



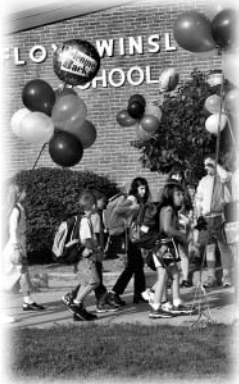
Community Newsletter

FALL 2003



Let R-H Spirit Soar! Welcome to 2003-2004!

Spirits were soaring high as District staff welcomed 6,000 Rush-Henrietta students on the first day of classes, September 4, 2003. With summer projects and preparations for a new school year complete at all buildings and in all classrooms, the opening of school went smoothly as students were welcomed into safe and caring school environments. Two-hours into the first day of school, eager students were already engaged in learning.



IN THIS ISSUE...

From the Board of Education	2
Outgoing Board Members	2
Celebrating Success and Achievement	3
From the Superintendent	4
Board of Education Meetings	4
2003-2004 District Priorities	5
Commencement 2003	6, 7
Community Use of District Facilities	8
For Your Information	9
Newsmakers	10
Volunteer of the Year	10
Partnership Survey Confirms Solid Improvement	11
Rush-Henrietta New Teacher Orientation	11



FROM THE BOARD



MR. DAVID R. PENNELLA

President
P. O. Box 285
Henrietta, NY 14667
[H] 334-0938
Dpennella@rhnet.org
Term expires June 2004



MRS. SUSAN M. DERRICK

Vice President
29 Deer Run
Rochester, NY 14623
[H] 359-2526
Sderrick@rhnet.org
Term expires June 2004



MRS. SUSAN E. BANKER

1552 Middle Road
Rush, NY 14543
[H] 334-3395
Sbanker@rhnet.org
Term expires June 2006



MR. EDWARD A. LINCOLN

392 Clay Road, Apt. 28
Rochester, NY 14623
[H] 334-4784
Elincoln@rhnet.org
Term expires June 2004



MRS. PAMELA J. REINHARDT

208 Alverstone Way
West Henrietta, NY 14586
[H] 334-2357
Preinhardt@rhnet.org
Term expires June 2006



MRS. SUE A. SMITH

400 Farrell Road Ext.
West Henrietta, NY 14586
[H] 334-6563
Sasmith@rhnet.org
Term expires June 2006



DR. WILLIAM B. STROUD

47 Cobblefield Way
Pittsford, NY 14534
[H] 383-8916
Wstroud@rhnet.org
Term expires June 2005

2003-2004 Board of Education Vision

The Rush-Henrietta Board of Education, along with the Superintendent of Schools, shall have a shared vision of success for increased student achievement and create/modify board policies that enable the District to achieve that vision. The board shall be knowledgeable of, and effective in, utilizing board policies, education law, education standards, legislative issues and R-H curriculum basics in achieving that vision. The board shall have clearly defined its role and the role of the superintendent in District oversight and management. The board shall be open to community input and communicate effectively with the community, the District administration and among its own members. The board shall be effective in using its time and resources in carrying out its responsibilities in an exemplary manner.

Many Thanks to Outgoing Board Members

The terms of office for Board of Education members **Sylvia Perez-Hardy** and **Arlene Burdett** ended on July 1, 2003. The District acknowledges the significant contributions of both Mrs. Perez-Hardy and Mrs. Burdett during their respective terms of office. The Rush-Henrietta school community extends its sincere appreciation to both women for their collective years of service as volunteer members on the board. Mrs. Perez-Hardy has served on the board since 1996 and Mrs. Burdett, since 1999.

During their terms, both demonstrated an unwavering commitment to children and to guiding student success in a fiscally prudent and responsible manner. As elected representatives of



Sylvia Perez-Hardy



Arlene Burdett

the District and as officers of the State of New York, Mrs. Perez-Hardy and Mrs. Burdett worked diligently with other board members to establish policies for the operation of the District, which ensure the long-term capacity to maintain the efficient delivery of quality programs and services.

Please join the District in thanking Mrs. Perez-Hardy and Mrs. Burdett for their involvement in shaping the future of the District. Their concern for the advancement of education so that all children can enjoy challenging educational opportunities in safe and caring school environments will have a long-lasting impact on Rush-Henrietta students.



Celebrating Success and Achievement

Intent on fostering continuous school improvement, administrators, teachers, board members and parents met this summer to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement within the District. More than 100 people gathered during the daylong session, which featured plenty of upbeat news about student achievement.

Throughout the interactive sessions, Superintendent J. Kenneth Graham, Jr. reiterated his desire to make Rush-Henrietta "an environment characterized by continuous improvement," one that makes students feel supported and cared for as they pursue academic excellence.

That commitment to fostering student achievement is starting to pay new dividends, and the most recent state assessment data shows there is plenty of good news to celebrate. In many subject areas, Rush-Henrietta students improved their academic performance, even when faced with more rigorous state learning standards. For instance, fourth-graders taking the state math test did well. The test is scored on a scale of one to four, with one being the lowest score and four being the highest. There were increases in the number of students who scored threes and fours and corresponding decreases among those who scored ones and twos.

In addition, impressive numbers of high school students passed the Global History [92 percent] and U.S. History [94 percent] tests. There is also good news on the English front, specifically

regarding eighth-graders who took the English-language arts exam. District officials note that, while the scores on this test declined elsewhere in the state, Rush-Henrietta's performance improved.

In recent years, state mandates forced the District to alter its approach to meet increasingly rigorous standards. When New York started requiring each student to earn a Regents diploma as a requirement for graduation, school officials here and throughout the state had

"Positive results don't just happen. They have to be carefully planned."

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

to adjust curriculum and teaching methods accordingly. "The interventions we have put into place have more than proved their worth in measurable gains," says Dr. Lois Austen, assistant superintendent of instruction.

There are many reasons for the improved student scores in Rush-Henrietta. For instance, the District is placing increased importance on encouraging parents to be equal partners with the schools in terms of their child's education, and there is a renewed emphasis on teacher study groups, one of several innovative ways that Rush-Henrietta educators are helping each other become better at their profession.

In addition, the District is making a concerted effort to recruit a more diverse staff, finding teachers who can bring to

the classroom what Dr. Graham refers to as a personal "richness."

Of course, the students deserve plenty of credit, too, especially for taking advantage of extra services offered by the District during the past year. For example, students who fell just short of passing the state test for English-language arts, or those who were at-risk of falling below the standards, were invited to Saturday Academy. The program, which was held last fall, included six sessions that led to significant improvement in the students' writing skills.

There is more work to be done, and school officials say they won't rest easy until all subject areas show improvement. However, even when certain achievement data may look disappointing at first blush, there are positive signs, too. For example, when benchmarked against 11 similar schools throughout the state, Rush-Henrietta high school students who took physics didn't score near the top of the group. However, says Ken Hilton, executive director of Research and Evaluation, "Rush-Henrietta had the second-highest enrollment among the 12 benchmarked schools. It's important to keep in mind that we are challenging more kids."

Brainstorming sessions such as the one that occurred this summer are extremely important to the District's future, Graham says. "Positive results don't just happen. They have to be carefully planned. The strategic choices we have made and will make will directly impact our student's achievement not only in the schools, but as they become members of society."

Each year, *Newsweek* magazine ranks the best high schools in the United States, and the Rush-Henrietta Central School District is proud to be among the best in the nation.

The most recent list, which was released in June, provides ample evidence that Rush-Henrietta provides students with a high-quality education. Three years ago, the

District ranked about 450 out of more than 20,000 high schools in the nation. In the most recent survey, the District showed dramatic improvement, ranking 363 out of more than 20,000.

In fact, among suburban districts in Monroe County, only schools in Pittsford, Brighton, and West Irondequoit scored higher than Rush-Henrietta!



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Community Residents:

Welcome to the 2003-2004 school year. Throughout the year, the District will continue to have high academic expectations for Rush-Henrietta students and to provide instructional supports needed to meet and exceed these expectations. The District will also continue to encourage the involvement of District stakeholders to work with students and educators toward our common goal . . . to guide student success, one child at a time, in a caring school environment.



To nurture and support higher academic achievement, elementary class sizes will be smaller at kindergarten and first grade this year. Smaller class size means more time for teachers to spend with students, addressing individual learning needs. This special attention is particularly important during a child's formative years as a learner. As students advance to middle and high school, many require additional time and help to master more challenging learning standards. Providing secondary students additional time and help will be a priority this year.

Student asset building will continue to be a priority. To ensure student success we must develop supportive, caring relationships that encourage academic achievement and the development of key character traits needed for success. This means being approachable and taking time to talk with students about their hopes, dreams and concerns, especially when they may be having difficulty in school. When students feel cared about, they give their best. As caring adults you can help Rush-Henrietta students feel valued.

The participation of parents, guardians and community residents in education can inspire and motivate students to do well in school. We need your support to reinforce that doing well in school is important and that it should be every child's number one priority while a student. Together, we share the responsibility for engaging children in learning and I look forward to your involvement in guiding student success . . . one school, one classroom and one child at a time.

Once again, welcome to the new school year . . . a year that promises to be filled with challenging educational opportunities for all students. As a school community, we have much to celebrate and to be proud of. With your continued support, the R-H spirit will soar to new heights in 2003-2004!

Sincerely,

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

2003-2004 Board of Education Meetings

Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m., NGA*

*Unless otherwise noted

July 8, 2003
 August 12, 2003
 September 9, 2003
 September 23, 2003
 October 14, 2003
 October 28, 2003
 November 4, 2003
 November 18, 2003
 December 9, 2003
 January 13, 2004
 January 27, 2004
 February 10, 2004
 February 24, 2004
 March 9, 2004
 March 23, 2004
 April 6, 2004
 April 27, 2004

First Public Hearing on Proposed 2004-2005 Budget

Board Adoption of Proposed 2004-2005 Budget

May 11, 2004 Final Public Hearing on Proposed 2004-2005 Budget
 May 18, 2004 Election Results, Winslow Elementary School, 9 p.m.
 May 25, 2004
 June 8, 2004
 June 22, 2004

Special Dates

Wednesday, February 25, 2004 Community Forum on Preliminary Proposed 2004-2005 Budget, 7-9 p.m., SHS Cafeteria

Wednesday, May 3, 2004 Board of Education Candidates' Night, 7 p.m., RMS Cafeteria

Tuesday, May 18, 2004 Budget Vote & Board of Education Election, 6 a.m.-9 p.m., All R-H Elementary Schools



2003-2004 District Priorities

During the course of every school year, individually and collectively, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District strives to accomplish many important goals. Each is important and reflects District beliefs about how to better educate and support Rush-Henrietta students. Therefore, collective attention will focus on goals identified and believed to be the most important. For the 2003-2004 school year, the District will focus on the following priorities in six major areas as outlined below:

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Three District priorities for this year fall into the domain of strengthening and improving curriculum and instructional practices and the districtwide focus will be on:

- 1] Standards Based, Data Driven Instruction
Standards based instruction requires that we make explicit the content and skills that we expect students to master at each grade level. It also requires that instruction be planned in ways that help each student understand and achieve these desired "exit outcomes."
- 2] Technology Integration
The District is committed to improving student and teacher access to electronic educational technology [computer hardware and software, Internet access and distance learning].
- 3] Appropriate Class Size
The District will continue efforts to reduce class sizes to levels believed to best support student learning. Elementary class size targets will be reduced to 15 students per class over the next four years. In the 2003-2004 school year, kindergarten and first grade class size targets will be reduced to 15 students.

STUDENT SAFETY AND MANAGEMENT

To further support significant steps taken over the last three years to strengthen school safety and security, three District priorities for the 2003-2004 school year relate to improving student management and support. It is important to note that these are preventative measures to prevent student safety from becoming an issue at Rush-Henrietta and to provide caring school environments for all students.

- 1] District Safety Coordinator*
To improve student safety, a District Safety Coordinator [DSC] has been employed to coordinate districtwide emergency responses, conduct school safety audits, oversee school safety drills, conduct residency investigations and assist with the supervision of youth assistants and evening and weekend security. The DSC will also assist school staff with home visits to students expected of truancy.
- 2] School Resource Officer*
The services of a School Resource Officer [SRO] from the Monroe County Sheriff's Department will be secured. The SRO will be assigned to secondary schools to assist with law enforcement, student counseling and law-related education. This uniformed and armed presence in secondary schools will discourage, diffuse and de-escalate situations that might otherwise elevate to levels requiring police involvement.
* It is important to note that the above two positions are being added to prevent student safety from becoming an issue at Rush-Henrietta in the future. It is not because of a concern with student safety at our schools. In fact, more than 80% of the District's secondary students report that they feel safe and secure in school.
- 3] Student Asset Development
Students learn best when they feel cared about and supported by teachers and school administrators. Having high expectations for

students and building supportive, caring relationships that encourage students to achieve high expectations is called Student Asset Building. Throughout the 2003-2004 school year, Student Asset Building will continue to be emphasized at all schools. School staff will receive six hours of Crisis Prevention Institute training and building level Student Asset Building plans will be developed and implemented. Procedures for assessing and reporting asset development will be improved.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

High student achievement and performance requires well trained, highly motivated, student-centered staff. To encourage and reinforce these aspects of professional practices, staff development programs will be aligned with District priorities. In addition, more frequent use of peer observations, peer sharing and student groups will be encouraged. A comprehensive, three-year induction plan for new teachers will be developed and the quality of teacher observations and evaluations will be improved.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

In response to parent concerns expressed in the 2003 Partnership Schools Survey regarding communication, steps will be taken to improve parent-teacher/school communications by implementing a better use of technology. Plans for improving parent communication will be developed and implemented at each school and a plan for fall parent-teacher conferences at secondary schools will be developed.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Partnerships with businesses, colleges and community organizations play an important role in guiding the success of Rush-Henrietta students. Two partnerships that will be strengthened during the 2003-2004 school year are:

- 1] Teenage Employment Partnerships
These partnerships ask teenage employers to serve as good role models for high school students and by keeping track of how high school employees are progressing in school and by letting these students know that doing well in school is their number one job. Currently, more than 60 local employers are enrolled as Teenage Employment Partners and the District's goal is to double this number over the next three years.
- 2] Advanced Technology Education Partnerships
These partnerships establish dual-credit programs with local colleges and universities to provide Rush-Henrietta high school students with access to college level course work in engineering, graphic media, and computer and information technology. During the 2003-2004 school year, the District will emphasize developing these dual-credit opportunities with the Rochester Institute of Technology [R.I.T.] School of Graphic Media and R.I.T. School of Computing and Information Technology.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

High student achievement and performance requires appropriate space for instruction, student support services and school operations. To ensure appropriate, long-term capacity for these purposes, the construction of a new Transportation and Operations Center was completed by August 15th and the building at 649 Erie Station Road will be renovated and will become the District's Professional Development, Shipping and Receiving, and Mail Center. In addition, a capital campaign will be conducted to raise funds for constructing a Community Sports and Fitness Center at the Senior High School. Long-range space plans for elementary and middle school instruction will be developed.



Commencement 2003

They lined up by the hundreds, eager to enter Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial as students and exit as high school graduates. By the end of the June 27 ceremony, nearly 400 young adults reveled in their accomplishments with family and friends.

Superintendent J. Kenneth Graham, Jr. addressed the supportive crowd assembled in the arena and highlighted some of the students' accomplishments. "This senior class has met and exceeded the most rigorous academic standards established for New York State high school students in recent history," he said.

While acknowledging that members of the Class of 2003 benefited from supportive families, a generous community and dedicated school staff members, Graham praised the graduates' personal efforts and encouraged them to embrace the challenges ahead. For some, those challenges will occur at college, while others will encounter them in the military or workforce. "In life, sometimes what appears to be the end is really just a new beginning," Graham said.

Other District leaders also addressed the students, congratulating them on their achievements and encouraging them to pursue their dreams with enthusiasm. These speakers included Sylvia Perez-Hardy, then president of the Board of Education; Susan Banker, then vice-president of the Board of Education; Stephen Barbeau, then high school principal; Scott Nash, English teacher and senior class advisor; and Katherine Perrelli, high school social studies teacher.

Student speakers included Amanda Carden, the class valedictorian, and Margaret Rich, the salutatorian, both of whom gave speeches reflecting upon their time in school. Joseph Bithorn and Elizabeth Schirmer provided the student welcome, while Erica Hardy and Ryan McAlpine presented the Class of 2003 gift, U.S. and New York State flags. Michael Sanbury and Amanda Smith, two of the graduates, presided during the tassel ceremony.

The music at this year's ceremony again proved to be memorable. The high school's Symphonic Band performed, as did the R-H Jazz Combo, which provided a rendition of "All Blues" by Miles Davis. The R-H Singers performed "Bridge Over Troubled Waters," a Simon and Garfunkel classic, and "Wanting Memories," by Ysaye M. Barnwell. Near the end of the commencement exercises, Shirley Horton and Wayne Scarborough sang and played piano, respectively, on "Wind Beneath My Wings."

During their time at Rush-Henrietta, the graduating seniors enjoyed years of personal growth and improved achievement. Each one leaves high school having been exposed to a well-rounded education, while at the same time having the opportunity to hone a special talent. For some, that talent was in the classroom. Others excelled at athletics, community service, drama, music or by learning a trade.

Many thanks to everyone who helped make commencement exercises a terrific success. The District's mission is to foster the intellectual and personal development of Rush-Henrietta's students and to prepare them for responsible citizenship, productive employment and lifelong learning. Reflecting on the Class of 2003, it is clear that the mission was accomplished. Good luck graduates!





Community Use of District Facilities

District buildings and school grounds are available for community use as outlined below. When in, or on, school property, please observe the below guidelines for use.

School Buildings

Rush-Henrietta schools are available to community groups for meetings and special events under rules established by the State Education Department and the Board of Education. Applications for use of school space are available at each school. Completed forms need to be returned to the principal of the school you wish to use. Please give as much advance notice as possible to permit the scheduling of requests.

Athletic Fields

School athletic fields are in great demand. The District works with the Rush and Henrietta recreation commissions, the Rush-Henrietta Athletic Association and other community sports groups to schedule equitable use of fields. During the summer, town recreation commissions use school fields/facilities for playground programs and for town-sponsored recreational sports leagues.

The community is invited to use the outdoor track at the high school. The hours, weather permitting, are sunrise to dusk, Monday-Friday and weekends/holidays only if the high school is open.

Guidelines for Use

School buildings and grounds are off limits to unauthorized persons from 15 minutes after sunset to 15 minutes after sunrise. When on school grounds:

- Obey speed limits and parking regulations.
- Park your car only in designated lots.
- Snowmobiles, motor scooters, motorbikes and model airplanes are prohibited.
- The possession of alcoholic beverages, firearms and weapons are always illegal. Individuals violating the rules will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.
- Smoking is not permitted at any time.

Walk Program

All Rush-Henrietta schools are available for individuals to walk the hallways within the time frames listed below. This program runs from September to June, when school is in session, not on holidays or vacations. However, walking may be restricted during large events at the buildings [e.g. open house, concerts]. Check dates in this calendar for specific school events.

School	Days	Walk Times
Crane	T, W, Th	4:30-9 p.m.
Fyle	T, W, Th	3-9 p.m.
Leary	M, W, Th	3-9 p.m.
Sherman	M, W, F	3-8 p.m.
Winslow	T, W, Th	4-9 p.m.
Burger/Roth	M-F	6-9 p.m.
NGA	M-Th	6-9 p.m.
SHS	M-Th	6-9 p.m.
Vollmer	M, W, Th	3:30-9 p.m.

District Pool Use

Family Open Swim

The Senior High School pool is open to District residents for Family Open Swim according to the schedule below. For admittance to the pool:

- Infants through elementary school students must be accompanied by an adult and provide appropriate emergency information.
- Middle school students must be signed in and out by an adult, provide appropriate emergency information and leave an R-H Student ID.
- Ninth Grade Academy and high school students must sign in and out, provide appropriate emergency information and leave an R-H Student ID.
- Adults must provide the appropriate emergency information.

Non-swimmers must be accompanied by an adult in the water. To be classified as a swimmer, one must be able to enter and exit the water without assistance, float on stomach and back without assistance, and proceed across the width of the pool, using any form, without assistance. At any time, a lifeguard has the right to remove any participant who is deemed to be in an unsafe circumstance. Once admitted to the pool, all rules posted on the premises must be followed. Only Coast Guard approved floatation devices are allowed.

For a complete list of pool rules and updates to the Family Open Swim schedule, please contact the Continuing Education Office at 359-7805 or call the pool office at 359-5262. The Family Open Swim fee is \$1 per person, per hour.

District Learn to Swim Program

During the school year, Continuing Education offers the American Red Cross Learn to Swim Program. Watch for the lesson schedule and registration procedures in the fall and winter Continuing Education brochures. For more information, please call 359-7805.

Community Pool Use

The pool can be scheduled by District residents for school and non-school groups for a fee. Requests may be made through the Continuing Education Office and must be approved by the building principal. For a fee schedule, available dates and appropriate paperwork, contact the Continuing Education Office at 359-7805.

Pool Schedule During School Year

The pool is available for District resident use during the school year according to the following schedule. Pool hours may change at any time. For up-to-date information, call the pool office at 359-5262 or the Continuing Education Office at 359-7805.

Sunday	12-2 p.m.	Scheduled Community Use
	2-3 p.m.	Family Open Swim
	3-4 p.m.	Family Open Swim
Friday	7:45-8:45 p.m.	Family Open Swim

Open Swim Schedule During School Recesses

The R-H Family Center sponsors open swim sessions during three school recesses. The fee is \$1 per person, per hour. Open swims will take place on December 29 & 30, 2003; February 17-19, 2004; and April 12-15, 2004. There are two sessions each day, from 2-3 p.m. and from 3-4 p.m. Call 359-7915 or 359-7914 for information.

Summer Pool Use

The Henrietta Recreation Department is responsible for the summer pool schedule. Information about summer 2004 will be available May 1, 2004. Call the Recreation Department at 359-2540 for more information.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Tune In To RHTV!

Community residents are encouraged to tune in to RHTV, the District's cable television program, which is in its third season. The program is aired on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month, with the exception of November and December, on cable CH15 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tapes of each program are available for loan to residents who do not live within the cablecast boundaries. To reserve videotapes, please call the District reception desk at 359-5000. Tapes of each program are also in circulation at the Brighton, Henrietta and Rush public libraries.

New Transportation Procedures

Please be advised that the Rush-Henrietta Board of Education has made several changes to the policies and regulations regarding enhanced elementary transportation services and school bus scheduling and routing [Board of Education Policy 8411 and 8411-R]. These changes have been made to promote safe, effective and efficient transportation services for our students. Along with bus schedule information sent to parents under separate cover in August, detailed information regarding this topic was included. Complete copies of all board policies are available on the District web site [www.rhnet.org], in the main offices of all school buildings and in your local public library. If you have any questions, please contact the Transportation Department by calling 359-5380.

Saluting Our Soldiers

Under the guidance of Dr. Kenneth Hilton, Executive Director for Research and Evaluation, the Senior High School Student Council will oversee Operation S. O. S. [Saluting our Soldiers]. Operation S.O.S. was launched in the 2002-2003 school year to recognize R-H graduates that are serving our country in active military duty, along with faculty and staff from the District serving overseas.

Varun Mehta, student Board of Education representative and Class of 2004 president, will lead the program in 2003-2004. While still in its infancy, students will begin by corresponding with soldiers and the program will hopefully evolve into sending care packages and involving community members such as veterans, and even elementary school children. Families and friends of those serving in the military are encouraged to submit names of Rush-Henrietta graduates and staff currently serving in the armed forces. Please send submissions including name, photo [if available],

branch of service, rate or rank, unit or ship, years of service, age, year graduated from R-H, hometown, and the name and phone number of a local contact person to the Office of Research and Evaluation at 2034 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta, New York 14467. For more information regarding this program, please contact Varun Mehta by e-mailing vmehta@rhnet.org or by contacting Dr. Hilton at 359-5018.

Rush-Henrietta Education Foundation

"The mission of RHEF is to support educational initiatives, programs and projects that extend beyond the scope of the annual school district budget and which could not be initiated or maintained without private sector funding made possible through charitable giving."

It's been a busy spring and summer for RHEF. In the spring, four \$1,000 scholarships were provided to seniors Nicholas Ryan, Sheridan Wiggins, Kathryn Morrisey and Elizabeth Cronin.

This summer, RHEF welcomed new trustees Norm Rice and Nancy Reynolds to their board and Ed Lincoln as the new Board of Education liaison. Meghan Kelly ['05] joined Lauren Eichenauer ['04] as our student trustees.

RHEF is accepting applications for mini-grants [up to \$500] from students and staff members for educational enrichment activities not funded through the annual budget.

Also, RHEF welcomes anyone who may be interested in joining the board or helping in any way to achieve our mission.

For information on mini-grant applications, volunteering or more about RHEF, please visit www.rhef.org.

2003 Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk

Join staff and students from the Rush-Henrietta community as we walk and raise funds to fight cancer with the American Cancer Society on Sunday, October 19th. Buses to Frontier Field will leave from and return to the Senior High School parking lot for the walk. Team captains are available in every R-H school building to take your reservation. For more information, contact District co-captains Tess Richard [359-7958, Trichard@rhnet.org] or Lea Theuer [359-5213, Ltheuer@rhnet.org].

Kids Day Out

Attention Parents, Grandparents and Guardians! Look forward to Kids Day Out . . . a day of fun and enjoyment for elementary school kids just before the holiday season. Look for the date in upcoming monthly elementary school newsletters and on District and school web pages. The event, sponsored by the Class of 2004, is being planned for early December.

Notice of Equal Educational and Employment Opportunities

Pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and such other federal or state statutes and regulations as may pertain, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability with respect to the educational opportunities it offers, including vocational educational opportunities, nor with respect to the appointment of its employees, employment pay and benefits, counseling services for students, access by students to educational programs, course offerings, textbooks and student activities. Specifically, but without limitation, it is the policy of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District to assure that no person shall be denied employment solely on the basis of any physical, mental or medical impairment which is unrelated to the person's ability to engage in the activities involved in the job for which application has been made. Moreover, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District will not tolerate actions by its employees or students which constitute sexual and/or disability harassment.

Persons having questions, or wishing to file a grievance, with respect to an alleged violation of such District policies against discrimination or harassment, other than disability related claims, should contact Mr. Stephen Barbeau, at 359-5044, in the Office of Human Resources.

Persons having questions, or wishing to file a grievance, with respect to an alleged violation of such District policies against discrimination or harassment on account of a disability, should contact the District's designated Section 504 Coordinator, Paula Gianforti, at 359-7925.

Any such persons may also make inquiry directly to the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.



NEWSMAKERS

Eight members of the **Ninth Grade Academy Visual Arts Club** and teacher **Jennifer Ziehl** worked 125 hours after school to complete Garvey, the giraffe. He was painted at the Henrietta Chase Pitkin. Garvey was painted in the style of Oaxacan animal sculptures that are found in the Oaxacan region of Mexico. These sculptures are known for their bright colors, complex patterns and expressive faces. The students enjoyed their "15 minutes of fame" when they attended the invite only artists reception in April for the Animal Scramble and a book signing that took place in June at the Henrietta Wegmans store. The NGA is hoping to purchase Garvey through fundraising efforts when he goes up for auction on October 3rd.



2003 Volunteer of the Year

Each year the District gives special recognition to a volunteer whose contributions to the District have been particularly noteworthy. We do this by recognizing this special person as the R-H Volunteer of the Year. Again this year, the District received numerous nominations for this honor.

The 2002-2003 Volunteer of the Year is Yvonne Thorne, a long time District resident and volunteer. Her volunteer work includes Fyle Elementary School, Burger Middle School and the Senior High School. She has been an active member of our District Parent Advisory Council, as well as the chair of the committee. She is recognizable at numerous functions, including our Annual Leadership Workshop, our Parent Partnership Endeavor and most notably, she is a founding member of the Parker Parent Group.

Mrs. Thorne doesn't need a "leadership" role to make her voice heard. She has a way of expressing important thoughts and ideas at whatever meeting or gathering she attends and getting dis-

cussion going. She is an active advocate of the school system and never lets an opportunity go by to try to make it better, to require "us," as a group, to strive for more. Her demeanor while she is



Yvonne Thorne, Volunteer of the Year with Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Kenneth Graham

doing that is never condescending or blaming, she has a great way with people. That is definitely one of her strengths.

In summary, our 2002-2003 Volunteer of the Year is a humble and hard working individual whose generous

work and positive interest on behalf of all children and the Rush-Henrietta School District is greatly appreciated and truly warrants this honorable award.

Mrs. Thorne resides in the District with her husband Francisco and children Frances, age 19; Brian, age 16; and daughter Cherise, age 9 and is also the Manager of the Center for Women at Highland Hospital. She grew up in Brooklyn and graduated from NYC Community College, earned a BA from Roberts Wesleyan College and is currently working on an MBA at Medaille College.

Along with Mrs. Thorne, all volunteers present at the annual Volunteer Dinner were acknowledged for the countless hours of volunteer work they provided to the District throughout the 2002-2003 school year. As the program noted, each was reminded that "A hundred years from now it will not matter what sort of house you lived in or the kind of car you drove . . . but the world may be different because you were important in the life of a child."



Partnership Survey Confirms Solid Improvement

Results from the 2003 Partnership Schools Survey show that Rush-Henrietta is cultivating better relationships among parents, teachers and students.

This past spring, parents were asked to complete a Partnership Schools Survey. The survey seeks input about their level of satisfaction regarding parental involvement practices within the schools. It also provides a forum for adults to make suggestions about how the District can foster more meaningful and plentiful parental involvement.

The results of the 44-question survey are heartening, officials say. For instance, the District tried to get a sense of how people perceive the school climate. When asked whether the schools, teachers and staff demonstrate they care about their child, 86 percent said the District does a good or satisfactory job. In addition, 90 percent of parents responded positively when asked if they thought their child's school is a safe, secure and orderly place for teachers to teach and children to learn.

In June, parent representatives from each of the District's nine schools joined with building principals during the second annual Partnership Schools Forum. "Using the survey results, we did an analysis from building to building and gave those results to each school principal and parent organization so they had a feeling for specific concerns there," says Ken Hilton, executive director of Research and Evaluation.

Fostering parental involvement in the education of their children is one of the District's top priorities. When parents, teachers and students work together to provide support and a proper learning environment, an improvement in achievement follows.

Parents who did not fill out the survey this year are encouraged to do so next spring, when the District will again seek input from families. "This isn't a bureaucratic exercise," Hilton says. "We take these surveys very seriously, and the results are so important. We are confident this survey has given us a good per-

spective on the opinions of our families and how we can improve, and we are pleased that this year's results show solid improvement."

Rush-Henrietta recognizes that a good portion of a child's academic success stems from a sense of caring, a sense of welcoming and a sense of security within the schools. Children who experience that, Hilton says, are "more likely to be engaged, to be involved and participate actively in their education."

Between now and next spring, Hilton offers a reading assignment for interested parents. He suggests picking up a copy of "Beyond the Classroom," by Laurence Steinberg, which focuses on factors outside of school and how they affect children's learning and success. "Children have a greater potential for being successful in school if their parents are on the same wavelength with teachers," he says. "The benefit to a child whose parents are involved in school is immeasurable."

Rush-Henrietta New Teacher Orientation



Seventy new teachers attended the 2003 Rush-Henrietta New Teacher Orientation where they engaged in learning about District priorities and programs that support classroom teaching and learning. The six-day new teacher orientation is an integral part of the District's long-term professional development plan for staff.

Welcome new teachers . . . may your spirit soar as you guide student achievement and success in Rush-Henrietta classrooms and beyond!



Rush-Henrietta Central School District

2034 Lehigh Station Road
Henrietta, New York 14467
(585) 359-5000
www.rhnet.org

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Henrietta, NY
Permit No. 2

2003-2004 Board of Education

Mr. David R. Pennella, President
Mrs. Susan M. Derrick, Vice President
Mrs. Susan E. Banker
Mr. Edward A. Lincoln
Mrs. Pamela J. Reinhardt
Mrs. Sue A. Smith
Dr. William B. Stroud

ECRWSS

Postal Customer

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. J. Kenneth Graham, Jr.

Published by the Office of Community Relations

Ms. Nanette P. Hance, Executive Director
Ms. Karen A. Flanigan, Information Specialist

THE RUSH-HENRIETTA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

announces the opening of its
TRANSPORTATION & OPERATIONS CENTER
1133 Lehigh Station Road

All community residents are invited to attend the
OPEN HOUSE and DEDICATION PROGRAM

marking this important milestone
in the history of the District on
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2003

5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

with a special

Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Program at 5:30 p.m.

Self and guided tours • Bus-washing demonstration
Student entertainment • Refreshments

Celebrate! Let R-H Spirit Soar!