



TRITON VOICE



Triton High School

Triton's Student-Produced Newspaper

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MEET THE TEACHERS, *Part II*

New Counselors, Educators, Instructional Aides, and Principals Join Triton District

Bienvenidos, Mrs. Kretsch!

By Liam Dostie & Addison Rowe
Staff Writers

While walking the halls of Triton down-stairs, across from the boys bathroom, students will find Mrs. Catherine Kretsch's Spanish classroom.

A new teacher to the school, Kretsch recently sat with her mentor, Spanish teacher Jennifer Scott, for an interview on to discuss her time at Triton so far.

Upon entering Kretsch's classroom, visitors can see an abundance of Spanish-related decorations scattered about the room. Spanish-speaking countries' flags, posters, and Mrs. Kretsch's Spanish learning sentiments can be observed as one gazes from wall to wall.

If you were to peek in the room whilst she was teaching the class, you'd see a helpful "Mrs. K" watching over her students, awaiting any questions. As for the students, you would see students scattered throughout the classroom on the couches or at the tables, writing in their *cuadernos* (notebooks).

When talking to her class, Mrs. Kretsch often speaks in Spanish in order for her students to become more familiar with the language.

In addition, Mrs. K's assignments often come with Spanish directions, allowing the students to translate and comprehend the text before beginning the assignment. This helps all sorts of students understand and recognize more words because of this added exposure.

Her excellence in the classroom is a great fit for Triton,
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Mrs. Catherine Kretsch (left) with her mentor, Ms. Jennifer Scott, both Spanish teachers at THS (courtesy photo).

Teaching Outside the Box (and School)

By Joshua Krugman
Staff Writer

A new staff member at Triton, Mr. Drew Balanoff has been hired to teach middle school science, and he has already taken a more hands-on approach.

In an interview, the *Triton Voice* asked him what he thought of Triton so far and his plans for the year.

"I love it here," he said. "I think the students are committed to learning and that the teachers are very welcoming."

Balanoff has always been interested in how the human body works, so he studied kinesiology in college to improve his own body and learn more about it. He is also eager to share this knowledge with his students. Balanoff has been known to take his students outside and give them a learning experience that he hopes is a lot more interesting than what a typical science teacher might assign.

Mr. Alan MacRae, the middle school principal, took part in the hiring of Balanoff.

"We found him to be energetic and engaging from the start," said MacRae. "We are very excited to watch him grow as a new teacher in our school."

Balanoff is very busy with his new year. He has multiple full classes of middle schoolers and often has found curious students coming up to him asking questions about their work. The middle schoolers say they find

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Mr. Drew Balanoff recently worked with a group of seventh graders in his classroom (Krugman photo).

Motivated to Teach and Learn Music

By Adeline Stapleton & Riley McIsaac
Staff Writers

After hearing the high-pitched sounds of a recorder, or the rhythmic clang of a xylophone, it's impossible to not be immediately transported into the magic of an elementary school music room. New Salisbury Elementary School teacher, Ms. Megan Speidel is ready to take on those sounds in the new school year.

Speidel discovered SES in search of a place of work close to home. Upon further exposure, she has found the Triton District to be a great and welcoming community. Despite only meeting the students and faculty a little more than a month ago, she has found everyone to be extremely friendly and is excited to get to know her students and get down to business.

"I like students to be making music every class," Speidel said. "The part of music that appeals the most to me is the performance aspect."

According to the Pew Research Center, over 53 percent of current teachers wouldn't advise young people to step into a career. Accordingly, there is a shortage of genuine teachers looking to connect with kids and help them become strong students. Speidel hopes to be one of them.

She values improvement, confidence, and making her students fall in love with the art of music, she said. As the years progress, she said she looks forward to seeing each

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Ms. Megan Speidel, a new SES music teacher, sits at her piano in her classroom (Stapleton photo).

Pine Grove Teacher Finds Her Place in a Quiet and Cozy Library

By: Michael Coco & Harry Pike
Staff Writers

In a cozy library on the first floor of the newly-remodeled Pine Grove Elementary School sits a new face: librarian Erin Kelley, who recently shared how her first weeks at the school have gone.

During the wave of new hires at the beginning of the school year, Pine Grove was able to acquire a hard-working, kind spirit in Kelley. Kelley has high aspirations and much optimism about starting her new job. One of the things she's most excited for is meeting her co-workers and students.

"I really would like to end my career here," said Kelley of Pine Grove. "I've got a ways to go, but this is what I would like to do."

Kelley was hired by the Pine Grove to take over the library. The task will not be easy as Kelley describes, but so far her coworkers and students have spoken highly of her as a teacher.

"My first impression was her friendly personality and eagerness to jump right

in," said art teacher Jennifer Dubis. "They [Students] already seem comfortable with her and have welcomed her into our PGS family."

Pine Grove features a modest, cozy library and media room. There's a smell of fresh books, comfy chairs and a calming environment invite passersby to stop in to read and relax, and the library's miniature bookshelves bring visitors back to the simpler time of elementary school days.

Although Kelley is just starting out at Pine Grove, this is not her first time around the block. This new hire has been teaching for 20 years and is starting her second year as a librarian.

In college, Kelley said that she wanted to be a social worker. After working in that field, she decided it was not something she wanted to continue. She then started spending time with kids working at a day-care and realized her passion.

"I really enjoyed spending time with kids, so I started thinking well maybe I want to be a teacher," said Kelley.

She went on to get her English degree and eventually her masters in education,

which led her to being a classroom teacher for 18 years. From being a classroom teacher, Kelley decided to go get her library/media license which brought her to now starting her second year as a librarian.

Kelley really enjoys working with the younger kids and says that they just have a fun energy around them.

"I love teaching second grade," said Kelley. "They kids are fun, they're curious."

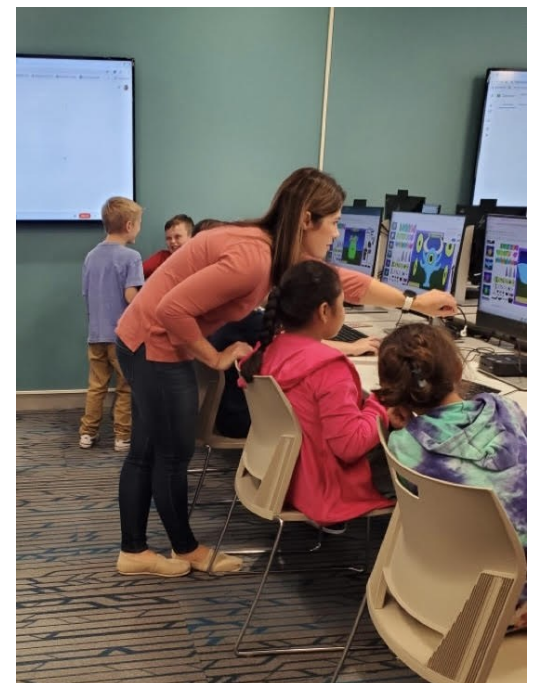
She has two children of her own, ages 14 and 11, who she says she loves to spend time with.

Despite the long drive from her home in Tewksbury, Kelley is now settling in at Pine Grove and meeting all the welcoming and friendly people.

"The people [at Pine Grove] are amazing, everybody is so nice, welcoming and friendly," said Kelley.

As a librarian she is always looking to expand her collection of books and create a better atmosphere for her

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Teacher Erin Kelley assists one of her students in the library at Pine Grove School (Coco photo).

Thank You, Brother

Fifth Grade SES Teacher
Inspired by Younger Sibling
Maddie January & Rowan Cole
Staff Writers

During a new year with many new faces, Ms. Stephanie Quinn is one at Salisbury Elementary who has a bright smile and warming presence that she brings with many new strengths for her 5th grade class.

But she is not alone. The 5th grade team is full of fresh faces all from different areas of the school, and they are all navigating this year together. Quinn's teaching story is one that began at young age, when she first knew she wanted to work with kids.

"At family parties and cookouts, I was always watching the younger cousins," she said

But what really made her want to become a teacher was her younger brother who was diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome when they were kids. Growing up, she looked after him, and in a way, coached him throughout his school career, and she realized that the help for kids with special needs was sparse. Quinn knew that special education was where she wanted to start her career.

She earned her bachelor's degree in special education teaching at the University of South Florida and then went on to get her master's degree at Cambridge College in Boston. After graduating with her master's, she was a long-term substitute teacher at a middle school in Boston, which is where she really fell in love with teaching. Later on, she became a special education teacher at one of Triton's neighboring schools.

"Unfortunately, I didn't have a welcoming experience, and it is unfortunate," she said of her time at that school.

Over the summer, Quinn had an interview with some of the returning SES staff. There, she spoke with her now-mentor Ms. Molly Donovan, who had great things to say about Quinn.

"She was a no-brainer," said Donovan. "She has great experience already, and with her background in special education, she adds great skills to the 5th grade team." Donovan expressed how awesome it was to have the opportunity to hire someone for their team with such amazing experience and patience.

Quinn has exciting plans for this year and her students appear to share that enthusiasm.

"ELA is my favorite subject," said one student "She [Quinn] helps me write paragraphs."

"My favorite thing about her class was learning about the BC and BCE," said another student.

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but this isn't her first time in this community.

"I lived in Byfield as a little kid," said Kretsch. "It's kind of nice being in an area where I'm working with people and making those connections again. It's like being home."

Scott said that one of those connections happened recently with long-time substitute Mrs. Nancy Reusch. Reusch's daughter, Jessica, a third grade teacher at Pine Grove Elementary used to dance at the same studio with Kretsch.

"Mrs. Reusch stopped in and she was looking at Mrs. Kretsch and just knowing she was familiar."

Now that Kretsch is back she is building up old connections and starting new ones in her 11th year of teaching high school Spanish. She started her career at a charter school in Fall River freshly after graduating college from the University of Rhode Island. She spent two years at the charter, then worked at a boarding school located in Rhode Island for four years while living on campus in faculty housing. Most recently she taught at Lynnfield High School for four years before coming to Triton.

Kretsch has multiple teachers in her family, including her mother her uncle, the latter of whom was her Spanish teacher in high school.



Mrs. Catherine Kretsch, Spanish teacher, with her husband Eric, and both of her kids, Lucion and Paloma (courtesy photo).

From Cases to Classes

From Background in Law, New SPED Teacher Makes her Mark
By Bradyn Lopes and Tim Clark
Staff Writers

When giving a tour around Pine Grove Elementary School, Ms. Shayne Ostrowski was greeted by several students walking through the hallways. The faces of the kids lit up with smiles while they were lining up in the halls and they waved their hands in the air. Ostrowski responded with a warm smile and a friendly wave.



Ms. Shayne Ostrowski working at her desk (Lopes photo).

Many students from around Pine Grove continue to express their gratitude and love for Ostrowski. She has a passion for teaching and wants to make the world a better place.

"Yes, her presence has definitely had a positive impact," said PGS Principal Nicole LaPerriere. "Her dedication to her students and her ability to connect with them on a personal level have been noticed by both staff and families, as she consistently goes above and beyond for her students."

Ms. Ostrowski is a new special education teacher at Pine Grove Elementary School. Although she has only been here for a few weeks, she has already left a mark on the kids. She comes from a background in law but has found that she enjoyed teaching more.

When Ms. Ostrowski was young, she wanted to be a veterinarian. However, like most little kids dreams, it didn't work out due to her affection for the animals.

"I wouldn't be able to deal with the times when you couldn't help them," said Ostrowski.

After completing high school, she went on to get her law degree from Bentley University, and soon after, became a paralegal at a corporate company. After having kids of her own, she realized and decided to go back to school in order to make a real change. She went to Gordon College to get her masters degree in education.

She started out in the Triton system as a helper at Pine Grove and that is where her love for the school started. As soon as she could she got a job at Pine Grove helping out children and creating dreams.

"When [her kids] were started at school in pre-school that's when I started to consider education and seeing what an impact the teachers had on the kids," said Ostrowski. "It changed me."

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him engaging.

Students from his seventh grade class agreed that he was "...pretty chill," and that they liked Balanoff's outdoor experiments so much that they wanted to go outside more. "He is a good mix of hands-on and talking," said one.

Balanoff seemed to have found the right teaching style to captivate and teach his young students.

When not teaching, Balanoff enjoys athletics such as hiking, rock climbing and skiing. He used to be a ski instructor as well as a rock climbing guide before he got a job as a physical education teacher in Newburyport. His goal is to get his students to also love being outdoors.

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students, which happens a main goals at the moment.

Kelley is currently spending time going through the whole collection of books to find which ones are outdated and need to be replaced. She is also in the process of applying for a grant so that she can get audiobooks for her students as well as a subscription to the online website, Sora.

Outside of school and all of her work, Kelley has an adventurous personality. She says that she "loves outside stuff." This includes things like kayaking, hiking, gardening and she even likes to go horse riding occasionally.

Despite the kind of "overwhelming" start, it appears that Kelly is getting things figured out and has a bright future ahead of her making Pine Grove a friendly space and learning environment for all of her students.

Scribe Halloween Contest

Write Scary Stories, Creepy Poems, or Both, and Win Prizes!

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student come out of their shell and guide them into mature and successful young adults.

Speidel's own high school experience, unfortunately, didn't include the factors she hopes to provide to her students. However, every cloud has a silver lining. The half-hearted and low-quality faculty she was exposed to, in turn, inspired her to become a teacher.

"I got a lot of practice teaching my classmates in high school and I thought, this is something I want to do," Speidel said.

Speidel has seen first-hand the outcomes of an apathetic educator. She hopes to right those people's wrongs. She has been teaching for 13 years, all of which out of a cart in Gloucester Elementary.

The dedication to teaching has never left her soul, and the lack of experience in her own classroom did not hold Speidel back. Today, her room is filled with colorful instruments and resources for each student.

Additionally, Speidel is an advanced band member, dating back to the fourth grade. However, she has reverted to the basics for her younger children, teaching them how to differentiate their singing voices from their speaking ones.

While each class had only gotten to meet with Speidel twice before this interview was conducted, a few students reported that she's "very nice," and they're excited for the remainder of the year.

Speidel has had Mrs. Deborah MacKinnon in her corner through the transition into the Triton community. MacKinnon is the band teacher for 5th and 6th grade at Salisbury Elementary, Newbury Elementary, and Pine Grove. She is also considered a mentor.

"Ms. Speidel comes to us with a lot of experience, and she has a lot of great ideas," said MacKinnon. "She has even taught me a few things already!"

MacKinnon's interactions with Speidel have been limited, due to her bouncing around between the three schools. Nonetheless, she said Speidel is, "very passionate about teaching music and wants every student to have a positive experience in her classroom."

With such positive feedback from both students and fellow faculty, it is obvious Speidel has a lot to bring to the table. She and her students will soon be working towards their annual recitals in the winter and spring.

"I am looking forward to working with her this year, and hearing her ensembles perform at our Winter and Spring concerts," said MacKinnon.