GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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Homecoming weekend had something for everyone!

Huntington – Gateway's second annual homecoming weekend offered twice as many events as last year, resulted in over $2,000 raised for Gateway's foundation, outdoor club and athletic program, collected items needed by local families, and offered activities for music lovers, foodies, sports fans and outdoor types!

"We would like to thank SO many people who made this weekend happen," said Wendy Long, Clerk of the Gateway Education Foundation. "At the risk of forgetting somebody, I need to mention our business partners—Chester Common Table and Comfort Kitchen and Bar; the many performers at the Shipman Concert (who just might have put on the best concert to date!); Cheryl Wright and the Gateway Tech Crew; Avery Wing and the Yearbook staff for the yummy bake sale at the concert; the Gateway Outdoor Club with Jeff Penn and Nicole Daviau for a great kayaking event on Littleville; John Crane, Denae Dostal, Tim Gamble and the boys X-C Team (plus race volunteers) for a wonderful first 5K Race on the Gateway home course; and the US Army Corps of Engineers for working with us on the race and kayak tour."

"The weekend would not have been complete without Gateway Athletic Director Matt Bonenfant, our soccer coaches and teams, the Gateway Athletic Booster Club and our fall sports athletes for taking part. And special thanks to Mike O'Connell for again organizing a wonderful Alumni Game!"

The weekend opened Thursday night with dinner at Chester Common Table (who gave 15% to the Gateway Education Foundation). The Shipman Memorial Concert, featuring current AND former students and staff, was held Friday night in the Performing Arts Center with a stellar concert performed for a very appreciative audience.

Saturday opened with the first annual 5K Dam Run on the Gateway home cross-country course which, just after lulling runners with a fairly comfortable first half-mile, takes the heart out of many (almost literally) with a climb up the back of Littleville Dam. About 40 runners participated and the race was a community service project of the boys cross-country team, raising nearly $400 for the Gateway Education Foundation. The top three male finishers were Evan Coltman (24:06.15, age 12); Stephen Pitoniak (24:14.95, age 46) and Brian St. Jean (25:03.64, age 56). Top three female finishers were Lynn Ashby (26:00.52, age 39); Gateway's own Maddy Carpenter (27:25.57, age 14); and Sawyer Wilkinson (27:29.61, age 12). Race results are posted on the Berkshire Running Center website, under "results".

Also on Saturday, local historian Jeff Penn, adviser Nicole Daviau and the Gateway Outdoor Club led a historic kayak tour on Littleville reservoir. Clouds cleared just in time for the 22 boats taking part (students, staff, alumni and community members). Many witnessed an osprey with a fish being

harassed by a hawk; the osprey finally let go of the fish, which the hawk caught before it hit the water!

Soccer Saturday—a landmark of each year's homecoming—included all 4 high school soccer teams playing back-to-back games against Easthampton HS. History was made during the girls' varsity game when Jessica VanHeynigen broke a long standing scoring record, reaching 105 points. Game play was stopped as Athletic Director Matt Bonenfant and Varsity Coach Steve Estelle unveiled a surprise banner—with previous record holder Jessica Rida present—and presented the game ball to VanHeynigen. Also during the day, the soccer teams collected canned food and hats/mittens for local charities as their fall service project. The day concluded with the annual Alumni Game, where it is reported that referee Tim Gamble (Gateway alum, PE teacher and former boys' varsity soccer coach) was mercilessly heckled from the sidelines by fans!

The weekend came to a gentle but delicious end on Sunday with lunch at Huntington's newest restaurant, Comfort Kitchen and Bar. The restaurant also donated a percent of their profits to the Gateway Education Foundation on Sunday.

"We thank every runner, kayaker, singer, athlete and eater who took part," concluded Long.

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Homecoming Photos: Dam 5K Race start; kayaks ready to launch; Dawson Atkin, Parker Atkin and Meg Rock performing in the Shipman Concert; and alumni game action in the mist on Booster Field. For more photos, check out our 2017 Homecoming Photo Gallery at www.grsd.org!