

September 12, 2014 – Staunton City Schools Tip Sheet

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EMMY NOMINATION FOR LEE HIGH TEACHER

Jennifer Goss has made her mark in the classroom as a history teacher at Robert E. Lee High School, and now outside the classroom as well as a Holocaust documentary she produced, “Misa’s Fugue,” has received two Emmy nominations. Last month, the National Association of Television Arts and Sciences (Mid-Atlantic Chapter) nominated the film in both the documentary and the writing categories.

Misa’s Fugue is the amazing story of Frank Grunwald’s four year ordeal as a victim of Nazi persecution. History shows that nearly 1.5 million children were murdered during the Holocaust between 1933 and 1945. Grunwald, now 81 years old, was one of the less than 300 children who escaped death from the “camp-ghetto” at Terezin in the Czech Republic, a facility used by the Nazis as a tool of deception. The beginnings of “Misa’s Fugue” were in 2010 when Director Sean Gaston was introduced to Holocaust survivor Frank “Misa” Grunwald. Grunwald’s story was so powerful it had to be told. Gaston reached out to his then colleague and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum teacher fellow and 10th year Social Studies teacher, Jennifer Goss, to produce the documentary. Goss said “The entire film has been community funded.” Goss went on to say, “The making of this film consumed every spare second of our lives for nearly three years. It’s become just so much more than a simple film and now hearing that we received two Emmy nominations is simply surreal. When we began this project it was about making a film and getting 500 copies out to teachers around the country. Awards and film festivals were not part of the initial plan and to end up here four years later is a true privilege.”

To date, 3,000 DVD’s of “Misa’s Fugue” have been distributed at nominal pack-and-ship costs to high schools, not-profits and museums that illuminate Holocaust history and to project donors. Admiration and best wishes to Jennifer Goss and her team as they pursue the coveted Emmy!



Jennifer Goss, Lee High
School history teacher.

BESSIE WELLER SPIRIT ROCK REFRESHED

Bessie Weller Elementary School’s spirit rock was in desperate need of a fresh coat of paint. Several years ago, a very large rock in the school playground was painted with the original “Bessie Bee” design, which was created by Diane Kester, a fourth grade teacher at the school. Over time, the paint had weathered, and this summer it was obvious the spirit rock needed a refresher. Jennifer Hackley, math coach at Bessie Weller and her husband, Mark, repainted the spirit rock just in time for the first day of school. The Bessie Bee spirit rock was again bright and shiny to welcome everyone back for the start of the new school year.



Mark Hackley freshens up the painting of the Bessie Bee on the school spirit rock at Bessie Weller Elementary School.



The freshly painted Bessie Bee spirit rock shines brightly on the playground at Bessie Weller Elementary School.

SHELBURNE STUDENTS ENJOY GARDENING

With the addition of garden beds and a greenhouse at Shelburne Middle School, the students are getting the full experience of gardening -- from planting, to care and harvest, and finally, to the table. Vegetable gardens provide a wealth of opportunities for students to get their hands dirty while learning lessons in many different areas, such as science, math, social studies, and language and visual arts. By tending to the gardens, the students learn responsibility and teamwork. The students taste and enjoy the bounty of their harvest while learning valuable nutrition lessons on the importance of eating fresh foods. When combined with our healthy school lunch programs, gardening encourages the students to make more healthful food choices.

School Board members are also reaping the benefits of the school gardens. Prior to their monthly meetings, members of the Staunton City School Board take a few minutes out of their busy schedules to enjoy a social dinner together before the meeting begins. The students in life skills classes at Shelburne Middle School and Robert E. Lee High School are taking turns preparing the monthly meals and are incorporating the fresh vegetables from the greenhouses into their menus. “The meals are tasty and enjoyable and we look forward to tasting their new creations each month,” said Ron Ramsey, School Board Chair.

“Working in the greenhouses has proven to be a great experience for our students. They are enjoying being a part of the full process of meal preparation,” said Dr. Jelisa Wolfe, Executive Director of Student Services. Garden beds and a greenhouse are also in place at the Dixon Preschool Center.



Deon Freeman picks tomatoes from the Shelburne garden.