



FOX TALES *Quarterly*

A Student Publication

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Battle Bot Team Excels at Regional Preliminary Competition

Students from Fox Chapel Area High School placed second at the Southwestern PA BotsIQ Preliminary Competition. The battles were held at Butler County Community College on March 10th, 2016.

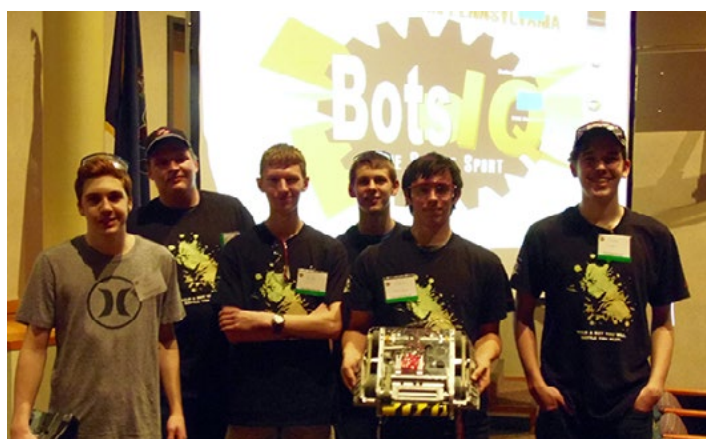
Fox Chapel Area High School robot "La Venganza del Diablo" won all of its battles in the winners bracket, thus advancing to finals. After two great battles with Pine-Richland, the team finished second and qualified for the PA State BotsIQ competition against 84 teams and 65 schools. "I'm so proud of the team's sportsmanship at the competitions," said BotsIQ coach Ken Grimm. "Pine-Richland burned up a drive motor in the first round, and our team gave them an extra motor. They made it to the finals against us and they won the first match but we damaged their bot during the battle and they burned up their weapon speed control. They would have been unable to make the final bout, but our team gave them an extra 20 minutes that we did not use. The students did not want to win by default."

Fox Chapel Area will be one of the top six teams at the state competition, providing a better chance of advancing to the finals at the PA State BotsIQ competition.

Team members include: Joseph Klass, Thomas McFadden, Chris Snider, Andrew Wirkowski, Skylor Wright, Darrien Thomas, Andrew Sobek, Thomas Mcfadden, Brian Koglin, Jacob Pilarski, Amanda

Trusiak and Dylan Lion. A special thank you goes to the Advanced Robotics Engineering class for all their help.

The SWPA BotsIQ is the first of three levels of competitive competitions. The next level of competition is the Pennsylvania BotsIQ State competition. The competition will be held on April 8-9 at California University of Pennsylvania.



FCAHS's bot "La Venganza del Diablo" won second place against 84 teams on March 10th, 2016.

FCAHS Tests Revolutionary New Safety App

On Monday, February 22nd, the Fox Chapel Area High School administration, a group of teachers, and a team of five students conducted a violent intruder simulation. The simulation was designed to test effectiveness of SIREN (School-based Intruder Response Evacuation Network), a safety app developed by junior Mihir Garimella and seniors Che Esch, Ishan Khatri, Stephen Polcyn, and Sreeroopa Som. The app gives teachers, administrators, and security staff key information on the location of an intruder in real time. During the simulation, teachers utilized the app to avoid a mock intruder and either evacuate or lock-down their classrooms.

The test is the culmination of nearly a year of development by the student team. SIREN started as an entry in the Pennsylvania Governor's STEM Competition in 2015.

From there, it grew into a long-term endeavor. "We realized that we had an idea with far-reaching applications, so we wanted to take it beyond that first contest," said Che, the team's lead. The student team enlisted the help of several mentors, including Ms. Lisa Giguere of the Gifted Education department and Mr. Ken Grimm of the Technology Education department, who helped them to organize their ideas and served as a liaison between the students and the administration. Now, the students are looking to expand beyond FCA, but they first want to establish the app permanently in their own school. "We thought the test went very well, and we got a good response from the teachers involved," said Mihir. "We want to make a few improvements to the product and test it again soon."



District Recognized by White House for Commitment to Computer Science Education

The Fox Chapel Area School District has been recognized by the White House for its commitment to computer science education! The announcement came as part of President Barack Obama's weekly address on January 30, 2016. As part of that address, he announced his Computer Science for All Initiative. The goal of the initiative is to bring an expanded computer science curricula to all K-12 students. Only three school districts from across the nation, including the Fox Chapel Area School District, were highlighted in a Fact Sheet from the White House which was released January 30. Another district highlighted was the Broward County Public Schools, the nation's sixth largest public school system. The Fact Sheet stated, "Additionally, elementary-school students in the Fox Chapel Area School District (FCASD) in Pennsylvania will engage in a full coding curriculum in 2016-2017, and teachers in the middle and high schools of FCASD will be provided free regional professional-development opportunities in the areas of CS, coding, and digital fabrication." Among other innovative computer science initiatives, Fox Chapel Area High School will offer the new Principles of Com-

puter Science Advanced Placement (AP) class when it launches in the fall of 2016, as well as the AP exam in that course. The Allegheny Intermediate Unit was also recognized for its commitment to computer science education.



FCASD was highlighted in a fact sheet released by the White House about commitment to technology education.

In his weekly address from the White House, President Obama discussed the Computer Science for All Initiative and how it will ensure that students can compete in a high-tech, global economy. He stated that he will seek funding from Congress so that elementary, middle, and high schools can provide more opportunities in general. The President's Computer Science for All Initiative calls for \$4 billion in funding for states, and \$100 million specifically for school districts so that they can train teachers, expand access to high-quality instructional materials, and build effective regional

partnerships. In addition, over the next five years, more than \$135 million in investments are expected to be made by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to support and train teachers who are the most critical ingredient to offering computer science education in schools.

fox tales staff

Maria Burns (Head of Layout)
Ishan Khatri (Staff Writer, Editor)
Amanda Michalowski (Layout Assistant)
Alex Smolar (Staff Writer, Editor)
Marty Taxay (Staff Writer, Editor)
Daly Trimble (Editor-in-Chief)

Marjorie Trimble (Chief Photographer)
Bliss Uribe (Staff Writer, Photographer)
Bridget Wang (Staff Writer, Photographer)
Micah Ziff (Staff Writer)

Ms. Lisa Giguere (Sponsor)



I Traveled Abroad: A Student's Time in Europe

Nina Khorey

As most of my peers launched the first semester of the 2015/2016 school year here in Pennsylvania, I was aboard an airplane bound for France. Study abroad in high school? Yes, that exists! With the help of the American Foundry Society Intercultural Program, I was able to experience the adventure I've dreamt about since middle school. French has always been a subject I've loved, having pursued the study of it to advanced levels, but I never could have anticipated the surprises that awaited me during my semester abroad.



Nina Khorey had the opportunity to study abroad in France for five months to improve her fluency in French.

When I boarded the plane, I had no idea what I was getting myself into, and I didn't expect it to feel so normal. I lived with a French host family and attended a normal French high school with normal French teenagers. After a few weeks, my life on a new continent became just that - normal! It may be hard to understand, but studying abroad is nothing like being a tourist. You still don't want to wake up for school in the morning, even though it is a French school. It felt less like a five month vacation and more like having moved to France. The newness wore off after a few weeks, enabling me to focus on achieving my goals of improving my fluency in French and experiencing French culture.

Students considering studying abroad should know that it is the most fun they will ever have and one of the coolest experiences ever. My primary motivation was to improve my fluency as someone who already knew French, but the vast majority of the other exchange students I met there arrived with little to no prior knowledge of the language. Practicing a new language in an immersion environment is exhausting but extremely effective. Back in the States, everything feels relatively easier because I can communicate in English. Another huge benefit of participating in the AFS program is the international community of people who have hosted, been, or ever had anything to do with exchange students. Thanks to the exchange program, I made incredible friends from all over the world and connections that extend far beyond Francophone countries.

As hard as it was to leave France, it was fairly easy to come home. Due to the block schedule, it's simple for Fox Chapel Area students to study for a semester or even a year abroad. My guidance to you is that there is always a way to achieve your goals. Don't wait for college to experience another country - take a chance!



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Community Outreach Club Volunteers at Food Bank

Hannah Mueller

On February 5th, the Community Outreach Club took their annual field trip to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The food bank is a large facility that, in addition to many other responsibilities, inspects and re-packages food to be distributed to all of the food pantries in Allegheny County. 20 students from all grades, along with guidance counselors Ms. Machen and Mr. O'Connor, volunteered to help pack boxed and canned goods into 30-pound containers for distribution. The club chooses to volunteer at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank rather than individual food pantries because the bank can impact a greater number of people.

Going to the food bank is a special experience for the club members, and many look forward to it throughout the year. In past years, students have done everything from labeling juices to packaging chicken. For me, it was a fun field trip because I could really see the impact it will have on many people. Food is a basic necessity of life, and, while most people in Fox Chapel Area do not have to worry about where their next meal is going to come from, many people across Pittsburgh do. The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank strives to provide necessities to all people in need, and the Community Outreach Club is excited to be a regular part of that endeavor.



Community Outreach traveled to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank on February 5th.

Student Wins First Place in Brain Bee and Qualifies for National Competition

Fox Chapel Area High School junior Yelim Lee recently won first place in the 2016 Pittsburgh Brain Bee. As the regional winner, Yelim won \$500 and qualified for the 2016 National Brain Bee which will be held in Baltimore at the University of Maryland during National Brain Awareness Week.

A total of 19 juniors and seniors from local high schools participated in the Pittsburgh Brain Bee, which featured questions about the brain. The regional competition was held at the University of Pittsburgh and was sponsored by the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience.





FCAHS Students to Compete at State-Level TSA Conference

Several Fox Chapel Area High School students recently qualified to compete in the Pennsylvania Technology Student Association (TSA) State Leadership Conference. The students qualified for states at the TSA Regions 1 and 6 Leadership Conference held on January 28, 2016, at California University of Pennsylvania. The following six Fox Chapel Area High School students won first places in the regional competition: seniors Joshua Manuel, Maya McCann, Alisa Quemado, and Elaine Yates; junior Jeremy Rodrigues; and sophomore Jorgen Wu. These students won second places in the regional competition: seniors Jacob Caruso, John Gurklis, Jessica Hertzberg, Jacob Smith, and Elaine Yates; juniors Austin Fisher, Mackenzie Myers, and

Waleed Tariq; sophomores Karissa Becer, Won Ho Kang, Sarthak Navjivan (three second places), and Sai Yarlagadda; and freshmen Arnav Gupta and Elizabeth Uber (two second places). Third place regional winners were: seniors Daniel Beluk and Joseph Klaas; juniors Erik Bothe, Samantha Cider, Adam Cook, Won Jun Kang, Daniel Markovitz, and Sean McCoy; sophomores Andrew Auth, Elizabeth Mountz, and Ruopeng Wang; and freshman Nishika Mohnot. The following 11 Fox Chapel Area High School students also qualified for the state competition: seniors Ishan Khatri, Stephen Polcyn, Sreeroopa Som, and Konrad Urban; juniors Kevin Kilmer and Jonathan Monroe; sophomores Anita Bargaje and Nikita Bargaje; and freshmen Michael Braham, Sanjana Harish, and Jonathan Hopkins.

The regional conference offered more than 31 state-qualifying events. It culminated with an awards presentation and closing ceremonies where many students were recognized for their achievements. The TSA Regions 1 and 6 Leadership Conference is the first of three levels of competitive conferences. The next level of competition is the Pennsylvania TSA State Leadership Conference which will be held April 13-16 at Seven Springs Resort. The third level is the National TSA Leadership Conference which will be held June 28-July 2 in Nashville.



Many FCAHS students qualified for the TSA State Leadership Conference.

AP Exams: Pathways to College Credit

Alex Smolar

Advanced Placement (AP) exams are rigorous, multi-component tests given at high schools across the country each spring. Typically, a student takes a specific AP exam after he or she has taken the corresponding AP class. Scored on a scale from one to five, AP exams test the content of an AP course and are often submitted to universities to demonstrate a student's academic abilities and to allow a student with a high score to obtain college credit. Passing scores range from three to five, and students with even half of the correct answers can score at least a three on an AP exam. In addition, there is no harm in taking an exam, as not all scores need to be submitted to post-secondary schools, making taking an AP exam a low-risk, high-reward proposition.

This year, Fox Chapel Area High School will administer its AP exams during the weeks of May 2 and May 9. All AP classes at FCAHS have an AP exam available. With 30

AP exams ranging from Spanish to Music Theory, students have a plethora of opportunities to take and pass an exam. AP exams have an attached fee of \$92 per exam, and financial aid is available to those in need by contacting the FCAHS guidance department.

If you are interested in taking an AP exam this spring, please pick-up a green sheet in the guidance office and sign-up for your exams by April 7, 2016. As an added incentive, all students who take an AP exam are invited to the AP Scholars breakfast and ceremony next fall to celebrate students' accomplishments.

In short, AP exams are a tremendous way to boost your college applications, gain college credits, and test your comprehension of an AP class. All students currently or previously enrolled in an AP class are encouraged to sign-up for at least one exam to try to open as many opportunities as possible after high school.

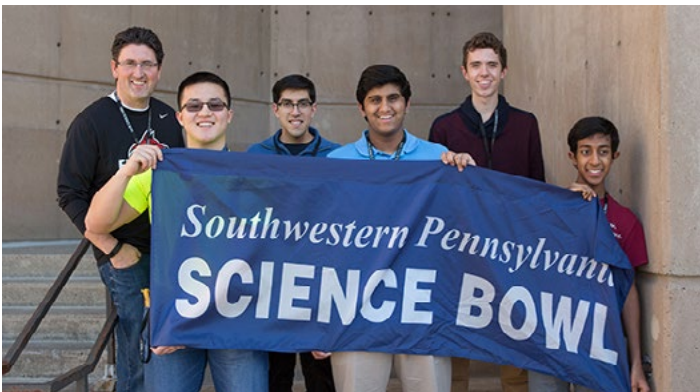


FCAHS Students Named Finalists in Science Competition

David Han

On Saturday, February 20th, two Fox Chapel Area High School teams competed in the 25th annual Southwestern PA Science Bowl held at the CCAC South Campus. This competition, sponsored by the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) in South Park, included 57 teams of students from 37 school districts and was open to students from several counties across Southwestern Pennsylvania. Participating students were required to answer rounds of rapid Jeopardy-style questions in which two teams vie against each other for points. The questions were drawn from various STEM fields, including biology, chemistry, physics, earth and space science, energy, and mathematics, forcing competitors to rely on both school curriculum and outside knowledge.

FCAHS's team one, senior Konrad Urban and juniors Rohan Chalasani, Mihir Garimella, Suvir Mirchandani, and Houruiyang Zong, had resounding success, going undefeated throughout the competition and ultimately qualifying for the regional finals, which will be held on March 9th. They will be competing for entry in the National Competition in Washington, D.C. and constitute the most successful team in FCAHS history. FCA's team two, Albert Liu, David Han, Yelim Lee, Kai Shaikh, and Zachary Lakkis, went undefeated until the semifinal round, after which they finished 7th overall.



Houruiyang Zong, Suvir Mirchandani, Rohan Chalasani, Konrad Urban, and Mihir Garimella went undefeated throughout the Science Bowl and qualified for the regional finals.



Students answered Jeopardy-style questions about STEM fields such as biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics.

Lady Foxes standout Class of 2016 Kayla Slovenec etched her name in Fox Chapel Area sports greatness. On February 5th, Slovenec racked up a game high of 15 points in a win against Armstrong and also reached a career milestone by scoring 1000 points. This achievement was conquered in Slovenec's final regular season of her high school career. On February 16th, the team began their road to obtaining a coveted WPIAL AAAA title which has never been achieved in Fox Chapel Area history.

- Micah Ziff





FCA Robotics Students Excel at Regional FIRST Tech Challenge

Ten Students from Fox Chapel Area High School recently participated in the FIRST Tech Challenge Regional Competition. Students experienced the power, excitement and the fun of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) with hands-on, minds-on activities – all with robots!



Ishan Khatri is one of the members of FCAHS's FIRST Robotics team that placed ninth out of 23 teams.

The team members have completed a great deal of community outreach not only to spread the word about FIRST but also to partner with engineers, scientists and other technology professionals in their corporate outreach efforts. This creates valuable connections between student teams, FIRST, and the professional world that can last years beyond their participation in FTC.

Twenty-three teams from four states competed at Shady Side Academy. With dedication and genius engineering, FCA placed ninth of 23 teams in their third year of competition. The FCAHS FIRST Robotics team members are: Che Esch, Mihir Garimella, Donovan Gorgas, Ishan Khatri, Kristo Penner, Stephen Polcyn, Sreeroopa Som, Anika Urban, and Konrad Urban.

Robotics has been an integral part of technology education at Fox Chapel Area High School. Many students through the years have shown interest in robotics, and many more will do so in the future. First Tech Challenge is one of several robotics competitions coached by robotics teacher Mr. Grimm that students have the opportunity to compete in throughout the school year. Students from FCAHS will also be competing in several upcoming robotics competitions, including Combat Bots, BotsIQ, TSA – Systems Control Technology and Vex Robotics.

2016 Volleyball Preview

Alexis Schwartz

Last year, the Fox Chapel Area Boys' Volleyball team was able to accomplish several astounding goals. They finished the season with a 17-2 record and as WPIAL champions. This season's fate is unpredictable due to the graduation of several high-performing players, but the team members are optimistic. "Coming off a WPIAL championship season, we definitely have big shoes to fill," says senior Matt Friday. "We have great hitters but just need to fine tune the defense. If we can do that, we could have a good chance at defending the title."

Assistant coach Mr. Daniel Guardino says, "Jack Reese is going to be our top player this season. He had much more of a subdued role for us last year, but this year he is going to be a big focal point to our offense. He also was recruited and agreed to sign with D-1 program Hawaii University." The Foxes open their season with the North Allegheny tournament on March 26. Best of luck to this talented team on their upcoming season!



The 2015 volleyball team celebrates their success at the WPIAL championship. (Photo credit to Mrs. Zaleski)



FCAHS Students Teach Elementary Girls to Rock in Robotics

A team of five high school girls who excel in robotics believe in the value and importance of younger girls discovering their talents in STEM-related fields. So much so, that they devised an after-school class, Girls Rock Robotics, for elementary-age girls so that they could learn about and build their own robots.

"When I was younger, the idea of making a robot was mind blowing, but here these girls are making one in elementary school," said freshman Courtney Kennedy, who along with Kristen Friday, Theresa Heidenreich, and Annika Urban (all freshmen) and Helen Paulini, a sophomore, teamed up to design and lead the class for elementary girls. Gifted education teacher Lisa Giguere and robotics engineering teacher Ken Grimm were the faculty facilitators for the project and also served as mentors for the high school students. They coached them throughout the entire process and attended every after-school session at Fairview.

Girls Rock Robotics, a five-week class held on Wednesdays, was part of Fairview Elementary School's Great Expectations after-school program sponsored by the Fairview PTO. A total of 15 girls in grades three through five, plus one first grader, each built a ladybug robot from scratch under the direction of their five high school female mentors.

After the first class, Annika said, "We weren't really sure what to expect in terms of how much the girls would know about robotics. After talking to the girls, we learned that their levels of robotics experience really differed – some had very little initial knowledge, and some had a lot of experience working with robots."

In order to build their robots, the younger girls used concepts from each of the STEM areas – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. They learned to use

metric measurements, align motors with different polarity, strip the ends of wire using wire cutters, solder wire to the components of their robots, and use mold forms to make plastic shells that cover and protect the robot components.

Each member of the high school team worked with a small group of the younger girls. As they built the robots, the older girls showed the younger girls step-by-step what to do, explained safety, and incorporated discussion about electricity and circuits.

"At the beginning of each class, we went over what we were going to do that day. We explained what the steps were and what each part does," Courtney explained. "Hopefully, making their own robots and learning about some STEM fields will inspire the girls to continue on exploring STEM. By offering the class, we are hoping to get girls interested in STEM, and to show them that girls can do anything."

Theresa hopes that the girls learned not only about robots and STEM subjects, but also patience, teamwork, and the value of helping each other. "I want the girls to know that math and science can be difficult at times, but are extremely valuable skills to learn and understand... It was also great to see the girls helping each other out on various difficult steps."

"We've had some awesome comments from the girls," Courtney said. "Everything in STEM is so exciting

that I, and the other group members just want to share everything we know about it. Even if the girls might not love robotics, I think it's important for them to see that older girls are doing STEM-related things, and they can too."

If the enthusiasm of the younger girls in relation to their success in building the mini robots is any indication of the high school team reaching their goal of exposing young girls to STEM fields, then mission accomplished!



Helen Paulini, a sophomore, was one of five high school girls that designed and lead a robotics class for elementary school girls.



Fifteen elementary school girls took part in the program and each built a ladybug robot from scratch.



The New and Improved HS Library

Madison Borkovich

As the construction projects at the high school near completion, many students and staff are enjoying and commenting about the many improvements made to our building. One renovation that showcases both aesthetic appeal and function is our new library. The library renovation project took about one year to complete, and in the opinion of many, it was well worth the wait.

"Before, it was really uninviting," said FCAHS librarian Mrs. Ward. "It was an ugly teal green and yellow color. After? It's open, and welcoming." Mrs. Ward's favorite improvements to the space include the new color scheme, the wooden features, comfortable reading chairs, and the open floor space. She also loves that more students are visiting the new library compared to the old one.

Students are loving the new library, too. Library volunteer Nina Khorey enjoys how it is brighter than before and feels that the open floor plan is more inviting to students. When asked what makes her so active in the library, Nina replied, "I love the library! It's such an open and inviting place. You can study or eat lunch; you don't have to just

get a book and leave." She also enjoys the various events that the library hosts, including movie fundraisers, book club meetings, and even visits from well-known authors. Last year, three authors came to visit: local author Heather Terell, who wrote *Relic and Boundry*; Gregory Maguire, who wrote *Wicked* (and all of the books in that series) as well as *Egg & Spoon*, and also A.S. King, who has written many pieces, most recently *I Crawl Through It*. King also wrote *Reality Boy*, *Passengers*, and *Please Ignore Vera Dietz*. Marja Mills is expected to come next year. She wrote *The Mockingbird Next Door* about her life living next to Harper Lee.

The 2016 Tournament of Books is a very popular event, with 64 FCAHS students participating. Prizes include gift cards to Burgatory, Coffee Tree, Coldstone and Subway. April is School Library month, and Mrs. Ward is sure to have excitement planned for that. Also, April 12th is National Library Workers Day, so be sure to stop by and tell your favorite library workers just how much you appreciate them!



The open layout of the new library is a feature that students and staff alike are enjoying.



Several desktop computers allow students to work during QRT, study halls, lunch, and more.



The Poetry Out Loud Regional Competition was held on February 6th, 2016. FCA's Alyssa Melani, pictured with her parents, was the only freshman competitor. Way to go, Alyssa!



FCAHS Summer Program Offers Engaging STEMM Opportunities

For the fifth summer, Fox Chapel Area High School will host the Western Pennsylvania Summer STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine) Academy. This three-week program is designed for students who will be high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors during the 2016-2017 school year and is open to students from the entire greater Pittsburgh area who have an interest in STEMM careers or a desire to learn more about them.

According to teacher and Academy Director Lisa Giguere, "The calendar of events is building quickly and will be packed with renowned keynote speakers, engaging hands-on learning activities, and field experiences that will help students to reach new heights in the exploration of their anticipated career paths of interest."

The academy's successful 2012 launch has resulted in partnerships with many of the area's top corporations and leaders. Participating students from various school districts interact with doctors, professors, and business professionals in the STEMM fields through guest speakers, panel discussions, and field experiences at universities, research labs, and STEMM-related businesses.

The Western Pennsylvania Summer STEMM Academy will run June 20-July 7, 2016, at Fox Chapel Area High School. Enrollment is currently open and the total cost is \$400.

Additionally, as an added option, the STEMM Sampler program will be offered again this year and is open to students who will be entering ninth-12th grades. This year's samplers will feature field experiences that focus on environmental sustainability, health sciences, robotics,

engineering, and advanced manufacturing. Students can elect to participate in one or all three of the scheduled sampler sessions. The dates are June 27, 28, and 29. The STEMM Sampler program is \$30 a day, or \$85 for all three days.

For more information and to download an application, please visit <http://stemm.fcasd.edu>; call 412/967-2479, extension 1; or email Lisa_Giguere@fcasd.edu.



STEMM Academy students present their theories to forensic pathologist Dr. Cyril Wecht.



Sophomore Devon Stein is placed in a magnetic resonance imaging simulator during a field experience at Carnegie Mellon University.



Junior Sada Lantgios is coached while performing a mock medical procedure using a Simbionix 3D medical simulator at the Allegheny Health Network STAR Center.



An International FCA

Daly Trimble

Say goodbye to your parents, board a plane, and...go to high school? While studying abroad would be a disastrous idea for the unadventurous, FCA is currently hosting a handful of travelers from around the globe. After noticing a Finnish sports fan learning how to cheer at a football game, a Pakistani student trying ice skating for the first time, and an Austrian ballroom dancer at Homecoming, *Fox Tales* decided to do some digging about our new neighbors.

Where did they come from, and how did they get here? Students have come from all over the world! This is possible through the American Field Service and Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange programs. AFS has been facilitating international student swaps for several decades and today connects 60 countries. Four students have come to FCA this way. The Kennedy-Lugar program is funded by the U.S. State Department and is meant to bring youth from countries with high Muslim populations to America. One student came through this avenue.

What's it like to be an exchange student? It's an interesting and unique experience for everyone! We were able to track down five International Foxes to ask them about it.

Shahmir Ghafoor,

Pakistan: Shahmir is from Turbat, a small city in the Balochistan state that is well known for date farming. His home school has Saturday classes and only academic courses. His adventures have included celebrating American holidays, roller skating, and trying very different kinds of food. When asked why he traveled abroad, Shahmir replied, "For me, it's always amazing to have a change...It's an honor for me to represent my country and resolve the misunderstandings about my country and my religion, Islam."

Mikke Käkälä, Finland: Mikke had to wait a year, go through mounds of paperwork, and be told he was going to Maine before he wound up in Pittsburgh! He normally studies in a small school in Espoo, a city close to Helsinki, the capital of Finland. While there have been some culture shocks, most notably a lack of public transportation in the neighborhood, "I've loved every single day that I've got to spend here." As a huge hockey fan, his best excursion was seeing a live National Hockey League game and meeting Sidney Crosby.

Ivy Wu, China: Ivy is just beginning her stay here, having arrived in Pittsburgh on December 15th. The largest challenge for her has been mastering English, but the easiest thing has been going to high school! Her studies in a small city near Hong Kong would carry over into the night and on weekends, but "Right here, school feels more like vacation for me...you get to leave school at two o'clock, which is so nice!"

Karla Heisele, Paraguay: Karla made a huge academic switch when she traveled across the equator. Her small, 130-student school starts its first semester in March and caps its second in November. Additionally, she grappled with homesickness that included missing a baby brother born 15 days prior to her departure. Interviewed close to the end of her program though, Karla was ecstatic about her travels. "Everything [has been] surprising since I got here. Every day, I discover something new, and most of the things are like the things I watch in movies, so I'm living the dream. I love this place!"



Shahmir Ghafoor, from Pakistan, had the chance to experience American high school as well as roller skating.

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Annalena Eggeling, Austria: Annalena is from an industrial town in Austria that is famous for automobile production, and she traveled here for a semester. She is used to a very structured educational system that involves applying for

high school in the eighth grade. After several essays and language tests, she was able to enter the United States to see what an American high school is like. Interviewed before she returned home, she gave us a good review. "The most interesting thing here is definitely the school. I like that I get to pick my classes and that there are so many non-academic classes...also, the whole thing about school spirit is totally new."

Can I get involved?

Yes! FCA students can travel through AFS Programs, and the summer applications have opened. Scholarships and fundraising help are available to the applicants. More information can be found at www.afsusa.org.

Those who would rather remain homebound can join International Friends, a school club that has organized outings and activities between local and international students. See Ms. Lancz, the club sponsor and an ESL teacher, for more details.



Apprenticeship Program Helps Students to Test Drive Careers

Marty Taxay

For the past several years, Fox Chapel Area students have participated in Allegheny Intermediate Unit's apprenticeship program. This program offers students throughout the Greater Pittsburgh area opportunities to explore career fields with more depth. AIU's programs range from sciences such as Marine Biology and Astronomy to art fields such as Photography and Filmmaking. These apprenticeships allow students to pursue potential career opportunities and understand what a profession in the given field entails.

One of the most popular apprenticeships is International Affairs. This program allows participants to study global business, law, and overall interaction. Sessions feature interesting discussions about global issues, an introduction to cross-cultural skills, renowned guest speakers, and an introduction to different fields of study within the realm of international affairs.

Throughout the duration of the Marine Biology apprenticeship, students explore the world of aquatic ecosystems with the help of various employees and professionals of the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium. The program encompasses examining the studying aspects of oceans and caring for living organisms, both captive and wild animals. Participants are exposed to numerous different career opportunities regarding the field of aquatic science.

The Journalism apprenticeship encompasses both writing and multimedia as a whole. Students learn about hands-on photography, film throughout the downtown area, and develop web skills. Participants work toward creating a culminating project to be showcased on the last day.

The apprenticeship program is coordinated for FCAHS students by Ms. Giguere in the QUEST office. The application process begins in April for the following school year. Those who are interested in applying to the program should visit <http://apprenticeships.aiu3.net> or the QUEST student center (room 168) for more information.



The Marine Biology apprenticeship allows students to explore aquatic ecosystems at the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium.

Kaleidoscope Concert

Micah Ziff

The music department's annual culminating performance, the Kaleidoscope concert, is set to take place on Tuesday, April 5th at 7 PM in the high school auditorium. The show features individual displays of the choir, band, and orchestra as well as combined performances of the national anthem and finale piece. FCAHS Band Director, Mr. Lesnik, will showcase his band with pieces "Armenian Danc-

es," "A Childhood Remembered," and "First Suit in E Flat." PA's Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Cooper, will conduct "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," and a select Bach piece. Choral Director, Mr. Murray will be presenting surprise numbers. Tickets to the Kaleidoscope concert are free as a thank you to the community for supporting the FCA music program; donations will be accepted.



Picalittle About *The Music Man*

Bliss Uribe & Bridget Wang

At Fox Chapel Area High School, we are very fortunate to have a stellar music and drama department that puts on amazing shows. It has been a longstanding tradition at FCAHS to produce *The Music Man!* every ten years, and 2016 marks the passing of yet another decade. Three months ago, students from all grades auditioned to be a part of the cast, and for the next three months, these students learned dances and songs and spent hours painting the sets. With the direction of Benjamin Murray, Bill Ivins, Dennis Emeret, choreography by Kathleen Nicholas and Cara Coulter, and the countless hours brought forth from parents, students, volunteers, and sponsors, this year's musical was a major success.

The school musical is produced by students and run by students. Stage managers Francesca Cano-Czagany, Natalie

Columbus, and Emilia Cano-Czagany, organize, run rehearsals, and have prepared for the show since this past summer. Their role was crucial to the organization of the pandemonium happening behind the scenes. Other roles included Brooke Echnat, who was the student producer and the program designer, Marjorie Trimble and Bridget Wang, who coordinated advertisements important to financing the production, Freesia Vettier and Marissa Albrecht, who managed and controlled the hair and makeup for the cast, Jennifer Snyder, Camille Cagley, and Georgina Zimmerman who managed ticket sales, and many other students who



“

The musical is truly one of the most unique opportunities that our school offers. You will make friends that will last long beyond the duration of high school and work together to create a piece of art, all while basking in the warmth of the stage lights above you and the applause of the audience in front of you.

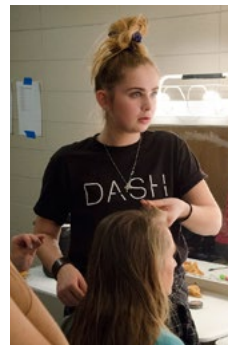
- Thomas Swigon (Harold Hill)





“ The musical has provided me with such an amazing family over the years. From the beautiful music to the rush of excitement during the dance numbers, *The Music Man* has been such an unforgettable experience. I couldn't have asked for a better group of people to share it with.

- Carlie Platt (Marian Paroo)



worked countless hours to make this show what it was. The role of Professor Harold Hill was perfected by Thomas Swigon, and Marion Paroo was flawlessly portrayed by Carlie Platt. When asked about musical, they both agreed that the experience has given them a family that will last long beyond the duration of high school and that it truly was an unforgettable experience. The musical is a long and meticulous process, but, to the students who complete the journey, it is so worth it in the end. A unique addition to the mainly high school cast this year was the incorporation of several children from the elementary schools, including the performance by Lincoln Baldwin as Winthrop Paroo.

Opening night was nearly sold out, and a student section was formed to support fellow classmates while parents watched their children with awe and with pride. Members in the cast, crew, and pit orchestra were overwhelmed

with positive reviews the following day and throughout the weekend. Considering the stunning performances and extraordinary production quality this year, everyone is excited to what the musical will turn out to be in the years to come.

A quick shout-out to all those involved: Thank you for sharing with the Fox Chapel Area community your talent and passion; it was truly an honor.



FCA Students Named 2016 National Merit Finalists

Sixteen Fox Chapel Area High School seniors have been designated as National Merit Finalists in the 2016 National Merit Scholarship Program conducted by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). The Finalists from Fox Chapel Area High School are Isabel Acevedo, Jessica Berg, Madelyn Coulson, Christopher Esch, Conor Gaffney, David Humphrey, Nicola Lee-Oesterreich, Shaina Munin, Stephen Polcyn, Sophie Rodosky, Anja Schempf, Sreeroopa Som, James Thomson, Daly Trimble, Konrad Urban, and Spencer Williams.

These Fox Chapel Area High School students were named Semifinalists in September 2015 and have met all the requirements to advance to Finalist standing in the competition for Merit Scholarship awards which will be announced this spring. The students are selected as Finalists based on their Preliminary Scholastic

Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) scores and other factors, including SAT scores, a student essay, a school recommendation, and having an outstanding academic record throughout high school.

Each year college-bound 11th grade students complete the PSAT/NMSQT. All the students who take this test are automatically enrolled in the National Merit Scholarship Program and approximately 15,000 advance to become Finalists. The Finalists represent less than one percent of the nation's high school seniors and compete for about 7,400 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$32 million to be offered this spring.

The NMSC is a privately financed, not-for-profit corporation.

Baseball Season Preview

Patrick Monteverde

The 2015 Foxes baseball team had a historic year, winning their first section title since their coach Mike Frank was a senior in Fox Chapel Area High School back in 1999. The Foxes finished their year 12-8 and won the first round of the playoffs against Taylor Allderdice 7-3, giving the team their first playoff win since 1978.



The Foxes had an excellent year, finishing 12-8 and having their first playoff win since 1978.

Losing in the quarterfinals to Bethel Park 2-1, the Foxes came back this year eager and hungry to win a WPIAL and PIAA state title. It looks like it is a real possibility after the team crushed competition in the WPFBL and won the championship. Returning for the Foxes are seniors Patrick Monteverde, Zack Burkhart, Jake Pilarski, Mike Marsico, Ryan Humbert, Brian Koglin, and Josh Anderson. Returning juniors are Josh Kieffer, Jake Hughes, and Nick McRandal. The Foxes are anything but inexperienced. Between all the seniors and the juniors, they share six first team, first section awards, three second team awards, and one honorable mention. Not to mention, two of them received Division 1 offers. The Foxes are pre-seasoned as the fourth best team in WPIAL Quad A. Ask any of the players or coach Mike Frank, however, and they will tell you they believe that they are the best in the WPIAL and will walk away with not only a WPIAL championship but also a triumph in the PIAA state playoffs.

Head coach Mike Frank weighed in on the topic. "We have very high expectations this year. We have a great group of returning starters with arguably the best pitching staff in the WPIAL. Our experience will be a key factor in helping us reach new levels of success."



Computer Club Offers Opportunities for Students of All Skill Levels

Marty Taxay

This year, junior Mihir Garrimella formed the Computing Club for students interested in programming and other technology-related fields. Mihir has a wealth of experience in the technological field, including the development of many apps and a first place victory in the Google Science Fair. Students meet during select QRTs to discuss creating iPhone applications, games and new algorithms. The club also works to help students without any significant knowledge in this field learn to have a general understanding of programming. Members participate in competitions including the USA Computational Olympiad and "Capture the Flag." Thousands of schools across the country, including Fox Chapel Area High School, have created teams to participate in the EasyCTF competition. Accompanying Mihir on FCA's team was Andreas Paljug, Darwin Leuba, and Stephen Polcyn. The team placed in the top 5% of teams across the country. FCA's second team consisted of Sarthak Navjivan, Albert Liu, Konrad Urban, and Josh Manuel. This team placed within the top 7% of all schools. If you have any interest in programming and computing, contact Mihir Garrimella for more information.



Formed by Mihir Garrimella, the Computer Club discusses creating apps, games, and algorithms.

High School Students Win First Place in Taiwan International Science Fair

Two Fox Chapel Area High School students were recently named first place winners in the 2016 Taiwan

International Science Fair. Senior Konrad Urban and junior Suvir Mirchandani won first place in the Computer Science and Information Engineering category. The title of their project was "Automated Illustration of Text to Improve Semantic Comprehension." For their project, the pair developed a software system that converts natural language input into illustrations in order to improve communication with individuals who have language communication disorders.

The fair was held January 25-30 at the National Taiwan Science Education Center in Taipei, Taiwan. Nearly 500 students from 22 countries competed at the fair. Konrad and Suvir qualified for the Taiwan International Science Fair by placing at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in May 2015.





Students Interview Don Belt

David Han

On Monday, March 7, the Fox Chapel Area National Geographic Club hosted a phone interview with Don Belt, an expert on the Middle East and water issues who has written for publications including *The New Yorker* and *National Geographic*. The club planned this event in response to widespread interest in foreign policy, particularly that of

Syria and Iraq, following the escalating rhetoric within the presidential primaries. For this purpose, Don Belt's resume fit the bill. He has travelled widely throughout the Middle East and met with leaders as controversial and influential as the embattled Bashar al-Assad of Syria. In the interview, Mr. Belt sought to change the narrative through which Middle Eastern conflicts are commonly viewed, characterizing the Syrian people as warm and hospitable in the face of increased government surveillance and internecine violence. He also spoke at length about the manifold issues facing the Middle East and the greater world, including the growing threat of climate change and resulting water scarcity.

However, the conversation did not revolve entirely around the conflicts humanity continues to face. Mr. Belt recounted his personal and circuitous journey towards his current job, stressing the importance of a well-rounded background and persistence when pursuing a career in journalism. Throughout the event, a common theme was the importance of an empathetic perspective on the world. In the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, redemption can be found through recognition of inherent similarities between cultures rather than divisions.



Don Belt presents the Syrian President Bashar al Assad with a National Geographic Atlas of the World prior to his 2009 interview (Richmond.com).

FCA Girls Discuss Gender Barriers and STEM

Daly Trimble

Eleven female students in Fox Chapel Area School District were recently invited to record their views on STEM and gender bias. Selected for their enthusiasm and talent in science and mathematics, these K-12 girls were interviewed as part of a multi-district and intercollegiate effort to preserve the thoughts of young women exploring fields still somewhat limited to them.

This was done through the Hear Me Project, a program created by Carnegie Mellon University's CARS Lab. While the Hear Me Project is a media program designed to record and post audio files of youth perspectives on a variety of topics, its most recent endeavor has been to explore gender barriers in STEM fields. By creating a joint effort between CMU and Penn State-New Kensington, PSU Professor Jennifer Wood and STEM program coordinator Colleen Smith arranged to use their communications students to collect and process interviews in the Pittsburgh

Area. Mr. Hand, FCA Director of Educational Technology and a board member of ABC Create, helped to cultivate the original idea and bring it to the district.

Following a day of staggered interviews at Fox Chapel Area High School and Fairview Elementary School, the team left with a variety of stories. Some students chose to talk about their girlhood fears of "nerdiness" and their early disbelief that women had a place in the STEM community. Others called attention to the gendered toys they were given and the shows they watch today. Several devoted time to the inspiring parents, teachers, and classes that taught them how to pursue what they enjoy. Following an editing process, their voices will be posted to www.hear-me.net. An FCA elementary school may be given a Hear Me kiosk. With a receiver shaped like a tin can, the installation will be made available to young students who wish to hear stories and advice from their older peers.



FCAHS Students Impress at PJAS Competition

Several Fox Chapel Area students recently won awards at the 82nd Annual Region 7 Meeting of the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS). A total of 14 of those students qualified for the state competition.

Fox Chapel Area first place winners were: seniors Anja Schempf and Sreeroopa Som; juniors Rohan Chalasani, Tanvi Meringenti, Ellen Pil, and William Schwartzman; sophomore Sarthak Navjivan; freshmen Sanjana Harish, Ji-Yool Moon, Kathryn Schwartzman, and Gina Wang; eighth graders Rajeev Godse, Anzu Sekikawa, and Ameya Velankar; and seventh grader Anthony Nguyen. The first place winners have qualified for the state PJAS competition on May 15-17, at Penn State University (Main Campus).

Fox Chapel Area second place winners were: senior Manasa Thada; juniors Austin Fisher, Moira McCormick, and Ayan Sinha; sophomores Tao Sheng and Bridget Wang; freshmen Theresa Heidenreich and Zachary Lakkis; eighth graders Hanna Chen, Serena Fisher, and Christiana Paljug; and seventh graders Catherine Heidenreich and Elizabeth Schwartzman.

The Fox Chapel Area third place winners were freshman Annika Urban and seventh grader Amulya Garimella.

The following Fox Chapel Area High School students received these special awards in addition to their place awards: Anja Schempf, Sreeroopa Som, and Manasa Thada each received Perseverance awards; Rohan Chalasani received a Perfect Score Award, a Provost Award from

Duquesne University, and a Carnegie Mellon University Institute for Complex Engineered Systems (ICES) Multidisciplinary Award; Austin Fisher won a PJAS Director's Award in Biology; Tanvi Meringenti won a Western Pennsylvania Chapter for the American Vacuum Society (AVS) Award, a Carnegie Mellon University Energy, Science, Technology & Policy Award, and the Duquesne University Award for Excellence in Physics; Ellen Pil won a PJAS Director's Award in Physics; William Schwartzman won a PJAS Director's Award in Earth/Space Science; Ayan Sinha won an American Chemical Society – Pittsburgh Section Award; Sarthak Navjivan won an Innovation Works Award and a Duquesne University Biomedical Engineering Award; Kathryn Schwartzman won a Duquesne University School of Health Sciences Award; and Gina Wang won the Meghan Roe Microbiology Persistence Award.

The following Dorseyville Middle School students received these special awards in addition to their first place awards: Rajeev Godse won a Perfect Score Award and a Duquesne University Award and Anthony Nguyen won an Excellence in Scientific Work Medal of Honor.

The participating students (from several schools from Allegheny and Westmoreland counties) researched their science projects for several months. During the competition, each of the students was required to give an oral presentation on his or her science project in front of a panel of judges. The regional competition was held at Duquesne University February 6.

Congratulations to Lizzie Kauma (sophomore) for her achievement in winning the National American Vision Award in the Scholastic Art and Writing Competition. Nearly 320,000 works of art and writing were submitted and only the top 1% were recognized at the national level. Her photograph will be exhibited in New York City in June!





Fun Clubs at FCAHS

Hannah Mueller

There is a plethora of clubs at Fox Chapel Area High School that range from serious to silly. You may think you know all of them, but chances are you're missing a few. As great as Model United Nations, Physics Club, and the Math Honor Society are, sometimes students seek out clubs that provide opportunities to spend time with friends rather than compete in serious events. Without further ado, here are three active and welcoming clubs that easily accomplish this task:

Busking Club

For those who love to perform and hang out with other talented musicians, Busking Club is the perfect outlet. All instruments are welcome, but guitar, bass, drums, and vocals are most common. Attend a meeting and find a small group to play with, or grab some friends and form your own group to perform at upcoming events. You have probably already seen club members perform at the Homecoming carnival or in the commons during telethon week. Their biggest event of the year, Fox Fest, attracted a crowd of over 400 students in December. When asked why he enjoyed being in Busking Club, drummer Andy Fugh said, "Fox Fest is a lot of fun, and Señor Gonzalez is the man!"

Comedy Club

Comedy Club members find delight in living "outside of the box." During club week, their primary (and successful) recruitment tactic was handing out whole raw potatoes to attract new members. During the Homecoming

carnival, Comedy Club held a potato smash where participants could pay \$1 to smash a potato with a sledgehammer. For Valentine's Day, Comedy Club also raised money by selling "potato grams" instead of the traditional candy grams.

Despite an obvious pattern, Comedy Club does not solely hold events dedicated to starchy tubers. This spring, the Comedy Club is hosting a show where FCAHS students and staff are encouraged to perform stand-up routines and improvisational skits.

When asked why he started the club, Darwin Leuba responded, "to be perfectly honest, Comedy Club started as a joke! But over time, it's turned into something much greater. Sure, some of the things we do may seem cheesy, but our goal is simply to make people smile, and I think that's something everyone should have a serious commitment to."

Doctor Who Club

Are you an enthusiastic fan of the British TV show *Doctor Who* or just love TV in general? If so, this is the club for you! The *Doctor Who* Club meets Monday mornings during QRT to watch what they consider to be the best episodes of the popular science fiction show. People in the club will say that they truly love the show, but whether you've never seen *Doctor Who* or have seen every episode multiple times, it's always entertaining. If you're interested in joining, contact club president Hansen Bursic for more information.



Darwin Leuba, the founder of Comedy Club, at the Homecoming Carnival where the club held a potato smash.



The *Doctor Who* Club is for anyone interested in watching episodes of the popular science fiction British TV show.



Students Witness Crossover Between Literature and Life

Nicole Susi

On March 1st, former Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher and 1960 World Series Champion Bob Friend came to speak to students in Mr. O'Connor's 12th grade Accelerated Sports and Adventure Literature English class. The students had just finished up reading *The Natural* in class,

which is about a fictional baseball player and everything surrounding the game in the 1950s and 1960s. All the students dressed up in Pirates apparel to honor Mr. Friend and his success. He was a four-time all-star, World Series champion and played on the team with Roberto Clemente. He was one of the most dependable pitchers that the Pirates ever had as he was never placed on the disabled list his entire career despite pitching on only two or three days rest.

The students asked Mr. Friend questions about his baseball career and compared it to the characters, plot line, and events in the book that they read in class. Most of the questions asked were inspired by the plot and main character in the book, but some were also about Mr. Friend's personal life surrounding the time he was in Major League Baseball and some of his greatest baseball memories. This was an amazing opportunity for the students as it brought the things they were learning in class to life. It gave them the connections they needed to understand the book, and made the unit more interesting. The students were so pleased to have had this opportunity and thanked Mr. Friend for coming to speak to them.



Bob Friend answered questions from students in 12th grade Accelerated Sports and Adventure Literature English.

National Technical Honor Society Adds Two FCA Students to Roster

Two Fox Chapel Area High School juniors, Amber Petrelli and David Zaretsky, were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society. Both of these students attend school at Fox Chapel Area High School and the A.W. Beattie Career Center. Amber is studying emergency response technology and David is studying automotive technology at Beattie. They qualified for the National Technical Honor Society based on attendance, leadership, and their grades at both A.W. Beattie Career Center and at Fox Chapel Area High School.

The students were inducted at a special ceremony held at A.W. Beattie Career Center March 22. The National Technical Honor Society is a national organization that honors student achievement and leadership, promotes educational excellence, awards scholarships, and enhances the career opportunities for its membership.



David Zaretsky and Amber Petrelli, both juniors, were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society on March 22nd.



FCA Student Union

Hannah Mueller

In the beginning of last year, Eli Berman and Anaïs Foss looked around Fox Chapel Area High School and noticed a poignant lack of awareness throughout the student body. Most students just didn't seem to know or care about important social topics such as transgender rights, feminism, poverty, and race relations. Eli and Anaïs saw that as their opportunity to start the Fox Chapel Area Student Union, an organization that would provide a safe environment and facilitate discussion, education, and conscious-raising about local and national social issues.

To accomplish this, the Student Union holds club meetings during QRT and after school where students lead discussions on topics like cultural appropriation, trans awareness, the current presidential race, and even Beyoncé's new music video that celebrates her Southern black heritage. Usually, a video or article is shown before the discussion to provide a little background information.

Last year, the FCA Student Union, along with similar organizations from Moon Area High School and the Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts School, hosted an event called the Festival of Hope to raise awareness for mental health issues and treatment. Students read their own pieces and excerpts from Chatham University's *Words Without Walls* anthology during an open mic, and visual art was also featured in a gallery. By all accounts, The Festival of Hope was a truly moving experience. It was such a success that the organizers have decided to hold another one this April at the Cooper-Siegel Community Library.

The primary goal of this group is to hear from a wide variety of different perspectives because one-sided discussions just aren't as interesting. Don't be afraid to come to

meetings! All opinions are valued even if they don't align with the majority of the club members'. The purpose of the gatherings is to raise awareness and increase understanding of a topic, not to belittle any member's ideas.

I recently attended a Student Union meeting for the first time, a little hesitant and unsure of what I would find, and I was amazed by the passion of all of the attendees. They were discussing things that they deeply cared about and thought others should, too. In the words of Anaïs, what makes the club so special is the "amazing group of passionate people [who are] connected and aware of social issues." Who wouldn't want to be a part of something like that?



Nina Mulroy, Anaïs Foss, and Eli Berman are part of the FCA Student Union, a club that promotes education on social issues.

upcoming events

- April 5th: Kaleidoscope Concert; Varsity Girls' Lacrosse vs Quaker Valley
- April 6th: ASVAB Testing; Varsity Boys' Lacrosse vs North Allegheny; Varsity Boys' Baseball vs Bethel Park
- April 7th: FC's Got Talent; Varsity Boys' Volleyball vs Shaler Area
- April 20th: Blood Drive
- April 20th to April 22nd: Choir Trip
- April 28th: Choir Invitational



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- April 29th: Senior Breakfast
- May 2nd to May 13th: AP Testing
- May 6th: Choral Banquet
- May 7th: SAT Testing; Prom
- May 10th: Seniors' Orchestra Concert
- May 18th: Seniors' Honor Choir Concert
- May 25th: Kennywood Day (Early Dismissal)
- May 26th: DESI Night
- May 30th: Memorial Day (No School)



Teacher Spotlight

Bridget Wang

Mairi Cooper, Orchestrating the Orchestra

Everyone knows Mrs. Mairi Cooper as the 2015 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year, but who actually knows her as Mrs. Mairi Cooper, graduate of the University of Rochester Eastman School of Music and teacher at Fox Chapel Area High School for fifteen years? What some people may not know about her is that she is left handed. Her favorite drink is coffee, and she has to be careful with the foods she eats because she is allergic to gluten. Her favorite composer, favorite type of music, favorite piece/song, etc. all depends on her mood. Upon questioning, she states that she is "very fickle with favorites."

Prior to the announcement of "Teacher of the Year," Mrs. Cooper spent most of her time in class and in rehearsals, and she stated that she really didn't want to get this title because she "would have to spend so much time away from all of [her students]." What most people do not realize is how committed she is. Thinking back fifteen years ago, Mrs. Cooper has changed the orchestra and the music department by milestones and shaped it into what it is today. Many students may have different opinions of her, but they cannot argue the fact that she loves every single one of her students.

One of the biggest projects she has been working on with this new title is creating a committee called PTAC, the PA Teacher's Advisory Committee. This committee intends to connect policy makers to teachers, and it will make a huge impact upon the learning environment. Recently, she has met with President Barack Obama and spoken at Washington D.C. about the creation of this committee and how it will impact both teachers and their students.

In a recent interview, Mrs. Cooper has stated that there hasn't been a normal school day since claiming the title. Every week, she loves to spend time with her students,

but she has to run across Pennsylvania to give speeches three times a week. Because of her busy schedule, she has discovered something very important – her voice in education. What is important for teachers to note, how their actions can make an impact in education and the commonwealth. She states, "There are many many teachers in this school who are better at teaching than me, and they are shaping the way education is for the next generation."

Gregory Schubert, Environmental Enthusiast

Graduating from the University of Notre Dame as a biology major, Mr. Gregory Schubert has been teaching at Fox Chapel Area for 19 years. At the high school, he teaches two classes, Molecular Biology and AP Environmental Science. Students seem to enjoy his class because he brings a kind of sarcastic and humorous tone to the learning environment on top of a very serious subject. He wants his students to "obtain a better understanding of the living world" and help them "realize their enormous impact on the environment."

In addition to being a teacher, he is also the sponsor to the FCA Environmental Club, the coach for the boys' and girls' frisbee team, and the advisor and sponsor for those students who wish to compete in the annual Envirothon.

The FCA Environmental Club has taken the initiative to encourage recycling and to conduct fundraising by selling food. One of their main mottos is "Reuse, Reduce, Recycle, Bicycle." This year, they are encouraging both students and faculty across the school to recycle. In addition, they baked cookies and raised over a hundred dollars in fundraising money for our annual telethon this past year. At the conclusion of each year, when finals and classes are coming to an end, endless amounts of paper, binders, and school supplies are thrown away. The environmental club intervenes to recycle all of it, salvaging about 3-4 tons of paper during the last week of school alone and saving over 600 binders which can be used by students in future classes! Some art supplies are also taken to the Center for Creative Reuse. This club really takes the phrase, "One man's trash is another man's treasure" to a new level.

Sadly overshadowed by other mainstream sports, the FCA frisbee team is coached by Mr. Schubert, and frankly, they're very good. Last year, the girls' team placed in second at the state championships against 11 other schools. Their captain, Rachel Szabo, was titled the MVP of the Western PA championship game. The boys' team advanced to states as well and tied for fifth place against 11 other schools. Ty Englert, of the boys team, was named to the All State team.

The Envirothon is an annual competition where



Mairi Cooper, Teacher of the Year, is working to connect policy makers to teachers in order to better learning environments.



students compete against other students on environmental science-based questions. For example, a topic could be to identify different Pennsylvania animal or plant species. In 2014, the team won third place. However, last year, the team took first place with the help of graduates Elena Meth and Zoe Aridor. This year, the team is hoping to reclaim their title.

With the effects of one of our mildest winters ever, it is very important that we, as human beings, start to pay even closer attention to our actions on this planet and how it impacts the environment we live in. Whether you believe in global warming or not doesn't really matter because taking actions to ensure a more healthy and safe living environment has no downsides. The effects of our current actions will certainly affect us and the future generations. Just remember – reduce, reuse, recycle, bicycle.



Gregory Schubert is active in both the FCA Environmental Club, which works to reduce paper waste at the high school, and the successful FCA Frisbee team.

Paulini Named Winner of Emperor Science Award

Fox Chapel Area High School sophomore Helen Paulini has been announced as a winner in The Emperor Science Award program. As a winner, Helen will now have the opportunity to work alongside and be mentored by an esteemed scientist on a multi-week cancer research project and to become part of the next generation of cancer researchers.

Cancer research is very important to Helen, as she,

herself, is a cancer survivor. Helen will be doing research this summer at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia alongside a team led by pediatric oncologist and co-head of the Pediatric Cancer Dream Team, John Maris, M.D. The research Helen will be a part of will focus on pediatric cancers, specifically the genes that cause neuroblastoma in children.

"The opportunity to learn more and work with researchers doing these studies is especially meaningful to me," Helen says. "I am grateful to the doctors and scientists responsible for the treatment of my childhood synovial sarcoma who made and continue to make great contributions to the health of myself and many others."

Helen is one of 100 winners nationwide in this, the inaugural year of The Emperor Science Award program. As part of her application, Helen wrote an essay answering the question, "Tell us why scientific research is so important to helping find a cure for cancer. And, if YOU could be a scientific researcher, what would you study and why?"

As part of her award, Helen will also receive a Google Chrome Notebook to enhance her studies, a \$1,500 stipend for expenses, and the opportunity to continue the mentoring program through high school to further her academic pursuits.

Stand Up To Cancer and PBS LearningMedia received almost 1,200 applications for the award from 10th and 11th graders across the nation interested in pursuing a career in science research.



Sophomore Helen Paulini has the chance to work alongside cancer researchers after winning the Emperor Science Award.



Senior Spotlight: Maggie McIlroy

Sarah Kintner

Margaret (Maggie) McIlroy is currently a senior at Fox Chapel Area High School. She has been playing field hockey for seven years and has been a starting varsity defender for four years. Selected as an All-WPIAL and All-Section player as a sophomore, Maggie was also voted team captain and titled Defender of the Year by her teammates two years in a row. During her final season of field hockey, the team had an unprecedented season with a perfect 20-0 record and a scoring record of 153-8. "Maggie is a quiet force defensively," said team coach, Ms. Jen McCrady. "She communicates with her teammates but lets her stick do the talking. She is a low, confident defender who is often our goalie's best friend."

Do you have any pre-game ritual? Yes. I always have to wear my hair in braids and eat goldfish before every game.

People would be surprised to know... That my middle name is Fox.

What movie could you watch over and over? Breakfast at Tiffany's.

Who is your dream date? Mike Zappala.

What are your plans after high school? Attend Southern Methodist University.

What is your favorite food? Prantl's burnt almond torte cake.

What is your least favorite food? Any kind of fish. I can't stand it.

What would you do if you won the lottery? I would travel the world.

What would your dream job be? A travel journalist for National Geographic.



Congratulations to the students who participated in the Pittsburgh Public Theater's Shakespearean Scene & Monologue Contest on February 10th.
Bottom row: Delaney Roberts, Georgia Borean, Alyssa Melani
Top row: Adina Rodwell, Cierra-Rose Bromley, Catherine West, Kristin Rhodes, Erin Burkhart



High School Collecting iPods for Music and Memory Program

The Fox Chapel Area High School Music Department is holding a collection of gently used and new iPods March 28-April 8, 2016. The collection is being held in conjunction with the Music & Memory programs at Presbyterian SeniorCare's affiliates, including Longwood at Oakmont.

Anyone wishing to donate an iPod can drop it off at the Fox Chapel Area High School office Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. March 28-April 8. Additionally, iPods will also be collected at the Kaleidoscope concert on April 5, and at the FC's Got Talent show April 7. Both events will be held at the high school and start at 7 p.m.

Music & Memory is a non-profit organization that is all about bringing joy into the lives of people suffering from Alzheimer's, other forms of dementia, and a wide range of cognitive physical impairments. Through the program, professionals in nursing homes and other care setting are trained in how to set up personalized music playlists on iPods for those in their care. These musical favorites tap deep memories not lost to dementia and can reawaken residents, enabling them to feel like themselves again, converse, socialize, and stay present. The program is used in hundreds of care facilities through the United States, Canada, and around the world.

FCA Wrestling Sends Reps to State Championships

Micah Ziff

Coach Ron Frank and the Fox Chapel Area wrestling team wrapped up a very successful 2015-2016 campaign. Section 3- AAA championships were held on February 27th at the newly renovated Fox Chapel Area High School gymnasium. Mr. Frank had four wrestlers reach the championship round in their respective weight class. Coming in at 170 pounds, Derrin Dietz lost 2-0 to Christian Sequette of Butler. Mike Mahon lost to Jake Woodley of North Allegheny at 182 pounds. Zach Carcy met his match in the 195-weight class when he lost against North Allegheny's Francis Duggan 6-0. Lastly, Jared Pegher was defeated in the 285 class.

Although the team was swept in the championship round 0-4, it wasn't over there. The top five finishers in each respective weight class move onto the WPIAL/Southwest Regional Class AAA tournament at Penn Hills High School. At this second round of competition, two Foxes advanced as far as the quarter final round. Zach Carcy was defeated by Eli Grape of Upper Saint Clair but rebounded nicely to finish in the third place match later that afternoon. Carcy qualified for the PIAA state championship meet to be held in Hershey, Pennsylvania March 11-13. Along with Carcy, after an early loss, Mike Mahon managed to rack up a few key wins to get himself in the third place match and solidify his bid to the state championships. The very impressive feat

of sending two wrestlers to the state meet is backed with full support from the fellow wrestlers on the team. "It really shows how hard work pays off," commented senior wrestler Johnny Summers. "Those two are constantly putting in extra hours before and after practice in the weight room and the track."



Zach Carcy and Mike Mahon advanced as far as the quarter final round of the WPIAL tournament at Penn Hills.

