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New Milford High School
 860-350-6647
 Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal

Mr. Marc Balanda, Ass't. Principal
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Schaghticoke Middle School
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 Mrs. Dana Ford, Principal

Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, Ass't. Principal
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Sarah Noble Intermediate School
 860-210-4020
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Mrs. Anne Bilko, Ass't. Principal
 Mrs. Joan Kick, Ass't. Principal
 Mrs. Jennifer Meyers, Ass't. Principal
 Dr. Don Naiman, Ass't. Principal



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 Dr. Anne Stuhlman, Principal

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John Pettibone Elementary School
 860-354-3218
 Mrs. Paula Kelleher, Principal

Mrs. Jennifer Meyers, Ass't. Principal



Northville Elementary School
 860-355-3713
 Mrs. Susan Murray, Principal

Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, Ass't. Principal

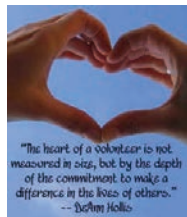
Spotlight on New Milford Schools

Volume 4, Issue 8

May 2014

Spotlight on Volunteers

With the school year starting to come to a close, we want to make sure to recognize and express our thanks to the many, many volunteers, both individuals and groups, who support the New Milford Public Schools. The Board of Education recognizes that volunteers make many valuable contributions to our schools and endorses a volunteer program that encourages community residents to take an active role to become school volunteers subject to suitable regulations and safeguards. This volunteerism comes in many forms and we will be "spotlighting" several of them over the next few pages.



"The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others."
 -- Bethany Hollo

Our students' parents and other community members are a wonderful resource, volunteering in our classrooms and school libraries, chaperoning field trips and contributing to our school fundraisers. Many parents are active members in groups such as the Band Parents and Athletic Boosters, spending countless hours in support of these students. Frequently, parents and other community members visit our schools to share their talents, knowledge, hobbies, and life experiences with our students.

Northville Elementary Principal Susan Murray says "We've been fortunate to have over 200 volunteers for thousands of hours just this year alone. These volunteers include grandparents, retired staff members and community members who don't even have students attending our school. Our top 20 volunteers have given over 2,212 hours to our students so far this year!" JPS Principal Paula Kelleher tells a similar tale. "One of our most dedicated volunteers is a former public library employee who has volunteered in our LMC for four years. She has so many skills we can use and we are so lucky to have her."

Still other volunteers serve as adult mentors. As Dr. Tomasello, SNIS principal, explains "From time to time we identify students who could benefit from having an adult mentor. These mentors visit the school to meet with these students, often enjoying lunch together while talking about school work and other topics of interest."

Sometimes volunteerism is focused on a particular event. Many local veterans eagerly volunteer to share in the schools' Veterans Day celebrations each November. They attend school assemblies and interact with students as part of classroom lectures about their life as soldiers, providing a wonderful visual representation of the character traits our students study.



Veterans visit SNIS



Community volunteers prepare to join last year's Walking Project Kick-off Assembly

Other community members participate in the Walking Project at SNIS. Fifth grade teacher Lisa Montemurro says "The SNIS Walking Project is a four week program aimed at teaching the fifth grade students how to live healthier lives through the 3 E's: Exercise, Eating Well and Environmental Awareness. Local businesses and organizations volunteer to partner with the individual classrooms, walking with and mentoring the students, participating in healthful activities and contributing the funds needed for pedometers, t-shirts, incentive tokens and various educational materials. During the four weeks,

students and sponsors track their miles on pedometers and participate in 3E activities taught by community volunteers and school staff. Since the Walking Project began in 2007, 2517 fifth grade students have walked 374,286 miles and participated in almost 200 hours of 3E educational activities! Now in its 8th year, the Walking Project began this year on May 7th and ends on June 6th."

SMS Science teacher Susan Stoughton appreciates the many volunteers who participate in the annual 8th grade In-House Activity Day. This year volunteers will assist in the set-up, building, testing and break down of a lab in which students will be building and testing prototypes of a car to race in a challenge. Per Mrs. Stoughton, "This is a perfect opportunity for volunteers to share knowledge and skills of construction and engineering with our students."



SMS students hard at work during last year's In-House Activity Day

Still other volunteers lend talents of a different nature, providing much needed assistance to the NMHS annual All School Musical as they help with costume design, wigs and make-up, or props and set building.

This year marks the 20th consecutive year New Milford High School seniors will be invited to the Grad Party - an all-night, substance-free party to celebrate the graduating class' success and accomplishments. The Grad Party is the senior's grand finale event at NMHS and takes place at New Milford High School on graduation night from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.

This event boasts a variety of activities and entertainment including a D.J., a hypnotist, games, food, prizes, and more! Although the Grad Party is over in a few short hours, it takes many months, an army of volunteers, and \$20,000 to pull off. Hundreds of NMHS parents from every grade level, school staff, and various community groups volunteer countless hours planning, fundraising, decorating, preparing photo boards, shopping for prizes, creating games, and countless other tasks to give the seniors a night to remember. Grad Party Organizers put the call out early in the school year and the group gains momentum throughout the year. "At the first meeting there are only 10 or 15 parents, but by June, it's standing room only. The parents really pull together and the community gets behind us and we're able to accomplish all our goals for the students year after year," states Olga Rella, Grad Party Committee Chairperson. "It's really overwhelming to see." For more information about the NMHS Grad Party, please visit their [website](#).



Grad Party volunteers prepare to welcome graduates. Each year's theme is a well kept secret.

Decorations always wow!

Photo courtesy of New Milford Spectrum



Making paper with a Kimberly Clark volunteer

Community organizations also contribute to the volunteer efforts, supporting our schools in ways big and small. Corporate partners such as Kimberly Clark and IBM visit our schools as guest lecturers in math and science classes where they cover such diverse topics as paper making or the science behind diaper technology. Still others work in conjunction with student groups. The Rotary Club, for example, has provided dictionaries to our elementary classrooms, hosts a Student of the Month from New Milford

High School, and also sends a representative to work in conjunction with the school's Interact Club, the youth branch of this service organization. The Lions Club works in similar fashion at both SMS and NMHS through the Leo Club which is the youth organization of Lions Clubs International. At SNIS, Lions Club volunteers join reading groups in 5th and 6th grade reading classes. The Kiwanis Club works in conjunction with their youth offshoot, the Key Club, at NMHS. Literacy on the Green volunteers work with our high school seniors to assist them with the college process, primarily writing the college essay. If requested, they will also work with them on completing their college applications and applying for scholarships and financial aid.



SMS Leo Club members help out at Lion's Club sponsored senior party



6th graders try to Stump the Astronomers

Volunteers from the John J. McCarthy Observatory provide curriculum support in conjunction with the Observatory and Galileo's Garden on the grounds of New Milford High School and the smaller planetarium at Sarah Noble Intermediate School. Volunteers offer programs and host numerous classroom science sessions. Last year alone, they conducted over 50 classroom sessions! A highlight each year is the "Stump the Astronomer Day" at SNIS where 6th graders challenge the astronomers with questions

they create related to their study of our universe and then invite the "experts" to try and answer them.

Other volunteers act as an advisory group to the Cut, Paste & Copy class at the high school. CPC Student Leader and NMHS senior Chealsee Kalivas says "Cut, Paste, & Copy is a student-run graphic design company comprised of fourteen highly motivated juniors and seniors. The class is able to experience job shadowing due to gracious volunteers that are class alumni or owners of print and design firms. This year started with the first visit to Michael Giacona at Full Circle Promotions. Michael allowed the class to come into his shop and screen their class t-shirt, providing a hands-on learning environment. Art Foote of KatArt Graphics allowed the class to experience a local design firm that works both internationally and locally. Other volunteer Advisory Board members who opened their places



CPC students screen print shirts at Full Circle Promotions

of business are Shari Barron at J&J Printing and Doug Johnson at New Milford Print-works. Current designers and alumni come into the classroom to share portfolios, answer questions about the demanding graphic design world and teach the tricks of the trade. In order to thank the volunteers for their support and generosity the class holds an annual cookbook party where we present our class-designed CPC Cookbook.”

Community partners also provide internship opportunities for high school students. These internships are mentored by professionals in various fields and occur after school and/or on the weekend. Examples of past internships include work at an art gallery or craft school, with a web designer, in an accounting office, with a vet, at a museum, and in the recreation department of a nursing home. Still other volunteers serve as interviewers and interviewees in the NMHS Business classes so students can practice their job interview skills.



Exhibiting at the K-3 District Science Fair

Every school is lucky enough to have an active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), a truly valued resource. The PTO coordinates school volunteers and sponsors special school events, after-hours family events and book fairs. Fundraisers provide money to help subsidize student field trips, special assemblies, scholarships and other non-budgeted items. One wonderful example of a PTO sponsored event is the K-3 District Science Fair. PTO coordinator for the Fair Becky Passero says “PTO representatives from each school gather in September to begin planning the fair for the spring. Each

school rep is responsible for promotion of the science fair at their individual schools. The first official year of the Science Fair yielded about 40 participants; since then it has grown to 90 combined from the 3 elementary schools. Each child is "awarded" an official science fair medal. We want to encourage as many children to participate and show what intrigues them in science. We get everything from rock collections, exploding volcanos to color carnations. It's really very exciting to see the effort the children put into their experiments. Aside from the children participants, we also seek outside vendors to bring their science specialties for the children to look at. We require it all to be hands-on. This year we had The EverWonder Museum from Newtown, Robotics and Beyond, The New Milford Library, Elite Gymnastics and the Pratt Center to name a few. The list varies year to year depending on availability. We hope to continue this event next year and have even greater participation from the students.”

Finally, no article on volunteers would be complete without mentioning the many individuals and organizations that, through volunteer efforts, raise funds for scholarships for New Milford High School's graduating seniors. At last year's ceremony, Principal Greg Shugrue was pleased to announce a total of over \$265,000 given out in state and local

scholarships. Many of these are recurring donors year after year after year. One of the most generous partners over time has been the Thrift Mart of New Milford. Mrs. Doris Curtiss, a longtime volunteer of Thrift Mart, says scholarship awards began way back in the 1980's and have continued every year since. On an average they have given \$40,000 to \$50,000 in scholarships to our students every year. With each scholarship averaging around \$1000 that adds up to well over a \$1,000,000 in scholarship aid to over 1200 students!

Do what you can to show you care about other people, and you will make our world a better place. ~Rosalynn Carter



More Energy Initiatives

The last issue of Spotlight talked about the energy savings being utilized through the district's Energy Management Program. That's not the only way the district is saving money in this area. Mr. John Calhoun, Facilities Manager, has focused his efforts on many other cost saving initiatives. "There have been a series of programs taking place in all the schools primarily focused on lighting retrofits, lighting controls, motion sensors and refrigeration controls", according to Mr. Calhoun. The projects have been supplemented by rebates of 40% to 50% from CL & P and are financed through the district's utility bill with no cash outlay. The projects have been so successful that from 2011-2013 while the projects were ongoing the district actually saved more money than the program cost, resulting in a savings of over \$1000 month. Mr. Calhoun says there are less obvious savings too in lower maintenance and fewer bulb replacements with the retrofit. The environment is a big winner also as the projects resulted in an estimated annual energy savings of over 700,000 kilowatt hours. Efforts in the current year have focused on continued LED retrofits at Sarah Noble Intermediate School and New Milford High School and additional refrigeration and HVAC measures at NMHS. These projects are also generating positive cash flow during the payback period and saving lots of kilowatt hours.

Mr. Calhoun is working with the water company to explore savings in that area. He says, "We are taking a good look at our water consumption and investigating ways to decrease that usage. At the high school, the large hot water heaters are being replaced with a smaller direct fire system to gain maximum efficiency. We expect a 50% energy saving from this project." Other projects in the investigation stage include installing variable frequency drives on the big chiller at the high school to adjust motor speed and installing more energy efficient boilers where needed.

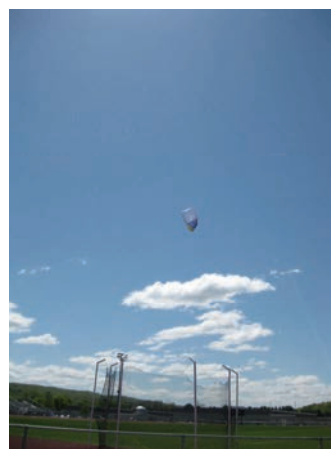
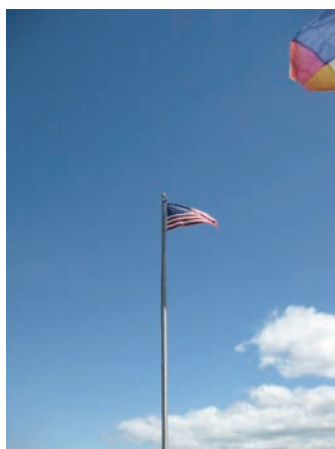


The Outdoor Classroom

If you are a working mom or dad lucky enough to have a window in your work space, this is the time of year that you look out and think “Boy, I’d rather be outside right now.” Our teachers and students feel the same way, and now that the weather is finally getting nicer, they are taking advantage of the great outdoors in a variety of ways. Drive by one of our schools and you are likely to see a class out reading in the fresh air or using the great outdoors to inspire writing or artwork. Many classes tie their science curriculum into outdoor experiences ranging from Mrs. Bouzakis’ NES kindergarteners who do a unit each year which ends in a butterfly release to physics classes at the high school who can be seen launching rockets and geometry classes who measure the flagpole as part of a unit on similarity, right triangles and trigonometry.



If you are really lucky and drive by the high school on the right day, you may see hot air balloons flying by. Chemistry teachers currently doing the balloon project with their classes are Mrs. Gardner, Ms. Landgrebe, Ms. Stolle, and Mrs. Chaudhuri. Experimental Chemistry students made and launched their balloons earlier in April but Academic Chemistry class will be making and launching their balloons at the end of May.



Mrs. Gardner says “Students work in pairs to build a tissue paper hot air balloon that will be launched outside during class. The students’ goal is to have their balloon remain in

the air for a minimum of 30 seconds. This lab is designed to get students to consider the many variables that influence how well a balloon floats (temperature and density of the air inside and outside the balloon, mass of the materials used to make the balloon, and the distribution of weight). It is also a direct application of Charles Law which states that when pressure is held constant, volume varies directly with temperature. For example, if temperature goes up, volume also goes up (heat the air inside the balloon and it will expand)." It's always interesting to see the diverse sizes and shapes of the balloons each year. Students enjoy the friendly competition that goes with the experiment.

No one is happier for the good weather than our Physical Education teachers who take their students outdoors for classes in everything from team sports to rollerblading. Hill and Plain Elementary School PE teacher Anthony Nocera says "This time of year I have the students doing several things outside. I do large field games that teach teamwork, cardiovascular endurance, offense and defensive strategy, and dodging. Those are done in games called Capture the Flag and Fitness Corners. I also teach several of my Field Day games outside such as Plinko which requires students to push large fitness balls up our hills and then push them down the hill into a target. Field Day will take place in early June at my school and includes almost 30 different activities, almost all of which are done outside." All elementary schools will be scheduling field days, an end-of-year highlight for many students.



Gardening is another popular outdoor activity for our elementary school students. Volunteers from the John J. McCarthy Observatory are visiting second graders at all three elementary schools to plant sunflowers with the children. Then the seedlings will be planted in the Observatory's Galileo's Garden in June where they will be in full bloom by August. Hill and Plain School students annually plant flowers to decorate their school grounds. Northville Elementary and John Pettibone schools are both lucky to have a garden on site. NES' garden, the Plant Patch, is cared for by volunteers who work with the teachers to schedule class visits. According to volunteer Claire Runyan "We try to get every class up for planting, hopefully for two visits per class. Students get an appreciation for how quickly the garden can change in a short period of time. Some seeds only take a week to sprout. I also make a point of sending photos to the teachers when the seeds are sprouting and flowers are forming so they can show the students the growing timeline of whatever seeds they planted." Crops this year will include: snap peas, radishes, pumpkins, Indian corn, carrots, potatoes,



pole beans, tomatoes, herbs, and a large variety of flowers. Last year, three third grade classes actually made a harvest soup with the vegetables they harvested. Students will help plant sunflowers, zinnias, marigolds, as well as bachelor buttons, black-eyed Susans, cosmos, nigella and decorative purple hyacinth beans too. Teachers often visit the Patch for lunch, snack or reading time at the picnic tables. All classes are invited back in the fall for harvesting. Last year, Mrs. Steinberg's third grade art classes created garden totems as a legacy project. The totems add a fun, whimsical element to the garden. [Mrs. Runyan](#) says the garden is always on the lookout for dedicated volunteers and she'd love to hear from you if interested! JPS Grade 2 teacher Scott McKay says "The JPS garden has been started for the 2014 growing season. Currently we have pea plants and radishes in the garden. Heirloom tomatoes and red peppers are in the greenhouse. Volunteers Claire and Allison Buckley will be coming in to plant herbs donated by Meadowbrook Farms. The PTO granted us an automatic watering system that we're in the process of installing which will be a great help."

Field trips provide another great way for the students to get outdoors and experience the curriculum they study in person. The Pratt Center provides a great site for lessons in life cycles, animal classification, plant science, and animal habitats for elementary students as well as a site for the fifth grade to try out pioneer life and complete their trout release unit. Third graders visit the Institute of American Indian Studies in Washington, CT as part of their social studies unit on Connecticut history. Kindergarteners visit the Beardsley Zoo as part of a unit exploring animal life cycles and habitats. Fourth graders visit the Bronx Zoo not just for science but as part of their social studies study of urban vs. rural life. Sixth graders visit Sound Waters in Stamford for science exploration and hands-on experience in the scientific method. The fifth grade social studies curriculum is enhanced with a visit to Old Sturbridge Village.



Sometimes the field trip is very close to home as is the case with the second grade field trip to the New Milford Green. This is a great opportunity for students to get to know their home town. JPS teacher Gayle Stewart says "We spend the day on the Green, walking from site to site in class groups. Merchants, professionals and community services open their doors to us and open our minds. We dine either by picnicking on The Green or, more often, at The Maxx. We enjoy

storytelling at the Library with Mrs. Ford, and visit Town Hall. The trip varies from year to year, depending on who is available, but it is always special, providing an inside view and behind the scenes knowledge. The children come away with a sense of the heritage and vibrancy of New Milford, while enjoying it's beautiful setting and stretching their legs!"

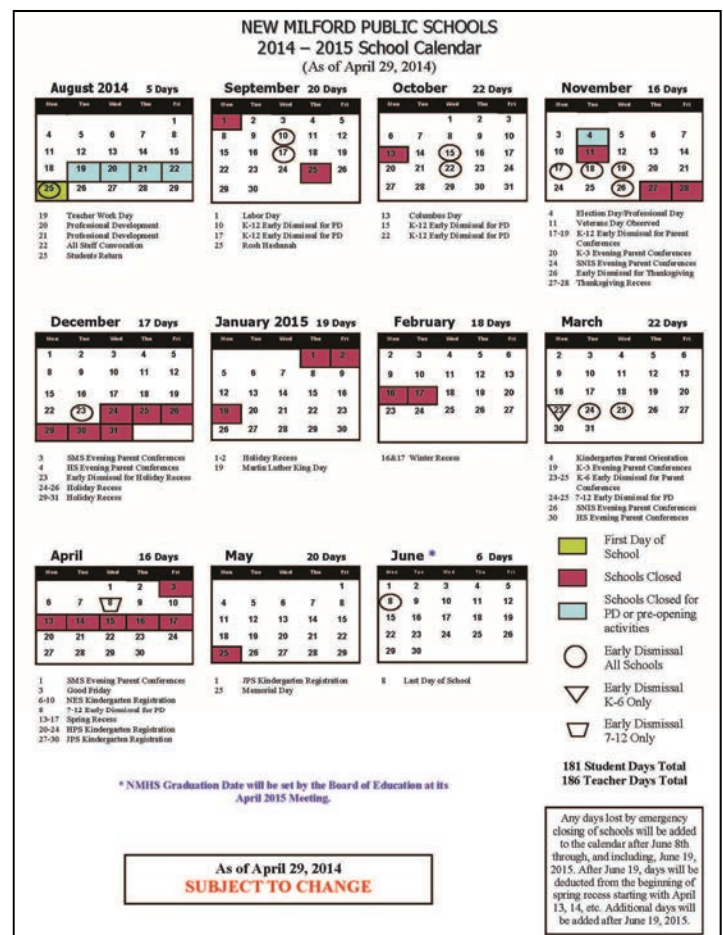
Board of Education Special Meeting

Tuesday, May 27, 2014

7:00 p.m. SNIS LMC

Topic: possible closing of a school due to declining enrollment

**Click [here](#)
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2014-2015
District
Calendar
On-line**





**New Milford Public
Schools**

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Mr. Joshua Smith
Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Ellamae Baldelli
Human Resources Director

Mr. John Calhoun
Facilities Manager

Mr. Gregg Miller
Fiscal Services Director

Mrs. Laura Olson
Pupil Personnel and Special Services
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Technology Director

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Teacher and Nurse Appreciation Days

May is the traditional month to
recognize teachers (May 6th)
and school nurses (May 7th).

**As we celebrate and
appreciate our volunteers,
so too do we celebrate
and appreciate
ALL our district staff.**

*"Anyone who does anything
to help a child in his life
is a hero to me."~ Fred Rogers
(Mister Rogers)*

May
brings

The mission of the New Milford Public Schools, a collaborative partnership of students, educators, family and community, is to prepare each and every student to compete and excel in an ever-changing world, embrace challenges with vigor, respect and appreciate the worth of every human being, and contribute to society by providing effective instruction and dynamic curriculum, offering a wide range of valuable experiences, and inspiring students to pursue their dreams and aspirations.