



THE DEVIL'S HERALD

Avon Grove High School, West Grove, Pa.

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AG LIFE

Students dance, raise money "For the Kids"

By
Meredith Haas
Staff Writer

AG THON was a seven-hour school function that began at 8:00p.m. on Friday, April 6 and went until 3:30a.m., Saturday, April 7, as the community raised \$12,000 for the B+ Foundation. The thon consisted of student performances, a professional DJ, food, and fun.

The B+ Foundation exists to help kids fight cancer with family assistance. They provide funding for research and advocacy through fundraisers like AG THON.

The fundraiser hits home for one student in particular who battled cancer when she was younger. Abby Supplee, a junior at Avon Grove and avid member of Cancer Society, fought her own battle with cancer 10 years ago.

Along with Supplee, athletic and activities director Ms. Robtison has a personal connection to this fundraiser.

Robtison stated that when she was younger, a family member who was close to her struggled with cancer, and it was organizations like this that helped her family through. She states that it may not have been financial help, but organizations like this provided an escape for her family.

She and her family were afforded moments to meet star athletes and sit in the best seats at Phillies' games.

Robtison, like so many others, knows how this money will



- Photo by Meredith Haas

Avon Gove students stand with the balloons which stand for "For the Kids," an abbreviation used for fundraisers that support research for childhood cancer.

improve so many lives, and help them through unexpected expenses.

"On behalf of the 25 hundred families that we will help all around the country, and the millions of dollars of research, you have inspired me, and I know my

son is proudly looking down on us," founder of the B+ Foundation, Joe McDonough said to the crowd.

The night was an 80s theme, where the decorations incorporated games from the 80s, like Pacman. The Pacman poster read,

"I play for," posing the question to everyone as to why they were there that night.

On each Pacman dot people were able to write the names of loved ones who have been affected by cancer.

Around 10:00p.m. zumba be-

gan, and instructors ran on the stage showing everyone their dance moves. This lasted until midnight when it was time to eat.

Brett Young, a senior at Avon Grove, was a prominent leader of the head council who managed many of the preparations for AG THON.

AG THON was running smoothly until something surprised everyone.

"We were not expecting the water to go out that morning, but because the township is putting in a new pipeline, they shut off the water thinking no one was up at 3 in the morning," Young said.

Around 3:00a.m. the water shut off and gave AG THON leaders no choice but to send everyone home.

Even with all the unexpected turns that may have shut the event down early, AG THON still did what it needed to do. It provided a fun night for high school students

with games and music, and it still raised money for families.

The one thing to never forget is that this was and will always be for the kids.

PROFILE

Madame DeFrate: From Africa to France to AG

By
Anton Bilski
Editor

From growing up in the Congo and being pried from her parents due to war, to meeting the love of her life and marrying him three weeks later, Madame DeFrate has done a lot of running around.

Most of Madame DeFrate's childhood was in the French Congo. Her father was a geologist engineer for the French government and he explored the forests for two months.

While her father was working in the Congo, Madame's mother had to travel back to Toulouse, in the south of France, to give birth to her. Three weeks later, she and her mother moved back to the Congo where she had quite an exotic life growing up in the French colony.

"Part of the situation for my parents was that they had a free house, free cars. They came to the French organization of life over there which was really pleasant. My parents had a driver, they had cooks, they had gardeners, they had maids, and servants. It was colonization," said Madame DeFrate.

Her family lived in the capital

of Brazzaville. They lived in a predominantly French neighborhood.

According to DeFrate, they also had some interesting neighbors.

"I had antelopes and a few monkeys and tons of birds."

As a child, DeFrate followed a repeating pattern that she obviously didn't mind having.

"As a child my life was to get up at 5:00a.m., go to school at 5:30a.m. and school was over at 12:30p.m. We didn't have air conditioning in Africa. This is 1959-1960. There was no air conditioning, so we left the school after lunch and we would spend the afternoon at the pool," said Madame DeFrate.

DeFrate's life was filled with constant play and leisure with her family and friends. African life was amazing due to the wildlife and the water sports.

Water sports were very common in her area due to the fact that Brazzaville was located right on the Congo River with the French on the south bank and the Belgian colony on the north bank.

"We learned to water ski. Actually my parents said I already know how to swim before I knew how to walk because the water is such an important and precious

element of our life in Africa. So of course we would go to the river, we'd go to the pool, we go back to the river."

Of course living in Africa for such a long time, Madame DeFrate obviously was indulged in African culture.

"We also had a really nice taste of African culture. There were a lot of African people working in our home for my parents, and they were very nice, and they were friends with us and the kids. They would teach us songs, and games, and they would take us to areas of wildlife where we would see animals we have never seen before and they would tell us what they were called. And so, we had a lot of outdoor activities, and good schooling."

Leaving Africa

But DeFrate's return to mainland France wasn't the most pleasant way to leave the place she had called home for so many years.

"It was May 1966...Our school bus was attacked by a machine gun and that was absolutely terrifying. I was ten years old. Twenty-four hours later, all the French kids were sent back to France. So

SEE DEFRADE PAGE 2

COMMUNITY

Little League celebrates 60th



- Photo by Meredith Haas

High school senior Ryan Gerenser high-fives a younger player as they celebrate during the 60th anniversary of the Avon Grove Area Little League.

By
Meredith Haas
Staff Writer

60 years ago, the Avon Grove Area Little League began and it has become a club that would become a multi-generational institution for young children and their families. On April 21, the league celebrated the teams of all ages, and years of hard work.

Businesses who have support-

ed Avon Grove Area Little League began the festivities as early as 7:00a.m.

Setting up shop in front of the revitalized concession stand, many businesses sponsored games and activity booths.

Kelly's Sports provided a spin-the-wheel game for children, while Certapro Painting had a large Jenga game setup.

When asked why they were
SEE LITTLE LEAGUE PAGE 2

SPORTS

Boys lax defeats Manheim Township 10-4

Defending state champions continue their unbeaten run

By

Brendan Thomas

Staff Writer

The Avon Grove boys lacrosse team increased their unbeaten streak to nine games after besting Manheim Township 10-4 on Saturday, April 21.

"As a team we are coming together," said boys varsity lacrosse coach Eric Jackson. "[We are] developing chemistry and working hard to get better."

With six minutes remaining in the first quarter, Avon Grove's Joey Borcky opened the scoring from point-blank range. Then, seconds before the end of the quarter, Zach Augustine increased the

Red Devil's lead to 2-0.

Augustine netted his second goal with seven minutes remaining in the second quarter, scoring on a breakaway up the right side of the field.

Five minutes later, however, Manheim's Eddie Newman scored by circling behind the net with the ball before firing into the bottom corner.

With one minute left in the second quarter, Avon Grove's Scooter Whiteside scored from the middle of the field, increasing the lead to 4-1.

With twelve minutes left in the third quarter, Manheim's Zach Diamond scored with a long-range

shot from the left side of the net.

Jake Smith responded with a goal for the Red Devils a minute later.

With seven minutes remaining in the quarter, Diamond scored for Manheim again off of a run down the left side of the field, making the score 7-3.

Manheim's Sean Curcio opened the scoring in the fourth quarter early on, but seconds later Avon Grove's Jackson Muller dented the net with a shot into the top right corner after securing a Joey Borcky pass.

Just seconds later, Jason Lengel increased Avon Grove's lead to five goals, and with five minutes

left in the game, Augustine scored the final goal to make the score 10-4.

Andrew Spencer had nine saves and Nate Hammond won 12 of 16 faceoffs.

The Red Devils, the defending Class 3A State Champions, are 9-0 this season (as of April 23).

"We need to focus on each play and each opportunity together leading into the back half of the season," said Coach Jackson. "Although we have won some games, we know we can play much better. We have some very strong opponents coming up and we will continue to work hard as we build towards playoffs."

AVON GROVE BOYS LACROSSE RESULTS

MARCH 28

5 HENDERSON - AVON GROVE 14

APRIL 3

13 AVON GROVE - UNIONVILLE 4

APRIL 5

2 SUN VALLEY - AVON GROVE 15

APRIL 7

3 SPRING-FORD - AVON GROVE 5

APRIL 10

6 AVON GROVE - B. SHANAHAN 3

APRIL 14

5 AVON GROVE - C. BUCKS EAST 3

APRIL 16

4 BAYARD RUSTIN - AVON GROVE 9

APRIL 19

17 AVON GROVE - DOWNINGTOWN WEST 7

APRIL 21

10 AVON GROVE - MANHEIM TOWNSHIP 4

COMMUNITY

Little League remembers 60 years of fun

FROM LITTLE LEAGUE PAGE 1 there, every business responded with the same message, that they're there for the kids and the community.

"This is our first year here, and we sponsor many of the teams. A lot of our patients are from Avon Grove Little League, so we are very excited to see some of them," treatment coordinator at Hendrix Orthodontics, Jen Hayes exclaimed.

The West Grove and Avondale fire departments presented a monumental, but beautiful flag that hung from a ladder on one of the fire trucks, high in the sky for everyone to admire.

"We appreciate the opportunity to join the AG Little League on their opening day. We are also pleased to show our equipment and apparatus to local residents," Fire Police Lieutenant Brandon Michaels mentioned.

At around 9:30a.m., people lined up on the sides of the street from School House Road into the parking lot at the Avon Grove Little League fields. Little kids anxiously waited to see their brothers, sisters, or friends walking in the parade.

The procession consisted of all the teams involved with the little league, including Kirby, the mascot for Tastykake. Each team was able to create their own banner with their unique team names.

From a bright pink softball team who call themselves the Wolves, to the Avon Grove High School baseball team, each group proudly held their banners, waved their arms and smiled toward the crowd. As they walked with their coaches, multitudes of children assembled on Field A at the AGALL baseball complex, which is where the parade ended.

Boys from T-ball to high school age lined up waiting for the first pitch to be thrown for the opening season. Boys and girls were overjoyed to be with their friends, dancing around and soaking up the sun on the beautiful 60th anniversary.

Some high school players looked back and reflected on the times that they played on this same field when they were in the Little League.

"It's incredible to think that not too long ago we were standing where all of those young kids were. The Avon Grove baseball

community is growing each year. It's unimaginable how great it is to be part of such a great community," senior Avon Grove varsity baseball player Ryan Gerenser exclaimed.

The young players looked up to the high school players, as the high school players had once done themselves. Now players like Gerenser leave with the memory of the community they were apart of and wait to see what the next generations do.

"This is a great organization, and we have been with it since around T-ball. The boys have fun, so we have fun," said coach Terry O'Brien.

As players danced around on the grass, and the coaches spoke to one another, a memory was set in place that will never be forgotten.

"We had members of the board here and previous members, including the family of Steve Walton, who was a long serving board member. We dedicated Field A to his memory. He passed away two years ago. He was a good friend of mine and the little league," current president of the little league board, Lee Irwin expressed.

The first pitch was thrown by Dick Chambers who was the first secretary of the Avon Grove Little League back in 1958. He is linked with this community so much so that he has been apart of the Rotary Club, he was president of the fire department, and he was the person responsible for purchasing the land for the current fields.

As everyone dispersed from the field, many began to congregate around the newly refurbished concession stand, that is due in part by the little league board, and help from Mike Bujak.

In years past people had to wait outside of the stand to order and receive food, but now they can walk in. Customers are able to order inside which has new countertops and cleaner surroundings.

All of the food preparations remain in the back, and people run the food up to the front. New food has been brought in as well, like cotton candy, funnel cakes, and churros.

As the day proceeded, the sun stayed out and the breeze kept everyone cool.

Not soon after the ceremony, the Villanova Wildcat mascot showed up to get pictures with

families and kids. The West Chester Ram made an appearance, along with Minnie Mouse and Rocky Bluewinkle.

The day was a collectivized effort of volunteers, board members, families, and businesses. Every person working in the concession stands were volunteers, who were mostly high school students.

"With our dedicated group of volunteers, AGALL is poised for another successful 60 years. It was great to see all of the young players come out for the 60th anniversary," said Mike Bujak, a board member and leader for the concession stand.

As the day came to a close, people saw the day as a success. It was a day for the AGALL community, and a day for the kids.

"It was a great turn out today. I look forward to watching my son grow and play baseball with the team and the league as well. I enjoy that we are all together, whether we win or lose, everyone works together so well. Kids are always making friendships with other kids in the league," Mike Baiocco, an Avon Grove Little League coach said.

PROFILE

DeFrate tells her Cinderella story

FROM DEFRATE PAGE 1

we all got to the airport at night and we had to say goodbye to our parents and they really couldn't tell us for sure when we would see them again," DeFrate uttered.

"So we flew back, a long, long, long, long flight, and we got to Paris. There were members of the families that were there to pick up the children, and we were picked up by our grandparents, who we knew a little, but not very much. But we met with them and they took us to their home and we went to school, but it was a year until we saw our parents again," said Madame DeFrate.

Her parents returned a year later and by that time Congo had gained its independence from the French.

Meeting Her Husband

One of Madame DeFrate's friends, Phillip, is probably the mostly likely cause of why Mr. and Mrs. DeFrate are now happily wedded.

Mr. DeFrate graduated from medical school and then took a self-tour of Europe.

"He started with England, and in the meantime one of my friends who was at medical school as well from my home town of Toulouse

had gone to America to do an internship in America and had become good friends with John, my husband, and when John told him, 'I'm going to Europe, what do you think, where should I go?' He said you have to come to my hometown of Toulouse and you have to meet my friends, and I was at the top of the list," said Madame.

She also added that the list had columns, and the categories in those columns were, "Speaks English," "Has a car," "Has a place to stay," and lastly, "Is nice."

For each of those, she had a check, making her the perfect candidate to introduce John to not just Toulouse, but to his future bride as well.

The first time Madame and John talked was over the phone and Madame was trying to get to her brother's birthday party when her phone rang.

"I have the cake, my purse. I have my car keys between my teeth, and I'm ready to get out the door and the phone rings, and I'm thinking I'm going to be late, and then I'm thinking maybe someone needs a ride to the party. So I answered the phone, and it was John," said Madame DeFrate.

So the two had a brief con-

versation, and John was relieved that he was finally able to reach someone who could speak English since he didn't seem to be getting anywhere with his French.

Madame told John that she would meet him at the railway station and that she was wearing a red skirt and a white t-shirt.

"Eventually I find him and he finds me and we met. And we spent a lot of time together. Since my brother and I were only a year apart, we had the same friends and they were all interested in him [John]. And the next day I saw him, and the next day I saw him, and the next day I saw him," said DeFrate.

During the month of May in France, weekends are four days long due to the many kinds of celebrations whether it be Mother's and Father's Day, the end of the Second World War, and the Armistice. So during the second week of May, the two went to her parent's beach house.

According to Madame, it was absolutely the perfect time the two had together.

But then, John decided to leave Madame and go to Monaco "to think and go away."

"Three or four days later as I'm

back in Toulouse, he calls me and he says he wants to see me again before he leaves which gave us a three to four day time frame to do so. The following weekend, again, was a four day weekend and I told him, 'Okay let's go to the beach house, and we can see each other again,'" said DeFrate.

"I got there at 5:30p.m. and he was already there. Then two days after that, he proposed, and I said 'yes,'" said Madame excitedly.

Two days after the proposal, John went back to the U.S. The two got married in September. They got married on a Saturday, and they had to leave on Sunday to get to Paris for their flight on Monday night.

"We dated for a little less than three weeks. We were just talking, talking, talking," said DeFrate.

"For me it was a big deal, I left my house, my car, my friends, and of course my family, who came first. I left everything, everything, including my job. So that was tough because if it didn't work, I would still be able to come back but no job, no place to live, no car," said DeFrate.

But due to the early marriage, there was definitely some dissent-

ing voices, primarily, Madame's father.

According to DeFrate, he wasn't understanding the decision. But after sitting down with the two, he eventually became relaxed with John and the decision his daughter made.

"I had made up my mind. I was 25, not a kid anymore, and that's what I wanted," said DeFrate.

When John met with Madame's grandparents, they instantly fell in love with him, even when he was struggling with his French.

Teaching at Avon Grove

How did she get to Avon Grove?

Mr. DeFrate is from Kennett, and his parents were selling their property and moved into Jenner's Pond Retirement Community. They asked if they wanted to move closer from their home in Annapolis, Md.

They eventually moved and found a "beautiful" home in West Grove, according to Madame DeFrate.

After a year of substituting at the middle and high school, Madame DeFrate got a full-time job as a French teacher, after replacing retired French teacher Madame Beachy.

AG Life

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MUSICAL

Mary Poppins brings magic to the stage

By

Ashley Murphy
Staff Writer

The *Mary Poppins* cast acted, sang, and danced for their audiences at Avon Grove High School on April 20, 21, 27, and 28.

Mary Poppins tells the story of the Banks family. The children, Jane and Michael, are uncontrollable and in need of a new nanny.

Jane and Michael have their opinions of the nanny they want, but Mr. Banks prefers someone like his childhood nanny, Mrs. Andrew.

A mysterious woman, Mary Poppins, lands on their doorstep one day and is the answer to the family's prayers.

She is very peculiar and takes the children on many magical adventures.

Jane and Michael Banks are not the only people Mary has an affect on however, as everyone has something to learn from Mary.

Mary Poppins was played by senior Jess Sides who explained, "This show required a lot of work, patience, and preparation. We calculated that the cast has spent about a month worth of hours working on the show and the crew has spent about the same amount. This show would not be possible without every single person doing their part, and I am so grateful for every single person in this production for making *Mary Poppins* a masterpiece. It has

been so worth it!"

Bert, who is an old friend of Mary that helps the family grow, was played by sophomore Brayden Orpello-McCoy.

"This group of students is unique to the program. They all bring their own flair and finesse to each and every performance, and that's what makes it so special. Without even one cast, crew, or pit member, the show would not be the same.

"We have achieved the level of success because of what everyone contributes. It is wonderful to see the community, staff, students, and administration support us in our long and tedious efforts that end in a masterpiece that reflects us all," said Orpello-McCoy.

Jane and Michael Banks are the kids Mary governs and are played by sophomore Savannah Kohler and freshman Trent Bonner.

Jane and Michael's parents, George and Winifred Banks, are played by senior Austin Spangler and junior Lindsey Felker.

George undergoes the most change in the show from a businessman who just wants order in his household, to a loving father and husband.

"Being in the show has been a great honor. The people who are in the show are hard working individuals who put every ounce of energy into the show, making the outcome tremendous and the



- Photo by Karen Kohler

Members of the cast pose in front of the auditorium after the show: Eliza Wright (Mrs. Andrews), Sydney Rundle (Featured Dancer), Brayden Orpello-McCoy (Bert), Trent Bonner (Michael Banks), Ally Morris (Mrs. Brill), Jessica Sides (Mary Poppins), Chloe Heath (Fannie and Featured Dancer), Savannah Kohler (Jane Banks), Austin Spangler (Mr. Banks), and Lindsay Felker (Mrs. Banks).

memories everlasting," Isabelle Spears, who plays the Park Keeper, shared.

Students from PLE and AGIS were able to be in the elementary cast for this production. They got to be in big group numbers including "Jolly Holiday," "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious," "Let's Go Fly a Kite," and "Anything Can Happen Part 2."

Regardless of age, being in the musical was a thrilling experience for some.

"I feel like I had such a good first high school show. I was really scared going into the show being a freshman, but everyone in the cast, crew, and orchestra are so nice. I'm being completely honest when I say I have no idea where I'd be if I didn't do the show. I'm so

grateful for all the strong relationships I've built due to the show," freshman Meghan Hepworth shared.

Jules Brescia, who plays Neleus, added, "It's such an amazing experience that has given me so many opportunities to meet amazing people, I love doing it."

COMMUNITY

Local dentist and composer? Dr. Eckman creates a song for the AGHS Concert Choir

By

Madison Turner
Staff Writer

Dr. Eckman may have a few tricks up his sleeve, and it's not just how to make your teeth whiter.

The local dentist composed a song named, "Hope is the Thing with Feathers," for the Avon Grove Concert Choir.

As it turns out, Dr. Eckman has a great background in music.

"I attended Messiah College, and even though I knew that I would go on to dental school, I found a way to make room for music while I was at college. There, I sang and played in many groups, and ended up getting a degree in music with a concentration in trumpet performance."

His daughter, Daisy Eckman, is a sophomore at Avon Grove High School and is involved in some of the music programs in the school and after some of the vocal performances he introduced himself to choral director, Mrs. Wilcox.

He had told her how he has written pieces for Unionville High School and other groups.

After talking about it over the

summer, it was decided that Dr. Eckman would write a piece in whatever text and style he would like, as long as it had five voice parts.

"I zeroed in on a text that I wanted to use in the summer, and got some preliminary ideas for a central theme and feel. I chose to use Emily Dickinson's poem, "Hope' is the thing with feathers." It has an easy thematic element to it, and is full of great words to sing. Aside from choosing the text, I didn't do anything with it until the winter."

Dr. Eckman was able to compose a draft of the piece and get it to Mrs. Wilcox before the new year.

With many inconvenient snow days, the Concert Choir had less rehearsals than they would have preferred but they used it in their adjudication performance in Washington, D.C.

AG CLUBS

Style Swap: Finally a club

By

Stephanie Paglia
Staff Writer

Students and staff now have the opportunity to go shopping for free now that a new club has been created.

Zoe Frantz is one of the four founders of Style Swap that became a club on April 6.

"Creating a club was more difficult and lengthy than we imagined it would be," stated Frantz.

It all began when Frantz held her own style swap party with about 20 of her friends and she told Mrs. Young about it. Mrs. Young proposed the idea of creating a club where members would exchange clothes.

At AGHS it's required you go through three I/E cycles in order to be declared an official club. They had to come up with activities and fundraisers to help promote their club and their cause.

This involved communicating and working with outside organizations, while spreading information around the school about Style Swap in order to gain the interest they needed.

"As a group we've come up with a lot of ideas on how Style Swap can benefit those less fortunate," said Frantz.

In December, they held a "Dressember" to raise awareness for sex trafficking and slavery. Frantz has donated to the Dressember organization in the past and knew that getting the school involved would be beneficial.



- Photo courtesy of Mrs. Young

Danielle Fineza, Zoe Frantz, and Kayla Fineza are the three student founders of Style Swap and are pictured at the teacher swap they hosted.

Style Swap raised \$1,500 and next year Frantz hopes to organize a Dressember 5k run to raise more awareness.

The Style Swap cabinet members have worked closely with many charities in order to donate excess clothing from swap days.

Another event that Style Swap held this year was a teacher swap, where teachers donated clothes and the clothes were given to the Wings for Success organization that helps the unemployed.

Frantz has high hopes for Style Swap and their team is continuing to come up with more ideas. But this time it was Frantz's 14-year-old sister, Trinity Frantz, that came up with an idea.

Word about Style Swap spread to the middle school and Trinity Frantz decided to start a junior style swap. Zoe Frantz and the other members of Style Swap are going to Fred S. Engle Middle School on May 23 to swap with interested middle schoolers.

Students and staff can bring any jeans, shirts, hats, sweatshirts, pants, or any clothing item to the swap meetings in order to exchange for some new clothes without paying any money

This all started with a simple idea and with the hard work of the four founders, it has blossomed the past several months into a prosperous club at AG.