

# inside

STAFF

South COLONIE Spring 2009

NEWSLETTER

## South Colonie staff honored for recycling

### ► EMPLOYEES ACCEPT AWARDS ON BEHALF OF THEIR SCHOOLS

The South Colonie School District has once again been recognized for doing its part to help save the environment. T.A. Predel Recycling Co. presented special recycling achievement awards to personnel from six schools and the District Office at the March Board of Education meeting.

Since the district expanded its recycling efforts with T.A. Predel less than a year ago to include cardboard and office paper, nearly 20 tons of paper waste has been diverted from the Colonie landfill.

"We all know how important it is to protect the environment and conserve resources," said T.A. Predel Manager Jody A. Paige. "For a school district to turn trash into recyclable materials, it not only helps protect our natural resources from being wasted but it sets a great example for our young people."

CONTINUED ON BACK



► District staff accept special recycling achievement awards on behalf of their buildings from Jody Paige (left), Manager, T.A. Predel Recycling Co. Left to right are Lindsay Steenrod, Roessleville; Shana Marra, Lisha Kill, Stephen Benedict, District Office; James Brown, Sand Creek; and Brigham McCutcheon, CCHS. Not in photo are Shaker Road Principal William Dollard and Deborah Gentile, Saddlewood, also recognized.

## Mark your calendars!

### ► BUDGET VOTE SET FOR MAY 19TH

South Colonie Schools will hold the annual district budget vote on Tuesday, May 19th, with the polls open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the five elementary school buildings. If you live in the school district please don't forget to vote.

The proposed budget totaling \$88,610,700 was adopted by the South Colonie Board of Education April 21st after several months of public discussion and workshops. The budget continues to support key educational initiatives for all students while remaining fiscally responsible to district taxpayers in a very difficult economic climate. It also takes a two-to-three-year financial planning approach to the long-term fiscal problems facing New York State and the nation.

"Throughout this long process, which began back in October, our efforts have focused on protecting internal programs, key initiatives and educational opportunities for our students while keeping expenses at a minimum," said Superintendent Jonathan Buhner.

One new initiative proposed for next year is the addition of Full Day Kindergarten in all five elementary schools. Full Day Kindergarten will replace half day sessions now offered at Forest Park and Veeder Schools, and the Transitional Kindergarten program at Saddlewood, Shaker Road and Roessleville Schools. Educational research shows that early intervention such as preschool and Full Day Kindergarten can make a significant difference in how well children perform later on in school.

The overall budget proposed for the 2009-10 school year represents a less than one percent spending increase (+0.38%) over the current school year. Though equalization rates will not be known until July, the district projects about a 1.92 percent residential property tax increase for Colonie homes to help finance education next year.

For more on the budget visit the district web site or check your mailbox for a more detailed *InFocus* budget publication.



## ... recycling awards

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

During 2008, South Colonie recycled 21,300 pounds of office paper and 18,340 pounds of cardboard equaling 19.82 tons. What does that mean to the environment? By doing so, the company estimates the district saved 337 trees, 138,740 gallons of water and 59.46 cubic yards of landfill space.

The district also saved taxpayer money in the process, paying \$746.60 to recycling its paper waste with T.A. Predel versus \$1,688.95 had it landfilled the paper and cardboard at \$85 a ton.

Accepting the recycling achievement awards on behalf of their schools/District Office were the South Colonie employees responsible for overseeing recycling in their buildings. They were:

- Special Education Teacher, **Shana Marra**, Lisha Kill Middle School (8,240 lbs/paper)
- Sixth Grade Teacher, **James Brown**, Sand Creek Middle School (7,840 lbs/paper)
- South Colonie Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds, **Stephen Benedict**, District Office (12,960 lbs/cardboard)
- Principal, **William Dollard**, Shaker Road Elementary School (2,740 lbs/paper)
- English Teacher, **Brigham McCutcheon**, Colonie Central High School (5,380 lbs/cardboard and 1,040 lbs/paper)
- Pre-Kindergarten Teacher, **Deborah Gentile**, Saddlewood Elementary School (760 lbs/paper)
- Pre-Kindergarten Teacher, **Lindsay Steenrod**, Roessville Elementary School (680 lbs/paper).

## ▶ MAY IS OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR DISTRICT INSURANCE

**M**ay is Open Enrollment for health, prescription and dental insurance for all eligible district employees. The district offers four health plans: Capital District Physicians' Health Plan and Blue Shield of Northeastern New York; for prescription plans: Express Scripts and for dental plans: Blue Shield of Northeastern New York Delta Dental. Benefits become effective July 1, 2009. For more information and information packets regarding these insurance plans, please contact the Insurance Department at the District Office, 869-3576, ext. 2455.

## The Energy Educator

### ▶ SEPARATING MYTH FROM FACT

BY DISTRICT ENERGY MANAGER JAMES BROWN

**S**everal years ago I was asked to make a presentation to a school district that was considering implementing an energy conservation program like ours. When I got there I was disappointed to learn that many were not in favor of the program and some were even adversarial about it. As of this date, that district has still not implemented a formal program.

They gave me many reasons why they believed an energy conservation program would not work in their district, including this comment: "Even if implemented, who knows how much we could save?" This was a perfect segue to my point. If you don't start an energy management program, you are not saving. Many of their arguments are common myths about energy conservation.



**Myth No. 1:** *Leaving a light on uses less energy than turning it off and on several times.*

**Truth:** Leaving an incandescent or fluorescent lamp on uses more energy than turning it on and off as needed.

**Tips:** Get into the habit of turning off lights when you leave a room. Use natural day lighting when possible and reduce or eliminate artificial lighting.

**Myths No. 2 & 3:** *It is more energy efficient to leave your computer on when not in use. Turning my PC on and off will reduce its performance and useful life.*

**Truth:** Any time you can turn off your computer it will save energy. Computers are designed to handle 40,000 on/off cycles before failure. Shutting down a computer actually extends its life cycle by reducing the intake of dust.

**Tip:** Turn off computers and monitors at night and on weekends. Remember that these machines generate heat and can cause an air conditioner to run more.

**Note:** We have more than 1,500 computers in our district. A computer that is left on over night uses 1.42kw of electricity. At the current electric rate, that wastes 24 cents a night. For this one computer, that translates to \$88 per year. If all computers were only on during the 182 days of the school year (and off 24/7 the other 182 days a year), it would be a \$44 dollars per year savings. Under this very conservative scenario, our district would realize a savings of \$66,000 by shutting down all computers at night.

**Myth #4:** *When my appliance is turned off, it's off.*

**Truth:** Most televisions, even off, use energy to be ready to quickly turn on when you click the remote. Many appliances that have front panel power buttons, or digital displays when on are monitored by a small micro-controller on a circuit board. When it detects you pressing the button on the appliance or via remote, it pulls in a large relay, and powers the rest of the appliance. This circuit board requires a power supply, which means it is using some electricity 24/7.

**Tip:** Unplug appliances such as TVs, VCRs and DVD players, printers, etc. over long breaks.

*Check back for my myths vs. truth facts in next year's columns.*