

SPIRIT OF EDUCATION

Published by the Steel Valley School District

Vol. 4 - No. 2 • Spring 2009

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Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

April 21 - Worksession, 7 p.m., HS Conference Room
 April 28 - Board Meeting, 7 p.m., HS Auditorium
 May 19 - Worksession, 7 p.m., HS Conference Room
 May 26 - Board Meeting, 7 p.m., HS Auditorium
 June 16 - Worksession, 7 p.m., HS Conference Room
 June 23 - Board Meeting, 7 p.m., HS Auditorium

Kennywood Ticket Sales

School Kennywood tickets will be on sale in the schools on Wednesday, May 6 as follows:

7:45 a.m.....Senior High School
 8:15 a.m.....Franklin Primary Center
 8:35 a.m.....Middle School
 9:15 a.m.....Barrett Elementary
 10:00 a.m.....Park Elementary

The school ticket sale price is \$20 for each Funday Pass. Only cash or money orders will be accepted as payment. **Steel Valley’s Kennywood picnic is scheduled for Tuesday, June 2.**

2009-2010 School Calendar

School starts on Aug. 27, 2009, for students. The full calendar is available on the Steel Valley website: www.svsd.k12.pa.us.

Watch For Our Next Issue Summer 2009

Literacy Fair/Kindergarten Registration Thursday, April 23

It’s time to register for the 2009-10 school year. Children who will be 5 years of age on Sept. 1, 2009, and live in Homestead, Munhall or West Homestead may register for all-day kindergarten at Franklin Primary Center, 220 East Oliver Road, Munhall. Registration packets can be picked up in all school buildings.

The Literacy Fair will take place in the Senior High School on Thursday, April 23 and doors will open at 5 p.m. Students who will enter kindergarten for the 2009-10 school year are encouraged to register for kinder-

garten that evening. They can meet their teachers and participate in a pre-kindergarten assessment. There will be children’s activities, classes for parents who have children ages 0-5 years of age along with infant and child safety and first aid class. We will have local vendors and free giveaways to the first 100 families. This event is for parents and their children aged 0-5 years.

You are encouraged to register for the Literacy Fair by April 1, by contacting **Jill Fleming-Salopek** at 412-464-3600 ext. 2906.

“Flip the Switch” scheduled for April 30

Steel Valley is in the 2nd year of a Classrooms for the Future grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the Science Department and its first year for the English and Social Studies Departments. Classrooms for the Future aims to enhance student performance by incorporating technology and differentiated instruction into teachers’ classroom lessons. The object is to produce 21st century learners prepared for post secondary education and the workforce.

The District will hold a Flip the Switch event highlighting the Classrooms for the Future program on April 30 beginning at 6 p.m. in the Senior

High School. Teachers will demonstrate how we are utilizing technology in the English, science and social studies classes. The public is invited to participate and see the technology being used in the Steel Valley High School.

In 2007-08, the District received \$260,955 from the Classrooms for the Future grant to equip our science rooms with laptops for every student, Polyvision whiteboards, digital camcorders, digital cameras, and video projectors. This year, the District received an additional \$47,518.00 to purchase student laptops and a projector to be utilized in the social studies and language arts departments.

Dr. Seuss’ Celebration Week

Steel Valley School District embraces the concept of community playing an integral part in helping District children reach their educational goals. During the week of March 2, the District celebrated “Read Across America” week; family and community were involved, and lots of fun reading-related activities for students were planned. Students also celebrated Dr. Seuss’ birthday on March 5 with a variety of fun activities.



See more photo highlights on pg. 6

Kindergarten faculty and staff enjoy “Wacky Wednesday” as part of Dr. Seuss’ Celebration week

District Celebrates School Director Recognition Month

Being an effective school board member is no easy task, particularly in today's climate of change and challenge. That's why January was designated as "School Director Recognition Month." In light of this honor, Steel Valley School Board Members were recognized at the Jan. 28 board meeting.

Board members include: **Joseph H. Ducar**, president; **Vincent E. Natale**, vice president; **Susan Ballas**; **Beth Cannon**; **Kimberly M. Kubancsek**; **Edward W. McCallister**; **Cynthia McEnheimer**; **Thomas M. Olson**; and **Pamela Terrick**.

These are men and women elected to establish the policies that provide the framework for our public schools. They take this responsibility seriously by attending lengthy meetings and talking about the schools with business leaders, parents and neighbors.

Steel Valley's is one of 501 such boards across Pennsylvania. These boards enable us to have local control of public schools, meaning that decisions on school programs

are made by local, elected representatives who understand the community's unique problems, values, culture and circumstances. It's a huge responsibility and one that should not be taken lightly. Their actions directly affect our children – what they learn, who will teach them and what kinds of facilities will house their classrooms.

This year marks a special milestone as we remember the 175th anniversary of the signing of the Free Schools Act in 1814. This pivotal piece of legislation firmly established public education in Pennsylvania and ensured that decisions about schools would be made locally by elected members of the community.

"We have a hardworking, dedicated group of people who serve on our school board," said **Dr. William Kinavey**, superintendent. "They truly deserve this recognition."



Standing (l-r): Joseph Ducar, president; Thomas Olson; Edward McCallister & Vincent Natale, vice president.

Seated (l-r): Beth Cannon, Kimberly Kubancsek, Pamela Terrick, Cynthia McEnheimer & Susan Ballas.

Right to Know Law

On Jan. 1, 2009, the new Right to Know law went into effect. This law provides access to public records to anyone that is a legal resident of the United States of America. This new law applies to entities such as school districts, intermediate units, charter schools, local government agencies and community colleges among other entities.

Under the new law, legal U.S. residents can make requests for public documents from any of the various agencies listed above. The requests must be in writing and include pertinent information related to the request as well as contact information from the requester such as name, address, telephone number, email address, etc. This information is required so that the entities have a means to respond to the request. Another component of the new law is that entities must provide an initial response to requests within 5 business days. This initial response many times will be the final response when the request is able to be completed. If the request is extensive, the initial response

provides the requester with a time frame for the completion of the request. If requests are received for documents that are not considered public, this initial response will indicate a denial of the request.

Here in the Steel Valley School District, we have completed several tasks to ensure that we are in compliance with this new law. We have appointed a Right-To-Know officer in Mark Cherpak and have posted his contact information on the district's website. Also posted on the website is a standard request form for anyone requesting public information. This form must be completed and sent to the Business Office either by fax, email or in person. We have also created specific files to track response times on requests and what types of information are being requested. These files will be maintained in the Business Office as well as copies of all requests received. If there are any questions about the new Right to Know law, please contact the Right to Know officer at any time at 412-464-3600 x1805.

New School Immunization Regulations

The Allegheny County Health Department established three new vaccine requirements to further protect our youth: MCV4, protects against the most common strains of meningococcal meningitis; a second dose of varicella vaccine, protects against chickenpox; and Tdap, provides a booster against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis. All students must be in compliance with the following immunization requirements before the 2009-10 school year. For more information about immunization clinic locations and operation times, contact the Allegheny County Health Department at 412-578-8304.

All Grades K-12:

- 4 doses of tetanus (1 dose after the 4th birthday); 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age
- 4 doses of diphtheria (1 dose after the 4th birthday); 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age
- 3 doses of polio
- 2 doses of measles
- 2 doses of mumps
- 1 dose of rubella
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella or written statement from physician/designee indicating month and year of disease or serologic proof of immunity

Grades 7-12

- 1 dose of tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis (Tdap)
- 1 dose of meningitis vaccine (MCV4)

District Celebrates Black History Month

Steel Valley School District students and staff enjoyed a variety of events for Black History Month. Some of the highlights follow:

Barrett Elementary students and teachers held various classroom presentations. First grade students sang the song "This Little Light of Mine;" children in second grade sang "Kid's Peace Song" and "Positive Power" switching between reggae and hip hop and providing a choreographed number and free style rasta rafiki dancing; third grade students worked on **President Obama** biographies; fourth graders enjoyed poetry readings; and fifth graders gave oral presentations on historical African-Americans. The school also held an assembly on March 3 featuring local speaker **Greg Kenny**, from Educate Us Productions. He presented a theatrical performance of the life of Rosa Parks depicting her perseverance and determination to make a change.

At the High School, various activities were held including a presentation by Dr. Sturdivant on "Kings and Queens of Africa;" she also brought along a guest to play African drums.

Students in the Middle School in **Brian Bungard's** classes wrote papers on a famous African American person. They were then required to make a poster or a PowerPoint presentation and provide a 3-5 minute presentation on their person.

And, the Social Studies Department worked with students on the following exciting activities:

6th Grade:

Web quest on Famous African Americans throughout history.



From left to right: Juliyan Grzyb (Kareem-Abdul Jabaar), Kaylee Joyce (Ella Fitzgerald), Julian Cox (Jessie Owens), Billy Barker (Muhammad Ali). Backrow: The handsome teacher Brian Bungard

7th Grade:

Using a Web hunt the students will create and present PowerPoint presentations on famous African Americans.

8th Grade:

Daily biographical reviews of famous African Americans.

9th Grade:

Dinner table assignments researching five guests to invite for dinner and design the dinner conversation.

10th Grade:

Historical Review of African American accomplishments in the 21st Century.

11th and 12th Grade:

- Biopoems.
- Character sketches.
- Seventy-five biographies of famous African Americans.
- Study of Black inventors with a writing activity.
- Bulletin board projects.



Elementary Students Enjoy Visit to Barnes & Noble

First through third grade students from Barrett and Park had the wonderful opportunity to visit Barnes and Noble. This event occurred over three days with first grade attending Feb. 9, second grade on Feb. 10 and third on Feb. 11. Each grade heard a story and then went 'shopping' to pick out a book to keep. First graders listened to **David Pribish**, from the Consortium for Public Education, read "Skippy Jon Jones" and then completed an art project. National cartoonist, **Joe Wos**, entertained the second graders with his storytelling and drawings of the folktale "The Crowded House." Storyteller **Rebecca Scalise**, who read and discussed Dr. Seuss' "The Lorax," entertained third grade. All of the students enjoyed the day and have been avidly reading their new books. We wish to thank the Consortium for Public Education and the Steel Valley School Action Committee for funding the field trips.

Barrett & Middle School Kick Off Bullying Prevention Program

The Office of Pupil Services in cooperation with Allegheny Children's Initiative secured a School Based Behavioral Health Grant titled "Reaching for Resiliency" to assist the Middle School and Barrett Elementary School with implementing a Bully Prevention Program.

The program was kicked off on Monday, Feb. 23. All Barrett and Middle School staff members wore maroon and gold shirts with the logo, "Bullying: It's Just Not Right!" Principal **Sharon Fisher**



announced the program during morning announcements and teachers provided the students with a 15 minute lesson on bullying.

The purpose of the program is to provide a common language and awareness of bullying. The first four lessons focus on defining bullying. Following the lesson, the students are given a weekly challenge. The week one challenge was to help someone with their hands. Any

staff member who catches a student meeting the challenge will issue them a ticket; students will place their tickets in the Bully Prevention box in the office and weekly drawings will reward students for meeting the challenges. Students who earn the weekly challenge more than 10 times will be recognized on the Challenge Champions Bulletin Board in the front hallway of the building. The goal of this program is to educate all students about bullying in all facets of school. It is the responsibility of all staff and students to promote a bully free environment at Barrett and the Middle School.

Elementary Students Participate in “CalcuSolve Bowl”

Gifted and enrichment elementary students from grades 4 and 5 took part in the District’s first CalcuSolve Bowl at the High School Library on Feb. 3. CalcuSolve is a math competition involving students solving higher level math problems in a competitive setting. The event took place at the High School Library under the direction of **Michelle Maddigan**, **Ivan Braszo**, and **Audrey Hinkle**. With the help of Middle and High School students including Angelica Kruth, Destenece Fuller, Jacque Joll, Taylor Szczepankowski and Josh Harter who worked on setting up the problems, score keeping and using technical expertise, the elementary students had a rewarding and enjoyable experience.



*Individual First Place
Champ - Jake Eged.*



*Individual Second Place Tie (l-r): Ryan Fossick,
Noab Alexandroff and Ryan McCallister.*

Gifted Elementary Students Attend Outings

Elementary Gifted and Enrichment students visited the Heinz History Center back in November to participate in the annual History Bowl where they competed using their writing, thinking, history and problem solving skills. The History Center specializes in bringing local Pittsburgh history to life for students and adults. Students enjoyed the newest exhibit “Pittsburgh: A Tradition of Innovation” which featured the impact Pittsburgh has had on the world. Students were able to talk with a “virtual” George Westinghouse, visit the Crawford Grill, learn about America’s first superhighway, the Pennsylvania turnpike and many of

Pittsburgh’s contributions to the medical field. “Students agreed that this was an enriching way to learn history and look forward to returning again,” said **Audrey Hinkle**, elementary gifted support teacher.

Fifth grade gifted students from Park, Barrett and St. Therese participated in the annual Science Bowl at the Carnegie Science Center this past January. Using a “team” approach, students calculated, created, reinvented and played with science activities that surely boosted their brain power. The students worked hard and enjoyed their day playing with science.

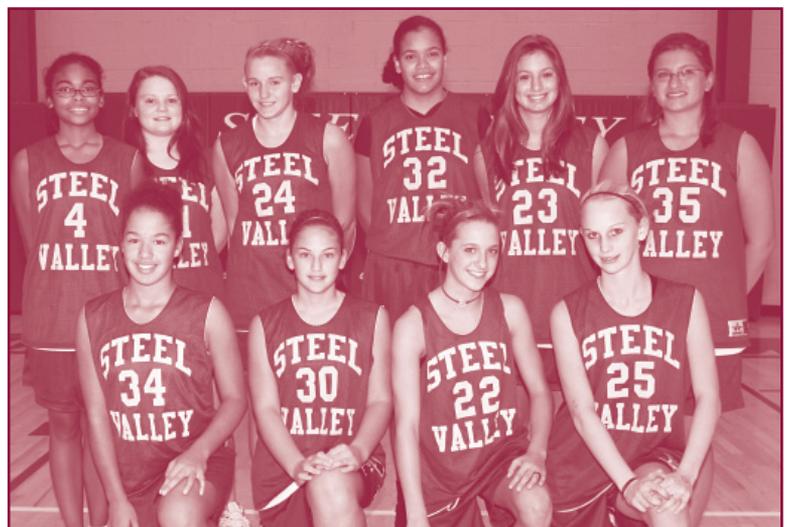
Rogan Receives Comcast “Leaders and Achievers” Scholarship

High School senior **Kelly Rogan** was a recipient of the 2009-10 Comcast Leaders and Achievers® Scholarship. This award, funded through The Comcast Foundation, recognizes high school seniors from Comcast communities for their commitment to community service, academic achievement, and demonstrated leadership. To acknowledge these accomplishments, she’ll receive a one-time grant of \$1,000 to use towards college.

Comcast is committed to motivating and recognizing the efforts of young people who are making a difference in their communities.

Steel Valley Girls Middle School Basketball Team Undefeated Section Champs

The Middle School Girls Basketball Team was the undefeated section champs for the second consecutive year. The team head coach is **Kelly Sabo**; assistant coach is **Sara Bouton**. Both coaches are proud of the team and their hard work and dedication throughout the season.



Standing (l-r): Jazzmin Jiles, Katie Ruffing, Melissa Cerda, CC Washington, Lacey Gori, and Paige Mitrik.

Kneeling (l-r): Naydina Phillips, Gabby Olson, Sydney Shearer, and Maria Cutone. Not Pictured: Shelby Casamento

Elementary Students to Participate in Historic Field Trip

Steel Valley elementary students will be learning about Homestead's past through an educational trip to the Water Pump House experiencing the \$1.65 a Day program given by the Rivers of Steel, an organization that shows how the steel industry played a major role in shaping not only the economy but also the culture and environment of the Monongahela Valley communities. Park Elementary students will visit on April 30; Barrett on May 6.

The \$1.65 a Day program will take place at the Pump House at the Waterfront and will focus on the lives of immigrants who came to work in the mills.

After an introduction, students will be divided into groups to rotate through a variety of hands-on stations with half of the students staying in the pump house for "domestic" chores, and the other half going outside to work on a "labor gang." Students will then switch activities so that they are all able to experience the full program.

When completed, two students will be

paid \$1.65 for their work; they will then have to "pay" their daily living expenses, leaving them with about 24 cents. Students will discuss their thoughts on what it was like to live and work in the past.

After a lunch donated by local restaurants, Steel Valley High School students in the group The Future is Mine (TFIM) will break the elementary students into small groups to discuss Homestead's present state. A discussion on current jobs available will also take place.

High School students will then lead the elementary children through a mural project depicting the future of Homestead; once completed, murals will be laminated and/or framed for the schools to hang.

The program cost is \$7 per child; costs will be offset by TFIM – part of the Consortium for Public Education's initiative that reaches into high schools, middle schools and elementary schools to connect students to authentic career awareness experiences.

TFIM helps students focus on learning

how to drive their careers from accessing appropriate academic opportunities to packaging skills and talents to navigating the world of work. The goal of the organization is to help all students find their passion and pursue their dreams in an informed way that will lead to future success.

One way that TFIM achieves its goals is through projects completed throughout the school year. The \$1.65 a Day is one project that targets their younger peers and allows them to create community awareness, see the impact of history in our area, and see how drastically different our area is currently related to the past according to TFIM Advisor **Ryan Dunmire**.

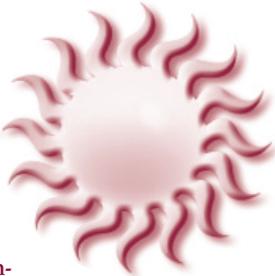
"Through this program, it is our hope to give the students an eye-awakening experience to see what the Steel Valley Community once was, look at it closely currently, and predict where we will be in the future (starting with them!)," said Dunmire.

I-TEAM Summer Camp

Planning for the 2nd annual I-TEAM Summer Camp is underway. Coming off the success of last year's I-TEAM Summer Olympics, this year's camp

promises to be just as exciting. The Summer Camp will run Monday - Friday, from July 13 - 31 in the SV Middle School. The focus for this camp will be science and technology. Just like last year, the camp will be hands-on, and students will be actively engaged both academically and physically. Fun activities and exciting field trips are being planned, too.

Look for the I-TEAM Summer Camp application to be sent home with students in April. Students currently in grades 3 - 6, and whose parents live in the Steel Valley area, may apply for admission. For more information, call 412-462-3407 or visit www.sviteam.org.



Middle School Students to Participate in "Tech 500 Races"

This year the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes are participating in the exciting Tech 500 Races! The finalist from each nine weeks will advance to the "Spring Finals," where we will race until we have the top three winners of all the Tech classes. Principal **Kevin Walsh** and Middle School Tech Ed Teacher **Albert Lesutis** plan on having the final races in an assembly format where all the students will be invited to witness the final culminating event. Parents and the community will be invited.

It all begins in the Middle School Tech Ed workshop where the students learn their measurement skills, then begin their intense training on how to safely and professionally use many hand tools and machines. The students forge, cut, shape, sand, and paint using their knowledge of our woodshop machinery and tools. Each student creates



his/her own car using their imagination in the design process.

Each student learns to brainstorm their ideas about all the possible details of their car. Then the students learn to draw several thumbnail sketches based on their brainstorming ideas. Finally, to complete the design process, the students make one final sketch. This sketch includes all their favorite ideas combined. Then, carefully, each student transfers these sketches onto a chunk of wood that, after some hard

work, will soon become their Tech 500 car!

Watch for an announcement this spring for our Tech 500 Finals. The competition will be intense when the fastest cars will be competing for the top three places in the school!

'Leadership Pittsburgh' Visits Steel Valley High School

On Feb. 19, individuals from "Leadership Pittsburgh, Class XXV" visited Steel Valley High School for the morning. From 9:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m., Principal **Leo Schlanger** and students **Brittany Dum mire** and **Miriam MacBeth** led the group on a learning walk/tour through the High School.

Leadership Pittsburgh Inc. is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to developing a diverse group of leaders to serve southwestern PA.

Leadership Pittsburgh participants have been visiting public schools in our region to learn more and connect with local students and administrators.

After their visits, Leadership Pittsburgh participants will be asked to develop an action plan engaging the voices of youth in our community or region.

On the 19th, the purpose of the walk was to familiarize group participants with Steel Valley High School.

During the visit, the group met with the school nurse, guidance office, the school



School Nurse Amber Thomas, Principal Leo Schlanger, and Students Brittany Dum mire and Miriam MacBeth talk with the Leadership Pittsburgh group.

library, cafeteria, athletic department and visited several classrooms where instruction was in progress. Former superintendent of the Steel Valley School District, **Dr. Jerry Longo**, accompanied the Leadership Pittsburgh participants on the tour.

Principal Schlanger and the students then traveled to Point Park University with the Leadership Pittsburgh group where they had lunch and participated in additional dialogue about how public policy has influenced Steel Valley School District and public education in general.

Student's Poetry to be Published

High school Junior **Jen Guciardo** wrote a poem that the District submitted to "Creative Communication." And, her poem was chosen and will be published in an anthology, *A Celebration of Poets* in June! She is now eligible for prize money and for her poem to be one of the top ten poems.

"Creative Communication" has been publishing student authors for 15 years and holds poetry and essay contests. The next contest deadline for poems is April 7th.

Guciardo's been writing poetry since 6th grade. "I just started writing and I really enjoy it," she said.

And, while she's a gifted writer, Guciardo plans on going into nursing after graduation. "I really like helping people," she said. "A lot of people in my family have been sick and I wish I could help them more."

However, she hasn't ruled out the possibility of continuing her interest in poetry as well... "I may enter more contests in the future," said Guciardo.



Continued from page 1 Dr. Seuss' Celebration Week

Park School held its "2nd Annual Book Swap" on Monday, March 2; students brought in a book from home and swapped it at school for a new book. On Tuesday, they had a school-wide "drop everything and read day" using their new books.

Notes were also sent home to parents asking them to encourage their children to read in their favorite place at home throughout the week. Parents took photos of their child reading and photos were posted on two bulletin boards entitled, "In the Zone." A challenge was also issued to families to turn off the TV for 30 minutes a night and do something creative.

Park children also celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 5; parents were invited to attend. Families created their own version of the Seuss tale "Happy Birthday to You!" and their creations will be included in a book for display.

Franklin Primary Center held a special week of celebrating reading Feb. 23 – 27.

On Monday, Feb. 23, Superintendent **Dr. William Kinavey** read children the "Foot Book" and children wore mismatched socks. Tuesday featured Principal **Sharon**

Fisher reading "The Cat in the Hat" and children made hats. On "Wacky Wednesday," children wore unusual clothes or dressed in an unusual manner while hearing from a guest reader. "1 Fish 2 Fish" was read on "Theodore Thursday" by District employee **Sherri Titmus** and students learned more about Theodore Seuss Geisel. And, "Funny Food Friday" featured Park Elementary Principal **Bryan Macuga** reading "Green Eggs and Ham;" afterwards, students made green eggs and ham!

Barrett Elementary featured guest readers throughout the day on March 2; they also held a family night that evening that was a celebration of Read Across

America and a prep time for the upcoming PSSA assessments. Parents and students in grades 3, 4 and 5 were invited to participate in math and reading activities with a Dr. Seuss theme. School Board Director **Vincent Natale** read a poem as part of the evening events.



SADD

Twenty high school students from the Students Against Destructive Decisions Club participated in an anti-tobacco training with **Jamie Moder** from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit on Feb. 9. And, on March 25 from 12 - 2 p.m., B94 will be leading an anti-tobacco expo broadcasting live from the James Campbell Athletic Complex at the Middle School as part of the Kick Butts Event at the Waterfront. The SADD Club is sponsored by **Jill Fleming-Salopek** and **Michelle Maddigan**.



Partnership with Actor David Conrad Enters Third Year

Steel Valley is in its 3rd year of a partnership with Actor **David Conrad** of the *Ghost Whisperer*; and, as part of the relationship, he visited several English classes this school year to discuss literature with students. On Feb. 3, he visited **Marguerite Luwara's** and **Matthew Simpson's** 9th grade English classes and they discussed *Romeo and Juliet*. Earlier in the year, he stopped in **Mariann Reilly's** 10th grade academic English class to discuss the *Crucible* and the theme of free will vs. fate. He's visited **Jodi Geyer's** 11th grade academic English class discussing short stories dealing with *Hero on a Quest* and her 10th grade Honors English class to discuss *The Crucible*. And, he visited the journalism and film and literature classes talking about his film and stage career.

He's also brought in many other artists to the District. **Dennis "DJ" Brewer**, a slam poet, talked to 9th grade English classes and will be meeting weekly with students for 10 weeks doing poetry and slam poetry. This is a way to make poetry relevant in the lives of young students. Brewer will also be visiting **Heather Huber's** and **Jonathan Edwards' Middle School** classes.

Two other artists visited on Feb 2. **Ezra** visited **Susan Salapa's** 7th grade classes to discuss writing and poetry. **Jason Perez** from New York visited **Brian Bungalow's** classes to discuss literary devices used in writing. **Luqmon** visited **Bethany Fenyus', Steven Singer's** and **Jonathan Edwards' 8th grade English** classes and discussed *The Outsiders*.

Following is an article written by High School Senior **Ashley Wolford** on one of Conrad's recent visits.

David Conrad Gives Insight Into the World of Film

By High School Senior **Ashley Wolford**

David Conrad, star of the hit show *The Ghost Whisperer* and Pittsburgh native, decided to visit both **Jodi Geyer** and **Mariann Reilly's** 10th and 11th grade English classes and Geyer's Film and Lit class. In the classes, Conrad talked about a variety of things dealing with literature and film. The topic Conrad addressed in Reilly's 11th grade English class was just how appealing the world of literature and film really is.

As an actor, Conrad questioned the students to find a reason why they like movies better than books. Though Conrad is an actor, he stressed the importance books have over movies. Books are not edited and 'dumbed down' like many movies. Conrad

Student **Carly Casamento** with **David Conrad**.



also talked about the origin in which books were created, discussing how many stories were first conveyed by word of mouth and that one way to actually see the meaning and beauty of the book, the reader needs to sometimes read it aloud. As Conrad said, "Read it out loud. It will sound better and it will come to life a little more."

During his visit, Conrad asked the students what they did not like about some movies and why they did not like them. Many of the students shouted out movies and were telling Conrad basically the same point of view...That all the emotion and guts had been stripped out of those movies and left the watcher feeling empty and upset.

As Conrad said to the class, "A lot of vision is compromised in the film industry," as opposed to the world of books and plays that pull all the punches. Due to the hard selling that goes on in the film industry, Conrad explained that many stories lose their heart and guts because the big corporate companies believe that the general public will not want to see it. Forget the vision the writer had, all that matters is the profit the company is going to receive back. So, to change the core of the story, they bring in all these different writers to change the story to make it more appealing to all. This massive combination of writers can only be described as, "way too many cooks in the kitchen." With so many different ideas of how the story should go, it loses its original meaning and purpose. The original writer's voice is lost and the point of view that he/she wanted to express with the public is now changed.

Conrad's visit to Steel Valley on Oct. 7 was seen by many of the students as an insightful experience into the world of literature and film.

According to junior **Carly Casamento**, "I really enjoyed his discussion. It got me to see both books and movies in a different way."

District Receives \$10,000 Grant

With a recent \$10,000 grant from the PA Dept. of Education, Steel Valley School District will now be able to add a variety of support programs to its current curriculum for students in all grades. Funds came from an LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) grant and will be used as follows:

- Purchase the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) curriculum at the elementary level and the PATHS Turtle Unit for kindergarten. This evidence-based prevention program focuses on empathy and relational problem solving.
- School Visit – Members of the LRE Improvement Team and selected secondary staff will visit another district that has a strong inclusion program at the secondary level and then develop an action plan to improve inclusive practices at the secondary level.
- Inclusive Practices Binder – We will put together resources from trainings, professional workshops, etc. to be placed within the Inclusive Practices Binder.
- ESAP – Develop an Elementary Student Assistance Team at both Park and Barrett to serve at-risk students at the elementary level.
- Healthy Relationships – The Healthy Relationships curriculum will be incorporated into the High School Health and Physical Education Department.
- Workshops – Building level and parent workshops will be set up on the topics of peer leadership, bullying prevention and working with one another utilizing the Starfish program with Dennis R. Barger.

Dual Enrollment

Once again, the District will be offering the Dual Enrollment program for all eligible juniors and seniors for the 2009-10 school year. Parents and students will be receiving detailed information on how to enroll over the next couple of months. If parents have any questions, they may contact the Steel Valley High School Guidance Department at 412-464-3600 x2521 or **Ellen Sabo**, Grant and Special Programs Coordinator, at 412-464-3600 x1552.

High School French Club Travels to Quebec

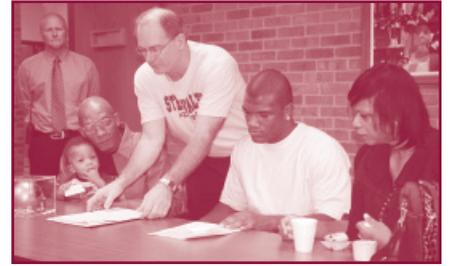
Forty-one Steel Valley High School students headed for Quebec on Feb. 12 to experience the 55th Winter Carnival celebration held every year since 1955. The theme for this year's Carnival was 'Masquerade.' Trip highlights included Winter Carnival activities, touring old Quebec and touring the Beupre Coast: Montmorency Falls, St. Anne Cathedrale, Atalier Pare, Chez Marie & the Chateau Frontenac.

Friday evening, the group went to the Village des Sports for an extreme sledding/tubing adventure. After two fun-filled days in Quebec, they departed for Montreal. After an afternoon tour of the city, Olympic Park and Mount Royale, students went to the Cabane a Sucre where maple syrup is made. After a horse-drawn wagon ride into the woods, students learned about the maple syrup process. Later in the main lodge, they enjoyed a traditional Canadian feast of meat pie, baked beans, ham, sausage, potatoes, soufflé and pancakes. Students also learned how to play the spoons during the entertainment portion of the night and danced.

This trip was organized and led by French Teacher & World Language Department Chair **Toni Besh** and assisted by Middle School Language Arts Teacher **Bethany Fenys** and High School History Teacher **Traci Churilla**.

High School Senior to Play Football at Pitt

Senior **Tyrone Ezell** made a commitment to play football at the University of Pittsburgh on National Letter of Intent Day (Wednesday, Feb. 4). Congratulations!



Student to Attend State Competition

As a result of placing 1st at district competition, **Jared Ducar** has earned the opportunity to attend the 2008-09 SkillsUSA State Competition at the Hershey Resort and Conference Center in Hershey, PA on April 1-3, 2009.



*Jared Ducar Grade 12:
Electronics*

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