



INSIDE WEST ALLEGHENY

A publication for West Allegheny School District employees

Spring 2009

Employees Keep Pace for Wellness

Wilson secretary Patty Hoskins arranged for all employees at the school to participate in National Walk @ Lunch Day on April 29. Those who took a brisk 30-minute walk during their lunch period were eligible for prizes.

Three West Allegheny teachers ran in a race to benefit the Montour Trail on April 25: McKee technology facilitator Kim Dawson, elementary Spanish teacher Alison McLaren, and middle school science teacher Brian Karcz. Dawson and Karcz both were awarded top prizes in their age groups.

2009-2010 School Calendar Finalized

- ❖ Staff reports August 24
- ❖ Classes begin August 26 and end June 3
- ❖ Winter Break - December 24 through January 1
- ❖ Spring Break - April 1 through April 5
- ❖ Graduation - May 28
- ❖ Kennywood - June 17

Staff Honored for Service



Leon Strimel, high school guidance counselor reacts to comments regarding his 35 years of service presented by his colleagues Dan Smith, high school principal, and Sophia Hanna, guidance counselor (above). Pictured below are Tiffany Mangan and Tami Derrick, both 10-year honorees (left) and Richard Smith, middle school principal with Toni Baldanzi, also a 10-year honoree (right).



Nancy Sale
25 years



Barb Liberto
25 years



Employee Recognition Program - 2009 Honorees

35 years - Sandra Huling, Mary Alice Medlin, Karen Evans Meyers, Leon Strimel, and Mardelle Walk; **30 years** - Carol Britton, Carol Lowry, and Phyllis Reuss;

25 years - Rich Cecil, Munai Franjione, Barbara Liberto, Nancy Sale, and Tom Snyder; **20 years** - Joann Biscan, Jennifer Hart, and Darlene Supinski;

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District Honors Staff for Service

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15 years - Lisa Barr, Anthony Castelluci, Doris Catalano, Elizabeth D'Amico, Mary Damratoski, Robert DeMario, Carol DeWitt, Shawn Dugan, Karen Fedin, Bernadette Goodwin, Chris Ann Heron, Deborah Ireland, Martin Lestander, Angela Powell, Amy Rocchio, Ralph Shattuck, Pamela Volakis, and Dorothy Wright; and **10 years** - Joyce Anderson, Toni Baldanzi, Renee Bollman, Erin Clay, Shelley Crannell, Tami Derrick, Barbara Godman, Steven Groba, Julie Hahka, Darren Humbert, Coleen Joyce Scott, Jacqueline King, Amy Krek, Tiffany Mangan, Robert Mayo, Roger Reynolds, Curt Russell, Rebecca Sabin, Christopher Shattuck, Joan Snyder, and Jerry Wessel

Read Across America Volunteers Coordinate Children's Event at Mall



Lisa Wensell and Susan Tarquinio, McKee learning support teachers, volunteered their time to help coordinate the children's program of arts, crafts, story time, and face painting held at the Mall at Robinson on March 7, 2009. The event culminated a week of fun and educational classroom activities at the elementary schools designed to promote reading in conjunction with the national celebration of Read Across America.

High School Employee Supports Blood Drive

Hall monitor Stanley Majocka donated blood at the April 7, 2009 blood drive sponsored by the senior and junior classes in conjunction with the Central Blood Bank. Students and residents also contributed to the success of the effort with 44 total products collected in the name of Connor Behr, a 15-month-old baby boy diagnosed with leukemia. Guidance counselor Leon Strimel coordinated the drive.



Training Sessions Target Bullying Prevention

Hillary Mangis, school psychologist, Kathleen Sites, Wilson Elementary principal and Richard Smith, middle school principal (far right) applied for and received PA CARES (Creating an Atmosphere of Respect and Environment for Success) grants to implement the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. Pictured also are Kathryn Taylor, Wilson guidance counselor, and Deborah Ireland, Wilson clerk, during a two-day training session held on February 18-19, 2009. The session was designed to prepare Coordinating Committee members as staff trainers.



In-service Explores Assessment Strategies

The District Act 48 Committee, chaired by Dr. Christine Assetta, Assistant to the Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, coordinated the March 16, 2009, staff in-service program.

Sessions included presentations on Formative Assessment Strategies by University of Pittsburgh consultants Joe Werlinich and Otto Graf.

Presentations were customized for elementary teachers and

for the middle school and high school faculties.

Also included were sessions on bullying prevention and CPR certification along with department and grade level activities and meetings.



Joe Werlinich of the University of Pittsburgh questions middle school teachers Leda Niccolai and Cathy Moore Chiodo on effective instruction and curriculum delivery strategies.



University of Pittsburgh consultant Otto Graf discusses data collection in the classroom with middle school teacher Bob Mayo and high school teachers Martin Lestander, and Shawn Dugan.

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McKee Claims Teacher's Cup Trophies

Winning the March 13, 2009, Teachers' Cup was the team from McKee Elementary School: (front) Renae Castelluci, Mariann Winning, Ginny Belko, and Autumn Magnone (student teacher); (back) Kirsten Davis, Tami Derrick, Tina Seybold, and Tom Orr.



McKee Elementary School also won the spirit award. Employees from all five buildings competed in events, including an obstacle course, a basketball shoot-out, and a relay race. The

West Allegheny Foundation sponsored the program to raise money for educational and community grants.

403(b) Plan: Retirement Savings Option

On April 20, 2009, the District's 403(b) Plan was fully implemented, and all existing participants had their new accounts established and investment choices in place. The school board approved the establishment of the 403(b) Plan to provide employees with a voluntary option to save for retirement in addition to the mandatory PSERS system.

The 403(b) Plan committee met regularly to learn the requirements for compliance with new IRS regulations. This yearlong process involved interviewing prospective providers, participating in conference calls

and web training sessions on the set up and use of the system, and establishing a PIN number for every employee. Briefing and registration sessions for participants were scheduled, and arrangements for the transfer of funds from old accounts to a holding account were made before the final transfer of the funds to the investments selected by the participants.

Employees who have not yet established a 403(b) account may do so by contacting John Daley from Lincoln Financial and submitting a payroll deduction form to the business office.