



Fall Display Provides Colorful Photo Background

Autumn hues of gold, rust, and orange abound in a fall display accented by miniature lights in the middle school hallway near the main office. The seasonal spectacle provides a colorful backdrop for student photographs. West Allegheny School District custodian Barb Gedman devoted over five hours of personal time on a Saturday morning to assemble the display with items she has accumulated from years of country living.



Pictured are West Allegheny Middle School sixth graders honored as September's Students of the Month. The students are Emily Accorsi, Alec Palmer, Ty Tracy, and Taylor Caruso. Not pictured are seventh grade honorees Kassandra Kyriakis, Joey Kvederis, Miah Shephard, and Anthony Hartzog; and eighth graders Michelle Bartha, Michael Godleski, Emily Pia, and Anthony Sinagoga. The students were nominated by their teachers for demonstrating citizenship and serving as role models for their peers.

This newsletter brings warmest wishes for a



Happy Thanksgiving
to all employees



West Allegheny 2007 Holiday Concert Schedule



- ❖ **Donaldson Band & Chorus**
December 4, 7:00 p.m.
Donaldson Elementary School
- ❖ **McKee Band & Chorus**
December 6, 7:00 p.m.
McKee Elementary School
- ❖ **Wilson Band & Chorus**
December 10, 7:00 p.m.
Wilson Elementary School

- ❖ **Grade 6 Band & Chorus**
December 11, 7:00 p.m.
Stewart Morgan Auditorium
- ❖ **High School Show Choir**
Holiday performance schedule
to be announced



- ❖ **Grade 7 Band & Chorus**
December 13, 7:00 p.m.
Stewart Morgan Auditorium
- ❖ **Grade 8 Band & Chorus**
December 18, 7:00 p.m.
Stewart Morgan Auditorium
- ❖ **High School Chorus**
December 20 & 21, 7:00 p.m.
Stewart Morgan Auditorium

District Welcomes New Employees for 2007-08

Joining the district staff for the 2007-08 school year are:

Administration:

--Toni Baldanzi, middle school assistant principal (While not new to the district, Mrs. Baldanzi has assumed a new position.)

Faculty:

--Leah Blinn, middle school speech/language pathologist
 --Blaise Cackovic, high school physics teacher
 --Matt DeChicko, Wilson health and physical education teacher
 --Jonathan Denk, high school English teacher
 --Denise Elicker, Donaldson learning support teacher
 --T. J. Fox, McKee music teacher
 --Janel Giovanelli, high school biology teacher

--Lea Hertzog, middle school math teacher
 --Brian Lambert, half-time middle school learning support teacher
 --Melissa MacNeil, middle school guidance counselor
 --Tom Misko, high school math teacher
 --Diane Ordich, McKee/Donaldson/Wilson Reading Specialist
 --Susan Tarquinio, McKee learning support teacher
 --Tammy Turner, middle school librarian
 --Lisa Wensell, McKee learning support teacher
 --Kim Will, half-time Donaldson kindergarten teacher
 --Laura Zuraski, Wilson music teacher

Long-Term Substitutes:

--Maura Nicholls Underwood, middle school music teacher
 --Brittney Gradkowski, half-time Donaldson kindergarten teacher
 --Brandie Short, Wilson fifth grade teacher

Support Staff:

--Renee Greer, Wilson aide
 --Tammy Majocka, Donaldson/McKee aide
 --Sharon Zysk, Wilson aide

Winter Coaching Staff:

--Jason Cardillo, varsity wrestling assistant coach
 --Gary Kacsur, girls' basketball assistant coach
 --Bill Morosetti, junior high wrestling assistant coach

Staff Supports Cancer Research

The district staff raised \$1,255 on Lee National Denim Day, a fundraising effort to eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease. Employees wore denim to work on October 5, 2007, in exchange for a \$5 donation to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Wilson Elementary School nurse Becky Schroeder, has helped raise over \$11,000 through this effort over the last eight years as part of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October.



The district held an Induction Program for 17 new teachers and 3 long-term substitutes prior to the start of the school year. Pictured are (Row 1) Lea Hartzog, Susan Tarquinio, Kimberly Will, Brandie Short, Diane Ordich, and Lisa Wensell; (Row 2) Janel Giovanelli, Melissa MacNeil, Tammy Turner, Denise Elicker, Brittney Gradkowski, Blaise Cackovic, and Jon Denk; (Row 3) Leah Blinn, Laura Zuraski, Amie Schwartzmiller, T. J. Fox, Tom Misko, and Matt DeChicko (Missing: Brian Lambert, Maura Nicholls Underwood).

Television Show Sparks Interest in Weight Loss

Inspired by the television show “The Biggest Loser,” approximately 60 West Allegheny staffers are focusing on wellness and weight loss prior to the holiday season.

Groups at the high school, McKee, and Donaldson report for weekly weight checks. “Contestants” choose their own nutrition and exercise plan, receive weight loss tips, and vie for prizes.

School nurses Barb Lecker, Mary Beth Hill, and Beth Bauer, elementary ESL teacher Erin McGowan, and high school clerk Nancy Barner are coordinating the program. Former high school math teacher Ryan Madonna, who died unexpectedly on October 15, actually initiated this program at the high school. Therefore, rather than award prizes to the winners, high school participants have decided to use the prize money to remember Mr. Madonna in some way.

Coach Responds to Need for Help

West Allegheny High School football coach Bob Palko responded to a call for help from the Sewickley United Methodist Church on October 6. He and a group of 15 West Allegheny High School football players helped unload 1,400 pumpkins for the church’s annual fall fundraiser.



Teachers Give Presentations

❖McKee faculty members Kim Dawson (technology facilitator) and Michelle Bateman (third grade teacher) presented a workshop on Integrating Technology into the Curriculum as part of the Countywide Professional Development Day on October 8, 2007.



Kim Dawson (standing) with Carrie Morgan, middle school technology facilitator



Michelle Bateman (standing) with a teacher from another school district

❖Debbie Turici, Wilson/Donaldson art teacher, gave the keynote address at a Regional ARTS Mini-Conference entitled “Be an ARTS Survivor!” on October 13, 2007, at the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit. The topic of her presentation was No Child Left a Dime--How No Child Left Behind has affected the arts and what you can do to fix it!

Remembering Ryan Madonna

The West Allegheny School District suffered the loss of a promising young educator with a bright future when an accident took the life of



former high school math teacher Ryan Madonna on October 15, 2007. While with the district for only a few short years, Mr. Madonna had a positive impact on both staff and students. He was receptive to advice from his peers and dedicated to doing his best for students.

High School Principal Daniel Smith described him as a “young

professional who was dedicated to the students, staff and community of West Allegheny, who will be deeply missed by all.”

As the result of staff donations for a tribute to Mr. Madonna, a high school yearbook and a memorial blanket were presented to his family. The remainder of the money was donated to the high school library for books in his memory. Students and staff also remembered Mr. Madonna with an evening candlelight vigil outside the high school.



It is the policy of the District not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age or handicap in its educational programs, services, facilities, activities or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments, Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 Regulations of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 204 Regulations of the 1984 Carl D. Perkins Act or any applicable federal statute. For information regarding this policy, contact Compliance Officer, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, West Allegheny School District, P. O. Box 55, 105 Pine Street, Imperial, PA 15126, 724-695-3422, or the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, DC 20201. The school district shall not discriminate in the operations/functions of the district on the basis of sex, color, national origin, religion, marital status, or handicap.

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Teacher, Retiree Maintain Highway Garden



High School biology teacher Marsha Herring (center) and retired biology teacher Jeff Marshall (right) help senior Mike Speakman clean up the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy garden.

West Allegheny High school biology teacher Marsha Herring and retired biology teacher Jeff Marshall volunteered their time after school on October 16 to accompany a group of National Honor Society students to the grassy area near the Montour Run on-ramp to the Parkway West. As a community service project, the group spent several

hours preparing the ground for next spring's planting.

For a number of years both teachers have coordinated this effort with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy by bringing students to the garden in the spring to plant the flowers. On weekly visits during the summer, Herring weeds the garden and Marshall mows the grass.

Resources Available for Families In Need



District families with school-age children, who need support services, particularly during the holiday season, may contact the following: Lynn Birnie, high school, 724-695-5252; Pearl Hellmann, middle School, 724-

695-8979, Ext. 5233; Kristen Tracy, Donaldson, 724-213-1014; JoAnn Biscan, McKee, 724-695-5267; Karen Tracy, Wilson, 724-695-3300, Ext. 5304; and Meredith Gillo, District Office, 724-695-5219.