



## Schuylkill Valley School Board Elects New Officers

The Board of School Directors of the Schuylkill Valley School District held its reorganizational meeting on December 2, 2014. **Mr. David E. Moll** was elected president and **Mr. Paul L. Bendigo** was elected vice president. **Mr. Kevin Raudenbush** is board secretary. Other members of the board include **Mr. Bryan D. Feeney**, **Mrs. Linda R. Lash**, **Dr. Jay R. Melvin**, **Mr. G. Dane Miller**, **Mr. Geoffrey P. Miller**, and **Mrs. Ann Strause**.

School directors generously contribute their time and talents toward the advancement of public education. They establish policies that provide the framework for our public schools. These dedicated volunteers reside in our community and serve as representatives for our residents. They are our friends, neighbors, community leaders, parents, and engaged senior citizens.

We thank the members of the Schuylkill Valley School District Board of Directors for their commitment to provide quality public education for the children of the Schuylkill Valley School District.



### SCHUYLKILL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS 2014-2015

Seated, left to right: Dr. Jay R. Melvin, Mrs. Linda R. Lash, Mrs. Ann Strause, Mr. Kevin Raudenbush.

Standing, left to right: Mr. Bryan D. Feeney, Mr. Paul L. Bendigo, Mr. David E. Moll, Mr. G. Dane Miller, Mr. Geoffrey P. Miller.

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**SCHUYLKILL VALLEY  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

929 Lakeshore Drive  
Leesport PA 19533-8631

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

**Warren F. Mata, Ed.D.**

Superintendent

**Mr. Patrick Sasse**

High School Principal

**Mrs. Maggie E. Drake**

High School Assistant Principal

**Mr. Michael T. Mitchell, Jr.**

Middle School Principal

**Mr. Jeremy L. Crills**

Assistant Middle School Principal

**Mrs. Melissa Kelchner**

Elementary School Principal

**Mrs. Melissa A. Rhoads**

Assistant Elementary School Principal

**Mr. Matthew Ammons**

Director, Special Education & Pupil Services

**Mr. Michael Billman**

Director, Information Technology

**Mrs. Wendy Boarder**

Business Manager

**Mrs. Changming Wang**

Assistant Business Manager

**Mr. Craig A. Strunk**

Director, Buildings & Grounds

**Miss Stephanie L. Deibler**

Athletic Director

**Ms. Peggy Romanies**

Coordinator, Human Resources

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Mr. David E. Moll, *President***

**Mr. Paul L. Bendigo, *Vice President***

**Mr. Kevin Raudenbush, *Secretary***

**Mr. Bryan D. Feeney**

**Mrs. Linda R. Lash**

**Dr. Jay R. Melvin**

**Mr. G. Dane Miller**

**Mr. Geoffrey P. Miller**

**Mrs. Ann Strause**

**BOARD MEETINGS**

Committees generally meet the third Monday of the month at 6:30 pm. Board meetings are generally held the fourth Monday of the month at 7:00 pm. High School LGI Room.

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Administration	610-916-0957
High School	610-926-1706
Middle School	610-926-7111
Elementary School	610-926-4165



# superintendent's MESSAGE

**Grit as a Key to School Success**

It's nothing new; we've seen it before, that stubborn refusal to quit, that determination to try again in the face of adversity. Sometimes we call it the human spirit. In the world of schooling and academia, it's known as "grit"—something Merriam-Webster defines as "mental toughness and an unyielding courage in the face of hardship."

For kids at school, we see it in the persistent struggle to figure out a math problem. We see it in a child's resolve to decode a new word or make sense of a paragraph. In athletics, we see it on the football field in that effort for a first down or on the final stretch of a 5K run.

For so many years, the idea of success in school meant being gifted with a high IQ or having an extraordinary talent. It was about the innate gifts and talents a student possessed. And while the idea of grit is recognized as an important quality, we rarely teach it directly.

Recently in a book by Paul Tough, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*, Tough makes the case for perseverance, curiosity, and self-control as qualities that matter as much, if not more, than intelligence.

Similarly, Angela Duckworth at the University of Pennsylvania makes the case for grit, describing it as "perseverance and passion for long-term goals ... working strenuously toward challenges, and maintaining effort and interest over years, despite failure." Reminding me of the story of the tortoise and the hare, Duckworth describes the gritty individual as one who "approaches achievement as a marathon" and not as a sprint.

So the question becomes "How can we teach and nurture grit in children?" In this regard, Duckworth has two rules she uses with her own children. Rule #1: Everyone has a self-selected hard thing to do ... something that takes effort and deliberate practice. It might be learning to play a musical instrument or taking ballet lessons. Rule #2: You can't quit on a bad day and you can't quit in the middle. You have to stick with it until the end of the season or the end of semester.

As I think about how schools teach and nurture this sense of grit, the most obvious way is through our physical education classes, our athletic programs, and our performing arts. In the pursuit of life-long fitness and in the competition of the athletic field, we already do this work. Whether at swimming practices, on the basketball court, or at our wrestling matches, students learn the

(continued on page 3)

## SV Senior Wins Miss Berks County!



**Morgann Henn**, Miss Berks County, will compete in the Miss Pennsylvania pageant in Pittsburgh in June.

Congratulations to SV Senior **Morgann Henn**, who was named Miss Berks County at the competition held at Wilson West Middle School on January 24. Morgann was also SV's representative in the Berks County Outstanding Young Woman competition held in the fall.

### HIGH SCHOOL

Morgann selected her love of reading as her platform for the Miss Berks County pageant. She wants to share her love of reading by introducing the importance of reading to children at a young age.

Morgann's prizes include a \$1,000 scholarship and the chance to compete in the Miss Pennsylvania pageant, the preliminary competition to the Miss America pageant, in Pittsburgh in June.

At school, Morgann participates in PYEA, NHS, the Science Olympiad, and varsity track and field. She served as a camp counselor and was

captain of the varsity field hockey team. Outside of school, Morgann enjoys jazz and hip/hop dancing. She especially enjoys spending time outdoors, snorkeling, running, fishing, and hiking.

"As a little girl," says Morgann, "I dreamed of being Miss America one day, but I never thought I would actually have an opportunity to be a part of the organization. I am honored to represent my own community at the Miss Pennsylvania pageant as one of the youngest titleholders this year and make my childhood dreams come true."

Morgann's family includes her parents, Al and Susan Henn, Bern Township, her sister, Jenna (Henn) Knechtle, and her brother, Nick Henn.

We wish you a very memorable pageant experience, Morgann!

## Grit as a Key to School Success continued

value of deliberate and persistent practice. Whether during the play rehearsal or the sectional music practice, students learn that continued, focused practice makes a positive difference.

I contend that our athletic programs and our performing arts programs help students build a sense of tenacity and drive. Those traits readily transfer to academic persistence and success. Even more, I argue that our athletic competitions and artistic performances mirror the joys and

frustrations of life beyond school. Athletes and artists learn the value of consistent preparation and face the realities of their practice on the athletic field or the performance stage.

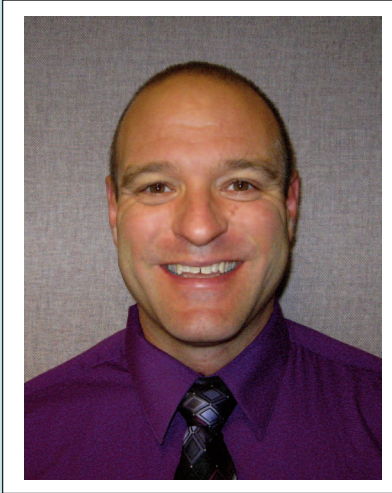
To our performance directors, coaches, and music teachers...thank you! You are teaching our students the value of grit and persistent determination. To our parents, please insist that your child participates in at least one extracurricular activity—at school, at church, in scouting, in 4-H.

Together we can help our students and children learn the importance of sticking with something, even in the midst of adversity. We can instill the value of "grit" as one key to a lifetime of success.

*Dr. Warren F. Mata*  
Superintendent



## Mr. Jeremy L. Crills, New Assistant Principal at Schuylkill Valley Middle School



**Mr. Jeremy L. Crills** has joined the staff of the Schuylkill Valley Middle School in the position of assistant principal. Mr. Crills has 16 years of educational experience expanding throughout the elementary, middle, and high school grade levels. He began his teaching career as a health and physical education teacher in the Reading School District followed by two years as an adaptive physical education teacher with the Lancaster Lebanon Intermediate Unit. He then taught Health and Physical Education in the Governor Mifflin School District for 10 years. Mr. Crills has been a football coach with the Schuylkill Valley High School football team for the last four years. He earned his bachelor of science degree from Lock Haven University and his master's degree in Education and his Educational Leadership Certification from Wilkes University.

Mr. Crills and his wife, Coleen, have three children, two of whom attend the Schuylkill Valley Elementary School. A district resident, Mr. Crills says, "We chose to reside here because of the district's educational

reputation and the attributes of the surrounding community."

Mr. Crills says, "I look forward to working together with the parents and community members to provide the students of the Schuylkill Valley Middle School the opportunity to grow and strive to be well-rounded students, develop into world-class citizens, and obtain the skills and knowledge to be successful in their academic journey."

Mr. Crills says he looks forward to working with SVMS Principal Mr. Mitchell and the Schuylkill Valley Middle School staff to provide a safe and engaging educational environment that encourages positive behaviors by all students and focuses on exciting and challenging enrichment opportunities for everyone who walks through the door."

"Lastly," says Mr. Crills, "I would like to thank you for all that you currently provide for your child. My door will always be open, and I encourage your continued involvement, as we can be partners to ensure success in your child's education."



The **Girls' Junior High Volleyball Team** organized a fundraising event called "Volley for the Cure" and sponsored a pink-out at the SV Middle School to raise \$300. Congratulations, girls!

## Logan Borkey Wins Schuylkill Valley Geography Bee

**Logan Borkey**, an eighth grade student at Schuylkill Valley Middle School, won the 23rd annual Schuylkill Valley Geography Bee Finals held on Friday, January 9, 2015. The school-level Bee was sponsored by the National Geographic Society and Schuylkill Valley P.T.O.

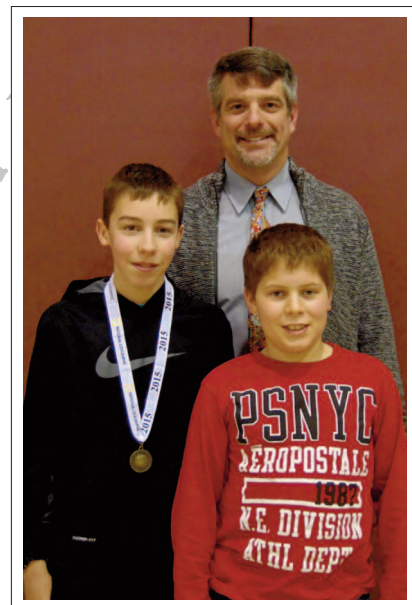
In addition to Logan and Clayton, contestants included:

Grade 6: **Addison Angstadt, Brice Dornblaser**

Grade 7: **Emily Angstadt, Luke Jozwiak, Jonathan Wails**

Grade 8: **Owen Manwiller, Clayton Spencer**

Logan has now taken a written qualifying test and is waiting to hear if he is one of the top 100 participants to qualify for the State Geography Bee to be held in March. State champions travel to Washington, D.C. in May to compete in the National Tournament where the top prize is a \$50,000 college scholarship, \$500 in cash, and a trip to the Galápagos Islands. Soledad O'Brien moderates the national finals.



**Logan Borkey**, with ribbon, won this year's Spelling Bee. **Clayton Hummel** came in second place. **Mr. Tod Witman**, SVHS social studies teacher, moderated the Bee.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Mr. Tod Witman** served as the moderator at the very intense competition. **Clayton Hummel** came in second place. The competition came down to Logan and Clayton competing in several tiebreaker questions in the Championship Round. The winning question was "Which Mediterranean country, located at the southern end of the Balkan Peninsula, is Europe's largest exporter of cotton?" The answer is Greece.

## Ella Jenkins, SV Spelling Bee Champion

Congratulations to sixth grader **Ella Jenkins**, winner of this year's Spelling Bee. The winning word was manicure. Runner-up was **Reinhold Louis**, also a sixth grader. Ella and Reinhold will compete in the Berks County Spelling Bee Championship Finals on Monday, March 9, at the Miller Center for the Arts.

Other contestants were:

Grade 6: **Addison Angstadt, Brice Dornblaser, Kara Faulk, Aidan Gensure, Cole Harris, Clayton Hummel, Jadiel Mateo, Cole Schweitzer**

Grade 7: **Layonni Adejo, Luke Ammarell, Emily Angstadt, Elizabeth Fell, Jaime Moyer, Hope Rozycki, Jonathan Wails, Lillian Wiley**

Grade 8: **Steven Arentz, Cort Borelli, Brooke Noecker, Kahlee Perera, Tyler Perry**



**Ella Jenkins**, Spelling Bee champion with runner-up, **Reinhold Louis** wearing the winning medals.



# PAST PANTHER PATHS



## Congratulations to Corielle Yarde, Inducted into MAAC Honor Roll

**Miss Corielle Yarde**, an SV grad and now an SV Elementary School teacher, was inducted into the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Honor Roll on November 1, 2014, at the Naismith Memorial Hall of Fame Court of Dreams in Springfield, Massachusetts. Ms. Yarde earned MAAC Player of the Year, MAAC Tournament MVP, First Team All-ECAC, First Team All-Met Basketball Writers' Association and MAAC Student-Athlete of the Year.



## Past Panther Paths

Congratulations to SV grad **Brady Walsh** for her soccer accomplishments while playing at DeSales University before graduating from there in December 2014. While at DeSales, Brady made the DeSales all-time list with 47 career goals and 14 career assists. She broke the school record for goals in a game (4) and points (8). Finally, she was Disney/NSCAA National Player of the Week the week of October 21.

## HIGH SCHOOL

**Wednesday, March 18**

6:30 to 8:30 pm

### TEENS AND COPING WITH STRESS

A free event presented by the Council on Chemical Abuse  
Please RSVP on the High School webpage under the 'News' section.

**Friday–Saturday, April 17 & 18**

7:30 p.m.

### PANTHERS-ON-PARADE PRESENTS THE ADDAMS FAMILY

See page 9 for the ticket order form.

**Thursday–Friday, April 23 & 24  
during school hours**

### SVHS TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

Teachers and staff will exhibit their current uses of instructional technology in class.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Friday, March 20**

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 pm

### St. Patrick's Dance

**April 13 through April 17**

PSSA Testing – English Language Arts

**April 20 through April 24**

PSSA Testing – Math

**April 27 through May 1**

PSSA Testing – Grade 8 - Science

**Friday, May 8**

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 pm

### Farewell Dance

**Friday, May 29**

6:30 p.m. to 9:00 pm

### Appreciation Dance – 8th grade

# WHAT'S happening ?

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**April 13 – April 17**

PSSA Testing – Grades 3 and 4

English Language Arts

**April 20 – April 24**

PSSA Testing – Grades 3 and 4 Math

**April 27 – May 1**

PSSA Testing – Grade 4 Science

## Schuylkill Valley Elementary School has New Principal & Assistant Principal

The start of the 2014-2015 school year brought administrative changes to the SV Elementary School.

**Mrs. Melissa Kelchner** began as principal in August and **Mrs. Melissa Rhoads** joined her as assistant principal in December.

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mrs. Kelchner has worked in the field of education since 1998. She earned her bachelor of science degree in Psychology from Kutztown University, her elementary teaching certification from Alvernia University, and her master's degree in Education and her principal certification from Wilkes University. Mrs. Kelchner formerly was the assistant principal at the SV Middle School. Prior to that, she was an alternative learning teacher at SV and previously a

counselor with the Berks County Judicial System.

New to the administrative team is Mrs. Rhoads. She was formerly a Family and Consumer Science teacher at the Schuylkill Valley High School and Middle School. She earned her bachelor's degree and Master of Education at Arcadia University and her administrative certification from Alvernia University.

Mrs. Rhoads says, "I decided to become a principal because I have always had a strong desire to make a positive impact on an entire school community. I believe that one of the strongest attributes of Schuylkill Valley School District is its community, and I plan to foster this connection."



**Mrs. Melissa Rhoads**, Elementary School Assistant Principal (left), and **Mrs. Melissa Kelchner**, Elementary School Principal

## SVES Students Winners of 2015 Literacy Council of Berks County Read-A-Thon

SVES students participated in the Literacy Council of Berks County Read-A-Thon by collecting donations and reading as many books as they possibly could from January 19 through January 26, 2015. As a reward, SVES students took turns throwing 15 pies to the faces of their principal, **Mrs. Melissa Kelchner**, and assistant principal, **Mrs. Melissa Rhoads**, during an assembly at the elementary school on February 27.

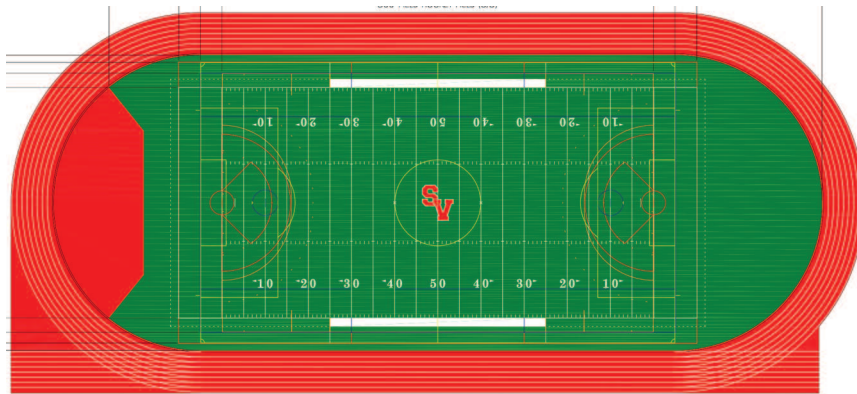
We are so proud to announce that SVES is the 2015 Literacy Council of Berks County Read-A-Thon winners! The students raised a total of \$9,432.50 in donations toward stamping out illiteracy in Berks County.

The elementary school will receive \$943.25 in free books as a reward for being the school that collected the most donations. In addition, a few Reading Fightin' Phils players will visit the school during an assembly in May, when the Literacy Council of Berks County will present the students with a first place plaque.

Congratulations to all!



# Panther Pride Stadium Campaign Update



It's official ... the SV Panther Pride Stadium Campaign (PPSC) has now received both state and federal approval of our 501(c)3 non-profit status, so we hope you'll hop on board as we move full steam ahead with our fundraising, grant applications, and donor solicitations in 2015!

The PPSC committee will be organizing subcommittees to tackle various campaign tasks. **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED** with interest and experience in the following areas:

- Upcoming events / fundraisers
- Community/student engagement – student groups, youth/community organizations, Parent Advisory Council, PTO
- Publicity/PR - social media, website, SVSD newsletter
- Grants and other funding resources
- Corporate giving – district businesses, community, alumni entrepreneurs

At the December meeting, the SV PPSC Committee elected new officers for 2015:

**Kellie Butsack**, President  
**Jeff Chillot**, Vice President  
**Terry McKechnie**, Treasurer  
**Renee Siglin**, Secretary

## SV PPSC Upcoming Events

- 2015 Golf Outing  
Sunday, May 17, 2015  
Golden Oaks Golf Club
- Homecoming Gala 2015  
SV Homecoming Weekend  
October 2015
- Personalized Brick Pavers - to honor, memorialize, and/or celebrate family, students, teachers, and alumni

Every one of us can give of our time, talents, and treasure to make this “dream” a reality for all who proudly call the SV School District “home.” Choose to offer your input on our committee ... choose to plan a fundraiser ... choose to donate personally and help us jump start the “game plan” (pun intended) ... choose all of the above ... but **PLEASE CHOOSE to SUPPORT** the cause! The sooner we raise the funds, the sooner we break ground on the project, and the sooner cur-

rent and upcoming student generations will benefit from this vision. **YOU** can help us accelerate the awareness and success of the Panther Pride Stadium Campaign. Help us reach out to your community neighbors and businesses to gain momentum for the project...SV Panther Pride starts with **YOU!**

On behalf of the committee, we thank you for your support. Your enthusiasm and involvement will surely impact the Panther Pride Stadium Campaign, our community, and most importantly, our students.

**Panther Pride Stadium  
 Campaign Committee**  
 P.O. Box 861  
 Leesport PA 19533

WHAT YOU CAN DO ... to contribute, volunteer, and learn more about upcoming events:

- Email the Panther Pride Stadium Committee at [PPSC@schuylkill-valley.org](mailto:PPSC@schuylkill-valley.org)
- Visit us on the district website: [http://www.schuylkillvalley.org/pages/Schuylkill\\_Valley\\_SD](http://www.schuylkillvalley.org/pages/Schuylkill_Valley_SD)
- Message us on



<https://www.facebook.com/PantherPrideStadiumCampaign>



## In Memoriam

For more than 40 years, **Bob Jones** was the voice of Schuylkill Valley football. He also served the school district as a Social Studies teacher, Social Studies department chair, assistant tournament director of Sectional Wrestling, assistant tournament director for District III Wrestling, timer and scorekeeper for boys and girls basketball, timer for boys and girls volleyball, and track & field event worker.

Mr. Jones was instrumental in the development of the first Frost Bowl, the rival football game between Schuylkill Valley and Hamburg, and actively assisted with the game

throughout the years. Mr. Jones retired at the conclusion of this year's Frost Bowl game on October 31, 2014. The press box microphone Mr. Jones used to call 40 years of games was retired and is housed in the high school trophy case.

Sadly, Mr. Jones passed away on Saturday, February 21, 2015. He was laid to rest in the Veteran's Memorial area at Schuylkill Memorial Park, Schuylkill Haven, PA.



Memorial donations may be made to the Panther Pride Stadium Campaign, c/o SVHigh School, 929 Lakeshore Drive, Leesport, PA 19533.

## 2015 Panthers-on-Parade Show: The Addams Family

Tickets go on sale to the public Monday, March 23 for this year's production of *The Addams Family*. Performances will take place on **Friday, April 17** and **Saturday, April 18, 2015** at **7:30 p.m.** General admission price is \$11; price for senior citizen tickets (62 years of age or older) is \$8. All tickets are filled on a first-come/first-serve basis and are not refundable.

All orders will be by mail only (SVHS 929 Lakeshore Drive, Leesport, PA 19533). There will be no orders taken over the phone. Tickets will be mailed back if a self-addressed stamped envelope is provided, or they may be picked up at the ticket booth the nights of the performances. Orders received after Friday, April 3 will be held at the ticket booth.



**Payment must accompany all orders.**

If paying by check, please make checks payable to **Schuylkill Valley High School**.

Questions or concerns regarding tickets should be forwarded to [tgoldeb1@gmail.com](mailto:tgoldeb1@gmail.com).

### FRIDAY April 17, 2015 Ticket Order Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ general admission tickets @ \$11 each = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ senior citizen admission tickets @ \$8 each = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ total # ticket | total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ CASH \_\_\_\_ CHECK (# )

### SATURDAY April 18, 2015 Ticket Order Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

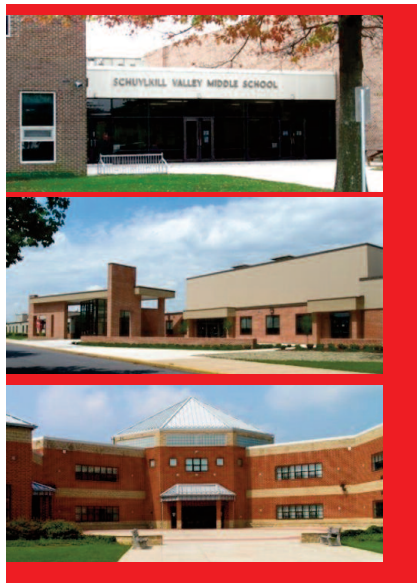
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ general admission tickets @ \$11 each = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ senior citizen admission tickets @ \$8 each = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ total # ticket | total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ CASH \_\_\_\_ CHECK (# )



**schuylkill valley**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Thanks for Your Time and Services!

We would like to acknowledge and thank **Dr. Jordan Hottenstein**, Central Berks Dental Center, Leesport, for donating his time and services to the children in the Schuylkill Valley School District. We appreciate your generosity!



The Schuylkill Valley School District newsletter, Around the Valley, winter and spring issues will be available online only at **[www.schuylkillvalley.org](http://www.schuylkillvalley.org)**.

If you would like to receive a printed copy of the newsletter, please call the Administration Center at 610-916-0957.

We welcome your comments at **[promanies@schuylkillvalley.org](mailto:promanies@schuylkillvalley.org)**

## HELP WANTED

- Classroom aides – part-time and substitutes
- Cafeteria workers – part-time and substitutes

For more information, visit our website **[www.schuylkillvalley.org](http://www.schuylkillvalley.org)** and click on Administration > Human Resources > Employment Opportunities or call Human Resources 610-916-5436.