

TABLE OF CONTENTS

“Taste the Rainbow”	3
PSNK Welcomes a New Student Government President.....	5
Penn State Students Support THON.....	7
How to Not Hate Group Projects.....	9
Suicide Prevention Comes to Cranberry.....	11
Plum Woman Raises Money for Dog Park.....	13
He Scores!.....	15
Money, Oil, and Politics: a Nexus.....	18
The Over-Sexualization of Women’s Halloween Costumes is Anti-Feminist.....	21

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CAMPUS LIFE

“Taste the Rainbow”

Penn State New Kensington Celebrates LGBTQ Month

By: Monica Fiore
Copy Editor

NEW KENSINGTON, Pa. - October is a special month for the LGBTQ+ community, as “National Coming Out Day” is celebrated worldwide on Oct. 11. Not only is it celebrated worldwide, but it also held a special place in Penn State New Kensington students’ hearts the week of October 9th.

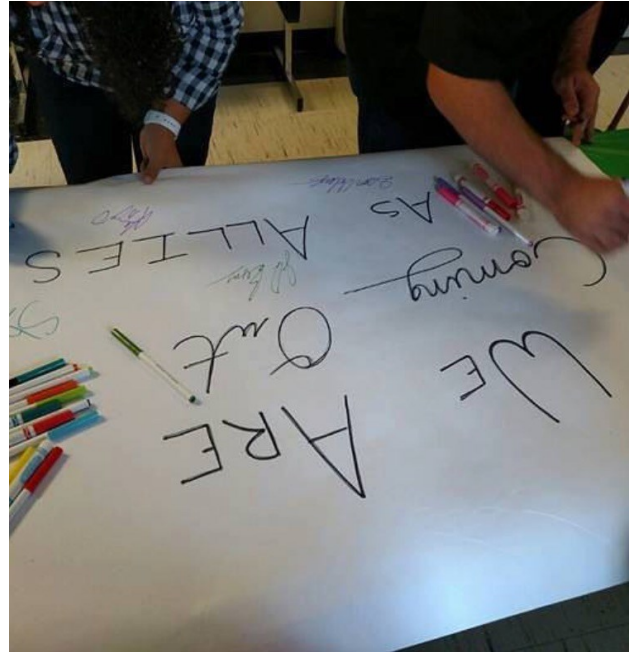
“As one of the Penn State campuses, we are committed to being ‘all in’, which means we support the diversity and inclusion of all of our students, all the different student communities, student identities, and one of those communities and identities that we wanted to celebrate due to the national holiday was the LGBTQ+ community and we thought no better way than capitalizing on ‘National Coming Out Day’ and bringing to our campus and starting that conversation and really supporting the “all in” initiative,” said Penn State New Kensington’s Student Life Coordinator, Michele Marcks.

While “National Coming Out Day” took place on Oct. 11th, the celebration for LGBTQ month started early.

“‘National Coming Out Day’ started technically not on ‘National Coming Out Day,’” Marcks said. “The festivities started before then with the Oct. 9th speaker we had come to campus. We brought a transgender advocate named T.J. Jourian to campus on Monday to talk about his experience, how being transgender can impact someone in a higher education environment. He answered lots of candid questions, helping guide people with whatever came to mind that they weren’t sure about; anything related to transgenderism or LGBTQ+...We also got the word out about our Nov. 2nd meeting. We’re doing an interest meeting for anyone who wants to continue the conversation about how we can support the LGBTQ+ and ally community at New Kensington.”

The celebration for LGBTQ month continued Oct. 11th on “National Coming Out Day.”

“We continued on Wednesday, which was actually ‘National Coming Out Day’, with a celebration of getting people to ‘taste the rainbow’, had some Skittles, get rainbow pins on either folks of the LGBTQ+ community or allies, so we saw lots of rainbows walking around campus, and then we did a banner of ‘We Are Coming Out as Allies’ and had people sign it to show their support for the community and really just showing that we have an inclusive campus and safe space and we support every student in our community,” Marcks said.



Students signing the “We Are United” Banner
(Photo courtesy of PSNK Student Life)

CAMPUS LIFE

Many students came and showed their support for “National Coming Out Day,” taking time to sign the “We Are Coming Out As Allies” banner.

“We have over 100 signatures on the banner,” said Marcks. “It was really exciting. We saw a lot of students' faces light up, going ‘This is great. I definitely want to come out as an ally’ or ‘I want to come out as part of this community.’ It was really cool seeing people get into it.”

Even though the LGBTQ community has made progress with the legalization of gay marriage in all 50 states, there is still a long way to go.

“Obviously, we’ve covered a lot of ground on equality and recognition in the last few years,” said PSNK student Sammi Adams, who participated in the celebration of “National Coming Out Day.” “However, coming out is a huge thing for many people. There are many that don’t feel safe still or aren’t in a position to come out without repercussions.”

The LGBTQ and Ally Meeting will be held on Thursday, Nov. 2 in the Art Gallery during Common Hour.

Want to write for the Nittany Pride?
Email Isabella at nittanypridenews@gmail.com!



CAMPUS LIFE

PSNK Welcomes a New Student Government President

By: Kierstin Flickinger
Staff Writer

NEW KENSINGTON, Pa. - Raven Brunner, a senior at Penn State New Kensington, took on the important role of SGA President in order to better both the campus community and herself, after being elected at the end of the 2017 spring semester.

A communications major, Brunner has always had an interest in advocacy and believes that her SGA presidency helps her with her communications skills, especially because she is in charge of planning events, giving introductions, and giving speeches.



Raven Brunner with one of her Hurricane Harvey donation boxes. (Photo courtesy of Kiersten Flickinger)

"I was very active on campus last year and enjoyed every bit of it," said Brunner. "But, through my activity on campus, I noticed many things that I wanted to change or hone in on." "I decided to run for SGA President because I was, and am, confident that my intentions for the campus will reflect positively on the student body."

"Raven is a great SGA President," senior Broderick Gerano said. "I'm sad that I'll only get to spend one semester going to events that she helped plan. They've all been fun."

Gerano only met Brunner this year, but said that the two quickly became friends, and he described her as "One of the nicest people [he knows]." He also said that some of the most enjoyable events to attend were ones during Welcome Week.

Two of the big events that SGA hosted during Welcome Week were the Soda Floats event during common hour on Aug. 23. and an event called 'Moonlight Sundaes' where students came to the school in their pajamas and got to make ice cream sundaes and watch a movie.

"Both of them [the Welcome Week events] were very tough to pull together logistically, but enjoyable in the end," Brunner said.

Brunner feels that there are some slightly more serious issues that SGA can and will deal with in the future, however. During the month of October, SGA collected enough school materials to fill an 18-gallon tub up to donate to victims of Hurricane Harvey in Texas.

"Monitoring the donation boxes have been a very inspirational and motivational experience," Brunner said, when asked what her favorite event has been so far this semester.

CAMPUS LIFE

Other important issues that SGA is looking to promote awareness about are world hunger and food insecurities. However, Brunner said that she can't give us an inside look on the events planned for that issue just yet, because "they are still being planned."

Brunner isn't only involved in planning events for the campus. She detailed at length just a few of the duties that she has as SGA President. She also oversees the entire executive board, runs weekly executive meetings, and meets with the Director of Student Affairs, Theresa Bonk, weekly.

She co-chairs the Student Activity Fee committee and the Student Facility Fee committee, attends the Council for Commonwealth Student Government at University Park monthly, and attends President Sessions and serves as a liaison for the Student Affairs committee.

"These are just a few things that I do and have on my mind on a regular basis while making sure that I am advocating properly for the student body," Brunner said.

Ashton Caldwell, a sophomore student, and SGA's Underclassmen Faculty Representative and Governmental Representative, thinks that Brunner is doing very well as SGA President.

"I think she has a very good work ethic," said Caldwell. "She never lets anything go until the last minute, she's always constantly on top of things, she's always asking us about new things we could be doing."

"Being SGA President has been an amazing experience," said Brunner. I have learned a lot from many different people and have been able to gain a lot of applicable knowledge that will help me in the future."

Find SGA on Twitter @sgapsnk, Instagram @psnkska, and on Facebook at Penn State New Kensington Student Government Association.



CAMPUS LIFE

Penn State Students Support THON

*By: Lauren Lizik
Contributing Writer*

UPPER BURRELL, Pa. - Paulina Iniguez, a junior at Penn State New Kensington, takes charge as a THON Co-Chair by creating events to help fight pediatric cancer.

Paulina Iniguez was born and raised in the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo to be exact. About six years ago she came to America. She now resides in Murrysville Pennsylvania, where she lives with her family.

Iniguez is majoring in Corporate Communications. She is a very busy individual at the Penn State New Kensington campus. Along with juggling school, she is a THON Co-Chair.

"THON is a great organization; it helps kids with pediatric cancer," Iniguez stated. Iniguez has been involved with THON her freshman and junior year here at Penn State. Just this year as a junior she took on her higher position as Co-Chair.

"It is a lot of work but it is for a great cause so it is worth every minute of it," Iniguez said, All of the Penn State campuses support THON. They all work together and push each other to raise as much money as they can. Iniguez stated "It's crazy, we have a group message with all the THON representatives my phone is always going off with new ideas to help and support this cause."

A major event THON is noted with is canning. This is a time where all the members of the club team up and go to store fronts with cans asking for donations for the cause. This THON event has recently been shut down.

According to Iniguez, "Last year there was an accident while canning so this was the last year for canning," she said, "No need to worry, we are putting our brains together with ideas for another way to ask for donations,"she added.

Another major event dealing with THON is the dance-athon. This event is in February and it is a forty-six hour dance marathon. All THON students gather at University Park for this event. Iniguez stated, "I am so excited this year for the dance marathon we are already trying to coordinate our outfits."

Since the Christmas season is rapidly approaching, Iniguez said, "Bring out all of your Christmas gifts to the Pittsburgh Mills mall; we are going to be volunteering and wrapping presents to raise money for THON." The exact date is not set yet but will most likely be the weekend before Christmas.

At Penn State New Kensington there are about thirty students involved in THON. Iniguez stated, "I hope to see the number grow, I always do my best persuading students around the school to join."

The community can also help THON in different ways. According to Iniguez, "We have some Spaghetti dinners coming up, every little bit helps." The representatives of THON are open to

CAMPUS LIFE

The community can also help THON in different ways. According to Iniguez, “We have some Spaghetti dinners coming up, every little bit helps.” The representatives of THON are open to suggestions and any ideas anyone may have.

After interviewing with Nick Roth, a junior at Penn State New Kensington majoring in Electromechanical Engineering and Technology, he puts a lot of his free time on campus into THON.

Roth’s position in THON is Chair. He takes a lot of pride in what he does. Roth stated, “This is my second year involved with THON I am so happy I got involved.” After asking Roth what are three words used to describe Iniguez the Co-Chair he said, “She is genuine, easy going, and fun to be around.”

Roth said his favorite THON event is the 46 hour dance marathon. He is really looking forward to it this coming February, along with all the other THON events that will follow.

Gina Batiz, who is a sophomore at Penn State New Kensington majoring in Chemical Engineering, is also involved with THON. Her position is an inspiration chair.

Batiz plans on transferring to University Park next year and hopes to still be involved with THON when she transfers. Batiz stated “Paulina is such a hard worker and manages her time very well; it is fun working alongside of her thinking of new ideas for the club.”

Batiz added, “THON is almost a Penn State staple it is a great club helping kids with cancer.” We may take things for granted in life, so help support THON in any way you can.



CAMPUS LIFE

How to Not Hate Group Projects

By: Isabella Bordonaro
Editor In Chief

As a college student about midway through my Senior year, I have dealt with what feels like a million group projects. The reason it feels like so many is because they are usually not an experience I look back on fondly.

One of the most interesting, and probably most helpful, courses I am currently taking, that may have changed my mind on group work is my conflict resolution negotiation class with Dr. Jennifer Wood.

The class focuses on teaching students how conflict works, and teaches us to develop skills that will allow us to not only solve our own conflicts, but potentially help others in our lives solve their conflicts.

The work in this class made me realize how important having this skill set is, and how I can use it to not only add to my own skill set, but to help improve my attitude toward group work. According to Ira Wolfe, President of Success Performance Solution, in an article on talenteconomy.io, one of the most necessary qualities that the “workers of tomorrow” must have is the ability to collaborate successfully with groups in the workplace. This basically means that you must have conflict resolution skills, because unless you get into a group with people that automatically work harmoniously together, a conflict is probably going to arise.

The fact that these skills are a necessary quality to enter the workforce made me want to share them with my student body, because I know not everyone will have the opportunity to take Dr. Wood’s class- although I HIGHLY recommend it.

Therefore, I felt the best way to help those who may not take the class, was to share my knowledge through the Nittany Pride, in the hopes that my fellow students will take the time to pick it up, and learn something.

Every time I have a class where we are assigned group work, there is almost always an audible groan, or looks of hesitation. Why is this? I think it comes down to having to rely on someone else for your grade, especially if you can’t choose your group.

I have had to do a group project before where I didn’t know anyone in my group. This can be extremely stressful because now you have to rely on others to do your work, and you have no prior knowledge of their work history. This can cause you, and the other people, to be stressed and worried about the project before it even begins.

The other reason most people hate group projects is because they dealt with someone who did not do their part, and because they do not have good conflict resolution skills, they did not solve the problem, and left the project unhappy.

One of the best skills to use when you have entered into a conflict with a peer in a group project, is to simply talk to them in a calm manner, and use your “I statements.”

CAMPUS LIFE

According to our textbook, *Interpersonal Conflict*, “I statements” can be used to accurately describe how you are feeling to someone, without blaming them or criticizing them. This is useful because usually when you begin a conversation accusing or blaming the other person, you automatically turn them off or cause them to get defensive, leading you into a destructive conflict which can be hard to get out of.

An example of a good “I statement” for a conflict where you feel the other person is not doing their part could be, “I feel overwhelmed by the workload this project is placing on me,” or “I understand that this is a group effort, and I feel I am doing most of the work.” By stating your feelings this way, you may get the person to understand where you are coming from, and they may be more willing to work on the problem. I statements also work because it withholds the opportunity to discredit your view from the person you’re in conflict with, because they can’t tell you how you feel.

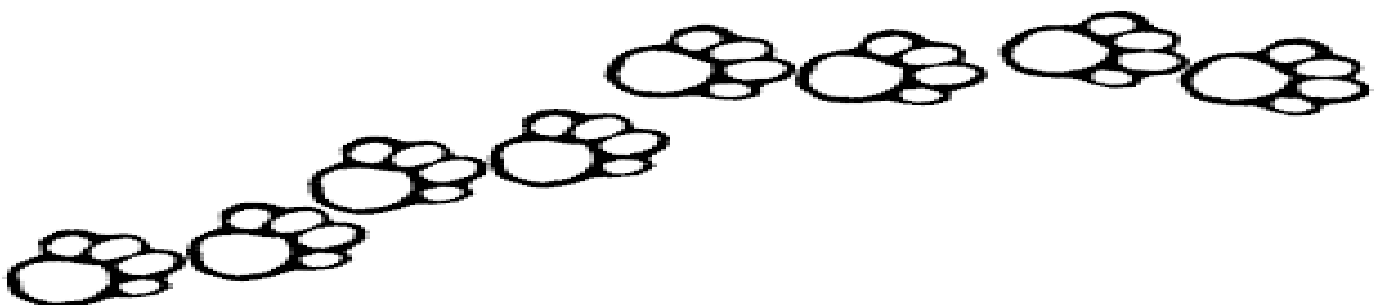
Another way to approach a conflict with someone you feel is not doing their part, is to begin by stating your goals to them, and asking them to state theirs. You may feel that this person doesn’t care about their grade because they aren’t doing the work, but you never know what’s going on in that person’s life that may be causing them to act this way. Maybe they have to work long hours in order to pay for housing or school. Maybe they don’t understand the project, but are too afraid to ask.

By stating that your goal is to get a good grade, as a team, and to ensure that all group members are on the same page, you may get them to open up about why they are not doing their part.

You may also want to use statements like, “I know we all want to get a good grade on this project, so let’s try to work together better in order to accomplish that,” or “I have noticed that some of us are having trouble getting our parts of the assignments done on time, is there anything I can do to help?”

Being kind and understanding is really going to help you to solve problems in group projects. Everyone wants to be treated with respect, and even if you feel you’re not receiving it, showing that person that you can be respectful to them may make them return the favor.

I hope that this has given you a few tips or tricks to help solve conflicts you may encounter in group projects. These skills can really be applied to all conflicts, and I will continue to examine different situations, and how to react to them, in further issues. If you have any comments/concerns about what I have said, feel free to email me at nittanypridenews@gmail.com, and I will get back to you ASAP!



COMMUNITY

Suicide Prevention Comes to Cranberry

*By: Carmen Austin
Contributing Writer*

CRANBERRY, Pa. – Several members of the Rotary International Club held a fundraiser event on Sunday to support the Suicide Campaign Awareness program in the high schools around the area.

John Marshall, 57, is a director and former president of the Rotary Club of Cranberry Township. The program was kicked off with an event called Walk for Hope, which was held in Cranberry, Pa. on September 17. Marshall hoped to involve other members of the community in this program.

The Suicide Campaign Awareness program was founded in January 2016. It holds its meetings once a month at St. Richard's Church located in Gibsonia Pa. At each meeting, families are encouraged to share their emotional distress, caused by the loss of a loved one due to suicide. Counseling is available by religious groups, psychologists and other professionals.

"Suicide is a permanent solution for a temporary problem," Marshall said. He experienced the loss of his beloved nephew who committed suicide at the age of 22. "It is important to recognize the warning signs in order to prevent more unjustifiable deaths," Marshall added.

According to the Tribune Review, the suicide awareness program had been reinforced by the school district in the area. For example, last year at Pine Richland high school informational sessions were offered to students. "The purpose of these sessions was to provide strategies, teach the students the different risk factors, and to take advantage of the school resources to prevent suicide," Tribune Review stated.

Shavonne Ayres, president of the Rotary Club in Cranberry, has been encouraging other Rotarian members to participate in the cause. This year, the club donated \$1500 dollars. Even though its origins are based in Cranberry, Ayres believes that the Suicide Campaign Awareness program can be expanded to include other communities throughout western Pennsylvania. Ayres said, "John does a great job as a community leader, I'm so proud of him."

The Suicide Campaign Awareness program has held three fundraising events each year since its inception. The last event was held in September of this year raising \$5900 dollars. All proceeds raised went to three charities having suicide prevention programs. These charities were Anchor Point, Active Minds and the Butler Veterans Administration. Additionally, the program received donations from local businesses, including John Marshall and local police.

Amy Aguglia, an active member of the community and Marshall's friend, said, "John has a deep conviction trying to help those people who contemplate suicide as a solution to their problems." "He does an amazing job in the community and hopefully the concept of the program can be imitated by other locations," Aguglia added.

On May 30, USA Today published the article "Youth suicide rates are rising. Schools and the internet may to be blame." According to the newspaper, bullying is known to be connected to

COMMUNITY

Marshall argues that parents are partly responsible for putting pressure on their children. He said, "Parents want their kids to be the best in everything regardless of the pressure that this creates in their lives. Because of their age, many do not have the coping mechanisms to deal with these pressures. In the end, they see suicide as a simple solution to their problems."

It is difficult to determinate if the program has helped reduce the rate of suicide. Marshall believes, however, that creating an awareness in the community is a start. "It is an opportunity to work as a group to gather together for the wellness of our neighbors," he added.



COMMUNITY

Plum Woman Raises Money for Dog Park

*By: Melissa Braun
Contributing Writer*

PLUM, Pa. - A local Plum Borough woman is catching the attention of many locals with her work for a new dog park in her area. Allison Wade, age 27, is a native of Plum Borough who recently moved back in 2016 after living in the city of Pittsburgh.

Once settling in with her husband, Andrew Wade, and their dog, Apollo, Wade made a realization that her local area lacked a safe place for her dog to run around off-leash.

Her previous home in the city had local dog parks that she would bring Apollo to, and Wade credits the parks with assisting with the development of Apollo's social skills. This epiphany led Wade to the idea that Plum Borough should have a dog park, too.

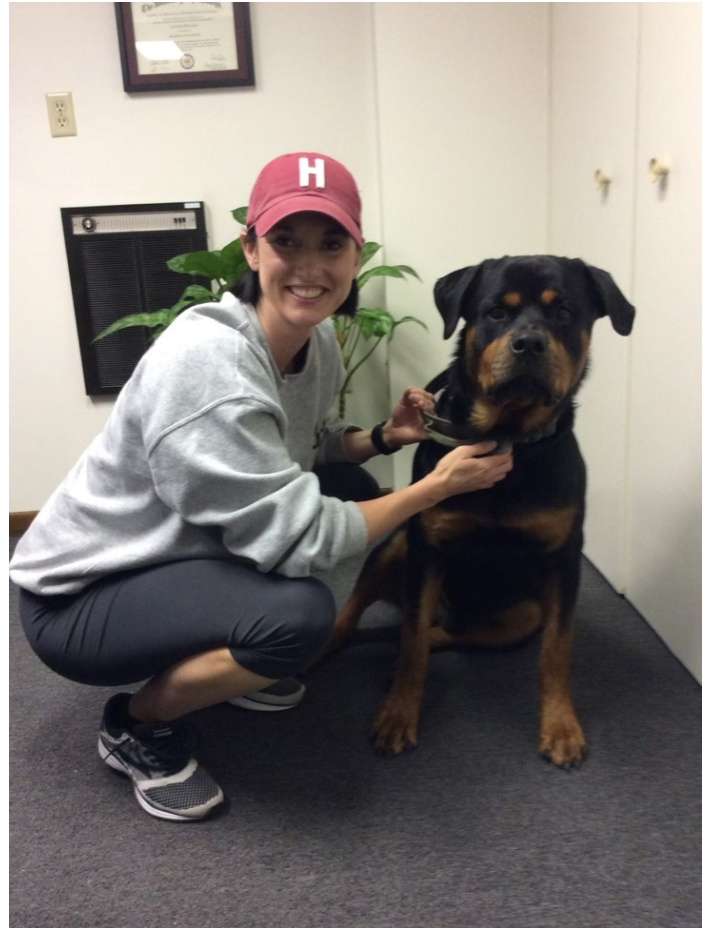
"I just reached out to the borough and asked who I needed to talk to and I happened to know the park director," Wade said, she was then told to gauge how much interest there was behind her proposal.

In order to do this, Wade created a public Facebook group, which has now grown to 1,300 followers.

After seeing the high interest in the dog park, Wade said, "There's enough people who want this, so I'm just going to do it."

Through fundraising and attending board meetings, Wade has caught the attention of quite a few people. The *Trib Live* and *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* have both featured her in their articles detailing her work towards the dog park.

Her family and friends have also been very supportive of her work for the proposal. Her husband, Andrew, described her as a focused individual and said, "If she likes something or wants something, she's kind of a go-getter." He also said that she's very action oriented and is a dog lover to an extreme.



Allison and her dog Apollo.
(photo courtesy of Melissa Braun)

COMMUNITY

Jeremiah Rowe, a close friend to the Wades, said how passionate Wade has been about this project and said, “This is a very genuine project that she’s working on and she genuinely wants to make a positive impact on the area.”

In response to so much positivity and support, Wade said, “I felt kind of more encouraged to keep pursuing it because I really felt that there was a need.”

Not only is the public on board, but so is Plum Borough’s council. Wade said, “The borough feels like the park is a go for this spring,” however, there is no set date.

Wade plans to raise \$25,000 for the project and has \$8,000 as of Oct. 5. Wade said, “I just picked a number that I felt confident in raising,” and hopes to reach out to more businesses for donations. A group of accounting students from the University of Pittsburgh have also reached out to Wade and offered to help her find grants as part of one of their projects for their accounting class.

Wade also balances the project with multiple other jobs, one of which is working as a registered dietitian at Case Specific Nutrition located in Penn Hills.


“There’s been times where I didn’t realize quite what I was getting into,” Wade said, but adds that her flexible work schedule allows her to juggle things pretty well.

Throughout the whole process, Wade discovered that the project would involve more than just setting up a chain-link fence.

“I’ve learned it’s a lot of work and takes a lot of time,” Wade said.

Wade also said that anyone can do exactly what she is doing in their own community.

“If it’s something you’re interested in, at least bring it up, whether it’s Facebook or some other kind of platform where you can gauge interest, find out if there’s actually a need, do research on the area,” Wade said. “If there are enough people who are passionate about something and you feel like it could be beneficial to the community then I say it’s worth going to a council meeting or reaching out to the borough or town or wherever you live and just finding out what kind of steps you need to take to do it.”



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SPORTS

He Scores!

Hometown broadcaster Steve Mears lands his “dream job” with Penguins.

By: Scott Sinclair
Staff Writer

PITTSBURGH, Pa.- This hockey season a new voice will be providing play-by-play for the Pittsburgh Penguins on AT&T Sports Network. Murrysville native Steve Mears takes the microphone last held by Paul Steigerwald.

Mears, a Franklin Regional High School and Bowling Green University alumnus, joins the Pens after five years at the NHL Network where he co-hosted the afternoon show “NHL Now.”

Mears spoke in an exclusive interview with the *Nittany Pride* about his education, some prominent Pittsburgh sports icons who helped along the way, and the future of sports broadcast media as more online streaming content become more available to the viewing consumer. He also took the time to talk some hockey, as the Penguins begin the 2017-18 season.

Mears was asked to outline the genesis of his professional broadcasting career after college. “My first job after Bowling Green was in Shreveport Louisiana,” Mears said, “I did play by play for the Shreveport Mud Bugs in the Central Hockey League.”

“My next job was with the New York Islanders for four years,” Mears continued, “There I learned a lot about hockey as a business, broadcasting was just a small part of the job.”

After his time with the Islanders, Mears returned home to Pittsburgh where he worked for the Penguins on Penguins radio and “Pens TV” as an analyst on both platforms. His time in Pittsburgh for that chapter only lasted for 3 years before taking the job with the NHL Network.

Mears spoke about some of the times in his youth when, either for school projects or just because of his passion for the Penguins, he made efforts to speak to local sports broadcasting icons. “I was doing a project for school,” Mears said, “I needed a professional quote for a project on hockey and the Penguins media guide had a listing for ‘Bob Pompeani, KDKA sport office’ and a number, so I called it.”

“I expected to go through like 10 secretaries before I got to anyone,” Mears said, “But I called at around seven or eight o’clock, and the voice said ‘Hello, this is Bob Pompeani.’ I was trying to



Steve Mears, the new voice of the Penguins for the AT&T Sports Network.
(Photo Courtesy of Goggle Images)

SPORTS

Mears then spoke about a story he was telling Stan Savran on the pre-game of his first game as a Penguins broadcaster this season. Savran, a longtime veteran sports broadcaster in Pittsburgh, hosted “Sportsbeat” an iconic local sports call-in show. “As a kid I would call into ‘Sportsbeat’ and offer up some kind of offbeat scenario about who the Pens should trade for,” Mears said, “Stan and Guy [Junker, Savran’s cohost] would answer my questions and were very gracious about it.”

Mears went on to say that he would record these shows with his VCR knowing he would be on them. He also admitted having a bout of the nerves when he did call in.

When that pre-game banter ended with Savran, Mears prepared to call his first game with the Penguins. This turned out to be a 10-1 thrashing at the hand of the Chicago Blackhawks; when asked how a broadcaster fills air time and tries to maintain an audience in such a lopsided contest, Mears explained that especially early in the season this can actually be a bit of a blessing. “It becomes a talk show with a game going on in the background,” Mears said, “it’s actually a good time to introduce new players and provide some prospects for the year.”

“Everyone knew this wasn’t the Penguins,” Mears continued, “They are much better than that, but we do our best to provide the commentary that matches the game energy, be it super close and exciting or sometimes more subdued [in a lopsided game].”

The next question concerned the ability of professional level broadcasters to accurately follow the action of an NHL hockey game. “Most broadcasters follow the live action; the game is too fast to use the monitors.” Mears continued, “The monitors do come into play when we are attempting to explain a replay, because that is what the audience sees on TV.” Also, Mears went on to explain the role of picking up subtle game details is left to Penguins former player and veteran color commentator, Bob Errey. Mears says Errey’s experience as a former player helps him pick up details that may be missed by the audience or even Mears himself.

Mears feels as if there is little to no threat of streaming type services taking over for the current TV broadcast format. He feels that pro sports television contracts are too valuable to teams and the consumer enjoys the thought of seeing the signature announce team, and all the new camera technology and production truck technology at work. Mears feels highlight shows and commentary type shows work on streaming platforms, where game broadcasts do not.

As for the Penguins team itself, Mears touched base on a few Penguins topics for the 2017-18 season. As to Conner Sheary, Pens winger; “Sheary wasn’t happy with last year’s two goal performance,” Mears said, “But he had an excellent training camp and is ready to perform in a more expanded role.” Mears also expects big things out of Bryan Rust and Jake Guentzel, adding about Guentzel, “No stage is too big for him, all he does is score and it wasn’t just because he played alongside Sidney Crosby, he thrived in a lot of different situations.”

This season also marks the return from injury of Kris Letang, “He is one of the greatest skaters I have ever seen,” Mears said, “But the coaching staff is stressing to him not to force plays and let the game come to him in terms of his defensive play; and playing this smarter game will cut down on the potential for injury.”

Mears also characterized the offseason acquisitions by General Manager Jim Rutherford as very smart. He would prefer to see a larger sample size before declaring an overall success, but he

SPORTS

He did pass on the sentiment that many players feel as they aren't truly part of a team until they have some kind of impact on a game. New arrival Ryan Reaves made just such an impact by both scoring a goal and standing up for his teammates with his skills with his fists.

“Third line center Greg Mckegg also made an impact on the Pens with his first goal. Goaltender Antti Niemi should find his groove as the backup to Matt Murray.” Mears said

Now is the time for Penguin fans to sit back and enjoy the team's run to try to capture a third consecutive Stanley Cup, taking a moment to enjoy and get to know all of the new additions to the team both on the ice and in the broadcast booth.



Sinclair (left, in goal) faces off against Mears in their weekly pick-up game.

(Photo Courtesy of Scott Sinclair)

Don't Forget to Check Us Out
ONLINE!

Nittanypride.wordpress.com

EDITORIAL

Money, Oil, and Politics: a Nexus

*By: Nathan Traini
Managing and Online Editor*

What does the future hold? What will America be like in 10, 20, or even 100 years from now? What would we want it to be like and how do we get there? These questions are very difficult to answer but one thing everyone agrees on is that if we are to have a society that functions with the majority's interest at heart we will have to throw out our current political system. Whatever future you envision, a Star Trek or George Jetson like future requires action in a political direction. The energy we use, the money we spend, and the people we elect no longer serve humanity as an assisting force.

Why? Our monetary system is tied to the energy most of the world uses, oil. They don't call U.S. currency the petrodollar for nothing. The world mostly trades oil in U.S. dollars because the dollar is a global currency that all other nations tie their monetary system to, according to Georgetown University. Each government procures enough oil/gas to refine and use to sustain their societies. For example, the Japanese government can't really buy large quantities of oil that it needs unless it converts its yen into dollars. After the conversion is done they are left with less than they started to buy the oil. This leads us to the financial system. The energy we use and the money we use to buy it with are linked very tightly. Since the value of the main global currency is tied to oil, the whole world is linked to oil. When the value of oil falls, so does the value of the dollar along with the rest of the world's monetary value.

This isn't the best system to have. One doesn't need to go into complex economic equations to figure what the implications of an energy/financial system such as ours entails. Our national interests have shifted from the people to oil/money. Whenever you hear government officials saying it is in our national interest to fight a country in the middle east, which poses no direct threat, go on opensecrets.org and see if they have large donations from oil and gas companies. We all know why we are in the middle east and why we are friends with Saudi Arabia. The reason isn't because we love democracy and want the same for the people of the middle east. We want to continue control over the world's oil supply.

I almost don't want to use 'we' when talking about how the U.S. conducts foreign policy. The people of this country don't have much of a say whether or not the country goes to war. We elect people from Woodrow Wilson to Barack Obama who promise to keep us out of war or dial our war machine back but when in office, turn around and do the exact opposite.

Money does make the world go round in a figurative sense. Without a massive amount of money, a person who genuinely wants to represent the people from his community on the national level, won't ever make it. The people who take the money to get to that level are compromised. With that money comes strings attached, because nothing in life is free, it either costs precious time or resources - usually valued in dollars. We the people must be the only ones that are represented, not businesses. If there's a decision between allowing a company to do something and the public's health, it goes without saying that the people's health should take precedent. Our energy system shows that notion to be false because we can be 100% off of polluting fuels in 10 years but there's no political will for it. The reason is easily seen by looking at congress's approval rating. If we lived in a true representative democracy then over 80% of Americans wouldn't disapprove of congress, according to Gallup Polls.

EDITORIAL

Let's put it this way. What if the Baltimore Ravens offered to pay a majority of Steelers' team members double their salary after they leave the NFL to throw the game whenever the two teams played? People would hate the Steelers and the Ravens. Imagine that the Ravens mounted a huge public relations campaign that convinced people the Steelers lost because they are incompetent and unorganized and buried the fact that they bought off the Steelers. People would only hate the Steelers. Imagine further that the Ravens got ahold of the recruiting department of the Steelers and only drafted people below 5 foot and less than 150 lbs. The Steelers would get decimated by the Ravens for the foreseeable future. The Steelers are the government and the Ravens are large corporations in this example. It is crude and simplified but that is how our government functions, from our elections (recruiting) to how people see the government (public relations campaign) and to the monetary quid pro quo.

Although the Supreme Court would like to say money=speech, according to oyez.org there is a fundamentally unconstitutional idea behind that notion. That notion is, people with money deserve to be heard more than people without. Say you have no money, then you essentially have no right to speak. You can speak but you can't buy airtime in radio or television for a large group to hear it. Heck, you can't even buy a megaphone. Saying money is speech then obviously stops people with none from being heard. It also says that corporations have the same protections as people under the first amendment effectively making a corporation a person with constitutional rights.

One thing that President Kennedy said was, "we chose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard," according to JFK's presidential library. We shouldn't do things just because they are hard but because they help our race, the human race, to further our existence and knowledge of this universe. Those things that we work toward that help all of humanity are those hard things. To do things for the betterment of all and not use technological or scientific advancements in general to further oneself is that hard thing. That is what I believe JFK meant when he made that speech over 55 years ago. Look at how few times that hard thing was done.

Many of the inventions made by scientists at public universities or the government itself have been used to make profits instead of public use. I am not against capitalism, I am against the usage of publicly funded inventions for private profit. How can anyone find it acceptable that we payed for the invention of automation but it seems it will take all of our jobs and leave us with nothing? How can we sit idly by as advancements in medicine are used to make drugs that everyone else in the world pays half price for and leave us with more side effects than cures?

What does this system mean for the next generation? The plundering of Earth's resources through the flattening of forests, mining of materials, and burning of oil leaves little hope for our children's future. We are essentially robbing the cradle of our children. We must realize the implications of our actions as a society, that is one of the challenges we all face. To deal with this cradle robbery before it endangers humanity, is the call to action.

Our energy system is controlled by the wealthiest people on the planet. With wealth comes the power to keep your wealth. Imagine, for argument's sake, that a device came along that would power your home with a one time purchase. The wealthy people who control the energy system wouldn't be all that thrilled about a product like that. Sure, they can make money from it if they bought the patent. But, would it be the amount they are making now? Decidedly not.

EDITORIAL

I don't subscribe to conspiracy theories but wouldn't it be logical for huge oil companies, some of the largest and richest organizations to ever exist, to buy up alternative energy devices and shelve them so they could continue the status quo?

That situation actually happened at least once. Nikola Tesla, the man who discovered electronic remote control, the first person to conceive of the internet and Wifi ran into big oil while building his WardenClyffe Tower. The tower reportedly would transfer wireless power to be used at any location, according to PBS. J.P. Morgan, the one funding Tesla's tower, shut down the project after learning he couldn't put a meter on it. Morgan couldn't continue to make money after he sold the receiving device so he scraped an idea that could have revolutionized our society much like computers have done for us in the 21st century.

A 'choice', like Kennedy said, is before us now. We as a country can chose to be cynical and watch as a few people buy and control our government. Or, we can all act against the powers that be and get big money out of politics through mass protests and demonstrations of peaceful resistance. Use that power then to demand an amendment to the constitution saying that only individuals can donate to a politicians and make any donation from a corporation punishable by removal from office. That one action would put this society on a path of discovery and progress. Our representatives wouldn't be inclined to send our sons and daughters off to fight wars over a resource that hurts us more than it helps. We could use the money used to spend on war and spend it on advancements in energy, medicine, farming, architecture, chemistry, physics, and space exploration.

We live on spaceship Earth. A finite planet with finite resources. We cannot continue as if the planet we live on is forever bountiful. We must create new forms of energy and technology that help up move away from dirty energy forms and increase our efficiency of resource usage and recycling. We all need to do this, if not for ourselves then for our children and future generations. Through this endeavor, humanity as a whole, can be something it never was completely, free and independent.

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EDITORIAL

The Over-Sexualization of Women's Halloween Costumes is Anti-Feminist

By: Kierstin Flickinger and Broderick Gerano
Staff Writers

A few weeks before Halloween, we walked into our local Spirit Halloween store in preparation for our favorite holiday. The costume idea that we had in mind was simple: a standard doctor and nurse combo. Searching for a doctor's outfit was easy, but finding a nurse's costume was disheartening. Kierstin left the store basically in tears, and we went on a new search for Halloween costumes. She ended up making her costume by herself for the fourth year in a row. The longest garment that we found was barely mid-thigh.

In fact, almost every costume targeted to young adult women was similarly made: less fabric for more money. They tended to be barely below the rear and cut deeply in the front. A priest's costume was typical of a real priest, while a nun's outfit portrayed a much less realistic appearance, sporting the name 'Naughty Nun.' A male police officer earned a badge and a hat; a female officer earned fishnet stockings and three-fifths of a top. Four female police officer costumes were called 'Deputy Patdown', 'Sexy Skirted Cop', 'Anita Bribe', and 'Busting Babe Cop.' The name for the lone male cop costume? It was 'Adult Sergeant.'

So, where did this disparity begin? According to an article from the Huffington Post, advertising for Halloween through the 80s primarily targeted children. Costumes were of generic ghosts, witches, zombies, and the like. Parents bought or made costumes for their kids, the children went out for candy, and that was about it.

That article went on to say that around the year 2000, marketers began to push into a new market: young adults. Here was a potential demographic largely left out of costume sales due to the fact that they weren't trick-or-treating as much, but as Halloween parties for this age group became increasingly common, a huge return could be made. In fact, the average amount of money spent on Halloween has largely increased. According to the National Retail Federation, the amount of money spent on Halloween since 2005 has increased by about \$5.8 billion.

Why has the move into more sexually-suggestive costume sales tactic worked? Though the answer to this is largely complicated, a series of factors are probably all responsible. Could it be social pressures, that our friends are purchasing these for parties, so we should, too? Could it be advertising gimmicks, convincing us that these are good and enjoyable to wear? Could it be general misogyny, telling young girls that this is what it means to be desirable, and is how they should want to look? Or could it be some other factor altogether?



"Junior's" Halloween Costume.

(Photo Courtesy of Google Images)

EDITORIAL

A nod toward a more feminist world would begin with acknowledging that women have many different preferences on how much skin they would like to show at any given time. However, modern day costume selections do not even allow for women to get this kind of choice when selecting their Halloween costumes. How are we, as a nation, supposed to end misogyny when there are 'sexy' versions of Disney Princess costumes being sold? At this point, it seems almost impossible to empower women because the female superheroes are wearing costumes (on the big screen, only made worse by Halloween costumes) that the average girl could not wear to school, while boys get to wear their superhero costumes without an issue.



Roll over image to zoom in

Amazon
Amscan Junior's Locked 'N Loaded Cop Halloween Costume
★★★★☆ 12 customer reviews
Price: \$31.38 - \$161.17
Sale: Lower price available on select options
Size:
Select Size Chart
- PACKAGE CONTENTS - This costume includes everything you need to take control of justice including police officer dress, hat, gloves, belt, and footless fishnet tights. Throw on your favorite combat boots and you'll be ready to take charge.
- SOUND THE ALARM - If you're looking to push the envelope this Halloween, this is the costume for you. Show your power in this saucy little dress. Everyone will sure to stop when they see you like you're pulling them over.
- GET THE GROUP TOGETHER - Get all your friends in their own cop costumes this Halloween and have the rest dress up in their prison gear for a hilarious Halloween costume or a fun new way to play cops and robbers.
- DRESS UP ALL YEAR - This costume is ideal for Halloween, but you can use it year round for role playing, cos playing, fun dress up, or for those moments when you need to add a little bit of authority to your life. Whatever the occasion, take charge in this awesome outfit.
- QUALITY CONSTRUCTION - Everyone is tired of those costumes that barely last one wear. Invest in a costume that will provide you with enough wear for all of your Halloween parties or adventurous nights. This costume is constructed to allow you to keep everyone in line for a long time.
Report incorrect product information.
SILVERRAINSTUDIO (15006)
Scary Mary Bones and Roses Tattoo Sleeves
+ Show more
Skeleton Tattoo Sleeves with anatomical roses
\$15.99 prime
All feedback

Another example of a “juniors” costume.
(Photo Courtesy of Amazon.com)

Another issue comes when women are shamed for wearing these costumes labeled as 'sexy', 'naughty', or 'fun.' Females should be able to leave their homes on Halloween feeling happy and confident about their costumes like males are able to. Instead, there are the worries that they'll be called a “slut” and have to spend the entire night out either pulling their costume down or up because they feel exposed and embarrassed. On Halloween, women want to be looked at for the creativity/complexity/hilarity of their costumes, just like men. Unfortunately, they become objects in the eyes of others once again.

This progression towards sexualized costumes has a major issue that deals with the original intended audience for Halloween costumes: children. Younger audiences who now plan to purchase a costume get a much more concerning choice than prior to this move. A search on Amazon, one of the leading online sales companies in the United States, for the phrase “teen girl costume” demonstrates some disgusting images. The third result is a “junior's” cop halloween costume, complete with “footless fishnet tights” and a “flared skirt” roughly half the length of the thigh. One reviewer noted her mother made her wear tights because her mother thought fishnets were inappropriate for a middle-school girl; thank goodness somebody thought about this.

Another result is for a Red Riding Hood Costume, marketed towards “tweens.” This option provides a skirt that ends approximately 4 inches below the waist. For those who may protest that “tweens” may be some kind of error and the costume is aimed towards an older audience, the advertising recommends the wearer to be “10-15 years” old. A ten-year old wearing a skirt ending closer to their waist than their knees is a disgusting result of this market's push towards a more adult audience.

We need to start pushing for equality for women in many more ways than just Halloween costumes. But for the sake of future generations, this country needs to stop teaching young girls that they should get used to being sexualized, and by making more gender-neutral costumes (or, at

CAMPUS LIFE

Attention students!

On Sunday, November 12th Dr. Adolph's Civic Engagement Class, in partnership with the Knead Café, is hosting a Game Day Tailgate at the Knead's location (1011 Barnes St, New Kensington PA, 15068). We will be viewing the Steelers versus the Colts game. Food and games will be provided. So, come on down and cheer on your favorite team or come down for some fun! If you are interested contact MAR5993@psu.edu.

Tickets are \$10



Just when you thought sangria season was over...

Apple Cider Sangria

Ingredients:

- 1 granny smith apple, sliced
- 1 reed delicious apple, sliced
- 1 golden delicious apple, sliced
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 1 orange, sliced
- 2 cups apple cider
- 2 bottles of ginger beer
- 1 bottle of white wine (optional)



(Photo from Delish.com)

Directions:

- Fill large pitcher with sliced fruit
- Add liquids
- Stir mixture
- Place equal parts fruit into serving glasses and pour liquid over the fruit

Derived from delish.com

Wine bottle hack...

Use your left-over wine bottle from making the sangria to make an adorable fall or Halloween centerpiece!! Get creative or make it simple, its all up to you! Add paints, lights, flowers, glitter or anything you desire.

