

SGF Education Foundation, new, to fund projects

By Gordon Woodworth
Chronicle News Editor

Some South Glens Falls School District residents have formed the not-for-profit South Glens Falls Education Foundation to "enhance and enrich our community" by funding educational events and projects, said board president Eileen Minder.

Buys books for kindergartners; aims to send kids to camp

"I think we can make a difference with little steps," she said, "because this community is so generous with its time, its energy and its funds."

Its first project, "Kelsey's Korner," provided each child entering kindergarten with the book *ABC I Like Me!*, funded by contributions in memory of Kelsey "Kat" Eckert, a ninth-grade student who passed away last March.

Kelsey's grandmother, Pat Eckert, helped present the books to the incoming students at Harrison Avenue Elementary School, which Kelsey attended.

"The book project was amazing for what it did for Pat, and the warmth with which

she was received," Mrs. Minder said. "We wanted to start with something tangible that would introduce us to the community. Kelsey's Korner also introduced us to all of the elementary school principals, and let us say, 'Here we are and we want to help.'"

Mrs. Minder, a lifelong educator and pre-school teacher, said the foundation has received memorial donations in honor of Claudette Crocker and Guido Sassone.

The foundation hopes to offer 10 scholarships to Camp Moreau, run by the Moreau Community Center in the summertime.

"Now that we are a 501(c)3, we are going to be applying for grants from Target and C.R. Bard and other local companies, and we're also going to be reaching out to local businesses for support," Mrs. Minder said.

The Foundation will then use the money to award grants of up to \$500 to organiza-



Kindergartner Isabella Sefcik was presented a copy of the book, *ABC I Like Me!* by Eileen Minder, right, president of the South Glens Falls Education Foundation board, and Pat Eckert.
Gordon Woodworth photos

tions and community groups for projects.

"It could be special teacher training that the district couldn't afford," said Lisa Lebowitz, retired teacher and board member.

Mrs. Minder said, "We've experienced a lot of loss in the district, and we're exploring ways of how we could help partner with the Community Coalition for Family Well-

ness that is looking at the issues of bullying and suicide....

"Perhaps we could fund a program educating parents about how to manage technology like Facebook and Twitter and texting, or help fund a drop-in center for teenagers."

Board member Joe Kelly said, "We're in the funding business, not the creation business."

Jim McCarthy's idea initially

Mrs. Lebowitz said the idea for an education foundation first came from former school superintendent Jim McCarthy.

"This was a dream of his," she said.

Along with Mrs. Minder and Mrs. Lebowitz as president and vice-president, other officers are Laura Van Guilder, secretary, and Bill Elder, treasurer.

Other board members are Tom Cumm, Joe Kelly, Anne Linehan, Kathie Spangler and Beth Austin. The advisory board includes attorney Monica Duffy, Donna Nichols, Audrey Varney, Kathi Brooks and Moreau Town Supervisor Preston Jenkins.

Donations to the South Glens Falls Education Foundation are tax-deductible and can be made online at www.sgfeducation-foundation.org. Grant applications are also available at the Web site.

Info: 932-2042 or bridgingpeople@adelphia.net.

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The South Glens Falls Education Foundation board and advisory board includes, front row, from left: Anne Linehan, Lisa Lebowitz, Eileen Minder and Laura Van Guilder. Back row: Joe Kelly, Donna Nichols, Kathie Spangler, Audrey Varney, Beth Austin and Bill Elder.

Published April 7, 2011 • The Chronicle, Glens Falls, NY