

## Attend Budget Meetings!

### Save These Dates!

Following are some of the key dates for the presentation and development of the 2010-2011 school budget. The Board of Education urges residents to learn about the budget challenges and decisions being made. A comprehensive Budget Development Calendar outlining specifics of the budget process is available on the District website at [www.saugerties.k12.ny.us](http://www.saugerties.k12.ny.us) under Superintendent's Page: 2010-2011 Budget Information.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 13**

@ HS Media Center, 7 PM

Regular Meeting: Board Budget Discussion

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28**

@ HS Media Center, 7 PM

Special Meeting: Board Votes on BOCES Annual Budget & BOCES Board Members, Board Budget Discussion, Informal Budget Hearing, Board Sets Budget

**TUESDAY, MAY 11**

@ HS Media Center, 7 PM

Regular Meeting with Annual Special Public Hearing for Budget Vote

**TUESDAY, MAY 18**

@ District's Elementary Schools,  
12 Noon to 9 PM

Community Vote on Budget, Propositions, and Board of Education Elections

### INTERESTED IN JOINING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION?

Petitions for joining the Board of Education are now available and can be picked up at the Hildebrandt Building, located behind the Jr/Sr High School. The deadline for submission of petitions for nominations of candidates is April 19. There will be three open seats up for election this year. Contact the District Office for more information at 247-6551.

# Saugerties

## Central School District

SPRING 2010

## Serving the Community at Saugerties Elementary Schools

At elementary schools in the Saugerties Central School District, community service means giving in a wide variety of ways while also developing positive character.

### CAHILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At Cahill Elementary School, their "Helping Hands for Haiti Project," initiated right after the devastating earthquake, raised nearly \$2,000 for Red Cross humanitarian relief. Working with the Haitian People's Support Project, they are now collecting new and gently used books for orphans in Haiti in a program called Li, Li, Li – which means read, read, read. Volunteers will be going to Haiti this summer, bringing the books and spending time reading to orphans. As second grade teacher Marcia DeAngelis says, "We hope to instill a sense of human kindness and caring in our children and to make new global friends through our effort."

Cahill Principal Susan Gies explains that other fundraisers go on at the school on a regular basis, such as last year's pre-holiday project soliciting donations to the Saugerties Animal Shelter. Recently, Cahill hosted its fifth annual "Jump Rope for the Heart" fundraiser for the American Heart Association (AHA). According to school nurse Sherri Danza, who coordinated the event, "More than 350 students participated and raised \$2,151.95 for the AHA."

### MORSE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

After the Haiti quake, Morse Elementary School first grade student Laurel Burch wrote to Principal Don Dieckmann suggesting a fundraiser she called "Kids for Change." Her idea was that students donate their loose change to the Haiti relief effort. In her letter, she noted, "To start off 'Kids for Change,' I am going to donate my allowance." According to Principal Dieckmann, "Every day for the month of February, students brought in spare change and placed their donations into a large water jug." As to the final tally, Mr. Dieckmann reports that they collected a total of \$541, to be donated to one of the worthy relief efforts.

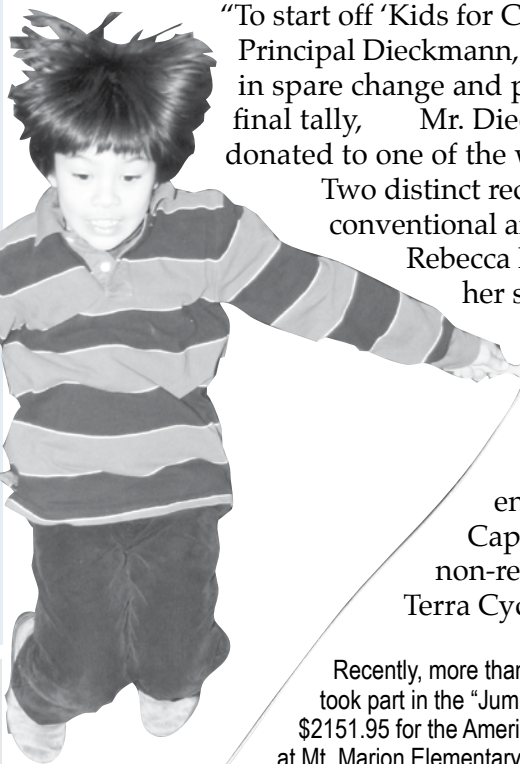
Two distinct recycling efforts are ongoing at Morse, one fairly conventional and the other known as "terracycling." Fourth grade teacher Rebecca Mulford oversees the traditional recycling program, where her students gather recyclables from designated boxes all over the building, and process them for pickup by an outside service. "I strongly feel that the students take pride in our program, and it gives them a sense that they are impacting the greater good," says Ms. Mulford.

Morse fourth grade teacher Don Glass and his students engage in what they call "terracycling." Students collect Capri Sun juice pouches, used glue sticks, chip bags, and other non-recyclable castoffs, and then process them to be sent to the Terra Cycle company, which converts them into unique products

Recently, more than 350 students at Cahill Elementary School took part in the "Jump Rope for the Heart" fundraiser, which raised \$2151.95 for the American Heart Association (AHA). A similar effort at Mt. Marion Elementary garnered approximately \$2,600 to donate to AHA for their research and health education programs.



Morse fourth grade students in Rebecca Mulford's class gather and process recyclables from collection boxes throughout the building.



*Continued on page 3*

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### WHAT'S INSIDE:

Primary Autism Program Expands .....	2
Elementary School "MAPs" Student Progress.....	3
Unsung Heroes .....	4
High School Students See Government in Action .....	5
HANDS Team Helping Students Cope in Jr/Sr High School .....	6
Regional Art Show .....	6
Health and Fitness: It's Elementary .....	7
Jr/Sr High School Students Participate in Hubble Telescope EROs Project .....	8
JRHS Students Study Alternative Energy Sources.....	8
Welcome to New School District Administrators .....	8



# District's Primary Autism Program Expands

## Giving Students the Best Learning Environment

The Primary Autism Program (PAP), offering valuable support for the District's students diagnosed on the autistic spectrum and their families, is now in its third successful year. Originally housed at Riccardi Elementary School, the program's growing numbers made it necessary to add a new section and relocate to a larger space at the Cahill Elementary School last fall.

"The students' transition to their new space has gone very well," says Sue Gage, the District's director of Special Education.

At Cahill, the students are now divided into two sections: a kindergarten-first grade level and a first-second grade level. The groups are using two classrooms conveniently connected by a central multi-use space. The flexibility of the space enhances one-on-one learning activities as well as group activities in an environment structured to accommodate the individual needs of the children. Each classroom of six students has one teacher and two assistant teachers.

Bringing the program in-house in 2007 has proved to be a step in the right direction. It improved students' opportunities to grow and develop. It also provided a valuable benefit to local taxpayers. As part of an integrated plan to implement a full-day kindergarten program and by bringing the autistic students home, the District received increased amounts of State Aid, as well as saved money on transportation and tuition to out-of-district placements. These savings and the revenues generated by the new initiatives were more than the actual cost to implement the programs.

"It's been a win-win solution for everyone," Ms. Gage says.

Since the early 1990's, the rate of autism has increased exponentially around the world with figures as high as 60 per 10,000. Boys outnumber girls four to one. In 2007, the Centers for Disease Control reported that 1 in 150 children are diagnosed with autism annually. That rising number is evident locally, too. Twelve years ago in Saugerties schools, there were just five students diagnosed with autism; today, that number is at 48.

With the increase in the number of Saugerties students with autism, the District finally reached the point where the desirability of running an in-house program was matched by the ability to afford it. Until the fall of 2007, the District was not able to provide this learning environment to the autistic population, and students instead were bused to special programs outside of the District.

### What is Autism?

Autism is a complex developmental disorder that usually shows its symptoms by the age of three. It not only affects a child's ability to communicate, it also impairs social interaction; two key components necessary for success in both school and society. While the disorder presents great challenges, autistic children often have special talents in visual or performing arts, and can contribute greatly to a school's learning community when given the proper structure for their distinctive gifts and needs.

This was not only a very expensive solution, but was not in the best interest of the students. However, community support of the 2007-2008 school budget made it possible for the District to offer its own program, specifically designed to address the autistic students' unique needs.

"We really wanted to give the autistic students the best learning

environment, and that's having them here, in their home school district," Ms. Gage says. Indeed, there are many important benefits: The children don't spend long hours being bused to and from faraway schools. They attend classes such as art, music, and physical education with students in the regular education program, which gives them more opportunities to be exposed to appropriate role models. "Being in a self-contained program outside of the District doesn't give that opportunity as all the students are there because of a specific disability or behavior," Ms. Gage explains. "It's a very important part of their success."

Andrea Klein, mother of 6-year-old Tyler Hoyt who is in his second year of the program,

couldn't agree more.

"It's been extremely beneficial to Tyler," she says. "Tyler had no speech when he was diagnosed. Now he can write, talk, and is learning how to tell time. He gets to mainstream with other children in the classroom and in the school. He rides the bus to school with the neighborhood children. He loves it!"

She also says the staff has helped her learn how to work more effectively with Tyler at home. "They are wonderful," she says. "They have so much patience and are so dedicated to the children."

**"We really wanted to give the autistic students the best learning environment, and that's having them here, in their home school district."**

*-Susan Gage,  
Director of Special Education*

**Children in the Primary Autism Program are thriving in their District-housed environment.**



Autistic children possess special talents that must be nurtured in a way that suits their unique needs. With early diagnosis and intervention, studies show that autism is treatable and significant outcomes can be realized.



## Serving the Community at Saugerties Elementary Schools ...continued from page 1

like backpacks and pencil cases. For each item sent to Terra Cycle, two cents is donated to St. Jude's Hospital, the charity chosen by the students. "This project teaches students about economics, efficiency, and environmental science, and we hope, will inspire them towards a better world," shares Mr. Glass.

### MT. MARION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At Mt. Marion, sixth grade teacher and Student Council advisor Charlene Frasse reports a litany of community activities that the students engage in monthly. In October, students wrote letters to servicemen and women as part of their Support Our Service People program. At Thanksgiving, they mounted a food drive, donating two truckloads of groceries to the Saugerties Food Pantry.

A December visit to the Ten Broeck Commons senior facility in Lake Katrine found Mt. Marion students making holiday ornaments with residents, and then singing seasonal songs for them. After the January earthquake in Haiti, the student-organized "Hope for Haiti" project collected silver coins at the school, raising \$300 for the relief effort. On February 9, Mt. Marion students participated for the first time in the "Jump rope for the Heart" fundraiser, garnering \$2,600 for the AHA. Student Council president Mason Rothe comments, "It is so rewarding just doing good things and knowing that someone out there is benefitting from our efforts."

### RICCARDI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

While other community service efforts may not address needs as dramatic as the Haitian Relief projects, they are nonetheless vitally important to local communities. Riccardi Elementary School Principal Mike Miller explains, "Before Christmas, our entire school conducted the annual 'Riccardi Cares Campaign' – which this year took the form of a food drive for the Saugerties Food Pantry." Instead of children bringing in gifts for their teachers, principal, etc, students and their families were asked to send in a food donation. The drive was scheduled in such a way that the food collected before the holiday was delivered at a time when the shelves might otherwise be bare. "It worked very well, and the food pantry was thrilled," said Principal Miller.

According to teacher Joanne Arcadipane, the Riccardi Cares Campaign started four years ago. Since then, thanks to the generosity of Riccardi children and their families, yearly donations have benefitted the American Red Cross, The Saugerties Food Pantry, Toys for Tots, The Saugerties Animal Shelter, Family of Woodstock, and Ronald McDonald House. "I am always

amazed how much children can do when they work together," exclaims Mrs. Arcadipane. "This campaign really shows our students that giving is just as important – and often more rewarding – than receiving."

"As educators we are always looking for that perfect teachable moment – this initiative provided that opportunity," observes Principal Miller. "By giving to those less fortunate than themselves, the children, as it should be, experience the joy of giving to its fullest."



Morse Elementary fourth grade teacher Don Glass works with students on a "terracycling" project. Students collect a variety of non-recyclable cast-offs that are then sent to the Terra Cycle company, who converts them into unique products like backpacks and pencil cases.

## Morse Elementary School "MAPs" Student Progress

Students at Morse Elementary School are expected to reach higher levels of achievement, thanks to the newly implemented MAP (Morse Achievement Program), now being piloted at the school. "The philosophy of the MAP program is that we will not allow students to fail," says Morse Elementary School Principal Don Dieckmann.

"The program is for fifth and sixth grade students, who sometimes find working their PlayStations more important than achieving in school," observes Dieckmann. "Students sometimes do not see the long-term consequences of their choices. This is a crucial time to promote a strong work ethic and pride in achievement, and this

program strongly encourages students to complete their assignments successfully."

The MAP program is based on the concept of students successfully accomplishing "essential tasks," long-range projects and important assignments that must be completed to demonstrate mastery of the subject area and confirm readiness for promotion to next grade level. Morse fifth and sixth grade teachers worked together with Principal Dieckmann to determine what the students would be held accountable for, while also referencing New York State learning standards.

When essential tasks are not completed to the satisfaction of the classroom teacher, students are placed on academic probation, which continues until the task has been completed. Regardless of grades from other work, each essential task must be satisfactorily completed before a student may be promoted to the next grade level. This approach ensures students have completed the work necessary to their educational development and sets clear expectations for academic success. While this is the first year the program has been in place, thus far only one student has been placed on academic probation, and he has since been reinstated, according to Mr. Dieckmann.

Essentially, the MAP program makes students, staff, and parents accountable for the success of each child. "I think a good analogy for this cooperative effort is a tripod," says Mr. Dieckmann. "With one leg each – the parents, the students, and the teachers – all working together, it will form a strong base. If only one leg is not holding its weight, the whole structure is weakened."

Recently, sixth grade student Zack Speed successfully completed his latest MAP project, creating a movie poster for the book, *The Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days*. Of the program, Zack says, "I think it's very good. It helps us with lots of different subjects." His mother, Garnet Banas, agrees that the program has made a difference in Zack's work ethic. "He knows that if he doesn't get it done, he won't pass."

Asked how she knows the program is working, Zack's mom says, "He looks forward to doing his work now, because the teachers make it fun and help him with it. When he gets an assignment, he starts working on it instantly. Plus, it has improved his grades."

Fifth grade student Abigail MacIsaac completed her recent MAP

project on the book, *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, by E.L. Konigsburg. She created a clever, delicate mobile, suspending various excerpts of her book report-like project as discrete elements. Asked how the MAP program helped her motivation on the project, Abigail shares, "I wanted to get my report done early, and do my best so I would not be on academic probation. It helped me to try more."

"The students have a healthy fear of being placed on academic probation, and so have been working extra hard to meet the requirements and do well on these projects," claims fifth grade teacher Heather Fanelli. "I think that the introduction of the MAP program has been a positive. In years past, some students would prefer to take a zero rather than have to complete the assignment. The MAP program ensures that they will complete their task successfully."

**"I think that the introduction of the MAP program has been a positive."**

*-Heather Fanelli,  
Fifth Grade Teacher*



Morse Elementary School fifth grade student Abigail

MacIsaac is proud of the mobile she created for her recent MAP project on the book, *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, by E.L. Konigsburg.



# Unsung Heroes

## Saugerties Central School District Computer Lab Assistants

The world has many unsung heroes, but in this century the most appreciated may very well be the technology-savvy experts who keep our computers and their various accessories running smoothly. They come to our rescue when the screen freezes, when those frightening “fatal” error messages pop up in the middle of a project, or when the printer suddenly “cannot be found.” The District is fortunate to have just such a group of professionals who are not only experts in their field, but also dedicated to the education of children.

There are about 30 computers in each of the six student computer labs (one in each building) across the District, as well as one on nearly every faculty and staff members’ desk, bringing the total number of machines into the hundreds. There is one computer lab assistant in each building to solve the problems that come with the exciting – yet sometimes trying – world of technology. Many of us struggle with the inevitable headaches that one computer brings into the office or home – it’s difficult to imagine having dozens to maintain.

If computer hardware or software fails in the Saugerties High School, a call goes out to **Don Yacullo**, computer lab assistant. “We are truly blessed to have Mr. Yacullo here,” says Timothy Price, principal. “He’s a dedicated professional. He’s here every day. He’s always positive and always helping out. If he’s asked for something, he gets on it immediately. No one could ask for a better employee.”

Mr. Yacullo’s desk is in the High School Computer Lab, but he can be found more often at a student or teacher’s desk working his magic on a malfunctioning computer, printer, or scanner.

In between calls for assistance, he guides students through a myriad of software programs including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Movie Maker, as well as online programs used for student instruction. Working in the District for 10 years now, his days are filled with everything from technology troubleshooting to determining the most cost-effective and time-efficient way to produce school print jobs to, on more than one occasion, looking up an access password for a forgetful student.

Mr. Yacullo, with a background in electronics, special education, and music, has an easy demeanor, certainly an asset in a position requiring so much patience. He says he likes working with the computers, but his real enjoyment comes from working with the students. “The kids have such a great sense of humor and great energy,” he says.

In the Junior High School, it’s **Lisa McCormack** whom students and staff turn to for help in learning the intricacies of the School’s computer hardware, software, and online instructional sites. She keeps the Junior High School’s computer lab running smoothly, but her duties extend far beyond the lab.

“Lisa is an invaluable resource for our building,” says Thomas Averill, principal at the Junior High School. “Her job takes her through-

out the building. I see her working with teachers in classrooms, students in the computer lab, and troubleshooting on a daily basis. In fact, she was pivotal in the change over and implementation of Infinite Campus, our new data management system. Her energy level is inexhaustible.”

At Lawrence M. Cahill Elementary School, **Donna Rogers** is ready to rescue students and staff when a SmartBoard (interactive, electronic whiteboard) ceases to communicate with its computer, a scanner needs to be connected to the network, or when a printer’s ink cartridge runs dry.

“Mrs. Rogers is a highly motivated member of our staff who goes out of her way to enable students and staff members to be successful,” says Susan Gies, principal at the school. “She is a valued asset to our school for her dependability and knowledge of computer technology.”

Indeed, when Mrs. Rogers started working for the District five years ago, she was already a veteran of the technology world. An IBM employee for many years, she was a programmer and later an operations manager for the computer company; but working with the students is far more exciting and interesting she says.

“I love to see the kids ‘get it’ – to reach the point of understanding,” she says. “It’s the best part of the job and makes every day worthwhile.”

Mrs. Rogers assists both teachers and students in a wide range of technology needs from loading and updating program software, to keeping kindergarten students on task as they learn keyboarding skills, to maintaining and even sanitizing the equipment, which has become very important with the threat of flu viruses looming all around.

At Grant D. Morse Elementary School, **Karin Maines** makes sure everything is up and running when it comes to the building’s computers. Some might consider the job daunting, but Mrs. Maines, who worked 10 years as a computer programmer for IBM, looks forward to learning something new every day in the rapidly changing world of technology.

“Anything students or staff need, technology or computer related, Mrs. Maines is the person we go to,” says Donald Dieckmann, principal. “I’m not technological at all, so she’s been very helpful to me. It’s unusual for her not to know the answer to our questions, but if she doesn’t, she will find it. She’s one of the hardest working people in the school.”

Mrs. Maines, who has worked in the District for 10 years, has been at Morse since 2003. Her days vary greatly, but she’s never lacking for something to do. Besides operating the computer lab and supporting the technology needs of students and teachers on a daily basis, she maintains the Morse’s monthly calendar, and designs and prints a wide range of school publications including event posters, tickets, and programs, as well as student academic awards.

“I really love what I do,” she says. “I’m ecstatic to be here working with the students and teachers. They are such a great group of people to

**Donna Rogers**



Donna Rogers works with students in Grades K-6 at Cahill Elementary School as they learn keyboarding skills.

**Marine DiPaola**



Marine DiPaola often troubleshoots with teachers over the phone or in the classroom when she’s not working with students in the Mt. Marion Elementary School’s computer lab.

**Lisa McCormack**



Part of Lisa McCormack’s response to the implementation of the District’s new technology is working with students designing “ha-

**Don Yacullo**



Don Yacullo, computer lab assistant at the Senior High School, helps students navigate software and online instructional websites.

**JoAnn Longendyke**



JoAnn Longendyke guides students through a Kidspiration math lesson in the Riccardi Elementary School’s computer lab.

**Karin Maines**



Karin Maines works with teachers in the Lawrence M. Cahill Elementary School.







A wall chart, created by Lisa McCormack, hangs in the Junior High School computer lab to aid students in keyboarding skills.

work with and in such a great atmosphere!”

**Marine DiPaola**, computer lab assistant at the Mt. Marion Elementary School for 12 years (and before that library assistant at Riccardi Elementary School for 10 years), is a familiar face in the District. She repairs and maintains the school’s computer hardware, installs and updates software, helps with any technology issues that arise, and helps teachers and students navigate the many computer programs used to support the curriculum. Her grand finale every year is a PowerPoint presentation for the school’s graduation ceremony featuring photos of the students taken throughout the year – a wonderful collection of school memories for parents to enjoy.

“I love seeing the kids improve and grow in their knowledge of technology,” she says about her job. “Watching their progress, year after year, is very rewarding.”

“Mrs. DiPaola is great,” says Larry Mautone, principal. “She’s fabulous, always willing to help not only in the computer lab, but with extracurricular activities. She prints our academic and quarterly student awards and volunteers to serve on committees for the school and helps out wherever she can. She’s a great asset to the school and we’re very glad to have her.”

It all started in 1988 for **JoAnn Longendyke** when she first volunteered at the Riccardi Elementary School. Since then, her enthusiasm for her job has only grown with each passing year. Her duties range from operating the school’s TV studio to assisting students and teachers in the computer lab to maintaining the District’s website.

“Mrs. Longendyke has boundless energy,” says Michael Miller, the school’s principal. “She’s a take charge person, always willing to go above and beyond the call of duty.”

Whether she’s guiding students through flow charts in Kidspiration, a software program that helps students develop thinking, literacy, and numeracy skills; facilitating a connection through Skype, software that supports voice and video calls over the Internet between Riccardi students and a classroom in Brooklyn; or uploading information to the District’s website, Mrs. Longendyke is always on the move.

“It’s a busy, busy place,” she admits. “But I love it! Especially working with the elementary students. Their minds are so open – you can actually see the learning taking place.”



...ibilities at the Junior High School has been the ...w data management system, Infinite Campus. Here she ...ang tags” for a Home and Careers class assignment.



ers and students daily in the computer lab at Morse

**Computers are used to store and process almost every aspect of school business today, from academic and attendance databases, to library books and publications access, sports schedules and bus routes, and even the heating and lighting systems. They are also used, of course, as educational tools. Students use them as they research and write book reports, essays, and poetry; compare and analyze math problems and science experiments; and prepare presentations of their work to share with their peers in the classroom.**

## High School Students See Government in Action

High School teacher Nicole Tucker’s Participation in Government class traveled to Albany in January for a first-hand look at New York State government in action. There, they met with State Assemblymen Pete Lopez and Kevin Cahill, as well as State Senator John Bonacic, all of whom were very gracious and anxious to answer the students’ questions.

“The highlight of the trip was definitely when Senator Bonacic took us onto the Senate floor,” says Ms. Tucker.

The Senate floor – where bills and laws are debated by our State legislators – with its rows and rows of red leather-chairs, walls covered with shimmering 23-carat gold leaf and carved mahogany paneling, and marble arches towering above the visitor’s gallery – was an impressive sight. The contrast between

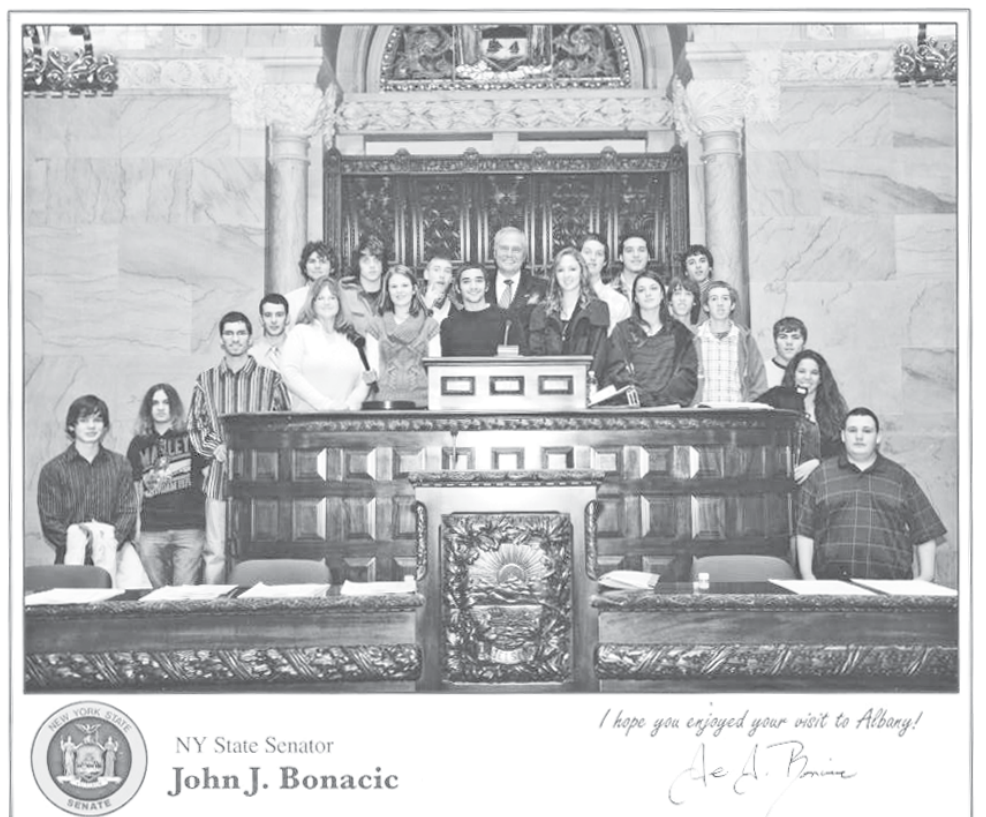
the debate arena and their classrooms was not lost on the 17- and 18-year-olds. It was here where students quizzed the Senator, who had just come from the Governor’s budget presentation, about school funding.

Assemblyman Cahill, whose office helped organize the one-day trip, gave a description of what his job entailed before answering questions on issues ranging from the Governor’s State of the State address to creationism versus evolution in the classroom.

Assemblyman Lopez also met with the students, giving them an idea of the day-to-day work that takes place in government. “They asked some tough questions about the economy and the environment,” Ms. Tucker added. “I am extremely proud of them and the manner in which they presented themselves.”

Due to budget constraints, all District field trips have been cancelled for the 2009-2010 school year. “But the students and I believed that this experience was too important to pass up,” Ms. Tucker says. “So each student paid his or her own way (transportation and food), and all of them have said it was well worth it.”

*Rainer Reeves-Cohen, a junior at the High School, was asked to join the government class on the trip because of his efforts to be part of the solution to the District’s budget shortfall. He has been organizing students and members of the community in a coordinated effort to bring about positive change. By meeting with government officials, he was able to further the grassroots project he began several weeks ago.*



The Saugerties High School Participation in Government class and their teacher, Nicole Tucker, joined Senator John Bonacic for a photo at the Senate Chamber dais during their visit to the State Capitol.



# HANDS Team Helping Students Cope

## Improving Social, Emotional, and Academic Performance

A new crisis and behavior prevention team at the Junior-Senior High School, called Helping and Nurturing Diverse Students, or HANDS, is all about giving students some assistance in coping with the everyday problems inevitable in the lives of teenagers. Whether it is peer pressure, bullying, problems at home, or any combination of the above, the conflicts and struggles teenagers deal with often interfere with the educational process.

“Basically, what we try to do is be preventative,” says Dominic Zarrella, dean of students at the Junior High School. “Our goal is to prevent problems before they escalate. It’s not controlling behavior as much as changing it.”

With a vision of a school environment where every student is accepted and nurtured by all members of the District and community, the HANDS team has taken on the 3-part task of 1) creating a non-reactive, non-confrontational building environment; 2) improving student accountability; and 3) improving social, emotional, and academic learning and performance.

“Our rationale is that redirecting the negative interactions and stereotypes of particular students and programs will create a positive school culture for all. We’ll all be on the same page,” says Gina Kiniry, Junior-Senior High School social worker. “It will ensure the optimum high school experience and save time and resources.”

Mr. Zarrella and Ms. Kiniry, along with the HANDS team (a group of teachers, staff, teacher aids, monitors, and bus drivers) have been receiving training from Ulster BOCES staff on techniques and strategies for better communication with students about what kind of behavior is expected in the school environment. The HANDS team members then share what they have learned with their colleagues at in-house workshops.

Now, if a conflict comes up in the classroom, cafeteria, or hallway that cannot be resolved, teachers now have the option of “redirecting” the students to Ms. Kiniry or Mr. Zarrella, rather than write up referrals for the students.

“We’re doing as much of this as possible, but eventually we hope to create a Redirect Center, a room where students can go for mediation,” Mr. Zarrella says. “It would be a place for students and teachers to go for support and would be flexible and responsive to what the need is at the time. The reality is things change. For example, with technological advances such as Facebook and MySpace, things can happen overnight. It’s imperative to stop things quickly, before they escalate.”

The program is in its infancy now, with the HANDS team working on a volunteer basis as they are trained and train their colleagues. They meet after school on their own time.

“It’s a huge undertaking, but we’re making progress,” Ms. Kiniry says. “There’s a lot less frustration for everyone.”

“The big emphasis right now is to put the Redirect Center in place for next year,” Mr. Zarrella adds. “We want everyone’s input so we can make sure everyone has what they need to make it work.”

# Teacher Focuses on Building

## Students’ Self-Esteem

Students who bully other students have long been Junior High School English teacher David Rubenstein’s pet peeve, so 12 years ago he applied for grant funding for an anti-bullying program. The grant money ran out years ago, but the veteran teacher of 43 years is still there for the District’s students.

“I’ve come to fully appreciate the importance of being there for them,” he explains. He doesn’t discipline, he says; he mostly listens and encourages the students to talk their problems out. Mr. Rubenstein, who seems a little larger than life despite his small stature, might plop a pink hat on top of his head to make a point or wear a favorite T-shirt proclaiming, “When people talk, I listen.” The students have learned to expect the unexpected when it comes to Mr. Rubenstein. They have also learned to trust the teacher, who reinforces their confidence and self-esteem.

“I have witnessed, all too often, the effects of bullying on the self-image of children,” he explains. “I have also come to realize the positive effect that good self-image can have and what a deterrent to bullying it can be.”

At the beginning of every school year, Mr. Rubenstein brings a presentation on anti-bullying to students in the Junior High as well as Grades 4, 5, and 6 in all four of the District’s Elementary Schools. The assemblies foster discussion about how to avoid being bullied and strategies on how to deal with it. Students are encouraged to take the microphone and talk about their own experiences.

“I tell students we need to respect each other’s differences. You don’t get to feel big at the expense of somebody else.”

Bullying can range from hitting, shoving, name-calling, threats, and mocking to extorting money and treasured possessions. Some kids bully by shunning others and spreading rumors about them. Others use email, chat rooms, instant messages, social networking websites, and text messages to taunt others or hurt their feelings.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), one-third of students experience bullying at school, and almost one-third report having bullied someone. It’s important to take bullying seriously and not just brush it off as part of growing up. The effects can be serious and affect kids’ sense of self-worth and future relationships. Remember. . . in severe cases, bullying has contributed to heart-wrenching tragedies, such as suicides and school shootings. Bullying of any sort should not be tolerated.

# How Can I Help My Child

## Deal with Bullying?

**Work with the school to help your child or teen handle a bullying problem. Also, encourage your child to talk to you about it and give them the following advice:**

- Walk away from the situation.
- Don’t hit back, don’t talk back, don’t e-mail back.
- Tell an adult whom you trust – a teacher, the principal, the school bus driver, or the lunchroom supervisor – about what happened.
- Talk about it with your brothers or sisters, or with friends, so that you don’t feel you’re alone.
- Find a friend to be with in the places where you don’t feel safe.

# Student Work Exhibited in Regional Art Show

This year, the artwork of seniors Marilyn Chu and Shylah Chiera was included in the annual Columbia-Greene Community College Regional High School Art Show. Both students have been consistent since Grade 9 in their interest and dedication to art, have taken all the art classes offered, and have intentions of continuing to make art a part of the lives. Selecting featured students “is always a difficult choice, but especially this year with such an abundance of talent in the graduating class of 2010,” says Patricia Moore, art teacher and chair of the High School Art Department.





## HEALTH AND FITNESS: It's Elementary

Recognizing the links between healthy bodies and healthy minds, the District's elementary schools are encouraging students to eat well and get plenty of exercise. Following is a just a sampling of the schools' health-oriented events and activities.

### RICCARDI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At Riccardi Elementary School, physical education was not confined to gym class this winter. Beginning in December and continuing through February, about 30 students in Grades 4-6 participated in an afterschool "Fit Club," joining physical education teacher Ted Suttmeier and school nurse Denise Dittus once a week for fun, exercise, and tips on healthy lifestyles.

"We did a lot of team-building games," Mr. Suttmeier says. In one activity, for example, students were charged with the task of carrying, and emptying, a five-gallon tub of tennis balls—using ropes instead of their hands.

In general, he says, club members played games in which there were no real winners or losers. The fact that the activities were cooperative, rather than competitive, was a plus for some students, suggests Mr. Suttmeier. (The school's afterschool intramural program, he notes, tends to attract a different type of student—the kind who relishes competition.)

Mrs. Dittus regularly spoke to the children about health-related issues. "Some of my talks centered around reading and comparing food labels, understanding the food pyramid, and knowing what ingredients really are in soda, fast food, and processed foods," she reports. "Our goal was to get students thinking about both exercise and nutrition as ways to achieve healthy lifestyles."

### MORSE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This winter, the sounds of bouncing basketballs filled the air at Morse Elementary School, where fifth grade teacher Heather Fanelli organized a girls' basketball clinic during the months of December and January. The afterschool clinic ran for six weeks, with third and fourth grade students meeting on Wednesdays, and fifth and sixth grade students meeting on Thursdays. "Eighty-two girls signed up to participate, and they had a great time!" exclaims Mrs. Fanelli.



The Riccardi Elementary School Fit Club gave students a chance to engage in valuable activities focused on exercise and nutrition. After some vigorous physical activity, led by physical education teacher Ted Suttmeier, students participated in a discussion with school nurse Denise Dittus about the importance of making good choices in what to eat. The Fit Club is an after school program for students in Grades 4-6.

Knowing that a good number of those attending the clinic were unfamiliar with the game, Mrs. Fanelli began with the basics. "For many, this was their first experience at basketball, so I introduced the basic skills of passing, dribbling, shooting, and defense to them," she explains. "It was a great way for our girls to become active and possibly develop a love for the game."

Mrs. Fanelli is also organizing a District-wide girls basketball league that begins on March 20. The league is open to all girls in Grades 3-5 living within the Saugerties Central School District.

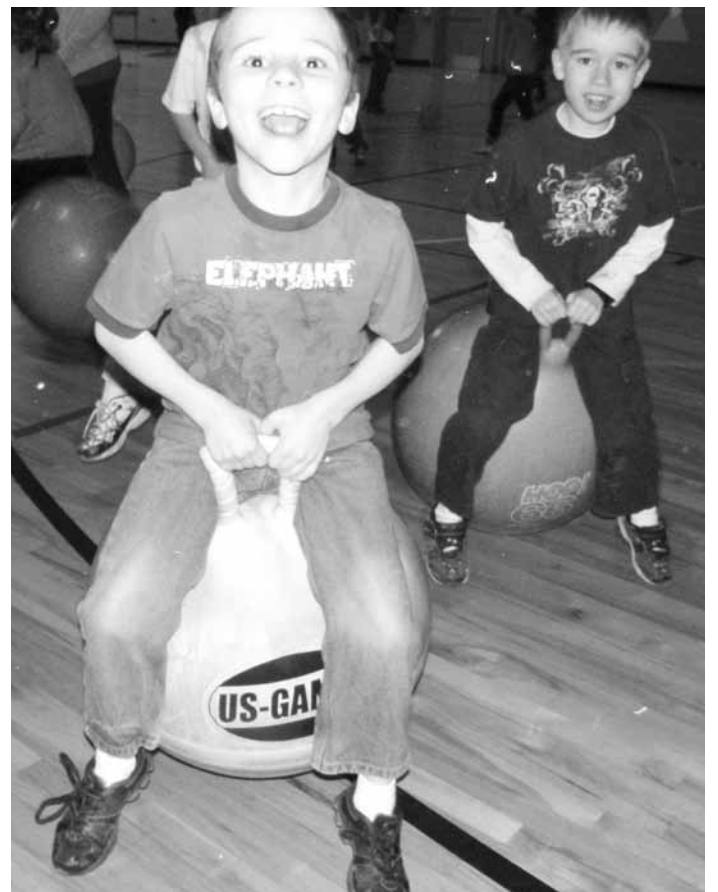
### MT. MARION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At Mt. Marion Elementary School, students literally jumped at the chance to get fit and to help others. The school participated in the American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser, with the proceeds (about \$2,600) being earmarked for medical research and programs that help prevent heart disease and stroke. Physical education teacher Melinda Glover coordinated the February 9 event, with assistance from fellow physical education teacher Chris Curnan and Mt. Marion's Student Council.

The entire study body took part in the special day. "Even if a student did not raise any money, they participated in the event," explains Mrs. Glover. "We explained to the students that they were jumping in honor of boys and girls with special hearts." If children were not able to jump rope because of a physical disability or other issue, they were encouraged to try alternatives like hop scotch or pogo sticks. At the end of the event, everyone was treated to heart-healthy snacks, including popcorn, pretzels, granola bars, vegetables, fruit, raisins, and goldfish crackers.

### CAHILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At Cahill Elementary School, students took important steps towards physical fitness during a school-wide project called Healthy Steps. For 10 days in October, students, teachers, and family members kept track of how many steps they took on a particular day. In class, teachers talked about diet and exercise; during recess, students were encouraged to run or walk laps around a



Mt. Marion students of all ages jumped for heart and health at a recent fundraiser for the American Heart Association. Besides jump roping, students found creative ways to jump for the cause, including riding hopping bouncing balls and pogo sticks, and playing hop scotch.

course set up on the playground. The students were then helped to convert their steps into miles. "The total number of miles for those 10 days was 3,234," school nurse Sherri Danza reports. "This activity helped raise awareness about the importance of proper nutrition and exercise."

Cahill also offers a fitness club, which hosts health-oriented guest speakers (including a triathlon coach, a former military fitness instructor, a karate teacher, and a nutritionist) and encourages children to run, climb, and play spirited games of kickball, soccer, and basketball. Fit Club founder Sally DePoala, a fifth grade teacher, runs the club with assistance from Mrs. Danza and gym teacher Steve Below. "We all have the same goal: to help students improve their fitness and overall wellbeing," Mrs. DePoala declares. "If students are fit and healthy, their self esteem goes up, their ability to focus for long stretches at a time improves, and this positive feeling spills over into all areas of their life," she concludes.





## Students Participate in Hubble Telescope EROs Project

The Saugerties Junior-Senior High School is one of 18 schools across the country participating in the Space Telescope Science Institute's Early Release Observations (EROs) Pilot Project. More than 100 District students are taking part in this great space adventure.

To understand the project, it's important to understand what an ERO is. In May 2009, astronauts made much-needed repairs to the Hubble Space Telescope, including the addition of new high-tech cameras that improved the telescope's sensitivity 10 to 30 times. By September, new images – the deepest and most detailed yet – of the universe were being sent back to Earth by the upgraded observatory. These awesome images, called Early Release Observations or EROs, portray incredible celestial events such as a dying star, a clash among galaxies, and a turbulent birthplace of stars.

"Their mission is to select one of four EROs (the Butterfly Nebula, the Pillar in Carina Nebula, Omega Centauri, or Stephan's Quintet), then research and design a scientific project around it," says Mary Bishop, teacher and chair of the Junior-Senior High School Science Department. Ms. Bishop has worked with the Space Telescope Science Institute's (or STScI) for more than 10 years designing high school science curricula.

In the EROs project, students have the option of writing essays and poems, and/or making videos, PowerPoint presentations, and posters to explain why the image inspires or interests them and why it is important for Hubble scientists to survey and study the universe. Many of the students presented their projects at the District's Board of Education meeting in February.

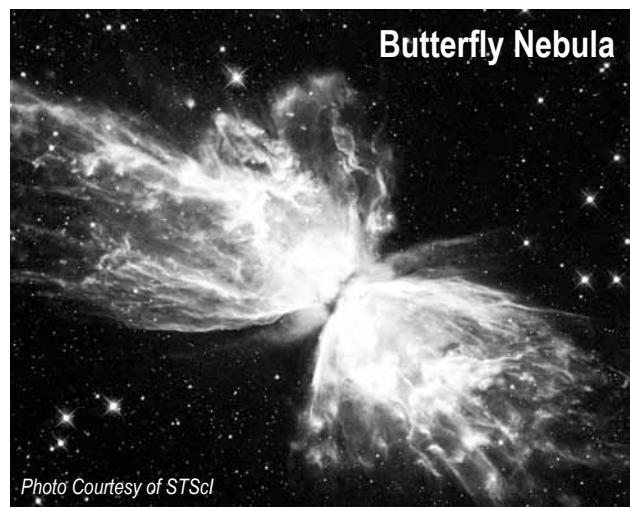


Photo Courtesy of STScI

What resemble dainty butterfly wings are actually roiling cauldrons of gas heated to more than 36,000 degrees F. The gas is tearing across space at more than 600,000 miles per hour – fast enough to travel from Earth to the Moon in 24 minutes!

*The Saugerties Junior-Senior High School is one of 18 schools across the country participating in the Space Telescope Science Institute's Early Release Observations (EROs) Pilot Project.*

Also, still in the works, is the highly anticipated arrival of a permanent installation of the Butterfly Nebula, one of the Hubble telescope's EROs since its 2009 upgrade. The lithograph's exact size isn't known yet, but it will be "quite large" and will grace the Junior-Senior High School's new lobby.

## JRHS Students Study Alternative Energy Sources

### Stimulating Interest in Science and Engineering

As fossil fuels continue to diminish and climate change poses an ever-increasing threat, scientists around the world are searching for new and more efficient methods of generating energy – wind turbines, solar systems, nuclear power, bio-fuels, and many others are being studied as possibilities. While we are registering good progress in the field of alternative energy, the heaviest burden will probably fall to the next generation of researchers – today's students – to come up with newer and better alternatives.

"It will be up to them to find solutions to our energy problems," says John Washburn, technology teacher at the Junior-Senior High School. With that in mind, Mr. Washburn gives his students a real-life energy predicament to ponder.

Nantucket Island, 33 miles off the coast of Massachusetts, has a year-round population of about 10,000, which swells to 55,000 during the summer tourist months. The island community has worked for many years to find more efficient and greener ways to provide electrical power to its residents.

Using this scenario, Mr. Washburn asked his students to develop a way to totally repower Nantucket Island – with an eye toward the future. The assignment integrates many different academic subjects and calls upon students' problem-solving and critical thinking ability, which have been identified as essential skills for success in the modern workforce.

"To do this, they must extrapolate what the Island's needs will be in 30 years," he explains. Students must also consider that the Island's population is growing at the rate of 2 percent a year as they calculate

### DID YOU KNOW?

Research studies related to renewable sources of energy have produced some interesting facts. The Clean Energy & Climate Policy for U.S. Growth and Job Creation: An Economic Assessment of the American Clean Energy & Security Act and the Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act reports that as many as 1.9 million new jobs could be created across the United States within the renewable energy sphere. It would also account for an increase in annual household income in the U.S. by \$1,175 per year, and Gross Domestic Product could register a rise of \$111 billion by 2020.



the cost and maintenance of power units and the amount of energy they would generate. They must submit their projects in "proposal" form to Mr. Washburn.

"Their proposals were impressive in their quality, completeness, and understanding of power generation and its cost, the cost of maintaining complex machinery, and their ability to adapt their proposals to the island's current and future power needs," Mr. Washburn reports. "Interestingly, although they could have selected any power source, they all chose renewable and sustainable power generation methods."

## 2009-2010 School Year Welcomes New District Leadership

Meet the Saugerties Central School District administrators: Seth Turner, Superintendent (center), with G. Michael Apostol, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction (left), and Allen Olsen, Business Official (right).

