

'Count on Us' math show may add an award

Class Notes

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Answering students' math questions paid off for Prince George's math supervisor Judith Russ, who was nominated as a finalist for a national education award.

Russ is one of 44 finalists competing for the fourth annual Cable Leaders in Learning Award, a program run by Comcast and Cable in the Classroom, a non-profit education foundation.

Russ, a district administrator at the county school system's Instructional Support Services Center in Capitol Heights, is one of about a dozen teachers who alternate the hosting spot on "Count on Us," a twice-weekly local cable program that invites Prince George's students to call in math questions and get assistance from the hosts.

"Sometimes our students do their homework, and they either have forgotten what they were taught during the day or their parents may not be readily available to assist them, so this is just another tool in determining an answer or figuring out a problem," said Russ, 54, a former math teacher at Doswell E. Brooks Elementary School in Capitol Heights and Potomac Landing Elementary in Fort Washington. "It has been a tremendous success."

The award-winning program was broadcast for 11 years before going off the air in 2001 because of budget constraints. The twice-weekly show was revived last year.

The school system's Television Resource Department nominated Russ, a school system employee since 1986, for her work. She could win \$3,000.

"Count on Us" airs Mondays

and Wednesdays on Comcast channel 96 or Verizon channel 38. The elementary school segment runs from 4 to 5 p.m., and the middle school segment runs from 5 to 6 p.m. Students can call the show at 301-772-0080 or e-mail cou@pgcps.org with math questions.

School year gets one day longer

Prince George's students got an extra day added to their school year, as officials adjusted the calendar last week to make up for a school cancellation Feb. 22 caused by bad weather.

The final day of the school year for students will be June 9 instead of June 6; the last day for county teachers was moved from June 9 to June 10. The last day for high school seniors will be May 22, giving graduates four more days to consult with teachers and counselors, Prince George's school officials said.

More time could be added to the calendar if any springtime storms close schools, said school system spokesman John White.

Donation to boost reading

The Prince George's school system received \$90,000 on April 9 for a reading program, along with \$60,000 for airtime to promote the program and attract volunteers.

The Comcast Foundation, run by the Comcast Cable company, announced the donation

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last week. The program will target second-grade students struggling with reading, Comcast officials said. The donation helps students at Springhill Lake Elementary School in Greenbelt,

Forest Heights Elementary on Oxon Hill, Princeton Elementary in Suitland and Thomas S. Stone Elementary in Mount Rainier. School board members said last month that those schools were among those with the greatest need for second-grade reading improvement.

Students will receive 30 weekly, hour-long instructional sessions.

Comcast agreed to air commercials urging the community to help students improve their reading. To volunteer in the reading program, call 301-780-2708 or e-mail Reading.Together@pgcps.org.

School calendar now online

The Prince George's school system continues to add to its Web site, recently providing a Web-based calendar tracking events, meetings and school activities across the county.

The online calendar, unveiled April 9 at www.pgcps.org, came just weeks after school officials added live and archived Web casts of school board meetings and work sessions. Links to the calendar and the Web casts can be found on the homepage.

Prince George's school officials said adding the calendar was part of an ongoing effort to get parents more involved in school activities.

"Whether an important Board of Education meeting or school event is coming up, we want to provide parents and the community with the timely, accurate information they need to plan to participate," schools Superintendent John E. Deasy said.

Bowie State hosts arts festival



A weeklong lineup of free artist lectures, film screenings and theatrical performances wraps up this week at Bowie State University, where officials hosted the school's annual Spring Arts Festival.

The festival ends April 20 at the Bowie campus. A schedule of events can be found at www.bowiestate.edu.