

Outgoing board members praised for their service

By Gary Weckselblatt

Four outgoing members of the Quakertown Community School Board were honored for their service at the Nov. 9 meeting.

President Paul Stepanoff, Vice President Charles Shermer were defeated in the Nov. 7 General Election; Director Stephen Ripper lost in the May primary; and Board Member Bob Smith chose not to seek reelection.

They will be replaced by Keith Micucci, Kaylyn Mitchell, David Ochmanowicz and Jennifer Weed on Dec. 7.

"I'm leaving with the knowledge that the Quakertown Community School District is profoundly better, and with the confidence that with the new board members it will continue to get better," said Stepanoff, who thanked the district's professionals for their dedication to students and congratulated the new members.

Stepanoff also praised Assistant Superintendent Nancianne Edwards for her "integrity and professionalism."

He became emotional as he spoke of Superintendent Dr. Bill Harner: "In a relatively short time here you've done far more than the last four superintendents combined. You defined what Quakertown Community School District is, not just to the community but to the world. The students adore you. We finally have a leader."

Stepanoff received huge applause when he told Harner's executive assistant, Alice Bishop, "This Board could not function without you. Period."

Harner said that Stepanoff, a director since 2005, has "developed into a great leader" and thanked him for the Board's "legacy" of helping to boost the District's academic standards and results in a "transformative" way.

The Superintendent also had kind words for Smith, a



Three of the outgoing Quakertown Community School Board members show off their plaques at the Nov. 9 meeting. Pictured are, from left, Assistant Superintendent Nancianne Edwards, Alice Bishop, the executive assistant to the superintendent, Board members Paul Stepanoff, Charles Shermer, Bob Smith and Superintendent Bill Harner.

former Board president and facilities chairman, who he described as a "huge supporter" of the district's performing arts and "you could always find him in the audience."

"Your tough questions made my game better," Harner said. "I'm very grateful. ... I believe we served you well. ... I know you served this community well."

Smith thanked his wife and said he "appreciates all the support I've gotten over the years. ... I look forward to what's happening in the future. There are good things happening."

He also had this piece of advice. "Everyone needs to be tolerant and listen to others' point of view."

Shermer said that despite the time commitment and a busy schedule, "It's absolutely worth the effort. ... It was an honor to work with this Administration and this Board."

Shermer offered his congratulations to Micucci and added that he lives "three or four doors" down from his replacement and that the two should go out for a cup of coffee.

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