



New Game Show Comes to Local TV Station
by
Christine Grupenhoff

Soon there may be a new game show to watch on your local television station thanks to two classes of creative youth and one new Character Counts! coach. Steve Scott coaches two fifth grade classes for Ruth Gilley and Joanne Carter at Kennard Elementary School. Scott first heard about Character Counts! from his children attending public schools. He became more interested after attending an employee orientation that was held for all new Queen Anne's County employees. Jacki Carter, Coordinator for Character Counts!, presented information explaining that full-time county employees are allowed one hour per week to volunteer for Character Counts!

Shortly after the employee orientation, Scott met with Jacki Carter, was given the orientation to become a Character Counts! coach, observed a coach in the classroom, and then assigned to Kennard Elementary School. Scott was enthusiastic from the beginning with his two fifth grade classes, each comprising approximately 22 students. Sharing his thoughts on character, Scott states, "Building and developing character is imperative for our youth. Character and, specifically, the character pillars are guideposts for the students to learn how to model and build successful relationships. These students will be the leaders and the beacons of character in the future and this program is a great tool to assist them on that journey."

At times, finding the right connection between character coaches, teachers and a class of students takes patience and time. With Scott and his two classes, it just took a challenge and some courage. Realizing what an asset the local television station, QACTV, is for the county, Scott asked the classes to come up with ideas to use for television to educate the community and themselves about Character Counts! and the Six Pillars of Character. Mrs. Carter's class developed the idea for a game show and Mrs. Gilley's class proposed the commercials idea. Scott elaborates, "I provided a challenge or an opportunity but the children came up with the ideas. The children have done everything. The idea was for a game show and, in between the rounds, the commercials would be put in. They wrote, rehearsed, came up with ideas for props, and aids to assist their program."

The game is called the Character Counts! Showdown and is based on questions and answers. A host is selected and asks a situational based question about character and then the host lists three pillars as possible answers. The contestants guess the appropriate

Pillar of Character demonstrated in the example. Each commercial is based on a Pillar of Character and describes that pillar in the form the students developed within their groups.

Asked about the classes' participation and response to the game, Scott shares, "The students have been great. They are all motivated and engaged learners. However, none of this could have been possible without the teachers. Their leadership and assistance made it all possible. I think they may have been a bit skeptical at first and, at the beginning, so was I as this was asking a lot from the students but they were more than equal to the challenge. "

It has been a learning experience on everyone's part. Scott adds, "I hope that the children gain a better understanding of the Pillars of Character and through this experience of creating a television program they realize that they are capable of a great deal, that they are leaders and by their example reveal how they can make an impact, educate and demonstrate to the community what character is and just how important it is."

Scott has also learned from the experience. "I learned just what an asset and what a tremendous job our teachers and administrators do in our schools. To say I have a greater appreciation for what our teachers do would be a huge understatement."

Michele Hampton, Principal at Kennard Elementary, is extremely pleased about the learning experience Steve Scott initiated. "Steve Scott's enthusiasm for Character Counts! is obvious and the audience, Kennard's fifth graders, can't help but catch fire from him. Our fifth graders are getting involved with community affairs by sharing the Six Pillars of Character with Queen Anne's County through QACTV Channel 7. Kennard students are not only learning character qualities, but they are also teaching others the character qualities that build success for children as well as adults. The students have thoroughly enjoyed writing and creating their own game show about Character Counts. We are pleased to share this with Queen Anne's County citizens through QACTV, Channel 7."

Character Counts! sincerely thanks Steve Scott for his volunteer work as a Character Counts! coach and for his commitment and dedication to the children he challenges and inspires. Stay tuned to Channel 7 to see Steve Scott and the Kennard 5th graders soon. For more information about Character Counts! visit www.peopleofcharacter.org or call Jacki Carter at 410-758-6677.