Montour hires new human resources director

Before Terri Testa was hired as Montour’s new human resources director, she worked in the healthcare industry for 20 years, including as director of human resources for Life Line Hospital in Wintersville, Ohio.

Testa says that a number of similarities exist between for-profit healthcare and public education human resources departments. For instance, both require conducting similar background checks and clearances for employees, as well as making sure stakeholders have the necessary training and tools to succeed. Ninety percent of the time, she says, that’s the key to keeping good people; that and having good managers.

“No only do you want to recruit good people, but you want to retain good people,” she says. “Set high expectations, but also give them the tools to succeed. Make it a good place to work.”

Though in a public education setting the focus is first and foremost on the students, Testa says she’s looking forward to making Montour a good place for everybody.

“Whether you’re the custodian, or the person paying the bills or teaching the student, we all have an equal part in what goes on in the district,” she says. “Everybody is a piece of the puzzle.”

Prior to working for Life Line, Testa worked for Bell South, and prior to that she volunteered with Lutheran Affiliated Services in Cranberry Township. After graduating from Gannon University, she interned with Erie County.

Moving forward, she says she’d like to see more of the kind of marketing she’s seen in private industry.

“We’ve got a lot of good things going on here. I think we need to brag about that,” she says. “When I worked for a Fortune 100 company, Bell South, there’s always a lot of marketing going on and getting your name out there and being in the spotlight. I’d like to see us moving in that direction.”

Testa has also taught performance management as an independent contractor at Penn State University and Westmoreland Community College. She is currently earning an MBA through Robert Morris University. She lives in Moon with her husband, Jerry, and their son, Anthony. Their daughter, Jennifer, is an honors college student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Kaitlyn Cruny receives KDKA Extra Effort Award

On Feb. 11, KDKA sports anchor Bob Pompeani visited Montour to recognize senior Kaitlin Cruny with a KDKA Extra Effort Award. A segment on the visit, featuring a fired-up Montour student crowd, as well as an interview and profile of Cruny, subsequently aired on KDKA-TV on Feb. 19.

The segment cited a number of Cruny’s achievements, including obtaining a 4.09 grade point average, competing on the school’s cross country and swimming teams, participating in four school clubs, and volunteering at a food bank and homeless shelter. Last October, Cruny placed 25th in the WPIAL Cross Country Championship, qualifying her to compete in the PIAA statewide meet.

Pompeani says the station receives nominations from across the region, and though nominees must participate in a sport, they are awarded based on academic success and volunteer work.

“What they represent is leadership, and that carries over into other aspects of life,” he says.

As part of the award, Cruny received a $200 check from Allegheny Health Network. During the award presentation, she thanked her parents and teachers for helping her to succeed.

By focusing on the positive achievements of Cruny and students like her, Pompeani says the award helps reinforce the notion that not all young people are like those who end up as the subject of negative news.

“I think it’s important to give young people who do well some notoriety as opposed to just the ones who don’t do well,” he says, “who you read about in headlines.”

Pompeani says he believes this visit marked his sixth to Montour.
Remembering Nucci and Finny

During an emotional ceremony prior to Montour’s home game against South Fayette Jan. 30, Montour revealed that the retired, framed jerseys of Brandon “Nucci” Chiarelli and Brian “Finny” Finnegan had been moved into the arena area of the Montour Athletic Center.

Fourteen years ago, Chiarelli and Finnegan passed away in a tragic car accident while en route to the final championship basketball game of the season. For the past five years, Montour has held an annual Nucci-Finny Tribute Game in their memory, helping transform the tragic into something positive by raising awareness of the Nucci-Finny Scholarship Fund.

Created in their memory, the scholarship as of Jan. 30 had raised $140,000 for college-bound, graduating seniors from Montour. Money has been raised in part by the Montour Association of Marketing and Advertising. Through an annual two-on-two tournament, MAMA has raised $5,500 for the fund.

This year, MAMA students Josh Randall, Amanda Bruscemi and Jaime Ramirez arranged for a special tribute to Chiarelli and Finnegan. After pregame remarks from Chiarelli and Finnegan’s parents, students unveiled framed jerseys bearing their names and numbers hanging in the athletic center.

“The loss of Brandon and Brian causes daily, devastating heartbreak,” says Jamie, “but the overwhelmingly amazing support we receive from the Montour School District community is beyond any words. Our friends, family, school district, administration, staff, and most importantly our students continually keep the memories of our sons at the forefront. It is so greatly appreciated.”

MAMA instructor April Fisher says that the fund has been a priority for the class since MAMA’s inception.

“When MAMA was created five years ago, one of the first things that the students wanted to do was contribute to the Nucci-Finny scholarship,” says Fisher. “I believe this is a testament to the impact that Mrs. Jamie Chiarelli has made upon not only our students but the community. This tragic event has affected many people, and we have great students who want to continue to honor their memories.”

Donations to the Nucci-Finny Scholarship Fund can be made at any PNC Bank branch.

Senior project battles childhood cancer

Senior Isabel Scrabis held a charity ice skating event to benefit the Hope for Boo Foundation on Dec. 20 at the Robert Morris University Island Sports Center.

Scrabis held the event as part of her senior project, which seniors fulfill in order to graduate. That was not the only reason Scrabis held the event, however. The primary impetus behind the event is a special friendship she formed with Meredith Berman, who is the inspiration behind the Hope for Boo Foundation.

The foundation was created in May of 2009 when Meredith was diagnosed at age 3 with neuroblastoma. The Berman family started the Hope for Boo Foundation with a mission to raise money and awareness of childhood cancer, support families struggling with the financial burdens endured during the fight against childhood cancer, and to support research to discover new treatments and cures for neuroblastoma and all childhood cancers.

Happily, even though Meredith was diagnosed with stage four neuroblastoma, she battled the disease and won. Today, she is a happy, energetic 8 year old who loves cheerleading, golfing, ice skating, reading, riding her bike, mermaids and fashion.

Scrabis says she thanks her family, friends, several local businesses and the community for helping to make her senior project a success. The event raised over $1,500 from ticket sales, monetary donations and a Chinese auction.

Scrabis said, “I was so happy to have raised this amount of money from the ice skating event. On Christmas morning, I went with the Berman family to Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh with a basket of gift cards and a small gift for each child staying on the oncology/bone marrow transplant ward. We also provided a nice breakfast for the families that morning.

“Also with the money raised, I have purchased gift cards for two children in the community who are battling cancer. The rest of the money will be used at the foundation’s choosing.”

She says she hopes to make the Hope for Boo ice skating fundraiser an annual event and plans to turn over the reins to her and Meredith’s sister while she attends college. Scrabis plans to attend either the University of Pittsburgh or Ohio State University and major in psychology. Whichever school she chooses, she hopes to be selected for its choir.

Scrabis is an active member of the Montour National Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, Honors Choir, Interact, Special Olympics, Hidden Angels, Student Council, and the high school musical.

Donations to the HFBF can be sent to: Hope for Boo Foundation, 4372 Duckhorn Drive, Moon Township, PA 15108.
Senior project results in benefit rock concert

It’s been the dream of many aspiring young musicians to put on a rock show featuring their own band. Few, though, get the keys to a multi-million dollar facility with state-of-the-art sound and lighting equipment to do so, or can write off the experience as a school project.

Senior Amer Cehic got to do both of those, however, when on Feb. 20 he put on a show with Quaker Valley sophomore Rocco Grimaldi at the Montour Athletic Center. Cehic helped organize the show, which featured five local acts, as part of his applied learning project. A member of the Montour concert and jazz bands, as well as an AP music theory student, Cehic had never put on a show so the process made for an all around learning experience.

“I definitely learned more about the business end,” says Cehic.

Cehic said he was introduced to Grimaldi by high school principal Todd Price after Grimaldi approached Montour about hosting a show. Grimaldi’s other connection to Montour was through Ryan Heitzenrater, who Grimaldi got to know by playing ice hockey. In February of 2013, Heitzenrater, a Montour freshman, passed away after contracting an aggressive infection.

“Rocco knew the Heitzenrater family, so he had already decided to make his graduation project a benefit for the Heitz 61 foundation,” says Cehic.

Founded in Heitzenrater’s memory, the foundation awarded its first scholarship last year. Grimaldi and Cehic agreed to split the proceeds between the foundation and Cehic’s charity of choice, the Palestine Children’s Relief Fund. Proceeds from the show were raised through $10 ticket sales, as well as sales at the athletic center’s concession stand.

Entitled “Rockin’ for Ryan and Relief,” the concert included classic rock covers by Grimaldi’s band, Roccon, followed by a solo acoustic act by 2010 Montour graduate Tina Black. Cehic’s band, Inculcation, followed up with a heavy metal set with Billy Cook, a recent PMEA Jazz Festival participant, on drums, 2014 Montour graduate Silas Minear on guitar and freshman Mitchell Bentley on bass. The Unfinished Side, made up of both high school and middle school students, entertained with some pop covers, while the Collisions closed out the evening.

The show was emceed by comedian Jason Clark. Videography student Nick Valeriano recorded the concert as part of his senior project.

Montour to perform “The Wedding Singer”

By Student Writer Lauren Windisch

Montour High School will go all the way back to 1985 in its musical production of “The Wedding Singer,” with over 70 cast and 50 crew members. The musical focuses on Robbie Hart, a rock star wannabe who sings hits of the 1980s at a local New Jersey banquet hall. Disaster strikes, though, during Robbie’s own wedding to his fiancée, Linda.

“The Wedding Singer” not only goes back in time, but also in three new directions. Ryan Collins, Nick Stamatakis and Brian Corey are all replacing longtime director Tammy Townsend. Along with husband Zach Wyatt, Tammy worked continually with the Montour Musical Board to find a staff with energy, enthusiasm and dedication.

Collins, a 2008 Montour graduate, started performing while at David E. Williams Middle School and followed his passion throughout high school and on into college. In 2011, while a junior in college, Ryan was an assistant director in DEW’s production of “Seussical Jr.”

Musical director Nicholas Stamatakis, Montour class of 2009, began working with last year’s Montour High School musical “How Sweet It Was.” Offered the opportunity to do it again, he accepted, saying that students are “very enthusiastic and committed to the show.”

Choreographer Brian Corey originally started his journey at Montour in 2009, instructing dancers for the DEW production of “Bugsy Malone.” He came back again the following year to choreograph “Thoroughly Modern Millie.” Brian said, “I have never had the opportunity to do this show and I probably will never get to do this show again.”

All performances of “The Wedding Singer” will take place in the Montour High School auditorium. Evening performances start at 7:30 p.m. on April 17 and 18. Additional evening performances will take place at the same time April 23, 24 and 25. A matinee show will be held April 19 at 2 p.m.

For more information about show times and tickets, visit www.montourmusical.com.
Two more on Academic Games team heading to nationals

On Jan. 7, the Academic Games Team added to an already record-setting number of national qualifiers after a game of propaganda at Seneca Valley Middle School. There, Sahara Moses qualified for the Academic Games Leagues of America National Tournament, to be held April 24-27 in Orlando, Florida. Sam Stewart also qualified for a second time this academic year.

The two join seven Montour students already slated to compete at the national level: Kate Vith, Ryan Finn, Lydia Miley, Rosh Bharthi, Jacob Devos, Keaton Bailey and Chelsianna Havko. Those seven set a school record for the number of qualifiers last October.

The team’s faculty advisor is history teacher Michael Philips, who also advised last year’s team, which had five students compete at the national level. Three finished in the top 20 in their respective subjects. Among those qualifiers were Sahara and Sam, who have qualified for the second consecutive year.

In the academic games, students attempt to outthink each other in a range of games that encompass mathematics, language arts and social studies.

Spartan Spirit Breakfast series recognizes student accomplishments

By Jillian Wilcox

A special breakfast was held Jan. 9 to acknowledge select high school students for extra effort and “Spartan spirit.” Assistant principal William King spoke to students before breakfast was served in the cafeteria to show appreciation and thank students for their efforts.

Students from each grade level were selected to attend and receive the extra effort award, with one from each grade selected as student of the month. Several from each grade were nominated by teachers for the Spartan Spirit award, which recognizes a variety of accomplishments. Improvement and hard work, as well as students who prove to be encouraging and good examples to others, were recognized. Some were nominated for their overall helpfulness in the classroom.

“It could have been something as simple as helping another student,” King said.

Attendees enjoyed a break from class to enjoy fresh breakfast items like eggs, French toast and fruit arranged by The Nutrition Group Food Service Director Kevin Leninsky.

Sixth grade mystery Skype

By Student Writers Natalina Didesiderio and Marisa Capline

On Dec. 11, Melissa Palmer’s class at David E. Williams Middle School Skyped Limestone Middle School in Limestone, Ontario. DEW sixth graders video chatted with a seventh grade class that, they learned, likes ketchup chips. The class learned much about Canada, including that they put maple syrup on snow and eat it as a snack. They even shared that some students watch broadcasts of the NFL. DEW sixth graders thought that this was pretty interesting.

The day that DEW students Skyped, Limestone had received three to four inches of snow, while students at DEW had none at all! Temperatures, however, were almost exactly same.

As part of the lesson, DEW students had to figure out where the students they were chatting with lived. Students asked their counterparts in Ontario questions - mostly the “yes or no” type - while looking up places in Canada that matched the clues. DEW students used iPads and maps to do so.

Over 80 middle school band students from eight local school districts came together Feb. 7 for the 17th annual Western Allegheny County Middle School Honors Band Festival at Sto-Rox High School. Among them were nine DEW students studying under music teacher Robert Roehn.

Nine DEW students participate in honors band festival

Nine DEW students were chosen to participate in the 17th annual Western Allegheny County Middle School Honors Band Festival on Feb. 7. They are (back row) Delaney Taylor, Ghalia Malki, Lauren Harrison, Holly Goodwin, Alexandra Mannino and Renee Benigni; (front row) Carline Dischner David Cross and Mackenzie Pifko.

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Once DEW students figured out where the Ontario students lived, the classes exchanged questions such as, “Do you watch ‘Vines’?” or “Have you ever heard of coleslaw and fries on a sandwich?” Both classes laughed when the other replied with “ew” or “gross!”

Life in America, specifically Pennsylvania, is very different than in Canada. DEW students learned much via the Skype session. Palmer’s class had a great time and hopes to do it again. Hence, the class recommends trying a mystery Skype.
Adopt-A-Family Program

By Student Writer Alex Mannino

Every Christmas, David E. Williams Student Council sponsors several families in the Montour School District who may be struggling to make ends meet via its Adopt-a-Family program. Student Council asked the entire school to donate at least one dollar to the cause. Because of the generosity of students and staff, this year’s student council was able to sponsor six families. The money was used to buy gifts, food items, and other necessities to ensure that families could have a beautiful Christmas. Other groups, such as the seventh and eighth grade boys basketball team, held a foul shooting fundraiser that helped contribute over $1,000. Student Council contributed $1,000 as well. Student Council purchased presents with the money and assisted in wrapping them.

DEW also hosted a drawing to be an “Elf for a Day,” which allowed any student who donated a monetary amount to be entered into a drawing to help wrap presents with Student Council members. Students chosen were Sydney Krugel and Morgan Hayes. Overall, the fundraiser was successful, and Santa Claus and his elves were very pleased!

Beat the Winter Blues Week

By Student Writer Alex Mannino

During the week of Feb. 2, David E. Williams Student Council held a themed week, for which the entire school was challenged to “beat the winter blues!” Monday started off the week on a positive note, with Mood Monday. The day allowed students to dress in a color that reflected their mood.

Tuesday’s theme, “Twin Tuesday,” allowed students to dress alike with one of their friends. Wednesday’s theme was “Wild Wednesday.” Grades five through eight showed off their “wild” side by dressing in animal print.

Thursday was “Throwback Thursday.” Students “dressed to the nines” in “duds” from the past. Finally, concluding the week was Formal Friday, for which students donned their best attire.

By participating in the splendid week, students “beat the winter blues!”
DEW student-run project to compete in international environmental competition

Fifth grade gifted students from David E. Williams Middle School have been working diligently on environmentally-themed assignments for the Fairchild Challenge, which is specifically designed for students in grades six through eight. Students recently completed Challenge 3, entitled “ART,” which had them examining pollinator syndromes in western Pennsylvania. Students had to explain the service, or value, that the plant-pollinator relationship provides to the ecosystem in a 150-word essay. They also had to create a drawing depicting a specific pollinator relationship. DEW submitted three entries. One was completed by Suzy Safko, another by Dylan Sparkenbaugh, and another by Nicholas Zezza and Luke Smarra. A fourth project was completed by McKenna Robinson and Olivia Lyscik, whose project “Forget-Me-Not” received a special merit award.

Olivia and McKenna’s work will be submitted to the Global Challenge. For the first time, ten international and national institutions are participating in the competition. Students will be vying to be crowned international winners. Top drawings will be featured for online voting, which will be open from April 1 through 30. Winning entries of the Global Challenge will then be published in the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden magazine.

McKenna and Olivia’s submission also has a chance to be displayed at the Phipps Conservatory Center for Sustainable Landscapes gallery from May through the summer.

Elementary students square off in annual spelling bee

In November, Montour hosted its annual elementary spelling bee. The competition was held in the Montour High School auditorium, with third and fourth graders from Burkett and Forest Grove. Approximately 70 students experienced an extremely competitive spelling bee, with many advancing to semi-final and final rounds. Participants also gained an understanding of public speaking, poise and composure.

Third grade takes a ride on the Polar Express

During the week of Dec. 2, third graders at Burkett Elementary read “The Polar Express” by Chris Van Allsburg and completed accompanying activities. Throughout the week, students worked on summarizing the story, discussing new vocabulary, and relating the story to their own lives through writing. They enjoyed reading this holiday classic.

On Dec. 5, students then participated in a “Polar Express” party. Third graders dressed in their pajamas, watched the movie, and then with the help of parent volunteers, transformed the cafeteria into the “Polar Express” dining car. Students enjoyed hot cocoa and cookies. By the end of the day, they were able to compare and contrast the movie and book. The “Polar Express” experience helped students remember to truly “believe.”

Forest Grove gets a new book room

Because all children should be surrounded with a variety of rich text to become fully engaged readers, Forest Grove Elementary recently added a new book room with a leveled library. The leveled library contains over 500 unique titles, text types, genres and themes, along with over 3,000 books. Books are “leveled,” helping all students move through increasingly complex texts as they become more fluent readers. The books are designed to be utilized in small group instruction.

Along with the addition of the book room, Forest Grove faculty received professional development training to prepare to use the leveled books effectively in their classrooms. The training will help educators reach all learners as they become strategic, independent readers who love to read!

In the coming months, teachers will use the leveled books, in addition to the core reading program to teach comprehension, phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary and fluency. A wider range of genres and themes will be more motivating to students, as they will be exposed to topics they enjoy. This will help students become more independent and confident readers.

As Dr. Seuss wrote, “The more you read, the more things you will know. The more you learn, the more places you’ll go.” Forest Grove faculty hope to take students many places by fostering a love of reading through the addition of the leveled book room!
Zoo Day and Wellness Wednesday

The Nutrition Group has partnered with the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium, as well as with Reinhart Foodservice, to bring a fun and educational program to students. The Pittsburgh Zoo’s Zoomobile arrived at Burkett Elementary School on January 15 with four different animals. Rhiana the Porcupine, Magic the Macaw and two snakes named Madagascar and Glenda gave students a real treat! Zoo handlers explained the habitats animals live in and the types of food they like to eat. Students are often surprised to discover that these animals eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds. The discussion provides The Nutrition Group Program Director Michelle Marker the opportunity to explain to students that animals and humans alike need healthy foods to meet their dietary needs. Fourth grade teacher Linda Ewonce was brave enough to handle one of the snakes during the presentation.

Pajama Project is successful again

For the second consecutive year, the Forest Grove Elementary community collected pajamas between Thanksgiving and Christmas for the Pajama Program. The Pajama Program is a nonprofit organization that distributes new pajamas through local organizations to children in need of all ages, many of whom are hoping to be adopted. The organization has partnered with Scholastic Reading Club, which donates a book for each pair of pajamas collected. Since 2001, the Pajama Program has donated over one million pajamas and books to children nationwide.

This year at Forest Grove, the school exceeded the number of “PJs” that it collected last year. Forest Grove faculty are thankful and proud of students for such a successful project. The 676 pairs of pajamas collected are indicative of the spirit of giving that is alive and well at the school. Over $550 also was collected on the last day of the drive, which went toward purchasing more pajamas. A grand total of 710 pairs of pajamas and 710 books were distributed locally through Families Promise, The Bradley House, Light of Life Ministry and Sovereignty House, to name a few of the organizations.

Students at Forest Grove enjoyed a “PJ Day” on the last day of the drive, during which bedtime stories were read in all classrooms. Thanks to teacher Lauren Froelich, who organized the event, collaboration with the Montour Elementary PTA, and the generosity of Forest Grove students and families, the event was an enjoyable success.

Forest Grove Kindergarten Celebrates 100 Days of School

Anyone who walked into a kindergarten classroom on Feb. 4 likely would have been confused, since all of the students looked like they had aged overnight. Some had gray hair, reading glasses, wrinkles, and even canes. Students were actually just celebrating the 100th day of school and being 100 days smarter! There were many great costumes, and students enjoyed having the opportunity to participate in the event.

In the cafeteria, students were also reminded to eat healthy and try new things each month during The Nutrition Group’s “Wellness Wednesday” program. Wellness Wednesday has quickly become a popular, anticipated monthly event for students, teachers and administrators. Food service director Kevin Leninsky will offer a different item each month for students to try.

This month, students were asked to try a Mediterranean chickpea salad. Chickpeas, or garbanzo beans, are high in iron and dietary fiber, rich in vitamins and minerals, and low in fat. The salad recipe includes cucumbers, spinach, olive oil, lemon juice and garlic seasoning. Each student who tried a sample was given an “I tried something new today” sticker!

In addition to dressing up, students participated in fun and educational activities during the school day. They wrote about where they would like to go on their 100th birthday, and illustrated it. They also participated in 100th day math activities by counting out 100 items brought in from home and making a 100 chart.

At home, they constructed a project made from the digits in 100 and brought it in to share with the class. Fun was had by all who were happy to be 100 days smarter!
On Jan. 16, the Officer Phil Program visited Forest Grove Elementary School at the invitation of local law enforcement agencies. Students learned valuable safety lessons in a fun, entertaining and informative 30-minute live assembly.

Magic, games and ventriloquism were used with one of the program characters to engage the audience about subjects such as bike and sports safety, stranger danger, Internet safety, and other important concepts. Students were able to participate in the presentation by assisting in magic tricks, playing a “Jeopardy”-like game and responding to questions. Smiles and laughter indicated that students enjoyed the presentation while learning about vital safety issues.

To reinforce what children learned in the live presentation, each child received a grade-specific activity book and other interactive materials to work on at home with their families.

Forest Grove faculty and students appreciate the local law enforcement agencies that support and protect students, both at school and throughout the Montour communities of Robinson Township, Kennedy Township and Ingram. The school also appreciates their sponsorship of the Officer Phil Program.

Montour pre-K holds National Children’s Dental Health Month activities

Each February, the American Dental Association sponsors National Children’s Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of maintaining healthy teeth and gums.

On Feb. 9, Bradford School dental assistant students paid a visit to Erin Hric and Lynne Jones’ pre-K classes to talk about healthy teeth. Caitlin Valentine and Courtney Wuenschell spoke with students about the importance of brushing, flossing and visiting the dentist. Bradford students used a model to demonstrate proper brushing and flossing, and pre-K children were given a chance to show what they had learned. Students also viewed a short movie about Gina the Giraffe learning how to take good care of her teeth.

Teachers and students were pleased to have Bradford dental assistant students come to talk. Part of the pre-K program at Burkett Elementary involves learning about personal health, including eating healthy foods. A special “thanks” goes out to Valentine and Wuenschell for coming to Burkett Elementary to share the importance of oral health.

Montour pre-K celebrates 100 days of school!

Pre-K students at Burkett Elementary looked a little different Feb. 5, and way too old to be in pre-K.

The day included many special activities to celebrate the special day. Students and teachers celebrated being 100 days smarter by dressing as if they were 100 years old. There were creative costumes with gray hair and even wrinkles. In addition to dressing up, students participated in fun, educational activities throughout the school day. Children answered the question, “On your 100th birthday, where would you like to go?” They responded by dictating their answers and drawing a picture of their 100-year-old self. Students also participated in math activities, such as counting out 100 items for the classroom trail mix and filling “10’s” trays with various items.

The trail mix was shared with classmates at snack time. Everyone took some home while feeling happy and proud of themselves for being 100 days smarter.
Spartan Athletics News

Girls soccer team receives proclamation

The Kennedy Township Board of Supervisors honored the Montour girls soccer team with a proclamation Feb. 10. This past season, the team secured both its first playoff win in school history and the team’s first ever AA WPIAL championship.

Seventeen members of the team, along with head coach Lee Coughenour and assistant coach David Martz, attended to receive the proclamation. The proclamation reads, in part, “these accomplishments, including specifically the WPIAL championship... brought much pride and joy to the residents of the Montour School District, and, in particular, to the team members, families, neighbors and friends that reside in Kennedy Township.”

The proclamation also names Feb. 13, 2015 as Montour Girls Soccer Day.

After wrapping up their impressive regular season, the team upended perennial WPIAL favorites South Park and Mars during its WPIAL championship run. In the PIAA finals, Montour defeated Hickory, 3-1, in the first round, and Manheim Central, 1-0, in the quarterfinals. A loss to Erie-based Villa Maria Academy in the PIAA semifinals ended the team’s historic season.

Letter of intent signings:

A number of Montour student athletes will be continuing their athletic careers at the post-secondary level. Signing letters of intent to colleges were the following:

Brandon Hopay committed to Edinboro University, where he will play under a football scholarship. Hopay was a captain and two-year starter for the Spartans. He also achieved All-Conference honors his senior year.

Jordan Vicheck also committed to Edinboro, where he will be playing under a football scholarship. Vicheck was a first team All-Section and Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Fabulous 22 selection. He was also a team captain and two-year starter.

Luc Nolder committed to Alderson Broaddus University, and will be attending on a soccer scholarship. Luc led the Montour soccer team in goals. He was a team captain, as well as an All-Section and All-WPIAL selection.

Jane Schleicher has accepted an athletic scholarship to play soccer for West Virginia Wesleyan University. Schleicher was the lead scorer on the Montour girls soccer team, which won its first-ever WPIAL championship and reached the PIAA semi-finals. Schleicher was an All-Section and All-State selection. She was joined for her signing by friends and members of the Spartans championship team.

Taylor Celich has committed to Point Park, which she will attend under athletic and academic scholarships. Celich will run both track and cross country for Point Park, which competes in the NAIA Kentucky Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. This past cross-country season, Celich placed 17th in the WPIAL, qualifying her to compete in the PIAA statewide meet. She was joined for her signing by her parents.