

Fox Chapel Area Adult Education Celebrates 50 Years

BY JANICE LANE PALKO

Most school districts claim to be devoted to education, but the Fox Chapel Area School District takes that one step further. It not only educates the children in its community, but it is also committed to continuing to offer educational opportunities to adults in the district and beyond.

This past fall, Fox Chapel Area Adult Education (FCAAE) celebrated 50 years of providing enrichment classes to adults in the community at a reasonable cost. In 1962, after the mergers of Aspinwall, Blawnox, Fox Chapel and Sharpsburg Boroughs and Indiana and O'Hara Twps. to form the Fox Chapel Area School District, residents approached the board of education about using the school facilities to educate adults as well.

"Our board of education is still committed to providing a variety of educational opportunities that appeal to the residents

in our district and those residing outside it," said Susan C. Goodwin, executive director, Fox Chapel Area Adult Education.

The program began with eight classes, among them *Civil Defense*, reflecting the fears of the Cold War era. Today, 1,400 to 1,800 students enroll annually for the 80-90 classes offered over two semesters. "Cooking and language classes have always been some of FCAAE's most popular offerings," Goodwin said.

The program also relies on local residents who are willing to share their knowledge and expertise. Not only is the district committed to the program, but the instructors are as well. Retired high school teacher Peter Marsico has been teaching Italian for the program for 39 years and counting. "His classes still fill up, often with people who have already taken his courses three or four times. It doesn't matter what the title of the Italian course is—they come. He's a gift," said Goodwin.

FCAAE is always adding new courses. This year, to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, Andrew Masich, president & CEO of the Heinz History Center, will teach a course on the battle and the Civil War. In addition, two gardening course: *Revamping Gardening Tools* and *Shady Space Gardening* will be added as well as a one-day CPR AED certification class, *Tai Chi*, *Cloud Computing with Google*, *Website Design* and two *Digital Photography* courses, one for point and shoot cameras and the other for SLR cameras.

For more information on FCAAE, visit the website at www.fcaae.org. ♦

St. Mary of the Assumption

