

Sandy Creek

Central School
District
Newsletter

Spring 2013



The Comet's Tale



Student Council Holds St. Patrick's Day Flower Sale



The Sandy Creek High School Student Council held a St. Patrick's Day flower sale to raise money in support of the Oswego County Opportunities' (OCO) Senior Nutrition Services and their March for Meals campaign. The campaign helps to raise awareness and support for the agency's home delivered meal service in Oswego County. The students sold flowers to their fellow students and staff members at the school. Pictured are students Hanah Bridges, left, and Autumn Irwin with Student Council President Izzie Bray, seated at the table. The high school student council advisor is Caitlin Urlacher.

National Junior Honor Society Induction Ceremony

The Sandy Creek National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) Chapter welcomed 13 new members at a special induction ceremony held at the school on April 10. The new inductees include: 8th graders Bridgette Anderson, Alyssa Fiegl, and Lainey Smith; and 7th graders Faith Bachar, Joshua Balcom, Christopher Blount, David Hennigan, Emily Kehoe, Seth Lurcock, Oren McDougal, Carley Stoker, Machela Sullivan, and Sullivan Worns.

The new members join current members: Breanna Allen, Dallas Blair, Stephanie Brown, Lindsey Goodnough, Matthew Guarasce, Elizabeth Hall, Alexis Ladd, Jessica Leppien, Chase Pappa, Alexander Paschall, Nicholas Radford, Connor Waggoner, Sophie Walter, Abigail Widrig, Jasmyn Williams, and Adam Yerden who were present at the ceremony to welcome the new members.

Sandy Creek Superintendent Stewart Amell welcomed the family and friends to the ceremony and personally congratulated the honor society members saying, "This is only the beginning. You must continue to demonstrate the high standards that got you here this evening." Amell also praised the parents and guardians whose inspiration and support was instrumental in their child achieving this honorable distinction.

NJHS Advisor Sue Gafner noted that NJHS distinction is not based solely on high academic



Sandy Creek Middle School Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society with current and newly inducted members are pictured above with NJHS Advisor Sue Gafner.

achievement, but also includes high standards and participation in citizenship, leadership, service and character. Sandy Creek Middle School Principal Carolyn Shirley led the 13 new members in the NJHS Oath.

Following the ceremony a reception was held in the High School Cafeteria for the audience and NJHS members.

Health and Wellness Expo Held at Sandy Creek

The Sandy Creek Central School District hosted a 2013 Health and Wellness Expo on Wednesday, March 13, in the high school gymnasium. The health fair featured exhibits and demonstrations focusing on health, wellness, recreation and safety. The event was sponsored by the Sandy Creek Central School District and the Sandy Creek School Based Health Center. Pictured right: Dimitri Marshall, left, and Adam Hilton take on the brain challenge at the Oswego County Traffic Safety booth at the Health and Wellness Expo.



(More photos available on page 2)

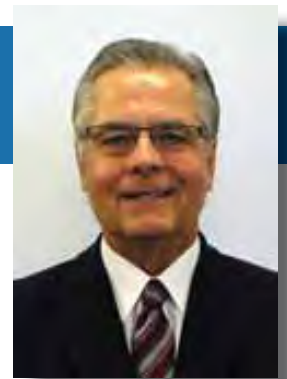
Sandy Creek Central School District





A Message From the District Superintendent

Mr. Stewart R. Amell



This Year's 3-8 Testing: WILL BE CHALLENGING!

Can you imagine testing students on material that hasn't been taught yet? Starting the week of April 15th, students in grades 3 through 8 throughout New York State will be taking state assessments in English Language Arts and Math. These new standardized tests are aligned with the New Common Core Standards that have been approved by New York State and 44 other States but not all of the curriculum materials that align with these new standards have reached our classrooms yet.

Imposing "High Stake Tests" to students before the aligned curriculum material is available, implemented, and taught, is just plain wrong. It's frustrating for students as well as teachers and administrators. The decision by our State Education Department to implement these new tests is another example of rushing a new education system before it is fully implemented at the local level.

Don't get me wrong, I support the New Common Core Standards and their accompanying assessments. If implemented correctly, they will provide our students with a

new enriching curriculum, expand student learning, and give our students the opportunity to use critical skills that will help them succeed in college and the workplace.

Please be assured that the consequences of rushing the roll out of these new tests will have a dramatic decrease in student performance compared to previous year's results. The State Education Department has admitted publicly that the scores for students will drop but they are still going to use these scores to unfairly label students and inaccurately measure teacher effectiveness.

As you can see, I am very frustrated with the State's policy on this year's 3 through 8 testing program. We anticipate a very challenging testing period.

Stewart R. Amell
Sandy Creek Central School District Superintendent

Health and Wellness Expo at Sandy Creek High School

(Cont'd from pg. 1)

More than 30 booths were set up in the high school gymnasium during the Sandy Creek Health and Wellness Expo held in mid-March.

At Right:

Alison Lantry maneuvers through an obstacle course on a scooter while observing all appropriate traffic and safety laws.



Above Far Right: Steven Wood, a peer educator with the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Services program at Sandy Creek High School, explains a little about the "Wheel of Choices" to first grader Thomas Taplin, during the Sandy Creek Health and Wellness Expo.



Bottom Right: Oswego County Sheriff's Deputy Rob Lawton creates a safe child card for Zachary Comins while Zachary's mother Denise watches.





Math Night Clarifies the Changes in Math and ELA



Sara McNitt was one of several teachers who explained to parents in the Sandy Creek School District the new methodology in teaching math to grades K-5 that align with the Common Core Standards.

Teachers and administrators in the Sandy Creek Central School District presented an informational evening on the changes in K-5 curriculum for Math and ELA that align with the Common Core State Standards. The main focus of the evening was to introduce parents to the new standards and help them understand what to look for and how to help their children at home.

The Common Core Standards are a single set of clear standards

for ELA and math instruction that will prepare students for success and provide educators with a clear, focused map for what to teach and when. This will provide instructional consistency, not only from district to district, but also from state to state.

The coordinators of the Sandy Creek program also shared with the parents curriculum timelines that show when their child will be learning specific skills in math and how selected standards change from year to year.

The Common Core Standards feature six shifts in mathematics including: 1) build skills across grade levels (more in-depth study); 2) learn more about less (building on learning); 3) use math facts easily (speed and accuracy); 4) really know it, really do it (understanding); 5) use math in the real world (practical application); and 6) think fast and solve problems (use core math facts quickly). The six shifts in ELA include: 1) read as much non-fiction as fiction; 2) learn about the world by reading; 3) read more challenging material; 4) talk about reading using evidence; 5) write about texts using evidence; and 6) know more vocabulary words.



To equip parents with tools to help them work with their children at home, coordinators presented the parents with "goody bags" which contained math manipulatives that were grade-specific. The manipulatives included red/yellow counters and shake and spill counters that provide students with a visual to help them combine like groups and help them solve problems multiple ways. Parents were also given tools and demonstrations on how to help their child divide math problems into equation, model, and answer sentences. The bags also contained resources for frequently asked questions, expectations, math and ELA testing information and activities that parents and their children can do at home to help strengthen and reinforce the Common Core Standards.

While parents were learning about changes involving the Common Core Standards, students enjoyed a variety of supervised activities including arts and crafts, Just Dance, reading and a movie. Dustin Mackey enjoyed a quiet moment coloring.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Apr. 24-26 Grades 3-8 NYS Math Testing
- Apr. 27 Talent Show, 7 p.m.
- Apr. 29 Staff Development Day - No school for students
- May 1 County-wide Battle of the Books, APW
- May 4 Junior/Senior Prom
- May 9 Elementary Science Fair 12-6 p.m.
- May 9 SCCS Budget Public Hearing, 7 p.m.
- May 14 5th & 6th Spring Band & Choral Concert, 7 p.m.
- May 15 Staff Development, 11:30 a.m. Dismissal
- May 21 Budget Vote & BOE Elections 12-8 p.m.
- May 27 Memorial Day - No School
- June 4 Middle School Awards, 12 p.m.
- June 4 High School Awards, 1 p.m.
- June 5 Grade 7-12 Spring Choral Concert, 7 p.m.
- June 7 Elementary Awards, 2 p.m.
- June 10 Last Day of School Grades 6-8
- June 11-20 Regents Testing
- June 17 Kindergarten Graduation, 9 a.m.
- June 20 Elementary Fun Day
- June 21 Elementary Moving Up Day
- June 21 5th Grade Graduation
- June 21 Last Day of School
- June 22 High School Commencement, 10 a.m.

Pre-K - 5th Grade Family Reading Night Wednesday, May 1st

Join us for an evening of Reading Olympics!
Dinner starts at 5:45 in the elementary cafeteria.

Families participate in 3 centers:
Family Fitness, Mind Games and Sportcast



Sandy Creek Group Takes a Trip "Across the Pond"

The Sandy Creek Spanish Club, along with staff and chaperones, took a week-long trip to visit the sights, sounds and culture of "jolly old England" during spring break. The group of 21 staff, students, and chaperones visited such notable sights as Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, Big Ben, Stonehenge, the Tower of London, and even the sights in London associated with the Harry Potter book series.

Members of the group included: staff members Karen Miller, Kristin Weller, and Denise Elkin; students: Taylor Mullin, McKenna Guarasce, Olivia Ivison, Cori Pandolfi, Sammi Pandolfi, Kerrie Ridgeway, Madison Bush, Paige Kehoe, Brett Wolfe, Luke Elliott, Lexy Goodnough, and Toni Gray; elementary students included: Colby Kimball Salzman, Abrielle Soluri and parents and family members Jessica Kimball Soluri, Erin Kimball Salzman, Colleen Warner, and Michelle Guarasce. The group is pictured above in front of Windsor Castle and at left at Kensington Palace.



Members of the Sandy Creek group that traveled to England during spring break, spent a chilly day at the pre-historic site of Stonehenge, one of the most famous sites in the world.

Spring Musical Production of "Wonderland" a Big Hit



On March 15th and 16th, Sandy Creek High School presented the musical "Wonderland." The show was based on the novel "Through the Looking Glass," by Lewis Carroll and followed the misadventures of a girl named Alice, played by Molly Horth, as she encountered strange people and creatures in an enchanted place called Wonderland. The cast of 24 students in grades 8-12 delighted and entertained in a magical evening of music and theater. Pictured are various scenes from the production.



Census Update

We are in the process of changing the software program we use for data management, and the Annual Student Information Verification Forms that have been mailed to you are crucial to us maintaining this as an accurate record. Our new system will be fully implemented this fall, and we appreciate your patience through the transition as we work out all the kinks. Thank you to all who have returned the forms.



Middle School Student Council Project Creates Care Packages



The Sandy Creek Middle School Student Council, their inspiration and their advisors are pictured above with a few of the chemo care bags before they were packed into boxes for delivery to the Regional Oncology Center at University Hospital for distribution to patients.

Sandy Creek Middle School Student Council members Alex Paschall, Emily Smith, Brianna Snyder, Faith Bachar, Makenzie Lococo, Taila Hatch, Emily Kehoe, Nicky Radford, Abbey Fitzpatrick, Esther Brafman, Timothy Snell, Morgan Bristol, Riley MacDuffie, and Haylie Roberts created approximately 60 "chemo care packages" as part of a community service project by the group to brighten the day for patients receiving chemotherapy. The project was inspired by Brandy Snyder-VanRy, a special education teacher in the district, whose personal experience at the Regional Oncology Center at University

Hospital with a family member, gave Student Council Advisors Karin Johnson and Kimberly Curley the idea for the students to create the care packages for patients to have as they receive their treatment. The bags include items such as personal care items, a small bottle of water, hard candy, hand sanitizer, a personal notebook, pen, lotion, puzzle and crossword books and other items to help patients pass the time during their time at the oncology center. Each colorful bag also contains a hand-written note from the students and is tied with ribbons to let the patients know that someone is thinking about them during what is often a very difficult time. VanRy delivered the bags to the oncology center on April 12th.



Students from Sandy Creek Middle School packed approximately 60 bags for delivery to the Regional Oncology Center at University Hospital.



Sandy Creek Middle School Student Council members Abbey Fitzpatrick, left, and Esther Brafman tie personal notes to each of the "chemo care bags" they created as a community service project.

Spring Band Concert



March is Music In Our Schools Month and on March 27, grades 7-12 band participants held their Spring Concert. The evening featured performances by Fusion Ensemble, pictured right, with soloist Jacob Cornell, the Middle School Concert Band and the High School Concert Band. Senior members of the High School Band were recognized and included: Toni Gray, Justin Haskins, David Brown and Xavier Goins.



Read Around the Planet Distance Learning Opportunity



Pictured are students in Susan Gafner's 6th grade class, left to right: Sidney Jenkins (back), Logan Haynes, Stephany Cole, Austin DeLong, Courtney Burns, Jordyn Mullin, Luke LaVere, and John Irwin (back).

Students in Susan Gafner's 6th grade class connected via distance learning with a school from Alberta Canada to celebrate Read Around the Planet in late February. The Sandy Creek students, using a format similar to the "Minute to Win It" game show, asked the Canada class questions related to reading and comprehension, all while performing a physical task. The dual tasks of thinking and physical exertion utilizes both sides of the brain in an activity.

The Canadian school performed an ancient Greek "Reader's Theater" for the Sandy Creek class entitled "The Maze of Midas." Both the Canadian and Sandy Creek classes had recently studied the Athenian democracy and the students easily shared their thoughts on the Greek study.

The two classes plan to keep in touch through e-mail and possible future distance learning connections.

The experience was made possible through the Distance Learning Program at Oswego County BOCES and its coordinator Laurie Ouderkirk.



The Distance Learning Program at Oswego County BOCES coordinated the Read Around the Planet project that linked Sandy Creek Middle School with Alberta, Canada.



Students in Susan Gafner's class took turns asking the other school questions about Read Around the Planet during the Distance Learning connection.

Board of Education Recognizes Section III Champion Cheerleaders

The Sandy Creek Board of Education held a recognition banquet to honor the Section III Champion Cheerleading team and Coach Tanya VanOrnum. Superintendent Stewart Amell praised the team for their hard work, dedication and commitment saying, "I'm always impressed by how hard they work. We are very, very proud of them." Coach VanOrnum recited the many awards and accomplishments the team had received, including being the first Sandy Creek Cheerleading team to advance to the State Championships. "Even though we were not State Champions, they did a great job." Adding, "You are a part of [Sandy Creek] history!" Team members are pictured here, front row, left to right: Sara Castor, Emily Calabria, Kendra Valley, Val Kampff, Clarice Thibault, Sammi Pandolfi, and Jasmyn Williams. Back row, left to right: Lindsey Goodnough, Ashley Goodnough, Tara Huggins, Bailey Laundre, Deanna Rusz, Brittany Valley, Caitlyn Williams, and Coach Tanya VanOrnum.





Battle of the Books Teams Advance to County-Wide Competition



Pictured are the 9th-12th grade gold and silver medal teams.

Students in the Sandy Creek Central School District (SCCS) put their literary knowledge to the test for a chance to be crowned Battle of the Books champion, and represent their district in the county-wide competition to be held May 1st at Altmar-Parish-Williamstown High School.

Battle of the Books is a nationally recognized literacy program coordinated in Oswego County through the Oswego County BOCES School Library System, and in the Sandy Creek District by Library Media Specialist Jacquie Owens. The program encourages students to read, enhances reading comprehension and promotes teamwork as well as academic excellence. Competing students volunteered to participate in Battle of the Books by committing to read 12 to 15 books from a predetermined list. The students, working in teams of two to three members along with a coach, discussed the books and quizzed each other on the contents in preparation for the district-wide competition.

The recent district-level competition brought together the top teams from the elementary, middle and high school for a level three-four competition, a level five competition, a level six-eight competition, and a nine-twelve competition.

During each level, the teams were asked 16 questions about the books on their reading list and were given 30 seconds to provide a written answer. Each question began 'in which book...' and points were awarded for each correct title and author provided, up to eight points per question.

Finishing in first place for the grade three-four competition was the team Book Bombers with members Annie Chen, Olivia Pappa, and Emma McDougal. Second place went to the team The Glasses with Hailstorm McNitt, Dorothy Searles and Alyana Blount and third place to team EME with Catie-Ann Blodgett, Hailee Thurston, and Deanna Hathway.

The fifth grade team Angry Nerds finished in first place with team members Lainie Hathway, Alexis McNitt and Marley Yerdon; second place was Reading Geeks with Gavin Babcock, McKenzie Kwak and Izzy Walter; and third place was team M2S with Madison Bauer, Madison Brown and Sadie Lurcock.

First place in grades six-eight went to team Knights with team members Abbey Fitzpatrick, MacKenzie Sherman and Emily Smith. The team did not face an opponent, but used the competition as practice for the county competition and to better their own personal score.

The high school, grade nine-twelve competition saw first place go to Princess Squad with members Olivia Bauer, Kylie Eldridge and



Pictured is the 6th grade gold medal team.



Pictured are the 5th grade gold, silver and bronze teams.



Pictured are the 3rd and 4th grade team participants.

Madeline Yousey and second place to team Rosie Morgan Ranieri with members Rosie Morgan and Morgan Ranieri.

The first place teams will represent the Sandy Creek Central School District at the county-wide competition in May for the chance to become Oswego County Battle of the Books Champions.

Congratulations!
to the following winter sports teams and coaches for winning Frontier League Class C Sportsmanship Awards for the 2012-2013 season



- Varsity Volleyball
- Varsity Boys Basketball
- Varsity Cheerleading

Sandy Creek Central School District

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True Beauty Group Expands at Sandy Creek

Signs at Sandy Creek High School proclaimed: "True beauty is about who you are as a human being; your principles - your moral compass." "True beauty is not related to what color your hair is or what color your eyes are." "True beauty in a woman is reflected in her soul." The students and staff members at the school declared February 28 "True Beauty Day" where respect for others, and non-judgmental acceptance represented in part, what defined the group's mission in the district. The group grew out of a similar event in a neighboring district, and staff members at Sandy Creek High School looked to bring the message of "true beauty" to their building. The group began with 59 initial members, but at the end of the day, over 150 students had pledged to either join or show support for the service group, each boasting "Rock Star" ribbons which were handmade by club members. Advisors Tanya VanOrnum and Michael Stevens said other service projects will be planned in the coming months, including more awareness days similar to the recent kick-off event.

Middle School True Beauty advisors Karin Johnson and Kimberly Curley recently launched the Middle School service club in early April and sign ups took place at the school during lunch. Students will receive t-shirts designed and printed by Victory Promotions.



Timothy Snell, left and Morgan Bristol model their True Beauty t-shirts during Middle School sign-up day. The True Beauty service club has several community service projects and awareness activities planned this year.



Sign up for the True Beauty service club was held during lunch periods A and B at Sandy Creek High School. Club members wore light purple shirts that proclaimed their "True Beauty" while new members wore "rock star" ribbons created by club members.



Middle School students lined up to join the True Beauty club with advisor Kimberly Curley, back right, and High School advisors Tanya VanOrnum and Mike Stevens, seated.