

# HURRAH Times

**HURRAH**  
Happy Upbeat Retirees  
(& OTHER) Residents  
Actively Helping

Summer 2012

A publication  
about Happy  
Upbeat Retirees  
(& other) Residents  
Actively Helping  
in Naperville  
Community Unit  
School District 203

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## New Illinois learning standards incorporate the Common Core

Common Core State Standards represent a sweeping educational reform that has been adopted by 46 states including Illinois and, for the first time, has produced a set of de facto national instructional standards in English and mathematics for grades K-12. Implementing the Common Core State Standards will be District 203's number one priority in the coming years.

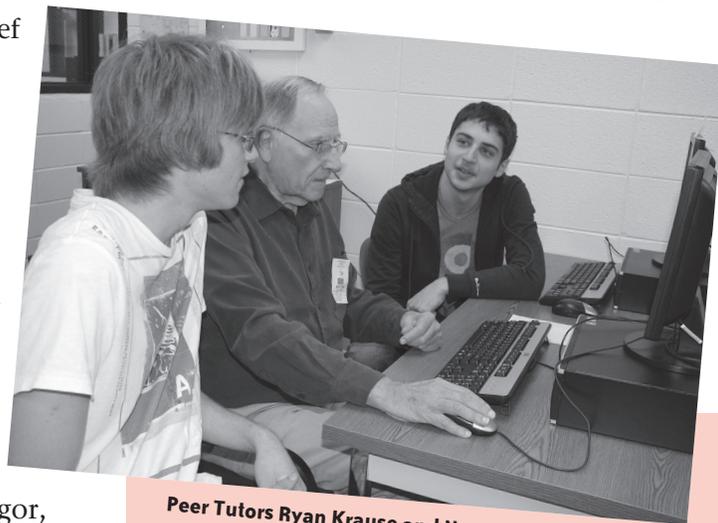
The Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) was developed in 2009 by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. These two groups brought together leading experts to develop academic standards in language arts and mathematics for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. These standards address the need for students to be prepared for both college and work in a competitive global economy.

These national standards, which are benchmarked to international standards, will replace existing state standards and involve more rigor, with an emphasis on developing critical thinking skills. The standards aim to provide clear, consistent benchmarks for academic progress that students should have at the conclusion of each grade level. This allows teachers to establish the best approach to help their students meet those standards.

District 203's curriculum already contains many concepts incorporated in the Common Core, such as the inquiry-based learning model that encourages students to become critical thinkers and collaborative workers. The major push of the English standards is to increase text complexity at every grade level and places far greater

emphasis on students reading non-fiction to better prepare them for college and careers. This change in emphasis will affect every student in every grade, beginning as early as kindergarten. In math, the progression of topics has been significantly revised by reducing the number of topics taught per year to allow students to spend more time mastering basic mathematical concepts in the early grades and then to progress into increasingly more advanced topics.

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Peer Tutors Ryan Krause and Naveed Jamali work with John Anderson to sharpen his computer skills.

## Free personalized computer training is a benefit of volunteering

John Anderson, 80, could be a textbook example of a lifelong learner. A HURRAH volunteer for the past three years at Prairie Elementary School and during the 2011-2012 school year at Kennedy Junior High School, he is a retired math and science teacher and guidance counselor. He recently

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## Reading is as easy as A-B-C with HURRAH volunteer

Every Friday morning, Joanne Graham helps students at Kingsley Elementary School successfully navigate the nuances of the English language. She patiently listens as they read, offering gentle tips, suggestions and encouragement. Because of her nurturing presence and calm reassurance, countless children have blossomed into fluent and avid readers.

A HURRAH volunteer for the past nine years, Joanne was recently recognized with a 2012 Those Who Excel Award from Naperville School District 203. She was nominated by Kingsley Principal Dr. Mary Alice Lindvall who noted, "Joanne is an excellent role model of energy, drive and determination, which are powerful characteristics of a lifelong learner. Her kind words often encourage a struggling child to persevere until his/her choppy reading sounds as smooth as creamy peanut butter."

Joanne said she empathizes with those she now helps because as a child she was a struggling reader, too. The former elementary school teacher and teacher for homebound children enjoys working one-on-one with a student in reading to discover their favorite activities and subjects, then center their reading choices around them.

"I take delight in seeing the light in their faces when they 'get it,' whether it's a word, a definition or perhaps the meaning of what they just read," she said. "Third grade is my favorite age. They are so thirsty for knowledge and ask super questions."

Joanne moved to Naperville from Texas in 2003 to be closer to her daughter and two granddaughters. Prior to arriving here, she had volunteered for seven years in a simi-

lar program with inner city children in Austin, Texas.

"The HURRAH program is a great way to reconnect with children. We've all been one!" she said. "And you feel so useful. I love those smiling faces as they come to see me! It's my most cherished time of the week." \*



HURRAH volunteer Joanne Graham reads with a student.

## HURRAH volunteer recognized by IBM

In recognition of its 100th anniversary, IBM's Celebration of Service honored its employees, retirees, families and friends in their commitment to volunteer service in 2011. One of the top 100 volunteers recognized was Russ Marineau, a HURRAH volunteer since 1991 and an enthusiastic advocate for the organization, who has traveled across the state and the country promoting the HURRAH model of volunteering.

Upon retiring from IBM in 1991 after 32 years as a systems engineer and then as an account executive in marketing, Russ was looking for a meaningful way to give back to his community. That opportunity came in the form of an invitation from District 203's then-Director of Community Relations Mary Ann Bobosky, who was also his neighbor. She told him about a new volunteer program that had been created, at that time composed primarily of retirees who helped students in schools.

As one of the program's pioneers, Russ began volunteering at a

familiar place, Washington Junior High School, where all five of his children had attended. Four years later, he was appointed chairman of the HURRAH executive council, a position he continues to hold. He also volunteers at Washington, where he helps students with special needs.

He is HURRAH's biggest cheerleader, spreading the word about the benefits of helping out in the schools and recruiting volunteers, who are not only retirees, but business professionals, too. Through his tireless efforts, HURRAH has been recognized as one of the best inter-generational programs in the state.

"The feedback we get from our teachers, our students and their parents is very positive on the contributions of our volunteers," Russ said. "In addition, our volunteers tell us they are getting real personal benefits from their volunteer activities. The HURRAH Program is truly a win-win for our community." \*

## It all adds up for Scott School volunteer

Jim O'Donnell has come full circle at Scott Elementary School, first as a parent whose son attended there, and now as a volunteer with HURRAH. A Naperville resident since 1976, his three children attended District 203 schools and he remembers when the future school site was a working farm. His son, David, was among the first students to attend Scott when it opened in 1978. Retired after 25 years as an electrical engineer with General Electric, Jim knows his way around a column of figures and helps elementary school students find their way through the complex ins and outs of mathematics.

Each week, he offers his expertise to students who might need some homework help in the Study Skills Academy. It's a two-way street as far as learning is concerned. Jim says he learns as much from his students as they learn from him.

"It's satisfying to help them get the work done," Jim said. "I try to convince them that math is really fun. I hope that they will enjoy it the same way I do."

A HURRAH volunteer since 2001, Jim started as a reader to first-graders at the suggestion of his friend and fellow Kiwanis Club member, Chuck Price. Although Jim didn't have any experience in the classroom at that time, he received support from the teachers and reading specialist as he helped children learn to read.

After four years of volunteering in the first-grade classroom, he was tapped to help children with mathematics when the new Study Skills Academy was established at Scott.

Jim said that being in the classroom was a unique experience for him and he appreciates the work of the teachers, staff members and administrators. Jim is a member of the HURRAH executive council and has been recognized as an outstanding HURRAH volunteer in 2004 and as an outstanding school volunteer in 2009.

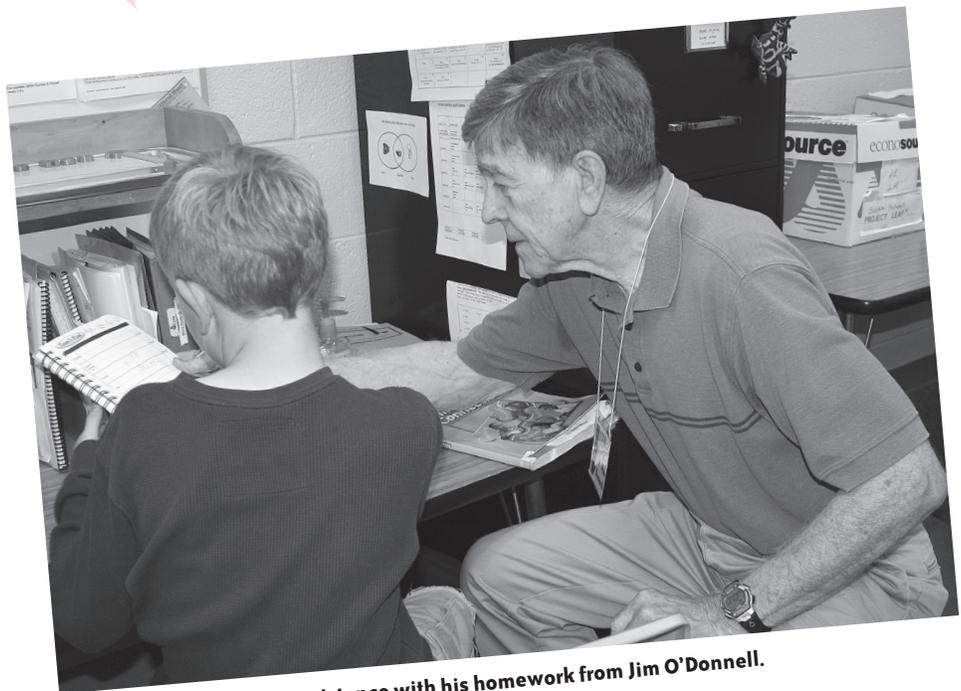
Assistant Principal Jean Kloepper said that HURRAH volunteers at Scott School make Study Skills happen as well as support students with reading, writing, spelling, math and even handwriting skills. She said that students

look forward to the one-on-one or small group attention they receive from these positively nurturing volunteers.

"His patience, calm demeanor and humor provide the positive environment these at-risk learners would not have at home to complete assignments, prepare for tests and gain organizational skills." Jim O'Donnell ("Mr. O") is a volunteer member of our Study Skills Academy staff. He is that positive male role model who the majority of students don't have in their lives," she said. "His patience, calm demeanor and humor provide the positive environment these at-risk learners would not have at home to complete assignments, prepare for tests and gain organizational skills. I've had the distinct pleasure to work with Jim for the past six years and I know he was volunteering long before I came to Scott School, which speaks to his dedication!"

Jim said that other volunteers would enjoy being part of HURRAH, too. "It makes you feel like you're contributing." \*

It's a two-way street as far as learning is concerned. Jim says he learns as much from his students as they learn from him.



A Scott student receives assistance with his homework from Jim O'Donnell.

Naperville Community  
Unit School District 203  
**HURRAH**  
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Naperville, IL 60540-6589

**Mark  
your calendar!**

**HURRAH Volunteer Fair**  
**Tuesday, October 2**  
**1-3 PM**

District 203  
Administrative Center

**HURRAH**

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## Free computer training

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retired from his second career as an electronics technician for the United States Postal Service. After he took the job with the Postal Service, he took electronics classes at College of DuPage to brush up on his skills. He quipped that the transistor hadn't been invented yet when he went to college.

A benefit of being a HURRAH volunteer is the free personalized PC computer training offered annually in the fall at Naperville North High School. The computer training is customized to fit the needs of each individual. John had several goals in mind: to better navigate the Internet, to make an animated cartoon and to learn how to send photos to his relatives. He received help from students in the Peer Tutors program who volunteer their time to help the HURRAH volunteers.

A benefit of being a HURRAH volunteer is the free personalized PC computer training offered annually in the fall at Naperville North High School.

Ryan Krause and Naveed Jamali, both juniors, assisted John in one of the school's computer labs. Ryan said that he's learned as much from his "students" as they've learned from him. The rewards are when the person he's helping can use the computer on their own without help.

Naveed said, "It's satisfying to know that you made a difference in someone's life."

John makes a difference in the lives of every student he helps through volunteering with HURRAH where he uses his skills as a teacher and a guidance counselor. "It gives me a special background to know how to listen to these kids and to have the time to listen. Sometimes I'm a grandpa who listens and sometimes I help them with math," he said. "HURRAH is a great experience." \*

## Common Core

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In District 203, implementation of the standards will begin in the 2012-13 school year with portions of the math curriculum. The English Language Arts curriculum is scheduled to be introduced in the 2013-14 school year. District 203's educational philosophy meshes well with the Common Core State Standards as the district recently revised its math curriculum. The various curriculum committees are working to fully align the curriculum with the new standards.

As the standards are put in place and the academic rigor increases, there will be an even greater need for volunteers to help students with one-on-one tutoring and reading and to help them with the core subjects of English and math. With their solid educational backgrounds and willingness to help students achieve success, HURRAH volunteers can make a significant impact in the lives of students. \*