

Highlights



VOL. 22 SPRING 2009

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

BEST MEASURING THE SCHOOLS



A child's first teachers are parents. But not far behind are elementary school teachers.

Elementary education is a foundation for the learning that will take children to adulthood.

But how do you know if your elementary school is a good one ... providing what your children need to grow and mature, developing their talents and curiosity, providing guidance for their future?

A snapshot look at the Canon-McMillan School District's seven elementary schools is a good start on determining what makes an effective school.

The schools - Borland Manor, Cecil, First Street, Hills-Hendersonville, Muse, South Central and Wylandville - have been recognized both inside the Canon-McMillan community and outside to show that they are exceptional.

A listing of the Best Pennsylvania Elementary Schools, based on PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) tests and compiled by schooldigger.com of 1,724 schools, shows three C-M elementary schools among the **TOP 10** as follows:

- No.1** Borland Manor
- No.5** Wylandville
- No.9** Cecil Elementary

■ **Borland Manor's** 264 students in 2007 were at the top of the

list with a combined PSSA score in 2008 of 197.2 which means the students had an

average PSSA math score of 99.05 and an average PSSA reading score of 98.2. That is very close to perfect.

Both Wylandville and Borland Manor were awarded grant money to run a Science Olympiad. Borland Manor also has been holding a Science Day for the past two years while Wylandville started its Science Day this year.

In 2007, the *Pittsburgh Business Times* ranked 325 Western Pennsylvania schools and named Muse 3rd-graders No. 3, Wylandville's 3rd-graders No. 5 and Borland Manor's 3rd-graders No. 14.

In 2008, www.greatschools.net rated schools across the U.S. on an overall rating with the highest being 10. Borland Manor, Cecil, First Street, Muse and Wylandville scored a 10. Hills-Hendersonville had a 9 and South Central, 7.

Since 2004, all seven C-M elementary schools received Achievement Recognition for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and were given the annual Keystone Award.

Mrs. Grace Lani, principal at both Borland Manor and Wylandville, says, "I believe our students rank so well because we begin with a partnership with parents who value their child's education and actively want what is best for their children coupled with an exceptional, highly



Dr. Helen K. McCracken

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

It is my sincere pleasure to serve our Canon-McMillan school community as Superintendent of Schools.

The Board of Education and I share a vision of excellence that I hope continues to become manifest as our time together ensues.

Excellence in any endeavor does not come easily, and a school district is no different than any other system. Therefore, perseverance, hard work, high expectations and openness to change must grow within an ethical climate for true success to emerge.

As we are reminded daily, the economic conditions of our world and our nation continue to worsen. Our challenges are many. Fortunately, we have a level of growth and opportunity in our community that does not exist for many areas less fortunate. However, fiscal responsibility is a foundation of our decision making. I am confident that we can address our financial

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HIGH SCHOOL

Coaches vs. Cancer

Canon-McMillan defeated Ringgold 52-45 in the Coaches vs. Cancer benefit basketball game in January. The Coaches vs. Cancer program unites the American Cancer Society and local high schools in the fight against cancer. One dollar of every admission went to the American Cancer Society.

Additionally, donations were accepted at Canon-McMillan and Ringgold. The halftime half-court shot monies and 50/50 also were donated to the American Cancer Society.

In all, the two schools were able to raise more than \$3,150 for the American Cancer Society to help promote lifesaving research and programs that improve the quality of life for thousands of people suffering from cancer.

Since 1993, the Coaches vs. Cancer program has generated nearly \$40 million in revenue for the society's fight against cancer.



Helping to create security blankets for Project Linus are, from left, Josh Cowden, Colby Agostinella, Scott Staples, teacher Mrs. Carmon Pomaibo, Josh Totterdale and Adam Hullak.

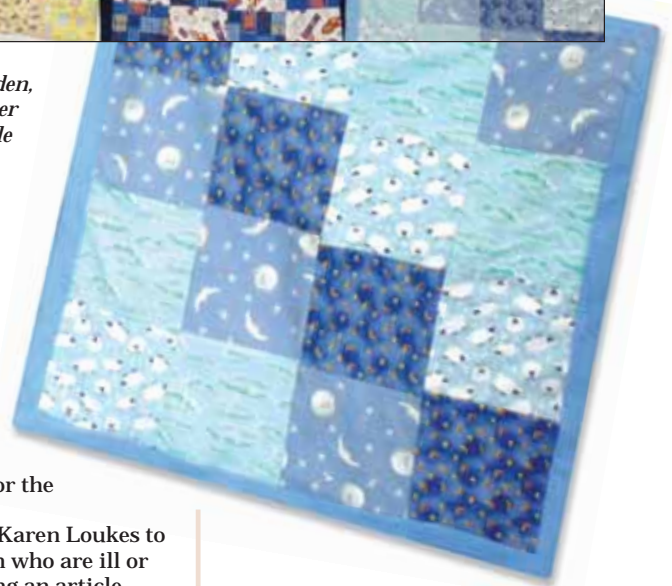
PROJECT LINUS: Security blankets for those in need

The Everyday Living classes from Family Consumer Sciences, under the direction of their teacher, Mrs. Carmon Pomaibo, designed and created baby blankets for the Project Linus Organization.

Project Linus was founded by Ms. Karen Loukes to provide security blankets for children who are ill or in need. She was inspired after reading an article about a cancer center where a child expressed her need for a "security blanket" while undergoing treatment. To date, there are chapters of the organization in all 50 states. The blankets are all handmade based on various patterns approved by the organization.

There were 43 High School boys and girls who made a total of 10 flannel blankets based on a typical quilt pattern. They hand stitched the squares together, then added a border and backing. A layer of batting was sewn in between the layers for added warmth and Mrs. Pomaibo used a sewing machine to stitch over the main seams to make them strong. They then were donated to the Pittsburgh chapter of Project Linus.

Students donated money and fabric and other supplies to provide all that was needed for the blankets. The students provided this unselfish act because they knew the work was for a good cause.



Students to create outdoor sculpture

High School art teachers Mrs. Kara Stauffer and Miss Joanna Zocco were awarded funding and support through the Mattress Factory for a museum visit and artist residency program in which students will create artwork for installation at the High School with the assistance and guidance of a professional artist, Ms. Wendy Osher.

CMSD students enrolled in Mrs. Stauffer's "Form & Function" and Miss Zocco's "Concept & Creative Thinking" will collaborate to create an outdoor sculpture that combines function and movement.

Ms. Osher will work with the students for 10 days in the spring. The resulting sculpture will be placed permanently near a pond on the High School campus.



Accepting a check in the amount of \$1,500 at halftime were Ms. Marella Kazos, Canon-McMillan High School Assistant Principal; and, far right, Mr. Lloyd Price, Ringgold School District Athletic Director; from Mr. Anthony Massari, President of Amcom Office Systems; and Mr. Rich Schneider, Senior Account Executive.

ARTS

Scholastic Art and Writing contest winners

Canon-McMillan High School and Canonsburg Middle School students were recognized for their art accomplishments at the recent Scholastic Art and Writing Competition of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Kara Fink, a junior, received a Gold Key, the highest level of achievement on the regional level, for a drawing entitled "Midnight Swimming." Her Gold Key work was forwarded to New York for national level adjudication.

Also sent to New York for national adjudication was Gold Key winner Erene Semanderes' painting, "R&R - Retro Reverse." Erene is an 8th-grader at Canonsburg Middle School.

Winners of Silver Keys for distinguished achievement on the regional level were:

ALLISON SCHEESER senior, both for her mixed media, "Something out of Nothing," and sculpture, "Crowned Crane"

TIM ZGORZELISKI 8th-grader, Canonsburg Middle School, drawing, "Unleashed Strength"

Merit Award winners were:

ALLISON SCHEESER senior, "Feeling," mixed media

NICOLLETTE BEVEC senior, three sculptures: "Recycelier" (recycle and chandelier), installation art; "Back to My Roots," installation art; and "Big is Beautiful," sculpture

HEATHER SPIRIK junior, "The Dark Side," computer art

JONATHAN TOWARD junior, "The Eye," painting

Other Canon-McMillan High School students who submitted artwork to the competition and had their entries exhibited in the Benedum Fine Arts Gallery at Waynesburg University were:

SENIORS Rebecca Harrison, Katie Mazzocco, Mindy Preaux, Keirsten Thomas

JUNIORS Rebekah Coffey, Ashley Guyaux, Rachel Poirer

SOPHOMORES Kristina Boehmer, Robert Durbin, Bryan Gogarty, Meredith Harrison, Jonathan Slezak

Canonsburg Middle School 8th-graders' art accepted into the exhibit at Waynesburg University were:

PAINTINGS

Rachel Anderson, "Weekend Plans?"

Jacob Brown, "Soul Outburst"

Heather DeMarino, "Lotus Blossom Timpanist"

Maggie Sphar, "Uniquely Me"

DRAWINGS

Michael Burchesky, "Lucky Glow"

Dan Hansen, "Vacant Paradise"

Catherine Herman, "Hidden by Humor"

Adam Veydt, "Hidden by Honor"



Gold Key: Erene Semanderes, Canonsburg Middle School, "R&R - Retro Reverse"



Silver Key: Allison Scheeser, Canon-McMillan High School, senior, "Crowned Crane"



Gold Key: Kara Fink, Canon-McMillan High School junior, "Midnight Swimming"



Silver Key: Tim Zgorzeliski, Canonsburg Middle School, 8th-grader, "Unleashed Strength"

Highlights

EDITOR MARILYN A. POSNER

Canon-McMillan *Highlights* is the community newsletter published by Canon-McMillan School District. If you know of anyone in the district who did not receive a copy in the mail, please call 724-746-2940 or write:

Canon-McMillan *Highlights*, One North Jefferson Avenue, Canonsburg, PA 15317

The Canon-McMillan School District is an Equal Opportunity school district.

CANONSBURG MIDDLE



Elizabeth Mansfield & Michael Burchesky

Recycling success at CMS

A recycling project to help Canonsburg Middle School is being led by several 8th-grade gifted students. The money they earn through the paper recycling project will be used for improving the school campus.

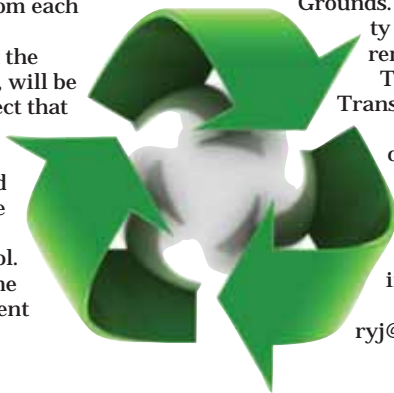
The project is a way to incorporate service-learning as part of the gifted education program at the school. Students began the recycling project by creating posters, bulletin boards, flyers and commercials to make their peers and teachers aware of why it is important to recycle.

A team of student writers, headed by Mrs. Shana Porter, 8th-grade English teacher, makes TV commercials that are shown during the morning news that is streamed into every classroom at Canonsburg Middle School to spread awareness of the project. Two other teams, headed by Ms. Julie Gaetano, 8th-grade English teacher, are responsible for posting signs and maintaining a bulletin board in the school.

The teams work together in collecting the recyclable paper from each classroom in the school.

The money earned from the recycling company, Abitibi, will be used in a landscaping project that is being planned by students to take place in the spring. The 8th-grade gifted students will lead 7th-grade gifted students in the landscaping project at the school.

Students are enjoying the project and becoming student leaders in the process.



DISTRICT

School & workplace safety

Workplace safety is a focus of the Canon-McMillan School District. At the beginning of this decade, the district's Business Office created a Workplace Safety Committee chaired by Mr. Jon McCrory, chairperson of the district's Technology Education Department.

The committee's mission is to take a critical look at workplace safety while helping to find cost savings. The committee has equal representation from administration and staff, including teachers, transportation personnel, building administrators, secretaries, custodians, cafeteria workers and Administration Building staff. Each committee member receives mandatory training annually, conducted by a professional online through the School Claims Service.

In an effort to reach its goals, the committee successfully earned Department of Labor and Industry approval as a Workplace Safety Committee each year by following the mandated rules received during training.

The district stays on top of safety issues and concerns along with earning a 5 percent discount on Workers' Compensation rates. In 2007, the committee also earned the PSBA (Pennsylvania School Boards Association) Insurance Trust Safety Award acknowledging the district for its proactive approach to safety/loss control.

Noteworthy recommendations and actions of the committee include:

- Making recommendations to place an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) in all buildings. To date, all district buildings and facilities are equipped with a life-saving AED.

- At the conclusion of the committee's formal meeting, a site walk-through is done and a safety checklist is completed for that building. The committee's findings are then shared with the building principal or supervisor prior to leaving the building. If any safety violation is found, that building is revisited either by Chairman McCrory or Mr. Randy Huddart, Director of Buildings and Grounds. Later, another walk-through is conducted to observe if safety issues had been addressed. All major findings have been remedied.

The Workplace Safety Committee has now grown to include a Transportation Safety Committee.

The Workplace Safety Committee shares information with others throughout the district. The committee analyzes Workers' Compensation claims and looks for ways to avoid future occurrences.

Mrs. Joni Mansmann, Director of Business and Finance, says, "The commitment to safety is evident in every building we have visited."

"I encourage anyone with questions to contact me at mccro-ryj@cmsd.k12.pa.us," says Chairman McCrory.



The Safety Committee consists of, from left, front row, Ms. Linda Kappel, Federal Coordinator; Mrs. Joni Mansmann, Director of Business and Finance; Mrs. Karen Dorgan, Maintenance Department Secretary; back row, Mr. Jonn Mansfield, Director of Transportation; Ms. Cheri Ochiuto, School Bus Driver; Mr. Jon McCrory, Chairperson of the Safety Committee and chairperson of the Technology Education Department; and Mrs. Donna Barca, Administration Building Secretary/Receptionist. Not pictured are Mr. Mark Abbondanza, Canonsburg Middle School Principal; Mrs. Shelley Brose, Assistant Principal at Cecil and Muse elementary schools; Mrs. Linda Camerson, Cafeteria Employee; Mr. Scott Chambers, Cecil Intermediate School Principal; Mr. Randy Huddart, Director of Buildings and Grounds; and Mrs. Cindy Karner, Custodian.

NORTH STRABANE INTERMEDIATE



North Strabane Intermediate School's The Mac Shack school supply store donated \$300 to the Washington Area Humane Society following a December holiday raffle. Pictured is 6th-grader Malina Dziak, surrounded by Mac Shack employees, presenting the money to Mrs. Linda Campbell, a Humane Society representative. The students raffled stockings filled with school supplies.

Thanks for creating cards for troops

Congressman Tim Murphy visited the students of North Strabane Intermediate School recently to thank them for their support of U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

The students created Thanksgiving cards for the troops which Cong. Murphy personally delivered on Thanksgiving.

"Our students made more than 250 cards for the soldiers," says NSIS Principal Tom Theodore. "We were happy to have the opportunity to show our support of the troops and hopefully bring them some holiday cheer.

"The students truly enjoyed creating the cards, knowing they were going overseas for our soldiers," Mr. Theodore added.

Cong. Murphy spent two days in Afghanistan to review the situation in Afghanistan and discuss U.S. and NATO plans. On his visit to the school, Cong. Murphy said he met with soldiers from across Pennsylvania when delivering the students' handmade cards. He also showed photos of his trip. In recognition of the students giving a morale boost to the soldiers, Cong. Murphy presented the school with a Special Congressional Recognition certificate and a U.S. House of Representatives coin.

Helping soldiers call home

The annual charity drive at North Strabane Intermediate School gave families a chance to clean out a junk drawer and help U.S. troops to call home.

The students donated old cell phones to support the "Cell Phones for Soldiers" campaign.

Donated cell phones will be recycled by ReCellular, turned into calling card cash and delivered to U.S. troops. Every 16 months consumers are retiring an estimated 130 million cell phones and only 10 percent of those phones are recycled. By donating to "Cell Phones for Soldiers" the students at NSIS had the opportunity to support U.S. troops and to help the environment.

The student volunteers - NSIS "Cell Phone Santas" - made daily collections during the month of December. The students donated a total of 188 cell phones for the charity drive. Montana Grimm donated the most cell phones - 18.

U.S. soldiers and their loved ones who receive the calls appreciate the calling card minutes.



Cell Phone Santas at NSIS, from left, are Savanna Mooney, Paul Higgins, Kami Warnock, Rachael Paquin, Taylor Wagner and Sam Luba.

ELEMENTARY

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

FROM PAGE ONE

challenges appropriately to meet the needs of our students.

A quote taken from Jim Collins' book, "Good to Great," is especially appropriate during this difficult fiscal period because I believe it speaks to those of us who are fortunate to live and/or work in Canon-McMillan. What we have here, now and for the long-term, is truly special. The following quote relates to all of us in our personal and professional lives during these times:

"Retain faith that you will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties. And, at the same time, confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be."

I believe fervently we are preparing our children to be world ready. We work diligently as a professional learning community to foster high levels of achievement for all students, to embrace differentiation in our instruction so as to address the needs of our learners all along the learning continuum. We are focused on 21st century skills and use data to drive instructional and curriculum decisions. Our budget will be developed to support our constant focus on improved academic achievement.

Education and academic achievement must be our priority. Our community deserves no less. Time has taught us that the cyclical nature of life will always mean periods of both highs and lows. Therefore, keeping a sense of unity as a district will ensure our future success. I look forward to all of us working together to create the learning community our children and our citizens deserve.

Helen K. McCracken, Ed.D.

A snapshot of the 'best'

FROM PAGE ONE

qualified staff at both buildings and believe that all children can learn. Our staffs have an excellent record of teaching and our children enjoy coming to school to do their very best."

First Street has been recognized nationally as a 2007 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon School, the highest recognition presented by the U.S. Department of Education. That was neither the beginning nor the end of that school's high rankings.

This school year the Division of Federal Programs, Pennsylvania Department of Education, selected 123 Title I schools to receive a Title I Academic Achievement Award of \$5,000 - which included First Street. In addition, First Street was named a 2009 Distinguished Title I School.

"We are proud to again be recognized as a high-achieving school," says Dr. Dawn Nicolaus, First Street's principal. "This recognition validates the programs and strategies we have instituted schoolwide. Once again, it shows how our whole school community working together ensures success."

When First Street's 3rd grade scored 100 percent proficient or advanced on the 2004 PSSA math test, it was the first school in Washington County to have a perfect score.

First Street also was a national finalist in the 2008 Intel Schools of Distinction in the area of math excellence, receiving a \$2,500 grant. Intel honors top schools that have demonstrated excellence in math or science education as Intel Schools of

“Once again, it shows how our whole school community working together

Distinction. These schools must develop an environment and curricula that meet or exceed benchmarks, including national math and science content standards.

At both Cecil and Muse, parental involvement is a key to success. "We have parent activity nights throughout the year, including Pasta Nights, Game Nights, Big Guy Nights, VIP Days and Bowling Parties," says Mr. Robert Kleinhans, principal of both schools. The two schools also hold PSSA Parent Days in which parents attend school to work through a PSSA Writing activity with their children. Parents and teachers also provide information with parents at parent-only PSSA presentations to explain the PSSA process, procedures and the type of assessment."

Similarly, Hills-Hendersonville holds weekly small-group instruction for each grade level along with literature circles to present authentic literature and promote discourse. There is a Reading Buddies program with 1st- and 3rd-graders. There also are Math Whiz, a problem-solving program by grade level each week, and weekly Math

BORLAND MANOR GOES GREEN

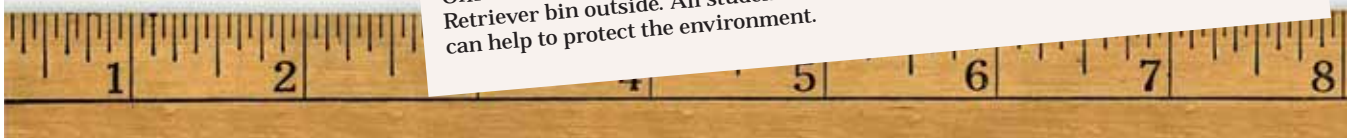
Borland Manor Elementary continues to "Go Green." In addition to recycling cell phones and laser and inkjet cartridges, at the end of last school year, the school started to recycle paper, with the assistance of the Recycle Committee of Borland Manor PFO.

The Abitibi Paper Retriever program started with presentations to students about what types of paper can be recycled in this program and how the paper is recycled into marketable paper products such as newsprint. Students learned about the importance of environmental stewardship, saving solid waste disposal costs, and diverting paper from local landfills. They also learned how they could participate and help to get the community involved.

With the cooperation of faculty and staff, students started the "Green Team," which is comprised of students from each class. Every day, the "Green Team Officers" collect recyclable paper in their classrooms and place it into the Paper Retriever bin outside. All students are learning good recycling habits and how they can help to protect the environment.



Allison Helfer, left, and Laney Hicks learn good recycling habits.



ELEMENTARY

schools

ensures success. ”

Dr. Dawn Nicolaus, First Street principal

Mania to practice computation skills.

Hills Helpers is a parent program to promote home and school interaction.

South Central, the largest of the seven elementary schools, has a variety of programs to encourage learning.

Special education services are delivered to meet the needs of all South Central students. "For example, when we saw the number of upcoming kindergarten students who were diagnosed with Autism, we felt we could provide the type of classroom experience that those students would need to thrive academically and socially," says South Central Principal, Mrs. Michelle Tomicek. "With the guidance of special education teacher Ms. Carla Mastrian, the result is the development of an incredible classroom that is reaching every young learner."

South Central's students and staff follow a POWER theme - "Polite, Orderly, Work Ethic, Respect" - the characteristics that they strive to demonstrate.

The school holds a Veterans Day program annually to show respect for the servicemen and women of the community. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of community service projects. South Central encourages family involvement. In addition to the PTA-sponsored activities, the school staff provides learning opportunities as well. Evening programs such as Partners in Print and Homework Help have been successful in providing training for many parents.

New this school year at South Central is "4500 Pledge." Families log time spent each month doing meaningful activities together. Research shows the average amount of interaction during a school day between parent and child is three minutes. The South Central pledge is for 30 minutes each day during the school year, which would equal 4,500 minutes. In the first month of the school year there were 70 families participating.



From left, Ms. Ann Metzger and Mr. Ron Baillie, acting co-directors of Carnegie Science Center, with Ms. Cyndy Carroll, Canon-McMillan elementary technology education teacher

South Central Elementary was selected to receive a \$1,000 Title I Academic Achievement Award during the 2008-2009 school year. Each year, the Division of Federal Programs allocates a portion of Title I funds to Title I schools making AYP for two or more consecutive years. This is South Central's third year of having the students meet the high academic goals that have been set up in order to receive this very significant and noteworthy achievement.

Borland Manor and Wylandville initiated the "Stepping into Reading" program in which a child reads at home for 15 minutes and their parents sign that it has been accomplished. When the child reads 100 15-minute intervals, the school provides a "reading bracelet" and a button to go on the bracelet. For each additional 100 "steps," the child receives another button to add to the bracelet to wear during the school day.

The schools' librarian and principal annually go to the Greater Canonsburg Public Library to promote Library Month and invite students to visit the library in the evening to see the librarian and principal work.

There also is the annual Reading Sleepover at Borland Manor filled with activities for students who spend the night at school reading and learning ... and sharing breakfast in the morning.

Mrs. Tammy Underwood, the mother of four including 2nd-grader Jordan, and 4th-grader Devin, says she likes the fact that Wylandville Elementary School, where her children attend, "is small and homey. Everyone knows everyone and there is never a problem with getting parents to help at school."

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MS. CYNDY CARROLL

Elementary Educator Award

Ms. Cyndy Carroll believes that young children are primed for learning technology. The judges of the Carnegie Science Awards not only agree, they like what Ms. Carroll does with all the 3rd- and 4th-graders in the seven Canon-McMillan elementary schools.

For that work, she will receive the Carnegie Science Awards' Elementary Educator of the Year Award at a formal celebration at Carnegie Music Hall in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh on Friday, May 8.

The Carnegie Science Awards, sponsored by Eaton Corporation, were established in 1997 to recognize and promote outstanding science and technology achievements in Western Pennsylvania.

A pioneer in elementary technology education, Ms. Carroll is in her fifth year of teaching at Canon-McMillan.

"Our program was the first elementary technology education program in Pennsylvania," says Ms. Carroll. "These young students are just perfect for learning technology. They so want to learn and be part of the design and hands-on work. And cognitively they are real problem-solvers."

The young students are excited about her class. "Sometimes the kids clap when I come into the room," she said. "You don't get that at the high school." Ms. Carroll also is adviser for the Canon-McMillan High School chapter of

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ELEMENTARY

Snapshot of the best schools

FROM PAGE SEVEN

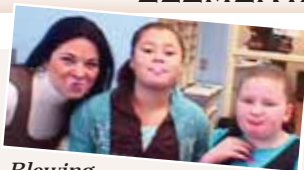
She adds that Devin is very active in the Accelerated Reader program, "which has encouraged him to read more. He just read like crazy last year," she says. "The school also has an outreach program in which students go into the community," which is another good learning experience.

Mrs. Jennifer O'Neill's two children are both at Borland Manor Elementary School. Maura is in 1st grade and Dylan is in 4th grade. "Over the past few years there has been a real focus on science initiatives," says Mrs. O'Neill. She adds that Dylan "loved tech. ed." and also has started choir and instrumental music lessons in school. "Our district's music program is phenomenal. The foundation our children receive in music at the elementary level will help them in so many aspects of their education as well as support them in continuing to become accomplished musicians in both theory and performance.

"Our principals and teachers at Borland Manor show their care and concern for the children every day which makes the children feel special, and they encourage parental involvement in the children's educational experiences," says Mrs. O'Neill.

Borland Manor designated "Kindness" as the school's character trait for February. "Children are recognized for random acts of kindness in school throughout the month," she said. "Our school seriously takes its responsibility to create well-rounded children by not simply teaching academic lessons, but also life lessons which are important to be reinforced everywhere."

The faculty and administrators at the Canon-McMillan seven elementary schools understand that each child can learn and each one may have slightly different learning styles. Working with students and their parents increases the effectiveness of the students' learning. Working together, they can make learning the exciting adventure it is.



Blowing beneficial bubbles are, from left, South Central Principal Michelle Tomicek and 4th-graders Haeley Gordon and Josie Gray.

BUBBLES FOR A GOOD CAUSE

South Central Elementary School students and staff celebrated "Bubble Gum Day" in February for a good cause.

For a donation of 50 cents, students were allowed to chew gum in school. The students at South Central had a great time chewing gum responsibly and the local food bank received a donation of \$253.93.

"SOUPER" BOWL

The "Souper" Bowl at South Central was a friendly competition between Team (Mrs. Kriste) Sisul and Team (Mrs. Barbara) Smutney's 2nd-grade classes to see which room could collect the most canned goods. Collectively, both classes donated more than 300 items to the local food bank. The classes were also excited to show their hometown pride with their Pittsburgh Steelers sign and decorations for the school lobby.

To keep in the Steelers spirit, both rooms participated in "Super Bowl

Stations." Students enjoyed making graphs of their favorite Steelers, playing a game of "Football Drop," completing a Hines "Ward" Search, and creating their own Steelers Pennant.



MS. CYNDY CARROLL

Elementary Educator Award

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TSA (Technology Student Association).

One of her projects can be easily seen atop the hill on the campus of North Strabane Intermediate School. She applied for and received a grant for the school district to obtain a wind turbine now used to teach about that alternative source of energy and to help provide power for one of the Canon-McMillan schools.

A graduate of Berea College with a B.S. in industrial arts, she earned an M.S. in technology education from Eastern Kentucky University. Ms. Carroll previously taught at the University of Kentucky's College of Engineering for eight years. She taught CAD (computer-aided design) to mechanical, electrical and civil engineering students. Ms. Carroll also has seven years' experience teaching technology education at the middle and high school levels in Kentucky.

"It intrigued me that our program is the first elementary tech. ed. program in Pennsylvania. This is the greatest teaching experience I've ever had," says Ms. Carroll. There are very few other elementary tech. ed. programs in the country.

"A lot of schools teach keyboarding in 6th grade, but students have been playing on computers since they were big enough to reach the keyboard. A recent study by CNN shows that children age 6 and under spend an average of two hours a day playing video games, using computers and watching TV and videos. Realistically, we need to meet the needs of the students when it is best for their cognitive growth.

"Elementary students are prime candidates for a technology education program because they have the cognitive problem-solving abilities by the 3rd and 4th grades. They are already inundated by technology by that age and need guidance such as the safe use of the Internet," says Ms. Carroll.

"Technology education integrates many academic areas such as science, math, geography and social studies to problem solve existing technology, develop critical thinking about technology and build innovative skills for the dynamic world of technology."

Team Smutney: seated, Ella Holtz and Jason Lestander; kneeling, Austin Jones, Jenna Rush, Chasity Casto, Kierstin Bennett, Alex Lober,

Noah Kemis, Daniel Block, Emily Seese; standing, Cameron Koop, Libby Platt, Dominic Dodson, Hannah Chop and Gabrielle Harouse. Missing from photo is Megan Joos.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Tech. ed. teacher teaches teachers

JON McCrory does more than teach students. He teaches teachers.

In addition to his students at Canon-McMillan High School, Mr. McCrory has mentored dozens of technology education student teachers from California University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. McCrory, also the chair of the Canon-McMillan technology education department, was honored in November by the Cal. U. technology education faculty with its "2008 Outstanding Service Award, Cooperating Teacher for Technology Education." The Cal. U. tech. ed. faculty unanimously chose Mr. McCrory for this award, which is unusual, says Dr. Mark Nowak, a member of the awards committee and a professor in the university's Applied Engineering and Technology Department.

He was presented the award at the California University Alumni Reception in conjunction with the



Technology Education Association of Pennsylvania conference in Harrisburg.

Mr. McCrory has been at CMHS since January 1980. He holds a B.S. degree in education from what was California State College (now California University of Pennsylvania), where he majored in industrial arts, now known as technology education. He is a 1971 graduate of California High School.

Mr. McCrory estimates that he has had 45 or 50 Cal. U. student teachers in his classroom at Canon-McMillan High School during his career. He was recognized for "demonstrating a consistently high commitment as a cooperating teacher over the years," says Dr. Nowak.

Now in his 9th year as an adjunct in the Applied Engineering and Technology Department at the university, Mr. McCrory primarily has freshman students in his class on Engineering Materials and Product Design, in addition to his work with student teachers.

In 2003, the Cal. U. tech. ed. faculty gave him the Established Leader Award for a graduate more than 10 years out of school who has consistently done significant work and continues to show promise.

"In tech. ed. at the high school level, we are busting at the seams. Students over the past eight or nine years have really taken an interest in tech. ed.," says Mr. McCrory. "Our administrators at the time our high school was being renovated and rebuilt were instrumental in adding state-of-the-art equipment which added interest and tools for real-world applications. Today, Superintendent Helen McCracken, Assistant to the Superintendent Greg Taranto, High School Principal Dave Helinski and Assistant Principal Marella Kazos have continued to encourage the technology education faculty to pursue better and more innovative courses."

In conjunction with Carnegie Mellon University, robotics was taught at Canonsburg Middle School this year and will be offered at CMHS next year.

Excellence award for Cavanaugh

It's only been five years since Sandra Cavanaugh graduated from college and became a teacher in the Canon-McMillan School District. Recently she was presented with the 2008 Elementary (technology education) Teacher Excellence Award in Pennsylvania.

The Technology Education Association of Pennsylvania (TEAP) presented the award to Mrs. Cavanaugh at its 56th annual conference at Camp Hill in November.

Mrs. Cavanaugh and her husband are empty nesters with three grown children. But she wanted to be a teacher. She attended California University of Pennsylvania, earning a bachelor's degree in 2003 and a master's in 2005.

Canon-McMillan hired Mrs. Cavanaugh as its first elementary technology education teacher. Being the first on the job allowed her flexibility in creating the new program for 5th- and 6th-grade students.

"Each year I have new experiences and a greater passion for this job. I keep on top of things. It makes me more certain that these are important learning experiences we are giving our students," she said.

"I teach a lot of problem-solving using the engineering design process;

that's the foundation of technology. It's a way of thinking. When students learn design, they can solve any problem in any class."

The elementary tech. ed. program at Canon-McMillan has grown with Mrs. Cavanaugh teaching 5th- and 6th-graders at both Cecil and North Strabane intermediate schools. A second teacher, Ms. Cyndy Carroll, instructs tech. ed. to 3rd- and 4th-graders in Canon-McMillan's seven elementary schools. Those nine schools comprise the elementary program at Canon-McMillan.

This is what Mrs. Cavanaugh's students are learning this year:

GRADE 5 – Alternative energy is explored, specifically electricity and wind energy; using the district's wind turbine on the campus of North Strabane Intermediate School. Students build their own windmills and learn about construction and forces through bridge building.

GRADE 6 – Students learn about magnetic levitation (maglev) vehicles, robotics, and flight (airplanes). "The students' excitement has been really high since Day 1 about what we do and



what we learn. There's never a dull moment. The students want to learn and the activities support the learning."

A non-traditional student, meaning she began college older than most college students, Mrs. Cavanaugh has made up for lost time by creating an impressive program at Canon-McMillan. She is also earning a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

The tech. ed. program is important because the No Child Left Behind Act is beginning technology assessments in the schools.

For now, she is happy that her hard work with Canon-McMillan students is being recognized across the state and may encourage other districts to take up technology education in their elementary classrooms.

CALENDAR

APRIL 1 SCOPE Games, Canonsburg Middle, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; Cecil Elem. PFO Meeting, 7 p.m.

APRIL 2 Muse Egg Roll; Cecil Intermediate 6th-Grade Field Trip to Pittsburgh Opera

APRIL 3 Borland Manor Spring Party, 2 p.m.; Wylandville Easter Egg Hunt, 2 p.m.; Muse Spring Party (10 a.m., A.M. Kindergarten; 2 p.m. P.M. K-4); Cecil Elem. Spring Parties, 2 p.m.; Blue Print for Dance Program, Cecil Intermediate, 1:30 p.m.; H-H Spring Parties, 2-3 p.m.

APRIL 6-10 SPRING BREAK (NO CLASSES)

APRIL 13 School Board Agenda Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.; Act 80 K-8 Staff Development (**NO CLASSES**); Kindergarten Registration Screening by Appointment

APRIL 14 Report Cards Distributed; Borland Manor PFO Meeting, 9:30 a.m.

APRIL 15 H-H Swim Party at Canonsburg Middle School, 6-8 p.m.

APRIL 16 South Central PTA Meeting, 7 p.m.

APRIL 16-18 Canonsburg Middle School Symphonic Band trip to Tennessee

APRIL 17 Parent Council Meeting at Cecil Intermediate, 9:30 a.m.; "Read Me Day," Wylandville; South

Central 4th-Grade Pool Party, 6-9 p.m., Canonsburg Middle; NSIS 5th-Grade Party, 6-8 p.m.

APRIL 20 School Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.; First Street PFA Meeting, 6 p.m.; Wylandville PFA Meeting, 7 p.m.; NSIS Parent Activity Assn. Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 21 H-H PTA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.; Muse PFA Meeting, 7 p.m.; Borland Manor Shop 'N Save Seed Assembly, 2 p.m.; H-H Wellness Day

APRIL 22 Wylandville Box Tops Store, noon-1 p.m.

APRIL 23 Borland Manor Talent Shows, 1 & 7 p.m.; PMEA All-State Conference, Valley Forge

APRIL 24 Cecil Intermediate 6th-Grade Party, High School Pool, 6-9 p.m.; Cecil Elem. 4th-Grade Party at Canonsburg Middle, 6-9 p.m.

APRIL 25 H-H Character Carnival Day

APRIL 27-MAY 8 PSSA Testing (Grades 4, 8 & 11, science)

APRIL 28 Local author, Karen Bradmon, visits Wylandville; H-H 4th-Grade "Battle of the Books"

APRIL 29 Carnegie Science Program. "All-Day Adventure," Cecil Intermediate; H-H 4th-Grade Party at Canonsburg Middle

MAY Cecil Elem. PFO will hold a banquet instead of a

meeting; date TBA

MAY 1 Wylandville 4th-Grade Party at Canonsburg Middle, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; South Central Field Day

MAY 1-8 PSSA Testing (Grades 4, 8 & 11, science)

MAY 4-15 Advanced Placement Testing

MAY 4 Fitness Day at Cecil Elem.

MAY 5 First Street Fitness Day; Muse Fitness Day; Borland Manor PFO Meeting, 7 p.m.

MAY 7 Progress Reports; High School Band Concert, 7 p.m.; H-H Fitness Day; NSIS Field Day

MAY 8 First Street "Battle of the Books," 6 p.m.

MAY 11 School Board Agenda Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.

MAY 12 Wylandville Field Day; Hills-Hendersonville Band & Chorus Concerts, 1:30 & 6 p.m.

MAY 13 First Street Band & Chorus Concerts, 2 & 6 p.m.; Canonsburg Middle Band Concert, 9 a.m.

MAY 14 Borland Manor Field Day; "Hats Off to America" Program, Muse, 2 p.m.; Carnegie Museum Program, "Bug Mania," Wylandville, 9:30 a.m.; Canonsburg Middle Unified Art Show at 5:30 p.m. and Band Concert, 7:30 p.m.; South Central PTA Meeting, 7 p.m.

MAY 15 Parent Council Meeting at Hills-Hendersonville, 9:30 a.m.; Muse 4th-Grade Party at Canonsburg Middle, 7-10 p.m.

MAY 16 Canonsburg Middle School Concert Band and Symphonic Band adjudication, Hershey Park

MAY 18 School Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.; Borland Manor Band & Chorus Concerts, 2 & 7 p.m.

MAY 19 Muse Band & Chorus Concerts, 2 & 7 p.m.

MAY 20 Cecil Intermediate Band & Chorus Concerts, 9:30

a.m. & 7 p.m.; South Central Band & Chorus Concerts, 2 & 7 p.m.; Wylandville Band & Chorus Concerts, 2 & 7 p.m.; High School Scholarship Banquet; Muse PFA Meeting, 7 p.m.

MAY 21 High School Choir Concert, 7 p.m.; H-H PTA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.; Carnegie Science Center Seed Program, "Wild Weather Adventure," Muse, 9:30 a.m.

MAY 22 Prom, Omni William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh

MAY 25 MEMORIAL DAY (NO CLASSES)

MAY 26-29 Wylandville Book Fair

MAY 27 North Strabane Band & Chorus Concerts, 9:30 a.m. & 7 p.m.; Cecil Elem. Spring Band & Chorus Concerts, 2 & 7 p.m.

MAY 28 Canonsburg Middle Chorus Concerts, 9 a.m. & 7 p.m.

JUNE 1 High School Small Ensemble Concert, 7 p.m.

JUNE 1-5 Borland Manor Spring Book Fair

JUNE 3 Muse Portfolio Day, 1:30 p.m.

JUNE 8 School Board Agenda Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.

THE DATES OF THE LAST CLERICAL DAY AND THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON THE DISTRICT'S WEB SITE AND IN ALL THE SCHOOLS.

JUNE 11 GRADUATION, 7 p.m. (if inclement weather, 7:30 p.m. indoors)

JUNE 15 School Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.

AUG. 3 School Board Special Voting Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.

AUG. 10 School Board Agenda Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.

AUG. 17 School Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Adm. Bldg.

SCHOLASTIC ART
competition drawing accepted into the exhibit at Waynesburg University:
"Hidden by Humor," by Canonsburg Middle School 8th-grader Catherine Herman



GREATER CANONSBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY

*Dear Friends,*

Many times I have begun this column by mentioning that as the school year is winding down, we are just getting ready for Summer Reading Club, our busiest time at the library. This year, we didn't have to wait until summer to be busier than ever. Our steadily upward climb in usage has increased dramatically in the last six months.

It's no surprise that when times are hard, free library services are a hot commodity. In times of economic hardship, Americans turn to – and depend on – their libraries and librarians. Libraries are America's great information equalizers – the only place people of all ages and backgrounds can find and freely use such a diversity of resources, along with the expert guidance of librarians. Where else can you get free Internet access including Wi-Fi, help accessing government resources at all levels, the capability to search and apply for jobs, free computer classes to help you upgrade your skills, free programs on investments, resources for small businesses and all kinds of entertainment for your family? Wow! There's a lot more at the library than you may think.

For example, let's talk about the library's career services. A recent article by Mary Niederberger in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, entitled "State of our economy: Use of libraries booms," stated that "in the past, when laid-off workers came to the library looking for help putting together résumés or researching jobs, librarians handed them books on résumé writing and the newspaper classified ads. But today's job-search process is far more complicated, requiring applicants to have an e-mail address, an online version of their résumé, and the ability to upload their information to online job site listings."

Did you know that only 44 percent of the top 100 U.S. retailers will accept paper applications any more? So, at GCPL, we offer:

1. **FREE** computer classes to help you succeed in today's technology-oriented job market.
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Did I mention that it's all FREE to our resident cardholders? And that the library card is FREE too? Beat that for a bargain!

During times of economic downturn, libraries can help you save on entertainment spending. Borrow DVDs for free and enjoy an evening at home instead of going out. Plan a "Stay-cation," where your family opts to stay home instead of taking a vacation trip, and try Summer Reading Club and other library programs and Family Fun activities to entertain everyone during the long summer days. Borrow books and magazines from the library instead of buying them. Check out our audio books on CD or Playaway, the new MP3 format.

There's no doubt that when the economy is down, library use is up. Unfortunately, at the same time, tight local and state budgets are reducing funding for access when it's needed most, so please don't miss a chance to spread the word to your friends, neighbors and legislators that the library is a most valuable community resource.

Keep up to date with what's happening at the library at www.cbpublib.org, your best source for information about library resources and programs.

Sincerely, Lyn Crouse, Library Director

HIGH SCHOOL

ON ALL-AMERICA SOCCER TEAM

Canon-McMillan High School senior **ZACHARY ZUZEK** has been named to the prestigious 2008 NSCAA/adidas Boys High School Scholar All-



America Soccer Team. He is one of 33 All-America athletes from high schools across the country to be part of this team.

Along with All-America Teams drawn from girls high school teams, and college-level teams, Zuzek was honored during the All-America Luncheon at the America's Center Convention Complex in St. Louis, Missouri, Jan. 17. This event was held simultaneously with the annual National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) Convention, the world's largest annual gathering of soccer coaches and the largest soccer convention in the world.

Zachary is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Zuzek of Cecil.

SOUTH CENTRAL

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION

Two teachers from South Central Elementary School have qualified for National Board Certification. Mrs. Lori Anthony, reading specialist, and Miss Kelly Mezyk, elementary teacher, passed on their first try.

The process can take up to three years to complete and includes each teacher submitting four portfolio entries and demonstrating content knowledge in response to six exercises developed for their certificate area.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards improves teaching and student learning. National Board Certified Teachers are highly accomplished educators who meet high and rigorous standards. Like board-certified doctors and accountants, teachers who achieve National Board Certification have met rigorous standards through intensive study, expert evaluation, self-assessment and peer review.

Since 1987, nearly 64,000 teachers have achieved National Board Certification. These teachers prepare America's diverse student population with the skills it needs to compete in the 21st century workplace.



Mrs. Lori Anthony



Miss Kelly Mezyk

Highlights

CANON-McMILLAN SCHOOL DISTRICT
One North Jefferson Avenue
Canonsburg, PA 15317
Web site: www.canon-mcmillan.org

DIRECTORY

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE 724-746-2940

Superintendent: Dr. Helen K. McCracken
Assistant to the Superintendent:

Mr. Gregory Taranto
Director of Business and Finance:
Mrs. Joni Mansmann

Federal Coordinator: Mrs. Linda Kappel
Director of Special Education:

Mr. Michael Daniels
Network Administrator: Mr. Matthew Harding
Director of Buildings and Grounds:
Mr. Randy Huddart 724-745-1502
Director of Transportation:
Mr. Jonn Mansfield 724-745-1502

HIGH SCHOOL 724-745-1400

Principal: Mr. David Helinski
Assistant Principal: Ms. Marella Kazos
Assistant Principal: Mr. Curt Vasas
Athletic Director: Mr. Guy Montecalvo

CANONSBURG MIDDLE 724-745-9030

Principal: Mr. Mark Abbondanza
Assistant Principal: Mr. Kenneth Schrag

CECIL INTERMEDIATE 724-745-2623

Principal: Mr. Scott Chambers

NORTH STRABANE INTERMEDIATE

Principal: Mr. Thomas Theodore 724-873-5252

BORLAND MANOR ELEMENTARY

Principal: Mrs. Grace Lani 724-745-2700
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Nina Unitas

CECIL ELEMENTARY 412-221-6808

Principal: Mr. Robert Kleinhans
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Shelley Brose

FIRST STREET ELEMENTARY 724-745-3130

Principal: Dr. Dawn Nicolaus
Assistant Principal: Mr. Joe Smiley

HILLS-HENDERSONVILLE ELEMENTARY

Principal: Dr. Dawn Nicolaus 724-745-8390
Assistant Principal: Mr. Joe Smiley

MUSE ELEMENTARY 724-745-9014

Principal: Mr. Robert Kleinhans
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Shelley Brose

SOUTH CENTRAL ELEMENTARY 724-745-4475

Principal: Mrs. Michelle Tomicek

WYLANDVILLE ELEMENTARY 724-222-2507

Principal: Mrs. Grace Lani
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Nina Unitas

CANON-McMILLAN BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Mr. Jay Romano, President
Mrs. Kathleen S. Smith, Vice President
Mr. Robert Malwitz, Treasurer
Mr. Nick Cianelli, Jr. Mrs. Debbie Link
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CECIL INTERMEDIATE

Student wins AG's drug-free calendar contest

Rachael Dodaro, a 5th-grader at Cecil Intermediate School, was one of 13 winners in the 2009 Pennsylvania Attorney General's Drug-Free Calendar contest.

For many years, 5th-graders throughout Pennsylvania have participated in the contest. Mr. Craig Barzan, guidance counselor, had his 5th-graders at Cecil Intermediate take part in this activity as a required assignment for Red Ribbon Week.

The work of Rachael Dodaro and Alena Poljak represented their school at the statewide judging.

Each year, 5th-grade students from across Pennsylvania are encouraged to create an original work of art illustrating a drug-free message of their choice. The 13 winners represent each month of the 2009 calendar year and a Grand Prize winner, who has his artwork displayed on the calendar's cover.

This year, the winners were chosen from a competitive record field of nearly 700 entries from schools throughout 58 Pennsylvania counties. The winners were chosen based on the artists' creativity and ability to illustrate and convey a drug-free message.

"Forty-four percent of all middle-schoolers have personally seen illegal drugs used or sold and other students drunk or high on school property," Mr. Corbett said. "This contest is one way to



Rachael Dodaro, contest winner, with Pennsylvania Attorney General Tom Corbett; at top, Rachael's winning entry

help educate students about drug use prevention and living a drug-free life."

Rachael's poster, with "You Will Be High in Life without Drugs," was chosen a winner and appears on the June page in the Drug-Free Calendar. Rachael also won a \$200 U.S. Savings Bond and a trip with her family to the State Capitol in Harrisburg to receive her award.

CHECK THE DISTRICT WEB SITE

More news, less paper.
That may be the future of
many publications.

At Canon-McMillan, we tried something
new this year. This is the only issue of
Highlights, but that doesn't mean we
were hiding news the rest of the year.

Check the district Web site:
www.canon-mcmillan.org

Look for **Newsbreaks** on the homepage to
read expanded articles about the district.