

The

Chalkboard

A Report from the Wattsburg Area Schools

2006/2007 School Year

April 2007

<http://www.wattsburg.org>

Voters to Decide on Tax Shift

May 15, 2007 is a very important day for the taxpayers of the Wattsburg Area School District. On that date, at the primary election, voters will decide if they wish to shift a portion of their property taxes to a local earned income tax. Act 1 of 2006, also known as the Taxpayer Relief Act, mandates that school districts follow the wishes of the majority of voters as they consider the referendum question:

Do you favor imposing an additional 0.8% earned income tax?

The revenue generated from the increased tax rate will be used to reduce taxes on qualified residential properties by \$360. The current earned income tax rate is 1%.

If the majority of voters vote “yes” on this front end referendum question, those properties which have been approved for a homestead and/or farmstead exclusion will pay about \$360 less in property tax. However, the earned income tax for residents will increase by 0.8%. If the majority of voters vote “no” on the referendum question, there will be no reduction in property tax and no increase in earned income tax.

As indicated in the last edition of The Chalkboard, if the majority of voters vote “yes” on the referendum question, those with an annual household earned income of less than about \$45,000 will pay less in taxes if they have been approved for a homestead and/or farmstead exclusion. All others will pay more in taxes because the increase in earned income tax will exceed the decrease in property tax. A chart estimating the impact of the tax shift appeared in the last edition of The Chalkboard and is also available on the school district’s web site at www.wattsburg.org.

It is imperative that the school district’s voters weigh in on this very important ballot question. Please plan on voting in the primary election on May 15.

Chat with Superintendent

The last in a series of chats with the Superintendent is scheduled for April 18, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the media center of Seneca High School. These meetings are designed to answer questions and receive input, regarding any facet of the school district’s educational program, from the citizens of the Wattsburg Area School District. In addition, this meeting will feature a presentation explaining the tax shift option which voters will consider at the polls on May 15, 2007, when the following question will appear on the ballot:

- Do you favor imposing an additional 0.8% earned income tax?
- The revenue generated from the increased tax rate will be used to reduce taxes on qualified residential properties by \$360.
- The current earned income tax rate is 1%.

Please plan on joining Superintendent Frank Bova on April 18 for an evening of candid discussion about topics which are important to all residents of the Wattsburg Area School District. For planning purposes, advance registration is required. Please call Mrs. Betty Jones at 824-4145 or e-mail her at bjones@wasd.iu5.org to reserve your spot.

Snow Make-up Day
April 9, 2007

WASD Welcomes New Staff



Ms. Melissa Doolittle

Wattsburg Area Elementary Center welcomes Ms. Melissa Doolittle. Ms. Doolittle graduated from Edinboro University in 2006, majoring in both Special Education and Elementary Education. After graduation, Ms. Doolittle worked as a therapeutic staff support person for the Achievement Center. This year, she is ready to teach learning support children in both their regular classrooms and in a support classroom by making necessary accommodations for her students. She has stated that she is honored to be part of our staff. It is our pleasure as well, to work with such a compassionate and caring individual.

Mrs. Arete Calabrese began teaching French at Seneca High School on January 29th. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in French from the College of Wooster in Wooster, OH, an M.A. in French literature from the University of Toronto. She completed her education certification at Mercyhurst College. Mrs. Calabrese spent a year teaching English in the city of Clermont-Ferrand, France and has taught French at the University of Toronto and at Gannon. Besides being passionate about all things French, Mrs. Calabrese loves music and theatre, and enjoys spending time with her family and friends, and traveling.



Mrs. Arete Calabrese

Mr. David Frank is a 2000 graduate of Iroquois High School and a 2004 graduate of Gannon University where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Social Studies. His professional experiences have brought him back home to Northwest PA from Hickory, North Carolina. Mr. Frank has coached varsity football for the past six seasons and ran the All-Sports Weight Training program while in Hickory. He looks forward to whatever field he may turn up on next! He also enjoys sports, traveling, being an active member in his church, and amateur theater. Mr. Frank states that he has felt extremely welcomed by the staff and atmosphere at Wattsburg Area Middle School and is looking forward to becoming an active part of the faculty.

Mr. Michael Ellicott, WAMS Science teacher, was born in Manchester, England. He attended Liverpool John Moores University in Liverpool, England where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree. Before coming to the Erie area, Mr. Ellicott taught Science and Math for three years in Virginia. He also coached JV and Varsity Soccer and was awarded the Coach of the Year award in 2005. Mr. Ellicott enjoys coaching, working out, and traveling, with Austria being his favorite place to visit. He and his wife, Emilie, reside in Erie.

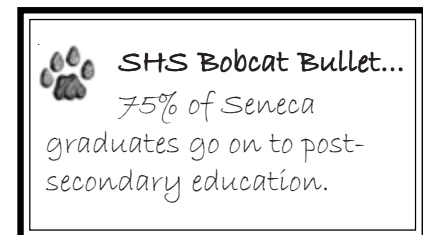
We welcome these outstanding teachers to the Wattsburg Area School District family!



Mr. David Frank



Mr. Michael Ellicott



Seneca High School Honored for Academic Achievement by PDE

The Pennsylvania Department of Education recently honored Seneca High School with an award for meeting the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards for two consecutive years.

The keystone-shaped award is presented to schools across the state where students have exceeded the math and reading standards required by the state's accountability system and the federal No Child Left Behind Act. To meet AYP standards, a high percentage of students must reach proficiency in both math and reading.

This is the second year that the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Association of Federal Program Coordinators have partnered to create the Keystone Achievement Award and Seneca High School has been a recipient both years. In recognition of the award, Dr. Gerald Zahorchak, Pennsylvania's Secretary of Education, termed the achievement another "great milestone" for Seneca High School.



Asst. Superintendent, Dr. Rosalie Constantine, presents the Keystone Achievement Award to SHS Principal, Mr. Tom Rinke



Music Notes

Congratulations to Sarah Shreve on her participation in Region II Chorus held in Blairsville this past February. Sarah was chosen to participate based on her outstanding audition at District Chorus in January.

Spring Concert dates for 2007 are as follows: Band concert - Tuesday, May 15 and Chorus concert - Thursday, May 17. Both concerts will be at Seneca High School and start at 7:00 p.m.

Many thanks to all of the Wattsburg community members who opened up their homes to the District 2 Band students this year. Your help and hospitality was, as always, greatly appreciated.

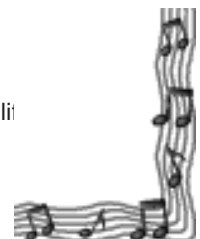


Sophomore Sarah Shreve

Spring Musical Thought...

Math, Science, Social Studies, and English are what make you a success in li

Music is what allows you to enjoy that success!



Seneca High School Career Academies Go on the Road



*Sophomore Joe Hewel visits
Erie Police Dept.*

On Thursday, March 15, 2007, Seneca High School had its first Career Academy Day. Students from three different academies visited various locations in downtown Erie to explore their career interests. Students in the Human Services Academy toured the City of Erie Police Department and were able to see the holding cells and the dispatch center. They learned about the SWAT team and the shooting range. They also learned about fingerprinting procedures.

The Arts and Communication Academy students visited Connoisseur Broadcasting. Among the different radio stations the students visited was BOB FM 94.7 where they learned the technical operations of being in the disc jockey booth.

The Arts and Communications students also visited the Erie Art Museum. There, students learned about a variety of works of art such as “The Avalon Restaurant” and the “Eva Zeisel” collection of glass, china, metal, and wood objects. They also visited the Kids as Curators exhibit.



*Students visiting Disk Jockey Alan
Carpenter at BOB FM 94.7 Radio
Station*

Finally, the Entrepreneurship Academy brought students to the Small Business Development Center at Gannon University. Students learned about what it takes to start a business. Each student wrote his or her own personal business plan. Students from other academies were able to see how their interests could be connected to the field of Entrepreneurship. For example, Dean Liebau, a 10th grade student who is interested in Art and Graphic Design, wrote a plan about starting a T-shirt design business.

Chaperones and coordinators were Seneca guidance counselors Ms. Liz Oslak, Entrepreneurship Academy Head; Ms. Linda Ricci, Arts and Communications Academy Head; and Mrs. Neala Ferralli, Job Shadowing Coordinator. “It was very educational and helpful in making career choices” said Nathan Miller. Nathan is a Sophomore interested in law enforcement.



*Students in front of the
Erie Art Museum*



*Freshman, Erica Tomaso
at the Erie Art Museum*



*Students gather at the
Small Business Development Center
with Gannon Staff*

Seneca High School Presents...

On March 9th and 10th, Seneca High School presented *Little Shop of Horrors*, a horror/comedy that mixes musical styles of Rock & Roll and Motown. The story centers around Seymour Krelbourn (played by senior Kyle Yaple), an employee at a struggling flower shop on Skid Row. Seymour discovers a strange and interesting new breed of plant-life and quickly finds that it must feed on human blood in order to stay alive. As Seymour nourishes the sickly plant back to health with his own blood, it grows larger and begins to demand more substantial food sources. As the plant grows, it attracts business to the flower shop. Seymour's quirky personality is then ignored by his boss, Mr. Mushnik, (played by junior Brandon Peck) and Seymour soon finds himself an indispensable employee and "son" to his sneaky, self-centered employer. Mushnik eventually becomes live plant food as does the sadistic dentist boyfriend of Audrey (played by sophomore Brooke Surgener), Seymour's love interest. Senior Dustin Drake played Dr. Orin Scrivello, Audrey's abusive dentist boyfriend. The plot of the story is



Kristine Gregory, Heather Donaldson, Holly Ramey, Kyle Yaple (as Seymour), Sarah Shreve, and Brittany Bilski



Kyle Yaple (as Seymour) and Brooke Surgener (as Audrey)

framed by the Doo Wop Girls who function as "Greek Chorus" style narrators. The Doo Wop Girls were played by Brittany Bilski, Katrina Good, Sarah Shreve, Kristine Gregory, Holly Ramey, and Heather Donaldson. The sultry voice of the plant, Audrey II, was sung by junior Trevor Surgener.

Many theatre groups that produce this show opt to rent the puppets necessary to play the plants which range in size from a small pot to an enormous monster that eventually takes over the entire stage. Instead, Seneca students took on the task of designing and constructing the plants. Plant construction was headed by Steven Rzepka with assistance from Eric Buman. Artistic details for the puppets were done by Jessica McChesney and Leah Hubbard. Additional contributions were made by Trevor

Surgener, Kyle Yaple, and Tom Sallach. Mr. Bill Rzdokiewicz, Art teacher, assisted with the project along with parent volunteers, Bonnie Bilski and Ann Duda. Set construction and design by students was under the direction of Mr. W. D. Holmes, stage manager. The show was directed by Mrs. Sharon Gdaniec with vocal direction by Ms. Melissa Ward, and choreography by Ms. Julie Kosin.

Little Shop of Horrors was produced with special arrangements with MTI. The Book and Lyrics were written by Howard Ashman, and the music was created by Alan Menken.

WAMS Bobcat Bullet...

4-Sight testing results have increased in all grade levels throughout the school year to exceed AYP requirements in math and reading.

Erie County Technical School Announces Millcreek Kiwanis Club's Outstanding Student of the Month



Ms. Carrie Carner

The Erie County Technical School (ECTS), 8500 Oliver Road, announced that Carrie L. Carner was selected as the Millcreek Kiwanis Club's Outstanding Student of the Month for October. She was honored for her accomplishments at a breakfast ceremony where she received a citation from the Kiwanis Club as well as a \$150 savings bond.

Carrie is in her final year in the Health Assistant program at ECTS and is a senior at Seneca High School. She was nominated for the Kiwanis award by ECTS high school principal, Mr. John Hansen who stated, "I nominated Carrie Carner as the Kiwanis student of the month because she always goes above and beyond what is asked of her. She is a very responsible young lady, who is not afraid to step up and lead by example. Carrie is a great match for the health care profession and is a fine example of what we hope all ECTS students aspire to become."

Upon graduation from high school in June 2007, Carrie plans to attend Edinboro University or Penn State Erie – The Behrend College, where she will pursue a degree in registered nursing.

The Millcreek Kiwanis Club Outstanding Student award is presented monthly to a qualified Erie County Technical School student. In order to be considered for this award, a student must be nominated by his or her instructor and must meet rigorous criteria including success in vocational technical classes, projects and work experiences. They must also demonstrate good attendance, school spirit, character and leadership, skill attainment, a positive attitude and involvement in school/community activities or other challenging experiences.

Note: The Chalkboard is published four times a year and this article was received after publication of the last edition.

Poetry Slam



Steve Perry

Have you every heard of a Poetry Slam? Students in Mrs. Szymanski's 6th grade Reading classes are very familiar with this concept. Simply put, a Poetry Slam is the competitive art of performance poetry. It puts a dual emphasis on writing and performance, encouraging poets to focus on what they're saying and how they're saying it. At the conclusion of a poem, the audience responds loudly by cheering, finger snapping, desk slapping, and foot stomping. Although performing one's original poetry dates back to ancient Greece, the tradition of a Poetry Slam began in Chicago in 1984.

In preparation for Mrs. Szymanski's Poetry Slam, students studied narrative, concrete, lyric poetry and Haiku. They analyzed the meanings of the poems and identified the types of figurative language found in them. Then, they wrote lyric poetry of their own. Students practiced presenting their poetry, but since this was a *Slam*, they also had to *perform* their works. Sometimes this proved to be a difficult task because lyric poetry expresses a strong emotion or relates a pivotal personal experience of the author.

On Poetry Slam Day, both the performances and poems were judged by Mr. Logan, the Slam Master, but students were encouraged to respect the motto of the Poetry Slam: **The points are not the point; the point is poetry!**

At the conclusion of the Poetry Slam, students were surveyed as to whether or not this should become an annual event. The response was an overwhelming YES!



Carissa Trayer



Rod Will



Chelsea Lamp

AMERICAN PRIDE A TO Z

Second grade students in Mrs. Mattocks's and Mrs. Wnukowski's classrooms presented a program to the school entitled American Pride from A to Z. The purpose of the program was to honor the United States of America using the letters of the alphabet. Mrs. Mattocks and Mrs. Wnukowski worked hard helping the children prepare for the 45 minute program which was presented to the school twice and for family members once. Students made costumes, painted T-shirts, created a computer slide-show, practiced reading their parts, and more. The children did an outstanding job of singing and reciting patriotic messages to their audience.

During the program, a special effort was made to honor all of the soldiers in Iraq who had family members in the audience. Songs that related to the theme included: God Bless America, America the Beautiful, This Land is Your Land, The Star Spangled Banner, You're a Grand Old Flag, God Bless the USA, and more.


In January, the show traveled to the PA Soldier's and Sailor's Home and the Veteran's Medical Center. The students were very excited to share their performance with the individuals who have served our country. After the show, the children visited with the Veterans and presented them with homemade gifts. It was a touching experience for all.



Mrs. Sherry Wnukowski's Class



Michaela Hess, Garrett Chesley, Maggie Pearce and Bailey Snarski with Veterans at the Veteran Affairs Medical Center

 **WAEC Bobcat Bullet...**

Kindergarten registration will take place on April 26th and 27th. If you have a child who will be attending kindergarten in the fall, please call the WAEC office to sign up for a time to register your child.



Mrs. Stacey Mattocks's Class

WAEC - Our Kids Are Special!



Deborah Young displays her Shining Star Award

Deborah Young is a kindergarten student at WAEC who was awarded the Shining Star award from the St. Martin Center. She received this award for her donation to those less fortunate than she. This past fall, Deborah invited her kindergarten class to her birthday party, asking them to donate to a Christmas wish list for four Shining Star kids instead of bringing birthday presents for her. Deborah explained that she had too many toys and she wanted to give some away to kids who never got presents. We celebrate Deborah's generous spirit.

The Elementary Center is proud to recognize Grant Thornton, a second grader in Mrs. Stacey Mattocks's class, as a "Good Kid" in the community. WJET-TV recently interviewed Grant for its Good Kids segment which aired February 26th. Grant was nominated as a "Good Kid" for his work with helping others who are less fortunate. He and his mother, Mrs. Maryanne Thornton, recently traveled to Hato Mayor in the Dominican Republic. While on their mission trip, they visited a Haitian refugee village and several orphanages. Prior to their trip, Grant and his classmates were thrilled to collect school supplies for him to deliver to the Haitian children. We admire Grant's compassion for others.



"Good Kid" Grant Thornton

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DR. SEUSS!



County Executive Mark DiVecchio reading to students

Read Across America Day was celebrated at the Elementary Center on March 2nd, Dr. Seuss's birthday. WAEC hosted several guest readers throughout the day and many children enjoyed green eggs and ham or toast. One special guest reader, Erie County Executive Mark DiVecchio, read Dr. Seuss books to our six kindergarten classes. The children enjoyed his visit and asked him to come back to read to them again. After reading to the children, Mr. DiVecchio toured the Elementary Center and complimented us on the beautiful building, especially the kindergarten gathering area.

As part of our Read Across America Day celebration, the children and staff wore their pajamas to school. Choosing a comfortable spot, the children took the opportunity to read lots of Dr. Seuss books in their pj's. Students in pajamas also made penny donations to Pennies for Patients to benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

The celebration continued into Saturday, March 3rd, as Principals Mr. Chad Porter and Ms. Gina Rullo read to children at Barnes and Noble. Part of the sales from this event were donated to First Book Erie, a local organization that provides books to underprivileged children in Erie County.



WATTSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2006-07 DATES TO REMEMBER

Elementary Center

- April** 5 Spring Celebration, 2:15-3:00 p.m.
- 6 Easter Vacation
- 9 Snow Make-up Day
- 10 PTO Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 26-27 Kindergarten Registration

- May** 8 PTO Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 8-10 Mother's Day Sale
- 28 Memorial Day Holiday
- 30 Last Storybook Café

- June** 1 Kid's Fun and Fitness Day
- 5 Kid's Fun & Fitness Day Rain Date



Middle School

- April** 3 WAMSAG Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 4 Science Fair & Art Show, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- 6 Easter Vacation
- 9 Snow Make-up Day
- 25 End of 5th Grading Period

- May** 1 WAMSAG Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 4 8th Grade Spring Fling
- 15 Spring Band Concert, 7:00 p.m.*
- 17 Spring Choral Concert, 7:00 p.m.*
- 22 Honors Program, 6:30 p.m.*
- 28 Memorial Day Holiday

- June** 7 Last Student Day

* Seneca Auditorium

High School

- April** 3 End of 3rd Grading Period
- 3 Music Booster's Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 6 Easter Vacation
- 9 Snow Make-up Day
- 11 Sports Booster's Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 28 Senior Prom at Union Station

- May** 1 Music Booster's Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 9 Sports Booster's Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 28 Memorial Day Holiday

- June** 1 Senior Banquet
- 3 Baccalaureate
- 7 Last Student Day
- 7 Graduation



The Chalkboard

A Publication of
Wattsburg Area School District
Equal Opportunity Employer

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
WATTSBURG, PA.
PERMIT No. 8

School Board

Mr. Elwin Rose, President
Mr. James Thompson, Vice President
Mr. Eric Duda
Mr. Kerry Duncan
Mr. David Hinz
Mr. Scott Rose
Mr. John Rzepka
Mrs. Linda Smith
Mr. Joseph Walko
Ms. Cheryl Nye, Board Secretary
Mr. Frank Bova, Superintendent
Mrs. Marty Dean, Chalkboard Editor

BOX HOLDER OR
CURRENT RESIDENT

Food Service Changes

The Wellness Committee has started to review action plans for the present school year and also to gather ideas for the third year of implementation of the district-wide wellness policy.

Several health-conscious changes have occurred. One of these changes includes the elimination of whole and 2% milk from all cafeterias. Ice cream novelties now offered are all low fat items. The number of high caloric desserts offered on the menu is limited to once or twice a month as opposed to weekly. The offering of fresh fruit and vegetables has been increased while pop in vending machines in school buildings has been replaced with a variety of juice and water. Those are just a few of changes that have occurred on the campus.

Wellness Committee plans for the 2007-2008 school year include highlighting increased communication between home and school regarding health and nutrition concerns, the availability of basic nutritional analysis of the school menus, and the continuation of new food choices that meet nutritional needs.