Gray-Veterans Memorial Field . . .  
A Structure That Inspires Community Unity

By Richard Merryman, Feature Writer

STRONGHOLD, STRUCTURE, STRATEGY, and STRENGTH—these four cornerstones permitted Tyrone Area School District to maintain a memorial stadium that the town would grow to appreciate and to cherish through all these circling years.

What more fitting frame for Gray-Veterans Memorial Field than two stone pillars, which support two brass plaques, which honor two Tyrone humanitarians, who dedicated their lives to young people—Mrs. Adda Gray and Mr. Arthur Vanneman? In 1931, Mrs. Gray dedicated a donation of $10,000 from her estate to Tyrone young people. By 1934, using Mrs. Gray’s generous bequest, Mr. Vanneman had engineered the evolution of Tyrone’s new football field, that would forever bear her name.

A Stronghold of High School Football Develops for Tyrone

At age 101, retired Tyrone Florist Bill Engelman can still remember when he played varsity football in 1933, and how high school football developed a STRONGHOLD in Tyrone in the Roaring Twenties. Bill Engelman played varsity football at the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Athletic Park, which existed from 1910 to 1948, and now serves as home to Tyrone’s Chicago Rivet. Reminiscing from his apartment at Epworth Manor, Mr. Engelman shed light on those dark days of the Great Depression when he recollected, “By the Autumn of 1933, during my senior year, we were lucky to play football at the Athletic Park field, even as construction on Gray Memorial Field had begun.”

Continued Engelman, “Since 1921, when football commenced at Tyrone High, coaches and players like Albert Bowen, Leon Keyser, Buck Skeen, Eddie Schlosser, Merle Stonebraker, and Coach Walter Mensch enabled football to gain a stronghold in Tyrone. Each day after school, we changed into our football gear, and walked from old Lincoln High School to the Athletic Park—about thirteen blocks away. Then, at the close of daily practice, we reversed our trek back to the Lincoln High School locker room—mostly in the dark. Each football season, on Thanksgiving afternoon, little Tyrone High competed with big bad Altoona High and forced the Mountain Lions to sweat hard for their victories!”

Concluded Mr. Engelman, “The other person who encouraged football to develop a stronghold in Tyrone was Samuel Burnham. In the Autumn of 1933, Sam Burnham christened Tyrone High’s athletic teams the ‘Golden Eagles’ and won free season football tickets to Tyrone games that year.” Eighty-three years have come and gone since then, but the mascot name Sam Burnham coined during the Depression remains the same.
Message from the Superintendent

It is hard to believe the holiday season is behind us and we have officially reached the halfway point of the year. At this time, we reflect on the good work done thus far while maintaining focus on the work to be accomplished in the remaining months. As we approach the spring season, we are focused on providing the support needed for students to meet high expectations in every aspect of their educational experience.

In this issue of TyNotes, we take a look at the past, present, and future of the Tyrone Area School District. Our feature article on Gray-Veterans Memorial Field offers readers insight into the history of how the field came to fruition and its positive impact on the school and community. The Tyrone Area School District is committed to preserving this facility for many generations to come in a manner that is financially affordable for the taxpayers of Tyrone.

I hope you find the information contained in this issue of TyNotes interesting and informative. If you have comments regarding information contained in this publication or suggestions for future articles, please contact the Superintendent’s Office at 814-684-0710, extension 4123 or tlsharer@tyrone.k12.pa.us.

What’s Inside

Gray Memorial Field ..................................... Cover Story
Superintendent’s Message ............................................ 2
Tyrone Area School Board .................................................. 6
TASD Conducts Emergency Drill ........................................... 7
Tyrone Students Attend GACTC ............................................ 7
School Property Tax Elimination ............................................ 8
Website Improvement Project ............................................. 9
Kindergarten Registration .................................................. 9
Outstanding Employee Award ............................................ 10
Highmark Foundation Grant ............................................. 10
Who’s New ........................................................................ 11
Color Blast Fun Run and Walk ............................................. 11
Spring Musical .................................................................... 12

TYRONE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education
James B. Crawford, President Brian L. Bressler, Vice President
Mollie K. Bakhsheshe, Rose A. Black, David J. Fusco,
William P. Hartsock, Luther J. Laird,
Randy L. Miles Sr., James E. Raabe

Administration
Cathy L. Harlow, Superintendent of Schools
Leslie A. Estep, Director of Curriculum & Instruction PreK-12
John E. Clark, Business Administrator
Kourtney L. Klock, School Psychologist
Thomas R. Muir, Physical Plant Supervisor
Thomas A. Yoder, High School Principal
Kristen N. Pinter, Middle School Principal
Lisa A. Hartsock, Elementary School Principal
Amanda M. Kurtz, Assistant Elementary School Principal
Glen A Drager, Network Administrator

Deans of Students
Michael F. McKee-ES, Lindsay N. Miksich-MS, Lucas D. Rhoades-HS

It is the policy of the Tyrone Area School District not to discriminate on the basis of sex, handicap, race and national origin in its educational and vocational programs, activities, or employment as required by Title IX, Section 504, and Title VI. Please direct questions about this policy to Ms. Cathy Harlow, Superintendent of Schools, at 814.684.0710, Extension 4123.

http://www.facebook.com/TyroneASD
https://twitter.com/TyroneASD
After playing high school football games at the PRR Athletic Park football field from 1921 to 1934, Tyrone’s Orangemen found themselves overjoyed to inaugurate Gray Field at a community Veterans Day Parade and football game on the afternoon of Monday, November 12, 1934. Tyrone competed against the Golden Tigers of Hollidaysburg and lost 7 to 6. Thanks to the creativity of 1934 Tyrone Graduate Samuel Burnham, who christened Tyrone’s memorable mascot in the Autumn of 1933, Tyrone’s grid men transformed into Tyrone’s Golden Eagles when Gray Field opened on that Armistice Day so long ago. Careful readers will notice that their grandfathers and great grandfathers populated and played on the 1934 Golden Eagle Football Squad (pictured above).

First Row: William Snyder, Robert Carling, Tom Fisher, Jim Hoffman, Robert Morgan.
Third Row: Mr. Merle Stonebraker (Coach), Joe Seymour, Clark Speece, Carl Albright, John Rote, Homer Shildt, Alton Pannebaker, Allen Thomas, Fred Westbrook, Mr. Robert Waite (Assistant Coach).
years, Tyrone’s seating capacity has remained fairly consistent. Tyrone School District’s Physical Plant Supervisor Thomas Muir and TAHS Head Custodian James Coleman, both attest that Gray Field’s present seating capacity stands at 4,240 people.

The Altoona Tribune of November 13, 1934, also spotlighted the center of the football field with this report, “The playing field proper is dried of moisture by French drains. The field is crowned in the center. The super-elevation at the center is two feet above the sides, thus permitting perfect drainage. Thick and closely cropped grass covers the entire area. Finally, behind the playing field is a practice field 420 feet long and 130 feet wide.” Today, this practice field of 1934 is now occupied by the Church of the Good Shepherd Campus.

Thankfully, after a spring and summer filled with both action and anxiety, Gray Memorial Field officially opened on the sunny Monday afternoon of November 12, 1934. On that golden November day, as townspeople

A Strategy of Gray Field Maintenance Begins With the School Board

With Gray Memorial Field only one year old, by 1935 a STRATEGY for maintaining the field through enhancements already began from the Tyrone School Board. First in 1935, to accommodate the luxury of evening football games, architect plans specified that forty lights on eight poles be erected on both the home and visitor sides of the gridiron. Second in 1935, because the earthen terrace in front of the home grandstands had washed away with the snow and rain during the Winter of 1935, under the direction of Athletic Association President Arthur Vanneman, contractors constructed a permanent stone wall in front of Gray Field’s home grandstands, with an iron rail fence atop that stone wall.

Since Mr. Vanneman served as President and General Manager of Tyrone Lime and Stone Company, he supplied all of the stone needed for this first maintenance project. Gray Field’s first maintenance mission was unveiled at 8:00 p.m., on Friday, September 20, 1935, when Tyrone High competed against Lilly High in Gray Field’s first nighttime football match-up. Forty lights illuminated the field, admission totaled thirty-five cents, and Tyrone handily beat Lilly with a score of 32-6.

Across the next half century, the Tyrone School District devoted itself to a regular strategy of field maintenance which solidly enhanced Gray Field. This field maintenance strategy included the addition of more and higher intensity lights, the painting or replacement of bleachers on both the home and the visitor sides, the addition of a walkway behind the bleachers, the remodeling and/or relocation of the press box, the restrooms, the ticket booth, and the Hamilton Avenue front field entrance.

The January 25, 1966, issue of the Tyrone Daily Herald, reported a revolutionary approach to Gray Memorial Field maintenance—to move the gridiron. With encouragement from a few members of Tyrone’s Columbia Avenue Methodist Church, the Tyrone School Board briefly entertained the idea of selling Tyrone’s Gray Memorial Field and moving football to the practice field, behind the 1961 Clay Avenue high school campus. Some members of the Columbia Avenue Church expressed a desire to purchase Gray Memorial Field as the site for a new church to replace the one which had burned. In the 1960s, building a new football field behind the 1961 Tyrone High School to replace Gray Memorial Field would have cost about $200,000. Emotions from both sides about this strategy grew quite intense. Eventually, the Tyrone School Board rejected that strategy and opted instead to sell the practice field behind Gray Memorial Field to the Columbia Avenue Church for $7,000 in September of 1969, as a site for what ultimately would become the Church of the Good Shepherd.

In 2000, the Tyrone School Board embarked on the most ambitious maintenance strategy of Gray Field since its creation 66 years before in 1934. The November 15, 2000, edition of the Tyrone Daily Herald reported that the

As advertised in the September 19, 1935, Altoona Tribune, the Tyrone School Board had commanded, “Let there be light at Gray Field,” and by September 20, 1935, there was light at Gray Field. At that first night football game, Tyrone battled nearby Lilly High School, defeating them 32-6. Newspaper reports indicate that originally, forty lights were installed. By 1946, forty lights were increased to eighty lights. Obviously, lights at Gray Field transformed football in Tyrone, making it possible to schedule Friday evening games, rather than limiting play time to Saturday afternoons.

(Continued from Page 3)

commemorated the sixteenth anniversary of Armistice Day, established on November 11, 1918, 5,000 proud Tyrone citizens witnessed bands and bugle corps from both Tyrone and Hollidaysburg stage a military march for eight blocks from the Tyrone American Legion (located in those days next to the Tyrone Armory) through crowded Borough streets to Tyrone’s new athletic structure—Gray Memorial Field.

During half time, the Hollidaysburg Band marched to the Tyrone home side of Gray Field and formed the letter “T.” Echoing that gracious Hollidaysburg gesture, the Tyrone Band marched to the Hollidaysburg visitor side of Gray Field and outlined the letter “H.” Then, the three drum and bugle corps each staged a drill. Ultimately, this Tyrone and Hollidaysburg halftime pageant closed with the combined bands playing John Philip Sousa’s 1888 Semper Fidelis (Always Faithful) march. Unfortunately, Tyrone lost that hard fought game to Hollidaysburg with a score of 7-6.

(Continued on Page 5)
school board intended to undertake a $1,500,000 Gray Memorial Field mission which would include brand new spectator seats, increased restroom facilities, a new concrete retaining wall, new paving everywhere, improved handicap access, better fencing, new locker rooms, new scoreboard, and upgrades to the lighting and sound systems. The Tyrone School District expanded the name of Tyrone’s football field from Gray Memorial Field to Gray-Veterans Memorial Field to honor Tyrone veterans who gave the last full measure of devotion to their country. The renovation included the addition of a commemorative wall at the entrance to the field, on which five memorial plaques are displayed. Two of the plaques were originally displayed at Lincoln School and honor veterans who died in WWI and WWII. An additional plaque was created to honor those who died in Korea and Vietnam, as well as those who died while on active duty. The remaining two plaques are for those who made significant donations to the renovation project in memory of loved ones who may or may not have been veterans or in honor of loved ones.

In this photo, Tyrone’s all-male high school band prepares to perform for the home folks at Gray Field in 1937. Since its inauguration in 1934, Gray Field has remained a sacred site for school football games, school Field Day festivals, and school band performances. This year, 2017, commemorates the 90th anniversary of Tyrone High’s band, founded in 1927 by baton wielders, Mr. J. P. Potteiger and Mr. T. Harry Smith. Mr. Smith was the maternal grandfather of Tyrone’s own Mary Jane Butterbaugh Bickle. As the years passed and Tyrone High’s band evolved during the 1930s, Tyrone High Algebra, Chemistry, and Physics Teacher Stanley Steigerwalt, also doubled as Tyrone’s band director. A supremely gifted musician, Mr. Steigerwalt received the yearbook dedication in 1935.

A Strength for Community Unity Comes from Gray-Veterans Memorial Field

As the encircling years envelop Tyrone, this community has grown to appreciate that Tyrone High’s football STRONGHOLD, its stadium STRUCTURE, and its maintenance STRATEGY all have encouraged citizens to cherish the community STRENGTH provided by Gray-Veterans Memorial Field. From its birth in 1934, Gray Field has become a source of community unity. During the Depression Era of the 1930s, Gray Field united the community in school Field Day festivals. Staged in late May or early June from 1935 to 1943, these festivals involved all Tyrone students from grades one through twelve and included highly rehearsed physical, theatrical, and musical exhibitions for the citizens of the town, centered around the themes of Greek and Roman Olympics, or Native American lore, or the history of America, or the Allied victory in World War II.

Besides school-wide pageants, Gray-Veterans Field certainly inspired football—even state football championships. Just six years after Gray Field opened, undefeated Tyrone gridiron stars found themselves in an inspiring exhibition of athletic prowess against an undefeated coal mining team from Eastern Pennsylvania, christened Shenandoah. On the icy Saturday night of December 7, 1940, in front of 6,000 shouting sports enthusiasts, Head Coach Steve Jacob’s Golden Eagles struggled to a scoreless tie against Shenandoah, at Shenandoah. Fifty-nine years later, on December 11, 1999, Head Coach John Franco’s Golden Eagles traveled from Tyrone’s Gray Field to Hersheypark Stadium to defeat football powerhouse Mount Carmel 13 to 7 in a competition that concluded with a thrilling 91 yard touchdown run by Tyrone’s Jesse Jones.

In 1931, when she bequeathed $200,000 for a hospital in Tyrone and $10,000 for a Tyrone football field, Adda Gray never could have dreamed about the far reaching consequences of her generosity to this community, sequestered amid the hills of Central Pennsylvania. Across the years, among all of the events staged at Gray-Veterans Memorial Field, Mrs. Gray might have found herself most delighted and fulfilled about an event of community unity staged on Tuesday, September 25, 1951.

According to the September 26, 1951, issue of the Altoona Tribune, on that Tuesday evening, world renowned Choral and Orchestral Conductor Fred Waring appeared at Tyrone’s Gray Memorial Field to offer a benefit concert, which ultimately would raise $40,000 for completing the Tyrone Hospital. In early June of 1951, Mr. Waring, from Tyrone High’s Class of 1917, had offered to bring his 60 piece choral and orchestral group, the Pennsylvanians, to Tyrone in early Autumn of 1951, to perform a Tyrone Hospital benefit concert. And Waring made good on his promise.

Before an enthusiastic crowd of 10,000 people from all across Central Pennsylvania, Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians electrified the audience with a smorgasbord of songs from 8:30 until 11:00 p.m. Gray Memorial Field had filled to capacity for the event, and most astonishing of all, 6,000 additional chairs had been set up on the Gray Field grass. When Tyrone’s most famous son—Fred Waring—turned over $40,000 after the concert, Tyrone Hospital had almost become a reality. And the stadium named in honor of Mrs. Adda Gray had become a field where dreams do indeed come true!
Monthly meetings of the Tyrone Area School Board are open to the public. Work session meetings, where agenda items are reviewed and discussed, are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Administrative Suite of Tyrone Elementary School. Regular session meetings, where agenda items are discussed and action taken, are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Administrative Suite of Tyrone Elementary School. Exceptions to the schedule do occur, so please check the TASD website for possible changes.

To learn more about the Tyrone Area School Board, visit the district website (www.tyrone.k12.pa.us) and on the homepage navigation bar, click “District” and then “Board.”
The safety and security of our students and staff is a priority of the Tyrone Area School District. Several years ago the District began to focus more on school safety not only because we were mandated by the state to do so but also because we realized there was an increasing need to be better prepared in the event of an actual emergency. Unfortunately, this is not something we want to do, it is something we have to do to ensure the safety of our school community.

We began by developing a more comprehensive All Hazards Plan which encompassed four phases of emergency management including Prevention, Preparation, Response, and Recovery. Once in place, we provided opportunities for staff and students to review and discuss the procedures outlined in the plan. We informed our parents and the community about our procedures. We also provided training to staff members who will assume various roles in response to an incident.

One of the key components of our All Hazards Plan is preparedness. Effective preparedness reduces the likelihood of panic during a stressful situation by offering periodic drills and preparing people for an unfortunate event. In addition, emergency response is most effective when first responders are familiar with the school facilities and procedures. The purpose of preparation is to reduce the impact when an actual incident occurs.

In keeping with our commitment to proactively prepare for an emergency situation, the Tyrone Area School District participated in a cooperative emergency crisis response drill with law enforcement and emergency responders during our teacher in-service day on Friday, October 28, 2016. The drill provided an opportunity for district personnel to evaluate our practices and procedures in a non-life threatening situation. In addition, it provided the opportunity for emergency personnel to become more familiar with our school and practice their response strategies and techniques.

The drill was an opportunity for all stakeholders to gauge our effectiveness in responding to a terrible situation. The goal was to heighten our awareness and improve our skills. The hope is that we never have to use them. The experience proved to be very effective in achieving the intended outcome. Staff, law enforcement, and first responders identified strengths as well as areas needing improvement.

The district will continue to develop practices and procedures to maximize the safety of both staff and students. In doing so, we will provide opportunities to discuss various emergency scenarios with students on a monthly basis so they will be better prepared and informed should an actual event occur.

If you have any questions regarding district emergency response procedures, information may be found on the district website (www.tyrone.k12.pa.us) or you may call the Superintendent’s Office (814-684-0710, extension 4123).

The Tyrone Area School District is one of eight school districts that currently sponsor the Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center (GACTC). Presently, 56 tenth through twelfth grade students from Tyrone are enrolled in 18 different programs at the Center.

The top three programs of study selected by Tyrone students are:
1) Computer-related programs including Visual Arts Technology; Computer Programming; Multimedia and Web Design; Computer Technology
2) Cosmetology
3) HVAC/Plumbing

Mr. Brian Bressler and Mr. James Raabe, TASD School Board members, currently serve as district representatives on the Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center Joint Operations Committee.
School Property Tax Elimination . . .

Too Good to be True?

By John Clark, Business Administrator

Recently, there has been much discussion on the issue of property tax elimination across the state of Pennsylvania. The elimination of property tax for schools would abolish taxes imposed by school districts for their general operations, but not taxes associated with debt service. Currently, the Tyrone Area School District has no debt; therefore, all property taxes would be eliminated. Sounds wonderful. However, there is a tradeoff. The tradeoff in this new funding scenario is an increase in state sales tax from 6% to 7% on all goods currently taxed. There also will be the application of sales tax to a wider range of goods such as groceries, clothing, cable TV, and legal services, just to name a few. Additionally, the state income tax rate would be increased from 3.07% to 4.95%. The impact of this increase would be based on an individual’s earnings.

The Tyrone Area School District, with a student population of 1,872, receives about $5,069,904 in local property taxes. This is the amount that the state would replace under the new plan through increased sales tax and state income tax. Currently, the Tyrone Area School District receives $14,856,615 from the state. Through property tax elimination, this amount would increase to $19,926,519. With a total annual budget of approximately $22,769,000, this represents a reliance on the state for 87.5% of revenues. If the state budget would be delayed or significantly reduced, the district could be in a real financial bind. There would be no local mechanism to maintain current educational programs.

What is a bit more bothersome, however, is the fact that this proposal does not make correction for the spending habits of numerous districts that have continued to increase taxes annually. Many of these districts currently tax and spend far more than Tyrone. In order of spending, Tyrone is currently 492 on the list of 500 districts, with 500 being the lowest spender. Why does this matter? Let’s look at a sample.

Brandywine Heights School District, with a student population of 1,540, spends $10,462 per student and is 77 out of 500 districts in spending. Local property tax for non-debt expenses totals about $14,902,152 and state subsidy is $3,932,993 for a total of $18,835,145—the amount they would receive from the state under the proposed change. Using the same comparable approach, Tyrone spends $6,442 per student. That is a difference of $4,020 per student. Under the property tax elimination proposal, some of our local tax dollars would go toward funding the continued spending of approximately $10,500 per student in Brandywine while Tyrone would be funded at a $6,500 per pupil spending level.

Under the current local taxing plan, this may be acceptable. Individuals choose their residence and the associated taxes for the educational advantages gained, this works as a matter of choice. In other words, a better neighborhood and higher taxes are a choice one makes. However, under a funding plan in which funds are garnered and distributed at the state level, where local cost is no longer chained to local program offerings, an unnecessary inequity in the allocation represents an unfair funding design. Simply stated, if we as Pennsylvanians are footing the bill for education, then the allocation of educational resources should be distributed equitably with the intention of leveling the playing field for all students.

Recent analysis shows that historically, Pennsylvania and its municipalities spend significantly less per pupil in the poorest districts than in the richest districts. According to the Washington Post, “In Pennsylvania, per-pupil spending in the poorest school districts is 33 percent lower than per-pupil spending in the wealthiest school districts.” In fact, Pennsylvania’s disparity is the highest in the nation. The second-highest is Vermont, where per-pupil spending in the poorest districts is 18 percent lower than in the richest districts. The proposed plan to eliminate property tax does nothing to address this inequity while asking the citizens of Pennsylvania to trust their state government with the lion’s share of educational resources.

Elimination of property taxes? Maybe, but a better bill is needed for this proposal to benefit the residents and students of the Tyrone Area School District.

Recent analysis shows that historically, Pennsylvania and its municipalities spend less per pupil in the poorest districts than in the richest districts.
Websites Begin Yearlong Update and Improvement Project

By Todd Cammarata, District Webmaster

The Tyrone Area School District website and its three sister sites for the elementary, middle, and high schools are in the process of an update and redesign that began in the summer of 2016 and will continue throughout 2017. “The district recognizes that our website is a critical communications tool for our students, staff, parents, and community. The old site, however, felt dated in its presentation and disorganized in its navigation. Better technology options were available to us to improve the ease of use of the site,” said Network Administrator Glen Drager.

This new initiative began in June of 2016 when Carol Blaska and Todd Cammarata were named as district webmasters. “Updating the website was overdue,” said Blaska, “It needed a fresh new look to grab readers’ attention and responsive design so it was adaptable to mobile devices.” The new design is much cleaner and less cluttered than the old site. A redesign of the staff directory was also completed in order to make it easier to find staff email addresses and phone numbers.

The current site is also more mobile friendly, an important feature when more and more visitors to the site are doing so on mobile devices such as smart phones and tablet computers as opposed to traditional desktop screens. “While the new site does look better on a mobile device than the old one,” said Cammarata, “converting a desktop site to mobile is never an ideal viewing experience. Depending on cost and the options available, the district may also look into developing a mobile app to better serve the public.” Keeping the front page of the website current is also a goal that the new website team has been focusing on this year. In the past, it was sometimes many months before news and information on the homepage was refreshed. The goal now is to keep things as current as possible, adding stories about events, activities, and awards earned in the district.

The initiative is still a work in progress and there are many areas of each website, particularly at the building level, that still need to be rebuilt and updated. “Many sections of our old website were setup as placeholders and had little or no content attached to them. To address this, the webmasters have been selecting areas of the site to focus on and fully develop,” said Drager, “I really would like to see us add more curriculum support information for parents, especially at the building levels.”

Among the first areas to get a redesign were the athletic pages, where instead of a link to schedules, the athletic schedules now appear on each sport’s page. In the near future, season photos will be added to each sport to further develop the content available on the website.

“I have been pleased with the progress that has been made thus far to the website and have heard positive comments about the appearance,” said Superintendent Cathy Harlow.

In order to obtain feedback, which will be used to further improve the site, the webmasters have developed a short public survey. Please go to the district homepage (www.tyrone.k12.pa.us) to take the survey.

2017-18 Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten Registration for the 2017-2018 school year will be held on Tuesday, April 11 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. at Tyrone Area Elementary School. To be eligible for Kindergarten, children must be five years old before September 1, 2017. Registration forms are available in the Tyrone Area Elementary School Main Office. For more information, please contact Amanda Kurtz, Assistant Principal, at 814-684-1342, extension 2225.
Last November, the Tyrone Area School District announced the first Employee Recognition recipients of the 2016-17 school year. These individuals were nominated by co-workers for their dedication and commitment. Three times each year, a committee comprised of professional and support staff members and the superintendent, reviews nominations and selects recipients.

Front (left to right): Louise Seidel, Middle School Special Education Teacher; Amanda Kurtz, Assistant Elementary Principal; Chrystie Williams, High School Special Education Teacher. Back: Craig Lowery, Middle/High School Custodian; Jaime Ewell-Irvin, High School Paraprofessional. Inset photo: Amy Heidenthal, Daycare Clerical Support.

By Leslie Estep, Director of Curriculum and Instruction PreK-12

To promote student health and wellness, the Highmark Foundation has provided schools in its 49 county Pennsylvania service area with funding and resources to create healthier school environments that have sustainable and lasting change. The Tyrone Area School District received a $6,500 award last fall to promote healthy eating and physical activity, particularly at the Tyrone Area Middle School.

The 2016-17 grant program is a continuation of the grant program from the 2015-16 school year, centered on an initiative to inspire the joy for aerobic activity and strength training, along with lifelong fitness. TAMS Physical Education Teachers Marcus Owens and Megan Hartman have continued the fitness program with the seventh and eighth grade students this school year. Popularity for the fitness room continues to grow for middle school males and females as they utilize the equipment on a more regular basis. Even self-conscious students who are traditionally “non-participants” in team sports seem to take an interest in using the treadmill, elliptical machine, and stationary bikes. Data from last year’s grant project showed that 100% of the students involved in the project increased their fitness level during the work with this equipment.

The Tyrone Area School District has utilized the current Highmark funding to maintain and add to the cardiovascular exercise equipment in the High School fitness room to allow greater student access and opportunity to participate in these activities. In addition, PE teachers are working with students to use technology to track vital statistics related to their workouts (changes in BMI, number of calories burned, heart rate changes, etc.), participate in fitness assessments, and set personal goals for improved health. Utilization of the Polar GoFIT exercise documentation software and PACER (Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run) fitness test help PE teachers assess students’ aerobic capacity, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and body composition. The use of technology to track the data motivates the students to take more ownership over their own fitness progress and goals.

The Highmark Foundation is a private, charitable affiliate of Highmark, Inc. that supports initiatives and programs aimed at improving community health. The Tyrone Area School District is grateful for the financial support that this grant will provide, as well as the long-lasting impact on the students of the Tyrone community.
Who's New at TASD

Patty Gonder, Paraprofessional
Patty Gonder has worked with children, infant through Pre-K, as a lead teacher over the past five years. She is currently studying online to obtain an associate degree in early childhood education. Patty resides near Bellwood with her husband Bill and two sons, Trenton and Darin. She volunteers with various children’s activities at church, scouts, and sporting events. When not working on her studies or volunteering, Patty spends her free time enjoying the outdoors with her family doing things like kayaking, fishing, camping, or just hanging out together.

Thomas Rumberger, Interim Equipment Manager (Winter Sports)
Thomas Rumberger is a 1969 graduate of TAHS. He has earned two associate degrees in marketing and business. Thomas worked for more than 37 years at Westvaco/American Eagle Paper Mills. He is married to the former Karen Rodgers and they have two children, Joann (Williams) and Thomas, and eight grandchildren. Thomas is a former firefighter, serving for more than 50 years, and secretary of the Blazing Arrow Hook and Ladder Fire Company. He attends Wesley United Methodist Church. Thomas enjoys watching football, baseball, and elementary and college wrestling, and reading books from his Nook Tablet.

Derek Mathews, Long-Term Substitute Math Teacher
Derek Mathews is a 2010 graduate of Altoona Area High School and a 2015 graduate of West Chester University, where he earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Middle Grades Preparation with Concentrations in Mathematics and Social Studies. He is currently the head coach for the Altoona Middle School Hockey team and has an avid passion for the game of hockey. In his spare time, you will find Derek playing sports, working out, and hanging out with his friends and family.

OTHER:
Kristen Baker, Varsity/Junior Varsity Girls Assistant Basketball Coach
Charles Ball, High School Food Service Worker
Susan DelBaggio, Varsity Assistant Swimming Coach
Barry Herr, Crossing Guard
Jim Lang, Junior High Boys Assistant Basketball Coach
Noelle Lucas, Paraprofessional
Jamie McGreal, Junior High Girls Head Volleyball Coach
Douglas Myers, Varsity Head Softball Coach
Steve Ramsey, Varsity Girls Assistant Basketball Coach
Stephanie Shaffer, Elementary Food Service Worker
Tim Shaw, Junior High Girls Head Softball Coach
Kirsten Snyder, Middle School Food Service Worker
Anthony Vallalla, Varsity Girls Assistant Softball Coach
Dylan Weston, Varsity Assistant Wrestling Coach
Charlotte Wynn, Spring Musical Co-Director

Second Annual Tyrone Color Blast Fun Run and Walk Set for May

The Second Annual Tyrone Color Blast Fun Run and Walk to benefit Tyrone Area School District’s Positive Behavior Support programs will be held on Saturday, May 6, 2017, on the TASD campus—rain or shine. Registration will begin at 10:00 a.m., and the race will kick off at 11:00 a.m. Please visit the Tyrone Color Blast Fun Run and Walk Facebook page and the TASD website (www.tyrone.k12.pa.us) often for up-to-date information.
The cast is set and the excitement is building as members of the TAHS Drama Club rehearse for this year’s spring musical, “Beauty and the Beast.” Auditions for the musical were held during the first week of January, and a cast of 39 performers from grades 9 through 12 were selected to be a part of this year’s production. “Beauty and the Beast” will be presented on Friday, April 7 and Saturday, April 8 at 7:00 p.m. in the TAHS Auditorium. Tickets are $8.00 for reserved seating and $6.00 for general admission and are currently on sale in the High School Main Office.