



Photo by Molly Schlachter

A student rolls a ball as the Penn Manor Unified Bocce team competes against Columbia at a recent match.

Bocce is the newest sport for students

Penn Manor is providing a new opportunity for its special education students to participate in interscholastic sports.

A Unified Bocce program began competing in the winter athletic season to complement the spring Unified Track & Field program that has been offered at Penn Manor since 2018.

Teams of eight students – four special education students and four partners – compete in bocce.

The game is played by rolling a small ball called a pallina inside a 12-foot by 60-foot court. Players earn points by rolling a larger bocce ball – four per team – as close to the pallina as possible.

More **BOCCE** on Page 6

Principal, HR staff changes in place

School leaders swap at LeTort, Central Manor

Penn Manor has hired a new human resources director and shuffled the leadership of two of its elementary schools.

The new HR director is Courtney Kunes, formerly director of human resources and Title IX coordinator for Elizabethtown Area School District.

Carly McPherson, former principal of LeTort Elementary, is now principal at Central Manor, replacing Brian Malek, who is on sabbatical this semester; upon his return, he will take over as LeTort principal.

During Malek's absence, Kelli Eachus is serving as interim principal at LeTort. Eachus previously was assistant principal at



Carly McPherson and Brian Malek

Hambright Elementary. Filling her slot at Hambright is Patty Detter, an Eshleman Elementary teacher since 2014.

Detter is serving as Hambright's dean of students through the end of the current school year.

Kunes previously was HR director for Lancaster County Career & Technology Center and for UPMC Lititz, formerly Heart of Lancaster Regional Medical Center.

She earned her master's degree in adult education from Penn State University and

More **STAFF** on Page 7



Courtney Kunes

PM teacher to lead international technology education group

Dr. Molly Miller, a Penn Manor High School technology education teacher, has been selected to head an international group representing technology educators.

Dr. Miller is serving one year as president-elect of the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association before assuming the presidency of the association in March 2025.

ITEEA, with about 1,500 members,

promotes the teaching of technology and the professionalism of those engaged in the field at all levels throughout the world.

ITEEA provides professional development activities, awards and scholarship programs to technology and engineering teachers, along with seminars on such subjects as teaching core content through robotics and coding, and utilizing project-based learning instead of

More **TECHNOLOGY** on Page 6



High school technology education teacher Dr. Molly Miller works with students in an engineering design class.

Internet safety resources available for all parents

Digital technology offers unparalleled student opportunities for learning, teaching, creativity, and global connections. With these opportunities also come responsibilities and cautions. Penn Manor recently notified parents about several resources they can use to support internet safety, data privacy, and digital citizenship.

All district-issued student Chromebooks include a content filter that blocks access to adult websites and other inappropriate material. Student Chromebooks are always filtered in school, at home, and anywhere they connect to the internet.

Parents may wish to apply additional web filtering and browsing time limits on their home network. Options for home include tools like Xfinity Parental Controls (free), or the built-in controls on home router or WiFi access points.

Student data privacy is another district priority. Penn Manor maintains a list of approved education websites used in classrooms. The list includes site privacy policies, which describe how the website collects and uses student data.

Penn Manor educators

Access these tools at:
<https://www.pennmanor.net/blog/2024/02/23/internet-safety-resources-for-parents-and-caregivers/>

teach students how to be responsible and safe digital citizens, and the district offers a collection of digital citizenship resources and videos. Google's Be Internet Awesome and Common Sense Media are two more excellent parent resources.

Beyond software and systems, parents and caregivers play a crucial role in shaping students' relationships with technology – and with each other. We encourage parents to talk openly with children about their online activities. Together, we can ensure that they benefit from technology in a way that is safe, respectful, and productive.

Links to all of the resources mentioned above are available at <https://www.pennmanor.net/blog/2024/02/23/internet-safety-resources-for-parents-and-caregivers/>

Thank you for your help and support.

Nominees sought for 2024 PM Alumni Wall of Honor

The Penn Manor Alumni Association is looking for nominations for its Distinguished Alumni Wall of Honor for 2024.

Do you know of a Penn Manor alumnus or alumna deserving of recognition? Is there someone you graduated with who has found great success? Consider nominating her or him to be a 2024 honoree.

Past honorees have been successful in the medical field, business, education, literature, the arts, the military and community service. The selection committee is

seeking individuals who have brought recognition, honor, distinction and excellence to Penn Manor through their postgraduate accomplishments.

Please complete the nomination form at <https://blogs.pennmanor.net/alumni/> and mail the form by May 1 to Cindy Rhoades, Penn Manor Alumni Wall of Honor, P.O. Box 1001, Millersville, PA 17551. You also may email Cindy at cindy.rhoades@pennmanor.net.

We can't wait to honor our alumni during a ceremony later this year.

Message from the superintendent

Have you ever noticed that some people love to focus on what could go wrong? Every time there's a new idea or a change, it's followed by: "That is scary," "What if it fails?" "Why don't we just stay the same?" When was the last time you truly took a big leap forward in your development? While change can be scary, we must evolve, grow and try new ways – that is, unless we want the same results from ways that may not be working.



Dr. Phil Gale with REMIX ideas submitted by teachers.

At the start of this school year, I challenged our teachers to make a REMIX of some of the things they do with their students. My challenge was followed by a request. When a teacher made a change, whether it was subtle or dramatic, they were to describe the REMIX on a blue slip of paper and send it to me. In turn, I would read each slip, learn what's happening in our classrooms, and hang them on a wall in my office. I am pleased to share that I have hundreds of blue slips on my wall. Each one tells me what a teacher has done to help students, make an activity more enjoyable, and be more effective in the classroom.

The ideas range from the simple, such as reorganizing classroom seating, to the very detailed, such as having students create artwork inspired by local history and the Susquahannock tribes that lived on Penn Manor land.

Because change can be scary or intimidating, I did not make this request to our teachers just so we could make change for the sake of making change. The request came

from our desire to be better – better at what we do each day, better at meeting our students' needs, better learners, and better people.

I'm impressed with the response from our staff.

Recently, I heard a speaker share about the ways our world is changing and the type of mindset we must develop to address these changes. She talked about artificial intelligence (AI), spatial computing, increasing access to the internet, the amount of data that will be generated, and many other new things to come. As I listened, two questions resonated in my mind:

- What can we do to prepare our students for the future?
- How are we in a unique position to influence the future?

While we certainly don't know what the future will bring, we do know that we need to prepare for it. As a school district, we will continue to help students develop academic and social skills that are foundational. However, we can't stop there. We also need to provide students with opportunities to apply what they are learning. Students need to have experiences that extend beyond the classroom, whether by leaving the classroom or by having individuals from the outside come in to work with our students. This requires collaboration and partnerships with our community.

The Penn Manor community has always been very supportive of our students. Our parents and residents have provided resources for our district and opportunities for students, and have shared their time and talents to help us. We look forward to continuing this collaborative work and developing new partnerships that will prepare our students for the future.

-- Dr. Phil Gale

(717) 872-9500, ext. 2223
phil.gale@pennmanor.net

More 'Best Schools' awards for Penn Manor

Eight elementary and middle schools earn U.S. News honors for 2024

Eight Penn Manor elementary and middle schools have received "2024 Best Schools" honors from *U.S. News & World Report*.

Six of our seven elementary schools and both Penn Manor middle schools were named to the Best Schools list, based on student scores on state assessments in math and reading/language arts, and the socioeconomic status of each school's student population.

U.S. News released the report November 14.

Marticville Middle School was ranked 70th of the 2,134 Pennsylvania public middle schools in the report, and Manor Middle was ranked 111th. In Lancaster County, Marticville had the third-highest ranking, and Manor was fifth.

Five Penn Manor elementary schools – Letort, Eshleman, Conestoga,

Pequea and Central Manor – were ranked among the top 10 percent of the 2,978 Pennsylvania public elementary schools included in the report.

Letort was ranked 124th overall in the state, Eshleman was 170th, Conestoga was 230th, Pequea was 236th, Central Manor was 251st, Martic was 349th, and Hambright was ranked 622nd.

Based on the rankings, Letort, Eshleman, Conestoga and Pequea were among the top 10 public elementary schools in Lancaster County.

Earlier this school year, Penn Manor High School earned similar accolades from *U.S. News & World Report*, which ranked the school No. 2 of the 18 public high schools in Lancaster County. The rankings were based on graduation rates, advanced-placement test



participation and scores, and standardized test scores.

"Penn Manor is honored to receive this recognition for our schools," said Dr.

Phil Gale, superintendent. "It is a true testament to the effort and commitment that our students and teachers put forth."

National Honor Society adds 49 members

The Penn Manor chapter of the National Honor Society welcomed 49 new members during an induction ceremony October 11 at Penn Manor High School.

The juniors qualified for induction by maintaining a cumulative grade-point average of at least 4.0; for seniors, the minimum was 3.85. NHS members also have to demonstrate the four pillars of the organization – scholarship, leadership, service and character.

The 2023-2024 inductees are:

Ethan Addy, Addison Ames, Abigail Andrew, Reece Andreychek, Cristofer Arias Orozco, Avery Bradburn, Brady Breneman, Breanna Brittain, Ella Cauler, Jordan Chen, Graham Cohick, Kathryn



New members of the Penn Manor High School chapter of the National Honor Society pose following an induction ceremony in the high school auditorium.

Eberts, Jaden Emmert, Alexander Eshelman, David Ferre, Bailey Floyd, Haley Frey, Emily Gregory, Joelle Harnish, Kate Harnish, Jack Hightower, Haley Hutchinson, Cole Johnson, Won Joo, Vincent Keefer, Emily Kemmer, Angeline Maestre, Gershom Magutu, Samaria Martin.

Abigail Michnya, Brady Mitchell, Emily Mummert, Annabelle Myer, Sophia Nightingale, Emmy Pham, Elizabeth Pursel, Gavin Roberts, Grant Rost, Wesley Shaffer, Madisyn Stoll,

Jackson Stuart, Mushna Subba, Lillie Swanson, Claire Sweeney, Sophia Telesco, Julia Umberhocker, Kelly Wall, Ava Wolfersberger and Lillian Zook.

They join the 55 returning members of the Penn Manor NHS. Officers this year are Gavin Boland, president; Johanna Bonnici, secretary; Aman Shaik, treasurer; and Clara Howell, historian. Faculty advisors are Michelle Boland and Catherine Tejada.

Congratulations to these students for earning this distinguished recognition!

FFA teams earn national honors

Students earn gold and silver medals in forestry, poultry and ag mechanics

Three teams of Manor FFA members displayed their knowledge of poultry, forestry and ag mechanics by earning gold or silver medals at the FFA National Convention and Expo in Indianapolis earlier this school year.

The Poultry Evaluation team of Rachel Sensenich, Emily Railing, Jenna Railing, and Ava Crill earned a gold medal. Abby Harnish and Sara Gehr also were part of the team but were not competing.

Team members had to choose live meat-type poultry for broiler breeding, assess and place live egg-type hens, and rate the final result by classifying and grading portions of chickens and turkeys, as well as ready-to-cook carcasses.

Their gold-medal performance qualified team members to participate in the International Production and Processing Expo, sponsored by the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association, in Atlanta in the winter.



The national award-winning Manor FFA Forestry team.

The Ag Mechanics team of Layne Perry, Keith French, Chase Vinson, and Collin Harnish earned a silver medal at Nationals.

During the competition, they had to resolve a hypothetical multi-system agricultural problem and compile a report on their recommendations. Team members also had to take a written test on five agricultural technology and mechanical areas, including equipment, electricity, natural resources and structures.

The Forestry Team of Derek Thomas, Kenzi Nafziger, Weston Shertzer, and Brady Breneman earned

a silver medal. Delvin Kneisley also was on the team but did not compete.

During the competition, team members had to use their forestry knowledge and equipment to solve a case and give a presentation about a local or national forestry issue. Members also had to complete individual practicums, identify and measure trees and complete a general forestry knowledge exam.

The students received formal recognition for their accomplishments from State Sen. Scott Martin during a visit to Penn Manor High School in February.



The Ag Mechanics, left, and Poultry Evaluation teams.

For second straight year, PMHS student wins photo contest

For the second year in a row, a Penn Manor High School student has won the top prize in a statewide photography contest to raise awareness about litter.

Jason Joniec, a Penn Manor senior, earned a first-place award in the student category of the 2023 Gene Capaldi Lens on Litter Photo Contest, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Resources Council.



Jason Joniec

Jason's black-and-white photo, "Natural Grown Couch," depicts a deteriorated couch that was dumped in the woods, with foliage growing in and around it. The image was photographed in Washington Boro near Blue Rock Boat Launch.

"I entered the photo to try to get my work out there and expand my portfolio, and I was incredibly excited when I heard I



Jason Joniec's winning entry, "Natural Grown Couch," from the Lens on Litter contest.

had won," Jason said.

"I was working on a project in my photo class highlighting humanity's effect on nature, and this photo really matched that theme well," said Jason, who received a \$500 prize.

He is enrolled in Maggie Cantrell's Photography III class at Penn Manor High School. After high school, he plans to operate a portrait photography business and study mechanical engineering.

Last year, another student of Cantrell's, Maddie Whited, placed first in the contest with an image of a discarded television set in the woods.

Beakes joins school board

A new member has joined the Penn Manor Board of School Directors for 2024.

Matthew Beakes, executive director of Impact!

Missions, was elected in November to fill the seat of Carlton "Herk" Rintz, who did not seek re-election after serving 20 years on the board.



Matt Beakes

Matt and his wife, Melanie, are both Penn Manor alumni, along with their son, Connor. Their other son, Cole, is a PMHS senior. The Beakeses live in Millersville.

More **BEAKES** on Page 7

Athletic teams make history in basketball, wrestling, bowling

Multiple Penn Manor student athletes earn state playoff berths for 2023-2024

It's been a record-setting year for sports teams in Penn Manor.

In winter sports, the **boys' basketball** team had an outstanding season, winning 17 games and qualifying for the LL League Playoffs for the first time since 2010. The Comets also advanced to the semifinals for the first time since 1990.

In addition, Ethan Benne hit the 1,000-point milestone, becoming just the sixth

player in Penn Manor history to accomplish that feat.

Penn Manor **bowlers** excelled this season, both as a team and individually.

The coed team finished second in the section and advanced to the finals of the LL League Team Bowling Championships. The girls' bowling team qualified for the state girls' championships after a Top 6 finish in the Eastern PA Bowling Championships and finished 4th in the state championship.

Individually, Eva Brubaker became the first Penn Manor girl in over 20 years to win the Eastern PA Girls Individual Championship, leading to a berth in the state championship.

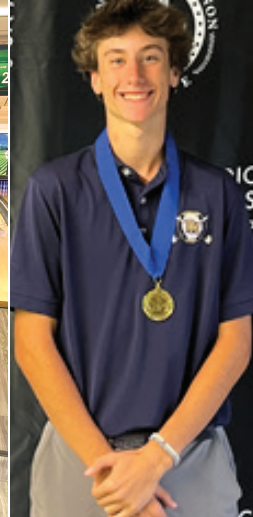
In **swimming**, freshman Dru Landis had an outstanding season. Dru won the 200 Freestyle at the LL League Championship



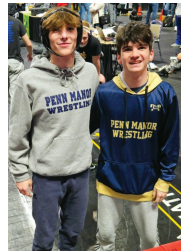
Ethan Benne



Eva Brubaker



Jesse Shue



From left, Travis Clawson, Gavin Boland and Dru Landis.



and finished 2nd in a school record time at the District III Championships. She also had a 2nd place finish in the 500 freestyle at the LL League Championship, where she broke a school record that dated back to 1990.

Dru then finished 3rd in the 500 freestyle at the District III Championships and was a PIAA state

qualifier in both events. She earned a 7th place state medal in the 200 freestyle.

The **boys' wrestling** team had an outstanding year, making Districts for the first time since 2020. Individually, Travis Clawson and Caden Boland qualified for the PIAA State Tournament. Clawson earned a 7th place state medal. They also both reached the 100-win milestone, the 12th and 13th wrestlers in Penn Manor history to achieve that honor.

In **girls wrestling**, Anisa Orr and Brooklynn Ayala made history by becoming the first two Penn Manor Girls Wrestling LL League Champions. They also both

More **ATHLETICS** on **Page 6**



Anisa Orr, left, and Brooklynn Ayala made history in girls' wrestling.

PMEF funds \$86,000 in projects for teachers

Penn Manor Education Foundation has continued its support of district teachers by awarding more than \$86,000 in Venture Grants to enhance classroom instruction and student learning in our schools.

A total of 39 grants were awarded in fall 2023, along with 21 grants in spring 2024.

The fall grants funded such projects as the Cardboard Regatta STEM challenge, visits to local colleges, artists in residence, cellos and musical instrument

repair supplies, field trips, chicken incubator projects, composting supplies, and a weather station.

Spring grants are funding microscopes, balances, and lab materials for high school science classes; a media production studio at Pequea Elementary; small appliances for consumer sciences classes; and equipment to upgrade small gas engine instructional supplies, among other projects.

The grants are impacting students in more than 150 classrooms across all grade



Central Manor kindergarten students enjoy Hands-On House Discovery to Go classroom activities, funded with a PMEF grant.

levels and subject areas in Penn Manor.

"We appreciate the strong support that the Penn Manor Education Foundation provides to our teachers and

students," said Dr. Phil Gale, Penn Manor superintendent.

PMEF is able to fund these grants through the generous support of the Penn Manor community.

Special education services at PM schools

Penn Manor School District is required to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities who are determined, through the evaluation process, to need special education and related services under IDEA and 22 Pa. School Code §14.

A school-age child with a disability who is determined to be in need of special education and related services is identified as a child in need of specially designed instruction.

The following are disability categories under IDEA:

- Autism
- Deafness
- Deaf/blindness
- Emotional disturbance
- Traumatic brain injury
- Hearing impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities
- Other health impairment
- Orthopedic impairment
- Visual impairment, including blindness
- Speech and language impairment

A full description of services and programs available is accessible at: www.pennmanor.net/special-education/ or by contacting Dee Galen, Penn Manor director of student support services, (717) 872-9500, extension 2244.

Annual notices

Federal and state laws require school districts to provide students, parents and/or the public with notices on such topics as privacy, nondiscrimination, child nutrition, open records and homelessness.

Penn Manor invites parents and guardians of students to review the information on notices at www.pennmanor.net/annual-notices/.

Please contact your child's principal with any questions or concerns about the information contained in these notices. You may also contact the superintendent's office at (717) 872-9500, ext. 2223.

Athletics: Fall, winter highlights

Continued from Page 5

finished in the top 4 of the District III Girls Championships to qualify for the PIAA State Wrestling Championship.

Brooklynn earned an 8th-place PIAA state medal, the first in school history.

In addition to these accomplishments, our **winter sports** teams were recognized by the Lancaster-Lebanon League with the Winter Sports Sportsmanship Award.

In fall sports, the **field hockey** team had another outstanding season, qualifying for the PIAA State Field Hockey Championships after a third-place finish in the District III Championships.

The Comets won their first-round game at States before falling in the quarterfinals.

In addition, seniors Avery Bradurn, Tristan Groff and Grace Gerner all earned All-State honors.

Golfer Jesse Shue was named the LL League Most Outstanding golfer and won the LL League Championship. Jess also was a PIAA state qualifier for the second year in a row.

In **cross country**, Kaleb Kabakjian had an outstanding senior season, earning medals at the LL League Championships and just missing a state medal by one spot at the PIAA State Championships. Junior Tristan Weaver also ran at States.

The **girls' volleyball** team made the LL League playoffs for the first time since 2018. The team advanced to the District III quarterfinals and just missed a spot in the state playoffs.

The girls also earned the LL League Sportsmanship Award, and Tim Joyce was named Coach of the Year.

The **boys' soccer** team returned to the District III Playoffs for the first time since 2011 and dropped a hard-fought match in the first round to the eventual finalist.

The **girls' soccer** team just missed out on a LL League playoff spot but advanced to the District III playoffs. In addition, senior Anouk Landgraff made the LL League All 11 Team.

Kudos to all our student athletes, their coaches and parents for a very successful year.

Bocce: New Unified team competes

Continued from Page 1

Penn Manor's team included four student athletes with intellectual disabilities and four partners, who participated in four matches that included eight games against Ephrata, Manheim Township, Solanco and Columbia.

"Students really enjoyed working with each other and competing against other schools," said Sarah Stover, a high school math teacher who coaches the team along with Kyle Lainhoff, a special education teacher.

Unified Bocce is sponsored by the Special Olympics, which provided PVC piping for the court, gel-filled balls, team uniforms and a \$1,000 coaching stipend to each team.

Penn Manor's team practices in the STEM wing of the high school. Meets are held in the high school gym of each host school.

Despite the team's 3-5 season record, "the students would consider the season a success," said Stover. "Many of the athletes talked about how they will miss bocce now that the season is over."

Technology: Miller heads group

Continued from Page 1

traditional testing methods.

Dr. Miller was approached about running for the position at last year's ITEEA conference but thought that "nothing would come of it."

"This election means a lot to me, as it comes from my peers and colleagues within the field of technology and engineering education," she said.

"I look forward to my new role and how I can help impact how students learn and engage with technology and engineering education in our country and

others," she said. "I'm excited to learn even more through my service leading ITEEA."

At Penn Manor, Molly teaches courses in Computer Science, Engineering Design, and Applied Science and has helped develop and expand Penn Manor's STEM course offerings. She serves as the advisor for the school's Technology Student Association (TSA).

In 2018, she was named Secondary STEM Teacher of the Year by the Lancaster County STEM Alliance.

We commend her on this latest honor.

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Beakes

Continued from Page 4

“My wife and I, along with our two sons, have had awesome educational and life experiences at Penn Manor,” Beakes said.

“I hope to help continue the high standards for which Penn Manor is known and provide support through policies to benefit all students.”

After board members were sworn in to their terms, the board elected Dr. Joe Fullerton as president and Nicki Nafziger as vice president for 2024.

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Staff

Continued from Page 1

her bachelor’s degree in applied human services from the Pennsylvania College of Technology.

“We are excited for Courtney to bring what she has learned from her past experiences to Penn Manor,” Dr. Phil Gale, Penn Manor superintendent said.

Gale said he applauds the principals for taking on new responsibilities.

“Each of these educators who are making a ‘remix’ are seeking new challenges in their professional careers at Penn Manor,” Gale said.

“In addition, the district is taking the opportunity to grow some of our talented professionals in their leadership abilities.”

We wish these employees the best in their new roles at Penn Manor.

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An early emphasis on careers

Elementary, middle schools give students a glimpse of future jobs

It's never too early for students to begin thinking about careers after high school, and to support that goal, Penn Manor elementary and middle schools have hosted a variety of career exploration activities throughout the year.

On February 23, elementary schools participated in Kids at Work Day, during which students were encouraged to dress for a job they are interested in pursuing. Teachers led classroom discussions about careers, and community members visited schools to

talk about what they do for a living and what led them to their fields.

At Central Manor Elementary, the fourth grade held a Career Exploration Day February 23 that brought 13 parents who work in different fields to talk about their careers, how their work helps the community and what encouraged them to pursue their jobs.

Speakers included a police detective, technical analyst, flight attendant, engineer, and an author, among others. Students could then meet one-on-one with the speakers for more information.

"These activities created a pathway to future opportunities and conversations with our students," said Beth Neumann, a fourth-grade teacher who helped organize the event.

Pequea Elementary will host a Career Day and Fair May 9.

Marticville Middle School held its Career Day March 8, featuring 30 presenters representing a variety of professions, including a lawyer, veterinarian, fishing guide, corrections officer and HVAC technician.

During the event, a respiratory therapist used a model of a pig's

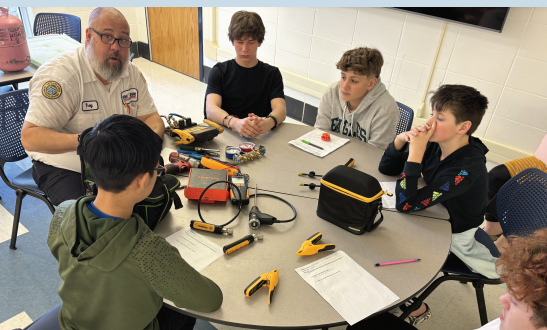


American Airlines flight attendant Pam Miller talks about her job with fourth-graders at Central Manor Elementary.

heart in her presentation, and students got hands-on experience creating a temporary concrete sidewalk with an employee of Sangrey Concrete.

Students at both Marticville and Manor Middle Schools also participated in Construction Wars, a day-long event where students learn about the training and skills required to work in construction. They also build wooden benches, test electrical circuits and learn how to lay bricks under the guidance of professionals in the construction industry.

We'd like to thank the community members who help make these valuable experiences possible.



Troy Gadberry, of One Hour Heating & Air Conditioning, shows Marticville students the tools of his trade.