



**making a difference**

Written by resident Polly Walters, E. Spring Ln.

# *Pondview Estates resident is making a difference through* **POWER OF THE PEN**

As an English Language Arts teacher at St. Marys Middle School, I see first-hand the challenges and uncertainties seventh and eighth graders are faced with on a daily basis. These years can be some of the most challenging times in a young person's life.

One Ohio nonprofit organization offers a creative outlet for students during these challenging developmental years, where they can make lasting friendships and find their own voices through storytelling. Power of the Pen has made a difference for many young students during its 34-year history.

I've been involved with the organization for 26 years, first as a coach, then as a tournament organizer and now as Regional Director. The creative writing program provides academic benefits and also teaches students empathy for others and the importance of sharing their own experiences. Storytelling is a powerful social tool, and Power of the Pen encourages young authors to use their talents to connect with others.

Creative programs like these are more important than ever! In fact, the pandemic threatened to cancel Regional tournaments and deprive students of the opportunity to complete the 2020 competition season. Rather than succumb to social distancing obstacles, Power of the Pen in cooperation with Kent State University persevered to hold virtual Regional tournaments in place of the in-person tournaments planned throughout the region.

Power of the Pen has produced many alumni who have used their creative writing skills to make a difference in careers in writing, journalism, marketing, teaching, and other professions. Most notably, one of Power of the Pen's more recent alumni is a writer on *The Tonight Show* and another is a Newbery Honor-winning author.

**If you would like to get your middle school involved in Power of the Pen, please visit the Power of the Pen website at [www.powerofthepen.org](http://www.powerofthepen.org) or contact Pond View Estates resident and Northwest Regional Director Polly Walters at [polly@powerofthepen.org](mailto:polly@powerofthepen.org).**



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