



*(Shopping News Photo by Donald Reese)*

Hinkletown Mennonite School held their annual Servathon during the first week of May with every class participating in a service project within the community. Over 200 students along with teachers and parent volunteers went to seven local organizations to assist with tasks such as visiting and singing with residents, cleaning, gardening, mulching and planting.

Second grade (shown) went to Mennonite Central Committee's Material Resource Center. "We got to see what [MCC's Material Resource Center] does to help people and worked on school

kits and health kits,” shared second grader Luke Harting. These kits are given by MCC and partnering organizations to families who fled their homes due to disaster or war. Luke Harting continued, “Some [kits] will go to people who need things because they lost their homes. I enjoyed helping because now we know that people can have the stuff they need to survive. Jesus served us, so we should serve them.”

Other classes are working with REAL Life Community Center, Fairmount Homes, Garden Spot Village, Landis Homes, Greenview Bible Camp and Woodcrest Retreat.

Seventh grade students served residents in Garden Spot Village’s memory support unit. Seventh grader Davin Esbenshade said, “[Our goal] was to interact with the residents and to serve without rushing.” Melissa Hurst, HMS parent and Garden Spot Activity Aide, provided a pre-visit orientation to the routines and needs of the unit’s residents, and the students used that information in planning their day. The students led a devotional, skit and singing time for the residents, then continued to connect through cookie baking, gardening, painting and balloon racquetball. “It was sometimes challenging to have conversations because [the residents] would repeat themselves,” shared Elijah Knowles. “But we just responded like it was the first time.” Justin Weaver, seventh grade Bible teacher, helped students prepare for their Servathon activity. “We studied James chapter 2 and talked about practically living out our faith and looking out for those who don’t have regular friendships,” said Mr. Weaver. “It was very cool seeing the joy from the residents and seeing how the residents were a blessing to the students.” Dawn Landes, Administrator/Principal, notes that giving students appropriate opportunities to serve helps them connect meaningful learning to life in both practical and spiritual ways.

HMS Servathon also helps to underwrite the operational needs of the school. Weeks before the event, students sought donations from friends, family and neighbors to sponsor them in their service projects and to support the school.

Hinkletown Mennonite School is located at 272 Wanner Road, Ephrata, one-half mile north of Route 322 in Hinkletown.

