FALL 2006

of the Sayville School District

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER VOLUME 22.2 http://www.sayville.k12.ny.us

${f Newsworthy}$

Board of Education LOWERS Proposed Tax Rate DETAILS ON BACK COVER

Trevor Caverly National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist Sayville Senior Trevor Caverly was named a National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist. He is among the 16,000 academically talented high school seniors nationwide who have the opportunity to continue in the 52nd Annual National Merit Scholarship competition for 8,200 Merit Scholarship Awards and to

Two Sayville High School Students to Perform with the METROPOLITAN YOUTH CHORALE

advance to the Finalist level. Congratulations,

Trevor, and good luck in the competition!

Congratulations to two Sayville High School vocalists, juniors Jenna Hanshe and Joseph Hailey, who have been selected by the prestigious Metropolitan Youth Chorale to perform along with the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra in such venues as Carnegie Hall, the Tilles Center, the Staller Center, and Lincoln Center. For additional information go to www.myo.org.

On their first day of school, Sayville students (see photos—front and back covers) returned to the classroom expecting some changes in teachers, classmates, and courses. Perhaps they noticed some other improvements that occurred over the summer:

- 23 new faces among the teaching staff (replacing moving or retiring faculty), as well as two new administrators
- New ceilings at both Cherry Avenue and Sunrise Drive Schools
- · Cherry Avenue's new sidewalks to replace the blacktop
- Refinished gym floor and upgraded pool at the Middle School
- Renovated rooms creating new science labs at the High School
- Completed new cafeteria at Sunrise Drive and renovations in the main office.

Perhaps less obvious are some of the curriculum changes. "We will continue to work towards achieving the Board's goals," Dr. Rosemary Jones stated in her Superintendent's Message on the School District Website, "with a particular emphasis on differentiated instruction. Through a grant the district received, work will begin on a curriculum-mapping

project, which will further align what we teach with the New York State Standards. An exciting new elementary language arts program will be implemented and all three elementary buildings will have upto-date science/technology labs. The High School program has been enhanced with the addition of A.P. physics, A.P. Human Geography and A.P. Studio in Art courses. In addition, an alternative learning environment has been established for students who are at risk of not graduating." (Read more of Superintendent's Message at sayville.k12.ny.us)

Another change this year involved the Kindergarten program. While the older students spend the entire first day in school, Kindergarteners came later to attend a short orientation program. On their second day, the Kindergarteners had half-day sessions. By their third day, Kindergarten students began their fullsession classes. Responding to parental endorsement to begin full session earlier than October, the District initiated new student-screening procedures that accommodated this welcomed change.

















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BOARD NOTES

At the September 14th BOE Meeting

For coordinating Middle School efforts that won the prestigious **Schools To Watch Designation** (see p. 5), Principal Dr. Walter



Schartner was acknowledged with a BOE Award by Dr. Rosemary Jones and BOE President John Verdone.

Dr. Rosemary F. Jones, Superintendent of Schools, reported on the following:

- I. School Accountability Report by Dr. Geraldine Sullivan Keck
- 2.Technology Presentation by Michael Taber
- 3. Update on Tax Rate

BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION: Board Reports

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 2 Yom Kippur—Schools Closed

OCTOBER 5 BOE Workshop Mtg, Admin.

Bldg. 7 p.m.

OCTOBER 9 Columbus Day—Schools Closed

OCTOBER 12 BOE Business Mtg, Admin.

Bldg. 8 p.m.

OCTOBER 28 Homecoming

New Staff Prepared For 2006-2007 School YEAR

In orientation workshops conducted by consultants Cecil Ramsey, Roberta Richin, and Central Office Administrators, 23 new staff members learned the policies and procedures specific to Sayville School District. It was not all work, however. As part of the welcome wagon, the new staff members were invited to a "backyard" barbecue lunch, where they socialized with administrators, building principals, and other new colleagues.



New staff left to right: (back) Andrea Fahey, Garret Campbell, Edward Schmieder, Samuel Kruse, John Verschure, Philip Paniccia, Christopher Schwabe, Jennifer Berotti, Ari Kramer, Peter Branscombe, Claire Rymer, (front) Kerri Van Boxel, Tamar Muscolino, Christine Senatore, Christina Eterno, Lynn Anne Sumner, Kimberly DeGraff, Doreen Rosso, Leonora Storms, Steven Alexandrou, Jackie Jones, and Elizabeth Bolger

Welcome Back!
Welcome Back!
Welcome Back!

During the Staff Welcome Back ceremonies, senior Katherine Buono sang the *Star-Spangled Banner*, and a musical jazz presentation included the student talents of Adam Rizzo, Conrad Jones), and Matthew Rivera. Returning staff members were encouraged "to teach and learn in new ways" by Sayville Superintendent Dr. Rosemary Jones; and BOE President John Verdone offered greetings.



Among the staff celebrating milestone years of service in Sayville, the following members in attendance received recognition for their dedication to our students and commitment to education:

(from top, l-r) 20 years: Brian Bennett, Joanne Grzymala, Steve Hintze, Robert Kempf, Rosemary Kessler, Bridget Norman;

25 years: Linda Davis, Deborah Reith; Leonard Cromwell (not pictured)

30 years: Kathryn Bernstein, Joseph La Dolcetta;

35 years: Joseph Buderman



Highlights

of the Sayville School District

Social Studies Chairperson Walker Hall Receives Suffolk County Anti-Bias Award

For his leadership in promoting racial and ethnic harmony in the High School curriculum, Sayville Social Studies Department Chairman Walker Hall received the 2006 Suffolk County Anti-Bias Award. This annual award, sponsored by the Suffolk County Inter-Faith Anti-Bias Task Force, commends select individuals who have promoted racial, ethnic, and religious understanding.

To celebrate diversity, Mr. Hall and the Sayville Social Studies faculty have coordinated teach-ins on relevant issues, film festivals, assembly programs, guest speakers, visual displays, and fundraising activities. Invited guests from the NAACP, the National Organization for Women, as well as Holocaust survivors, Genocide survivors, and a spokesperson from the mosque in Bay Shore have engaged in meaningful dialogue with students to help them dispel stereotypes. Native American Dancers and Drummers demonstrated



(I-r) Anti-Bias Task Force Cochair Dr. Paul J. Ciborowski, Sayville Social Studies Chairman Walker Hall, Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy, and Anti-Bias Task Force Cochair Rabbi Steven Moss. (photo courtesy of N. Lenz)

cultural heritage, while the annual History Club Cultural Awareness Dinner entertained the palate with diverse cuisine.

In addition, Sayville students have participated in Habitat for Humanity, visited the Holocaust Museum in Nassau County, raised funds to help offset winter fuel costs on the Pine Ridge Reservation, fundraised against world hunger through the Oxfam organization, and attended the Darfur Awareness Day at SCCC. The department-sponsored field trip to

Harlem focused on the history, architecture, and positive energy of that neighborhood.

"We are proud," Mr. Hall remarked when thanking the Task Force for the recognition award, "that we continue to involve young people in worthy causes...we in the Social Studies department are convinced that the cumulative effect will have a positive impact on promoting tolerance and understanding."

The Annual Presentations of the Lari Abrams Scholarships

The Lori Abrams Scholarship Awards were awarded to two graduating seniors in June. This year's recipients were Bridget Corso for the F.B.L.A. Award and James O'Connor for the Drama and Music Award. Both recipients were recommended by faculty members of Sayville High School to the scholarship committee for their talents and exceptional involvements. Congratulations and best wishes to both James and Bridget for continuing success in their futures.

Two perpetual plaques, commemorating the past and future recipients of these awards, are displayed in Sayville High School. Thanks are extended to everyone who has donated to this fund to honor the memory of Lori and help to fulfill the aspirations of these students. *Donations to the Lori Abrams Scholarship can be mailed to The Lori Abrams Scholarship, 21 Cleveland Avenue, Sayville, NY 11782.*



Mrs. Donna Gist presented Bridget Corso with the Lori Abrams Award. Mrs. Gist, an inspirational teacher and F.B.L.A. Leader, who retired this year, was well loved by many students, including Lori. Mrs. Gist, we will miss you. Thank you for all you have done.



Mrs. Amy Baron (Sunrise Drive Music Teacher), James O'Connor, and Mr. Steven Hailey (Sayville High School Drama Director) at Drama Induction Night. James sang a touching rendition of Lori's Song, words and music composed lovingly by Mrs. Baron.

SUMMER OPERA WORKSHOP CELEBRATES

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MOZART'S 250™ BIRTHDAY

This summer, the 11th Annual Sayville Young People's Opera Workshop delighted audiences with two entirely unique performances of W. A. Mozart's most frequently performed opera *The Magic Flute*. More than forty young performers from both Nassau and Suffolk counties, ages 12 to 22, appeared on stage, with the assistance of twenty in the orchestra, and another six working backstage, and played to full houses in the David M. Jones Memorial Auditorium both nights.

One audience member observed after the Saturday night showing, "It's not often that you find this many young people with the talent to perform this kind of music."

For additional information on Sayville Players school productions, please go to:

sayvilleplayers.sayville.site.eboard.com.

Sayville Math Olympiads On a Pinnacle of Success

Demonstrating amazing mathematical muster, four Savville teams, representing Sayville Middle School, Cherry, Lincoln, and Sunrise Elementary schools, attended the First Annual Math Tournament for grades four through six. The daylong event, sponsored by the Goudreau Museum of Mathematics in Art and Science in conjunction with the Math Olympiad Organization, was held at the College of Old Westbury last spring.

In the first 30-minute round, all the students competed individually to answer ten challenging problems. Out of 125 participants, sixteen emerged with perfect scores, including four Sayville students: Jesse Hirsch, James Klopp, Meagan Mulry, and Steven Smith. As a tie-breaker, the sixteen students were required to solve the following question: The product of 2 numbers is 216; neither number is divisible by 6. What are the two numbers? Sunrise Drive

Fifth-grader Steven Smith was the third person to get the correct answer, earning him third place overall for the individual event. [answer: 8 x 27]

Ratcheting up the excitement, Round Two was a team competition. Each team worked out strategies to solve a series of difficult problems before coming to a consensus on a single answer. The Savville Middle School team and two other teams (out of twenty-five total) tied with perfect scores. "For the tiebreaker," explained Sayville SEED teacher and Mathlete Coach Cindy MacDonell, "each team was asked to select one member to solve a problem The first person with the correct answer would win first place. The team

members chose Jesse Hirsch to represent them."

The challenging tie-breaker question involved geometry and creative problemsolving: The large square (above)

16 cm

contains three smaller squares. Their areas are 9 sq.cm., 16 sq.cm., and 9 sq.cm. What is the area of the shaded region?

Sayville's First-Place team

"Jesse, a gifted problem-solver with amazing spatial skills," Mrs. MacDonell continued, "was a perfect choice to answer the tie-breaker. However, the race to finish the problem first would be the real challenge. After a short time, Jesse's hand flew up—he was the first to solve it, but was his answer correct?"

After the judges collected the answers from the other two contestants, they pronounced thrilling news: Sayville Middle School Team (Jesse Hirsch, Tiffany Bruno, Jackie Kalomiris, James Klopp, and Zachary Stephan) was the winner with the answer: 42 sq.cm.

It was a stimulating day for all four Sayville teams, comprising the top five Math Olympians from each school. While the Middle School team enjoyed a shining moment as victors, the elementary teams were enthusiastic about qualifying for next year's tournament.

Congratulations to the following Sayville mathlete teams:

•SMS: First-Place Team with combined individual and team scores Tiffany Bruno, Jesse Hirsch, Jackie Kalomiris, James Klopp, and Zachary Stephan

•SD: Finished 3 points out of first place on combined scores of Matthew Stephan, Connor Mulry, Curran Boyce, Steven Smith, Rachael Wachter

LA: Lucas Volle, Rebecca Monastero, Meaghan Scheck, Jennifer Lembeck, Liam

Hofmeister, (alternate: Aneri Kinariwalla)
•CA: Andrew Wheaton, Chris Greco, Chris Wheaton, Meagan Mulry, Casey Lodol, (alternate: Melanie Drinkwater)



Two Sayville Middle School Students

Dinners in Separate Contests

• For Better Hearing and Speech Month in May, Middle School Speech-Language Pathologist Mrs. Laura Segarra encouraged her students to compete in the annual poster contest sponsored by the LISHA (Long Island Speech-Language Hearing Association). With over 200 entries, from which fifty top posters were selected for each grade level, Sayville Seventh-grader Krista Giardina was one of twelve students from both Nassau and Suffolk Counties to win. Congratulations!

• Last spring, Brodart, the premier library supplier of circulation-ready

materials, conducted a national Fall School Catalog Cover Contest for students, entitled "Connecting the Future: Your School Library." Entrants were required to create an illustration accompanied by a short essay to show how school libraries impact both students and communities. More than 300 entries were received and two winners announced in June. Middle School Seventh-grader Taylor Callis, a student in Mrs. Jeannette Ainslie's Current Issues class, was declared one of the two winners nationwide.

"Wow!" Taylor responded to the news. "I had no idea that I would win! I am so excited and my parents are so proud."

Taylor is having her illustration published on the cover of Brodart Fall School Catalog, will receive a laminated version of her poster, will win a \$250 voucher for books, a \$100 Toys'R Us gift card, and a pizza party, compliments of Pizza Hut, for her (last year's) class. In addition, the Middle School received a Banner along with a \$500 voucher for ibrary books.

Congratulations to Taylor and also to two Middle School honorable mentions in the contest: Kelsey Truglio and Qxiera Tomasetti.

"A School To Watch" Designation Earned with Eyes on Excellence

Sayville Middle School has met the criteria and been identified nationally as one of six high-performing Middle Schools in New York State by the Schools to Watch (STW) Program.* This prestigious designation reflects on the quality and character of the Sayville Middle School community as it continues to self-evaluate and improve its educational opportunities.

With the goal to ensure all students "achieve at the highest possible level," the Middle School consulted the STW evaluation rubric and utilized feedback from administrators, teachers, staff, and Site-Based Team members. During the 2004-2005 school year, this evidence was compared with various categories required by the STW self-evaluation.

When the committee reviewed the compiled evidence in September of 2005, it made recommendations for values on the rubric, noting numerous strengths in the areas of academics, organizational structure, and procedures, as well as developmental responsiveness. Weaknesses were recognized in three areas: limited hardware, limited student feedback, and cultural homogeneity. Plans for improvements include:

- Budgeting for wireless labs on a cart, additional multimedia carts, and more computers in the school library.
- Establishing a student advisory board that represents all three grades for monthly meetings with administrators on student issues.

• Availing students more opportunities to share experiences with surrounding culturally diverse communities, either virtually through the Internet and e-mail, or by reestablishing an exchange program.

"Self-evaluation is always a good way to step back and realize the great things that are done for the children of the community,"
Principal Dr. Walter Schartner commented in the STW report.

Sayville School District is very proud of the Middle School's accomplishment. As Superintendent Dr. Rosemary Jones stated in her website message: "It is the only school on Long Island that has received this honor, which is testimony to its strong academic program."

*The STW program, developed by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grade Reform (established in 1997), was responding to the decline in test scores and the increase of violence among middle-grades students. Over six years, the Forum has successfully reframed the national discussion about middle-grades education. "To accomplish its goal of improved academic and developmental outcomes for all students in the middle grades, the Forum identifies and disseminates best practices, articulates and promotes effective policies, recognizes and develops enlightened leadership, and informs and engages the public."

SEED STUDENTS Significations of the igniting intellectual investigations

Both Middle School SEED teachers Mrs. Jean Galima and Sonja Olsen worked with the Sixth- and Seventh-grade SEED students last year on projects that spanned all areas and disciplines. Using interactive computer challenges to conduct either independent or group studies, each of the students, stated Mrs. Galima, "sparked many fires of inquiry." The following is just a sampling of their efforts:

- Jesse Hirsh, Brian Rini, Brendan Clemente, Molly McCauley, Tyler Nolan, and Jonathan Rolland constructed robots from blueprints: The Climber, Predator, Escapee and other techbots taught functionality and the importance of cam mechanisms, as well as cooperative learning.
- Tangrams, solving patterns, and Soduko puzzles were extremely popular. For Anthony Piacentini, solving them was just not enough—he had to create them himself. He also used mathematical principles and equations to create caps, wallets and other items using everyday ducktape.
- Kate Tobin designed and created a magazine from beginning to end, learning about layout, advertisements, target groups, and what it takes to make a successful magazine. She elicited other students for advertisements and input. As a person interested in journalism. fashion, and design, Kate realized how history affects styles. She designed clothing for the busy working American womanstylish wraparounds that can transform for all occasions without the need of buttons. snaps, or zippers.
- Madeline Thayer conducted comprehensive research of primate brains comparing those



of apes to humans. Her quest was to discover why humans suffer from various diseases, such as Alzheimer's, and why animals do not.

- Kelsey Truglio built a very impressive model of our school.
- Dylan Gallagher researched the historical relevance and development of football and how sports affect cultures.
- Kelly O'Sullivan researched diseases and created PowerPoint presentations to highlight the need for further research to help eliminate them or bring more information to the public.
- Alexandra Russell and Kelsey Clair designed a board game of over 150 questions for the Gifted Mind! What a challenge.

"Our gifted students traveled the gamut," Mrs. Galima said "learning of the Natural Wonders of the World and learning how to approach problems by thinking outside the box. They were absolutely amazing!"

Their Eyes Have

All agree on the spectacular new Sunrise Drive addition

Opening day of school coincided with the reopening of the Sunrise Drive Elementary School cafeteria/auditorium and the official ribbon-

cutting ceremony. Standing patiently outside the closed doors, Sunrise Drive students and staff couldn't wait to get their first look after the yearlong construction. A red ribbon draped between plush red bows, made by art teacher Jeannette Ainsle, decorated the columns flanking the beautiful outdoor entrances.

Once Principal Rose Castello welcomed everyone to the ceremony, including guests

from the Central Administration, BOE President John Verdone, and building architect Joseph Abruzzo (of James M. Campbell Architects), she invited Sayville Superintendent Dr. Rosemary Jones to join the five students, chosen randomly from each grade, to cut the ribbon. Using large foil-clad cardboard scissors—made by former art teacher Mary -(Dr. Jones used real scissors), the students had the job done

in seconds.

Wide-eved with excitement the elementary students filed into the spacious interior-at 5,400 sq. ft, it more than doubled the original space. Everywhere they looked, the contemporary design was a sight to behold. The gleaming floors, a new extended stage, fabulous high ceilings with images of the sun, moon, and stars

engraved in the ceiling tiles, and of course, the cupola skylight drew squeals of amazement.

On display along the walls, the students spotted their self-portraits—artwork they had created last year and upon which they had written promises to respect themselves, each

other, and their new cafeteria. The self-portraits were reminders of how they would behave in their new addition.

The remainder of the ceremony was short, sweet, and sincere. After the Fifth-grade Chorus sang the Sunrise Drive School song, music and lyrics written by music teacher Amy Baron, Mrs. Castello thanked everyone for their participation and patience. She remarked how well the

Sunrise Drive community managed

through last year's construction, and that it was well worth the wait. Everyone indicated unanimous agreement through their cheers and applause. Shortly after the ceremonies, lunch was served once again in the cafeteria!

Guests enjoying the ceremony were (I-r) Assistant Superintendent for Business John J. Belmonte, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Stephanie Lamanno, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Dan Casali, Architect Joseph Abruzzo, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Dr. Geraldine Sullivan Keck, and BOE President John Verdone.









Sunrise Drive students helped Dr. Jones cut the ribbon during the ceremony





(above) Sunrise Drive students self-portraits decorated the walls.







Some Historical Statistics ABOUT SUNRISE



Originally built in 1960, Sunrise Drive Elementary started at 47,226 square feet. In 1964, the East Wing added 18,654 square feet, followed in 1970 by the Library addition and 996 more square feet.

Unfortunately, the old cafeterialauditorium (at 2,500 sq. ft.) did not undergo any renovations to accommodate the increased enrollment.

Since the districtwide renovations, funded through the \$30.5 million voter-approved Bond Issue, were well-managed, they came in ahead of schedule and often under budget. These savings in both time and money assisted the funding of the Sunrise Drive cafeteria/auditorium project.

Many thanks go to all whose concerted efforts yielded such fine results, especially Assistant Superintendent for Business John Belmonte, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Dan Casali, James M. Campbell Architects, Irwin Contracting, and the Sayville Board of Education.









Lincoln Buddy Writers

All last year, Lincoln Avenue students in Ms. Myszka's Kindergarten class became Kindergarten Buddy Writers with Ms. Byrne's Kindergarteners at Sylvan Avenue Elementary school in Bayport. Although it began as a "whole class" activity—the students interactively "writing" with their teachers to the other class—as the year progressed, the students assumed the responsibility of writing to their very own buddy.

Not only did the pen pal experience teach the students "print awareness" and how to write friendly letters, the students also learned about another child. At a bagel breakfast last June, both classes met with their buddies, exchanged introductions, and participated in writing activities and games. "The children left with hugs, new friends, and the motivation and tools needed to be writers!" concluded Ms. Myszka and Ms. Byrne.

Cherry Students Meet Pen Pals

The 4th Annual Pen Pal visit between First-graders in Karen Hooks' class at Cherry Avenue and Sayville resident Patty Schick's First-grade class from Farmingdale School District took place at the Albany Avenue School in June. The children had been writing to each other since January. Finally, the classes joined for a day of games, singing, dancing, and most importantly, meeting their pen pal friends face-to-face.



SAYVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER Linda A. Mittiga, Producer.Writer, Editor, Designer Past Winner of NYSPRA Awards

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Dr. Rosemary F. Jones, Superintendent of Schools

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LOWERING THE Tax Rate FOR THE SAYVILLE COMMUNITY

Going Down from **5.46%** to **4.1** %

EXCEPTIONAL NEWS FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR! The Sayville School Board of Education has been able to set the tax rate increase even lower than originally proposed. While residents voted to approve the School Budget at the projected tax rate increase of 5.46 percent last spring, this fall that figure has been

Q. How Did Sayville School District Lower the Tax Rate from 5.46 to 4.1%? The lower tax rate that will benefit Sayville residents can be attributed to:

- The excellent fiscal management of the District by the Sayville Board of Education and Administration,
- The overall increase in the assessed valuation of Sayville properties,
- Special legislation, approved annually, that stabilizes the shift in homestead and nonhomestead base allocations,
- Sayville's Moody Bond Rating of A1, which translates into an excellent credit rating and property valuation.

The Town of Islip determines the assessed value of all properties in Sayville and provides the classification as either Homestead (Residential) or Nonhomestead (Business). Once school districts receive this information (in August), the final tax levy is set. All districts are required to set the tax rate prior to October 1st.

Sayville School District assures residents that we are listening to your concerns. We understand the challenges of this fiscal climate and its impact on the economy. We remain dedicated to offering our children the best education and realize that we can only succeed with community support.

Please join us at our monthly Board meetings and stay informed.

WHAT ARE BASE ALLOCATIONS?

They are the ratio or proportion of Homestead (Residential) and Nonhomestead (Business) values, called the "Base Property Tax Allocation." (This is only one part of the entire formula for setting the tax rate.) These values change annually based upon such things as the number of homes sold, new homes built, and developed properties throughout the year.

The Sayville Community is INVITED to

Rachel's Challenge at 6:30 p.m.

Wed. Nov 1st - High School <u>and</u> Thurs. Nov 2st - Middle School

SPONSORED BY SAYVILLE HS/MS
MORE INFO? CALL
Ms. Foster 244-6784
Mr. SIMONSEN 244-6667









