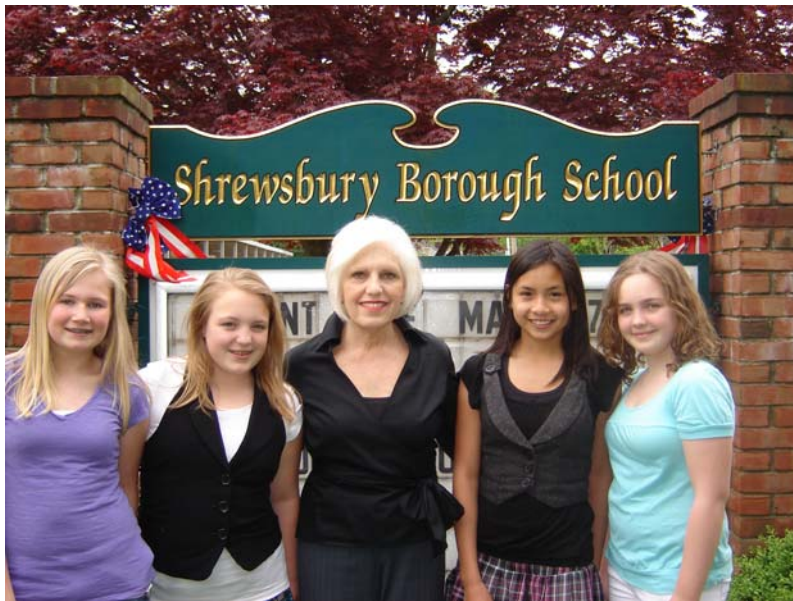


## *Shrewsbury Borough School News*

### **Shrewsbury Borough Students Win First Place in Northeast Region**

A team of four Seventh Grade students from Shrewsbury Borough School participated in a competition that is sponsored by the U. S. Army. The “eCybermission” challenge was to identify a problem affecting a local community and then to develop a solution. The students had learned about the existence of contaminated drinking water in wells and aquifers in southern NJ. This problem is linked to the use of commercial fertilizers on lawns and farms. Responding to this information, they developed their own eco-friendly fertilizer, Biochar, and tested its effectiveness against commercial brands. Biochar has been known to be an effective fertilizer used as far back as the ancient Amazonian Indians. The students created their own blend from peat moss, bone meal, and the char from burned wood. The results of their experiment in growing grass seed proved Biochar’s effectiveness in growing tall, full grass without the negative effects of harmful phosphates in the groundwater. Calling themselves the “Biocharmers”, the team has presented its findings at Shrewsbury’s Environmental Fair as well as to Shrewsbury’s Environmental Commission. With the help of their local watershed ambassador, Andrea Spahn, who assisted them in testing their collected groundwater, they hope to share their findings with neighboring municipalities.



From left to right: Dana Pusterhofer, Katie Robinson, Sallyann Jauch, Melissa Banal, and Fable Avison

Fable Avison, Melissa Banal, Dana Pusterhofer, and Katie Robinson have been successful in winning First Place for the Northeast Region, and will be competing at the national level in Washington, D.C. in late June, accompanied by their teacher/advisor, Sallyann Jauch. For more information about their project, visit their website at <http://www.thebiocharmers.weebly.com>.