



Ezra Cafaldo as planet Earth

Saugerties

Central School District

BUDGET 2015

Residents to Vote on May 19

Budget Within Tax Levy Limit for Fourth Straight Year While Educational Opportunities Grow

Academic programs and opportunities for success for all students continue to grow in the Saugerties Central School District as the community prepares to vote on a budget that is once again within the New York State tax levy limit.

The Board of Education adopted the \$59,306,508 budget on April 14. The budget represents a 3.2 percent increase over the current year and the tax levy will increase 1.75 percent, remaining within the state limit for the fourth year in a row and requiring only a simple majority approval by voters.

Superintendent Seth Turner said the major items driving the budget increase this year are similar to years past. Among them are contractual expenses and mandates. Turner said that there has been some reduction in the mandated contribution to the Teachers Retirement System, which offset an increase in contractual health insurance costs.

New Courses, More Technology

Throughout the budget planning process, the focus of the Board of Education and Turner has been on making sure students have what they need to succeed.

"We never lose the vision of what we're here to do. Our students are always our top priority," Turner said.

In 2015-16, Saugerties High School students will have 21 classes that could lead to college credit, as two new Advanced Placement (AP) courses and a college English course in partnership with SUNY Ulster are added to the ten AP courses and eight college partnership classes that already exist.

A new ELA curriculum will be in place at the elementary schools and a new K-8 math curriculum will be launched as well.

Technology, including Smartboards, projectors, and document cameras, is being added to classrooms as the District continues to review its technology plan to make the best possible use of \$1.9 million in State funds from the Smart Schools Bond Act education technology initiative passed in 2014.

Seeking Out Savings

The District is making an effort to save taxpayer money through a variety of means. Staff will use funds from three separate grants to continue reviewing and improving Academic

Intervention Services and Response to Intervention programs (programs to support struggling learners), reduce testing and assessments, and improve records management.

The Board of Education has also passed a resolution to go paperless, reducing both costs and wasted natural resources.

An inter-municipal agreement with the

Town of Saugerties will further help reduce the District's costs by allowing it to borrow equipment from the town and vice versa.

"Whatever they have we can use, and what ever we have they can use," Turner said, explaining that the District was able to make site improvements at Riccardi Elementary School this year for about one-third of the normal cost because they utilized town equipment. A new District-wide building condition survey will be launched to determine facilities needs and keep the District's buildings in good condition.

Meeting Fiscal Challenges

Like other districts across the state, Saugerties has had to meet all its fiscal obligations and find a way to continue funding programs despite several years of State Aid losses because of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA), a measure that the State enacted five years ago. The GEA froze State Aid at 2008-2009 levels and additional money was deducted as well to help the State make up for its own revenue shortfall. Since being implemented, Saugerties has lost a cumulative total of \$13.4 million under the GEA.

Despite the fiscal challenges of the GEA and the revenue limits caused by the tax cap, Saugerties continues to practice what Turner calls sustainable long-range financial planning. After a review of all expenses and revenues from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

STEM Learning Blasts Off at Riccardi's 'Planet Runway'

Grade 2 students at Riccardi Elementary School presented an out-of-this-world fashion show on February 18 that featured the best-dressed planets in the galaxy.

Forty students in Frances Murphy's and Sue Rinaldi's classes strutted their interstellar stuff for parents and other special guests during "Planet Runway," the culmination of a unit of study of the solar system. The organization, patterns, and cycles of the solar system and how they affect Earth are among the key ideas students are expected to learn in elementary school science.

After a month exploring space from their classrooms, the students took two weeks to design and build costumes representing the sun, one of the eight major planets, the Earth's moon, or the dwarf planet Pluto. Using resources found strictly on Earth – like beads, foam, Hula Hoops, and bed sheets – the students crafted other-worldly outfits as eye-catching as a solar flare and then donned them for a walk down the cosmic catwalk. Proving that they're brighter than any shooting star, the students also shared interesting facts and information about their planets.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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www.saugerties.k12.ny.us

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!

Tuesday May 19

6 AM–9 PM

Cahill, Mt. Marion Raise \$12,000 for American Heart Association

Students at Cahill and Mt. Marion Elementary Schools may not wear capes or leap tall buildings in a single bound, but they're definitely heroes with big, healthy hearts.

Together, students from the two schools raised more than \$12,000 for the American Heart Association during annual Jump Rope for Heart activities in February, smashing last year's fundraising total by \$1,000 and breaking records at both schools.

"Everybody did an awesome job," said Cahill physical education teacher Steve Below.

Cahill has been participating in Jump Rope for Heart for 10 years and Mt. Marion has been taking part for about six years. In 2015, Cahill's goal was \$6,500 in donations, but students collected \$8,574. At Mt. Marion, students easily smashed the \$2,500 goal by raising \$3,500.

In addition to raising money for those suffering from heart disease, the students kept their own hearts strong by spending 30 minutes hopping, bouncing, skipping, and jumping with equipment that included pogo sticks, Hula Hoops, Skip-its, Hoppity-Hops, and jump ropes. Moving to the beat of songs like Taylor Swift's "Shake it Off" and Pharrell Williams' "Happy," students in every grade got their pulses pounding by competing at Double Dutch and seeing how many Hula Hoops they could twirl at once. Members of the Cahill and Mt. Marion student councils were on hand to provide help to younger students at each activity station. After their workout, all students received a healthy snack to keep them fueled for learning.

To show their appreciation for the students' efforts, Below, Cahill Principal Dawn Scannapieco, and Grade 4 teacher Sue Kleinke allowed the students who raised the most money in each



Kaydin Rodriguez of Mt. Marion gets heart-healthy on a Hoppity-Hop.



Cahill student Kudakwashe Muronda pushes a plate of whipped cream onto Principal Dawn Scannapieco's head.

class to Duct-tape them to the gymnasium wall and push plates of whipped cream into their faces.

And the fun didn't end there. Kleinke's class, which raised \$1,244, was treated to a free pizza lunch and the top five fundraising students at Cahill enjoyed lunch with Saugerties village Mayor Bill Murphy this spring. Gift certificates for Saugerties Bowlers Club, Kiwanis ice-skating rink, Bounce in Poughkeepsie, and Zoom Flume water park ensured that students will continue taking part in heart-healthy activities. Three students also received gift certificates for new athletic shoes, two from New Balance, and one from Montano's Shoe Store in Saugerties.

Jump Rope for Heart was organized by school nurse Sherri Danza at Cahill and physical education teacher Melinda Glover at Mt. Marion.

The Builder's Club at Saugerties Junior High School, guided by teacher Hope Antonelli, also participated in Jump Rope for Heart, raising \$1,000, bringing the District's grand total to \$13,000, definitely something to jump up and down about!

Mitchell Hart watches a Ping-pong ball he launched from his catapult.



Science Comes Alive at Morse, Riccardi Engineer's Day

Young minds were catapulted into the world of science at Grant D. Morse and Charles M. Riccardi Elementary Schools this spring as students at both schools took part in annual Engineer's Day activities.

Engineer's Day is a nationwide program that brings real-life engineers into the classroom to talk about STEM and helps expose students to the types of math and science-based careers available to them. For many students, it's also one of the highlights of the school year because they get a chance to design, build, and test everything from miniature bridges to tiny parachutes.

This year, with guidance from IBM engineer Mike DeAngelis and Innovations Data Processing engineer Mike MacIsaac, students in the upper grades

Skyler Catalano (left), Gianna Papa (center), and Olivia Trees keep their eyes on the ball after testing their catapult.



at Morse and Riccardi constructed catapults. With nothing but rubber bands, Popsicle sticks, masking tape, and a plastic spoon, the students were asked to build a device that would launch a Ping-pong ball as far and as accurately as possible. DeAngelis and MacIsaac contributed some hints and tips, but each team's final design was a collaborative effort.

And that suited one team just fine. Morse Grade 5 students Ginger Defino, Karissa Heiss, Nicole Moorhus, and Olivia Cafaldo said the catapult project was "really fun," but especially so because they got to combine their ideas and work together. After initial trials, the young ladies revised their design to make it more stable for the competition, which allowed them three shots to achieve their best distance, and three shots to test the catapult's accuracy. Some of the devices created at Morse and Riccardi launched the ball to distances of between 15 and 20 feet.

"There were definitely some good, interesting designs," said MacIsaac, who has been taking part in Engineer's Day in Saugerties for about six years.

DeAngelis said that seeing students "jumping around" and getting excited about science is what has kept him coming back for three consecutive years.

"That's why we do it," he said.

Designing and building the catapults was much more than just a fun way to toss around a few Ping-pong balls, though. As students planned and tested, they gained a better understanding of physics and simple machines, an area of science that they're expected to know as part of the Common Core Learning Standards.



Riccardi's three suns: Grace Madelone, Sydney Sadarous, and James McTague

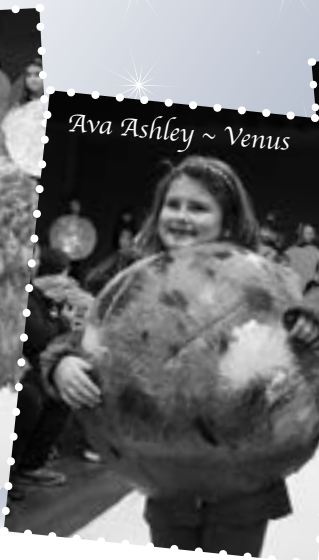
'Planet Runway' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Murphy served as emcee for the galactic gala, supplementing the show with planetary patter and puns while Computer Assistant JoAnn Longendyke spun appropriate tunes like Bananarama's "Venus" and "Drops of Jupiter" by Train.



Chloe Turner ~ Venus

Michael Pettit Jr. ~ Jupiter



Ava Ashley ~ Venus



Allison Argueta ~ Uranus



Hannah Hoyt ~ Pluto



Marcus Payet ~ Mercury

Saugerties 2015-2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Central School District

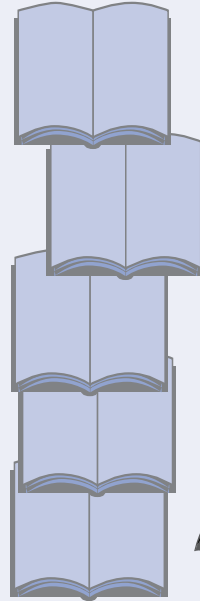
Three Part Budget

The legislation that requires New York State school districts to have a public budget vote includes the requirement that the budget be divided up into three sections: Administration, Program, and Capital.

	2014-2015	2015-2016	INCREASE / (DECREASE)
	7.04%	7.07%	3.6%
Administration	4,045,738	\$4,193,971	\$148,233
	81.75%	81.92%	3.47%
Program	\$46,951,576	\$48,582,055	\$1,630,479
	11.21%	11.01%	1.47%
Capital	\$6,435,670	\$6,530,482	\$94,812
TOTAL	\$57,432,984	\$59,306,508	\$1,873,524
2015-2016 Proposed Budget: \$59,306,508			

Budget Components

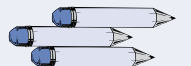
81.92 CENTS



11.01 CENTS



7.07 CENTS



Program

Capital

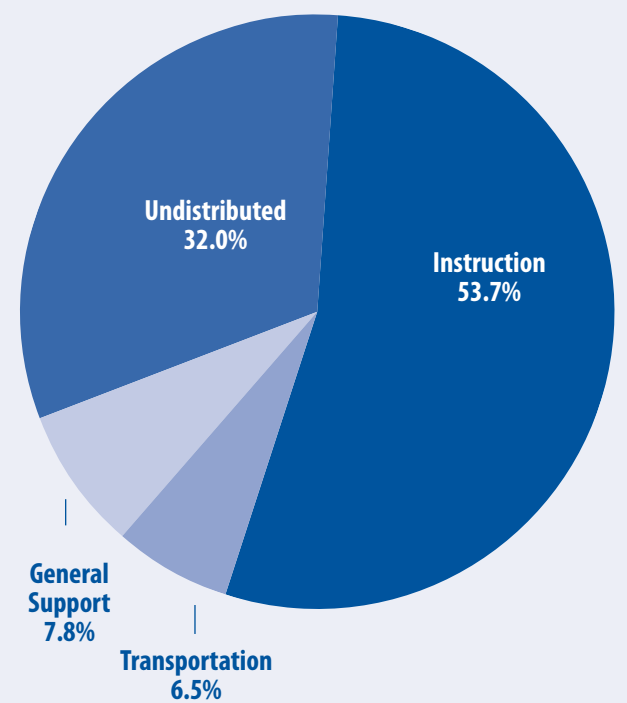
Administration

For each dollar spent on education, the majority goes towards program, with just about \$0.82 related to students and the classroom. Just over \$0.11 of every dollar is invested in maintaining our facilities. Administrative costs account for about \$0.07 of each dollar.

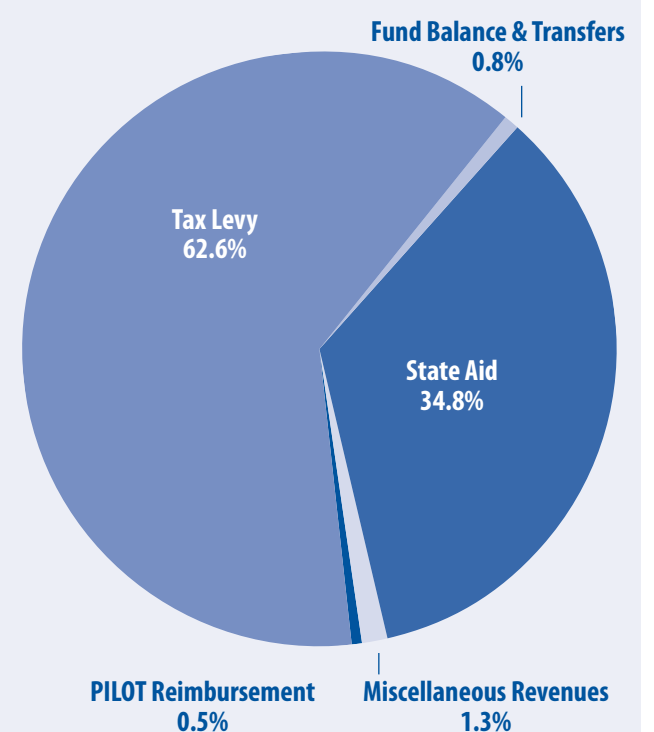
Expenditure Summary

	ADOPTED BUDGET 2014-2015	PROPOSED BUDGET 2015-2016	\$ INCREASE (\$ DECREASE)
GENERAL SUPPORT			
Board of Education	\$34,397	\$36,001	\$1,604
Central Administration	\$239,907	\$246,537	\$ 6,630
Finance	\$413,471	\$412,264	\$(1,207)
Staff	\$248,297	\$282,261	\$33,964
Central Services	\$2,794,215	\$2,876,821	\$82,606
Special Items	\$696,557	\$787,120	\$ 90,563
Total	\$4,426,844	\$4,641,004	\$ 214,160
INSTRUCTION			
Administration & Improvement	\$1,344,741	\$1,360,977	\$16,236
Instruction - Teaching	\$25,633,618	\$26,978,120	\$1,344,502
Instructional Media	\$1,217,074	\$1,262,951	\$45,877
Pupil Services	\$2,203,468	\$2,230,147	\$26,679
Total	\$30,398,901	\$31,832,195	\$1,433,294
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION			
District-Owned Transportation	\$205,321	\$210,526	\$5,205
Contract Transportation	\$3,433,218	\$3,630,443	\$197,225
Total	\$3,638,539	\$3,840,969	\$202,430
UNDISTRIBUTED			
Employee Benefits	\$16,200,730	\$16,223,452	\$22,722
Debt Service	\$2,517,970	\$2,518,888	\$918
Interfund Transfers	\$250,000	\$250,000	-
Total	\$18,968,700	\$18,992,340	\$23,640
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$57,432,984	\$59,306,508	\$1,873,524

How the Money Will Be Spent



Where the Money Comes From



Revenue Summary

	ADOPTED BUDGET 2014-2015	PROPOSED BUDGET 2015-2016	\$ INCREASE (\$ DECREASE)
Total Other Revenue Sources	\$540,000	\$740,000	\$200,000
Total State Aid & Federal Aid	\$19,658,968	\$20,651,575	\$992,607
Total Other Than Property Tax/STAR	\$20,198,968	\$21,391,575	\$1,192,607
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$450,000	\$450,000	-
Property Tax	\$36,509,983	\$37,148,061	\$638,078
Payments in Lieu of Taxes	\$274,033	\$316,872	\$42,839
Total Property Tax/STAR	\$37,234,016	\$37,914,933	\$680,917
TOTAL ALL REVENUES	\$57,432,984	\$59,306,508	\$1,873,524

Saugerties 2015-2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Central School District

Facts & Figures About the Proposed Budget

What are the estimated 2015-2016 equalization rates?

Estimated rates are based on the preliminary assessment rolls for the three towns comprising the Saugerties Central School District.

The estimated tax bills are for a property in Saugerties with an assessed value of \$175,000. (Since the estimated equalization rate for Saugerties is 1.00, the assessed value will equal the true value.)

Town	Equalization Rate
Saugerties	1.00
Ulster	0.84
Woodstock	1.00

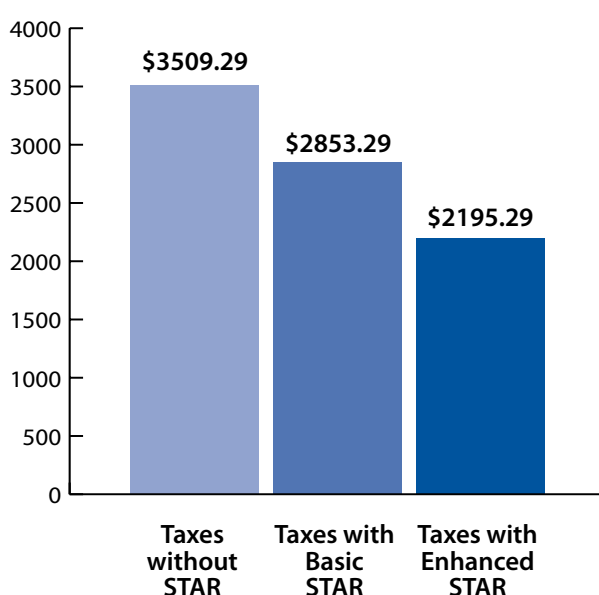
How does the STAR program work?

The School Tax Relief (STAR) Program that was passed by the Legislature in 1997 to provide Basic and Enhanced school tax relief for owner-occupied, primary residences is continued under the New York State budget but has been revised to also reflect income levels of owners. Owner-occupied, primary residences where the owners' total income is less than \$500,000 are now eligible for STAR.

The Basic STAR exemption is offered to property owners on their owner-occupied primary residences, and is provided in the form of an actual reduction in homeowners' property tax bills. Owners who are aged 65 or older who meet income criteria are eligible for even greater tax savings through the Enhanced STAR exemption.

Seniors must apply for Enhanced STAR each year. Just as a reminder, new homeowners must apply for either Basic or Enhanced STAR with their local assessor. For more information, contact your local assessor.

2015-2016 Estimated Taxes
(\$175,000 Home: Saugerties)



How do I get more detailed information about the budget?

You can stop by the District Offices in the Hildebrandt Building or any of the six schools for a copy of the complete Budget document. Please contact Superintendent Seth Turner at (845) 247-6551, or School Business Manager Lissa Jilek at (845) 247-6520, if you have specific questions.

Questions and Answers About the Tax Levy

Although New York State's fiscal crisis has been resolved, the impact on the State's public schools still exists as a result of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA). The GEA was a State measure enacted five years ago that froze State Aid at 2008-2009 levels and also deducted additional money to cover the State's revenue shortfall at the time.

Below are answers to some common questions people ask about school taxes. The community is encouraged to vote on the budget on May 19, 2015. Board of Education members will also be elected.

What is the "tax cap"?

New York State has implemented a new law that changes the way budgets are approved. The changes went into effect beginning with the 2012 vote. Under the law, a school district must now plan its budget around a complex State formula that calculates a baseline tax levy increase. Budgets that carry a tax levy increase at or below this calculation will need the approval of a simple majority (50 percent plus one) of voters. Any proposal higher than this calculation will require a supermajority approval (60 percent). **The Board of Education has adopted a budget that is at the allowable levy level under the State's formula and therefore will need a simple majority voter approval of 50 percent plus one.**

How is the tax levy increase calculated?

Although this law has been commonly referred to as the two percent tax cap, it is important to understand that it is not a cap, nor does it limit the levy increase to just two percent. That number may be above or below two percent, and it will vary each year. While the formula is influenced by the lesser of CPI (consumer price index) or two percent, it then allows for specific exemptions and the application of other factors in the formula. After applying the allowable exemptions, the Saugerties Central School District is permitted a maximum 1.75 percent levy increase and still meet the criteria of the tax cap formula for a simple majority vote.

What can I do?

The most important things community members can do are to become informed about the budget being presented and to vote on May 19. Helping everyone understand the budget and what it means to the future of the programs offered to students is very important. We want to assist in any way we can.

For more information about the budget, contact Superintendent Seth Turner at (845) 247-6551 or School Business Manager Lissa Jilek at (845) 247-6520.

What is This Year's Tax Freeze?

A Tax Freeze program was included in New York State's 2015 adopted budget. It is a two-year property rebate program designed to encourage school districts to generate long-term tax relief for homeowners.

For the first year (2015), the program required school districts to develop a budget that did not exceed its tax levy threshold. The Saugerties Central School District 2014-2015 budget was within the tax levy limit, thereby qualifying taxpayers to receive a rebate check.

In order for residents to receive a rebate in the second year (2016), school districts must do the following: 1) Once again develop a budget that stays within the tax levy threshold, which the Saugerties Central School District proposed budget does; and 2) develop a Government Efficiency Plan that demonstrates savings of at least one percent of the tax levy each year for three years through consolidated or shared services and other efficiencies. Saugerties fully intends to comply with the law and focus on developing a Government Efficiency Plan that meets the State's criteria. However, the District will not know until July whether the State has approved its plan.

Local Merchant Helps SHS Students Pay AP Exam Fees

Economically disadvantaged students taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes at Saugerties High School got some help paying their exam fees this spring, thanks to a donation from Jane Bird of The Well thrift store on Partition Street.

Normal AP exam fees are about \$90. Students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch pay a fee of \$12. Bird and The Well donated enough money to allow the students to pay slightly more than \$5.

Bird said the idea for the donation came about after she read an article about the District's plan to expand its AP course offerings and the fact that some money had been set aside to help students in need with the fees, if necessary.

"I had a lot of AP courses in high school and I really appreciate what the AP can do," said Bird. She added that she has met many talented and hard-working but economically disadvantaged students through her volunteer work at the Boys & Girls Club of Saugerties and has seen for herself the struggle some students have to pay for

exam fees and college.

Bird said that The Well's advisory board felt the students should still pay some portion of the test fee in order to maintain an investment in getting a top score, so the amount of the donation lowered the fee by half.

Achieving a high enough score on the AP exam can earn a student college credit at many universities, which means that SHS students who benefited from the donation paid less than the cost of lunch for college credits.

"Paying \$5.20 for a college credit is a pretty good deal," said Saugerties Guidance Counselor Kristina Kaisik, who worked with Bird to coordinate the donation.

Bird said that The Well, which sells quality used clothing at inexpensive prices, gives back to the community through donations to the Boys & Girls Club, as well as the Saugerties food pantry, and now High School AP students. "That's the fun part, giving all the money away," Bird said.

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!
Tuesday, May 19
6 AM-9 PM

★ Cahill Elementary School
★ Morse Elementary School
★ Mt. Marion Elementary School
★ Riccardi Elementary School

Saugerties

Central School District

2015-2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Budget Within Tax Levy Limit for Fourth Straight Year While Educational Opportunities Grow

the 2013-14 school year last fall, the District was given the “cleanest” audit possible by its external auditor, Victor Churchill, according to Turner.

“That means we’re doing business the way it’s supposed to be done,” Turner said.

Turner also said he appreciates the support of the hundreds of community members who signed an online petition this spring asking for the elimination of the GEA.

“On behalf of all our students, my thanks go out to the taxpayers who took the time to get

involved and speak up for fair funding in education,” Turner said.

The community will vote on the budget and elect three members to the Board of Education on Tuesday, May 19 from 6 AM to 9 PM at the District’s four elementary schools. A Superintendent’s Conference Day with no school for students has been scheduled for that day to alleviate safety concerns of having the buildings open to the public while students are in session.

Voting Information

Who May Vote?

In order to vote you must be:

- ★ Registered to vote
- ★ A citizen of the United States
- ★ 18 years of age or older
- ★ A resident of Saugerties Central School District for at least 30 days, immediately before the election

When and Where is the Vote?

Voting will take place on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, from 6 AM to 9 PM. Polls are open in each of the Saugerties Central School District’s Elementary Schools (Grant D. Morse, Mt. Marion, Cahill, and Riccardi) by School District voting areas.

Where Can I Get An Absentee Ballot?

Absentee ballot applications are available for pick-up at the Hildebrandt Building on weekdays from 8 AM to 4:30 PM. A voter can request an absentee ballot be mailed to them; however, the request for mailing must be made before May 11. The completed absentee ballots must be returned to the Hildebrandt Building in a sealed envelope no later than 4 PM on May 18.

How Do I Register?

If you are already registered to vote in the general governmental elections in November, then you are registered to vote in the School District vote. If you are not registered, you may do so by obtaining a registration form available at the following locations:

- ★ Ulster County Board of Elections, 284 Wall Street, Kingston (phone: 334-5470)
- ★ Ulster County Department of Motor Vehicles, 244 Fair Street, Kingston (phone: 340-3700)
- ★ any United States Post Office

Where Do I Vote?

District A: Grant D. Morse Elementary School

The district will encompass General Municipal Election Districts 6, 9, 15, and 16, and contains that geographical area south of the Greene County line, west of the New York State Thruway, north of Route 212 and east of the west boundary of the town of Saugerties located between Palenville and Zena.

District B: Mt. Marion Elementary School

The district will encompass General Municipal Election Districts 5 and 10 of the town of Saugerties and those parts of 3, 6, and 7 of the town of Woodstock. It is within that geographical area south of Route 212, west of the NYS Thruway (north of Glasco Turnpike), west of Snyder Road and Schoolhouse Road, north of the southern boundary of the town of Saugerties, with the exception of that area of the town of Saugerties located in the Kingston Consolidated School District and east of the School District boundary near the area of Plochmann Lane in the town of Woodstock.

District C: Cahill Elementary School

The district will encompass General Municipal Election Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 14 of the town of Saugerties and is within that geographical area south of the Greene County line, west of the Hudson River, east of the New York State Thruway and north of the area commonly referred to as Barclay Heights.

District D: Riccardi Elementary School

The district will encompass General Municipal Election Districts 8, 11, 12 (including Mt. Marion Park), and 13 located in the Town of Saugerties and parts of 7, 9, and 12 located in the town of Ulster. Geographically, it is bounded north by the south boundary of Election District 3, on the east by the Hudson River, on the west by the New York State Thruway (north of Glasco Turnpike), then south of Glasco Turnpike to the east of Snyder Road and School House Road and on the south by the town of Ulster.

School District Budget Notice

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL	Budget Adopted for the 2014-15 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2015-16 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2015-16 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 57,432,984	\$ 59,306,508	\$ 58,668,430
Increase/Decrease for the 2015-16 School Year		\$ 1,873,524	\$ 1,235,446
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.26%	2.15%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.62%	
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 36,509,983	\$ 37,148,061	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	-0-	-0-	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	-0-	-0-	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	-0-	-0-	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$ 36,509,983	\$ 37,148,061	\$ 36,509,983
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$707,754	\$ 710,992	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 35,802,229	\$ 36,437,069	
H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, Excluding Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve (E - B - F + D)	\$ 35,802,229	\$ 36,437,069	
I. Difference: (G – H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	-0-	-0-	
Administrative component	\$4,045,738	\$ 4,193,971	\$ 4,147,996
Program component	\$46,951,576	\$ 48,582,055	\$ 48,134,752
Capital component	\$6,435,670	\$ 6,530,482	\$ 6,385,682

* Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2015-16 school year: Should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law, a contingency budget for 2015 – 2016 requires that the tax levy increase by 0.00%. Therefore, a budget gap of \$638,078 would need to be addressed to reach the contingency level. The anticipated changes in order to meet the contingency level would possibly include the following:

- Potential cuts to Instructional and non-instructional positions
- Potential cuts to interscholastic sports programs
- Eliminating equipment spending unrelated to safety and security, and
- Reducing BOCES services.

There are no separate propositions for 2015 – 2016.



Under the Budget Proposed for the 2015-2016 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption savings ¹ → \$656

¹The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2015-2016 by the qualified voters of the Saugerties Central School District, Ulster County, New York, will be held at the Cahill, Morse, Mt. Marion, and Riccardi Elementary Schools in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, between the hours of 6:00 AM and 9:00 PM, prevailing time in the Cahill, Morse, Mt. Marion, and Riccardi Elementary Schools, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

Sample Ballot

The wording on the proposition will appear as shown in this example and you will have a choice of either YES or NO:

Proposition 1 2015-2016 Budget

Shall the Board of Education of the Saugerties Central School District be authorized to expend the sums of money which will be required for School District purposes for the 2015-2016 school year in the total amount of \$59,306,508.00 (the budget), and to levy the necessary sum against the taxable real property in the District?

There are three (3) 3-year term seats available on the Board of Education.
The terms will run from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2018.
The following six candidates filed petitions to run for the Board of Education:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| ★ Raymond M. Maclary | ★ Richard Petramale | ★ Thomas Ham |
| ★ Donald Tucker | ★ Robert Thomann | ★ James Mooney, Jr. |

Can plants grow without soil? What color food do squirrels prefer? What happens to Gummy Bears when they're soaked in vinegar?

The answers to those burning questions and dozens of other mysteries of the universe were all available for the taking at Grant D. Morse Elementary School's annual Grade 3 science fair in February.

Forty-plus students in Hilarie Wiacek's and Brooke Ryan's classes were asked to pick a topic of interest, formulate a question about it, and then use the scientific method to seek the answers.

Using materials that ranged from dish soap and food coloring to basketballs and moldy bread, students delved into chemistry, physics, botany, and other scientific disciplines, helping meet science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning standards while having a great time exploring the world around them.

"I love science," said student Elizabeth Annice Lee, who looked every bit the professional scientist in her lab coat as she shared the results of her experiment on the time it takes for ice cubes to melt on their own or in water. Elizabeth, who has made candles and performed other experiments in her spare time, said she enjoys using a variety of materials, conducting tests, and recording the results through photographs.

Student Teresa Bautista said she chose to investigate which dish soap generates the most suds because it would give her a chance to play with bubbles, but it was her excitement about science that was truly bubbling over.

"You get to learn new things every day," she said.

Scientific ideas were not the only new things the students learned through their projects. Because they had to demonstrate and explain their experiments to both parents and students in other grades, they also practiced public speaking and presentation skills.

The young scientists worked on their projects for about three weeks and the time was clearly well spent.

"The students were excited from the get-go and their projects are absolutely amazing," said Wiacek.



Foreground: Madison Cazzetta and Emaleah West, both Grade 3 students at Grant D. Morse Elementary School, test Emaleah's science fair project, a teeter-totter-like device which allows a lighter person to lift a heavier person off the ground.

Back: Dylan Lynch, far right, makes his science project volcano erupt while students (from left) Natalie Miller, Gabriella Cazzetta, Marcus Vazquez, Lawson West, and Eli Bowers look on.



Grade 1 student Olivia Dean prepares to pop a purple balloon.

Riccardi Students Raise \$1,409 for Epilepsy Foundation

Generosity, fun, and plenty of purple balloons were popping recently at Riccardi Elementary School as students and staff enjoyed Purple Pop Palooza, a fundraising effort for the Epilepsy Foundation.

The school has supported the cause for the last several years in memory of Whitney Kochetta, a Riccardi alum and daughter of library assistant Pat Kochetta. Whitney passed

away from epilepsy in 2008 at the age of 24. To honor her daughter's memory, Pat came up with the idea for Purple Pop Palooza.

"I wanted to do something fun for the kids," Pat said. "Whitney would have liked that."

The event put the fun in fundraising by allowing students to pop purple balloons with prize tokens inside as a thank-you for collecting donations to help kids with epilepsy. Students then presented the tokens at a prize table run by Student Government representatives in the library, and received everything from sunglasses, Spiderman notebooks, and free ice cream to Toys R Us and Barnes and Noble gift cards. Before leaving the library, they signed their names to a large purple banner to show their support for those suffering from epilepsy.

School staff also took the opportunity to turn the festivities into a teachable moment, sharing information about epilepsy during morning announcements and leading students in classroom discussions about the neurological illness, which affects more than two million people in the United States. Teacher Stephanie Pettit, who co-organized Purple Pop Palooza with fellow teacher Sue Rinaldi, said she hoped the students took away not only prizes but a greater understanding of epilepsy, too.

The money raised will go toward scholarships for young people with epilepsy to attend camp this summer. Pat Kochetta said camp gives both the children and the families the opportunity to experience ordinary life without being focused on the child's condition. The \$1,409 collected at Riccardi will allow five children to attend camp.

ELA at Mt. Marion: Reading, Writing, and...Spearing Fish?

Most of the time, studying English Language Arts (ELA) doesn't involve learning how to catch frogs or make a mattress out of leaves, but a lucky group of Grade 6 students at Mt. Marion Elementary School is now woods- and wilderness-ready, thanks to a popular novel and an informative guest speaker.

Earlier this year, the 18 students in Char Fraske's ELA group read Gary Paulsen's Newbery Honor-winning novel "Hatchet," which recounts the story of Brian Robeson, a 13-year-old boy who survives a plane crash and must fend for himself in the Canadian wilderness with nothing but a hatchet.

"The kids couldn't get enough of it," Fraske said of the book.

To translate the excitement of the novel into a hands-on lesson, Fraske let the students explore the woods behind Mt. Marion and construct shelters out of wood, pine boughs, leaves, and rocks, just as Brian did in the book. Each shelter had room enough for three or four people and many came complete with seating and a spot for a campfire.

This year, Fraske took the lesson one step further and reached out to survivalist John McCann of Hyde Park, who, along with his wife, Denise,



Survivalist John McCann teaches basic survival skills to Mt. Marion students.

visited with the students on April 16 to teach them basic survival skills and look over their shelters.

McCann, a Marine Corps veteran who leads week-long survival courses for adults, demonstrated everything from using the sun for navigation and crafting basic tools out of wood to making a whistle from a bottle cap and a rain poncho from a plastic bag. He showed the students some of his own gear, both purchased and home-made, including a fishing spear, a multi-pronged "frog gig," and wooden bowls and spoons. He also gave each student an emergency blanket, rain poncho, and whistle of their own, plus an



Alex Sirico learns how to use a giant plastic bag as a rain shelter.

autographed copy of his book on how to build a survival kit.

Using the acronym STOP (Sit, Think, Observe, Plan), McCann also addressed the emotional and mental aspects of survival, reminding students to prioritize their needs and do their best to remain calm and help themselves if they're ever lost in the woods.

"Keep a good mind, like Brian did in the book," he advised.

Students also proudly showed off their shelters to McCann, who called them all "very cool" and praised the students for their design and attention to detail. He also gave them tips for improvement and then demonstrated how a temporary shelter could be built in just a few minutes by draping an emergency blanket over a bent sapling.

Fraske said McCann's presentation made the details of "Hatchet" come alive for the students.

"This is a dream come true as a teacher," she said. "This doesn't happen very often."

Saugerties H.S. Students' Winning Videos Fight Dating Violence

Two Saugerties High School (SHS) juniors were honored by Ulster County recently for their efforts to fight teen dating violence through the power of video.

Ulster County Executive Michael Hein and representatives of the county's Inter-Agency Domestic Violence Council were on hand at SHS on March 19 to recognize students Kelsey Gaulin and Daniel Douglas for the public service announcements they created as part of the first-ever countywide contest aimed at teen dating violence. Kelsey and Daniel won second and third place, respectively, with first place going to Ellenville High School juniors Edgar Saravia and Vinny Mele.

Kelsey's second place video was a short but powerful film depicting a young woman repeatedly being abused by her boyfriend and being given gifts as an apology. Kelsey said her inspiration came from the idea that an abuser's gift is never just a gift, but always has consequences attached.

Saugerties Chief of Police Joseph Sinagra, who has responded to many domestic violence incidents in his career, told Kelsey that her video, which brought tears to many viewers' eyes, "hits home more so than you can ever imagine."

Daniel was awarded third place for a video that used a series of silent slides with pictures and text to highlight negative words and ideas commonly used by abusers to describe women. Daniel said the idea for the video came from his awareness of how often the negative words are used, despite the fact that the "meaning behind them is terrible."

Both Kelsey and Daniel are students in Scott Wickham's Computer Video Production II (CVP II) class at SHS. Wickham,

a veteran teacher of more than 20 years, made participation in the county video contest an assignment for the CVP II students and an optional creative project for his CVP I class. Many of Wickham's students aspire to careers in film production and have been accepted by prestigious college film programs at Ithaca College and Syracuse University.

"When I assigned this, I had no idea it was going to end up being this big," Wickham told the students. "I'm blown away by what you guys do, and I'm glad people recognized how good you are."

Hein called the students' videos "extraordinary," thanked them for using their skills to engage in the fight against dating violence, and reminded them that their work can be a way of not only educating themselves, but truly helping other people as well.

"We've got a lot of talented young people here," Hein said. "They're amazing."

Superintendent Seth Turner noted that the students' videos put the spotlight on an important topic that many people nonetheless find difficult to speak about. "I'm proud that my students were part of this wonderful endeavor," he said.

A screenshot from Kelsey Gaulin's video.



Sinagra also expressed his admiration for the students, saying, "I'm proud to be the police chief who represents Saugerties High School."

Kelsey's and Daniel's videos can be viewed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/user/UlsterCountyExec/feed>



Students in Scott Wickham's Computer Video Production classes at Saugerties High School. Second and third place video contest winners Kelsey Gaulin and Daniel Douglas are second and third from left in the front row. In the back row, from left: are Ulster County Crime Victims Assistance Program Educator Lydia Diaz; SHS Assistant Principal Fred Hirsch; Saugerties Chief of Police Joseph Sinagra; Ulster County Executive Michael Hein; SHS Computer Video Production teacher Scott Wickham; SHS Business Department Chair and business teacher Jaqueline Hayes; SHS principal Tom Averill; and Saugerties Superintendent Seth Turner.



Saugerties High School student Matt Rivera on stage with Robert Hankenson during the social media safety presentation.

Saugerties Students Learn Social Media Safety Tips

On March 23, at Saugerties High School, professional speaker and "edutainer" Robert Hackenson, Jr. presented a seminar on Youth Social Media Safety to three different age groups of Saugerties students.

Among the topics covered in this presentation were:

- The most popular social media applications and the pros and cons of each
- Cyber bullying among youth – telltale signs and what to do
- Social media addiction and communication skills
- Potential social media risks for youth and the security measures

In an evening session, Hackenson also offered parents tips for monitoring and protecting children.

Using real life examples, as well his talents as a professional magician, Hackenson demonstrated the dangers of texting while driving, meeting strangers on-line, sexting, insecure passwords and hacking, and posting location information without adequate consideration. He brought a number of students to the stage to make a variety of points regarding attention span, perception and reality, the differences between on-line and face-to-face communication, and "digital footprints." The idea for addressing this topic came out of the school's Shared Decision Making Committee, a group made up of high school and junior high administrators, parents, students, and teachers. School Psychologist Michael Pugliese searched the available information on the internet and found Mr. Hackenson.

Chris Backus, a Grade 10 student who participated in one of the demonstrations, said, "The whole thing was pretty cool – a really good presentation."

Students' Creative Skills Take Shape in Junior High School Art Class

Jeremy Cornelison aspires to a high-powered career as a stockbroker, or maybe a lawyer, and he's building the foundation for that every day in math and social studies class at Saugerties Junior High School, but he's also learning how to solve problems and face challenges by working with markers, paper, paint, and clay in art class.

"You can express yourself in a million different ways and there's no wrong answer," said Jeremy, who has especially enjoyed making ceramic mugs this spring.

"They get a little bit of everything: drawing, painting, sculpting," said veteran teacher Bob Slate, who teaches the mandatory 20-week art class to Grade 7 students. Students get to sample 3D drawing, self-portraiture, cartooning,



Jessie Bucci gets help with her art project from teacher Bob Slate at Saugerties Junior High School.



Saugerties Junior High School students Jeremy Cornelison and Maddy Kott create geometric designs in art class.

geometric patterns, free-form pottery, and other forms. Learning how to

use the tools and techniques of the visual arts are part of the New York State learning standards for middle school students.

The students' goals and personalities are as diverse as the art they create, but they have one thing in common: enjoyment of the creative, and often relaxing, time that art class provides.

"You get to step out of your comfort zone and

express your cool colors," said Sophia Pacheco, who dreams of being an actress, which, she points out, is a form of art, too.

Mia Iwanowski, who draws animé, enjoys realistic artwork, and hopes to put her talents to use as a tattoo artist or graphic designer, said that art provides an escape from stress.

A project of colorful two-dimensional street views was Maddy Kott's favorite art project this year. She enjoys sketch-

ing and playing the drums and is considering a career as a graphic designer.

Slate said that the hands-on approach required by art teaches students a different way of looking at problems, as well as their solutions.

"They're working with their hands creatively and not just pressing buttons," he said, referring to teens' frequent use of cell phones and other technology. "They're problem-solving in a visual manner and that's totally different."

Sawyer Scientists Shine at 2nd Annual Fair

With an exploration of everything from optical illusions and electricity to handmade soap, the second annual Saugerties Junior-Senior High School Science Fair, held March 13 in the High School auditorium, was a great place to pick up some bright ideas.

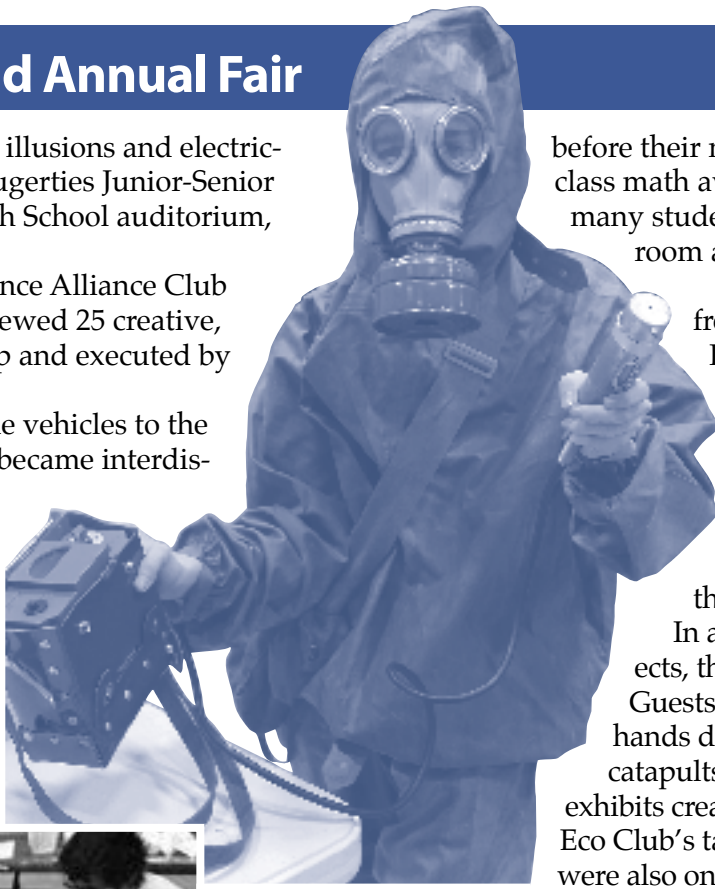
The fair was organized by the schools' joint Science Alliance Club and drew a crowd of more than 100 guests, who viewed 25 creative, innovative, and interesting projects, all dreamed up and executed by students.

Topics ran the scientific gamut from rechargeable vehicles to the reduction of oxidation on cell phone batteries, but became interdisciplinary because they often grew out of students' non-scientific interests.

Katie Hoffstatter, a junior at SHS, used her experience playing the guitar at venues like libraries and coffee shops as the basis for an experiment in acoustics and sound absorption. Katie earned Second Place in the Grade 10-12 category.

An episode of the National Geographic show "Brain Games" got seniors and Science Alliance officers Karen Panke and Audrey Trossen thinking about gender stereotypes. Their project, which involved administering tests with stereotypical statements to their friends of both genders to see how they would answer, earned the young women First Place in the Grade 10-12 awards.

Freshman Lula Rappoport took First Place in the Grades 7-9 division for her "Downtime in the Classroom" project. After learning that schools across the country are implementing meditation programs with promising results in test scores and absence rates, Lula decided to try something similar in Saugerties. Enlisting the help of her younger brother's Grade 4 class at Cahill, Lula asked the teacher to have students take part in quiet, concentrative activities, such as reading, drawing or meditating, first thing in the morning and again



before their math lesson in the afternoon. As a result, the class math average rose by seven points in six weeks and many students reported that they enjoyed the quiet classroom atmosphere.

Second place in the Grades 7-9 division went to freshman Renata Simera for her "Color and Blood Pressure" project. The overall winner of the science fair was sophomore Meghan Murphy, who theorized that a prosthetic bird wing could be created from the wing of a bat.

Science Alliance advisors and teachers Ara Krom and Amy Scanlon called the students' projects "outstanding" and expressed their pride at being part of the ever-growing fair.

In addition to viewing individual student projects, there was plenty to do and see at the science fair. Guests could watch a 3D printer in action, get their hands dirty (or at least sticky) trying out marshmallow catapults, or use their senses at half a dozen interactive exhibits created by science teachers. The results of the Eco Club's tapping of 17 Silver Maple trees on the campus were also on display. A reptile show with Mark Perpetua and some star-gazing with the Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association rounded out the evening.

"The science fair is what learning is all about," said Saugerties Junior-Senior High School Principal Tom Averill. "It's the ability for students interested in science to expand on their passion and display it for everybody to see."

The science fair was sponsored by Village Apothecary and its owner, Neal Smoller, and Ceres Technology. This year's judges were retired Saugerties teachers Mary Bishop and Mitch Stevens and engineer Alex Feinberg.

Clockwise, from top right: SHS senior Michael Giarraputo wears a homemade radiation suit as part of his project on Beta Particle Shielding. Liam White, a Grade 7 student at SJHS, talks with Life Sciences teacher Tina VanVoorhis about her interactive Cartesian Diver buoyancy experiment. SHS junior Nathaniel Lukazewski and sophomore Amalia Martinez use cornstarch and water to mix up a batch of Non-Newtonian Fluid at the science fair. Non-Newtonian fluid becomes a solid when pressure is exerted on it.

SHS Brings 'Peanuts' Characters to Life in "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown"

Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Linus, Lucy, Sally, Pigpen, and the rest of the loveable "Peanuts" gang brought their own special brand of fun to the stage April 17 and 18 as the Saugerties High School (SHS) drama club presented "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown."

The 1967 musical comedy, staged amid bright, colorful sets, followed characters from Charles M. Schulz's famous comic strip through the trials, tribulations, and joys of childhood, from tangled up kites and puppy love to troubles in school and success on the baseball field.

"It's really an adorable play,"

said Saugerties Junior High School social studies teacher Theresa Hogan, who directed the show. "It sparked an interest in a lot of our students because it gives them a chance to relive their childhood."

Hogan said that because the sets and costumes were simple, it allowed the acting skills of her "hugely talented" group of young thespians to shine.

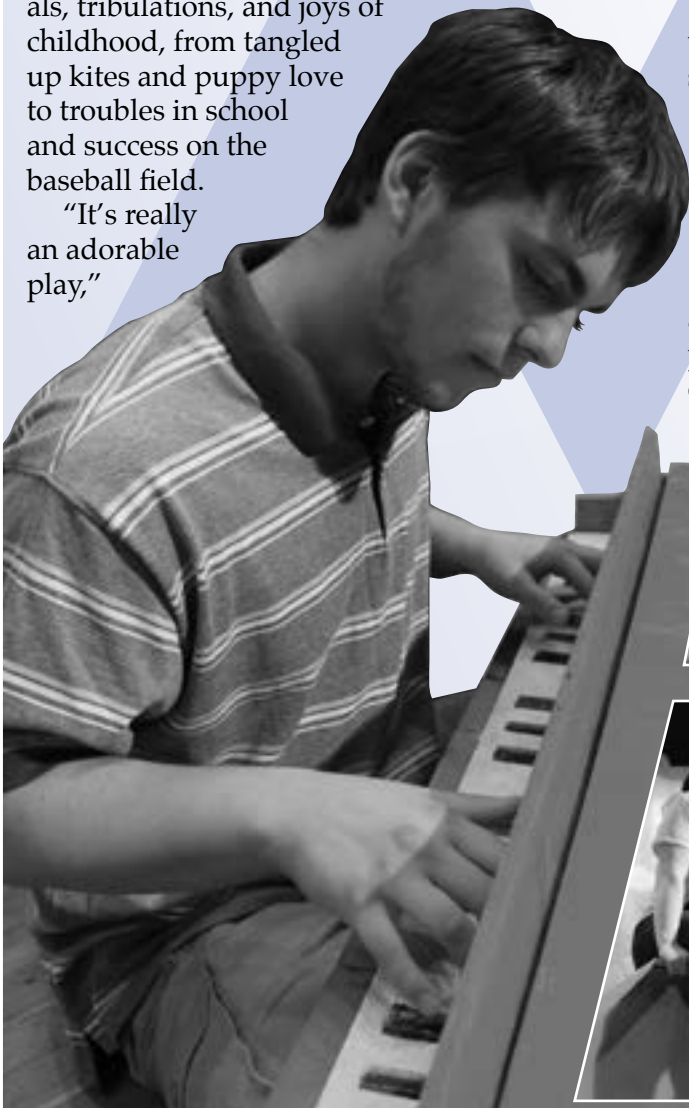
Seventeen students, from freshmen to seniors, were involved on stage, while five students served as stage crew. District music teachers accompanied the production with live music.

For seniors Phoebe Defino and Phylicia deThomas, "Charlie Brown" was their last Saugerties show. Phoebe, who played the sometimes cranky Lucy Van Pelt, also appeared in last spring's production of "Little Shop of Horrors." She said that

she and her character are similar every once in a while. "I have my Lucy days," she said.

Phoebe said that leaving Saugerties theater behind will be "bittersweet," but she hopes to continue her involvement in drama at SUNY Brockport, where she will begin classes in bilingual childhood education this fall.

Phylicia, who played Frieda, was not only in her final role at SHS, but her first one as well. She worked backstage on "Little Shop" last year and got a chance to see how things look from the stage this year. "It's a lot of fun," she said. "I haven't done anything like this since elementary school." Phylicia plans to attend Dutchess Community College in the fall and major in biology for education.



The cast of "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown" at Saugerties High School

Clockwise, from top left: Garrett Simera is the piano-playing Schroeder. SHS junior Dan Caffrey (Charlie Brown) and senior Phoebe Defino (Lucy) rehearse a scene. "Peanuts" pals Snoopy (Kelsey Gaulin) and Woodstock (Renata Simera) chat at Snoopy's doghouse.