

A Publication of the South Western School District  
225 Bowman Road, Hanover, PA 17331 ☎ 717-632-2500 🌐 www.swsd.k12.pa.us

Volume 25

Number 4

Spring 2010

# Teachers & Students Making a Difference

## '09-'10 Teachers of the Year

In this issue, we are excited to announce the individuals who have been selected by their peers as Teachers of the Year for the 2009-10 school year.

Faculty throughout the district nominated 14 teachers at the elementary schools, 21 at the intermediate school, and 24 teachers at the high school. High school students also nominated 93 teachers. As we have consistently said here at South Western, these teachers are representative of the many outstanding, dedicated, and caring teachers with whom we interact daily. Please take time to congratulate our selected representatives.



### Elementary Schools

*Claudia Simmons, Kindergarten/Reading - Manheim*  
(Finalist) *Emily Yeager, Physical Education - Park Hills*  
(Finalist) *Jill Shirey, Guidance - Baresville*

### Intermediate School

*Keith Smith, Language Arts*  
(Finalist) *Mark Myers, Mathematics*  
(Finalist) *Eric Toomey, Guidance*

### High School

*Molly Wiles, German*  
*Thomas Long, Technical Education*  
(Finalist) *Diane Hertzog, Mathematics*

Continued on pg. 4 🖱

## A Note From the Superintendent

**Dr. Barbara Rupp**



In these challenging economic times, teachers, staff, and administrators continue to strive to make South Western the best it can be and to make our community proud of our district. Our school board is doing their best to ensure long-term financial stability for the district. Under the direction of our teachers, our students are motivated to be ready to learn and to achieve. Our teachers plan and prepare to provide learning opportunities in their classrooms so our students can be better thinkers and problem solvers. Our dedicated support staff provide the extra services to have our schools clean and ready, to transport our students safely, to maintain our buildings and grounds, to prepare nutritious food each day, and to give assistance to our teachers and administrators in all of their responsibilities. Our administrative team provides the motivation and leadership necessary for all of this to happen.

Everyone strives to make a positive difference in the lives of children and many spend their personal time dedicating to non-profit organizations and to charities. Our South Western team gives back to our community in many ways. They donate money and time. They serve on boards. They are cub scout leaders, Kiwanis Club members, work with AARP,

Continued on pg. 2 🖱

## Inside

- Making A Difference Special Edition
- Manheim In The Middle



## A Note From the Superintendent

Continued from cover

help with VNA Hospice, event volunteer teaching English to adult immigrants.

Our dedication to children and the community does not end at the close of the school day. Our mission remains the same... to provide the best education for all students in the most fiscally responsible way. We could not do what we do without your ongoing support. Please know that your support is greatly appreciated and not taken for granted.

*Barbara A. Rupp*

## 50th Anniversary Wraps Up...

As the district's year-long 50th Anniversary Celebration comes to a close, our committee has a very special final event planned: the placing of a time capsule tracing the history of the district. The capsule will contain a 1961 class ring (first graduating class), the 50th Anniversary yearbook from this school year, other 50th publications from the year and more. Keep checking our site at [www.swsd.k12.pa.us/50years/](http://www.swsd.k12.pa.us/50years/) for details on when in June the dedication ceremony will occur!

## Park Hills: Education And Intervention



Park Hills students in first and second grade have been a part of a daily reading intervention program throughout the school year. In an effort to meet the varied needs of our young readers, the first and second grade teachers, reading specialists, literacy coach, and principal planned this new intervention program and implemented the program at the start of the second marking period. Through numerous data meetings, the educators involved have seen great achievement gains in the area of reading for all students.



The reading interventions focus on numerous reading areas and are primarily research-based programs. They include programs such as The Early Reading Intervention and Leveled Literacy Intervention, both used as intense interventions. Other interventions include Read Naturally, focusing on fluency, Words Their Way, a program focused on phonics, a series of leveled non-fiction books for the on-level readers, and reciprocal teaching strategies for more advanced readers.



The excitement of this intervention period is that every student is involved, in addition to guided reading and anthology reading instruction in their classroom, as well. For many of our students, this intervention period has allowed for a double or triple dose of reading each day. By utilizing numerous classroom teachers, reading specialists, and paraeducators, the students' individual needs are being met on a daily basis. We are thrilled with the students' reading results and look forward to continuing the use of the intervention periods, as well as determining how to include an intervention system at other grade levels.

## South Western Students & Staff...

Make annual contributions to Feed-A-Friend Marathon

Donate holiday gifts for YWCA SafeHome families

Hold an annual Walk-A-Thon through EHMIS  
Peer Helpers to benefit Red Cross

Raised \$14,000 via Student Council for the Four Diamonds Fund

Host Star Family Fun Day, a special FREE carnival-like event for families

## Teachers & Students

# Making a Difference

### "K" Means Kid Writing At Baresville

Anytime of the day you may see Baresville Kindergarten children with their heads down in deep concentration as they are writing and illustrating a story. The Eileen Feldagus's model to Kid Writing has been the approach used with Kindergarten students for both reading and writing instruction. From day one, children are recognized as writers, from their simple pictures and letters and eventually to writing stories. The power of this approach is that children take ownership to the stories they write.

The process begins with the children thinking of a story and then drawing that story picture. In the next step, they meet with an adult, share what the story is about, then write their story while the adult helps with letters and sounds.

Throughout the year this progresses to words and to sentences. Sight words posters located around the room hook the children into learning the simple sight words that are used all through our writing stories. The room becomes a learning resource with the building of word walls and ordinary items being labeled. Demonstrating good practices transfers over to how the children write. Short mini-lessons are created from the children's stories. The teacher models the traits of a good writer. During the mini-lesson children are focused in on how to make their writing reflect what good writing should look like. Month by month the progression is noticeable. Parents who have seen their child's first journal pages from September and compare to their child's stories at this time of year are amazed at the progress.

An exciting part of Kid Writing is the connection between reading and writing. The more a child sees letters



and words with their sounds the easier it is to see that letters make words and those words are just the combined sounds of those letters.

Reading and writing go hand in hand for learning the basic beginning literacy skills. Kid Writing helps develop both these literacy areas. It is also very individualized because of the way each child shares the story with the adult. The adult guides the children and gently stretches them to try the next letter, sound, or word. With this one on one opportunity the children are actively thinking and learning. They are becoming problem solvers.

The children enjoy sharing their finished stories with each other. They are proud of their work. Their progress shows us first hand that Kid Writing increases reading and writing at this young age. Baresville is fortunate to be part of this writing initiative to improve student achievement!

### Manheim In The Middle

Manheim Elementary teachers and students have truly had a unique opportunity being at EHMIS for the 2009-2010 school year. A few of the benefits experienced include: elementary and middle school teachers working collaboratively to coordinate student helpers in classrooms, planning activities, and assisting in student achievement.

Several middle school students worked in each of our elementary classrooms assisting with previewing content, graphic organizers, sight word recognition, reading fluency, individual and small group reading support, and math facts. In addition to the academic assistance, middle school students have also been a part of elementary activities.

Sixth grade students met with kindergarten students to interview them and then generated letters to Santa. The STEEDS class presented a play to kindergarten students. Seminar students assisted in measurement and weight activities during center times in kindergarten and worked on math enrichment activities in 1st grade.



With the help of the middle school technology staff, EHMIS students were selected to work with 3rd graders to create a Photo Story for English class. 5th grade seminar students were invited to participate with the EHMIS Writing Club after school.

The administration, teachers, support staff, and maintenance staff of EHMIS have been immensely supportive and accommodating to Manheim Elementary students and staff. We have had an incredible learning experience this school year.

Volunteer for AARP

Raised \$3,614 to prevent heart disease  
& stroke via Jump Rope for Heart

Work with local  
Head Start

Volunteer as Girl  
Scout leaders

Will provide \$2,500 in scholarships in 2010 through SWEA

**🏆 Claudia Simmons**  
**Kindergarten/Reading Specialist**

Mrs. Claudia Simmons has been an educator for over 14 years at South Western. She first began her career as a half day kindergarten teacher at Baresville in 1996. She accepted a full-time position at Baresville the following year. Since then, she has been a dedicated team member of the elementary department at South Western as a primary teacher at Baresville or Manheim. Currently, Claudia has a dual position at Manheim Elementary: she serves as a reading support teacher for grades 1-5 in the morning and teaches kindergarten in the afternoon.

Mrs. Simmons demonstrates excellence in the classroom by emphasizing a positive classroom environment where she implements a Reading Super Star Program for kindergarten and for children who receive reading support. Claudia hosts the Therapy Dog Program weekly to increase reading fluency. She designed a Kidwriting template that has helped children gain a better understanding of print and she differentiates her instruction to meet the needs of all of her students

Mrs. Simmons believes it is crucial to keep up with current trends and continues taking classes in order to stay sharp, current, and motivated. She received her Masters in Reading and has completed 45 additional credits. Most recently, Claudia has taken Love and Logic workshops to help her gain strategies to use in the classroom as well as to share with parents. Mrs. Simmons serves on the newly formed Language Arts committee and is involved in curriculum revisions in many content areas.

Claudia is known to share anything and everything with teachers in and outside of the district. She has welcomed principals and colleagues from within our district as well as educators outside of the district to observe her Language Arts block and Mrs. Simmons co-teaches with third and fourth grade classroom teachers to highlight reading strategies.

Mrs. Simmons serves as a representative to the district liaison committee and is a member of the South Western Education Association. Outside of her professional duties, Claudia has served as an officer of the West Point Parent Club in the central Pennsylvania Chapter and currently supports her son's platoon currently serving in Afghanistan through care packages and other correspondences. She is a member of the Yellow Ribbon Club which supports active service people and is currently initiating the "Make a Stocking in July" to prepare stockings for service people serving at Christmas time.

If Claudia were to write an autobiography of her life, she would entitle it, "Always Be A Learner." She is passionate about her evolution of her learning and always willing to improve. She truly embraces the concept of life long learning for herself and her students.

**🏆 Keith Smith 7th Grade Language Arts**

Mr. Keith Smith starts every school year with the expectation that his students will be writers. From the very first day he talks to his students as a writer to a writer. He also tries to talk to them as a reader to a reader. He expects his students to write something that surprises them and impresses them, and he has never been disappointed. Keith tries to complete every assignment he gives to the kids. If they have to read the article-of-the-week and write a one-page response, he does it, too. Keith cares about teaching the students how to THINK. He



**Mrs. Claudia Simmons**

# Teachers & Staff Making a Difference

believes the world needs thinkers more than it does test takers. A workshop classroom forces the students to DO. Mr. Smith doesn't just provide the right answer. He wants his students to know everything and understand everything about the world, just as he would for his own children.

Mr. Smith tries to balance creativity and organization in his classroom. Keith runs his classroom as a workshop whenever possible. He believes students need a regular dose of actual reading and writing if they are ever going to develop into mature readers and writers. The workshop approach also allows the opportunity to kneel down beside a student's desk and work one-on-one on a piece of writing or talk about a book. His best teaching occurs in a whisper.



**Mr. Keith Smith**

At the same time, Mr. Smith is open to new ideas and change. He has implemented the article-of-the-week idea this year to give his students more practice reading current nonfiction rather than dated literature. Students have read and written about topics ranging from a soda tax, healthcare, Darfur, and the U.S. Afghanistan policy to tailgating, a 19-year-old chess champion, and the White House party crashers.

Mr. Smith feels that parents entrust him with their sons and daughters for 182 days and he has never taken that trust lightly. He works very hard to create relationships and his students know

**South Western Students & Staff...**

Gave the most in York County  
to United Way in 2009: \$29,881

Work with  
Operation  
Carelift

# Difference



how much he cares about them. Sometimes that caring is a question about a sporting event on the way into class. Sometimes it is a reminder when a student hasn't done his homework. And sometimes it is the pat on the back and kind word on a job well done.

Several years ago, Mr. Smith started a writing club.



**Mrs. Molly Wiles**

Over those years, the club has allowed him to reach writers who never had him for class. Keith tries to spread his love of writing as far as he can. An extension of writing club has been Equus, the literary and art magazine for the school. He feels that the writing club and Equus is his contribution to South Western's writing community. It is his love letter to the power of creativity and the arts. Keith is also pleased with the boys reading group he began this year. Students meet during Colt period and do something quite novel; they read. Mr. Smith believes any boy will read if you give him time and books he enjoys. Thanks to the financial support of building administration, Keith is thrilled by the amount of reading the boys have done this year. They have books and magazines selected because of their appeal to boys. Mr. Smith was a middle school boy who read only Sports Illustrated, so he identifies with male students when it comes to reading. He wants to show these boys that reading isn't a "girl thing." It isn't a passive waste of time; it is a rich and vital part of any person's life.



**Mr. Thomas Long**


and fluency. Mrs. Wiles reaches all her students because she ascertains their learning styles and interests; she then differentiates the course content and incorporates the students' interests into her lessons. Students want to perform their best because they love their teacher and have learned to love the German culture and language.

Molly believes in education as a life long opportunity. She models this tenet by continuing her studies in the areas of curriculum and ESL programs, procuring the title of ESL Program Specialist and earning a Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction/ESL. She also participates in programs that will benefit the students and enhance the German program at SWHS such as the York Twinning Association (German Exchange Program). Mrs. Wiles has helped in the past with the annual PA Conference for World Language teachers. She remains committed to language education by staying abreast of national trends and updates through her membership in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Mrs. Wiles continues to strive for curriculum and personal perfection through SWSD Professional Development courses—most recently in the area of technology.

Students know that Mrs. Wiles cares deeply about each of them as students and as individuals. She establishes a routine, sets boundaries, and creates a safe and respectful atmosphere. A student writes: "Mrs. Wiles takes her own personal time to help any student who is having trouble in German. She comes up with more than one way to learn and that helps me a lot." Mrs. Wiles teaches a German I class with 30 students—lots of challenges including a vast difference in ability level and learning styles. Students witness a teacher who "wakes them up for first period and makes learning German seem easy and fun." All of Mrs. Wiles' students see their "outside the classroom" interests, hobbies, and talents incorporated into the lessons. Mrs. Wiles attends extra-curricular activities to watch the students "do what they love." She makes them work hard in the classroom not only because academic success is an important goal, but also because she knows that the experience of a job well done impacts the students' self-esteem and pride. In the words of another one of her students: "She shows a passion for her job. She goes above and beyond what is expected of her and the success of her teaching stays with kids a long time. She is happy, energetic, and always in the teaching mood."

 **Molly Wiles**  
**High School German**

Mrs. Molly Wiles exhibits daily an unfeigned enthusiasm for student learning. Her energy in the classroom and desire to make each day count in the lives of her students is evident. Her goal to make each student feel welcome and important in the classroom comes easily with Mrs. Wiles' personality and respect for the student. One student wrote: "Frau Wiles is one of the best teachers I have ever had the pleasure to have. She truly inspires me to want to get better in German. I have never once seen her angry with students. She gives us trust and respect and in return we respect her. She truly is a lovely person and a brilliant teacher." Mrs. Wiles' students speak volumes concerning her expertise, creativity, and devotion. One has only to visit her classroom for moments to hear the students and Mrs. Wiles engage in a German dialogue with ease, confidence,

Continued on pg. 6 

Are Kiwanis Club leaders & members

Are Boy Scout leaders

Volunteer on the boards of many community agencies

Volunteer at the local SPCA



**Thomas Long**

**High School Technology Education**

Mr. Long's dedication to his students' success goes well beyond the classroom walls and remains with them after graduation from South Western. His positive and kindhearted nature is contagious, and he continues to seek outside learning experiences to share with his students so they can keep pace with current trends in industry and technology.

Mr. Long continues to match the rate of change technology has brought to the classroom. The evolution and use of the computer in the classroom, especially in his subject areas within the technology education curriculum, has been one of the most demanding challenges he has shouldered. Mr. Long has been instrumental in the move from hand drawing using t-squares, triangles, and pencils to converting his room to a twenty seat computer lab now running five different AutoCAD packages and matching the latest industry move from 2D to 3D Modeling. To remain on the cutting edge, Mr. Long has attended numerous workshops and training programs which not only focus on the technology and software, but also focus on the use of the aforementioned technologies to attain industry standards and goals. To stay current with technology and to create industry connections, Mr. Long also serves on several committees including the Business Advisory Committee, High School Steering Committee, and School to Career Committee. He has also been heavily involved with the Educator in the Workplace program.

The word "connections" has significant importance to Mr. Long. He wants his students to know he is not just a teacher, but a person they can come to at anytime with any issue and he will help them in anyway he can. Mr. Long is a people person. During Mr. Long's interview, he shared with the committee that based on his background and interests he could have easily entered a variety of professions and been successful but he chose education and teaching because of the opportunity to make connections. This fact could not be any more evident as to when a current student asked Mr. Long if he had his uncle in class. Upon being asked this question Mr. Long went to his file cabinet where unbeknownst to anyone he has filed away all thirty-one years of grade books, lesson plans, and students' names from his tenure here at South Western. He started naming names and where those students are today. In wonderment his students asked him how he knew all of this information and he responded, "These are my friends."

From the day he was hired, Mr. Long has been involved with students in athletics and extra-curricular activities. To name a few, he started the girls softball program, he has been class advisor, Varsity Club advisor, and coach of three different sports for a total of thirty seasons. Mr. Long has also held the position of Assistant Athletic Director since 1996.

Tom Long is one of the most genuinely positive and dedicated educators to have graced the classrooms at South Western High School. He has that special gift of being able to relate to anyone and can make any one feel at home when around him. He has dedicated his life to being a positive role model for his students, and he is also someone who quietly and confidently takes care of the business side of education without drawing attention to all that he does to make South Western a better place... not just for his students, but for everyone involved.

**Teachers & Students**

**Making a Difference**



**Design With an Eye on History**



**Molly Glover and her design**

While alumni and former faculty have spent the last year commemorating the district's 50th Anniversary, our CURRENT students also played an important role in celebrating the important milestone. Student leaders gave school tours at open house events and built a float for the Halloween parade.

Over the summer, a team of students from the high school student council and key club met to design the official commemorative 50th anniversary t-shirt. Junior Molly Glover created the artwork based on the group's concept. The shirt's back design pays tribute to the past, present, and future of the high school by blending together three important symbols of mustang pride: the original smoking tree, the current mustang tree, and the compass star, guiding us to future excellence.

The commemorative shirts have been sold at various 50th anniversary events and can still be bought for \$10.00 at the district administration office. There are limited numbers of some sizes, so own a piece of South Western history today!

**South Western Students & Staff...**

Are part of the Hanover Knights of Columbus

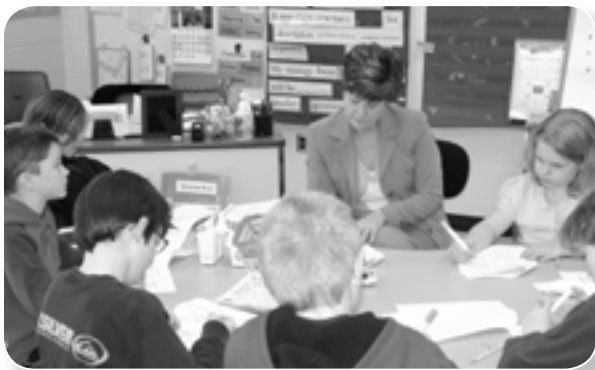
Help the community and the environment with Black & White Goes Green Event

Raised over \$22,000 through Key Club and logged over 3,000 service hours

Sent relief kits to Haiti

## Intervention at West Manheim

The intervention period at West Manheim Elementary School is designed for teachers and support staff to intervene and guide students' reading. The model allows students to receive reading instruction at their working level. Based upon their attainment of skills and assessment data, students are placed into flexible groups. The term flexible indicates the fluid transition of students from one group to another based upon needs. Instruction varies one group to the next. In the upper elementary grades, the SOAR program, reading skill mini-lessons, guided read-



ing, and literature circles are critical components of instruction. The level of support also varies by group. The ultimate goal for each group is to become independent readers with limited teacher support. Throughout the intervention period, teachers continue to monitor student achievement and share skill progress. One method of data sharing occurs within a monthly intervention meeting where professionals share student data. The second method of data sharing occurs through Google Docs. Google Docs are used to record students' daily progress. The intervention period has proven to be successful as students' confidence and achievements in reading continue to grow.

# community info

## Community Swim



The pool at EHMIS is open to the public **Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7:00 - 8:45 PM** for a minimal fee. Lifeguards and access to locker rooms are provided.

## Make A Splash at Guthrie Memorial Library

Starting on June 14th this summer, children and their parents can all *Make A Splash And READ!* They're invited to participate and enjoy all the activities offered during the library's summer reading program at Guthrie Memorial Library - Hanover's Public Library.

The 2010 Summer Reading Club is open to young people, preschool through 18 years old with programs, reading incentives, prize drawings, and much more. Students in grades 7-12 are also welcome to serve as volunteers.

Registration for the program begins Tuesday, June 1st at the library or you can register online at [www.yorklibraries.org](http://www.yorklibraries.org).



**For more information, call the library at 632-5183, or visit [www.yorklibraries.org](http://www.yorklibraries.org). All programs are free of charge.**



**HACC** recently offered an evening welding class at South Western. The class is part of the welding curriculum to be offered next year to South Western students during the school day as a "college in the classroom course." It's good for three HACC credits. Additional HACC welding instruction will continue to be offered in the evening for adults interested in a welding career.

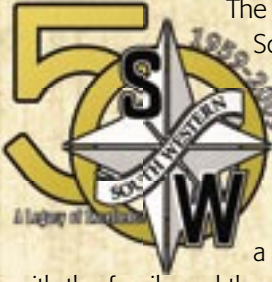
Help local families in need at Christmas

Donated 740 pairs of shoes to Soles4Souls in Alabama

Volunteer at the Hispanic Center teaching english to adult immigrants

Perform at senior communities around the area

## Mission Statement



The South Western School District is dedicated to providing a continually improving educational environment, through a cooperative effort with the family and the entire community, in which all students are encouraged and expected to achieve their full potential, to express themselves clearly, to think reflectively, and to interact responsibly in preparation for lifelong personal growth.

Adopted by the Board of School Directors  
October 24, 1990; Revised March 25, 2002

South Western School District  
225 Bowman Road  
HANOVER, PA 17331

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## Dates to Note

**June 1**  
**New Kindergarten Student Visitation Day**

**June 9**  
**School Board Planning Meeting**  
**7:00 PM**

**June 10**  
**Last Day of School - Early Dismissal**

**June 11**  
**Commencement Ceremony**  
**7:00 PM**

**June 23**  
**School Board Meeting**  
**7:00 PM**

**July 21**  
**School Board Meeting**  
**7:00 PM**

**August 31**  
**First Day of 2010-2011**  
**School Year for Grades K-9**

**September 1**  
**First Day of 2010-2011**  
**School Year for Grades 10-12**

The South Western School District complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Public Law 90-202 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or physical handicap.

Any questions concerning South Western School District's programs and policies should be addressed to: Administration Office, 225 Bowman Road, Hanover, PA 17331, 717-632-2500.

## What A Treasure for High School's Future Teachers!



Recently, South Western High School students in the elementary seminar program attended a special event with Will Hillenbrand, author/illustrator of *What a Treasure!* His book has been named the 2010 selection of the fifth annual Pennsylvania One Book, Every Young Child early literacy program ([www.paonebook.org](http://www.paonebook.org)).

Mr. Hillenbrand was on a 21 day trip to visit libraries, museums and other early learning sites across the state including Park Hills Elementary.

He mesmerized the children as he read and spoke to them about reading.

He was an excellent model for strategies to use when reading to children, and spoke with the elementary seminar students afterwards brainstorming with them and sharing various ideas to use when working in their own assigned classrooms.

What an excellent opportunity for these future teachers!



## School Board Meetings

School Board meetings are conducted at 7:00 pm on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month in the Administrative Conference Room, unless otherwise announced. Residents are invited to attend. Requests to formally address the Board should be made in writing to the Superintendent's office ten days in advance of public meetings.

