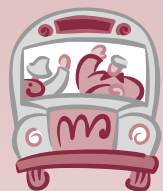


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focus

Preparing World Class Citizens

September, 2006

New school renovations to go before voters in October

Roofs, boilers, drainage and classrooms make up \$9.28 million bond

Aging roofs and boilers and the need for three new classrooms at Veeder Elementary School make up the majority of a \$9,286,000 million capital project to go before South Colonie voters in the fall.

The work will be presented to residents in three separate propositions on Thursday, October 19. The referendum is part of the annual school bus replacement vote held at this time each school year.

The last capital project (see story on the right) was approved by voters in December, 2003. So why take on another capital project so close to completing the last one? There are several reasons for this:

The Building Conditions Survey — required by the state and completed by the district's architects last spring — identified certain areas of the district's roofs and boilers as needing replacement within 3-5 years. There is a long lead time between voter

Continued on page 5 ... October vote

What I did on my summer vacation ...



Michael Fitzgibbon (far left) was one of two Sand Creek Middle School students selected to participate in Tech Valley Summer Camp in August. On this day he delves into the world of biotechnology (story on page 3).

District turns up the heat this summer on school building improvements

The finishing touches being put on renovations

It's been a busy summer for the South Colonie Central School District as construction crews put the finishing touches on a \$22.8 million capital improvement project. The project, which affects all eight schools and the bus garage, has been ongoing since receiving voter approval in December, 2003. The summertime, however, was particularly hectic as crews took advantage of the 10-week vacation period to complete as much work as possible while school was not in session.

"It's very rewarding to see this long project come to fruition," said Superintendent Michael Marcelle. "We ask for everyone's patience as some minor details are finished up this fall. Overall, I think people will find the changes and enhancements quite exciting."

Continued on page 2 ... capital project

... capital project

Continued from page 1

South Colonie schools are planning a variety of open houses and ribbon cuttings to unveil these improvements when classes resume. For schedules and updates please check back to the district web site at www.southcolonieschools.org.

Here's a brief overview of this summer's construction activity by schools:

- **Colonie Central High School** — About a dozen science classrooms were totally or partially refurbished. There is new seating, painting, carpeting, heating and air conditioning in the auditorium, bigger student lockers with new doors, kitchen and tennis court renovations, new ceilings and lighting throughout the school, modernizing of the electrical and fire systems, new main entrance doors and upgrades to the parking lot and outside lighting poles. The track has been resurfaced and restrooms were renovated.

- **Sand Creek Middle School** — Science room renovations, heating and fire alarm upgrades, new lockers and satellite clock.

- **Lisha Kill Middle School** — Completion of building addition with six new classrooms, science room renovations, refurbished auditorium with new seating, carpeting and painting, new ceilings, heating and fire alarm upgrades, new tennis courts and lockers.

- **Saddlewood and Shaker Elementary Schools** — Completion of new school library additions, fire alarm and heating upgrades.

- **Veeder Elementary School** — Completion of the cafeteria and gym expansion, fire alarm and heating upgrades, new entranceway, drop off area and parking lots. A new roof was added a year ago.

- **Forest Park Elementary School** — Upgrades to the electrical, fire alarm and heating systems and a new roof.

- **Roessville Elementary School** — Upgrades to the heating and fire alarm systems, new hallway carpeting and re-paving of the parking lot.

A look at South Colonie's summer work from top to bottom: Crews paint the high school auditorium, the new high school tennis courts take shape, cabinets are installed in Sand Creek Middle School's new science labs, a new coat of blacktop is applied in preparation for Lisha Kill Middle School's new tennis courts with the new classroom addition in the background.





Sand Creek Middle School student Amie Jefferson (seated) explores the inner workings of a computer at Tech Camp.

Students write letters ... no, emails home from summer tech camp

If you're the parents of Sand Creek Middle School students Amie Jefferson and Michael Fitzgibbon you won't be getting a letter home from summer camp this year. Expect an email, instead. The two were selected as participants in the third annual Tech Valley Summer Camp sponsored by Questar II and the Capital Region BOCES in August.

The Tech Camp enabled students to actively engage with the emerging technologies of Tech Valley: Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Information Technology and Alternative Energy. Participants spent two days learning on the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute campus in Troy, one day at the Center for Functional Genomics on the SUNY East campus in Rensselaer, one day at Plug Power in Latham, and one day led by Waste Management and Recycling Products, located at MapInfo in Troy.

Teachers and superintendents from 48 area school districts nominated students for the opportunity to participate in the free tech camp. Some of the summer educational experiences included:

- Investigating fuel cell technology and exploring alternative energy sources at Plug Power.
- Viewing nanostructures through the use of scanning electron microscopy at the RPI Future Chips Constellation.
- Simulating forensic investigations and the use of biotechnological techniques including DNA analysis at the State University at Albany's Center For Functional Genomics.
- Disassembling and reassembling computers, participating in PowerPoint Adventures and an Internet scavenger hunt.

South Colonie News & Notes

Colonie High ranks No. 3 on 'Best Local Public School' list

The readers of *Capital Region Living Magazine* have voted Colonie Central High School as the third "best local public school" in the Capital District.

The area's leading life and leisure magazine conducts the annual readers poll each spring and publishes the results in its May issue. The survey covered 116 categories from "best weekend getaways" to "best pizza" in the area. Colonie Central High School finished third behind Bethlehem and East Greenbush. For more visit www.capitalregionliving.com.

Beverly Miller appointed to new administrative position

South Colonie Schools has appointed Beverly K. Miller as the district's new Assistant Superintendent/Management Services. She replaces Peter Haessig who retired at the end of the 2005-06 school year after 19 years of service to South Colonie.

Miller had been employed by the district as the Business Administrator since 1994. She began her career at South Colonie more than 30 years ago as an Account Clerk and has also served as District Treasurer. Anjelieeque Martinez is the district's new Treasurer/Business Office Manager.

CCHS student earns art award

Congratulations to Colonie Central High School student Jakiem Crayon, who received the Artistic Expression Award from Albany County. The county's Youth Recognition Awards is a program that recognizes students for improvement and personal growth in academics, athletics and the arts and for their contributions to the community. Jakiem is a talented artist and fashion designer.

District joins the fight against childhood obesity

New health curriculum promotes exercise & smarter food choices for students & families

Children have certainly gotten a lot rounder these days since their parents were in school.

In fact, over the past 30 years the child obesity rate has more than tripled for elementary-aged kids and 9 million children aged 6 and older are considered overweight, according to the National Institute of Medicine.

To help combat the problem locally, a group of South Colonie teachers got together over the summer to brainstorm ways to help students and families increase their level of exercise and make better food choices throughout their lives.

In educational jargon, the group cooked up a comprehensive wellness and obesity curriculum for students in K-12 that it will roll out on the school menu this fall. Translation: It's lots of fun and exciting activities that they hope the young and old will really sink their teeth in to.

"We want South Colonie students to be successful academically but also leaders in the push for healthier lifestyles," said Veeder Elementary School teacher Laura Backus. "Healthy kids are smarter kids."

Some of those activities district-wide include various educational classroom activities this school year, but also things like "Real Fruit Fridays" where everyone is encouraged to eat fruit for a snack instead of junk food.

South Colonie's elementary and middle schools will kick off FEET — Family Exercise Everyday Together. This two-week program encourages students and families to exercise 30 minutes a day and set healthy eating goals at home. Students will also be motivated with random MOB times during school hours, short for Move Our Bodies.

Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge — a one-day fitness and exercise event — is being planned for grades 5-8 as well as Girls and Boys Nights Out to promote healthy lifestyle choices in a fun way.

An aerobic workout program that encourages fitness partners and goal setting will muscle the high school health curriculum this year while the school PTAs will join in by distributing helpful health newsletters and articles to students and staff.

Colonie Central High School health teacher Tom Holb said the action plan is

based on one of the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) key strategies to prevent obesity. "Getting our students excited about physical fitness will hopefully give them valuable skills they can use to maintain their health out in the real world," Holb said.

Veeder health teacher Debra Varsame couldn't agree more and that's why she is so excited about this new curriculum she helped develop. "I want to see people eating better and moving more," Varsame said. "I am even changing things with my own children at home."

Physical activity and learning

According to the American Heart Association, physical activity in children helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints. In addition, physically active children enjoy other health benefits, such as weight control, lower blood pressure, improved psychological well being and a tendency to be more physically active as adults.

Recent research also indicates that daily physical activity (such as physical education classes and recess) positively affects academic achievement in a host of ways, including increased concentration, improved reading, writing and math test scores, and a reduction in disruptive behavior.

Aerobic exercise has been shown to improve memory and may strengthen certain parts of the brain. The oxygen intake during exercise may also enhance the important connections made between neurons (nerve connections) in the brain.

Staying physically fit can give kids the endurance to sit for lengths of time while learning in a group setting, to hold their upper bodies upright and maintain eye contact needed to learn. Physical activity that strengthens the large muscle groups leads to an increased ability to hold a pencil or crayon properly and to form letters and numbers when writing and computing.

Did you know?

- **Nearly 1 in every 5 children or adolescents ages 2-19 years in this country are considered overweight.**
- **In the past three decades the obesity rate has more than tripled for elementary-aged kids.**
- **The United States has the highest prevalence of obesity among the developed nations.**





Athletics are just one way South Colonie students stay in shape.

“We want South Colonie students to be successful academically but also leaders in the push for healthier lifestyles. Healthy kids are smarter kids.”

Things like this are important to Sand Creek Middle School health teacher Stacy Sausto, who joined this curriculum committee to become a “positive role model and motivator” for students. “I am excited to get back into the classroom and help students make lifelong changes,” she said.

Kathleen Brown, a health teacher at Saddlewood and Shaker Road Elementary Schools, said she saw a need to change the health curriculum due to the “changing waistlines” of today’s students. “As educators, it’s important that we become more aggressive in helping young people learn about healthy habits,” she said.

Those healthy habits also extend to the South Colonie cafeterias, where several years ago, the district began participating in the “Choose Sensibly” program.

Choose Sensibly is a campaign being promoted by the New York State School Food Service Association and its members - like South Colonie. By placing colorful Choose Sensibly buttons, stickers and stamps on healthy snacks and drinks, food service officials hope to help students identify wise food choices and sway their buying habits for the better.

To be considered a Choose Sensibly choice, snacks and drinks must meet strict dietary guidelines. Snacks, for instance, should contain 7 grams or less of fat, 2 grams or less of saturated fat, 15 grams or less of sugar and 360 grams or less of sodium. Milk (including flavored milks) must be low fat, juices must contain at least 25 percent real juice and other beverages must have 10 milligrams or less of caffeine.

To persuade students to make the “right” choices, healthier items are displayed more prominently with less fatty chips set in the front of the snack rack and nutritious juices placed lower in the refrigerator cases where elementary students can easily reach them.

...October vote

Continued from page 1

approval and the necessary state approval of a capital project before it can begin. Voter approval in 2006 would tentatively allow for roof/boiler improvements during the summer of 2007.

New York State lawmakers approved, in 2006, a new state aid — EXCEL aid. This new allocation is targeted for certain repairs and improvements to school districts. Roof and boiler improvements are eligible for this new aid in addition to receiving approximately 52 percent state building aid on the project. EXCEL aid for South Colonie is \$1,825,000. This additional funding is currently available to schools but must only be used for new capital projects. No one knows how long this extra state aid will be available so why not take advantage of it before it goes away?

- The district has historically attempted to keep capital repairs at reasonable amounts so as not to create a large financial burden on taxpayers all at once. The average South Colonie property owner with a home assessed at \$150,000 would pay about \$13.50 a year or just over a dollar more a month to finance this capital project. Also, just like someone who uses a credit card or owns a home, the district tries to keep its debt payments at reasonable levels by spreading out repair costs.

What’s in the capital project?

- One proposition totals \$7,684,000 and calls for spending \$2,312,000 to replace original boilers (30-40 years old) at Sand Creek, Forest Park and Veeder schools and the hot water system at the high school. The other \$5,372,000 is earmarked for roof replacements at Lisha Kill, Sand Creek, Saddlewood and Shaker Road schools and one section of the high school roof.

- The second proposition totals \$1,602,000. \$1,140,000 would be spent on a three-classroom addition on the back of Veeder Elementary School to meet growing enrollment and create space for transitional/full day kindergarten which the state may require by 2010. \$273,000 is earmarked for new floor drains at three schools and the bus garage (new drains are state mandated and have to be replaced by 2008) and \$189,000 to replace some wall panels that are disintegrating in the Lisha Kill Middle School gym. If approved by voters, most of the work is expected to begin by next summer.

Have you resolved to do something different and meaningful this year?

Are you looking for a position where you can work when you want or need extra money?

SUBSTITUTING MAY BE FOR YOU!

The South Colonie Central School District is seeking substitutes in the following areas:

Substitute Teachers - If you hold a teaching certificate or a bachelor's degree, we have classroom substitute positions available for full or half day assignments. Substitute teachers are needed in all areas. \$95 per day for certified, \$87 per day for uncertified.

School Bus Drivers - We will provide training and help you obtain the necessary licenses. A high school diploma and regular driving license are required. We pay \$13 for the first 100 hours of substituting and \$13.69 per hour, thereafter.

Food Service Helpers - We have substitute positions available for lunch shifts in all of our schools. \$8.60 per hour.

School Nurses - Substitute nurses are needed in all of our schools. New York State registered nursing license required. \$15.50 per hour.

School Monitors, Custodial Workers and Typists - If you have a high school diploma, we have substitute positions available at the elementary, middle school and high school levels.

School Monitors — \$8.25 per hour.

Typist — \$9 per hour.

Custodial Worker — \$9.25 per hour. 4 or 8 hour shifts. First and second shifts.



For more information about these substitute positions, please contact the Human Resource Office or stop and pick up an application.

869 - 3576



SOUTH COLONIE PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION FORM — 2006-07 YEAR

Initial Notification to Persons in Parental Relation and Staff Pursuant to Section 409-h of the State Education Law and Commissioner’s Regulation 155.24*

Dear Parent, Guardian and School Staff:

New York State Education Law Section 409-H and State Education Department Commissioner’s Regulation 155.24, effective July 1, 2001, require all public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools to provide written notification to all persons in parental relation, faculty, and staff regarding the potential use of pesticides periodically throughout the school year. The South Colonie Central School District is required to maintain a list of persons in parental relation, faculty, and staff who wish to receive 48 hour prior written notification of certain pesticide applications. The following pesticide applications are not subject to prior notification requirements:

- * a school remains unoccupied for a continuous 72 hours following application;
- * anti-microbial products;
- * nonvolatile rodenticides in tamper resistant bait stations in areas inaccessible to children;
- * silica gels and other nonvolatile ready-to-use pastes, foams, or gels in areas inaccessible to children;
- * boric acid and disodium octaborate tetrahydrate;
- * the application of EPA designated biopesticides;
- * the application of EPA designated exempt materials under 40CFR152.25;
- * the use of aerosol products with a directed spray in containers of 18 fluid ounces or less when used to protect the individuals from an imminent threat from stinging and biting insects including venomous spiders, bees, wasps, and hornets.

In the event of an emergency application necessary to protect against an imminent threat to human health, a good faith effort will be made to supply written notification to those on the 48-hour prior notification list. If you would like to receive 48-hour prior notification of pesticide applications that are scheduled to occur in your school, please complete the form below and return it to Stephen Benedict, Buildings and Grounds, 102 Lorelee Drive, Albany, N.Y. 12205. Benedict, the school pesticide representative, can be reached by phone at (518) 869-3576, Ext. 2445, and by Fax at (518) 869-6481. He can be contacted for information on these requirements.

***NOTE: Please register again if you registered in response to any previous notifications.**

**SOUTH COLONIE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Request for Pesticide Application Notification**

If you are a person in parental relation list the school building(s) your child(ren) attend(s): _____

If you are a school employee list the school(s) or building(s) regularly worked in: _____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Written notification must be provided to all persons in parental relation and staff at the following intervals throughout the school year; at the beginning of the school year or the beginning of summer school; within 2 school days of the end of: the January break, spring recess and the end of summer school; and within 10 days of the end of the school year.

South Colonie Central School District uses an integrated pest management (IPM) approach to pests. IPM is recommended by the NYS Education Department and the US EPA.

Sincerely,

Stephen Benedict — School Pesticide Representative

Asbestos notification

In accordance with the EPA Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1987 (40 CFR Part 763), the South Colonie Central School District put in place a management plan to identify and manage asbestos building materials. Periodic Surveillances are done every six months. In addition, abatement projects have been conducted in conjunction with the building construction. Specific notifications are posted in the buildings where projects are done prior to the start of the abatement work. This spring the Triennial Reinspection will be done, reviewing and updating the management plan for all of the district buildings.

The Asbestos Management Plan for the district is kept on file at the District Office. These records are available for review during regular business hours (8:30 am- 3:30 pm) or by making a special appointment. For more information, contact Steve Benedict at the District Office, 869-3576.

Michael Marcelle
Superintendent of Schools

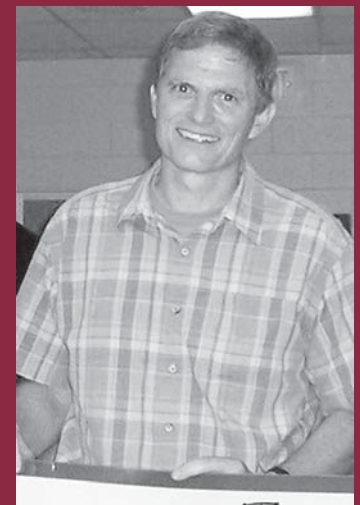
Anthony DeBlois
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Beverly Miller
Assistant Superintendent/
Management Services

David Seaver
Director of Human Resources

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In Focus Editor: John K. Noetzel



Congratulations to these outstanding Veeder teachers

A belated congratulations to two Veeder Elementary School educators who were recognized in June by Wal-Mart and Sam's Club stores with Teacher of the Year honors. Third grade teacher Richard Thompson (left photo) earned the Wal-Mart honor and second grade teacher Michael Kovarik (right photo) was recognized by Sam's Club. The awards are designed to pay tribute to local teachers who are doing an outstanding job teaching, leading and mentoring today's youth. With the awards came checks for \$1,000 each to be used by Veeder School.

SOUTH COLONIE

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