



The Wigwam

Southern Local School District Newsletter

Fall 2021

Everything's Coming up Roses for Bowling

Everything's coming up roses for Southern Local High School Band Director Emily Forbes Bowling, who is heading out west for a major event in January.

Bowling will join Jennifer Mollenkopf, band director for East Palestine Schools, and others from across the country to take part in the annual Pasadena Tournament of Roses® Parade on Jan. 1. They will be among 280 members from all 50 states and Mexico in the Band Directors Marching Band who will make the 5.5-mile trek on New Year's Day. The event has been viewed in person by thousands and on television by millions, and history is also being made since the entry is the first of its kind and will include an animated float and marching band composed solely of band directors. The special entry was formulated by Saluting America's Band Directors, a project of the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation, and will convey the theme, "We teach music. We teach life."

Bowling, who has taught at Southern Local for the past 21 years, is one of only 45 band directors statewide selected and she is thrilled for the opportunity.

"I'm very excited about it and I can't wait," she said. "They've been building the float since summer and I've been sharing photos of the progress with my kids and getting them excited."

She actually learned she would participate last year but said plans were nixed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now she



Southern Local High School Band Director Emily Forbes Bowling, pictured at right, will join Jennifer Mollenkopf, band director for East Palestine School, and 280 others from across the U.S. and Mexico to perform in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses® Parade on Jan. 1.

will get the opportunity to don a uniform and play her clarinet in the Golden State. Members include band directors who are new or have 50 years' experience teaching all levels from elementary to high school,

colleges and universities, the military and even community bands.

"I found out [about the opportunity] in the spring of 2020 and I applied. The foundation had a selection committee," she said, adding that she also submitted an essay describing how she teaches about life with her music lessons.

Bowling will head west from Dec. 29-Jan. 2, where she will rehearse with the others and appear in the parade and other musical events. The band will be led by renowned music educator and innovative band director Jon Waters, who directed the Ohio State University Marching Band and is now director of bands at Heidelberg University. Waters will conduct rehearsals in Pasadena in preparation for the big day and lead the band at Bandfest, a two-day event in which Rose Parade marching bands also perform a field show.

The band will perform four tunes including "Sing, Sing, Sing," "Stars and Stripes Forever," "Strike up the Band" and a custom arrangement of "76 Trombones" created specifically for them. Bowling noted that the band directors yield a combined total of 4,539 years' experience and have taught approximately 181,000 students. For her part, Bowling instructs 145 chorus and band members in grades 5-12, and she is not only a staff member at Southern but also an alumna. She graduated from SLHS in 1995 and returned to work at her alma mater in 2000.

Southern Local Drive-Through Christmas Parade on Dec. 17

Southern Local Elementary School is ringing in the season with the second annual Drive-Through Christmas Parade.

The event gets underway on Dec. 17 from 6-8 p.m. and attendees can take part in both indoor and outdoor activities. SLES Assistant Principal Emily Brinker, who is organizing the parade, said students and their families may travel through the parking lot and partake of stations for some holiday treats, plus they can get warm inside and visit with Santa Claus.

"They can park on the elementary side and go into the building to do Santa's Workshop and visit Santa," Brinker said. "All of the elementary school is participating and there are [stations]

from the high school. We will have hygiene bags with Nurse Heidi McIntosh and teachers will pass out toys and candy."

She added that the Giving Tree gift drive will be on hand in the library to dole out presents and brighten the spirits of those in need. Meanwhile, Santa's Workshop will be set up in the gym to purchase holiday gifts for friends and loved ones with crafts, jewelry and other merchandise for sale.

Brinker said the inaugural event went incredibly well and spurred the latest iteration to celebrate the season.

"Last year's parade turned out so good, so that's why we wanted to do it again."

JCESC Best Practice Grants Awarded for School Projects

Southern Teachers Receive Funds for Coding, Habitat, Disc Golf Proposals

Teachers in the Southern Local School District are enriching learning opportunities for students after receiving allocations through the Jefferson County Educational Service Center.

JCESC Director of Curriculum and Professional Development Ron Sismondo presented three \$600 Best Practice Grants during the Nov. 15 school board session for Karen Marquis, Janice Pierce and Eric Sampson to enhance their respective classes with emphasis on math, English/Language Arts and physical education.

Marquis plans to implement a “Wonder Workshop” for 55 fifth-grade math and English/Language Arts students at Southern Local Elementary School to introduce them to coding. She will purchase two Cue Robots and said the project will help kids’ self-guided exploration of programming languages and robotic capabilities. The program will be incorporated into small centers in her classroom and allows all students to work with the robots. Activities are designed for grades K-5 teachers and students and offers step-by-step lesson plans covering six fundamental coding concepts that engage kids in hands-on learning and project-based assessments. Wonder Workshop has a database of lesson plans and turn-key activities that can be implemented across all core subject areas, plus there is STEAM-related content and easy-to-integrate ideas for grades K-8.

“This program helps the kids to build problem-solving skills through coding, engineering and design. Cue is also a step up from the dash robots that students had the opportunity to work with in the fourth grade,” she added. “The computers will be able to build things.”

This is her first mini grant and Marquis was grateful to gain the financial support and expand her students’ horizons.

“I am very excited about this opportunity. I am excited about learning how to do the coding myself and finding ways to challenge my students,” she said. “This is a practical way to introduce engineering and coding to students who are interested in technology. The program is built so that students will feel successful while learning something new and challenging.”

Pierce, a fourth-grade math and science teacher at SLES, is using her funds to create a Monarch butterfly habitat and pollinator garden after discovering its population was declining. She said her 42 students will learn how to plant and maintain the garden but grades K-5 could benefit from its educational properties in the future. She previously received Best Practice Grants and said the latest allotment will help bolster educational advantages.

“I love seeing the students’ excitement when the Monarch butterflies emerge in the fall. It will be a wonderful educational experience to watch all the stages. Also, students will benefit from the learning process by developing an understanding of the Monarch butterfly environment,” Pierce explained. “Students will gain a better understanding of the importance of maintaining a sustainable habitat and can experience their life cycle.”

Sampson, a physical education teacher at Southern Local High School, will use his portion to add a little more fun with the formation of a “Disc Golf Course” project on the campus. He instructs grades 6-12 but added that elementary school teacher Kathy Randolph and her class were also included in the grant process. The course will benefit at least 300 students and even the community.

“Disc Golf has exploded in popularity over the last few years. It is a perfect sport that checks many boxes of the [Ohio De-

partment of Education’s] physical education standards. Students will be participating in physical activity while walking the course, learning on working with others, learning proper throwing and manipulative skills of a disc and even map reading to navigate the course. Disc golf baskets will be installed on the campus of Southern Local Schools. The course would be available to all students in all physical education courses, as well as the community after school,” he said.

Sampson received a similar grant last year for his surveying class and was pleased to benefit from the Best Practice Grant program yet again.

“The grant program is a wonderful opportunity provided by the JCESC that allows us as teachers to have an enormous impact on student learning and success,” he commented.

Meanwhile, JCESC Superintendent Dr. Chuck Kokiko lauded the teachers and said the purpose of the mini grants was to support the enhancement of learning.

“The JCESC has a mission of building capacity through innovative cost-effective programs. The Best Practice Grants are a great example of allowing our classroom teachers to be innovative in the practice of educating their students,” Dr. Kokiko commented. “Every year, our district teachers continue to find unique and innovative methods for their classroom. We are grateful for the teachers’ hard work and happy to support their creativity.”

Southern Local has received a total of 21 grants since it began participating in the program in 2015 and more funding was awarded this year to teachers at Buckeye Local, Edison Local, Indian Creek Local, Steubenville, City and Toronto City School Districts as well as the Utica Shale Academy.

Utica Shale Academy Equipped to Better Prepare Students

A \$600 mini grant will enable the Utica Shale Academy to update equipment as the community school prepares students for the workforce.

USA gained a Jefferson County Educational Service Center Best Practice Grant for the 2021-22 year to purchase wall-to-wall white boards which will allow students to work in unison in class. The boards will be put to use as they receive direct instruction and intervention and solve problems in Algebra, Geometry and trades math to prepare students for the working world at graduation. USA Superintendent Bill Watson said the project will assist about 85 students in grades 9-12.

“We are going to whiteboard the intervention room wall for math assistance,” he explained, saying a previous grant was used to acquire calculators for students and he was excited and grateful

for the latest allocation from JCESC.

USA, which is provided through the Southern Local School District, has expanded from oil and gas to include welding, industrial maintenance and hospitality and will soon incorporate a diesel mechanics program. The community school offers curricula that are required by the Ohio Department of Education and a customizable digital curriculum that allows for acceleration or remediation, plus flexible scheduling and safety certification courses. Graduates receive a high school diploma, certificates and college credit options.

JCESC Superintendent Dr. Chuck Kokiko said the Best Practice Grant Program helps provide resources to carry education to another level. He congratulated all of the recipients for their forward-thinking projects and ideas to better serve their students.



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