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New WPD chief named



Wapakoneta Mayor Rodney Metz administers the oath of office as police chief to Lt. Russ Hunlock Monday prior to Wapakoneta City Council meeting. Hunlock was named police chief earlier in the day succeeding former Police Chief Dave Webb. Photo provided

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October 2009

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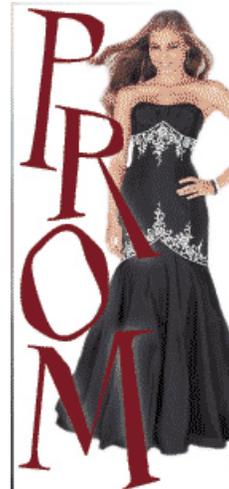
Should people be

By KAREN CAMPBELL
Assistant Managing Editor

The new police chief took the oath of office and swore to "protect and serve the people of Wapakoneta."
 Wapakoneta Mayor Rodney Metz administered the oath of office to Lt. Russ Hunlock Monday evening prior to the Wapakoneta City Council meeting. His wife and sons as well as his parents witnessed Hunlock being sworn in to succeed Police Chief Dave Webb, who retired Friday.

Hunlock, 40, who has been with the department for 18 years, spent 17 of those years as the K-9 handler with 18 months as a lieutenant. The son of Thelma and Jeff Hunlock grew up in Wapakoneta, where he still lives with his wife, Michelle, a dispatcher at the Auglaize County Sheriff's Office, and sons, Ryan 13, and Nathan, 10. He is a 1987 graduate of Wapakoneta High School and received law enforcement training from Lima Technical College, now known as James A. Rhodes State College.

"In the back of my mind, it was a goal of mine to become chief," Hunlock told the Wapakoneta Daily News this morning. "I did not think it would happen at this point in my career."



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allowed to hunt within the city?

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Yes under certain provisions

No, only city personnel

No, in no instances



Teacher rakes in grant

Saturday, 17 October 2009

By KAREN CAMPBELL
Assistant Managing Editor

A Wapakoneta Middle School teacher plans to use grant funding from the Wapakoneta Area Community Foundation to spark an interest in mathematics and science in her students. Dawn Rankin, a 22-year teacher who has taught two years in the Wapakoneta City Schools District, presented a proposal to bring the national Science Olympiad and More program to her fifth-, sixth- and seventh- grade enrichment students. Her proposal, requesting \$3,300 in start-up costs this year, was selected from other applications submitted to receive funding from the Wapakoneta Area Community Foundation at its annual meeting.

"I want them to know the value of science, technology, engineering and math," Rankin said. "There are a lot of important and exciting career opportunities in those fields and the U.S. is really low in offering education on that. Science inspiration is on the decline."

She said in addition to helping students explore the fields as career opportunities the program also provides the ability for tracking them starting with the time they start the lessons to the end of their time at the Wapakoneta Middle School and even into Wapakoneta High School to see what kind of impact they are having and how many students may be choosing to go into that as a career. Science Olympiad also holds regional competitions for students where they not only learn about different topics, but work on speeches and presentations with topics changing annually.

This year topics are expected to include anatomy, disease control and meteorology. Projects range from giving step-by-step instructions on how to do something and creating a buggy for an egg. Rankin plans to serve as the adviser to the extra-curricular team, in addition to working on the program with gifted students during enrichment time.

She plans also to share the information with other teachers and continue the program into the future as having money for start up costs was the major hindrance.

"A lot of the supplies we can re-use," Rankin said. "This is really helpful in getting our feet wet." She said in the future, costs could be rather limited except for \$100 fees to compete in regional Science Olympiad competitions.

"I'm really grateful to the foundation, that they see the importance in what we are doing," Rankin said. She was the lone recipient of an educator grant from the foundation this year, but two teachers, who each received \$5,000 for programs they wanted to bring into the classroom also talked with members of the Foundation at the meeting about how their educational efforts paid off.

"The outstanding educator grant was created to recognize teachers in the Wapakoneta School system," said Gary Shepline, a trustee for the Wapakoneta Community Foundation.

"How many kids we touch through this, we don't even know," he said of its widespread range. He said all teachers are eligible to apply for the annual grants through a 3-page online application. Teachers request the amount of money they need for specific projects.

Melissa Hilty, a reading teacher at Cridersville Elementary School, said the Orton Gillingham Phonics program she purchased with her grant last year went way beyond what she ever imagined. Additional funding was able to get at least 14 other teachers, not only from Cridersville, but from Centennial Elementary and other area school districts involved in the concepts of the program so they could use them in their classrooms. Even more teachers became familiar with the phonics program after that as those original teachers shared it with others.

"It changes how we introduce letters to children," Hilty said.

Using phonics, students through this program form both jibberish and real words, they use stacks of cards, write letters with their fingers in trays of sand, and use popsicle sticks to answer questions. A book "Recipe for Reading," provides a wide range of ideas for teachers to introduce letters to the students.

"Kids learn in so many different ways and as a teacher we need to teach to all different styles," Hilty said. "I've seen kids grow beyond what I could ever imagine with this."

She talked about how it changed students' perspectives, making them excited and wanting to learn and come to school every day.

For students now in second-grade, who began the program as kindergarteners, Hilty said none are on IEPs (Individualized Educational Program).

"It's neat to see the kids succeed," Hilty said through tears as she talked about other students she had worked with before and their frustration learning to read.

Wapakoneta Middle School teacher Anne Niemeyer also received a grant from the foundation last year to create a cultural museum in her classroom.

She addressed the ways it has made learning come to life for students.

"I've evolved as a teacher," the seventh-grade social studies teacher said. "I really wanted the kids to feel history, to know it's not dead. It is totally alive and what you make of it."

"I want them to remember what they learn when they leave," she said.

Niemeyer said she spent a lot of time deciding what items to purchase and how best to spend the money to create the museum that is to be passed on to future social studies teachers in the district.

From helmets and coins to chainmail armor and shoes that bound Chinese women's feet to 3-inches, Niemeyer said she was able to purchase more than three spreadsheets worth of items for the museum through the grant.



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Using some of the pieces she said students can conduct "Time Scene Investigations" to piece together history.

"I am very excited," Niemeyer told Foundation members at their dinner. "I always have students stopping in after school. You've made me and the kids excited."

Last Updated (Monday, 19 October 2009)

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