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STAFF

## South COLONIE Fall 2011

NEWSLETTER



South Colonie teachers attended a summer Earth Science conference at RPI. Pictured are Michele Famoso (bottom left corner), Maurisa Rathwell (directly behind Michele Famoso), and Raymond Szczerba (far right at top).

### South Colonie Central Schools welcome new district staff

- Lisa Bennett ..... Lisha Kill Social Worker
- Michael Carpentieri ..... Lisha Kill School Counselor
- Peter Calantone ..... School Bus Driver
- Jennifer Casabonne ..... Roessleville Food Service Helper
- Kathleen Charbonneau ..... Lisha Kill Food Service Helper
- Joseph Coleman ..... Lisha Kill Teaching Assistant
- James Conlen ..... School Bus Driver
- Donna Davidson ..... Sand Creek Social Worker
- John Day ..... School Bus Driver
- Darcie Donahue ..... Roessleville Kindergarten Teacher
- Debbie Fountain ..... High School Food Service Helper
- Barbara Fritz ..... Roessleville School Monitor
- Laura Gara ..... School Bus Monitor
- Lori Gardy ..... Veeder Food Service Helper
- Julie Gavigan ..... School Bus Monitor
- Rudi Gerstenberger ..... School Bus Driver
- Jennifer Hazzard ..... High School Physics Teacher
- Hannah Hunter ..... Saddlewood Secretary
- Christine Guidarelli ..... District Office Keyboard Specialist
- Gerald Kallner ..... School Bus Driver
- Lauren Kaplan-Rieger ..... Veeder School Monitor
- Kristen Karbowski ..... Veeder Kindergarten Teacher
- Matthew Maes ..... Lisha Kill Special Ed Teaching Assistant
- Shawn Maney ..... School Bus Driver
- Katherine McGowan ..... Lisha Kill Food Service Helper
- Aine Masterson ..... Lisha Kill Special Ed Teaching Assistant
- Ralph Micale ..... School Bus Driver
- Heidi Monti ..... School Bus Driver
- Nicholas Morocco ..... High School Technology Teacher
- James Motta ..... School Bus Driver
- Carla Nolan ..... Roessleville First Grade Teacher
- Carolyn Nolte ..... Forest Park Food Service Helper
- Kristina Oliver ..... High School Chemistry Teacher
- Lana Otty ..... High School Food Service Helper

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### Summer Learning

#### SC TEACHERS ATTEND EARTH SCIENCE CONFERENCE

Three South Colonie teachers attended an Earth Science in “Space has No Boundary” Conference held at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Attendees included Sand Creek Middle School teacher, Raymond Szczerba, and Colonie High School teachers, Maurisa Rathwell and Michele Famoso. The summer institute brought teachers of Earth Science together through a NASA grant written by Dr. Heidi Newberg, Rensselaer astrophysicist, and the Dudley Observatory Curriculum Committee. Teachers used a combination of hands-on activities and lectures from prominent scientists as they learned how to integrate their improved knowledge of space science into their classrooms.



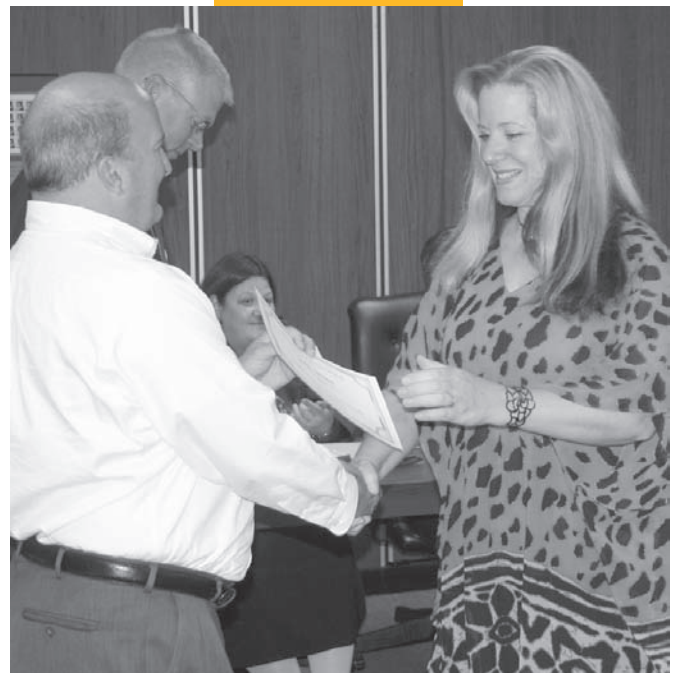
## *Congratulations tenured staff*

### ▶ 21 HONORED AT FALL RECEPTION

**T**wenty-one of the district's finest administrators, teachers and teaching assistants 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 Leonard Motto 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!

- Barbara Amirault ..... Colonie High School Special Education
- Timothy Backus ..... District Office Administration
- Courtney Bellouny ..... Colonie High School Special Education
- William Boardman ..... Lisha Kill Middle School Administrator
- Donna Buda ..... Roessleville Elementary Teaching Assistant
- Tanya DeLaMater ..... Roessleville Elementary Special Education
- Julie Jenne ..... Sand Creek Middle School Music
- Gala Knack ..... Roessleville Elementary Teacher
- Tina Krom ..... Veeder Elementary Teaching Assistant
- Tracy Krom ..... Veeder Elementary Teaching Assistant
- Robert Lemerise ..... CALC Teaching Assistant
- Christina Mathieu ..... High School Art Teacher
- Kristin Mesick ..... High School Guidance Counselor
- Dawn Napolitano ..... YDC Remedial Reading
- Elizabeth O'Clair ..... Roessleville Elementary Teaching Assistant
- Lisa Prinzo ..... Forest Park Elementary Special Education
- Christopher Robilotti ..... High School Administrator
- William Roemer ..... High School Physical Education
- Kelly Seamster ..... Veeder Elementary Special Education
- Darko Sedlar ..... High School Media Specialist
- Matthew Tarullo ..... Forest Park Elementar Physical Education





**VIEW MORE TENURE  
RECEPTION PHOTOS ON  
THE DISTRICT WEBSITE  
UNDER PHOTO GALLERIES**



## Other News & Notes

### ▶ DISTRICT CAPTURES THREE AWARDS IN STATE COMMUNICATIONS CONTEST

**S**outh Colonie captured three awards in the 32nd annual Communications Contest sponsored by



the New York School Public Relations Association (NYSPPRA).

The district earned an Award of Excellence in Writing for the April, 2011, story: "The Wheels On Old School Bus No. 55 Keep Going 'Round and 'Round,'" an Award of Honor for its postcard celebrating the district website's first birthday in March, 2011, and an Award of Merit for the overall design and function of the South Colonie website. About one-third of the more than 300 NYSPPRA entries earned awards in 2011 in a closely drawn judging by communications professionals from around the country.

### ▶ CCHS TEACHER ATTENDS INTERNATIONAL SUMMER WRITING WORKSHOP

**C**olonie Central High School Social Studies teacher Erin Lasky attended a 10-day summer writing workshop through the American Federation of Teachers in Washington D.C.



Over the 10 days, a team of American teachers was joined by teachers from Colombia, Poland, Northern Ireland, and South Africa to continue work on the Civic Voices International Democracy Memory Bank. The Memory Bank is a powerful resource for transmitting the stories of the world's great democratic struggles from one generation to the next.

Lasky worked with the AFT to develop the Memory Bank project and teachers' guide and has used the project in her social studies classes.

## welcoming new district staff

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- Rene Papa ..... Roessleville CAI Teaching Assistant
- Anthony Renna ..... School Bus Driver
- Kaila Ricciardi ..... School Bus Monitor
- Yvanette Ramirez ..... School Bus Monitor
- Jason Semo ..... Director of Athletics, Physical Ed and Intramurals
- Alison Smith ..... Forest Park Kindergarten Teacher
- James Snyder ..... School Bus Driver
- Rosemary Soltis ..... Lisha Kill School Counselor
- Timothy Stockton ..... High School Special Ed Teacher
- Amanda Trance ..... High School Food Service Helper
- Susan Weiss ..... Veeder Reading Teacher
- Bryan Zajesky ..... High School Special Ed Teaching Assistant



**PLEASE REMEMBER TO:**

1. TO TURN OFF ALL LIGHTS IN YOUR OFFICE/CLASSROOM WHEN THE ROOM IS UNOCCUPIED, EVEN IF YOU ARE LEAVING FOR JUST A FEW MINUTES.
2. USE 1/2 LIGHTING WHERE POSSIBLE.
3. TURN OFF COMPUTERS, MONITORS, SPEAKERS AND PRINTERS AT END OF EACH WORK DAY AND DURING LONGER PERIODS OF NON-USE.

*Other News & Notes*

▶ **TSA PLANS AVAILABLE FOR DISTRICT EMPLOYEES**

**S**outh Colonie Central School District employees are eligible to participate in a Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA) plan. If you are interested in participating or would like more information on what is available, please have your TSA plan agent contact Shirley Kelty at the District Office, 869-3576, X2455.

▶ **NOTE: NOVEMBER IS OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR DISTRICT HEALTH INSURANCE**

**N**ovember is Open Enrollment for health insurance ONLY for all eligible district employees. The district offers two health plans: Capital District Physicians' Health Plan and Blue Shield of North-eastern New York. Benefits become effective January 1, 2012.

Employees who do not enroll in a health insurance plan during the open enrollment period in November will have to wait until the next open enrollment period for health insurance beginning May 1, 2012. Please note that May 1 is also open enrollment for dental and prescription plans as well as health insurance with an effective coverage date of July 1, 2012. All deductions will be on a pre-tax basis. Please contact the Insurance Department at time of enrollment if you do not want that option.

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*

**SOUTH COLONIE DISTRICT ENERGY PROGRAM REACHES 10-YEAR MILESTONE, AND STILL GOING STRONG**

**BY DISTRICT ENERGY MANAGER JAMES BROWN**

**T**his year, 2011, marks a milestone for me because it has been 10 years since I began my job as Energy Manager in South Colonie. Boy, how things have changed.



At the time, no other district in our area had such a position. However, in early 2001, our Board of Education and Superintendent made the decision to begin an energy conservation program. The purpose was to divert funds from our utility budget to our instructional budget. We all worked together to implement the new program, and in our first year avoided more than \$300,000 in utility expenses. It wasn't long before other districts started to take notice of our success. Today, in 2011, you would be hard pressed to find a school district that does not have an Energy Manager on staff.

This year is also significant for me because of a switch in location from Sand Creek Middle School to Shaker Road Elementary School. As with any change, I have had to learn many new routines. Colleagues from my old building have sent many encouraging messages, and I am receiving much support from those at my new location. One day prior to the start of the new year, Erika Bushey (fourth grade teacher at Shaker Road) was describing classroom jobs that she has her students perform. After listing several of them, she said with a smile, "and you're going to like this one — Energy Monitor."

I did like it. I also like the words, "We will try to use less electricity," written on one of the large hallway windows. Whether it is done for the protection of our environment, for cost savings, or both, students today are growing up learning about conservation.

The conservation ethic in South Colonie continues to divert funds from our utility budget to the classrooms. That is more important than ever in today's difficult financial climate.

Over the past 10 years, we have avoided more than \$3 million in utility costs. We did this in spite of making additions to several of our buildings, adding many more computers, expanding air conditioning/heating, and numerous other electrical consuming devices. And, believe it or not, we use less electricity and natural gas today than we did in 2001.

As we start another school year, I encourage you to keep looking for opportunities to save. Remember to shut down/off whenever possible, and know that when you do, you are personally contributing to the success of our program. No savings is too small — shut off whatever you can, whenever you can. Printers, monitors, computers, lights, etc. — it all adds up!