

MARCH 2009

Excellence

ON DISPLAY

VICTOR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS MAGAZINE



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VCS Board of Education

Jenner Davis
Timothy DeLucia
Mark Hamilton
Kathryn Hart
Stephen Martin
Robert Rose
Scott Sprague

The Board of Education meets on the second Thursday of the month in the Victor Education Center at 7:15 p.m. Residents are welcome to attend.

Board Clerk

Maureen Goodberlet,
(585) 924-3252 ext. 1402

Superintendent of Schools

Timothy J. McElheran

Excellence on Display is the official publication of Victor Central School District.

(585) 924-3252 ext. 1407

www.victorschools.org

"Always, Kids First."

Superintendent Tim McElheran Plans, Prioritizes 2009-2010 Budget

The news headlines continue to hit us like a fierce winter storm... "2008 Foreclosure Filings Set Record," "Bank Stocks Plunge on Fresh Insolvency Fears," "...Job Cuts," "Unemployment Reaches Record Highs," and the headline that hits closest to our school home, "NYS Budget Projects \$700 million cut in school aid."

There is no question that the economic storm we face is unprecedented, but as Superintendent Tim McElheran told residents at a January 15th Community Budget Forum, "Snow melts . . . We will get through this, too."

One way McElheran says he plans on getting the Victor School District through this crisis and absorbing New York State Governor David Patterson's projected \$1,749,000 cut to our district is by developing a more innovative, conservative budget— one in which everyone will share the responsibility. Thanks to the help of input from school administrators, staff, parents and community members, Mr. McElheran, along with VCS Business Official, Michael Vistocco, has already begun drafting such a budget, one that he says will "limit program reductions for children, staff losses and provide an affordable true value tax rate." According to McElheran, this will be the most transparent budget ever.

Under the New York State's initial state aid proposal for the 2009-2010 budget, the impact on the Victor Central School District looks like this:

- Loss of Middle Class Star Rebate (\$174 to \$384)
- Deficit Reduction Assessment: a loss of \$1,912,352

- Other aids such as Transportation and BOCES will increase \$162,619
- Net reduction excluding building aid: \$1,749,733 (12%)
- Pre-school special education costs: 15% of costs would be paid by district (approximately \$150,000) rather than State and County

Key VCS 2009-2010 budget elements include the following:

- Possible need for 8 teachers to address a projected increase of 100 students (\$400,000)
- Salary and benefits increase of \$1,341,000
- No new programs that would impact district finances
- Elimination of district-wide positions as they become vacant or through a reduction in force
- Limited use of reserve funds

The overall big financial picture for the VCS 2009-2010 school year translates this way:

- Salary and benefits increase plus additional staffing (based on a projection of 100 new students) : \$1,741,00
- Proposed state aid loss: \$1,749,733
- Pre-School Special Education Expenses: \$150,000
- Total state aid loss and expenditure growth: \$3,640,733

While McElheran says the final New York State budget will ultimately look different than what Governor Patterson has proposed, we must work with the preliminary draft to develop our district budget. Another factor that will play into

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2009-2010 Budget Meetings

The 2009-2010 VCS Budget process is in full force. Meetings have already been held during the month of February. The month of March is filled with still more opportunities to learn about the budget, both at regular Board of Education meetings and special budget sessions.

Now, more than ever your support is needed. Please consider coming to one or all of these special informational meetings.

March:

- Wednesday, March 4th at 7:15 PM; Budget Meeting
- Thursday, March 12th at 7:15 PM; Regular Board Meeting
- Thursday, March 19th at 7:15 PM; Budget Meeting (if necessary)
- Thursday, March 26th at 7:15 PM; Budget Meeting (if necessary)

May:

- Budget Newsletter: A special budget newsletter detailing specific components of the proposed budget will be mailed to residents in early May.

- Public Forum: On Tuesday, May 5, a Public Forum will be held at the Victor Education Center at 7:00 p.m. Highlights of this evening will include a broad budget overview as well as the opportunity for residents to meet the new Board member candidates.

- Voter Registration: On Tuesday, May 12, residents may register to vote from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room B at the Victor Education Center.

- Budget Vote: On Tuesday, May 19, the official budget vote will be held at the Victor Junior High gymnasium from 6:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Eligible voters must be at least 18 years old, a registered voter and a resident of the district for at least 30 days prior to the May 19 budget vote.

- Family Fun Fest: On Tuesday, May 19, during the budget vote, VCS will host its annual Family Fun Fest.

Face of VCS Board of Education to Change

Two 3-year terms on the Victor Central School Board of Education will be decided at the May 19, 2009 district budget vote. Terms held by long time Board members Scott Sprague and Mark Hamilton are expiring.

Board of Education candidates are nominated by petition. Petitions for the May 19, 2009 election are available at the District Clerk's Office beginning on Monday, March 23.

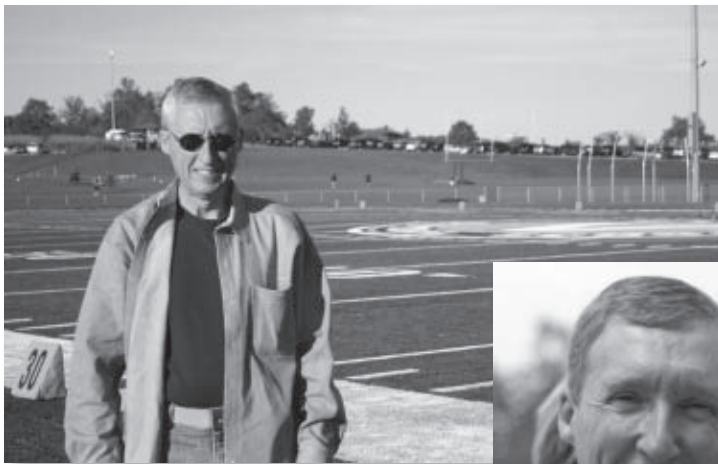
Completed Board of Education Petitions are due by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 20, 2009 in the District Clerk's Office.

For more information, please contact District Clerk, Maureen Goodberlet by phone at 924-3252, ext. 1402 or by email her at goodberletm@victorschools.org

The End of an Era

Superintendent Timothy J. McElheran Paved the Way for All of Us

When Timothy J. McElheran officially steps down from his post as Superintendent of Victor Schools at the end of this month, he will leave behind a long legacy – more than ten years of dedicated service to literally tens of thousands of students, parents,



teachers, staff and community members. But mere years of service do not begin to measure McElheran's contributions to Victor Schools.

In fact, they are so many and diverse that they touch nearly every inch of our 180- acre school campus. The student population has grown dramatically since McElheran's first year as Superintendent – from 3,000 students in 1998 to close to 4,200 students today, an increase of more than 30%!

The district's student population is not the only thing that has changed. If you look at the landscape of the campus it is easy to see many of the improvements that have taken place during McElheran's tenure. From building additions and renovations that range from dozens of

new classrooms, three new cafeterias, two new gymnasiums and a state-of-the-art Arts Center, to new athletic facilities, improved roadways, parking lots and a new transportation center and Building and Grounds facility, McElheran's list of accomplishments has impacted each and every building, from the inside-out.

Programmatically, McElheran has lead an educational renaissance, steering students into the twenty-first century like a seasoned captain maneuvering his ship through uncharted waters. He was the man behind the beginning of Victor's



Universal Pre-Kindergarten and full day Kindergarten programs, the leader behind the high school's Project Lead the Way pre-engineering, International Baccalaureate, Alternative Education and GED programs. Under McElheran, Victor Schools serves more students with special needs than ever before with more programs and services than ever before. It was on McElheran's

watch that Victor Schools doubled the size of its Advanced Placement offerings, implemented the Wilson Reading program, incorporated a secondary School of the Arts program and opened the door for the Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA), a high school collaboration with the University of Rochester.

But, McElheran's accomplishments do not end here.

During his Superintendency, Victor Junior High was recognized as a School to Watch by the New York State Education Department and Victor High School was ranked in the top 1% of high schools in

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MESSAGE FROM **TIM McELHERAN**

My time at Victor Central Schools is quickly drawing to a close. After an “extended stay” at the request of the Board of Education to build one of the most challenging school budgets in my administrative career, I am confident that when I leave on March 27th the success of the district will continue for years to come.

The Victor School community has been an idyllic place to live, learn and lead. I cannot think of a better place to end my career nor a finer community in which to begin the next chapter of my life.

While there is no doubt that I am ready to enjoy a little more time for personal growth and time with my family, I am certain that there will be occasions when I wish I were back doing what I have done for more than 4,000 days! It has been an honor to be a part of such a wonderful organization and to have been associated with so many outstanding people.

As most of you know, one of these outstanding people will be your next Superintendent, Dawn Santiago-Marullo. I have had the privilege of working directly with Dawn for the past eight years. Dawn’s most recent role as Director of Special Projects and Programs is just a small reflection of her leadership skills and qualifications. There is no doubt in my mind that between Dawn’s exemplary education/ leadership experience and her personal energy, enthusiasm and creativity, Victor Central Schools is in good hands, especially during these very challenging times.

Thank you for making my time at Victor Schools so incredibly rewarding. I know that you will work in partnership with Dawn to ensure Victor Central Schools will not only be a continued haven for educational excellence but a warm and nurturing environment for all of our children.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. McElheran



“I cannot think of a better place to end my career nor a finer community in which to begin the next chapter of my life.”

MESSAGE FROM **DAWN SANTIAGO-MARULLO**

It is with great honor that I follow in the footsteps of my predecessor, mentor and colleague, Tim McElheran, as your next Superintendent.

As you know, Mr. McElheran's influence at Victor Schools is unsurpassed. For nearly eleven years, he has challenged us all –from students and teachers, to staff, administrators, parents and community members – to do more, dream more, and become more. The results of these high standards and ideals are all around us.

They are in the smiling faces of our successful students and their proud parents, the creative energy and enthusiasm of our teachers and staff and the positive, proactive outlooks of our administrators. You can see it in the crowds of community members who fill our auditoriums and athletic facilities to watch a play, athletic or musical event.

From the carefully planned and maintained condition of our buildings to the pristine state of our grounds, Tim's challenge to do more, dream more and become more has benefited all of us through the years.

As your next Superintendent, I am extremely proud to carry on this tradition of excellence. My vision for this district is to continue to be a high performing organization where all children and adults can thrive.

Our current economic conditions will undoubtedly challenge us like never before, but I am confident that the strength and character of this district and community will carry us through these times with great success.

I look forward to working with each and every one of you as we move forward in our continued pursuit of excellence.

Take care,



Dawn A. Santiago-Marullo



“My vision for this district is to continue to be a high performing organization where all children and adults can thrive. “

International Club

Promotes Cultural Awareness and Acceptance

They have “traveled” to Asia and South America – all without packing a bag or boarding an airplane. Thanks to Victor High School’s International Club, once a month, students get a first class ticket to places they might never actually visit in person.

This school year, our foreign exchange students gave them virtual (Powerpoint™) tours of their native lands. Last November, Bega Ilamanov (Bega), with the Pacific International Exchange Program, gave students a lesson on his homeland of Turkmenistan. In December, Amerah Jasmine (Jasmine) with AFS Intercultural Programs spoke about her native Philippines and last month, Maria Fernanda (Fena), also with AFS, gave students a taste of Chile.

Once a loosely organized group of students, the “International Club” was originally formed to welcome the district’s foreign exchange students and help them adjust to our school. This past October, however, recognizing the growing need *and* desire of our students to become



Bega giving a powerpoint presentation on his homeland of Turkmenistan

more globally-aware and connected, the Board of Education approved the group as an official school club.

Under the leadership of Victor High School Spanish teachers, Angelica Reyes and Vivian Richelsen, the newly organized International Club is now comprised of around 30 students, all searching for a greater glimpse of the world. “The goal

of the international club is to expose students to different cultures and traditions...to promote



Breanna Dean enjoying dinner from the India House



VCS Engages The World is an on-going feature dedicated to telling the community how VCS students, teachers and staff are connecting with the world both during and after school. If you have a story with international connections, please contact the Office of School and Community Relations at 924-3252, ext. 1407.



"I have learned from being in the International Club that the world is getting more similar than different."

multi-cultural awareness...to encourage students to embrace differences. The more educated our children are, the more apt they are to understand others and to

lose their fear of the unknown," Reyes said.

Losing the fear of the unknown comes in many forms. In addition to learning from our foreign exchange students, many of our very own Victor students also use this forum to share their roots and traditions,

things like Chinese New Year and cookie decorating. This year, the club has celebrated everything from Halloween and Thanksgiving to December holidays. They even had an early dinner one day after school with authentic food from the India House.

Filling our students with fun, food and facts is not all the International Club does. According to co-presidents, Erin Thomas and Emily Mydosh, this group also fills



Our foreign exchange students from left, Maria Fernanda, Bega Ilamanov, & Amerah Jasmine

them with a new perspective. "I have learned from being in the International Club that the world is getting more similar than different," Mydosh said. At the same time, she said the group learns that many countries and cultures are still very different from the United States.

Co-president, Erin Thomas says the club, which meets once a month is an important facet of our school campus. "International Club is very important to Victor because it promotes cultural awareness and acceptance. Our district isn't very diverse and I think the club helps students learn about customs, religions, etc. that are not represented in Victor. I would encourage anyone interested in joining the club to talk to Emily, myself or one of our advisors."



VHS Spanish teacher, Angelica Reyes sets up the club's dinner from India House.

The International Club meets once a month during 5th period in room 315 at the Victor High School. New members are welcome anytime!

Heart of Excellence

Coaching For Life

*They have touched the lives of thousands of students through the years, both as teachers and coaches. Whether they are on the tennis court or on the volleyball court, they teach our children to play with passion, persistence and pride. Above all, they teach them to play with heart. This month Victor Central Schools proudly honors Coaches Bill Coleman and Shelly Collins with one of the district's highest accolades – **The Heart of Excellence.***

Coach Bill Coleman

When Bill Coleman came to Victor Schools in 1960 to be a sixth grade teacher at the Intermediate School, there was no tennis in the district. That all changed four years later when in 1964 he became the first head coach of the boys' varsity tennis team. Eleven years later, Coleman expanded on his passion for tennis when he began coaching Victor's brand new varsity girls' tennis team. The rest is history. And what a history it has been! Although he retired from teaching in 1998, Coleman continued to stay on at VCS as the tennis coach. This year, after coaching tennis here for nearly 45 years, he is retiring.

Coleman may be retiring, but he is hardly hanging up his tennis racquet. This Waterloo native, who has been playing the game since he was ten years old, says he will continue to play when he can. He still plays in a 140 year and over (combined

ages) tournament in Bristol Harbor where he lives! Tennis is not the only thing Coleman will do in his new spare time. He looks forward to playing golf, taking walks and traveling with his wife Muriel. He will also have more time to devote to his to own "home team" which consists of two daughters, seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Known as "King Coleman" to his players and the community, Coleman looks back on his time with Victor with great pleasure and pride. "It was a real privilege to be associated with so many great people," he said.

As for the game, "Sure, the game has changed quite a bit through the years with more modern racquets and year-round lessons, but the kids are still not much different from 1960. Through the years, they have shown excellent sportsmanship on the court," Coleman said, a quality he believes will serve them well not just in sports, but in life.



"Face life the way you play tennis...with dignity."

Heart of Excellence

Coach Shelly Collins

The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle named her 2008 Co-Coach of the Year, but from our perspective, girls varsity volleyball coach Shelly Collins has been an award winner for many years.

While this twenty-two year Victor coaching veteran is proud of this most recent recognition, she quietly shuns the spotlight, quickly redirecting it to her team and how it is merely a reflection of how well they did. This past season, the girl's varsity volleyball team had a 20-1 record including a second straight Section V Class A title and state title.

But a winning record does not always translate into great coaching, according to Collins. "Some years, during our least successful seasons...one year, the team had a 5 and 13 record...this is when I did my best coaching... and there were no awards for those years!" she said with a smile.

Win or lose, Collins, who has been a physical education teacher at Victor High School for the past twenty years, is very proud of her players, not only for their physical prowess, but for their mental capacity to work hard, whatever their place on the team. "We don't set goals per se to win so many games or titles. My philosophy is simple, play better than you did the day before."

Collins, a Naples native, said it was her father who instilled many of these values

in her. (He still plays in a mens' 65 years and older softball team today!) She says Coach Pat Beya of the Naples School District also made a big impression on her. And, it seems Collins, herself, continues to pass along these lasting impressions to her own players.

"Many of my players may never play volleyball again after they leave Victor Schools but I know they can take the lessons they have learned from the game and apply them in life. That's a great thing," Collins said.



"Play better than you did the day before."

Kindergarten Registration

*Children who turn five on or before December 1, 2009
are eligible to register for Kindergarten.*



The following documents are required at time of registration:

- Original birth certificate. (Copies of baptismal certificates can not be accepted as proof of age.)
- Immunization records signed by a doctor.
- Proof of residency. (e.g., driver's license, utility bill, lease agreement, letter of intent.)
- This is also a good time to provide a complete dental examination for your child. Proof of a dental examination will be required in September. If you need assistance in securing dental care for your child, please contact the school nurse.
- Proof of a physical exam will be required to begin classes in September, 2009. (This physical must have taken place after September 1, 2008 to be valid for the 2009-2010 school year.)

For more information, contact the VECEC main office at 924-3252, ext. 6410.

Required Immunizations

*Students who will be starting school in September, 2009
are required to have the following immunizations:*

- 3 doses of diphtheria toxoid (usually DTP, DT, Td or DTaP)
- 3 doses of OPV (or 4 doses of IPV or 3 doses of eIPV)
- 2 doses of live measles virus vaccine after the age of 12 months (given as MMR #1 and MMR #2)
- 1 dose of live mumps vaccine after the age of 12 months (given as MMR#1)
- 1 dose of live rubella virus vaccine after the age of 12 months (given as MMR#1)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 1 dose of varicella or proof from health care provider of having had chicken pox disease (varicella)

VIS Celebrates 27 Years of Skating For Heart

... And The Man Who made it All Possible



VIS Physical Education teacher, Jeff Keller

When Physical Education teacher, Jeff Keller, came to the Victor Intermediate School in 1979, he had had no idea how large his legacy would be when he decided to retire. This spring, he will find out. After 30 years of teaching and coaching Keller has decided to call it a day at VIS.

But Keller's "day" will be anything but over after he leaves. In fact, each February, during VIS' annual Skate for Heart fundraiser for the American Heart Association, he will undoubtedly be remembered as the man who made

it all possible. After all, it was Keller who brought the Skate for Heart program to Victor in the first place.

This former New York State Coordinator for the American Heart Association's Jump for Heart program originally had the idea to incorporate a volunteer roller skating fundraiser for the American Heart Association back in 1982 when VIS began a unit on roller skating. "I just thought it was a good cause," he said.

Good doesn't even begin to tell how successful Keller's Skate for Heart program has been through the years. Thanks to Keller's vision to combine a beloved sport (roller skating) with a worthy cause (The American Heart Association), this program has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars through the years. One year, Keller said they raised nearly \$24,000 – money that was raised all during PE classes.

Keller says that every year about one third of VIS students (250-300 children) participate in the Skate for Heart during their PE class. This past February was no different. Students are sponsored by the number of minutes they skate. For Keller and The Skate for Heart program, those minutes have really added up through the years.



“Always Kids First”

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the state budget impact is whether the budget is passed by the April 1st deadline. History does not bode well for this. Although the budget has been on time (though often at the eleventh hour) for the past two years, prior years have been less optimistic. The budget was on time in 2005. Before that it has been late twenty out of twenty one years.

Whether the state budget passes on-time or not, Superintendent McElheran says we will do what we have to meet our financial obligations on time and within budget.

“Will we have to tighten our belts? Move a bit more to the center? Yes,” McElheran said. Comparatively, he says “We have positioned ourselves well over the past decade to weather this economic storm and we will weather it.”

McElheran says one thing is certain – cost increases will not be passed on. “I will recommend that we do not add an additional tax burden to our residents,” he said. Above all, “Cuts will be as far away from the classroom as possible. Always... kids first,” he said.

The End of an Era

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the nation by Newsweek Magazine. From paving the way for students to excel academically and artistically to overseeing the transition of our athletic teams to the Monroe County athletic league, McElheran’s vision has seen the district through numerous transformations.

He was instrumental in starting the Athletic Hall of Fame and Graduate of Distinction program, programs that recognize alumni for outstanding athletic and community contributions. From implementing the first school resource officer program in the Finger Lakes Region of New York to initiating the highest levels of campus security and unprecedented classroom technology with SmartBoards™, Student Response systems, computer labs, wireless internet access and more, it seems McElheran has left no stone unturned.

And, to top it all off, he leaves district residents with a true value tax rate that is less than it was a decade ago when he became Superintendent of Schools.

McElheran says he will look back on his time at Victor Schools with many wonderful, lasting memories. “The Corbit Field rededication ceremony was special...a magical night,” he said. But when all is said and done, it may surprise you to know that out of all of the things he enjoyed being a part of the most; was the annual high school graduation ceremony. As McElheran so aptly put it... “They were the culmination of the school year and marked the beginning of new paths for our graduating seniors.”

New paths are something Timothy McElheran knows something about. Now, he is about to forge his own.



The Graduates of Distinction Committee

is looking for VCS alumni to participate with us.

- Committee meets 3-4 times a year.
- Meeting times are flexible.
- Meetings are held at the Victor Education Center

It's a great way to give back
to the school and the community!

Interested?

Please send a letter of interest by March 20 to:

Maureen Goodberlet, *District Clerk*
Victor Central School District
953 High Street, Victor, New York 14564
goodberletm@victorschools.org



On March 6th and 7th the Victor DevilTech Robotics Team (Team 1559) will compete in the Finger Lakes Regional FIRST Robotics Competition at RIT's Gordon Field House. The event is free and open to the public. This will be Victor's fifth season participating in FIRST.

Special Transportation requests due by April 1.

New York State requires districts to provide transportation for students up to 15 miles to private or parochial schools. Mileage is measured from the student's home to the school legally attended.

District residents whose children are or will be transported to private or parochial schools and will be requesting transportation would submit a request in writing to the VCSD Superintendent of Schools by April 1.

Request for Non-Public Transportation for the 2009-2010 School Year

Name(s) of student(s): _____
Address(es) of student(s): _____
Name of school(s): _____
Grade Level(s) 2009-10: _____
Birthdate(s): _____
Parent/guardian name: _____
Home phone: _____
E-mail: _____
Please mail to Superintendent of Schools,
Victor Central School District, 953 High St., Victor, NY 14564

SAVE THE DATE

Family Fun Festival

May 19, 2009, 3:30 - 9:00 p.m.
VCS Campus



March 5th, 6th at 7pm
March 7th at 1pm & 7pm
Tickets for sale at the door or online
www.victorschools.org

Eighth Annual Senior Citizens Ball

Free and open to ALL
Victor Central School District
Senior Citizens!

Presented by
VICTOR CENTRAL SCHOOLS
Office of School &
Community Relations
and the Senior High Key Club

Saturday, April 25, 2009
7 - 9 p.m.

@ Victor Intermediate School
Gymnasium

Entertainment by
"For Dancers Only"

Scenes from our 2008 Ball!

Victor Central School District
953 High Street
Victor, NY 14564

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To: Victor Central School District Residents

The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services maintains a list of registered sex offenders and offers many resources through its web site, <http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us>. People may search the Sex Offender Registry using the criteria of name, county or zip code. Parents and guardians may want to talk with children about interacting with adults and people they do not know.