



The Comet's Tale



Pre-K and K Registration set for Feb. 5th

Sandy Creek Elementary School will be conducting registration for the Pre-K and Kindergarten classes of 2014-2015 on Wednesday, February 5th, 2014 from 1:00 - 6:00 p.m. in the Elementary Office area.

This registration is for incoming Pre-K students, who must be 4 years old on or before December 1st, 2014 and incoming Kindergarten students who do not attend the Pre-K Program in Sandy Creek Elementary School. Incoming Kindergarten candidates must be 5 years old on or before December 1st, 2014. Students and parents/guardians must be residents of the Sandy Creek Central School District. Parents/guardians must provide a valid birth certificate and shot record for their child and proof of residency or custody may also be necessary.

Students currently enrolled in the Sandy Creek Elementary School Pre-K will bring home paperwork for Kindergarten registration.

(Continued on page 3)

National Honor Society Induction Ceremony



The Sandy Creek Carpe Diem Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) recently inducted 21 new members at a New Member Induction Ceremony held in the high school auditorium.

Sandy Creek High School Principal Maureen Shiel welcomed the very special inductees who she said had met challenging standards in character, leadership, service and scholarship, calling them examples of hard work and dedication. Shiel also pointed out that the new inductees represented one third of the junior class and praised the group for their exemplary character and high academic standards. "Step up and keep the honor in National Honor Society," she said.

NHS advisor Casey Vallance explained that membership in the NHS is a privilege and not a right, pointing out that the organization was established to recognize more than outstanding academics, but also places emphasis on character, service and leadership qualities for membership selection.

Current NHS members described the four principles in a candle-lighting portion of the ceremony before Chapter President Gabrielle Guarasce recited the NHS Oath with the new inductees. As each new inductee was announced they came forward to be congratulated by Principal Maureen Shiel, and Board of Education members before lighting their candle with the four flames representing the four principles of NHS.

The following students were inducted into the Carpe Diem Chapter of the National Honor Society: Kathryn Austin, Olivia Bauer, Autumn Darling, Anita Glenister, Alexandra Goodnough, Zachary Halsey, Jay Iverson, Maggie King, Marissa Lacelle, Joshua Lococo, Sarah McDougal, Taylor Mullen, Alina Quintana, Alicia Paige, Samantha Pandolfi, Collin Reff, Kortney Steele, Timothy Wolfe, Liberty Yalch, Rachel Yerdon

and Madeline Yousey.

The new inductees join current members: William Benedict, Zachery Brown, Madison Bush, Gabriella Guarasce, Kylie Hanni, Molly Horth, Valarie Kampff, Kylee Martin, Michaela Martin, Courtney Plumley, Kerrie Ridgeway, Elizabeth Sedore, Clarice Thibault, Brittany Valley, Hannah Walker, and Grace Wallace.

For more information about National Honor, contact NHS advisor Casey Vallance at the high school at 387-3445 Ext. 1910.

Pre-Kindergarten Holiday Concert

The Pre-Kindergarten program at Sandy Creek Elementary School held a Christmas Program where students entertained family and friends with a concert featuring many holiday favorites. At right, Sam Tessier sings out "We Wish You A Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year," to those gathered at the school that day. For more photos of the Pre-K concert and other holiday happenings in the district, see pages four and five inside this edition.



(More Holiday Photos on Pages 4-5)





A Message From the District Superintendent

Mr. Stewart R. Amell



NYS Board of Regents Reform Agenda

As most of you know if you read and keep up with NYS Education System, there is a considerable amount of discontent over the direction the Commissioner and Board of Regents is leading the state. Parents, Students, Teachers, Administrators and School Board members throughout the state are voicing their concerns at public forums throughout the state.

The rage centers on the implementation of two major state mandates at the same time. First, testing third grade through eighth grade students on the new Common Core Standards when the entire curriculum isn't even available yet and secondly, implementing the new Teacher and Principal Evaluation System. Both of these mandated initiatives implemented at the same time have caused enormous stress for the total education community, especially our students. Both of these major initiatives have been rushed and inadequately supported and have forced schools into expanding student testing.

The Commissioner and Board of Regents have repeatedly stated that these two initiatives will provide our students with better learning opportunities and will better prepare them for college and/or a career. Let me make myself perfectly clear, I do believe the new Common Core Curriculum will improve the quality of education in our district as it will in many districts in NYS. However, I firmly believe the implementation has been rushed and the resources to adequately prepare staff and students have not been available.

Why doesn't the Commissioner and Board of Regents hear our sincere concerns? Do not despair, there is hope; I believe our local elected officials have heard our concerns and plan on doing something about these rushed and underfunded mandates during the next legislative session. I commend our State Legislative Officials for listening and making this a top priority during this next legislative session. Please join me in campaigning to have these issues remain at the top of the priority list for our legislators.

Stewart R. Amell
Superintendent of Schools

NYS Senator Patty Ritchie

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Jan. 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - School Closed
- Jan. 24 MS/HS End of 2nd Quarter
- Jan. 27 Spring Sports Sign-ups Start
- Jan. 27-30 Regents Testing
- Jan. 30 Rating Day - 11:30 Dismissal for PK-12
- Jan. 31 Staff Development Day - No Classes
- Feb. 5 PK and Kindergarten Registration 1-6 pm
- Feb. 6 PK-5 Report Cards Home
- Feb. 7 Spring Sports Sign-ups End
- Feb. 13 BOE Meeting 6 pm
- Feb. 17 President's Day - School Closed
- Feb. 17-21 Mid-Winter Recess
- Mar. 13 BOE Meeting 6 pm
- Mar. 14 1/2 Day Staff Day 11:30 Dismissal
- Mar. 14 Drama Production 7 pm
- Mar. 15 Drama Production 7 pm
- Mar. 19 National Junior Honor Society Induction 7 pm
- Mar. 21 Recess Day - School Closed
- Mar. 24 Staff Development Day - No Classes
- Apr. 3 7-12 Grade Spring Band Concert 7 pm
- Apr. 4 MS/HS End of 34rd Quarter
- Apr. 10 BOE Meeting 6 pm
- Apr. 14-21 Spring Recess
- Apr. 18 Good Friday - School Closed



Congratulations!

To the following teams who have been recognized for their outstanding academic achievements as Scholar Athlete Teams:

- Varsity Girls Cross Country**
- Varsity Girls Soccer**
- Varsity Football Cheerleading**
- Varsity Football**

These teams have qualified with a combined average of 90 or above!



Middle School's Top Speller Advances to Regional Bee



Pictured are the top three spellers from Sandy Creek Middle School determined at the building level spelling bee held on Dec. 16th. Students in grades 5-8 participated after qualifying for the bee with a written test, before vying for the top spots in the recent competition. Pictured left to right are: Marley Yerdon, third place; Seth Lurcock, first place; and Tori Jenkins, second place in the Sandy Creek Middle School Spelling Bee.

Students at Sandy Creek Middle School in grades 5-8 competed on December 16th in an early round of the Scripps Spelling Bee. After several re-scheduled dates due to adverse weather in the district, the contest proved to be a real barn-burner with two students slugging it out for the title of top speller in the school.

The Middle School contest was coordinated by 8th grade English teacher Jodi Whitney and was used to determine who will represent the district as they advance to the next level of the prestigious spelling competition. To prepare, students used study guides and word lists provided by Scripps and their teachers. The students qualified by first taking a written spelling test, before taking the stage in the auditorium in front of fellow students, teachers and family members to begin the challenge.

With each progressive round, the spelling words became increasingly difficult until only two spellers remained standing. The final two students, Tori Jenkins and Seth Lurcock went back and forth before Lurcock was finally named Sandy Creek Middle School Spelling

Champion.

Lurcock, as top speller, moves on to the Post Standard/WCNY Spelling Bee to be held in January. The Scripps National Spelling Bee Week will take place May 25-31, 2014 near Washington, D.C.

The spelling bee helps students improve spelling, increase vocabulary and proper English language usage, and the Scripps contest is the nation's largest and longest-running spelling bee.



Middle School Honor Roll

6th Grade

Merit Roll: Bryce Akey, Mickayla Bristol, Gavin Brown, Tiaira Copenhaver, Isabella Cornell, Shelby German, Thomas Guarasce, Dylan Hall, Kalen McNitt, Mayson Mullin, Angel Peter, Cody Phillips, Jesse Quintana, Charles-Samuel Shaw, Skylar Skellington, Brooke Soluri, Margaret Steele, Kaylee Waldeck, Taylor Webb, and Faith White.

Honors Roll: Sydney Cook, Levi Darling, Aden Goodnough, Adam Hilton, Abigail LaRue, Alexis McNitt, and Isabella Walter.

High Honors Roll: Gavin Babcock, Madison Bauer, Travis Benjamin, Madison Brown, Riley Dowlearn, Alaina Hathway, McKenzie Kwak, Sadie Lurcock, and Marley Yerdon.

7th Grade

Merit Roll: Courtney Burns, Dimitri Dawson, Colbyn Dinehart, Kyrsten Hall, William Henry Jr., Hunter Lachenauer, Dakota Loomis, Tirone McBroom, Caleb Miller, Clarice Miller, Emily Paternoster, Angelina-Anne Salzman, MacKenzie Sherman, Jacob Smith, Timothy Snell, and David Worden.

Honors Roll: Alec Balcom, Esther Brafman, Kaleb Brown, Violet Carkey, Kayla Carnes, Alexis Guyette, Cassondra Hayes, Sean Hennigan, Sidney Jenkins, Shelby Miller, and Kennedy Sullivan.

High Honors Roll: Hannah Dasno, Bailey Fahnestock, Abigail Fitzpatrick, Kalista Kimball, Alison Lantry, Makenzie Lococo, Carly Lyndaker, Zachary Martin, Joseph Metott, Jadyn Mullin, Jordyn Mullin, Samantha Walter, Alexis Wolfe, and Margery Yousey.

8th Grade

Merit Roll: Kyle Allen, Savannah Brown, William Castor, Anthony Catania, Trace Clark, Dominic Forcione, Kacey Goodsell, Anthony Guarasce, Garrett LaPointe, Hayden Leppien, Kaitlyn Quinn, Autumn Shephard, Joseph Stawicki, John Tibbles, Jordan Trudell, and Cara Waldeck.

Honors Roll: Joshua Balcom, Joseph Benedict, Summer Brockway, Dustin Bryant, Michael Landphere, Seth Lurcock, Rebecca Miller, Richard Potter, William Robbins, Emily Smith, Brianna Snyder, Jaide Stevens, Carley Stoker, Sullivan Worns, and Madison Yerdon.

High Honors Roll: Faith Bachar, Christopher Blount, Allison Burrows, Cassidy Carnes, David Hennigan, Tori Jenkins, Emily Kehoe, Dylan Kimball, Oren McDougal, and Machela Sullivan.

Pre-K and K Registration set for Feb. 5th

(Continued from page 1)

which should be returned to Mrs. Julie McNitt or the elementary office. This begins the process for those students.

Pre-K registration on February 5th determines participation. If more than 40 students are registered on this day, all candidates enter a lottery and the first 40 drawn are those chosen to participate. If 40 or less register, all candidates can participate from the start. A waiting list is established if we exceed the maximum of 40 students.

All students will be screened in separate sessions, and more information regarding the screening process will follow.

Please call the elementary school office at 387-3445 Ext. 1110 if you have any questions.



Holiday Happenings in the Sandy Creek District

Whether it was because of holiday performances or holiday community service, the month of December was a busy one in the Sandy Creek Central School District. Pictured here are just a few of the many holiday performances shared with family, friends and the entire Sandy Creek School District community. Also found throughout this edition are examples of community service by students and staff in the district to help make the holiday season for those less fortunate a little brighter. The spirit of caring and generosity is a strong bond that runs throughout the district and not just at the holiday season, but all year long.

Sandy Creek Grades 5-12 Holiday Band Concert



Donning elf ears and hats, the sixth grade band played a delightful number called "Christmas Elves in Santa's Workshop" by Mike Hannickel. After calling to Santa for a number of needed items, the overworked elves eventually cried out in frustration, "Hey Santa, we need a break!"

The Sandy Creek School District's Holiday Band Concert was held recently featuring performances by students in fifth through twelfth grades.

The concert was opened with songs by the fifth grade band. Following the first concert by the fifth graders, other more seasoned bands performed including the Middle School Concert Band, the Sixth Grade Band and the High School Concert Band.

The mix of traditional and festive music provided a wonderful transition into the holiday season. The bands are under the direction of Valerie Marshall and Tom Artini.



Above: Liz Sedore, on flute, performed two solos during the high school concert bands time on stage.

Pre-Kindergarten Holiday Concert



"The Reindeer Pokey" was an audience favorite and by the looks of these faces, a student favorite as well. Pictured, left to right are: Brady Thomas, Marilyn Dewhirst, and Hayden Cottrell. The students' performance was during the Sandy Creek Central School's Pre-Kindergarten Christmas Program. The students are in Julie McNitt's morning program at Sandy Creek Elementary School.



Left to right: Haven Wielt, Cordelia Crast and Taylor Thayer give a rousing rendition of "Jingle Bells" for audience members during the morning class' Pre-Kindergarten Christmas Program at the elementary school in December.



Elementary Students Take Center Stage at Holiday Concert

Sandy Creek students in Kindergarten through fifth grades got into the holiday spirit December 19th as they sang nearly a dozen songs in front of an audience of classmates, teachers and family members.

The gymnasium was bustling with excitement and sounds of the season, with each grade level performing songs such as "Mittens and Gloves," "If I Could Fly Like a Snowflake," "All I Want for Christmas" and "Santa Claus is on His Way."



Sandy Creek first-graders perform a song during the kindergarten through fifth grade concert held in the school gymnasium on Dec. 19.

The concert was a coordinated effort among classroom teachers, students and the music department, with music teacher Jackie Hobbs conducting the performance.

Sandy Creek 5-12 Chorus Concert



Pictured are student representatives from the Sandy Creek Middle School Student Council and National Junior Honor Society who helped collect and organize the food drive.

Middle School Students Collect Items for Local Food Pantries

Sandy Creek Middle School Student Council and National Junior Honor Society students collected items to benefit two local food pantries. The Middle School Student Council, who sponsors a fall and spring dance for middle school students, used the fall dance to help collect food items for the drive by collecting items at the door prior to the dance.

The students collected 340 items including canned goods and non-perishable foods which were packed into boxes to be transported to the local food pantries for distribution to those in need during the holiday season.

Student Council Advisors are Kim Curley and Karin Johnson and the National Junior Honor Society Advisor is Sue Gafner.



A moving tribute to Sue Bitz included a special a cappella arrangement of "Silent Night" with solos by Jacob Cornell, Zachary Halsey, Molly Horth, and Madeline Yousey, pictured in front, left to right. Other soloists included Elizabeth Sedore, Anita Glenister, Jason Hays and Ian Brown.



Sixth grade chorus featured a special audience participation song "Listen to the Rain" where audience members used their hands to simulate the sound of rainfall.



Annual Thanksgiving Feast



Allison Dashnaw, left, and Sophia Brown, right, at the Elementary Thanksgiving Feast.

Students in 1st and 2nd grades at Sandy Creek Elementary School performed several Thanksgiving-themed songs under the direction of music teacher Jackie Hobbs during the Annual Thanksgiving Feast. The Thanksgiving event, which featured a gathering of Native Americans played by the 1st graders and Pilgrims, played by the students in 2nd grade, also included a feast of similar food items consumed at the original Thanksgiving feast.

A packed audience was on hand and they were delighted by the creative costumes, entertaining songs and the holiday performance by the students.

The event was a collaborative effort between the music and art departments and the classroom teachers. Students created their costumes in art class, practiced songs in music and in their classrooms, and crafted special Thanksgiving placemats in class that were personalized with their own list of things for which they were thankful.

Manarah Brown, right, prepares to enjoy her Thanksgiving Feast at Sandy Creek Elementary School following the first and second grade classes' performance during the annual event.



In front, left to right, Native American girl Olivia Euler and Pilgrim Ava Basler give thanks in song during the annual Thanksgiving Feast at Sandy Creek Elementary School.



High School Honor Roll

9th Grade

Merit Roll: Breanna Allen, Bridgette Anderson, Dallas Blair, Taila Hatch, Jason Hays Jr., Skyler Marshall, Mekaila Meyers, Alexander Paschall, Ryan Wills, and Thomas Yerdon.

Honors Roll: Stephanie Brown, Adrianna Comins, Jesse Cornell III, Matthew Guarasce, Elizabeth Hall, Alexis Ladd, Jessica Leppien, Chase Pappa, Nicholas Radford, Richard Skellington III, William Stone, Conner Waggoner, Sophie Walter, Abigail Widrig, and Jasmyn Williams.

High Honors Roll: Lindsey Goodnough, John McGrew II, and Adam Yerden.

10th Grade

Merit Roll: Zachary Akey, Dakota Allen, Jarred Baird, Chelsey Blodgett, Heidi Brown, Jodi Davis, Laine Diaz, Kimberly Distasio, Hunter Gable, Jacob Galloway, Tessie Jones, Paige Kehoe, Bailey Laundre, Jessica Luberto, Jacob Mulpagano, Milferd Potter, Morgan Ranieri, Mikayla Russell, Victoria Vazquez, and Sean Williams.

Honors Roll: Aadaiah Bauer, Tyler Brown, Emily Cheney, Abigail Irwin, Nicholas Miller, Adrianna Palmer, Leonard Phillips, James Potts, Alex VanRy, and Jessica Williams.

High Honors Roll: Dylan Bryant, Kate Hanni, Brigid McClusky, Rosaleen Morgan, Andrew Olin, Skylynn Salzman, and Kasey Yerdon.

11th Grade

Merit Roll: Miranda Allen, Nathaniel Anderson, Brad Clark, Jacob Cornell, Autumn Darling, Luke Elliott, Kyle Fayette, Tara Huggins, Elizabeth Lockerby, Alicia Paige, Samantha Pandolfi, Alina Quintana, Kortney Steele, David Washburn, Timothy Wolfe, Tyler Wood, and Liberty Yalch.

Honors Roll: Kathryn Austin, Olivia Bauer, Zachary Halsey, Megan Hough, Marissa LaCelle, Joshua Lococo, April Miller, Taylor Mullin, Lindsey Redden, Collin Reff, and CodiAnne Salzman.

High Honors Roll: Anita Glenister, Alexandra Goodnough, Jay Ivison, Maggie King, Sarah McDougal, Rachel Yerden, and Madeline Yousey.

12th Grade

Merit Roll: Dylan Anthony, Justin Bonney, Ian Brown, Deven Bryant, Steven Cooper, Robert Cornell, Justin Cox, Shania Darling, Brandon Delano, Allison Donohoe, Anthony Kelton, Jacob Kirchner, Kylee Martin, Scott McCarthy, James Palmer, Shane Rowell, Deanna Rusz, John Shirley, Alyssa Snyder, Sierra Steele, Karleigh Stuckey, Brittany Valley, and Jarod Williams.

Honors Roll: William Benedict, Megan Bennett, Zachery Brown, Madison Bush, Hunter Delamater, Makayla Elliott, Kylie Hanni, Molly Horth, Valarie Kampff, Maria Luberto, Michaela Martin, Matthew Miller, Courtney Plumley, Richelle Ranieri, Corey Reff, Kerrie Ridgeway, Elizabeth Sedore, Frehiwot Sergis, Tyler Swarhout, Clarice Thibault, Grace Wallace, Tyler Ward, Caitlyn Williams, and Brett Wolfe.

High Honors Roll: Gabriella Guarasce, Brandon Rotach, and Hannah Walker.



Thibault wins Section III Cheerleading Scholarship



Sandy Creek High School senior Clarice Thibault was selected to receive the Section III Rosemary Corcoran Memorial Cheerleading Scholarship. She is pictured with Michael Stevens, Health and Athletic Coordinator, and Dean of Students for the Sandy Creek School District.

Sandy Creek High School senior Clarice Thibault was selected to receive the Rosemary Corcoran Memorial Cheerleading Scholarship. The scholarship embodies service, academia, and spirit. She has been a varsity cheerleader at Sandy Creek since her freshman year. She is the daughter of Dr. Priscilla Thibault and Dr. Glen Thibault.

For consideration for the scholarship, she was required to write an essay entitled "When I think of cheerleading" and submit two letters of recommendation along with her high school transcript to the selection committee. Thibault's application was selected from all the seniors who applied from Class AA - D in the Section III region. She will use the scholarship for her education at Houghton College next year

where she will study elementary education.

Her cheerleading coach, Tanya VanOrnum said, "We are very proud of her and her name will go on our Section III Scholarship Plaque." The plaque is displayed in the award case at Sandy Creek High School. She is the third winner from school: Vicky Ward was honored in 2004, and Megan Clark received the award in 2010.

Snow Scenes Around the District



Sandy Creek Special Education Aide Carol Yerdon, is also a weather observer with the National Weather Service and brave Redfield resident. She took these photos of the recent snowy weather which closed school and cancelled after school activities in December. The snowfall total of 191 inches by December 31st shattered the record of 171 inches set back in 2008. The snowy December also saw significant snowfall in a short period of time when over 110 inches fell in Redfield between December 10th and 19th. Yerdon has been a weather observer for 18 years and her prediction for 2013-14 is for an "above average" snowfall season, if not a record-breaking one. Just a reminder to watch and listen for school closings and alerts on area television and radio stations. Weather in some parts of the district can vary drastically from what is happening in your neighborhood and could impact the district's decision to close or dismiss early.



Emergency School Announcements

In the event that it is necessary to close or delay school due to severe weather conditions, mechanical breakdown, etc. announcements will be made to the following radio and television stations.

Television: WWNY (Channel 7); WSTM (Channel 3); WTVH (Channel 5); WSYR (Channel 9), YNN (Channel 10), WWTI/ABC 50

Radio: 570AM, 620AM, 790AM, 1050AM, 1240AM, 1260AM, 92.1FM, 93.1FM, 94.5FM, 95.7FM, 99.5FM, 100.7FM, 100.9FM, 102.1FM, 103.1FM, 104.7FM, 105.5FM, 105.9FM, 106.5FM, 106.7FM, and 107.9FM

**Sandy Creek Central
School District**

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Middle School/High School: Ext. 1910
Nurses' Offices:
Elementary - Ext. 1503; HS - Ext. 1505
Transportation: Ext. 3330

Postal Patron



Sandy Creek Central School District

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School District Board
of Education**

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Elementary:
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Middle School:
Carolyn Shirley
High School:
Maureen Shiel



**Sandy Creek National Honor Society
Wraps Up Community Service Project**

Volunteers from the Sandy Creek Carpe Diem Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) spent several hours ensuring that hundreds of less fortunate children in the Sandy Creek area had a happy Christmas morning and their families had a wonderful holiday meal this year. The students, along with their advisor, Casey Vallance, volunteered their time and energy to help local community groups wrap and box the holiday good will. Peggy Manchester, who also runs the local Friendship Shop, said the boxes fed more than 100 families and gifts were wrapped for over 200 children in the area.

Needy families apply for the gift and food distribution that took place at one of the local churches in the Sandy Creek/Lacona area. The application provided information so volunteers could match sizes, needs and wants to a specific child in need. The boxes were separated by child and identified with a first name and family number to allow for anonymity.

As the morning wore on, boxes of wrapped presents began to pile up quickly as the students individually wrapped each present, and packed each food box with the fixings for a wonderful holiday meal. On distribution day, the food boxes also included a turkey and



Hundreds, if not thousands of presents were wrapped in preparation for the gift and food distribution in the Sandy Creek/Lacona area for the holidays. Members of the Sandy Creek High School National Honor Society joined with other volunteers from the community to wrap presents and pack boxes for the local distribution.

More than 100 families were recipients of a box of food for the holidays in the Sandy Creek/Lacona area through the annual food and gift distribution day. Collin Reff is pictured as he moved the packed boxes into place for the distribution. Reff is a member of the Sandy Creek High School National Honor Society.

margarine for each family. "We are so thankful for the students' help," said Manchester, who coordinated the holiday distribution along with many other volunteers from the community. "I don't know what we'd do without them."

