

Board recognizes students, discusses governor's budget

By PAM SCHEHL
News Staff Reporter

CENTERBURG — Outstanding student accomplishments were highlighted at Monday's meeting of the Centerburg school board. The board honored Yelena Arishina for her achievement in being selected as the 2009 Ohio Junior Miss, and wished her good luck in representing the state of Ohio and Centerburg High School at the National Junior Miss competition in June.

The board also recognized the Centerburg Robotics Club for its success at the Buckeye Regional FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics competition. The team did well at its first-ever competition, and will travel to Atlanta in April for the international championship. Team members and coaches also presented

high school principal John Morgan with their three trophies — Regional finalist award, the Highest Rookie Seed Award and the Rookie All Star Award — to be placed in the showcase at the school.

Carol Garner and Sam Breneman of The Knox Community Hospital Foundation presented a plaque to the Centerburg student council and student body for their efforts in the cancer awareness fundraiser drive, "Keep Her in the Picture." With the help of the Centerburg schools, the foundation was able to raise the funds needed to purchase a digital mammography machine. The students themselves brought in \$2,800 in honor of their superintendent, Dorothy Holden.

"We can't thank you enough," said Ann Wilson, director of diagnostic imaging at KCH. "We are

averaging 350 exams a month on this new digital mammography machine, it is a well-known fact that early detection [of breast cancer] saves lives. Your gift is not just a gift of money, but a gift of life."

As part of the financial report, district treasurer Ellen Scott talked about the governor's budget proposal. Contrary to reports in an out-of-county newspaper, she said, she sees no data to say Knox County schools will get a 20 percent increase in state funding. On the contrary, she said, Centerburg will receive no increase in state foundation funding next fiscal year.

That is somewhat worrisome, Scott continued, because her projections in the five-year forecast did not take a zero percent increase into account. It's also upsetting, she said, that larger, more affluent districts are slated

to receive funding increases.

"It's the little schools that don't have a voice," said Scott.

The board approved routine fiscal actions, and accepted the following donations: \$5,000 from The Community Foundation of Mount Vernon and Knox County in support of the robotics team, \$100 from Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Bumpus for the robotics team and \$54 from Phiopyle Prints Inc. for the high school.

Regarding personnel, the board granted the retirement request of Nancy Kelley, Title I classroom teacher, and accepted letters of resignation from fourth-grade teacher Janis Check and eighth-grade basketball coach Sean Sweeney. The board also retroactively approved a six-week family medical leave for Brody Griffith starting Feb. 6, hired Jennifer Sant as a math teacher for the

2009-10 school year, granted middle school principal Mike Hebenthal a three-year administrative contract, approved Lisa Burke as a one-on-one aide for students and approved a supplemental contract for Shelley Byrley as head girls golf coach. Due to the lack of student participation, the board voted to eliminate four girls softball coaching positions, effective Feb. 24.

Other actions taken by the board included the approval of a number of volunteers, the declaration of the indoor track program as a non-school sponsored group and permission for the group to use school facilities free of charge, and the approval of educational field placements for Mount Vernon Nazarene students.

Prior to adjournment, the board moved its next meeting to April 20.