



# The Chief Online

April 2015

## PTHS Hosts World War II History Symposium

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[WATCH THE SYMPOSIUM ON SCHOOL CUBE!](#)

[CATCH UP WITH OTHER PTHS EVENTS AT HIGH SCHOOL CUBE](#)

The Social Sciences Department and The Livingston County War Museum/Dal Estes Education Center honored five local military veterans during a World War II History Symposium on Tuesday, April 7, 2015. Four local veterans who served in World War II spoke in the PTHS auditorium and students, as well as members of the community, were invited to ask questions after the presenter shared their stories. The veterans who spoke were Rollie Gagnon (who was in the Navy assigned in the Pacific Theater), Bill Hall (who was in the Marines assigned in the Pacific Theater), Art Leach (who was in the Army Air Force assigned in the Pacific Theater) and Mel Lay (who was in the Army Air Force assigned in the Pacific Theater). Also speaking was PTHS graduate Roger Amm, honoring his father John Amm who served in the Army in the European Theater. Amm will also share a sneak preview of the documentary *The Greatest Honor*, a film that tells the story of his father, a concentration camp liberator. Thanks again to those who participated and shared in this opportunity to honor those who served and to witness the stories of the greatest generation this country has ever produced. Special thanks to Mr. Sweetwood for coordinating the event.

## Retiring Teacher: Mrs. Mullen



By Jeanette Wooldridge

At the end of this year there will be several teachers leaving PTHS. One of those teachers is Mrs. Mullen. Mrs. Mullen has been teaching for thirty-two years, twenty-three of which have been here at PTHS. When I asked her what she'll miss the most she immediately said her students, peers, and LACC staff. She also said that she misses being the Student Counsel advisor and will miss planning Homecoming, Volley for the Cure, and the Polar Plunge. She said that once she retires she's wants to travel to New York to see the 9/11 Memorial, go to Ireland to see her husband's family roots, and to go anywhere warm with a white, sandy beach.

Some of her favorite memories from the past twenty-three years include being the 2014 Pontiac Kiwanis Club Educator of the Year, 2014 Homecoming Parade Marshall, everything associated with "Volley for the Cure," and learning from her students and helping them on their road to success. We're going to miss you Mrs. Mullen. We hope that you have a fun time and enjoy retirement. When you're on that warm sandy beach, think of us back here!

## Saying Good-Bye to Mrs. Meier

By Cassidy Murphy

As we come near the end of the 2014-2015 school year, the seniors aren't the only people who are saying good-bye. One familiar face that is leaving us is Peg Meier, the head of the PTHS cafeteria. I was able to have the chance to ask Peg about her time here at PTHS. We appreciate all of her hard work, yummy food, and smiling face.

Q: What do you plan to do in the future?

A: I haven't made any plans yet, however spending time with my husband, children, and grandkids will play an important part.

Q: What is your fondest memory at PTHS?

A: I have to say there are many good memories at PTHS, but I was always very proud when we would see a graduate out and about and they would ask my staff or me if we could come to their college and cook. They missed our good food.

Q: What is the biggest change you've seen within the walls of the school or within the walls of the cafeteria?

A: I would have to say the last two years have been the biggest change in the cafeteria in what we can and cannot serve the students.

Q: How did you begin your career at PTHS?

A: I will never forget this day for as long as I live. It was the first serving day for all the new changes in the PTHS cafeteria. A couple of transformers by the school blew up and we had no electricity. Thank goodness our stoves were gas. We got the food ready, and when lunch came we still didn't have electricity, so we served lunch to 900 students by the lights that the Pontiac firemen hooked up for us. Thank goodness for those firemen!! I figured if I got through that 1st day of serving, I could get through most anything – and I did.

Q: What have you liked best about being at PTHS?

A: Most everything. I am very lucky in life that I had a job that I really loved. I have now and in the past, had some wonderful people work for me. I have made good friends in both the staff and the students. I enjoy the students going through our lunch lines and having a good time with them. It has been a great 24 years, and I wouldn't change any of it.

Q: Do plan on continuing to make your famous carrot cake?

A: My baking is a hobby that I really enjoy. I hope that I can bake for a long, long time.

We all say "yeah!" to that and best wishes in retirement Peg!

## Upperclass Acts



**Katie Anna Kuska**

**Nicknames:** Kusk, Kate

**Role Models:** My obason (grandma) because she lives life to the fullest and doesn't care what anyone thinks.

**Activities @ PTHS:** Volleyball, Softball, CAPTAINS, Student Council, FFA, Class Officer

**Fondest Memory of High School So Far:** My favorite memory of high school is the entire season of my freshman year of softball. We were almost undefeated and I got to play with my best friends and made some of the best memories during that season.

**3 Major Areas of Interest:** Working with people, something non-stressful, and something that allows me to sleep in and not wake up early.

**Plans After High School:** To attend college, get an easy job that pays well, and marry a professional athlete.

**Favorite Movie:** *Elf*

**Most Inspirational Song:** "Shake it Off" by Taylor Swift

**Favorite Teachers/Classes:** Ms. Hat/Advanced Comm. & Mr. Vogt/ Art

**Most Positive Moment:** Signing to play softball for Parkland.

**Pet Peeves:** When people scratch their jeans and when people snore.

**What My friends Will Remember About Me:** My sarcastic sense of humor.

**How Would You Spend \$1,000,000?:** I would go on an all-inclusive vacation outside the country, buy a yellow Camaro, and buy a big house in country with a lot of land.

**If You Were Stranded on a Desert Island, What 3 Items Would You Want With You?:** I would bring my phone, a solar powered charger, and a friend.

**Last Words of Advice:** "Be nice to the lunch ladies, use Sparknotes, and wear sweatpants."

### Kayla Kohlmeier

**Nicknames:** Beaves & Kay

**Role Models:** My squad  
**Activities @ PTHS:** Football and Basketball Cheerleading Squads, Peers in Action, HOSA, National Honor Society, and National Technical Honor Society

**Fondest Memory of High School So Far:** My fondest memory would have to be the bus rides to and from basketball and football games with the cheerleaders

**3 Major Areas of Interest:** Cheerleading, beaches, and sleeping.

**Plans After High School:** Attend Northern Illinois University and study Nursing

**Favorite Movie:** *Something Borrowed*

**Most Inspirational Song:** "Keep Your Head Up" by Andy Grammer

**Favorite Teachers/Classes:** Mr. Nollen's Anatomy class

**Favorite Author:** Nicholas Sparks

**Most Positive Moment:** Becoming Co- President of Peers in Action

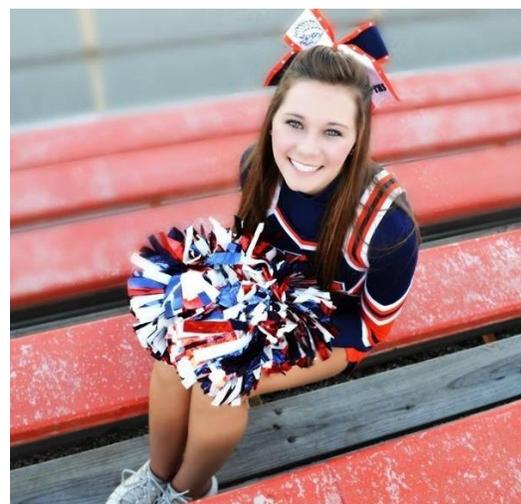
**Pet Peeves:** People who have to have everyone's attention all the time, people who are constantly complaining, and people who don't understand personal space.

**What My friends Will Remember About Me:** My friends won't remember me, they'll remember my mother's breakfasts before school.

**How Would You Spend \$1,000,000?:** I would buy a summer house in Florida and use put the rest toward my college debt.

**If You Were Stranded on a Desert Island, What 3 Items Would You Want With You?:** My best friends so I don't get lonely, a lifetime supply of fruit, and my cell phone with an unlimited charge.

**Last Words of Advice:** "Enjoy high school while you can, it'll be over before you know it."



# Book Review: *I Am Nujood, Age 10 and Divorced*

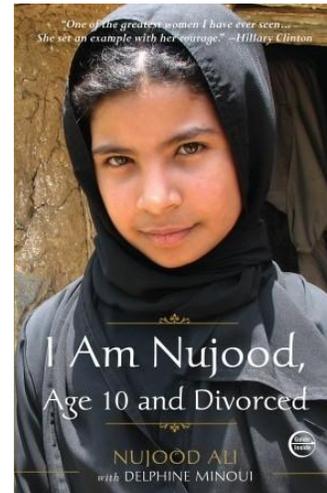
By Nujood Ali and Delphine Minoui

## Review by Dena Boatman

In 2008, ten year old Nujood was in an arranged marriage with a man that was in his forties. Her father paid him to marry her. Her husband and his family would constantly abuse her. After two months of this Nujood escapes and goes to get a divorce. She gets a lawyer that helps her with the case. In 2012 she was legally divorced and got her childhood back. She was the first child bride in her country to get a divorce.

Nujood is now a leader in women's movements in Yemen and around the world. She was voted Woman of the Year in 2008. She is still currently in school and plans to become a lawyer. Nujood's story has helped many other little girls in the same situation, including an eight year old who was forced to marry an adult.

Click [HERE](#) for more of Nujood's story



## Movie Review: *Whiplash*

### By Cassidy Murphy

"The road to greatness can take you to the edge". There isn't a quote that can describe this movie better. That's because this movie tells the story of a first year music student and his abusive instructor who utilizes a unique approach to find his students' greatness.

Andrew Neiman (Miles Teller) is a jazz drummer at Shaffer Conservatory. He has huge dreams of becoming the world's best and is willing to lose everything else in his life to obtain this goal. One day instructor Terrence Fletcher (J. K. Simmons) listens to him practicing and allows him to join his band as an alternate, or substitute behind the core drummer, Carl Tanner (Nate Lang). Neiman is excited and scared and has no idea what he's gotten himself in to. Fletcher asks Neiman to play their first song, "Whiplash," and when he fails to keep the tempo given, Neiman gets a chair hurled at him, is slapped, and is downright humiliated in front of his classmates. Oddly, this incidence only pushes him to work harder. After a mishap at a competition that involves Neiman losing the music, he proves he can play the song by memory and is moved to the core drummer.



The next song that comes Neiman's way is "Caravan," He is soon replaced by Ryan Connolley (Austin Stowell) as core drummer and is back as a substitute with Tanner. During a rehearsal of the song, all the drummers struggle to keep the said tempo, so the band instructor keeps all three boys locked in the band room with him for hours to audition for the spot of core drummer. This event leads to stress, exhaustion, and a lot of bleeding hands; but Neiman is back as core drummer.

Throughout the movie you witness just how far Fletcher pushes his students, believing he "only wants them to do their best." The portrayal given by both actors is amazing, and the movie received three Academy Award wins, including Simmons for Best Supporting Actor. If you want a good movie which prompts discussion afterward, you will not be disappointed in renting this DVD.

## Student Teachers



**Mr. Franco**

### Interview by Alexis Hall

If you walk through the English hallway at PTHS, you may notice a new face. Mr. Franco is a student at Illinois State University who is working with Mr. Blair. Mr. Franco's home town is Carol Stream, Illinois. During the summers, Mr. Franco spends his time as a camp councilor and enjoys teaching kids of all ages at camp. His love for teaching came from his favorite high school teacher, Mr. Madison, who taught high school English at Bartlett High School. Mr. Franco spends his free time working out and jogging around Heritage Lake in Carol Stream, a place he highly recommends everyone jogs around at least once in his/her lifetime. He also enjoys playing the guitar, reading, and eating Italian food.

Mr. Franco has enjoyed his time at PTHS. He feels that his experience has truly taught him what it means to "roll with the punches" and "to think on your feet." His experience has helped him learn how to better understand students' needs and adjust accordingly. No student that has had the pleasure to be in one of Mr. Franco's classes will ever forget the great Nacho Libre impressions.

His final thoughts as his time at PTHS is nearing the end are for students to "not sweat the small stuff." He wants students to "focus on the big things in life, not the little things; those are the things you should worry about."

## FFA Update

By Amy Wyant

The Pontiac FFA definitely left the winter season with a bang and we are ready for our springtime events! Our spring break can be more accurately described as an adventure as we took a group of students to South Dakota and got to experience agriculture life in a different state. However, there was some excitement back home as I, Amy Wyant, competed at the State Proficiency Awards and won in the area of Veterinary Medicine. Oh and I can't forget our epic basketball tournament complete with Buffalo Wild Wings at our March meeting. However, things aren't about to slow down as we invite our fellow friends and residents at Evenglow Lodge to come to our next meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and hopefully entertain them and the incoming Turkish students with a little karaoke! Before we break out our singing voices we first have to plan our annual FFA Banquet on April 18<sup>th</sup> where we will recognize some of our incredible members with our family and friends. In the midst of all this craziness we will also have a group of students attend "Wacky Wednesday" on April 15<sup>th</sup> where we will go to Prairie Central and compete in several CDEs such as Horticulture, Mechanics, and of course the infamous Quiz Bowl competition! Just a reminder, any FFA member is welcome to come and compete in any of these contests on the 15<sup>th</sup>! Last but not least, we are getting ready for our annual Lock In this Thursday at the Pontiac Rec Center where we will be swimming, having volleyball and basketball tournaments, and as always have an abundance of food! Overall, we plan to end our year with some excitement and hope to see all of our members at our banquet in April!

FFA information can be found [HERE](#).

## Music Department Update

By Jessica Ping

They say time flies when having fun and March sure flew by fast for the Music Department! Over spring break the Marching Band and Festival Choir traveled down south to the sunshine state for five days. While down in Florida, they went to Disney World, Epcot, Hollywood Studios, and Magic Kingdom, along with Universal Studios and Cocoa Beach. Having fun in the sun and riding roller coasters is a blast, but the trip wasn't all fun and games. The Band, Choir, and Flags all were required to attend their designated workshops. These workshops taught the students what it would really be like to have a career as a performer, especially in the Disney parks. The moment everyone had been preparing for weeks on end finally came when the Choir took the stage in Downtown Disney and the Band marched down Main Street in Magic Kingdom like they owned the place. Both shows were phenomenal; way to go PTHS!

Coming up this month the Choir is going to Organizational Contest! As they prepare for both contest and an upcoming concert we wish them luck in their future endeavors!

Click [HERE](#) for the Music Department website

## More Student Teachers



**Mr. Crowley**

### Interview by Kamryn Moore

Anybody taking a social studies class has probably noticed a new face this semester, Mr. Crowley who is Mr. Sweetwood's student teacher. I was able to catch an interview.

**Q-** Where did you grow up?

**A:** Berwin, IL. Then moved to Naperville.

**Q-** What school do you attend and what is your major?

**A:** ISU with a major in History and Social Science education.

**Q-** What are your future goals?

**A:** Improve myself as an educator and find as many ways as possible to reach out to students and teach them what they want to learn and catch a state record fish.

**Q-** What interests and hobbies do you have?

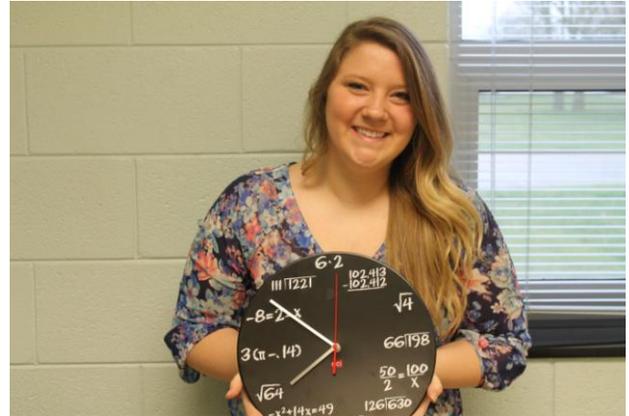
**A:** Reading, researching historical artifacts, auctions, authentication, and computers.

**Q-** Who are your inspirations?

**A:** My family has always been hard workers and it's rubbed off on me and my teachers.

**Q-** What do you hope to learn and accomplish while student teaching?

**A:** I hope to learn how to create a use full and interesting curriculum, and with the guidance with PTHS social studies department I believe that I will succeed in this.



**Ms. Melzers**

### Interview by Kamryn Moore

Ms. Melzers student teaches for Ms. Halloran and Mr. Shepherd.

**Q-** Where did you grow up?

**A:** Oswego, IL.

**Q-** What school do you attend and what is your major?

**A:** ISU with a major in Secondary Mathematics Education.

**Q-** What are your future goals?

**A:** To have a job teaching math at a high school.

**Q-** What are your interests and hobbies?

**A:** I love crafting, and I have a baby nephew so I enjoy hanging out with him.

**Q-** Who is your inspiration?

**A:** I had algebra teacher in high school and he's the one that got me interested in a career in math and I still keep touch with him, so I'm still learning from him.

**Q-** What do you hope to accomplish while student teaching?

**A:** My biggest concern was making a connection with students and I feel that I have accomplished that with my classes.

## Turtle Project Featured on State Farm's Good Neighbors Website

The work of PTHS students on the Alligator Snapping Turtle project has been featured on the State Farm's "Good Neighbors" website. Click [HERE](#) to view the website!

## Ask Trippy

Dear Trippy,

Graduation is coming soon and I don't know what I'm going to do! Most of my friends are seniors so I'll be all alone next year! I'm happy for them since I know they're ready to move on but I'm dreading graduation at the same time because I know that they are going to leave. What if they forget about me or I never see them again? I don't want to be all alone next year!

Help me! Dreading Next Fall

Dear Dreading Next Fall,

I know it may seem scary and horribly depressing but things may not be as bleak as you think. Your friends won't just forget about you; memories are made in high school and no one ever forgets the first friends they made. You'll definitely see them again although it'll be a while in between the visits. Wherever they are going to college will give them breaks and I'm sure they'll come back home at least once. Try not to worry too much and enjoy the last few weeks of school; it'll go by quick!

Yours, Trippy

Have a question for Trippy? Send it [HERE](#)

## Student Survey: What do you want to find in your Easter basket?

Pineapples – **Jessica Hull**

Car keys – **Tanner Wright**

A monkey – **Brandon Hanson**

Candy – **Andrea Merhkens**

One million dollars – **Ariana Callum**

A dinosaur – **Rachael Syputt**

Macaroni – **Stephanie Rice**

A way to bring my grades up – **Brent Kilgore**

A baby seal – **Rhianon Burns**

Love and joy – **Josh Moore**

## Turkish Students to Visit PTHS



Baylee and Clair with students and Teachers at Fen Bilimleri School in Istanbul

By Baylee Ritter

It's crazy to think that exactly a year ago Clair Bammann and I were experiencing life in Istanbul, Turkey. From going to school with our host families to visiting the grandiose Blue Mosque, our experience is one that we will never forget. In a few short weeks however, the same students from Turkey are coming to Pontiac Township High School to obtain the same type of experience that Clair and I did. Twelve students accompanied by two administrators will be staying in Pontiac for a week to see what it's like to be a high schooler in the United States. It is our hope that by staying in our homes and attending school with the students of Mr. Ritter's Heartland Environmental Science class, they will see firsthand the culture of the Midwest region of the United States. We have many activities planned including a day in the city of Chicago, an in-depth tour of all the museums in Pontiac, and a special award presentation at the Clean Water Festival in Peoria. It should be a very good week! Stayed tuned to find out more information on our visitors from Turkey and be sure to tell them hi in the hallways!

## Attention Teachers!

Check out the revamped Teacher  
Resource Webpage @

<http://libguides.pontiac.k12.il.us/content.php?pid=495677>

## PTHS has Talent!

By Cassidy Murphy

It's that time of year again, the time where PTHS's best come out to showcase their talent. On May 10<sup>th</sup>, the auditorium was filled with students for the annual CAPTAINS and Interact Talent Show. All the proceeds for night went to Alexis Flynn, who is recovering from a liver transplant and Meka Gero, who has spina bifida and will be undergoing surgery soon.

The night began with a unique performance of the National Anthem played by Zach Wilson. He later showed off more of his guitar skills with a solo. Other instrumental acts included Drew Wilson on guitar, Brent Kilgore on bass, a drum battle featuring Ethan Putnam against Jeff Elem, and a trumpet duet from Noah White and Brandi Mueller. Along with instrumental performances, Hannah Tronc, Brie Stadler, and Aaron Newsome showed off their singing voices. Two comedy acts that ended up stealing the show were Olivia Welshans and the AP Spanish class performing "Qué Hora Es". Following the skit, a rap duo consisting of Adam Shelton and Alex Blaetz performed. However, most of the night was dominated by dance acts which included; the winning duet from Clair Bammann and Jess Ping, a quartet performed by Sam Quinn, Anya Taylor, Becca Cagley, and Shannon Harback, and a much lighter dance duet performed by Jack Hoving and myself. The night was capped off with a group performance from the Dancenter.

The well-deserved results were as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Clair Bammann and Jess Ping  
(Dance Duet – "Here in America")
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – AP Spanish (Comedy Skit – Qué Hora Es)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Olivia Welshans (Comedy)

### ***The Chief Staff***

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Jordan Triplett  
Jeanette Wooldridge  
Amy Wyant

[Mr. Soares, Faculty Sponsor](#)

## Pop Culture 2015

By Jessica Ping

Tragedy has struck in the One Direction fandom seeing as one of the five members has decided to leave the group. A week before this decision was made, Zayn Malik pulled out of the boyband's world tour due to stress following rumors of him cheating on his fiancé. Fans encouraged him the whole way, showing Zayn that it was okay for him to take a break for his health. The short break unfortunately became a completely severed bond on Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. A Facebook statement was released via One Direction's official account stating Malik's departure from the group and how the other four members would be continuing on as a four piece. Since leaving the band, rumors of a solo career have taken over the media. These rumors took a steep incline after music producer, Naughty Boy, dropped a demo that Zayn had previously been working on onto his twitter. Millions of fans are now upset with Zayn because this solo music career totally goes against what he said in his interview with the *Sun*. The interview stated that he wanted to live the life of a normal 22 year old. Other than this interview, Malik's social media has been silent. One Direction has now finished the first leg of their world tour and will resume performances in June. Let's hope that the break will give the fans their closure and honest answers that they have wanted since the initial news hit.

## Project Unify Peers in Action Launches PTHS Read for Respect Reading Marathon

Hosted by Project Unify Peers in Action and the PTHS Library, participants have from now until April 24 to read books for the race!

There are four ways to participate:

- o Marathon: Read 26.2 books
- o Half Marathon: Read 13.1 books
- o 10K: Read 6.2 books
- o Mighty Miler: Read 5,280 pages

- Race forms are in the library or can be printed off from the [Read for Respect LibGuide](#) (linked from the Library webpage). To sign up, please visit the [Read for Respect LibGuide](#) and mark which race you plan to participate in.
- For more information or to print off race forms, visit the [Read for Respect LibGuide](#), or speak with Ms. Baumgardner or Mrs. Mueller.