

Recognized for excellence

"I thought if these people could help me, then, I could do the same and help others,"
— Beth Sullenberger



MIKE ULLERY/STAFF PHOTO

Beth Sullenberger works on a project with students in her classroom last week.

BY JOHN HAUER
For the Daily Call
editorial@dailycall.com

PIQUA — In a classic example of what goes around comes around, Wilder Intermediate School educator Beth Sullenberger had her life turned around when she was in 6th grade, and now, she is a 6th grade teacher.

Sullenberger grew up in Euclid, and graduated from Euclid High School in 1974. She was a member of the Humanities Club, and she was involved in the arts and the school plays. She would have

See Excellence /Page 4

Excellence

Continued from page 1

liked to involve herself in many other activities while she was in school, but she needed to work. "I spent many hours working to save money for college," she said. "I worked for seven years at Richmond Restaurant, a Greek restaurant in Euclid."

"I did not like math until the 6th grade," she said. "I didn't understand math, but my teacher Mr. Waldren worked with me after school, and suddenly, everything started to make sense." She also credits her 4th grade teacher Miss Baxter with being creative and making learning fun. "I thought if these people could help me, then, I could do the same and help others," Sullenberger said. "That is when I decided to become a teacher."

After high school, she entered Bowling Green State University to major in Special Education. "I visited BG because they have a very good education program," she said. "I knew right away it was a good fit for me." She earned her bachelor's de-

gree in elementary education and special education in 1978. Later, she received a master's degree in educational leadership from Wright State University.

Her first teaching position was at Favorite Hill School, teaching 5th and 6th grades with learning issues. This lasted eight years. Next, she spent a year at Staunton, and after that building closed, she went back to Favorite Hill for a year. Sullenberger then transferred to Wilder to teach 7th and 8th graders with learning disabilities and when the district realigned the buildings after the new junior high opened, she switched to 6th grade science at Wilder.

She uses a variety of lessons to keep her sixth-graders interested and engaged in science and technology. "We make crystal gardens, mummify apples and build bridges with different materials," she said. Using a set of Dell Notebooks has allowed her students to do individual research on a wide variety of topics such as rocks, min-

erals, and Discovery Education Virtual Labs. "We have a Survivor Show type project among the 6th grade homerooms, and they have weekly and monthly challenges with the winning 'tribe' rewarded with a year-end Challenge Day and picnic. These challenges encourage friendly competition and get students to problem solve and work cooperatively in a group setting. The students get very excited over the challenges."

"My sixth-graders are interesting to teach," Sullenberger said. "They are at an age where they are not sure where they fit in. They are not little kids any more, and they are too cool for some things, but they still like stickers and will do the chicken dance in the gym." She cites the efforts of the Wilder staff for creating a successful learning environment for all the students. "We work well together and help each other. Everyone shares ideas and gets along with each other. It is an amazing staff. And I wouldn't trade them for the world."

Sullenberger has been recognized for her excellence as a teacher on the local, state, and national levels. She was named the Piqua City Schools Teacher of the Year in 1993. She was given the Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Educator Award by the state of Ohio. Mr. Walter was a former state Superintendent for Ohio. Sullenberger received the Golden Apple Achievement Award from the state, also. She was recognized nationally as a Martha Holden Jennings Scholar in 2002.

Away from school, Sullenberger has had a variety of part-time jobs. She has worked for JTPA in Troy, a job training program for 15-

18 year-olds. She has worked at the concession stand at the Piqua Municipal Pool for seven summers. She worked at a nursery one summer and has held jobs at stores in the Piqua Centre Mall. All these jobs have one way or another shaped the person that she is today and have provided

her with a wide variety of skills that she continues to use on a daily basis.

At home, Sullenberger and her husband Jerry, retired from H.D. Plumbing Supplies, have been married 24 years. They live with their dog Murphee, a Jack Russell, on five acres in Washington Township.

Known for Excellence. Trusted for Value



Back Row: Rev. Jack Chalk, Associate, Jim Herment, Associate, Bob Askins, Facilities;