***Eternal Indian Update***

Restoration continued in late June on the Eternal Indian, also known as “Blackhawk,”. Leading the effort to raise funds for the statue’s restoration was Frank and Charron Rausa of Sterling, IL. Along with the Friends of the Black Hawk Statue Committee, they have raised approximately $848,000. Andrzej Dajnowski, Director of the Conservation of Sculpture and Objects Studio, and his fellow restorers can often be heard chiseling away at calcium deposits under the green, rectangular veil. Work also being done on the local icon includes steam-cleaning and testing of material to fill cracks. Mr. Rausa hopes that the statue will be completed in time for its 105th anniversary in June 2016.

Adapted from “Restoration of 104-year-old Eternal Indian statue resumes” By Ted Gregory of the Chicago Tribune. July 20th, 2015
2015-16 Taft Education Staff

From left to right:
Katie McBride,
Garrett Greely,
Alyssa Parker,
Kylie Robey,
Joshua Hapner,
Shauna Guglielmo,
Amy Banner,
Katie Quesnell,
Ashley
VanSpeybroeck,
Shannon Forney,
Jennifer Mitchell,
and
Melanie Costello.

Truths: Taft Times Edition!

Listed below are twelve truths, one for each staff member. Next to is a series of empty boxes and some jumbled letters. Can you un-scramble the letters to figure out whos truth is whos? Continued on page 3.

1. I tobogganed down the Great Wall of China  T K Q A I E

2. I had 32 pets at one time  N S N O A N H

3. I have been on the fastest zip-line in the United States  I K L Y E

4. I can lick my own elbow  Y A M

5. I grew up in a different country  T G R A T R E

6. I attended the World Scout Jamboree in Japan  H S L E A Y

7. I once went to Canada for 45 minutes  L E I M E A N

8. A bear got into my food and stole the honey jar  M K T A E I

9. I backpacked through the worlds longest slot canyon  S A L A S Y

10. I have gone spelunking in the Bahamas  O A J H S U

11. The FBI have my fingerprints on file  F I E J N E R N

12. I climbed the highest peak in the North East  U H S A N A
The Inside Scoop

Kurt is one of the many faces around Taft who provide vital services to our visitors and Taft’s educators as a chef in our kitchen. Kurt and his staff create delicious meals and serve them piping hot three times a day. Late in September Kurt was asked if he would like to be interviewed for a piece in the Taft Times, and he obliged. Sitting in the dining hall with the picturesque river valley below us, I asked Kurt some hard hitting questions.

Shauna Guglielmo: What’s your favorite 90’s jam?
Kurt Lassard: Pearl Jam is the first thing that pops into my head. Pearl Jam’s “Jeremy.”
SG: Good choice. What did you have for breakfast?
KL: A cinnamon roll, of course!

A crowd favorite, Kurt always makes sure our guests receive their dose of sugary gooeyness in the form of a pinwheel.

SG: What is your philosophy towards your work?
KL: I like to set an example by my actions. By working hard it makes others want to work hard.
SG: Excellent answer. How many turkeys do you cook each year?
KL: We cook about 4 a week during the year, so almost 200 a year.

Turkey dinner is Taft’s most popular meal; almost every school visiting Taft requests this particular dish. Taft would also like to clarify that, no, the turkeys walking around campus are not our private stock to feed our guests. Those are wild turkeys and they are very happy knowing they will not be served with a side of mashed potatoes, gravy, corn, biscuits, and stuffing.

SG: What is your favorite food item to serve at Taft?
KL: Breaded chicken strips.
SG: Last question. A penguin walks through the door right now wearing a sombrero. What does he say and why is he here?
KL: Hola, necesito peses favor.

*Translation: Hello, I need fish please.

Here at Taft we would like to thank Kurt and his entire team for keeping our bellies full and happy throughout the year.

Say Hello to Our New Friends

With a new school year comes new faces at Taft and we would like to give a big welcome to our new maintenance and kitchen staff. Kelsey Thorp, a previous Education Program Specialist, has recently switched roles to work in the kitchen. Although Kelsey is missed in the education department, she is excited for her new position, and we are thrilled to continue to see her smiling face. In maintenance, Lester “Les” Flaherty, hailing from Dixon, IL, is a welcomed sight at Lorado Taft. His positivity, as well as his smile, is infectious, and he is fitting right in. During your next visit to Lorado Taft be sure to give Kesley and Les a wave.
What’s round, orange, and lit up at night in the fall? A Jack-o-Lantern! However, this Jack O’Lantern is not your standard Halloween kind. Pictured here is the Jack O’Lantern fungus (*Omphalotus illudens*). Some simple ways to identify this mushroom is by looking at its location and shape. They can be found in the fall, growing at the base of dead trees, where they are actively breaking down dead material to release nutrients back into the soil.

When first growing, they resemble little orange clubs. Once they absorb enough water from the soil and their host, the dead tree, they can grow and unfurl into beautiful umbrellas.

These umbrellas are the “fruit” of the fungus, meaning their sole purpose is to release their white spores out into the wind so that they may start to grow into web-like filaments called mycelium. This mycelium is what decomposes the dead tree and is the non-reproductive part of the fungi.

A word of caution for this stunning mushroom: Do not consume! If it is consumed, while not fatal, you will feel very ill for several days. Symptoms reported include vomiting, diarrhea, sweating, headaches, and exhaustion. Please, never eat a wild fungi unless you are 100% positive that you know what it is.

So next time you go into the woods, look to the ground. You may just find a poisonous, orange, glow in the dark, fabulous fungi!