

# Valley News Dispatch



**TAKE YOUR SHOT**  
You could win \$25,000  
in our annual contest **C15**

**DANCE CARDS FILLED**  
Pitt surprised to be No. 1 seed in Southeast;  
WVU No. 5 in East; PSU 10th in West **C7-8**

## High school juniors put to the test starting today

*Meeting federal standards on PSSA exams could prove difficult—especially in math*

BY MICHAEL AUBELE  
VALLEY NEWS DISPATCH

Students across the Alle-Kiski Valley start taking the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment exams today, which means local high

school juniors had better bring their A-game.

If 2009-10 PSSA scores offer any indication, the juniors in most local districts could struggle to meet the new federal benchmark for success in math.

Under the No Child Left Behind Act, districts must have at least 56 percent of their students score proficient or better last year in math to achieve “adequate yearly

progress,” which is the government-established benchmark for success. This year, that standard jumps to 67 percent.

The benchmark for the reading portion of the exam escalates, too. Last year it was 63 percent. This year it’s 72 percent.

But the real trouble for local high schoolers appears to be in math.

In compiling its AYP report, the state Education Department

assesses students in three grade spans: 3 through 5, 6 through 8, and 9 through 12. At the high school level, however, the state tests only juniors in reading and math.

Using the AYP results from 2009-10 as a predictor, juniors in only four local districts will achieve AYP this year: Burrell, Fox Chapel Area, Franklin Regional and South Butler.

As for the younger kids, meeting the requirement in math should be

a cinch if the same formula is applied. Enough students in grades 3 through 5 scored proficient or better last year in every local district to meet this year’s higher target.

Asked why the disparity exists, Valley High School Principal John Banko said a few factors come into play. Chief among them are the differing number of concepts the two

PSSA · A7

### THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT



ERICA HILLIARD | VALLEY NEWS DISPATCH

Tyler Griffith, 13, of Allegheny Township, gazes at 10 inches of his hair moments after it was cut last week by stylist Teri Biddle of Teri’s Styling Salon in Apollo. The hair will be given to Locks of Love, which provides wigs to ill children with long-term hair loss.

## 3 years of hair shed for Locks of Love

*Allegheny Township boy, 13, not sure if he’ll grow it back*

BY MICHAEL AUBELE  
VALLEY NEWS DISPATCH

After having roughly a foot of hair lopped off last week, Tyler Griffith said he felt lighter.

It was more than three years ago that the 13-year-old Allegheny Township boy started growing his locks. He said he wanted to wear it long like Leland Chapman on the TV show “Dog the Bounty Hunter.”

Tyler, a sixth-grader at Allegheny/Hyde

Park Elementary School, said he wasn’t certain why he decided to get it cut. After the event, which played out Tuesday at Teri’s Styling Salon in Apollo, he said he didn’t have any regrets.

Tyler indicated he was happy that getting his hair cut might benefit someone else.

“I donated it to Locks of Love,” he said. Locks of Love is a Florida-based nonprofit that provides hairpieces to needy children in the United States and Canada who are struggling with long-term hair loss because of a medical condition.

Lauren Kukkamaa, spokeswoman for

*“It definitely is usually younger girls who donate, but it seems to be a growing trend with boys and men.”*

LAUREN KUKKAMA  
LOCKS OF LOVE SPOKESWOMAN

HAIR · A2

## Death toll soars past 10,000

*2nd hydrogen blast occurs, but radiation within legal limits*

FROM WIRE REPORTS

SENDAI, Japan — With a death toll expected to climb into the tens of thousands, more than a half-million people displaced and a nuclear crisis continuing to unfold, rescuers converged today on Japan’s devastated earthquake zone while workers in relatively unaffected areas struggled to return to work.

Japan’s chief cabinet secretary said a hydrogen explosion occurred today at Unit 3 of Japan’s stricken Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. The blast was similar to an earlier one at a different unit of the facility.

Yukio Edano says people within a 12-mile radius were ordered inside after the blast. Journalists felt the explosion 30 miles away.

The plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co., said radiation levels were 10.65 microsieverts, significantly under the 500 microsieverts at which a nuclear operator is legally bound to file a report to the government.

The No. 3 Unit reactor had been under emergency watch for a possible explosion as



JUJI PRESS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

A weary firefighter rests Sunday in Rikuzentakada city, Iwate prefecture. Japan battled a feared meltdown of two reactors at a quake-hit nuclear plant, as the full horror of the disaster emerged.

pressure built up there after a hydrogen blast Saturday in the facility’s Unit 1.

More than 180,000 people have evacuated the area.

Across a wide swath of earthquake-hit territory, hundreds of thousands of hungry survivors roused themselves from a third cold night spent huddled in darkened emergency centers, cut off from rescuers, aid and electricity.

JAPAN · A7

The blindsided hit Penguins captain Sidney Crosby suffered at the end of the second period during the Winter Classic and a hit four days later have kept him off the ice for 29 games with no end in sight.



CHAZ PALLA | TRIBUNE-REVIEW NEWS SERVICE

## Head knocks worrisome for NHL

*Concussed Crosby still not well enough to play; brain injuries to be hot topic at GM meetings*

BY ROB ROSSI  
TRIBUNE-REVIEW NEWS SERVICE

Sidney Crosby’s concussion is causing a headache for the Penguins on the ice and the National Hockey League off it.

Nobody knows when Crosby might play hockey again, and continued speculation about his health is as frustrating to the team as it is confusing to fans.

“I’m sick of talking about it,” Penguins general manager Ray Shero said this week, reiterating that Crosby’s status is “not something we talk about every day.”

Crosby missed a 29th consecutive game Sunday when the Penguins

played the Edmonton Oilers at Consol Energy Center.

Penguins coach Dan Bylsma said Thursday there was “no change” to Crosby’s status since he was hit in the head Jan. 1 during the Winter Classic by then-Washington forward David Steckel and struck from behind four days later by Tampa Bay defenseman Victor Hedman.

CONCUSSIONS · A7

### INSIDE

#### State rewards recycling

» Fox Chapel, Indiana Township and O’Hara receive state grants based on their success in recycling. **A3**

#### Solar power wins converts

» Technological advances, coupled with energy prices and government incentives, are selling residents on solar power. **A5**



#### Quilts blanket hospital walls

» Colorful quilts by Debbie Borkowski and her daughter, Cailynn, 13, of Natrona Heights are featured this month in the new lobby gallery at Allegheny Valley Hospital. **B1**



#### Pens rebound

» After a lackluster effort Saturday against the Montreal Canadiens, the Penguins whip the Edmonton Oilers, 5-1, sparked by two goals from Chris Kunitz. **C5**

#### NEW OBITUARIES, A4

**Dr. Richard M. Drisko**, 85, Forest Hills  
**Gloria Gentile**, 79, New Kensington  
**Russell W. Miller**, 82, West Deer  
**Margaret L. Petho**, 89, Kiski Township  
**Richard K. Ravotti**, 56, Leechburg

**WEATHER 45 · 30**  
Partly sunny  
Details, A2

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