



# Community Newsletter

APRIL 2003

## R-H Earns Top Sportsmanship Awards

After witnessing some of the shocking antics recently displayed by professional athletes and fans, one might assume that sportsmanship is no longer in fashion. In the Rush-Henrietta Central School District, however, being a good sport is in vogue.

The Western New York Officials' Association, which consists of officials who referee local sporting events, recognized the District for exemplary sportsmanship. Two fall sports, boys' varsity football and girls' varsity soccer, were named the best in their class in terms of sportsmanship in Section 5.

Members of the officials' association grade the teams based on the sportsmanship of the players, coaches and spectators. "They take all aspects of sportsmanship into consideration," says Tom Stewart, director of athletics at Rush-Henrietta. "They really take it seriously, and so do we."

Making the teams' sportsmanship recognition even more impressive is the fact that both teams endured trying seasons. The football team, led by Dick Puccio, was 1-8 and the soccer team, an inexperienced squad that included a seventh grader and three freshmen, finished 2-16. "We're teaching them about more than just wins and losses," said Jeff Carpenter, the soccer team's coach and a physical education teacher at Burger Middle School.

During the pre-season last August, Carpenter called a mandatory student-parent meeting. One of the goals set forth was to win the sportsmanship award. Throughout the season, Carpenter continually stressed the importance of sportsmanship, encouraging his players not to be insubordinate to a referee or engage an opposing player during a dispute. He repeatedly explained the difference between playing

aggressively and playing dirty, and told them to stay focused on the game, even if they had a complaint. "I tell them, 'If you're not focused on the game, what you're telling me is that it's time for you to come out,'" Carpenter says.

teaching students about boundaries - in this case, school boundaries and the consequences for crossing them. The program also fosters adult role models, such as the coaches and parents of student athletes.

"These assets are key components in our quest to make each student a responsible, contributing member of society," says Superintendent Dr. Kenneth Graham. "At Rush-Henrietta, we place a high priority on good sportsmanship and stress that, while we want to compete at a high level, we are not competitive at the expense of good sportsmanship. The District places a high priority on the development of good character traits, and awards such as these reflect values that can be engrained here at school and at home."



R-H Boys' Varsity Football Team



R-H Girls' Varsity Soccer Team



Teddy Quinn, Class of 2004

In addition to the team awards, Teddy Quinn, one of Rush-Henrietta's top athletes, received statewide recognition for individual sportsmanship during the cross-country championships, held during the fall on Long Island. "The way Quinn conducts himself is an example for all student athletes," Stewart says.

Three years ago, Rush-Henrietta embraced the Healthy Communities-Healthy Youth program, a joint effort with the town of Henrietta. The program is based on 40 important factors that shape young people's growth and development. Several of those factors, or assets, are on constant display throughout the year, as different teams practice and take the field. They include conflict resolution, integrity, restraint, responsibility and bonding to his or her school, in which students are encouraged to care about the school they attend and represent.

A significant piece of the Healthy Communities-Healthy Youth initiative involves

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## FROM THE BOARD

Dear Community Residents:

The Superintendent of Schools has presented his 2003-2004 recommended budget to the Board of Education. This budget reflects the profound impact that Governor Pataki's proposed budget will have on school district operations. It also reflects the District's commitment to the development of a budget that is educationally sound and fiscally responsible.

To keep all District programs and services at their current level next year, planned spending would be \$85.2 million, 5.2% more than planned spending for 2002-2003. Factors driving this budget increase include inflation, rising health insurance costs, higher retirement system costs, contractual obligations, higher costs for BOCES services and increased debt service.

Unfortunately, these increases will not be offset by an increase in state aid. In fact, quite the opposite is true. If the governor's proposed budget remains unchanged, Rush-Henrietta will receive \$2.6 million less in state aid next year, a decrease of 12.8%. In addition, the District can expect little or no increase in interest earnings or sales tax revenue next year, and property valuation is expected to increase only slightly. Given these revenue projections, a double-digit tax rate increase would be required to keep all District programs and services at their current level. Clearly, in today's economic climate, this increase would be unreasonable.

Recognizing the importance of developing a budget that is both educationally and fiscally sound, the Board of Education directed Dr. Graham to recommend a spending plan for 2003-2004 that does not impact planned programs and services for students, nor require a tax rate increase greater than 8%.

To meet these Board of Education budget guidelines, the superintendent has recommended that planned spending be reduced by \$1.9 million, to \$83.3 million. By making this reduction, the proposed budget-to-budget increase would be 2.83% - one of the smallest proposed school budget increases in Monroe County. Proposed reductions include turnover savings resulting from retirements, a reduction in BOCES services, elimination of two administrative positions and a reduction in planned spending by the Board of Education. Given the \$2.6 million state aid reduction proposed in the governor's budget, this 2.83% budget increase would require a school tax increase of 7.34%.

While reducing planned spending by \$1.9 million, the superintendent's proposed budget provides funding for five important District priorities - keeping curriculum development and staff development efforts at current levels, improving student access to school-based academic support services, maintaining student and teacher access to computer-based educational technology, reducing class sizes at elementary schools and maintaining smaller class sizes at secondary schools. The superintendent's proposed budget also provides funding for two programs not fully funded in the governor's proposed budget - the District's teacher center and the District's universal pre-kindergarten program.

Believing that it is critical to present a realistic budget for voter approval, District leadership sought input from a wide cross-section of stakeholders throughout the budget development process. The Board of Education will continue legislative lobbying efforts for the restoration of state aid. The adoption of the proposed budget is scheduled to take place at the April 22nd Board of Education Meeting.

The proposed 2003-2004 budget document can be viewed on the District web site, [www.rhnet.org](http://www.rhnet.org), under Administration by clicking on Financial Operations. For additional information regarding the budget, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or other Board Trustees.

As always, the Board of Education is most appreciative of the strong community support that continues to be demonstrated for the delivery of quality programs and services that enable the District to guide student success . . . one child at a time.



Sylvia Perez-Hardy

Sincerely,

Sylvia Perez-Hardy, President  
Board of Education

### Board Accepts Resignation



Matthew D. Spuck

The Board of Education accepted the resignation of Matthew D. Spuck, vice president of the Board, effective March 25, 2003. Citing commitments to his church and son's school as reasons for his resignation, Spuck has redirected his interests to better match those of his family. A Board member since 1999, Spuck enjoyed the opportunity to serve the stakeholders of the Rush-Henrietta Central

School District. In addition to serving as vice president of the Board this year, Spuck also made valuable contributions as a Board member on the Finance and Policy Committees. The Board's appointee to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Spuck will serve until the next school board election in May 2003.

### Reinhardt Appointed to Fill Board Vacancy



Pamela J. Reinhardt

Pamela J. Reinhardt was appointed by the Board of Education to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Matthew D. Spuck. Reinhardt will serve as a Board member until the next annual school budget vote and Board election on May 20, 2003. In addition to volunteering since 1992 at the schools her two sons attend in the District, she has served in leadership roles at both school and District levels. Reinhardt has served on many school and District committees including PTA, DPAC, the Senior High School Parent Group, the District Space Committee, Budget Advisory Committee, Shared Decision Making Committee and on the Districtwide Safety Team. Mrs. Reinhardt is a part-time comptroller for Premium Mortgage Corporation, a self-employed bookkeeper and small business consultant. She is confident that her work and volunteer experience, coupled with her flexible schedule, will enable her to serve as an effective Board member. Mrs. Reinhardt resides at 208 Alverstone Way in West Henrietta with her husband and two sons. She continues to be an active volunteer in the Rush-Henrietta school community and looks forward to serving as an effective Board member.

# Dictionary Giveaway Helps Schools Emphasize Language Skills

Third graders recently received an unexpected gift, one that had them buzzing with excitement for days. Members of the Rush-Henrietta Rotary Club visited elementary schools, giving each third grader a dictionary.

"It was so much fun and the kids were so appreciative," says Rotarian Ray Warrick, who helped deliver more than 500 dictionaries. "I thought the kids would like them, but they're more excited than I expected. Their response was overwhelming. The teachers would give them a word to look up, and they'd race to see who got there first."

The third graders couldn't wait to take the dictionaries home to show their families, says Sherman principal Mark Turner, who personally thanked the Rotary Club for its generosity. "This thoughtful gesture will help us achieve our literacy goals," he said. "What was especially gratifying was the sincere appreciation that the students expressed to the Rotarians for such a special gift. The students immediately looked up some words in the dictionaries and discovered the power of words."



Leary Elementary School Dictionary Presentation by Rush-Henrietta Rotarian Joe Berta



Another student, John Ernst, described himself to Warrick and fellow Rotarian Jeff Masters as "your friend that is now full of new words."

Warrick says the dictionaries are perfect for third graders, who are at an age where they transition from learning to read and instead begin reading to learn. "This version of the dictionary is aimed for a child to use," he says. "It gives the word, the pronunciation and one or two meanings."

Some students were inquisitive in their thank you letters. "Thank you for the dictionaries," wrote Alex Cook. "We really like them. Where did you get the money?" The funds to pay for the gifts, Warrick explains, came from monies collected during Rotary fundraisers.

Members of the Rush-Henrietta Rotary Club were comforted by the words of third grader Ben Sterling, who concisely and sincerely expressed appreciation for his new dictionary. He pledged: "Thank you very much for the Webster's Dictionary. It will not end up in the garbage."

After the dictionaries were distributed, many of the students wrote letters of appreciation to the Rotary Club. "I was so surprised about having my own dictionary," wrote Christian T. Harris. "I took mine to lunch and checked up five words. I am going to take my dictionary wherever I go. Thank you once again for the dictionaries. I am going to use it wisely."

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- The Rush-Henrietta Class of 1993 will hold its 10-year reunion on Saturday, November 29, 2003 at the Burgundy Basin Inn, located in Bushnell's Basin. For information, please go to [www.iknowbeads.com/html/rh93.html](http://www.iknowbeads.com/html/rh93.html) or e-mail [rh1993@frontiernet.net](mailto:rh1993@frontiernet.net).

**"Board Plans Trip to Albany"** - On Saturday, May 3rd, there will be a "March for Public Education" in Albany. Your Rush-Henrietta Board of Education believes that it is imperative that upstate New York and Rush-Henrietta be represented. Rush-Henrietta Board Trustees are currently working with the PTAs and unions on this endeavor. This march is sponsored by the Educational Conference Board - a coalition of school board members, superintendents, school administrators, parents and teachers. For more details go to: <http://www.marchforpubliceducation.org> or contact the District Clerk at 359-5010.



**District Vocal Festival**  
Monday, June 2, 2003  
7:30 p.m.  
Henrietta Town Park

**RHTV Schedule - Cable CH 15**  
**April 23, 2003**  
6:30 p.m. Budget Presentation  
7:00 p.m. Fyle Musical  
7:30 p.m. Math in R-H Schools  
8:00 p.m. Budget Presentation

**May 14, 2003**  
6:30 p.m. Budget Presentation  
7:00 p.m. Technology in R-H K-5 Schools  
7:30 p.m. Technology in R-H Secondary Schools  
8:00 p.m. Budget Presentation

### Rush-Henrietta SAFETY TIP LINE



To anonymously report situations that may pose a threat to the safety or well-being of Rush-Henrietta students, staff or school property, **DIAL 359-STOP [7867]**

**WHO can call this number?**

- Students
- Teachers
- Staff Members
- Bus Drivers
- Parents
- Administrators
- Community Residents

**WHAT should be reported?**

- Violence and threats of violence
- Theft
- Drug or alcohol use and abuse
- Talk of suicide
- Sexual harassment
- Weapon possession
- Vandalism





## Senior High Students Go On Acquisition Expedition

After spending more than an hour browsing the shelves at Borders Books and Music, students from Rush-Henrietta Senior High School did their part on a recent afternoon to replenish their library's book collection.

Eleven students took part in the shopping expedition, scouring the aisles for books they believed the library should offer. Jim Belair and Sara Kimmel, librarians at the high school, led the volunteer activity. The pair held a pizza party for students after school, discussing buying strategies and reviewing what types of material are appropriate for a school library.

Armed with a handwritten list of must-have books, the students traveled by school bus to Borders on Hylan Drive where they began their search. A popular choice among students was "The Lord of the Rings," author J.R.R. Tolkien's famous book-turned-motion-picture.

"It seems like a good idea to get books that students like to read," says Nick Brown, a senior who took part in the book-buying extravaganza. He and classmate Liz Strong searched the shelves for art and science-fiction books, while junior Erika Strong looked for books dealing with teenage issues. Others, such as junior David Kendrick, eagerly used one of the bookstore's computers to search for texts that would help him learn to speak Japanese.

Using \$1,500 set aside from the library budget by Belair and Kimmel, each student could spend as much as \$75 for books they thought would be most appealing to teenagers. The librarians, who came prepared with a laptop computer, checked each new book against the library's inventory to make

sure the school didn't end up with unwanted duplicates.

The Acquisition Expedition to Borders also served as an unexpected economics lesson. One student was overheard saying to the school librarians, "I didn't realize books cost so much!"

Belair and Kimmel, who put many of the books out on display within days of their pur-

chase, say they will reprise the book-buying experience next fall, and many students have already expressed an interest in participating. "The students were very enthusiastic," Belair says. "It was a really worthwhile time."

Rush-Henrietta extends a special thanks to Borders Books and Music, which extended a 25 percent discount to students on all of the books purchased during their outing.



Senior High School Students Selecting Books at Borders



## Unfunded AED Mandate Update

While an unfunded mandate, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District was one of the first in the area to become fully compliant with the Automated External Defibrillator [AED] legislation by December 1, 2002. Under the direction of Rick Page, Assistant Superintendent for School Operations, 24 AED units were purchased and installed throughout the District. In addition to the purchase of AEDs, American Heart Association CPR and AED training for staff members was required to support the administration of them and associated costs for the development of training protocols, materials and props, which were incurred.

AED units can only be used by trained personnel and, to date, over 200 volunteer staff members throughout the District have been trained to use them. The American Heart Association estimates that AEDs will save more than 40,000 lives a year. AEDs analyze the heart's rhythm and administers a shock, only if necessary, to restore the heart's natural rhythm. AEDs are out-of-hospital devices which

administer an electric shock to the heart of cardiac arrest victims. The units are small and portable and are easily identifiable throughout the District with color signage.

Unfunded mandates are laws passed by New York State legislators that school districts must comply with within a specified period of time. They have serious financial implications for districts, especially in times when districts are challenged by budget constraints resulting from decreased state aid. They are often imposed after the approval of annual school district budgets, as was the AED mandate. The cost of unfunded mandates must, in turn, be passed along to local taxpayers.

While the District remains committed to the safety and well-being of all stakeholders and believes that this mandate will increase a person's chance of survival, the fact remains that no state funding was provided. The cost to the District for implementation of the unfunded AED mandate, to date, is \$65,000.



# District Update on Homeland Security

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Everchanging world events and changes in the Homeland Security Alert continue to prompt calls to various District and school offices regarding the declaration of war, a verified threat of terrorism or related incidents. In the event of any of these circumstances, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District will follow existing emergency management plans. These plans have been developed collaboratively with staff, community members, law enforcement agencies and emergency services providers. The plans provide guidelines and direction related to responsibilities and decision-making.



Dr. J. Kenneth Graham, Jr.

As always, when any incident arises, the first step is to determine the scope of the problem. Based on that determination, the District will communicate with appropriate agencies and follow their lead when deemed necessary to activate emergency response plans both building and districtwide. Depending upon circumstances, the District will determine the course of action to best safeguard students and staff. By state law, building level emergency response plans are confidential. A summary of each school's plan and the District level emergency response plan can be accessed for public review on the District web site [[www.rhnet.org](http://www.rhnet.org)] under Student and Family Services by clicking on the School Operations page.

Communication is the most essential element of our emergency response plan. Should the activation of an emergency response plan be required, please know that phone calls to the District and school offices will hamper internal and external communication efforts and may impact the effectiveness of our response. Should there be a local, regional or national crisis, parents and community residents are encouraged to listen to, or watch, local radio and/or TV stations. The local media and the District web site [[www.rhnet.org](http://www.rhnet.org)] will be used to communicate as much information as possible.

Parents and guardians will be required to show proper identification when picking students up from school. When children are being picked up by someone other than a parent or guardian and the person's name is not listed on the blue card on file, a written authorization, along with identification, will be required. No child will be released to any adult without the proper credentials. Please verify and/or update emergency contact information on file with District schools, including the list of people who are authorized to pick your child/children up from school. In addition, should it become necessary to evacuate District buildings, a sign will be placed on the front door directing parents to the District web site at [www.rhnet.org](http://www.rhnet.org) and/or local television stations for further information.

Concerns regarding both domestic and foreign student trips, and fundraising to support such travel, have also been

expressed. Foreign travel will be allowed as scheduled if the U.S. Department of State in Washington has not issued a "travel warning" to the countries of destination prior to date of travel. This is, of course, providing that parents and staff have once again discussed the merits and potential dangers of respective travel. If the State Department in Washington issues a "no-travel" warning, the District cannot allow trips to take place. Such warnings can be monitored periodically by checking the U.S. Department of State web site [[www.travel.state.gov/warnings\\_list.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/warnings_list.html)]. If no State Department warnings have been issued prior to travel, Rush-Henrietta staff and students will be allowed to complete trips within the United States as planned, providing that parents and students have been advised of risks and make the decision to proceed.

In the event that a student trip has been canceled due to the issuance of State Department warnings after fundraising efforts are complete, funds cannot, by State law, be returned to students. The monies, however, can be retained in student activity accounts in a student's name to fund future activities they may wish to participate in at a later date. As an example, if for some reason the 8th grade trip to Washington, D.C. was canceled, earned fundraising dollars could be spent on the Ninth Grade Academy semi-formal dance, class ring, yearbook, Jr. and Sr. Prom tickets, the senior banquet or senior T-shirt and graduation announcements.

While, as adults, we understand the concern that is prevalent in our society, we must also continue to go about our daily routines with as much normalcy as possible. It is in our children's best interest that we communicate and foster a sense of security and orderliness. Parents and community residents may want to review emergency communication and preparedness procedures with families. Children should know who to call, what to do and where to go if something were to occur when school is not in session and adults may not be at home.

To address the safety and well-being of students and staff, emergency response procedures are reviewed with staff and outside agencies on a regular basis and travel warnings are monitored. As always, the District remains committed to doing its best to provide an environment in which both the children and adults in our school community are secure and safe. Thank you, in advance, for your cooperation and understanding.

Sincerely,

J. Kenneth Graham, Jr., Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools



## Leary Fair Emphasizes Science & Social Studies Skills

Dozens of projects were on display in February during the Leary Elementary School Science and Social Studies Fair, an annual event for which students voluntarily create projects that incorporate both important disciplines.

As principal, E. Sue Mills greeted participants [scores of families - many of whom excitedly arrived to the event 15 minutes early] who packed the school's cafeteria and gymnasium, taking a close look at each student's work. "I love making stuff from scratch, so I made this [replica] of a lock on the Erie Canal," says David Ayers, a fifth grader. "I like the Erie Canal. It was all manmade, and I like how they made the locks, how they had that technology back then."

Throughout the evening, parents repeatedly remarked at how involved their children were in the making of their projects, all of which were done at home. "This is good for his research skills and it tweaks his mechanical skills," says Jim Ayers, David's father. "He just loves it."

Ashley and Kelly Miller, sisters who attend the school, also showed off their handiwork in the form of a project that asked, "What will sink? What will float?" Another team of siblings, Jarek and Stephanie Wierzba displayed results of their research about shipwrecks in the Great Lakes. "Once, we saw a real-life storm while we were out on our boat," Stephanie says, explaining that their personal experiences made researching the project fun.

Andrea Hyatt, the District's director of science, says there are many long-term benefits to hosting such a fair. "This is a good

opportunity for all of these children to become more interested in science," she says. "At this age, they love science, and our fair allows us to further foster that interest in our students.

"This type of fair reinforces many of the lessons we teach our students," she says. "These lessons are based on the state learning standards that we follow at Rush-Henrietta. One of the key parts of this fair is that, in terms of studying science, some students focused on the physical setting, which includes topics such as geology and physics, while others focused on the living environment, more of a biology-based approach. Both are equally important and exciting."

Students and their families also had an opportunity to speak with representatives from community organizations such as Strong Museum, which had an exhibit on display. Kathy Boesel and Deborah Brundage, teachers at the museum, spent the evening talking to fair-goers. "We want to support education in any way, shape or form," Boesel says. Others taking part included the Rochester Museum and Science Center, Galyan's and the U.S. Navy.

Richard Arnaud, Sr. hopes the District continues to encourage these types of activities.

"This is an excellent way to explore the world at large," he said, while looking at projects with his son, Richard Arnaud, Jr., a first grader. "He asks a lot of complex questions that we try to answer with him. These projects help the children engage their parents."

Leary teachers, along with members of the school's PTA, organized the fair.



*Leary Elementary School Students with Science and Social Studies Fair Projects*

## District Addresses Residency Fraud

Due to the District's capacity for supporting student learning, it is not surprising that out-of-district families wish to enroll children in Rush-Henrietta schools. While the District requires proof of residency before a student may register, at times, it registers nonresident students on a tuition basis as classroom space permits.

As in all school districts, there are cases where residency fraud exists and

parents successfully find a way to enroll their children under false pretenses. This is a matter that the District takes very seriously and when aware that this may be the case, fully investigates. Community residents are asked to help address this issue by contacting the District when suspicious that a neighborhood nonresidency matter might exist.

Such concerns can be reported to

the Office of Student Services by calling 359-7950. In addition, calls may be made to the District Tip Line at 359-STOP, which was activated so that students, teachers, staff members, bus drivers, parents and community residents could anonymously report situations that may pose a threat to the safety or well-being of Rush-Henrietta students, staff or school property.

## Parents Get a Glimpse of Modern-Day Math Lessons

Students in local elementary schools are finding math so intriguing that they often ask to continue their lesson after class time has expired. They're so interested in the topic that more than 100 students recently took their parents back to school for an evening to share what they have been learning about math.

The event, held at Winslow Elementary School, was billed as Math Family Night. Students were encouraged to invite their parents to the school to learn more about the changing ways they are receiving math instruction.

This type of instruction, known as reform mathematics, is occurring through our elementary schools. Reform mathematics is a generic term that describes a shift in how math is taught and learned. In simple terms, the shift is toward a more engaging curriculum that requires students to use math in context to solve problems, to encourage them to make sense out of the processes they learn and to communicate mathematically more than they ever had to in the past.

Throughout the cafeteria, posters showed students and their parents how significant math is in everyday life. For instance, one chart showed how steps could easily be converted into miles - there are about 1200 steps

in a half-mile, or 2400 steps in a mile, it explained. "This is about thinking about math in a different way," says Principal Ron Springer. "The beauty of math is how it helps us in our everyday lives."



*Students, Parents and Staff Making Sense of Math at Winslow Elementary School*



"Before we came tonight, I was wondering exactly what this event was," says Hyunok Jung, who attended with her son, Tommy, 6. "I think Math Family Night is a good concept. Math is being taught differently than when I learned it."

During Math Family Night, parents were able to see and experience lessons that their children are doing in class. Most parents remember their experiences in math class, but are unfamiliar with the kinds of lessons that are designed to help today's students build understanding. When parents attend a math night, they have an additional opportunity to

ask questions about what their children are doing and to engage in mathematical problem solving and discussions.

"When parents listen, question and explain their thinking, they deepen their own understanding," says Jody Hoch, the District's director of mathematics. "Like their children, often they become aware of mathematical concepts that were previously hidden."

A fundamental knowledge of mathematics is essential to function in our complex society, Hoch says. Modern technology has dramatically increased the need for a mathematically literate work force. An effective mathematics program not only deals

with basic skills, but also develops a student's ability to communicate, explore, conjecture and reason logically.

Math Family Night is held in elementary schools throughout the District. They are important because parents can learn more about the complete math program that is taught in elementary school.



## Rare Visit by Composer Leaves Students on a High Note

As they continue to prepare for a major community concert in June, Rush-Henrietta students recently seized a rare opportunity to rehearse a song with the musician who composed it.

Last summer, the District commissioned Darin Lewis to write a song specifically for Rush-Henrietta. As part of 'Music in Our Schools' month, Fred Weingarten, director of music and visual arts, invited Lewis to spend a week with local music students. In March, the composer met and rehearsed with more than 700 choral students in grades 6-12.

Lewis, who is chairman of performing arts at the private Horace Mann School in New York City, was thrilled with the opportunity and challenge of composing for Rush-Henrietta. "I've never done anything on this massive of a scale, something for 700 kids," Lewis said. "It's a great opportunity for me, and it's great for them to see the composer live. I remember when I was in high school seeing someone in person and it brought everything alive for me."

During his week in Rush-Henrietta, Lewis met with music students from every school. They discussed and rehearsed his composition, called "It Starts with a Song." Although Lewis wrote the song, which focuses on friendship through music, he took his inspiration directly from the students.

"In September and October, each of us were given an index card and asked to write five aspects of what it meant to be friends," says Amanda Petrella, a senior alto and a member of the high school's R-H Singers. "He took all of our ideas and created this song."

Although music composition is part of state music standards, it is sometimes challenging to incorporate it into class. Lewis' composition gave Rush-Henrietta students a chance to participate in a way that is often impossible. "It was so interesting to get the music from Mr. Lewis and review it," says senior Malaina Beattie, a member of the R-H Singers.

When Lewis met with the R-H Singers, the 65-member group found itself engaged in more than a rehearsal. In many ways, it was a brainstorming session. During breaks from singing, Lewis challenged the students to find the deeper meaning behind the lyrics. "What kind of song is this?" he asked, eliciting responses of "inspirational" and "a power ballad."

"Yes," Lewis said, invoking the names of some famous rock bands, connecting with the students on a more personal level. "It's like slow Aerosmith, slow Whitesnake, slow Bon Jovi."

A strong commitment to music education is a long-standing tradition in Rush-Henrietta

schools. Music continues to be a needed and effective tool in not only teaching and learning about people of all cultures, but in providing a link between all people.

"Working with a composer lets the students see the inner workings of his musical mind," says Christine Sargent, director of the R-H Singers. "It also allows them to see him

as a real person who has students of his own."

Lewis, whose sister-in-law, Carol Lamica, is a music teacher at Roth Middle School, will return to Rush-Henrietta in June. He will conduct the mixed choir during the District's vocal festival on June 2nd at Veteran's Memorial Park in Henrietta. The community is invited to attend.



Visiting Composer, Darin Lewis, with Burger Middle School and Senior High School Students



## School Fire Safety and Security Measures Enforced

For some time, the District has been experiencing illegally parked vehicles in fire lanes on school property. In light of the everchanging Homeland Security advisories, as well as recommendations from the NYS Association of Fire Marshalls and the NYS Association of Fire Chiefs, the District will continue to enforce appropriate vehicle parking around the exterior of all school buildings.

Effective April 5, 2003, all vehicles must use appropriate and designated parking spaces when parking on school property. The only exceptions will be police and emergency vehicles, school transportation vehicles, school service vehicles and parking for school events where special parking arrangements are directed and overseen by school security personnel. Any vehicle parked illegally on District property will be turned over to Town enforcement or law enforcement officials for issuance of a court appearance ticket.

Thank you, in advance, for your help to ensure the safety and security of students, staff and community groups using District buildings and grounds.





# NEWSMAKERS

## CORRECTIONS

- Please note the following two corrections to the December 2002 Newsletter.
  - Under "District," in the Elmer Gordon Stadium newsmaker, John Gaffney is the District's head groundskeeper [not Jack].
  - Under "Staff," there was a spelling error in Erinn Harder's name and she is a 4th grade teacher from Crane Elementary School, not Winslow Elementary School.

## MUSIC

- The District's **music department** is the recipient of a grant award in the amount of \$3,883 from the **Rochester Area Community Foundation [RACF]**. The purpose of the grant is to purchase recording equipment which will enable staff to record performances of student concerts and allow them to instruct students how to listen critically in order to improve their abilities. It will provide an opportunity for students to reflect on their performances, create goals for improvement and help ensembles perform more effectively as a unit, with greater adherence to musicality and to the written page. This notable and generous award granted by RACF ensures continued success of Rush-Henrietta's Senior High School music program.
- **Malaina Beattie** is a winner in the **Arts Recognition and Talent Search competition** sponsored by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts! This program identifies promising 17- and 18-year-old artists in the categories of dance, jazz, film and video, music, photography, theater, visual arts, voice and writing. The NFAA is the sole recommending organization to the Presidential Scholars Program sponsored by the White House and the U.S. Department of Education. Malaina was chosen as an Honorable Mention winner in the category of Music/Voice/Soprano. She was one of only 33 applicants nationwide to receive this honor. Congratulations Malaina!
- The following students are to be congratulated on their participation in the New York State School Music Association Zone 2 Elementary All-County Music Festival.
 

**Chorus**

  - Crane Elementary School [5th graders]: **Emily Buttram, Stevin Karlsen, Dylia Albarron**; Fyle Elementary School [5th graders]: **Hannah Kronenwetter, Eric Partridge, Clarissa Sullivan**; Leary Elementary School [5th graders]:

**Nathaniel Barnett, Carol Gabbert, Kaitlin Voellinger**; Sherman Elementary School [5th graders]: **Ashley Binnert, Stacy Hooper, Lauren Tomkinson**; Winslow Elementary School [5th graders]: **Rachel Carleton, MacKenzie Diamond, Lauren Henry, Elizabeth Klein**; Burger Middle School [6th graders]: **Caileigh Collins, Carley DeFranco, Kelsey Mattiaccio, Eric Metzgar, Meghan Mueller, Alberto Santiago, Eric Swanson, Michael Truisi**; Roth Middle School [6th graders]: **Carla Keller, Jessica Le, Melanie Little, Mark Repka, Nathaniel Wright**

### Band

- Roth Middle School [6th grader]: **Robert Flynn**

### Orchestra

- Burger Middle School [6th grader]: **Eric Johnstone**, Violin; Roth Middle School [6th graders]: **Jennifer Castiglione**, Violin; **Katrya Cichanowicz**, Cello; **Jessica Le**, Violin; **Joe Parrino**, Cello
- The following **Burger Middle School** students are to be congratulated on their participation in the New York State School Music Association Zone 2 Junior High All-County Music Festival.
  - Band [8th grader]: **Allison Thurnherr**, French Horn
  - Mixed Chorus [7th graders]: **Nick Condello, Eric Hardy, Jacob Hubbard, Cody Joy**; [8th graders]: **Jon Buecheler, Josh Gibson, Anthony Glatz, Daniel Pieters, Carson Smith, Michael Smith**
  - Girls Chorus [7th graders]: **Erin Hassett, Wendy Latham, Jasmine Mitchell**; [8th graders]: **Christina Nelson, Amy Schnitzler**
  - Orchestra [7th grader]: **Joseph Wang**, Violin
- The following **Roth Middle School** students are to be congratulated on their participation in the New York State School Music Association Zone 2 Junior High All-County Music Festival.
  - Junior High Chorus [7th graders]: **Angela Briggs, Katie Brosius, Erica Sortino**; [8th graders]: **Preshita Date, Julia Eddy, Katelyn Meister, Matt Penet**
  - Orchestra [7th graders]: **Greg Lebens-Higgins**, Viola; **Chelsie Mack**, Viola; [8th graders]: **Elizabeth Barnett**, Cello; **Marirose Dempsey**, Viola; **Sam Elliott**, Violin; **Tom Kern**, Violin; **Victoria Vasso**, Cello
- The following **Ninth Grade Academy** students are to be congratulated on their participation in the New York State School

Music Association Zone 2 Junior High All-County Music Festival.

- Junior High Women Chorus: **Laura Best, Carla Brugnoni, Shannon Scally, Jenna Soule**
- Junior High Mixed Chorus: **Rebecca Giannetti, Christina Julian, Scott Martin, Kevin Schweitzer, Caitlin Smith**
- Junior High Orchestra: **Zeke Auburn**, Viola; **Teresa Carosa**, Viola; **Tyler Lucero**, Violin; **Tammikka McFadden**, Viola; **Curtis Wooderson**, Bass
- The following **Senior High School** students are to be congratulated on their participation in the New York State School Music Association Zone 2 All-County Jazz Festival.
  - Jazz Band [11th grader]: **Katie Horn**, Trumpet; [12th graders]: **Michael Cottone**, Trumpet; **Simon Fletcher**, Guitar; **Michael Kujawski**, Bass
- The following **Senior High School** students are to be congratulated on their participation in the New York State School Music Association Zone 2 Senior High All-County Music Festival.
  - Mixed Chorus [10th graders]: **Noah Hudnell, Kelvin Rolle**; [11th graders]: **Hannah Campbell, Adam Chatfield, Bill Stanton**; [12th graders]: **Alan Edwards, Erica Hardy, Matt Heimbueger, Emily Hudnell, John Marnell, Lisa Nudds, Stephanie Penet, Amanda Petrella**
  - Orchestra [10th graders]: **Luke Auburn**, Violin; **Rebecca Barnett**, Violin; **Lisa Germeroth**, Viola; **Joshua Jones**, Violin; **Britta Rauck**, Viola; **Tim Xu**, Violin; [11th grader]: **Katrina McFadden**, Violin; [12th graders]: **Mike Cottone**, Trumpet; **Lindsay Heckler**, Flute; **Mike Kujawski**, Bass; **Christina Montano**, Cello; **Margaret Rich**, Cello
- More than 600 of the most musically talented high school students in the Eastern region of the United States came together to perform in the 2003 MENC All-Eastern Honors Ensembles, consisting of a concert band, symphony orchestra, mixed chorus and jazz ensemble on March 9th. The ensembles are organized by members of MENC, The National Association for Music Education. Selected to perform in the All-Eastern Honors Choir of approximately 340 was **Meghan Beattie**. What an honor!
- The **Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra** is in its 33rd season of offering outstanding musical opportunities to the Rochester area's finest young musicians. The Senior High School is proud to have

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## Newsmakers

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three members of this year's fine ensemble. They are: **Zhaomin Xu**, Violin, Grade 10; **Lauren Beikirch**, Violin, Grade 12; and **Margaret Rich**, Cello, Grade 12. Congratulations!

- On Saturday, March 8th, the Rochester Philharmonic League education committee of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra sponsored the 31st annual Young Artist Auditions. The competition provided an opportunity for high school students to perform before judges in an effort to win awards and scholarships. Congratulations to **Malaina Beattie** who won the Deverian Award for Female Vocalists.

### SCHOOLS

- **Zachary Towey**, a third grade student at **Winslow Elementary School**, has won the "Do the Right Thing Award" sponsored by the Rochester Police Department for his efforts in contacting 911 when his mom was in need of medical assistance. This involved him taking his younger sister along and going to two houses until he found someone home as he could not get the phone at home to work. The award ceremony will be held on April 2nd. Great job Zachary!
- The **Ninth Grade Academy** is the proud foster parent of an eight foot tall fiberglass giraffe that weights 125 lbs. and is four feet wide. The six area **Chase Pitkins** each sponsored an animal with the intent of having a local school in their community paint and embellish it. They also sponsored a \$500 stipend to purchase supplies. The teacher and students will work on the giraffe in the Chase Pitkins store located on Hylan Drive after school and on the weekends. They will have the opportunity to be recognized on the plaque that accompanies the animal, in the coffee table book that is being published and to attend the formal artists reception in April. The finished giraffe will be on display in front of Chase Pitkins over the summer and will be up for auction in September.
- The **Smoking and Health Action Coalition of Monroe County** has awarded a \$1,000 grant to the **Senior High School** to fund a Youth Tobacco Control and Prevention Project. The grant will fund the Rush-Henrietta Kicks Butts Project. Students involved in the project will plan and participate in a variety of activities aimed at increasing the social desirability of being smoke-free teens.

- Congratulations to **Michael Kujawski**, a **Senior High School** student, who placed first in the 2003 **Essentially Ellington Essay Contest**. Students from all participating high schools were invited to submit an essay describing a personal experience with jazz. Essays from across the country were received, from which author and scholar Albert Murray chose the winners. For winning first place, Michael will be able to name a seat in Frederick P. Rose Hall, the new home of Jazz at Lincoln Center.
- On Saturday, March 8th, the **Regional Spelling Bee** was held at the Rochester Museum and Science Center. Over 100 students, representing 42 schools in the Monroe County region, participated in the competition. Congratulations to **Preshita Date**, an 8th grader at **Roth Middle School**, who won 2nd place honors. Preshita demonstrated great skill, endurance and poise during the five-hour event.
- The following students were winners in The Monroe County Volunteer Firemen's Association's annual **Fire Prevention Essay Contest**. In the fifth and sixth grade category, fourth place went to **Jessica Ryan** of **Sherman Elementary School**; and in the seventh and eighth grade category, sixth place went to **Abigail Pruitt** of **Roth Middle School** and eighth place went to **Sarah Wilcox** of **Burger Middle School**. About 2,500 students from fifth through eighth grades participated in the program, which has been carried out for 35 years. Entries were received from 56 schools throughout the county.
- While driving on County Road 30 near Bloomfield during a fierce snowstorm in January, **Dan Pasternak**, a **Senior High School** student, along with five of his friends stopped to aid a woman and her two children whose sport utility vehicle had flipped and was lying upside down. The boys could not break a window to get in, but persuaded the mother to roll down a window so they could crawl inside to help her and her children escape. The boys used a cell phone to call 911 and remained with the mother and her children until help arrived. Great job Dan and friends!
- **Senior High School** student **David Zeigler**, a member of Troop 481, sponsored by the Winslow Elementary School Parent-Teacher Organization, built 10 recycling/trash bins for the Rush-Henrietta Athletic Association baseball fields. Nice job David!
- **Jessica Schlindwein**, a senior at the **high school**, is this year's winner of the **Miss Greater Rochester Teenager Pageant**. She was crowned in March and will compete for the title of Miss Teenager of New York in August. Best of luck Jessica!
- Congratulations to the 12 students in **Mrs. Stockmaster's** and **Ms. Antonecchia's 8th grade math classes** of **Burger Middle School** whose posters were selected and displayed at the Hylan Drive Wegmans. The students created the posters during a Connected Math Project unit on comparing and scaling. They were to figure out unit rates using the Wegman's flyers by finding advertisements for multiple items at one price and then figuring out the price for one item. The posters were selected based on creativity, effort and the correct math being shown. Nice job!
- The third grade students in **Patty Weiner's** and **Joanne Fusare-White's classroom** at **Sherman Elementary School** entered posters in the **Association of Mathematics Teachers of New York State Poster Contest**. The students were asked to create posters around the theme of Mathematical Reflections. Congratulations to **Eric Nestler** who won second place in the primary division overall and received a certificate and check for \$75.00; and to **Cody Bears**, **MacKenzie Hargrave**, **Dalton Passmore**, **Tyler Szczesniak** and **Jennifer Wiedl** who won honorable mention in New York State. The posters were scheduled to be on display in February at the Assembly Building in Albany. Winning entries may be viewed at <http://www.amtnys.org/>.

### SPORTS

- **Girls' soccer**, **boys' and girls' cross country**, and **boys' and girls' indoor track** were all awarded the **Team Scholar Award** by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association [NYSPHSAA]. The team scholar award is a NYSPHSAA program that recognizes any team in New York State that has a team combined GPA of 90 or above. The state certificates are currently displayed in the gym lobby at the **Senior High School**.
- The **girls' bowling team** finished ninth at the state competition in Long Island. The team consists of one senior, two juniors and six sophomores and is coached by Brian Usselman. Congratulations to **Coach Usselman**, **Laura Carmichael**, **Megan Cripps**, **Lisa Germeroth**, **Samantha Heinrich**, **Tiffany Rathman**, **Jenna Robison**, **Kara Sanderl**, **Alyse Sherman** and **Jennifer Slawson**.
- The **R-H wrestlers** were undefeated in Monroe County East and captured the Monroe County East title this year. Congratulations to the team and to **Coach Mickey Marlowe** and **Coach Rich Walker**. This year's varsity starters were: **Mike Mancari**, **Kevin Bertiner**, **Phil Gordon**,

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# Newsmakers

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Dave LaRussa, Walter Moore, Craig Hightower, Larry LaRussa, Rob Frustaci, Andy Swain, Joe Moore, Rafe Mattingly, Sam Rivera, Quentin Gordon, Ben Martin, Jeff Standish and Jake Taylor.

### STAFF

- Congratulations to **Jerry Ryan, Senior High School English teacher**, who has been selected as **Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year** out of 47 drop-in nominations at the Henrietta Store. He won \$1000 for his school and has earned the right to go on to the state [worth \$5000] and national [worth \$10,000] Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year competitions. This award will be presented on May 6th, National Teacher Day.
- **Chris Daley, Ninth Grade Academy** math teacher, was nominated by ninth grader Nicole Platt because of his outstanding qualifications as an educator to become one of **NASA's first Educator Astronauts**. To even be considered, you have to be nominated by a student. NASA is searching for K-12 teachers to join their Astronaut Corps

and these uniquely qualified individuals will have the opportunity to travel to space and perhaps even live on the International Space Station. This experience will enable these specialized educators to inspire literally thousands of students across the nation in the academic areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

- Congratulations to **Bill Connolly and Jody Day**, both recipients of the 2002-2003 **Professional Pupil Transportation Employee of the Year Award**, which is sponsored by the Rochester Area Transportation Supervisors Association [RATSA]. Bill has been a Rush-Henrietta Transportation employee for 10 years. He is a retired Kodak employee and a retired Henrietta Ambulance EMT. Bill is a very dependable driver and is accident free. Jody has been a Rush-Henrietta Transportation employee for eight years. She is a retired Army reservist and has three children that all graduated from Rush-Henrietta. Jody is a very professional driver and always goes the extra mile. She volunteers in the community food cupboard and with the Town of Henrietta Asset Building Team. They will be honored at a brunch at Logan's Party House on May 19th.
- **Victor Beauseigneur, Senior High School**

**Driver Education teacher**, was recently honored with the **NewsSource 13 and New York Lottery's Educator of the Week award**. What an honor!

- On April 3rd, **Paul McKee**, former Rush-Henrietta football coach who passed away in 1999, will be inducted into the **Section V Football Hall of Fame**. Paul started the Rush-Henrietta football program in 1964 and guided the Royal Comets to a 55-5-1 record.
- Congratulations to varsity wrestling coach, **Mickey Marlowe**, who was named **East Coach of the Year** for the second consecutive season and the fourth time in his career. He is in his ninth year of coaching with the varsity team and his hard work has led the Comets to division championships in the last four seasons, this year finishing third in the Monroe County Championships.
- **Nancy Kula**, math teacher at **Roth Middle School**, has been recognized for educational excellence by **Who's Who Among America's Teachers 2002**.
- Congratulations to **Chris Reed** who was selected as **Coach of the Year** for Class A schools, Section 5. Coach Reed coached the boys' varsity basketball team.

## FOUNDATION NEWS

The mission of the Rush-Henrietta Education Foundation [RHEF] is to enhance and enrich educational opportunities for students and staff of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District. This is accomplished by awarding grants for educational initiatives, programs and projects that cannot be included in the annual school district budget. RHEF is funded exclusively by donations and charitable giving. The Board of Trustees is deeply grateful for the financial contributions received from the Rush-Henrietta community and appreciate its ongoing support.

### Recent Grants Awarded

RHEF has recently awarded grants to benefit students at all levels within the District. These awards have enabled the purchase of robotics materials for the Senior High School, funded Robo-Lab supplies at Winslow, enabled Leary to purchase a reading enrichment program for the Kindergarten Extended Educational Program, contributed to the 6th Grade Recognition Rallies at Burger and enabled the purchase of cash registers for the Crane school store. Grants are reviewed and awarded on an ongoing basis. Grant applica-

tions are available in all District school buildings or by e-mail, [info@rhef.org](mailto:info@rhef.org).

### Scholarships Available

RHEF scholarships provide financial assistance for education and training beyond high school, no matter what career paths the winners choose. Last year four \$1000 scholarships were awarded to R-H seniors. Applications and instructions are available in the Career Center at the Senior High School or by e-mail at [info@rhef.org](mailto:info@rhef.org). Completed applications are due April 25th.

### RHEF Looking For Student Trustee

RHEF is looking for a student trustee for the 2003-2004 school year. This is an ideal opportunity to gain Board experience while participating in a meaningful way to enhance educational opportunities with the District. Student trustees are equal to adult trustees on the RHEF Board, with full voting privileges. They are expected to attend monthly Board meetings and occasional special events. For more information see current Student Trustees, Jeff Le or Lauren Eichenauer or e-mail [info@rhef.org](mailto:info@rhef.org).

### Distinguished Alumni

RHEF is currently accepting applications for the prestigious "Distinguished Alumni Award." This award was initiated in 2000 and recognizes the accomplishments and contributions made by R-H Alumni. It is presented during the half-time ceremonies of the R-H Homecoming football game. Plaques honoring all of the Distinguished Alumni are on display at the Senior High School. For more information, or for an application, please e-mail [info@rhef.org](mailto:info@rhef.org) or phone 359-5008. Applications must be received by June 30, 2003.

### Honor A Special Teacher

A donation to RHEF is a wonderful way to honor that special teacher or staff person who has made a difference in a student's life. With a donation of any amount you choose, RHEF will send a 'Teacher Recognition Certificate' [certificate, suitable for framing, which can include a message from the donor] to the individual honored. All donations will be used to fund the awards and grants given out by RHEF. For more information or to request the 'Honor a Special Teacher' form, please e-mail [info@rhef.org](mailto:info@rhef.org) or phone 359-5008.

## Rush-Henrietta Central School District

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# MILITARY OUTREACH PROGRAM

To salute and support the servicemen and servicewomen from the Rush-Henrietta school community, the Senior High School Student Council is taking the lead in organizing a Military Outreach Program. Through this on-going communication program, Rush-Henrietta students will demonstrate concern and provide support for those serving our country either overseas or on the home front.

For this purpose, community residents are encouraged to submit the names of Rush-Henrietta graduates serving in the armed forces. Parents, friends and family members are invited to submit names, along with a photo [if available], branch of service, rate or rank, unit or ship, years of service, age, year graduated, hometown and the name and phone number of a local contact person.

Please send submissions to the Rush-Henrietta Central School District Office of Community Relations. Submissions and photos can be e-mailed to [nhance@rhnet.org](mailto:nhance@rhnet.org) or mailed to 2034 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta, New York 14467.

On behalf of our community's servicemen and servicewomen, thank you, in advance, for your participation in the District's first-ever organized Military Outreach Program.