

The

Chalkboard

A Report from the Wattsburg Area Schools

2004/2005 School Year

June 2005

<http://www.wattsburg.org>

Wattsburg Area School District Will Not Participate in Act 72

At a Special Board Meeting on May 26, 2005, the Wattsburg Area School District Board of Directors voted not to participate in Act 72. As explained in previous issues of the Chalkboard, Act 72, also known as The Homeowner Tax Relief Act, allows school districts to accept funds accumulated from a tax on slot machines (gaming funds) if the districts impose an additional .1% earned income tax on all residents. The districts are then required to reduce property taxes, for those who qualify as a homestead or farmstead, by the exact amount received from the gaming funds and additional earned income taxes. Over the past nine months, the school board offered public meetings and provided much written information to inform community members about Act 72. Input from all Wattsburg Area School District residents was encouraged and over 60% of those completing surveys urged non-participation in Act 72. The law required the board to make the decision regarding participation by May 30, 2005.

After considering the input from community members, the board's decision was made with the goal of protecting the community by insuring long range stability for the educational system. Our community has invested a great deal to develop a top quality educational program and a consistent funding mechanism is essential to maintain a level of excellence which will insure the future success of our greatest asset, our children.

With so many unanswered questions about Act 72 and no guarantee that gaming funds would be available for property tax reduction, estimated to be less than \$200 per year for qualifying homesteads and offset by an additional .1% earned income tax required by the law, the risks associated with participation in Act 72 were deemed too great.

The majority of school districts across the Commonwealth reached the same decision, concluding that the state legislature has within their power the ability to devise a method of property tax reduction which, unlike Act 72, insures adequate funding to maintain a quality educational system that is essential to the future stability of our community.

As evidenced by the fact that Wattsburg Area School District residents experienced no school tax increase in four of the last seven years, your school board remains committed to maintaining a top quality educational system at the lowest possible cost.

The Tremendous Trio



*Aubrey Cyphert, Michael Meabon,
and Alexandra Tronetti compete for Valedictorian*

See Graduation Details on Page 2

Congratulations, Class of 2005



Logan Clark, Faculty Choice



Mathew Turner, Class Choice

Seneca High School's 2005 Baccalaureate service will be held on Thursday, June 9, at 7:00 p.m. at the high school. Reverend Mark Sallach will be the guest speaker.

Graduation ceremonies will take place on Friday, June 10th, at 7:00 p.m. in the newly renovated Seneca High School auditorium.

Seneca's top three students from the graduating class of 2005 are Aubrey Cyphert, Michael Meabon, and Alexandra Tronetti. The Faculty Choice is Logan Clark, and Class Choice is Matt Turner.

Michael Meabon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Meabon, resides in Venango Township. He plans to attend Penn State Behrend in the fall, currently with an undecided major. While at SHS, Michael participated in basketball (Senior Captain), National Honor Society (Vice-President), 2004 Homecoming Court, was a National Merit Scholarship qualifier, and a member of Who's Who Among American High School Students.

Alexandra Tronetti is the daughter of Drs. Pamela and Michael Tronetti of Greene Township. Alexandra plans to attend Carnegie Mellon University in the fall, majoring in Economics. While attending Seneca, Alexandra participated in Marching Band, fall plays, spring musicals, National Honor Society, Robotics, Drama Club, French Club, and was Vice-President of her class.

Aubrey Cyphert, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Cyphert, resides in Greenfield Township. She plans to attend Juniata College in the

fall, majoring in Biology. Aubrey participated in National Honor Society (President), Leo Club, FBLA, Ski Club, Yearbook, Science Olympiad, Cross Country (Captain 2 years), softball, was a member of Who's Who Among American High School Students, and won the Science Merit Award, USSA Leadership and Service Award, Greene Township Lion's Club Student of the Month for October Award, and the Prince Award from Gannon University's Regional Summer School of Excellence.

Logan Clark is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Brett Clark of Greene Township. Logan has been selected as the Faculty Choice speaker at Graduation. While attending Seneca, Logan was involved in Drama Club, Yearbook, Leo Club, WSBN Multimedia Productions, fall dinner theatre, spring musicals, and was co-editor of the school newspaper, Bobcat Pride. Outside of school, Logan works part time at West. He also appeared in, and was assistant director for, the independent film *Swamp Zombies*. After graduation, Logan plans to attend the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, majoring in Digital Media Productions.

Mathew Turner is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Turner of Greene Township. Mat has been chosen by his fellow classmates as Class Choice Speaker at graduation. He was a member of the Boys' Basketball Team for four years, and was Captain this year. Mat was also involved with Seneca Solutions. Outside of school, Mat coaches a high school basketball league team at Family First and works at McDonald's and Dial America. In the fall of 2005, Mat will be attending Penn State Behrend, majoring in Communications.

Jade Bensink Competes in Nationals!

Congratulations to Jade Bensink, a freshman at Seneca High School. Jade is a Level 9 gymnast and recently competed at the Gymnastics Nationals against other gymnasts from across the nation!

Jade placed 4th in the All-Around competition and earned the right to compete at Nationals by placing 2nd All-Around in the State competition and then 2nd All-Around in the Regional competition.

In the future, Jade's goal is to test out in the Elite group, which is the highest level a gymnast can achieve. Spending 30 hours each week training, it looks like she is well on her way!

Congratulations, Jade, on a superb performance!



Jade Bensink, Gymnast

★★★ AFJROTC ★★★

The new Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) program at SHS has generated a lot of student interest. "Building better citizens for America" is the mission of AFJROTC. Over 60 students have signed up to take the inaugural class.

This program will include students from SHS, Harbor Creek HS and Corry HS. Non-SHS students are a part of the Regional Choice Initiative (RCI), which allows students to participate in programs that are not offered at their sending school.

SHS's AFJROTC program is a 4-year program, but students at any grade level can enroll. The program includes classroom instruction and ceremony and drill as part of the daily activities, and will involve various activities outside of the school day with an emphasis on community service. Goals of the program are to: train and educate students in citizenship and life skills, promote community service, instill responsibility, character, and self-discipline through character education, and provide instruction in air and space fundamentals. The curriculum is a balance between aerospace science and leadership education. Courses offered for the 2005-2006 are Frontiers of Aviation History and Leadership Education I.

The courses will be taught by two retired United States Air Force personnel, a Commissioned Officer and a Non-Commissioned Officer.

For more information on SHS's AFJROTC program, please contact Seneca Guidance office at 824-4119.



Class of 2005 Motto

SHS Bobcat Bullet:



This year, Seneca High School Seniors accumulated nearly \$350,000 in scholarships!

Mrs. Marty Dean, Extra Mile Award Winner



*Mrs. Marty Dean,
Extra Mile Award winner*

Congratulations to Mrs. Marty Dean, Chalkboard editor! Mrs. Dean was awarded the Extra Mile Technology Award at a banquet on May 3, 2005. The Extra Mile Award is given annually by the Pennsylvania Association of Educational and Communications Technology (PAECT) to a person who has gone above and beyond with their use of technology

Mrs. Dean is the secretary for Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Constantine. Highlights of her work with technology include publishing the district newsletter, The Chalkboard, four times each year and her work preparing the School Board Policy Manual in a format that could be placed on the website. Because of Mrs. Dean's extra efforts, district residents are informed of all happenings in the district on a quarterly basis each year. In order to get the School Board Policy Manual ready for the website, she had to first convert each policy to a PDF document and then load it up to the website. She did a great job with this, considering this was the first time she had ever done such a task!

Once again, congratulations Mrs. Dean! It's great to know that your efforts do not go unnoticed.

Renovation Update



The renovation process is moving along. The first floor of the addition is nearing completion. Guidance and administration offices are expected to be completed in July. The second floor science rooms are awaiting placement of tables and cupboards. The third floor Math rooms will have flooring and wallpaper soon. Four social studies teachers have moved into completed rooms on the third floor. The general contractor has begun the tie-in to the main building between the gym and the administrative offices.

The auditorium is complete except for sound and lighting and will be used for graduation on June 10th. The new auditorium will be color coordinated with the rest of the building and looks great. The *cushioned seats* will be a welcome change at theatrical productions, graduations and open houses.

The makeshift kitchen has been working well in the commons. Although the lunch selections have been reduced, the lines seem to move a little faster and faculty and students have adjusted well to the change. The students and staff have been very understanding throughout the renovation process and should be commended. The faculty, staff, students and administration look forward to a new building within a year!

Technology Update

The main emphasis in technology for this summer is the Seneca renovation project. Seneca will be receiving four new computers labs, bringing the total for the building to seven. New labs will be placed in the Math area, English area, Social Studies area and the Media Center. The existing labs that will be upgraded are the two Business labs and the CAD/Graphic Arts Lab.

The labs will be completed as the rooms are finished. The entire project should be completed by next January.

All teachers will be receiving new teacher stations over the summer. The stations should all be configured and in place by the first day of school.

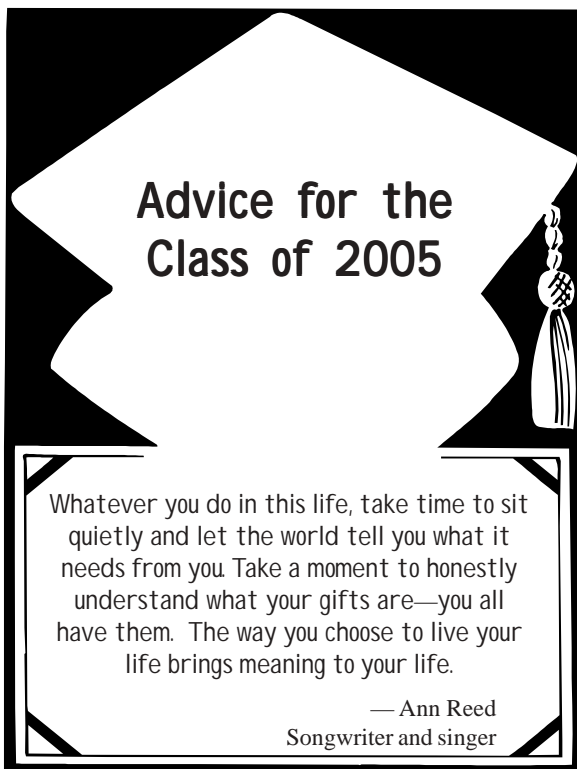
Because of the Seneca renovations, the main hub at the middle school had to be updated to handle all the additional computers at the high school. Major infrastructure upgrades were approved for completion during the summer months.

Fall Sports Physicals

Physicals for Fall Sports will be held on Thursday, June 8, 2005, at the Wattsburg Area Middle School nurse's office. The cost is \$12.00, payable in cash. Physicals will be given by Pinecrest Family Practice.

Sign-ups will be held prior to physicals at which times students will be given all necessary forms. The schedule for the physicals is as follows:

2:30 - 2:40	8th Grade Football
2:40 - 2:50	8th Grade Girls' Basketball
2:50 - 3:00	Cheerleading
3:00 - 3:15	Cross Country
3:15 - 3:35	Volleyball
3:35 - 3:55	Girls' Soccer
3:55 - 4:25	JV and Varsity Football
4:25 - 4:45	Boys' Soccer
4:45 - 5:00	Golf
5:00 - 5:30	7th Grade Football, Girls Basketball and Cross Country



WAMS Bobcat Bullet:



Approximately 70% of 8th Grade Middle School Students Exceeded the State Standard for Math Proficiency in 2004.

Summer School

Summer school sign ups have begun for the 2005 session. Areas of instruction scheduled for this year's program are social studies, math, science, English, and health/P.E. Courses will be taught by certified teachers.

Students who earned a 61-69% final grade in one of these course areas during the 2004-2005 school year can enroll in the program. The 2-week program was developed to generate a more individualized remediation program so that students may better their skills in deficient areas, to earn course credit failed during the school year. Courses will be offered in content areas as long as a minimum of 6 students sign-up for a particular content area.

Coursework for the program will include tests, projects, and quizzes, as well as a final exam. The final average will be determined by averaging the summer school final grade and the course final grade. Student must have a final average of 70% or better to earn credit for the course. Students are expected to attend every session and those who miss 2 days, without administrative approval, will be dropped from the program. This year's program will be taught at Wattsburg Area Middle School. Transportation is the student's responsibility.

The dates for summer school are Monday, July 11, 2005 through Friday, July 22, 2005. Times are from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Cost for this program is \$120 which must be paid upon registration. Students are eligible to sign-up for one content area per year. Please contact the Seneca Guidance Office at 824-4119 to reister.

Immunization Requirements

Varicella and **hepatitis B** are the most recent immunizations required for school children by the state.

Kindergarten or first grade registrants or students entering 7th grade, must have:

- **DPT** (4 doses, 4th dose on or after 4th birthday).
- **Polio** (3 doses)
- **MMR** (2 doses)
- **Hepatitis B** (3 doses)
- **Varicella** (Chicken Pox) vaccine or history of disease. (1 dose)

For more information, please call Mrs. Lisa Zarger, School Nurse, at 824 4121 or 1-877-PAHEALTH.

History Miracles at the Middle School

**FDR Steps out of his wheelchair!
Amelia Earhart is found!!
Cleopatra reclaims her throne!!!**

The Wattsburg Area Middle School's 8th grade students have brought history to life. The project is known as the "Traveling History Museum." Students sat frozen until the activations buttons were pressed; then it was show time! Dressed in costumes and surrounded by historical props, students began to recreate key historical people. Their goal was to explain who they were and what historical significance they played in our history. The museum brought historical excitement to students, faculty, administration, and all who experienced the museum. Visitors were given a "Visitors Guide," which listed all the stations.



*In costume, from left to right:
Corinne Zimmerly as Abraham Lincoln, Sarah Shreve
and Esther Laupp, both portrayed Clara Barton*

The museum is the culminating activity for several weeks' worth of curriculum work. Mr. Hart's American History class teamed with Mrs. Bank's Language Arts class to create a fun peer-teaching experience. Students learned how to evaluate research, create a research portfolio, and gather historical facts from their history class. They then worked on the process of writing a research paper, using mechanics and presentation skills from their language arts class. The research papers were well done and students felt a sense of accomplishment but that wasn't enough! Mrs. Banks and Mr. Hart challenged the students to become their key persons. Eighth graders created displays, posters, costumes, and changed their mannerisms. The class response was overwhelming as students lived and applied the curriculum. Mr. Hart and Mrs. Banks plan on making this a yearly event with expansion plans that include a parent night and presentation to elementary center students.

Talent is Everywhere at WAMS!

The science expo, Traveling Museum and Art Show, was held on April 13, 2005. The middle school overflowed with parents and students who enjoyed an evening of student science projects, displays of student art work, and unique dramatic recreations of famous American historical figures. Sixth grade science teacher, Mrs. Mary Beth Hengelbrok, organized the student science exhibits and WAMS art teacher, Mrs. Shelly Magnusen, coordinated the art exhibits. Mr. Robert Hart added to the evening with his students' traveling history museum displays. The range of talent and academic work demonstrated by all of the students was impressive.



*Mrs. Hengelbrok and Eric Sonney
pose with Eric's Yeast Exhibit*

Another display of Wattsburg Area Middle School talent occurred April 15th at the annual talent show.

This year's show was titled "Kids Just Want to Have Fun." The show was directed by Ms. Judy Kneller and featured a variety of acts that included dancing, singing, and instrument playing. On Thursday, April 14th, the cast of the show performed a sneak preview for the 5th and 6th grade. Highlights of the show included a performance by Niky Donaldson and Holly Ramey of *Popular* from the new musical "Wicked." Nicholas Nasibyan displayed his virtuosity at the piano by performing an original minuet, and Brooke Surgener's trio featuring Melissa Deck on Bass and Ashley Ace on Piano, performed several selections.

WAEC Boasts Upcoming Authors!

Mrs. Rebecca Whitman's kindergartners are authors! The children have been very busy crafting personal narratives during their writers' workshop time. They learned to listen to the sounds in words and record the sounds they knew using their ever increasing knowledge of letters and sounds. They learned to spell high frequency words like "are," "like," and "my" correctly.

Mrs. Whitman's students also learned that stories have a structure, and they concentrated on including a beginning, middle, and end. On May 25, 2005, the children published their stories as they shared them during their Authors' Celebration. Family and friends joined them in the elementary center's auditorium for this exciting occasion. Afterward, refreshments were served in the cafeteria.



Mrs. Whitman's Kindergarten class display their narratives

"Doughnuts for Dad"

In order to recognize all the fathers of WAEC, a "Doughnuts for Dad" breakfast will be held on Wednesday, June 8, 2005 and Thursday, June 9, 2005. This event will begin each morning at 9:15 a.m., and will be held in the cafeteria. A written notice will be sent home with the students. The notice will provide all the necessary information concerning the purchasing of tickets and the designated day for each grade level.

We look forward to honoring all the fathers on this special day!

Summer Library

The Wattsburg Area Elementary Center will once again offer the Summer Library Program, which is funded by the PTO. Throughout the summer, the children will have the opportunity to listen at story time, work on the computers, and borrow books from the Media Center. The Media Center will be opened on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon, and the first day of operation will be Monday, June 20, 2005. Due to Independence Day, the Media Center will be closed during the week of July 4th, but will resume the following week. The final day to utilize the Media Center will be Wednesday, August 10, 2005.

Fun & Fitness - the Elementary Way!

On Friday, June 3, 2005, the Wattsburg Area Elementary Center held its first "Fun and Fitness Day." This event replaced the Fun Day which was held for the students in the past.

The PTO worked in collaboration with the administrators and physical education teachers in order to bring the students a fun-filled, engaging day. The planning was ongoing and many businesses in the Erie County Area participated in this event. The "Fun and Fitness Day" was an all day event, consisting of four interactive, educational sessions in the morning, followed by lunch, and concluding with field events in the afternoon.



WAEC Bobcat Bullet:

5th Grade orientation will be in August.
Parents will be notified by mail.

Always Looking for Books

Have you started "spring cleaning" and don't know what to do with the mounds of books that your child has accumulated? If you have any **gently** used books, please consider donating them to the Wattsburg Area Elementary Center. The children can ALWAYS use a new book to read.

Please drop off the tenderly used books to Mrs. Nicole Drabic at the elementary center library.

Thanks for your support!



The Chalkboard

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*Congratulations
Graduates!*

