

The PA-Post

Pennsylvania Technology Student Association

Issue I

Volume I

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Always wanted to see your name in print? Have an interesting TSA story?

Write for the *Post!*

We are always looking for PA-TSA members to submit articles.

Write about anything TSA or technology related, and email it to reporter@patsa.org!

Message from the Vice President

Charles Eames, an influential designer and architect, said: "Recognizing the need is the primary condition for design."

And Thomas Edison: "I never perfected an invention that I did not think about in terms of the service it might give others. I find out what the world needs, then I proceed to invent."

That is the essential idea behind technology. The purpose of design and engineering is to solve problems, to improve our environment, and to help people in their work and their lives. In TSA and Technology Education, whether you're designing a family home, researching medical devices, or giving a presentation about a recent breakthrough, you're working with technological solutions that meet needs and perform services for other people. In the wider world, innovations ranging from hearing aids to bomb-disposal robots to alternative energy sources are improving human lives.

I encourage you to take this idea a step further. Just as we can generate designs that have real-life significance, we can use our skills and resources to benefit our communities. Our individual chapters gather together students and teachers who are passionate about technology. This creates an incredible opportunity to accomplish more in our schools and communities.

You can start by making a difference in other schools. Your chapter could give a presentation at an elementary school to get kids excited about technology. You could visit another middle school or high school to tell them about TSA, or even help them start their own chapter. Within TSA, many chapters are newcomers to certain events—you could offer to exchange ideas on electronics or teach them how to use video editing software. Furthermore, your chapter could do volunteer work for a local program. You could raise money for charity. There

are many more possibilities. What are the needs? What services can you give to your own school, to other schools, to the neighborhood?

I ask you: Why are you in TSA? Why do you, students and teachers, dedicate time to technology-related activities?

My answer is that TSA is a great place to learn, develop skills, and realize your ideas. It's an enjoyable program for engineers and creative minds. I'm also in TSA because it is a chance to make a meaningful contribution to our Technology Education program and to my community. I hope that our organization continues to seize this opportunity and use its skills and resources to improve our world.



--Dan Zollman: 2007-2008
PA-TSA Vice President

Parliamentary Patrol (Part II) How Start A TSA Chapter Team

Molly Miller, Sergeant-at-Arms

Chapter Team is a very popular event in which a group of six members must properly conduct a business meeting. Chapter Team is in no way an easy competition. Experience is key to a great team, but how exactly do you start a Chapter Team from scratch?

1. Find a coach (normally your advisor, but anyone who knows parliamentary procedure and has some spare time can work) to help guide you during practice meetings. Having extra eyes and ears searching for mistakes helps fix every problem you may encounter.

2. Assign an office to each team member. The six Chapter Team offices are President, Vice President, Secretary, Reporter, Treasurer, and Sergeant-At-Arms. Each office has specific duties, so pick wisely.

The President must conduct the meeting and should be the most familiar with Robert's Rules of Order. They must use the right procedure with each motion and properly lead the opening and closing ceremonies. Immediately before competition, the Secretary must look through the minutes of the previous meeting to search for any

old business that must occur in the meeting. During the competition, the Secretary must take minutes in proper format while also participating as a team member.

Before competition, the Treasurer must balance the budget to properly deliver the Treasurer's report in the opening ceremony. Immediately preceding competition, the Sergeant-At-Arms must enter the meeting room and properly set up the meeting-including setting up the symbol of each office in front of the proper chair for that office. During the meeting, the Vice-President, Reporter, Treasurer, and Sergeant-At-Arms are the members most responsible for making the motions and providing relevant debate. It is very important that each team member feels comfortable in the position they hold and the duties that come with the office.

3. Become familiar with Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised. The entire competition of Chapter Team revolves around a team's knowledge of Roberts Rules and the proper way to conduct a business meeting. Every team member should know the rules, but as seen above, it is more necessary that some offices know the complete rules.

4.PRACTICE!!! A Chapter Team cannot be picked up overnight; meetings must be practiced before competition to become comfortable with the event. Practice makes perfect, and perfection is required to have a winning Chapter Team.



"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."
~Henry Ford

Attention PA-TSA members!

The state officers are building a directory of chapter presidents in order to open up communication between chapters. This directory will be made available to them so they can ask each other questions or share resources. We would like to collect the following information from your president or, if not your president, another student contact person:

Name of contact:

Email address:

School name:

Please send this information to vice_president@patsa.org.

Cabin Trip Summary

Sharonne Holtzman, Secretary

For the second year in a row, the nationally-sponsored Directions Leadership Conference was canceled, so the PA-TSA state officers went to Mr. McConahy's cabin instead! There, the state officers took part in various leadership training and problem solving activities. One highlight was a challenging (yet rewarding) adventure up a mountain. At night, we went elk watching, and if you have never been, I recommend you definitely try it. Along with all the bonding activities, the state officers began to plan and discuss the details of the state conference. Check out the minutes on patsa.org to see exactly what was decided.

TSA: Helping Nerds have a Social Life Since 1978

A personal narrative

Brenna Thorpe, North Allegheny HS Chapter

I understand that not all of you in TSA would call yourselves nerds. However, I would argue that there is no way any of us are completely free of nerd tendencies. Plus, it seemed like an entertaining title for an article. Technology Student Association is a way for middle school and high school students across the state to improve their social skills, be it with peers, competitors, or professionals. Many members, myself certainly included, entered TSA their first year being uncomfortable around crowds and strangers. However, if you fast-forward from that awkward 8th grade year to last year's 11th grade State Conference, and Bucknell, there has been a dramatic change. I owe this change, for the most part, to TSA.

1. TSA helps you network.

For all you facebook junkies, TSA helps you expand your network of people from out of your school to all across the state and country. You can meet and keep in touch with people that may someday go to your college, etc. This gives you an advantage, because you will know people in different places.

2. Meet people with similar interests.

When competing in events such as CADD, Electronic Research and Experimentation, etc., you are bound to meet people who have similar interests. It's always good to strike up common conversations, and you may be able to learn from fellow competitors.

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Interview with Wayne McConahy

Matt Michini, Treasurer

In October, Mr. McConahy hosted the State Officer Team for a planning and leadership weekend. Besides holding the annual Cabin meeting in the mountain home that he constructed himself, Mr. McConahy also serves PATSA as a Board Member and logistical planner for the State Conference. He is one of those familiar faces at the Conference who has worked hard to make PATSA what it is today. I thought the membership should know a little more about him, so I asked him some questions.

How long have you been involved in TSA?

Since 1988.

What made you decide to be involved in TSA?

After going from a junior high school to a middle school, with much less time with the kids, I looked at TSA, OM, SO and decided that TSA had the most to offer and would be an excellent enrichment activity.

How would you describe your role in PATSA?

I became a PA-TSA BOD member in 1990. I was president for about four years when Dr. Nevin Andre died unexpectedly. He was the state conference director and had run it pretty much as a one person show. The summer of 1995 I was named State Conference Director and we overhauled the conference with making a conference planning team, of amazingly dedicated advisors. Many are still on the conference team today. The state conference back then had about 500 people attending. We decided to expand the conference and start it on Wednesday night. In 1998 the state conference team plus several other advisors joined me to host the national TSA conference in Pittsburgh. It was a great success and this is when Mr. Roth and Mrs. Lapinski really got involved. This was one of the most grueling and tiring events we have ever undertaken, but the friendships forged were amazing. It was a total team effort of 20 dedicated advisors. I was the PA State Conference director for eight years (got tired) and Mr. Roth stepped up and took over. Since then I have been a member at large and helped with securing all the equipment, materials and supplies for the state conference. ~Continued Page 4

Event Tips and Tricks

Sean Yeakel, Parliamentarian

Everyone knows it can be intimidating preparing for some of the two-part events (ex: Medical Technology, Manufacturing Prototype.) Whether it's your first conference and you just don't know what to expect, or you're a seasoned veteran who has marveled at the quality turned out by other schools in the past, here are some main points to keep in mind while completing your project.

Balance: Make sure the poster board and entire display are balanced. This means keeping the information and graphics fairly even on both sides of the display. You do not want all of the information leaning heavily on one side—it becomes very hard to look at. If you want to put more information on a poster, make sure it's balanced out with pictures: a lot of writing doesn't always make the best display.

Aesthetic: Nobody likes a boring poster, so be sure to spice it up a little and make it extraordinary. Used to using black and white? Mix it up and throw some other colors in there. An attractive display that takes some design risks will always take you farther than a plain one.

Notebook: Be aware of all the required information that needs to be in the notebook. Do not exceed the number of pages allowed for each topic because you could get points deducted.

Preparation: When setting up your project, keep in mind the specified space allowed for this event.

Rules: Check, double check, and triple check that you have everything that is required, and you did not violate any rules because one silly mistake could ruin your chances.

Confidence: This is a big one when it comes to the finalist interview. Be confident in what you say. If you speak hesitantly or are unsure of your facts, the judges will know. To prevent this, make sure you and your partner have practiced your presentation several times ahead of time. Take note cards if you have to: knowing your facts is crucial, and as long as you are fluid, judges don't mind if you glance down once or twice. Even if you are unsure, pretend you are an expert—the difference to someone watching you present is astronomical.

"Success is a journey, not a destination." Ben Sweetland

Interview with Mr. McConahy: from page 3

How has PATSA changed since you were first involved (events or in general)?

Big and bigger! This year we should hit the 1500 mark at States. It is great to see all the faces and new advisors. It bodes well for the future of PATSA. The events are changing to keep pace with curriculum and standards and that is a very healthy thing. Change is the constant.

What is your greatest TSA memory?

Seeing a number of my former TSA students become Tech Ed teachers and seeing them with their own TSA Chapters.

How would you describe TSA to a complete stranger?

It's about competition, leadership, fun, travel and just great life experience for kids. I would not be here this long if it wasn't.

A Newbie's Guide to TSA: Part II: Regionals!

Jessica Scolnic, Reporter

Now that you've picked your events, it's time to start working! While regionals may seem far off, you really only have about two months (which translates into about 8 weekends, for those of you trying to figure out which Saturdays you're going to declare "TSA days.")

The judging at regionals is, in my opinion, a little different than that at states. For the more artistic or design based events at regionals like Manufacturing Prototype, Promo Graphics, and Safety Illustration, make sure you pay attention to detail. The judges at regionals aren't so much concerned with miniscule rule violations as they are with the amount of effort you've put into your product.

At states, the judges are forced to disqualify entries with rule violations because of the sheer quantity of entries. At regionals, since each event has dramatically fewer entrants, rule violations don't have such harsh consequences. This is NOT, by any means, me telling you to not read the rules before regionals. You should still make every effort to obey all the rules. If you do, that can only impress the judges. However, if you do happen to slip up on a minor rule (like the width of your dragster or the size of your box for Manufacturing,) chances are you'll be okay.

The judges at regionals are looking for projects that have obvious effort put into them. Creativity, originality, neatness, and passion for your work will take you a long way.

As for the actual day of regionals, some of you with drop-off events will find yourselves with a lot of spare time on your hands. Don't waste it! There is a lot going on for you to experience—plus it's a whole lot more fun than just napping in the auditorium the whole day.

While each region is slightly different, there are probably quite a few events taking place throughout the day that you can watch. Flight Endurance/ Challenge, Dragster Design, Problem Solving, Transportation Challenge, and several others have exciting tests to run. Even if you aren't participating in any of these, watching them cannot only be fun, but it can give you an idea of other events you might want to try in the future.

Good luck with your regional events, and don't hesitate to email me with any questions at reporter@patsa.org!

The Social Effects of TSA (cont.)

3. Meet people with dissimilar interests.

I know this is the opposite of #2. At a TSA conference, you will meet many students with totally opposite interests as you, and this is even more interesting. Peers will be sure to learn new things from each other, and someone you meet at TSA may even turn you on to an interest that sparks a future career.

4. Meet people from different parts of the state and country.

It's amazing how similar, yet simultaneously different, two people from opposite sides of the state can be, and what they live around.

5. Makes you more interactive, outgoing, and confident.

Being around large crowds of people can sometimes force a person to acclimatize to the activity. In my case, I started to become comfortable introducing myself to members from other TSA chapters, in part because I just became used to it, and in part because I realized how interesting other people can be.

6. Helps you act professional in the workplace.

Several aspects of TSA will greatly help career

behavior for the future. Interacting with peers, performing for, and being interviewed by, adult judges, and even dressing professionally, all give TSA students an advantage for the future.

7. It's a unique experience with students from your own school.

Countless inside jokes come from TSA conferences, and you and your peers may have to share in the stress of last-minute work, as well as living together for a few days. TSA can bring together not only students from different schools, but can also strengthen an individual chapter's bond.

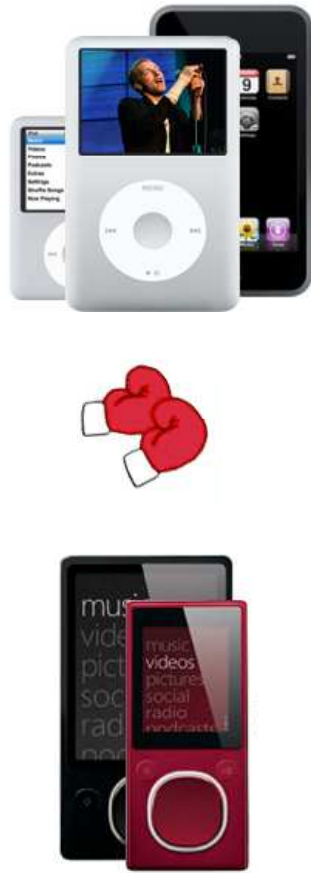
So, you can see the social benefits that Technology Student Association gives to every member, especially those who are willing to open up to the new experiences. Regional conferences, State conferences, Nationals, and the Bucknell Leadership Conference are all unique events that have the ability to shape who you want to become. I highly encourage everyone in PA TSA to try to make at least one new friend from outside their school this year - you won't regret it.

Trends in Technology

Chloe Alpert, Historian

So, which is it—the classic iPod or the new Zune?

Both the newly released Zunes and iPods, while surprisingly similar, have some key differences. For around the same price, the iPod classic and Zune have different screen sizes, WiFi capabilities and battery lives. The iPod classic has a slightly smaller screen, but it makes up for it with a better battery life. The Zune, however, sacrifices the added battery life but has WiFi, which is very popular. The Zune also features “Wireless Sync and Share,” which, unlike iPods, allows you to share music with anyone who owns a Zune. However, the benefits of this feature as of now are limited, considering not many people own the Zune yet.



Still partial to the iPod? I am too, but by the looks of it, the Zune may be a better deal. When compared to the new iPod touch edition, we see almost identical specs, however the iPod touch costs a few dollars more. Whether or not that cool touch screen, better resolution and slightly longer battery life are worth the cash is up to you.

This season, before you go out to buy a new MP3 player, check this chart out and see which player is the best for you. Personally, even though I’m a die-hard iPod fan, I feel the Zune is the best deal. Still, all of these players have their unique features...see for yourself! Enjoy!



The most exciting breakthroughs of the 21st century will not occur because of technology, but because of an expanding concept of what it means to be human.”
~ John Naisbitt

Feature	Zune 80GB	iPod classic 80GB	iPod touch 80GB
Price	\$249.99	\$249.00	\$299.00
Size (inches)	4.3 x 2.4 x 0.51	4.1 x 2.4 x 0.41	4.3 x 2.4 x 0.31
Weight (ounces)	4.5	4.9	4.2
Display (inches)	3.2	2.5	3.5
Display Type	LCD	LCD (LED backlight)	Touch-sensitive LCD
Resolution	320 x 240	320 x 240	480 x 320
Navigation	Zune Pad	Click Wheel	Multi-touch
WiFi	Yes (802.11 b/g)	No	Yes (802.11 b/g)
Wireless Sync	Yes	No	No
Wireless Share	Yes	No	No
Web Browser	No	No	Yes
Battery	20 hrs music (WiFi off) or 5 hrs video	30 hrs music or 5 hrs video	22 hrs music or 5 hrs video