

Erie hit with record amount of snow

Erie Pa, was hit with one of the largest snowstorms in history over the holiday season. It was reported that the city received 34 total inches of snow on Christmas Day. The snow didn't stop after that as Erie received 24.5 inches of snow the following day. This is most snow Erie has ever recorded in a two day span. With a total of 58.5 inches of snow coming that fast it made road conditions very poor. A law was even made for a day where it was illegal to be driving on the roads for motorists without snow tires on their cars. It was stressed that people should not driving unless it was an absolute emergency.

Many sports events and practices were closed for most of the week. It made traveling almost impossible. Junior Luke Kubiak stated, "I wasn't able to get my daily workout in because I couldn't even manage to get out of my driveway." Most people had to spend a good portion of that week trapped indoors. Erie is currently the snowiest city in America right now. No other city is even close in the total amount of snow received this winter. Erie has received 133.0 inches of snow so far this winter season. Syracuse, New York, is in second place, but it's not even close. They have received only 63.8 inches of snow this winter. Erie went on to make national news for the amount of snow received. Erie civilians are used to getting large amounts of snowfall during the winter, but no one has ever experienced anything like this.

As of the time of this publishing, most of Erie's record snowfall has melted away thanks to a two-day stretch when temperatures reached the upper-50s. As soon as it has melted, though, another winter storm warning is in effect with the potential for another batch of ice and snow.

At least 17 dead after Santa Barbara mudslides

On Tuesday morning, Santa Barbara County in California was afflicted by devastating mudslides caused by intense rainfall. The area was unfortunately susceptible to this disaster due to the environment surrounding it, which included many hills and mountains, making flood water extremely fast and dangerous. At the time this article was written, 17 people have been reported dead and 43 have been reported missing.

The beginning of the devastation started early Tuesday morning, at around 4 a.m. The catastrophe was caused by heavy, consistent rain that was measured to fall, at one point, half an inch in just 5 minutes. Debris and mud rushed through the streets of Santa Barbara, ravaging the once lush and beautiful area. Houses and expensive properties were decimated as thick mud, boulders, branches, and other products of the storm crashed into them. It is estimated that at least 65 homes were demolished in the mudslides and over 400 were damaged. Besides homes, other important structures were afflicted by the mudslide. Large infernos were caused by the surge damaging a gas line, which subsequently tacked on more damage to the community.

The lethal storm claimed the lives of at least 17 people while also being responsible for the disappearance of 43 others. With ages ranging from as young as 3 years old to the most elderly with an age of 89, these citizens were killed in one of the most horrible ways imaginable. With the toll of those missing raising rapidly, we will most likely see an increase in the death toll, unfortunately.

Right now, the state of a California is doing all they can to supply aid to the damaged area. With nearly 700 professionals on the ground assisting with recovery, and citizens of the area actively offering help, the area will hopefully return to the way it was and more people will be discovered in time for possible rescue. In the meantime, the rest of the country will hold its breath as more details are released on this horrible natural disaster.

Hilbrich, Pletz, take Call of Duty title

Mr. Ferraro's room on the fourth floor is generally anything but rambunctious, but on Wednesday, Dec. 20, the lights were dimmed, and sounds from the world's greatest modern conflict enveloped the room. The Video Game Club hosted its last tournament of 2017, and the game of choice was *Call of Duty: WW2*. This first-person shooter is Infinity Ward's fourteenth release of the *Call of Duty* series, which came out Nov. 3, 2017. "This is my favorite Call of Duty by far," said sophomore Robbie Lupo. "They changed a lot and the multiplayer is unbelievable."

The tournament took place in two parts over the course of two days. On Wednesday, Dec. 20, the teams who were placed on the left side of the bracket battled hard. "There [were] a lot of great games," said Colin O'Brien. "I had no idea that some of my classmates were this good. They knew tricks that I didn't even think existed."

The following day, on Thursday, Dec. 21, the right side of the bracket battled until only two teams remained. Jack Hilbrich

and Shaine Pletz advanced to the finals after a sweep of Kinecki and Peterson in the first round and didn't look back placing them in the championship final. On the right side of the bracket, Noah Ali and Justin Hall needed four wins to reach the championship after a first round play-in. In the championship it was all Hilbrich and Pletz. They ran away with the win and claimed the title of *Call of Duty: WW2 Champions*. Ali and Hall grabbed the silver medal, and the team of Ishimaru and Bello won the consolation match and picked up the bronze medal.

"This is a great club, and events like these are a lot of fun. It's great to see guys compete and show their talent," said organizer Mr. Ferraro. The Video Game Club will host its next tournament in January, and it will be an NBA2K18 Tournament.

Box Village raises money for Emmaus Soup Kitchen

Cathedral Prep held their annual event Box Village on Saturday, Dec. 16th. Many of students signed up to help raise awareness for the homeless. The students had to camp out in only a box to see what it would feel like to be homeless for a night. The event took place from 3 p.m. on Saturday until 9 a.m. Sunday morning. Students stood out on the street corners to take donations from people driving by.

Everyone had to sign up for a shift taking donations. Another thing the students had to sign up for was adoration. They had to spend 30 minutes in adoration praying. From 11 p.m. until 12 a.m. everyone was to have an hour where they didn't talk. They spent that time praying and reflecting on their

experience. The students then gathered to have a midnight mass.

“It really put it into perspective what homeless people have to go through,” said junior Robert Wierbinski. “I have done this every year since I’ve been at Prep and it makes me feel good to know I could help out.”

Junior Albert Caldwell stated, “Box Village really helped me come closer with my brothers, too.”

It was a very good bonding experience for all the students participating. In the free time some students played football for fun. Other students had snowball fights and sat around the fire. All the participants helped clean up the boxes in the morning and threw them away. The students ended up raising over \$5,000. All the money went towards the Emmaus Soup Kitchen.

Raging Wildfires plague California

In Southern California, forest fires have been raging through the area while firefighters struggle to contain them. There have been six fires in total: Thomas Fire, Rye Fire, Creek Fire, Skirball Fire, Liberty Fire. According to CNN, these combined fires are larger than New York City and Boston combined.

Thomas Fire has been the biggest contributor, destroying more than 790 structures and causing damages of more than \$34 million. Lilac has been one of the most recent and very fast-moving fires, consuming 4,100 acres in a short span since its

ignition Thursday. All of these fires have started as simple brush fires that turned into the monstrosities seen today.

These fires have been devastating for many families who live in the Southern California area. A “red flag warning” has been extended into Wednesday evening, according to the National Weather Service. This means that elevated conditions could arise due to the gusty winds and low humidity. These conditions raise the risk for more terror. Already, these fires have forced almost 100,000 people to evacuate. Fire officials are always on the lookout for the people who are in danger. Officially, one person has died from these fires, a 70-year-old woman by the name of Santua Puala who died as she was trying to escape. Her body was found, hers is the only officially known death.

At this very moment, firefighters are expending all of their resources to try and mitigate these fires. According to ABC news, Governor Jerry Brown commented “[We’re] facing a new reality in the state,” he said. “It’s a horror and a horror we need to recover from.” He noted that climate change and California’s drought have caused these fires.

People from all over the country are sending their thoughts and prayers towards the families in California. Thanks and prayers should be sent to the firefighters risking their lives to protect the residents of Southern California

Top scorers on 2017 entrance exam earn scholarships

The following students received the top ten scores on the 2017 Cathedral Preparatory School Entrance Exam. Their results are

extraordinary in a highly competitive field and we are very proud of their accomplishments.

Several eighth grade students representing over 30 different parochial, public, and private schools sat for the exam. Clearly this is no small achievement on their part.

1. Ridgeway Case, Seton Catholic School (\$2500 Tuition Scholarship)

2. Logan Nikolai, Blessed Sacrament School (\$2500 Tuition Scholarship)

3. Nicholas Fornelli, Saint Jude School (\$2500 Tuition Scholarship)

4. Andrew Kolodychak, Our Lady of Peace School (\$2500 Tuition Scholarship)

5. Connor Benson, Walnut Creek Middle School (\$2500 Tuition Scholarship)

6. Luke Markiewicz, Saint Luke School (\$1000 Tuition Scholarship)

7. Jackson Mattocks, Seton Catholic School (\$1000 Tuition Scholarship)

8. Jake Walden, Saint Jude School (\$1000 Tuition Scholarship)

9. Michael Jenks, Walnut Creek Middle School (\$1000 Tuition Scholarship)

10. Michael Vereb, Our Lady of Peace School (\$1000 Tuition Scholarship)

Prep's 2nd Annual Shark Tank allows students to pitch products to local area business leaders

The idea of starting your own business is quite an anomaly for the average high school student. Mr Bhatti's entrepreneurship class gives students an introduction to the intricacies of owning a businesses. One of the class's main aspects is creating a product and presenting it to a panel of successful investors and entrepreneurs in the Erie area. This idea was derived from the mainstream TV show *Shark Tank*.

"I wanted to add a real life aspect to the class. This model gives students the ability to make a business with the potential of becoming invested," Mr Bhatti said. These investment possibilities gives students even more incentive to provide an excellent product. Presentation skills are put to the test in order to add credibility to one's business model.

Groups presented various products to the particular investing panel in the Prep library. Panelists included Bill Scholz, Owen McCormick, Adam Williams, Brian Slawin, Alex Brychowoski and Carl Nicolia. They listened intently to all of the proposals and gave feedback on ways to improve. Many were genuinely interested in the products, asking further questions about their capabilities in the market place.

The products included XoTic Cloting Line, GoFitness App, Porto-Poddy Charger, Dripless Coffee Mug, Lacrosse Solutions Redesigned Lacrosse Stick, and Kicker Pro. Each team used their personal knowledge and experiences when it came to making a product. Nate Fisher, a Prep lacrosse player, redesigned a lacrosse stick to help with passing and catching.

His design was a more adapted version of the original sticks Native Americans used. It was clear that many of the panelists were intrigued with his creative design. Fisher commented, "It was a fun time putting my idea into action and presenting it to people who could help and give me advice." He encourages more people to take the class and try *Shark Tank* out.

Another stand out product was Kicker Pro, a redesigned football with sensors that monitor kicking ability. This was made by seniors Adam Upperman, Anthony Lupo, and Alex Douds. Anthony Lupo used his knowledge of being a kicker on Prep's football team to make an innovative product. Upperman stated, "This presentation went really well. It gave me a lot of knowledge and encouragement for any exhibition I give in the future."

Overall, Prep's second annual *Shark Tank* was a great success. Each presentation was professionally done, and impressive to each panelist. This rendition has more people excited for what the future of Prep's "Shark Tank" holds.

November 5 tornado damages homes, businesses on Erie's west side



This past Sunday, Erie citizens residing anywhere from 26th and Peninsula to 36th and Washington were struck with a lethal storm. The storm was responsible for the deaths of two Erie men along with much destruction. This was the first time in recent memory that a tornado formed within

city limits and swept through neighborhoods, as well as major roads. The cleanup process quickly began following the damage, but restoring power to some areas took time.

It all began on the evening of Nov. 5 when a sudden downpour of rain occurred at approximately 5:30 p.m. As the rainfall increased, lightning began striking dangerously close to homes resulting in power outages lasting longer than 24 hours. Trees spilled onto not only roads but vehicles and houses as well. Many streets were completely taped off by city officials, law enforcement, service workers, tree removal companies, and private contractors in an attempt to restrict as much attention from the most serious cases as possible and to neutralize the damage. Sometime prior to 7:30 p.m., a tornado struck many residential areas.





Erie native Paul Snyder spoke of his experience saying, "All of a sudden, rain started coming down very hard. Then, there was a brief calm before what sounded like a freight train coming through my backyard. The trees in my backyard were almost horizontal to the west and then to the east. You couldn't see anything, and there were papers flying all around inside. During the aftermath, we opened the front door and our tree was up against our house, and as we looked down the street, it resembled a war zone. I never saw wind with that much force in my life."

Many businesses and non-residential buildings faced similar conditions to Snyder's that night. The Belle Valley Fire Department was severely flooded. The Milcreek Township School District administration's office roof was severely damaged. The Hong Kong restaurant's windows were shattered by wind gusts just to name a few. Large trees were completely uprooted from the ground. A power line even fell onto a car and set it on fire on the



3400 block of Allegheny Road. To say the least, this storm has sparked a sense of appreciation among those who endured the threatening nature of Nov. 5, an appreciation for what we all take for granted (utilities, city service employees, and their own neighbors). It was amazing to see people in the streets helping each other remove debris, cautioning others of downed power lines, and offering refuge if one's power was out.



Not all can be quite as thankful though. Two men tragically were killed in the basement of their home. Extreme flooding caused the wall to cave in and eventually lead to the death of 2 innocent lives. The families need our help. It is time to see what Erie is made of and how much we care for our neighbors. As if the death to these men didn't carry enough horror, the home was later robbed and stripped of their firearms and electronics. These

were men with families who need a helping hand through their struggles. If interested in contributing to the funeral expenses to further assist the families, please visit <http://gofundme.com/gary-hoffman-funeral-costs> for more information.

Prep-Villa theater perform Peter and the Starcatcher

This past weekend, Cathedral Prep and Villa Maria Academy performed their second show of the year. Just three weeks after *To Kill A Mockingbird*, they kept the shows rolling with *Peter and the Starcatcher*. Unlike the last production, this show was done at Cathedral Prep. This unique comedic play had the crowd laughing all through the night. It proved to be very special and allowed the actors to showcase their versatile, all-around talents.



This unorthodox show is presumptively the prequel to *Peter Pan*. It's extremely complex plot revolves around an abused orphan boy (Dominic Montefiori '18) who is aboard a ship in 1885 while being transported to Queen Victoria of

Britain. He speaks frequently of his hatred for grown-ups. Also aboard the ship is Molly Aster (Mary Grace Kelly '21), a strong-willed, defiant girl who is on a mission to safely deliver a trunk filled with "starstuff" to the queen. Starstuff is later revealed to be a magical substance that has the ability to give anyone what they want.

On a separate, competing ship is Molly's father, Lord Aster (James Proper '18). Unknown to Lord Aster, the ship has been taken over by pirates. The leader is found to be Blackstache (Nick Carneval '18). Although filled with evil aspirations, Blackstache is very ineffective in getting his way. Blackstache's ship, the *Wasp*, begins to pursue the other ship, the *Neverland*, in hopes of obtaining treasure.

As the ships make contact, the members of each are forced to jump to sea. Some people die, while others make it alive to a nearby island. Natives of the island are at first very violent and ruthless towards the English; however, the children escape. All the while, Blackstache and his right hand man, Smee (Hannah Harvey '19), are searching for the treasure. The pirates finally meet the children face to face and the orphan boy gives up the treasure to save Molly. As the pirates open the chest, they find that nothing remains in it. Molly explains that the starstuff dissolved into the water. The magical reaction has given the orphan eternal youth, just as he's always wanted. He is given the name Peter and stays on the island forever. The natives come to appreciate Peter and all ends well.

Peter, portrayed by Dominic Montefiori, spoke of his experience saying, "This show was one of the hardest plays Prep and Villa has put on, but it was so extremely fun because of the imagination needed to create this show."

Nick Carneval, playing Blackstache, also commented, "It was an awesome opportunity to be able to work with a cast of long time thespians as well as kids who are just getting started. It was unique to be able to portray a cool origin story for the iconic character [Peter Pan] that people, no matter what their age, have known and loved for years."

As the plot develops, many keen in on the noticeable parallels to *Peter Pan*. This show indirectly explains, in depth, how the story of *Peter Pan* came to be. Many of the cast members acted as props, which added another comedic, unique element to the show. The cast members also made use of improvisational timing and hilarious dialogue. It really showed how the actors and audience members could both reach the same spot in each other's imagination with nothing but the space in between them.

Man drives truck into pedestrians in New York terrorist attack

On Oct. 31, 2017, New York witnessed its greatest terror attack since 9/11. A 29-year-old male by the name of Sayfullo Habibullaevic Saipov drove a truck onto a bike path killing 8 people and injuring more than 12 on Halloween. He was shot and apprehended by a member of the New York Police Department and is "somewhat" cooperating with authorities, according to a law

enforcement official. Saipov reportedly confessed his actions were inspired by an ISIS propaganda video featuring its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Saipov came to the U.S. legally in 2010 on a diversity immigrant visa from Uzbekistan. He allegedly was radicalized on American soil, with no prior known ties to terrorism. About 6 months ago, he began working for Uber as a driver in New Jersey, where he resided with his wife and 3 children. The only criminal records belonging to Saipov have been traffic violations in 3 different states, including an arrest for not appearing in court for a misdemeanor charge.

Saipov had planned the attack out for over a year. He decided to use a truck to inflict maximum damage to civilians, and chose the date because of the large amounts of foot traffic on Halloween, officials said. Saipov was linked to a large array of ISIS related material on his social media account, including approximately 90 videos and 4,000 photographs of propaganda being found on his phone. Among the fatalities, 5 were from Argentina, celebrating their 30th anniversary of high school graduation.

“He appears to have followed almost exactly to a ‘T’ the instructions that ISIS has put out in its social media channels before, with instructions to their followers on how to carry out such an attack”, said John Miller, NYPD deputy commissioner for intelligence and counterterrorism.

As America looks to prevent future atrocities similar to this, it is important to note that in 2014, an ISIS spokesman urged this upon Muslims- “If you are not able to find an IED or a bullet, then single out the disbelieving American, Frenchman or any of their allies. Smash his head with a rock or slaughter him with a knife or run him over with your car or throw him down from a high place or choke him or poison him.” Since then, ISIS has taken responsibility for an increase in attacks through the use of motor vehicles. It is essential

that authorities consider this, along with the current vetting process of visa recipients, when taking future steps of precautionary measures to avoid more tragedies of this kind.