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Superintendent of Schools

# News from our Schools

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## Mission Statement

The Mission of School District 15 is to produce world-class learners by building a connected learning community.

### Our Core Values are:

- Student- and Constituent-Driven Quality
- Public Responsibility and Citizenship
- Management by Fact
- Continuous Improvement and Learning
- Results Focus

### Our Key Goals are:

- Students and the Community Acquire 21st Century Skills
- World-Class Achievement
- Connected Learning Community
- Caring, Safe, and Orderly Learning Environment
- High-Performing Staff
- Aligned and Integrated Management System

### Board of Education

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## Two district teachers earn board certification

Two teachers from School District 15 have just been notified that they have received certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for the 1999-2000 school year. They are **Judith Sawdey**, a fourth-grade teacher at Marion Jordan, and **Lori Didier**, a second-grade teacher at Lake Louise.

Certification, considered the highest professional credential in the field of teaching, is a rigorous performance-based assessment that takes nearly a year to complete. Through the assessment process, teachers document their subject matter knowledge, provide evidence that they know how to teach their subjects to students effectively, and demonstrate their ability to manage and measure student learning.

Sawdey and Didier join eight other School District 15 teachers who have previously received certification. These include Patty Clark, Charlotte Drayer, Carole Einhorn, Kelly Garro, Karen Hindman, Marianne Kipp, Penny Potter, and Ron Williams. They are among just 185 certified teachers in Illinois and 9,498 in the nation.

Judith Sawdey has been on the teaching staff of School District 15 for ten years. She earned her B.A. degree from Michigan State University and taught in Livonia, Mich., for three years. She moved to the Chicago area and raised her children, then got her master's degree in reading instruction. Judith worked as a permanent substitute in the Glenview and Northbrook school districts before starting her district career at Frank C. Whiteley. She then moved to Marion Jordan and taught fifth grade before switching to fourth grade, her grade-level preference, because, she said, "the kids still really love school."

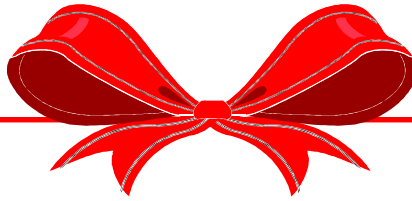


*Lori Didier, Lake Louise School*



*Judith Sawdey, Marion Jordan School*

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## Reaching Out to Others . . .

■ **Marion Jordan** students and their families have been involved in several community service projects throughout the fall and winter. A PTA-coordinated “Pennies for Pies” initiative offered students the opportunity to give money to purchase pies for donation to the Palatine Township Food Pantry. Student donations bought 60 pies; additional purchases by staff and parents brought the total to 129. The Marion Jordan Service Club is organizing a canned food/paper product drive in December to benefit the Palatine Township Food Pantry. The group, in cooperation with the Rotary Club, is also organizing a used book drive to benefit school libraries at seven schools in South Africa. Marion Jordan PTA is sponsoring a “Blessings in a Box” campaign, with students decorating shoeboxes to be filled with small personal items. The boxes will be distributed to needy children in 43 countries through a nationwide program. In addition, third-graders in Lindsay Dahl’s class held a bake sale in November to earn money for Hope Now, Inc., and P.A.D.S., raising \$286 for these organizations which serve the homeless in Palatine and nearby communities.

■ Fifth graders at **Frank C. Whiteley School** raised more than \$600 through the sale of more than 1,200 taffy apples. They used the funds to purchase books, audio and videotapes, then recorded the books in a number of languages, including Spanish, Polish, and Japanese. The materials were donated to children’s hospitals, shelters, and not-for-profit day care centers.

The Service Over Self (SOS) Club and the PTA at Whiteley are reaching out to those in need. Each classroom will buy a gift for a boy or girl of their same age. The PTA will deliver the gift donations to Palatine Township, Hope for the City, and local families.

■ While Florida was counting ballots, **Kimball Hill** students were counting cans, food cans to be exact. Newly elected student government representatives from grades 3-6 sponsored a food drive for the entire school that lasted for a week. Approximately 1,000 pounds of food was collected and donated to Hope Now, is a Palatine organization that helps the

homeless, including single mothers and families. The shelter, located on Northwest Highway east of Route 53, helps individuals ranging in age from 17 to 70.

“Our students are a very industrious group,” states Debbie Morales, Kimball Hill student government sponsor. “The kids were so happy to meet the challenge of collecting as much as they could. They immediately set to work making posters to hang around the school to advertise the big event. Nicky Silva and Bianca Serrato, President and Vice-President, respectively, wrote speeches to promote the event and appeared on the morning announcements to inform our student body about ‘New Hope’ and this organization’s work to aid the less fortunate in our area.”

Mrs. Morales and Dave Middleton, Kimball Hill student government’s technical advisor, dropped off the nonperishable food items on November 22, so they could be distributed for the Thanksgiving holiday. Kimball Hill students plan a toy and clothing drive for December and January.

■ Third- and fourth-grade gifted students at **Pleasant Hill** are raising money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation through their “Brownies in a Jar” project. Teacher Mary Salsinger has incorporated economics, math, and the school’s character education into the project. The students chose a charity, selected an appropriate recipe, purchased ingredients, determined a price which would allow for a profit, and marketed their product to families and staff members. A representative of Make-A-Wish will visit the class on December 14 to accept the students’ contribution.

■ The **Thomas Jefferson School’s** S.T.A.R. Club (Students Taking Added Responsibilities) recently sponsored a schoolwide bake sale as a tribute to the late Hoffman Estates’ Mayor Michael J. O’Malley, raising \$275 for the Children’s Advocacy Center which he established.





## Paddock students sing at Randhurst

The fifth- and sixth-grade chorus from **Stuart R. Paddock School** led Santa into Randhurst Mall, singing traditional Christmas songs. After escorting Santa to a log cabin area where he will greet children throughout the holiday season, the chorus also performed a rousing version of "Santa Is the Man."

## Jane Addams students enjoy wall-climbing activity

Students at **Jane Addams School** learned team building, communication, and problem-solving skills through a "Cliffhanger-Climbing Wall" experience, a special physical education activity funded through a contribution from the Jane Addams PTA. The Cliffhanger staff and parent volunteers worked together to give students the chance to improve their balance and coordination as well as trust and self-esteem. The PTA also sold tickets for an evening of extra climbs, with proceeds going to purchase team building equipment for the school.



## Teachers earn board certification

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The certification process was a lot of work, she said, but other teachers in the district encouraged her to take the challenge. "It forces you to evaluate what you do and compare your performance to national standards," she explained. "Along the way, you get feedback from other teachers, and that's insightful, enriching, and stimulating." Although she once thought she might like to do something outside the classroom, completing her certification portfolio helped her understand that her job is just what she wants to do. "I'm doing what I have a passion for," she said. "I just love where I am, but it took writing about it for me to realize it."

Judith and her husband Richard, a lawyer, live in Wilmette. They are parents of two adult children: a daughter, Karin, and a son, David, and they are soon to become first-time grandparents.

Lori Didier has been on the teaching staff of School District 15 for 11 years. She previously taught kindergarten and has been teaching second grade for the past two years. Lori was a day care teacher for ten years before deciding to go back to school. She earned a B.A. from Elmhurst College and a master's in curriculum development from

Concordia. She taught in Elmhurst and Barrington before joining District 15.

Lori was inspired to pursue the certification process when she heard Penny Potter, one of the district's first board-certified teachers, talk about it. "I wanted to further my education, and this seemed like a good way to approach it," she said. "The process requires that you examine how you teach, what impact it has on your students, and whether you are reaching the benchmarks of the national board," she explained.

Having successfully achieved her goal of certification, Lori now is willing to help mentor other teachers who are considering it. "It's a process where you need people to help you," she noted. Lori isn't planning to use her certification as a stepping stone to another job. "I want to stay in the classroom," she said. "Teachers have a very short time with their students, and it's all precious. It's important that everything I do as a teacher be very significant. That's my commitment to my students."

Lori, who was reared in Des Plaines, has lived in Palatine for 20 years. She is the mother of a son, Cooper, 21.

# Around the Schools

## Learning about the arts

- Art students from **Plum Grove Junior High** took a field trip to the Northwest Cultural Council's art gallery in Rolling Meadows to see a show from Guatemala illustrating a Mayan procession. Artists were on hand to explain the show and work with students on a writing/poetry project and an arts-related workshop. The artists' appearance and the gallery trip were funded by Square D and the Northwest Cultural Council as part of the council's "Kids Meet Art" program.
- Forty **Winston Campus** eighth-grade art students and parent chaperones visited The Art Institute of Chicago recently to view and discuss paintings of different cultures. After returning to school, the students worked with partners to reflect on their favorite works of art, comparing and contrasting styles, history, and subject matter.

## Hunting Ridge students visit west side Chicago school

- Some 25 first-grade students from **Hunting Ridge School** visited Skinner Elementary School on Chicago's west side as part of a unique school exchange sponsored by Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois. The visit, an outgrowth of a pen-pal project between students from each school, was featured in a Blue Cross/Blue Shield magazine article.

## Sundling students have writing published

- Two eighth-grade students from **Walter R. Sundling Junior High** recently had essays published in The High School Writer. Jessica Tepas' article, "*Marie Antoinette*," a first-person account of the life of the doomed queen of France, was regional winner of the publication's November Literary Award. Katsie Calhoun's article, "*Anti-Boxing (Opinion)*," traced the history of this controversial sport. The girls are students of Jennifer Buehler and Laverne Stephens.

## Studying early man

- Fifth and sixth graders in Sheila Frankel's classes at **Thomas Jefferson School** worked together in teams to create life-size replicas of early man, including *Australopithecus*, *Cro-Magnon*, *Homo erectus* and Neanderthal figures.

## Virginia Lake draws parents in

Recent programs at **Virginia Lake School** have helped attract even more parents into the school.

- During October, parents were given the opportunity to learn how to use Microsoft PowerPoint which students often use in creating presentations. Parents were trained on both basic and advanced features of this software program.
- The school's PTA and bilingual teachers recently sponsored a Hispanic Family Night, with families invited to school for an evening of information, fun, and food. While parents participated in discussions and shared concerns and questions, children were entertained with games and a clown who made balloon creations.
- Parents and children participated in PAL (Parents Assisting Learning), a family literacy program. PAL provides parents with strategies designed to help their children become more effective readers. This year's program offered workshops for kindergarten, first-, and second-grade students and their parents.

## High school club members mentor Virginia Lake students

- Kindergarten through fourth-grade students at **Virginia Lake School** benefit from a cultural awareness mentoring program conducted by members of the Multicultural Club of Palatine High School. Club members volunteer to visit Virginia Lake weekly to work with elementary students on self-esteem issues. The students also spend time drawing, discussing issues, and developing relationships.