



A day of service

The school spirit of giving

By Jenn Smith

Berkshire Eagle Staff

SHEFFIELD

'T

is the season of giving, and the Southern Berkshire Regional School District is certainly in the spirit.

On Thursday, members of the school's new SWAG — Students Who Achieve Goodness — group held a Lock-a-Thon event to benefit the Locks of Love campaign.

Meanwhile, many other staff and students on the Mount Everett Regional High/Undermountain Elementary school campus worked together — from elementary school actors to high school band members and volunteer servers — to host the eighth annual holiday luncheon for area senior citizens.

"I'm really proud of everyone today," said 12th-grader Bethany Pothul.

"I think having this in our school is really great because some schools don't have this. It makes me feel really happy to help," said eighth-grader Kristen Wolfe, who chopped off about 14 inches of hair for Locks of Love.

In total, 23 young women donated 211 inches of hair to the cause. The charity turns hair donations into wigs for cancer patients.

Thursday's events highlighted some new long-term efforts to boost activity, connection and community service among students and staff.

Art teacher Stephanie Graham initiated the SWAG club this year "to give kids an outlet to do ongoing activities and outreach."

The teacher, who also donated more than 8 inches of her own hair to the Lock-a-Thon, said anti-bullying efforts

SERVICE, continued on [A5](#)



Gabriella Makuc, a Mount Everett Regional High School junior, plays holiday tunes on piano with the school band on Thursday as part of the school's eighth annual holiday luncheon for senior citizens.

Photos by Jenn Smith / Berkshire Eagle Staff



Karisa King, a Mount Everett senior, jokes with another photographer as she cuts more than eight inches of hair from art teacher Stephanie Graham's head as part of the school's Lock-a-Thon. The hair is used to make wigs for cancer patients.

Article Continued Below

[See SERVICE on Page A05](#)

Kids show a giving side

SERVICE from A1

are a main focus of the group.

SWAG created its "put-ups" campaign to combat putting people down. The students decorated small cards with uplifting quotations and simple messages like "You're liked." When a SWAG member sees someone who is looking down, they discreetly hand the person a card.

"It's just like an instant smile," said senior Celina Sinico.

Senior Karisa King said the group has partnered and recently received a grant from the onlinebased organization DoSomething.org, which encourages young people to get involved in giving back to their communities.

The high school also introduced a new elective class called "Teen Leadership" in which students explore their personal principals, values and life goals.

"I think every school should have something like this, even make it a requirement. We need more awareness," said senior Ronnie Kimball.

Also in the spirit of empowering students to do more, students in the high school's culinary department opened a new café, which is open to the public every Wednesday from noon to 1 p.m.

in the school's Eagle Nest dining/ meeting space. There, patrons can get a homemade soup or salad, sandwich or entree, drink and dessert for \$7.

"We've done fundraisers and raised our own money to buy tables and chairs for the café. We had no grants or budget, so we raised money to do this holiday luncheon too," said 12th-grader David Atwell.

Evelyn Race and Katherine Crine, who's children and grandchildren have all attended the schools, said they look forward to the luncheon every year.

"They do really great, a really good job," Race said.