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STAFF

South COLONIE Fall/Winter 2008

NEWSLETTER

OfficeMax 'sur-plies' for Saddlewood teacher

▶ ANNE HOFFMAN A WINNER IN 'DAY MADE BETTER' NATIONAL CONTEST

Call it a "sur-plies" of a lifetime for Saddlewood Elementary School kindergarten teacher Anne Hoffman. That thanks to the local OfficeMax store, which selected Hoffman and Saddlewood this fall as winners in the company's "A Day Made Better" national educator recognition event.

Hoffman was one of 1,300 teachers across the country and four from the Capital District surprised in October with a big orange box of office supplies for her school. Representatives from the OfficeMax — Kohl's Plaza/Central Avenue — secretly arrived early in the morning and presented Hoffman with a bouquet of flowers and \$1,000 worth of supplies during the Morning Program.

"I'm overwhelmed by it all," said Hoffman, surrounded by her very excited kindergarten youngsters. "It's great to be appreciated. I'm happy OfficeMax has adopted our school because I know it will be a great benefit to our teachers and our children."

OfficeMax Manager Mike Thomson, a 1990 graduate of Colonie Central High School, said schools are chosen for the award based on need.

"We focus on schools that could benefit from the program the most," Thomson explained. "At OfficeMax, we understand the challenges our teachers face every day to fulfill the needs of their children. Personally, I enjoy being a good neighbor. I grew up in Colonie and it's so rewarding for me to be able to give back to my community."

The "A Day Made Better" surprise in-school ceremonies were part of the office supply retailer's campaign to eliminate teacher-funded classrooms, especially in this time of extra economic burden on school districts across the nation. According to studies conducted by the National Education Association, teachers spend

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South Colonie Superintendent Jonathan Buhner (center) and Board of Education President James "Tim" Ryan (right) present Colonie Central High School Psychologist Matthew Raso with a certificate of tenure. Raso was one of 34 administrators, teachers and other staff recognized at a special school board tenure reception in October. More on pages 2-3.

The Energy Educator

▶ WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS ... HAPPENS IN SOUTH COLONIE?

BY DISTRICT ENERGY
MANAGER JAMES BROWN

After emailing a district-wide reminder to shut down equipment for one of the school breaks last year, I received several responses from staff. One response in particular made me laugh.

The email read: "Jim, thank you for the reminder. I am turning off everything and heading off to the most energy wasting city in the country — Las Vegas."

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Congratulations tenured staff

▶ 34 HONORED AT FALL RECEPTION

Thirty-four of the district's finest administrators, teachers and psychologists were honored by the South Colonie Board of Education this fall for their recent tenure appointments.

A reception was held at the District Office in September where Board President Tim Ryan joined Superintendent Jonathan Buhner and other board members and administrators in presenting the honorees with certificates for this accomplishment. Featured on pages 2-3 are some photographs capturing the night. Congratulations to all!

- Matthew Botta Colonie High School Teaching Assistant
- Erica Buda Veeder Music Teacher
- Sekani Carroll Sand Creek School Psychologist
- Stephanie Cobart Saddlewood Special Education
- Stephen Doran Sand Creek Elementary Education
- Christine Festin Colonie High School Art
- David Fields Colonie High School Mathematics
- Lisa Gallacchi Colonie High School Teaching Assistant
- Elizabeth Bell Lisha Kill Elementary Education
- Joseph Guardino Lisha Kill Middle School Principal
- Lori Ira Lisha Kill Teaching Assistant
- Christine Kachadurian Colonie High School Science Teacher
- Michael Kanaly Colonie High School Teaching Assistant
- Jaclyn Lupe Colonie High School English Teacher
- Michael Marohn Colonie High School Associate Principal
- Jessica Mazzone Colonie High School Science Teacher
- Beverly Miller Asst. Superintendent for Management Services
- Joel Miller Colonie High School Music
- April Mlambi Colonie High School Foreign Language
- Marc Mostransky Sand Creek English Teacher
- Thomas Nicholson Colonie High School Associate Principal
- Catharine Olsen Colonie High School Reading Teacher
- David Pace Academic Supervisor
- Mary Ellen Pachucki Roessleville Elementary Education
- Calvin Pitts Lisha Kill Teaching Assistant
- Matthew Raso Colonie High School Psychologist
- Brain Scalzo Lisha Kill Special Education
- Michelle Schrader Colonie High School Science Teacher
- David Seaver Director of Human Resources
- Jenine Silen Lisha Kill Foreign Language
- Jennifer Szpila Roessleville Elementary Education
- Debra Varsames Roessleville Health Teacher
- Melissa Vecchio Colonie High School English Teacher
- David Wetzal Colonie High School Principal





... Hoffman OfficeMax 'sur-plies'

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nearly \$1,200 out of their pockets each year for basic classroom supplies.

Principal Ernie Casile said Saddlewood decided to apply for the OfficeMax reward over the summer because the school was starting the new Transitional Kindergarten program in September and was in need of supplies. Anne Hoffman's name "immediately came to mind," he said, because "she always goes above and beyond to make her classroom special."

Among the \$1,000 in supplies awarded to Saddlewood was a digital camera, leather chair, label maker and everything from sticky notes, scissors and pencils to glue sticks, notebooks, and classroom organizers.

More than \$1.5 million in OfficeMax supplies were donated October 1 to schools nationwide, including \$1,000 in supplies locally from each of the stores in Colonie (Wolf Road and Kohl's Plaza), Clifton Park and Rotterdam. Thomson encourages other schools to apply to OfficeMax by visiting www.adoptaclassroom.org.



Saddlewood Elementary School teacher Anne Hoffman and her kindergartners after being surprised by Colonie OfficeMax this fall for winning \$1,000 in supplies for her school in a national contest.



Two more schools earn EPA Energy Star label

Shaker Road and Lisha Kill have recently joined the list of South Colonie schools earning an Energy Star label from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

That brings the list to six schools earning this prestigious label, which signifies that these buildings operate more energy efficiently than 75 percent of the schools in the United States. The other schools are Veeder, Saddlewood, Roessleville and Sand Creek.

The Energy Star designation is one more mark of success for the district's multi-year energy conservation initiative. Since 2001, South Colonie has exceeded its energy savings projections set by the district and its energy conservation partner — Energy Education, Inc. — and avoided more than \$2 million in energy expenses.

These Energy Star Awards come on the heels of 2005's EPA honors when the South Colonie Central School District was also among 18 organizations recognized for achieving significant energy savings and leading their fields in responding to the agency's Energy Star Building Challenge. Those honored for achieving at least 10 percent energy savings included school districts, a hospital and supermarket, hotel, banking and commercial real estate companies.

Sand Creek's Brown to study in Galapagos Islands

Sand Creek Middle School Science teacher James Brown is one of 29 teachers in the nation selected to participate in an international teacher program on the Galapagos Islands.

Brown was chosen for participation in the Toyota International Teacher Program, funded by the car maker and run in collaboration with the Institute of International Education. The two-week, fully funded trip will take place in November.

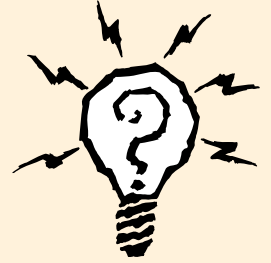
While on the Galapagos Islands, educators will observe and explore environmental projects, speak with experts and community leaders, and participate in activities that encourage global awareness about environmental stewardship.

The Galapagos Islands are an archipelago of volcanic islands distributed around the equator, off of Ecuador, South America, in the Pacific Ocean. The islands are all part of Ecuador's national park system, and are famed for their vast number of endemic species and the studies of Charles Darwin. Brown will explore the Darwin research site and work on interdisciplinary lesson plans together with educators from the Galapagos Islands that he can bring back to his Sand Creek sixth graders.

The Energy Educator

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That email made me think of my own perception of Las Vegas. Everyone knows "Sin City" is a place where luxury and excessive consumption is promoted. However, I think you would be surprised to know that beyond the bright lights and the gambling, even in the city of excess, there is interest in energy conservation.



Just as many school districts now have an Energy Manager today, so too do many casinos. One of the reasons casinos are trying to conserve energy is that customers are demanding it. In addition, it can save them a lot of money, as it has in our school district.

Looking at all the lights around Las Vegas might make the thought of energy conservation seem laughable. But things are changing even in the desert. In past years, energy was cheap. But things are different today.

One initiative currently in place in many casinos is — you guessed it — shutting down anything they can when not in use, and encouraging users of the facilities to do the same. Many resorts have also switched from incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs. Both of these practices are also in place in South Colonie.

While profits are the motivation to energy conservation in Vegas, in our school district, saving funds on energy costs helps provide more money for our educational budget.

As we start another school year, let me share an old Chinese proverb with you: "If you do not change your direction, you are likely to end up where you are headed."

Seven years ago our district made a conscious decision to change by establishing an energy conservation program. Since no other district in our area had an energy conservation program going, this was considered a gamble.

Fast forward to present day South Colonie. After our lead, most school districts in the area have followed suit and have created their own energy conservation programs modeled after our success. You are to thank for that. As users of our facilities, you are the backbone of our program's success. Over the past seven years, we have created an energy conservation culture in our schools and have avoided \$2.5 million in energy use.

So the next time you visit Vegas or see that now famous television commercial, remember, "What Happens in Vegas, also happens in South Colonie." Whether you are at South Colonie or in Las Vegas, if you see an opportunity to avoid utility waste, roll the dice. It's a gamble worth taking!