



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Bruce Riley, a passionate New York Giants fan, has decorated his office at Misericordia University with memorabilia of New York sports teams and hopes for a Giants win in this year's Super Bowl.

WAGER

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wreck in my living room on all fours."

When he moved to Pennsylvania for the first time, being a Giants fan was not as commonplace as it was when he lived in New York.

"Everyone seemed to like the Philadelphia Eagles," he said. "It was like being a pilgrim in a foreign land."

But now as he settles into his life as assistant tutoring director and learning specialist at Misericordia University, he's comforted by the same friends and a few likeminded friends.

"There's one student who also likes all the New York teams, and he comes in about two or three times a week to chat," said Riley. "There are a few fellow staffers, too, that I talk to about the Giants."

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Bruce Riley

About moving to Pennsylvania

Riley could talk to Lou Yanora, of Dallas, about the Giants all day. Yanora, 54, has been a Giants fan since the early 80s, and his favorite player was Riley's idol, Lawrence Taylor.

Yanora is excited about today's game — primarily because of a bet he has with 14-year-old Patriots fan Connor McGovern, of Larksville.

McGovern is Yanora's godson. The two are pretty close, but not too close to place a little wager on the Super Bowl.

The pair made a similar bet four years ago when the Giants and the Patriots went head-to-head in the Super Bowl that year. If the Patriots won, Yanora would fork out \$50 to McGovern. But, if

the Giants won, McGovern was supposed to clean up after Yanora's German Short-Haired Pointer, Jake, for a week.

Needless to say, McGovern tried to call off the bet at the last minute, as he came to realize he would be picking up "doggie doo-doo" for the next week.

"It was three minutes to go and he made his dad call and say the bet was off," laughed Yanora.

This year, Yanora bought a brand-new pooper scooper to sweeten the deal. He trying to teach McGovern not to bet, but the teenager doesn't seem to be learning his lesson.

"I think the Patriots are stronger this year because they have fresh players," said McGovern.



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Jeffrey Soroka, center, and Sophia Loisel, right, watch Jen Gimble give instruction on touching toes during a morning stretch and exercise class.

HEALTHY

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cardiovascular problems, type 2 diabetes, cancer, stroke and osteoarthritis.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health published a survey of children's body mass indexes during the 2008-09 school year, revealing that out of the 23,747 Luzerne County students in kindergarten through sixth grade surveyed, about 17 percent were overweight and about 18 percent were considered obese.

Pre-kindergarten teacher Courtney Novajosky, 23, of Mon-

roe Township, grew up playing outdoors almost nonstop. Being involved in sports at an early age also led her to value the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

"If kids are taught at a young age, that's what they know, and then they can teach their kids and their grandkids," she said of forming healthy habits.

Novajosky said it's also important to lead by example when trying to incorporate health-conscious behaviors into a tot's routine.

"It definitely has to be more hands-on because kids are active, not stationary," she said. "You need to be enthusiastic about it because if you're not into it, they won't be."

Novajosky leads the students

in exercises daily, from push-ups and sit-ups to freestyle dancing. She keeps the activity pressure-free, so the children don't have to do a certain amount of exercises within a certain time and they can be comfortable with the movement.

Parents can get involved in the action, too. "Parents are allowed to come to class to see what the kids are learning any time they want," she said. "We post the snacks so they can see what their kids are eating."

Jamie Lynn Timlin, 4, of Shavertown, enjoyed dancing to Justin Bieber songs rather than toe touches or sit-ups.

"Exercising gives you energy and it makes your heart happy," she said.

MH/MR STAFF MEMBERS HONORED FOR SERVICE



The Advisory Board of the Luzerne-Wyoming Counties Mental Health/Mental Retardation Program honored 12 staff members for years of service with the bi-county human services program during its December 2011 meeting held at the program's Wilkes-Barre offices. From left, first row, Dale Klush, Hughestown; and Rebecca Boris, Hazle Township, 5 years of service; Marion Knorr, Wilkes-Barre; Maureen Marascio, Shavertown, and Tami Kester, Taylor, 10 years of service; Jean Noss and Florence Muth, both of Wilkes-Barre, 25 years of service. Second row, Joseph DeVizia, Larksville; Advisory Board members Dr. Mahmoud Fahmy, Dallas; Dr. Carl Charnetski, Harvey's Lake, and David Wilson, Tunkhannock; former Luzerne County Commissioner Maryanne Petrilla, Sugarloaf; Advisory Board members Paul Gritman, Dallas; Sandy Faux, Tunkhannock; Dr. Jeff Kile, Shavertown; Thomas O'Neill, Wilkes-Barre; Raelene Daring, Dallas; and Rosemary Rakos, Shavertown. Absent at the time of the photo were Lou Ellen Zekas, Shavertown, 10 years; Linda Baldoni, Wilkes-Barre, 15 years; Tammy Barber, Forty Fort; Gina Galli, Pittston; and Winifred Serfass, W. Pittston, 25 years.

WRITING

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others use the writing form and students will need to know how to read it.

Fourth-grade teacher Alysia Jones said cursive writing also gives students an opportunity to expand their learning horizons.

"They learn more words when they're seeing them in a different way," she said. "Some kids who had trouble with printing went to cursive and it was like a whole new world for them."

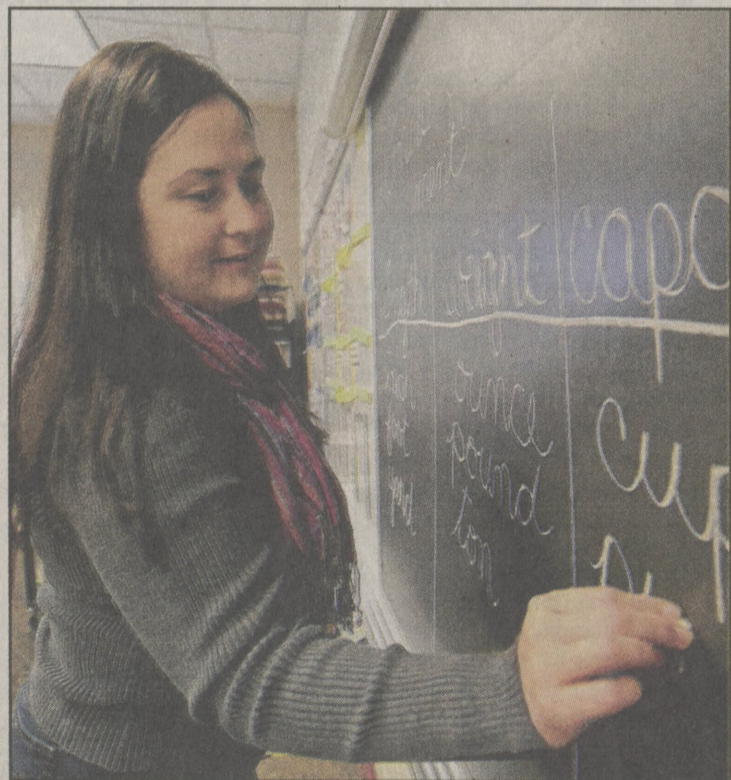
But cursive writing isn't just taught for practical reasons. Etiquette expert Jill Evans Kryston, who runs the Defining Manners School of Contemporary Protocol in Shavertown, said cursive handwriting is a "lost art," and she feels its demise could eventually cause barriers in the structure of society.

"Experts claim that handwriting enables you to better construct and convey thoughts, and it teaches patience and discipline, just like playing the piano or learning to do anything takes that time," said Evans Kryston. "With this quick, have-it-your-way fastness, no one is learning these fine motor skills."

While Evans Kryston believes technological skills are important in modern society, she said losing the ability to read and write in cursive could make historic documents, often painstakingly written in cursive, look like a foreign language to students in the future.

"I believe there could be a divide between those who know and those who don't know how to write in cursive," said Evans Kryston. "It could become a status thing in the future. I think if you don't have those skills, it could prevent you from doing certain things."

Bill Gartrell, director of technol-



BILL TARUTIS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Ross Elementary School third-grade teacher Lee Ann Bauer demonstrates cursive handwriting on the blackboard for her classroom.

ogy at Dallas, said students will begin to use more technology in classrooms in the future, but he still believes there is a place for cursive handwriting.

"For example, we're losing a lot of our artists to technology," he said. "You can have a pad connected to a computer and draw on that. People aren't using their hands anymore. We don't want to lose our creativity."

Evans Kryston said cursive handwriting is just as much a part of how humans communicate as speaking or using body language.

"The highest form of a thank you is the handwritten thank you note — an e-mail thank you doesn't cut it, though any thank you is a good thank you," said Evans Kryston.

"But when you take the time to write a thank you using your style of penmanship, it's like a gift. You took the time to do it, and it reflects that style of you."

Lake-Lehman Superintendent James McGovern doesn't think cursive handwriting is more important than other skills students need, such as learning grammar, during those crucial formative years.

"We're dealing more with (state mandated) outcomes and specific standards, and we have less and less time dedicated to teaching cursive handwriting," said McGovern. "It is a lost art, but as far as improving effective communication, I don't see as it being what it once was."

DENTAL HYGIENISTS INSTALL OFFICERS



The Northeast Pennsylvania Dental Hygiene Association (NPDHA) recently held its annual installation of officers and committee chairs. Lorraine Lockawich, 2012 president of the Pennsylvania Dental Hygienists' Association, served as installing officer. From left, first row, are Karen Webb, Swoyersville, president-elect and publicity chair; Lorraine Lockawich, Allentown, PDHA president; Daiphin Bober, Drums, president and trustee. Second row, Kristen O'Donnell, Avoca, hospitality chair; Alicia McMonigle, Mocanaqua, LCCC second-year class representative; Valerie McCreary, Nescopek, secretary; Rachel Grochowski, Dallas, newsletter editor. Absent at the time of the photo were Lynn Lombardo, Kingston, past president and continuing education chair; Maureen Savner, Mountaintop, treasurer; Julie Cleary, Macungie, public health chair; Angie Yorina, Wyoming, continuing education chair; and Patti Bieski, Kingston, membership chair.