

April 21, 2015 – Staunton City Schools Tip Sheet

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Ware Students Making Music

(STAUNTON, VA – April 21, 2015) Fifth grade students in Ms. Pultz's room at Ware Elementary School made instruments as part of their science unit on sound. Students were tasked with making their instruments out of common household items. The instruments were used as examples of how sound travels and how various factors affect the pitch and frequency of sound. One of the students, Curtis Lowe, created two different versions of a horn instrument and explained, "I created two different instruments so I could show the difference between the pitch of the two."

Another student created his guitar out of rubber bands, a cardboard paper towel roll and a box. The rubber bands on the guitar were of different levels of thickness in order to demonstrate the differences in sound. He stated, "The thick rubber bands have a lower pitch because they're thicker. The thin rubber bands have a higher pitch because they vibrate faster."

The students had a wonderful time making the instruments and they may just play you a tune if you stop by to see them!



Ware student, Christian Kellison, shows off the guitar he made in a science unit about sound.

SCS Hosts Regional Professional Development Event

(STAUNTON, VA – April 21, 2015) On Thursday, April 9, nearly 30 educators from Staunton City, Augusta County, Rockingham County and Waynesboro City Public Schools attended a workshop at Robert E. Lee High School co-sponsored by the Valley Holocaust Education Consortium, the Anti-Defamation League and Staunton City Schools. The theme of the workshop was “Teaching the Holocaust with Resources Centered Around Elie Wiesel’s *Night*.” The workshop was led by Deborah Batiste, who serves as the National Director of the ADL’s Holocaust resource program, *Echoes and Reflections*.

Participants at the workshop represented various subject areas in both middle school and high school settings. The materials are geared mainly toward English/Language Arts and Foreign Language; however, teachers in ASL, French and ESL were also in attendance and excited to use the materials with students in their classes. The flexible format of the *Echoes and Reflections* Teacher Resource Guide and supporting online materials make it accessible across many content areas.

Echoes and Reflections is celebrating its 10th year, founded in 2005 as a joint venture between the Anti-Defamation League, the USC-Shoah Foundation and Yad Vashem. The ADL is the main organizer of the trainings which have trained over 25,000 teachers during the past decade. The USC-Shoah Foundation, founded by Steven Spielberg to preserve witness testimonies of the Holocaust, provides the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, liberators and rescuers that make up the backbone of the resource guide. Yad Vashem, a foremost research institution on the Holocaust in Jerusalem, helped to provide many of the primary and secondary sources that are also intertwined in the materials.

Robert E. Lee High School French teacher, Denise Southwick came out of the workshop an enthusiastic supporter of the materials. “Though this is a difficult topic of study, the facilitators opened my eyes to the many resources available and showed us ways to present material that is not always easy to do,” she said. Southwick is looking forward to incorporating the study of *Night* (Le Nuit) into her upper-level French courses through literature study.

Jennifer Goss, a Social Studies teacher at Robert E. Lee High School, organized the training on behalf of *Echoes and Reflections*. Goss serves as a consultant for *Echoes* and worked with Batiste to organize this training as part of a national pilot for this new approach to the materials via the teaching of *Night*. The training program at Lee High School marked only the second time the program had been offered. Batiste was delighted with area teachers, sharing that they were among the best of groups that she has worked with through her ten years with *Echoes*. Additional training opportunities related to the Holocaust and *Echoes and Reflections* are planned for next school year. Individuals who are interested in learning more about these educator programs, either as participants or supporters, are invited to contact Goss at jjgoss@staunton.k12.va.us or Linda Petzke at lpetzke@augusta.k12.va.us.



Deborah Batiste, National Director of the ADL’s Holocaust resource program, *Echoes and Reflections*, leads the workshop at Lee High School.

Lee Student Wins Regional Science Fair

(STAUNTON, VA – April 21, 2015) Abigail Johnson, a senior at Robert E. Lee High School has invested much of her time over the past year conducting a year-long independent research project on the biologically-facilitated removal of a pesticide called atrazine from an aqueous environment. She studied whether or not common pond organisms are able to remove this chemical from the water. Her research has applications pertaining primarily to the EPA’s regulatory policy for atrazine. She did a portion of her project at Shenandoah Valley Governor’s School and a portion at Mary Baldwin College, under the supervision of Dr. Ruiz-Haas. Her project garnered her the grand prize at the regional science fair, where she competed against other area high school students. This was the second year in a row that Abigail walked away with the first prize at the regional fair -- the first time in the history of this fair that a student has been a repeat winner in two consecutive years.

In late March, Abigail competed at the Virginia State Science and Engineering Fair, earning a 2nd place award in the Environmental Management category. Through her successes, Johnson has earned an all-expense paid trip to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where she will compete in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF) in May. This fair is the world’s largest international science competition for high school students, where more than 1,700 students from over 70 countries, regions, and territories will compete for over \$5 million in prizes.

Abigail has been accepted at the University of Virginia as an Echols Scholar but is waiting to hear from other schools before making her final decision. She is hoping to have a career in environmental policy. Johnson stated that “The mentality that curiosity can lead to discovery and innovation is by no means unique. However, it is the addendum to this outlook, the rarer belief that innovation ought always to be applied for the benefit of humanity, which encapsulates the mentality of the students that I met at ISEF, and the mentality of change-mediating research in general. The acquisition of this mentality is what makes the long hours, the endless questions, and all the difficulties of conducting research completely worth the while.”



Lee senior, Abigail Johnson will compete in the International Science Fair in May.

SCS Staff Members Nominated for Technology Awards

(STAUNTON, VA – April 21, 2015) Staunton City Schools is proud to announce that three staff members have been nominated for awards through the Shenandoah Valley Technology Council. They are being recognized in the category of **Virginia Robotics - Innovation in K-12 Education Award**, which honors innovative use and/or development of technology in K-12 education and training. The nominated representatives are Mr. Chandler Sansing and Mr. Wayne Zink as a team from Shelburne Middle School and Ms. Denise Southwick of Robert E Lee High School.

The Shelburne team represents the core of the Shelburne BETA Academy which engages 8th grade learners with technology infused, project-based teaching and learning. They demonstrate that project-based learning, co-teaching, and flex-grouping in a shared space with students from all backgrounds not only works to deliver the basics, but also enables all students to engage in rigorous, higher-order critical thinking within math and science courses geared toward solving real world problems.

Ms. Southwick of Robert E. Lee H.S. is a French and Spanish teacher who engages students utilizing technology to enhance their learning experiences. Techniques infused into class sessions offer a variety of exercises, such as using applications which provide students with valuable audio feedback, working with on-line collaboration tools for essays and video projects to actively listening to International news and participating in the discussions which follow.

Staunton City School teachers realize that they are lifelong learners and believe that teachers need to study and implement new methods to assist with student learning. Through the creative use of these technologies, students are being equipped with the skills necessary to become productive members of our society.



Shenandoah Valley Technology Council award nominees, L to R: Chandler Sansing and Wayne Zink of Shelburne Middle School, and Denise Southwick of Lee High School