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2009 Chili Cook-Off

It was very encouraging that the 2009 SHEF Chili Cook-Off, chaired by Carey Kane and Arlene Ward and coordinated by a committee of 31 members, was so profitable. In this down-turned economy, it was heartening to see the response from all who attended and donated to net \$95,000 to fund programs and technology in The Somerset Hills School District. As an educational foundation, SHEF takes this as acknowledgment that the community is pleased with the good works we facilitate in the local school district.

This year the committee maintained the mission to attract sponsorships to underwrite the event. SHEF was encouraged by the response of 16 sponsors totaling \$18,500. The donor list included: **Gold Level:** *Bernardsville Print Center, Goldman Sachs; Silver Level:* *Blueprint, Peapack-Gladstone Bank, Smith Barney; Bronze Level:* *CrossFit, Debra Ross- Weichert, Realtors, Gary's Wine & Marketplace, Keller Williams Towne Square Realty, Ken Rent, Olcott Square Interiors, Raritan Liquors, Starbucks, Warren Esanu, Willis HRH, 56⁰ Wine.* This corporate sponsorship allowed all revenues to be funneled directly back to the three schools in the district in the form of grants and technology initiatives. SHEF is very appreciative to all the local businesses, volunteers, and attendees who made this event so successful.

The highlight of the evening was the unveiling of "Vealtown Jesse." District parents Vijay Singh and Brent Laurin came up with this spicy idea for Chilli Cook-Off... to design and build an interactive game where guests tested their quick-draw skills in an old western shoot-out setting. The two decided a proper challenger was needed to "act the part" of a gun-slinging outlaw. A robot mannequin was dressed as an old-west outlaw fitted with an actuating arm, imitation pistol, and sensors that electronically "fired" and sensed being "shot." During the event attendees, fitted with a belt, holster, and a toy pistol that had an electronic firing mechanism, demonstrated their skills against "Vealtown Jessie" (Note: Vealtown was the original name of Bernardsville).

Twenty-one area chefs served up chili to the 700 partygoers, another sell-out year for SHEF. The winners for this 2009 Chili Cook-Off were:

Celebrity Chefs' Choice: *1st Place* - Cliff MacTavish; *2nd Place* - Pat Wry & Bill Motyka.
Best Display: *1st Place* - Don Philhower (Coldwell Banker); *2nd Place* - Allen Thurlow (SHSD Teacher) & Chris Oraschin.
Best Restaurant: *1st Place* - Equus; *2nd Place* - M&M Perotti's Butcher Shop & Prepared Foods.
People's Choice: *1st Place* - Cliff MacTavish; *2nd Place* - Equus.

SHEF would again like to express our gratitude to our hosts, Susan and Bob Landmesser, who generously welcome SHEF to utilize The Carriage House on their estate. By moving the event later into April when sunset is later in the evening, the attendees were able to appreciate the beautiful surroundings even more.



Vealtown Jesse spiced up the 2009 Chili Cook-Off, giving guests an opportunity to test their skills with an interactive old-west shoot out against a gun-slinging outlaw.

Save the Date for the 7th Annual
chili cook-off
Saturday, April 17, 2010
 Please contact SHEF at 908.204.1930 ext 1344 if you are interested in volunteering with SHEF's major fundraising event.

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Thank you to our departing Trustees:
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The mission of the Somerset Hills Education Foundation is to promote and provide educational opportunities through innovative programs and projects.

Financial Contributions cont.

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**SOMERSET HILLS
 EDUCATION
 FOUNDATION**

Dedicated to Supporting Bedwell Elementary School, Bernardsville Middle School, and Bernards High School

Message From The Board of Trustees

The Education Foundation enjoyed another fruitful year, achieving our second-best performance in funds raised and grants awarded during a very difficult economic climate. Good progress was realized against our annual goals:

- The 6th annual Chili Cook-Off was another overwhelming success – attendance once again approached 700 and net proceeds have exceeded \$400,000 from the six events.
- Our annual fundraising campaigns matched last year's level – driven by a 180% increase in donations from district staff and nearly \$3000 in donations from our recently introduced Staff Tribute Program.
- SHEF's website and Electronic Newsletter allow us to effectively communicate more information to you.
- As an outcome of the district's strategic plan, we have begun planning to extend SHEF's umbrella to include an Endowment Fund, a BHS Alumni Association, and Performing Arts Center events. We welcome volunteers who are interested in helping to form these new fundraising initiatives.

As always, the most satisfying aspect of our work has been the Foundation's ability to fund district-wide programs. By devoting \$28,000 to fund 22 project

grants this year, we have now disbursed \$232,000 to 164 projects over the last twelve years. By committing \$40,000 to the Computers on Wheels (COWs) initiative, the Foundation ensures that students in each school will have access to multiple mobile carts containing wireless laptop computers. And by extending our GetSMART! initiative with \$31,000, we continue to outfit classrooms with a consistent "SMART" technology set-up that should lead to improved instruction and learning. SHEF continues its drive to place technology directly in the hands of district staff and students – in the last four years, SHEF has directed more than \$300,000 to this objective.

We wish to thank our district staff for their commitment to education – your exciting innovative ideas give students difference-making experiences. And finally we wish to thank this year's 424 contributors – your continued generous support will allow us to make the district's educational offerings even more special.

Keith Kebel
 Keith Kebel, Chairman



SHEF celebrated the 2009 Teachers of the Year by purchasing plaques to be displayed in the individual schools.

SHEF Implements Tribute to Staff Through New Giving Campaign

The **Somerset Hills Education Foundation (SHEF)** has come up with an idea for a truly special end of the year or holiday gift for teachers or other school staff members who have made a big impact on a child's school experience this year- It is the SHEF Staff Tribute program.

Many parents wish to show their appreciation by offering a gift at the end of the year and/or at the holidays. And while our teachers, coaches, counselors, and support staff appreciate these genuine gestures of thanks, SHEF has an alternative . . . a gift in the name of that special staff member. A SHEF Staff Tribute is a meaningful and memorable way to acknowledge the efforts of the many dedicated staff members who extend themselves beyond the call of duty to provide our students with a stimulating and fulfilling experience.

All proceeds go to SHEF's Teacher Classroom Grants Fund, which over the past 13 years has awarded more than \$230,000 towards 164 teacher initiated grants that have gone directly to fostering creativity and promoting excellence in our community's classrooms. The Somerset Hills School District Administration, the principals of Bedwell Elementary School, Bernardsville Middle School, and Bernards High School, and the Somerset Hills Education Association have endorsed this program and hope many will consider joining other parents in this effort.

Tributes may be dedicated to any staff member in any school. SHEF will send a personal congratulatory card to the staff member to recognize the Tribute donation from your family. During this inaugural season, SHEF has already received \$2600 for over one hundred tributes. The donations ranged from \$10 to \$100 and all contributions are greatly appreciated. The teachers have felt very appreciated by the outpouring.

look inside!

- Chili Cook-Off 2009
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- Support the Foundation
- What a Great Year to GetSMART!

Annual Giving Envelope Is Attached

2008-2009 SHEF GRANTS

The Somerset Hills Education Foundation (SHEF) is pleased to support innovative programs in The Somerset Hills School District. Over the past thirteen years, dedicated trustees have donated time, energy, and enthusiasm to help SHEF dispense funds towards grants totalling \$232,000. This current school year, SHEF has disbursed over \$28,000 of the proceeds from fundraising efforts to the following grants:

Bedwell Elementary School

Art in Flight; Scanning the Scrapbook of Our Heritage; Save Our Local History; Teachers' Discovery Traveling Art Exhibits; Grow, Grow, Grow... Here We Go!; Kindergarten Meets "The Rainforest Man"; School + Home = Math Success; e-Books for Bedwell

Bernardsville Middle School

Medieval Enrichment; Integrating Technology in PE; Bernardsville Middle School Book Clubs

Bernards High School

Poetry Power: Mayhem Poets; Tunewriter Phonograph Recorder for Popular Music Class; Sony Vegas Software; Calculus, The Musical; An Intergenerational Prom; The Art of Photography in the Bernardsville Community; Broadcast Journalism in a Box; The Reality Gap; Student Work Exposition on the Internet

District

NJASK Online Test Prep Through the Library; Keys to Performance; SHEF Teacher Recognition

Grow, Grow, Grow... Here We Go!
Bedwell 4th-grade Science students learn to honor the earth with hands-on experiences.



Pictured are author and SADD president Stephen Wallace, SHEF trustee Val Howes and John Grund of BHS. Mr. Wallace delivered a poignant message to the BHS student body on the dangers of destructive decisions.

Fun Fridays at BMS: SHEF funded the popular Book Club eliciting such responses as, "It gives you something to do and a way to be with people like you, who love to read" and "All I can say is WOW. Book Club is awesome. It is the highlight of my week."

District students representing SHEF spread holiday cheer this December and sang their appreciation to the local merchants who have so generously supported SHEF. Pictured with the group is Kathleen Palmer of Studio 7.

Financial Report

SHEF Financial Report 2008-2009			
For the period covering July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009			
Opening Balance		\$41,760	
Revenue		\$132,867	
Chili Cook-Off Receipts	\$115,472		
Annual Giving Campaign	\$10,269		
Matching Gifts & United Way	\$2,177		
Staff Donations Campaign	\$1,960		
Staff Tribute Campaign	\$2,345		
BPC Holiday Card Campaign	\$352		
Interest	\$292		
Disbursements		\$136,750	
Technology Initiatives (COWs, GetSMART!)	\$84,225		
Classroom Grants	\$29,916		
Chili Cook-Off Expenses	\$17,468		
Postage, Printing, Website	\$2,175		
Insurance	\$2,385		
Memberships, Registrations, Administrative	\$581		
Closing Balance		\$37,877	

The King holds court... old and young alike enjoyed an evening of dancing at the second annual Golden Prom.

Bedwell and BHS students collaborate to create movies and sequels to children's classic literature using Sony Vegas software.

What a Great Year to GetSMART!

In June 2009, The Somerset Hills Education Foundation (SHEF) presented The Somerset Hills School District with a check for **\$81,025 to advance technology initiatives** in Bedwell Elementary, Bernardsville Middle, and Bernards High Schools. These funds enhance the Computers on Wheels (COWs) program and last year's SHEF initiative GetSMART! Over the past four years, SHEF has devoted \$300,000 to student technology.

SHEF's Computers on Wheels (COWs) initiative has enabled students greater access through portable laptop carts that can be moved from classroom to classroom. SHEF continues its drive to place technology directly in the hands of district students.

SHEF's newer initiative, GetSMART!, assists the district in the implementation of "SMART" technology. SHEF is helping to outfit classrooms with a "SMART" set up, which will include SMARTboards, LCD projectors, and related technology such as Senteo student response systems. Providing district classrooms with a consistent "SMART" set-up will lead to endless possibilities for instruction and student learning. SHEF is pleased that the Home & School Associations in both Bedwell Elementary and Bernardsville Middle Schools are complementing our efforts with their own donations of technology funds.

This year's SHEF donation included **20 computers for a lab** in the Bernards High School Library/Media Center, a dedicated cart of **25 laptop computers** for Grade 8 in the Bernardsville Middle, and is providing a **SMARTboard to each grade level in Bedwell Elementary and each department at BHS**, in addition to other related technology.

Of special interest is the generator that was purchased which will be powered by a stationary bike ridden by Bedwell students to recharge their COWs' batteries—thereby complementing the district's strategic plans for conservation of energy and the environment.

SHEF continues its drive to place technology directly in the hands of district students. When our \$81,025 technology grant is combined with earlier classroom grants, it brings SHEF's support of the district to \$112,000 for the year, \$422,000 over the last four years, and \$540,000 during SHEF's 12-year life.

This funding for student technology is a direct result of proceeds from the recent Chili Cook-Off. Next year's event will be held on Saturday, April 17, 2010 -- once again at Upton Pyne.

Please visit SHEF's website, www.shefnj.org, for more information or to make a donation.

Students at all three district schools extend learning through the use of SMARTboards.

SHEF Improves Electronic Communication

Last year SHEF renovated its website, www.shefnj.org, so that it is easier to stay abreast of all the latest Somerset Hills Education Foundation information.

This year we have taken our electronic efforts a step further. For more up-to-the-minute-reports sign up for our **e-Newsletter**, which delivers important SHEF news right to you. Receive breaking news, such as when our Chili Cook-Off tickets go on sale, information about our new technology initiatives, and details on our SHEF grants that we have funded with your help.

SHEF has also made it easier to support education. You can make a secure credit card donation online through **Just Give or American Express**, where you can even choose to redeem earned points to make a donation. Visit us at www.shefnj.org and click on the "SUPPORT SHEF" tab, then click on the appropriate online link.

We are thrilled to provide you with these new and improved mediums to communicate the mission of SHEF, which is to provide education opportunities through innovative programs and projects for the benefit of the students of The Somerset Hills School District.

Explore our website, be in the know, and **sign up today for the SHEF e-Newsletter!** Visit us at www.shefnj.org click on the "ABOUT SHEF" tab and enter your e-mail address in the box provided, then click submit. It's that easy!

How Can You Support the Foundation?

- Our **Annual Giving** envelope is included.
- A **Tribute or Memorial gift** is a perfect way to honor a teacher, friend, or relative while supporting the mission of the Foundation. A gift acknowledgment will be sent to the party of your choice.
- If you donate **appreciated stock** to SHEF, you are eligible to receive a tax deduction for the full fair market value of the securities transferred and you do not have to pay capital gains taxes on the appreciation.
- Many businesses will **match a charitable gift** made by employees and retirees to an education foundation like SHEF. This is a wonderful way to double the value of your donation. If applicable, please enclose your company's matching gift form with your donation to SHEF.
- A donation may be directed to the Foundation via the **annual United Way campaign** at many employers. Simply fill in our name (Somerset Hills Education Foundation) and tax identification number (22-3446481) as a specific agency of choice.
- Volunteers are always being sought** to help with our fundraising efforts. We especially need more people with skill or interest in: communications, computing technology, event planning, finance, fundraising, law, marketing, or sales. If you wish to volunteer or share some ideas, please contact any of the trustees listed in this newsletter.

Financial Contributions cont.

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