Pennsbury Honors School Directors

School Director Recognition Month is celebrated each January in Pennsylvania. It is a time when school districts throughout the state honor and thank the individuals who volunteer their time and skills to ensure that each student in their respective districts receives the best education possible.

The Pennsbury Board of School Directors serves the taxpayers, students and parents of Pennsbury. Each of our Directors contributes untold hours serving constituents by attending meetings, making site visits, establishing and reviewing policies and working with teachers, administrators and support personnel in order to offer Pennsbury students one of the finest educational programs in Pennsylvania.

Pennsbury honors school directors

It is fitting that these locally elected officials are recognized for the important work they do and the service they provide, without pay, to the residents of the communities they represent. That recognition is embodied in a Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) resolution, certificates, and special handmade gifts.

Pennsbury Board of School Directors

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Years of Service</th>
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<td>Allan Weisel, President</td>
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<td>Gary S. Sanderson, Vice President</td>
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<td>Kathleen D. Zawacki, Assistant Secretary</td>
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<td>Simon Campbell</td>
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<td>Dr. Stephan Kosmorsky</td>
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The Pennsbury Partners Advisory Board Mini-Grant Committee recently awarded ten schools with special corporate-sponsored grants, a record number this year. The purpose of these mini-grants is to foster partnership development in each school that would:

- Make a positive impact on student academic achievement by linking with curriculum;
The Pennsbury Education Foundation (PEF) received a $2,500 grant from the Pennsylvania American Water Company through the firm’s participation in Pennsylvania’s Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. PEF President, Annette Young, accepted the check on behalf of the Education Foundation. The EITC grant

Fallsington Elementary ($500):
- Marta Grothman - *Holiday Sing at Sunrise Assisted Living*
- Sheila Miley and Ed Obert-Thorn - 5th Grade Visit to the Waste Water Treatment Center
- Kristen Cahill - *Let’s Learn About Safety*
- Monica James and Sherri Cohoon - Japanese Culture Experience at A-1 Japanese Steakhouse

Makefield Elementary ($500):
- Nicole Bond, Michele Greenockle, and Mary Ellen Wells - *5th Grade School to Work*

Oxford Valley Elementary ($984):
- Cherie Lynne Kooker - *Have you Filled your Bucket Today?*
- Donna Fay - *Assisting Teachers and Students with Language Arts*

Penn Valley ($500):
- Betty Zubrzycki - *100 Book Challenge*

Village Park ($500):
- Jennifer Dillon - *Village Park Welcomes Seymour Simon*

Walt Disney ($385):
- Lorie Becker and Katie Duncan - *Little Zoo on Wheels*

Charles Boehm ($900):
- Melissa Vitucci - *Exelon Renewable Energy*
- Sandra Hollenbaugh - *Les Miserables Experience*

Pennwood ($1000):
- Linda Alampi - *Careers Connecting*
- Stacy Kirsh - *The Odyssey Experience*

William Penn ($1000):
- Jeff Arndt - *Fitness/Circuit Training*
- Kristin Slota - *Energy Education in the Elementary School*

Pennsbury High School ($1500):
- Frank Mayo - *Career Fair*
- Nancy Quigley and Terri Calpino - *Behind the Scenes at the Yardley Inn*
- Matthew Ott - *Sports and Entertainment Marketing Classroom Extension*
program provides tax credits to eligible businesses that contribute to an educational improvement organization such as the PEF.

IN THE SCHOOLS

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

During the month of December, Eleanor Roosevelt students, families, and faculty took care of communities both local and international. Donna Horner and Liz Sietz report that the Student Council supported Max Curewitz, a senior at Pennsbury High School, with his Graduation Project titled, Walk It Forward. Over 300 pairs of shoes were collected by ER families to send to Africa. In all, Max collected nearly 1,000 pairs of shoes from the local area for his project. Student Council also sponsored a Pajama Day for Literacy Lifeboat in conjunction with Alisa Myles, Reading Specialist. The dollar donations enabled schools that were hit hard by Hurricane Sandy to replace books and supplies. ER students were proud to contribute a total of $470 for this cause. In addition, the ER PTO sponsored a toy drive, spearheaded by parent Sandy Grey, and collected toy and gift card donations for the Bucks County Children and Youth Social Services Agency.

Gifted Support teacher, Kathryn Royal, shares that her students welcomed Michael Nuzzolo, father of Matthew and Steven, to their classroom to discuss his professional work. Mr. Nuzzolo is a microbiologist at Merck Pharmaceutical, where he helps create vaccines to fight diseases such as Measles, Mumps, and Rubella. He explained that chicken eggs are used to grow the viruses utilized in creating the immunizations. Mr. Nuzzolo also shared that he and his company won an award for providing over 400 million vaccines to children across the world to fight the deadly rotavirus. Asked by Sarah Zeuke what he liked best about his job, Mr. Nuzzolo replied: “I love going home at night knowing that I’m helping millions of children maintain healthy lives.”

For more news from Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary, look under Commendable Accomplishments in this edition.

MAKEFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Gifted Support teacher, Alison Majikas, shares that her third, fourth, and fifth grade students were involved in a simulation titled Toy Company during the month of December. “The students worked collaboratively in groups to assume roles in a company, create a mission statement, design a toy, conduct a survey, compose a product description, and hold a trade show,” said Ms. Majikas. “The Toy Trade Show was held on December 19th. Parents and Makefield staff attended, served as product buyers and investors, and selected the top three ideas.” Students wrote persuasive essays and delivered speeches about their products. As Ms. Majikas explained, this engaging activity “helped students develop their skills in researching, descriptive writing, persuasive writing, higher level thinking, working collaboratively, and public speaking.”
Teacher MaryBeth Davis shares this news from Manor: On December 11th, the third grade students received a “Phillies Phitness” workout session facilitated by the trainers from NovaCare Rehabilitation. Organized by physical education teacher, Sal Ranniello, the trainers discussed with the students the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and eating the right foods. The event culminated with the students being led through a variety of activities to promote physical fitness.

Jen Stephens, is behind this yearly community outreach project.

Men of Harmony, originally known as the United States Steel Chorus, visited Oxford Valley students and staff to present their annual holiday show. “A former Oxford Valley student has joined the troupe, which made it especially fun!” added Ms. Nitkin.

In addition to all of these holiday experiences, there were philanthropic activities that took place. Oxford Valley staff members provided holiday meals for families in the community, and staff donations were also used to buy toys and clothes for less fortunate families in the community.

Principal Fran Nitkin reports that students recently participated in the Snowflake Project for the students at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Over 350 snowflakes created by Oxford Valley students were sent to Connecticut to help decorate the new building that is housing the returning students. Ms. Nitkin extended her gratitude to Nicole Raven, a fourth grade teacher, for coordinating this effort.

Oxford Valley’s fifth level chorus treated the senior residents of Sunrise at Floral Vale to a holiday concert. Students arrived with songbooks, instruments, and holiday garb and engaged residents in a sing along in addition to presenting a medley of holiday songs. Vocal music teacher, Jen Stephens (right), led the fifth grade chorus from Oxford Valley Elementary in a holiday concert staged for local senior citizens.

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More than 50 students representing every grade at Penn Valley opted to participate in the school’s 17th annual Science Fair in December. This year’s event was coordinated by parent Tammy Hasney. In addition to hosting an evening showcase open to parents and families, the young scientists had the opportunity to explain their projects to Penn Valley students who visited the Science Fair by grade level during the school day.
Principal Elaine Novet is proud to recognize second grade teachers, Kim D’Emidio and Mary Johnston, who asked parents to make donations to the Make a Wish Foundation in lieu of giving the teachers holiday gifts. A total of $390 was donated to the charity.

“Mary and Kim are both kind and compassionate teachers who always remind their students about the importance of helping others,” said Ms. Novet. “As we know, actions speak louder than words, and this act of kindness showed students that sometimes it is better to give rather than to receive.”

School Librarian Barbara Pesature writes that children’s author, Seymour Simon, visited Quarry Hill thanks to generous funding from the Quarry Hill PTO. Mr. Simon spent time with students in the third, fourth, and fifth grades and spoke to them about science, where he gets his book ideas, and how he researches each of the topics. He encouraged each student to find a subject of interest and to start pursuing it now. He gave the analogy that a major league ball player does not pick up a ball for the first time at age 20; rather, he or she nurtures that interest from a young age. Mr. Simon also encouraged students to visit his Web site to participate in a science word contest that was open only to Pennsbury students. Quarry Hill was very proud to learn that a student in Ms. Dubell’s class was a winner. That student received an autographed copy of the newly-published Science Dictionary.

Gifted Support teacher and Student Council advisor, Robyn Rowlands, shares that the school community is developing a new bird sanctuary in the inner courtyard at Quarry Hill. “With the help of the Student Council, we will be raising money to put birdfeeders, a water source, and bird houses in the courtyard,” said Ms. Rowlands. “We also plan to have identification posters around the school so we can keep track of the birds that visit this outdoor learning center. Our first official fundraiser was on 12/12/12. Student Council asked each class to raise $12.12 in honor of the day. As a school, we collected $200.94. The fourth and fifth grade Student Council members also made birdfeeders, which we placed in the courtyard. We are hoping some beautiful birds begin to visit.”

In December, Quarry Hill’s fourth and fifth grade Mentally Gifted students participated in a Webinar about amphibians. The live presentation, titled All about Amphibians, was hosted by the Smithsonian’s
National Zoological Park and sponsored by Siemens STEM Academy. “We watched the hour-long live presentation, submitted questions, and we also got to see some interesting frogs, toads, salamanders, and caecilians,” said Ms. Rowlands. “We are now writing nonfiction books about amphibians in the same style as author Seymour Simon.” The books will be on display at Young Authors’ Night in the spring.

**VILLAGE PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Students at Village Park and Fallsington elementary schools gave the gift of music this holiday season. Third graders at both schools gave up recess time once a week during the months of November and December to practice holiday favorites with their vocal music teacher, Marta Grothman. Village Park students met on the evening of December 11 and Fallsington students gathered on the evening of December 12 to travel door-to-door in their respective neighborhoods, with flashlights and song sheets in hand. “They surprised and delighted neighbors with their holiday cheer,” said Ms. Grothman, who has been caroling with her music students since 1995. “I loved caroling as a child and enjoy bringing the experience to my students, who are very enthusiastic about these events.”

**CHARLES BOEHM MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Teacher Joy Booz Ream reports that nearly 1,000 paper snowflakes hand-made by Boehm students were shipped to Newtown, CT with a personal note to help decorate the new school for students returning to class after tragedy struck in their community. One generous Boehm student personally created upwards of 60 snowflakes for this project!

Physical Education teacher, Christine Rittler, also wanted to do something to send a little glimpse of hope to the people of Newtown. She shared the idea of pooling funds, calling the town’s general store, and making donations so that local townspeople would “enjoy a cup of coffee on us.” The word spread quickly and many staff donations were made.

The store owner expressed how touched he was by the teachers’ generosity, and thanked them for what they do every single day for their students.

**PENNSBURY HIGH SCHOOL**

The students in Suzanne Schmidt’s Music Theory I class recently entertained Pennsbury faculty, staff, and students with their yearly Holiday Orchestration Concert. Students either composed original songs or orchestrated their favorite holiday and seasonal songs to the instrumentation of their class and then performed their compositions in a festive concert in front of the school’s tile mural during the four lunch periods at PHS East.
Family and Consumer Science (FCS) Curriculum Coordinator, Nancy Quigley, reports that on Thursday, December 19th, FCS teacher, Terri Calpino, gave her Classic Cooking students the opportunity to participate in a “helping hands” activity designed to lift the spirits of the Sandy Hook Elementary students. “This project was begun at the high school by Debbie Weston, a Foreign language teacher, to enable our students to send kind words of encouragement to the students of Sandy Hook Elementary School as they started back to school in a new building in a new year. As word spread of Ms. Calpino’s willingness to let the students take a few minutes out of their day to relay these kind words, her classroom at PHS West became a revolving door for students to express such kindness. There were times during the lunch periods that up to 50 students would crowd into this classroom to lend a helping hand. It was quite amazing to see such a large number of students from PHS come together to offer kindness to other children in need. Hall aide Nancy Crohe also provided assistance. This all started by one twitter message sent by one student after she left that A period class! Ultimately, about 500 hand prints were collected and forwarded to Sandy Hook by Ms. Weston over winter break.”

Another FCS teacher, Gayle Gould, serves as co-advisor of a student group known as Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) with teacher Peggy Lehnen. FCCLA recently staged a “penny war” at PHS. “We were able to send a check for $208 to Share Our Strength: No Child Hungry this year,” said Ms. Gould. “Share Our Strength was selected as the National Outreach Program for both FCCLA and the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS), the national organization of FCS teachers. This charity helps to promote proper nutrition and provides food for underprivileged children throughout the country.”

In a new green initiative, FCCLA recently began a recycling program throughout the Pennsbury High School campus. “We have partnered with PaperRetrievers to collect paper products in each classroom and office area to be deposited in designated dumpsters for collection. The dumpsters are located in the parking lot at the corner of South Olds Boulevard and Queen Anne Drive at the West campus,” said Ms. Gould. “Members of FCCLA collect the bags of recycled paper from each classroom, copy room, and office area on a weekly schedule. Many students and teachers are now complying by dividing the paper from other trash and the community has also contributed their papers in the receptacles.”

Pennsbury High School Baseball Coach, Joe Pesci, led a group of Pennsbury Varsity Baseball players to Sellersville to help build houses for Habitat for Humanity in mid-December. The volunteer players
who put in a day’s work included Joe Sabatino, Brendan Campbell, Matt Kaiser, Justin Jacko, Jake Goldberg, and Shaun Wright. “We will schedule more work days in the future as well as doing a Home Run 5K in the spring/summer to get the boys involved in more volunteering,” added Mr. Pesci.

**COMMENDABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Instrumental Music Curriculum Coordinator, Frank Mazzeo, is pleased to announce that Pennsbury will once again be very well represented at the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) All-District 11 Festivals. Twelve Pennsbury students were selected to perform. These students include Kevin Caruso, Karen Caruso, Michael Zhang, David Simon, Laura Glatzer, Julie Scheffler, John Wagner, Ryan McHenry, Michael Houser, Benjamin Strauss, Sylvia Biscoveanu, and Jonathon Cottone. “Thank you to all of our teachers and students for your hard work,” said Mr. Mazzeo. “This is truly an accomplishment for the entire department.”

**MUSICIANS SELECTED FOR PMEA ALL-DISTRICT 11 FESTIVALS**

The 21-member Pennsbury Chamber Choir, under the direction of Pennsbury’s K-12 Vocal Music Coordinator, James Moyer, had the privilege of performing holiday music in the Grand Foyer of the White House on Thursday, December 13th. This was the first appearance by a Pennsbury choir at the White House since December, 2000. The students provided seasonal music as members of the public took part in White House holiday tours.

“This was a huge honor for us,” said Mr. Moyer, who applied during the summer for the Chamber Choir to be considered for this appearance. Along with the application and a letter of inquiry, recordings were also submitted. “Our students were thrilled to have this opportunity to sing in such a prestigious venue,” added Mr. Moyer.

The elite singing group performed a 45-minute set of familiar carols and traditional pieces three times during a three-hour timeframe. The students were accompanied to Washington, D.C. by Pennsbury High School Principal Lisa Becker, School Counselor Joyce Burger, and Vocal Music teachers Betty Hohwielder and Brian Krajcik. Most of the musical selections were sung a cappella by the group with Mr. Moyer conducting. Mr. Krajcik also conducted several pieces and provided some piano accompaniment.

**CHAMBER CHOIR PERFORMS AT THE WHITE HOUSE**

Late last year, the Pennsylvania State Thespian Conference was held at Central York High School. Thirty-Two Thespian troupes from around the state attended. Five “Main Stage” shows are showcased annually at this conference, and in 2012, Pennsbury...
High School and Charles Boehm Middle School presented two of them. The PHS show, *Anatomy of Gray*, is being considered for an invitation to the national festival at the University of Nebraska in June.

Each year, the Pennsylvania Thespian Conference holds a competition for performance scholarships. Three top awards are presented. This year about 55 students from throughout the state competed. Two of the three awards were won by Pennsbury High School Seniors, Danny Gleason and Victoria Pedretti. It is the first time that PHS students took home two of the three awards. This is one of the most prestigious awards a Pennsylvania high school actor can win.

Two students, Julia Sismour and Victoria Pedretti, were selected to present individual event performance at the national festival in June. While several performers were selected from throughout the state, being selected to present at nationals is a high honor and the invitation is given only to students who are ranked as “excellent” in a variety of categories.

Julia Sismour was selected by adjudicators to the All Star Cast. One actor is selected from each school performing at the conference for this honor. Danny Gleason was welcomed into the Thespian Hall of Fame, and Charlotte Triebl was inducted into the Tech Hall of Fame. Congratulations to all of our accomplished Pennsbury Thespians!

Elementary Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator, Janice Gibson, announced that two Pennsbury teachers were recently inducted into the Alpha Nu chapter of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, a professional honor society of women educators. The Society, founded in 1929, promotes professional and personal growth of its members and excellence in education. This year’s faculty inductees included Angela Minor and Kathryn Royal. Ms. Gibson, who is currently serving as President of the local chapter, is also pleased to announce that the Pennsbury members of Alpha Nu continued their 12-year tradition of
promoting math literacy by delivering wrapped, math-related story books to third grade students as holiday gifts. This year, the recipient school was Fallsington Elementary. Assisting Ms. Gibson in the book distribution was Fallsington Math Specialist and Delta Kappa Gamma member, Barbara Fikaris. With the books, students also received hand-written letters from the Pennsbury teachers who donated them. After reading the books, the students will write thank you notes to these thoughtful educators.

**Upcoming MEETINGS**

**Public Hearing on School Closure**
7:00 p.m., January 31, 2013
Keller Hall, PHS West

**Board Facilities Committee**
5:30 p.m., February 7, 2013
Superintendent’s Conference Room

**Board Agenda Meeting**
8:00 p.m., February 7, 2013
Fallsington Elementary School

**Regular Board Meeting**
8:00 p.m., February 14, 2013
Fallsington Elementary School

**Board Revenue Development Committee**
7:00 p.m., February 19, 2013
Superintendent’s Conference Room

**Town Hall Meetings with the Superintendent**

Join us as District Superintendent, Kevin J. McHugh, Ed.D., leads the discussion on various District-related topics and takes questions from stakeholders.

**Tuesday, January 22, 2013, 7:30 p.m.**
Pennwood Middle School library

**Tuesday, March 26, 2013, 7:30 p.m.**
Walt Disney Elementary School auditorium