.93229 E.

A new strange way of advertising, called "mapvertising" is taking place. Enormous advertisements have started popping up in remote areas for people's viewing pleasure. You can find the world's largest Coca-Cola bottle on a hillside in Chile, or a huge 87,500 square foot picture of Colonel Sanders (the KFC logo) at the coordinates 37.646163 N, 115.750819 W, just off Extraterrestrial Highway in Nevada.

The last sight is a mysterious red colored lake outside Sadr City in Iraq at the coordinates 33.396157 N, 44.486926 E. So far, there are no explanations as to why this lake is red.

Andrew's Automotive Assessment Honda NSX Formula Red



By: Andrew Koval

The 1990 Honda NSX is basically the bestselling sports car that Honda has ever made. It is huge whenever it comes to the Japanese car clique. This car is sought after for its very sporty and aerodynamic design which was inspired by an F-16 fighter jet's cockpit, designed by Chief Designer Masahito Nakano and Executive Chief Engineer Shigeru Uehara. The NSX also became the world first mass produced car with an all-aluminum body. It is powered by a 3.0L V6 Engine which featured Honda's VTEC (Variable Valve Timing and Lift Electronic Control) system developed in the 1980s, a 5-speed manual or 4-speed Sports Shift automatic transmissions. The engine produced up to 244 Horsepower which is pretty impressive since it is a naturally aspirated V6 (meaning it doesn't have a supercharger or a turbocharger) and the engine itself was extremely and easily customizable, so most people beefed up the engine making it easily reach 500-600 horsepower.

Not only does the NSX have a nice engine, but Honda was also one of the first companies to make the engine block and head out of aluminum to save on weight. Was this a smart move, you ask? It all really depends on what you did to the car. If you beat it up and constantly slammed your foot into the pedal, which is what most people do with sports cars, the aluminum head and block would eventually heat up to the point where the engine would possibly blow. It's also not good for it to be anywhere near the state of Pennsylvania because aluminum easily deteriorates because of the chemicals on the road from winter, so the engine would be in bad shape. Notwithstanding, it's water cooled (it uses water as its coolant instead of straight coolant or a coolant water mix), so in below freezing temperatures, the lines would either burst and be ruined or expand and be worn down quicker over time. Bottom line: if you want to own one, live somewhere down south. The NSX can go 0-60 mph in 5.3 seconds and has a top speed of 168 mph which is very impressive due to only the 244 horsepower it has, but the reason the NSX can go this fast is also because of its lightweight and aerodynamic design. NSX also stood for "New", "Sportscar" "eXperimental" and the phrase stuck around for a while because of the car's popularity. With all that said, the Honda NSX was really a great car for any Japanese racing enthusiast to have.

By: Alexis Richardson

Richardson's Reflections

Mr. Slanoc

- Q: What's your favorite flavor of Skittle?
A: I just grab a handful. I eat them all together. They all taste the same
- Q: What question do you hate to answer?
A: How did you become so awesome
- Q: Do you like to dance?
A: Yes. I've cut the rug up a few times in my life
- Q: Would you go bungee jumping or sky diving?
A: Sky diving
- Q: Have you ever won a trophy? If so, what for?
A: Yeah. Team sports

Mrs. Lutz

- Q: What did you do for your latest birthday?
A: I went to my parents' house for a birthday party for my sister and I
- Q: What was the name of your first pet?
A: My first pet was a cat. His name was Rascal
- Q: What is your favorite time of the day? Why?
A: My favorite time of the day is the morning. I look forward to all the things I will be doing each day
- Q: Are you a morning person or night owl?
A: I am a morning person. I don't like to stay up late
- Q: What inspires you? Why?
A: People inspire me. I like to help people and make people happy

By: Emily Niper

Reading Across America

In May, 1997, a group in the National Education Association (NEA) came up with the idea to dedicate a day to reading. They called it *Read Across America* and decided to celebrate it on Dr. Seuss's birthday. The following year on March 2nd was the largest celebration of reading the country has ever seen. The purpose of *Read Across America* is motivating children to read as an important factor in student achievement and creating lifelong successful readers. Research has shown that children who are motivated and spend more time reading do better in school. The NEA provides its members along with parents, caregivers, actors, athletes, parents, grandparents, and teachers activities to bring reading excitement to children of all ages.

Every year, the Portage Area Elementary School holds an event or activity to get the students involved in reading, and it is always something different. This year they are celebrating the event throughout the week of February 29th- March 4th. Throughout the week the students will have different themes to follow for each day. Along with the theme of the day, each grade level will be doing something different.

Monday- Brighten your day with a good book - Wear sunglasses to school.

Tuesday- Twisted Tuesday - Wear your clothes up (Inside out/Backwards)

Wednesday- Wacky Wednesday - Wear your wackiest socks

Thursday- Top Hat Thursday - Wear your favorite hat

Friday- Famous Friday - Dress like your favorite book character.



Every student that participates in the theme for the day is asked to donate \$1 to benefit the Mean Green Reading Machine. Prizes will be awarded on Friday for the best costume. The teachers are also welcomed to dress up, and those that do dress up will also be judged. The judges will be Mr. Zelanko, Mr. Noel, Mr. Serenko, and Mrs. Pisarski. Judging will begin around 9 a.m. This year Mrs. Emily Horn, Mrs. Christina Franey, and Mrs. Emily Steberger are working on the program and putting everything together to make the event come together, so the students have an enjoyable week. They want everyone to enjoy reading and make it a week to remember.

By: Hannah Shaffer

F.A.F.S.A.

The Average student loan debt is near \$30,000, so filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a must if you wish to qualify for assistance and reduce your student loan debts. The FAFSA helps determine whether students are eligible for federal student loans, grants, or work-study programs. Over \$150 billion is given to college students annually according to the U.S. Department of Education. To qualify you must meet the requirements such as being a U.S. citizen and having a high school diploma or GED. One of the most common reasons students don't fill out the FAFSA is because individuals believe their parents make too much money. This is a common misconception; everyone is eligible for some form of financial aid no matter what the individual's financial status. It is recommended you fill out the FAFSA as soon as possible, as early as January, to increase one's chances to receive money. This way you have an advantage so a potential college or university can offer you what you deserve before they run out of money. There are many things to know when first applying for a financial aid, these include

- Determine your family's financial situation: have a discussion with family members about money. You can discuss whether they are willing to pay or if it is expected of you to pay on your own.
- Know the difference between merit-based and need-based aid: merit-based are awarded to students based on their accomplishments and not financial need. Need-based are awarded to students based on their ability or inability to pay.
- Find out what merit can do for you: ask your guidance counselor for a list of local scholarships.
- Watch deadlines: many applications have early deadlines, so you need to get these in as soon as possible to receive what you deserve
- Colleges want to help: financial aid officers are working hard to accommodate all financial situations.
- It may not be their final offer: if a college's financial aid didn't award you with as much as you need, contact the financial aid office and ask for other options that are available. Some schools make adjustments.
- Don't base you decision on finances alone!

<http://mycollegeguide.org/articles/8/130/10-things-to-know-about-financial-aid>

<http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/my-money/2015/01/05/why-you-should-fill-out-the-fafsa>

Lady Mustang's Playoff Run

By: Katie Nolan

On Monday February 15th, 2016 the Portage Area Lady Mustangs traveled to Tyrone High School to take on the West Branch Lady Warriors at 6:00 to take part in their round 1 District 6 Class A playoff game. The Lady Mustangs were ranked number six while the Lady Warriors were ranked number eleven in the district. The Lady Mustang starters for Monday night were seniors Katie Nolan, Kacie Baker, and Lexi Wozniak along with juniors Lauren McCabe and Abby Chobany. The Lady Mustangs knew going into the game Monday night that it was "do or die." To continue to advance in playoffs they knew they had to win and they came out with the spark they needed, proving they were the more worthy team to advance.

The Lady Mustang's shots were on fire and they never even gave West Branch a chance to get some spark to take a lead. The Mustangs didn't just apply the pressure offensively though. They ended up forcing 37 West Branch turnovers. Going into half time the Lady Mustangs truly made their statement. The score going into the locker room was 41 to 15, giving the Lady Mustangs room to breathe. But the Lady Mustangs didn't just "let up." Their coach Lance Hudak always says "your best offense is your defense" and on Monday night that was the case. Even though the third quarter wasn't as strong as an offensive quarter as the first two for the Lady Mustangs, the defense still caused many turnovers that they were able to turn into easy layups for points on the board. Portage's seniors Katie Nolan and Lexi Wozniak had a combined point total of 41 points in their win over West Branch with Lexi Wozniak putting up 23 points and Katie Nolan adding 18 points. Portage's Kacie Baker and Lauren McCabe also added 10 points and 6 points to give the Lady Mustangs a 66 to 36 win over West Branch, knocking them out of playoffs.

On Thursday February 18th, 2016 the Lady Mustangs traveled to Hollidaysburg High School to take on the Blairsville Lady Bobcats in the quarterfinals of the District 6 playoffs for an 8:00 tip off. The Lady Mustangs knew the task they had on hand: needing to win to not only advance in the District 6 playoffs, but also to guarantee entrance into the state playoffs. The Lady Mustangs came out with great intensity on the defensive end but just couldn't buy a shot. Down 8 at the half (26-18), the Lady Mustangs continued to fight, but eventually the Lady Mustangs ended up just a bit short, ending their season with a 49-38 loss to the Lady Bobcats. The Lady Mustangs ended their 2015-16 season 19-5.



By: Elona Kreishta

Goodwill From Portage



Goodwill Industries is a non-profit company that organizes job and career support and accepts many types of donations from antiques to clothing. A majority of local people are at least familiar with this organization that also benefits people that have disabilities. Goodwill is known to be a thrift store and to have operated over 100 networks that are based in Venezuela, Brazil, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, the United States, Canada, and eight other countries. The symbol for the store is the letter 'G' which is a resemblance to a smiling face. That is for you to accept Goodwill as an organization to help those in need.

Senior siblings Andrew and McKenna Bender of Portage Area High School are taking a great step in helping out Goodwill with having students and staff of Portage donate to them on the organization's behalf. Students are encouraged to donate whatever they can of their choice. Lightly worn tops, bottoms, shoes, jackets and more are currently being accepted. These seniors Andrew and McKenna Bender are using this for their senior project. With the help of Mrs. Grata rooting them on from the sidelines, they have made two boxes for the students to put their donations in for them to take at a later date to Goodwill in Johnstown. Not only is this for students to donate their things but also for their parents as well. Parents of course have very busy lives because they work, take care of their children or even themselves at times. This is a very convenient way for parents to just give whatever they want to donate to their child or children to take to their school and have donated to Goodwill. Andrew and McKenna are set to collect through the first week of March.

Mrs. Grata who is a first year teacher at Portage Area High School says, "Even though Goodwill has gotten some bad reviews due to where they take their money and such, people tend to forget about the employees who have special needs and that Goodwill gives those people second chances. Goodwill does important good things."

By: Dzvinka Kozhukh

Learning More Than ABC's and 123's

Despite the many problems each teenager deals with in their lives, Portage Area High School adopted a program for 7th and 8th grade students who now are participants in Botvin LifeSkills Training (LST). This program is an abuse prevention program, proven to reduce the risks of alcohol, tobacco, drug abuse, and violence by targeting the major social and psychological factors that promote the initiation of substance use and other risky behaviors. It was developed by Dr. Gilbert J. Botvin, a leading prevention expert. Botvin LifeSkills Training is backed by over 30 scientific studies and is recognized as a Model or Exemplary program by an array of government agencies including the U.S. Department of Education and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.



The students are taking the second level program which includes 10 booster lessons which began in January and will end in April. A certified trainer/teacher works with the students to build up their self-esteem. Portage's trainer, Sharon Starner, stated, "This program is intended to give students the ability to make good choices, grow up to be healthy adults and to make kids realize that saying no is easy!"

In the class, the kids discuss everyday life problems and how to manage them such as the following: coping with anxiety attacks; making good decisions in the future; improving their communication and social skills. Each course takes about 45 minutes which begins with a quick warm up that helps the teacher to get the students attention. The students then begin to read about the given topic and the class finishes off with different types of activities, depending on the topic they're studying.

Portage Area High School is not the only school who holds this program; many other schools in Cambria County also have this program. Botvin LifeSkills Training program has received many awards and has been rated for having top ratings from the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs. Regardless of all of the publicity, this program is proud to announce its ability in preventing many teenagers from smoking and alcohol and drug abuse.

By: Nathan Teno

Mustangs Fall Just Short to Top Seed Homer Center

The Boys Basketball team's season has come to an end, but it has been a great season for them. They finished the season 15-9 which is a good overall record. However, it isn't just the record that made the Mustangs proud. It was the way they finished.

The Mustangs playoff run started off great. They played Saint Josephs at Tyrone in the first round of the District 6 playoffs. Many of the "experts" picked Saints Josephs to win the game. Not too many were giving the Mustangs a chance except for themselves. They battled in the first quarter after going down 15-9 early. The boys dug down on defense and allowed no points for the Wolves until 5 minutes into the 2nd period. Our boys had won the momentum back. The Mustangs were heading into halftime on top leading the Wolves 21-20. Things only got better from there. Playing hard throughout the third, the Mustangs built a 34-24 lead heading into the final period. They had no trouble holding onto the lead the rest of the game. The Boys finished the game with an impressive 49-33 victory, giving them a shot at the district's number 1 ranked team, Homer Center.

Homer Center had been undefeated since their playoff loss to Saint Joseph's last year, but the 'Stangs didn't care. They practiced harder than ever in preparation to bring down the Wildcats. The boys had nothing to lose, so they were feeling pretty confident heading into the game, and they showed just how confident they were. Right off the bat, Jake Swank stole the tip and made a contested layup to put the Stangs on the board. The game took off from there as the first quarter ended with the score of 13-12 Mustangs. The Boys entered the half coming off of 9-0 run, and they were leading the Wildcats 24-18 and felling pretty good about their chances. The third period began and the battle continued, both teams were going back and forth through the third but it was still the Mustangs on top 35-34 heading into the fourth. Foul trouble with 3 of the Mustangs starters dampened their attack and Homer ended up pulling away hitting 12 of 14 foul shots down the stretch. The boys had given them all they could handle but came up just on the short side losing the battle 58-43...a score truly not indicative of the game's play.



By: Max Gossard

Portage Palate Gossard's Grub

Chocolate Covered Peanut Butter Balls

Ingredients:

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- ½ cup peanut butter
- 3 tablespoons softened butter or margarine
- Approx 8-12 ounces of brick chocolate
- ½ cup heavy cream (optional)

Directions For Peanut butter balls:

- In a large bowl pour in the 1 cup powdered sugar, ½ cup peanut butter, and the 3 tablespoons of softened butter
- Mix together with a rubber spatula thoroughly until all ingredients are combined and form a giant ball in the bowl
- Roll the peanut butter into small balls approx. 1 inch diameter and place on a baking sheet with wax paper
- Let stand for 20 minutes to stiffen up

Directions Chocolate topping:

- Into a sauce pan over low heat add the 8-12 ounces of brick chocolate and constantly stir until melted
- (optional) add the ½ cup heavy cream and whisk until the chocolate is smooth (this gives the chocolate a deep brown color and a chewy fudge like texture)
- Once chocolate is melted take off heat and whisk through to cool down (until it is done steaming)
- Once the chocolate is cooled dip the peanut butter balls into the chocolate one at a time to coat them. Shake off excess chocolate and place on a baking sheet lined with clear wrap
- Place pan in the freezer for about 30 minutes
- Take out of freezer and peel off the chocolate covered peanut butter balls and throw into a bowl
- Serve with milk and Enjoy



Great for snacks for movies, eating over a conversation or just to yourself on lonely Netflix filled nights.