



ABOVE & BEYOND

A newsletter for Penn Manor School District

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Summer 2011

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Penn Manor School District shall strive for academic and personal excellence by fostering a democratic environment which motivates students, teachers, administrators, and parents to work collaboratively to improve the instructional program.

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Congratulations to the Class of 2011



On Tuesday, June 7 at 7:00 pm, 427 members of the Class of 2011 proudly graduated in the spacious and air-conditioned Franklin & Marshall College Alumni Sports and Fitness Center. A live webcast was available for friends and family who were not able to attend the event. The live webcast was viewed by nearly 200 people during the graduation ceremony. It can be downloaded at

<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/15233214>.

Pictured above are the speakers for the evening. From left, Jesse Graham, senior class president, who will attend the University of Pittsburgh; closing speaker Anderson Olson (Cornell University); valedictorian Benjamin Clark (California Institute of Technology); co-salutatorians Helen Hutchens (Lafayette College) and Lars Andersen (Franklin & Marshall College); and opening speaker Katie Maisel (Penn State University).

The Class of 2011 earned **\$2,493,858** in scholarship money. Nineteen members of the class will be student-athletes at Division I, II, and III colleges. One graduate, Emily Hess, will be attending the Air Force Academy. Twelve students will be joining the military and 81% of the class will be pursuing higher education. A complete listing of awards presented at the senior sports award social and the senior awards ceremony is posted at <http://blogs.pennmanor.net/highschool/>.



Superintendent, Dr. Michael Lechlitter, speaks with students as they wait to march in for graduation.

Superintendent's Message:

From the Desk of Dr. Michael Leichliter



Penn Manor, like all other school systems across the state and nation, is facing many challenges as a result of various economic factors, including the prolonged national economic downturn. We are confronting rising costs, many of which are the result of state and federal mandates. At the same time we are experiencing declining revenues. As a district

we made a decision earlier this year to communicate clearly and frequently with our community regarding the circumstances we are confronting, as well as the decisions we are making. Over the past year we held a total of ten advertised "State of the District" meetings at each of our schools for the community. We also held ten other targeted community meetings covering budgetary issues as well as facility needs in order to provide as much information as possible to the public, while seeking input from our citizens.

During some of my presentations I compared our current situation in schools to cable television. When I was growing up I had a television dial with the basics - channels 2 through 13, similar to the "basic" level of programming many in our community experienced as students. We now have programs in our schools that are more like premium cable, mainly due to legislative requirements that did not exist in previous generations. In the next few years with additional

budget reductions, it will be necessary to scale back our programming to somewhere between those 13 channels of yesteryear and the hundreds we presently enjoy. The decisions will not be easy and there will be varying opinions from the different segments of our community regarding what constitutes a truly essential program.

On Monday, June 20, 2011 the Penn Manor administration presented to the School Board a final balanced budget, which included approximately \$2.2 million in program cuts and savings from salary freezes and \$1.8 million in reduced state funding. In order to balance the budget we proposed a tax increase below our state-adjusted index, as well as a proportional use of fund balance. The proposed reductions cover items like the reduction of staff at all levels, restructuring or eliminating existing programs to reduce costs, implementing an energy management policy, reducing building and other operational budgets like athletics, and reducing our transportation budget, including the elimination of mid-day transportation services. Our five-year projections indicate that this will be the first of many years in which we will be encountering programmatic cuts. Future reductions will begin to significantly impact academic and co-curricular programming for our students.

During periods of change an organization has a clear choice to make: to either view uncertainty as an obstacle or as an opportunity. We choose to view the hurdles we have encountered as an opportunity to make this organization stronger. In the important work of educating our children, we cannot afford to have a negative mindset. In this issue, we explore some of the upcoming changes. We will continue to hold community forums in the years ahead to keep Penn Manor citizens fully informed.

Please feel free to contact me at mike.leichliter@pennmanor.net or (717) 872-9500, ext. 2223 with any questions or comments.

Penn Manor Senior Citizens' Corner

If you haven't applied for a **Comet Classic Card**, you have missed out on special events like *Dinner and a Show*, a free intro computer class, the *Music, Money, and a Meal* presentation, and free admission to home Penn Manor sporting events. To apply for your Comet Classic card, visit the district administration office (attached to Manor Middle School) on Charlestown Road. You will need to show proof of age (must be 60 or older) and residency (driver's license, etc.) Your card will be mailed to you in about a week. Please call Cindy Rhoades at 872-9500 ext. 2241 if you have any questions.

Penn Manor's **tax rebate program** is modeled after the Pennsylvania Property Tax Rebate program. Any homeowner who has received a PA Property Tax Rebate and earned less than \$15,000 is eligible, upon filing an application, to receive a district rebate up to a maximum of \$650. The district rebate is calculated on the amount of the 2009 (bills issued July 1, 2009) school real estate taxes paid. The deadline to file for the 2009 district rebate is June 30, 2011. The Penn Manor School Board has voted to continue this program for another year. On or after July 1, 2011, you can apply for your 2010 rebate. District applications may be obtained at the following locations:

- * www.pennmanor.net/business/tax/rebate
- * Penn Manor Business Office located at 2950 Charlestown Road (adjoining Manor Middle School) (717) 872-9500 ext. 2243

School Board Passes 2011-2012 Budget

On Monday, June 20, after a year of tough choices, reduced revenue from state and federal government, and many community meetings, the Penn Manor School Board passed the 2011-2012 budget. The \$64,716,620 is \$2,257,456 below last year's budget. The budget includes a 1.4% tax increase for homeowners, which is below the state-adjusted index assigned to Penn Manor of 1.7%. A homeowner with a house assessed at the district average of \$132,000 will see an additional \$30.36 on his/her tax bill.

Listed below is a summary of some of the major categories of program reductions included as part of the 2011-2012 Penn Manor budget:

- **Savings from not replacing retirements**

- 10 teaching positions were eliminated by not filling openings due to retirements. These positions include elementary physical education, elementary classroom teacher, middle school music, school psychologist, family & consumer science, foreign language, middle school library, and chemistry.

- Program modifications at the elementary, middle, and high school levels will be made as a result of the personnel changes.



- **All employees in the district - administrators, teachers, support staff - have agreed to a pay freeze for the 2011-2012 school year.**

- **Transportation Reductions**

- Mid-day kindergarten transportation has been eliminated
- There will be a reduction in the number of stops made on some bus routes
- The high school late activity bus has been eliminated

- **School, technology, and maintenance budgets have been reduced by 25%**

- **Reductions and modifications have been made to the athletic budget**

- **In-school suspension and the associated staff have been eliminated at both middle schools**

- **Penn Manor will be outsourcing the state-mandated Student Assistance Program staff support**

The district has also implemented cost savings through partnering with other school districts when purchasing benefits, insurances, supplies and fuels. Other cost savings will be realized from the summer hours (4 - 10 hour workdays), lowering thermostats in the buildings during the winter months and raising thermostats during the summer months. Work continues on finding additional cost savings across the district. Energy conservation will be a major focus for the 2011-2012 school year.

"Tiny Comets" Wanted!

Tiny Comets is a new program for all children who reside in the Penn Manor School District who are not yet age eligible to attend kindergarten. The program is an effort to acquaint future Penn Manor students and their families with the school district before they enter school. *Tiny Comets* can sign up by sending an email with the name(s) of the child(ren) and date of birth, address, and parent's name. An electronic newsletter will be sent two times during the year with articles that will be helpful to parents, activities for the children, and information about events for the *Tiny Comets*. A special website, www.pennmanor.net/tinycomets containing links that may of interest to all parents is in the development stage.

If you have any questions or wish to sign up your *Tiny Comet*, please send an email to cindy.rhoades@pennmanor.net.

School Board Members Read to Kindergarten Students

The National Association for the Education of Young Children set aside the week of April 11 as the *Week of the Young Child*. Penn Manor kindergarten teachers invited the members of the Penn Manor School Board to come into their classes and read to the children. All nine board members participated in the event, reading their favorite books to the kindergarten students. Pictured is board member and vice president, Mrs. Johnna Friedman, who entertained Mrs. Ann Helwig's afternoon kindergarten class with a kindergarten favorite, *If You Give a Cat a Cupcake* by Laura Numeroff.



Millersville University Students Partner with Conestoga 5th Grade Classes

For over 30 years, technology education students from Millersville University have visited Conestoga Elementary 5th grade classes twice a year to practice teaching a lesson. The Millersville University students tailor the lessons to fit into the science curriculum that 5th grade teachers, Mrs. Vickie Usciak and Mrs. Deb Falk, already have in place. The Millersville students instructed the Conestoga 5th graders on building wind-powered cars (Mrs. Usciak's class) and wind turbines (Mrs. Falk's class), tying the lessons to the science curriculum on energy.



Central Manor Kindergarten Examine Insects Using a Talking Microscope

Thanks to a Classroom Venture Grant funded by the Penn Manor Education Foundation, Central Manor kindergarten teacher, Miss Elizabeth Crum, was able to purchase a talking microscope that includes slides of insects. As the students study the insects through the microscope lens, they are given a quiz by the microscope that pertains to that particular insect. Books with information on the insects were also purchased to supplement the lessons.



High School English Language Learners Help Teach Eshleman 1st Graders About Their Cultures

The Penn Manor School District has 70 students for whom English is not their primary language. There are 20 such students at the high school taught by Mrs. Wendy Letavic. They partner with Mrs. Patty Detter's 1st grade class at Eshleman Elementary for activities throughout the year. On February 3 the two groups of students celebrated the Chinese New Year. The celebration was planned as a surprise for a high school student who had only been in the United States for a short time. The students wanted to make this a special day for him. The first grade students decorated their classroom with Chinese lanterns and many wore traditional Chinese clothing. The high school ELL's helped the younger students make traditional fans and Chinese bead bracelets. For a treat, the students dined on rice, oranges slices, and giant homemade fortune cookies. The students had a chance to try out chopsticks as well. The first grade students also learned about Chinese culture and how to write their names using the Chinese alphabet.

Time to say “good bye”

When the 2010-2011 ended, students and staff said good bye to more than just another school year. Twenty-two faculty and staff retired at the conclusion of the school year. We say good bye and thank you to:

Kathy Baxter - Spanish teacher at the high school
Eileen Boyle - 4th grade teacher at Letort Elementary
Dan Brown - 6th grade teacher at Martic Elementary
Pat Chnupa - 3rd grade teacher at Martic Elementary
Linda Deal - Elementary teacher of the gifted at Central Manor and Pequea Elementary
Karen Eckert - Cafeteria staff at the high school
Terry Eckman - Music teacher at Marticville Middle
Ruth Frey - Aide at the high school
Linda Gerhart - Psychologist at Manor Middle
Joan Herr - 5th grade teacher at Eshleman Elementary
Sue Hostetter - Librarian at the high school
Lee Keefer - School nurse at Conestoga & Eshleman Elementary and Marticville Middle
Dolores Myers - Healthroom tech at Manor Middle
Bruce Pierce - Math teacher at the high school
Marylou Ruth - Physical Education teacher at Eshleman & Conestoga Elementary
Tina Shank - Family & Consumer Science teacher at Manor Middle
Pat Sultzbach - 2nd grade teacher at Martic Elementary
Karen Stadden - English teacher at the high school
Cindy Stoner - Science teacher at the high school
Doreen Sweitzer - Speech therapist at Manor Middle and Central Manor Elementary
Cheryl Youtz - Spanish teacher at Manor Middle
Patty Ziegler - 2nd grade teacher at Letort Elementary

Outstanding Educators/Employees

The Penn Manor School District employs over 600 full time and part time employees. Every employee plays an important part in making Penn Manor a top-notch school district. Each year, four individuals are singled out to receive special recognition for their outstanding contributions to the district.

Since 1980, two educators, one elementary and one secondary, are chosen from all educators nominated by staff, parents and students to be named the *Outstanding Educators of Year*. The intent is to recognize educators who have dedicated their time and efforts to help their students excel academically and succeed in life.

This year's *Outstanding Elementary Educator* is **Chris Ivey**. Mr. Ivey is a fourth grade teacher at Eshleman Elementary and has taught in the district for 9.5 years. The *Outstanding Secondary Educator* is **Deb Meckley**. Ms. Meckley is the social worker at the high school and Manor Middle School. She has been employed by Penn Manor for the past 10 years.

Since 1999, two support staff employees have been chosen each year, one elementary and one secondary, for their outstanding contributions to the district. This year, **Teresa Reisinger**, library aide at Central Manor Elementary, and **Mark Homsher**, high school lead custodian, were chosen to receive recognition as *Outstanding Employees*



Pictured from left - Deb Meckley, Mark Homsher, and Teresa Reisinger. Missing from the photo is Chris Ivey.

Central Manor Elementary Renovations on Schedule

Since the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year, Central Manor Elementary has been going through a complete renovation. All Central Manor students will begin the 2011-2012 in the newly renovated school. The construction was scheduled in 5 phases:

- o **Phase 1** involved the building of a two story addition (9 classrooms) and the renovation of the primary wing. It is essentially complete. The new addition is pictured below.
- o **Phase 2** involved the renovation of classroom space located in the rear of the building. This includes new case work, flooring, ceilings, lighting, heating and cooling, and upgraded wiring to support new technology. It is essentially complete.
- o **Phase 3** involved the renovation of storage spaces and mechanical rooms. This is essentially complete.
- o **Phase 4** involved the renovation of library, guidance, office and nurse areas as well as the front entrance. Offices have been relocated to be accessed by a secure entrance area. This is essentially complete.
- o **Phase 5** involves the renovation of the kitchen, the gymnasium and the stage area. These areas are expected to be usable for the opening of school with completion expected by late September.



The renovation project included major upgrades to the heating of the building and comes with a geothermal system for energy efficiency. Air conditioning has also been provided. The district will be applying for LEED certification to verify the energy efficiency of the design. The total cost of the renovation is expected to be \$10.9 million.

For the 2010-11 school year, the 5th and 6th grade students from Central Manor were housed in modular classrooms that were located on the campus of Manor Middle School. The modular classrooms had also been used during the Marticville Middle School and Martic

Elementary renovations. The modular buildings will be retained for future use.

Looking toward the future, at its regular meeting on Tuesday, May 17, the Penn Manor School Board authorized the administration to begin design work with architects and engineers for a new Hambright Elementary School on the campus of Manor Middle. This begins a lengthy process which is estimated to take three years. To gain community input regarding the two options, renovating or building new, a series of dedicated community meetings as well as a number of State of the District meetings covering the Hambright topic among other issues, were held. The overwhelming response from the community members who contributed to the discussion was to abandon the current land-locked site on route 741, and relocate to a facility that could meet 21st century educational needs, as well as provide for projected enrollment growth in the northern end of the district.

*You are invited to Central Manor Elementary School's
Community Open House*

*Sunday, October 16, 2011 at 2:00 pm
Central Manor Elementary
3717 Blue Rock Road, Washington Boro, PA*

*There will be a brief
re-dedication ceremony at 2:00 pm*

District Staff Honored

Several district employees were honored for their accomplishments during the 2010-2011 school year. Athletic director, Jeff Roth was chosen as the District 3 Athletic Director of the Year. Mindy Rottmund, family & consumer science teacher at the high school, was chosen as the Pennsylvania Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher of the Year. Both are pictured with Penn Manor School Board President, Dr. Richard Frerichs. They received a resolution from the school board congratulating them on their respective awards. On behalf of the school district, Charlie Reisinger, Director of Technology, accepted the Excellence in Technology Award from the Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA). He is pictured below receiving the award from Pamela Price of PSBA.



Penn Manor Alumni Association Wants You!

The Penn Manor Alumni Association (PMAA) has always been a proud tradition at Penn Manor. In recent years, it has gotten more involved in homecoming activities and is actively looking for new members who wish to help.

For the 2011-2012 school year, PMAA will meet in the high school library on Tuesday, September 6; Tuesday, November 1; Tuesday, April 3 at 6:30 PM. You can also check out the Alumni Association at <http://www.pennmanor.net/alumni/> and read past issues of the *Comet Chatter*, the PMAA newsletter, check out reunions planned and see what PMAA has been up to.

If you have reunion information to share, questions or would like to join PMAA, please feel free to contact the Alumni Association at 872-9520 ext.1934.



Current PMAA officers - Judy Herr Duke '79, Nancy Kreider Smith '58, Dolores Hippey Warfel '60, Fred Wilds '61, Michael McDonald '74, Cindy Duncan LaMaster '74

Polling Places in Elementary Schools

During the 2011-2012 school year, six of Penn Manor's elementary schools will be used as polling places on Tuesday, November 8 and on Tuesday, April 24.

The schools to be used are

- **Central Manor Elementary** at 3717 Blue Rock Road, Washington Boro
- **Conestoga Elementary** at 100 Hill Street, Conestoga
- **Hambright Elementary** at 2121 Temple Avenue, Lancaster
- **Martic Elementary** at 266 Martic Heights Drive, Holtwood
- **Pequea Elementary** at 802 Millwood Road, Willow Street

These two days have been designated as Teacher In-Service days so that students will not be in attendance in the buildings.



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*The Above & Beyond newsletter is published by the Penn Manor School District.
Questions or comments may be directed to editor, Cindy Rhoades, Community Relations Coordinator, at (717) 872-9500 ext. 2241, or cindy.rhoades@pennmanor.net.*

Important Dates & Information

- Penn Manor buildings that are normally open during the summer months will be closed every Friday from June 20 until July 29. Buildings will be open Monday through Thursday from 7 AM until 5 PM as the district goes to 4-10 hour days to save on utility costs.
- Elementary buildings will be closed from June 21 until August 12. New elementary students may pick up registration packets at the District Office on 2950 Charlestown Road, Lancaster; find the information online at www.pennmanor.net/parents/registration/; or wait until the elementary schools reopen. New middle school or high school students should contact the buildings directly to schedule an appointment.
- School calendars will be mailed to each district resident the week of August 22. Don't forget to use the valuable coupons in the current year's calendar. The 2011-12 snapshot calendar is online at www.pennmanor.net/district/calendar/
- Tax payments should be mailed or taken to any Fulton Bank branch. Please do not bring them to the district office.
- Orientation for incoming 9th grade students and new students at Penn Manor High School will be held on Tuesday, August 16 at 9 AM and 6:30 PM
- Orientation for incoming 7th grade students at Marticville Middle School will be held Thursday, August 18 at 6 PM
- Orientation for incoming 7th grade students at Manor Middle School will be held Friday, August 19 from 8:30 AM until 11 AM
- The first day of school for the 2011-2012 school year will be Monday, August 29.