

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

October 7
Middle School
October 14
High School



Southern Regional High School District
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SOUTHERN LIGHTS



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Southern Lights

Summer 2004

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New staff members attended a three-day orientation program at Southern Regional in August. The district welcomed 50 new staff members for the 2004-2005 school year. Fifteen were Southern graduates. William Entrikin, one of the 15, stated, "I chose to return to Southern because both as a student and as a substitute here I admired the enthusiasm and friendliness of the staff. In addition, I have been the assistant coach for the Girls Varsity Swim Team for the last four years. These students have become a very important part of my life."

Southern Musicians Perform in Europe

The summer of 2004 will hold a special place in the hearts and minds of twenty-eight student musicians from Southern Regional. These talented students were among 150 of the area's best musicians who spent three weeks in July performing in some of Europe's finest concert halls and cathedrals. This Gold Tour trip was sponsored by the American Music Abroad (AMA) Program.

American Music Abroad Honor Bands, Choirs & Orchestras is a Cultural Performance Tour of Western Europe for high school and college age musicians. They carefully select participants on the basis of recommendations from their school directors and their musical achievement demonstrated on audition tapes. Musicians convene at a college for a three-day pre-tour orientation and rehearsal session, which includes an introduction to European art and architecture and guidelines for touring. At this time they also record a CD that contains selections from the pre-tour rehearsal session as well as selections from the Farewell Concert performed for family and friends before they embark on their tour.

Now in its 30th year of music travel, AMA blends city experiences with those of quaint, smaller villages, providing not only musical fulfillment but also a unique opportunity to meet local European citizens. This year's trip included locales in Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Germany, and France. The concerts by bands, jazz bands, choirs, and orchestras delighted their foreign audiences and received warm receptions and outstanding reviews.

For 25 years Southern has sent students on AMA trips to all parts of the world. Over 350 Southern Regional students have

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Home and School Association Awards Grants

In the past three years, the Southern Regional Home and School Association (SRHSA) has given back almost \$35,000 to the Southern Regional School District. Scholarships attribute to 30 percent of that. Recently, they discovered an additional way of ensuring that the entire district benefits from participation in SRHSA – grants. Six teachers were awarded grants of \$250 each to implement programs that would benefit a broad range of students within the district.

To be considered for the money, teachers had to be a member of the SRHSA and complete an application describing their project. The following were recipients: Barbara McHale for the Character Counts Lighthouse Initiative, Karol Doucette for the Mainsail Alternative Program project with the Atlantic City Rescue Mission, Eileen Beirne for a Middle School drama project on

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Choir Partners with Recording Studio

The Southern Regional Select Choir, formed three years ago under the direction of Carolyn Schneider-Placa, provides advanced vocal students an opportunity to perform madrigal and classical style repertoire. Despite its short history, the group has an outstanding list of accomplishments. Since its creation, it has received only "Superior" and "Excellent" ratings along with First Place finishes at various music festivals and competitions. In addition, this group was selected as a finalist for the New Jersey State Teen Arts Program.

Last year the Select Choir participated in the Rowan University Choral Festival with Dr. Robert Page, a Grammy award-winning conductor. "It is my hope to continue our success this year and also branch out to more choral adjudications where students perform and then are critiqued by a famous conductor," remarked Schneider-Placa.

With several graduating seniors and various choral repertoires from numerous performances and competitions, she felt it was an ideal time to start recording the group's vocal sound and history. A partnership with the Lakehurst Vocational Technical School Recording Studio,

"... an opportunity to experience the demands of a recording studio."

under the direction of Dennis Bourke and Frank Fotusky, was formed last year and resulted in two CD's, a Winter Collection which encompasses many holiday and winter songs and the Choral Revue Collection which contains popular madrigal and classical tunes. Schneider-Placa noted, "In the spring we spent two full days recording a lot of music for these CD's. It was quite an opportunity not only for me as the director but also for my students to experience the demands of a recording studio."

Currently both CD's by the Select Choir are available for sale at \$10.00 each. The money will offset the costs of future festivals and competitions. If interested, send a letter with your name, address, phone number, and the title of the CD you wish to purchase along with a check made out to SRHS to: Carolyn Schneider-Placa, 600 North Main Street, Manahawkin, NJ 08050. Enjoy the quality musicianship and vocal excellence of this talented group all year long.



Book fairs . . . everybody remembers them from elementary school. But what happened to them in high school? SRHS reintroduced students to them and concluded their first annual high school book fair in April with much success. It was scheduled in conjunction with National Library Week. Students came down with their English classes to browse and buy. Both fiction and non-fiction titles were available for sale. Students could read about many subjects from crime scene investigation to science fiction. Librarian Darlene Kowalski noted, "The book fair was a success, and hopefully the second of many more book fairs will be held next year."

Students from Danyl Amato's English class from left to right are: Amanda Black, Amanda Majkutowski, Samantha Tucker, and Kelley Essinger.

Generations Close Gap on the Dance Floor

According to Sue Craig, class of 2004 co-advisor, "the Class of 2004 rocks - not to mention waltzes, merengues, and cha-chas!" In preparation for the prom, the senior class together with the Southern Regional Adult School hosted an evening of ballroom dance instruction in May. This instruction, provided by Angie and Pete Belice and the instructors from the Adult School Ballroom Dancing Classes, was open to seniors who were attending the prom along with a date/friend. It included the Merengue, the Waltz, and the Swing. The evening concluded with two students from the senior class teaching the Cha Cha Slide, a dance learned through physical education dance classes, to the adults present.

The event was a huge success. They were hoping for 25 students, and they almost tripled that expectation. The next morning there were seniors teaching other seniors the waltz while waiting in line to buy prom bids.

Physical education teachers, Doreen Rhoads-White and Sue Sharkey, along with adult school instructors, Angie and Pete Belice, and their volunteer dancers are to be commended for their efforts. Several of the couples made it a point at the end of the evening to share their apprehension about the assignment but were gratified and pleased by the enthusiasm of our students. One female instructor said she overcame her nervousness about "asking a young man wearing a Marilyn Manson tee shirt and having several face piercings to waltz" with her. She discovered he was a polite and funny partner who "made her year," and she would never "judge young people on face value alone" anymore. Sue Craig concluded, "Now, I would say that makes for a successful evening!"

Did You Know?

In May, **freshman class advisors Melissa Ceppa and Chris South**, escorted **100 freshmen volunteers** to various locations in the area for **community service**. The main goal of this project was to show that problems in society are everywhere but so are opportunities to make a difference. Eligibility for student participation was based on academics, attendance, and citizenship.

Robert Johnson, Humanities Supervisor, announced that **Peter Swierczewski** and **Melina Cordero** "competed successfully with the best and brightest in Ocean County to gain admission to the **Governor's School**." Peter attended for Public Issues at Monmouth University and Melina for International Studies at Ramapo College.

The SRMS **seventh grade math team** placed **third** in the **Ocean County Math League Competition** in May at Georgian Court College. They were presented with school as well as individual trophies. Team members were **Gabrielle Caponigro, Amanda Shives, Toni Dworkin, William O'Hara, and Carly Garrison**.

Senior **Peter Swierczewski** wrote a **book - Caesar** - that was published by Rosedog Books. The story revolves around an

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School closings or delayed openings due to storms or other emergencies will be broadcast by radio stations WOBM-92.7 FM, WBHX-99.7 FM, WJRZ-100.1 FM, and also by Southern's SNN channel.



Carolyn Gray is congratulated by Superintendent Dr. Kerfoot (center) and Principal Dr. Traficante (right) as she receives one of her scholarships.

Scholarship Awards Display Community Spirit

Once again the exceptional generosity and support of the community for the students of Southern was demonstrated at the Scholarship Awards Program on June 6 when 794 scholarships were presented to 297 students by 310 donor organizations. The awards totaled \$504,675 for the class of 2004. Staff and student organizations associated with Southern Regional presented approximately \$91,000.

Southern has always been known as a caring group of people. However, their reputation is spreading beyond the boundaries of the district. An editorial in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* noted that Southern's scholarship program is astounding and serves as a "model for other high schools throughout the country." The program provides students with opportunities that might not be available otherwise for them to pursue their dreams.

Students Perform in Europe

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participated thus far. Staff members who have traveled with the group in past years include Ron Poorman, Jen Hodgson, Kevin Moninghoff, and Tom Murphy.

Sarah Applegate, one of this year's musicians, shared some of her reactions in the following excerpts:

My European experience started with a simple invitation which came in the mail in the fall of 2003. It gave me general information about what the tour would be doing and where they would be going on their trip in the early summer of 2004.

Mr. Murphy, our music teacher, explained that if we chose to go on this trip, it would be a life-changing experience for us as it had been for him when he had gone while he was in high school. He was not kidding.

At Leysin, Switzerland, where we had our first concert, the people gave us a standing ovation because they liked our performance so much.

We also had the opportunity to see such amazing sights as Michaelangelo's "David," the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Venice, and Salzburg, the setting for the "Sound of Music." We went from Switzerland to Italy to Austria to Germany

“... it would be a life-changing experience for us ...”

to France and then back to Switzerland. Along the way, I made many new friends and learned many new things. I will never forget this amazing experience in Europe. Just as Mr. Murphy said, "It was an experience of a lifetime!"

According to Tom Murphy, instrumental teacher at Southern and co-head director of the AMA Gold Tour, the tradition will continue. Next summer they are planning to visit Zurich, Vienna, Budapest, several small German and French towns including Heidelberg, Strasburg and Koblenz, a glacier, a castle, and many cathedrals. He noted, "We have planned seven concerts for appreciative European audiences for Gold Tour 2005." So, some of the area's best young musicians are already busy filling out applications, looking for recommendations from their school directors, and preparing audition tapes, hoping for that chance for one of the most enriching cultural and musical experiences of their lives.

In the Classroom

In May, an **outdoor historical antique car presentation** was made to **U.S. History I and II students**. The presentation was divided by era, that is; the teens, 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's, 60's, and 70's. The Vintage Automobile Museum of New Jersey, Inc. brought at least one automobile manufactured in each of these eras. The cars were arranged from the oldest to the newest. Each class was assigned a "starting point" in the exhibit and spent five minutes with the car(s) from the era that was



Freshmen Kristina Mollo (left center) send Elizabeth Petoia (right center) receive some help reading their schedules from their mothers at Freshman Orientation. On September 1, freshmen and their parents had the opportunity to meet the administrative staff, teachers, and student leaders as well as to locate their classrooms and lockers. School supplies were also on sale as a class fund raiser.

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their "starting point." The class then moved ahead in time to the next era. At each station, a brief historical summary that included a description of the important people and events of the particular decade in history during which the car was manufactured oriented them to that era. Club members provided additional information.

The **Stafford Municipal Alliance** and **Southern Ocean County Hospital** worked with **SRHS** in organizing a **Health Fair for freshmen** in April in the 9/10 gym. Students visited the fair during their health/physical education classes. They were divided into teams. Each team visited five stations with presentations provided by qualified personnel from various agencies. Students completed a

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Home and School Grants

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bullying, Rob Watson and Mike Longdo for offsetting student expenses to the Winter Guard International World Championships in Dayton (Ohio), Sam Fierra to organize a Community Turkey Trot as a major community event, and Cynthia Graham for High School English as a Second Language students to work bilingually with elementary school students.

The SRHSA is excited about starting another year. However, they need your help. A critical need for members and volunteers exists for the organization to continue its various projects. Spokesperson, Suzanne Romeo, encourages membership as well as participation in the committees. Membership applications were mailed with schedules but also will be available at both Back to School Nights. Their first meeting is October 12 at 7 p.m. in the Ram Room of the Administration Building.

Enrollment

September 8, 2004

Grade 07 - 514 students

Grade 08 - 545 students

Grade 09 - 577 students

Grade 10 - 825 students

Grade 11 - 712 students

Grade 12 - 687 students

Expertise Brings Fulbright Fellow to Africa

For most people, summer is a time to relax and perhaps even take that long-awaited trip. Well, physical and health education teacher Dr. Paul Mc Mahon did take his trip – to South Africa for a month. He traveled there with 13 other Fulbright Fellows through Rutgers University to learn about the culture and educational challenges farm schools are facing as well as to develop a curriculum to enhance educational opportunities. Because of his expertise in sports management and health education, Paul taught youths and residents about HIV/AIDS.

During this four week immersion experience, participants attended planned activities that included lectures, visits to a

“... it is a country of contradictions.”

variety of schools, participation in school and community projects, and visits to historical and cultural centers. As a side project, he distributed sporting equipment that was donated by staff and local businesses.

Since returning from South Africa, he has written curriculum on HIV/AIDS that can be disseminated to all schools in New Jersey and meets the spirit and goal of the New Jersey Amistad Legislation. As Paul reflected on his experience, he wrote:

As one of fourteen Fulbright Fellows, I was fortunate enough to travel to South Africa this past summer. While our main goal was to provide materials and training to various farm schools, the trip encompassed so much more. We visited the Apartheid Museum, the Hector Pieterse Museum, Robben Island, and the District 6 Museum. These important places fueled our knowledge about the history of South Africa and their struggle with Apartheid. In preparation for our field experience we attended various lectures at the University of Pretoria, the University of Kwazulu-Natal, the University of Western Cape, and the University of Cape Town.

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Lighthouse Initiative Offers Safe Harbor



Developing positive character traits has always been a primary focus for Southern's educational community. A character survey revealed that a caring spirit is a dominant

trait in our culture here. Both students and staff have given it freely and have shown appreciation for it. Using this as the foundation, the Lighthouse Initiative was developed to continue to send out this message of hope to all students.

Barbara McHale, Middle School Academics and Maxtap Supervisor, has been instrumental in putting the program together. She felt the lighthouse was the symbol that best represented the goals. "Just as the majority of boats are able to find a safe harbor in which to anchor through the storm, so are the majority of our students able to find a safe harbor within the available resources here, whether it be through faculty, coaches, specialists, or friends. However, for those boats traveling in rough seas, thus, thrown off course, the constant beacon of the Lighthouse can steer them toward a safe harbor," she explained.

In August more than 65 staff members volunteered for the full day training provided by faculty members Bob Dolan, student assistance coordinator and abuse-and-anger management counselor with the Ocean County Court, and Farley Doucette, alternative school principal.

As "Lighthouses," these volunteers made a commitment to be the first line of defense for students. They were trained to be good listeners, knowledgeable of the agencies and personnel services available at Southern, and knowledgeable of the danger signs exhibited by students. Their watchfulness allows them to take the initiative to stop any negative comments and bullying in the classrooms, hallways, or public areas.

Trained staff members have posted a picture of the lighthouse in their rooms so students can easily recognize the safe harbors. As the program moves into phase II, students will be trained.

Perfect Attendance 2003-2004

Grades 7 & 8 - 37 students
Grades 9 & 10 - 98 students
Grades 11 & 12 - 62 students

Did You Know?

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evil Roman general named Pompous Tyrus who is sent to Asia Minor (Turkey) to prevent the people from becoming rebellious. However, he taxes them into poverty, filling his own pockets with stolen money. At the same time, Marcus Claudius, an honest general, puts down a rebellion in Gaul (France) and treats the rebel prisoners-of-war humanely. Then he is off to Greece on another assignment. Meanwhile, Tyrus returns to Italy. Here he covertly stirs up

unrest followed by open rebellion. With Claudius in Greece, Tyrus makes a grab at power. The story continues their adventures.

HS art students did some phenomenal work in clay and were recognized for it at a competition in May. **C.J Davies** won first prize; **Ashley Gareau** and **Meagen Tvaroha** each won second prize. Their work was exhibited at the Clay Studio in Philadelphia, an internationally recognized gallery. Additionally, C.J., along with his **teacher Melissa DeFalco**, was awarded a three-day workshop with renowned artist Jerry Bennet who combines fibers in his clay in order to make "paper clay."

The High School String Ensemble was awarded the **Grand Sweepstakes Award from Music Showcase Festivals for 2004**. This award is given to the highest scoring instrumental group which includes all high school concert bands, orchestras, string orchestras, and jazz ensembles that competed during the entire Music Showcase Festival season. The season runs from April through June. In order to qualify for this award, the group took first place in the orchestra division and overall grand champion at the Music Showcase Festival held in May at Six Flags Great Adventure.



Southern musicians pose with Alps in background.

In the Classroom

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series of questions from each station. In class the next day they compared answers and further discussed the various topics. Health and Wellness stations included: Body Tattoo and Piercing, Vegetarian Cooking, Today's Drugs, Depression, Think Before You Drink, Fitness, Stress Busters, Tobacco Control, Car Safety, Fast Foods, Surf Safety, Got Milk, Taking Control on a Date, Skin Care, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and CPR. Presenters came from various organizations that included St. Francis Center, SOCH, the Ocean County Health Department, the LBI Health Department, REBEL, Stafford PD, and the LBI Beach Patrol.

HS social studies teacher Jeff Brown worked tirelessly toward the assembly of speakers and exhibits for a **two-day program** on the **Vietnam War for U.S. History II** students in April. On the first day Vietnam War **veterans** from the Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps recounted their experiences for the students. On the following day there were **outdoor exhibits** which included Vietnam-era military vehicles provided by the members of the Military Transport Association of NJ and by Dan Janquitto of Beachwood Canvas Works in Island Heights. Vietnam reenactors set up a base camp display and a POW display provided by Rolling Thunder of NJ. In addition, the New Jersey National Guard provided a medical display (an Army field hospital) as well as a modern Humvee vehicle as used by our troops in Iraq. The New Jersey POW/MIA organization also had an exhibit.

Fulbright Fellow to Africa

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My field experience took place at the Amstelhof Primary School located in Paarl, South Africa. Presently, Amstelhof has 694 pupils attending grades K to 7. It represents one of the social and economical disadvantaged schools in the Paarl community. The school serves a community where the unemployment rate of parents is about 60 percent. The school fee is set at R150 (\$25) per child per year. Fifty percent of the students attending Amstelhof cannot afford to pay this fee.

My host in Paarl was the school's principal, Claude de Jager, and his family. Claude was an invaluable source of information and a wonderful host and exhorted a tremendous amount of vision. In October Mr. de Jager will be visiting Southern Regional.

Outside of my field work responsibilities, I decided to gather sporting equipment to donate to the school. Local businesses, staff, students, relatives, and friends kindly donated money or items. Some of the donations were used to outfit the classrooms at Amstelhof with televisions, fund the education of four children, and assist a remote kindergarten school in the Emmaus Valley, Kwazulu Natal.

My general perception of South Africa is that it is a country full of contradictions. While it is a country rich in resources, it has an unemployment rate of 55 percent. In theory, Apartheid has been over for ten years, but in practice it is still applied. Vast rural areas with informal housing (shacks with no running water or electricity) sit next to urban areas that rival any major city in the United States. It is a gorgeous country that could attract tourists, but at the same time it is a very dangerous place. Crime is very prevalent due to the low education and high unemployment rate.

Paul is looking forward to reuniting with Claude de Jager this October and attending a reunion of all participants at Rutgers University. Also, he is still accepting donations. If interested, contact Dr. Paul McMahon at Southern Regional High School.

Students of the Month

April

Grade 9	Brendan Clark
Grade 10	Daniel Rooney
Grade 11	Jessica Castaldi
Grade 12	Patricia O'Neill

May

Grade 9	Jeff "Chandler" Fraser
Grade 10	Shaina Geltman
Grade 11	David Woerner
Grade 12	Nicole Ix

June

Grade 9	Patrick Blaydes
Grade 10	Dina Cioffi
Grade 11	Derek Blauser
Grade 12	Jon Griffin
	Medora Crumbaugh