

QCommunicué

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An Update from the Quakertown Community School District



The ring's the thing in this human interest story: Connecting alumnus with lost keepsake

Facebook? How about Alice-book?

Recently, Alice Bishop, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, helped connect a QCHS alumnus (class of 1959) and a total stranger in New Jersey, who recently found his class ring!

"It's amazing what kind of detective work you can do with the internet," Alice said.

In mid-October, Alice received an email from Lette Magrini from Oakland, N.J. Lette did her own share of detective work to get the ring rolling, so to speak.

"I was going through a small box of things from my father, who passed away in 1989, and I came across a Quakertown Community High School, Class of 1959 school ring," she wrote Alice. "Gold, about a size 9, with onyx face, and a 'Quaker' in the middle. Inside are the initials in script 'H A.' I have had this little box for years...even before he passed away. Never noticed the ring until today."

Lette said she had no idea how her father wound up with the ring. She guessed he found it while looking for rocks, a lifelong hobby.

"He lived almost his whole life in north Jersey. Not sure if he was ever in Quakertown," Lette wrote. "Anyway, I found your name and your e-mail on the QCSD website. I am wondering if you might know who has the initials H.A., and if he/she lost the ring?"

Alice sifted through alumni names from the class of 1959, finding a Horst Adler, or H.A. She googled his name and discovered that he runs a church camp for kids in or near Phoenix, so she sent a message through that website. In a matter of minutes, he emailed back through his personal email.

"Dear Alice, Thank you for contacting me regarding this issue. Yes, my high school ring disappeared around 1960-1961. It is a long story. If that ring still exists, I would like to recover it."

Thus began a series of emails between Horst and Lette, Horst and Alice, Alice and Lette. Stories of love, immigration and culture emerged.

Horst, pictured in 1959, at left, explained that he gave his ring to a girlfriend when they went "steady" in 1960-61 in Philadelphia. When they broke up, she never returned the ring. He lost contact with her. Meanwhile, Horst asked Lette about her name. Her response led to an interesting story about her mother's immigration from Paris, her grandparents' immigration from Hungary and Horst's immigration from Poland and Germany.



Lette's father collected rocks. He acquired a tremendous rock collection in his lifetime, much of it with hammer and chisel at quarries in New Jersey. He traded with collectors all over the world.

Before he passed away, Lette's father gave her a little plastic box with faceted gemstones in it. She liked jewelry. "Most are synthetic, but pretty enough that if I wanted to, I could have had set into rings or something," she wrote. "That little box has been in a dresser drawer for probably 30 years! My brother mentioned something about a gemstone-quality piece of Prehnite that my father found, and faceted himself. The first place I thought to look for it was that little box. Although it wasn't in there (and I have looked at those stones a number of times) I only noticed the ring in there yesterday! With the wonder of the Internet, I googled the high school, found Alice's e-mail address and in less than 24 hours the rightful owner is found! [And in Horst's hands in the picture at right!] What a great human interest story!"

She guessed that her father found Horst's ring during one of his digs or at a mineral show. "He held onto it for whatever reason and stuck it in the little box. Perhaps he thought it was 14k gold. Maybe it is, but usually class rings are 10k. Maybe he was going to sell it? He was a pretty frugal guy."

Lette boxed the ring and mailed it to Horst. "This whole story just makes me smile!" she wrote.

Horst wrote back, "This whole scenario amazes me for two particular reasons. First, I commend you for taking the initiative to try to find the owner of a ring lost in your father's box for over thirty years. Not many people would have taken time out of their busy schedule to bother with such a seemingly insignificant detail. Second, the efficiency and effectiveness of the internet was exemplified. It took less than 24 hours from finding the ring to the identification of the owner. Wow! That is almost scary. To me, this is more than just a remarkable human interest story."

Horst explained his upbringing as an immigrant. Born in Poland in 1941, he lived in Germany and later moved to the United States with his mother and sister.

"We settled in a little Latvian Village called Applebachsville, six miles from Quakertown," he said. "After graduating from high school, we relocated to Philadelphia so that I could attend Drexel. It was in Philly that I met Valda [the steady girlfriend], and that was the beginning of the ring story. Flashbacks and memories are indeed joyous."

Lette did not want Horst to pay for the postage, even though he offered. "Consider it 50 years of interest! LOL!" she wrote.

Alice concluded, "This has been quite a journey. It's given me a few laughs as well. I remember 'going steady.' LOL, you don't hear that expression these days!"

Concluded Lette, "Who doesn't like a good story, with a happy ending!"



European vacation: Students, teachers enjoy the sights during cultural summer excursion

"I would absolutely do it again. In a heartbeat," Stacey Schantz said.

This past summer, Schantz and Jodi Alderfer, QCHS teachers, took a 10-day trip to France. They organized it through the school's International Travel Club program and traveled with 14 students.

"Being on top of the Eiffel Tower and just taking in the view...there isn't anything like it," said Amanda Sica, a senior. "Bike riding in Versailles was my favorite thing we actually did in France."

For three years, everyone in the club united to travel to either France, Spain or Germany. The ITC hosted the winter formal dance as one such fundraiser.

"Having never been to France before, I was excited to see all the places I had learned about when I took French classes in middle and high school, especially Mont St. Michel and, of course, the Eiffel Tower," Miss Schantz recollected.

The Quakertown students joined approximately a dozen students from Palisades High School and two dozen from Blackstone Miller Regional High School in Massachusetts.

Mrs. Alderfer, German and French teacher, best remembered all the amazing food, beautiful language and celebrating her birthday. "Touring the castles in the Loire Valley on my birthday was great! The beach at St. Malo was amazing and the flowers everywhere were beautiful."



Amanda said she liked St. Malo, "a beachy sort of town in France. Our hotel was gorgeous, it was everything I pictured before I went to France! The shopping was awesome in this town too and there was entertainment everywhere! It was the prettiest place ever!"

In addition to the Eiffel Tower, the group also saw the Arc de Triomphe, the catacombs of France, the Normandy coast, Versailles Palace, the Louvre, and Mont St. Michael.

"The language barrier was apparent in the smaller coastal towns in France, but not as much in Paris," said Miss Schantz, a science teacher. "Everyone seemed to speak English in Paris. Menus were even written in English, which surprised me."

"The most interesting part of the trip for me was visiting the D-Day Beaches in Normandy," Miss Schantz continued. "The visitor's center, beaches, and American cemetery were somber and very real reminders of the ultimate sacrifice these young men and women made for their country. This trip brought history alive for me."

Miss Schantz said she loved the hustle and bustle of the city in Paris. She also loved the French countryside. "Everything is very picturesque. St. Malo with its cobblestone streets and quaint shop, Trouville for its wonderful beach and boardwalk."

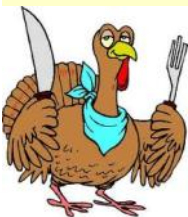
If the memories spark inspiration for travel, students should consider the next International Travel Club trip, planned for 2012.

Students, families, staff contribute to Food Pantry

With the holidays upon us, the Quakertown Food Pantry is thankful for the generosity of the community. Ann Tiefenthaler, President of the Food Pantry, thanked Richard Elementary for the "wonderful donation" from its Fall Festival.

First grade students and teachers at Trumbauersville Elementary collected 109 pounds of canned corn. Tohickon Valley students contributed Pennies for Pies. As a result, the Market Day team was able to purchase 11 Pumpkin Pies, 2 Apple Pies, 6 Pecan Pies, and packs of Chik-N-Steaks for the Quakertown Food Pantry.

"Our teachers are awesome, for teaching not only the 3 Rs, but the fundamentals of life, giving back," Tiefenthaler said.



Gift of Giving Campaign in full swing

The Gift of Giving Campaign, which helps QCSD families in need, is now taking donations for the 2010 holidays. Lenny Greaney, Director of Pupil Services said, "We are hoping to assist as many families as possible again this year."

Those who can donate can simply write a check to "Quakertown Cares" for a tax deductible contribution, and give it to a building guidance counselor by Dec. 15. Cash will also be accepted. Kirsten Cochran, Social Worker, will deposit donations in the Quakertown Cares account at QNB and purchase gift cards from local businesses. She will distribute them to families before Christmas.

"Thank you in advance," said Greaney. "Together we can make a difference."

Newsletter prepared by Ricki Stein, Community Relations Coordinator