

FORT MILL TIMES

Fort Mill falls hard in title match-up, 1B



The 'Hat Lady' creates with flair, 4B



WEDNESDAY, JAN. 6, 2010

www.fortmilltimes.com

20 PAGES

COVERING FORT MILL, TEGA CAY AND INDIAN LAND SINCE 1892

COST: 50¢

News

FORT MILL TIMES
WWW.FORTMILLTIMES.COM

3A
JAN. 6, 2010

Grant used to beautify ILMS property, 6A

In Business

Synergy fires the Panhandle area's latest eatery, 5A

Got a news tip?

Call us at 547-2353!

Foundation awards \$6,500 in grants

By Jenny Overman
joverman@fortmilltimes.com

FORT MILL TOWNSHIP — With the Fort Mill School District's budget shrinking, money for special programs, such as the \$500 grants offered by the Foundation for Fort Mill Schools, are more important than ever, according to officials.

This year, the Foundation for Fort Mill Schools received 34 applications for the 13 grants it awards annually, one grant for each school in the district. In previous years, said executive director Jill Lauber, the foundation typically received approximately 22 to 26 applications.

She attributes the downturn in the economy to the increase in teachers requesting funds.

"This year, \$500 probably seemed like a little more than it did last year, so the economy created more awareness," Lauber said.

Among the grants awarded was a grant to Donna Skipper and Kris Thompson, teachers at Gold Hill Middle School. The grant provided funding

for Bal-A-Vis-X, a series of balance, auditory and visual exercises and movements that promote right and left brain integration. The benefits of the program can include an increase in attention span, improved academic success with less effort and diminished signs of stress, according to the Foundation for Fort Mill schools.

"We have seen almost immediate results from incorporating Bal-A-Vis-X in our curriculum," Thompson said. "Students having difficulty sitting still or paying attention can return to the classroom after a three-minute session with balls or bags and be able to sit quietly and focus on instruction for the remainder of the class period."

Other grants awarded included a grant to Pleasant Knoll Elementary teachers Kylie Carroll and Darby Scott to provide science materials allowing children to have hands-on discovery learning and conduct scientific experiments. Fort Mill High School teachers Annemarie Dowd and Rita Cater received a grant to incorporate a Wii game system into

mathematics lessons, hoping to increase motivation and comprehension for Algebra students.

The Foundation for Fort Mill Schools is a nonprofit organization made up of business and community leaders as well as educators and other volunteers from the community that donate their time and money to finance projects in Fort Mill schools that fall outside of district budget parameters.

Among the financial supporters of the Foundation are First Citizens Bank, Founders Federal Credit Union, South Carolina Bank and Trust, Fort Mill Rotary and Allen Tate Realtors as well as donations from individuals.

"The district's budget is focused on maintaining quality in core subject areas. When the extras — supplies, books, and technology — are unable to be funded, the Foundation for Fort Mill Schools is able to help," Lauber said. "We promote academic excellence through the Innovative Classroom Projects program, funding projects which encompass innovation, creativity, educational value, student involvement and teacher commitment."

Who got what and why

This is how Foundation grants were distributed:

- Fort Mill Elementary School, Karen Helms, for a children's garden.
- Gold Hill Elementary School, Kim Byrne, Tracy Fisher, Amy Hallman, Kim Hart, Matt Rohring, for "Pairing puppets, props and picture books with best practices in Reading and Writing."
- Orchard Park Elementary School, Lynn Given, for "Opening a new world of books to struggling readers."
- Pleasant Knoll Elementary School, Kyle Carroll and Darby Scott, for "Science in Action."
- Riverview Elementary School, Kay DeWalt, "Student led reading instruction is only a click away."
- Springfield Elementary School, Dede Cross and Caroline Ford, "Educational Voicethreads."
- Sugar Creek Elementary School, Lauren Dean, "Teaching Math through Literature."
- Fort Mill Middle School, Brenda Honeycutt, Virginia Buchanan and Martha Gribble, "Keeping students up-to-date with real world science."
- Gold Hill Middle School, Donna Skipper and Kris Thompson, "Bal-A-Vis-X."
- Springfield Middle School, Deanna Koverman, "Garden Angels."
- Fort Mill Academy, Mary Hutchinson, Tamara Luckey and Dorothy Ngongang, "Fort Mill Academy leaders activate motivation through environmental studies"
- Fort Mill High School, Annemarie Dowd and Rita Cater, "Motivated to Participate, Wii Learn."
- Nation Ford High School, Col. Sean Mulcahy, "Raising Constitution Day Awareness."